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# Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society

19 Incorporated 71

# NEWSLETTER

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## July-August 2003

Meeting/Membership Telephone Number (978) 454-3600

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## B&MRRHS CALENDAR

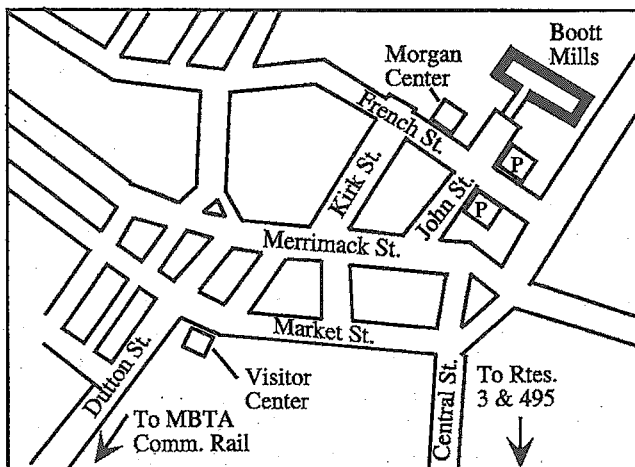
Meetings at 3:30 Saturday unless otherwise indicated

- JULY 26 & 27** Lowell Folk Festival. Open house at the combine in Lowell
- AUGUST** VACATION – No meeting
- SEPTEMBER 13** B&M Engineer Alan McMillan will be taking us along the old Boston & Maine. Alans' shows are always well received. Please be sure to join us for this presentation!
- OCTOBER 11** Richard Sanborn will treat us to moe of his fabulous Boston & Maine material.
- NOVEMBER 8** Join B&MRRHS Historian Russ Monroe as he takes us on a photographic tour of the B&M.
- DECEMBER 9** Member's night. Bring slides, video.

### 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.**



**NEXT ISSUE**  
 The deadline for the September/October Newsletter is September 8, 2003. 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.

## 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

## Business Address:

B&MRRHS: P.O. Box 469: Derry, NH 03038

## E-mail:

BMRRHS3718@aol.com

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.

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## MEMBER CORRESPONDENCE

## 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 33 different ETT's and 6 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

## NORTH CONWAY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

MODEL RAILROAD OPEN HOUSE SESSIONS  
SUMMER, 2003

The North Conway Model Railroad Club of North Conway, NH announces its 2003 Summer Season public open house events. The club's large HO scale "North Conway & Crawford Notch Railroad" layout will be open every Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday during July, August, September and October at the club's air conditioned facility in the Freight House at Conway Scenic Railroad in the center of North Conway village on Routes 16 and 302. Hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There is no admission charge, but donations are accepted. The club's action packed model railroad operates as many as four trains simultaneously. Scenic vignettes include accurate replicas of North Conway's train station, freight house, turntable and roundhouse. Other scenes include mountains, tunnels, rivers and bridges along with large cities and small towns. Portions of Crawford Notch have been modeled, including famous Frankenstein Trestle and the Crawford Notch station. A large paper mill complex and a waterfront scene with a steamship tied up at dockside are additional notable features of the layout. The club's volunteer host "engineers" bring model railroading alive for visitors young and old. Last year over 10,000 visitors signed the guest book, including guests from 26 different foreign countries. A large proportion of the visitors are families with children from toddlers to teenagers. Many guests experience their first contact with an operating model railroad at the clubroom, and leave with a better understanding of the hobby of model railroading.

The North Conway Model Railroad Club is a non-profit organization with a membership of over one hundred men and women. The club's facility is located on the property of Conway Scenic Railroad, a major tourist attraction in New Hampshire's Mount Washington Valley. However, the club is an independent organization that is not directly affiliated with CSRR, although

the model railroaders work very closely with the full size railroad's staff for their mutual benefit.

The North Conway Model Railroad Club Public Open House Days every Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday during July, August, September, and October at their layout room in the Freight House at Conway Scenic Railroad in the center of North Conway village on Routes 16 and 302. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The club's large HO scale "North Conway & Crawford Notch Railroad" operates as many as four trains simultaneously. The volunteer hosts bring model railroading alive for visitors young and old. Free admission, and donations are accepted. For more information, contact: North Conway Model Railroad Club, P.O. Box 2744, North Conway, NH 03847 or call Dwight Smith (603) 356-3416; e-mail: geebud@ncia.net

## B&M CONNECTION

*Editor's note: Here's a follow-up list to the one I made in an earlier issue...*

Several attendees at the recent train show at West Springfield, MA got together and tried to name all the exhibitors at the show that had a connection to former Boston & Maine RR physical property in one way or other. Here is the list (which may be incomplete):

*Conway Scenic RR*, which operates over former B&M trackage between Conway and Intervale;

*Hobo Railroad and Winnepesaukee RR* that operate over former B&M trackage on the Concord to Lincoln line;

*Green Mountain RR* which utilizes the former B&M roundhouse and yard in North Walpole NH;

*The 470 Railroad Club* which owns former B&M F7 cab units 4266 and 4268 residing in North Conway;

*Steamtown* had an exhibit, and they own the former B&M 4-6-2 No. 3713;

*The B&M RR Historical Society* owns a former B&M 0-6-0 switcher on display on ex B&M track in Lowell, MA;

*The Flying Yankee Restoration Group* has the former B&M streamliner under restoration at Claremont, NH;

*The 494 Restoration Group* at White River Jet., VT, are restoring former B&M 4-4-0 No. 494;

*The Friends of Bedford Station Park* have a former B&M station and Budd car at Bedford, MA;

*The Shelburne Falls Trolley Group* is utilizing trackage in the former B&M yard at Shelburne Falls, MA;

*The Danbury Railway Museum* in Danbury, CT, owns former B&M 2-6-0 No. 1455.

Did we miss someone?

NORTH CONWAY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB NEWSLETTER  
via Mike Lennon  
via THE 470, Newsletter of the 470 Railroad Club

## BOSTON & MAINE NO. 3713

The work of restoring this locomotive to operating condition continued throughout 2002 and into 2003. The project has been underway since employees at Steamtown removed and cataloged the external parts of the locomotive such as bell, domes and lights. The

next step was the removal of asbestos in 1997. In 1999 a contractor was hired to begin performing the work on the removal of the parts from inside the boiler, including superheater tubes and flues. Most of the work performed in 2001 involved removal and replacement of rigid staybolts, caps and sleeves. K nuts, some flexible staybolts, crown staybolts, sleeves and material to make the caps for the firebox were purchased.

In 2002 a grant for \$200,000 was received from the Federal Transportation Enhancement Program. This is a matching grant for which there is a need to raise \$50,000. Congress has not passed a budget, so they can't start to use this money yet. This grant is for completing the work on the boiler, firebox and smokebox. and purchasing more parts. Total funds expended to date are over \$247,636. All funds so far have been the result of donations from supporters of the project. If you wish to make a donation to the Restoration Fund, which is tax deductible, send it to Locomotive Restoration Fund, L&WV R.H.S., Inc., P.O. Box 3452, Scranton, PA, 18505-0452. When completed, the restored Boston & Maine locomotive will be the first American manufactured engine to be used in regular service by the Steamtown National Historic Site for its excursion service.

*"The 470", 470 Railroad Club*

## BM 4268A HISTORY

BM 4268A has history that until now has been hidden in EMD files - b/n 9932 built 3/49, not 10/49 as most rosters indicate - it was first mentioned in an EMD letter dated 28 Mar 49, carried #930 in testing & 89930 in other EMD letters along with 89955 & 89533131; as 89930 it was used on KCS; as 89955 on DRGW in high altitude tests; 89533131 in CB&Q colors at the 1949 Chicago RR Fair - it was #930 for most, if not all, of the testing.

Called EMD Project 6059 in some of the letters - this is the order number. The 9-1-50 EMD Product book lists it as Experimental Loco. The carbody is owned by the BM/470 RR Club today & the number 930 can be seen above rear door inside the carbody.

*Wayne Allen  
The Railroad Photographer (TRP)*

## NEGATIVE COLLECTION

The 470 Railroad Club has a collection of over 9,000 negatives of railroad subjects. They are primarily pictures of Maine railroads, but there are a large number from other New England states, and a smaller number from other parts of the U.S. and Canada as well. The time frame covered by the collection ranges from the 1890s (or possibly even earlier than that) right through the 1960s. In the past, when the collection was quite a bit smaller, we offered for sale prints from the negatives, but several years ago we were forced to discontinue offering this service. Now after about two years of work, your Archives Committee has\* completed the task of organizing and cataloging the entire collection. All the pictures have been listed in a computer database, with a description identifying the subject and the date and location of the photograph where this is known. We have located a person willing and able to make quality large format prints from these negatives, and we can once again offer prints for sale. The collection has been divided

into four basic categories according to the principal subject of each photograph Steam Locomotives, Diesel Locomotives, Structures and Equipment. Structures include stations, bridges, towers, etc., while Equipment refers to passenger and freight cars and work equipment. Within the categories, the pictures have been sorted by railroad. A list of the railroads represented in the collection, with the count of the number of pictures in each category, has been included with this Newsletter.

If you would be interested in purchasing prints of any of these negatives, you may request a detailed printout from our database of the pictures available for the specific railroads and categories you are interested in, as, for example, Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Steam Locomotives. The printout will list the pictures available, with all the information we know about them, and will show the negative number we have assigned to each one. You may then request one or more prints by negative number. In order to cover printing and mailing costs, there will be a charge of \$2.00 for each printout request.

Black and white prints of negatives in the collection will be available as follows:

5 x 7 \$6.00 each , 8 x 10 \$9.00 each, plus postage and handling of \$3.00 per order.

There are a very few color negatives in the collection. Let us know if you are interested in any of these, and we will supply cost information. To request a printout of the pictures available by category for one or more railroad, write to: 470 Railroad Club Negatives, P. O. Box 2468, South Portland, ME 04116.

Number of photos available for the B&M - Steam 1079; Structures 63; Equipment 110.

"The 470", 470 Railroad Club

## B&M EQUIPMENT WEB SITE

Matt Cosgro has compiled a list of existing B&M powered equipment on his web site. Here's the announcement that he posted on the NERAIL e-mail list:

"I've got it mostly 'done' now... Final count: 6 Steam, 65 Diesel, 46 Budd RDC. Thanks guys for all the mass lists of numbers, and those with the much needed details on just a few units.

"Anything on the list with white text needs clarification.

<http://www.nashuacitystation.com/bmequipment.html>

"Photos or links to photos to NERAIL and other archives will come with time... also with time will be the start of other types of B&M equipment lists."

Matt Cosgro

Webmaster of Nashua City Station <http://www.nashuacitystation.com/>

## BOSTON & MAINE COACH 1215

From the Old Colony & Newport Scenic Railroad's web site

The scope of the project is to bring Boston & Maine coach #1215 from Lunenburg, MA to Newport Rhode Island. The next phase is the restoration for active passenger service on the Old Colony & Newport Scenic Railroad. The coach has sat on a railfan's side yard in Lunenburg since the 70's and has acted as a playhouse, workshop etc for the former owner. Four years ago the property was purchased by a Mr. Dawson, who is not a railfan, and included in the package was this nostalgic railroad car. Mr. Dawson has donated the coach to the non-profit group Old Colony & Newport in February of 2002 as a gesture of his generosity and the hope of the car reliving its life as an active passenger carrying railroad car. Numerous offers by scrap dealers were rejected as the feeling was that it would serve a better purpose on the railroad.

Efforts are underway now to secure the safe movement of this fine antique railroad car to Newport to join sister Boston & Maine Coach which is operated constantly as an active conveyance of tourists along Narragansett Bay in Newport.

## MOST WANT RR BRIDGE TO STAY AS - IS

NEW HAMPTON — Winona Road residents told representatives of the state Department of Transportation on Thursday they want the railroad bridge to stay.

Some 40 people packed a meeting room at the New Hampton Town Hall to hear DOT engineers detail four plans that would get the 84-year-old bridge off their red list.

The option supported by people who attended the session was a rehabilitation project estimated to cost about \$100,000.

New Hampton resident Louise Hennessey expressed the sentiments of the majority who attended the meeting.

"I've been going under that bridge for 86 years and I've seen one accident. It was a bicyclist and he was going too fast. Leave it alone," she urged.

Project Manager L. Robert Landry Jr., an engineer with the bureau of highway design, explained that Thursday's meeting was an informational session designed to solicit public comments.

First District Executive Councilor Ray Burton attended as did state Rep. Fran Wendelboe, who represents New Hampton and Center Harbor. Winona Road is about seven miles long and connects Route 132 in Ashland and Route 104 in Meredith, and also crosses through New Hampton and Center Harbor.

When the DOT last discussed the issue with area residents in the fall of 2000, Landry recounted the key issues of concern raised were the number of accidents at the bridge and the need for a detour if construction was done. Others urged the state not to remove the bridge, maintaining it slowed traffic and kept tractor-trailers from using the road. The last issue raised by abutters during the prior meeting was the need to protect the Winona Station historic site.

The bridge, built in 1919 is currently on the state's red list because it has a clearance height of just 10 feet six inches, and is in need of some maintenance. The mortar between the granite blocks that make up its abutments needs repointing, the wooden deck needs to be replaced and the steel I-beams need to be inspected for rust and repainted.

Currently, motorists traveling north towards Ashland come down a hill with an 11 percent grade and encounter the bridge, which has an S-turn beneath it. Northbound traffic has the right-of-way and southbound vehicles are supposed to stop.

"It's kind of a honk and pray situation," said Bill Oldenburg, a DOT engineer.

State records indicate in the past five years there have been four accidents at the bridge, resulting in one injury, with three vehicles striking an abutment.

The bridge poses a series of safety hazards because of the steep grade, limited sight distance, narrow width of the roadway and the low overhead clearance, according to Oldenburg.

As chief of preliminary design for the bureau, Oldenburg detailed four options the state has developed.

The first option, called the western alignment because it would move the existing road west, would feature a straight road alignment designed for a speed of 30 mph. The bridge would be removed and replaced with an at-grade railroad crossing that would be protected by flashing lights and a drop gate system.

The advantage of such an alignment, said Oldenburg, is that removing the bridge would result in improved sight distance and eliminate other safety hazards. There would be no need to down post the road, which currently has a posted speed limit of 15 mph.

The disadvantage is that the at-grade crossing would make it difficult to plow and hazardous for both motorcyclists and bicyclists.

An eastern alignment would move the road eastward and would also remove the bridge and replace it with an at-grade crossing for the Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad that now uses the line as part of its tourist train operations. This option, Oldenburg said, would have a less severe railroad crossing, but would still require motorists to negotiate an S-turn in the road. It would have a design speed of 25 mph and would probably not "ride right" because of the super-elevation of the train track.

The disadvantages of an at-grade crossing include the need for the train engineer to blow the whistle every time the train approaches the road. While the train makes four daily trips during the bulk of the summer it increases to 8 to 10 trips during the height of foliage season. Both the western and eastern alignment options are projected to cost approximately \$700,000.

A third option, and the one most favored by those who attended the session, was rehabilitation. This option would keep the bridge as it is, but would repair the abutments, replace the deck, inspect the girders and paint it.

The fourth and final option would be to build a new bridge that would have a height clearance of 12-13 feet at an estimated cost of \$2.5 million and would require some easements to be purchased. That option, Landry cautioned would be too expensive to be financed by betterment funds that come from the 3-cent per gallon gasoline tax. If area residents supported a new bridge, Landry encouraged them to go to the Lakes Region Planning Commission and get the proposal included in the Governor's 10-year highway plan.

That option would take a number of years to work through the system, he said, so the DOT would look to rehabilitate the bridge in the interim.

New Hampton Selectman Fred Avery said the board met with DOT representatives three years ago and told them that they felt the betterment money would be best spent on making improvements to a stretch of Route 104 near Bobby's Girl Diner that has been the site of numerous accidents and a motorcycle crash that killed a Catholic priest.

New Hampton Police Chief Nathaniel "Chip" Sawyer said since 1994 there have been 15 accidents near the Winona Road bridge, eight with injuries. Meanwhile, on Route 104 on the west side of the popular eatery there have been 38 accidents, with 39 injuries, one fatality and more than 70 vehicles damaged.

Greg Tansley, a principal planner with the Lakes Region Planning Commission, told those who attended the session that if they support rehabilitation of the bridge, it could potentially free up \$600,000 in state highway funds that could be used to make improvements to Route 104 which would still benefit the Lakes Region.

Rep. Wendelboe urged people to remain vigilant, and to contact their representatives and/or Councilor Burton to let them know that they want the bridge to stay in its present form.

The bulk of people who attended the meeting said the existing bridge helps slow traffic and is more in keeping with the rural nature of the road. Many of the houses on Winona Road are just 10 to 30 feet from the road and increasing speeds would make it more hazardous for homeowners to back out of their driveways, they said.

If rehabilitation were chosen as the option, Landry said, the work would probably be done in April and May, before the railroad begins operation, and would mostly likely be done in 2004.

People wishing to comment on the proposals, can write to Landry at the John O. Morton Building, 1 Hazen Drive, Room

200, P.O. Box 483, Concord, N.H. 03302-0483 or contact by e-mail at rlandry@dot.state.nh.us.

*Saturday 5/10/2003*

By BEA LEWIS

*Northern Lakes Region Bureau*

## ON TRACK WITH SAFETY IN LACONIA

LACONIA — The Safety-Express rolled into Lakeport on Thursday morning to teach fifth-grade students from Elm Street Elementary School about the importance of railroad safety and how simple guidelines can save a life.

The Safety Express was actually the Hobo & Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad, which parked on the tracks next to the Lakeport Fire Station and picked up several classes of fifth-graders before making its way to Weirs Beach and back.

The excursion was a joint venture between the Laconia Police Department and the railroad company as part of the national program, Operation Lifesaver — a non-profit organization that works to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities at highway rail crossings.

The program began in Idaho in 1972 when the national average of collisions at railroad rail grade crossings exceeded 12,000. Today, the organization is active in 49 states and offers statistical information, a variety of safety programs and tips to keep people safe.

The New Hampshire committee of Operation Lifesaver meets several times a year. The group is coordinated by Lyman Cousens of Concord and Executive Councilor Ray Burton facilitates the meetings.

“Basically we’re trying to reach out to the community and invite them on board the train and encourage them to think safe and be safe around the railroad,” said Ben Clark, vice president of the Hobo & Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad.

Clark said the program is based upon the three E’s — engineering, enforcement and education.

Clark added that while his business has worked with Operation Lifesaver since 1990, this was the first time hosting a safety program on board the train.

Fred Smith, a presenter of Operation Lifesaver said some of the information shared with the students includes teaching them what the various railroad signs mean and what actions they should take when a train is approaching.

“We try to teach them how to cross the tracks at the appropriate times. One of the things we try to stress to the kids when they’re riding their bikes is to get out and walk across the tracks so they don’t flop and fall down and get stuck in the tracks,” said Smith.

Smith said he also tells the children not to throw debris at the train or the tracks and they should not stand too close to the tracks at anytime as it is private property.

Laconia Police Officer Don Kimtis, the school district’s DARE officer, also rode on the train with the students.

Kimitis said he hopes programs similar to the Safety Express can continue and he would like to see the parents involved in the program as well.

“Railroad safety is a must, especially with these locomotives and the size of them and the speeds they travel. An emergency situation can happen at any time,” said Kimtis.

For more information about Operation Lifesaver, log onto [www.oli.org](http://www.oli.org).

Krista Marrs can be reached by calling 524-3800 ext. 5933 or by e-mail at [kmarrs@citizen.com](mailto:kmarrs@citizen.com)

*May 23, 2003*  
By KRISTA MARRS  
Staff Writer

## FOR THESE RAIL FANS, IT’S ALL ABOUT COLLECTING MILES

Conn. — In the cab of a Naugatuck Railroad locomotive, I find myself smitten with rail travel. The track snakes ahead of us into the woods, every curve sparking anticipation. I perch in what’s known as the fireman’s seat; in the steam-engine era, I’d be shoveling coal to keep the train chugging along. But this is a diesel-powered engine, so all I have to do is sit, and let every turn swivel my chair toward a different view.

I had boarded this Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts excursion trip outside the Railroad Museum of New England, which is housed in the old Thomaston Depot. The trip takes two loops: first, across the face of the Thomaston Dam to Torrington and back, and then to Waterbury and back.

The museum takes visitors on the same tour starting this weekend through October. The enthusiasts charter excursions all over New England throughout the year, some on stretches of freight-only track that most people never see. This trip on “Naugy” — part of the old New York, New Haven, and Hartford line — has been geared to the particular passions of the enthusiasts, who call themselves rail fans.

You won’t find a private, first-class car on the museum’s ordinary runs. Hooked up just behind the cab and fitted with an observation deck, the car — called the Sherry Lynnette Brannon after owner Louis Edmonds’s wife — was built in 1897 as a business car for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. B&O executives would use it to court business.

Mahogany-paneled with Victorian detailing, a dining room, a lounge, a galley, and two bedrooms, the Sherry Lynnette Brannon seems the ideal way to travel. For its day, though, it was simple.

"This is exceedingly plain," says Edmonds, decked out in a gray jacket to serve lunch to his first-class passengers. "It's the oldest car of its type running, and the only railroad-built car still running. It has owned me since Oct. 9, 1991."

Edmonds, who lives in New Hampshire, has spent many a weekend in Connecticut, restoring and maintaining the car, which he keeps at the museum. He can't take it far; because the Sherry Lynnette Brannon is a wooden car (sheathed in steel in 1915), regulations prohibit it from rail interchanges. In wrecks, wooden cars splinter and catch fire; to use interchanges today, cars must be made from steel and be able to withstand a 600,000-pound impact on the ends without bending, Edmonds says.

Peter Bretz, an avuncular fellow with a walrus mustache, is one of the eight paying first-class customers. He sits in the lounge, watching the track rush toward him, sipping Chardonnay. Bretz has flown in from Los Angeles for this trip.

"These are inhuman conditions," he jokes, raising his wine glass.

Bretz is a particular breed of rail fan: He collects miles, and while he's been on this line before, there are a few miles the MBRRE excursion will traverse that he has never ridden before.

Why collect miles? Bretz answers with a quote from "Travel," a poem by Edna Saint Vincent Millay: "There isn't a train I wouldn't take, no matter where it's going."

Trip coordinator Sue Waldron Sample, one of the very few women in the enthusiasts group, wears a conductor's uniform and walks up and down the aisles of the two regular passenger cars, chatting and making sure everyone is happy. She is in her element on the train. "I love to travel, and about 10 years ago I realized that I liked the railroad part as much as the travel part," she says.

Sample met her husband volunteering at the museum, and they got married on the observation deck of the Sherry Lynnette Brannon. She also has an engineer's license, and has driven this locomotive.

"I like the idea of being able to control something so big with a very small brake handle," Sample says. "I also enjoy blowing the horn and ringing the bell. Going through a crossing, and people stop and wait, little boys wave and you blow the whistle."

As we approach the end of the line in Torrington, Sample consults with the club's higher-ups. "Do we need to go down to the very end of the track today?" she asks.

This is for the sake of mileage collectors like Bretz.

"The coupler on the car will touch the leaves after the track ends," says Howard Pincus, chairman of the museum, president of the Naugatuck Railroad, and conductor of today's trip.

Indeed, as the engine pushes the rear car toward the trees, many of the rail fans, most of them in their 50s and 60s, crowd toward the back of the train, cameras in hand, to witness the miles — and feet, and inches — eaten up.

Bretz, and almost all the other passengers, disembark at a number of stops along the line. These are photo-ops; another breed of rail fans can't take enough pictures of trains. The still photographers set up tripods. One Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts member has rigged up a two-camera outfit to take stereophonic slides. Then the crowd is silenced as the video cameramen shoot their footage. The train moves about 50 yards back toward Thomaston for the cameras.

"If he makes us walk back, that's less mileage," Bretz complains. "I'm scandalized."

Yet another breed of rail fan revels in the history of the railroad, in riding antique cars like the Sherry Lynnette Brannon, and in acquiring encyclopedic knowledge about trains.

"Is anybody in this for the scenery," I ask Bretz. "That's why I'd ride trains. For the scenery."

He laughs, suggesting scenery is for amateurs. "My wife comes along for the scenery," he says. "When there's no scenery, she doesn't."

But the scenery is part of it, because rail fans see sides to this country that only people who ride trains are exposed to. Even just on the run from Thomaston to Torrington, we ride over the face of the Thomaston Dam, a sleek and impressive structure overlooking the Naugatuck River. We also pass the backside of a factory, which Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts newsletter editor John Reading points out as "part of America's rustbelt."

On the route's second loop, heading toward Waterbury, engineers Al Pomeroy and Al Galanty let me climb into the cab, and it's here, with the wind blowing in my face, and the jiggle and sway of the locomotive beneath my feet, that I get my fill of scenery. The rail fans don't seem to be hankering for this seat, but the museum offers the opportunity to be an engineer for an hour, to get a lesson and actually drive this 1600-horsepower behemoth.

I'm happy just to ride along. On a road parallel to the trap, four couples on touring motorcycles drive by, tooting their horns. Galanty toots right back. Two fishermen walk by the side of the track, and he toots at them, as well — irked that they are putting everyone in danger by using the track as a foot trail. They look up and wave happily.

Full-fledged fans or not, everybody seems to love trains. Maybe it's because they're so powerful. Or maybe it's because they're

always passing through on their way somewhere else. The passengers have the thrill of travel, and miles, and history. Even the folks standing near the railroad crossings, waving as we go by, can't help but put their dreams on these iron rails.

Cate McQuaid is a freelance writer who lives in Haverhill.

*By Cate McQuaid  
Globe Correspondent  
02/25/2003*

## THESE FOLKS ON THE RIGHT TRACKS

LINCOLN — Progress had sent these compact little railroad cars down the tracks and into the sunset some years ago, but some have been saved to ride the rails another day and that's what they did this weekend.

They gathered in Lincoln at the Hobo Railroad Friday night, these little vehicles called track cars, which were once used by inspectors to check tracks and telegraph lines and other things along the rail line, for the 15th annual Track Car Meet.

"This is the longest consecutive track car meet in the U.S.," said Paul Yorkis of Medway, Mass., who has been organizing the event for 15 years. "We have people come in from all of the New England states, Delaware, Ohio and New York — we have 43 cars this year."

Their owners are most enthusiastic.

Dirk Ras of North Branford, Conn., was oiling his track car Friday night in preparation for Saturday's trip from Lincoln down the line 55 miles to Weirs Beach.

"When it's at full throttle and it's running right, it sounds like a Harley Davidson," he said.

Dennis LeBeau and his family traveled up from East Brookfield, Mass. It's been a family activity for years — his sons used to ride in the front of the track cars in their car seats.

"It's a blast," he said. "We have a great time doing this. You have to have a love for the railroad and history, and you have to like being out in the woods."

He rescued his track car from a junkyard, where it would have met its demise from the Central Vermont Railroad.

"I grew up by the railroad and since I can't buy one of these," he said, pointing to a locomotive, "this is a great sport." His son, Tom, 9, knows about track cars.

"This was built in 1946 and was used before there were high railers," he said. "They were used to do maintenance on the tracks."

The little cars were usurped by these high railers, which are pickup trucks fitted with devices that allow them ride right on the

rails, as well as on the highway. It became a more efficient way of getting to points on the tracks.

Al Bernard and his son, Peter, 11, are newer members at the track meet. They traveled from Rockport, Mass., for the meet. Al Bernard fell in love with the sport after a ride on the Hobo Railroad two years ago.

"We were vacationing up here and took a ride on the train," he recalled. "I was talking to a woman in the station and asked her about the track car weekend, and she said that they had one for sale. The rest, as they say, is history."

He wears a big grin when talking about his experiences.

"It's the funniest thing," he said. "It's like riding a roller coaster — it feels like you're getting away with something."

Yorkis said the meet emphasizes safety and the fact that the participants are guests of the state of New Hampshire, which owns the rail line. Top speed on the tracks is 15 miles per hour.

"You get to see a part of America most people never see," he said. "We see the (Pemigewasset) River from places people never see it. We see moose, bear and even deer."

*June 2, 2003  
By LORNA COLQUHOUN  
Union Leader Correspondent*

## BOSTON-MONTREAL RAIL BOOSTED BY STUDY

CONCORD — The results of a study on the feasibility of Boston to Montreal high-speed rail service show it may be feasible, a New Hampshire rail task force was told yesterday by Charlie Miller, rail program manager for the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

A draft final statement of the first phase of the study presented by Miller indicates that a significant ridership would use a competitively priced high speed rail service.

The preliminary study forecasts a maximum ridership of 683,667 passengers a year from a mid-speed service with the lowest fare rate.

"Therefore the results indicate that a competitively priced (high speed) service would have the best ridership and the highest operating revenue," the draft report states.

Miller briefed the New Hampshire task force on re-establishing the Lawrence, Mass., to Manchester and Concord and Concord to Lebanon rail service on results of the study, which is about to shift to phase two.

Steering committees from Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts along with Canadian government officials have been



working on a feasibility study of a 329-mile high-speed rail service corridor between Boston and Montreal.

Vermont already has several active rail lines and is strongly committed to Amtrack and freight line service, Miller said.

The Green Mountain state has committed \$3.5 million this year for Amtrack services for both the Ethan Allen Express Service out of Rutland to Penn Station in New York as well as the St. Albans to Washington service, the Vermonter, which serves Claremont and several other communities along the Connecticut River Valley, Miller said.

Phase one of the study covers the development of ridership projections, existing freight and passenger operations, station selection issues as well as infrastructure questions. Phase two will shift into refinements of phase one issues and focus on a more specific operating plan, Miller said.

June 7, 2003

By WARREN HASTINGS  
Concord Bureau

## WILTON SCENIC RAILROAD FINALLY READY FOR SHAKEDOWN CRUISE

WILTON — Stuart Draper's dream of running his own railroad will reach fruition when the Wilton Scenic Railroad departs from its Main Street station at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

Although he won't be running full scale until the end of the month, Draper will offer four runs in his two Budd Liner cars tomorrow as part of the 10th annual Wilton Arts and Film Festival.

Getting the train up and running has been a struggle for Draper because he has had to deal with two unmoveable obstacles: the force of Mother Nature and government red tape.

Washouts along the tracks between Wilton and his eventual destination of Greenfield State Park have caused delays and so has a seemingly endless succession of state and federal approvals.

"I've been through red tape before," said Draper, a Wilton selectman. "Any government agency can give you grief."

That sounds remarkably patient, coming from a man who butted heads regularly with public utility bureaucrats when he owned his own telephone company.

The Federal Railroad Administration was the main culprit this time, enforcing government regulations on timetables, drug and alcohol screenings for employees and more. Even the kind of glass used in the cars required a waiver because it's different in Canada, where Draper bought the Budd Liners from British Columbia Rail.

The biggest problem was a washout along the tracks in Greenfield and a delay in new railroad ties arriving.

"If the tracks aren't up to where they should be, we're not going to run," Draper said. "Safety is the main issue."

Even on the shorter run, riders will see some nice scenery. The train runs along Stoney Brook, including a large trestle bridge and dramatic cut ledges. When the full run is offered, riders will enjoy all that plus scenic views of Zephyr Lake in Greenfield and natural woodland.

Draper's train will be fully staffed tomorrow, including a conductor, electrical engineer and mechanic, and of course, the railroad engineer. Peter Leishman of Milford-Bennington Railroad is the operator for the line, and he'll be along for the ride as well.

"I'll just be an observer," Draper said.

"It's really exciting to see it get started," said Draper, whose trains arrived in Wilton last fall. "We're taking it one step at a time, and we'll work the bugs out as we go along."

The cars have been refurbished and painted over the winter and spring and have all the amenities, including bathrooms.

While future runs will offer sandwiches and lunches, there will be candy and soft drinks for sale on opening day.

The trains will run four times tomorrow: 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Tickets are \$7 for people age 13 and over, \$5 for kids 6 to 12, and \$2 for those 5 and under. When the full season starts, those prices will be \$12, \$10 and \$2.

Each run will handle 110 passengers, and Draper said patrons who have bought advance tickets will get a pass for a free ride tomorrow, with their tickets good for the full ride later in the season.

"We want everybody to enjoy themselves and have a good time," Draper said.

May 16, 2003

By GIL BLISS

Union Leader Correspondent

## WASHINGTON COUNTY RAILROAD NAMES ITS NEW DIVISION

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION, Vt. ? As of noon June 3, the former Boston & Maine-Canadian Pacific line between White River Junction and Newport, Vt., officially became the Washington County Railroad's Connecticut River Division, under a lease agreement with the State of Vermont.

The line had been operated by Iron Road Railways' Northern Vermont Railway, but was excluded from the recent sale of bankrupt Iron Road's system to the new entity Montreal, Maine & Atlantic. The state of Vermont wanted to preserve service, and so awarded the operation to Washington County Railroad (WCRC), an existing short line. Before the Northern Vermont, the line from White River Junction to Wells River, Vt., had been Guilford Transportation,

before that Boston & Maine, from Wells River northward, it had been Canadian Pacific.

Washington County has divided its new Connecticut River Division into two subdivisions, Lyndonville and Bradford, which will remain in place until, and if, WCRC decides to change the mileposts on the route to represent a single unbroken series.

The original Washington County operation, at Montpelier, previously the Montpelier & Barre Railroad, becomes WCRC's Montpelier & Barre Division to distinguish itself from the new operation. This line serves Bombardier's plant outside Barre, connecting it to the railroad network at Montpelier via the New England Central (former Central Vermont Railway).

*TRAINS News Wire*  
Thursday, June 5, 2003

## AMTRAK DOWNEASTER RETURNS TODAY TO OOB

The Downeaster begins its first full season of stops in Old Orchard Beach today, two months earlier than the service began last year.

Amtrak also announced several other changes for the Portland-to-Boston passenger train, including revised schedules and the availability of self-service ticketing in Wells.

"All those little bits and pieces add up," Patricia Douglas, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority manager of planning and development, said.

Higher fares are also coming down the tracks for some riders. The passenger rail agency has come up with a plan to increase revenue generated by the Downeaster, which carried 323,000 passengers in its first year, by raising ticket prices on some popular peak-travel trains while lowering prices for trains that attract fewer riders. The overall impact is that the average revenue per passenger trip - not the average ticket price - is estimated to increase 4.2 percent.

Douglas said a final decision on the fare structure is expected this month.

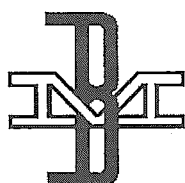
New schedules for departures and arrivals are on the NEEPRA web site, [www.thedowneaster.com](http://www.thedowneaster.com). As part of the revision that takes effect today, people looking to spend some time in Old Orchard Beach will be able to disembark in town two months earlier than last year.

"Last year that station didn't open until July 12," Douglas said. Service continues through October.

The trip between Portland and Boston isn't getting any faster. Despite a federal ruling that the track can handle trains traveling up to 79 mph, Guilford Rail, which owns the tracks, Amtrak and the rail agency are still negotiating the start of speedier service.

But at least purchasing tickets will become quicker for travelers who use the Wells station, where a Quik-Trak ticket machine has been installed. Travelers can purchase tickets at the ATM-style machine, Douglas said, as long as there is an open seat on the train they wish to take. Passengers can also use the machine to pick up tickets they've reserved on the phone or online.

By LARA SKINNER/Journal Tribune May 1, 2003  
[lskinner@journaltribune.com](mailto:lskinner@journaltribune.com)



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