

Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society
Incorporated

NEWSLETTER

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B&MRRHS Newsletter
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APRIL 18, 1991 Please note the date! The April meeting will be our annual joint meeting with the Mass. Bay RRE, and this year it is their turn to host our Society. The meeting will be held at their Newton facility, starting at 8:00 PM. The program will be **"Nostalgia Night"**; **Boston Rails 1950-1970**, presented by Robert LaMay.

**PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN
LOWELL FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL!!**

MAY, 1991 Tentatively scheduled for the May meeting's entertainment will be **Mr. Don Elbert, Jr.**, Executive Director of the **National Railroad Foundation & Museum** in Newport, RI, who will be speaking about the meeting, as well as their efforts on the restoration of 2 B&M passenger cars. Following Mr. Elbert's presentation will be the second half of the **"B&M RAILROAD SHOW"** (1st half of which was shown in March). If you were there in March, you won't want to miss the second half!

JUNE 1, 1991 Our annual trek to Lincoln, NH for **RAILFAN'S DAY** on the **HOBO RAILROAD**. Those of you who attended last year know that an excellent time was had by all. Please see inside for more details.

JULY 28/29, 1991 The Society will be active with the B&M car at Lowell's Annual International Folk Festival. More on this at a later time.

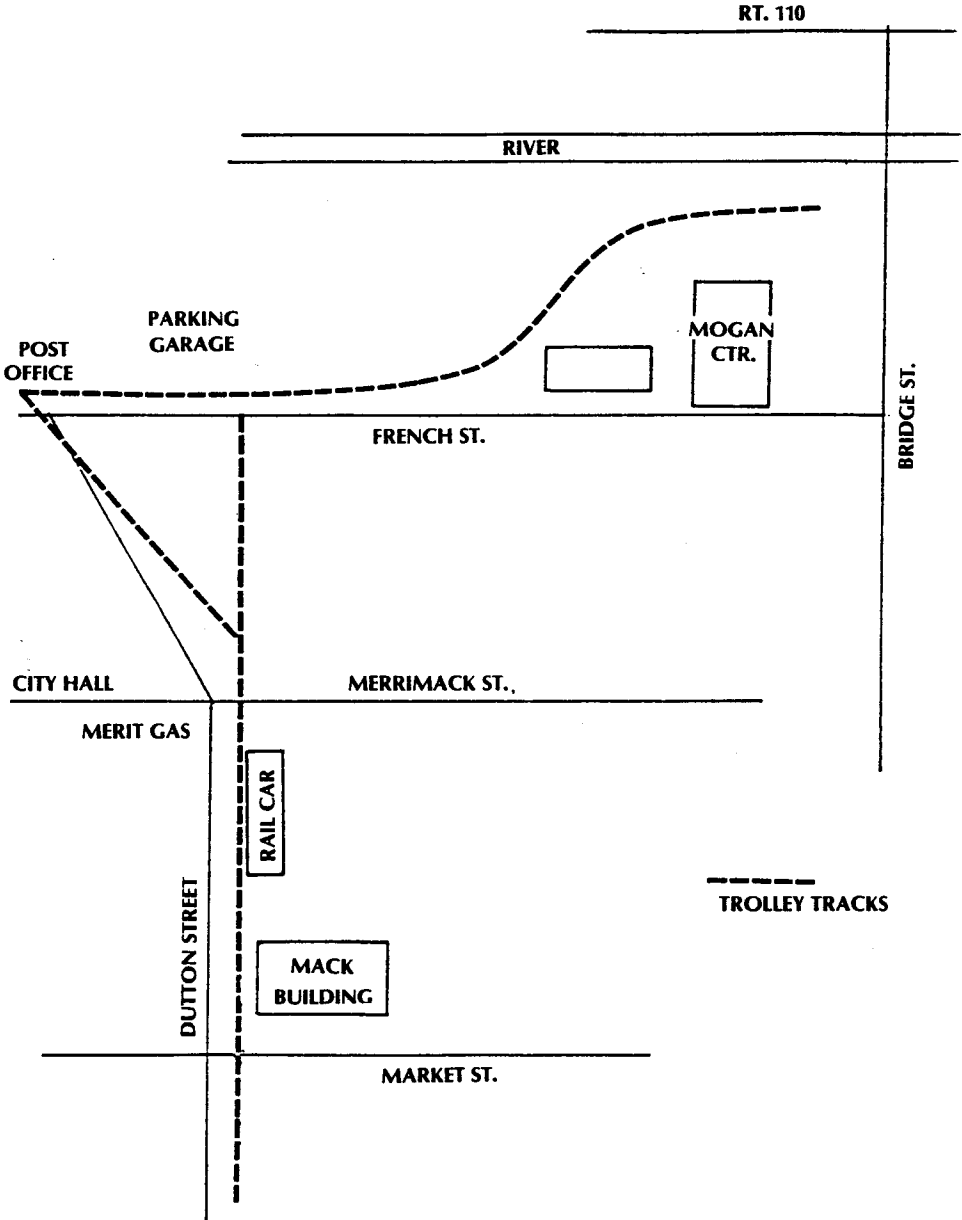
OUR APOLOGIES . . .

In the **January / February** Newsletter, we enclosed an orange form that you could fill out and mail back to the Membership Secretary should you not wish to receive anything other than your regular Society mailings. Due to the lateness of the January / February Newsletter, we were unable to intercept mailings from two companies who had requested and been granted a one time use of our mailing labels. We apologize for the inconvenience that this may have caused for anyone who had requested that their name be deleted from these mailings, and rest assured that your name has been deleted at this time. The Board of Directors

SOCIETY MEETING LOCATION

Please note that the Society is still meeting at the Mogan Cultural Center, 40 French Street, Lowell, MA. The Mack Building is still closed, but we will keep you posted as to when it will be open to us again.

The Mogan Center is located about 1½ blocks from the Post Office in Lowell, directly behind the High School and in front of the Lowell Trolley Tracks. (see map below).



As the newsletter went to press, we were saddened to learn of the passing of Ron Eames, past editor of the B&M Bulletin. The officers & staff of the Society extend their sympathies to Ron's family and friends. All who knew Ron will agree that the world has lost a true gentlemen and good friend.

ANNUAL RAILFAN DAY AT THE HOBO!

June 1, 1991 will be the annual Hobo/B&MRRHS railfan's day, this year combined with a Motor Car weekend. Many activities have been planned, including; special runs, shop tours and a dinner train. More details will follow, but please reserve the date for a great day of railfanning on the Hobo railroad in Lincoln, NH.

THE NEW ENGLAND RAILROAD COMPANY IS LAUNCHED

A long-vanished name in Yankee railroading reappeared this past year when the *Railroad Museum of New England* formed a subsidiary, the New England Railroad Company (NERRCo). NERRCo will supervise the rail operations of the Museum. The new company is preparing an employee timetable, and has adopted the NORAC code of operating rules used by virtually all northeastern rail carriers.

THE RMNE continues to expand its 32-acre Willamantic "Air Line Yard" facility. During the summer of 1990, the Connecticut Department of Transportation gave RMNE permission to occupy and improve the remaining three tracks in the former New Haven RR yard, and engine terminal north of Bridge Street.

The General Electric Company has donated the 45-ton Lynn Massachusetts River Works switcher #3 to the RMNE. The Erie-built 1942 siderod diesel ran under it's own power onto a flat bed trailer via a temporary ramp in mid-December for shipment to the Museum's new yard site in Willamantic, Connecticut. The #3 will be used as a yard switcher. The Mass Bay RRE helped cover moving costs of the old GE diesel. [MBRRE Callboy 1/9]

CORRECTION

In the January/February Newsletter it was said that the speed record of 60 miles per hour was set between Boston and Lowell, when in reality, it was between Boston and Lawrence. I thank the sharp eyed readers for correction me. [ABT]

WINNEPESAUKEE RR CONTRACT EXPIRES

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation has terminated its contract with the Winnepesaukee RR, and is soliciting requests for proposals to provide a passenger excursion on a portion of the state-owned Concord to Lincoln line between Northfield and Meridith, NH. [Mike Lennon through Manchester Union, 470 2/91]

GTI TURNS OVER BERKSHIRE LINE TO HOUSATONIC RR

The Housatonic Railroad has finally acquired the former New Haven Berkshire Line north of Canaan, Connecticut to Pittsfield, Massachusetts in mid-January from Guilford Transportation Industries, Inc. ST's last northbound train on the Canaan Running Track returned to Canaan on January 9th.

An hour after taking over the line, Housatonic RS3M #9935, painted in HRR's green and gold livery handled the first job. Housatonic was using #9935 on the south end of the line because brush had been cleared from the tracks. Locomotive #7324 is still in Conrail blue, and Housatonic would just as soon have it kissed by the branches that currently hang out over the former Guilford track. The north end train is symbol NX-12, identical to the symbols used by the former New Haven Railroad. [Narragansett Newsletter]

MAINE DOT BUYS 49 MILES OF TRACK AND RIGHT-OF-WAY

The state of Maine in early March bought rail tracks needed to create a rail service centered on Brunswick, according to the Maine Department of Transportation.

Using \$4.5 million approved by the voters last November, the state bought about 35 miles of lines between Church Road in Brunswick and Maple Street in Augusta from Guilford Transportation Industries. The sale was made in late February.

"This puts together a cohesive hub," said Michael Murray, head of the rail division.

The Augusta-Brunswick line is in fairly good shape except for a few washouts caused by spring floods three years ago, said Murray.

Also purchased were 10 miles of line from Brunswick to a point just beyond the Lisbon Falls Industrial Park and 4.4 miles between Brunswick and East Brunswick connecting previously acquired lines of the Rockland Branch to Augusta and Lisbon Falls.

The total price was \$5.2 million, the extra \$700,000 coming from money set aside to buy parcels for "Park and Ride" programs, Murray said.

Murray could not give exact dates on when passenger and freight service could resume on these lines, but did say it was only a matter of time. "It's not if. It's when."

Maine DOT Commissioner, Dana Connors heralded the purchases. "This \$5.2 million agreement marks another milestone in the preservation of Maine's existing rail network and provides us a major opportunity to encourage increased rail use in the future," Connors said in a prepared statement.

"We've acquired three major pieces of what we hope will become a revitalized rail network, allowing us to expand beyond our present operations on the Rockland Branch between Rockland and Brunswick, Connors said.

Under the agreement, Guilford keeps the right to serve Bath Iron Works at the Hardings Plant and the right to operate freight over the Lewiston Lower Road.

Passenger service from Augusta south to Portland and beyond will depend largely on an Amtrak study due this June, Murray said. [Portland Press Herald 3/5/91 through Steve Cook]

RAIL UNIONS SEEK TO OVERTURN RECENT ICC RULING ON GTI

Rail labor will ask a federal court to overturn the Interstate Commerce Commission's ruling in mid-February setting a 75-day limit on job protection payments to workers affected by the creation of the Springfield Terminal rail system in 1986.

After years of heated dispute at the Commission and in court rooms throughout the Northeast, the ICC last week virtually accepted Guilford Transportation Industries Inc.'s request to severely restrict payments to displaced workers.

The suit will be filed at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia after the ICC issues its written decision in the case next month, attorneys for labor said last week.

This suit most likely will be consolidated with three related cases arising out of the bitter five-year dispute between Guilford — which owns the Boston & Maine, Maine Central and Portland Terminal — and the unions.

"We most definitely will be meeting the ICC at the courthouse," Elizabeth Nadeau, a labor attorney, told Traffic World.

This is the latest move in a bitter dispute that began in December 1986 when Guilford signed a series of leases with its Springfield Terminal's unit that effectively shifted management of its larger railroads to the tiny terminal carrier.

Guilford immediately put Springfield Terminal's wage and work rules, which were far more liberal than those covering the companies other carriers, into effect on its other lines.

All this was done under special ICC procedures allowing the transaction before an agreement, covering working conditions and job protection for employees affected by the transaction, was reached with the unions.

ICC labor protection conditions that cover such transactions — commonly called the Mendocino Coast conditions — require that affected employees receive up to 75 days in pay and benefits. During this 75-day period — in theory at least — an implementing agreement is to be negotiated with the unions.

In this case, however, it took well over three years — during which there were two strikes — before Guilford was able to reach an agreement with labor covering the Springfield Terminal operations.

Language in the ICC's Mendocino Coast rules indicate that workers will receive additional payments if the final implementing agreement's provisions are different from what management used as a basis for making its payments to the workers.

Guilford also originally promised to make employees affected by the transaction whole for the period it took to put the Springfield Terminal leases in place. As a result, labor asked the commission to extend the make-whole conditions to cover all three years.

However, the agency, for a variety of reasons, refused to do so in mid-February.

Retaining the 75-day limit is a big victory for Guilford, since extending the period for all three years would cost the company between \$8 million and \$10 million, Guilford officials said.

This could have created a major cash flow problem for the cash-strapped rail system, and sources said company officials indicated an extension of the 75-day limit might have forced it to put its remaining rail units into bankruptcy.

The company's other railroad, the Delaware & Hudson, went bankrupt in 1988, and was eventually sold by the court trustee to Canadian Pacific Ltd., the giant Canadian firm that operates CP Rail.

Labor interests contend the bankruptcy threat played a major role in the commission's deliberations on grounds the agency is reluctant to put two New England railroads into reorganization.

The ruling is a major loss for labor, since it means that Guilford workers who lost their jobs will receive no benefits from March 1987 until November 1990.

The normal six-year labor protection coverage for workers affected by changes resulting from the Springfield Terminal operations thus became effective with the signing of the implementing agreements in November. Holding to the 75-day period could also deny most benefits to workers who, fed up with the delay in reaching a settlement, found other work during the three years.

Generally, the ICC regulations provide for payments to workers who lose their jobs as a result of mergers, sales and similar changes.

The agency should use the 75-day limit in the Guilford case because it represents fair balance of the various private and public interests involved in the case, ICC Associate General Counsel Henry Rush said.

Accepting labor's proposal would effectively create a nine-year period for job protection benefits which could prove quite expensive, Rush said.

The agency should consider extending the labor-protection limit or amend it to require that the make-whole period cover the entire period from the date a rail operation begins to when an implementing agreement is reached with the unions representing its employees, he said.

Continued on next page

Nancy Beirter, an ICC attorney working with a special agency task force created to resolve the Guilford mess, urged the agency to consider doing this immediately.

"An implement agreement cannot be negotiated within 75 days, which means this problem will exist if a transaction takes place before an implementing agreement is in place," she said.

It makes more sense to make the Mendocino Coast labor protection period substantially longer — Beiter proposed 180 days - or have it last until an implementing agreement between the carrier and its union is negotiated and put in place.

Beiter's proposal for instituting a rule-making at this time died aborning although comments by the commissioners indicate the issue will be looked at once the Guilford war winds down.

Commissioner Karen B. Phillips, for example, said it makes more sense to hold off until the Supreme Court issues a final ruling in a pending case dealing with the ICC's jurisdiction over labor issues.

ICC's chairman Edward J. Philbin indicated he thinks the agency should take a rest from Guilford and Guilford-related issues before getting involved in another labor related rule-making.

"This (the proposed rule-making) is a late comer to this particular bucket of worms," Philbin said. [Traffic World by David M. Cawthorne 2/18/91]

FROM THE MACK TOWER

The extension of the Eastern Line from Ipswich to Newburyport is still alive, but until sufficient funding is available, this observer is not sure how well it is. The Route #1 bridge in Newburyport just south of the Newburyport traffic circle has been cordoned off and a parallel bypass built over the tracks. The bridge has been in poor condition for several years, and is deteriorating quite rapidly. Reconstruction of the bridge by the DPW is part of the restoration of the Newburyport commuter rail service. [ABT from MBTA and various sources]

The Eastern Line from Ipswich to Boston, and the Gloucester Branch from Rockport to Boston have had their timetables revised with some trains, generally off-peak hours, with as much as 12 minutes being shaved off. The continuous welded rail has been laid between Everett to Salem in both directions accounting for the restoration of "normal service." Trip time is now the fastest since the North Station fire, and the Beverly-Salem bridge fire. The track from Beverly to Ipswich, and Beverly to Rockport had been upgraded shortly after the Beverly-Salem bridge fire. In the spring, the grade crossings in Everett-Chelsea will be upgraded completing the restoration of the Ipswich and Rockport lines.

On the Reading/Haverhill line, the roof of the Wellington Tunnel has been removed as part of the work to accommodate the higher clearance of the F-40s and the bilevels. There has been a run around using a short distance of Guilford track going off toward Medford, Massachusetts.

Work on the Reading Station, which had begun last spring has been completed. The area underwent expanded parking, extended platforms, handicapped access platforms, new lighting and general cleaning and refurbishing.

The first four of the bilevels which arrived in Boston last August will be back in regular service soon according to a report from the MBTA. Following three weeks of running on all lines on both the North side and the South side, the four were sent to Pittsfield for final modifications. It was reported that a fifth double-decker has arrived arrived on site, representing the first of the production vehicles. It appears that the new vehicles will be in the 700/1700 series, with the 700 numbers for plain coaches, and the 1700 being cab control coaches. As with the numbering of all MBTA series, the "1" prefix designates a cab control car.

Springfield Terminal adopted the Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee (NORAC) rules January 6, 1991. Made up of most of the major railroads in the Northeast, including Conrail and Amtrak, NORAC represents a unique effort by member railroads to develop a single set of special instructions, and employees must continue to learn the physical characteristics of any territory over which they operate, Ken Strout, systems director-operating rules, states that having a large number of railroads consolidate their individual rules into a single rules book offers a number of advantages.

According to Strout, "in the past, employees would have to learn a new set of rules in order to operate in another railroad's territory. Now by learning only one set of rules, along with special instructions and physical characteristics, they can operate over all NORAC member railroads." Thus the need to cross train employees using several rule books is eliminated, and the overall number of training courses each employee must attend is reduced at a substantial cost savings for each railroad. Further, by consolidating the rules, the amount of material each employee must learn is made more manageable. Stout says this reduction in workload enhances safety for employees. "With a smaller number of rules to learn, procedures are simplified and it is more likely that employees will perform their jobs safely."

In addition, Strout says "using one set of rules to govern operations makes it easier for the connecting railroads to

interface with one another." As a result, NORAC fosters greater cooperation between railroads. Given the intense competitiveness among transportation modes in the current economic climate, railroads are learning that it is increasingly important to collectively market their services. Under NORAC rules, it is easier for railroads to design innovative marketing strategies which enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of the rail option.

NORAC meets every other month for three days to write, review and modify its rules in an effort to improve the safety and efficiency of railroad operations. Representatives from Springfield Terminal's Rules Department actively participate in these meetings and before joining, worked to ensure that several of the old rules governing ST employees were adopted by NORAC. Most significant in these discussions was the decision by NORAC to accept ST's Voice Control System (VCS) rules which, in most cases, govern railroad operations in "dark territory," that is, territory without electronic signals. ST considers its VCS rules to be the most efficient way to control operation in these territories.

Training of Springfield Terminal employees on the NORAC rules took place throughout last year, and was complete in time for the changeover to the new rules in January. Under NORAC rules, ST employees will be required to return annually to take part in a follow-up rules review program.

[Guilford Express, Fall/Winter 1991]

Did you catch the nice cover photo on the Interurban Press catalog for winter/Spring 1991??? Shows the Budd-built Minuteman #6000 slipping out of North Station close to old track 20 between the Boston Garden and the Hotel Manger. It's a nice lead-in to page 3 of the catalog where the new-yet-to-be released, all color volume, full of B&M railroading throughout New England for three decades can be found. [ABT]