

BOSTON & MAINE R.R.

Historical Society, inc.

NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

November 17, 1975

Dear B&M Fans:

The December meeting of the Boston and Maine Railroad Historical Society, Inc., will be held at the First Unitarian Parish Church, corner of Winn and Pleasant Streets, Woburn Square, Woburn, Mass., at 8:00 P.M. on Saturday, December 13, 1975. Following the regular monthly business meeting, Mr. Frederick C. Dumaine, Jr., who is presently seeking to reorganize the Bangor & Aroostook, the Maine Central and the Boston & Maine into a regional system outside of Conrail, will be our guest speaker. This is sure to be a very interesting meeting concerning the B&M's future, so do try to attend.

NOVEMBER MEETING: The November meeting of the B&MRRHS was called to order at 8:00 P.M. by president Donald S. Robinson. Reports were heard and accepted from the Treasurer and the Editors. It was announced that the Central Mass. book would be going to the printer on the Wednesday following the meeting. The Fall issue of the Bulletin had been delayed in order to get the Central Mass. book to the printer. It was also announced that the Central Mass. book should be ready for delivery by the January meeting, and if you have already ordered a book or are going to order a book, please try and make it to the January meeting to pick up your copy.

Mr. Donald S. Robinson donated the following items to the Society's Archives; a large photograph of gas-electric 1141; a large framed builder's photo of B&M 2-10-2 3000 that hung in the master mechanic's office in Greenfield, Mass.; the Fitchburg-New Hampshire Division limit board from the Peterboro Branch; and the Passumpsic station sign. The Society wishes to thank Mr. Robinson for his most generous donation. The regular monthly business meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 P.M. Following the business meeting everyone was treated to Mr. Albert Hale's excellent 16mm movies of the B&M in the 1930's and 1940's. The Society wishes to extend a sincere "thank you" to Mr. Hale for taking the time and effort to show us his movies, and also to Mr. Stanley Y. Whitney, for the use of his projector.

The November meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 P.M. and was attended by 100 members and guests.

JANUARY MEETING: As yet we do not have any entertainment planned for the January meeting. Like to show your slides or movies? Drop us a line at the Society's address before Dec. 17th, (so I can tell our members who the victim-I mean guest, will be) and we'd be most happy to accommodate you, if not at the January meeting, then at some future meeting.

DUES: Dues for the year 1975-1976 are past due!!! This is your last warning! This will be your last NEWSLETTER unless you have paid your dues by December 15th!! Don't delay!! Send a check or money order payable to the Society for \$8.00 to Mr. Charles P. Smith, at his home address, 6 Edgehill Road, Woburn, Mass. 01801 to avoid excess time in handling.

NEW MEMBERS: It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Society; M. Sgt. Frank M. Wheeler, Charlestown, NH, Joseph Mulligan, Medford, MA, Roy E. Jennings, South Groveland, MA, Joseph F. Doyle, Elmwood, MA, John Hasbrouk, Stratford, CT, J. Howard Adibert, St. Petersburg, FLA, Fred Choquette, Holyoke MA, Ellis E. Walker, Concord, MA, Gerear J. Grzyb, Savoy, ILL, and Thomas R. Engel, Belmont, MA. The Society now has a total of 677 members!!

PUBLICATIONS: Copies of the Winter 1974-1975 and Spring 1975 Bulletins are still available at \$1.75 each to members and \$1.80 to non-members. Also, the Summer 1975 issue sells for \$1.75 to members and \$2.00 to non-members. Also available are the 1900 Springfield Terminal Railway timetable and the 1932 Snow Train menu reprints at 25¢ each; Dick Symmes' drawings of 2-6-0 1470 at Milford NH and gas-electric 181 at Claremont Jct (almost gone) at 70¢ each. All the above prices include first-class postage. We remind members to show their membership number on their order to avoid being charged the non-member rates. Pre-paid, prepublication reservations are being accepted at \$5.00 per copy for the softbound edition of the Central Mass. book to members only. An order blank is enclosed on the last page of this NEWSLETTER. Please be sure to enclose a check or money order payable to the Society with your order.

HELP: Mr. Freeman M. Fogg, 1 Cedar Street, Stoughton, Mass. 02072 writes; "I have a picture of 4-4-0 #941 entering North Station with a cab and tender-full of people. Does anybody know the occasion? The picture is also printed backwards.

"How many 'lettered' engines were there and what was their prior number & post lettered number? I have a picture of a 2-6-0 lettered "R" with coach #13 - was this possibly a pay train?" Hopefully someone in the Society can help this gentleman out.

NEWS AND OBSERVATIONS: On October 20, 1975 (the date of the last NEWSLETTER) at about 4:05 A.M. the Northbound Amtrak "Montrealer" B&M train No. 733 derailed at milepost 89, South Charlestown, NH. Involved in the derailment were Amtrak engines 428 and 418, which had recently been repainted in the new Amtrak scheme with the blue and red stripe running completely around the unit, baggage car 2691 and pullman car "Okefenokee" Both units and the baggage car landed on their sides and down a 35 foot embankment, and the pullman car remained upright. The derailment was caused by a wash-out due to heavy rains in the area. The Engineer, fireman and an Amtrak employee in the baggage car were taken to a hospital, treated and released. See the photo on the next page.



Amtrak engines 428 and 418 lie on their sides at milepost 89 in South Charlestown, NH, October 20, 1975 as B&M's Boston and East Deerfield wreckers right baggage car 2691. Pullman "Okefenokee" can be seen behind the baggage car. Photo by Alfred S. Arnold.



Photograph taken November 11, 1975 showing some of the damage in the November 9th derailment of freight No. 8904 which took place $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of the Ely, Vt. station in almost the exact location of a derailment that happened eight years ago. Photo by Vincent Paone.

The same rains which caused the washout on the B&M at South Charlestown also caused a large washout on the Green Mountain Railroad, causing steam to return once again to the B&M's Connecticut River line. A double-headed fantrip was run Saturday, October 25, 1975 by Steamtown from Bellows Falls to Old Deerfield Village and return using former Canadian Pacific 4-6-2s 1246 and 1278. The train consisted of ten cars and carried four hundred passengers.

The very next day, B&M's sole 44-tonner, No. 119 was run light to Worcester from Billerica Shops, where it was leased by the Norton Co. while their own engine was laid up for repairs. No. 119 returned about one week later, on October 31, 1975 and is currently in use as the Billerica Shop switcher.

The B&M suffered its second derailment in 30 days on Sunday evening, November 9, 1975 at about 5:40 P.M. No. 8904, which runs from Montreal to Wells River, VT as CP train 904, thence to White River Jct. as B&M train 8904 reported that they were on the ground $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of the Ely, VT station. Lead unit B&M 1749 stayed on the rails and was eventually brought to White River Jct. by the train crew. The second unit, B&M 1707, was completely derailed, but stayed upright. The third unit, CP 8742 had flipped over and gone down a 40-foot embankment, coming to rest against some small trees next to the Connecticut River. Of the 37 cars in the train, 27 cars derailed, including 3 propane gas tank cars and two carloads of Canadian whiskey. A fire broke out shortly after the derailment, and at approximately 6:00 P.M. there was a series of three major and 3 minor explosions, as the three cars of propane gas and the two cars of whiskey erupted. It was reported that 23 of the 27 cars derailed were burned in the following fire. The explosion of the propane gas cars was seen as far away as Windsor, Vt., which is 34 miles south of Ely. The fire was brought under control by the Fairlee, VT Fire Department. Amazingly enough, there were NO reported injuries.

On Wednesday, November 12, 1975, freight BM-1 Boston to Mechanicville, ran from Boston to East Deerfield with unit 4266a and ~~30 cars.~~ I was fortunate enough to have been off duty that day and chased BM-1 from Littleton station to East Gardner, where BM-1 met NE-84 with lead unit 200!

COMING EVENTS: The Mass. Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc, are running a trip to Edaville Railroad, South Carver, Mass. (by bus, unfortunately) on Saturday, December 6, 1975. A triple-header is planned, along with a second ride after dark to view the famous Christmas light displays. Contact the Mass. Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc., P.O. Box 136, Ward Hill, Mass. 01830 for further details.

The Conway Scenic Railroad has announced that they will be running weekends throughout the winter, using 44-tonner 15 (ex MEC) closed car No. 102 and open car No. 76. For the present, one run a day on weekends is planned to leave North Conway at 2:00 P.M., with more runs during Holiday weeks and on weekends if demand warrants.

Best regards,

Wayne D. Hills

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