

BOSTON & MAINE R.R.

Historical Society, inc.

NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

2 December 1974

Dear B & M Fans:

The December meeting of the Society will be held at the First Unitarian Parish Church, corner of Winn and Pleasant Streets, Woburn Square, at 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 14, 1974. Mr. John Deely of Longmeadow, Mass., will show motion pictures taken during the 1930's and 1940's. They will be primarily B&M in subject and cover a variety of operations, from the electrified zone to pusher service with steam power out of East Deerfield. These are "not-to-be-missed" movies, so please make an effort to attend. Guests are always welcome.

PUBLICATIONS: The December 1972, March 1973, June 1973, September 1973, and March 1974 issues of the Bulletin are still available at \$1.40 (including postage). The summer and fall 1974 issues are also available at \$1.65 including postage. Also available are the 1932 Snow Train menu at 25¢ (including postage) and copies of Dick Symmes' excellent drawings of Mogul 1472 and gas-electric 181 at 70¢ (including postage). Remember, after January 1, be sure to include your membership number with all orders for back issues prior to the summer 1974 issue as the price will be \$1.65 to non-members for all issues after that date.

We have received good response recently to our requests for black and white and color photos for publications use. If you have some good slides you wish to submit, we would appreciate it if you would have prints made from them and send us the prints whenever possible. These will be returned to you as will any slides you send us unless you indicate that we may retain them for our files. We presently need good photos of stations, trains, wrecks, construction, etc., on the Central Massachusetts line; shots of B&M milk cars (especially the wooden cars); and pictures of B&M wreckers and other work equipment in use on the road. (All inquiries regarding publications for sale should be addressed to the Publications Editor, Mr. John Hutchins.)

The Society's major publication in 1975 will be a book on the Central Mass. line. Indications are that it will be available in mid-1975. Historical photos, primarily west of Oakdale, are still needed by the authors. Please contact Mr. H. Bentley Crouch, 81 Montvale Road, Weston, MA 02193, if you can help out.

NEW MEMBERS: It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Society: Richard M. Foster, Manton, MI; Lewis L. Lloyd, Boston, MA; Andrew F. Deibert, N. Syracuse, NY; Ross Chapman, Hingham, MA; Steven Lattimore, Santa Monica, CA; Allen H. Magnuson, Silver Spring, MD; Richard G. Hurd, Maynard, MA; Merton J. Stearns, Concord, NH; Officers J.&I.G. RR, John B. Egan, President, Gorham, NH; Lt. Richard M. Blunt, Fort Richardson, AK; Thomas J. Emmons, Methuen, MA; Fred N. Coggin, Wakefield, MA; Merle K. Pierce, North Kingston, RI; Francis C. Carroll, Lowell, MA; and Simon Duhamel, New York, NY.

**BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

P.O. BOX 302, READING, MASS. 01867

MEETING OF NOVEMBER 9, 1974

The regular monthly meeting of the B&MRRHS was called to order at 8:10 p.m. at the First Unitarian Parish Church, Woburn, by President Donald Robinson. Approximately 50 members and guests attended the meeting.

The Secretary's verbal report was accepted.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as read.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: The Archivist, Mr. Bill Cashman, gave his report concerning recent additions to our facilities at Merrimack College.

The entertainment to be presented at the December meeting was discussed, followed by announcements of recent B&M news and happenings.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Following the business meeting, Mr. Don Robinson showed a substantial number of excellent slides from his B&M collection.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Squires

David R. Squires, Secretary

We regret to announce the death of a long-time railfan and member, Mr. Elwin K. Heath of Barre, VT. Mr. Heath kept us well informed about railroad activities in Vermont, and in addition to this hobby, he was active in fraternal and church work, and was a member of the volunteer fire department for 20 years. Mr. Heath died at the age of 68 after a long illness.

OFFICIAL NEWS: The Trustees of the Boston and Maine Corporation have announced that, for the first time since 1965, the railroad had a profitable quarter. B&M's third quarter net income of \$833,000 is a sharp increase from the \$2.1 million loss in the same period of 1973. Trustees Meserve and Lacy noted that September is the third consecutive month that the B&M has reported a profit.

Third quarter operating revenues increased 21% to \$23.9 million from \$19.7 million a year earlier, while operating expenses increased only 9% to \$18.6 million from \$17 million a year earlier.

Although the B&M still shows a loss for the first nine months of 1974, it is some 70% less than the loss for the same period last year - \$2.2 million as opposed to \$7.3 million in 1973. These financial achievements have been accomplished in spite of B&M's accelerated maintenance program, both in track and equipment, on a "catch-up" basis.

Mr. A.S. Arnold writes that "Finally, on October 31, the Providence and Worcester formalized the sale of the Gardner branch from the B&M. The purchase price was \$310,000 for the 22 miles of line plus trackage rights for 3 miles in Worcester and 1 mile in Gardner. The P&W is already repainting bridges with its name on them. They are tight on power right now; RS3 No. 165 is out of service and 2001 is still not running (as of mid-November.) Plans are to switch the Worcester to Gardner run to late afternoon."

THINGS YOU (MAYBE) DIDN'T KNOW: David Johnson reports that the B&M's main line through Manchester, NH, is being relocated to the filled-in canal bed running through that city.

The trackage west out of Mechanicville to Crescent, NY, is joint B&M-D&H and carries everything except via-Albany freights from M'ville (1 each way) and a couple of Montreal-Wilkes-Barre jobs that don't go via M'ville at all. Technically speaking, those so inclined can get shots of the Adirondack and eventually (sigh) the Baldwin Sharks on the B&M.

A bit out of our territory (but only 20 or so miles north of Wells River, VT), interesting motive power may appear in St. Johnsbury. The Chessie System and the CPR now have pooled power on Chicago-Montreal-St. Johnsbury freights. CPR power in East Deerfield is very pleasant to see, but the thought of C&O, or B&O, or Western Maryland units in St. J. is rather mind-bending. It could happen.

RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHY 101: (courtesy of Prof. K.E.P.)

Did you ever notice how short the old Bluebirds are compared to the Two-Birds? B&M is unique with its all GP-9 or all GP-38-2 consists. Where you can still find them, 1700's in the old bluebird color scheme photograph well because of the white on the cab ends. Don't forget to show the sides of the hood in your shot, however, in order to catch the big graphic B&M logo. Things to look for when photographing GP-9's or any high-nose diesel: Is the short hood within the shape of the cab so that right and left cab windows are visible, or is just the near-side window visible? How your camera angle conforms to this simple rule of thumb gives a variety of looks to the good old GP-9. Try both.

On low-nose units our "short hood rule" is easier to check as the locomotive fills your viewfinder. In fact you can even check how much nose extends beyond the cab profile. With a moving train the short hood rule depends a lot on your lens and how far away the subject is; none the less, it's one of the ways of establishing "The Look" of your photo subjects. PA fans can apply the same rule by checking certain angles to see how much of that square grill around the headlight falls where, relative to the center and farside windshield posts.

We would be interested in some of your own hints on what makes a good B&M photo!

Next month----"To Crouch or Not To Crouch..."

WEST END RAMBLINGS: For a while now they have been using a Penn Central unit as a kicker out of E. Deerfield to E. Gardner. This is part of that PC consist that lays over in E. Deerfield before heading out on its namesake connecting train. Early this spring we were watching trains behind the Dunkin Donuts in Gardner. (If nothing comes you can always warm up with coffee and a jelly doughnut.) Before long 3 geeps headed up the hill on a Rigby job. On the end was a lone U25B pusher with its typical smoke and phlap, phlap, phlap exhaust. Upon picking up a supposed train order that came fluttering from the helper engineer's hand, we found ourselves reading instead a strongly-worded treatise on "Sin and Salvation." Is PC or the B&M trying to improve us railfans or something?

The other night at the November meeting a question came up as to how many of those dandy banjo swinging-light crossing signals are left in service. Could you let us know if there are any in your area? And while you're at it what are those special thingamabobs (hickey, for those Pennsylvania members) on top of the crossing light poles on the Lowell-Lowell Junction line--photocells, solar reflectors, or what??

How long has it been since any of us has spent some time out at Mechanicville? If you like B&M and D&H (and who doesn't), there is a lot happening. The hostler sets up power for B&M eastbounds on the train as much as an hour before departure. The B&M swings north out of town before heading east across the Hudson River. Once on the east bank the line runs south for quite a ways before resuming the eastbound trek once again. In fact, you can take the bridge directly across the river from Mechanicville and catch eastbounds at a crossing before they make the swing east again. You can follow your nose or use a roadmap to get you to Johnsonville and into the bargain you'll have plenty of chances to follow the same eastbound freight.

D&H engine facilities are easy enough to find at the other end of M'ville yard. If you're heading more or less west beyond the yard look for Coon Crossing Road. This is a common railfanning spot for West End folk - it's where the old Round Lake line used to split off. (Don't be fooled by the old abandoned fills, etc., if you venture further west en motorcade.) Now, Coon Crossing is a good spot because here you see all trains from Mechanicville to Montreal, Whitehall, Schenectady, and Oneonta, as well as the Adirondack service. All B&M activity for Rotterdam Junction such as freight and coal extras that branch off at Crescent further west also pass Coon Crossing. Because of dual trackage it is technically correct that PA's (and eventually Sharks) run on the B&M.

We're sure that our West End members will be the first ones to provide us with a look at this B&M activity. (K.E.P.)

MEMBERS' SERVICES: The Cambridge Historical Commission is currently preparing Northwest Cambridge, its fifth volume on the architectural history of Cambridge covering the area between North Cambridge and Fresh Pond. They are actively searching for illustrations relating to the Fitchburg Railroad and its subsidiary branches. There is particular need of photographs of the Porter Square station and views of the Fitchburg main line operation in North Cambridge between 1845 and 1900. Anyone who has access to such photographs should contact Mr. Arthur J. Krim, Cambridge Historical Commission, City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street, Cambridge, MA 02139. Full credit will be given to the owners of any pictures published.

John Weston, P.O. Box 339, Wilmette, IL 60091, is interested in buying or trading public and employees timetables, 8 X 10 b&w or color prints of motive power and rolling stock, 35mm color slides, and technical data (diagram books, painting diagrams, etc.) of New England railroads, particularly the B&M and predecessors.

New England Rail Service, P.O. Box 701, Keene, NH 03431, has a 13-page list of northern New England railroad photos which is available to anyone who sends a stamped, self-addressed envelope bearing 30¢ postage. Approximately half of the listing is of B&M material; not many recent shots are included. Ordering info and prices are included with the listing.

New England Rail Service has been appointed as the exclusive dealer for photos by John Krause for the New England region. Mr. Krause's photos should be familiar to many members both from the photos he has contributed to various books and his photos in the Bulletin. All photos are individually printed by John on heavy paper. The first offering will be a mixed steam and diesel set of ten B&M photos which will sell for \$15.00 including postage. It is available now. None of the photos

which they market by Mr. Krause will be offered elsewhere. Should sufficient interest arise they will also market a set for the D&H and a smaller set on the HT&W. Quantities are limited for the moment so parties desiring a set for Christmas should write as soon as possible. Requests for catalogs on their other photos should be sent to the same address.

Mr. Donald Valentine would like to thank the half dozen or so members who responded to his request in an earlier Newsletter to be contacted by members interested in obtaining B&M HO scale locomotives such as the 2-8-4 which Harry Frye and he worked on for so long. It is obvious, however, that with such a small response there is little hope of convincing anyone to manufacture models of B&M steam locos. It is interesting to note that almost half of those responding to earlier comments were more interested in a model of the B-15 2-6-0 than the 2-8-4 which was under consideration.

Mr. Al Clark, 9516 Wallingford Drive, Burke, VA 22015, has for sale a Hallmark GP-7, spray painted and lettered in red and yellow for B&M 1558; smooth running with Kadec couplers. \$80 postpaid.

ARCHIVAL DONATION: We would very much like to thank Mr. Stanley Y. Whitney, Wakefield, MA, for generously donating the following items to our archives: Two Baldwin Locomotive Works Plan Books, of B&M R-1 blueprints of locomotive parts.
One lot of approximately 156 blueprints of the Hoosac Tunnel Electrification Plans, with 3-page index list.

The Society is enriched by Mr. Whitney's donation, and we hope that other members will follow his unselfish example.

Best regards,

David Squires

David R. Squires, Secretary

*Wishing you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*

