

BOSTON & MAINE R.R.

Historical Society, inc.

NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

1 August 1975

Dear B & M Fans:

The August 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, August 9, 1975. The entertainment will consist of slides brought in by the members.

PUBLICATIONS: As noted in the Central Mass. book announcement included with the last Newsletter, there will be only 150 hard-bound copies printed. To date, 110 of these have been reserved. If you want a hard-bound copy, send in your form as soon as possible. This will reserve you a copy while the supply lasts.

NEW MEMBERS: It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Society: O.R. Cummings, Manchester, NH; William H. Drury, Chelmsford, MA; Dominick Carnabucci, Malden, MA; Herman W. Leonard, Wakefield, MA; Donald A. Clerke, So. Windsor, CT; Richard Belanger, Berlin, NH; Ron Gallant, New London, CT; George Morey, Lexington, MA; Lester H. Wing, Wilmington, MA; Andrew R. Schools, Granby, CT; Rev. William A. Bray, Hartford, CT; Paul C. Donovan, Arlington, VA; Roger F. Otis, Salem, NH; F.H. Willard, Jr., Acton, MA; George H. Guild, Lakeport, NH; Robert W. Rock, Bow, NH; Morris E. Director, Stoughton, MA; David S. Allen, Belmont, MA; and Joseph Meyers, Jr., Rutland, VT.

B&M FINANCIAL STATUS: Reorganization trustees of Boston & Maine Corp. reported that the railroad, in the first half ended June 30, had a net loss of \$7,419,387 compared with a net loss of \$3,165,710 in the first six months of last year. Gross revenues were \$42,669,127 versus \$45,780,664. First half sales were \$9,347,329 versus \$9,454,266 last year.

A WORD TO THE WISE: Mr. Frederick Carnes of Ossining, NY, writes that while photographing the B&M in the vicinity of Mechanicville on June 14, he was informed by a car inspector that the railroad was considering not allowing railfans on the property due to careless safety habits and vandalism. He personally noticed two young men in their early 20's climb over some freight cars in order to photograph the newly-repainted GP7 No. 1557. Whether these individuals were Society members or not, their actions reflect on all enthusiasts who like to get out and photograph the railroads in action.

Please be sure to bring your brains with you when railfanning.

MEMBERS' SERVICES: Mr. Thomas P. Le Compte, 8306 Ridgely Oak Road, Baltimore, MD 21234, desires photos of the B&M's "Bicentennial Boxcar", to aid him in modeling same.

MEETING OF JULY 12th, 1975

The regular monthly meeting of the B&MRRHS was called to order at 8:12 P.M. in the First Unitarian Parish Church, Woburn, Mass., by Secretary David Squires in the absence of both the President and Vice President. Approximately fifty-five members and guests were in attendance.

Mr. David Derow was appointed Acting Secretary for the meeting.

The Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports were accepted as read.

"Bulletin" Editor Richard Conard announced that the Summer issue would be in the mail within a few weeks. He reminded those present that orders were being taken for the Society's book on the Central Mass., scheduled for publication this Fall: a limited number of hardbound copies are available to members at \$11.00 each; softbound copies are available to members at \$5.00 each and to non-members at \$6.95 each.

It was noted that the Society's Archives are steadily expanding and that donations of B&M material for preservation by the Society are tax deductible.

Mr. Richard Baltulis mentioned the recent visit to this area of Mr. Charles Kennedy of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Mr. Kennedy, who has previously published papers on the B&M's history and development, is presently working on a book on the B&M's economic history, due in 1976 or 1977. According to Mr. Baltulis, Mr. Kennedy noted that the first shovel of earth for a major common carrier railway project in this country was turned in 1830 on the B&M's predecessor Boston & Lowell in front of the Black Horse Tavern, which site is near the present Winchester Centre, Winchester then being a part of Woburn, known as Black Horse Village. Mr. Kennedy felt that the placement of a historical plaque to commemorate the event might well be a suitable endeavor for this Society.

Mr. Squires commented upon the Society's phenomenal growth: our membership is now over 570, and our mailing list exceeds 600 names.

There will be no formal programs for the July and August meetings: the members are urged to bring a reasonable number of their slides to provide the evenings' entertainment.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

After the business meeting, Mr. Wayne Hills presented an excellent slide program devoted to railways in New England, primarily the B&M, that was very well received.

Respectfully submitted,

David Derow
David Derow, Acting Secretary

TO CROUCH OR NOT TO CROUCH?

Frankly, sometimes it helps - especially if you have a completely mediocre photo vantage point.

The sun is right and there isn't a bridge, signal, or embankment in sight and your favorite locomotive is drawing near. No curves, trestles, or hills to brighten the scene. Just you and the train. This embarrassing state of affairs can result in one of those uninspired wedge shots that's a throw-away as soon as you take it; but hold on - all is not lost.

The challenge is to get a good action shot without all those "buzz" items of scenery. The line between Lowell and Lowell Jct. is a good example of a line with nothing to offer except trains.

In situations like this to shoot from a crouch lowers the point of view, quite simply. This forces the train to look taller and more imposing, because it differs from the customary way our mind's eye has come to know trains from lineside. In effect, somewhere in your subconscious is the smug knowledge that a GP-9 has a mere 10-foot height advantage. When, with the help of your camera, you and your friends are some night sitting in a dark room with a slide projector, and suddenly find yourselves staring up at the train from railhead level, it's a bit startling. Such a shot is always good for that "Ping" that comes from a change-of-pace situation.

To add dramatic effect, your vantage point should be as close to the track as good sense and safety permit. Incidentally, before you spend too much money on auxilliary lenses, a fifty millimeter lens, when used correctly, will provide many of the virtues of a wide angle lens. (If, of course, you like distortion effects, which are interesting to a point, by all means 28mm is your cup of tea.) You'll find, however, that a lot can be crammed into that view finder with a plain old 50 mill! We are all guilty of centering our Bluebirds (to coin a phrase.) What we are left with is lots of picture area out near the edges that goes to waste.

Now lets go back to an original situation on that straight, bland rail scene. We've decided to get dramatic and crouch (or crawl) to a view point just a touch above the railhead. Now before you shoot one of those "sky and ballast" masterpieces, look at the edges of the frame. (By the way, if you're tired of crouching, sit. Those pants are ruined anyway.) What if you swing the camera so that the point where the tangent essentially goes out of sight is all the way over to the extreme right or left of the frame. That's right; it brings a lot of the track close to you into the picture. Before you argue that the extra track space is useless - because the train will be too big - how about getting rid of all the ballast in the foreground by rocking the camera back so that the rails themselves run nearly along, and nearly parallel to, the bottom of the frame. Try this from varying distances from the tracks and you'll be surprised at how much train and how much of the side of the locomotive (this is nice on steam, what with smoke and driving wheels) you can grab without cutting off the consist. As for shutter speed, don't even think of using less than 1/250 second, because this is a very ridged way of shooting which doesn't lend itself well to any panning.

So, if this isn't your weekend to go to Greenfield or chase up the Conn River, all is not lost for you and your camera on the B&M.

Next -----

THE TILTED PICTURE

or,

Would you spite your face to hold your camera level?

--- Ken Patton.

Best regards, *Dave Squires* D.R. Squires,
Secretary