

B&MBEETING JANUARY 1992

The B&MRRHS opened the new year on a sharp, colorful note with a superb slide presentation of Canadian Passenger Service in the last three decades by Len Bachelder. Lenny, from the Mass Bay RRE shared his traveling experiences to a very near-capacity group assembled in the projection room in the Mogan Cultural Center in Lowell. And he did it without a single inverted or backwards slide, at least to this observer's eye.

His program showed a variety of passenger, freight and mixed trains, which was varied across three types of operations. He talked first of corridor operations such as Quebec, Montreal, Toronto and Windsor, Ontario (across the river from Detroit), which he likened to the Northeast Corridor, but lesser in scope.

Len continued with a discussion on the "very limited long haul" such as the Montreal to Halifax, or Montreal to Gaspee, Toronto to Vancouver, then he discussed operations which he called "socially necessary". The latter includes several operations scattered across Canada in which there are no roads serving the communities. The only contact with the communities is with rail, or float plane.

Making his presentation starting in the east and working westward, he kicked off the slide show with several scenes from the now-defunct Newfoundland rail operation, using a 3-foot

6-inch gauge which was popular among the British colonies.

Len continued westward, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia where we viewed several Budd RDCs -1s, -2s, and -3s in single unit service or with two or three units mu'd.

In Halifax, we saw the first of the VIA (Canadian Amtrak) stock with F40s used for Halifax to Montreal runs. More RDCs making Dominion Atlantic CP runs from Halifax to Kentville, or to Yarmouth. Then to Prince Edward Island, and the steamship, and on to Moncton and a trip on the Salem & Hillsboro (S&H) on a dinner train with the food cooked onboard. Len led us across northern Maine between St. John and Fredrickton with a VIA stop at Jacqueline, Maine.

We saw some more RDC activity in White River Junction and Newport, Vermont with both B&M and CP Budds. Further west over the border, we saw a snowbound D&H Laurentian in an open field with attempts to free it using four RS-3s.

In the Montreal area, we looked at 1913 or so vintage boxcars which to this day are still running commuter service at Mont Royale. The old boxcars are the oldest locomotives still operating on the North American continent. Their days are numbered.

Leaving Montreal and heading west toward Toronto we viewed some

Government of Ontario (GO) coaches and which brought back memories of the 1980s to some B&M/MBTA commuter rail fans. We also viewed some more RDCs including an RDC-4 in service between Toronto-Hamilton-Niagara Falls Ontario.

We saw several shots of Ontario Northland equipment, almost all of which had the appearance of coming out of the washers or paint shop. All ON equipment has a very clean appearance.

Len led us northward to Sault St. Marie and home of the Algoma Central that makes runs northward way up to Hearst, Ontario.

Further west into the wilderness, Len took slides of a railroad built for employees to maintain a 75-mile water supply aqueduct. We rode the Greater Winnipeg Water District railroad, which at one time took visiting passengers.

And Lenny concluded by running through the last several hundred miles with the beauty of the Canadian Rockies, looking at the "Super Continental" and Northern Alberta and British Columbia. Again, a few RDC Budds of the Pacific Great Eastern plying the rails on Vancouver Island.

It proved to be a wonderful night, and the Society thanks Lenny again.

[ABT]

JANUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

This is an attempt to improve the communication channels between the B&MRRHS Board of Directors, Officers and Staff and the general membership. Jim Nigzus has asked all of us for help in staffing the joint B&MRRHS and the Salisbury Point Railroad Historical Society show on Saturday, March 7, 1992. We need help on Friday night in setting up, and on Saturday. If you can help, even to give the show staff a few minutes respite, stop by and make an offer.

We received word from the Archive committee that the archives will again be open on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. until March 28th. It could be open after that date, but we don't have any assurance now that it will be open.

Also, a large bunch of limited-edition B&MRRHS-exclusive production Mystic Terminal Co., forty-foot boxcars were mailed out to those who ordered from the last newsletter flyer. They look really good and are available in two road numbers. Order a pair before they are gone.

Society President John Allen Roderick reported that he had received a copy of a Steamtown book, entitled Study of the Steamtown Collection by Gordon Chapel. Of particular interest to Society fans is the positive assessment of B&M Pacific #3713. It appears to be a good candidate to have steam emanating from its boiler some day. It is reportedly, the only American-made Pacific in the Steamtown collection.

And speaking of old B&M steamers, the National Park Service is investigating the possibility of bringing the old B&M #410 up to Lowell for display from its current spot in Billerica.

It is expected that plans will soon start on creating a permanent type display in the old B&M combine on Dutton Street outside the Mack Building. The Society thanks several individuals who worked to acquire a grant for creating a permanent display for Society artifacts. It was noted that the Boston Street Railway Association (BSRA) is having a Trolley Meet which will be held at the Lowell Sheraton Hotel over the weekend of June 12th through 14th. There was some discussion, that since the Society is to meet on Saturday, June 13th, the Society may open the B&M combine on an adjacent track if it is felt that enough B&M'ers will be available to staff it. The annual Lowell Folk Festival will be held probably on July 24th through 26th, and it is definitely expected to be open for that very active weekend.

The B&MRRHS Board of Directors will have an "all-day" BOD meeting on Saturday, March 14. There the crew is expected to discuss the operating budget, some of the projects facing the Society as we grow and have greater visibility, our visions for the future, and long-term goals of the society and it's not too soon, according to our 20th anniversary's hostess and Vice President, Pat Byron to start planning for the Society's 25th anniversary. And, there is a good possibility of an open house at the Society archives. So if you are in the area of the Mogan center on that Saturday afternoon, drop in and say Hi!!!

[ABT]

MASSACHUSETTS CONSIDERING MERGING TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

The Administration of Republican Governor William Weld is exploring the idea of consolidating several state transportation agencies and authorities into a single department. This is an effort to offset the mounting costs of subsidies to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) in the fiscally-strapped state.

The MBTA owns and operates, through a contract with Amtrak, the remaining vestige of the Boston & Maine Railroad's passenger service. The MBTA currently operates over five former B&M lines out of North Station, and during the late 70's, four of the five commuter rail lines out of South Station. Passenger service support of the South side lines were once operated by Old Colony/New Haven/Penn Central (and Conrail which declined), and New York Central/Boston & Albany roads.

Among the agencies that may be affected are the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) that is essentially the Commonwealth's DOT, the MBTA, the Massachusetts Port Authority, and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. Combined, they would be known as Transportation, Inc. The combination of agencies would provide a means to allow revenue acquired from MassPort and the Turnpike Authority to channel back to support the MBTA.

Possibly the biggest obstacle to consolidation lies in what the agencies

represent to politicians: patronage. "This administration does not yet control patronage in those authorities said Rep. Stephen J. Karol (D-Attleboro), House Chairman of the Legislature's Transportation Committee. If they stay around long enough, they will."

There appears to be a lot before this even begins to take shape. Stephen P. Tocco, the Governor's Secretary of Economic Affairs, said the administration is "playing around" with the idea. "We are just looking at our options to consolidate and leverage our limited resources," Tocco said.

Karol said cutbacks by the federal government have forced the state to pick up a larger share of the MBTA's bills. He doubts that the proposal will get off the ground because of potential legal problems involving bond issues by the Turnpike Authority and Massport. [ABT condensed from Toni Locy of the Boston Globe staff; 1/7/92]

[Editor's note:] Your editor who is an active member of the MBTA's Advisory Board and the Advisory Board's Capital Planning Committee and Commuter Rail Committee has spent many hours intimately discussing the problems of revenue for both MBTA operations and repaying a burgeoning debt service. The Dukakis administration spent almost \$4-Billion in the last decade to upgrading as restoring the entire MBTA system including major expenditures for commuter rail right-of-way and rolling

stock. It makes the MBTA among the best mass transit systems in the nation, moving more people per mile than any other system, but it leaves a large debt service for our children and grandchildren to pay for.

The consolidation idea has merit. It should be given a fair chance. Some states (such as California, New Jersey, New York) have similar versions of this idea. And as the teeth in the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 become sharper, the disincentives to the operator of the single-occupant vehicle in the form of higher operating costs will serve to subsidize the incentives for commuters to seek alternate transportation through use of high-occupancy-vehicles (HOVs) in the form of car pools, busses and heavy or light rail vehicles. In short, use the proceeds from the Mass Pike and the bridge and tunnel tolls to subsidize commuter rail and express bus.

But it appears to this observer that with many bargaining units to deal with (at least 17 for the MBTA alone), and provisions of bond bills, revenue and just plain autonomy of authorities, I feel that this idea is unachievable in the short run, but if the patronage aspects could defer to painful reality, it could work in the long run if we don't get strung out into a huge megauthority. [ABT]

WEST END ACTIVITIES

Effective November 4th trains EDWJ and WJED between East Deerfield, Massachusetts and White River Junction, Vermont were abolished. Also on November 4th, EDBF/BFED was established, operating as a turn between East Deerfield and Bellows Falls, Vermont. BFED goes on duty at East Deerfield at 20:00 Monday-Friday.

The northern end of the Connecticut River Line is now served by WJ-1 out of White River Junction. WJ-1 goes on duty at 05:00 and works to Bellows Falls and return on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It runs to Wells River, Vermont on Tuesday Thursday and Saturday.

Traffic on the Adams Running Track is growing. on some days, AD-1 lifts as many as 10 loads at Pfizer's limestone mill in Adams. Therefore, a brush cutter was sent down the line during the last 2 weeks of October. It cleared out the line from North Adams to Renfrew station (the Pfizer lime plant) in Adams. This is the first time on over 20 years that the line has been cleared.

[Jack Armstrong through CTC Board 1/92]

ABANDONMENT BEAT

On October 11th, the Boston & Maine Corporation and Subsidiary Northern Railroad filed a notice with the ICC to abandon 59.32 miles of the Northern Main Line between milepost 80.68 (Boscawen, NH) and milepost 140.00 (Lebanon, NH).

[Brain Jennison through CTC Board, 1/92]

UTU Gets Voted out by Workers

In early November, Springfield Terminal contract workers voted the United Transportation Union (UTU) out of eight separate crafts. However, the UTU contract with ST remains in effect until 1995.

In the mid-80's Guilford Transportation leased Boston & Maine, Maine Central and Portland Terminal to ST. At that time, ST was only a 5.42-mile shortline, with flexible work rules, and it's workers were represented by the UTU.

When Guilford Leased it's three lines to ST, it imposed the ST contract on it's union workers. A federal arbitrator ruled that original B&M and MEC contracts would have to remain in effect. That ruling was later upheld by a second arbitrator, although several ST work rules were affirmed, the most noticeable being two-man train crews.

[P.J. Gratz through the CTC Board 1/92]

ST Sightings

U-18B #406 is shopped for repairs, one of the most salvageable. GP40 #330 is in bad condition with electrical and turbo problems, is now sidelined and NOT in a to be fixed status. #333 was sent to the shops with mechanical problems. ST 12 is getting another air compressor. ST 680 is out of service with a bad oil leak. ST 62 is shopped for a bad compressor, the 62 was assigned duties at Rigby. B&M 663 (last of a dying breed) was the trailing unit on NE-SE on 1/7/92 (302-615-663). ST 688 released from the shop is back in service. 690,691,693, after being reevaluated for repairs were sent back out to various dead-line tracks. All in NO Immediate plans for repair. ST 15 is assigned to the Haverhill switcher duties, B&M 309 is again at Lawrence as LA-1, and the Lawrence switcher. B&M 351 is at Waterville being checked out for noisy cylinders. B&M 328 returned from CR use in early January. B&M 600 is still shopped while the remaining 600's are seeing service on CR lines. Reportedly, CR is not pleased with ST power sent to them for use.

Don LeJeune as of 1/7/92

USDOT Transportation Bill Gives Portland to Boston Service a Boost

A transportation bill passed by congress dramatically improves Maine's chances of receiving train service to Boston by 1993. The \$151 billion transportation act authorizes \$30 million for track improvements needed to restore the link.

Amtrak, which would operate the service, has promised to provide \$20 million in locomotives and passenger cars if the rest of the deal is put together.

The \$30 million needed to complete the start up financing would pay for replacing thousands of railroad ties and miles of track. The line, owned by Guilford Transportation Industries, is used for freight service. The work is needed because federal standards say the track must be capable of allowing a passenger train to travel at least 79 MPH.

Passenger trains last ran between Portland and Boston in 1965.

The biggest hurdle remaining is to figure out how to cover operating losses for rail service, estimated at \$3 million per year. Another hurdle mentioned is that trains from Maine would probably head to North Station in Boston, while Amtrak's Northeast service ends at South Station. The transportation bill includes \$250,000 to study whether linking the two stations with a new rail line would be feasible. The lack of a rail connection between the two stations is not enough to slow the return of train service to Maine. [Steve Cook through Portland Press Herald 11/30/91]

Guilford Passenger Service?

In early November, Guilford offered a counter proposal to Amtrak's plan to revive Portland to Boston passenger service. Guilford's proposal offers more service at less cost than Amtrak's proposal.

Amtrak has proposed to operate three daily Portland-Boston passenger rains with stops in Plaistow and Dover, NH. Amtrak will supply \$20 million in new cars and locomotives for the start-up of service if the state can raise the necessary funds for track repair.

The Guilford plan proposes four trains daily with service going beyond Portland to Freeport, Augusta and Waterville, Maine. Guilford estimates it would need \$35 million in federal subsidies to make track repair and purchase equipment. [Dick Hughes & CTC Board staff 1/92]

New Haven to Boston Catenary

(This is an update on the "Meatballs to Boston" story that appeared in an earlier issue of the B&MRRHS Newsletter)

The nation's passenger railroad, Amtrak, announced an \$800 million program to bring sub-three hour train service between New York and Boston, with speeds eventually reaching 150 MPH. A key component will be electrification between New Haven and Boston, which should be completed by 1997.

Included in the project will be new concrete ties and rail, and possibly some relocated R-O-W to alleviate the many curves. Bridges will be upgraded and new signals installed. New track configuration to avoid Metro North Commuter Railroad commuter operations will be placed at New Haven, Stamford, and New Rochelle. An environmental study is underway.

On November 21, Amtrak announced it would borrow a high-speed, tilting electric trainset from ABB Traction of Sweden. The aim of the test is cutting travel time to attract new patrons. The X2000 trainset will arrive for tests and demonstrations next year, and service could start in late 1992 or early 1993. The train can operate at 125 MPH and is able to take curves at full speed, with a computer-controlled system to reduce the effects of centrifugal force.

The present New Haven-Boston segment of the NEC is hindered by many curves and change of power at New Haven. Each trainset will cost \$15 million and Amtrak plans on purchasing several for continued service between Boston and

Washington.[Robert Lowe through BLHS Bulletin, 1/92]

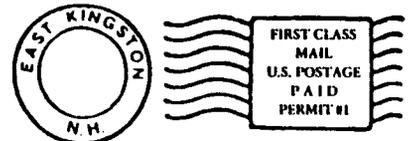
It has been reported that the MBTA 'planned ahead' when they designed the South Side Maintenance Facility in the MBTA/Amtrak Southampton Street yards. They allowed for overhead clearances and accommodations for future catenary and servicing facilities for AEM-7 or other types of electric locomotives, or electric mu'd coaches whenever the MBTA decides to go electric.[ABT]

Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society
Incorporated

MIDDLESEX-ESSEX GMF • P.O. BOX 2936 • WOBURN, MA 01888

FORWARDING AND ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION



FIRST CLASS MAIL