



Epicurus Delight

by Denis Connell

NEW THIS YEAR in the New York–Vermont market is *Epicurus*, a former Santa Fe Railway dining car offering full meal and beverage service, attached to the rear of Amtrak’s *Ethan Allen* on select weekend dates.

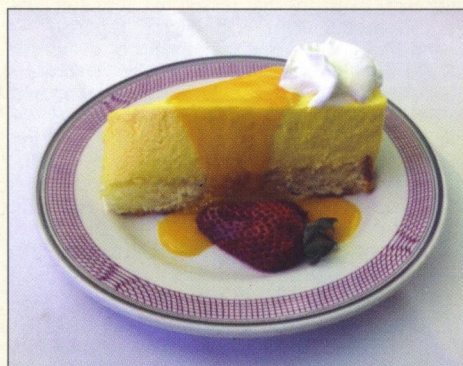
Operated by Peter Calleo, the service made a break-in roundtrip from New York Penn Station to Rutland, Vermont, over the weekend of May 19–20, which happened to coincide with the MassBay RRE *Hoosick Junction Limited* fantrip out of Rutland on Sunday. Since we were already aboard Amtrak’s *Ethan Allen* enroute to Rutland on Saturday, we had an opportunity to sample the new dinner-train service.

Epicurus is a Pullman-built lunch counter/ diner built for the *El Capitan* LA-to-Chicago streamliner in 1950. The deluxe car offers seating for 24 at six 4-seat tables, with additional seating for ten in the counter section located in the center of the car. A full kitchen provides complete meals and full beverage service.

We enjoyed New York Strip Steak with mixed vegetables over a bed of rice served on reproduction Mimbreno china from the *Super Chief* on the

northbound run, and selections including chicken and tuna on the return. The “signature dessert” was a delicious mango mousse topped with a strawberry, and for the record there were no leftovers at the conclusion of the journey.

A unique dinner train concept introduced with *Epicurus* attached to the *Ethan Allen* is the matrix of dining origins/destinations. While most dinner trains operating in North America are typically an



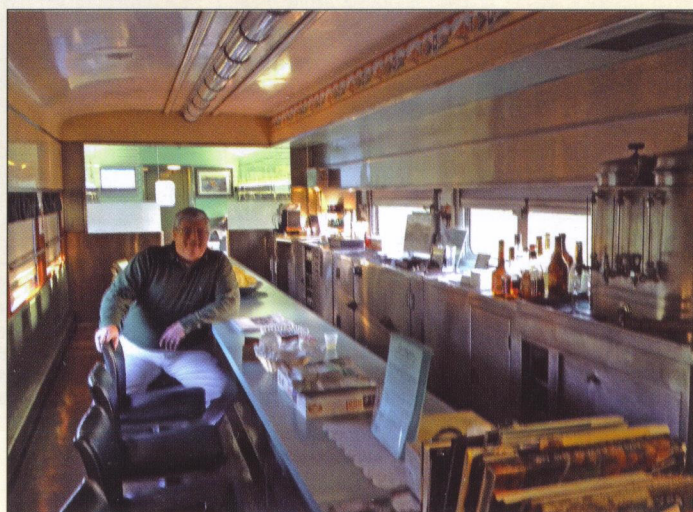
TOP: *Epicurus* brings up the rear of the *Ethan Allen* at Rutland, VT, on Sunday May 20, 2012.

ABOVE: New York Strip in Vermont: Served with mixed vegetables over rice on real china with stainless steel flatware. Not your father’s Amcafe.

LEFT: Mango mousse was the signature dessert on board the mid-May trip.

BELOW LEFT: The main dining room seats 24 at six linen-decked tables, each with its own fresh flowers and large picture window.

BELOW: The lunch counter section seats guests on the shorter journeys, such as Penn Station to Poughkeepsie, and Rutland to Fort Edward, NY.



"out-and-back" operation with no intermediate stops, *Epicurus* serves many markets: One can enjoy a short 75-mile hop from Penn Station, NY, to Poughkeepsie, taking in the Hudson Highlands while enjoying a three-course meal with wine, beer and cocktails at counter seating for just \$89. (Metro-North return to New York City (Grand Central) is \$15.75 additional. During 2012, these "Walkway Over The Hudson" specials operate from Penn Station at 3:15 p.m. on Saturdays July 7, 14, August 18, 25, September 29, October 6 and 13.

For a longer (and more extensive) meal, make Albany/Rensselaer your destination from Penn Station, with table seating featuring a five-course dinner including wine, beer and cocktails, for \$169, with coach return to Penn Station aboard an Amtrak Empire Service train.

There are also round-trip weekend packages to upstate points on the *Ethan Allen* route, including Saratoga and Fort Edward, and onward to Rutland, Vermont. These jaunts include table seating with a five-course dinner including wine, beer and cocktails each way, plus Saturday night hotel or B&B, along with the services of an onboard host/concierge for \$299 per person.

Green Mountain residents aren't left out: There is the "Vermont Dining Train" option which allows diners to board the outbound Sunday evening (5:05 p.m.) *Ethan Allen* and enjoy a four-course meal with after-dinner cordial to Fort Edward, NY, returning to Rutland that evening in coach aboard the northbound *Ethan Allen*. Table seating is \$69, counter seating \$55, higher during Fall dates, all of which are Sundays: July 8, 15, August 19, 26, September 30, October 7 and 14. ~~\$850~~

It's even possible to make an across-the-platform transfer to the Saratoga & North Creek Railway at Saratoga Union Station to complete your all-rail journey into North Creek, with cocktails under glass in a full-length dome.

Reservations are required for *Epicurus*, and can be had by calling Railroad Passenger Services LLC at (908) 688-7277 or toll-free (800) 292-7245. Group rates and charters are available.

Dining Train Timetable

(subject to change)

Saturdays	Sundays
3:15pm.....New York City....	10:35pm
3:39pm.....Yonkers, NY.....	10.04pm
3:58pm...Croton-Harmon, NY..	9:45pm
6:00pm...Rensselaer/Albany...	8:05pm
6:50pm...Saratoga Springs...	6.47pm
7:10pm...Fort Edward, NY*..	6.25pm
8.24pm.....Castleton, VT.....	5.24pm
8.48pm.....Rutland, VT.....	5.05pm
9:09pm....North Creek, NY....	3.45pm

*Fort Edward/Glens Falls station serving the Lake George Region.

All tables comfortably seat four guests. Roundtrip guests seated at tables are guaranteed river-side seating in at least one direction. Table requests will be honored in the order in which paid reservations are received.

Reservations & Information
 Railroad Passenger Services LLC
 Rail & Cruise Travel Center
 908-688-7277 800-292-7245
www.HudsonValleyExplorer.com
 Discount rates available for pre/post journey hotel lodging in New York City.



News from
**DEL-MAR-VA and
 Southern N.J.**
 Edited by
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CMSL Track Material Theft

Cape May Seashore Lines continues to suffer from theft of materials on its property. Scrappers stole several thousand tie plates and spikes, and damaged or destroyed hundreds of ties along the CMSL Cape May Branch between Woodbine and Dennisville, in Cape May County, NJ. Over 6,800 feet of track has been rendered impassible due to this event. The railroad had plans for Cape May service this summer, since all the highway and grade crossing construction is finished, but has given up claiming it can't get the train from its base in Tuckahoe to Cape May. The damaged section of track is enroute and not part of the regular Cape May excursion mileage.

On Thursday, March 1, 2012, the Seashore Lines received a telephone call from the New Jersey State Police (NJSP), advising it that a theft of track material had occurred its Cape May Branch, in an area between Woodbine and Dennisville, NJ. The investigating trooper informed the railroad that several individuals associated with the theft had been arrested and charged with indictable offenses. Arrested on Monday, March 5, were a father and son team from the Villas section of Lower Township, along with a third individual from Rio Grande. The trooper noted that the investigation was continuing, with the expectation charges would be filed against additional individuals. The theft of the track material represented 75% of the tie plates and spikes along that section of track. In their actions to remove the tie plates and spikes, the perpetrators also damaged and destroyed numerous cross ties. On Wednesday, March 28, the state police informed the railroad that they had

also arrested the operating partner of a local scrap yard in conjunction with accepting the stolen materials.

Tidbits

Canadian Pacific ES44AC 8838 lead a short Shared Assets train WPCA-51 south through Oaklyn, NJ, on March 30, 2012.

NS 60Z and 61Z are now operating Conway Yard, PA, to Pavonia (Camden, NJ) as an extra manifest to handle increased business to South Jersey.

NS train 64N is a new crude oil train which makes deliveries to Delaware City, DE. Initial routing was east on NS's Harrisburg Line to Philadelphia, then south on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor (NEC) to Delaware City. An alternate route is via the Port Road to the NEC at Perryville, Maryland, then north to Delaware City. Depending on space at Delaware City, some of the cars may be staged at Chrysler Yard or Porter/Bear.

NS Heritage units have been making appearances in Maryland on 500-series coal trains between Enola and Baltimore. So far, the Nickel Plate and Lehigh Valley units have made trips over the ex-PRR Port Road and Amtrak NEC from Perryville south to Baltimore during May and June. Due to Amtrak operating time restrictions for freight train movements over the NEC, most of these moves have been at night.

Wilmington & Western SW-900 915 has finally received a new and well-done two-tone blue paint job, done by Cassidy Painting, with gold striping and lettering done by Wilmington & Western Executive Director David Ludlow and Justin Kane of Cassidy Painting

Thanks to the following for this month's news. Drew Marshall, Kurt Hudson, Steve Jensen Jr., Tony Macrie, Dave Homer and Bob Vogel.

Send news from South Jersey, Delaware, and the Maryland and Virginia Eastern Shores to Dale W. Woodland, 402 E. Reliance Road, Souderton, PA 18964 or e-mail: RDG803@yahoo.com

E-mail low-res "For Approval" digital images directly to railpace@ptd.net



ABOVE: REBUILT P40s ON AUTO TRAIN— Amtrak has assigned six recently rebuilt General Electric P40s to its popular Auto Train. The six P40s, Nos. 814, 818, 830, 831, 832 and 835, were rebuilt with funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. A total of 15 P40s have been rebuilt for long distance service, which encompassed overhaul or replacement of all main components, including auxiliary generator power contactors, voltage regulator, batteries, trucks and air brake systems. This work was done at Amtrak's Beech Grove, Indiana, shop. Amtrak purchased 44 P40s from GE in 1993; after being in mainline service for a decade and a half they were removed from service and stored. Each Auto Train is now powered by a pair of the P40s, two others are kept at their facility at Sanford, FL. The southbound Auto Train with rebuilt P40s 835 and 832 is shown crossing Aquia Creek at Hope Springs Marina on April 16, 2012. This location is on the CSX RF&P Sub. near Stafford, VA. Digital photo/ Alex Mayes