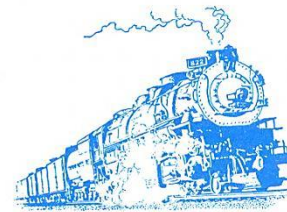


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



OCTOBER 26, 2020 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 40 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 10



Amtrak's new "Avelia Acela Express" train from Alstom coming next year!

The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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The Semaphore is the monthly (except July) newsletter of the South Shore Model Railway Club & Museum (SSMRC) and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The SSMRC, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please address all correspondence regarding this publication to: *The Semaphore*, 11 Hancock Rd., Hingham, MA 02043. ©2020
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VOLUME 40 ■■■■■ NUMBER 10 ■■■■■ OCTOBER 2020

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('22)
	Bryan Miller ('22)
	Roger St. Peter ('21)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('21)

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ON THE COVER: New Acela trainset being tested between New York and Boston earlier this month. Built by Alstom at Hornell, NY. (Photo by Dan Lowe, Amtrak Assistant Conductor) See: www.amtrak.com/next-generation-acela-express

FORM 19 ORDERS

OCTOBER B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, October 26th 8 p.m.

NOVEMBER BUSINESS MEETING (ZOOM)

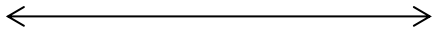
Monday, November 2nd 8 p.m.

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, November 21st

CONTESTS

This month's contest question for the NOVEMBER Business Meeting: **What is the location of the cover photo?** Email with answer or any paper mailed or put in my mailbox is good.



For the DECEMBER Business Meeting, see the new "favorite" puzzle from Al Taylor: **"Boston to Waterbury in the 30's"**. Extra puzzles at the Club or use the one in this newsletter. Don't forget your name!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

When I took over this column several years ago, I felt it was a good way to keep members informed of the progress on the railroad and of future projects. The last few months have been difficult, due to the Pandemic, as we stayed away from the club. We have slowly started to return the past month but there hasn't been a lot to report on. Just the same, I seemed to cobble up something to make a column each month. I apologize if some were boring. I hope we have turned the corner, as we get safely back to the club. This past week I was there on Monday afternoon and early evening, and for the first time since March I felt a small sense of normalcy. I hope other members are feeling the same; it is all good if we can do it safely. As for progress on the railroad: Al Taylor continues to add track feeders to the new section; Al Munn is still laying track; I have been installing the turnouts,



Roger is working on anything that has to do with wood. Savery and his helpers have been continuing to work on scenery in and around Cedar Hill and the scenery table has been busy, so that is all good. Two test projects will be happening--I have cut out two holes under one of the tracks in the Boston yard to test a Rapido Rail Crew magnetic uncoupler. One hole only allows the device to come up to underside of the roadbed; the other removed the roadbed so the device is right under the track. This is a product we would like to use instead of Kadee magnets. The next test will be the Berritt Hill Shops "Touch toggles". These toggles replace regular toggle switches that control the turnouts and one of the advantages of them is that they have red/green LEDs built in to the toggle, which simplifies wiring quite a bit. Also, the wiring is designed to be a modular installation--that is why I want to test them. The Nashua Valley Railroad Association (club) has been using them for a couple years and they are happy with them.

Well that is it for this month. As always, if anybody has any questions, please give me a call.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

OCTOBER 2015 (5 years ago)

- "Corner City" completed in time for the Open House.
- Switch Machine toggle panels ready, also.
- Workers begin re-assembling ex-C&O 2-6-6-2 #1309, after parts repaired, with hope of operation in 2016.
- Partnership of Al Harper and Jon Delli Priscolli plan to purchase Conway Scenic RR from Russ Seybold, owner for 25 years.
- Central Maine & Quebec acquires 10 ex-CP SD40-2Fs "Red Barns". Only 25 were built in 1988.
- MBTA begins non-stop, round-trip train between Boston and Worcester, saving 30 minutes off regular run
- Berkshire Scenic RR starts operation on 6-mile ex-B&A branch from North Adams to Renfrew in Adams.
- Rapido Trains unveils new line called "Icons of Canadian Steam", with plans to produce two Canadian steam locos a year, starting 2018 through 2023. First will be CP's famous "Royal Hudson".
- Beacon Park Yard tower torn down.

OCTOBER 2010 (10 years ago)

- Amtrak unveils long-term vision for 220-MPH "Bullet Trains" between D.C. and Boston on mostly-new ROW.
- WW&F purchases narrow gauge Wiscasset & Quebec coach #3 (1894) from MNGRR in Portland.

- NJ Gov. Christie kills plan to build new passenger rail tunnels under Hudson River to Penn Station, NY.
- Chicago Union Station begins \$40-million renovation.
- MBTA explores feasibility of Commuter Rail to Gillette Stadium Station.
- MBTA Government Center station begins \$72-million renovation; top-to-bottom facelift.
- Amtrak celebrates 100th anniversary of construction of New York's Penn Station. That building was torn down and replaced by Madison Square Garden in the 1960s.
- RI transportation officials strike deal with MBTA to provide rail service to T.F. Green Airport in Warwick.
- Bombardier unveils new ALP45-DP locomotive, which can operate on A.C. catenary or under its own diesel-electric power. NJ Transit and Montreal AMT ordered.
- Second *Cascades* train will continue to operate between Vancouver, BC and Seattle.
- Swiss engineers break through last stretch of rock to create World's longest tunnel, 60 hours in the making. 35.4 miles under the Alps!
- MNGRR may be forced to vacate its Portland waterfront location, due to increasing property values. Has asked 75 communities if interested in hosting the museum.

OCTOBER 2005 (15 years ago)

- Amtrak begins planning for replacement of Thames River Bridge in New London, CT.
- New England Central upgrades E. Alburg, VT trestle and automates bridge opening, eliminating the need for the bridge-tender, who lived in a shack on the bridge.
- Last active semaphore signal on NS's "Southern Tier" line (ex-Erie main) replaced by tri-color type "G" and moved to their museum in Norfolk, VA.
- Amtrak expands ticket sales to 32 countries on four continents.
- UP honors George H.W. Bush by painting new SD70Ace in special colors, numbering it 4141, after the 41st President. (See a model of it in our showcase.)

OCTOBER 2000 (20 Years Ago)

- Amtrak accepts first *Acela* trainset from Bombardier in Barre, VT.
- Amtrak orders 15 HHP-8 electric locos from Bombardier, to be built in Plattsburg, NY.
- Lionel celebrates 100th birthday.
- Cape Cod Dinner Train named one of three best in country by the "Food Network".
- Alaska RR operates 32-car passenger train; longest in its history.
- Maine Coast RR decides not to continue lease with state of Maine for Rockland Branch track.
- HVAC unit delivered and craned onto back of Building.

OCTOBER 1995 (25 Years Ago)

- Iron Road Railways, owner of BAR, acquires 250-miles of the last of the CPR's lines in Vermont and southern Quebec Province.
- CN receives approval to integrate U.S. subsidiaries Grand Trunk Western and Duluth, Winnipeg & Pacific into parent company.

- Maine Coast RR acquires three former P&W Alco M420 locomotives.
- MBTA opens bids for construction of Ipswich-Newburyport Commuter Rail extension.
- Amtrak's first new "Viewliner" sleeper, named "Atlantic View", makes first appearance in D.C.
- Ex-C&O 4-8-4 #614 moves from B&O Museum to be restored for excursion service.
- Amtrak discontinues famous *Broadway Limited*, which had run for 93 years between Chicago and New York.
- Welded rail being installed on Old Colony Plymouth line.
- MBTA extension of the Green Line subway tunnel between Haymarket and Science Park begins.
- Bus station, built over RR tracks at South Station opens.
- Amtrak renames corridor service "Northeast Direct".

OCTOBER 1990 (30 Years Ago)

- First "All-steam Operations", in memory of John Morrison, our first "Operations Manager".
- NYS&W purchases brand-new steam locomotive from China; a 2-8-2 "Mikado".
- Hobo RR sells ex-Wolfeboro RR steamer #250.
- MBTA GP9 #1921 repainted by BET crews into historic B&M maroon and yellow scheme.
- Valley RR runs first mainline steam excursion in 32 years, over P&W's Norwich line, using their new Chinese loco, also a 2-8-2 "Mike".
- Ex-MEC S3 #958 is first power for new Maine Coast RR, which started rehabbing former MEC Rockland line.
- MBTA unveils first double-decker passenger cars at South Station; cars assembled in Pittsfield, MA.
- Northampton Street Station, from old Orange Line elevated, moved in two pieces, by barge, to Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine.

OCTOBER 1985 (35 Years Ago)

- "Project Filene's" in full swing, dividing the Club.
- Amtrak adds Greenfield, MA and Claremont, NH as stops on *Montrealer* route.
- *Lake Shore Limited* celebrates 10th anniversary.
- General Dynamics considers selling its subsidiary Fore River RR, which operates 3-days/week, serving P&G plant.
- "Steam Associates" saves two Budd RDC cab units built for New Haven's *Roger Williams* service from the scrap line.
- Ridership on the Cape Cod & Hyannis RR from Braintree to Hyannis jumps from 8,000 to 19,000 in one year.
- PRR K4 #1361 removed from display at Horseshoe Curve in Altoona, PA, and replaced with GP9 #7408, with plans to restore K4 to operation.



SOUTH AFRICA'S COMMUTER rail services have all but ground to a halt following a cable theft epidemic and widespread vandalism that has prevented Metrorail

services from operating across most of its network. Almost the entire Metrorail network, which is also partially used by Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) services, has been affected.



Metrorail EMUs marooned by cable theft at Randfontein station.

Stations have also been destroyed on the commuter rail corridors around Johannesburg, with buildings reduced to rubble and platforms torn up by thieves looking for signal wiring. (RA)

●●●●●

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY of Civil Engineers warns that the gap between current spending and the need to maintain the U.S. infrastructure in a state of good repair has reached \$5 trillion, measured in 2019 dollars. In preliminary findings for a report to be released later this year, the ASCE calls the future of the transit sector “bleak,” with a current backlog of \$176 billion in investments, considering vehicles, tracks, and equipment that are already past their useful lives. That figure could reach \$535 billion for transit and intercity passenger rail by 2039 as existing assets age. (TN)

●●●●●

METRA MARKED THE COMPLETION of expansion of its Rock Island Shops, giving the commuter railroad the ability to expand its locomotive and railcar rehabilitation programs and perhaps take on work for outside agencies. The expansion includes a new 38,000-square-foot building at the 49th Street Coach Shop, and improvements to the 47th Street Diesel Shop including an enclosed loading-dock crane and 17,500-square-foot building replacing the material storage area. “Modernizing these facilities will allow us to increase the output of both our in-house railcar and locomotive rehab programs and make significant strides in achieving a state of good repair,” Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski said. “Equally important, this facility will

allow us to train and maintain a highly skilled workforce and keep good-paying jobs in Chicagoland.” Metra board Chairman Norman Carlson said, “Metra has demonstrated that it is a good steward of public funding, saving \$125 million by bringing its rehabilitation programs in-house. Now, we have a facility that will allow us to stretch our capital dollars even farther and keep the benefits of these investments in our community all while training our people from entry-level onward and creating Metra’s future leaders.” Work on the facility began in May 2018, and was funded by federal money for capital projects. (TN)

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VIA RAIL CANADA HAS POSTPONED resumption of its triweekly Halifax-Montreal Ocean and twice-weekly Toronto-Vancouver, British Columbia, *Canadian* indefinitely, according to a news release. This is contrary to the passenger carrier's addition of trains to its Quebec City-Windsor, Ontario, corridor. Sleeping car service will also remain suspended between Winnipeg and Churchill, Manitoba, though the route serving many otherwise-inaccessible communities is the only one on VIA's system that operates with pre-pandemic frequencies. VIA discontinued its two long-distance trains in March, and previously announced plans to relaunch them on Nov. 1. It later decided to block future sleeping car sales on the *Ocean* and *Canadian* in November and December while conducting what VIA spokesman Karl-Philip Marchand Giguere said, “A detailed analysis of many aspects of the journey.” He says the study includes, “ventilation systems, classes of service, schedules, and food and beverage, in order to offer a safe travel experience,” adding, “Due to the close proximity between employees and passengers and the duration of the trip, VIA Rail deemed it would be difficult to offer a safe environment on board its long distance trains.” Yet while VIA and Amtrak both require passengers and employees to wear masks, Amtrak continues to promote the social distancing advantage of private



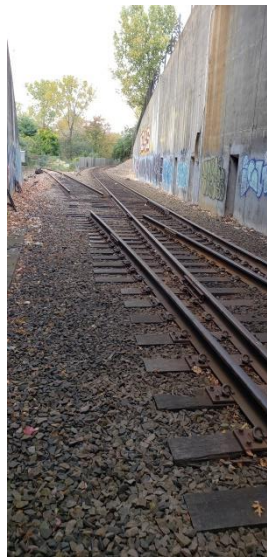
rooms on its website, radio traffic report sponsorships, and social media posts. It has become Amtrak's strongest revenue-per-passenger segment, with many travelers opting to buy a meals-included room for short-distance daytime travel on its long-distance trains. However, travel restrictions have been consistently more stringent in Canada than in the U.S., with many areas limiting passage only to residents of the same or an adjacent province. The release announcing the most recent service postponement advises, "Recent bulletins by authorities show that a second wave of the pandemic has begun in some regions of the country." (TN)

●●●●●●
AMTRAK'S LAST "GREAT DOME" car, *Ocean View*, is getting a new home. The car, now at Amtrak's Beech Grove Shops, is being purchased by Paxrail in Chicago. *Ocean View*, the last full-length dome car used in intercity passenger service in the country, is expected to be back in service in 2021. The car was built in 1955 by Budd and seats 92 passengers. For 63 years, it was used on many trains, including the *Adirondack* and *Downeaster*, until its retirement by Amtrak president Richard Anderson in 2018. It was put up for sale that year, after Amtrak (read: Anderson) lost interest in maintaining the car. Paxrail maintains a fleet of multiple historic passenger cars for use in private excursion, corporate events and day trips. Once restoration is completed, the company said it will also have public events available. *Ocean View* was one of six full-length domes built for the Great Northern Rwy. and the CB&Q for use on the *Empire Builder*. Called the "View-series" domes, Amtrak acquired them all and used them on the *Empire Builder*, until replaced by *Superliners*. A few were used on the *Auto-Train* until the late '90s. (RN) This is really good news! Wouldn't it be nice if the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority rented the car for use on the *Downeaster* for a time each fall—duplicating what had been done for 5 years until 2019?-Ed.

●●●●●●
NEW SUBWAY CARS from a U.S. plant of Chinese manufacturer CRRC will be delayed by at least a year, MBTA officials said on the 5th. MassLive.com reports the cars for the MBTA's Orange Line are now expected to be delivered by April 2023. The agency has received 24 cars from a 152-car contract awarded in 2014, with three six-car trains accepted for service. CRRC blamed the delays on the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as

changes to technical specifications. MBTA Deputy General Manager Jeff Gonneville told the news site that the contract with the manufacturer allows it to seek damages for delays, and the agency intends to explore that option. "At the heart of the issue has been production output from the CRRC Springfield facility," Gonneville told MassLive. "The most recent delays from the pandemic have only compounded some earlier issues CRRC was experiencing in pre-pandemic times." CRRC also holds a contract for 372 cars for MBTA's Red Line; six cars from that order are undergoing testing. The Red Line order is now not expected to be completed until September 2024. (TN) It's time to re-think the requirement of having to always accept the lowest bid!-Ed.

●●●●●●
KEVIN LINAGEN REPORTS: "Here are pics from today (10-5) of the switch to the entrance of the West Quincy/Patriot Ledger branch. The last of numerous old colony branches (all others of which are gone or inoperable) to be restored next weekend! Our company has been patrolling this track for years, watching the numerous homeless campsites, now gone, next to Home Depot and BJs warehouse of West Quincy. Just



got word today from our friends at the T that the frog that was removed (in the pic), due to severe wear, will be replaced by next week, along with restoring the switch stand lever/ timer box problem(see pic). So hopefully, we at Fore River can make use of this historic track by storing



a bunch of our cars there, thus preventing it from permanent and probably final removal! Last time the Ledger got any cars was maybe mid '90s. However, around '98 I suggested Quincy Bay Terminal store those old Union Pacific woodchip cars there. So I stored 23 of them on that track 'till maybe 2006, or so. There's a couple-hundred feet of 80 lb. rail between the 1980s-era Ledger switch under the Quincy Adams T entrance bridge and the 1997 commuter rail new construction. So, that

ancient section is untouched since 1930s, as the date nails show!

●●●●●

THE METRO-NORTH RAILROAD and Long Island Rail Road will test an air filtration and purification system that claims to kill 99.99% of airborne viruses and bacteria while scrubbing out particulate matter. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority announced this month that it will test the system developed by Knorr Brake Co., which uses an electrical field to generate ionized particles to filter and purify air. It is incorporated into the existing ventilation and filtration system, which already filters air every two minutes. "This addition to our ventilation would be completely invisible to the customers," Metro-North Chief Mechanical Officer James Heimbuecher said in a press release. "We like that it can be incorporated into our existing ventilation systems with minimal intrusion. If this pilot proves successful, our crews are ready to begin adding this system across our entire fleet." The MTA and researches with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will test the program to assess its effectiveness. The system has already been installed on a Metro-North car and will be added to a Long Island car by the end of the month.

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KEOLIS COMMUTER SERVICES, which operates the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail network in Boston, has suffered a ransomware attack that may have leaked employee information.



Keolis says MBTA networks were not breached as a part of the incident.

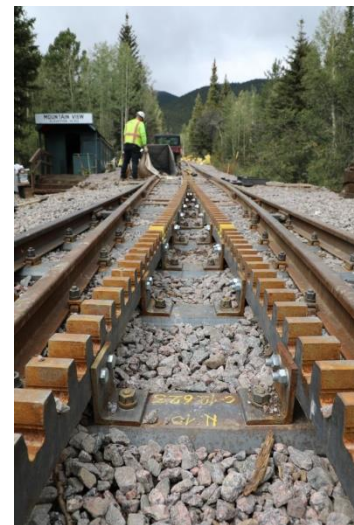
The company says it was alerted to the situation by its advanced threat detection systems and deactivated the network within a few hours. "On October 10, Keolis Commuter Services

experienced a ransomware event," Keolis Commuter Services spokesperson, Justin Thompson, told IRJ. "Keolis immediately took affected systems off-line, notified law enforcement and implemented steps to protect and restore systems. "For impacted employees, we will provide support resources, such as credit monitoring and identity theft protection. "At no time were operational safety systems compromised, and there was no risk to system safety during this event. This event did not and will not impact the continued safe operation of MBTA Commuter Rail." Keolis says no MBTA networks were breached as a part of the incident, and no other Keolis networks were impacted. As Keolis does not store passenger data, no passenger information was taken. The company is now working with forensic experts to resolve and investigate the attack, which may have affected several other companies around the world. Keolis currently provides mechanical, transport and engineering services in Boston under an eight-year contract that began on July 1 2014. The contract included two two-year extensions, which were activated in June. (RA)

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CONSTRUCTION ON THE BROADMOOR

Manitou and Pikes Peak Cog Railway is chugging along and is one track closer to its highly anticipated May 2021 reopening. The railway recently reached the halfway point of construction completion mark with the newly reconstructed Mountain View siding, approximately 4.5 miles into the 9-mile line. Originally built in 1891, this historic railway is the highest railroad in America, the highest cog railway in the world, and one of Colorado's top attractions. Since March 2019, it has been undergoing a \$100 million renovation of its tracks, cogs, railcars, and depot to totally reimagine the experience. "We're happy to share that we've reached a major milestone in our track renovations with the installation of two of the three passing siding tracks: Windy Point and Mountain View," said Ted Johnston, assistant general manager of the railway. "The crews faced one of the toughest stretches of track to construct between these two



points, a part of the line we call the 'Big Hill,' which is the longest, steepest, and narrowest portion of track." As for the actual trains, the four diesel engines that are being refurbished in the Cog's Manitou Springs shop are 90 percent complete with new floors, seats, a sound system and vinyl wrap (instead of paint), and diesel engines. These trains also are having their axles converted to the new cog system. Once completed, they can be placed on the track. In addition, three new trains are currently in production at Stadler's facility in Switzerland. (RA)

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ONLY IN AUSTRALIA: KANGAROO joins light rail passengers on platform. Passengers waiting at a light rail stop near the city center of Australia's capital city, Canberra, found themselves with unexpected company recently when a kangaroo bounded down the platform on his way to a nearby lawn. The passenger nearest the kangaroo was looking at his phone as the marsupial bounded past and only reacted after it was past. (TN)

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ALAN BOYD, a former president of the Illinois Central Railroad and Amtrak who was the first U.S. Secretary of Transportation, has died; Boyd was 98. He became IC president, after leaving Washington and served as the railroad's president from 1969 to 1972. Boyd was Amtrak's third president, elected to the position in April 1978, serving until succeeded by W. Graham Claytor Jr. in June 1982. He arrived at a difficult time, as funding was curtailed under the Carter Administration, but his IC experience brought railroad experience and institutional knowledge into the company. He arrived as the passenger railroad was receiving its first Superliner cars and during his time as president, Amtrak ordered 150 Amfleet II cars and began operating the *Crescent* as Southern Railway exited the passenger business, and completed its conversion to head-end power for all equipment. (TN)

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BIKES WILL BE ALLOWED on all MBTA commuter train as of Nov. 2, when the agency will update its schedules. Keolis, the contract operator of the commuter trains, announced the change this month, with a spokesman saying the "decision to permit bicycles reflects lighter ridership and service patterns that now offer more evenly distributed trains throughout the day." (TN)

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I ENJOYED THESE ARTICLES in this month's RR magazines and can suggest them to you:

TRAINS

Railroads Where You Least Expect Them

News: Long Distance Stable, Snubbed

Canadian National's Long Reach

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Model a Dual-Gauge Freight Interchange

MODEL RAILROADER

Freight cars of the 70s

Trains of Thought

Alternate Uses of House Cars

CLASSIC TRAINS (Fall 2020)

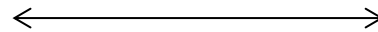
Ingles Color Classics: Alco's Outlier

Charlie's Photo Album

Western New York Railroad Scene

Mountain Brakeman

Jersey City Sunset



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains "Newswire", Railway Age, Progressive Railroading, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger.

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. The "Big E Show" next January has been officially cancelled. This was inevitable, but disappointing none-the-less. We will look forward to January 2022 even more—and might even have a Club Car by then to sell!
2. Keep the articles coming about your activities during the month. This has become a popular column during these "unusual" times at the Club and in our lives.

..... *David N. Clinton*

"Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand." (Mother Teresa)

MEMBER NEWS

Our condolences to **Al Munn** and family, on the passing of his brother Glen earlier this month.

We also extend condolences to Phyllis Walsh, on the passing of her husband and member **Coley**

Walsh, who has battled brain cancer for many months. May both these folks rest in peace.

Bryan Miller is back home and improving with each day. We look forward to seeing him back at the Club soon!

Welcome to two new Applicants: **Tom Ross** of West Bridgewater and **Joe Corn** of Sagamore. We look forward to getting to know you both over the next several months, even under these unusual circumstances!

Note: The "Health & Welfare Committee" (Ye Ed.) would like to hear of any member who is ill or hospitalized, so that we can help "cheer them up" and keep their fellow members advised.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations on their special day:

Tom WylieNovember 5th
Fred FoleyNovember 17th
"Gunny"November 23rd
Ed Bulman.....November 29th



Meanwhile, I've heard from these folks on **WHAT ARE YOU DOING?**

Gunny: "I continue teaching Hunter safety class and Working as the Range safety Officer when the Police qualify at the range. , I will get some photos next time I am on duty as range safety... My next hunter class is Nov. 7th and I will get some photos of that also. I finished with the sign for the Model RR I'm building for our grandchildren, Sophia & Hayden. The name 'Am-Broke' is made up from using AM from Amherst, NH, where they live and the BROKE from Pembroke, where Beth and I live."



Savery Moore: "I've been trying to get back to the Club on Mondays to resume scenery work and plan

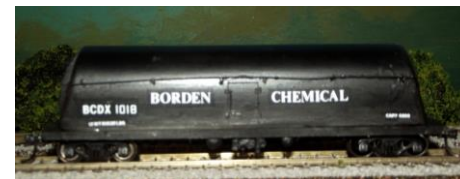
future leg 3. The scenery team has been well represented, as well. Outside the club, my town meetings are ramping up, and I've been 'putting summer away' around the house. I took my dock out, took all the tarp cables down in my summer party area, and did general clean-up. The boat is still in because the weather's been nice, and I did go for a swim last Friday. But that will be my last until next summer!"

Ron Clough: ". I still swing by (the Club) a few times a week to check on the premises but that is about it. On another note, finally this afternoon my connection to town water was completed. This should solve my issues with the freezing issue I've had in the sub-zero weather. Not excited about another bill but will have a better piece of mind when we get down to around Zero degrees."

Stan Rydell: "Finished the last of the 20 replacement relays for controlling spastic switch motors so we should be set for a long time, I hope. Need to do something different for a while!"



Kurt Kramke: "Here are some pictures; one is a Borden Chemical car that was a milk car. Basic scenery is complete just have to apply the detail."





Chip Mullen: “I mentioned last month that I was working on building a Boston & Maine wreck train centered on Skip Burton's 250 crane and tender. Here is my progress: I fitted an off-brand sound decoder into the Stewart RS3 that pulls this train. The decoder is made by XL Industries and is basically an MRC sound decoder. Well, it worked, sort of. Using an ESU ‘sugar cube’ speaker the decoder gives reasonable sound, if not as sophisticated as TCS, Soundtraxx, ESU, or QSI. But... it was cheap. It is not programmable using Decoder Pro so everything had to be done one CV at a time on my NCE Power Cab. I modified Skip's crane, converting it from steam to diesel which happened in real life sometime around World War II. This included removing the boiler exhaust and cab-top walkways then applying intake louvers, engine exhaust stack, and window glazing. Eventually, I hope to change the topping lift from one-part to four-part falls and do the same for the main boom block.

“The B&M did not use a tender like the one that came with the Athearn crane set, so I found some pictures of what they did use on RRPicturesArchive.net. Using them, I modified an Athearn 50' flat car to replicate the tender BM 524 MWT. I'm attaching a couple of the archive pictures I worked from, along with a photo of the modified crane and tender.

“Modification of the flat car called for removing most of the side pockets, stirrups, hand grabs, and rivets; building deck-mounted tool boxes, that also serve as truck carriers as well as excavating the frame side sills to hold dunnage material. Then repositioning the brake stand and installing an American Model Builders wood deck and installing metal stirrups and hand-grabs. I also made a



replica of their spreader bar and a couple wire-rope lifting bridles for some deck-mounted ‘eye candy’.

“The next portion of the project includes building and modifying a Walthers 25-ton crane car, a 40' tender for that crane, a modified 50' flat car used to hold and move recovered equipment, and several heavyweight cars for equipment stores, quarters, offices, and food service. I'll report on these next time.”

Ross Hall: “Final tracklaying will be completed this week. Since these are industrial spurs, there is some length to it. I made a tie jig from a piece of straight Tru-Scale roadbed (60 years old!) to speed up the job. Moral: never throw anything out! Next step: final wiring & DCC installation.”

Peter Palica: “Here is a nice little street scene from my “London by Gaslight” collection by John Hine. I fell in love with these highly-detailed out-of-production resin buildings as they reminded me of the many similar structures found in and around Beacon Hill in Boston. They are only slightly smaller than HO scale and come equipped with figures, interior lights, lighted street lamps and sidewalks.”



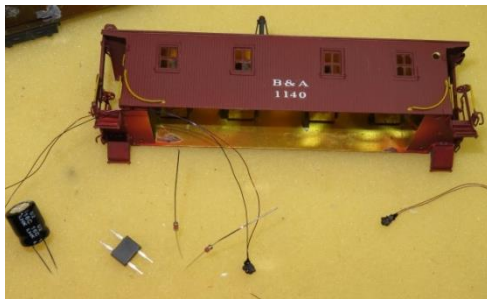
Jesse Collins: “Had this in the shop recently!”



Ye Ed: I finally finished my B&M GP9s with extra details, such as grabs, winterization hatches, antennas and sound decoders. They so remind me of a 1965 trip to Steamtown in Bellows Falls, VT, and watching a B&M train coming down from White River Jct. heading to East Deerfield then Mechanicville, NY, where the B&M and the D&H had side-by-side yards. Here's a picture of the "Blue Birds" crossing the high bridge over the Hudson Falls industrial area, just to the east of Mechanicville.



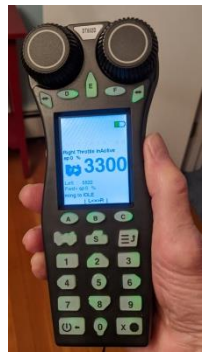
My present project is installing marker lamps in a Boston & Albany caboose. These were very unique cabooses, without a cupola or bay



window. But every caboose needs markers or flashing red light on the end. I have been lax installing them and have a "backlog", which I'm working on reducing. Tomar makes really nice LED-powered markers and includes the proper resistors and "Bridge Rectifier", so that the caboose can be used on both DC and AC (DCC) railroads. I add a 470 mf capacitor to eliminate any "flickering", caused by bad or dirty track. The markers stay lit for up to 10 minutes, after track power is turned off!

I'm also playing with (read: trying to get used to) the new DT602D throttle from Digitrax. It certainly has

its advantages but the "learning curve" is wide, after using the previous throttles for so many years!



Paul Cutler III: "This past month I've been experimenting with my new 'ProtoThrottle' and several different sound locomotives, in order to get the configuration for each set up the way I like it. This has been a learning experience because normally I don't get into the nitty-gritty of sound decoder effects; I'll usually just take the factory defaults and run with them. However, with the ProtoThrottle offering independent headlight controls, a working brake lever, and limited function buttons, it means I have to study-up on several brands of sound decoders and how they work (and how to program them).

"I've just about finished up the next issue of the NHRHTA's *Shoreliner* magazine. This issue is all about private club cars that were run on various NH commuter trains. This includes the one that ran right by the entrance to our club on the Greenbush



line. In fact, here's a picture of one of the cars used. It was originally called the "Charter Oak" and was built as a tavern-

observation car in the 1920's for the NH's best, most exclusive train, the *Merchants Limited*. Here it's been renumbered to 5106 and is assigned to the South Shore Club Association (no relation to our club). In the picture, it is on the Greenbush line somewhere but we're not sure where. (If you know where this scene is, please let me know ASAP so we can include the info in the magazine.)

"As for modeling projects, the 36-seat diner project has run into a bit of a snag. The old brass car sides are about 1/16" too tall to fit the Walthers car. The reason is that the brass sides were meant to be used on the Rivarossi cars which were never the right height. The Walthers car, however, is the right height. Trimming the brass down will be a tricky procedure without messing it up.

"I recently applied NH decals to a pair of painted/unlettered Walthers heavyweight baggage cars for a friend. All I have to do next is to brush on

some clear coat that matches the factory finish to protect the decals.

"I've had a NH EF-2 electric (by NJ/Custom Brass in the 1970s) for quite some time and finally decided to install a decoder in it. I held off for a long time because of the age of the model and that it only has 4-wheel pick-up (out of 12). There is a can motor, but the gear towers are all exposed brass gears. The installation went rather quickly as all I had to do was cut two wires inside the model and solder the four wires from the decoder to the cut ends. I chose not to install working headlights as the model has MV lenses (which look ok) and they are on very delicate mountings. Trying to drill through the headlights to add bulbs would almost certainly result in a broken model. To take care of the lack of electrical pick-up, I plugged in a PX112 'power extender' into the DH126D decoder. I'll be testing the model at the club this week.

"And since I had nothing to do one evening, I built an InterMountain 8000-gallon tank car painted up for 'Hercules Powder'. I had already built a half dozen or more 10,000 gallon tanks from IM, so this was more or less the same. Patience, a sharp X-acto blade, sprue nippers, and pre-drilling all the holes so glue can be applied from inside the tank are the best tips I can offer. I also have a precision glue applicator from Flex-I-Grit that went a long way in making a neat model."

RUNNING EXTRA:

The Beagle and the RDC

By Pat Fahey

This story takes place in the early 1970s, in the day when the railroad was still running a lot of old equipment. These were the days of the GP-9s, and RDCs, and old coaches.

One Saturday in the fall, I think in 1974, Dick Bourinot and I were planning on making a trip into Boston. The main reason for the trip was you could get a lot of photos at either North or South Station without any problems.

The plan was that we would catch the train out Franklin and spend the day in Boston. I picked up Dickie early in the morning and headed for Franklin. At that time, you could only get the train at the station located on Depot Street in downtown Franklin.

The morning, as I remember it, was very foggy, and you could barely see your hand in front of your face. Once we arrived at the station, I parked the car; in those days parking was free, weekdays and weekends. We went into the station and bought our round trip tickets. The price was something like \$6. As we waited for our train to come, out of the fog, we could hear the sound of an ex-New Haven RDC that would be our ride into Boston. The unit has seen plenty of miles — it was old but still reliable.

We boarded the RDC along with a few other passengers, and left for Boston. Once we got going we asked the conductor to ask the engineer if it would be all right to ride up front with him. The conductor came back, and said it would be all right. Once we were in cab with the engineer we introduced ourselves, and said we were railfans. Well, the engineer already knew that — the only condition, he said to us, was don't ask too many questions.

The RDC was running a few minutes late by the time we crossed the diamond at Walpole and stopped for passengers. By the time we were on our way again the fog was slowly lifting, and the sun was getting brighter.

Our next stop would be at Norfolk; after leaving Walpole we were making a speed of I guess about 35 to 40 mph. A few miles south of Norfolk, the engineer could see a dog running at top speed in the middle of the track. He blew his horn, and slowed down a bit, hoping the dog would cross the track. The dog was a small beagle, running as fast as his little legs could carry him.

We slowly got up to the beagle and went right over him. The engineer asked one of us to go back and see if we had killed the dog. One of us (I forget whether it was me or Dickie) proceeded to the back of the RDC to look, and expecting the worst. There was the beagle, still running at top speed!

We told the engineer the dog was fine, and was still trying to beat us to Boston. We got a smile out of the engineer.



MBTA RDC-142 at the Franklin, MA, station in 1974. It was built by Budd at the Red Lion Plant in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in March, 1953. New Haven RDC-142 is only one of two Budd RDCs ever specially named. Originally, NH RDC 26 was named "Firestone" after the Firestone tire plant in Fall River, which was a large freight customer for the New Haven. Sometime prior to 1956 the "Firestone" nameplate was placed on 42 after NH 26 was wrecked. By April of 1970, 42 was owned by New Haven successor Penn Central and was repainted into PC's New York Central style RDC livery. At some point that year, the "Firestone" nameplate was removed from the car. 42 was transferred to the MBTA in 1976 and retired in 1989. In February, 1990, 42 was sold to the Old Colony & Fall River Railroad Museum in Fall River, MA. Over the ensuing years, 42's interior and exterior were restored to its New Haven appearance, including the "Firestone" nameplate. In 2017, as they began to wind down their operations, the Old Colony & Fall River RR Museum transferred ownership of 42 to the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum. In October of 2018 42 made its way to the BSRM's Lenox Yard, where it awaits restoration to full operating condition. RDCs were used heavily in the Berkshires, and 42 visited the Berkshire Line on several occasions, bringing passengers to the Berkshires from Danbury and points south. (Photo by Pat Fahey)

The Callboy - October 2020

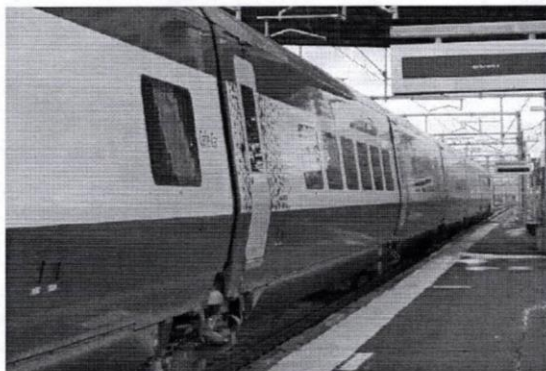
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EDITED FROM UNIVERSALHUB.COM, SEPTEMBER 28, 2020

Acela replacement makes first trip to Boston

By Adam Gaffin

One of the first of the 28 new trains that Amtrak plans to replace the current Acela trains with made it to the end of the Northeast Corridor at South Station today. Around 4:10 p.m., the train, made by the French company Alstom, passed through Readville station - at a much slower pace than Acela trains normally do - as a half dozen or so railfans stood on either side of the tracks taking photos. Until a few days ago, it had never gotten further north on the



Unlike the current pastel-accented silver first-generation Acela trains, the new cars feature a red, white and blue motif.

tracks between Washington and Boston than New Jersey.

The 28 new trains will ultimately replace the current 20 Acela trains, which the railroad says

will let it offer more frequent service. Plans call for the first new trains to go into service next year, with all of the current Acela trains replaced by 2022.

[Story suggested by Jan Okolowicz & Alan MacMillan, Jr. Reprinted with permission of the author. Universal Hub is a community news and information site for the Boston area, posting daily news and links, often before the mainstream media, and giving local folks a place to discuss the day's events - and to post news on their own. www.UniversalHub.com]



Like the current Acela trains, the new ones have an electric engine at both ends. (Both photos taken at Readville by Adam Gaffin)

// FROM THE EDITOR

PSR, Penn Central Style



You think Precision Scheduled Rail-roading is something recent? Guess again, my friends. “Been there, done that,” as told to me by long-retired locomotive engineer and BLET Local Chairman (Division 312, Boston) Richard S. Prone.

Granted, Prone is not fond of PSR, which to him stands for “Poor Service Routinely.” I’ve heard other definitions for PSR—“Pulverized Shipping Routes,” “Paralyzed Shipping Routes,” “Pathetic Service Reversal,” “Purposely Stretched Resources,” “Pure Stockholders’ Reward.”

Indeed, PSR has been polarizing. It’s either loved or hated. Richard Prone, like many of his fellow agreement employees—active, retired or furloughed—leans strongly toward the latter. He comes from the railroad school of hard knocks, the pre-Staggers years when the industry, especially in the Northeast, was navigating a lot of bad track. Does anyone under the age of 60 remember the Penn Central, which in 1970 became the largest bankruptcy in U.S. history, up to that time?

Richard Prone does, but as he relates, there were some bright spots:

“You want to talk PSR? In the darkest days of the Penn Central during the 1970s, four TrailVan trains left Boston’s Beacon Park Yard between 7:30 p.m. and 1:00 a.m., six days a week. We picked up blocks of TOFC and containers at Worcester and Springfield, where yardmasters prioritized the moves to make the prearranged departure times. At Selkirk, N.Y., relief crews were waiting at designated locations in the

yard to take over and forward the trains to Chicago and St. Louis via the 70-mph Mohawk and Buffalo Divisions. Standard power was four EMD GP40s. The crew change took 5-10 minutes, tops.

“With the notable exception of BNSF, the railroads seem quite content to abandon shippers and let their market share continue to shrink. Meanwhile, our highways are being overwhelmed by larger and heavier trucks, many of which are carrying commodities once moved by rail. Unless the railroad executives’ mindsets change, this downward trend will continue, making the Class 1’s less and less a factor in the national movement of freight.”

A little more history: In 1970, Penn Central adopted the trademark “TrailVan” to designate its container services, combining the Pennsylvania Railroad’s “TrucTrain” (today’s TTX) with the New York Central’s “Super Van.” The latter succeeded the NYC’s Flexi-Van, the brain-child of Al Perlman, the NYC president who ran Penn Central from its formation in 1968 until June 1970. Perlman was an innovator, and a controversial figure. In 1958, he famously told *The New York Times*, “After you’ve done a thing the same way for two years, look it over carefully. After five years, look at it with suspicion. And after ten years, throw it away and start all over.”

I wonder what Perlman, who died in 1983, would think of PSR. Maybe he’s having a friendly debate in the afterlife with Hunter Harrison. Let’s see where we’re at in a few years.


WILLIAM C. VANTUONO
Editor-in-Chief

Opinion:

EDITED FROM NJ.COM, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

Amtrak says it must repair its crumbling, storm-ravaged Hudson River train tunnel

By Anthony R. Coscia

We are reminded of the fragility of the century-old North River Tunnel that carries Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT passengers under the Hudson River into Penn Station New York every day. Wires snap. Concrete crumbles. Salty water corrodes. Despite rigorous maintenance and regular inspection, we are witness to the real-time deterioration of the tunnel’s internal systems predicted after Super Storm Sandy flooded the tubes in 2012. For sure, the tunnel remains safe, but its systems are becoming less and less reliable every day under the strain of years of heavy use.

Since the ARC tunnel project ended and the Gateway Program was conceived, Amtrak and our partners have worked to focus the region’s attention on the need to address the looming trans-Hudson transportation crisis. Amtrak spent hundreds of millions of dollars building the first two sections of a concrete casing under Hudson Yards to preserve the right-of-way for a future tunnel. Perhaps more importantly, we spent years of precious time working to build consensus around the solution—construction of a new tunnel to carry Northeast Corridor rail traffic while the existing one is closed for rehabilitation.

That project, the Hudson Tunnel Project, will keep today’s service running while we rebuild for the future. A partnership of Amtrak, NJ TRANSIT, the Port Authority, the states of New York and New Jersey and the Gateway Program Development Corporation has worked hard to advance the Hudson Tunnel Project, but it isn’t moving at the pace we need.

In our capacity as owner and steward of this crucial national asset, Amtrak is stepping in to perform targeted repairs in the North River Tunnel to protect and improve reliability for riders today, while we continue working toward the long-term solution we really need—the Hudson Tunnel Project that will finally replace a one-track-in, one-track-out system with modern, 21st-century rail infrastructure.

In coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration and our partners at NJ TRANSIT, Amtrak has launched the North River Tunnel Interim Reliability Improvement program. This effort will identify and prioritize work that can be done in the tunnel during limited night and weekend outages to immediately improve service reliability without introducing new risk to operations. Borrowing a page from Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s leadership on the Canarsie Tunnel project under the East River, we have convened a cross-section of experts from industry and academia to analyze conditions and develop solutions that will deliver quick results while minimizing the operational risk associated with working within the limited maintenance windows necessary to preserve service levels.

Let me be clear. This work we are launching isn’t the full, comprehensive rehab the tunnel so badly needs—that will require an extended closure. This isn’t the Canarsie Tunnel Project, either. The North River Tunnel houses significantly different infrastructure than the MTA tunnel. This is a program of interim improvements. And the work is already paying off.

Amtrak is accelerating and funding a leak mitigation pilot program now, based on data examined by the expert panel that shows almost half the delay-causing incidents in the tunnel stem from water infiltration of some kind. Instead of waiting for a formal process to conclude, we’re launching a program of inspection, repair detailing and stitch grouting in high-priority areas of the tunnel now. At the same time, a design team is developing innovative ways of stopping water from outside the tunnel.

While the panel’s work is still ongoing, early indications suggest wholesale replacement of the tunnel’s major features—including the original, outdated ballasted track system and crumbling concrete benchwalls—must be left to the eventual full tunnel outage. A sophisticated matrix developed for the project demonstrates why spot repairs, drainage improvements, and accelerated state of good repair work represent the most efficient use of precious outages and deliver the most return on investment in terms of near-term reliability. In addition, we continue working with our partners at the Gateway Development Corporation to evaluate and develop projects that can both fit into the complex operating environment and support the reliability of the tunnel until the Hudson Tunnel Project advances and a full closure is possible.

Again, these interim improvements do not negate the need for the Hudson Tunnel Project. Think of this as a series of tourniquets, stents and bandages Amtrak is applying to a tunnel that needs to survive until major surgery can be accomplished. If we started digging the Hudson Tunnel Project’s new tubes tomorrow, we’d need the existing ones to last some seven years. To ensure that happens, they are going to need some serious attention now, which Amtrak is delivering.

Anthony R. Coscia is chairman of the board of Amtrak.



Amtrak gives a tour of the aging North River Tunnel to Gov. Phil Murphy and members of the New Jersey congressional delegation. (Ed Murray | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com)

BOSTON TO WATERBURY IN THE 30's

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