

Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society
19 *Incorporated* 71

NEWSLETTER

Patrick Abegg, Editor • P.O. Box 418 • Gloucester, MA 01930 • Email: bmrrhs@ix.netcom.com

Visit the B&MRRHS on the web at <http://come.to/bmrrhs>

Meeting/Membership Telephone Number (978) 454-3600

November-December 2000

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— B&MRRHS CALENDAR —

- NOVEMBER 11, 2000** Buddy Winiarz will do a presentation at the Lowell meeting from the slide collection of Don Robinson.
- DECEMBER 8, 2000** Our annual "Members Night"—Members and friends are invited to bring up to 50 slides or a 15 minute railroad video.
- JANUARY 12, 2001** Carl Byron will be giving us a slide show on the B&M in the 1970's. Carl will be signing copies of his books as well.
- FEBRUARY 9, 2001** Dr. Bruce Heald will be giving a presentation this evening.

*The Directors, Officers and Staff
of the B&MRRHS wish evryone a
Happy Holiday Season!!*

All Lowell meetings are held on the second Saturday of any given month in the BOOTT MILLS THEATER (2nd floor) at 3:30 PM unless otherwise noted. If you forget what the program will be please call the Society's phone line.

WINTER MEETING CANCELLATIONS

With the winter months upon us again, we remind everyone that if a snowstorm or other serious weather situation warrants such, the B&MRRHS meeting will be cancelled or postponed. To find out whether the meeting has been called due to weather, we ask that you call the society's answering machine after 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

And as usual, we ask that when in doubt, you should use discretion—if you don't want to drive in it, we probably don't either!

Society Addresses

Membership:
B&MRRHS - Membership
P.O. Box 9116
Lowell, MA 01852

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Which address should you use? For membership payments, use the membership box in Lowell. For any correspondence concerning the Newsletter, use the Newsletter box in Gloucester. Everything else should go to the Derry address. This includes catalog orders and correspondence with the Archives, Historian, Bulletin, and Board of Directors. As always, include a SASE or postage if you want a reply to your correspondence.

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

As of September 1, 2000 dues in the following categories will be going up. The B&MRRHS hasn't raised dues since 1988 and with the rising costs of printing and mailing we have to do it. At the May meeting of the Board of Directors it was voted on to do so.

Basic from \$25.00 to \$30.00
Basic + from \$27.00 to \$32.00
Foreign and Canadian from \$35.00 to \$45.00

At the same time, we are raising the newsstand price of the Bulletin to \$10 per issue.

The Board of Directors has voted to institute a \$28 charge for returned checks. This applies to all Society transactions. This reflects the expenses that the Society incurs when a check is returned.

MEMBERSHIP

Please look at your mailing labels of the Newsletter. If you see a BLUE DOT it means that you are on the verge of being deleted from the B&MRRHS Membership list.

A RED DOT means that this is the last item you will be receiving from the B&MRRHS.

These two dots refer only to those members from 1999 who have not renewed their memberships. Back in October and November of 1999 all members were sent a renewal notice. The only other notices to be sent are those that are to be renewed in the year 2000.

The Society did have problems with the Membership and now stands updated on the membership.

Dues payment ONLY should be sent to:

B&MRRHS---Dept. M
PO Box 9116
Lowell, Ma.
01852

If you have a question on your dues you may e-mail me at:

CPC835@JUNO.COM

Or write me at:
B&MRRHS DEPT--M
PO BOX 469
DERRY, NH
03038

Please include a SASE or postcard for reply-thank you.

*Buddy Winarz,
Membership Sec.,
B&MRRHS*

Fallen Flags

HARRY A. FRYE

We are sad to hear that noted B&MRRHS Historian and railroad historian, Harry Frye of New Hampshire has passed away from complications of leukemia.

Harry was a unique and valued member of the Society, and served as Historian for as long as any of us can remember (at least back to 1974). All of us in the Society have benefited from his work and will miss him and his contributions to the preservation of the history of the Boston & Maine.

B&MRRHS/SPRRHS JOINT SHOW A SUCCESS

I want to express my sincere thanks to everyone who helped with the TRAINS UNLIMITED show on August 27. We would not have been able to carry out this function without the dedicated help of all you. Due to the closing of the hall we had booked in March, we had to find a new location and time for the train show, a challenge for us. Although attendance numbers were low, the sales were good at the society's tables, almost \$900.00. We plan to return to the March date in the year 2002.

Jim Nizgus

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Correction from John Collins

In the Sept-Oct 2000 Newsletter you have a news item from me about the Brockway Smith siding in Andover. My original post was provided to you when the California products building was just being started.

Since then it is obvious that the siding does not, and cannot, go to California Products. Rather it goes into the back of Brockway Smith. Several pieces of rail have been replaced along with a number of ties on the curve.

However, as of this writing, the siding has not been used.

REGISTRY BUILDING AT NORTH STATION COMES DOWN

The state office building on Nashua Street, Boston, has been torn down to make way for highway and subway construction. This building was best known to the public as the Registry of Motor Vehicles. It appeared in many railfan pictures as it stood to the immediate west of the passenger tracks. The B&M Bulletin cover from issue XVII/3 "featured" the building as the background to P-4 Pacific 3712 in Preston Johnson's photograph.

This was the last standing of the buildings that framed the tracks at North Station in so many of the classic pictures of the terminal. First the Hotel

Manger, then the 100 Causeway Street building, then the North Station/Boston Garden itself, and now the Registry. The elevated expressway is now the oldest piece of the picture, rather than the youngest as it was in so many B&M shots.

XO TOWER

"A new historical marker has been erected this summer beside the hulk of former XO Tower in Mechanicville, NY, proclaiming it the side of 'Historic yards' of the D&H, Fitchburg and B&M lines. In 1912, Mechanicville Yard was the third largest in the US. The tower is slated for future restoration as a new tourist center which will overlook CP467 interlocking, where the joint D&H and B&M mains diverge."

Railpace Magazine 9/2000

THANKS

Thanks this issue go to: Steve Myers, Tim Gilbert, Bob Warren, John Collins. Richard Muse, Buddy Winiarz, Richard Muse, Bruce Bowden, Ellis Walker, Steve Cook.

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the January/February Newsletter is December 2, 2000. Please send all items to the Newsletter address or E-mail. News items, especially local items not likely to be reported in Boston, will be greatly appreciated.

In the Trivia Department...

According to the February 13th, 1932 "Railway Age," between January 1st and February 7th, 1931, Timken's "Four Aces" was operated on the B&M as part of its 21 month 100,000 mile tour operating on 13 different railroads testing roller bearings.

Timken #1111 was a 4-8-4 Northern built by Alco in 1930 for the express purpose to test an all roller bearing locomotive in operations - freight, passenger, or on one road, as a pusher. First operated by the NYC in freight service on April 14th, 1930, #1111 had been subsequently tested by the PRR, C&O, ERIE and New Haven.

On page 195 of Swanberg's "New Haven Power," there is a photo of three well dressed executives pulling the #1111 with a rope which was a standard demonstration showing the lack of friction. The New Haven handed over the Four Aces to the B&M on December 26th, 1930.

On the B&M, the #1111 was employed on the Rigby-Boston and Rigby-Worcester runs - 35 of them amounting to 4,193 train miles hauling a grand total of 2,813 cars for a total of 310,385 car miles and 13,338,313 gross ton miles. The trains averaged 28.79 MPH.

On January 24th, #1111 hauled 86 cars (3,040 gross tons) 112 miles in 3 hours 14 minutes running time (33.74 MPH) when the temperature was 20 degrees.

On February 11th, the D&H took the #1111 on a light move from Mechanicville to Binghamton where the tests continued on the DL&W. Subsequently, the #1111 was tested on the Lehigh Valley, NKP, Alton, MoPac, Burlington and the Northern Pacific where the Four Aces passed the 100,000 mile mark.

Eventually, the Four Aces was bought by the NP and was numbered #2626.

The "Four Aces" was probably the largest steam locomotive ever to operate on the B&M. The engine without the tender weighed in at 417,500 pounds Barely eking out the R-1's 416,100 pounds.

Timken's "Four Aces" was not the heaviest steam loco to operate on the B&M - the two 0-8-8-0 Mechanicville Switchers (1922-1929) weighed 465,000 pounds and the four 2-6-6-2 Helpers (1910-1912) may have weighed more.

Tim Gilbert

BEMIS BRANCH ABANDONMENT

The Surface Transportation Board (successors to the Interstate Commerce Commission in railroad regulation) rules on abandonment petitions involving all common carrier railroads. Documents from recent years are available on their web site (www.stb.gov), and the recent approval of the abandonment in Watertown is reprinted here (abridged) as an example of the economics of the modern B&M.

BOSTON AND MAINE CORPORATION--ABANDONMENT--IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY, MA

Decided: August 11, 2000

By application filed April 28, 2000, the Boston and Maine Corporation (B&M) seeks authority under 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon and discontinue service on a line of railroad known as the Bemis Branch in Waltham and Watertown, MA,

extending from milepost 8.83 to milepost 10.94, a distance of 2.11 miles, in Middlesex County, MA. Notice of B&M's application was served and published in the Federal Register (65 FR 31630) on May 18, 2000.

B&M states that the line it proposes to abandon is a dead-end branch line with no agency or terminal stations. According to applicant, traffic over the line has declined due to the decision by the major shipper on the line, Americold Logistics Corporation (Americold), to ship its freight by truck rather than by rail. B&M states that, although Americold shipped 192 carloads of food products in 1998 and 105 carloads in 1999, this shipper has decided to close its Watertown

facility and convert its real estate into an office park. (1) Applicant indicates that a second shipper, Sterritt Lumber Company, also located in Watertown, shipped 17 carloads of lumber products in 1998 and 21 carloads in 1999. During the base year, (2) B&M operated a total of 83 trains over the line on an "as needed" basis via a local train originating at Ayer, MA. B&M states that, because the line is bordered by State Highway 20 and Interstate Highway 90, trucks are readily available to the shippers on the line.

During the base year, B&M received revenues attributed to the line totaling \$175,540 and incurred costs of \$143,583, yielding a base year operating profit of \$31,957. However, based on a projected gross revenue of only \$27,452, due to the loss of Americold's business, B&M projects a forecast year operating loss of \$22,519.

We find:

1. The present or future public convenience and necessity permit the abandonment of the above-described line, subject to the employee protective conditions in Oregon and the condition that B&M leave intact the portion of the right-of-way between milepost 9.72 and milepost 10.94, including bridges, trestles, culverts and tunnels (but not track and track materials), for a 180-day period from the effective date of this decision, to enable any state or local government agency or any other interested person to negotiate an acquisition for public use.

B&M CAR RESTORATION IN THE PRAIRIE STATE

To prevent further deterioration and "restoration damage", I have championed two cars at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois, B&M cafe/coach 1094 and B&M diner 1090.

As I understand it, these cars showed up here as a result of a trade. The shop superintendent at the East Deerfield shops wanted to retire these two cars in work train service, replacing them with a single more up to date diner. The general manager at IRM somehow got wind of this and offered to find a car, with the overall idea of having an all-wood train operating on the IRM trackage. This in fact he did, purchasing a diner in the South with museum funds and having it shipped to East Deerfield. Had anyone else in NE done this they could have had these cars, but they may not have known this, perhaps did not have had the funds or foresight, or else felt that the cars should have been an outright gift which the shop superintendent would have obviously rejected. Then these two cars languished in the yard for a couple

of years, because no other railroad would accept them over their rails while the storage charges to the museum mounted and mounted. Finally, the shop superintendent gave an ultimatum to get them off the property or else they would be destroyed, and with no other options available, eventually the trucks and steps were removed and the cars placed on lowboys for the over-the-road shipment to IL. Then at the museum the cars were set back on their trucks but the steps were left off the deteriorated ends, a condition which exists to this day.

After arrival, cafe 1094 was found to have extensive water damage to the roof and ceilings so it was placed indoors, where it remains in a convenient location for me to work on and for the public to view from an elevated walkway. Diner 1090 apparently had been extensively vandalized while in service and afterwards, and the interior had been gutted and redecorated by the railroad but the roof was in good condition, so the car is still out of doors like so many other pieces of equipment here. Last weekend I discovered that this roof too has started to deteriorate, and plans are in the works to work on the roof and to mothball the car with blue tarp.

After arrival the "modern stuff" was ripped out in the winter of 1997, leaving a 1090 "bowling alley" and 1094's kitchen area now a storage area for parts from another Pullman diner undergoing long-term restoration. In this particular barn, work space and storage space are at a premium since the passenger coach dept. lacks a separate shop, requiring a constant search for a place to put items. Incidentally, all cars at the museum have a track storage charge applied toward the budget of each department registered for that car, much higher for indoors, so there is a lot of incentive either to have them earn their keep as display or operating pieces, or else relegate them to a sad deterioration or parts salvage. Hence volunteers are important not only to care for and restore a particular piece of equipment but also to save that equipment from benign neglect and decay.

I began work on the cafe car 1094 in June, 2000. My objective was to first establish myself as a willing volunteer in the passenger coach department, also to improve 1094's visual appearance to the casual visitor, next to upgrade the existing interior with a modest investment of time and energy, and finally to get into the same nitty-gritty that you had experi-

enced in rebuilding major components that had either deteriorated or had been removed long ago.

The cafe section still has the original overhead lights, and the six tables to which more modern diner seats and Syracuse china have now been added.

Years of grime are still being removed from the windows and car interior, but the peeling ceiling paint still needs attention. In the coach section, antique Pullman berth seats replaced the original seats, a conductor's swivel chair and desk had been added in the back of the seating section, and across from it had been installed a Weil-McLain oil-fired boiler for self-contained heating. This had necessitated the removal of one small window and its stained glass upper section, and the replacement of the original siding with matching siding in the process to install the boiler and oil tank. As a result, only a bit of the commode sections remain, the Men's room door, a cabinet door and both mirrors! Someone cared about this car and seemed to sense it might someday be saved!

Ted Anderson

LAUNCH OF NEW AMTRAK SERVICE TO VERMONT DELAYED TO 2001

Amtrak service between Albany, N.Y., and Manchester, Vt., won't begin this year, as Vermont Gov. Howard Dean had hoped.

The earliest the new service could begin is summer 2001. State officials were targeting a November startup date, the Associated Press reported.

But a two-month delay in acquiring welded rail needed to upgrade Vermont Railway's track south from Rutland to Manchester has pushed back bidding for the trackwork contract. That will in turn delay trackwork, which must be completed before weather turns cold.

Meanwhile, Vermont officials are awaiting a report from Amtrak on the capital and operating costs of service to Manchester.

In a related story, Amtrak has priced the cost of starting this service at \$70M.

B&MRRHS WEB SITE

For those that are computer connected, the B&MRRHS has a web-site. The address for it is:

<http://come.to/bmrrhs>

This is the "Official Web Site of the B&MRRHS." Any other sites are not sanctioned by the B&MRRHS. Thanks go to Jonathan Miner, the webmaster of the site.

"AT HOME ON THE BOSTON AND MAINE"

Tim Gilbert has produced the following list of cars with the Mystic Transportation Company reporting marks. The original article contained much more detail on each of the series, but has been shortened for space.

In 1927, the Boston & Maine changed the reporting marks of a number of their freight cars from "B&M" to "MTC," the initials of B&M's Mystic Transportation Company which operated the rail-marine operations in Boston.

I had believed that this change was made to promote the MTC, but an item on page 291 of the August 13th, 1927 RAILWAY AGE has proved my hunch wrong - the item has been transcribed in entirety following:

"BOSTON & MAINE TO ANALYZE REPAIR COSTS"

"It is usually rather difficult to determine just how much it is costing a railroad to maintain any specific series of freight cars, or what proportion of the total different parts are responsible. When cars are repaired on foreign lines, the ARA billing repair cards are passed through the MCB clearing house for approval. The cards are mixed with many others coming in from all parts of the country, thus making it a rather tedious task to pick out cards covering a certain series of cars."

"L. Richardson, mechanical superintendent of the B&M, has placed into effect a simple scheme for checking up the maintenance costs of eight series of cars. He selected a number of cars from each of the following series:

- A) 25 Boxcars, Steel Center Sills,
- B) 50 Boxcars, Steel Underframes,
- C) 25 Boxcars with 40-Ton Trucks,
- D) 25 Boxcars, ARA (new),
- E) 25 Steel Gondolas with 40-Ton Trucks,
- F) 25 Steel Gondolas with 50-Ton Trucks,
- G) 25 USRA Coal Cars and
- H) 25 Flatcars.

"The Boston & Maine designation has been removed and the cars have been stencilled MYSTIC TRANSPORTATION COMPANY, AT HOME ON THE B&M, which provides a guide to foreign lines in billing for repairs. The cars stencilled are all in good condition. The ARA Billing Repair Bureau has the numbers of these cars and special accounts have been provided for them. Whenever a billing repair card comes in bearing the MTC initials, the billing clerk will enter the charges in the proper special account. Any repair cards originating on the home lines will also be similarly marked and accounted for. In this manner, an accurate record will be kept of the maintenance cost for these cars with no increase in personnel and with a minimum amount of extra work.

"The costs will be carefully sub-divided by parts of cars. A monthly report will be submitted to the mechanical superintendent by the ARA Bureau. By making a careful analysis of these reports it is hoped to determine what parts of each series require abnormal maintenance and then steps can be taken to

reduce the excessive costs either by redesigning the part or specifying new materials." (END OF ITEM)

The cars were randomly chosen meaning that the car numbers were not consecutive. Considerably more cars were selected to carry MTC reporting marks than the amounts indicated by the item in RAILWAY AGE in 1927.

Besides the cars cited by RAILWAY AGE, there were other car series which were given MTC reporting marks both "retroactively" and those series purchased after the 1927 RAILWAY AGE item was published.

I) Fifteen 34' WUF Coal Cars were listed in the November 1930 ORER as having MTC marks.

J) Five of the #33000-33499 36' Flat cars were listed as having MTC marks in November 1960.

There were four car series acquired after 1927 which included MTC marks. Unlike the prior cars, the MTC car numbers were consecutive.

K) MTC #8000-8024 were quad hoppers built in 1929-30.

L) There were Twenty-one MTC #71975-71995 1923 ARA Single-Sheathed boxcars with Pennsy Flat Ends and Reverse Creco doors.

M) MTC #71996-71999 were all-steel 1923 ARA Boxes acquired in 1929-30 which were very much like the PRR's X-29's except for the Reverse Creco Doors and "ARA" door hardware. The MTC cars were four of the twenty-five X-29's the B&M bought in 1929-30, The others were numbered into the B&M #71954-91974 series. MTC #71997 and #71998 were renumbered into #70997 and #70996 respectively as a result of the 1956 deal with Hyman Michaels. #71996 and #71999 were off the roster by 1965. I have never seen a photo of a B&M "X-29" with a Youngstown door although it is quite likely that the ten renumbered #70988-70999 series got them while being refurbished for the Hyman Michaels deal.

N) The last twenty-five cars in the #92000-92749 41' 6", 4' 8" Inside Height, drop bottom nine-panelled steel gons were numbered MTC #92725-92749 when acquired in 1936-37.

O) The first 25 PS-1 40' 6" boxcars in the \$74000-74499 series had MTC marks when acquired in 1947.

As far as I can determine, this was the extent of cars provided with MTC marks. According to the ORER's, however, "MTC" was an official reporting mark up until the 1980's although it seems unlikely that it was applied on any acquisition after 1947.

BOSTON - PORTLAND SERVICE UPDATES

WELLS, Maine (AP) Mile by mile, workers are creeping northward as they replace tracks for Amtrak's long-awaited Boston-to-Portland run. Even though the rail rehabilitation is expected to be completed in December, the daily service, once set to start in 1993, has been delayed again because of another construction project.

While the date of the inaugural run has not yet been set, there may be special trains, like to ski areas or sporting events, before April on the

tracks that aren't shut down by work on the Big Dig. When regular service begins, stops will include Portland, Biddeford and Wells in Maine; Dover and Exeter in New Hampshire; and Haverhill, Mass. The trains also would make

summer stops in Old Orchard Beach. Passenger trains along that route last ran in 1965.

The 114-mile trip, with all stops, is expected to take 2 hours. A roundtrip ticket from Portland to Boston is expected to cost between \$30 and \$35. But potential riders are not holding their breath.

By Jennifer Vento, Portsmouth Herald Contributing Writer

EXETER - Passenger train service from Portland to Boston, still scheduled to start in April, is expected to include four round-trip trains that will bring passengers from Exeter to Boston in roughly an hour for a one-way fare of \$9.

The latest details from the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority indicate that train service will take roughly 2.5 hours to travel from Portland to Boston. While not designated as a commuter train, the service will easily accommodate a 9-to-5 job in the Boston area, according to Mike Murray, executive director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority.

The train will stop in Wells and Biddeford/Saco, Maine, Dover and Exeter, N.H., and Haverhill, Mass. The route will include additional stops at Old Orchard Beach, Maine, during the summer and Durham, N.H., on weekends.

Intermediate departure and arrival times have not yet been set.

Officials predict that although the train service is aimed at day-trippers, it could also begin to alleviate commuter traffic. "It isn't a coincidence that this train originates in Maine for an 8:25 a.m. arrival in Boston,"

Murray said. The Portland-to-Boston route isn't custom-made for commuters.

NOTICE OF ARCHIVES HOURS

The B&MRRHS archives are located in the Patrick Mogan Culture Center at 40 French St., Lowell, Ma. They are generally open Mon.—Fri. 9 to 5 and Sat. 10 to 3. Closed Sun. and holidays. For further information and to see if they are open call 978-934-4997 or 4998.

It doesn't leave every hour and cannot compete with MBTA commuter rail fares, but it will give commuters an option during peak times. "If it looks like a commuter train and arrives at commuter times, some people might say 'Let's commute.'" If the commuter demand grows, Murray said, more runs may be added but, currently, there is only one track laid in the Portland-to-Boston corridor.

>From Staff and Wire Reports

Transportation officials believe limited passenger rail service between Boston and Portland could start as early as January, but riders probably won't be able to board in York County.

The long-awaited project is scheduled to be completed by April, Nate Moulton of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority said Thursday, although some stops on the route could have service by January.

Wells Town Manager Jonathan Carter, who is also chairman of the passenger rail authority, today said the rail service could debut with promotional trains that "might" pick up passengers at stations between Portland and Boston if those platforms are ready.

"What will be happening is, as the Amtrak crew will be training we will hopefully commence event trains, so if the Historic Society of Maine wanted to schedule a tour of the Museum of Natural History in Boston, we would sell seats," he said.

The tracks will be done in December but scheduled service won't start until the spring, Carter said. The event trains, which have not been approved by the rail authority, would be a way to acquaint the public with the service and bring the system on line.

Moulton estimated the round-trip ticket at \$35, but added the exact amount and fares to and from other stations have yet to be finalized.

He added that about 250 passengers will be able to travel on each of the four daily trips.

(abridged from press accounts)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!!!!

The Lowell National Park Service is currently seeking volunteers to assist with trolley operations. The turn-of-the-century trolleys provide transportation between the Visitor Center and other exhibits. Trolley motorman and conductor volunteers will operate the trolley through historic downtown Lowell, flag the trolley safely through intersections, assist passengers with boarding and disembarking the trolley, and provide information to visitors. Training is provided.

To volunteer or for more information, call 1-978-970-5032.

NEWER POWER—NEW TRAFFIC—NEW OUTLOOK—FOR THE WEST END

Guilford Rail System plans to buy 20 four-axle locomotives to handle the railroad's increasing traffic (Note; Word has it that these are to be primarily ex-CN GP40-2's) No date for purchase has been set.

Guilford's current road-locomotive fleet is mostly secondhand GP40's. One place the new power will likely be found is on the West End of the former B&M. The Conrail breakup gave Guilford direct connections to both CSX and Norfolk Southern in the Albany, N.Y., area, and has boosted business.

At times in recent years, Guilford's West End hosted a lone daily through train in each direction between Portland, Maine, and Canadian Pacific subsidiary Delaware & Hudson at Mohawk Yard near Schenectady, N.Y.; semi-weekly coal trains bound for power plants in Massachusetts and New Hampshire; and a local.

Now, however, as many as eight trains per day, plus coal extras, run over the former B&M and through the historic Hoosac Tunnel, longest bore in the East. The Portland-Mohawk trains are joined by East Deerfield, Mass.-Saratoga Springs trains that go to CP; the Ayer, Mass.-Chicago intermodal trains run in conjunction with Norfolk Southern; and Portland-Rotterdam Junction trains of CSX interchange traffic. Until this July, the Rotterdam Junction traffic moved over CSX's former Conrail Boston & Albany route. Although Rotterdam Junction, N.Y., was always technically the interchange point, in practice Guilford and CSX (and formerly Conrail) exchanged traffic at Barbers Station, Mass., near Worcester, under a haulage agreement dating to 1990. The agreement made operational sense when Conrail was far and away Guilford's main interchange partner, and all of the traffic had to go through Conrail's yard at Selkirk, N.Y. Lower clearances along the B&M route, including Hoosac Tunnel, provided another incentive for Guilford to divert the traffic away

from its own rails. But no more.

"With the money we've invested in the West End, it made sense" to run the traffic over the former B&M, Guilford President David Fink says. Besides doing trackwork and laying welded rail, Guilford cleared Hoosac Tunnel and the rest of the B&M as far as Ayer to handle 19-foot, 6-inch double-stacks—the same clearance available on the parallel and competing B&A. All Rotterdam Junction traffic—consisting mainly of paper-industry related business bound to and from the Midwest—is now routed over the B&M. Other CSX interchange traffic, mainly destined for points in the Southeast, still runs via the B&A, Fink says.

Transit time remains unchanged, Fink says, and the Rotterdam Junction trains sometime run through to Buffalo, N.Y., over CSX using Guilford power. Still, both Guilford and CSX say they want to build more run-through traffic. "We all need to work together," Fink says.

The above report was largely excerpted from a report in Trains Magazine on 10-18-2000 forwarded to us by the NERail discussion group.

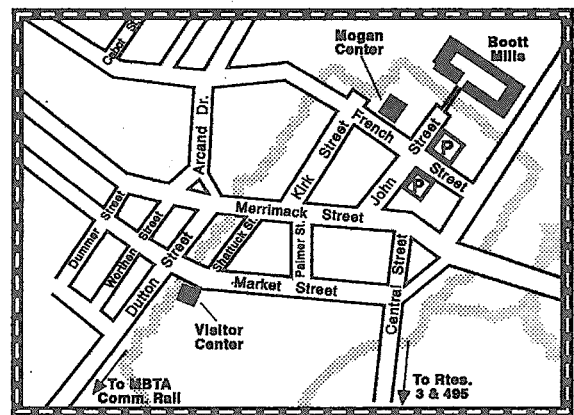
Recent trips to East Portal and conversations with railfans locally confirm that things are, indeed, looking up. In addition to the increased frequency of trains, work has been taking place to upgrade much of the main line with new ties, ballast and even some welded rail being installed in various places.

Much remains to be done following the line's decade of relative neglect, but things appear to be moving in the right direction.

John Alan Roderick

DIRECTIONS TO THE LOWELL MEETING PLACE—at the traffic light near the Mogan Center, take a right or left depending on which way you come down French St., go past the little guard shack (Parking lot is on right—Boarding House Park is to the left), Walk over the trolley tracks and bridge. Into the courtyard, bear to the right and go to the end. The doorway will be lighted. Also look for signs.

VISITORS MUST PARK IN THE LOT ON FRENCH STREET—NO PARKING IS ALLOWED IN THE COURTYARD.



ITEMS OF INTEREST

- December 9-10, 2000. Railway Express XVII Toy Train and Model Railroad Show. Newbury Fire Station Memorial Hall, 3 Morgan Ave, Newbury MA. 10am-4pm both days. Adults \$3.00, Children (5+) \$1.00
- January 6, 2001 Wenham Museum Model Railroad and Railfan Meet. Winthrop School, Bay Road, Route 1 A, Hamilton, MA. 10am-4pm. Adults \$3.50, Children (6-14) \$1.00
- February 3-4, 2001 Big Railroad Hobby Show. Eastern States Exposition Center, West Springfield, MA. 9am-5pm both days. Adults \$6.00, Children (5-11) \$1.00.