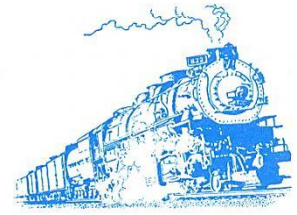


The Semaphore

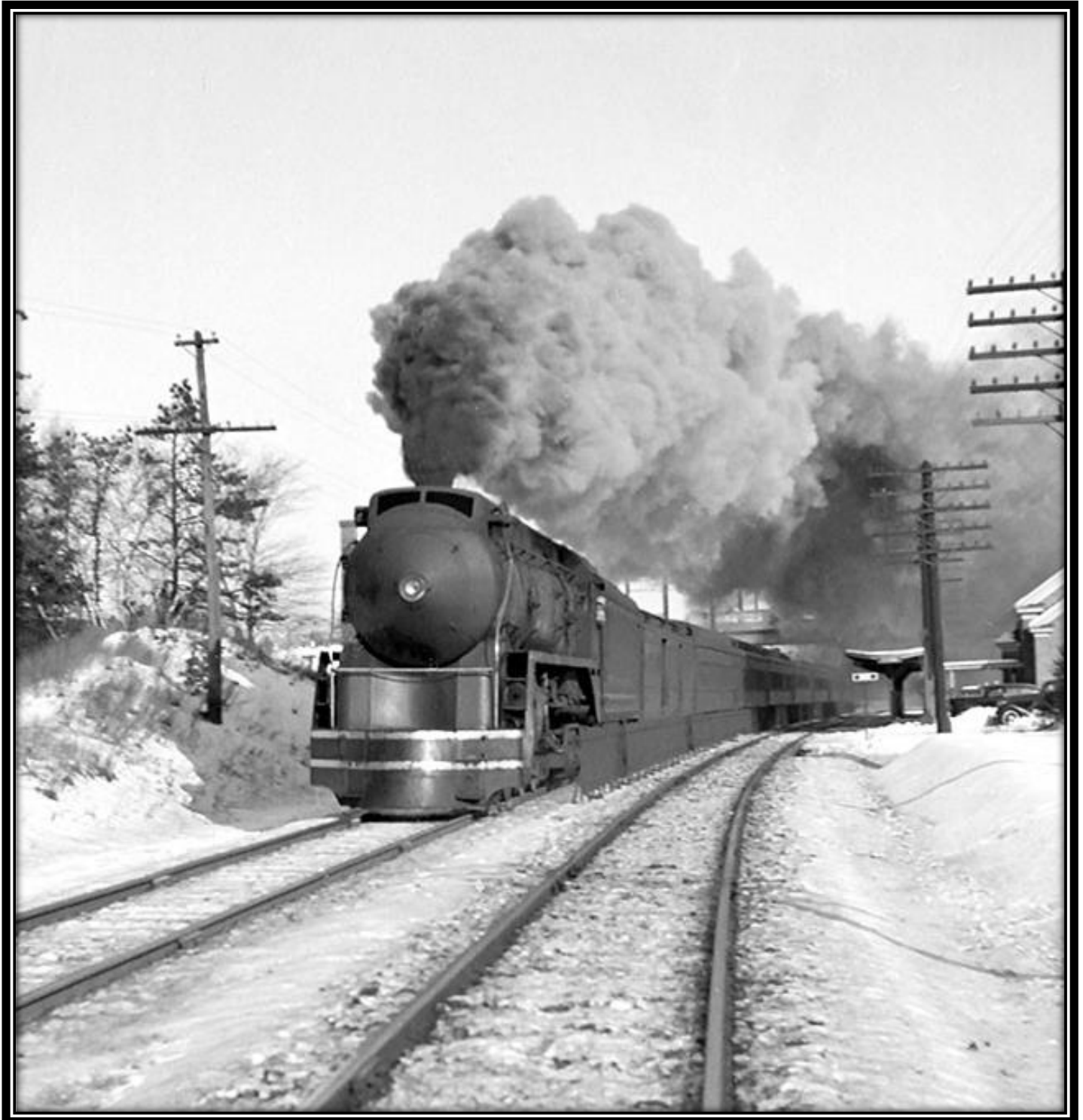
South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



JANUARY 20, 2020 ■■■■■■■■■■ **VOLUME 40** ■■■■■■■■■■ **NUMBER 1**



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. ©2019

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VOLUME 40 ■■■■■ NUMBER 1 ■■■■■ JANUARY 2020

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Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('20)
	Bryan Miller ('20)
	Roger St. Peter ('21)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('21)

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ON THE COVER: New Haven I-5 #1408 pulling the westbound “Yankee Clipper” passes the Sharon, MA station. A beautiful picture of times past, that some of us wish we could witness today! Thanks to George Corey for being there in November 1941.



In Memoriam

James T. South

August 18, 1943 – December 19, 2019



Thursday, December 19th was a sad day, when Roger called me to say that Jim had passed, after a month-long fight with pneumonia. So sad and so close to Christmas. I could tell how broken Roger was—they were best Buds, and always together at the Club. That’s one of the wonderful things about this hobby and the Club: mutual interests breed close friendships, no matter what the age. And since becoming a member in October 1991, Jim had made so many friends; there were so many sad folks upon hearing the news.

I sponsored Jim 29 years ago to the SSMRC, after a mutual friend, Wilbur Stone, introduced me to him. Both Wilbur and Jim were very active at Union Congregational Church; in fact, they both were “kingpins” of the Church. Wilbur had sponsored my family in joining the Church the year before and he knew both of us were “train nuts”. Thus, the friendship began. Jim joined just in time to participate in the events of our old location in Weymouth and in building our new quarters in Hingham. He could always be seen helping in preparing our new premises and building the framework for the new layout.

He loved collecting, details and running trains. For our Shows in the new building, he would bring some of his beautiful fire engine models and stage them on parts of the layout. His favorite RR was the Chicago & Northwestern. He detailed a passenger train, complete with details of naughty things going on in the Pullman cars! Jim was always “full of fun” and made us laugh. I remember when he found the first C&NW “gallery” commuter cars at “The Big E”; a smile on his face that I’ll never forget. So many years ago. That smile was used at every Show when, at East Middleton, Jim would be in the “pit” facing the crowd and asking the kids if they “see the Silly Goose”, as they looked down the main street with a mirror at the end of it...oh the laughter on both sides of the layout! A “tradition” none of us will forget.

“Jim was such a generous and thoughtful person”, is an understatement. When hearing of someone’s needs, he always asked if he could help, or drive them somewhere, or pick them up. He loved driving the Church’s snowplow truck and when our minister lived in Hingham, he would always stop by and plow me out, too. Many times, he plowed out the SSMRC lot in Bare Cove Park, before the Town figured out they should do it! 10 months after becoming a member, Jim offered to have the “Annual Cookout” at he and Alice’s home—and there was a beautiful in-ground pool included! After having the cookout for nine years in my small backyard, this was a real treat. We celebrated 25 years of Alice & Jim’s amazing hospitality two years ago, and still wonder how Alice put up with the “train geeks”. Jim loved “Junk Food Jollies” and always brought his famous “Chipped Beef” and enjoyed all the other offerings on the dining room table, as well!

Jim was a Braintree native, and lived there his whole life, retiring after 37 years with the Braintree Fire Department. He married Alice (Forbes), also a native of Braintree, 51 years ago and they brought up two great children, Danny and Katie, who have followed in their parents’ footsteps and are very active in the Church. They both inherited their father’s sense of humor and carry on the tradition of both parents of caring about others. Jim introduced Rick Pearson to the Club and Rick promises to carry on some of Jim’s traditions, not to mention bringing his grandson, Adam, to the Club whenever possible; Adam can’t wait to become age-eligible for the SSMRC!

Jim’s presence will be deeply missed by many folks but isn’t it nice that our paths crossed and that we have so many happy memories of his life here, including all the silly things that made us smile. I believe that our paths will cross again in a better place. Until then, Jim, may you rest in peace and look down upon us favorably.

David N. Clinton



FORM 19 ORDERS

AMHERST RAILWAY SOCIETY TRAIN SHOW

January 25 & 26 – “BIG E” West Springfield

JANUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, January 27th 8 p.m.

TRAINS ‘N TOUCHDOWNS

Saturday, February 1st 11 a.m. -

FEBRUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, February 3rd 8 p.m.

OFFICIAL OPERATIONS

Sunday, February 9th 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. w/lunch

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, February 22nd

FEBRUARY B.O.D.

Monday, February 24th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Rick Pearson** on winning this month’s 50/50 raffle!

10 members knew that the famous Viaduct in this month’s contest is the **CANTON VIADUCT**—oldest of its type and still in daily use with 125 MPH trains crossing it!

Al Taylor
Paul Cutler III
Dan Peterson
Fred Lockhart
Roger St. Peter

Ron Clough
Mike Dolan
John Sheridan
Doug Buchanan
Jack Foley

All entries were winners and donated calendars for this “swap” contest. Thanks to you all for a fun tradition!

For the April Business Meeting: “Word Find” puzzle 20-4; another favorite by Al Taylor. Extra copies in contest rack in train room. Good luck and don’t forget to include your name!

CHIEF’S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Progress on the railroad

The work continues on the bench work for the new section of the railroad; risers for the Boston Division mainline are being installed, as well as the risers that will support the industrial area. Grades to align with the existing permanent part of the Boston

Division are being adjusted as we set the risers. The sub-roadbed for the trolley line that will appear on the new section has been designed and built in place. It extends from the existing trolley line near the steel mill, down thru some of the bench work and appears and parallels the new part of the Boston Division in the staging room. The grade came out around 4.5%, which the Trolley Committee said in their earlier testing would be ok. We really did not have any choice, as we had to fit it in the run we had available. We are ready to install the roadbed on that section of the trolley. Scenery work has been started on the section of the Boston Division that runs below the edge of the Cedar Hill arrival/departure yard. Scenery work also continues above it in Cedar Hill along the front edge. The icing platform for Cedar Hill has been painted and detailed at the workbench and a mockup of the ice house has been prepared, so they should be installed in the near future. The Narrow Gauge Committee has built a two-sided model board for the narrow gauge wye. Because the wye is divided by the backdrop, it was difficult to know the turnouts on the other side were aligned properly; wiring is in progress and it should be finished shortly.

What Else

As I reported after the Fall show, we had a major problem with the DCC system on Sunday afternoon. I had mentioned that we would require all throttles to have their firmware updated--an in-house procedure. If your throttle is a DT400, it will need to be upgraded to a DT402 by Digitrax; their charge is very reasonable. At the time I stated that Bob England would be handling that along with Paul III. But with other upgrades that have come up in discussion, Paul will be handling the firmware updates, so Bob can focus on the other upgrades to the DCC system on the railroad. You can help by leaving a note in Paul’s mailbox (if he has not already spoken with you) with the model of your throttle or throttles, if you have more than one (model # is between the two knobs). Bob can use anyone’s help that is offered, as some of the upgrades do not require massive knowledge of DCC, just following his directions, so please lend a hand and we will get the work done.

That is it for this month, as always, your comments or questions are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer



DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Roger St. Peter was our first “victim” this month, bringing an Athearn SW1200 dressed in the SP’s grey and red. This unit came with a 9-pin plug, so he was able to simply plug in the DH126D and away he went! True to Athearn’s use of cheap “mini-bulbs”, his front ones were burned out but he decided to tackle that job another time.

Jim Ferris returned with his D&H RS11 by Atlas. Previously, he had installed the decoder and now it was time to do away with the center, factory bulb and install LEDs at both ends. This entails cutting the light tubes close to the ends and heat-shrinking the LED to the end of the tube. He did a great job and now had nice, bright, directional lighting.

David Galbraith brought his P1K RS27 to correct a broken truck wire, which meant the decoder was only getting power from one truck. The loco still works but is more susceptible to dirty track and “dead spots”, like turnout “frogs”. He re-soldered the connection, after having to remove the truck from the chassis.

Applicant **Eric Mercer** brought three Kato SD40-2s to decoderize and, pleasantly, found one already had a decoder—the main reason we put “stickers” on the bottom of the fuel tank...so we know in 5 years that we have already installed a decoder! The second loco, in UP colors, took the DH123PS into the 8-pin plug on the top of the factory board. He wasn’t so lucky with the 3rd unit, an undecorated one, where we found that the factory board was defective and would not take the DZ123P. This unit will have to be “hard-wired”, after removing the factory board.

Ed Carter had a fun evening working on his Walther’s heavyweight passenger cars—PRR, of course! He wanted to put lighting into the cars, that come with nice interiors and “tabs” that fit the Walther’s “lighting kit”. The LED light boards he had gotten to install in the cars come with power wires and a “keep alive” capacitor, which prevents “flickering”. They come about 90’ long, and can be cut to fit any car—down to a caboose. Big problem: the power “tabs” in the cars are made with a metal that one cannot solder to. The solder blobs up and slides off the tab, even after filing the tab. After much time and frustration trying to attach the power wires to the tabs, **Paul III** suggested that he wrap the wires around the tabs and then “crimp” them real tight to the tabs. This seemed to work...but who knows for how long. So, he was going to try to find a “connector” that he could solder to the wires and slide over the tabs. How about “Magic Tape”-ing the wires to the tabs? That stuff is pretty sticky and may hold the wires for many years.

Our next Clinic will be **Thursday, March 12th** as we follow an “every second month” schedule from now on. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

JANUARY 2015 (5 years ago)

- Bridge spanning pit area between Cedar Hill freight and passenger yards built.
- E. Hunter Harrison named “Railroader of the Year” by *Railway Age* magazine.
- STB gives approval for Massachusetts to acquire part of Housatonic RR between Sheffield and Pittsfield, MA.
- Groundbreaking for California’s high-speed rail line between Los Angeles and San Francisco.
- NS gets go-ahead for design and construction of replacement Portageville Viaduct over Genesee River.
- Amtrak’s *Vermont* makes route change to ex-B&M Connecticut River line through Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield. No more back-up moves to Palmer.
- \$996-million grant awarded to MBTA to extend Green Line to Somerville and Medford.
- MBTA solicits bids for 30 self-propelled railcars to be used on the Fairmount Line.
- Kraft Group and the MassDOT sign agreement to start daily commuter service between Boston and Gillette Stadium station; service to start in two years.
- SSMRC tables move at “Big E”, after 20 years in same area.

JANUARY 2010 (10 years ago)

- Replacement of deteriorated concrete ties on Plymouth & Middleboro Old Colony Lines begins.
- CT approves funds for double-tracking New Haven-Springfield line.
- Amtrak adds WiFi service to *Acela Express* trains.
- Amtrak awards contract to replace 102-year-old Niantic River Bridge in East Lyme, CT.
- Effort begun to save Attleboro’s ex-New Haven “Boro” Tower.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR plans to abandon 230 miles of track between Millinocket and Houlton, ME.

JANUARY 2005 (15 years ago)

- EMD sold by GM to an investor group led by Greenbriar and Berkshire Partners.
- Freight car builder Johnstown America changes name to Freight Car America, Inc.
- Ruling by FRA requiring reflective materials be installed on sides of all locomotives and freight cars.
- MBTA GP9 #1921, painted in the historic B&M “Minuteman” scheme, is retired.
- 44-tonner era on Claremont Concord RR comes to end, with sale of last two of the locomotives.
- Amtrak begins serving brand-new transportation center in Pittsfield, MA.

- Restoration of B&M #3713 at Steamtown begins.
- EX-QBT SW9 #20 shipped from storage in North Stratford, NH to New England Southern RR in Concord.
- \$2.5-million restoration of Canaan, CT Union station moves ahead with grant money. Station almost completely destroyed by arson fire in 2001.
- Walthers brings out first 85' Heavyweight passenger car in plastic.
- Army Corps of Engineers gives long-awaited permit, allowing MBTA to build near and in the highly-protected wetland areas along the Greenbush corridor.

JANUARY 2000 (20 Years Ago)

- Plans for *Flying Yankee*, ex-B&M streamliner, to be running in March.
- State of VT buys Guilford ex-B&M track from White River Jct. to Wells River, VT.
- BNSF and CN announce plans to combine their rail systems; later denied by STB.
- Alaska RR takes delivery of their first SD70MACs.
- Work begins on moving Framingham station platform 700' to the west of present station.
- Vermont Rail System forms "Washington County RR" to operate old Montpelier & Barre RR from Montpelier Jct. to Graniteville, VT.
- Amtrak launches weekly "Rail Sale" on the Internet.
- MBTA opens remainder of new RTE 128 station and parking garage.

JANUARY 1995 (25 Years Ago)

- Construction of new Neponset River RR Bridge for Old Colony service almost completed—1 year ahead of schedule.
- UP receives approval to take control of Chicago & Northwestern Transportation Co.
- Iron Roads Railroad purchases Bangor & Aroostook from Fieldcrest Cannon.
- Conrail SD60 #5595 unveiled at Juniata Backshop in Altoona, as the first diesel locomotive built in that shop.
- MBTA Commuter Rail leads all U.S. commuter railroads in ridership growth.

JANUARY 1990 (30 Years Ago)

- \$5/mo. assessment voted for "Building Fund".
- Delaware & Hudson Rwy sold to CP Rail.
- Life Like introduces first "Proto2000" line of models—a BL2 locomotive.
- Guilford transfers operation of its North Country lines to Vermont & New Hampshire RR; 60-miles of CT River Line (former Berlin Branch) and 19-mile Groveton Branch.
- Ship arrives from China with two brand-new 2-8-2 steam locomotives; one for Valley RR in CT and the other for Knox & Kane RR in Pennsylvania.

JANUARY 1985 (35 Years Ago)

- Honorary Member Wally Chase adds Narrow Gauge to his layout. ("Wally World" visits to Lewiston, ME)
- China returns to Amtrak dining cars, replacing plastic and paper Amtrak was forced to try.
- Upgrading of Amtrak's New Haven-Springfield line begins, with removal of second main line.

- 20-year anniversary of B&M making most massive cutback in history, with the cancellation of over 30 interstate passenger trains including all to NH and ME.

POTPOURRI

THE 21ST ANNUAL Canadian Pacific (CP) Holiday Train recently wrapped up its North American tour, and, while final numbers are still being calculated, it raised more than C\$1.49 million and collected 238,393 pounds of food. The Holiday Train, which supports more than 170 communities along CP routes, has now raised more than C\$16.7 million and collected 4.7 million pounds of food since its inaugural journey back in 1999.

•••••
CHINA National Railway (CR) opened the 174km Beijing North – Zhangjiakou line on December 30, the world's first automated high-speed railway, together with the 53km Chongli line serving venues for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. The Beijing – Zhangjiakou line has eight stations including Badaling Great Wall and Xihuayuan North, where the 52.2km Chongli high-speed line branches off to serve the Olympic Village in Prince Edward City. Badaling Great Wall station is underground and has a maximum depth of 102m and occupies an area of 41,000m. The maximum speed on the Beijing –



Zhangjiakou line is 350km/h and will cut the journey time between the two cities from 3h 7min to 47 minutes. The Chongli line has a top speed of 250km/h to achieve a Beijing – Prince Edward City journey time of 53 minutes. CR is operating 36 round trips per day on the two new lines plus six daily round trips in peak hours. (RA)

•••••
YEAR-END 2019 saw the retirement of a unique, Canadian-designed and built streetcar: the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) Canadian Light Rail

Vehicle (CLRV) after 40 years of service, a near-record in today's transit industry. As autumn descended on Toronto, the once 196-car fleet had dwindled to about 40 serviceable units. The end came on Sunday, Dec. 29, which was 40 years to the day after the arrival of the first CLRV in Toronto,



from Switzerland. CLRVs were in service on part of the Queen crosstown route, providing free rides to the public. (RA)

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CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY has announced it

completed acquisition of the Central Maine & Quebec Railway on Dec. 30. While the regional railroad is now owned by the CP, the deal still needs to be approved by the U.S. Surface Transportation Board. CM&Q will be placed into an "independent voting trust" and continue to operate as normal until the federal regulator approves the deal. In a statement, CP officials wrote, "The acquisition, first announced on Nov. 20, 2019, will provide CP customers with seamless, safe and efficient access to ports at Searsport, Maine, and to Saint John, New Brunswick, via Eastern Maine Railway Company and New Brunswick Southern Railway, thereby preserving and enhancing competition." In 1995, CP sold its main line to the Maritimes to Iron Road Railways and J.D. Irving. Iron Road merged its portion of the CP with the Bangor & Aroostook. In 2002, Iron Road sold the railroad to Ed Burkhardt's Rail World Inc., which renamed it the Montreal Maine & Atlantic. The MM&A struggled through the 2000s, thanks in large part to the decline of Maine's paper industry. In 2010, MM&A sold a large chunk of the former Bangor & Aroostook to the State of Maine that in turn leased it to J.D. Irving. In July 2013, an MM&A oil train derailed and exploded in the small town of Lac-Mégantic, Que., leveling more than 30 buildings and killing 47 people. The railroad filed for bankruptcy a month later and in 2014 it was sold to Fortress, which created CM&Q. (TN)

.....
GENESEE & WYOMING'S SALE to Brookfield Infrastructure and GIC has been completed. The deal takes the company private, with each share of stock receiving \$112 cash. As a result, the company ceased trading on the New York Stock Exchange on December 30th. "This transaction is

an excellent outcome for all G&W stakeholders," Genesee & Wyoming CEO Jack Hellmann said in a press release. "For our customers, employees, and Class I partners, the long-term investment horizon of Brookfield and GIC is perfectly aligned with the long lives of G&W railroad assets. We look forward to building on G&W's track record of safety, service excellence and commercial growth as we become an important component of a portfolio of global infrastructure assets." G&W operates 113 short lines in 42 U.S. states and four Canadian provinces. It also has operations in Europe and Australia, although the company is in the process of selling the Australian operation to its minority shareholder. (TN)

.....
THE OWNER of the only two surviving Baldwin RF-16 "Sharknose" diesel locomotives says they will eventually go to a museum. Escanaba & Lake Superior Railroad owner and President John Larkin, in an exclusive interview for Trains News Wire, says that, upon his passing, the two units will go to museums. What museum that will be is yet to be determined, he says. Baldwin built 109 such A units and 51 B-units between 1950 and 1953 for Baltimore & Ohio, New York Central, and the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1967 the Monongahela Railway purchased seven As and two Bs from NYC, and operated them into the 1970s. The last two As, Nos. 1205 and 1216, which were in danger of scrapping, were purchased by Delaware & Hudson in 1974. They were used in freight service and in passenger excursion service on the D&H until late 1978, when they were purchased by Illinois-based Castolite Corp. That company leased them to the now defunct Michigan Northern, and then they were moved to E&LS. No. 1216 was briefly used by E&LS in the summer of 1979; No. 1205 had mechanical issues and remained stored. No. 1216 saw another revival in autumn 1982, but after a few trips between the railroad's headquarters in Wells and Channing the unit's crankshaft broke and it has been stored ever since. Larkin, 73 acquired the units in the 1980s and has kept them in indoor storage ever since. He also acquired Baldwin prime movers and other parts in the event the units were ever restored, but says the costs of rebuilding them would be significant. "But they are protected and out of the weather. They are inside so they are not further deteriorating," he says. (TN)

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FOR THE FIRST TIME since the government began tracking employment statistics in the 1940s, the number of people employed by railroads has dipped below 200,000. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has industry-specific data going back more than 70 years. In 1947, there were more than 1.5 million people employed in the railroad industry but over the subsequent decades, that number has slid downward. For the past 25 years, the number of people employed in the industry has bounced around from 210,000 to 250,000, usually responding to various economic issues. In 2002, during an economic downturn, the number of railroaders bottomed out at about 214,000. A decade later, following the 2008 financial crisis, the number bottomed out at about 210,000. However, as the economy improved, so too did railroad employment. Data for 2019 that was recently made available by the government agencies shows one of the biggest declines yet. In January 2019, there were 215,400 railroaders in the U.S. but that dropped more than 15,000 in eight months when in September the number slipped below 200,000. Preliminary data from November 2019, shows that 195,800 people were employed by the industry, the lowest ever recorded by the bureau. (TN)

●●●●●●
NEW PLANS WERE ANNOUNCED for New York Penn Station by Gov. Andrew Cuomo. To augment the new Moynihan Train Hall and existing Pennsylvania Station, buildings and land on the south full city block adjacent to the current facility will be acquired to create an additional new eight-track terminal annex with additional tracks, will provide room for an additional 175,000 riders a day. This is the first expansion of Penn Station's foundational infrastructure since the station was completed in 1910. New York State, Amtrak, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority and others will partner with a consultant design team led by FX Collaborative to develop and carry out the plans for the Amtrak-owned station. New York State will take the lead on expanding Pennsylvania Station by acquiring an entire block in Manhattan to add eight new tracks, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said. The proposed expansion would increase the capacity for trains using the hub by 40% and accommodate an additional 175,000 daily passengers. (WSJ)

●●●●●●
A GROUP IN MAINE restoring New England's last main line steam locomotive has ordered a new tender, an important step toward its eventual return

to service. New England Steam Corp. announced it had signed a contract with Millinocket Fabrication & Machine to construct a replacement tender body for Maine Central 4-6-2 No. 470. If everything goes according to plan, the tender will take three months to complete. "Considerable discussion between [the steam organization] and MF&M over the past year has determined the best method to achieve a modern but nearly exact copy of the original tender tank," New England Steam officials say. "Manufacturing technology has been considerably upgraded since the age of steam, so there will be welded fabrication inside the cistern that will vastly extend its service life over that of the original." In an effort to stay true to the "old fashioned methods," the tender will be riveted to the frame. Fixtures like the tender doors, grab irons, and more from the original tender will be installed on the new one. When No. 470 was built in 1924 it did not have a stoker but the Maine Central added one later. New England Steam plans to restore the locomotive without a stoker initially but the new tender will be constructed in a way that will allow for easy installation of the mechanism at a later date. New England Steam has been restoring No. 470 at the Downeast Scenic Railroad since the group purchased it from the City of Waterville in 2015. No. 470 was built by the American Locomotive Co. in 1924 and powered the Maine Central's farewell to steam excursion in 1954. After the trip, it was put on display in Waterville, near the railroad's classification yard. Decades of Maine's rough and raw winters took a toll on the engine and in 2012, the city put out a request for proposals to have the engine removed or restored. Six proposals were received and the one from New England Steam Corp. was selected. In 2013, the city council voted to sell the engine to the group for \$25,000 if the group could raise the funds in two years. If successful, No. 470 would be the largest operating steam locomotive in New England and the only operating standard gauge steam locomotive in the state. It is one of three Maine Central steam locomotives in existence. The group expects that it will take about \$1.75 million and a decade to restore the locomotive. (TN)

●●●●●●
THE CTRAIL HARTFORD LINE commuter service has carried more than 1 million riders since its debut in June 2018, well ahead of original ridership projections. Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont announced in a press release that the line carried its millionth rider during the Thanksgiving holiday

weekend. Year-over-year ridership is up 25 percent, with 750,000 passenger trips projected for its second year, surpassing the projected 667,000. November was the line's biggest single month for ridership, with 70,551 passengers. Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Joseph Giulietti attributed the success in part to the coordinated operations on the line by CTrail and Amtrak, which allows passengers to use either carrier at the same ticket price. Weekday service on the route seeks 14 trains in each direction — eight CTrail and six Amtrak trains northbound, and six CTrail trains and eight Amtrak trains southbound. (TN)

●●●●●●
EQUIPPED WITH ULTRA-HIGH DEFINITION cameras and high-powered illumination, the automated system “produces 360-degree scans of railcars passing through the portal at track speed. Advanced machine vision technology and software algorithms identify defects and automatically flag cars for repair.” Duos Technologies Group, Inc., through its operating subsidiary Duos Technologies, Inc., supplied the portal, which it calls a Rail Inspection Portal (rip®).



Completed in record time, the portal, which was the first full-scale rip® implementation for CSX, was recently featured in a promotional video published by the Class I railroad, highlighting its “renewed and expanded commitment to safety improvement and technological enhancements. This rip® installation and accompanying promotional effort underscore the increasing trend in the railroad industry of automating railcar mechanical inspections, which have historically been conducted manually.” (CSX News)

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

TRAINS

Phoenix Rising in West Virginia
 Cass Climax

Railroad Vision 2020: Fixing Amtrak
 Reviving a Landmark

Big Boy Payback!

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Easy and Effective Foreground Trees

An Operating Engine Terminal

Stone, Brick, and More

MODEL RAILROADER

Digging into Better Tunnels

Power Pickups for Rolling Stock
CLASSIC TRAINS (Winter 2019)

End of the Trail

Santa Fe passenger service

Itinerant Agent

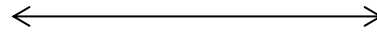
What's in a Photo?

Wells River, VT

Best of Everything

The Way it Was

How a Chicago boy fell in love with the New Haven Railroad



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains “Newswire”, Railway Age, Progressive Railroading, Railpace, RRE “Callboy”, “The 470”, Patriot Ledger, Wall Street Journal

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Welcome to the beginning of the **40th year of the *Semaphore***. It's very hard to “get my arms around” the fact that it has been 40 years, since that first issue! (Actually, the November 1980 issue was the first.) So much has happened at the SSMRC and in railroading itself, during those 40 years; too much to remember. That's why “Semaphore Memories” helps me and I hope you enjoy, too. Thanks for your support over these many years!
2. The **Annual Holiday Auction** was, as usual, a great success and a fun time. We missed Auctioneer Doland, with his famous retail sense of humor but Auctioneer Cutler had his own style of humor and with the help of Bryan Miller auctioned over 70 items to a group of happy- go-lucky members! Thanks to them both and all attendees for adding to the Club coffers!
3. It was suggested that we are due for a **group photo**. So, we would like to have one taken at the March Business Meeting. If you have a Club shirt, please consider wearing it!
4. We're **publishing a week early**, due to our presence and display at “The Big E” next weekend. Hope you can make it out to what



has become the largest model train show in North America!

..... *David N. Clinton*

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” (John F. Kennedy)

MEMBER NEWS

Bill Garvey is still in Brockton VA, waiting for a shot to alleviate back pain, so that he can be moved to a rehabilitation center. Good luck, Bill—we hope to see you around here soon!

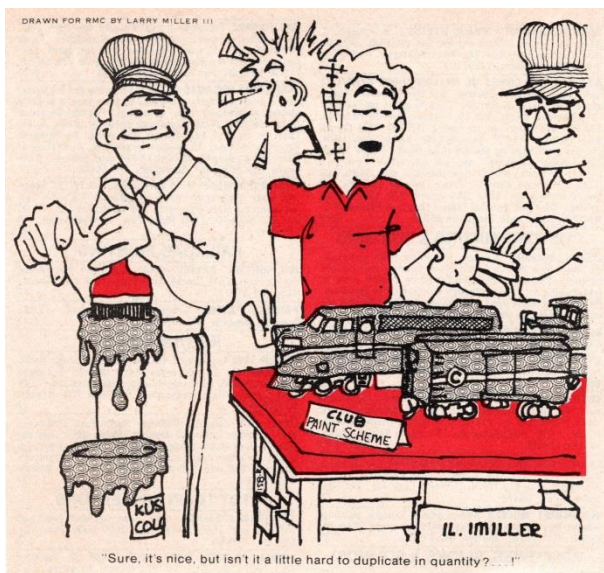
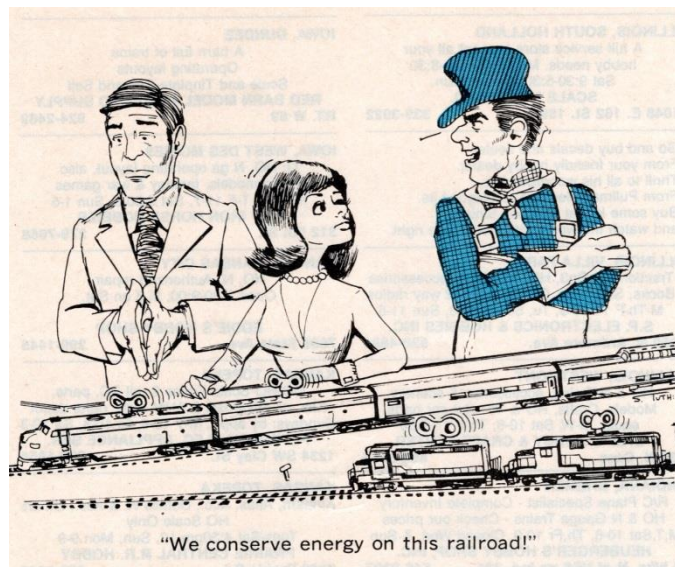
John Sheridan had an emergency appendectomy in the hospital where he works—very convenient but not fun at all, reports John. He is back to work, both at the hospital and for Rapido. Good going, John!

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.

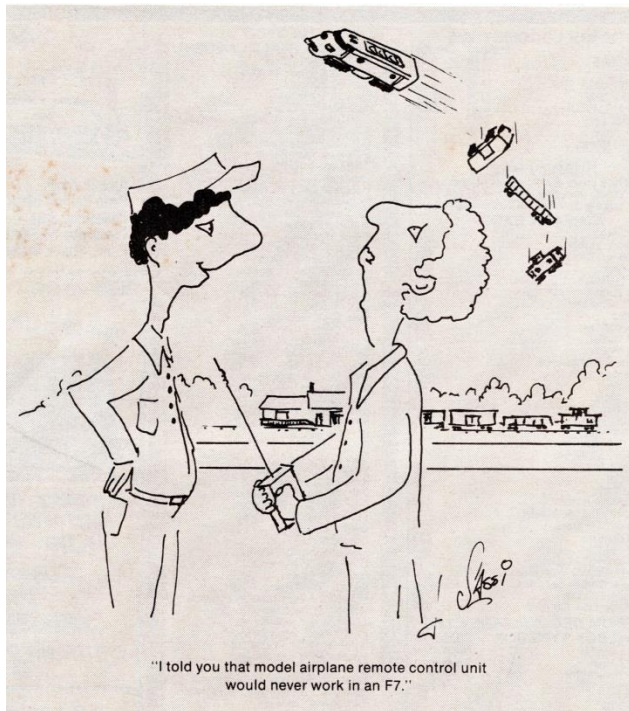
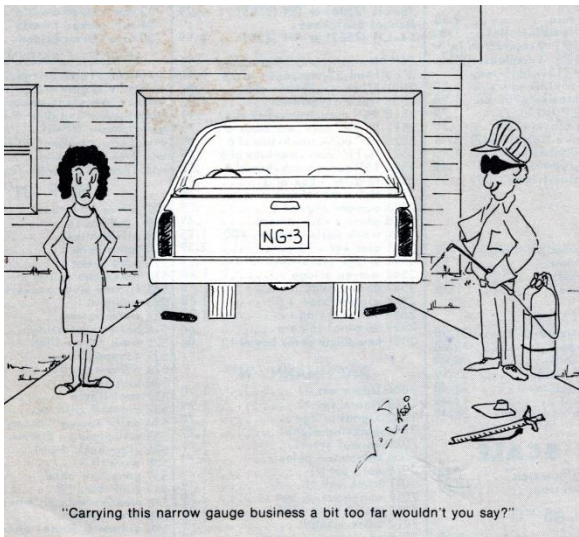
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

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

- Bob Farrenkopf..... February 2nd
- Jeremy Cahill..... February 3rd
- Don Pierce..... February 5th
- Steve Wintermeier February 5th
- Roger St. Peter..... February 6th
- Paul Agnew February 18th
- Ray Welliver (H) February 29th



RUNNING EXTRA



Amtrak Faces Scrutiny Despite Gains

BY TED MANN

12-2020

For a company coming off its best year ever, Amtrak faces a strange challenge in 2020: convincing its owner, the federal government, that the railroad is running in the right direction.

The national passenger railroad reported an adjusted operating loss of \$29.8 million in the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, the best financial performance in Amtrak's nearly 50-year history. While the railroad still faces a backlog of capital investment worth billions of dollars, the earnings show it moving closer to Chief Executive Richard Anderson's goal of breaking even in the typically unprofitable business of moving passengers by rail.

Skeptical lawmakers say Amtrak's pursuit of profitability has caused its overall service to suffer. And the railroad's financial strategy will face scrutiny this year as Congress takes up a new multiyear highway bill, which includes reauthorization of the federal grant programs that subsidize Amtrak.

Some on Capitol Hill have objected to Mr. Anderson's goals of maximizing ridership and revenues on shorter routes between population centers—while seeking to rein in costs by reducing service on unprofitable long-distance routes in rural parts of the country.

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D., Ore.), the chairman of the House Transportation Committee, has questioned Mr. Anderson's profit focus altogether, arguing that is more appropriate to the private sector than to a government-owned company like Amtrak.

"I think part of the problem we're dealing with is the original mandate from Congress, which said that this is supposed to be run as a for-profit corporation," Mr. DeFazio said. "I think they should think about efficiency but not profit...Amtrak is a service, and it can be a better service."

The railroad's leaders reject that notion.

"Amtrak wants to grow and do more for the nation," said Anthony Coscia, chairman of its board of directors. "The single best way to do that is to



The passenger railroad enters the new decade having just completed its best financial year ever.

run the company well—and we have been doing that."

Amtrak's steady financials have helped it make improvements, like replacing aging track. Amtrak is also planning to bolster service along its busiest and most profitable corridor with the procurement of new passenger cars.

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Coscia say their stewardship of Amtrak's annual federal subsidy, which totaled \$2.2 billion last year, gives the company credibility when it seeks funding for large capital projects, like new tunnels at two critical chokepoints in the Northeast, one beneath downtown Baltimore and the other under the Hudson River between New Jersey and New York.

Potentially adding to Amtrak's uncertainty in the coming year is the possible departure of Mr. Anderson, who has run the railroad since 2017. While there has been no public announcement, some at Amtrak are bracing for his exit.

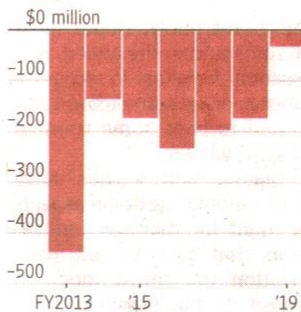
Mr. Coscia didn't comment on that possibility but said Amtrak "takes succession planning very seriously."

Also unknown is how Washington politics might shape Amtrak's future. Mr. DeFazio's

Getting on Track

Amtrak is approaching profitability, cutting annual operating declines in recent years.

Adjusted operating earnings



Note: Fiscal year ends Sept. 30. Source: Amtrak Consolidated financial statements

committee is one of two House panels that will begin work on the reauthorization bill to replace the FAST Act, a five-year surface transportation bill to fund road, rail and transit programs, which expires in 2020. Some doubt Congress will craft and pass the bill in an election year, especially since its funding will turn on whether lawmakers will raise the federal gas tax, the primary funding source for highway grants, for the first time since 1993.

Congress has shown it intends to intervene in some fiscal decisions that have driven Mr. Anderson's push to profitability. In the nearly \$1.4 trillion budget deal approved by Congress in December, lawmakers barred Amtrak from moving to reorganize the railroad's police, which unions said would mean shrinking the workforce.

But the budget deal also helped Amtrak by allowing local governments to use funds borrowed from federal loan programs to count as the local share of a project funded by federal transportation grants.

Railroad leaders have defended their approach. Their goal, they say, is to run more trains more frequently in areas that are dense and growing—effectively replicating the model of the Northeast Corridor between pairs of cities where Amtrak is underused but could compete with flying and driving.

"What we're after here is the person who lives in Atlanta or Charlotte, who doesn't have train service," Mr. Coscia said. "The person who has to wake up at 3 in the morning in Cleveland to take a train."

NAMES OF B & M MOUNTAIN LOCOMOTIVES

Find the words in the grid. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

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AMERICAN PROGRESS

BEE AND EMMA

BLACK ARROW

CALVIN COOLIDGE

CARDIGAN

CASEY JONES

ENDURANCE

HANNA DUSTIN

HERCULES

INTREPID

INVINCIBLE

LILY PONS

LITTLE JOHN

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

POWWOW RIVER

THE BUMBLE BEE

THE SWALLOW

TROJAN

Your Name: _____