

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

# NEWSLETTER

*“Every foot of track on the B&M, mainline or branch, rain or shine, was the scene of legitimate human endeavor.”*  
Robert W. Jones, “Boston and Maine: Three Colorful Decades of New England Railroading.”

**January–February 2022**

Meeting/Membership Telephone Number (978) 454-3600

[www.bmrrhs.org](http://www.bmrrhs.org)

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*Tyngsboro, MA, January 1958. Boston & Maine Railroad's Talgo Train in a publicity photo on the NH Division Mainline. From an official B&M PR Dept. slide in MacMillan/Hutchinson Collection, B&MRRS Archives. Cat. No. 2021.4.1.*

## TIMETABLE OF UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sunday, April 24:

Hooksett Lions Club Train Show

David R. Cawley Middle School, 89 Whitehall Road, Hooksett, NH. 10am-3pm. At present the B&MRRHS plans to have tables at the show with merchandise, clothing, models, books and more. Check the “upcoming events” section on our website for updates.

**BOSTON & MAINE RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization composed of people who want to share their knowledge, and learn more about, the history and operations of the Boston and Maine Railroad, its predecessors, and successors. Formed in 1971 by a group of interested B&M employees and railfans, the B&MRRHS now has nearly one thousand active members.

Our principal activities are publication of our journal, the *B&M Bulletin*, and our *Newsletter*, monthly speakers, archives and hardware preservation, preservation of the B&M 0-6-0 switcher No. 410 and coach-baggage combine No. 1244, participation in railroad shows, and maintaining two web sites: [www.bmrrhs.org](http://www.bmrrhs.org) and [www.flickr.com/photos/bmrrhs](http://www.flickr.com/photos/bmrrhs). If you would like to join the Society, you can join on-line or download an application at [www.bmrrhs.org](http://www.bmrrhs.org).

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**About the Newsletter**

The Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society *Newsletter* is published six times a year. We welcome your articles, photographs, and news items about the Society, the Boston & Maine Railroad, and current railroad events in New England. It is best to query the editor before writing articles. Please address correspondence to the Newsletter Editor at:

*Rick Kfoury, B&MRRHS Newsletter*  
*B&MRRHS, P.O. Box 9116,*  
*Lowell, MA 01853*

or email [rickkfoury51@gmail.com](mailto:rickkfoury51@gmail.com).

Opinions expressed in the *Newsletter* do not necessarily represent the views of the Society, its officers, or members. Reference in the *Newsletter* to products or services is for the convenience of readers and does not constitute an endorsement by the Society. © 2021 B&MRRHS.

**MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

Join us on-line or renew your membership on-line at [bmrrhs.org](http://bmrrhs.org). Credit cards may be used if you join or renew on-line (via PayPal). Dues are also payable by check, money order, postal money order, or cash (in person only). All payments in U.S. dollars. Please allow four to six weeks for processing.

Basic Individual - \$40	Basic & Spouse - \$43
Contributing - \$50	Sustaining - \$55
Supporting - \$80	*Canada & Overseas - \$75
Benefactor - \$100	Corporate - \$500

\* *Canada & Overseas members please pay via PayPal*

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Notices are sent monthly based on members' renewal dates. If we have an email on file for you, a renewal reminder will also be sent via email. Envelopes are clearly marked "RENEWAL NOTICE." Not responding will result in removal from the member list.

- When members renew, typically the month of renewal does not change. (A member with a 06/19 renewal date who pays in August would have a 06/20 update to renew.)
- The label on your *Newsletter* envelope shows your renewal date.
- Refer questions to the Membership Secretary Stephen DeFrancesco at .

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Please advise Membership Secretary of new address before you move. Returned and forwarded mail costs the Society money. Write *Stephen DeFrancesco, Membership Secretary, B&MRRHS, P.O. Box 1438, Tewksbury, MA 01876.*

**NEW MEMBERS**

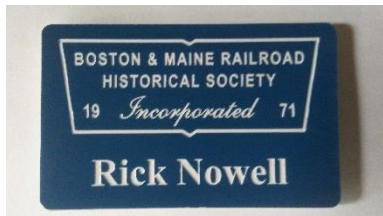
We would like to take the opportunity to our welcome new members who have joined the Society since the last *Newsletter* and through early December:

- David Harkess, North Conway, NH
- Richard Morrow, North Wales, PA
- Christopher M. MacGillivray, Clinton, MA
- David Dix, Woodbridge, VA
- Matthew Menzi, Manchester, NH
- Scott Blanchard, Northfield, VT
- Fred & Christine Kfoury, Manchester, NH
- Daniel Shelley, Mooresville, NC
- Edward Snow, Seattle, WA
- Bob Fay, New Braintree, MA
- Gary Clifton Smith, North Conway, NH
- Andrei Alexiev, Blairsville, PA
- Robert Comora, North Andover, MA
- Robert Bouchard, Salem, MA
- Kenneth Luther, Pepperell, MA
- Corey Reynolds, Methuen, MA

*>Welcome Aboard!*

**MEMBERSHIP BADGES AVAILABLE**

B&MRRHS members are entitled to wear the official membership badge at all society events. The badge is an attractive shade of blue with white lettering, 3 inches wide by 2 inches tall. The badge has a secure magnetic attachment system that eliminates pinholes from shirts and sweater. The Society sells and mails badges at cost. Please make checks for \$12 payable to B&MRRHS and send to: Name Badge, B&MRRHS, P.O. Box 9116, Lowell, MA, 01853. Please specify name for the badge. NOTE: Magnets are known to be harmful to those who utilize Pacemakers.



**NEW MAILING ADDRESS FOR MEMBERSHIPS**

Please be advised that we have moved our P.O. Box for new and renewed memberships, and we are **no longer using** the Derry, NH P.O. Box address. Our current P.O. Box address is:

Membership Secretary, B&MRRHS  
P.O. Box 1438,  
Tewksbury, MA 01876

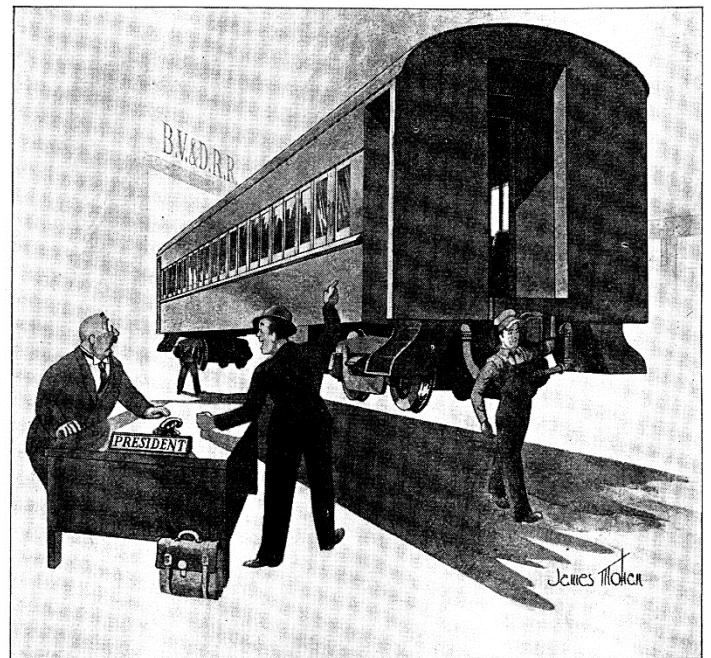
**WEBMASTER'S REPORT**

The Online Committee has been very busy so far this winter. In November we shot new episodes of our web series *Minuteman Tales* at locations on the old Northern Mainline north of Concord, NH. Our team has been hard at work editing and these episodes. We released new episodes of our podcast *High Green*, and continued to update the website and attend virtual meetings. We currently have 3,703 people following us on Facebook, and 510 YouTube subscribers, up from 442 at last *Newsletter*. We hope you have been enjoying the content and always appreciate any feedback! ☿ – *James P. Nizgus, Webmaster*

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

I hope that you and all in your life enjoyed a happy and healthy holiday season, and have been well in the new year thus far. The Society has launched into 2022 fulfilling holiday merchandise orders, working in the archives and hardware collections, and preparing digital offerings to help spread this amazing history far and wide. After our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year it is exciting to look back on our history — and ahead into the future, too. We'd like to thank you all for your continued support in our efforts, and hope that you are enjoying them as much as we are. We have a good edition of the Newsletter this time, with some fascinating reading and great photos, too. Enjoy! ☿ – *Rick Kfoury, Newsletter Editor*

**This, Sir, Is the New Lightweight Coach You Ordered!**



*March 1938 issue of the B&M Employee Magazine. James Mohan, artist.*



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

B&MRRHS Archives Report  
 Rick Nowell, Archives Chairman

November 7, 2021

Eight volunteers attended our work session on November 17. We scanned maps from the William Remington donation, sorted timetables from the Sandown Historical Society and Trager donations, continued organizing negatives from the Hill-MacMillan-Hutchinson Collection, began an inventory of the Vincent H. Bernard Signaling Collection, and catalogued other recent acquisitions. Rick Hurst's group met to continue the work on the Fitchburg Division records donated by Donald B. Valentine. Incidentally, Don Valentine visited us recently and brought with him the last five boxes from the Division Engineer's office at Greenfield, Mass. The total number of boxes was 61, and they include leases and contracts, operational documents, and track plans. The Hurst group has organized the material alphabetically by location, thus making it accessible to researchers. Brad Kippen's group has now scanned over 3,500 negatives from the Robert E. Chaffin Collection, with ~1,400 presently in progress. An inventory of the Bill Gove Collection, prepared by B&MRRHS Archives volunteers Mal Sockol and Eric DiVirgilio, has been transcribed and can be viewed at <https://bostonmaine.squarespace.com/on-line-archives>

Paul Burke has been at work in the Lowell Archives, helping to file a backlog of new acquisitions.

Volunteers are needed for the following special projects:

- Negative scanning and postproduction. Contact Brad Kippen, [fbk3amtk@aol.com](mailto:fbk3amtk@aol.com)
- Transcription of inventories and employee service records. Contact Rick Nowell, as above.

We will hold our next work session in January.

The Center for Lowell History, where our main Archives collection is located, is open by appointment only, Monday through Friday, 9 to 5, and the third Saturday of each month from 9 to 3. Masks must be worn.

Archives work sessions are held monthly. Visitors and volunteers are welcome. For more information or to make an appointment, please email Rick Nowell, [fnowell3@gmail.com](mailto:fnowell3@gmail.com)

View our On-Line Archives at [www.bmrrhs.org](http://www.bmrrhs.org) and our photo archive at [www.flickr.com/photos/bmrrhs](http://www.flickr.com/photos/bmrrhs)

Respectfully submitted,

*Rick Nowell*

Rick Nowell  
 Chairman

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"Dear Members;

It has been pointed out to your Calendar Editor that he has conflated two different RRE trips in the photo caption for June 2022. The RRE's special train back to Boston on June 13, 1954, returned without incident. And in fact, could not have returned via the Eastern Route because by that date the Eastern Route had been abandoned!

The trip involving the re-route via the Eastern occurred on June 8, 1952 when the RRE traveled from Boston to Maine Central's Waterville Shops and return.

And for those keeping past B&MRRHS calendars for reference, it has also been discovered that the direction of travel of FDR's POTUS special at Ayer shown on the August 2020 calendar page is north--or--eastbound, not south--or--westbound. The giveaway is the placement of milepost 28W. All the mileposts on the old WN&P were--and are--on the east side of the right-of-way

My apologies!  
 Sincerely, Carl Byron"





## HARDWARE COMMITTEE REPORT

Bill Marnik, Hardware Committee  
Dan Hyde, Hardware Committee

The Hardware Committee met on November 11th in North Chelmsford to discuss its next steps as we adjust to losing a valued member's involvement with the Community. In November, I received several valuable pieces of memorabilia and equipment from two private donors. We appreciate their generosity. I have the software for the Hardware Roster which totals over 2500 artifacts. I intend to maintain and expand the roster to include its new additions.

The team is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, December 15th at 10 AM in North Chelmsford for our next working session. I would like to extend appreciation to Team Members Dan Hyde, Mal Sockol and Fred Brown for their contributions to the BMRRHS. I enjoy our work sessions for their hard work and humor.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Marnik

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

November 21, 2021

I hope the new year finds everyone healthy and hopefully an end to this crazy virus. We are going to try to hold in person meetings again, but of course that all depends on current conditions, which always seem to be changing.

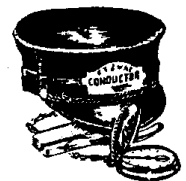
We were able to participate in railroad shows this fall, these were quite successful. We will keep you updated on plans for meetings via the Newsletter, website, and the society phone.

We would like to say thank you to Kathy LaValley, she has been our membership secretary for the past few years and has done a great job. She has decided to step away from this position and Steve DeFrancesco has taken on this role. Steve will be making some changes, so bear with us as we try to improve the membership process by using more email but be assured that a mail-in option will always be available to members. We have a new P.O. box at Tewksbury for membership, you can find that and Steve's email address at the front of the *Newsletter*.

We are always looking for new volunteers to help with the society's many tasks. Please consider helping as we depend on our volunteers to get all jobs done. Hoping for improvement in the New Year.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jim Nigzus*  
President



**WEST RINDGE STATION BURNS**

WEST RINDGE, NH. – Member Brad Blodgett reports that the former B&M station in West Rindge, NH, now a residence, burned on July 11, 2021. Exterior walls mostly remain, though scorched around the broken windows. The fire broke through the roof and the inside of the building is gutted. According to the town, the owner plans to repair/rebuild. The line, which was originally the Worcester & Contoocook, later known as the Peterboro Branch and finally the Monadnock Branch, was abandoned north of Peterboro in 1936, Peterboro to Jaffrey in 1972, and Winchendon to Jaffrey in 1984. ☿

**WORK ON COMBINE COACH #1244**

LOWELL, MA – Boston & Maine Combine Coach #1244 received some cosmetic attention this past year. The wooden car, which is on display with B&M 0-6-0 steam locomotive #410, was completely repainted and re-lettered. A huge thank you is due to Jim Nizgus, Fred Brown, and the 410 Committee which oversees the Society’s responsibilities of keeping the B&M rolling stock presentable at the National Park in Lowell. ☿



*Above, before the work and below, after.*



**MOTORCARS ON THE NORTHERN**



CONCORD, NH. – On Nov. 27, members of motorcar enthusiast group NEREX enjoyed a rare ride on the former B&M New Hampshire Division Mainline, now operated by Pan Am Railways as the freight-only “Northern Mainline” between North Chelmsford, MA and Concord, NH. The cars set on at Delta Drive in Concord on the White Mountain Branch before entering the Northern line and traveling south through Bow, Hooksett, Manchester, Bedford, Merrimack, and into Nashua Yard. Following a lunch break the motorcars continued across the border into Tyngsboro and to North Chelmsford where they turned and reversed direction for the cold but exciting trip back north. Motorcars from several railroads were represented, including three which were once owned and operated by the Boston & Maine Railroad. The trip was the result of cooperation between members of NEREX and Pan Am Railways. ☿



**B&M F7A #4268 UPDATE**

NORTH CONWAY, NH – New piping was installed to hold 3 lights to illuminate the engineer’s walkway on 4268. Leaks were located and corrected during multiple airbrake tests. Larry Kemp helped solder up some more leaks, and 4268 reached over 115psi on the main reservoirs. The airbrakes work, horn and wipers as well. Cory Fothergill sanded and repaired more of the compartment in the rear and the equipment rack.  
*470 Railroad Club Facebook page*





# Vignettes from the Archives

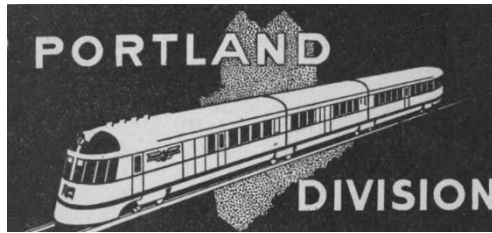


**ABOVE:** Quebec Junction, NH, February 25, 1952. B&M Train #377 switching cars with Maine Central Train. Taken from B&M engine. Quebec Junction is a remote location where Maine Central's route to Quebec via Beecher Falls, VT (at right) diverged from the Mountain Division to St. Johnsbury, VT (at left). MacMillan/Hutchinson Collection, B&MRRS Archives. Cat. No. 2021.4.1., negative 4924-2.

**LEFT:** In October 2021, the 470 Railroad Club and Conway Scenic Railroad relocated the old Quebec Junction shanty back to its now overgrown original location after it resurfaced in private ownership. The wye and sidings are still in place here and were recently cleared for a 470 Club excursion. Conway Scenic Railroad photo.

## “THE NEW RIGBY TERMINAL”

From the *Maine Central Magazine*, January 1924



Transcribed by Archives Chairman Rick Nowell

The Rigby terminal — whose opening, although unaccompanied by ceremonies of any kind, was the chief industrial event of the month in Maine — is something more than an impressive engineering feat. It is something more than a panorama of buildings and steel rails. It is, one may say, a vision — a vision of progress, of service, of increased efficiency, of good faith to public and employee — translated into reality.

Briefly, Rigby is by far the greatest freight terminal in Maine and one of the most important in New England. It was constructed by the Portland Terminal Company at a cost of one and three-quarters millions, and its object is to relieve congestion in the Portland yards and to facilitate the passage of freight in and out of Maine. Already, so smoothly and easily was the work of transferring from the Portland yards accomplished, it might have been in operation for years. Already, too, railroad men say, it has demonstrated its efficiency.

Before Rigby was built, Portland was the terminal and starting point for all freights over the Maine Central and the Boston and Maine. There was a system of small yards numbered one to ten — not one of them large enough for the volume of traffic. And congestion, as this traffic grew, became increasingly serious. Divided between these tiny yards — split into fragments, when they should have been centralized — really efficient freight movements became almost impossible.

For years, to relieve congestion a little, the yard at Deering Junction was utilized as an auxiliary. Here was handled the business that went south and

west — to Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Harlem River, through the Ayer (Mass.) gateway. There were, too, a few tracks at Rigby available for east-bound freights. But the great burden of freight traffic flowing in and out of Maine rested squarely upon Portland terminal; and this situation was complicated by the "waterfront business," which is larger and more important than the average person knows. Coal for many private industries; sulfur, lumber, China clay — used to put the gloss on paper in the big paper mills — these and many other imports make up the "waterboard freight," most of which is shipped east. This alone requires several trains a day, and it added to the burden of the overcrowded Portland yards.

Hence the need of Rigby Terminal. Hence the impressive undertaking by the Portland Terminal Company — an undertaking that will mean millions, as years pass, to the welfare and development of Maine. The work, which ordinarily would have required years, was driven through in seven months — as brilliant a construction and engineering feat as ever was accomplished in New England.

The purpose of Rigby? Simply to concentrate, under efficient modern conditions, the receiving and dispatching of all freight and the handling of all power. It means that every freight run from Portland terminal for any point on the Boston and Maine system or beyond — every freight on the Portland and Mountain divisions of the Maine Central, now makes Rigby its starting place, even though some pick up full trains at Portland terminal for points east. Thus, the congestion of long years in the Portland yards has been relieved, and the result in increased efficiency already is — well, beyond computation.

To give a brief description of this terminal, with its maze of buildings, tracks and signals — all illumined at night by a half hundred floodlights that bring out each detail as clearly as in some scene upon a stage — is not easy. First in impressiveness, perhaps, is the giant roundhouse of brick, steel, and cement, which will hold 42 locomotives and has tracks just outside for fourteen more. Here, surely, is the last word in constructive skill. There even is an



arrangement for washing the boilers of locomotives without cooling them — the boiler being filled with water heated almost to the steaming point. There are two 75,000-gallon tanks, water flowing from them to the engines through two large standpipes—which serve, also, three outward tracks running from the turntable to the freight yard. This turntable is a marvelous bit of mechanism — ninety-five feet long and equipped with electric power and compressed air tractor: the one available should the other fail. In the event of both failing — practically an impossibility—it can easily be turned by hand, notwithstanding its dead weight of seventy-five tons.

Engines arriving at the terminal are delivered on what are called the engine house receiving tracks. They go first to the coal shed, where they take a full supply of coal and sand; then to the ash pits, where their fires are cleaned. Here are facilities for the handling of four engines at one time—the cinders and clinkers being taken from the firebox and dropped into an underground conveyor, later raised by compressed air and dumped into a car for further handling.

Then the engines receive an inspection; and the next stage of their journey is the washroom. Following the cleaning, they are delivered to the engine house for repairs, if needed; and then, and not until then, they are ready for their "stalls." And all this is done to every engine at the end of every trip. Talk about supervision!

Another feature is the coal shed — modern and of heavy construction. Coal is dumped from the cars into pits beneath the tracks; conveyors, electrically driven, take it to the upper part of the shed. From there it drops into bins; from the bins into one-ton buckets; from the buckets to the tender of the engine — and in this way count is kept of the number of tons delivered to each. Adjacent to the shed, which has a capacity of 2000 tons, are storage facilities for 22,000 more. There are headquarters for the general yardmaster, his assistants and office force, and for the master mechanic, roundhouse foreman and assistants. There is a branch of the Portland Freight Office for clerks who rebill, revise, and give other

attention to through freight; and there is a telegraph office, always open, with five telegraphers in attendance. Here are handled telegrams for the transportation and mechanical departments.

The stockyards will accommodate ten carloads — three yards, entirely enclosed, being for horses; the others, enclosed on three sides and about half the top, for cattle, sheep and hogs. The "icing plant," from which come ice and salt for the proper cooling of the cars, is worth a story in itself. At night, as has been said, a half hundred flood lights — of 500 watts each — brighten the expanse of tracks and buildings. The capacity is approximately 1,775 cars, and there are 28 miles of new trackage.

Here are two paragraphs of impressive figures: Six hundred employees of the Portland Terminal Company work in and out of Rigby every day. From 500 to 600 conductors, brakemen, engineers and firemen of the various contributing lines are there in the course of each day, also — except on Sundays, when the number of trains is usually much reduced. The daily number of freights arriving and departing, over all divisions, is between sixty and ninety, the number of cars varying from 2,000 to 3,400. And Rigby cares for the engines of seventy-seven passenger trains in and out of Union Station.

Already the effect at Portland terminal has been noticeable. It seems quiet there, in comparison with a few weeks ago—but conditions are wonderfully improved, and almost complete use of the old facilities for regular industrial and water-borne freight has been restored. Meantime, the interchange of cars at Deering Junction station has been discontinued and the force there much reduced.

Rigby was once a famous racecourse — the Saratoga of Maine. Now the thud of hoofs and cheers of eager thousands have given way to the whistles of hard-working shifting engines, the rattle and bang of freights — not so romantic, yet evidence of industrial progress. A good theme for some story writer, possibly.

## ANDREW'S EXCURSIONS #11

### MAPLEWOOD MEMORIES

B&MRRHS MEMBER ANDREW RIEDL



Maplewood Depot again this time on October 25th, 2019. This depot is all ready for Halloween as it certainly has the spooky factor going for it in this picture! The depot would continue to wither away along in the woods until it collapsed on October 28th, 2021, despite the commencement of preservation efforts. Andrew Riedl photo.

**Y**ou could imagine the once bustling activity, the steamer trunks, the women in long dresses and big hats, waiting for the train. Truly a place of memories.” – *Unknown referring to Maplewood Depot.*

Probably one of the most unsettling feelings one can get is to stumble across a man-made structure deep in the woods that has been long abandoned and left to wither away in the elements. Be it the rusty frame of a decades-old automobile miles away from a paved road, a ramshackle cabin that has not sheltered a soul in years, or even something as simple as a stone wall defining a long-overgrown pasture left for nature to reclaim, finding something abandoned almost always brings a slight shiver down one’s spine as they try to piece together why something was left to simply be forgotten.

Exploring the remains of the Boston and Maine Railroad has not often brought out this “uneasy” feeling in me, but there have been a few exceptions during my years of documenting. I think the most notable were the two times I visited Maplewood depot in the town of Bethlehem, NH. Prior to my first visit in May of 2010, I had seen a few photos over the years, and knew the depot was in rough shape in the northern New Hampshire forest, but it wasn’t until I walked into the woods on a rainy day to see it for myself that I experienced the feelings of loneliness and unease that the shell of this once glorious structure emitted.

To be fair, Maplewood was once an elegant and welcoming depot in the woods that welcomed travelers headed to the White Mountains to escape everyday life in the cities and to stay at the many grand hotels and resorts in the area. Originally built in 1881 as part of the narrow-gauge Profile & Franconia Notch Railroad, Maplewood was the intermediate stop on the 3.4 mile branch between Bethlehem Junction and Bethlehem. This short branch off of the Boston, Concord & Montreal Railroad was one of two branches that comprised the P&FN, the other extending further south to the Profile House resort. When the B&M took over ownership and operation of this line in 1895, the track was converted to standard gauge.

For several decades the line prospered, despite only being in service during the summer tourist season. Well-to-do city residents traveled to the many resorts in the Bethlehem area, and the Maplewood station was their first taste of the regions elegance and luxuries as they arrived at their summer destinations. Beautiful woodwork as well as an ornate steeple and subtle resemblances to the areas grand hotels were features of this building as well as its sister station in the town of Bethlehem itself.

Like so many other branch lines of this era, however, the advancement of the car and truck caused a huge decrease in ridership, and the Bethlehem branch only survived until 1925. Both stations on the now abandoned line remained standing, and curiously enough, experienced drastically different fates over the next century. Bethlehem depot located a few blocks outside of the town center is beautifully maintained to this day as a private residence, and almost all of the buildings original details still remain. I visited this location in May of 2010 (the same day I saw Maplewood for the first time) and was simply in awe at how you felt like you were stepping back in time upon seeing this building and all that was missing was the actual railroad itself.

Maplewood depot, however, was just far enough off the beaten path that it sat quietly in the woods, slowly decaying as the years went by. Located off of Maplewood Hill Road, the elegant station was set back from the road, so many people would not have even noticed it as they passed by unless they were specifically looking for it. The railroad right of way slowly grew in with foliage over the years, until finally in the summer months, the former crossing location at Maplewood Hill Road was nearly impossible to determine.

As the years and decades passed, Maplewood sat just out of sight and out of mind, except for visits from occasional rail fans and history buffs, until eventually the once proud depot was nothing more than a rotting wooden

shell, on the brink of complete collapse. What was fairly remarkable about the structure, however, was that it had survived in such an advanced state of dilapidation for such a long period of time. Mark W. Beauregard’s 1979 book “R.R. Stations of New England Today Volume 1” features a picture of Maplewood in the winter of 1977. The image shows the depot standing alone in the bitter cold North Country winter, and even at that time almost 45 years ago, the building looked to be on its last legs. I’m sure at the time of this photograph, Beauregard never would have imagined that Maplewood would hang on well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I have visited Maplewood depot twice, first back in May of 2010 while exploring the North Country B&M lines with Ben English Jr. I’ll never forget walking down the short length of the old roadbed from the road where Ben had parked his Subaru and remained while I ventured into the woods to experience this legendary B&M location. The ghostly depot appeared ahead of me and looked much lonelier and much more derelict than any picture I had ever seen. The large open spaces where windowpanes had once sat seemed to stare down on me like watchful eyes, and even though I was only a few hundred feet from the road, I got a very ghostly feeling at the old station. In my decades of exploring the B&M, only a handful of places have made the hair on the back of my neck stand on end, and Maplewood was definitely one of them. I took many pictures, however, and Ben and I continued on to the happier, well maintained Bethlehem depot just down the road.

Fast forward nearly a decade, and a dreary late October day in 2019 found me tracing the remains of the former White Mountains Division, and soon enough, I was walking down the same rough path in the woods that I had traversed earlier that decade. The depot was somehow still standing (this seemed to be what everyone said when they laid eyes on it) and being just days away from Halloween, this station was as close to a haunted house as one could possibly get. I may have been a decade older and known what to expect, but I still got the exact same uneasy sensation that I had on the rainy May

day in 2010. The thoughts of all the people who once stood where I was standing waiting for a train, carefree and happy on summer vacations, only to now be nothing more than faded memories certainly made it feel like a lonely location. The depot was still there waiting for a train, but the people are long gone as are the trains. It was at that moment it really hit home with me that Maplewood is a very ghostly, forlorn place. Still, I made sure to take plenty of pictures before driving off as I knew Maplewood would not be there forever, and looking back, I’m so glad that I did.

Soon after that visit, I discovered that there was an active preservation group looking to save Maplewood depot with the intention of restoring it and moving it to a more prominent place in town. They braced one side of the building that had long been leaning far off center, and for the first time since the glory days of the P&FN, things were looking up for Maplewood depot.

Unfortunately, this brief resurrection attempt would be short-lived as on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the depot collapsed when braces that had been placed on the side were removed for the preservationists to start dismantling the structure. It has been noted that as much of Maplewood depot has been packed away as possible, and maybe someday it will stand again, rebuilt from its remains. From the photos of the rubble, however, one can’t help but wonder if the legendary story of Maplewood depot has in fact come to a close.

This article is not meant to fuel debate about what happened to Maplewood depot at the time of its destruction or to speculate what the future may hold but rather remember it for what it was, a piece of B&M history truly encapsulated in time in the deep woods. Even with the physical structure now gone, the site of Maplewood will likely continue to draw the occasional B&M history enthusiast, and I can’t help but think it will always continue to be a location on the B&M system that will make my pulse quicken slightly. Maplewood is truly a ghostly lost memory and will live on as a B&M legend. Happy Explorations! - AR



**“Line of the Minute Man”**





# Winter Railroading at *North Conway*



**Clockwise from top left:** A snowbound GP7 #1555 at the enginehouse after a run up the B&M Conway Branch; E7 #3809 in town with a passenger run; across town, Portland Terminal GP7 #1081 with a Maine Central passenger run on the Mountain Division approaches Kearsarge Street; the B&M's only E8, #3821, gets cleared of snow near the famous passenger station; snowplow W3711 is turned on the turntable while K-class 2-8-0 steamer #2658 waits nearby. Photos of the Richard Hamilton Collection, B&MRRHS Archives.

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