

Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society

Incorporated

NEWSLETTER



P.O. BOX 302 · READING, MASSACHUSETTS 01867

John C. Alden, Editor

November 19, 1977

Thomas R. Engel, Asst. Editor

Dear Boston & Maine fans:

DECEMBER MEETING: First Parish Unitarian Church, Woburn Square, Woburn, Mass., 2000 hrs. (8 PM) December 10, 1977. Entertainment to be presented by Alan MacMillan, Jr.; the show to have been put on by Art Mitchell has been postponed to a future meeting.

JANUARY MEETING: January 7, 1978, First Unitarian Parish Church (same place as above), 2000 hrs. (8 PM). Currently, this is scheduled to be a members' night so be prepared with your slides, etc. (no hogging the projectors, please!). If the entertainment plans change notification will of course be put in the next Newsletter.

●● Our regular meeting time is the second Saturday of every month at 8 PM (2000 hrs. B&M time) at the above church. Woburn Square is a large green triangle (except in winter) on Rt. 38 in downtown Woburn; the church is at the corner on the north side of the triangle and is more recognizable as the only church in Woburn Square without a steeple. (The Congregational Church is a very similar white building with a steeple; those of you familiar with New England ecclesiastical history can probably guess at the background.) Our meeting place is two blocks from the Woburn passenger station, train yourself to relax.

B&Meeting

The November meeting of the B&MRRHS was held jointly with the Amherst Railway Society on Nov. 5, 1977 at 2000 hrs. in the Engineering Auditorium, UMass Amherst, Amherst, Mass. As this was a joint meeting at the Amherst group's location the usual B&MRRHS officers' reports were dispensed with. Turnout was rather sizable (estimates ran over 150) with various luminaries of the railfan fraternity from both groups being present. Mr. Robert Buck of the Amherst Railway Society introduced various people from both groups; among B&MRRHS staff present were President Leroy C. Hutchinson, Board Chairman & Business Mgr. John C. Hutchins, and Memb. Sec. Thomas R. Engel.

The entertainment program was a slide show from pictures taken by Messrs. H. Arnold Wilder and Dana Goodwin. Due to the recent illness of Mr. Goodwin (he's recovering nicely, we hear) the show was put on by Mr. Wilder alone. The show covered railroad subjects in the Northeast and Canada. The humorous (?) height of the evening was undoubtedly pictures of the infamous "Molasses and Hides" wreck at Ayer some years back: the wreck occurred on a hot July 4th weekend and the wrecked cars were left in place for a few days. Among the cars involved was a load of glass scrap, a load of hides, and a tank car of confectioners' syrup. The kids got in the molasses, the glass got in their shoes, the dogs got in the hides, and the stench got into Ayer. The whole show was immensely enjoyed by all; afterwards members of both groups mingled and discussed railroad and other matters till late in the evening. (T. R. Engel)

HISTORIAN'S CORNER Many of you have requests for information relative to B&M history, motive power, and operations. All such requests should be routed to Mr. Harry Frye, B&MRRHS Historian. Harry will either respond himself or will pass your request for information on to someone who does have the information at hand. Please do not add such requests to orders for publications or other business correspondence as that makes it very difficult to provide the level of information service we would all like to provide you. Mail your requests directly to Harry at 14 Riverside St, Hooksett NH 03106.

CALLBOY'S CORNER 1) Send your news items, etc., for the Newsletter to: J. C. Alden, Newsletter Ed., 11 Riverside Ave., Concord MA 01742. We need news; this is your Newsletter.
2) The Memb. Sec.'s infamous Belmont Box for all membership and circulation matters: Box 369, Belmont MA 02178. 3) For those interested in joining dues are \$10/yr., 100\$ life membership, send to Memb. Sec.
4) Thank you all for a successful renewal campaign (this is the 1st time in 7 months I don't have to squawk about d--s); %-wise we've already renewed a higher proportion than for all of last year: 88.8% vs. 88.5%!
5) You are now reading the Newsletter; the magazine's the Bulletin. 6) If you're wondering: 943 members.

B&Matters COMMUTER COMMENTS — This month we introduce a new member of our staff who will be doing this section of the Newsletter regularly. Mr. Joe Mulligan is in a good position to catch this news. Send your commuter rail notes to him at 121 Traincroft, Medford, Mass. 02155. —TRE)

An ever-increasing number of ex-B&M Buddcars are showing up on the South Side. Un-rebuilt ex-PC Buddcars are becoming increasingly rare. They are still detectable by their unique if not horrendous zebra stripes. The Buddcar radios have been installed and all towers in the commuter district have new radios. With the new radios you can even hear Winchester tower in Medford.

The Paul Revere Express is now running on the Fitchburg Route. Running as train #729 it runs express to Lincoln (no Cambridge stop!) then makes all stops to South Acton. (We hear there are complaints from the people in intermediate towns as the P. R. has often had empty seats while the following local has been overcrowded; rearranging equipment might help that.)

Tufts University station on the New Hampshire route is the first Northside station spotted so far to have MBTA station signs. Naturally they are fuchsia (that reddish-purple color).

In the first week of November a two-car train from the US Dept. of Transportation was spotted on the South Side. Next day it was at North Station on track 2. Anybody know the occasion? The cars were similar to equipment seen on the PRR commuter service out of New York.

The Narragansett Newsletter gives us a clue: they report that the MBTA is about to order 25 coaches (push-pull; including 7 cab-control cars) from Pullman-Standard and that to save money they will be similar to the fleet of EL/NJDOT ones that have been running down there for several years. Because of the design similarity delivery were expected by 1979. The cars are unattractive but functional; their windows are slightly larger and they ride better than Amfleet. The NN also says the T has gone ahead and ordered 5 F40PH's after first balking at the \$768,000 @ pricetag, figuring the price would only go up... The PA's have been seen in trailing service running on the B&P (on Oct. 28); we have learned however that the units went then to Providence enginehouse for their monthly ICC inspection evidently coming and going in harness. The vandals have already cracked several windshields on them which may lead to installing "ghetto grates" (though the problem is even greater in the affluent suburbs) over the windshields. Cab signal installation will not be complete until the spring we hear; also heard: the MBTA might not allow any fantrips with commuter equipment until the spring as heavy weekend maintenance schedules are expected.

●●● Some North Side commuter trains are being pulled by locomotives with the RDC's in neutral to Rockport. ●● NN also reports rumors that some of the American Flyer/Potato coaches now stored in Yard 14 might be restored to service to help alleviate the MBTA/B&M equipment crisis ●● On Nov. 14 an Amtrak RS-3 was pressed into service to haul train #805, one of the Stoughton locals; shades of the NYNH&H!

A GLANCE AT THE PAST — (Boston & Maine Employees' Magazine, source)

- 50 years ago December 1927: "What the Flood Did to the Boston & Maine" . . almost the entire issue devoted to Nov. 3-5 flood; map showing principal areas washed out; many photos showing bridges suspended in mid-air with abutments gone; listed as "The greatest disaster in our history. (note: same flood did even more damage to the B&A and bankrupted the CV.)"
- 25 years ago December 1952: Leading article - "The Fitchburg Division" listed as "the chief revenue producing division of the railroad"; map of the division extending from the Willows to Rotterdam Jct., Springfield to W. R. Jct., and many branch lines. . photos of Div. Supt. Whit Haynes, Div. Eng. J. F. Collins, Master Mechanic H. F. McFarland and others. . brief description of train operation, engineering problems, etc. . 2nd article "Whistle-Stopping on the B&M" about Presidential Special trains operated over the Boston & Maine with photos of the Truman extra at Nashua NH; Gen. Eisenhower at North Station; US Sen. Richard M. Nixon at Greenfield MA. . center spread photo of 38 members of Employees' Magazine editorial staff at the Manger Hotel on Oct. 27th. . .

It is now believed that Amtoobing-er-Amfleeting the Montrealer is a matter of months away (the NN says Jan. or Feb., other sources say the spring); such conversion was to have happened this fall but problems in the sleeper conversion to Amfleet-compatibility program delayed it. Complaints have been made of the loss of the popular "Le Pub" lounge cars and their piano bars, to say nothing of the dining cars or the large windows or Dutch-door vestibules. No first-class service except the sleepers; as this train carries a high proportion of vacationers and skiers the coming Amstuff may well cause a loss of patronage as the same coach accommodations can be made more reliably on a—bus! Especially as it is not known yet whether meal service on the Amfleet Montrealer would be an Amdinette or a snack bar Amcafe. Prediction: a heavy increase in ridership just before Amtoobing as railfans do their "last rides" then a drastic fall-off as skiers and vacationers switch to the bus or private car or airplane as Amfleet violates the honor of the Conn. River line. Horrors!!! There are rumors the F40PH's may have been tested on the Conn. River line recently (one may have been seen out a hotel window on Nov. 6 ca. 0245 hrs.); anybody know?

Symbol freight schedules are in upheaval: runs from Boston west (the AP's and the Salem Job) are back to the June schedule we printed. NE-1 is out of Rigby at 0900; we'll run a complete schedule next issue.

B&Matters

The Mechanical department recently acquired a new Holmes hi-rail crane capable of highway speeds of 50 mph. It can transfer to rail for any emergency that might occur. The crane has 75-ton lifting capacity, hydraulic outriggers, and a 25-foot boom. The crane weighs approximately 35 tons fully equipped while overall height and width is within limits allowed for movement over the highway without a special permit. Forward maximum rail speed is 25 mph. and reverse rail speed 15 mph. The carrier engine is 228 hp. with fully automatic ten-speed transmission. The crane has a 360° revolving cat and mechanically-powered controls up and down. The crane was used the day after it was received in Billerica to re-rail four cars on the New Hampshire division and has seen service in several areas. (B&M (Corp.) Newsletter, special thanks to Mrs. Gloria J. Stone, B&M Corp.)

The Holmes hi-rail crane is working so well that the Boston and Mechanicville wrecker trains face imminent retirement; already the Boston wrecker has been reposing at Billerica. Some of the cars in these trains, especially the crew cars, are very old and quite a few of them originated as diners (see L. C. Hutchinson's article in the summer 1977 Bulletin on the B&M wooden diners). Possible disposition of the surplus equipment is unknown.

Arthur E. Lassonde has sent us some details on the circus train's moves: crew was called on duty at 2100 hrs. and the Circus Train left Mechanicville at 2330 Oct. 18 and arrived at Yard 7 at 0700 Oct. 19. The train had departed from Champaign IL Sunday Oct. 16 for its next engagement at Boston Garden, a distance of 1100 miles. The animals were watered at Mc'ville before the train departed. After the circus' Boston engagement the train went over the B&M to Springfield. Coming into Boston from Ayer the lead engine of the circus train had a special rider, Mr. Frederick W. Mercer of Concord NH. Mr. Mercer is an active members of various circus historical groups and has played as a show drummer in numerous circus bands.

In our continuing never-ending saga of the Clarks (Blackberry Hill Rd.) bridge in Berwick ME the Maine DOT has stepped into the brouhaha (the B&M and Berwick had been going after each other hammer & tongs) and is doing an engineering project to develop design details and cost figures for repair/replacement of the bridge; the matter is probably slightly nearer to solution. The Clarks Bridge imbroglio is rapidly becoming non-news thus we won't report again on it unless something drastic happens.

The B&M's reorganization trustees have made application with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for financial assistance in the form of FRA's purchasing \$25,867,000 principal amount Trustees' Certificates. The trustees propose to pay the certificates off in 20 equal annual installments of 7½% of the principal amount of each certificate commencing on the 11th anniversary of the issuance date of each certificate. The money is to be used to finance improvements on the Willows-Mc'ville main line; the project has four major elements: A) Reduction of 18 miles of line from double to single track; B) Installation of 83 miles of continuous welded rail; C) Installation of an in track signal system within the project limits and remote controls for interlocking points at Ayer and Fitchburg; D) Repair of 38 bridges and installation of 300 feet of steel liner in the Hoosac Tunnel. (Thomas L. Underwood, Jr.)

EQUIPMENT NOTES: B&M/D&H pooling of power has now been discontinued. ●● additional coal trains are now being run on the B&M to Bow NH due to Public Service of NH's expectation of a coal strike Dec. 6. The additional trains are being routed over the D&H and are reported as originating on the WM; the coal is coming from a different mine as the stockpile at Bow is built up. The pile had dwindled as CR often held the unit train for up to 2 days while they scrounged up some power; the cumulative effect was a decrease in the number of trains. ●● those famous 18 soon-to-be B&M GP40-2's are being built at the La Grange IL EMD facility. Arrangements for their coming to the B&M are nearly complete. ●● Frank Judge tells us the B&M moved his rebuilt BAR caboose from Acton to Wolfeborough NH within 24 hours.

The B&M Corp.'s 3rd quarter ICC report figures are in: freight revenues \$20,723,026, total revenues \$22,583,000; total expenses \$23,201,187 (including \$1,086,772 accrued interest expense): net loss. \$618,158. Note that there was income of over \$400,000 available for interest charges; the loss for the 3rd quarter is down substantially from 1976's loss of \$2,374,812 for that quarter. 3rd quarter 1977's 3% freight revenue increase was primarily due to rate increases; tonnage over the first 9 months of 1977 is down 2% from 1976 and 15% from 1974. There is still a glimmer of hope that the B&M may be able to have income for fixed charges for the year (a positive times charges earned figure). The last quarter will make the difference; the figures should be in just in time for the February 1978 Newsletter.

In a letter to his fellow employes in the Oct.-Nov. B&M (Corp.) Newsletter President Dustin noted that the tonnage decline had occurred despite innovative and aggressive marketing and sales techniques carried out to divert traffic back to the railroad. "Review of the entire traffic situation indicates continuing erosion of traffic from the railroad to contract truckers who can now quote rates equal to or better than the railroad's." Mr. Dustin in the course of his letter described certain inequities in taxation, especially highway use taxes. The Federal diesel fuel tax has not been increased since 1961 while weight limits have been raised reducing truckers' unit costs and increasing highway maintenance. Collection of state and local diesel fuel taxes leave something to be desired: in some states (NH is one) the tax isn't collected at the pump but is paid quarterly on an "honor" system based on their reported mileage within the state. One may wonder how accurately that figure is reported. This arrangement is especially advantageous to truckers who only occasionally operate in NH; the NH taxpayers end up paying for the extra highway maintenance.

MASS. CENTRAL MYSTERY The Massachusetts Central Railroad (no, not the old one but the new outfit mentioned in the CM book and which was interested in operating the West-over trackage last month) is up to something: a caboose lettered for them has been reported sighted by Joe Mulligan at Amherst MA. Bob Ridpath writes that a Whitcomb 45-tonner is at East Deerfield (minus its builder's plate) on one of the turntable leads. Current paint scheme is black roof and underbody with gray sides. The cab side is lettered P A & Mc R (Pittsburgh, Allegheny & McKees Rocks, an industrial short line near Pittsburgh) — and, spaced under those letters: Mass Central 8. This same engine was seen by Jeremy Plant 9/30/77 at Rotterdam Jct. yard; he reported paint scheme as maroon/grey. No one yet knows what is going to be done with this equipment; when your Asst. Ed. was out at Amherst he heard rumors of their taking over the Westover operation and a very wild rumor—if it was not an auricular illusion—of their taking over the Wheelwright branch! The Massachusetts Central had put out a fancy prospectus in Sept. 1975 when they were organizing: they planned to operate both the Wheelwright branch and the PC's Ware River branch by running a freight train twice a week to serve the two branches. The proposed schedule was not too realistic without a massive track-work campaign and the company counted on using certain exemptions in the 12-hour law available to short lines. If interest warrants it or space allows it we may run more details from this prospectus; it is quite a document, to put it mildly.

The real Central Mass., that is, the Wheelwright branch, is in tough shape even where it's being used. The local comes out from Northampton on Thursdays as far as Bondsville where a busy paper warehouse usually has several cars sitting (all B&M the day I was there, no per deim); ties there were rotted and rail joints slightly skewed. East of Bondsville nothing has run since 1976 as road sand at the side of the road on crossings has not been plowed away by wheel flanges and the rails are completely covered with grass (this is near where the Hampden RR joined). Someone's operating the Ware River branch. Whom?

B&Memos Donald A. Clerke, 132 Laurel Street, South Windsor CT 06074, has been appointed Technical Editor for the B&M Bulletin, effective October 1, 1977. A Professional Engineer by trade, Don has long been a B&M enthusiast, photographer, and modeller, a result of having grown up in the Swampscott, Mass. area.

As Technical Editor, he will be coordinating research and production for plans and data of B&M rolling stock, locomotives, and structures for publication in the B&M Bulletin. His particular interest is in B&M freight and maintenance of way equipment. Members with information and interests in these areas are urged to contact Mr. Clerke at the above address.

●● The Passenger Car Book Committee meetings for the coming year are as follows: Dec. 27, Jan. 31, Feb. 28, Mar. 28, Apr. 25. The May meeting is a question mark at present as the last Tuesday of that month falls on Memorial Day, May 30th. Meetings will be held at the home of Roy Hutchinson, 37 Pearl St., Reading, Mass., unless otherwise designated. Meeting time: 7:30 PM (1930 hrs.). All members who are on the committee are urged to attend each meeting, if at all possible.—L. C. Hutchinson.

ERRATA & ADDENDA Sorry, out mistake. A fan trip was run on the Clarendon & Pittsford. Various members of the society have informed us that the Railroad Enthusiasts (RRE) ran a trip June 17-18, 1939. Sections ran from Boston, Worcester, and Springfield. Some highlights were an inspection of C&P facilities, a trip on the Green Mountain Flyer, and night observations of operations in the Rutland yards. The meeting also included a get-together with the New York division of the Railroad Enthusiasts. Round trip fare was an outrageous \$4.90. (Boy would we love to have that sort of thing now!)

●●● In the Aug. Newsletter I ran a short Queries section (one of those features that comes and goes); herewith the answers: 1) What infamous RR subsidiary makes underwear? Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron, of Molly Maguire and George F. "Divine Right" Baer fame, spun off by the Reading Company in 1923, (following year the P&R Railway and the Reading Co. merged), Coal & Iron went bankrupt and reorganized in 1944, acquired Fruit of the Loom in 1962 or so but by that time company had become P. & R. Corp.; finally it was acquired in 1967 by Northwest Industries, which oddly enough was the Heineman-formed holding company for the C&NW. 2) The Delaware & Hudson Canal Co. (name changed to D. & H. Co. in 1899 after abandoning the canal in 1898) succumbed to the wiles of the Norfolk & Western in 1968, despite Buck Dumaine's entreaties. NW bought the assets and the D&H Co. became Champlain National (sic) for liquidation which then merged with International Industries which hasn't done very well, in fact the preferred stock which was the D&H will probably go through the wringer. Int. Ind. changed its name last year to IHOP right, you guessed it, International House of Pancakes! Assuage your D&H sorrows with some flapjacks!

B&Members We welcome the following new members to the B&MRRHS: George H. Reitze, Glastonbury CT; Leo V. Clark, Westford MA; Robert E. Larrivee, Lowell MA; David C. Bartlett, Shelburne Falls MA; Roy L. Drake, W. Springfield MA; Gordon A. Janvrin, Hampton Falls NH; Lawrence G. Parr, Damascus MD; David S. Decker, W. Peabody MA; Gary Cliborn, Dracut MA; Terry B. Curtis, Lisbon Falls ME; Richard Burdin, Methuen MA; David M. Kruschwitz, Cambridge MA; Edward S. Hladik, Jr., Schenectady NY; Robert F. Akerley, Albuquerque NM; Frank W. Batchelder, Jr. Ward Hill MA; William J. Neidermeyer, Middleton WI; Peter K. Rhoads, Stow MA; Charles W. Bohi, White River Jct. VT; Alan K. Mann, Stoughton MA; William S. Topham, Salem NH; Rey's RR Crossing Restaurant, Rochester NH; Paul F. Lessard, Exeter NH; George E. Slye, Wayland MA; Robert C. Allen, Epping NH.

NORTH COUNTRY NOTES GOODWIN RR. State of New Hampshire #74 (ex-Army GE 44-tonner) is back in service after being completely overhauled in the Lakeport enginehouse this summer. The GRR is planning to put a plow on their RS-3 #1 before the winter snows; heavy snowfalls will be removed by Weaver Bros. equipment as was done while the Wolfeborough RR operated the line last winter (Weaver Bros. owns the Goodwin RR). . . Both the Goodwin RR and the NORTH STRATFORD RR have received checks from the state for track work reimbursement so track work will proceed; work on the North Stratford line (ex MEC Beecher Falls br.) had halted while some uncertainties about state reimbursement were cleared up (Brent Michiels). . . VERMONT NORTHERN: Five new bids were received by the governor's office from companies interested in running the line (ex-St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County RR); however, the state Rail Commissioner said the latest bids didn't appear to be different from earlier offers declared unacceptable in a previous round of bidding. The Commissioner was to review these new bids in detail to decide if they offered "any advantage" over a proposal from local shippers along the route.

RAILFAIR '78 April 22-23, 1978: Railfair '78 & 16th Annual Open House, Emerson School Gym, Main St., Exit 27 I-495, Rte. 117, Bolton, Mass. Railfair '78: 11 AM-6PM; 16th Open House: Sat Apr. 23 12 Noon - 8 PM, Sunday 12 Noon - 6 PM. Suggested donations: \$1 adult, 50¢ children under 12. Nashua Valley Railroad Association, Inc., Rte. 85, Bolton MA 01740.

MEChatter Hearings have been held on the Maine Central's application to abandon its 16-mile Bingham Branch. Average annual revenue on the branch has declined from \$320,00 in 1973 (the peak year) to \$70,000 for 1975-6; average loss for 1975-6 was \$32,000 and deferring maintenance will hold 1977's loss to about \$15,000. While the branch is generally deteriorating it is still safe to operate at up to 25 mph., MEC Chief Engineer J. O. Born testified. Normal maintenance would be around \$63,000; Mr. Born estimated deferred maintenance is well over \$300,000; a five-year \$60,000 would be realistic to catch up to this figure — over and above the normal annual maintenance; if deferred maintenance continued within five years the maximum speed were likely to be reduced to 10 mph. Estimated net salvage value for the branch is \$170,000 which would improve the Maine Central's cash and materials position.

The Maine Central lost \$114,000 (ICC figures) for 3rd quarter 1977; the year earlier loss was \$123,565 (MEC 3rd quarters are usually weak). Nine months' net income for 1977 is \$278,881; comparable 1976 figure was \$172,112. While 3rd quarter operating revenues, net equipment & joint facility rents, and other income rose operating expenses, taxes, and fixed charges rose slightly more.

Maine Central's President E. Spencer Miller gave an address to the New England Railroad Club in November; while your staff was not privileged to hear it the speech has been described as stunningly brilliant. We understand the main subject was the Maine Central's successful refunding. While this indeed is an outstanding achievement the new securities' terms are onerous; furthermore there have been indications that the MEC might be planning to pay the issues off by maturity without refunding. If so, one cannot view the Maine Central's paying out \$9 million between now and 1991 on sinking funds with complete equanimity. Times ahead are very uncertain; to compete railroads must keep up maintenance, which consumes cash. However, Maine Central has survived crises before so they'll very likely get through this one too.

B&Marketplace We'll publish advertisements by members as space permits. Please keep them as short as possible and send them on a separate piece of paper. Don't forget to include your name and address with your ad! We reserve the right to edit ads to fit them in.

- **FOR SALE:** Order from KENRAY SHOP, Dept. BM, Box 422, Wilton NH 03086. A discount of 50¢ per order is offered for anyone ordering two or more items.
1978 New England Railroad Calendar, \$3.00 @; 1977 NE Railroad Calendars, \$2.00 @.
40 Different worldwide railroad postage stamps, \$1.00 per packet of 40.
- **FOR SALE:** 3,121 2¼" x 2¼" black/white negatives (some color); breakdown: 22 Edaville, 230 Steamtown, 667 trolleys (mostly Boston), 735 B&M, and 1,467 other railroads; taken from 1962-1974. Call evenings, Henry Marrec at (617) 643-9442 for appointment.
- 16,000 photos available — New England Railroads, Walker Transportation Collection, Beverly Historical Society. Please send us a S. A. S. E. and tell us which railroad you are interested in and what equipment, etc., if other than general. Mail to: 117 Cabot St., Beverly MA 01915.
- 30,000 used crossties for sale; ties are now at Mechanicville NY. If interested contact Purchasing & Stores Dept., B&M Corp., Iron Horse Park, North Billerica MA 01862.

CVIEWS BOTTOM OF THE PIT DEPT. — AMC New England Canoeing Guide: White River Third Branch, Vermont (Conn. River p. 137). Quote: "This is perhaps the least attractive of the three branches, largely owing to the fact that the main line of the Vermont Central Railway (note: they mean the Central Vermont) passes up the valley. There are, however, many fine bits of scenery. . . Randolph to Bethel 10 mi. (USGS Randolph), . . . During much of its course it is far enough from the railroad to preserve scenic views. . ." This interesting comment was noted while checking information re the Pow Wow River. . . the CV has painted a GP9 in its new yellow/green scheme. . . the ex-DW&P RS11's are on the Grand Trunk now. . .

D&Happenings Jeremy Plant reports that an ex-B&M passenger RS-3 is now in the "Altschul Blue" paint scheme: solid blue, large yellow number on flanks, block lettered "Delaware & Hudson" in yellow below number, yellow D&H shield on ends, and silver trucks. Other units in blue: U33C 759 (reported but not seen). Mr. Plant has seen RS11 #5002 (which has the fancier lettering ala the bicentennial D&H units) and RS36 #5015. The latter unit was the only one with the "C&O" scheme of yellow nose and large block "D&H" on the side; this is just a memory now as the D&H crew was putting the finishing touches on it 9/30/77. ●● #4075 has been working local from Colonie to Mechanicville, lv. 5-7 AM, return 12-1 PM.

C. Bruce Sterzing, who had been president of the D&H until August 1, has now been taken on by the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific (The Rock) as their new General Manager. Mr. Sterzing was known for operating a "railfan's railroad" (preserving the PA's and the Sharks and such like) and also keeping the Delaware & Hudson solvent while almost everything around it sank into ConRail. The necessary expansion of the D&H did not work out so well and differences of opinion with government agencies reputedly led to his ouster. We wish him luck in his new endeavors with The Rock. (already trackage hounds are checking their maps for uncovered mileage or unique equipment.)

The Delaware & Hudson once again has a President & Chief Executive Officer: effective Nov. 16th the new man is Charles E. Bertrand, who replaces Selig Altschul who was temporarily named CEO after Mr. Sterzing's "departure". Mr. Bertrand comes to the D&H from a position with Amtrak as general manager of the Northeast Corridor Region. Before then he had been president of the Reading Company (the legal name of that railroad) in the early 1970's. There he has first wrestled with the problem of keeping the Reading out of bankruptcy and, once that road had succumbed in Nov. 1971, then to attempting to nurse the Reading back to solvency; for 1974 the Reading had income available for fixed charges!

Mr. Bertrand has a tough job ahead of him: the Delaware & Hudson posted a whopping \$2,751,000 net loss for the July 1 - Sept. 30 quarter, up from the \$1,140,000 of 1976. Gross revenues increased very slightly (1.6%), operating expense rose sharply (operating ratio 89% vs. 81%). The nine months' net loss is \$6,166,000 (cf. fixed chgs. \$2,533,000); comparable 1976 figures: \$3,702,000 (\$1,948,000 fixed chgs.), operating ratio 87.4% vs. 84.6%. Maintenance of way and equipment expense is up sharply (though we must note that doing extra maintenance or catching up on it while increasing present expense does cut future operating cost); joint facility and equipment rents (per deim) are also up.

The Nov. 23rd Wall St. Journal reports the US Railway Assn. (a government corporation) has decided to allow the D&H to defer \$1.1 million in interest payments due Dec. 20 on \$26 m. in government loans; the D&H has made application for \$4 m. more in loans, including \$2 m. not authorized. USRA has asked the D&H to apply to the FRA for refinancing for locomotives/purchases already covered by the USRA loan to free the USRA money for use in operations. The D&H has deferred plans to seek \$25 million in preference stock financing from the government (similar to the B&M's proposal) for route changes and yard improvements; included in that proposal was a bypass of the tunnel on the Albany & Susquehanna line at Tunnel NY to alleviate clearance difficulties.

Clearly the future of the B&M and the other independent railroads of northern New England is being determined on the western railroads of this country. The D&H is the B&M's only friendly connection to the west and south (the CR connections cannot be described as friendly as the two roads are fierce competitors.). Without an independent D&H the B&M may well become a hopeless case. Would the USRA throw the D&H to ConRail? Would CR swallow it of its own volition? However the USRA itself has offered a clue: in its allowing the D&H to defer its interest payments the USRA also directed the D&H to study the possibilities of merging with several of the railroads of northern New England...

NEW ENGLAND ROUND-UP Plans have been unveiled for a new station/hotel/parking complex in Hartford CT. It is not clear from the description whether the old station (which has some very interesting tile decorations showing two very early NYNH&H electric locomotives) would be preserved... Woonsocket RI had a hair-raising runaway on Nov. 3rd. A PRR flat loaded with steel plate broke away from a P&W train during switching (according to a crewman the flat's brakes failed to work properly; a trainman was on the car when it started to roll away but was unable to stop it and jumped for safety when he feared the car would derail). The car rolled through Woonsocket accross nine unguarded grade crossings; only casualty was the front end of a truck, fortunately the driver had caught sight of the car's coming out of the corner of his eye and was able to stop in time. The flat finally ran into a siding in Woonsocket yard and crashed through a bumper and sank in some mud. The next day the car was put back on the tracks and taken to the consignee. All in all, a very lucky day.

THE STAFF CORNER While typing this I realized that John and I have now been doing these Newsletters for one year and that this month is the anniversary of our first big 6-page issue. Quite a comparison if you go back and look over them. I remember how much a big achievement it seemed and how our readers responded to it (and, being Membership Secretary I saw how renewals, which had been sluggish, suddenly picked up!). October 1976 was a 4 page issue; we had actually cut out a lot of news. In November we decided to take the plunge and try to fill 6 pages each issue; the going was rough at times but by April we produced our first magnum opus; now we roll like a well-maintained R-1-d (with Hanlon bypass valves). It wasn't just us; we owe most of it to you our readers who sent us news and bore with our trials.

B&Memories

(This issue we begin what we hope to be a regular feature of reminiscences of things as they were on the Boston & Maine; we aptly call this feature "B&Memories"...) We conclude with a story by the late Laurence B. Walker, the man who left the collection he had assembled and which now bears his name to the Beverly Historical Society. With their permission we reprint a short essay from a little "newsletter" that he used to put out for friends back in the 1950's. We think it will melt the hearts of even the staunchest die-hard steam fans....

"A PLYMOUTH GAS ENGINE IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS" by Laurence Breed Walker

During the 20 summers that I spent at New Hampshire's Crawford House, I used to spend a couple of afternoons in each week at Fabyans, Whitefield or Bretton Woods. In those days I rode on a "pass" and as soon as the crew knew me, I rode without pass or ticket. The train schedule was such that I could go away after lunch and be back at the hotel in ample time to dress for dinner.

Fabyans was an interesting spot in those days. You not only had the Maine Central with frequent freights, excursion trains and the regular passenger trains, but you had the B&M's Mt. Washington Branch and the main line from Wells River, Boston, etc. The B&M had their enginehouse there and a large train yard with passenger as well as service equipment. Gradually the passenger business had declined; the New York sleepers were discontinued; the Fabyan enginehouse was deserted during the day. Then it was that the powerful little Plymouth appeared on the scene.

During the fall, winter and spring it was the "shifter" at Laconia. (They were not "switchers" in those days!). But from mid June until mid October, little #100 proudly scuttled around the Fabyans yard; dwarfed by the big Pacifics, it soon showed that it could almost outdo the mountain Moguls that ran to the Base Station. Its prime duty was to push a car of coal from the B&M main line up the very steep grade to the coaling station of the Mount Washington Ry. Another chore assigned to it was to push the coal cars to the power plant of the Mount Washington Hotel that was reached by a long spur track from the Base Station line. It helped the making up of trains in the Fabyan yard and took a car of freight now and then to Twin Mountain.

The first time I saw it, I was sitting on the porch of the Fabyan House, around 1931. A heavy Pullman chair car suddenly appeared as if from nowhere and then suddenly started back from where it had come. No engine was in sight and the Plymouth looked so tiny that I thought it was some machine the section crew were using. Pretty soon a big CNR official car started moving around and I thought that it was then time to investigate. There was little B&M #100, gloriously painted, brand new, bright and shining!

Now, the reason I mention this Plymouth is that one of the B&M Moguls (1472 or 1473) was taxed to capacity to push 2 open observation cars to the Base. If there were three cars, filled, a second engine was added. But this tiny Plymouth could push a heavy loaded coal car up the grade with the greatest of ease. They tried out pushing the 2 observation cars and it reached the end of the line in 5 minutes less time than the specially designed steam locomotives. The B&M would not have dared use it on a regular passenger run. Everyone with a camera would have taken pictures of this new kind of a passenger train and it would not have brought credit to the B&M. Nevertheless, without any apparent effort, without the clouds of smoke, cinders, puffing that could be heard for miles, this tiny little thing crept up the grade pushing a huge coal car that you would have thought would tax its capacity on level ground. This is the steepest grade on any New England line.

When the observation car trains to the Base were discontinued in the middle 30's, Plymouth #100 continued with its strenuous duties until the track to Bretton Woods and the Base Station were removed and coal trucks were substituted. Once from the Mt. Washington Hotel porch I watched it push a huge hopper car along the track and the contrast was laughable, as if a man were pushing the car. Edward LaCroix once said of the 3 he was using on the Umbazooksus & Eagle Lake RR., "The most powerful things imaginable".

- 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, or any other address, will be subject to an automatic delay of at least two weeks.

THE CENTRAL MASS. Members \$8.00; Non-members \$10.00

B&M BULLETINS Spring (19 left), Summer (18 left), Fall 1975 (35 left), Winter 1975-6 (7 left), Spring 1976, PRICE: \$1.75 each to members, \$2.00 to non-members. Summer, Fall 1976, Winter 1976-7, Spring, Summer 1977; PRICE: \$2.00 each to members, \$2.25 to others.

OTHER Scale drawing of mogul 1388 - 70¢ (only 16 left!)
1860 Woburn Branch election poster - 70¢ (only 18 left)

B&MRRHS 1932 Snow train menu - 25¢
Copies of the poem "The Canaan Wreck" available at 50¢ each (12 left)

PUBLICATIONS Reprinted Montpelier & Wells River / Barre & Chelsea RR employes' timetable #62B of January 22, 1928. Members \$1.50, non-members \$1.75.

BOOKS Vanishing Markers, a 128 page illustrated description of Boston & Maine railroading, 1948-52, 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. Members \$12.50; Non-members rate is \$14.95.

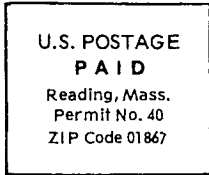
BY Trains of Northern New England, 96 pp. 120 photos with full-color cover. Softbound. This book features John Krause's photography of B&M, CV, Rutland, and MEC operations in Vermont and along the Connecticut River in the 40's and 50's. Includes steam and diesel action. Members \$6.50, non-members \$7.50.

OTHER The Railroad That Came Out at Night, Frank Kyper's account of railroading in and around Boston. Includes profiles of two shortlines, an eyewitness account of the 1973 Chelsea Fire on the B&M, and a personal account of life as a B&M crossing tender. Hardbound, 6x9", 160 pp., photos. Members \$6.95, Non-members \$7.95.

NEW! New England Diesels, Available in November, Reserve yours now! Members \$24, Non-members \$26.95 retail.

ART First in a series of full-color prints of paintings to be done by Peter Rhoads depicts 4-8-2 4117 on a passenger train at the west portal of Hoosac Tunnel. Measures 20 x 30", suitable for framing, shipped in a durable mailing tube.

PRINT Available in regular or limited editions. Limited edition is signed and numbered by the artist. Regular edition \$5.00; Limited edition \$7.00.



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