

INTERCHANGE

...a column of opinion

Crossing Shanties and Barometers

There's an unusual title for a column, but we'll show relevance real quick. First, though, we would like to bring you up to date on the status of our new crossing shanty.

When we first looked the shanty over a couple of weeks ago, we were basically undecided about whether we should take it or not. Somehow, it seemed a shame to just cart it off to the dump, especially since it was structurally sound. But, at the same time, (as we've often pointed out) the Society's finances just would not permit the outlay of the cash needed to bring the shanty back to show-piece conditions.

The Board of Directors had already decided that *no* money could be taken out of the general fund, as this is all tied up in BULLETIN and Newsletter production. But, Jovial Joe Shaw picked up the phone, and within one week most of the supplies to restore the shanty had been donated from individual members, including the truck to move it from Brentwood. The list of donees reads as follows:

Dave and Dodi Lamson and Dennis Adams

- lumber to frame and move the shanty

Carl Byron - four sills

Ed Felton - plywood for the roof

John Alan Roderick - two rolls of roofing paper and cove moulding

Dick Symmes - paint for the shanty

Winnacunnet High School - will fabricate a chimney in metal shop.

Joe Shaw - transport and storage

And, just so that no members need feel left out, there will be plenty of opportunity to get in on the action. The shanty will probably be moved later this week, and work sessions will probably be Saturdays, at Joe Shaw's in Portsmouth, NH. A barbecue grill will be provided, bring your own food and drink (non-alcoholic, please). Bring hammers and lots of enthusiasm. As an aside, Don Robinson has identified the shanty as most likely having been the Front Street crossing shanty, as the Main Street shanty was much larger.

Now we'll get to the part about the barometers. For many years people in the Society

have been clamoring for the Society to become involved in restoration projects. Some projects have been attempted before, but the net result was dismal failure, (with one spectacular maroon and gold exception!). This shanty will be a barometer, or gauge, to let us know how future restoration attempts will be responded to. And, we realize that the shanty is not a locomotive or a large scale project, but it's a beginning. And it should be fun, with somewhat instant gratification, as it should not take a long time to refurbish the structure. Will we see you on Saturdays?

Dennis and Scott

I recently met an old friend I hadn't seen for over twenty years. My hair had turned gray and my waistline had changed, but my friend had held up surprisingly well. As with most of us today, she had moved to a new home in 1965, and really had been forgotten. It was indeed a thrill to chance upon her in Temple, Pennsylvania, Sunday, March 30th.

If you haven't figured it out yet, I'm referring to Boston and Maine Railroad Budd RDC-3 #6305! There she was, wearing Reading letterboards, but operating under her own power (as Budd had intended) and carrying revenue passengers. She is currently in the employ of the Blue Mountain and Reading Railroad, and is sharing her duties with two other RDC's; an ex-NYC, and an ex-B&O. On this particular day all three units were in service and for someone like myself who as a baby boomer saw much of Northern New England thru the windows of an RDC, it was a real treat!

The reunion got better. I requested and received permission to ride the cab on both legs of our roundtrip to Hamburg, Pa. The trip north, with BM&R #9169 leading, was at a very leisurely pace. Track conditions were outstanding, the scenery much like that in our area. After a brief layover at Hamburg, the fun began! The return trip was at track speed, and you didn't have to close your eyes to make believe you were in B&M territory. The 6305 (now re#9166) ran beautifully, and really put on a show. We passed Leesport approaching 50mph, and made great time on the well maintained track.

The highlight of the trip occurred when it was decided a photo runby would be had just north of Temple! We stopped at a grade cross-

ing to drop the railfans, the RDC's backed out of sight and then proceeded to run past at speed, truly reminiscent of the many RRE fantrips of the 60's and early 70's. A final runby was accomplished at Temple as we glided thru the station.

Point to be made:

No one will dispute the fact that the B&MRR at one time rostered the largest fleet of RDC's in the world.

The days of the RDC running in a self propelled mode are numbered, qualify that statement to the Lower 48.

Even as early as ten years ago, no one would have seriously considered saving a stock RDC for future historians/enthusiasts to enjoy. LV #40 is now at the Penn. State RR Museum.

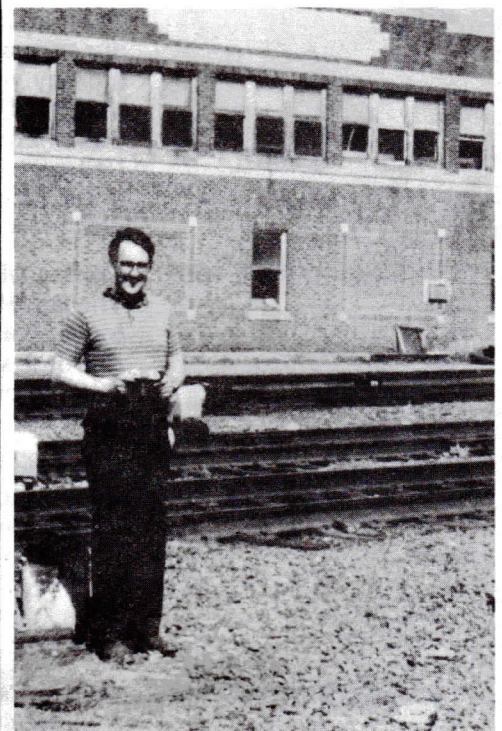
The question:

Would not the B&MRRHS be the group to consider the preservation of a genuine B&M BUDD RDC? Save #6305, the RDC-3 fleet in its original configuration is gone. RDC-2's are few in number, and many RDC-1's are now Boise Budds.

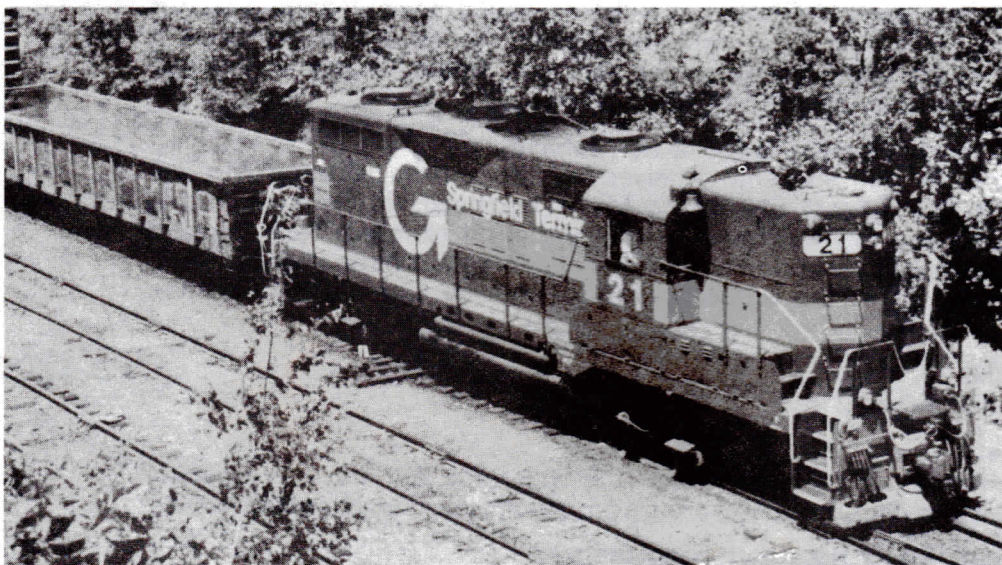
Our most immediate concern would be to secure an RDC to save. Would not the MBTA consider such a donation? I know we have the expertise amongst our members to bring such a beast back to life. I have been known to frequently visit the home of B&M F-7A #4266, and know that such a project is not impossible, only that miracles take a little longer. Time marches on and I hope we don't look back and chastise ourselves for not acting sooner.

Thank you for your time, I was one of the original B&MRRHS members and remain extremely proud of this dedicated group. Accept this thought with an open mind and maybe we can as a collective group save a RDC.

Gary Webster



Member Leslie Drake poses outside of the Boston & Maine's famed Tower A at North Station, Boston. Rev. Drake is our only member from the United Kingdom, and was recently visiting in the Boston area. We hope you enjoyed your visit, Rev. Drake, and if members from out of the area visit Boston & Maine territory, be sure to let us know! Jeff Ursillo photo.



Membership Secretary Jeff Ursillo snapped this photo of Springfield Terminal 21, formerly Maine Central GP9 450, formerly Algoma Central! Whew! The locomotive is working out of Lawrence Yard.

Recently I was taken to task for "passing the hat" at one of our membership meetings. Although this is not a usual happening, some thought it to be in bad taste. Now, I would like to explain the reason for doing this.

First, how many of you have actively responded to our fundraising projects? By far, not as many as needed to accomplish a "simple" feat, such as a place to house our hardware. Through the generosity of those present when the "hat was passed", we now have built a small building which houses the hardware, have a complete inventory of it and this is available to each and every member interested in seeing it at one location (address?). The only expense to the Society members was the building materials; the labor and assembly of same was freely given.

Whether or not you are aware of this fact and since we are a non-profit organization, all dues money goes into publishing, printing and mailing of the BULLETIN and NEWSLETTER at a "mere" cost of approximately \$45,000.00 per year. You do not have to be a mathematician to realize what this means with our total membership at \$17.00 per year. Easy math tells you immediately that other sources of income, in addition to dues, must be entered into if we are to continue being an active Historical Society operating in the black. For example, where does the money come from for maintaining our Archives? There is more than storage space required - there is always a need for files, non-acid paper, envelopes, etc. in order to keep priceless collections and documents safe and in tip-top condition available for members' perusal and use. True, we have been blessed with a benefactor from a fund raising grant which went for the Dana Goodwin collection and housing for same, but what about the rest?? We are also very grateful to the University of Lowell for the space allotted us for the Archives, but, money is still needed for the upkeep of these. As we all know, *everything* takes money, so whether it is procured from "passing the hat", grants, auctions or just plain contributions, fundraising will continue with whatever it takes in order for our Society to survive!!

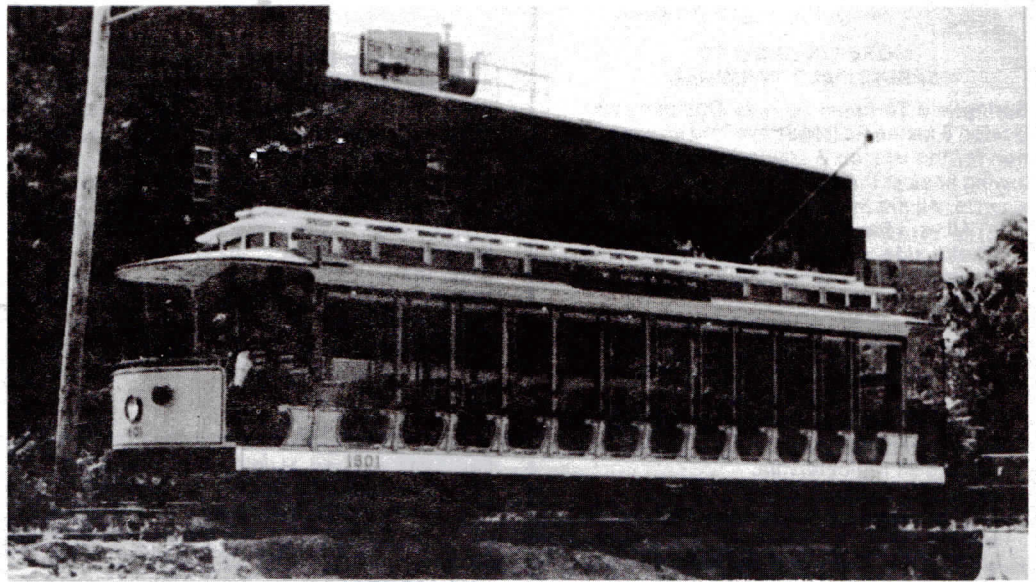
Thanks for lending your ear, your past and continuing support and contributions and your understanding. **Joe Shaw, Chairman of the Board**

Springfield Terminal has purchased the remaining fleet of yard switchers. This includes the 1223 which the Amherst Historical Society was instrumental in having painted in its original colors a few years back. It will be renumbered **ST #1421**. Maine Central switchers are sold and numbered 1430 to 1434. Ex-B&M #1118 will also be sent to Oneonta from the most northern parts of Maine where its been leased for a couple of years now. This unit will become ST #1400.

Also, the following GP40's have been painted in the Guilford scheme with Boston and Maine on the #338, 342, 340. The 326 and 324 are due next, followed by the D&H 7300 and 7400 series. These will be followed by the B&M GP40-2 and GP38-2's all to be repainted by late Fall.

At Cofonie, Morrison Knudsen GP40's that have been stored there for years have been sent west, possibly back to MK; those numbers are #3243, 3230, 3238, 3240, 3256, 3252.

On May 14th it was told that Waterville Engine House will be closed for good in 90 days. Work will be sent to Billerica and East Deerfield facilities. Currently at Billerica MEC #253, 254, 259 are there waiting for genera-



The Lowell Trolleys roll again! Jeff Ursillo photo.

tors and truck work. Also GP7 #573, GP9's 1712, 1734, 1744, 1715, 1714 are also waiting for repairs, although the 1714 will most likely be retired there. ST units awaiting repairs are the 618, 622. Switcher #1129 (ST1407) is waiting tests.

At Waterville MEC #257 is out of service with electrical problems.

An Oneonta, the following units are in the paint shop: 1432, 616, 649. Presently Colonie is doing the wheel machine work, after the new wheel machine shop opens at East Deerfield, Colonie will be closing. On 5/18 the following units were there for wheels: B&M 1723, 211, D&H 7403 and 7416 are at Billerica and will undergo a rebuilding program. Who knows what's next? **Don LeJeune**

Concord, N.H. to White River Jct., VT Line

(Northern Railroad) = New England Southern? On Saturday, June 6 residents along 31 miles of this line were amazed when the 1st train in years traveled as far as Andover. Many thought the railroad was back in town, but which railroad? The train was a gravel train consisting of NES GP18#503 a B&M caboose and D&H hopper cars. Previously NES had traveled only 6 miles up the line to Penacook. On Sunday, the next day, another run was made up the line using the same equipment. Both runs encountered no track problems and more were scheduled in the following week. NES had sent a high railer vehicle inspecting the line a few days earlier. The gravel was being used to cover GTE fiber optic cable which had been installed along side of the track. At any rate these runs proved that the line is still operable. Maybe with a future? **From Louis Beaudoin.**



Some of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's ex-SEMTA Geeps have been given temporary MBTA lettering to go with their "T" logos. The Narragansett Newsletter reports that the MBTA intends to have these locomotives, along with the ex-Burlington Northern Geeps and some F10's rebuilt soon. More F40PH's are on the way, too. Photo by Jeff Ursillo.

