

Underground History

Author Talk Examines Boston's Race against New York to Build America's First Subway and Its Ties to the West End

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Boston, MA—Long before the Red Sox-Yankees rivalry, Boston and New York were competing to be the first American city to build a rapid transit system underground. Boston won, establishing the nation's first subway in 1897. Today, while the T is a magnet for critics, it is also an economic engine powering the region.

The T's history is intertwined with the West End neighborhood, a point highlighted in the book, [*The Race Underground: Boston, New York, and the Incredible Rivalry That Built America's First Subway*](#). Authored by *The Boston Globe's* Doug Most, the book chronicles the competition between the Whitney brothers, who separately developed the nation's first two subways—in Boston and New York. The highly praised book, which filmmaker Ken Burns calls, "a fascinating account of how New York and Boston tunneled their way into the future," is being made into a PBS American Experience documentary.

On **Wednesday, September 14, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**, The West End Museum will feature a conversation with Most titled, [*The History and Future of America's First Subway, The T*](#). The event is a companion to the Museum's current exhibit, [*From Stagecoach to Subway: The West End Street Railway*](#), which explores how the West End neighborhood played a key role in the history of the Hub's public transportation system. Most's talk will also examine the present and future of public transit in Boston and beyond. His book will be available for purchase and signing.

As part of the program, the Museum is sponsoring an online [Transportation Trivia Contest](#). The contest is free, and prizes will be awarded to the highest-scoring participants.

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About The West End Museum:

[The West End Museum](#) is dedicated to the collection, preservation and interpretation of the history and culture of the West End neighborhood. The Museum's permanent exhibit, "The Last Tenement," highlights the immigrant history of the neighborhood through its decimation under Urban Renewal in 1959; two additional galleries feature rotating exhibits. The Museum is located near North Station at 150 Staniford St. Suite 7. Hours: Tuesday - Thursday, 12:00pm - 5:00pm; Friday, 1:00pm - 5:00pm; Saturday, 11:00am - 4:00pm. Admission is free.

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