

**Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society**  
*Incorporated*

# NEWSLETTER

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**P.O. Box 9171, MS #312, Cambridge, MA 02139**

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MEETING / MEMBERSHIP TELEPHONE NUMBER (617) 628-4053

September 8, 1990

At 8:00 p.m. through the courtesy of the Town of Amesbury (Mass.) we'll meet at the Amesbury Town Hall. We'll hear Howard Pincus, president of the Railroad Museum of New England operated by the Connecticut Valley Railroad Museum at Essex, Connecticut, and president of the Valley Railroad Company, operator of scheduled steam excursions on a former New Haven branch between Essex and Chester, Connecticut. The Valley Railroad is also well known for importing a new Chinese steam locomotive #1647 from the Tangshan Locomotive and Rolling Stock Works. Mr. Pincus will share with us his thoughts and experiences with acquisition, rehabilitation and restoration of railroad rolling stock. The railroad museum and the Valley Railroad has recently acquired some of the B&M/MBTA RDC Buddliners recently divested from the MBTA. Also the group has some former B&M American Flyer stock and a milk car as well as other rolling stock from other heritage.

The Amesbury Town Hall near School Street and Friend Street in Amesbury has plenty of parking in front of, and to the rear of the Town Hall. Downtown Amesbury is located west of I-95, Exit 58 and north of I-495, Exit 55.

October 13, 1990

Will be our first visit to what may well become our new home. We plan to meet on the fourth floor of the Lowell Heritage State Park building near Merrimac and Dutton Streets. At this early date, the program for the evening is uncertain. Part of the meeting will be our annual business meeting and election of officers. The date, time and location are, at this moment, fairly firm, but still tentative. When in doubt, call our answering machine. Please bear with us!!!

November 10, 1990

It's not yet committed, but it's a good bet that we'll be visiting our friends at the North Shore Model Railroad Club on their turf in Wakefield, Massachusetts. Bring your Prince (HO) car. More on this later.

## SOCIETY LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME

The B&MRR Historical Society is looking for a new home as it winds up its first twenty years as a railroad historical society. Having spent virtually it's entire life in the First Unitarian Church in downtown Woburn, MA, the group was given notice that the church, now with very few members, is scheduled to close its doors during the next month. After the June meeting (auction), the members, at the end of the evening, removed for safe-keeping, B&MRRHS property such as the projection screen and other hardware items stored there.

Because there was no program scheduled for July, nor a viable location to meet, the July meeting was cancelled. Our next general membership meeting scheduled for the second Saturday in August is our annual meeting with the 470 Railroad Club at the North Conway Scenic Railroad in North Conway, NH. Our September meeting will be hosted by the good folks of the Salisbury Point Railroad Historical Society of Amesbury, Massachusetts.

Although there are several possibilities for a new meeting place, none have been firmed up. The possibilities centered around the Lowell, Massachusetts area, for a couple of reasons. One, our B&MRRHS archives are, as most of you know located, in the Mugar Center of the University of Lowell. Secondly, Lowell represents a fairly central location among our Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society population center. Thirdly, Lowell is accessible through public transportation. Woburn was chosen as the location for the meetings for the same reasons, except that the archives didn't exist as a formal collection then. Several of our members are looking into a few possibilities including the University of Lowell, Lowell State Park of which canals and industrialization fit in well with rail transportation and the National Park System. Your Board of Directors, Officers and Staff are busy.

[ABT]

### HOBO RAILROAD RAILFAN'S DAY

Being overcast didn't stop approximately 200 railfans including about 34 B&MRRHS members from enjoying the Hobo/B&MRRHS Railfans' Day. On May 19, 1990 the Clark's outdid themselves, starting with the steam engine being fired up and running at Loon Mt., to the "1930" Reo Speedwagon Railbus running and giving rides at Clark's Trading Post. An afternoon special run which was followed by a freight consist made for some excellent photo runs which were staged at various locations. The supper train was a great success. We were served a roast beef dinner with all the fixings - vegetables, salad, rice, rolls and pie for dessert. You couldn't have asked for a better meal.

Throughout the day the B&M members were treated to cab rides, shop tours, and whatever else they were interested in doing. As I said, the Clarks' rolled out the red carpet for everyone especially B&M members. Instead of riding in the regular coaches, B&M members **ONLY**, were allowed to ride in the Cafe Lafayette, a restored Pullman coach complete with linen table cloths and Orient Express brass lamps. This was a treat which B&M members had all day.

Our day ended with a superb slide show by Ray Belanger of northern New England Railroading, focusing on the B&M in the Berlin/Groveton area.

Overall everyone had a great time and look forward to doing it again next year. If you missed out this time, don't forget to make sure to join us next year.

Jim Nigzus, Railfan's Day Committee

**Saturday, September 15, 1990** Save this day for our annual trek to North Conway, New Hampshire for railfan's day on the Conway Scenic Railroad on the B&M's former Conway Branch. Many B&MRRHS members meet informally in a group in a fun-filled day, and if you missed our August meeting with the 470 friends, you have another chance. All kinds of activities are assured. Those of you who have been there, know; those of you who haven't have missed out. Don't miss this one!!!

## GTI TO ASK FOR ABANDONMENT OF MEC MOUNTAIN DIVISION

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New Hampshire's Department of Transportation has contacted several White Mountain communities to gauge their interest in a section of railroad track which may be abandoned by its owner.

State (NH) Bureau of Railroads planner William Boudreau has mailed letters to selectmen in Whitefield, Hart's Location, Conway, Carroll and Bartlett, saying the state has received word that the Maine Central Railroad and Portland Terminal companies intend to seek abandonment of the Mountain Division line.

The North Country Council, the president of the New Hampshire and Vermont Railroad and owners of the Conway Scenic Railroad also received a copy.

The track runs approximately 120 miles from Westbrook, Maine just outside of Portland, to Whitefield. Nearly 50 miles are in the Granite State. It passes through the communities that received the letter. Officials at Guilford Transportation Industries (GTI), of North Billerica, Massachusetts, owners of the tracks, said the rails are no longer cost effective. "There isn't the business opportunity there to justify the expense and upkeep," said Assistant Director of Government Affairs for GTI, Geoffrey Wade.

The letter says the company intended to file with the Interstate Commerce Commission on or about June 11, but Wade said that as of June 19 the filing hasn't taken

place and he doesn't know when it will.

"It tends to be a lengthy process, and there is a lot to do with it," said Wade, who added both Maine and New Hampshire transportation officials received word of the intended filing to get the ball rolling in the process toward abandonment.

Boudreau said the state of New Hampshire has the right of refusal over the tracks, last used in 1984, and can enter into negotiations for the track if there is interest. He said the track is a very steep grade and may have been hard for Guilford to maintain. Boudreau sent the letters out June 12 to see if there is positive input. He wants a response by June 29. "Time is of the essence," he said.

Conway Scenic Railroad operations manager, Gary Webster, said it was too soon to comment on what may happen. Like everyone else, we will be analyzing the situation," he said.

[Steve Cook/Manchester Union Leader, 6/20/90]

[Editor's note: Most B&MRRHS members will recall that the Intervale, Bartlett and Crawford Notch mileage of the MEC Mountain Division up for abandonment is much of the Stan Whitney footage featured in the recently released video tape "New England Glory," Volume 1 Mountain Division by Herron Rail Services. ABT]

## CONRAIL TECHNICAL SOCIETY

In recent weeks, Conrail has become more visible in New England, in terms of volume and location, particularly in Massachusetts. This is, of course, due primarily to new working arrangements between Guilford Transportation Industries, Inc. and Conrail. This has stimulated some railfan interest in the Conrail Technical Society which formed about a year ago.

The Conrail Technical Society issues a newsletter which features schedules, rosters, historical articles, operating guides, maps and, of course, the latest news about the "Big Blue."

Membership dues are \$15.00 a year, and you will receive six newsletters plus other Conrail-related mailings. All members make use of the information service for latest information on Conrail operations in their area.

If you have a preference or interest in Conrail predecessors: Pennsylvania, New York Central, New Haven, Penn Central, Erie, Lackawanna, Erie-Lackawanna, Lehigh Valley, Reading, Central of New Jersey, or interest in interchange with New England railroads, or other special interests, you might so indicate. The Conrail Technical Society also asks your age and railroad interests, such as railfan, modeler, photographers, employee, and what you might want to see in their newsletter.

A sample copy of the latest newsletter is available for \$2.00, or you can send for information or membership for this year by submitting \$15.00 dues to:

Conrail Technical Society

P.O. Box 568

Maspeth, NY 11378

4      **WHAT'S GOING ON IN BOSTON???**

A couple of Newsletter issues back I had mentioned a few items that were poised for change in the North Station area and in Boston in general. I had written about the Charlestown Army/Navy YMCA, (I had called it simply the Navy "Y" before I was corrected by some of you having been torn down to make way for the "new depressed artery," and mentioned that a partially constructed ramp was (and is still) aimed at Tower "A" by the drawbridge over the Charles River. I further spoke of some of the changes that are part of a renewal program at North Station itself such as adding high-level platforms to the five-year old tracks and platforms replaced after the North Station fire. Some of you that have retired or otherwise moved far away from Boston or been away from Boston for some time have written me asking, "What's going on in Boston???"

Because of the rapidly changing scene with Guilford and Conrail, personnel transfers to Billerica, cutbacks at Deerfield, diminishing traffic in and out of Mechanicville, the on-again, off-again deals with the D&H bankruptcy, questionable real estate acquisitions by Guilford and the B&M of excess D&H property, all pre-empted the article about what is going on in Boston.

Basically, there are two large, independent, but also inter-related projects in the final stages of planning, going through environmental impact studies and design. Much of what is needed now, as is common everywhere, is funding.

One project described in various stages in recent Newsletters is the North Station area development plan where high-level platforms are about 80 percent complete over the 12 tracks from where the bumpers were until a year ago. Later, the MBTA's Green Line, heading north out of Haymarket Square will remain underground under Causeway street, and around in back of the current North Station.

The Green Line will share a large, new multilevel "superstation" parallel with the Orange line in the general area where the Orange Line's North Station stop is currently located. The area is under Accolade Way running between North Station and the Analex Building at 150 Causeway Street. The Analex Building, where the former B&M RR offices were located, is also slated for demolition, although a timetable is not currently known. This will eventually eliminate the old surface loop area, now with three dead-end tracks (two passenger and one storage) directly across Causeway Street from North Station.

The "Type 7" and "LRV" vehicles used on the Green Line for the past several years are articulated, double-ended cars, and do not need a loop for turning around. The few PCC-type trolley cars remaining on the MBTA cover the short surface hop at the Ashmont-Mattapan end of the Red Line. Thus, relocating the Green Line's North Station stop will eliminate one of the most hazardous pedestrian crossings in Boston. It will also alleviate the crowding of several hundred people trying to feed tokens/passes through three turnstiles and a booth when a couple of trains full of passengers disembark at the same time.

The parking lots immediately behind North Station and the Boston Garden have recently been cordoned off and the pavement removed. This is to make way for extending the tracks back into the station area where they were 40 years ago. It has been disclosed recently that some of the former tracks are being unearthed, not having been removed. It is expected that this is the next phase of track work following completion of the high level platforms.

The second to last of the high level platforms is being undertaken between track 2 and track 1. Cranes and other heavy equipment are utilizing tracks 1 and track B. It appears likely that these two tracks will also be out of service while the platform between tracks A and B is made into a high-level platform.

Meanwhile, on the Sommerville side of the draw bridges (now only two for many years where there were at one time four), Tower "A" is slated for demolition, but when is uncertain. According to Ralph Duval, Director of MBTA Commuter Rail Operations, demolition of Tower "A" is going to be funded by the Department of Public Works (DPW). It is the DPW that needs the space for the access ramps from Charlestown's City Square to I-93, that I mentioned earlier in a Newsletter were aimed right at Tower "A" and that end of Boston Sand and Gravel. The area in question is not far from where the Orange Line emerges from the tube after crossing

under the Charles River at the "new" locks. Many will remember the Orange Line "Elevated" takes a 90-degree turn at Causeway Street in the opposite direction from the Green Line, then head for City Square. If you don't remember colors for the various subway lines, then you've been away since 1965. Until then, except for the trolley type vehicles, all the subways were a grimy gray-black.

The Central Artery North Area (CANA) project is designed to make significant safety and traffic flow improvements at one of the most accident prone stretches of highway in the Commonwealth. Reconstruction actually started in May 1987, and when the North Area phase is completed sometime in 1993, the compound intersection reportedly 11 stories (or 100 feet in the air) consisting of I-93, U.S. #1, Storrow Drive and the Central Artery will be lengthened from 600 feet to 2000 feet. A pile of dirt is currently soaring skyward near the "new" Charles River flood control locks and gates near the old Warren Avenue bridge which will become the foundation of the intersection.

Part of the project will eliminate the dangerous "S" curve approach to the Tobin (Mystic River) Bridge from the Central Artery. All traffic to and from the Tobin Memorial Bridge will travel through tunnels now being constructed under City Square. As mentioned previously, most of the ramps from I-93 and U.S. #1 have already been torn down, the others will come down eventually. This will ultimately create open-space and parkland in the City square area.

Plans in the North Station complex include the new construction of a new Boston Garden as well as two new office towers. As the high-level platforms are being built, new caissons have been sunk between the tracks, under the platforms. These caissons are to support eventual construction of structures having "air-rights" over the tracks. A controversial aspect of the North Station plan revolves about the need to build a 1,300-car underground garage to five levels below the North Station complex. The garage would have a direct connection to the depressed Central Artery when that end of the artery was complete. Thomas Glynn, General manager of the MBTA, sees the "T" collecting some \$6 million in revenue for parking spaces, where other folks, although they don't deny that the "T" should provide more parking, feel it's more prudent to place those parking spaces outside the city, and encourage use of public transportation into the city. The development of the North Station/Boston Garden/office tower complex as a modern transportation center, sports complex and business center is seen as a seed for extensive rehabilitative growth for the entire north end in the years to come.

As said before, parts of City Square now see sunshine where it hasn't shone for many a year. Also, with regard to the former Army/Navy YMCA, some of you have said, probably quite appropriately, that it also served as the B&M "Y" as it served as a layover facility for many a B&M'er in days of steam, milk, mail, Railway Express and 23 tracks.

For many years since World War II, Boston has grown vertically, adding many thousands of square feet of office space. Little or no growth has occurred in roadways or parking facilities; nowhere near equivalent to the floor space expansion. Built in the 1950s for 75,000 cars a day, the old Central Artery now carries some 190,000 vehicles on a daily basis making it what has been written "as the most congested highway in America" with an accident rate twice the national average. The Sumner and Callahan tunnels crossing under the harbor are similarly overburdened and outmoded.

The Central Artery/Tunnel project expands and improves two of New England's interstate highways, I-93 and I-90 (Massachusetts Turnpike). Current plans are to make the new Central Artery, replacing the elevated section of I-93 with a new underground eight-to-ten lane roadway. It will also extend the Mass Pike through the South Boston Fan Pier area (another area expected to grow dramatically) and on across the harbor through a new four-lane harbor tunnel.

Most of the \$4.2-billion cost for the project will be born by the federal government in what has been described as the largest public works project in the nation now. There are several problems remaining to be resolved before the "Big Dig" is fully underway. Some problems involve funding, and Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation Frederick Salvucci has been

under considerable fire for authorizing the initial work of some of this project before the full appropriation from Washington has been given. Moreover, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with well-known fiscal problems of its own has failed to appropriate its own share of \$1.2 billion, (\$48 million up front) as was required. This has given cause to Washington that perhaps Massachusetts is unable to fund its share. This aspect has carried into the gubernatorial race.

Other concerns center around where the material dug up for the depressed artery is going to be placed. Along with the Boston Harbor cleanup, material is still expected to be deposited on Spectacle Island increasing the size of the island considerably, and ultimately creating a park. There are many folks who believe that we'd all be better off if this project was not undertaken at all. After ten years, if the project is completed on time, we'll have an additional lane in each direction which would be occupied fully today, we'd have one more lane in the Central Artery.

[ABT]

### **#4266 GOES OUT ONTO MOUNTAIN DIVISION**

Several months of negotiations between the Town of Bartlett, NH, the Conway Scenic RR and the Maine Central RR resulted in an agreement June 14 to allow a train to visit Bartlett for the town's Bi-Centennial celebration on June 16. The CSRR's Route 16 (Main Street) crossing in North Conway, which had been disrupted by sewer construction, was repaired June 15 and all was ready for the 470 Club's F-7 #4266, disguised as MEC #687, to depart North Conway at 7:00 AM June 16 for Bartlett. Its train consisted of MEC RPO 409, CSRR ex-CNJ coach, hopper B&O 829839 (used by the MEC for many years in ballast service), the 470 Club's BAR refrigerator #7765, wooden MEC boxcar #35059, the 470 Club's red, white & blue BAR #2573, and Bob Allen's/Roger Robar's ex B&M caboose. The run was made without incident with stops along the way to photograph the train. At Bartlett the train was posed for photos at the freight house and then uncoupled to pose with the passenger equipment and freight equipment separately at the engine house. Next the 687 was run around the train and moved eastward to the day's festivities at the Attitash recreation area from noon to 6:00 PM. Several residents commented on their surprise at hearing a train that day, and a couple of retired railroaders commented - "Where'd the 687 come from? They never had an engine of

that number on the MEC." At 6:00 PM the train departed for North Conway, arriving shortly after 7:00 PM. This was the first train to visit Bartlett since a work train on October 20, 1984.

[470 Club 7/90]

### **WHOOPS!!!**

No, it wasn't a cornfield meet in the May/June issue of the *B&MRRHS Newsletter*, but it did embarrass your editor. Several of you sent in articles from many sources about the GTI layoffs coming out of East Deerfield operations, but the primary stories came through the *Greenfield Recorder* and the *Springfield Union-Times*. The publishers of the *Union-Times* are, of course, in Springfield, not Greenfield as printed. The stories attributed to the *Greenfield Recorder* are credited properly. My apologies!!!

[ABT]

### **FORMATION OF AMTRAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

For those interested, an Amtrak Historical Society has been formed. You can make contact with them for information at:

Amtrak Historical Society

Box 1019

St. John's, AZ 85936

[Turntable Times/NNL 7/90]

Four of the 75 Kawasaki bilevel coaches ordered by the MBTA earlier are scheduled to be delivered in August. The bilevels which seat 185 are being assembled in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in an agreement worked out earlier this year with General Electric Company management.

They will be delivered through Framingham to the Boston area across the Conrail main (formerly Boston & Albany). Initial plans heard last week at a meeting of the Commuter Rail committee of the MBTA Advisory Board is to split up the delivery of the initial four bilevels and place two on the north side and two on the south side. Then both the north and south sides will split their pair up into singles so that on any given day, four commuter rail trains will be carrying a bilevel coach.

Ralph Duval, Director of MBTA Commuter Rail Operations, was heard to say that some of the passenger loading density that exists now, particularly at the Attleboro and Mansfield station stops could fill a nine bilevel coach train today. They'll be fun to watch for, because there have never been bilevel coaches in service north of New Jersey/Long Island area.

#### **ONE-WAY (DOUBLE) FARE COLLECTION EXTENDED TO FRAMINGHAM LINE**

Because of the success of the one-way fare collection experiment on the MBTA's Lowell line, the experiment is continuing for a undisclosed period while being expanded to the Framingham line on the former Boston & Albany line. Many will remember that B&M crews operated commuter rail trains on this line in the late 1970s when Conrail declined the operation.

The MBTA plans to start one-way fare collection on Monday, July 30, 1990 after holding hearings with the Lowell commuter rail line customers and meeting with the Commuter Rail committee of the MBTA Advisory Board. Such a collection utilizes the full complement of the crew in the direction of collecting double fares, and permits the reduction of a crew member when no collection is made in the other direction. Most train crew members are retained to open and close doors and traps as necessary and ensure safety.

In the Lowell experiment, fare collection (double fares) is on the inbound trip while logistics on the Framingham line suggest that fare collection (double fares) is more easily implemented on the outbound trip.

One aspect of the Framingham experiment that is different from the Lowell line experiment is that for a major part of the Framingham line between South Station and West Newton, an MBTA express bus line serves the same population. It has been reported that under normal circumstances, along part of the route, the bus is faster. [Editor's note: Not so this morning, July 16, when this editor had the occasion to ride the Framingham commuter rail line from Framingham, and the traffic on the Massachusetts Turnpike was backed up for miles after a tractor tank truck overturned on an overpass spilling diesel fuel across the three inbound lanes and down into Conrail's Beacon Park yards in Brighton-Allston. The Massachusetts Turnpike was closed for several hours to cleanup the yard and the highway.]

The MBTA management is watching these experiments closely, and are also monitoring the competing express bus line operation to watch for passenger leaks in the system. There seems little doubt based on the success of the Lowell line experiment, that some significant savings can be made in commuter rail operations without sacrificing any employees. It has been stated that no Amtrak employees who are contracted to operate commuter rail over former B&M, Boston & Albany and New Haven lines will lose regular hours. Some may lose overtime hours, but not regular hours.

The MBTA is interested in conducting a reasonable experiment, and will shut down the experiment if there are indications of losing money or quality of service are compromised. The MBTA has cooperated by good advanced publicity at the commuter rail stations involved and have provided the public with an address and phone number for the public to express their comments. Your editor sits on the Commuter Rail Committee of the MBTA Advisory Board and could verify for the most part that at least for this day, the public relations work has been carried out. It is believed that this type of fare collection for commuter rail is unique, that no other system in the nation is collecting fare this way.