

# ~ A Century of Rapid Transit Service ~

The Chicago Transit Authority is an enthusiastic participant in the Chicago Day celebrations of institutions marking 100 years of service to the city, and an authentic one was well.

It was on June 6, 1892, that the Chicago & South Side Rapid Transit Railroad began operating steam-powered trains on an elevated structure south of the downtown area.

The original line ran above the alley between State Street and Wabash Avenue from Congress to 39th Street, quickly becoming dubbed the "Alley 'L'." By the time the World's Columbian Exposition opened in Jackson Park, on May 1, 1893, service had been extended directly to the fairgrounds near 63rd Street east of Stony Island Avenue.

Elevated rapid transit switched to third rail electric power before the end of the 19th Century, and has been part of the Chicago landscape ever since.

It carries millions of riders every year to their places of work, shopping and recreation, helping Chicago prosper through its ability to move people conveniently to their destinations.

And it is still growing. Before this centennial year is over, a new 9.13-mile line will be opened to Midway Airport and the surrounding Southwest Side neighborhoods that never had 'L' service.

Trains on the new line will enter downtown on the same elevated structure that has served generations of riders, stopping clockwise at inner Loop stations along Van Buren, Wells, Lake and Wabash.

Initial Service will be provided by many of the 256 new 'L' cars being purchased from Morrison Knudsen Company of Hornell, N.Y. Prototypes of the new cars are already being tested in service.

Another improvement planned for rapid transit's

centennial year is the route realignment creating a Howard-Dan Ryan line, which will permit greater rider comfort and operating efficiency on both segments.

Already in place is a direct connection between the Clark-Lake 'L' station and the O'Hare line subway below. Both stations are fully accessible by elevators, escalators and stairs.

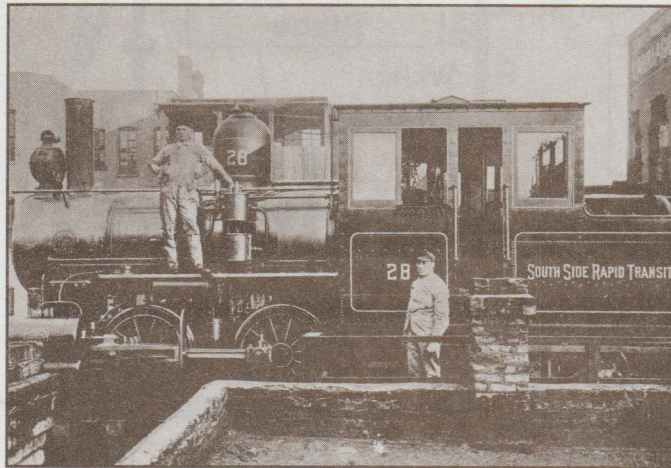
Entry to 'L' and subway is through either the State of Illinois Center or the 203 North LaSalle office buildings, which are on opposite sides of Lake Street between Clark and LaSalle Streets.

Just as public transportation to the Columbian Exposition was provided by both 'L' trains and cable cars, so the CTA offers its riders the latest in bus as well as rapid transit car service.

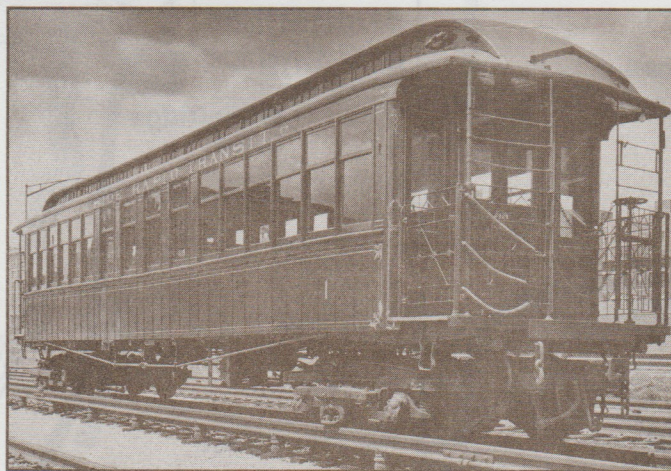
Within the past year, CTA has taken delivery of 961 new buses, representing about 45

percent of its operating fleet. And almost all these buses are equipped with lifts for persons with disabilities.

So while Chicago's original 'L' is now 100 years old, CTA is keeping its service up to date with new routes and equipment designed to serve the needs of its riders well into the century ahead.



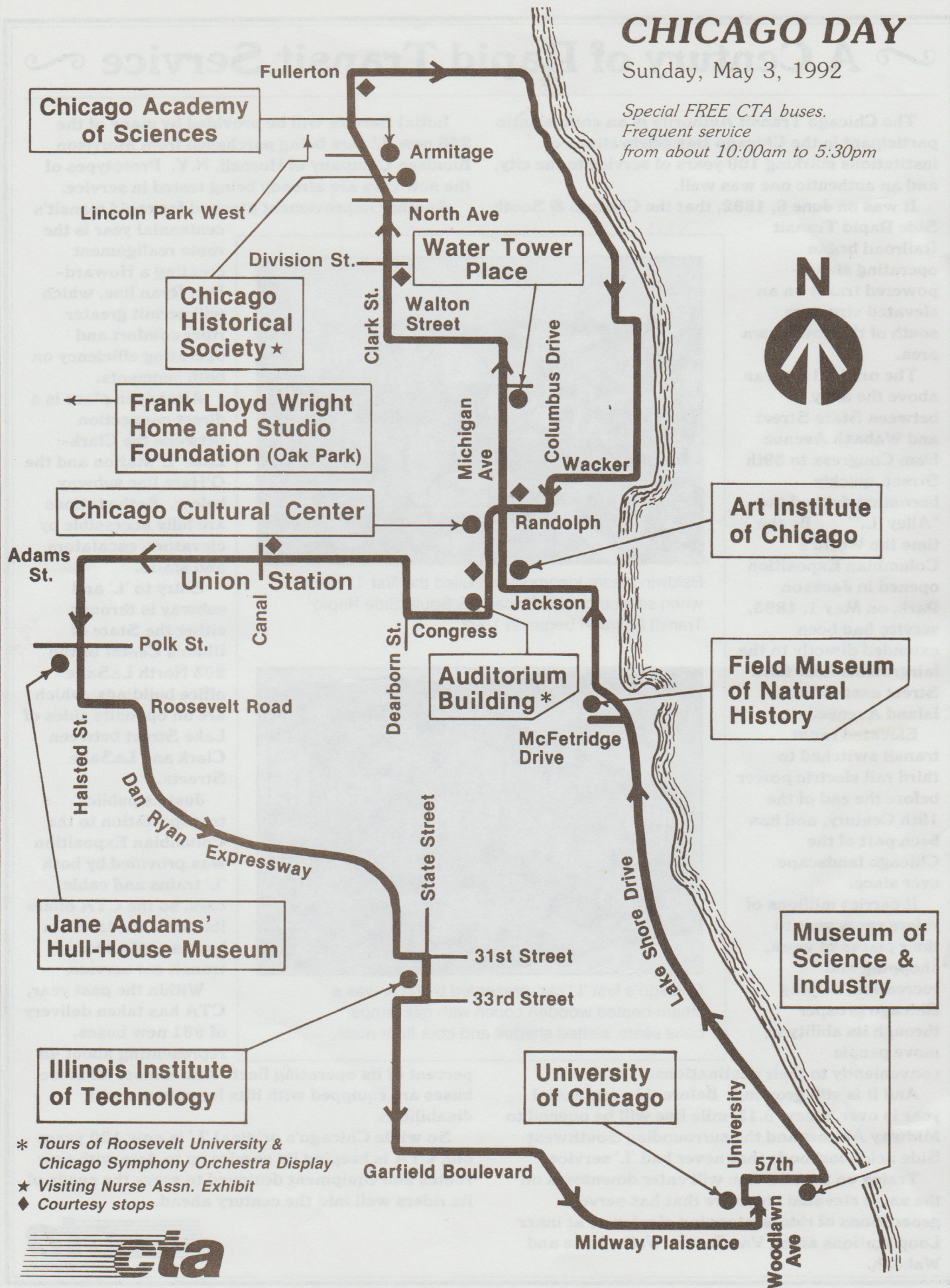
Baldwin steam locomotives pulled the first 'L' trains when service on the Chicago & South Side Rapid Transit Railroad began in 1892.



Chicago's first 'L' car, preserved by CTA, was a steam-heated wooden coach with gas lamps, cane seats, slatted shades and cork floor mats.



Sunday, May 3, 1992



- \* *Tours of Roosevelt University & Chicago Symphony Orchestra Display*
- ★ *Visiting Nurse Assn. Exhibit*
- ◆ *Courtesy stops*

