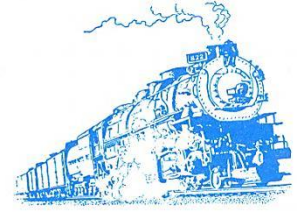


# The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938

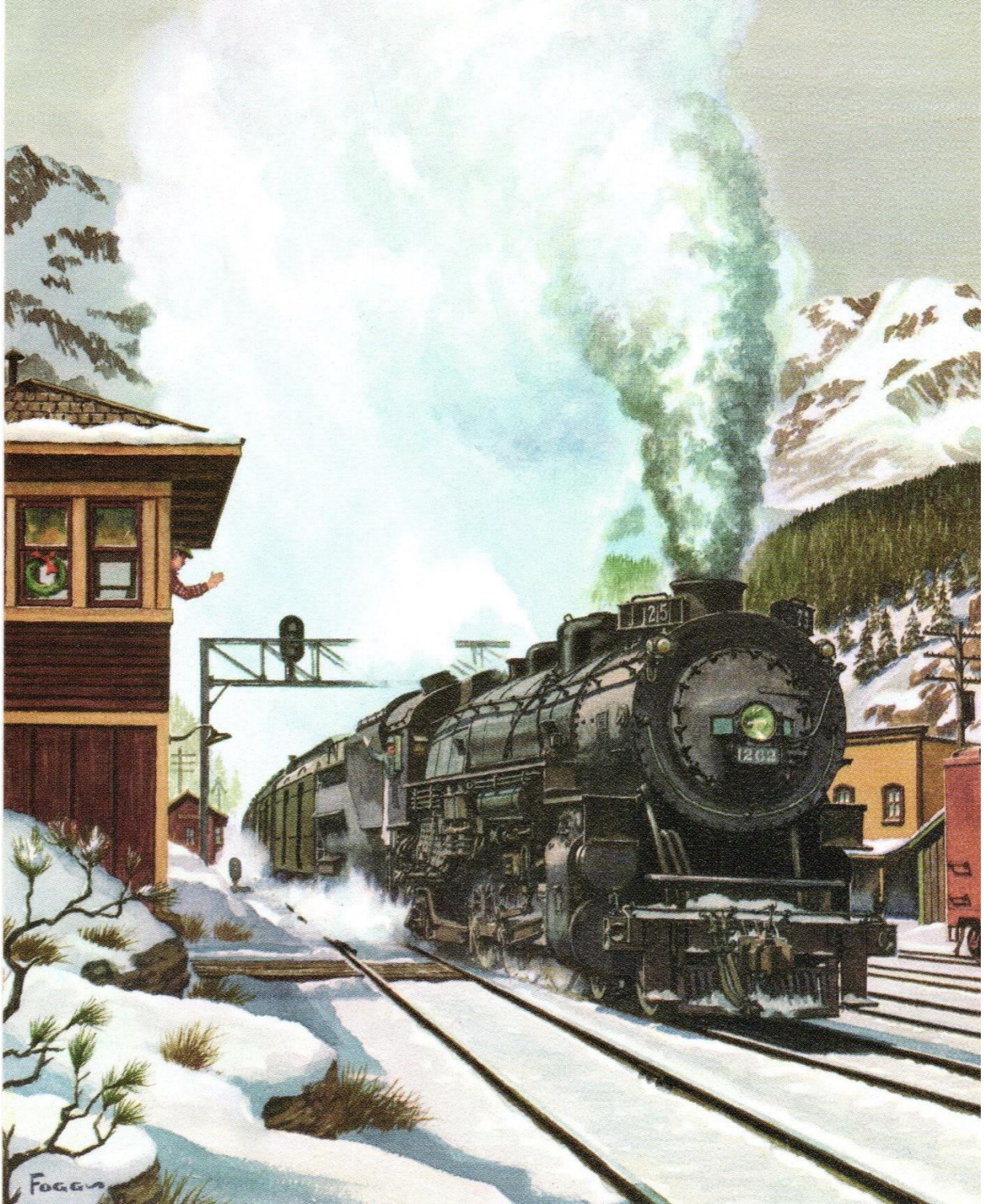


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DECEMBER 19, 2022 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 42 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 12

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*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Semaphore staff!*





# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr.
“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Boston <u>Globe</u> .....	Paul Bonanno
Western Massachusetts.....	Ron Clough
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
“The Chief’s Corner”.....	Fred Lockhart
“Behind the Scenes”.....	Savery Moore
Mid-Atlantic News.....	Doug Buchanan

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Guest Contributors.....	

*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. ©2022  
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VOLUME 42 ■■■■■ NUMBER 12 ■■■■■ DECEMBER 2022

### CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice President.....	Rich Herlihy
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Eric Mercer
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	David Galbraith ('24)
	Bob England ('24)
	Roger St. Peter ('23)
	Gary Mangalinkx ('23)

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**ON THE COVER:** “Highballin’ the Christmas Mail” is the title of this Christmas card from “The Lazy RL Ranch”. Original painting by renowned railroad artist Howard Fogg.

## FORM 19 ORDERS

### DECEMBER B.O.D. MEETING

Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### FAMILY & SCOUT NIGHT

Friday, January 6<sup>th</sup> 5:30-9 p.m.

### JANUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>

### DECEMBER B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Dan Peterson** on winning this month's "50/50" drawing!

←————→  
For the **JANUARY** Business Meeting another "Word Find" from Al Taylor, may he RIP knowing that he is still causing enjoyment at the SSMRC. The Puzzle was in the October newsletter. This will be our "Annual Calendar Contest"-- with all those entering a correct puzzle going home with a train calendar. We appreciate donations of RR calendars, so if you are ordering your favorite...how about an extra to be donated to the contest? Just put in my mailbox or give to me in person. Extra copies of the contest are on red paper in the train room. Good luck!

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

T'was the week before Christmas and all through the club, not much was happening, when all of a sudden to my surprise I found some progress was made. Don't want to steal the Scenery Committee's thunder in case they have a column this month, too. The area between Cedar Hill Arrival/Departure yard and the steel mill is coming along nicely. The Electrical Committee, with applicant Jim Emerson, is continuing to install their demonstration of signals on the new section of the railroad with the end result to see if the club wants to adopt Jim's system, which he has operational on



his own railroad. Looking forward to the demo. Out at the Boston/Great Lakes staging yard, I am building turnouts to make Great Lakes Yard double-ended, which will improve traffic flow during shows, trains won't have to back into the yard anymore, which holds up other trains.

As I close this short column, I want to wish all of our members a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

## Semaphore Memories

### DECEMBER 2017 (5 years ago)

- "Fast clocks" removed with new chips installed for better performance.
- CSX Chief Executive Officer E. Hunter Harrison dies.
- Amtrak *Downeaster* service tested to Rockland, Maine. Seasonal service ended between Brunswick and Rockland in the fall of 2015.
- Norfolk Southern opens new 963-ft, steel arch bridge spanning the Genesee River, replacing Erie's Portageville Bridge built in 1875.
- Narrow gauge WW&F reassembles a Howe Pony Truss box covered bridge for installation on its restored mainline. The historic 48-ft-long bridge, previously on B&M's Berlin, NH branch, was given to the RR by the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges
- Connecticut's "Hartford Line" became first in New England to have a wayside horn system at various crossings, as part of a "noise-mitigation program".

### DECEMBER 2012 (10 years ago)

- EMD subsidiary of Progress Rail (Caterpillar) opens locomotive manufacturing facility in Brazil.
- First of four Talgo trainsets to be built in Milwaukee moved to Pueblo, Colorado for testing.
- First ES44AC locomotives from GE delivered to CNR.
- NY State-owned ex-Amtrak Turbo Trains and parts auctioned off. Two Rohr-built trains from the '70s had been rebuilt for high-speed service, which never materialized.
- UP in talks to bring back and restore a "Big Boy".
- CPR president and CEO Hunter Harrison outlines plan to improve service and lower costs by first cutting 4,500 employees and extending train lengths.
- EMD delivers first GP20C-ECO to CPR.
- After a quarter-century absence, it is announced that Boston-Cape Cod passenger service will return next Memorial Day.
- Downeaster celebrates first month of new service to Brunswick with twice as many people riding as projected
- Former Tuskegee Airman and member Jack Bryant

(D) shows movie "Red Tails" to full house in meeting room with lots of discussion and insights from Jack.

#### **DECEMBER 2007** (15 years ago)

- Amtrak's Downeaster declared an unequivocal success, after six years of service.
- MBTA Fitchburg line double-track funding secured.
- VT drops plans to purchase diesel multiple-unit cars for the Vermonter and Ethan Allen Express.
- VIA Rail Canada awards CAD Railway of Montreal contract to rebuild its 53 F40PH locomotives.
- Saco, ME, breaks ground for new station.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR takes delivery of ex-BNSF B23-7s, still in Santa Fe paint.
- Bellows Falls tunnel on NECR opened after clearance work, allowing double-stacks and auto racks.
- MBTA's Board votes to extend contract with MBCR.

#### **DECEMBER 2002** (20 years ago)

- MBTA Board approves 5-yr. contract with MBCR.
- UP announces licensing fee requirement for all models using their logos.
- Amtrak trains return to Kansas City Union Station for first time in 17 years.
- Two former B&M RDCs purchased from BC Rail for Wilton scenic RR start-up in the summer.
- Edaville adds 25-ton Whitcomb diesel to roster.
- Durango & Silverton purchases 5 diesels, so it can continue service during times of high wildfire hazard.
- Alaska RR opens station to serve Anchorage Airport.
- Walthers introduces R-T-R heavyweight sleepers in various configurations and roads and brings out first "Built-up" structure.
- New Jersey Transit orders first bi-level cars.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR replaces Bangor & Aroostook System; uses all GE locomotives.
- Work on Greenbush Line gets underway, with brush clearing and removal of old ties and rails.

#### **DECEMBER 1997** (25 Years Ago)

- Flying Yankee moved by flatbed truck from Glen, NH to Claremont Jct., NH, on the Claremont Concord RR.
- Thomas Downs, Amtrak's president resigns; replaced by George Warrington.
- "Silver Line" proposed for South Boston waterfront.
- Perini Corp. wins bid to build new RTE 128 station.
- New England Central workers vote to unionize w/UTU.
- FRA mandates "ditch lights" on all locos operating over 20 MPH over one or more public highway crossings.
- Cranberry Belt Corp. of New Bedford receives approvals to run 2-ft gauge tourist train between downtown Plymouth and the Cordage Park T-station, along the old railroad ROW. (Never happened-Ed.)
- Old Colony Commuter Rail station at Cordage Park opens; served by only 4 trains a day.

#### **DECEMBER 1992** (30 Years Ago)

- Members Peter Palica and Ross Hall attend "official" New Old Colony RR "groundbreaking" ceremony in Dorchester.
- Amtrak places order for 50 "Viewliner" sleepers.
- Canadian Pacific Rwy announces plan to abandon lines east of Sherbrook, Quebec to the Maritimes.
- Atlas becomes largest manufacturer of model RR track
- First Christmas season without Edaville RR.

• ABB Traction of Elmira, NY, releases first rebuilt FL9, #2043 to Metro North Commuter Rail Road.

• Construction of bus depot over South station approach tracks begins.

#### **DECEMBER 1987** (35 Years Ago)

- 50th Anniversary Club Car project decides on boxcar.
- Don Pierce joins SSMRC.
- Runaway trains on Guilford and tensions between union members and management cause turmoil on the railroad.
- Virginia and Montana remain only states requiring cabooses on freight trains.
- Bay Colony RR signs 20-year contract with Cape towns to haul trash to Rochester incinerator.
- NJ Transit retires E8 locos and announces preservation of eight of them.
- CSX breaks ground on new dispatching center in Jacksonville, FL.
- CP stops using "Multimark" ("pack-man") on equipment.
- Amtrak unveils prototype "Viewliner" sleeper.
- Ross Hall and Ye Ed take special "field trip" train to Rockport, which was the T's way to demonstrate type of trains and similar terrain characteristics of the Greenbush Branch.

#### **DECEMBER 1982** (40 Years Ago)

- SSMRC "30-years in Weymouth" celebration planned with invited guests and entertainment.
- 9 members visit Editorial Offices for an "impromptu" get-together, enjoying "mulled cider" and "junk" food and watching train movies and slides, in what was to become first annual "Junk Food Jollies".
- Portland Terminal Alcos #1061 & 1063 and MEC #312 go to Bay Colony RR.
- Amtrak begins conversion of 1950s steam-heated cars to "HEP", including four of the PRR's twin-unit diners from the *Broadway Limited*. Cars to be named "Heritage" after their conversion. (BL became first all-HEP train.)
- "Ms Osborne" joins *Semaphore* staff. (First computer—"suitcase"-style.) Should be in Smithsonian! ▶



## POTPOURRI

**THERE WILL NOT BE** a rail strike this month and unionized rail workers will not gain from Congress an unfunded mandate of seven railroad-paid sick days annually. Although the House on Nov. 30 passed two resolutions (H.J. Res. 100 and H.Con. Res. 119) to impose on four balking rail unions a Tentative Agreement accepted by eight others, and to amend that Tentative Agreement to include seven days of paid sick leave (that unions couldn't gain in collective bargaining), the Senate agreed only to impose the Tentative Agreement. The Senate also defeated—by a 69-26 vote—an



amendment offered by Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) to extend the status quo (no strike, no lockout) another 60 days and send the parties back to the negotiating table. The House-passed paid sick leave resolution was defeated by not achieving a 60-vote threshold to avoid a filibuster. It attracted only 52 affirmative votes and 43 “nays.” The lone Democrat voting “no” was Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Six Republicans—Mike Braun of Indiana, Ted Cruz of Texas, Lindsay Graham of South Carolina, Josh Hawley of Missouri, John Kennedy of Louisiana and Marco Rubio of Florida—voted in favor. (RA)

●●●●●●  
**TOURS OF GRAND CENTRAL** Terminal are resuming for the first time since being halted because of the COVID-19 pandemic, with global tour provider Walks as the new operator, Metro-North Railroad and City Experiences have announced. Tours will be held starting at 3 p.m. daily, with \$35 admission for adults and \$30 for children. The 90-minute tours include major sites such as the Main Concourse, Grand Central Market, Transit Museum, Vanderbilt Hall, Grand Central Clock, and Whispering Gallery.

“Grand Central Terminal is one of New York City’s iconic locations with a rich history that will once



again be told to visitors and fellow New Yorkers alike,” Metro-North President and Long Island Rail Road Interim President Catherine Rinaldi said. “Metro-North is excited to bring tours back after a two-year pause and are confident that *Walks’* storytellers will do the history of Grand Central, and all the terminal’s historical features, proud.” A beaux-arts style building that opened in 1913, Grand Central joins a list of sites featuring exclusive guided tours by Walks that also includes the Vatican and Colosseum in Rome, the Louvre in Paris, and Barcelona’s Sagrada Familia. (TN)

●●●●●●

MassDOT, Amtrak, and CSX Transportation are seeking \$108 million in federal grants to improve the rail line between Springfield and Worcester, Mass., as part of the proposed East-West Rail project. The three entities announced the grant application, with the goal of adding two daily Amtrak round trips between Boston and Springfield once the 53-mile Springfield-Worcester segment is upgraded. MassDOT will contribute an additional \$18 million and Amtrak will add \$9 million toward the project. The application was for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements, or CRISI, grant program for fiscal 2022, which had a Dec. 1 application deadline. Improvements would increase the top speed on the Springfield-Worcester segment to 80 mph, also reducing travel times for the Boston section of the *Lake Shore Limited*, MassDOT said. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**A SINGLE SIEMENS VENTURE CAR**, part of the Amtrak Midwest operations, traveled over Canadian Pacific and Canadian National lines in Ontario on Saturday, Dec. 3., end route from Sacramento, Calif., to Canada’s National Research Uplands Campus in Ottawa for testing. The special train, Union Pacific SD70ACe No. 8821 and the Siemens car, SIIX 4301, is shown passing the railway station in Woodstock, Ontario, built in 1885. The car is part of an 88-car order that saw the first cars delivered in August 2020, though a series of issues have slowed their entry into service.



Among facilities available at the National Research Council campus is a chamber that can offer a 180-degree temperature range to test heating, air conditioning, and other equipment. (TN)



●●●●●●  
**THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION** has approved a French move to ban short-haul domestic flights on routes where rail service is available that takes less than 2½ hours. (TN)

●●●●●●

**THE SOUTH COAST RAIL PROJECT** has reached the half-way point, with construction of the Fall River line completed and Commuter Rail expected to start late next year. Both Fall River and New Bedford (the other South Coast line) lost passenger service in the late 1950s. (BG)

●●●●●●  
**AMTRAK HAS ASKED** the Surface Transportation Board to investigate what it calls the “abysmal” on-time performance of the *Sunset Limited*, which it attributes largely to the operating practices of Union Pacific, and seeks “damages and other relief” from UP as a result of those practices. Amtrak lays out the details of its complaint in a 76-page document, one of two filings with the board on Thursday, Dec. 8. Since the complaint is the first of its kind under a provision of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 — which charges the STB with the responsibility to investigate passenger on-time performance issues and how to address those issues — Amtrak has also proposed a framework for the proceeding in a separate 17-page filing. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**THE MBTA MUST RESUBMIT** a dozen corrective action plans to address Federal Transit Administration safety directives after the FTA asked for revisions to those plans, the Boston Herald reports. To date, the MBTA has only received approval for eight of the 20 plans stemming from directives issued by the FTA in August addressing personnel, training, operating, and other safety issues. Those directives were in addition to an earlier set issued by the FTA in June. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**CTRAIL AND AMTRAK SERVICE** on the Hartford Line saw schedule changes on Monday, Dec. 12, with completion of second-stage work on the line’s rail replacement project, the ConnDOT announced. Work in Meriden, and between Berlin and Hartford, had led to schedule adjustments of up to 35 minutes. With that work complete, those adjustments are being removed and trains are returning to their regular schedules. Amtrak’s rail replacement project on the line is being carried out in three stages. The third stage will begin in 2023. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**UNION PACIFIC IS READY** to launch pilot programs that will test the feasibility of redeploying conductors from locomotive cabs to ground-based positions, the railroad told the Federal Railroad Administration today during a hearing on the agency’s proposed two-person crew rule. UP believes that ground-based conductors — which

the railroad dubs expeditors — would be able to more safely and more efficiently play the role conductors do today from the locomotive cab, Rod Doerr, UP’s vice president of crew management services and interline operations, told the FRA. Positive train control has significantly reduced the conductor’s tasks out on the main line, Doerr says, and an expeditor would be better able to handle troubleshooting and fixing mechanical problems in route. “This job will be much better served by a truck-based approach, responding to planned or unplanned events dispatched from a central location around the railroad network. Union Pacific envisions a role where the expeditor receives a call for service from an end route train, drives to that train in a truck, performs the requested service, and drives back to the ... base of operations,” Doerr says. “Our data suggests in most cases this will take less time than having the on-board conductor attempt the same tasks.” The big six Class I railroads are not of one mind regarding taking conductors out of the locomotive cab and redeploying them to pickup trucks. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**UNION PACIFIC WANTS** to address sick leave for its unionized employees and provide certainty regarding scheduled days off, CEO Lance Fritz told the Surface Transportation Board on Tuesday. STB Member Robert Primus asked Fritz if he would be in favor of adding sick leave, something that rail labor is seeking through congressional action after failing to get paid sick days at the negotiating table in the latest round of contract negotiations. Primus suggested that the costs of providing paid sick time would be outweighed by service benefits. “We definitely want to address sick leave and certainty in time off in terms of scheduling ... There’s a host of ways we can get there,” Fritz replied. “There’s economics that are available to make that happen. And we are committed to making that happen this coming year.” UP also wants to reach agreements with labor about providing more workers with predictable schedules, Fritz says, as part of an effort to improve quality of life for workers and the railroad’s ability to recruit and retain operating employees. (TN) It’s about time management started thinking about the good health of their employees, instead of the greed of their stockholders with PSR! -Ed.

●●●●●●  
**THE FIRST NEW BELPAIRE** steam-locomotive firebox built in Altoona in 76 years is taking shape at the Railroaders Memorial Museum in Altoona, Penna. Over the last week, employees of consultant FMW Solutions LLC and volunteers



have fabricated a new firebox for former Pennsylvania Railroad Class K4s 4-6-2 steam passenger engine No. 1361 (PRR Juniata Shops, 1918). The last such work was completed in 1946, when the PRR built 25 T1-class streamlined 4-4-4-4 passenger engines in its shops here. Those locomotives, along with 27 T1s built by Baldwin Locomotive Works, were supposed to replace the road's 425-member K4s fleet, but instead were themselves quickly replaced by diesels, starting in 1947. No. 1361 is undergoing a \$2.6 million restoration to return it to running condition. One of the obstacles is that the original mechanical specifications — drawn up by PRR in 1914 — do not meet present-day federal pressure-vessel safety standards. The museum has hired FMW to engineer and build a new firebox that's visually identical, but with thicker steel and other modifications that simplify and strengthen the component. (TN)



View through the fire door in the boiler backhead of No. 1361 shows the custom-fabricated side wrapper sheets, left and right, the Belpaire plates, upper left and upper right, and the roof sheet, top. The four horizontal stays are temporary to stabilize the components for fitting and welding. Dan Copper

●●●●●●  
**A HIKER WHO FELL TO HIS DEATH** off the summit of Mt. Willard in Crawford Notch on Saturday, Dec. 10, has been identified as a longtime employee of the Mt. Washington Cog Railway. The New Hampshire Fish and Game officials identified the victim as Joseph “Eggy” Eggleston, 53, of Randolph, N.H. He fell about 300 feet while hiking with his wife; officials said he and his wife were frequent hikers who were well prepared for the hike and weather conditions. Eggleston had worked for the railroad since 1993, starting as a welder, and eventually became an engineer, developing a way to perform the job despite hearing impairment resulting from a childhood illness. (TN) What a shame. -Ed.

●●●●●●

**THE MBTA OPENED** its Green Line light rail extension to Medford the morning of Monday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, completing a \$2.3 billion project adding five stations. More than 200 people were gathered at the Medford/Tufts station by 4:37 a.m., with a packed first train departing at 4:52 a.m. The new branch is projected to generate more than 50,000 rides per day. It opens about a year late, having originally been projected to begin service in December 2021. Built adjacent to an existing MBTA commuter rail line, the project involved widening the right-of-way to make room for the light rail line. It is an all above-ground portion of the Green Line, some of which includes the oldest subway line in North America. (TN)

●●●●●●

**A DAY TO REMEMBER!** December 15, 2001: At 6:05 AM the first scheduled Downeaster passenger train for the general public pulls out of Portland's new Transportation Center for Boston. Since that day, communities all along the line have reported benefits and endorsed the success of the train. Supporting Amtrak's effort to provide superior service, they have shown their commitment by undertaking trackside improvements of stations, platforms, parking and other facilities to capitalize on economic and transportation benefits brought by the train. Early success has augmented efforts to expand Downeaster passenger service beyond Portland to Freeport and Brunswick. (TrainRiders Northeast)

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**THE INDUSTRIAL AREA** known as Widett Circle essentially remained hidden in plain sight for decades, a nondescript string of low-slung buildings hard by the Southeast Expressway, where hundreds of workers toiled away to prepare foods that fed the city. Then, almost overnight, it was positioned as the home for a glorious Olympic stadium (summer 2024); a massive, new mixed-used neighborhood was envisioned next. Then, maybe, an Amazon warehouse. Now, it appears Widett will become what some say was always the most practical next use for the place: a railyard. The MBTA is preparing to acquire the 24-acred industrial area, just south of downtown, with the agency's board authorizing the purchase recently. Though Widett has long been eyed by transit officials for a layover yard, it has also become, in recent years, one of Boston's hottest potential development sites. The train layover project is crucial to the MBTA's ambitious plan to expand South Station terminal. The T will be in control of the full 24 acres and nearly all the food processing businesses, that once called it home, have already

left. T spokesman Joe Pesaturo said the railyard would likely be designed to accommodate an air rights project. Matthew Kiefer, a development lawyer, said that might be the best eventual outcome for the long-debated site. “The expansion of rail is important to the city’s future and finding a way to accommodate that is certainly important,” he said. “But it’s also true that for a site that large, and that close to the core (of the city), it would be great to have the best of both worlds, and to have the possibility of air rights on top of those tracks for future development. (BG)

●●●●●●  
**A CONCEPT THE SWISS** rail industry (and its passengers) has dreamed of for years became reality in mid-December with the debut of through trains from Montreux on Lake Geneva to Interlaken in the heart of the Alps. No new rail lines were needed but some modern railway technology was. The route includes a 39-mile meter-gauge line out of Montreux operated by Montreux Berner Oberland Bahn, or MOB, and a 33-mile standard-gauge route out of Interlaken run by Switzerland’s second-largest mainline rail company, BLS (formerly the Bern–Lötschberg–Simplon Railway but now just known by its initials). The track gauges haven’t changed, but to make the through running possible, the equipment has: 23 new Golden Pass Express, or GPX, push-pull cars built by Swiss firm Stadler operate on variable-gauge trucks.

A gauge-changer system built at the station at Zweisimmen, where the two track gauges meet, adjusts the specially designed trucks made by Alstom in Switzerland. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**UNION PACIFIC HAS PAUSED** its use of new embargoes to limit congestion. The move, announced Friday, Dec. 16, comes after two days of Surface Transportation Board hearings where shippers, rail labor, and regulators were critical of the railroad’s increasing reliance on embargoes since 2018, the year it adopted a Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model. Regulators last month ordered UP to explain why it has significantly increased its use of embargoes. With UP running short of train crews, the railroad has issued more than 1,000 embargoes so far this year in response to congestion, compared with just 27 in 2017. UP has issued the vast majority of Class I railroad congestion-related embargoes this year. In April and November, with congestion rising in some of its local service yards, UP asked certain carload customers to reduce their inventory of private cars or face the prospect of an embargo that would limit the flow of inbound empties as well as loads. (TN)

●●●●●●  
**A FEDERAL GRANT SEEKS** almost \$179 million to fund improvements for Amtrak Gulf Coast service between New Orleans and Mobile, Ala., while CSX Transportation will pay almost \$10 million toward the matching funds for those improvements, according to a news report. The Alabama State Port Authority will contribute \$750,000 as part of the \$44 million in matching funds toward the project. Amtrak is contributing \$6 million. The total of about \$223 million would address some 12 separate areas where improvements are needed — projects such as new switches and turnouts, siding extensions, crossovers, and station, yard, and crossing improvements. Amtrak, CSX, Norfolk Southern, and the Port Authority reached agreement on a deal allowing Gulf Coast service last month, avoiding a precedent-setting Surface Transportation Board ruling on Amtrak’s ability to start service, despite what the freight railroads said would be “unreasonable impairment” of their operations. Since then, the parties have offered no details on that agreement, saying it is confidential. Amtrak did say at a Southern Rail Commission meeting last week that it would start service sometime in 2023, although it did not specify whether it would initially operate just one or two round trips. Since it took its effort to launch Gulf Coast service to the STB in 2021, its intent has been to run two daily round trips. (TN)

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**THE IZAAK WALTON INN**, the trackside property along BNSF main line adjacent to Glacier National Park that is a longtime railfan destination, is under new ownership. The hotel, with its rental cabins



including cabooses and an F45 locomotive on a 100-acre property, sold for \$13.5 million. Gavin Burns, new owner Loge Camps’ vice president for business development, told the newspaper the company will update rooms and update the hotel’s café but that most of the property will not be changed: “We’re not developers. We’re



remodelers,” he said. “The property has so much character and great history.” The hotel dates to 1939, when it was built by the Great Northern Railway to provide lodging for railroad workers. It was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. (TN) On my “bucket list”!-Ed.

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**VIA RAIL CANADA** on Thursday announced creation of a new wholly owned subsidiary, VIA HFR, to manage development of the High Frequency Rail project for service between Toronto and Quebec City, and to act as a dedicated project office. (TN)

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**ON DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>** Amtrak introduced the graphics and a new brand name — Airo — for its coming fleet of Siemens Mobility push-pull trainsets due to enter service in 2026, replacing 40- to 50-year-old locomotive-hauled equipment. At a press conference in Penn Station’s Moynihan Train Hall, Amtrak President Roger Harris and other officials sketched out the broad outlines of an 83-train fleet of semi-permanently-coupled equipment that will operate primarily from Maine to North Carolina and west to Pittsburgh, with some on the West Coast. They will retire the carrier’s iconic but aged Amfleet I cars, Amtrak’s first bought-new rolling stock, which is now nearing 50 years of age, and replace other equipment. Watch video: [https://vimeo.com/781601082?embedded=true&source=vimeo logo&wmer=45699973](https://vimeo.com/781601082?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&wmer=45699973) (TN)



●●●●●●

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

**TRAINS**

A Few Days with Union Pacific’s Big Boy  
Solving Amtrak’s Capacity Crisis  
Gallery

BNSF in the Rockies in Winter  
Train-Watching

Massachusetts Coastal RR

**MODEL RAILROADER**

Building a Trestle from the Top Down  
Make Your Own Grass Mats

Using a Flocking Box

Ask MR

Speed Matching DCC Locomotives

**RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN**

Pennsylvania RR’s Buffalo Line

Buffalo Line: Compare and Contrast

News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains “Newswire”, Railway Age, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE “Callboy”, “The 470”, Patriot Ledger, Rail Passenger Assoc., Attleboro Sun Chronicle.

**DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC**

Dave Clinton

**Joe Dumas** brought his Vermont Rail System GP40 back for decoder, which was out of stock at the last session. The LokPilot “Standard 53614” is a 21-pin decoder, which includes 6 functions. With **Paul Cutler III’s** assistance on the programming cart, Joe enabled the “Ditch Lights” function, so that whenever the F1 button was pushed, the ditch lights would “wig-wag” for five seconds, as they do for Eastern prototype locomotives these days.



**Chris Barlow** brought two older P2K GP9s, dressed in PRR drab. These were from the original run and did not have plugs. So, hardwiring was the job of the night. The TC T-1 #1021 was used and he spent the whole evening trying to get the lights to work; the motor function worked fine. It was a very discouraging session, with one light working fine but then neither working, when both were hooked up. Ye Ed is going to try the other unit in his basement and report findings to Chris for the next clinic.



**Dan Peterson** brought a Walthers H10-44 switcher, dressed in, what else, C&NW yellow and green. This was also a hardwire candidate and, with some suggestions from **Paul III**, he used the DZ123 decoder soldered to certain parts of the factory board, which worked fine. He even added a rear back-up light, which the model did not come with originally!

Speaking of **Paul III**, he brought a new, “old stock” undec Kato RS2 (20+ years old), that he got at the

## MEMBER NEWS

HUB Show over the weekend. It did have an 8-pin socket, so he tried the DH163IP “Integrated Plug”, as there is very little room over the top of the motor for a decoder. This decoder is the size of a dime and appropriate for the space, but did not allow the LEDs to operate; the motor function was fine. He replaced the decoder with a DZ123PS, which allowed the lighting function to work. This decoder does not have lighting resistors on it.



The thought is that the IP decoder has built-in current-limiting resistors for lighting and so does the factory board, since the loco came with LEDs. Add them together and there is not enough voltage going to the LEDs. Learn something new with each clinic! He will be painting the loco in a New Haven scheme not offered on the factory-painted models.

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for his assistance this session. The next clinic will be Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. Please contact me with any questions about the clinic. (Joe Dumas photos)

## EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Interesting **article in this month's RailPace magazine** titled “Thacher Island's Mystery Railroad”. I'd never heard of Thacher Island, which is off the coast of Rockport, Mass. The 52-acre scenic island has two lighthouses and a restored wooden RR. It is open to the public June-August on Wednesdays and Saturdays; accessible by a 6-person ferry!
2. Sorry no **“Junk Food Jollies”** this month. Earlier in the fall, I was thinking of having this festive time, but with increasing infections of both the Flu and Covid, decided not to take the chance. Hopefully, this tradition started 40 years ago can continue next Christmas-time.
3. Please don't forget we need help at the **“Family & Scout Night Open House, Friday January 6<sup>th</sup>”**.
4. I hope that everyone has a very **Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and best wishes for the New Year!** Be safe in your journeys and festivities and see you back at the Club next year! .....*David N. Clinton*

“Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” (1 John 3:18)

Congratulations to **Doug Buchanan** on being named a Life Member... “In consideration of his 50 years as a member of the SSMRC, which included over 30 years as Treasurer, and his contributions above and beyond his share of time and talent.” Thank you, Doug, for all you have done to help make the SSMRC the fabulous club it is today! Welcome to our latest two applicants, both from Dorchester: **Michael Jackson** and **Dennis Hester**. We look forward to getting to know you both during your applicant period!

(Note: For the “Health & Welfare Committee”, Ye Ed, would like to hear of any member who is ill, hospitalized or special occasion news, so we can keep the membership advised of these happenings.)

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

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

Dom Mirabello ..... January 4<sup>th</sup>  
Paul Cutler III ..... January 7<sup>th</sup>  
Ed Carter..... January 20<sup>th</sup>  
Jesse Collins..... January 20<sup>th</sup>  
Mark Hall..... January 21<sup>st</sup>  
Eric Tedeschi ..... January 25<sup>th</sup>



## HOW WE GOT HERE—Part 3 Ron Clough

Well, now that we got the final permission to occupy our new home in Hingham, a lot of discussions took place as to how to make the best use of the building. With no need for a Search Committee anymore, that committee was dissolved, with great thanks, and turned into a “Building Committee”.

Some major discussion items the Building Committee worked through were:

- How best to use the interior? It was decided to use the first 25% (50' x 50') part for members/visitors amenities to include restrooms, an office, a meeting room, library (now moved upstairs), small kitchen / lunch room and an entry room for visitors, with a theme of an old waiting room with a vaulted ceiling.



- Do we want windows in order to admit daylight? Even though many of the glass block windows still existed (some still exist), we felt for security purposes that it would be best to make the building secure and eliminate all windows.
- How much, if any of the existing railroad to move? It was decided to only move the Middleton Yard to the new building since it was the newest and we would at least have a place to run some trains and build off that. We would then dispose of the rest of the railroad in a manner not yet decided.
- What order do we do all the work ahead of us? For example, no sense in putting up a wall only to realize we needed to cut the floor to run drain pipes underneath. A lot of planning to do projects in a proper schedule.

The Building Committee folks did a great job in planning all this out.

Another big issue we had was the fact that we needed to submit plans to the Town's Building Department to enable us to get permits to do the work we envisioned. The plans we had to submit needed to be stamped by a licensed Architectural Professional. Another great connection by our former president Rick Sutton (D), who had a connection that offered to do this for us at no charge. What a great savings, and a thank you goes to Paul Bonanno (H) for doing this for us.

Even though we had a pretty good "war chest" of funds, we still were open to donations or bargain price donation items. I remember we got a lead on a bunch of lumber from an old Zayre's store (Braintree) which we could use for wall studs--just needing to sort through and pull nails. Another led us to a great deal on fluorescent light fixtures at a bargain price, also free. And the glass display cases came from a closed Bradlees Department store.

Some of the bigger projects that we knew we could not do ourselves were put "out to bid" and we accepted the best price for each. Some of these projects included the following items:

- Septic System design and installation. The best price we got was from Margetts & Sons, a long time Hingham company. I remember being involved with the perc. test and the water went into the ground too fast, which is not good; this would add to the cost to bring in a different soil. After a

second test, though, we passed...whew, what a savings!

- Electricity to the building. We felt 3-Phase power would be best and, with none nearby, we would have to pay for the extension as we would be the only customer. Another great connection thru member Bill Garvey (D) got us the 10 poles needed for free as they were "used" and we only had to pay for the wire.
- Water. With no public water being available nearby through existing pipes, the cost to extend the main was prohibitive so we decided to drill our own well. The price to do that comes in by the foot. We found a good location and gave a contract to a company to drill for water. The Fire Dept. required a certain amount in case we were required to also add sprinklers. They started to drill and at 200 feet, not enough; 300 feet, no; 400 feet, no—and getting costly. 500 feet, no; 600 feet, looking better and, finally, at 683 feet enough water to meet requirements. But pricy.
- Cutting the floor. We had to cut the floor to install the plumbing drain pipes. When the company we hired started sawing the floor, they said "how thick is this concrete as our 8" saw doesn't do it?" Turns out our floor consists of two 6-inch slabs of concrete separated by a thin layer of sand. Probably good for Military standards, but additional costs for us.
- Roof. We knew we could not remove the asbestos shingles properly, nor could we patch the holes or install a new roof. Fortunately, former member Phil Wood had the licenses to do this, and we gave him the contract at a great price. It literally took a trailer truck of shingles to cover the building with a new roof!
- Heat. It was decided to heat the first ¼ of the building with a heating oil hot-air system and we would decide later on how to heat and cool the "railroad" room.
- Exterior doors. We decided to install 3 sets of double steel doors with a removable center mullion to be able to move large items in or out. Then, we cut in a new door on the east end wall, now known as the "member's door". We had all exterior doors made and professionally installed.

Now, with all of the big projects being put out to bid and being done in an orderly fashion, we had

time to do work that we could do as members. First was to “board” up the building to keep others out. We only had the 3 loading dock doors for access. We decided to make the right hand two doors completely secure for the meantime and only use the left door for temporary access. (How many know that the 3 front double doors were designed to accommodate three 40-foot boxcars at a time to either load or unload?) The left-hand usable door also had the ability for us to run the generators outside on the loading dock, pre-electricity days, and plug into the temporary electrical panel inside the building.

And then began our work projects in our “new home”. We started working on the first 50 feet by installing the well-known, at the time, “temporary wall”--between the members’ area and the future railroad room. This allowed us to put up studs, install the electric wires, insulation, drywall--all in an orderly fashion to get permit compliance inspections done accordingly.

And there was a lot of work to be done outside to clear trees and brush to open the building up.

A lot of excitement from members because everything we did was for our new home.

We progressed along in various projects, waiting for contractors to do their projects according to schedule in a timely fashion. The goal was to get us along in our new location so we would not have to renew our lease in Weymouth again, when it came up for renewal. After a lot of work to get the first 2500-sq. feet of the building done, we got an occupancy permit for that area in October 1998. We did expend huge amounts of money for all these big projects but, due to the forward thinking of members at the time (many now deceased), we had the Building Fund to pay for them. The Building Fund consisted mainly of the monthly assessment on members’ dues, profits from our very successful shows and donations, again mainly from members.

After getting the so called “members area” completed, we started work on the so called “railroad room”, but that is another whole story, maybe for another time. We originally broke the construction into two sections with another temporary wall about half-way down (now long gone), and work is still continuing to this day on the railroad--and for a long time into the future!

And that is how we got to where we are today and to what we now know as the South Shore Model Railway Club & Museum... “Home of The East Coast Lines”.

Hope you enjoyed this little bit of history and comments and corrections are always welcome!

Ron Clough

**RUNNING EXTRA**

## Rail Labor’s Risky Gambit

Written by [Frank N. Wilner](#), [Railway Age](#) Capitol Hill Contributing Editor 12/9/22



“Biden stabs unions and workers in the back,” shouted a headline describing rail labor’s reaction following the President’s Dec. 2 signing into law of a congressional resolution (H.J. Res. 100) imposing on four holdout rail unions a collectively bargained Tentative Agreement ratified by eight others. Congressional resolutions, having the same force and effect as laws, are used to enact temporary legislative objectives.

Rail labor could have celebrated that a rail strike was avoided, thus protecting member paychecks and healthcare benefits; that union strike funds were not depleted providing 115,000 picketing members \$100 daily in subsistence relief; that up to \$16,000 in retroactive pay would be on its way to members; and that the imposed Tentative Agreement meant a 24% wage boost, \$5,000 in bonuses and a cap on healthcare insurance cost sharing.

Instead, rail labor bemoaned the Senate’s refusal to be a fellow traveler with the House and provide through the legislative process (H. Con. Res. 119) what labor failed to achieve through collective bargaining—seven days of paid sick leave.



Had the Senate concurred in passing H. Con. Res. 119 (the paid sick-leave mandate) as a companion to H.J. Res. 100, decades of congressional legislative precedent in dealing with threatened and actual nationwide rail shutdowns would have been relegated to the dust bin of history. Eviscerated would have been decades of bargaining-table precedent, stability and mutual trust.

Ushered in would have been a perilous era of political gamesmanship, fueled by political campaign contributions, creating a palpable threat to survival of America's oldest and quite pro-worker labor law—the 1926 Railway Labor Act, which guarantees a right to organize, be represented by a union of the workers' choosing, and requires employers to bargain collectively with unions over wages, benefits and work rules.

In fact, labor negotiators did not place paid sick leave high on their list of objectives at the start of collective bargaining in January 2020, nor were congressional supporters of the paid sick leave mandate mindful that during previous rounds of collective bargaining, labor negotiators opted instead for alternative increases in compensation, including other forms of paid leave.

Sometimes, it takes a figurative child, such as Charles Schultz's "Peanuts" character Lucy Van Pelt, to yank adults back to reality. "In all of mankind's history, there has never been more damage done than by people who thought they were doing the right thing," offered that part-time dispenser of a nickel's worth of psychiatric help.

### **Not Congress' Finest Hour**

Rail labor's narrative won the PR battle, convincing opinion leaders—and thus many in Congress, who follow closely public opinion—that the railroad industry is a miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, swimming in profitability, profligate in rewarding investors, but brazenly stingy with its workforce.

Minimized was the role of profits and investor confidence in making unionized rail worker compensation higher than that earned by some 95% of American workers.

Especially missing in the debate is whether Congress should choose private-sector winners and losers, and what effect a partisan congressional thumb on the scale means for the future of rail industry collective bargaining. Labor should contemplate the tables being turned and a management-friendly congressional majority rolling back to 15%—as part of a strike-preventing resolution—the already negotiated 24% wage increase.

### **Workers Not Disposable Pencils**

This is not to suggest that railroads be excused from denying their workers paid sick leave, which the Bureau of Labor Statistics says is available to 80% of other private sector employees. This is especially so given the rail industry's extraordinary profitability—owed, in significant part, to cost-saving headcount reductions and the improved productivity squeezed from remaining workers.

The estimated \$400 million annual cost to railroads of granting unionized workers seven-days paid sick leave would sweat just three cents of each dollar of this year's free cash flow among the Big Four railroads—BNSF, CSX, Norfolk Southern and Union Pacific. Carriers already make it available to non-contract employees.

In human costs, causing employees to feel as if they are disposable wooden pencils—no matter their compensation level—is antithetical to building and maintaining the morale and teamwork essential for railroad safety and world-class service on what is America's largest shop floor—the 140,000-mile U.S. freight rail network.

When workers feel pressured to report to work sick—so as to avoid lost pay and not be penalized for violating carrier availability policies—their ability to perform efficiently and safely is compromised. Sleep scientists, who equate going to work tired with going to work drunk, say also that being even mildly sick can impair brain function and the exercise of judgment. In an industry where personal injuries too often are career ending or fatal, and where a train accident involving hazardous materials can threaten the lives of thousands, this is not a trivial matter.



## Ten mph speed limit is the law

*Hingham's Yesterdays, 100 and 50 years ago from the files of the Hingham Journal – for the fifth week in May as compiled by Anne Martin*

**1902**

**LEGISLATION:** We may hope that the peril of reckless automobile driving will be in a measure removed by the law which has been enacted by the legislature and which goes into force immediately. This law forbids the running of automobiles, including motor bicycles in that class, at a greater speed than ten miles an hour in cities and in thinly settled country districts fifteen miles an hour. Of even more importance, it is provided that the \$20 penalty of the past, which rich riders willingly paid as a license fee for their speed bursts, shall not serve any longer, and courts are given discretion to punish each offence with a fine not exceeding \$200, or by imprisonment for a term of not more than ten days or by both. Referring to this enactment, "Practical Politics" says the Legislature had certain things plainly in mind which it wanted to stop. First was reckless driving of machines, irrespective of consequences. Farmers told of machines being driven right up to the noses of their frightened horses and of their being left to gather up the remains of runaway wrecks as best they could. Second, was the habit of rushing by crossings, no matter what teams might be coming. Then there was the custom of the white ghost racer adopted last year of leaving his fine in the hands of the clerk of the court to be paid on the assembling of court while he is in his own home. [Boston Courier]

The great auction sale of nearly 200 Jerseys and over 100 Berkshires at Hood Farm, Lowell, Massachusetts, June 11 and 12, is the sensation of the day in stock circles. Among the Jerseys to be sold is the famous prize winner, Figgis, believed to be the greatest cow living, imported or domestic. The free catalogue which is



PHOTO COURTESY OF C. LEE SHACKFORD

*Boston-bound commuter train approaches Hingham Depot passing first, the back side of the Colonial Bar & Grill; then Bickford's Hardware. Note the double tracks crossing Main Street and the gate-tenders "hut" (left center) in this 1940 photo. In the background can be seen the bell tower of the Isaac Little firehouse at Magonis Bridge junction of North and South streets.*