

Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society
Incorporated



NEWSLETTER



P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

John C. Alden, Editor Thomas R. Engel, Asst. Editor 18 December 1976
Dear B&M fans:

The January meeting of the B&MRRHS will be on Saturday 8 January 1977 at 2000 hrs. (8 PM) at the First Parish Unitarian Church in Woburn Square, Woburn, Mass., the entertainment to be presented by Mr. David K. Johnson of Nashua, NH. For February we plan to have a speaker from the Boston & Maine. Our monthly meetings are held the second Saturday of every month at 2000 hrs. at the above Woburn church, unless otherwise noted in advance in these Newsletters.

MEETING OF 11 DECEMBER 1976: The December meeting of the B&MRRHS was called to order by President Kenneth E. Patton at the First Parish Unitarian Church in Woburn at 2015 hrs. Approximately 75 members and guests were in attendance.

The Secretary's report was not read due to the absence of Secretary Derow.
The Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

Publications Editor Richard Conard stated that the Winter issue of the B&M Bulletin would contain an article on the Montpelier & Wells River and Barre & Chelsea Railroads as well as another article on Windham Junction, NH. He also mentioned that work had recently been started on a possible future B&M passenger car book, with Roy Hutchinson heading up the project.

Business Manager John Hutchins noted that copies of Edgar Mead's The Up-Country Line published by Stephen Greene Press were available to members at \$4.75 per copy (normal list price \$6.50), and that a forthcoming New England diesel pictorial is expected to be sold by the Society to members when it becomes available from the publisher.

Newsletter Editor John Alden thanked those who had provided information and assisted with the last Newsletter, and requested that members continue to send in newsworthy items.

Entertainment Chairman Don Hills announced that the entertainment for the January 8th meeting would be provided by David K. Johnson of Nashua, NH. For the February meeting we are hoping to have a speaker from the Boston & Maine.

No action was taken on the proposed By-Laws amendment, whose text appeared in the November Newsletter. The amendment will be acted upon at the January meeting.

After the business portion of the meeting was adjourned, member E. Robert Hornsby (not Cornfield, as was erroneously reported in the last Newsletter!) showed four films of the American Freedom Train. Several of these films were edited and had sound added by Bob, who has had a good deal of film making experience.

Respectfully submitted,
(signed) R. Richard Conard

PROPOSED B&M PASSENGER CAR BOOK: The publications staff and several other Society members have recently begun research and photograph inventory work for a possible future book on B&M passenger equipment. Publication will be at least 1-1 1/2 years away, assuming that enough volunteers can be found to help with the project. At this point, persons are needed to assist with the preparation of an equipment roster, a photograph inventory card file, and a bibliography of articles and sources of information on B&M passenger cars. We are especially interested in learning of sources of B&M passenger equipment photographs. Contact: Roy Hutchinson, 37 Pearl St., Reading, MA 01867.

CALLBOY'S CORNER: (1) I've had a temporary lack of stamped/signed membership cards. Thus some who renewed (ca. 37), some renewing via pink slip (ca. 30), and many new members (ca. 50) have not received cards. Help is on the way, you will not be purged. Those who didn't receive pink slips have nothing to worry about. (2) If you know anyone who's gotten a pink sheet but claims he renewed tell 'em to contact me pronto! (3) For those who have had dues problems: (a) my apologies; (b) dues handling and all mailing lists are now entirely under unified management (mine); and (c) I've learned what works well and what doesn't, & how to avoid same. Next year will be better. Keep those address changes coming. Also, for those interested, memberships are \$10/yr., \$100/life. -(TRE)

COMING EXTRA! — MVRS "Snowflake Special" Boston-Greenfield trip on 15-16 January has been CANCELLED due to closing (due to bankruptcy) of Northfield Inn. Word just received. 29 January 1977 - RRE mid-winter meeting (National). Burnside Methodist Church, Hartford, CT

EVENTS (Possible Feb. 1977) - Montreal-Chicoutimy (2 day trip), CN 6060, dates not yet available trip may be run in spring, instead.

OF Amtrak steam trip - (possible, stay tuned) SP 4-8-4 #4449 Miami-Portland (Ore.) via New Orleans - sunset route - L.A. or (depending on Pontchartrain trestle weight restrictions) via Memphis - Little Rock - Texas to sunset route. Amtrak consist. Still planned.

NOTE 12 Feb. 1977 - Snowflake Special, Morris County Central, Newfoundland - Beaver Lake NJ. ca. 11 mile trip. To get there, Bus stops at Stan's Bar & Grill.
(Special thanks to Stanley Genthner for word on upcoming trips.)

VANDALISM: On 10 December an epidemic of vandalism, worse than usual and reminiscent of the barbaric hordes who sacked Rome, infested the B&M's Eastern, Reading, and NH route commuter lines. Debris was put on tracks, stones and other projectiles hurled at cars, and tires thrown under moving Budd cars. Casualties: 2 broken windshields, several dead engines, assorted minor damage, and 6 cars out of service. Cost of repairs will be major. To combat such vandalism the B&M police and local police labor round the clock. We can do our part, too. Assist them in spreading the word about vandalism and the threat (and dangers) it presents. (This article is based on a Commuter Update put out by F. G. Fotta, General Manager, Commuter Service.)

BELLOWS FALLS COLLISION: Don Robinson reports the decision has been rendered on responsibility for the collision and places the blame on the Green Mountain crew for excessive speed within yard limits. It cannot be said whether or not there were other factors deemed contributing. Since the accident the two railroads have jointly agreed to and have moved the Bellows Falls yard limit about 2500 feet north of its former location thus affording more room for B&M switching movements. Your former editor wishes to apologize to both the GM and the B&M for parts of his original report which some officials felt tended to place the blame in advance of the investigation.

A LOOK AT THE PAST: (As related by the Boston & Maine Railroad Employees' Magazine and other RR employees' magazines, from the collection of John C. Alden.)

50 years ago 1925 - the ICC gave final approval for abandonment of the Nashua, Acton & Boston (Concord, MA to Nashua, NH)...New Haven RR moved about 1750 carloads of cranberries, per "Along the Line", NYNH&H Employees' magazine...

25 years ago Jan. 1952 B&M Employees' Magazine - Lead article on tie-treating plant near Nashua... photo of locomotive #3235 4-4-2, last Atlantic type on system.. "Timetable Mabel" becomes a personality - Cindy Parker, WEEI songstress performs at RR day of the Boston Advertising Club.. Five men receive 50-year Gold Passes...

NEWS AND COMMENT: On Sunday 5 December 1976 all rails were removed at the Concord Junction and a new complete diamond crossing was installed by ConRail, PC, and B&M track forces; the new foundation had already been put in place. The first train over the new crossing was a westbound freight at 1930 hrs. Our observer notes that the only three-track RR bridge in Concord is located just north of this crossing; one track was used by the Nashua, Acton & Boston. Interestingly, there is a Middlesex County atlas ca. 1890 that shows a leg of the wye between the Middlesex Central (Bedford-Reformatory Jct.) and the Old Colony (Framingham-Lowell) running through the yard of the State Reformatory! The History of the Town of Dunstable has a chapter on history of the NA&B.

We are all saddened by the passing in St. Louis on Thursday 9 December of John W. Barriger, III. Services were held Saturday 11 December. He was Chief Executive Officer of the Boston & Maine 1970-2, during his long and distinguished career in railroading he was also President of the Monon, P&LE, and Missouri-Kansas-Texas.

Not only have the freight schedules been changed but the passenger schedules have gone through a radical restructuring. Gone are the old "twelve-tens" (0010 hrs.) out of Boston, the last departures are now at 2359 hrs., evening and midday headways have been altered; those of the line to South Acton have probably gone through the most change; your asst. editor is having a time getting used to them. Furthermore, after a hiatus of over 20 years the Tufts stop is being restored to service on the New Hampshire Route (we do not know if service is yet begun, however, the stop has been inserted in the public timetables). Also, we believe there are now morning and afternoon stops both ways at W. Medford. While one might find the earlier times as little less convenient, it is good to see service being restored to so many places that lost it in earlier years. Might one dream of the Saugus branch? Watertown?...

● ● FLASH! MBTA just (12/27) handed B&M \$39.5 m. check paying for comm. lines (see Oct.).

The Providence & Worcester is getting about \$645,000 in federal funds to upgrade track and rail yards. Under the arrangement with the New England Regional Commission (NERCOM) the money can be used only for hiring workers, not for materials or supervision. Contracts are expected to be signed by March so work on Worcester yard rehabilitation and Rhode Island and Conn. lines can begin when the ground thaws. Of special interest: the P&W is installing new grade crossings and signaling on the B&M's former Gardner branch; a move indicative of increasing traffic for the P&W.

Under a similar program in New Hampshire approved by Gov. Thompson and the Executive Council about 200 miles of B&M trackage will be repaired, the B&M putting up \$882,250 and NERCOM \$705,000. Also, the Governor and Council approved a \$25,000 subsidy to the Wolfeborough RR to keep freight service to Lincoln, NH.

The Gates crossing wig-wag signal in Sterling, MA on the Worcester Route line has been replaced with conventional highway flashers. The old signal is now in the hands of private parties who are involved in its restoration. Such signals are getting exceedingly rare; the Orange, MA wig-wag was removed this fall, the Montvale (Stoneham br.) and Revere St. (Bedford br.) ones came down about two years ago. The Milford, NH one was still there as of about two weeks ago and an unusual one was still on the Ossipee (former Conway) branch last June.

The Oct. 1976 B&M (Corp.) Newsletter reports the distinct possibility that the railroad could be eligible for a Harriman Award for safety for 1976. That issue also contains a good article on the B&M police, their organizational structure, their personnel, and their unceasing efforts against vandalism and theft. Cooperation between B&M and governmental law enforcement agencies is at an all-time high along with arrests and convictions. The RR police have petitioned the Mass. legislature for broader police powers (exercision of police powers off RR property, if related to a crime committed on railroad property; another bill allowed RR police to train at municipal police academies). The B&M has been assured the General Court would act favorably on these bills this session. (Our thanks to Gloria Stone of the B&M Public Relations Department)

To enlarge on a brief tidbit from last month, the Amoskeag Corporation (Controlled by the Dumaine interests) sold its \$10.3 million in B&M 1st mortgage bonds for \$7.4 million to the Madison Fund (a mutual fund) around 28 Oct. The Dumaines had reportedly bought the bonds for about \$5.4 m. Madison Fund has no agreements with the Dumaines for repurchase or any other "strings"; Chuck Crouse reports the sale may have been done to obtain cash for Amoskeag and its Bangor & Aroostook (BAR); also, it appears the bonds' purchase money was borrowed, the sale enabled the loan's liquidation. Whether the Dumaines have given up their idea of a unified Northeastern system or whether they're regrouping for another assault cannot be foretold. This one is by no means over, especially with such seasoned hands as the Dumaines. Stay tuned, folks...

The B&M is continuing its ambitious program of clearance improvements on the system. Mike Lennon reports work is progressing on improving clearances at 5 bridges in Maine; when this phase is completed the B&M will have 17' 6" clearance to Rigby; next year the track dept. hopes to improve that to 18' 4". The track crews ran into problems with the Summer St. bridge in Kennebunk: phone company crews relaid a telephone cable deeper under the tracks; then the water dept. proceeded to break the cable while lowering a water main; the track crews had to wait it out. The winter project will be the lowering of the floor of the Bellows Falls tunnel two feet to remove a major bottleneck on that line.

Seashore Trolley Museum took delivery 4 Dec. of an interurban freight motor from Tulsa, OK at Rigby. The car was 17' 4" on the flat car, necessitating a MKT to St. Louis - NW to Detroit - CP to St. Johnsbury - MEC to Rigby routing. Clark's bridge was the problem, which indicates what a crimp the low clearances put on B&M operations. Reportedly the B&M has been told by several Maine paper firms that with the improved clearances they plan to ship around 600 (we hope we've got the figure right) trailers a month from Rigby.

The B&M announced on 4 Oct. a substantially improved piggyback (TOFC, COFC) schedule between New England and Chicago, allowing a much later cutoff and departure time at both Boston and Chicago. Information is being sent to as many shippers as possible to attract new business. The service runs under the name "The Apollo Piggyback Service" between Chicago and Holyoke-Fitchburg-Boston-Manchester-Portland via the Boston & Maine, Delaware & Hudson (Buffalo), and Norfolk & Western (NW). Among other traffic news, volume on the Conn. River line has seen much improvement with a substantial increase in volume over last year. The Ford strike bit into auto traffic to the Ayer auto facility.

The cause of a derailment of the lead diesel (B&M #1750) of a 65-car freight train in Exeter, NH on 11 Nov. has been directly laid to vandalism: a switch had been tampered with, the lock broken and the switch left half-open. Trouble was noted around 1800 hrs. when a Billerica dispatcher reported an open circuit (caused by the open switch); the information was radioed to the train at East Kingston, NH where the engineer slowed to half-speed due to a red signal. Due to the slow speed of the train only the lead engine derailed at the jimmied switch. #1750 was not rerailed until 1345 hrs. the next day.

ConRail pulled a major coup in industrial development when it persuaded a major retailer to locate its New England distribution warehouse on ConRail's branch in Manchester, CT (once the main line of the NY&NE). Whatever one may think of the ethics of ConRail's creation, or of its original designs on the B&M, they are making an impressive effort to get back on their feet. ConRail in no way created the problems that fostered its creation, for those problems the blame lies elsewhere. Don't blame the offspring for the sins of its parents. CR should be judged on what it does, not on what its predecessors and the politicians, businessmen, labor leaders, etc. did. (TRE)

The 14 December Christian Science Monitor reports on a railroad tie recycling process developed by Edward Potter and Stanley Bishoprick and their Cedrite Corp. of Vancouver, WN. The old ties are ground up and the chips blended with a resin and processed into new recycled ties. The resultant tie is highly fire-resistant, are far heavier than regular wooden ties, and show none of the splits that normally show up in new ties in a few months. Spikes do not pull loose readily, in fact holes for spikes must be pre-drilled in the new ties. The recycled ties would cost around \$15 per tie when in commercial production; currently, new wooden ties cost between \$11 and \$18.50 a tie, depending on the RR. The ATSF, UP, and BN are currently testing the recycled ties in regular mainline service. Savings come from new timber and new creosote not used.

NEW MEMBERS: We welcome new members: Walter W. Wright, Lebanon, NH; Lawrence D. Copeland, East Walpole, MA; Melvin R. Lawson, Dexter, MI; Don LeJeune, Peabody, MA; Arthur E. Mitchell, Barre, MA; Stephen F. Flanders, Weare, NH; Brian D. Di Pietro, S. Lancaster, MA; Cheryl A. West, Foxboro, MA; P. J. Mullaney, Winchester, MA; Kenneth E. Stockwell, St. Albans, Vt.; Craig Roberts, New Orleans, LA; Frederick Y. Briscoe, Greenfield, NH; Mark G. Koger, Weston, MA; John F. Knox, Farmington, ME; Steve Ondic, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Ronald Sebastian, Des Plaines, IL; Donald K. Dillaby, Nashua, NH; Edward A. Urmston, Sr., Rochester, NH; Robert J. McGuire, Newington, CT; Fred W. Keeler, Robbinsville, NJ; Henry L. Hartley, Woodsville, NH; Russell S. Homer, Plymouth, NH. Welcome aboard the B&MRRHS, ladies and gentlemen!

CLASSIFIED ADS: Advertisements by members will be published in the Newsletter as space permits. Please keep them short as possible and send them on a separate sheet of paper. Do not forget to include your name and address with the ad. Ground rules for ads may change in the future, due to increasing volume and length.

- Wanted - Original Kodak processed 35mm slides of B&M engines, stations, cabooses. Trade current SCL. Bob Warren, 1201 Kapok Circle, Clearwater FL 33519.
- A Good last-minute gift idea - Famous Steam Locomotives, a 96-page high quality album of classic steam photos, description, and vital statistics. Originally produced by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the book is now available in its second printing - at the same high quality - by the author at \$5.75, postage paid. Richard J. Cook, P. O. Box 6271, Cleveland, OH.
- Brass steam whistle once used on old dummy switcher No. 8 along Dutton St. yards in Lowell! Will take \$50.00. Also, complete issues of "Railroad Stories" for years in 1930's, up to 1945 or 1946. Will sell the whole lot for \$50.00! Arthur H. Gerrish, Hampden, MA, 566-3243.
- New England Rail Service, Keene, NH is working on HO gauge B&M K-8's and T-1a's for delivery in 1977; also, other NE steam RR models. Please contact Donald B. Valentine, P. O. Box 701 Keene, NH
- Henry T. Andrews, 15 Vista Ave., Reading, MA, has "various model trains and parts to show our members..". Please call 944-5377.

THANX: Many of these Newsletters could not have been possible without the help of many members who contribute news items, etc. (keep 'em coming to John C. Alden, 11 Riverside Ave., Concord, Ma.) I would especially like to thank those who helped John and I mail the Newsletter: Walter Sokolowski, Ellis Walker, John J. Crowley, Richard Linley, Bill Pappas, Harold Surgecoff, and Ed Keogh. If I've forgotten anyone, I thank him too. We are currently trying a mailing service, but we will continue to need volunteers occasionally for standby service in case the mailing service is out of town.

SLEUTH: Be Sherlock Holmes! We have over a half dozen missing members who have changed addresses and disappeared without a trace! Seriously, we hope none of them have passed away, but those whose Bulletins get returned to us will not get any more publications. The Roll: Louis Beaudoin, Derry, NH; Dennis W. Casey, Gardner, MA; John A. Cloutier, Auburn, AL; Joseph M. Crowe, Jr., Winchester, Mass.; Carl E. Hamilton, Windham, NH; Thomas Heinrich, Mullens, WV; Richard C. Hussey, Jr. Laconia NH; James C. Kenney, Seabrook, NH; James W. Kidd, Jr., Wollaston, MA; Mark J. McDermott, N. Andover, Mass.; Paul Pellegrini, Boston, MA. Send any info. to the Memb. Sec. at the Reading Address.

• **THE EDITORS WISH ALL B&M FANS AND FRIENDS AND RELATIONS A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!!**

EXTRAS: The Collector's Book of Railroadiana, by S. L. Baker & V. Brainard, is out in time for the Christmas bookbuying season, seems more intended for collectors than railfans, good pix.. Boston St. Ry. Assn. has brot out a new book Newport-By Trolley! on that system, good hist., pix... Smithsonian magazine has had 2 articles on rail matters this year (1 on British Rail & 1 on US hoboes).. BAR declared \$2/share div. for its 19 stockholders, payable 21 Dec. to record holders 7 Dec.. MEC did it again on the P&O at Scott's Crossing, damage not too serious; judging by the track standard last June MEC is more experiencing a run of bad luck than anything else, accident happened Thanksgiving.. B&M's brush cutter was out cutting brush and trees in Belmont 19 Nov., interesting machine, has pivoted blades mounted on rotor, when rotor spins centrifugal force throws blades out, they smash through trees and brush with surprising force.. YR-1 and RY-2 powered by U-boats & occasional GP-38's, GP-7's on weekends when St. Johnsbury switcher is changed, on MEC's P&O runs thru Crawford Notch.. rumors have cropped up that the B&M's Maynard branch is to be reopened, we'll track 'em down.. Portsmouth branch upgrading is also in response to LNG shipments to the area, we hear.. "Soviet coal loss fuels tempers" article in 6 Dec. CSM; seems about 20 million tons a year disappear in transit, est. 3% of production, problem is in large holes in wooden coal cars still used there, 85% of cars substandard, holes several inches across, large part of problem is in bureaucratic snafus in trying to plan everything, rail ministry is credited for tons loaded, not tons unloaded (claims dept. must be on Easy St.), very interesting, sheds light on lots of things over there, read it.. ever hear of the Harvard Branch Railroad? ..an old law in Vermont required that conductors on railroad trains read passages from the Bible to persons traveling on Sunday.. West Concord Depot (now a sub shop) has some very interesting windows.. Penn Central Transportation Co. Trustees filed reorganization plan in federal court which would essentially result in liquidation, synopsis was in 20 Dec. WSJ; liquidation would be spread out over at least 10 years & there would be option to try to become going concern - don't laugh: there are a lot of valuable assets in PCTC: coal fields & mines, the Pennsylvania Co., the P&LE and DT&I are solvent and very profitable (reduced P&LE 1975 div. was meager 12% of par), Co. also is in line to get good-sized chunk of CR securities.. The Redline Is Coming - Arlington, MA on the Bedford branch is up in arms about the planned extension of the Cambridge subway to their community, many don't want it, plan is to basically use railroad right-of-way through town.. fiery collision between gas truck and Amtrak train in Marland, OK tragically reminiscent of a similar collision on the B&M at Everett, MA 10 years ago..

LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN BEN: At the time the Society was organized the founders decided that the second Saturday of each month would be the scheduled meeting night and this decision has since been incorporated in our by-laws. That this weekend date has been reasonably popular is attested to by the attendance which consistently averages about 60 members and guests.

However, the Officers have received comment at various times to the effect that a weekday night would be more preferable to some members than the present Saturday evening. The thrust of their argument is that family commitments quite often take precedence over our meetings. That there may be considerable merit to their position is the paucity of new faces at our meetings of late. In addition there has been some resistance in obtaining speakers because of their reluctance to give up a weekend evening.

About a year ago this matter was raised at a regular meeting and an informal poll was taken of the members present as to their preference. Not surprisingly those in attendance opted for the Saturday evening date. Significant however was the fact that those would could not attend that meeting did not have the opportunity to state their feelings.

Since that time the Board has received enough additional comment that we feel that the question should be put to all members. We have been advised by our Treasurer, Mr. Charles Smith, that the second Tuesday of each month is available to us at the Church in Woburn. In order that the Board can obtain a broad sampling of opinion we have enclosed a simple form which can be mailed in to the Society address or brought to the next meeting.

With the membership fast approaching the 900 mark the Board feels that this matter is of significant importance (particularly as it might effect more member participation) that we request that all members take just a few moments to let us know your feelings.

(signed) H. Bentley Crouch

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Boston & Maine R.R. Historical Society, P.O. Box 302, Reading, Mass. 01867 Attn: Board of Dirs.

I would like to see the meeting night moved to the second Tuesday of the month at the same location. _____

I would like the meeting night to remain the same. _____

Name: _____ Memb. No.: _____ Write comments on reverse side, if any

PUBLICATIONS: The following publications are available postpaid (unless otherwise noted) by ordering direct from the address which follows: Business Manager, B&MRRHS, P. O. Box 223, Harwood Station, Littleton, MA 01460. Publications orders sent through the Reading address will be subject to an automatic delay of at least two weeks.

THE CENTRAL MASS. Members \$6.00
Non-members \$7.95 plus 50¢ for postage and handling

B & M
BULLETINS

Winter 1974-75, Spring, Summer, Fall, 1975, Winter 1975-76, Spring 1976
PRICE: \$1.75 to members, \$2.00 to non-members

Summer, Fall 1976; PRICE: \$2.00 to members, \$2.25 to non-members

OTHER

1900 Springfield Terminal Ry. timetable reprint - 25¢

Scale drawing of Mogul 1388 - 70¢

Drawing of Mogul 1470 at Milford, NH - 70¢

B&MRRHS

1860 Woburn Branch election poster - 70¢

1932 Snow Train menu - 25¢

PUBLICATIONS

Copies of the poem "The Canaan Wreck" available at 50¢ per copy including postage. Only 20 copies available, order fast!

NEW

Vanishing Markers, a 128 - page illustrated description of Boston & Maine railroading, 1948-1952, by a former B&M brakeman. This is a captivating account of B&M operations during one of the most interesting periods of the company's history. By special arrangement with the publisher (Stephen Greene Press), we are able to offer this \$14.95 book to our members for \$12.50.

Non-members rate is \$14.95.

PUBLICATIONS

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- NEWNEWNEWNEW!!
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The Up-Country Line, Edgar Mead's short, illustrated history of the Boston, Concord & Montreal published by Stephen Greene Press. 64 pages, hardbound. Retail price to non-members is \$6.50. Members' price is \$4.75.

BOSTON & MAINE R.R.

Historical Society, inc.

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