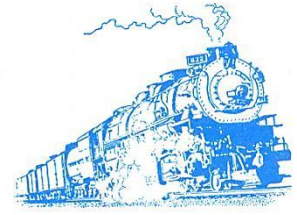


# The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



MARCH 27, 2017 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 37 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 3



A Club in Transition



# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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Boston <u>Herald</u> Reporter.....	Jim South
<u>Wall Street Journal</u> Reporter.....	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
Empire State News.....	Dick Kozlowski
Amtrak News.....	Rick Sutton, Russell Buck
“The Chief’s Corner”.....	Fred Lockhart

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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. ©2017

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### CLUB OFFICERS

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Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('18)
	Bryan Miller ('18)
	Roger St. Peter ('17)
	Rick Sutton ('17)

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ON THE COVER: Building 51 construction from unknown photographers. See new column: “A Club in Transition”, page 12.



Come and enjoy the fun on **Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>** for movies & popcorn at Bldg. 51.

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Looking around the railroad today. I saw some new work that had been done. First in the scenery areas, we have a rebuilt, expanded rolling mill in the steel mill complex with the outside wall open, showing the interior details of the rolling mill machines; the finished mill looks great. This work was done by Bob Farrenkopf and Chip Mullin. Near the steel mill, on the trolley line, are some mocked-up structures of a future factory complex, consisting of several buildings that will be scratch-built once the details of the structures are worked out. Over in West Middleton, ballasting has been started on the tracks that run through the swamp into the Middleton yard; this work is being done by Steve Wintermeier. The Scenery Committee has also started work in the Cedar Hill engine terminal. With so many members involved in scenery, it is possible to have multiple projects on-going at the same time.



The Electrical Committee is continuing to check the railroad for dead sections of track and turnout frogs, that the Tortoise switch machines are not powering properly. A new Loconet cable was installed above the ceiling to reach the tower and has been put in service and was tested. If the Dispatchers do not have any Loconet communication issues with this weekend's "Op" session then we will remove the temporary cable that has been hanging from the ceiling. Bob England has added a new power supply for the turnouts at the industrial area at the end of Cedar Hill yard, replacing the one that had to be plugged in when working in that area. The new supply will come on with the railroad and the output is a lower voltage, which eliminates the clicking sound that some of the Colbolt switch machines were making.

Maintenance is going to be an on-going part of the workload on the railroad, besides the Tortoise switch machine internal electrical contacts that power the turnout frogs that have been failing. We had a dead block on the Boston mainline by Middleton, just due to a loose screw on a terminal

strip. This past week we repaired two turnouts that had problems: one was in a hard-to-reach place in Hudson Falls and the other one was damaged and needed a new rail and throw bar installed; all told about three hours work. Members have been good about using the "Repair Forms" for problems they have found and putting them in my mailbox. If I know of the problem, it will get fixed. The forms are kept behind the Blue Flag folder over the switch that turns on the railroad.

***I need to write this as a reminder:*** this past week I had a conversation with a member about soldering track or wiring on the railroad, he was not aware of the rule that it should only be done when the power is **OFF!** Do we remember two years ago when the railroad was damaged due to a soldering disaster with the power on? I do. Also if you are soldering, with power off, the electrical switch that turns the railroad on must be "Blue Flagged" so no one else inadvertently turns the railroad on while soldering is being done.

Reminder to the railroad construction committees: check your inventory of materials so you can breakdown in your budget requests what you will need for this coming fiscal year. The Budget Committee wants the breakdown.

I will be scheduling a Chief Engineer's meeting in April; it was canceled last month due to a scheduling conflict. I want to discuss with committees what our priorities are for the coming months.

That's it for this month.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

## SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

**MARCH 2012** (5 years ago)

- ✳️ Removal of the temporary third peninsula to begin after Show and Open House.
- ✳️ "Patriot Corridor Double-Stack Clearance Initiative" begins between Mechanicville & Ayer on ex-B&M main.
- ✳️ Eastman Kodak announces end of production of slide film.

• Norfolk Southern announces that 18 of its brand-new locos will be dressed in commemorative schemes of historic RRs that have formed NS over the years.

• Casinos that bankrolled special luxury train service between NYC and Atlantic City end service after 3 yrs.

• Construction slated to start on second track between Rensselaer and Schenectady, to remove delays of single track between those two busy stations.

#### **MARCH 2007** (10 years ago)

• Canadian government makes Canadian Railway Museum in Montreal suburb, called "Exporail", the National Railway Museum of Canada, guaranteeing continued funding.

• EPA unveils plan to clean-up emissions from railroad locomotives and large marine diesel engines. This promoted GE and EMD to produce the "e" engines—for "environmentally friendly".

• The first of VIA's rebuilt F40 locomotives, number 6400, released from CAD Railway Services of Montreal, who will rebuild all 64 locomotives over time.

• Last MBTA Green Line LRV type-6, built by Boeing, withdrawn from service, ending an era on the T.

• Maine State Senator from Freeport suggests extending Downeaster to Brunswick to connect with Maine Eastern excursion service to Rockland.

• Fascia panels and Lexan installed around leg 1, along with several detection panels.

• Passenger Train Journal magazine returns as a quarterly.

• Sakonnet River railroad swing bridge blown up and scrapped. Built in 1899, it connected the island of Newport, RI, with the mainland and a direct rail connection to Boston via the Old Colony \* Newport Rwy.

• Cape Cod Central RR president John Kennedy decides to bid on the contract to run all Cape trains.

#### **MARCH 2002** (15 years ago)

• Proto1000 brings out RDC-1 and BLI brings out Pennsy M1 and T1, the famous 4-4-4-4.

• MBTA puts out bid specs for operation of Commuter Rail.

• Amtrak president George Warrington resigns to take over operations of NJ Transit.

• Greenbush contractors choose site for project engineering office at the old "Bowl-a-Wey" in lower Jackson Square. (Now the E. Weymouth Parking lot.)

• \$5.6 million "Hyannis Intermodal Transportation Center" completed and expected to open in summer.

• Quincy Wholesale Grocery Reefer produced as latest limited-run Club Car.

#### **MARCH 1997** (20 Years Ago)

• Norfolk Southern and CSX agree to split Conrail.

• Philip Morris Co. cancels \$50 million "Marlboro Unlimited" promotional train project.

• Cape Cod RR sells Parlor Car "Nobska".

• CPR's one-of-a-kind Alco RSD-17 operates for last time and placed in museum in Ontario. Nicknamed "The Empress of Agincourt".

• Vanity Plate "BNSF" joins rank of railroad plates in the SSMRC (Jeremy Cahill)

• Power-short Canadian National leases 50 Amtrak F40s to haul freight trains.

• Kato finally announces HO scale SD45s, after years of speculation.

• Amtrak adds first "RoadRailer" to back of passenger train—used for carrying mail. "Amtruck" nickname soon given to some trains with multiple RoadRailers on rear of train.

#### **MARCH 1992** (25 Years Ago)

• Quinoil Tank car by Walthers introduced as latest limited-run Club Car.

• State of Maine selects Amtrak to operate proposed train between Portland and Boston.

• Federal Transit Administration gives MBTA approval to publish final environmental impact statement (FEIS) on Old Colony Lines project.

#### **MARCH 1987** (30 Years Ago)

• "Back on Track" organization formed to promote restoration of Old Colony branches to Plymouth, Middleboro and Greenbush.

• Wolfboro RR's 2-6-2 sold to Clark's Trading Post of North Woodstock, NH.

• Ex-Maine Central shops in Waterville, ME, to be closed by Guilford, in favor of ex-B&M shops in Billerica, MA. (never happened-Ed.)

• MBTA orders 40 subway cars from Bombardier for Red Line and buys 5 geeps from SEMTRA of Maryland.

• North Abington station re-opens as a pub, three years after a devastating fire nearly destroyed it.

• CSX acquires Sea-Land Corp.

• MassCentral opens container loading/unloading facility in Palmer, MA.

• Amherst Railway Society Show at "Big E" has record attendance of 8,200 during one-day event held in single building.

#### **MARCH 1982** (35 Years Ago)

• "The Gov" institutes first "All Steam" operations.

• Portable Layout, known as "Filene's Layout", goes to Greenberg's show in Woburn for first time.

• New metal front door installed at Club, replacing wood.

• "New" tonic machined donated, replacing "honor system" of tonic in refrigerator.

• Contest to name new yard in S. Division ("Cedar Hill") won by Mark Hall, out of 11 names suggested.

# ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

# POTPOURRI

This month, **Joe Dumas** was first with an Atlas GP40 in undecorated. This was an easy plug-in, using the DH165IP, which has an integrated plug right on the board; there are no wires to get in the way. Forgot to ask Joe what road he plans on painting it in.

Next was "**Gunny**" with his Atlas RS3 dressed in as-delivered B&M maroon and gold; one of the original models, with Kato drive. He had previously installed sound, so now it was time for lights. He went with L.E.D.s and chopped down the light bar, which originally went to a center bulb, heat-shrinking the L.E.D.s to the ends of the light bar. This works great and is nice and bright and no worry of bulb burn-out.

**Al Munn**, who hasn't been at a clinic in years, showed with a leased Athearn GP40X. The decoder he installed several years earlier had gone bad, so a new DH123D was in order. Nice having the plug...just unplug and toss and plug in the new! Away he went, pushing his leased locos on any road that needed them.

**Paul Agnew** had a new wiring harness for the Rivarossi 4-8-4, where he found that contacts on the loco had been shorting. He installed a decoder, lights and the "keep alive", PX112-2, which is extremely helpful.

**Coley Walsh** brought an Atlas RS11, decorated in the PRR Tuscan. He installed the DZ123P in the top plug, which gave him plenty of room. He also added a PX112-2 power extender, which will take him over those "dead spots" without hesitation.

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for his assistance and for preparing the Model Shop beforehand. Our next clinic will be **Thursday, April 6, 2017**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. Everyone is welcome!

**THE MBTA PLANS** to invest \$7.9 million on the historic Mattapan-Ashmont High Speed Line, home to one of the last fleets of Presidents' Conference Committee streetcars still in regular service in the United States. The investment will help to extend the PCC's life for at least a decade while the transit agency figures out on what to do with the 2.6-mile route that has become an historical oddity in Boston. MBTA began an internal study in 2016 to address rising maintenance costs on the Mattapan line. This week, MBTA announced it will hire an outside firm to study its options for the route, including keeping the PCCs or replacing them with light rail vehicles or buses. The study is expected to cost \$1.1 million and take a year to complete. The multi-million dollar investment into the Mattapan route will mostly go toward an effort to rebuild the PCCs' trucks. MBTA rosters 10 PCCs built in the late 1940s. Today seven remain in service. Due to the cars' age, it can be hard to find replacement parts for the vehicles. The MBTA's PCCs are unique in that they are the only ones in the United States to have never been retired from service. Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Kenosha, Wis., also still use PCCs in regular service. MBTA has kept the PCCs in service on the Mattapan line because of a weight restriction on one of the line's bridges. In 2016, when MBTA announced that they were studying the future of the route and said they may replace the PCCs, the public and local officials rallied around the historic cars. MBTA officials say they realize how important the cars are to the community but noted that providing good service remains the top priority. The study being completed by engineering consultant CH2M Hill Ltd. is expected to look at a variety of options for the route, including even building replica PCCs to replace the current ones. (TN)

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**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT** of Transportation (CTDOT) Commissioner James P. Redeker recently announced that the State Bond Commission had approved \$50 million in additional funding for the New-Haven-Hartford-Springfield (NHHS) Rail Program during its February 1, 2017

meeting. The funding will support the design and environmental permitting for new *CTrail* Hartford Line stations in North Haven, Newington, West Hartford, Windsor, Windsor Locks and Enfield as well as 7.5 miles of double track from Windsor to Enfield. This funding will also support the construction of approximately 4 miles of double track between Hartford and Windsor, which is currently underway. Commissioner Redeker stated, "The funding approved by the State Bond Commission reinforces our State's continued commitment to providing new regional passenger rail service on the Hartford Line, which will become the newest component of a robust and vibrant multi-modal regional transportation system." Scheduled to launch in 2018, the *CTrail* Hartford Line will offer more frequent, convenient and faster passenger rail service between New Haven, Hartford and Springfield by increasing the number of round trip trains from six daily Amtrak intercity and regional trains to a total of 17 round trip trains a day to Hartford, and 12 trains per day to Springfield. (NHHS Rail Program Team)

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**MA STATE TRANSPORTATION** officials began soliciting bids last month to study a proposed rail tunnel connecting North and South stations, a long-discussed project that would create an unbroken rail route from Maine to Washington, D.C. The start of the bidding process marked an incremental but important step for the project, known as the "North-South rail link". The state's transportation secretary, Stephanie Pollack, said the study "will help determine if further technical and financial analysis for the project is warranted". The study, expected to take about eight months after a consulting firm is chosen, will cost as much as \$2-million and will provide updated cost estimates and outline the benefits to riders. Discussions about the nearly 3-mile tunnel go back decades, but the cost has been seen as prohibitive. Previous estimates placed the cost of the project at \$8 billion, but supporters say that advances in construction technology would lower the cost to between \$2 and 3-billion. In 2003 governor Mitt Romney shelved the project as too expensive and its fate seemed sealed. Critics call the project a pipe dream, and its future seems doubtful. (BG)

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**THE CENTRAL MAINE & QUEBEC** Railway turned a profit last year, the first time the railroad

has made money since acquiring the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway in a 2014 bankruptcy sale. New owner Fortress Investment Group has invested \$23 million in the railroad's physical plant. It acquired the former MM&A line for \$15.7 million in the wake of the 2013 Lac Mégantic, Quebec, oil train disaster that killed 47 people. (TN)

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**E. HUNTER HARRISON** was named the CEO of CSX Transportation today, less than seven weeks after stepping down early from the top job at Canadian Pacific. Harrison, 72 — widely regarded as the industry's best operations CEO — will begin immediately, CSX said today. He transformed Illinois Central, Canadian National, and CP into ultra-efficient and highly profitable railroads over the past three decades. "I am proud to join the dedicated and talented railroaders at CSX," Harrison says. "Together, we will implement precision scheduled railroading — a model proven to improve safety, create better service for customers, produce a proud and winning culture for employees, and generate exceptional, lasting value for shareholders." The deal with CSX was a coup for Harrison and his activist investor partner, Mantle Ridge founder Paul Hilal. Harrison on Jan. 18 announced his departure as CP CEO — five months earlier than planned — so he and Hilal could pursue a management shakeup at CSX. Hilal and Harrison will gain seats on the CSX board, with Hilal becoming its vice chairman. In addition, CSX appointed three other directors as part of a deal with Mantle Ridge, which owns just under 5 percent of CSX's stock. CSX said that at the annual shareholder meeting, typically held in May, investors will vote on two elements of Harrison's compensation package. These include reimbursing Mantle Ridge for the \$84 million in compensation and benefits Harrison left on the table at CP by retiring early, as well as tax liabilities that could reach \$23 million. Under the deal with Mantle Ridge, Harrison can resign after the shareholder meeting if shareholders reject these items. CSX scrapped plans for a special shareholder meeting to consider Mantle Ridge's proposals. Hilal helped lead Pershing Square's successful 2012 proxy battle that ousted CP management and installed Harrison as CEO. Harrison quickly implemented his precision railroading system at CP, slashing costs and raising revenue. CP's operating ratio fell more than 20 points in less than three years. And its

stock price doubled during Harrison's tenure. Word that Harrison was eyeing CSX sent the company's stock soaring 30 percent, boosting its overall value by \$10.4 billion. This put pressure on CSX's board to respond. By reaching a friendly deal with Harrison and Mantle Ridge, CSX avoids a costly and potentially nasty proxy battle. A decade ago, CSX fought — and lost — a proxy contest launched by The Children's Investment Fund and 3G Capital Partners. The railroad spent \$22 million in the effort, but four of the activist investor's five candidates were elected to its board. Harrison replaces Michael Ward, who has led CSX since 2003. CSX on Feb. 21 announced Ward would retire, effective May 31. Ward will now stay on as a consultant, although CSX did not say for how long. (TN)

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**NOW THAT MICHAEL WARD** has retired as CEO of CSX, he will remain in Jacksonville and continue the work that he loves as much as running a railroad—giving back to the community. Ward, 66, Railway Age's 2009 Railroader of the Year, will focus his efforts on running the Michael J. Ward Foundation. According to the Florida Times Union, when Ward was named CEO in 2003, "he decided to share the wealth and, since taking over at CSX, has personally or through his Michael J. Ward Foundation given about \$30 million to various education, domestic violence prevention and veterans causes. 'This is a well-paid job. I started earning all this money,' he said in a recent interview. "I am a relatively simple man—nice house, nice car, nice wife—what else do I need? What am I supposed to do with it? I probably had been given this to make a positive difference,' he said." Ward revamped CSX's corporate philanthropy, the Times Union noted: "The Company's giving had benefitted only the company's headquarter cities—then in Richmond, Va., and Jacksonville—but he shifted focus to the communities where CSX trains run. Also, he created philanthropy budgets for each of the company's divisions. 'There was a bias toward what I call the more elite organizations, the symphony, museums. We run trains in 23 states and most of the time the railroad does not run in the best part of a community. We needed to have philanthropy where we run our trains,' he said. Ward said he hopes the incoming CSX management will follow the same philosophy, of

network-wide philanthropy and volunteerism. He encouraged other wealthy Jacksonville residents to 'get off their dime' and support worthy causes. 'They can't take it with them,' he said. (RA)

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**SPRINGFIELD'S UNION STATION**, shut since 1970s, is to be reopened. It was built in 1926, and was a hub for travelers and the commerce hurtling through Western Massachusetts. But time — and changing tastes in travel — were not friends. So in the 1970s, Springfield's Union Station was shuttered. Now, more than four decades later, and after \$95 million worth of renovations, the landmark downtown station is primed for a revival. "It will really bring people back to a period in history. So much [of the station] is still original," said US Representative Richard E. Neal, who has been a key figure in the restoration and whose district includes Springfield. On March 6th, Neal and local leaders unveiled the reborn station during a media tour. The grand opening will take place the weekend of June 24 & 25. The distinctive terrazzo floors were restored, a new roof was put in, period light fixtures were installed, eight murals depicting Springfield's history were hung, and an iconic clock was placed in the grand concourse. Neal, who has a special connection with the station, believes it was money well spent. "I kicked off my political career here 40 years ago, so [the station] still has great meaning to me and the people of Springfield," Neal, a Democrat, said in a telephone interview Monday. "Restoring this station can make Springfield a transportation and commercial center, as well as do a lot of good." Union Station had a long and storied history in Springfield. At least until cars and airplanes stole the passengers. "The highways came through Springfield, and that really



spelled the end. As rail declined, the station just didn't have much of a purpose," Neal said. "It's been 43 years, and now we're giving it that purpose back." Neal said that with improvements made to the rails, he expects ridership on Amtrak trains to increase. Although the station will primarily serve passengers at first, Neal believes there are prime opportunities to expand into commercial rail, as well. There's no question that Springfield has benefited economically from the restoration, Neal said: "In construction alone, there have been hundreds of jobs created. Then there were architectural firms that were hired and artists commissioned. Now that it's done, food stands and shops have gone up, leading to new jobs in the service industry. "Neal believes that when the public can see what's been done, any doubt about the worth of the project will be gone. "We all love to say, 'I hate to say I told you so,' but secretly we all love to say, 'I told you so.' I told you so. We did it," Neal said. Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno agreed. "The naysayers said we'd never finish, but we've proved them wrong," Sarno said. (BG)

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**NEW YORK CITY** has released plans for the new Penn Station. The Empire State Development Corp., the New York MTA, Long Island Railroad and Amtrak have issued proposals asking for the redevelopment of Penn Station, and there are already loan guarantees in place to complete the \$1.59 billion project. The redevelopment includes the transformation of the historic midtown Farley Post Office Building into the Moynihan Train Hall, which will include shops and restaurants, located under the new skylight above the building's architecturally dramatic steel trusses. The new station will increase floor space by 50% from the existing Penn Station and serve riders on the LIRR, Amtrak and eventually accommodate passengers from Metro-North Commuter Rail Road. A total of 9 platforms and 17 tracks will be accessible from the train hall. Construction for the project is expected to begin this fall, with completion in December 2020. (470)

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**THANKS TO A NEW RETAINING WALL**, the first train to Frostburg will arrive on May 6, says John Garner, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad's general manager. It has been nine months since passengers rode the railroad to Frostburg. Two landslides damaged the railroad right-of-way in

2016, which curtailed service several miles short of Frostburg. Crews with Allegany County (Md.) completed some \$1.5 million in repairs to stabilize a weakened rock shelf at Woodcock Hollow, about 10 miles from Cumberland, Md., earlier this week. The county owns the section of the former Western Maryland Railroad. The railroad and an adjacent bike trail will now traverse a 350-foot-long, 28-foot-tall retaining wall. (TN)

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**TRANSIT MANAGERS AT THE MBTA** have outlined details of their positive train control plans to the Federal Railroad Administration. The transit agency looks to partner with its operator, Keolis Commuter Services, and Ansaldo Signaling and Transportation Systems on a PTC program that includes 180 antennas, 250 wayside installations, and more than 4,000 transponders. The project would also include PTC hardware in 100 locomotives, 25 Pan Am locomotives, and 114 cab cars. The new equipment would include upgrades to the agency's dispatching centers as well. In order to meet the federally mandated deadline, work would need to begin later this summer. Transit managers say that some commuter rail lines could see weekend service disruptions as early as July due to PTC work curfews. The agency did not disclose how much money it plans to spend on bringing its network into PTC compliance. MBTA's commuter rail service area includes more than 660 track miles in a network comprised of 14 rail lines. Congress extended the PTC implementation for most railroads to 2018. (TN)

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**IN THEIR LATEST EFFORT** to slash operating costs, MBTA officials are considering a cut to weekend commuter rail service for one year, Boston media report. While the commonwealth's legislature would need to approve long-term service cuts, board members representing the agency's fiscal and management control board say slashing weekend service could help close a \$42-million budget deficit, the Boston Globe reports. Stephanie Pollack, the Commonwealth's transportation secretary, says cost cuts are needed to balance the budget and invest money in other areas of the agency. If approved, the proposed cuts would take effect in July and would last for one year. The idea to cut weekend service follows a March 3 article by the Boston Globe in which the newspaper reported that more than a quarter of MBTA employees were

paid more than \$100,000 in 2016. Between 1,800 and 1,900 of the agency's more than 7,200 workers made at least \$100,000, according to the newspaper. In 2016, the agency's total payroll was about \$563 million, according to the article. (TN)

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**CSX TRANSPORTATION** workers are now permitted to step on and step off moving equipment while switching freight cars on the railroad's system. In an employee document obtained by *Trains News Wire*, railroaders can make the moves on locomotives and other track equipment at a walking pace not to exceed 4 mph. The bulletin, which took effect at 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, applies to trained employees who have been qualified by a supervisor regarding the rule change and have demonstrated proficiency in the task, the bulletin reads. According to the bulletin, the new rules supersede existing CSX "safe way" rules and will be a part of broader revisions that will be implemented in the new CSX employee operating manual that will take effect on April 1, 2017. Sources familiar with the rule tell News Wire this is one of the first rulebook modifications implemented under E. Hunter Harrison's leadership at CSX. (TN)

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**THE MBTA's** commuter rail vendor, Keolis, will install fare gates at North Station, South Station and Back Bay stations, in exchange for a share of fare revenue, under an arrangement proposed by T management and the contractor. Under the plan, Keolis will spend \$10 million installing fare gates and invest \$7 million in annual operating expenses intended to promote commuter rail ridership and enhance fare collection. The T anticipates increasing revenue by \$24 million, by installing fare gates, establishing a fare collection team and making it easier to buy tickets. (PL) Will this make it impossible to walk down the platforms without paying, like can be done now?-Ed.

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**CRRC** Sifang America, a Chinese manufacturer of rail transit vehicles, held a ceremony on March 16th on its new \$100 million railcar assembly plant in southeast Chicago. The assembly plant will build 846 7000-series transit cars for the Chicago Transit Authority. The company will spend about 10 years building the transit cars once the facility opens next year. According to the manufacturer, the production site is the first of its kind to be built in Chicago in more than three decades. When the company was

awarded a \$1.3-billion contract to build the cars last spring, CRRC Sifang American committed to building the railcars in Chicago to return jobs to the city. The plant will be located on the city's far south side at 135th Street and Torrence Avenue. CRRC is the largest manufacturer of locomotives, rolling stock, transit equipment, and railroad components in the world. It is owned by the Chinese government. (TN)

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**BID REQUESTS** are going out in the next two months for replacement of the MBTA (ex-B&M) bridge over the Annisquam River in Gloucester. The replacement for the 106-year-old lift bridge is expected to cost \$50 million. It was built in 1911, using a design created by the architect of the Golden Gate Bridge. (BG)

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**ADVOCACY GROUPS** were quick to express their concerns about proposed cuts to federal funding for Amtrak and mass transit in the fiscal 2018 budget proposal that the White House released last week. The "America First" budget would eliminate funding for all of Amtrak's long-distance passenger trains. It would also eliminate any new capital projects under the Federal Transit Administration, and effectively terminate the Department of Transportation's popular TIGER grant program that has benefited transportation infrastructure projects since 2009. The National Public Transportation Association said that while the president is touting a \$1 trillion investment in infrastructure, the White House wants to cut billions from existing transit program. Some 220 communities would lose Amtrak service if Congress carried through with the funding cuts, according to the National Association of Railroad Passengers. "It's ironic that President Trump's first budget proposal undermines the very communities whose economic hardship and sense of isolation from the rest of the country helped propel him into office," said Jim Mathews, NARP president. He said many small towns depend on Amtrak as a link to the U.S. economy. "These proposed cuts come as President Trump continues to promise that our tax dollars will be invested in rebuilding America's infrastructure," Mathews said. "Instead, we have seen an all-out assault on any project — public and private — that would advance passenger rail." Amtrak employees should not be alarmed by the headlines, according to President Charles W. "Wick" Moorman. "We do not yet know [what will

happen],” Moorman said in a letter to employees on Wednesday. “Every year, there is vigorous debate on what Congress should fund and what it should cut. These debates are long and hard, and they often result in a final outcome that is very different from the initial proposal, so let’s give this process some time. “As the budget process progresses, we look forward to working with President Trump, [DOT] Secretary Chao, and Congress to ensure they understand the value of Amtrak’s long distance trains and what these proposed cuts would mean to this important part of the nation’s transportation system,” Moorman said. (TN)

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**A LOCOMOTIVE REPAINTED** into Chessie System colors has emerged from CSX Transportation’s Huntington locomotive shops. The B30-7, C&O No. 8272, formerly CSX No. 5554, was spotted outside of the facility’s main shop area on Saturday afternoon where it was coupled to CSX blue-and-gold locomotives. It is the first time a Chessie System locomotive has been painted at the Huntington shops in more than 30 years. The shop, located on the railroad’s ex- Chesapeake & Ohio mainline, was once predominantly responsible for painting C&O and Chessie System locomotives. (TN)



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**CHINA RAILWAY ROLLING** Stock Corp. (CRRC), now building an assembly plant in Springfield, MA, to build Red and Orange Line replacement subway cars for the MBTA, has been awarded a contract from SEPTA of Philadelphia to build 45 bi-level coaches, a \$137.5 million contract. The cars are expected to be delivered in 2019. They have also contracted with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority to build 64 new subway cars for their Red and Purple lines. There is an option to purchase an additional 218 cars, with a total contract valued at \$647 million. The shells for these cars will be manufactured in China, with final assembly done at the Springfield plant. (RA) Appears that this new facility will be busy for years to come!- Ed.

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**THE MASS D.O.T.** is planning to construction the South Coast Rail project in two phases, beginning with the Middleborough Route. MassDOT filed a Notice of Project Change (NPC) for the South Coast Rail (SCR) Project with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office on March 15, 2017. MassDOT says taking a phased approach to construction and utilizing the existing Middleborough/Lakeville Commuter Rail Line will provide service sooner than if the project was constructed all at once. "Our administration is committed to providing the South Coast with commuter rail service as expeditiously and efficiently as possible," said Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker. "Pursuing the Middleborough-Lakeville early action service while advancing the Stoughton Electric final phase service will facilitate commuter rail service to the region years earlier." The 7.5-mile Middleborough Secondary Line, which must be upgraded to handle commuter rail traffic. While the MEPA review is underway, MassDOT will advance work on the so-called Southern Triangle, from Cotley Junction in Taunton south through Berkley, Lakeville, Freetown, Fall River, and New Bedford, which is common to both the early action and final phases of the project. The first phase of the project would extend and upgrade the existing Middleborough/Lakeville Line via the 7.5-mile Middleborough Secondary Line, which provides a quicker, less expensive option for service to and from New Bedford and Fall River. Trains heading towards the South Coast would then join the New Bedford Main Line and continue to New Bedford or branch off on the Fall River Secondary to Fall River. Phase 1 service would be diesel, as the existing Middleborough Line does not include the overhead catenary required for electric service. Phase 1 would also include the construction of several new stations and layover facilities in the Southern Triangle. As the early action service is permitted and implemented, MassDOT would continue to advance design of the Stoughton Electric Phase 2 of the SCR Project. This phase consists of new track, signals and stations between Canton Center and Cotley Junction. "We are pleased to continue advancing the South Coast Rail Project and working towards providing commuter rail service to the South Coast region in a timely and efficient manner," said Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack. "This Notice

of Project Change allows MassDOT to analyze impacts and incorporate public input of the proposed change to develop this project in phases. This will enable us to provide passenger rail to the South Coast region years sooner than would be the case if the project were constructed at one time."

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

### **TRAINS**

Finding a New Winning Formula

Core Traffic

Leading the Way

C&O #1309 Update

### **MODEL RAILROADER**

How to Model a River Channel

New England Railroading in a Small Space

Working With DCC Cables

### **RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN**

Alco FA1 & FA-2

Look Both Ways

Turnout Ground Throws

### **PASSENGER TRAIN ANNUAL 2016**

Amtrak's First Fleet

Amtrak's Rainbow

Commuter Muscle: MPI's MPXpress

Unveiling VIA Rail Canada

PCCs on Parade

News sources: [Boston Globe](#), [Boston Herald](#), Amtrak "News", [Trains Newswire](#), [Railway Age](#), [Railpace](#) Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", [Patriot Ledger](#).

## **A CLUB IN TRANSITION**

Dave Clinton

Thanks to Rick Sutton, and the Directors of the Club in the early 1980s, we have a gratified history of turning a derelict WW I building into what we proudly, and fondly, present to our visitors and what we enjoy tremendously ourselves.

Over the past several months, it has come to light that not every member feels the same way about Building 51, as those of us who spent so much time, and money, turning a building that had trees fallen through its roof, was full of graffiti and evidence of bonfires inside and crappy-looking

outside into what is today's tremendous facility; probably an envy of most model RR clubs. This is understandable because if you weren't there you would have no idea how much blood, sweat and tears went into the project. At times we all had thoughts of "what have we gotten ourselves into?"

If it were not for the foresight of the Directors setting up a "Building Fund" and investing in CDs, back in 1980, and Rick Sutton (a member of the Fire Museum at the time) getting information on the remaining old warehouse buildings still remaining in Bare Cove Park and presenting the idea to the members, we would probably still be in some basement or old church hall (which we investigated in the late 80s).

Because of so many members, who are newer than those of us around in 1992, it's a good time to "reminisce" and present some pictures and thoughts on those tough days 25 years ago.

The first pictures (on the cover) of the series, clockwise from top left, show the building just after we got it and had covered over the windows with concrete blocks and installed doors on the front. The interior shots show the fluorescent lights, powered by a gasoline generator; both supplied by member Richie Schmeir (r.i.p.). The beginning of air-handling equipment. Installing the "submarine" propane tank at NW corner in the back of the building. A first summer meeting held in our "new building"--we were even proud of it at this time! It was ours and we were busting-hump gathering old lumber (and pulling out nails), old light fixtures, and old furniture donated from closed businesses. We were building walls and ceilings and having a roof installed. It's hard to believe we even ventured into this project. Of course, we were all 25 years younger in those days!

I hope that after reading and seeing these old pictures, that the "newer" members will somehow get a sense of pride in the place, as they are now a part of it, too.

It's enjoyable to this (old) member to reminisce about this part of our Club's history and hope you, too, find it interesting.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

1. I'm considering a **new "contest"**, no prizes but fun. I'd like to collect a picture of each **member in his younger days**. Each month I'll post one and see who the other members think he is. The column will be **'Way Back When** and might include a "clue", since some pictures can be very difficult. I ask that you dig up a picture of yourself from years past and give it to me to scan; it will be returned to you next time I see you.
2. **Bryan Miller** would like to **thank the members** for their donations of food items to "Jack's Red Tails Café". And thanks to those who staffed the Café, too. All of this made the table a great success!
3. The long-awaited **"The Operator"** column has been pushed back again, and will appear in next month's issue. Probably will be a "double your pleasure" one, considering yesterday's Operations!
4. As you may have seen on "This Week", we are sponsoring a **trip on The Downeaster on Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>** to Portland, Freeport and Brunswick, Maine. It has been five years, since we "took the train to Maine", and our three previous trips were fun for all, so please mark your calendar and plan to join us for another fun outing. Details to follow.

.....*David N. Clinton*

## MEMBER NEWS

Our thoughts of sympathy go out to the family of **Dom Russo**, who passed away on the 4<sup>th</sup>. May he rest in peace.

**Bill Sims** has had foot surgery and will be recuperating for some time. We wish you speedy recovery, Bill, and look forward to your return!

**Fred Lockhart** has done well recuperating from his heart procedure. Glad you're back with us, Fred!

**Bob Knapp** is recovering from hip surgery but now wishes he could have the other one done, as it is just as bad. Keep up the good work, Bob and we hope you're back to work and with us soon!

## Birthday Celebrations

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations:

Chip Mullen ..... April 7<sup>th</sup>  
 Bob Knapp ..... April 8<sup>th</sup>  
 Skip Burton ..... April 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Rick Pearson..... April 20<sup>th</sup>  
 Al Gray ..... April 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Jack Doyle ..... April 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Ed Sisk..... April 30<sup>th</sup>

## RUNNING EXTRA

### MBTA bosses dueless on weekend commuter rail

Ledger 3-18-17

**W**ell, here we go again. Weekend commuter rail is under the gun because of its "high subsidy per ride" and low ridership.

However, amid all the rhetoric, never once has the T looked at why customers choose to drive to Boston weekends instead of taking the train. The answer? It's far too expensive and the lack of a later evening Boston departure makes it unusable for evening events in Boston.

Unlike peak hour weekday passengers armed with discounted monthly passes, week-

end riders are college students, sports fans and parents with children in tow. Then, the conductor delivers the bad news:

**COMMENTARY**  
 RICHARD PRONE  
 "That'll be \$125 for you, your wife and three teenagers." After a quick exit, the family piles into the SUV for the 70-mile roundtrip to Boston. Prior to 2012 when the T abolished family fares, this same group could have made the trip for \$31: And now, we have to listen to the talking heads complain about low weekend ridership.

Then, there are the locally notorious "backward trains" on the Kingston/Plymouth line. These trains attempt to serve both Plymouth and Kingston stations - located two miles apart, but on separate rail lines - with the same train. End result? It takes up to an hour to travel just eight miles to Halifax. Instead of a 55-minute trip to Boston, it's over an hour and a half. I have invited MassDOT officials and the Fiscal Control Board to ride these trains with me, but haven't yet received a response.

This problem is not unique to Boston. Chicago Metra offers an \$8 weekend pass for unlimited travel over its 500-mile system, while Los Angeles MetroLink sells \$10 weekend day passes with free connections. New York's Metro-North and Long Island Railroads give 25 percent discounts to weekend and weekday off-peak passengers. As a result, their trains are packed, revenues are up and the subsidy per rider plummets. More importantly, they're doing their job as a transit agency by getting cars off the road.

Here on the South Shore, we are fortunate to have a new network of excellent railroad infrastructure. If the T continues to rely on fare increases instead of attracting new riders with innovative fares and scheduling, then I suggest the present management step aside and let younger, more creative executives tackle this problem. Massachusetts taxpayers paid billions for these rail lines, and affordable fares and good service is not too much to ask.

*Richard Prone is a retired 39-year Conrail, Amtrak, and MCR locomotive engineer. He served on the Old Colony and Greenbush Citizens Advisory Committees and is Duxbury's representative on the MBTA Advisory Board.*

# Precision railroading, with a humane face

Written by David Thomas, Contributing Editor, [Railway Age](#) 3/26/17

One of Keith Creel's first acts upon becoming Canadian Pacific CEO in February was a call to his counterpart at the union representing the railway's train and engine (T&E) crews. It was time, CP's top brass hat told the Teamsters senior rail boss, to restore respect and fairness to the railroad's treatment of its engineers and conductors.



Creel's call to Teamsters Canada Rail Conference President Douglas Finnon signaled a unilateral ceasefire in the harsh disciplinary regime imposed by Hunter Harrison, Creel's predecessor and erstwhile mentor in the art and science of "precision railroading." Under Harrison's command, engineers and conductors were subject to battlefield justice in which the most trivial transgressions (urinating lineside at an unpopulated station stop was one) resulted in summary dismissal.

After his talk with the Teamsters president, Creel conveyed his change in attitude directly to the railway's employees in a digital memo provided by CP to *Railway Age* on March 24. In the memo, the CP CEO conceded that the unforgiving

disciplinary regime involved "mistakes" made in the [remaking of CP from money-losing laggard to profit-maker](#).

"It's not that we need to dwell on the how's and why's of the past, but I want the future to look different," Creel wrote to employees.

By the start of March, some 60 T&E crew members who had been dismissed under Harrison were awaiting arbitration in hope of getting their jobs back. Without waiting for the rulings, Creel has recalled about 10 of them and declared that he is personally reviewing the remaining cases.

While "de-Harrisonification" maybe too much a mouthful to catch on, Creel's more forgiving disciplinary policy coincides with other moves that signal a desire to restore employee pride and public appreciation to a company whose history is intertwined with Canada's own.

In another early gesture, Creel returned the hardworking beaver and shield to the company's official heraldry. Harrison had dumped the poor national rodent for a barebones "CP" logotype, which he felt better represented the lean efficiency that marked scheduled freights, slimmed-down yard trackage and fewer, harder-worked locomotives.



Explained Marty Cej, CP Assistant Vice President for public affairs: "After CP regained its rightful place in the industry, it was time to acknowledge the company's place in history and its role in driving the North American economy forward. Combining our bold modern 'CP' logo mark with the heritage shield, CP's new logo renews

Canadians' and employees' sense of pride in the company that connected a nation, and connected a nation to the rest of the world.”

In this, Canada's sesquicentennial, Canadian Pacific is planning an as-yet-unannounced rolling event to celebrate the country's 150th birthday. CP fans can only hope this means the re-emergence of its exquisite maroon, gray and black *Empress* steam locomotive, its fire dropped by Harrison but its running gear kept well-oiled and polished at the company's Ogden railyard and head office in Calgary. The 1930-vintage Hudson-class locomotive and its dedicated consist of heavyweight CP passenger cars starred in the 2011 IMAX movie "Rocky Mountain Express." (Our "feature film" at "Movie Night on April 10<sup>th</sup> –Ed.)



The prospect of the world's most beautiful locomotive returning to steam will cause foamers to drool unashamedly, but the more important reaction will be that of CP employees to Creel's promise of a more humane workplace. Here is his remarkably candid memo in full:

“A few days ago, I authorized the implementation of a new discipline process for all CP unionized employees. It's an important topic, so I want to take a few minutes to explain why and what it means.

“First of all, context is important. As many of you know, a little over five and a half years ago, CP was a company in serious trouble. Our free cash flow was negative C\$592 million, meaning about half a billion dollars more went out than came in. Our service and operating ratio were the worst in the business. Our credit rating was BBB–, just above a junk rating. Clearly, the direction in which CP was headed was not sustainable.

“This wasn't an accurate representation of you – our talented group of railroaders. You just needed the right plan and leadership so you could deliver the superior execution that you have now shown the world you are capable of.

“But the transition was tough. When you are in survival mode you have to move quickly. When you do, you can make mistakes. We got most things right, as we can all see in the results, but not everything.

“That's why a few weeks ago, as one of my first acts as CEO, I asked my team to take another look at our discipline policy. It's not that we need to dwell on the how's and why's of the past, but I want the future to look different.

“I view discipline as something I would rather not have to do but something I cannot avoid as part of my commitment to all employees. Simply put, we need people to do their jobs fully, to the best of their abilities and always, always safely. From a long history in this industry, I am absolutely passionate about this second point. This can be an unforgiving business and it is the short cut, the inattention to detail or the little unsafe act that can have the most terrible consequences. I would rather be tough on the issue with a person and ensure their safety than to visit a spouse to explain a tragic accident.

“In this context, my view on discipline is meant to influence – change, if you will – the actions and behaviors that don’t live up to our standards.

“Some have made the case that in the instances where the person has made a first mistake and recognizes their error, perhaps lesser penalties than we have been applying could be used.

“So, we are going to try a different approach. The details will be rolled out through your managers over the next few weeks. For the vast majority it won’t directly affect you, as you won’t be part of the discipline process.

“For the cases where discipline needs to be applied, we are going to use more deferred suspensions instead of actuals. This means that if a person had a one-off bad day and doesn’t have another event, there is no financial penalty. If an event of real concern happens again the discipline may also be applied along with anything appropriate for the new issue. Again, if there is no new offense, the penalty does not apply.

“Furthermore, as part of this review, I am personally reviewing all outstanding terminations. I have already directed some reconsiderations. Not all cases can be eligible. Some infractions are so serious that, for the protection of all, there can be no second chance.

“I would ask every CP employee to embrace this positive change with me. Let’s be our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers and make sure that CP continues to build on its status among the very best in performance and safety.

“I look forward to seeing you out on the property.”



**JOHN POOR AND THE PORTLAND COMPANY**—With all the current discussions about the development of the Portland Co., John Poor’s name is close by. Poor, born in Andover, Maine in 1809, founded the company in 1846 to manufacture steam locomotives. During the America’s Civil War his company supplied the Union Army with heavy cannons and in the 1920s produced Knox Automobiles. Poor brought the railroad to Portland, transforming the city from an isolated backwater town to a thriving city connected to the outside world, and in the process changed the landscape of the city. Without John Poor we wouldn’t have Commercial St. or Marginal Way, both constructed to accommodate the railroad. He turned his attention to making the city a major railway center, with the idea it could become the winter port for Montreal when the St. Lawrence River was frozen, providing the Canadian city with access to European markets throughout the year. Boston was also in the competition, with almost ten times the population of Portland, with far more resources to devote to building a rail system and terminals. But Portland had a deeper harbor than Boston, could accommodate larger ships, and was the closet seaport to Europe on the East coast.

Poor made a heroic trip to Montreal, through the White Mountains by sleigh in the winter to delineate the route the railroad would take to Portland. Using the oratory skills honed as a teacher and lawyer, along with his incredible journey, he impressed the Montreal Board of Trade. The Board voted in favor of Poor’s proposal. On his return to Portland he formed the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad, soon after becoming the Grand Trunk Railroad, the offices of which were in the still standing Grand Trunk building on the corner of Commercial and India Streets. Subsequent to his epic journey he remained extremely active in the development of the railroad system in the state of Maine. In 1849 he purchased the American Railroad Journal, and his brother, Henry, became the manager and editor. Interestingly, Standard and Poor’s, the much respected publication featuring financial research and analysis on stocks and bonds, traces its roots to the American Railroad Journal. Along with his accomplishments John Poor had a direct effect on naming some Portland streets. Atlantic, St. Lawrence, Montreal, and Quebec, on Munjoy Hill, were not named for the ocean, the river or Canadian cities. They were named after the railroads that many residents of the newly constructed streets, worked for. Then there is Commercial St. which is filled land, from removing the top of Munjoy Hill. The influence of John Poor on the city of Portland are felt to this day.

There would definitely be a major street named for him, but, who would want to live on Poor Street.

THE PORTLAND SUN Authored by Cliff Gallant