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July 1<sup>st</sup> 2021

## **New York Subway Car No.1144 on display at Quainton**

**Who knew there was an old New York Subway Car at Buckinghamshire Railway Centre? Its location on site has been somewhat tucked away, behind the Royal Mail carriages, so it was quite easily missed. However, on June 17<sup>th</sup>, the 38-tonne carriage was brought out of the shadows and repositioned at the front of the site, where it will be refurbished for use as a coffee shop for visitors.**

Apparently the only New York Subway car in the world that isn't in the USA, No. 1144 was built by the American Car & Foundry in 1935, part of contract R-6-3 (car Nos: 900-1149), The Independent Fleet, for use between 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Fulton. This route became the 'A' line of the New York mass transit system. In common with other stock, No.1144 had driving cabs at each end, but although this aided flexibility in use, it took up valuable space that could have been used for passengers.

Withdrawn for scrapping around 1976, along with the rest of its type, No.1144 was miraculously saved, as it was purchased by a brewery in Stockton-on-Tees and, quite extraordinarily, shipped across to England, where it was converted into an American Diner. When Whitbread took over the brewery several years later, they didn't want to keep it and generously donated it to Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, who took delivery of it in January 1991 - 30 years ago.

When it first arrived in Quainton, as it was fitted out with diner tables and chairs, it was initially used as part of the refreshment facilities, but since the opening of their Rewley Road Visitor Centre, it has been used as a place for their volunteer crew members to eat their lunch and take breaks.

During the closure of the site in the 2020 lockdown, the 'crazy' idea was put forward to bring it out of its hiding place, reposition it at the front of the site and convert it into an extra little coffee shop. Months later, this idea has finally come to fruition after a huge logistical undertaking, which has been sponsored by Barwood Homes, who are about to start construction work on a housing development next door to the heritage railway.

An enormous crane was hired to lift the 38-tonne steel carriage from behind the Visitor Centre, over the top of the Travelling Post Office and onto a low loader. It was then driven into the car park where it was lifted again, over the fence and into its current position on the grass in front of the Visitor Centre, in pride of place for all to see and use.



We hope to hear more updates from Buckinghamshire Railway Centre in regards to No.1144's progress as they renovate this fantastic piece of railway memorabilia.

For more information contact:

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Images attached by Louisa Richards/BRC of 'Lifting Day'

**Press release issued by:**

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