

MAINE LINE

A Publication for the Friends of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad



Talking It Over



Happy New Year!

May 2021 bring you all happiness and health!

Although it is not perhaps directly related to the historical Bangor and Aroostook that this magazine is primarily about – it was officially announced on November 30, 2020 that CSX Transportation has agreed to purchase Pan Am Railways, formerly Guilford Rail System, Guilford Transportation Industries and historically the Maine Central, Boston and Maine and Springfield Terminal Railway companies. With Canadian Pacific and now CSX in the mix, we have two modern Class 1 railroads in Maine for the first time since CN sold off the Maine portion of the Grand Trunk in 1988. How this will affect Maine railroading is a question that is easily asked but not easily answered. We can be assured that changes will happen and that these large companies coming into the State of Maine within a two year time span will have a profound affect on Maine.

This issue brings us a few modern touches on the Bangor and Aroostook's history, including one, our cover story that starts within the Bangor and Aroostook and ends in 2020. We return, briefly, to Finland and talk about the Last Bangor and Aroostook steam locomotive.

As always – I must thank the contributors – of photos – of ideas – of articles. I couldn't do this without you!

For our dear readers – please continue to spread the word of the Maine Line – it is purely for the comments and enjoyment of creating this magazine that I continue to shepherd its name along. Please – tell your friends and family and be sure to send any Bangor and Aroostook fans to the Maine Line website: <http://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com/>

Thank you all!

- "Joey" Kelley, Editor

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About the Cover:

Maine Northern yarding
the Military Move in our
feature article.

Photo by Paul Donovan

What's going on with 502?

Maine's Last F-Unit

**The Last
B&A Steam
Locomotive**

Military Move Through Maine:

Destination Unknown

<http://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com>



502 in Northern Maine Junction, May 24, 1991, Photo by Leo Landry

WHATS GOING ON WITH 502?

As of this writing, 502 is still sitting in Brownville Junction yard. Visible from a public road, 502's future is still uncertain at this point.



*Scrapped in July 1956 along with sister 400, these two were the last B&A steamers on the property. Unknown location, date or photographer.
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*

THE LAST BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

BY JOEY KELLEY

According to the roster published in *Bangor and Aroostook: The Life of a Maine Railroad Tradition* by Jerry Angier and Herb Cleaves, which is attributed to Richard F. Dole and William D. Edson, Bangor and Aroostook 400 and 403 were scrapped in July 1956. Replaced by diesel electrics, they were less than 10 years old at the time of scrapping.

Based upon this, either 400 or 403 (whichever was scrapped last) was the last steam locomotive to carry the Bangor and Aroostook name. Or was it?

In 1985 a novel by author John Irving was published. A movie based upon a screen play by the author was released in 1999. That movie, shot in 1998, had a surprising setting and a surprising opening sequence.

That movie and novel are titled *The Cider House Rules*. Although it was only after it was released for home viewing that I saw it – the opening sequence of the film, appearing under the main titles featured a steam locomotive, station and passengers. Set in the World War II era, none of this surprised me. However – finding that the setting was a fictional town in Maine and that the name Bangor and Aroostook was proudly emblazoned upon the tender – was a surprise.

At the time I saw it – the name did not register, not in the way it would have now. To be fair – the train appears a few times in the film, but not for very long and not as a primary character – only as background to the actors and plot. It has of course been the better part of two decades since I saw the movie and given that digital editing was beginning to become main stream in the movie business – I doubt I gave the name a second thought.

That would change – nearly two decades later – because of one picture:



The photograph in question was among the slides that I purchased from Richard B. Gassett, whose photos and ones gleaned from his collection have graced these pages since the first issue of the rebooted Maine Line. ([Literally – check the ‘From the Archives’ from the first issue in June of 2018.](#))

I will not state that I know every single piece of preserved railroad equipment around the country. Nor will I state that I know about every single class of car or locomotive that the B&A had, from memory. But I was very confused as I saw this picture for the first time. I had never seen a milk car that looked like this one, on the B&A. Further, the car was almost identical to a car I was familiar with – located on the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad and I knew that one to be of Boston and Maine heritage.

After the slide popped out of the scanner – I was able to pull up the slide and look for the information that I desperately hoped was on the slide mount. October 2, 1998, Bellows Falls, Vermont. If anything, that raised more questions than answers. The next sentence provided some clue: ‘dressed up for movie’. What movie? It didn’t say. I began searching the web – and very quickly came up with *The Cider House Rules* including some pictures of the train.

A subsequent call to “Dick” Gassett netted some details and a very good story. The brakeman in the picture above is.... Mr. Gassett. He worked for the Green Mountain Railway at the time and was involved in the moves of the train that were shot by the production crew.

This movie is quite interesting from an actors and actresses perspective. Charlize Theron is the female lead, in only her third major film. Paul Rudd, better known for his comedy work, appears in it as his 9th film and in a very serious role. Michael Caine, legendary actor, took home an Emmy for his performance and Tobey Maguire, the male lead, was only on his 11th film at the time. All could be considered household names now, over 20 years later.

Back in the railroad world – with one exception, every piece of railroad equipment was on the Green Mountain and re-lettered to match the Bangor and Aroostook name. That one exception, was the steam locomotive, #142. 142 is, unfortunately, unlike anything the Bangor and Aroostook ever had. According to that same roster mentioned earlier – the B&A never had a Mikado – or 2-8-2 wheel arrangement locomotive of any kind. There was a 142 on the roster, but it is not a close match. 142 is in fact, an imported locomotive. Built in China, in 1989 she was sold to the Valley Railroad – then purchased by the New York, Susquehanna and Western Railway as a replacement for the locomotive of the same class the NYS&W had ordered but was lost in shipping.

She was transported dead-in-tow to Bellows Falls, Vermont which was magically transformed into the fictional town of St. Clouds, Maine.

[You can watch the trailer for the movie \(with a couple of quick clips of the train in motion here\).](#)



Someone at the railroad or in the movie's production department did a very good job at matching the paint colors used on the coaches. Its really difficult and practically impossible on screen to tell the difference between the regular and temporary lettering. Photo provided by Dick Gassett, 10/2/1998



Its amazing what you can do with a couple of prewar vehicles and some extras in green uniforms. It does look like the early 1940s. On screen the look is quite convincing. Photo provided by "Dick" Gassett – 10/2/98



Movie Magic! Winter has come to St. Clouds – it only took a team and some biodegradable fake snow sprayed out of a large hose. Photo provided by “Dick” Gassett – 10/2/98



Here is the star of the show – at least for me – before her ‘snow’ was applied. Note the big hose spraying the fake snow in the background. Photo provided by “Dick” Gassett – 10/2/98



Not the crane we typically associate with railroads – but here is 142 just before a take. Photo provided by “Dick” Gassett – 10/2/98



Previous Page: 142's crew between takes. Richard "Dick" Gasset is the conductor, on the left on foot. Photo provided by "Dick" Gasset – 10/2/98

Thank you to "Dick" Gasset for not only providing the photos for this but the story and the background as well!

There she is – the last steam locomotive to wear the Bangor and Aroostook name. Made in China, when the B&A was 98 years old, it has never set foot in the state of Maine, was from New York, shown here in Bellows Falls Vermont and now resides in New Jersey! Photo provided by "Dick" Gasset - 10/2/98





IT STARTED WITH A PHOTO BY JOEY KELLEY

A photographer from New Hampshire, a railroad historian from Maine and a model railroader from Finland... No, this is not the setup for a joke. There were a couple of major purchases that made these pages possible – one was a large collection that I have still not finished scanning that came from the Bangor and Aroostook’s marketing department photo archives. The other was as mentioned elsewhere in this issue, “Dick” Gassett’s entire B&A collection. Among those photos was the above – X1230. As I continued to flip through the collection and scan them – I found the hidden gem within.



On the left – “Dick” Gassett’s picture of X1230’s hidden gem – on the right Johan’s 1/48th scale version

Johan Kortman, whose O gauge modeling was previously featured in these pages ([the Winter 2020 issue specifically](#)) and I were talking about something completely unrelated and I just sort of popped a picture into the chat stream and said ‘This is a cool thing I have never seen modeled.’

Being a motorcar enthusiast – a Bangor and Aroostook fan and knowing how rare it is to find good quality photos of Maintenance of Way equipment – when I saw the photo above on the left – I was very happy. Of course I had to send it to Johan when the subject came up.

I had no idea that Johan would take these two photographs and take the project on – producing a 1/48th scale model of not only the boxcar – but finding and painting a model track car to stick in it – then – building the scale ramp to take it out of the boxcar and put it on the track!



Johan's X1230 in 1/48th scale!

Its at times like this – where being able to reach out and share a passion for railroads with like minded individuals – in this case an ocean and multiple countries away – really makes me feel fortunate to live now. It also makes me very glad to have access to the volume and variety of Bangor and Aroostook photos that makes this magazine possible and gives me the chance to share it all with you.

Johan's modeling still amazes me and rumor has it that there are a couple of extensions in the works – so who knows – this may not be the last time we here from Johan's Shark Bay Railroad!



Part of the train in Presque Isle yard on 10/12/2020 – photo by Shawn Duren

RIFLING THROUGH MAINE BY JOEY KELLEY

On October 21, 2020, WABI TV 5 carried a story on their website and broadcast about the train load of “tanks” visible along Route 2 in Hermon at Northern Maine Junction. [The website version even carries the heading “Don’t worry. This is not an invasion.”](#) Like a lot of things railroad in the news, the details are not quite right.

The story actually starts 20 years earlier. On October 4, 2000 photographer Shawn Duren caught several self-propelled M109 Howitzers on Department of Defense heavy duty flatcars in Mapleton and Presque Isle. A bit over six years

after the Loring Air Force Base closed, these M109s were headed into the base. Although the reason for this was not known, speculation ranged from storage to rebuilding by a firm located at the former base. The latter was certainly done with many Humvees over the years.



*364 in Mapleton with a mix of hoppers and Howitzers – October 4, 2000
Shawn Duren photo*

Although an interesting set of photos and a unique move that Shawn was lucky enough to capture (No other photos are known to exist of this particular move) the bankruptcy and eventual sale of the Bangor and Aroostook eclipsed this particular event and although I knew Shawn had photos of a military move, the details had completely escaped me – until 2020.



Not the sort of meet you normally see in Presque Isle! Shawn Duren, 10/4/2000



20 years and 8 days after Shawn saw the Howitzers in Presque Isle, one third of the total to be shipped out were being reloaded onto heavy duty flatcars by crane. They had been transported by heavy duty truck from Loring to a spot within the Skyway Industrial Park and a crane was called in to do the heavy lifting. At around 28 tons a piece, individually they are not that heavy by railroad standards. At two to a flatcar, 56 tons in total, the cars were just a whisker over one-third capacity, rated at 150 tons apiece.



Making it look easy – nearly 28 tons dangles above the ground. Shawn Duren photo.



The crane operator is not the only one involved. Spotters guide and instruct in what is arguably the most dangerous and tricky part of the lift – setting it down in the right spot.

Top photo by Harry Gordon – bottom by Shawn Duren – both in Presque Isle





Rolling along former Aroostook Valley track, still within the Skyway Industrial Park, the first of three sections of Howitzers is rolling out. Joey Kelley Photo

A quick call from Shawn advised me to get North – global pandemic or not, I was going to get this train. (I should have been working on the Fall 2020 Maine Line that weekend, but justified it with the knowledge that I was working on a future issue!) By the time I arrived the loading had been finished – Shawn and I had enough time to walk our dogs and chat about photo spots. Soon, the Maine Northern crew had their loads in tow (see photo above) and the very short chase began, which ended at the Presque Isle yard.



Howitzers around the curve! Skyway Industrial Park's distinctive long sweeping curve provided the setting for Shawn's shot of the first group out. Shawn Duren photo - 10-12-2020

Leaping ahead to the crossing just outside of Presque Isle Yard, I set up for a pretty unique photo and video opportunity. Soon, 2644 lead her consist into the yard and the crew began to yard the train.

[Speaking of that video – it is a Maine Line Magazine Exclusive – published nowhere else – you may view 2644 and Howitzers here.](#)



2644 leads into the yard, Howitzers in tow. Joey Kelley photo - 10-12-20

With the first 10 flats safely tucked into the yard, the crew went back light engine to the industrial park to pull 10 more flats and set them for loading the next day.

It would take a full three days to load all the flatcars – then the Maine Northern had to coordinate motive power and crews to get this one-time move out of town.

With the actual destination unknown (California was rumored) the train would take three railroads just to leave the state of Maine – Maine Northern, Canadian Pacific and Pan Am Railways.

Next Page: The first 10 cars have arrived in Presque Isle yard, photo by Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com – October 12, 2020





Harry Gordon's shot above shows the second set of Howitzers still going around the big curve in Skyway Industrial Park. October 13, 2020.

One week after the first cars were loaded, October 19, 2020, found the military move rolling between Squa Pan and Oakfield. Shawn Duren shot it in Squa Pan:



Shawn was then able to get down to Masardis before the train did and got a great pair of shots that really show how long this move was:



Further South, Maine Northern Railway Train Master Peter Peverett was out shooting a few pictures for the Maine Northern Facebook and Twitter. This one – really gives you a sense for how much metal there was in this move:



When they reached Oakfield, the train needed to be cleared of the main line, requiring a starting from stopped shove into the yard. Paul Donovan caught this shot from under the Oakfield Station canopy. This is also the image on the cover of this issue:

AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
MONEY ORDERS
SOLD HERE.

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The next Day, October 20, 2020, photographer Harry Gordon caught up to the Military move, South of Millinocket:

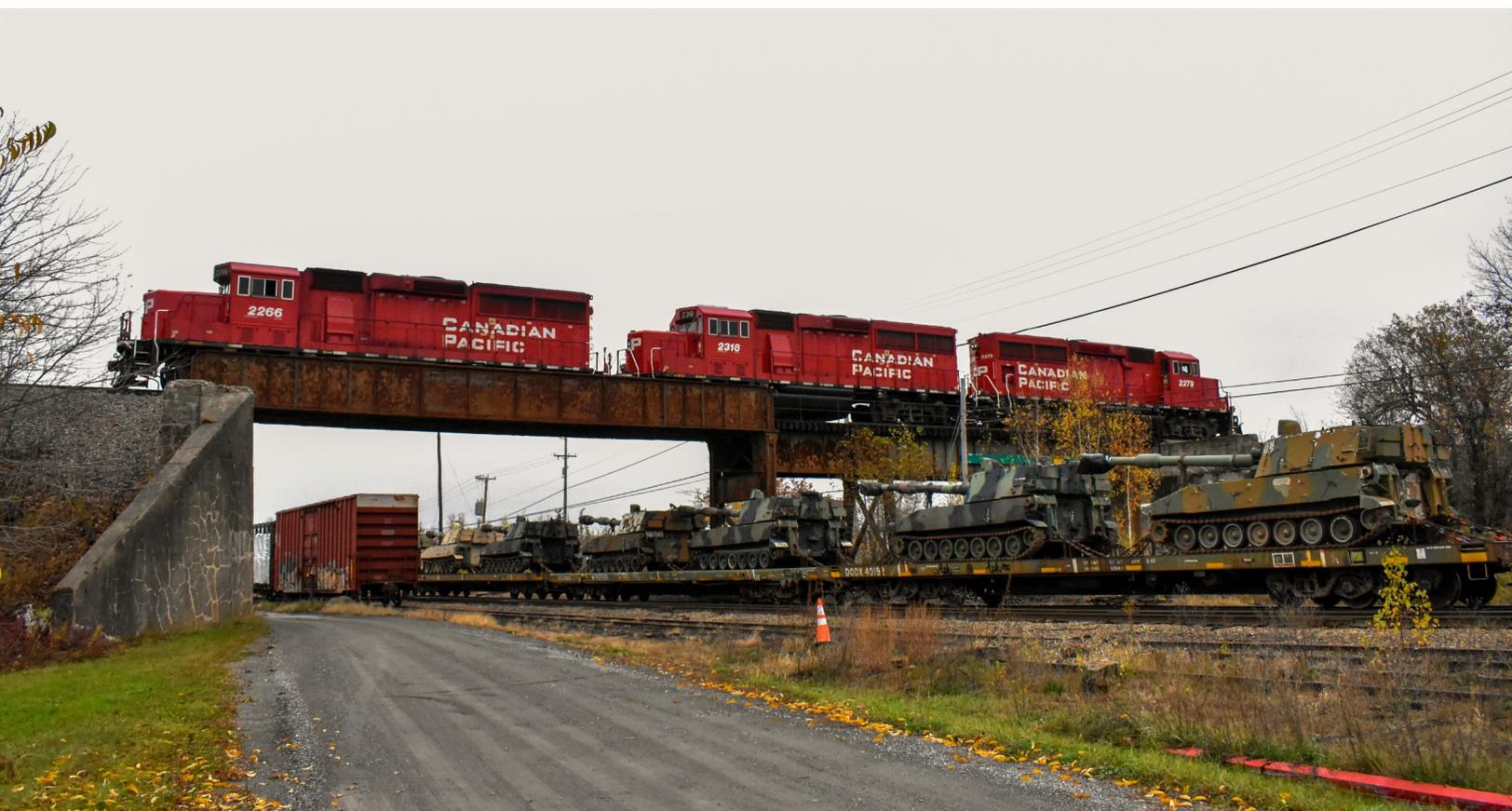


The train was later handed off to Canadian Pacific. By the time the Howitzers arrived at Northern Maine Junction – it was long after dark:



Photo Credit: Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

The Howitzers were still there the next day and photographer Logan Tourtillotte was able to capture this shot of the Canadian Pacific local power returning from working the interchange with Pan Am Railways on October 21, 2020:



The Howitzers left sometime early the next morning and were in Belgrade, Maine on Pan Am Railways by mid afternoon on October 22, 2020.

We end our coverage of this unique train with a shot from Belgrade, taken by Joshua Stevens, Rumford Branch Productions:



THANK YOU to all the photographers who made this article possible!
A story, 20 years in the making, could not have been told without you!

FROM THE ARCHIVES



December 3, 2000 found these "Amtraks" leading a freight through Long Pond, Maine. Peter J. Coulombe photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection



June of 1981 was the processing date on this slide by an unknown photographer. 54 and her train have stopped in Madawaska during one of the railfan trips to run through town. JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection



For Newsprint Loading Return Home Promptly is emblazoned upon the side of the two State of Maine Products cars found here at the East end of Brownville Junction yard on the Canadian Pacific. Photographer unknown, processed in January 1972. JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection



33 is using the weight car at the Farm in this Mike Spearing shot processed in January of 1981. It appears that the tree lights are running off the locomotive. JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

Happy New Year

