

# Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society

19 *Incorporated* 71

# NEWSLETTER

Patrick Abegg, Editor • P.O. Box 418 • Gloucester, MA 01930 • Email: [bmrrhs@ix.netcom.com](mailto: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 2002

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## — B&MRRHS CALENDAR —

**NOVEMBER 9, 2002** Frank Ellis will be giving a presentation on the Boston & Maine.

**DECEMBER 14, 2002** Members night.

**JANUARY 11, 2003** Program not set at press time

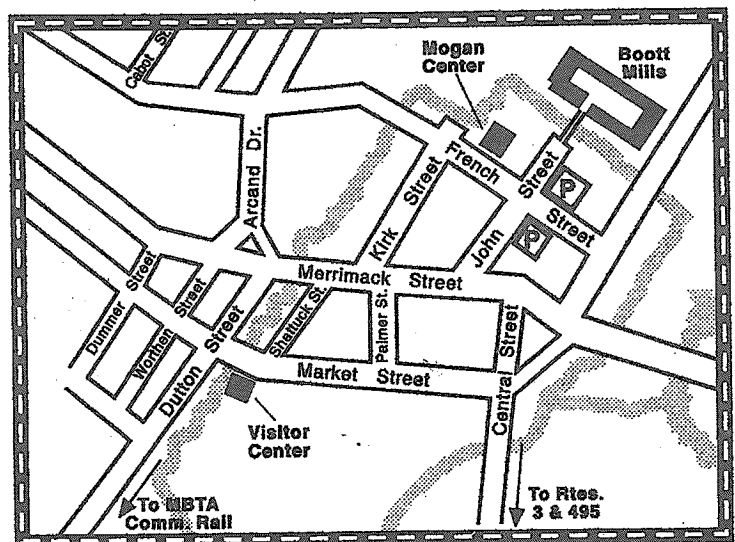
**FEBRUARY 8, 2003** Program not set at press time

*Meetings at 3:30 Saturday unless otherwise indicated*

*The Officers, Directors and Staff  
of the B&MRRHS  
Wish Everyone a Safe and  
Happy Holiday Season!*

**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.**



## MEMBERSHIP INFO

### Membership:

Dues payment only should be sent to:  
B&MRRHS - Dept. M  
P.O. Box 9116  
Lowell, MA 01852

### Newsletter:

B&MRRHS  
P.O. Box 418  
Gloucester, MA 01930  
E-mail: [bmrrhs@ix.netcom.com](mailto:bmrrhs@ix.netcom.com)

### Business Address:

B&MRRHS  
P.O. Box 469  
Derry, NH 03038  
E-mail: [CPC835@JUNO.com](mailto:CPC835@JUNO.com) (*Please note change of e-mail address*)

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.

Please remember to remit your dues within 90 days-after 90 days you will be removed from the mailing list. Check your Newsletter for the RED DOT...this is the last item you will receive from the Society.

Return payment in the return envelope with your check or money order ... DO NOT send cash as the Society will not be held responsible if lost. Make checks payable to: B&MRRHS.

If you change your address please let the Society know by snail mail (USPS) or e-mail. When you do not let us know it costs extra for postage...the first mailing, the return postage due and a second mailing to the correct address. Three mailing payments to one person.

MEMBERSHIP Renewals are sent out every month with a return envelope with all your membership data on it..PLEASE return in the renewal envelope. If you need to change something on the label PLEASE insert on a piece of paper as it makes it easier to correct. You have 90 days to renew, your renewal month and the next two months after. If after the third month you have not renewed I have to remove you from the Membership List, it is the Society's policy. Thank you.

### E MAIL

Due to a slight problem with AOL, I am reverting back to the old E-Mail address of: [CPC835@JUNO.com](mailto:CPC835@JUNO.com)

This is for general information of the Society and membership status only. Archival and historical information should be sent to the Archives for now. Please go to the Society's web site for other addresses.

## SOCIETY OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND STAFF

President	Mike Basile
Vice President	Buddy Winiarz
Treasurer	Allan Klatsky
Secretary	Buddy Winiarz
Clerk	Ellis Walker

### Board Of Directors

James Nigzus, Jr  
Brian Bollinger  
Russell Munroe, Jr.  
Daniel Hyde  
John Goodwin  
Wayne M. Gagnon  
Patrick Abegg  
George "Sandy" Shepherd  
Paul Kosciolk

### Alternate Directors

Ellis Walker  
Allan Klatsky

### Staff

Historian	Russell F. Munroe, Jr.
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Program Chairman	Vacant
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Model Projects Coordinator	Vacant
Bulletin Editor	Andrew Wilson
Layout And Art Director	John Alan Roderick
Contributing Editor	Craig Della Penna, George H. Drury
Webmaster	Jonathan Miner

## MEMBER CORRESPONDENCE

*I read with keen interest the article in the Sept./Oct. Newsletter about the Lisbon, NH old B&M RR Station. Much has happened since the May 20th newspaper article was written.*

*In late June the Railroad Station was purchased by Dr. Marvin Kendall of St. Johnsbury, Vt. Dr. Kendall out bid the town for the station. At the present time the town has not received word what Dr. Kendall plans to do with the station. Dr. Marvin Kendall owns the Passumpsic Railroad located in Barnet, Vt. along with a vast number of railroad related items which include rolling stock, a Rutland bridge and a restored Heisler steam locomotive.*

*Roger Robar*

## B&MRRHS Board of Directors Minutes (Excerpts)

**JULY 13, 2002  
LOWELL, MA**

In attendance: Jim Nigzus, Dan Hyde, Paul Kosciolk, Buddy Winiarz, Allen Klatsky, Ellis Walker, Wayne Gagnon, Sandy Shephard, Mike Basile, Pat Abegg  
Meeting called to order at 10:20 AM.

The June minutes approved and accepted on a motion by Gagnon 2nd by Klatsky. No Reports from: President, V. President, Bulletin, Archives, Programs.

### REPORTS

Treasurer: \$2,545.00 in Checking, \$51,900 in Savings \$10,000.00 cd will be transferred to savings account in August 2002.

Accepted and carried on a motion by Nigzus 2"d by Hyde

Clerk Files are setup and in order.

Membership: As of July 13, 2002 23 have 1200 members.

Newsletter: May/June sent. July/Aug. will be sent to John A Roderick for setup to printers.

Hardware: Crossing lights have been anonymously donated.

410: Last spring session was held June 28th, half the 410 was painted, one side of combine has been resided. Windows will be put in cab in the fall.

Models: Flyer for the new car in the newsletter. Pre-sale of about 40 cars.

Shows: Concord, NH in Sept., Pepperell in Oct., Hub Div. in Nov.

### OLD BUSINESS

Nominations VP-Wayne Gagnon

Dir. Buddy Winiarz, Jim Nigzus,

Allen Klatsky

Sec.-Buddy Winiarz

Clerk: Ellis Walker

Alt. Dir.:Ellis Walker

Nominations close 9-14-02.

Folk Festival Last weekend of July.

Information on building some type of "layout" for Society use will be done.

The next Bulletin and the calendar will be done by Phoenix/Vermillion printing.

Next BoD meeting 9-14-02 at 1:00 PM in the Boott Mills.

Motion to adjourn by Hyde 2"d by Gagnon..carried 11:49 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Buddy Winiarz,

Sec. B&MRRHS

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2002**

**BOOTT MILLS LOWELL, MA.**

In attendance: Jim Nigzus, Dan Hyde, Paul Kosciolk, Buddy Winiarz, Allen Klatsky, Mike Basile, Wayne Gagnon, Russ Monroe, John Goodwin and Andy Wilson.

Meeting called to order at 1:30 pm.

July minutes read and accepted on motion by Gagnon 2nd Monroe: amended on a motion by Gagnon and Hyde that nominations close Oct 12, 2002 not Sept. 14, 2002.

Agenda accepted with following additions: Town of Shirley; PBS show: Mack Building on motion by Hyde and Gagnon.

There were no Reports from: President, VPresident, Clerk, Hardware.

### REPORTS

Treasurer: \$66,978.03 In savings, \$4,489.32 savings, \$109.00 Interest accepted on a motion by Winiarz 2nd by

Goodwin.

Membership: September renewals mailed. 1185 members.

Newsletter: Sept-Oct 2002 mailed.

Bulletin: Presently at printers. One more before year is over. We need price list from Vermillion, have one from RIP. Bulletin Editor Wilson will make final decision on printer.

Archives:Buddy Winiarz and Paul Kosciolk received bundles of B&M blueprints from Larry Boyd, ex B&M employee and are in storage.

410: Four work sessions planned before winter.

Models: Boston & Lowell cars are selling good. Possible Laconia flatcar next

Shows: The Society participated in the Concord, N.H. show and did \$650 in sales. Pepperall show Is Oct. 10.

Programs: Set through December 2003.

### NEW BUSINESS

Town of Shirley, Ma. Is Interested in the Society partaking in their 250 anniversary.

Use of photos from Bulletin on B&M bridge in Northfield, Ma. for PBS show from Ed Klekowski will be forwarded to Archives Chairman Rick Nowell.

We are being "evicted" out of Mack building. A work session will be needed to transfer items to storage center.

The third Heald book is for sale and Arcadia wants a fourth soon.

Next meeting October 14, 2002 in Boott Mills at 1:00 pm.

Motion to adjourn by Basile 2nd by Nigzus carried ... adjourned 3:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Buddy Winiarz,

Secretary, B&MRRHS

### INTERCHANGE...

As a not-for-profit retirement hobby, former B&M RTC Alden Dreyer buys, sells and trades historic Boston and Maine RR paper. Currently in rapidly-diminishing stock: many out-of-print B&M BULLETINS, about half of the 284 B&M Employees' Magazines and about 42 different ETT's and 24 PTT's, plus numerous out-of-print books with all or mostly B&M content. Also, nearly complete files of TRAINS, RAILROAD, L&RP, NESL, SHORELINER, etc. FREE LIST via USPS or email. Contact Alden Dreyer, 91 Reynolds Road, Shelburne MA 01370, alden.javanet@rcn.com, eBay: alden, 413-625-6384.

### THANKS

Contributors to this issue of the Newsletter are: Michael Lennon, Bob Warren, Roger Robar, Alden Dreyer, Bob Willner, Roderick Hall, Bob Terhune, Peter Victory, Wayne Gagnon, John Luczynski

### NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the January/February Newsletter is December 7, 2002. 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.

## FLYING YANKEE UPDATE

from Carl E. Lindblade, CHA

The Restoration of the Flying Yankee has reached a critical point in terms of restoration and money.

The restoration work has finally begun on the restoration of the Winton 201 A engine. While we do believe this is in fact the original engine we do know that it is an original model. The Boston and Maine owned about seven of these engines and the one being restored is one of those.

The pistons and liners, after initial false starts, have been re cast and machined to exacting tolerances. Once the re-machining was done they've were sent out to be micro examined and during that process internal flaws were detected that have now been corrected.

The original block has been treated and is ready for service as is the original shaft.

It's important to note that the Board of the Flying Yankee is determined to restore the Winton 201 A because of the defining technology it represents in the history of American Rail motive power. It might have been easier to purchase a new diesel prime mover but we'd have under served part of the mission of the Yankee to celebrate innovative technology.

With a major change in organization at the Claremont Concord Railroad the Board is confident the Winton will be "cranking" as early as this December.

Fund raising. The project has cost far more than originally envisioned and to complete the train will cost an estimated \$500,000 which at the moment we do not have. The train is also indebted to the Morrell family for 1 million dollars that they have loaned (In addition to the 1 million-dollar grant from the Morrell Family Foundation)

We are actively pursuing funding opportunities both large and small.

If the additional money can be found then the Flying Yankee can accept an invitation to the B and O Museum's celebration of 175 years of Railroading in American, an event to be held in late June, in Baltimore, of 2003.:

Carl Lindblade  
The Flying Yankee  
Glen NH 03838-6000

Cell 603 731 0650  
Land 207 697 2353  
Email celassoc@pivot.net

*(Editor: Carl added the following in an exchange of notes with the Editor)*

The more we can circulate the need for this last part of the funding the better chance we have of success.

The project will come in right around 5 million dollars. To be whole we need 1.5 million of the 5 million but can finish the train with \$500,000.

If you have any thoughts, they are most welcome.

We remain completely committed to the project and the mission.

Thanks for the continued support of the B and M Historical Society.

Carl Lindblade

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## FLETCHER QUARRY TOURS PLANT TOURS-VISIT A WORKING QUARRY!

Please note - we are booking group tours now.

There are three different categories of tours which we will be running this year. All tours start with a short presentation in the conference room at the original Fletcher House. This building was once a great mansion - constructed from granite. The presentation will cover an overview of such subjects as quarrying, fabrication, uses of granite, and the Fletcher products.

Following this, everyone will board our own short line railroad train, and venture down deep into our Chelmsford quarry. This quarry is one of New England's largest, as well as one of this country's longest continually quarried sites. After touring the quarry, the train will bring you into our fabrication facility, where you will see granite being manufactured into building products, bridge products, curbing products, and landscaping products. You will be able to view first hand our production methods from our most modern computer controlled saws -- to the craftsman's skilled use of hand tools.

All tours are at no cost to you and are limited to 50 persons at a time. Reservations are accepted by phone and/or e-mail. Please inquire as soon as possible.

The three categories of tours are:

- Open to the general public.
- Open to businesses and individuals in our related work area. These include architects, engineers, designers, landscape architects, general contractors and site contractors.
- Large groups. If you have a large group such as an association, school group or organization, who would like to tour our facility, we will make separate arrangements for you ..... please contact us for coordination and dates.

### Tour Dates

For all tours, please notify us at least 48 hours in advance if you are planning to attend.

Phone:

Telephone: 800-253-8168 or 978-251-4031

Fax: 978-251-8773

Contact Information

e-mail - wardg@fletchergranite.com

— *Fallen Flags* —

**Janet Shea**

of Union NH passed away late in September.

She worked for the B&M for 42 years as telegraph operator and agent at several Conway Branch stations. She was the last agent at Dover, before the position was eliminated.

She appeared in a thirty minute video on the N.H. Northcoast produced by NH Public Television in 1992. Although not in good health in recent years, she was able to ride the Downeaster last winter.

**John L. Farnham Jr.**

**NORTH HAVERHILL** - John Leon Farnham Jr., 78, of 861 Clark Pond Road, died Sept. 19, 2002, at the Veteran's Administration Hospice Care Facility in the V.A. Hospital in White River Junction, Vt.

He was born July 3, 1924, at Old Cottage Hospital in Woodsville, son of John and Mildred (Higgins) Farnham. He graduated from Haverhill Academy in 1942. He served in the U.S. Army in Africa, Italy, France and Germany during World War II, until 1945.

He worked for the Boston & Maine Railroad in 1947 as a brakeman/conductor, retiring in 1984. He had been engineer of the scenic Hobo Railroad in Lincoln until July 22 of this year.

**William V. Furey, Sr.**

Retired General Manager and Superintendent of the Boston and Maine Corp. passed away unexpectedly on August 22nd in Melrose. Born in Somerville 76 years ago, he was a graduate of Somerville High School and a WWII Navy veteran receiving the Purple Heart.

He went to work for the Boston and Maine in 1946 as a clerk and ascended to the position of General Superintendent, retiring in 1986.

He leaves his wife Anne, six children, eleven grandchildren, four sisters and two brothers.

## **DOWNEASTER DELIVERS RELIEF**

Sunday, September 1, 2002  
Portland Press Herald Report  
Copyright 2002 Blethen Maine Newspapers Inc.

Amtrak's Downeaster rail service from Boston has boosted southern Maine businesses this summer, slightly helping to ease the effects of a stumbling economy.

Tens of thousands of visitors rode the rail into Maine for day trips and longer vacations, beating Amtrak's expectations and bumping up area businesses along the line which otherwise had slow tourist seasons.

The success of the Downeaster may prove a feather in the cap for cash-strapped Amtrak, currently seeking a more than \$1 billion bailout from Congress following a string of crises this year.

But state tourism officials and business owners project that, despite high ridership on the Downeaster, overall tourist revenue this summer may not have grown because of travelers' concerns over the economy.

"What we're hearing is that business this summer was basically flat," said Steve Lyons of the Maine Office of Tourism. "Nobody's saying it was terrible, but nobody's saying it was fabulous, either."

The Downeaster service was introduced in October 2001 amid much fanfare in the business community, which hoped it would bring in more tourism dollars by adding to the traditional summer vacationer influx from the Northeast corridor.

The business community wasn't completely disappointed.

The service carried 194,304 people from its startup through July,

far exceeding a projected ridership of 108,200 for that period, according to Amtrak. In July alone, the railway carried 29,683 people; it was projected to carry 27,200 for the month.

The Downeaster makes local stops in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine, including in Wells, Saco and seasonally in Old Orchard Beach. Most business owners are pleased with the result.

"What we're seeing is certainly no disappointment to Maine businesses," said Vaughn Stinson, director of the Maine Tourism Association. "Anything that brings more people in and exposes people to Maine is very good for us. There's a lot more demand for the rail than people thought there would be."

Still, business owners and associations say southern Maine has not gotten enough of a boost to completely counter the effects of a slow economy and a fear of flying since last year that has cut the number of visitors from outside the region.

"Business has been slow this year due to the economy and I think due in part to 9/11," said Sue Cox, who runs the Inn on Carleton on Portland's West Side. "But the train has only helped business."

Cox said she often gets weekend guests by train from Boston, many of whom consider the train ride a highlight of the trip.

"People have stopped through as a result of the train, but not enough," said Mark Johnston, owner of Vic and Whits wine shop in Saco. "Most of the people who come through are from places like Buxton and Dayton, and they're here to get on the train. This is a staging area for export."

Maine's so-so tourist season places it within a national trend.

## ...DOWNEASTER DELIVERS RELIEF (Continued)

Growth in U.S. travel during major summer holidays has been basically stagnant relative to last year, with only a slight increase in travel during the Independence Day holiday and a slight decrease expected during the Labor Day holiday, according to surveys by the Travel Industry Association of America.

While an unimpressive tourist season nears its end in southern Maine, businesses along the rail continue to offer resounding support for the Downeaster, saying business would be worse without it.

The largest beneficiaries of the Downeaster have been the hotels and inns along the train's route that provide the rail-riders with lodging, according to tourism officials.

"There are a number of properties that have benefited from the Downeaster service, particularly for overnight stays," said James Harmon, executive director of the Old Orchard Beach Chamber of Commerce. Harmon said his members believe this year's tourist season in Old Orchard Beach is very close to being as strong as last year's.

The Downeaster started serving Old Orchard Beach in early July.

"The service has definitely been a plus," said Ray Deleo, manager of the 10-room Atlantic Birches Inn in Old Orchard Beach. "We've had roughly 10 couples that said they got here by the train service and likely wouldn't have made it otherwise because they don't enjoy driving."

On Tuesday afternoon, the Downeaster arrived in Old Orchard Beach with roughly 30 passengers disembarking, most of them from

Greater Boston.

"I used to come here as a boy, and now I'm thrilled that there's a train service," said Arthur Slate of Stoughton, Mass., who arrived with his wife, Fran, and his son, Gary. "This is my first time using this train, and my first time back in Old Orchard for many years."

Another passenger, Jerry Friedman, said he and his family drove to Wells on the weekend but used the Downeaster to take a day trip to Old Orchard - a move that saved him the hassle of parking his car.

"I love trains because you can just sit back and relax," he said.

While statistics on sales and travel in Maine are not yet available for July, economic indicators for June from the Maine Office of Tourism are mixed.

Maine border crossings were down nearly 18 percent in June from the previous year to 350,194 crossings, while arrivals and departures from the Portland International Jetport declined nearly 9 percent to 118,500, the office said.

Restaurant sales in June increased by slightly more than 2 percent, while lodging revenue fell roughly 2.5 percent, the office said.

June's year-to-date restaurant sales were up nearly 6 percent and lodging revenues for the same period were up 2 percent, the office said.

"It's tough to say how the summer has been with any certainty until all the figures come through," said Lyons.

July figures are expected by mid-September.

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## LOWELL OFFICIALS SEEK BETTER SAFETY AFTER MAY LEAK

THE LOWELL SUN, August 27, 2002

By CHRISTOPHER SCOTT, Sun Staff

LOWELL Nearly three months after a parked tanker car leaked about 200 gallons of hydrochloric acid into the Concord River, the head of the rail company responsible for he stored rail car refused to cooperate with the city on improving rail safety. In a meeting with the Rail Safety Task Force at City Hall, David Fink, executive vice president of Guilford Rail Systems, yesterday rejected a recommendation that the railroad notify local public-safety officials when full chemical tank cars, like the one that leaked, are being stored in the city. "Then we'd have to do it in Lincoln, Maine and hundreds of other locations," Fink said.

He said he would take under advisement another suggestion that the railroad consider storing such cars in more secure locations, where there is regular surveillance by railroad police. "It's another thing to think about," said a noncommittal Fink. The May 31 leak from a tank car left unattended on a trestle bridge over the Concord River near Lawrence Street enraged neighborhood activists and city officials, who say the railroad has been apathetic to their concerns. In addition to the formation of the task force, the spill prompted

U.S. Rep. Martin Meehan to request a federal review of laws regulating the transportation and storage of hazardous chemicals. But in his first meeting with city officials since the spill, Fink did nothing to ease neighborhood concerns. He defended his Billerica-based company's record and called Guilford "a good corporate citizen," angering city officials and

neighborhood activists.

"He was just a total jerk. He totally blew us off," Carol McCarthy, co-chairman of the Sacred Heart Neighborhood Improvement Group, said after the meeting. Rail cars are frequently left unattended in that neighborhood. "And then he tells us he's corporate-minded and a man of the people? Please," McCarthy added. During the meeting, city representatives also expressed frustration with Fink and his company. "I'm not feeling like we're getting anything from the railroad," fumed Democratic state Rep. David Nangle, who lives in the Sacred Heart neighborhood. "How hard would it be just to make a simple notification?"

"I think I've answered that question," Fink said. "So it's, basically, you won't do anything more or anything less than what federal law requires," City Council member Eileen Donoghue inquired. "That's right," Fink replied. Les Fiorenzo, Federal Railroad Administration deputy regional director, said his agency's investigation of the spill has uncovered no wrongdoing by Guilford. Federal law allows rail cars carrying hazardous materials to be stored for up to 48 hours, excluding weekends. Furthermore, there are no regulations that require railroads to make local notifications. "But we do encourage railroads to be good corporate neighbors," Fiorenzo said.

Fiorenzo said the most effective way for a community like Lowell to change federal regulations is through its local congressman. In a June 14 letter, Meehan, a Lowell Democrat, asked the General Accounting Office, the independent investigatory arm of Congress, to "identify any gaps in law or regulations and offer recommendations as appropriate to improve the safety and security of rail hazardous materials shipments."

# NAMED B&M TRAINS

Bob Warren sent along this list of named B&M trains  
Boston & Maine named passenger trains (5/48 AAR document)

Name	Road(s) operated over	Between	Overnighter	NYNH&H; B&M	New York- Woodsville- Berlin,NH
Alouette	B&M; CP	Boston- Woodsville- Montreal	Patriot (#) Paul Revere (#) Penobscot Pine Tree	B&M B&M B&M; MeC B&M; MeC	Bedford-Boston Boston-Bedford Boston-Bangor Boston-Portland- Bangor
Ambassador	B&M; CV; NYNH&H	Boston-White River Jct.- Montreal	Portsmouth Down Portsmouth Up Red Wing Skier (w)	B&M B&M B&M; CP B&M	Portsmouth-Boston Boston-Portsmouth Boston-Montreal Boston-North Conway-Intervale
Bar Harbor (s)	CP; NYNH&H; B&M; MeC	Washington- New York- Bangor- Ellsworth	State of Maine Vermont, The	NYNH&H; B&M CV; B&M; NYNH&H	New York-Portland St. Albans-White River Jct.-New York
Beachcomber (s)	B&M	Boston-Portland	Washingtonian	CN; CV; B&M;NH; PRR	Montreal to New York & Washington
Beach Special (s)	B&M	Boston-Concord- White River Jct.- Plymouth	Winnepesaukee (s)	B&M	Boston-Plymouth
Cannon Ball	B&M	Boston-Portland	(s) Summer only (w) Winter only (w*) Winter only - week-end snow train (#) Commuter train		
Cheshire	B&M	Boston-White River Jct.			
Connecticut Yankee	NYNH&H; B&M; CV; CP	New York- Boston-White River Jct.-Quebec			

## Boston & Maine named freight trains (AAR document)

Name	Road	Scheduled Run	Number or
Day White Mtns	NYNH&H; B&M; B&M; CN		
Down Easter (s)	NYNH&H; B&M; MeC	Boston to Mechanicville	
East Wind (s)	NYNH&H; MeC	Portland, to New York	
Eastern Slope (w*)	B&M		
Flying Yankee	B&M; MeC		
Green Mtn, The	NYC;B&M; Rutland; NH		
Gull	B&M; MeC; CP; NYNH&H		
Kennebec	B&M; MeC		
Minute Man	B&M		
Monadnock	B&M		
Montrealer	PRR; NHH; B&M; CV; CN		
Mt. Royal	NYC; B&M; Rutland; NH		
New Englander	B&M; CV; NYNH&H		
Night White Mtns (s)	NYNH&H; B&M		
North Wind (s)	NYNH&H; B&M		
Woods			

Name	Railroad	Scheduled Run	Number or
Big Chief	B&M	Boston to Mechanicville	
BM 3			
Bullet, The	B&M; NH	Portland, to New York	
M 7			
(Maine Bullet, The)	PRR; NH; B&M	Greenville to Portland	
M 6			
Champion	B&M	Rotterdam Jct. to Boston	RB 4
Champlain	B&M	Bellows Falls to Boston	XB 2
Clipper	B&M	Portland to Mechanicville	PM 1
Coaster, The	B&M	Wells River to Boston	UB 2
"Dairy, The"	GTW; CN;		
Dirigo	B&M	Chicago to Boston	490
Forest City	B&M	Worcester to Portland	P 2
Frontier	B&M	Mechanicville to Portland,	MP 2
Hubber	B&M	Boston to Bellows Falls	BX 1
Maine Bullet, The	B&M; NH	Mechanicville to Boston	MB 6
(Bullet, The)	PRR NH B&M	Portland to New York	M 7
New Englander	B&M	Greenville, NJ to Portland,	M 6
Newsboy	B&M	Rotterdam Jct to Boston	RB 2
Night Hawk	B&M	Portland to Worcester	N 1
North Start	B&M	Mechanicville to Worcester	MW 2
Pathfinder	B&M	Boston to Wells River	BU 1
Scout	B&M	Mechanicville to Boston	MB 2
Westerner	B&M	White River Jct. to Boston	JB 490
		Worcester to Mechanicville	WM 1



# MILFORD-BENNINGTON TOUR TRAIN EYED

By GIL BLISS

August 16, 2002

Union Leader Correspondent

WILTON — An excursion train run by an established railroad and backed by a prominent local businessman could prove to be a significant economic boost to this riverside town and several others up the line to Bennington.

Milford-Bennington Railroad owner Peter Leishman and Wilton businessman Stuart Draper are working on a plan that would run a weekend excursion line from Wilton through to Bennington and back again, about a 40-mile roundtrip.

Draper, a Wilton selectman, is still examining cost estimates and the deal is not yet finalized, but he waxed enthusiastic yesterday about the boost an excursion train would bring to his town.

"Wilton would become a tourist destination," Draper said. "The train would benefit existing businesses and bring in more business."

Leishman has been quietly working toward that plan, upgrading rail intersections along the route, ordering and installing new railroad ties and is in the process of locating passenger cars that are available for sale.

Leishman is a state representative representing Milford and is also a former five-term Milford selectman.

Right now, his railroad carries quarried rock between Milford, Wilton and Lyndeborough, but he is licensed to run on tracks as far as the Bennington Paper mill.

"The train route gives the rider an entirely new perspective on the natural beauty that runs throughout the region," Leishman said. "The line features a number of engineering marvels, such as extremely deep rock cuts and one of the highest railroad bridges in the state."

"This area is losing manufacturing and similar businesses and we need to look at other things that would be a drawing card," he said. "The area used to be a strong tourist destination for Boston people and this type of venture could revitalize that old industry."

Draper said the train could hit the tracks within two years and probably would be a scenic train at first, but his plan is to eventually add restaurant cars and offer a dinner train.

He said that although the town was recently awarded a \$500,000 state transportation grant for downtown improvements, tourists would still need a reason to come to Wilton and the train could fill that bill.

"I've had a long interest in trains," Draper said, recalling that, when he was a youngster, he would hop the freights bringing coal to his father's fuel business.

"The train would also have a positive effect in towns like Greenfield and Bennington," Draper said. He rode the last two passenger excursions through the area, run by railroad enthusiasts and said there's plenty of scenery to attract railroad fans as well as people who just want to see the sights.

"People used to ride to school on the passenger trains," he recalled, "and I can remember going on the freight train to the grain mill in Greenfield."

The tracks run alongside Stoney Brook in Wilton and

Lyndeborough, by Zephyr Lake and Greenfield State Park in that town and by scenic Powdermill Pond in Bennington.

Draper said the train would proceed at 15 to 20 mph along the route, allowing people time to enjoy the natural beauty and snap photographs. A recorded tour guide could interpret the surroundings for the riders.

Draper has money to invest in the new project from the sale of his Wilton-Hollis telephone company last year.

Businessmen along the line were also enthusiastic about the train proposal.

"That's fantastic," said Douglas Nelson of Nelson's Candy in Wilton. "I know if Stuart Draper is backing it, he'll give it his all."

"People love train rides, so they'll come and see the foliage and stop in these little towns," Nelson said.

Vic Mangini of the Greenfield Inn said that such a move could help turn the region into the summer resort it used to be.

"The train is a fun experience and would draw more people," he said. "More than 250,000 people come to Greenfield State Park between May and October. People could drive not quite as far and just jump on the train to get there."

Mangini said the train could also prove a boon to new operators of the Crotched Mountain ski area in Franconia, which may reopen after being shut down for more than a decade. A connection to the ski area could make the train a viable four-season operation, he said.

Richard Delay is proprietor of Delay's Town and Country Store in Greenfield and is also a resident of Bennington.

"We go to Ohio and take train rides, which are very popular there," he said. "There are a lot of train enthusiasts and it would be a tourist draw. Powdermill Pond and Alberto's Restaurant (in Bennington) would be a perfect ending spot," Delay said.

The old railroad depot in Bennington still exists, Delay said, but is now the VFW hall. The original Wilton station is still in place, Draper noted, and that could also become part of the mix.

The train's exact beginning and ending locations are still undetermined, Leishman said, as are whatever stops might be made along the way.

In 1988, the state Department of Transportation purchased from the Boston and Maine Corporation about 65 miles of abandoned railroad rights-of-way, which included the Hillsboro Branch from Wilton to Hillsborough. The Hillsboro branch was abandoned in 1986.

The Milford-Bennington Railroad, under Leishman, entered into a five-year operating agreement that reestablished rail freight service on the tracks from Wilton to Bennington.

In 1991, the railroad's operating agreement was amended to allow for a limited passenger excursion service and in July 1992, the Milford-Bennington Railroad began providing rail freight service, moving 20 to 30 carloads per day from Granite State Concrete's quarries in Lyndeborough to its processing plant in Milford.



## FAIRLEE STATION TO GET MAKEOVER

BY SONIA SCHERR

VALLEY NEWS - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2002

Valley News Staff Writer

**FAIRLEE** - A historic train station in downtown Fairlee will once again welcome visitors following a \$200,000 restoration project to be completed in the spring.

The renovated Fairlee Railroad Station will serve as a visitors center and will provide space for the town's historical society, which currently stores its archives and conducts meetings in the Town Hall. The station and its 5 1/2 acres of land are located off Route 5 near the town common.

"It is a central part of the town," said Hester Gardner, curator for the historical society and a longtime Fairlee resident. "I think it'll be a big addition to the town to have it improved and cleaned up." The station, which saw its last train passengers three decades ago, is used for flea markets on the weekends.

The town has received a \$165,000 grant for the project from the National Scenic Byways program of the Federal Highway Administration. The renovation also will be funded by a \$38,000 grant from the Preservation Trust of Vermont, as well as \$3,265 that residents decided to spend at TDwn Meeting several years ago.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the station is the oldest surviving railroad structure in Vermont, according to Jay Barrett Jr., chairman of the selectboard.

"The building has never been butchered up, and it's in a remarkable state of preservation," said Barrett, an architect. "It's the kind of thing that railway historians and architectural historians get kind of misty-eyed over."

Barrett lives in Fairlee's other railroad station, located in the village of Ely, which his family restored in 1994.

The Connecticut & Passumpsic Rivers Railroad constructed the station in downtown Fairlee around 1850, when trains first made inroads in Vermont. The station, built of hand-hewn timber, served a railroad line stretching from White River Junction to the Canadian border.

The Boston & Maine, which had acquired the station from its first owner, remodeled it in 1910, constructing a bay win-

dow, adding flush toilets and improving the waiting area. In the early 1960s, the railroad wanted to sell the station to someone who hoped to turn it into a supermarket, but town officials stepped in to prevent the sale, according to Gardner.

The station closed in October 1972, following a period when the railroads encountered hard times and sold many rural stations. Because of an obscure state law, the train station went to the Fairlee School District, which sold it to the town for \$1 when Fairlee schools became part of the Rivendell Interstate School District several years ago.

The restoration involves putting in a new foundation, replacing the electricity and heating, and building a small, separate structure for bathroom facilities. About two-thirds of the station - an unfinished area known as the freight house - will remain open for groups such as the flea market to use.

The remaining section is a lobby that will be cleaned and restored to house the historical society and welcome center.

Barrett said the improvements would be in keeping with the historic feel of the building. "The idea is to have the station when it's done appear exactly as it would have around 1940."

That authentic feel will be reinforced by displays of railroad memorabilia donated to the town by Barrett and Doris Demick, whose late husband, George, was station agent in Wells River and filled in at the Fairlee station. Barrett's collection includes a large Boston & Maine cast-iron potbellied stove from the station in Bradford that is identical to what would have been in the Fairlee station. Demick's artifacts consist of telegraph equipment, two station platform lights, a message pole, rubber stamp rack and framed timetables, among other items.

A required archaeology study was completed at the site in July. Since no significant findings were discovered, the town will bid out the construction work by early fall. Barrett was selected to do the architectural plans for the project.

Barrett said people have shown strong interest in Fairlee's stations, including some who recalled riding the rails to summer camps in the area. "Everybody loves a country railway station," he said.

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## RAILROAD POLICE AGENT OFFERS ROLLING SAFETY PRIMER

Christopher\_Cousins@TimesRecord.Com

10/07/2002

**HALLOWELL** - You're sitting in your car at a railroad crossing. Red lights flash, bells ring and a gate has lowered across the road. There's no train in sight. Maybe you'll just drive around the gate....

Here's another scenario: The railroad track that crosses your street hasn't been used in years, so long you don't even notice it anymore when you bounce over it in your car two or three times a day.

They're both scenarios that have become reality in Maine since passenger rail service dwindled and tracks fell into disrepair. But after \$33 million in upgrades on the 56-mile railroad between Brunswick and Rockland, the tracks are ready for passenger trains that travel up to 59 miles per hour.

Michail Griskewitsch III, a special agent for the Boston & Maine Railroad Police Department, is putting his efforts into education. His

lessons for the public are simple: look both ways before crossing, stay away from the tracks and obey the signals. Griskewitsch and others invited law enforcement and media representatives for an informational session while riding a train on a scenic route along the Kennebec River last week.

Amtrak passenger rail service from Boston to Portland began in December. No definitive date has been announced for service to be extended north to Brunswick, Augusta and Rockland, but it's a high priority for the state's Department of Transportation.

The biggest challenge, said Griskewitsch, is getting the word out to the public and breaking old habits.

In 2001, there were more than 3,200 collisions nationwide between trains and automobiles at rail crossings. They resulted in 419 deaths. Not including suicides, another 508 people were killed while trespassing on private railroad rights-of-way and property. An untold

## RAILROAD POLICE AGENT OFFERS ROLLING SAFETY PRIMER (Continued)

amount of railroad company property was damaged.

In Maine in 2001, Department of Transportation statistics show, there were 10 incidents involving train-vehicle collisions with four injuries. From 1982-92, there were 21 fatalities involving trains in Maine, but there have been no deaths since 1992.

Griskewitsch briefed the law enforcement officers on the laws regarding trespassing on railroads and ignoring crossing signals, and also the civil penalties, which became more severe over the years. The fine for running a crossing is \$233, and trespassing on railroads is a criminal offense.

One significant problem is all-terrain vehicles traveling along the tracks, which kicks out the rocks between the railroad ties. Those rocks, referred to in the business as "ballast," are vital to holding the tracks in place. For those reasons, several of the police officers on board said they'll be paying closer attention to trespassing on railroad property.

"There were some misconceptions I had about the law," said Sgt. Shawn O'Leary of the Brunswick Police Department. "This presentation was very helpful."

In Wiscasset, there have already been accidents at railroad crossings, said Wiscasset Patrolman Robert McFetridge. "People won't be used to the higher speeds and more trains," said McFetridge, referring to when passenger train service to Rockland begins.

A two-day course for law enforcement officers will be presented by Operation Lifesaver, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving safety at rail crossings. Several of the officers said representatives from their departments will take the course.

Paul Famulari, chief of the Topsham Police Department, said he's eager to bring what he learned back to his department. "For a half-day trip, this was well worth the education," said Famulari. "These issues are becoming more and more relevant in Topsham and Brunswick."

## LATER TRAIN OFFERS WEEKEND VISITORS LONGER LOOK AT PORTLAND

Friday, September 6, 2002

By TOM BELL, Portland Press Herald Writer

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Jane Garvin glanced at her watch Thursday while standing on Danforth Street in front of the Victorian Mansion.

"Can't do it. Not enough time," she said.

It was only 3 p.m., but the day ends fast for day-trippers who take Amtrak's Downeaster to Portland. The last southbound train leaves town at 4 p.m., so Garvin and her three friends, who took the train from Wells, hailed a cab to get back to the station.

If only they could have stayed until the evening, they lamented. They could have eaten dinner at a restaurant and visited shops in the Old Port. That would have pumped a little more money into the Portland economy.

Day-trippers like Garvin could spend - at the most - 3 1/2 hours in Portland before catching the train back home. That has been one of the most frequently heard gripes about the new passenger service.

Now the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority has changed the schedule on weekends. Starting this Saturday, the last train out of Portland will be at 7 p.m.

Local merchants are pleased by the move because it adds to the positive economic impact of the new rail service. Not only will people stay longer and spend more money, they say, but the new schedule will lure more people from Boston and coastal New Hampshire to Portland.

"I'm very excited about the possibility to have three extra hours," said Barbara Whitten, president of the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Greater Portland. "It gives visitors a chance to see a couple of museums and historic homes, do more shopping and possibly have dinner."

Passengers arriving at the train station on Sewall Street have several options for getting downtown. They include the Metro bus, the Portland Explorer shuttle bus and, on weekends, a private trolley service.

Managers of Old Port restaurants and shops say they like the tourists who come on the train. They leave good tips and seem

like a jovial bunch. But they always seem hurried, said Steve DiMillo, manager of DiMillo's Floating Restaurant.

Tourists want to relax, said Sharon Bondroff, owner of the China Sea Marine Trading Co. "They don't want to be looking at their watches while they are walking around," she said.

Changing the schedule is not as simple as it sounds, though. The Downeaster for much of its journey runs on a track that also accommodates freight trains. It's like a one-way street, said Patricia Douglas, the rail authority's manager of planning and development. Moving the 4 p.m. train to 7 p.m. means changing some other train schedules.

The existing schedule will remain in effect Monday through Friday.

On Saturday and Sunday, the 6:05 a.m. train out of Portland will leave 25 minutes later. The 4 p.m. out of Portland will leave at 7 p.m., giving visitors who arrive at 12:30 p.m. 6 1/2 hours in the city. Also on weekends, the 6:15 p.m. northbound train out of Boston will leave at 7:45 p.m.

Amtrak worked out the schedule with Guilford Rail Systems, which owns the track between Portland and the Massachusetts border, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which owns the rails the rest of the way to Boston.

When the train service began last December, it gave an immediate boost to downtown merchants, Whitten said, and has been a "blessing" for what otherwise has been a flat summer season.

Still, the service has been used more heavily by Mainers heading to Boston than vice versa.

A survey of passengers in May found that 45 percent were from Maine, 24 percent from Massachusetts and 24 percent from New Hampshire.

Tourists from Boston tend to take the train that departs Boston at 9:45 a.m., the earliest train on the northbound schedule. That train took 3,223 passengers in July.

In contrast, the 6:15 p.m. northbound train from Boston - the train of choice for many Mainers returning home after spending the day in Boston - carried 7,522 passengers in July.

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# REVENUE GOALS MET, DOWNEASTER OFFICIALS FOCUS ON FUTURE

By ROBERT M. COOK

September 29, 2002

Foster's Daily Democrat Staff Writer

PORTLAND, Maine — The success enjoyed by Amtrak's Downeaster during its first nine months has surpassed all revenue expectations and given train officials a boost of confidence that they also can reach ridership goals.

Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority officials here announced that the train has met its revenue projections for the entire year some 3 1/2 months ahead of schedule. The service began on Dec. 15, 2001.

The Downeaster, which serves a 114-mile rail corridor between Portland and Boston and extends through three states, had more than 30,000 riders in August, which pushed the service past its projection of \$3.3 million in revenues for the first year of operation.

Nate Moulton, the rail authority's deputy director, believes the group's goal to have at least 320,000 riders for the first full year of service is definitely within reach.

"We're just about on pace to do that," said Moulton during an interview last week at the rail authority's Portland office.

He attributes a lot of the train's success to the tireless efforts and dedication by the rail authority's previous executive director, Michael Murray. For seven years, Murray negotiated many of the difficult agreements. He retired just a few weeks ago on a high note after seeing the train achieve strong numbers.

Since the first Downeaster train rolled down the tracks for its inaugural run last winter, Moulton said the service has been blessed with a 95 percent on-time rate. It also has benefited from customer service-friendly Amtrak crews, and a working relationship with Guilford Transportation Industries. (Guilford operates freight trains and was forced to share its tracks with the passenger rail service.)

John Englert, executive director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority in Portland, Maine, believes that with continued quality service and the right marketing, the Downeaster can attract enough riders in five years to become self-supporting. (Robert M. Cook/Staff photo)

Ridership demographics have been surprising.

For instance, rail authority officials thought only 40 percent of their riders would go from Portland to Boston or the other way around, but that has amounted to 55 percent, Moulton said.

The busiest trains continue to include the 682 train that departs Portland at 8:45 a.m., and the 685 train that leaves Boston at 6:15 p.m.

The age breakdown of ridership aboard the Downeaster also has surprised rail authority officials.

In a survey conducted during a week in May, 99 percent of the 600 riders polled said they would strongly recommend using the Downeaster to their friends, Moulton said.

The same survey showed the largest group of riders, 42 percent, fell in the 41- to 60-year-old category followed by people 61 and older, which was 32 percent. People ages 26 to 40 comprised 15 percent of the ridership, compared to 8 per-

cent for people ages 10 to 25 years old.

A whopping 40 percent of those surveyed said they were retirees compared to 9 percent students, 8 percent homemakers and 31 percent professionals.

All of these numbers and healthy ridership totals through September are very encouraging for rail authority officials, whose ultimate goal is to make the service viable enough to pay for itself in the next four to five years.

A great deal of time and resources have been spent marketing the service to get more people to give it a try, according to John Englert, the rail authority's newly appointed executive director. He came onboard less than two weeks ago after former executive director Murray retired.

Englert believes word of mouth continues to be the Downeaster's best marketing tool.

"It's word of mouth where a family of four goes to Boston, comes home and tells their friends and neighbors they had a great time and they should try it," Englert said. "A portion of it is curiosity, novelty, if you will."

"We actually have quite a bit of work left to be done. It will be quite a challenge to operate a high quality service with the funds that are available," he added.

Moulton agreed that maintaining a high-quality of service is one of the most critical factors that goes into building a loyal ridership base.

"If you can hook them when they try it for the first time, they'll try it again," Moulton said.

If a customer rides the train and has a bad experience, they will more than likely go back to their car and sit in traffic and never come back again, he said.

Moulton said that making the Downeaster run smoothly requires careful coordination between Amtrak crews, Guilford freight dispatchers and the host communities along the line that maintain train stations, parking lots and security. If any one of those parties fails to do its job on a given day, a rider's experience will suffer because of it, he added.

"It's choreographed chaos," said Englert. "It's one of the reasons I'm in the business because every day is different. There is so much behind that simple motion of that train leaving the station."

## A pricey way to travel

During the busy summer months, the Downeaster used four coaches and a cafe car between two locomotives. This could accommodate up to 276 passengers, including business class which has 18 seats, Moulton said. When the train operates three coaches, some 216 passengers can ride.

The first nine months have been very educational for the rail authority, the host communities where train stations and platforms are located, Guilford officials, Amtrak and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which shares its 36 miles of track when the Downeaster leaves New Hampshire and makes its final leg to Boston's North Station.

Englert said the service is very market driven and has to respond quickly to the needs of its customers.

"Everything will be controlled, monitored and looked at as

## DOWNEASTER OFFICIALS FOCUS ON FUTURE (Continued)

the market changes," he said.

Just recently, rail authority officials decided to make a schedule change for the Portland train. Instead of having a train leave Portland for Boston at 4 p.m., they decided to have it leave the city at 7 p.m. to better accommodate daytrippers who wanted to spend more time in Maine.

Some passengers may grouse about the fares of \$35 for a round-trip ticket from Portland to Boston, but they might be surprised to learn how much it costs to have the train make four round trips each day.

It took more than 13 years and \$62 million in federal and Maine money to improve the tracks for high-speed rail travel and bring the service back to Northern New England. It costs about \$5.3 million to operate the train on a yearly basis, Moulton said.

Each time the Downeaster's cars head down the 78 miles of track that Guilford owns in Maine and New Hampshire, the rail authority has to pay Guilford 13 cents per car mile. This amounts to \$486 a day and \$177,652 a year.

When the train ambles into Massachusetts, rail authority officials have to pay the MBTA 11.7 cents per car mile for 36 miles of track. That amounts to \$202 a day, or more than \$73,794 a year.

Moulton said Amtrak, through the rail authority, also pays Guilford an on-time bonus of \$30,000 to \$35,000 a year for helping the Downeaster keep its schedule. The MBTA does not receive an on-time bonus.

The rail authority also has to pay Amtrak \$373,142 per month, or \$4.47 million a year, for fuel and maintenance costs "to physically fuel the train and keep it going back and forth," Moulton said.

When the Downeaster decided to carry additional coach cars during the busy summer months, it cost an additional \$53,158 per month, or more than \$26,000 per car, in May, June, July and August.

The cost of having ticket agents in Boston and Portland, and ticket machines at each of the Downeaster train stations is about \$275,000 to \$300,000 a year. Three full-time ticket agents work at the new Portland train station and an agreement was recently made to have a ticket agent sell tickets at North Station in Boston.

Every time a customer calls Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL to book a reservation, it costs the rail authority \$1.55 for each ticket that is issued, Moulton said. Last month, the rail authority had to pay \$15,000 to \$16,000 for the work performed by Amtrak call center representatives, Moulton said.

The Downeaster also has to pay \$130,000 to \$140,000 a year for liability insurance that is required for all of the train stations.

On average, the Downeaster generates about \$410,429 a month in revenues.

Overall, the total expenses required to operate the Downeaster could be as high as \$6 million a year. Moulton said the rail authority expects the train will generate about \$4.5 million to \$4.8 million in revenue for its first year, which is higher than the original \$3.3 million that was estimated.

When asked how the Downeaster makes up the difference to cover the cost of the train, Moulton points to the safety net of federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds.

Some \$1.6 million a year is provided by the Federal Transit Authority and another \$400,000 is provided by Maine in 20 percent matching funds, giving the rail authority \$2 million a year to cover any gaps between revenue and expenses for the first three years of the service, Moulton said.

Englert said rail authority officials hope to raise another \$100,000 this year from sponsorships and advertisements displayed on the train.

"We have to make enough revenue to cover everything and nobody is making any money here, not yet," Moulton said.

If the Downeaster can become a break-even operation after the first three years of service, Moulton said that would be a major achievement.

## Unresolved issues

Rail authority officials are looking forward to the day when the Downeaster can travel up to 79 miles per hour. If Guilford officials have their way, that day will never come and the train will continue to travel only up to 59 mph.

The rail authority's latest attempt to resolve the dispute is before the U.S. Surface Transportation Board. The board has sided with Amtrak once already, but Guilford officials have refused to accept the finding.

Even if the federal panel rules in Amtrak's favor later this fall, Guilford officials say they will not budge.

"The train will not run faster than 60 miles per hour," said David Fink Jr., Guilford's vice president. "It's running on time and we believe it should stay that way."

Fink maintains that if the train were allowed to travel faster, the likelihood of an accident would increase.

Rail authority officials argue that at the slower speed the train will not attract their desired annual ridership of 1 million riders after five years, which is critical for the Downeaster to become a self-funded entity.

Englert said allowing the train to travel faster could lead to another 30,000 to 35,000 riders and reduce travel times by 12 minutes.

Guilford's Fink also wants the federal panel to re-examine the 13 cents per car mile fee the Downeaster pays his company because he claims it is "woefully inadequate."

But these ongoing disputes aside, Guilford and rail authority officials say they have maintained a healthy, working relationship.

"We promised long before the train ran that we would run the most on-time train in the Amtrak system and we have done it since December and we're very proud of that," Fink said.

Fink said both freight and passenger trains have to operate on "a very busy piece of rail" and it is quite a challenge to make it work well.

Englert said the relationships between passenger rail and freight companies "can be contentious, but we understand

their perspective."

Moulton said that despite the friction, "people have figured out a way to make it work and they have done a fantastic job of moving our trains as have the T (in Massachusetts)."

Another unresolved issue Englert would like to address in the future is to get New Hampshire officials to pay its share to support the train. So far, the Granite State has gotten a free ride and let host train station communities pay the tab to accommodate the train.

Englert hopes state officials will more willing to contribute some funds by seeing, "This is not just a choo choo on the tracks. This is an investment in the transportation infrastructure."

New Hampshire Department of Transportation officials have been more interested in using \$35 million to expand existing Massachusetts Bay Transportation Agency passenger rail lines into Nashua and Plaistow to alleviate heavy traffic congestion.

Even though New Hampshire would not provide any funds for the Downeaster, rail line communities did.

Exeter appropriated \$135,000 to build its own station, platform and parking area. In Durham, the University of New Hampshire donated 20 percent in matching funds for the \$200,000 needed to restore the railroad station there. Dover city officials contributed 20 percent in matching funds for the \$475,000 needed to build a new state-of-the-art station and parking area. (The federal government provided the other 80 percent for both projects.)

## Getting better all the time

Englert said there is always room to improve the existing service and turn more drivers into train riders.

In the next few months, the Downeaster will launch new ad campaigns online via Boston.com to advertise travel-and-stay packages.

The idea is to lure more weekend getaway travelers to Portland or Boston via the train and to encourage them to stay at hotels like the Omni Parker House or the Portland Harbor Hotel.

The rail authority will also market the Downeaster through a frequent traveler program where riders can earn guest rewards and points that will entitle them to free hotel stays or travel via Amtrak, United Airlines and Continental. They can also earn \$50 toward dinner at Red Lobster restaurants.

One of the most ambitious ad campaigns will focus on attracting more business travelers, Englert said.

The "Business to Boston" campaign will target corporate travel agents, companies and businessmen, he said.

"We can have employees look at their laptops and their notebooks rather than a tractor trailer's brake lights in front of them," Englert said. "We think it's a market that is yet to be fully tapped."

Moulton said the rail authority and Amtrak will continue to make infrastructure improvements at the Maine train stations in Wells, Old Orchard Beach and Saco. The Portland train station is already finished and is now providing complete transportation services for travelers.

People who arrive there can now count on Portland Metro buses (\$1) and the Portland Explorer Express (\$3) shuttle to pick them up every 30 minutes and take them to the Portland Jetport, Maine Mall, Old Port and area hotels, Moulton said.

Moulton said the Portland Convention and Visitors Bureau will have people greet travelers and provide them with information. He said the Dover train station will eventually have an operator and people will be able to go inside the station and wait for their train.

A major project that will be undertaken at the other end of the line at North Station in Boston by the MBTA over the next several years will move the Green line and the Orange line subways underground into North Station, making it easier for travelers to access South Station for connector Amtrak trains, Englert said.

"You will be able to go from track to subway as seamlessly as ever without ever having to go outside," he said.

Rail authority officials also want to extend the line farther north in Maine, to Freeport and Brunswick and west to Lewiston/Auburn and Bethel within the next three to five years.

Regardless of whether people take the train for business or pleasure, Englert believes the Downeaster is here to stay because as the region becomes more populated and congested, the train becomes more necessary to keep things moving.

"This is about moving people and moving the economy of Northern New England forward," he said. So far, the Downeaster is living up to its end of the bargain.

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## NEW FILM FROM BEDFORD DEPOT

### *The Films of John M. Boardman Volume One*

Equipped with his 16 mm. motion picture camera, John M. Boardman chronicled a wide range of local railroading as it was during the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Ten reels of his (mostly color) historic footage are now being edited for release as three VHS programs. They will be sold to raise funds for Friends of Bedford Depot Park's historic preservation work.

Volume One will run about 50 minutes and feature Boston & Maine lines in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Mechanicville, New York. Rare footage of the Lexington, Central Massachusetts and Pemigewasset Valley Branches is included.

Release is expected in October.

The Films of John M. Boardman, Volume 1, is available for \$24.95 from Bedford Freight House, 120 South Road, Bedford, MA 01730-2344. (Massachusetts residents should include 5% sales tax.) Shipping charges for mail orders are \$3.85 for Priority Mail and \$1.42 for Media Mail. Credit card mail orders may be phoned to treasurer George Dalrymple at 781-275-8558. Also, a mail order form may be downloaded from our web site: [www.BedfordDepot.org](http://www.BedfordDepot.org)



# END OF THE LINE FOR WHITE RIVER STATION STEWARD

By Jodie Tillman  
Valley News Staff Writer  
September 25, 2002

White River Junction -- When this week ends, the doors to the Amtrak station will still be open and the trains will still run.

But Bill Brigham, the 63-year-old stationmaster who does everything from planning passengers' trips to making the morning coffee, will be gone after the Vermonter pulls out of the station Friday evening.

Amtrak eliminated the stationmaster positions at four Vermont stations, including the one in White River Junction, to try to save between \$300,000 and \$350,000, said Charlie Miller, director of rail with the state Department of Transportation. The company made the layoffs a condition of the new contract with the state of Vermont, which subsidized the positions.

Ticket machines, which will cost the state \$40,000 apiece, may be installed at the stations in about six months, said Miller. Until then, passengers must reserve tickets over the phone or online and buy them on the train.

The state had planned to put in the ticket machines eventually, but Amtrak's decision was a surprise, said Miller. "This came up on us," he said.

Brigham has worked for Amtrak for nearly 30 years, the last seven of which have been at the White River Junction station. In that time, he has become a fixture at the station, which also houses the Welcome Center and a railroad museum. He bought plastic chairs -- green for coach and white for business class -- so that passengers could wait outside. He brought the plants decorating the interior of the station and hung the photographs of trains.

For some passengers and station regulars, taking away the familiar face behind the gold bars of the ticket window is another sign that traveling by train just isn't the personable experience it once was.

"It's going to be a sad day," said Barbara Pitkin, who helps recruit volunteers for the annual Glory Days of the Railroad Festival and spends many mornings hanging out at the station. "Mr. B (Brigham) makes the Amtrak station."

Brigham, a Randolph native, said many of his passengers have questions or other needs, such as cashing in on refunds or gift certificates.

"To have somebody to talk to makes a big difference," he said.

Growing up in Randolph, Brigham's family lived near the railroad tracks, and one of his favorite activities was watching the trains rumble through town. He worked several years at his family business, which manufactured gel used in theater lighting, but stayed a railroad enthusiast. Twenty-eight years ago, when a friend who was station manager in Montpelier told him he was leaving, Brigham figured he would apply.

"I said, 'Hey, let's try it.' I like trains," said Brigham.

And so he became station manager -- part travel agent, part custodian, part caretaker -- at several Vermont stations. For the last seven years, Brigham has been the sole employee of the White River Junction station, working from 9 a.m. to noon for the morning train to New York City and 5 to 7 p.m. for the evening train.

Brigham said cutting his and others' positions may save money, but ultimately it may lose the train business because people become frustrated with buying tickets.

Brigham says he's lucky -- he has a job that revolves around his hobby. But working for financially-strapped Amtrak -- a hot political issue in Washington -- has not always been easy. He said that in this fast-moving world, people want more out of train travel than they are currently getting.

"It's discouraging to deal with the public's expectations," said Brigham, "and for whatever reasons not being able to live up to it."

Vermont must do more to promote train travel for local residents, said Brigham, who believes the state has promoted it as something more for New York and Connecticut residents.

"The problem with the trains has been the neglect of the local ridership," said Brigham, who is married and plans to spend time at home before moving to South Carolina, where his daughter lives.

Yesterday morning, the coffeepot set on a table by the ticket window was brewing, beside a bowl of peppermints and a Styrofoam cup with a note: "Coffee donations." Close to 20 people sat on the inside benches, their baggage at their feet, while Brigham finished taking tickets and phone calls. Two men wandered in from the museum, and one, a former custodian at the station in the 1940s, announced, pointing toward the ticket window, "We used to clean those bars."

On a table are Amtrak fliers and small slips of paper urging "Save our Trains," with a list of phone numbers for Vermont's congressional delegation.

Pitkin was there, along with Chris McKinley, a railroad enthusiast who was profiled last year in a Valley News story about the daily log he has been keeping of the trains.

"They need to have people here because a lot of people come here looking to change their tickets," said McKinley.

As for his meticulous log, he said, "Bill put me up to it."

As No. 9645 pulled into the station, Brigham put on his shiny Amtrak jacket, adjusted his cap and hustled out to the platform. He pushed a ramp toward the boarding doors for two wheelchair-bound passengers. "Come on, Bill," said an Amtrak employee aboard the train, helping to guide Brigham.

The train pulled out of the station. McKinley recorded the departure in his notebook, and Pitkin told Brigham that the station phone was ringing. He rushed back inside, passing a life-size sculpture of an Amtrak conductor, holding train brochures and schedules.

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

- December 7 Newbury MA: Railway Express XVIII, Newbury Fire Station Memorial Hall, 3 Morgan Avenue, 10am-4pm, Adults \$3, Children \$1, Under 5 Free.
- February 1&2 West Springfield MA: Big 2003 Railroad Hobby Show, Eastern States Exposition, 1305 Memorial Ave. 9am - 5pm, Adults \$7, Children 5-12 \$1, Under 5 free
- March 9 Haverhill MA: The 11th Haverhill Train Show, Haverhill High School, Monument Street. 10am-4pm, Adults \$4, Children (5-12) \$1, Under 5 Free.