

BOSTON & MAINE R.R.

Historical Society, inc.

NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

27 January 1975

Dear B & M Fans:

The February 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, February 8, 1975. This will be Members' Night, and the entertainment will be provided by those who bring in slides, movies, models for display, etc. This is your chance to show the efforts of your train chasing last summer, or whatever. B&M subjects are preferred, but bring along and share with the members whatever you have.

PUBLICATIONS: The December 1972, March 1973, June 1973, September 1973, and March 1974 Bulletins are still available at \$1.40 each including postage (\$1.65 to non-members). The Summer and Fall 1974 issues are available to all at \$1.65 per copy. Also available are the 1932 Snow Train menu at 25¢ each, the Springfield Terminal 1900 passenger timetable at 25¢ each, and Dick Symmes' drawings of Mogul 1472 at Milford, NH, and gas-electric 181 at Claremont Jct. at 70¢ each. All the above prices include postage. When ordering back issues of the Bulletin from now on, please be sure to include your membership number or you will be charged the non-member's rate for issues prior to Summer 1974.

NEW MEMBERS: It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Society: Edward C. Merrill, Pleasant Hill, IL; Graeme W. Rumler, Sebastopol, Victoria, Australia; William T. Chase, Chevy Chase, MD; Robert Harlow, Washington, DC; Calvin W. Blaser, No. Kingstown, RI; William H. Soar, Jr., Acton, MA; John H. Williams, Walpole, NH; Norman A. Savage, Nashua, NH; Ted A. Lewtas, Sudbury, MA; Duane M. Gillette, Melrose, MA; Graham L. Prendergast, Foxboro, MA; and Luis Varela, New York, NY.

FAN TRIPS: A paucity of these exists in our area, as we all know. Things may be brighter in the future, however. The Railroad Enthusiasts are tentatively planning a trip on the Claremont and Concord Railroad in the not-too-distant future. Watch this space for details.

Our friendly connecting railroad to the west has several trips pretty well firmed up. Contact the D&H for information concerning these:

- 6 April (Sun.): Binghamton - Colonie.
- 24 May (Sat.): Rouses Point - Ft. Ticonderoga.
- 28 June (Sat.): Oneonta - Saratoga.
- 20 Sept. (Sat.): Colonie - Castleton, VT via the Washington branch. Train may go on to Rutland, but not too likely. Return to Colonie via Whitehall and the main line. The SHARKS will probably be used on this trip!
- 5 Oct. (Sun.): Wilkes-Barre - Oneonta.

MEETING OF JANUARY 11, 1975

The regular monthly meeting of the B&MRRHS was called to order at 8:07 p.m. at the First Unitarian Parish Church, Woburn, by President Donald Robinson. Seventy members and guests attended the meeting.

The Secretary's Report was accepted as read.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as read.

Mr. Crouch reported that the Society's book on the Central Mass. Railroad was coming along well.

Mr. Cashman gave the Archivist's Report.

Mr. Valentine mentioned that David Johnson would present the entertainment in March, and that the February meeting would be members' night, giving the members the opportunity to bring in their movies, slides, models, etc. He also noted that Don Hills would heretofore be assisting him in lining up entertainment.

The President reported that the meeting in May would possibly be held at the Wolfeboro Railroad in New Hampshire. He advised that the B&M will renumber one of its locomotives 200 for the bicentennial, and then made several corrections and additions to the list of banjo signals that appeared in the last Newsletter.

Mr. Santurjian gave an update on track work being carried out by the B&M.

Mr. Slayton donated a B&M Run-Through book of 1942-43 to the Society's archives.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Following the business meeting, Mr. Al Hale presented the entertainment which consisted of superb B&W movies of various New England railroads in the 1930's. The B&M was well represented in his films.

Respectfully submitted,

David R. Squires

David R. Squires, Secretary

LATE NEWS FLASHES: The B&M's only Alco RS-2, No. 1500, derailed 2 miles north of S. Ashburnham on the Cheshire branch on 21 January, while in charge of local freight F-5. Considerable damage was done to the underframe. The accident was caused by hard-packed ice on the rails as a result of snow-mobilizers using the right-of-way. It is not known at this time whether the Alco will be repaired or not.

B&M No. 1170 has been leased to the Springfield Terminal Railway. It arrived on the property on 25 January.

RESCUE OF A TURNTABLE

-by-

Howard W. Boothroyd

Along with the changing landscape and railroad profiles when the steamers and trackside water tanks were gone was the rapid disappearance of turntables. In the era before the diesels, turntables were used to turn steam locomotives at terminals, although in some locations this was accomplished by a "wye" and in a few instances a loop was used. The turntable was by far the most popular as it required the least land area and provided a natural nucleus for a roundhouse. In addition to engine service, the table was used to turn snowplows and "wrong way" boxcars that had to be unloaded from one side only.

It was decided that the Wolfeboro Railroad should have at least one operating turntable as soon as practicable, and efforts were focused on utilization of the pit at Sanbornville which had never been filled or destroyed and remained pretty much intact except for debris, bushes, snakes, and trees that had taken possession and inhabited the pit for the past few decades. Almost coincidentally in September of 1972 it was learned that the abandoned turntable at the old Cheshire enginehouse in Keene, New Hampshire was desperately looking for a new home.

Measurements of both pits were promptly made with the almost unbelievable results that they were identical in almost every detail. Furthermore, the table appeared to be structurally sound and all of its functional parts were in the Keene pit. Further research showed that the original installations were both 60-foot tables and products of the Boston Bridge Works. The Keene table had been installed in 1895, was made of wrought iron with a design capacity of 112 tons, was electric motor driven, and had a cone roll center pivot. The Sanbornville table was also of wrought iron, with a design capacity of 120 tons, had a cone roll pivot, but was hand-operated. The date of installation is not given but is presumed to be circa 1900.

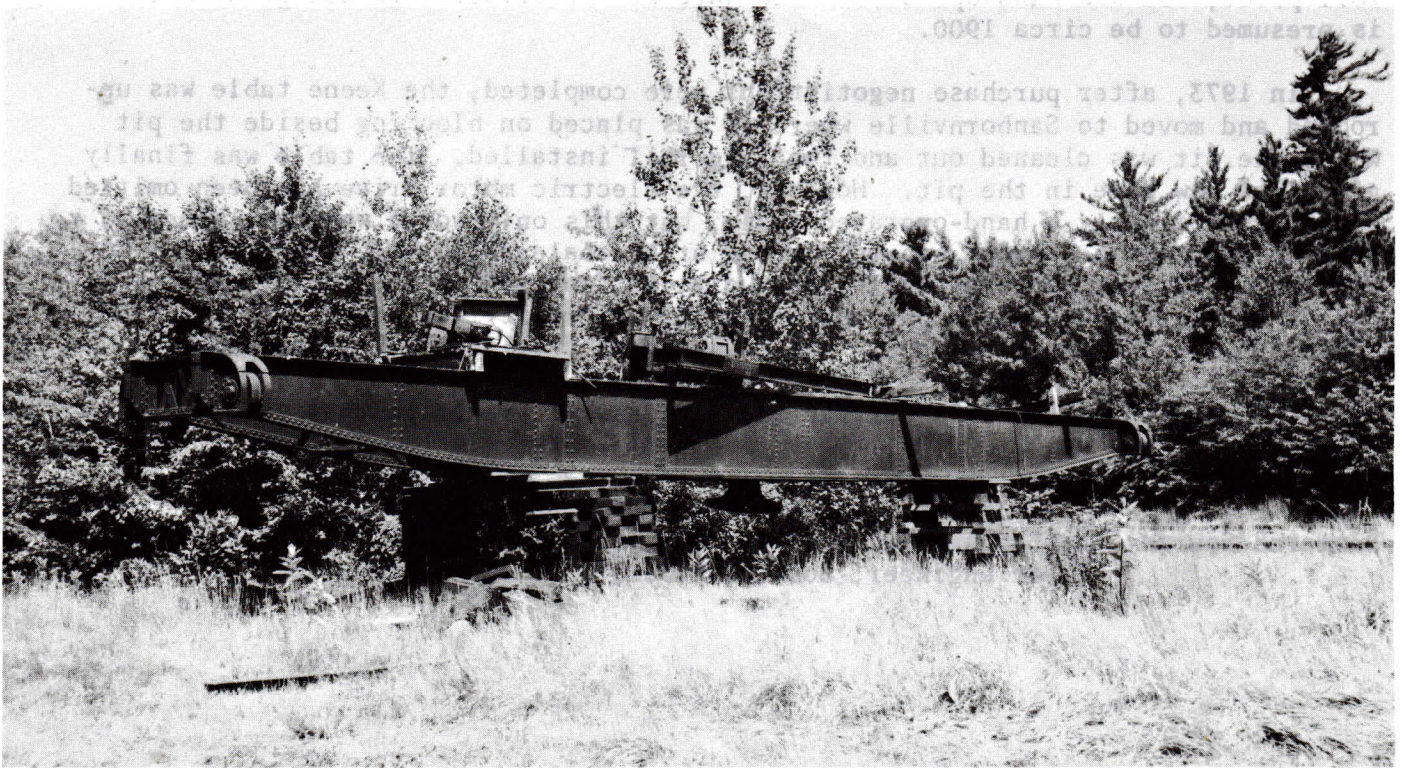
In 1973, after purchase negotiations were completed, the Keene table was uprooted and moved to Sanbornville where it was placed on blocking beside the pit while the pit was cleaned out and the ring rail installed. The table was finally given its new home in the pit. However, the electric motor drive has been omitted and it is presently a hand-operated table, but this only works when the piece of rolling stock to be turned can be spotted at the balance point. Wolfeboro's No. 250 is 65 feet long and calls for judicious spotting on the table just to get all of its wheels on, which places its center of gravity way off the pivot point. Consequently, a tractor and chain are required to provide the turning power.

The accompanying photos portray the progress of events in this timely rescue operation.

Research Source: Boston and Maine Railroad List of Turntables, from Office of Chief Engineer; Boston, Mass., February 9, 1918.



... was made of wrought iron with a design capacity of 110 tons. Installed in 1895, it was used for the production of the Boston and Maine Railroad's first electric trolley cars. The structure was built by the Boston and Maine Railroad and was used for the production of the Boston and Maine Railroad's first electric trolley cars. It was used for the production of the Boston and Maine Railroad's first electric trolley cars. It was used for the production of the Boston and Maine Railroad's first electric trolley cars.





"Rescue of a Turntable" photo captions -- All photos by Howard W. Boothroyd.

TOP LEFT: The abandoned turntable and part of the old enginehouse at Keene, New Hampshire, as it appeared on Sept. 24, 1972. The table was formerly the property of the Cheshire Railroad, and later the Boston and Maine RR.

BOTTOM LEFT: The Keene table on blocking beside the pit at Sanbornville, New Hampshire on August 18, 1973. The bushes and trees behind the table were growing in the pit like a giant plantpot sunk in the ground.

TOP RIGHT: The Sanbornville pit with the table installed on June 22, 1974. The position of the caboose is not an illusion. It is about halfway onto the table. Wolfeboro Railroad No. 250 with two coaches approaches in the background. The B&M Conway branch tracks can be seen at the right.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Wolfeboro No. 250 being turned on the table on October 27, 1974. Note the taught horizontal chain at the rear of the tender about in line with the coupler; an out-of-sight tractor is providing the turning power. This shot clearly shows the relationship of engine and table lengths.

B&M HAPPENINGS: A Boston & Maine Buddliner with 95 passengers aboard crashed into a 15-foot "snowman" built on the tracks in Billerica on 9 Jan. The "snowman" had a core of railroad ties. The engineer, John Kempton, suffered a leg fracture, and the door of his cab was torn off. The crash occurred about 4:40 p.m. just south of the High St. bridge, as the train was en route to Lowell. The RDC stopped near a house where passengers telephoned police about the incident.

The B&M has acquired two Alco RS-3's from the D&H. They are former D&H 4075 and 4082, now B&M 1508 and 1536 respectively. The units will MU only with each other, and are therefore being used in local freight and pusher service out of E. Fitchburg and E. Deerfield. The two units were painted blue for the B&M by the D&H.

A minor derailment on 5 January in Templeton, MA tied up the Fitchburg Div. for several hours. Four cars went on the ground on a straight, single-track section of the line in the Baldwinville section. The train was en route from Boston to Mechanicville. The hooks from Boston and East Deerfield were able to put things back in good order.

The latest word is that GP 38-2 No. 212 will be the locomotive that the B&M will re-number 200 for the bicentennial. Further details will be supplied when available.

FURTHER TO THE B&M's NEW LINE IN MANCHESTER:

In the Sunday News of Dec. 15 there is a picture of a track gang working on the new line. According to the story accompanying the picture the track will not be in use before July 1975. Ties and ballast will be laid now along with conventional rail, but in April the rail will be replaced with lengths of welded rail. Signal equipment, ordered in August 1974, is not expected to be delivered before late April or May. The new line will be single track from where the old station was located to the Notre Dame Bridge, and from there it will be double again for the remainder of the distance to the switch at the north end of the present double track section. The cost of this relocation is being paid from funds provided for the Canal St.-Millyard urban renewal project, planned as far back as 1962, at a cost of about \$1.2 million. --- (David K. Johnson)

BOOK REVIEWS: If you like traction, then TRACTION GUIDEBOOK will be your Bible.

The guidebook is published by Kalmbach Publishing Co. and gives you everything you will need for your own traction empire or personal library. Many of the articles and plans have appeared in Trains and Model Railroader; nevertheless, the articles have been updated and presented in book form.

Traction Guidebook delves into the traction lines of the past, plans of traction equipment from all over the country, and several tours of traction model railways. At \$3.50 the book is well worth the price. --- (Jim Ickes)

N-SCALE PRIMER is another of Kalmbach's publications created especially for those who like the increasingly popular 1:160 scale modeling. All facets of starting in N scale are covered in this start-to-finish primer.

I must admit that if I were not so involved in HO, I certainly would give N scale a chance, especially after reading about an N scale model railroad with 40-car trains and 400-car capacity yards. It's that kind of book! Price: \$3.00.

---(Jim Ickes)

MEMBERS' SERVICES: For sale: 5X7 black & white glossy photos of steam and diesel power from the B&M, New Haven, Boston & Albany, BAR, MeC, Lehigh Valley, Santa Fe, U.P., Pennsy, N.Y.C., and many more railroads. Also, traction photos from the Boston Elevated Rwy., M.T.A., and M.B.T.A. All photos only 50¢ each. Also for sale, Boston area maps of B&M RR, and current diesel rosters of 32 different railroads. Send \$1.00 for all-new 25-page brochure and sample photo to Henry Marrec, 11 Overlook Road, Arlington, MA 02174.

Best Regards,

Dave Squires

David R. Squires, Secretary