

Fall 2025

# MAINE LINE

*A Publication for the Friends of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad*



MaineLineMagazine.JoeyKelleyPhoto.com



# TALKING IT OVER



Fall in Maine - colors to love and brisk temperatures that only hint at what is to come. Soon we will have time for gathering friends and family and the beginning of winter when Jack Frost may be a daily companion.

As this is the last issue of the year for 2025, I think it is appropriate to thank all the contributors for this past year. I know I keep saying it, but this is not a one-man operation. Contributions from far and wide keep this magazine going. Just in this one issue we have contributions from photographers from across Maine, Massachusetts and New Jersey. Advertisers come from Maine, Connecticut and New York. None of this is possible without the help and assistance of those interested in the B&A, no matter where they hail from.

Traditionally at this time of year I begin to think about what I'm thankful for. One of those things is that for eight volumes now, I have proudly been able to spearhead this effort to keep the story of the Bangor and Aroostook alive. It is both a passion and a great responsibility and one that I do not take lightly.

I am very thankful for all of you who read these pages, those who watch the various videos I put out between issues on the Maine Line Magazine Facebook page and those who take the time and put in the effort to shake my hand when they bump into me and say thank you for putting out a great magazine. It makes it all worth while!

Although it is an impossible goal, I try to make each issue better than the last. This issue contains some interesting product reviews, a piece from the last editor of the Maine Line and much more about this railroad we are all interested in.

Best wishes and Happy Holidays to you and yours and see you in the New Year!

*-Joey*

"Joey" Kelley, Editor

# **Maine Line Magazine**

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# ABOUT THE COVER



Daniel McFadden shot this on December 8, 1991, with the 502 leading the Turkey Train south, stopped at Oakfield. See the feature about this two day experience in this issue!

REAR Cover: Rear cover of the September-October 1969 Maine Line





# Rule of the Month

STORES DEPARTMENT

November 1991

- 2.13 - Keep steps and platforms free of ice, snow, oil, or other hazards. Ice creepers are provided and should be worn when needed.

**THE RULE BREAKERS** *are accident makers*

CC: D. R. Sinclair  
T. Corbett  
File

# MAINE LINE REWIND



56 years ago in the Maine Line:  
September - October 1969 Issue

- W. Jerome Strout is President
- Chip Bull new Executive Vice President of the Maine Potato Growers
- The Ladies, Bless 'Em (Women on the B&A)
- The B&A buys a steer
- Railfans Ride the BAR
- In The Family of the B&A

The September - October 1969 issue was Volume 17 and Issue number 5. In 1969, the Maine Line was being produced every two months.

You can view the Archive of original Maine Line Magazines, including the issue above, on the Maine Line Magazine website  
<https://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com/>  
Look for the Archive page



# REVIEW: ATLAS HO WIDECAB, B&A STYLE



Back in the late 1990s, Canadian National Railways began to dispose of their GMD (EMD of Canada) GP40-2L and GP40-2 locomotives that had been produced between 1973 and 1976. This continued into the early 2000s. Bangor and Aroostook management leased several of the 'widecabs' from Helm Leasing in 2000 and painted them in a tri-color paint scheme, as opposed to the Iron Road paint scheme that was common at the time. The reasons for this decision remain unknown, with theories ranging from left over paint to a desire to have these units run only in Maine, which would seem an odd choice given their Canadian manufacturer. Rather than supplementing the motive power fleet as intended, these units in the 340 series actually were such a burden on the finances that they were returned to the leaser very quickly. Oddly enough, they were stripped of their paint and sold to Guilford Rail System becoming part of the Maine Central's 500 series that continue to roam New England to this day, many being repainted into Pan Am Railways paint.

Well, that was an interesting story, but, not a lot of truth to it. CN did buy many GP40-2L and GP40-2 locomotives between 1973 and 1976. They also bought a few used units from GO Transit. These models represent the later production versions, not the L variant with the lightweight frame. They also did start disposing of said units in the late 90s. In 2000 several went to Helm Leasing and several of those became the Guilford Rail System (MEC reporting marks) 500 series. Guilford wound up with 20 of them, but this model is only correct for numbers 509-519, the lower numbered units having the leighter weight frame and being produced earlier. Many of these units survived into the Pan Am Railways era and several survived into CSX's ownership of Pan Am Railways.



One might offer the question 'if the B&A did not ever have any of these, why is Atlas making them?' Good question. At the latest Springfield show your editor had a chance to speak with one of the manufacturers representatives, although not from Atlas, about the recent trend of 'fantasy' paint schemes. Once found only in the realm of modeler's custom painting, recently one has been able to find many modern locomotives in paint schemes they were never offered in, straight from the factory. The representative simply said that in today's modern era, one has the 'Big Four' (CSX, NS, BNSF, UP) and just about everything else is either gone or a short line.

Short lines by their limited geography usually have a limited fan base and tend not to sell in large numbers. Even short line conglomerate Genesee and Wyoming does change the name and logo for each of its individual railroads, keeping its orange and black paint scheme pretty much the same across the world, but making mass production of any one particular railroad no better than any given short line. As a result, creating something that did not exist is a way to sell more locomotives with little additional cost. It really is that simple. Your editor pre-ordered three of these as soon as possible, proving the theory that Bangor and Aroostook sells!

Before we talk about the models, lets discuss some inconsistencies. If these locomotives are to portray something that the B&A bought new, your editor feels they have missed the mark. If the B&A had been in the market for new power in the early 70s, they could have ordered GP38-2 locomotives, the production of which started in 1972 and ended in 1986. The management did not do this, instead picking up used GP38 locomotives from Conrail. (These would become 90-94) This would be consistent with the 2000 horsepower non-turbo locomotives that seemed to be in favor at the time. If they had wanted a higher horsepower turbocharged unit, a GP40-2 was a good option, with production starting in 1972 and continuing through 1986.

Why would a US based company source a locomotive from a Canadian builder? At that time, 1973, the only recent example of a US railroad buying from a Canadian locomotive builder was the 1969 order of five M-420R locomotives ordered by the Providence and Worcester from Montreal Locomotive Works. Those were the only five units MLW ever sold new to a US railroad. Thus, a decision to go to a Canadian builder seems unlikely in 1973, although the B&A was known for being different, so this is possible, albeit unlikely in your Editor's opinion. Now, should these be representing something that the B&A bought used, in the late 90s or early 2000s, the purchase of Canadian locomotives is much more likely as this did occur with Guilford Rail System. That brings up another set of 'problems' though.





Lets talk numbers and paint schemes for a moment. These units are painted in the later version of the tri-color paint scheme, with the red and grey cab and white pin stripe. This would be the appropriate scheme for locomotives painted in the later 70s and onward until about 1995, when Iron Road took over and the paint schemes changed. The paint itself is accurate, colors are a close match and the black trucks are appropriate for later tri-color repaints.

The use of this scheme and three digit numbers presents us with a problem. In the fantasy world Atlas has created here, this class of locomotives was at least eight units strong, with Atlas producing units 340, 343 and 347. The problem being that either the paint scheme is wrong or the numbers are wrong. The Bangor and Aroostook went from three digit to two digit locomotive numbers in the early 1950s. This practice continued until Iron Road took over in the mid 1990s. That would have meant that these should have had a two digit number. If these had been purchased new, in the 1970s, one presumes that the used GP38s that became the 90 series would probably not have been purchased at all. There would have been no need. Therefore, these could have easily slid into the 90 number range. A careful look at the locomotive roster shows that depending on the exact year, no other two digit number class was available. That of course creates a problem for the B&A modeler, who might have models in the 90 series. If one presumes that these were purchased used from Canadian National, that makes the three digit numbers make sense as by then the B&A would have been under Iron Road management. However, the units painted under Iron Road management all wore the Iron Road paint scheme - although colors varied. At that time the current trend towards 'retro' or 'heritage' paint schemes on locomotives was decades in the future and that makes this paint scheme choice unlikely. In short, if these had shown up in the late 90s or 2000 when CN began purging them from their fleet, the numbers make sense but the paint would almost certainly have been Iron Road blue. Not that your Editor is complaining you understand, as quite frankly, the tri-color paint scheme is arguably the most recognized of all the B&A colors over the years and a personal favorite of your Editor.



The models themselves are of excellent quality and performance. If you have not already seen them, check out the pair of videos on the Maine Line Magazine Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/MaineLineMagazine> - showing your editor unboxing three units and testing them at the Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club.

The detail level from all sides is exactly what one has come to expect in a modern HO locomotive - see through fans - scale or nearly scale handrails that seem to be individually applied. Details like fuel level glasses and fillers on the tanks along with the proper bell location for a CN style unit prove the attention to detail. The bell even has an air line running to it across the top of the unit all the way back to where the horn is. The trucks have the proper detailing on their sideframes and even individually applied detail parts. Graphics are sharp, and are correct based upon a combination of actual locomotives of this type and B&A paint and lettering styles. The lighting, including front ditch lights, is both correct and all LED. The rear has a single headlight and no numberboards per the prototype. These two choices lead one to think that these were meant to represent a unit purchased used from CN prototype as the B&A did not have a single unit with ditch lights until the rebuilt units arrived under Iron Road. It is also unlikely that the B&A would have ordered them without rear number boards as this would have been contrary to standard practice at the time.

The three tested all came from the factory with LokSound 5 decoders providing DCC and sound. The sound and speakers are very good. No rattling during horn blasts and the engine sound, a 16 cylinder turbocharged EMD 645, is not only quite good, but accurate. Before they move after being started, the sound revs up, then you hear the air brakes release and the units begin to move. It is worth noting that these units are available in conventional 'DC only' with no DCC decoder, but the retail price for the DCC version is \$329.95 with the DC only version at \$189.95, the \$140 difference makes it hard to justify the cost of a sound decoder, speaker and the time to install one.

The one complaint your Editor has is that the units come equipped with AccuMate couplers. Although completely functional during the testing presented on the videos referenced above, Kadee couplers will eventually replace them, the all-metal construction being superior to the partially plastic AccuMates.

These locomotives are being offered in three road numbers 340, 343 and 347. All three numbers are offered in both DCC with sound and DC versions.



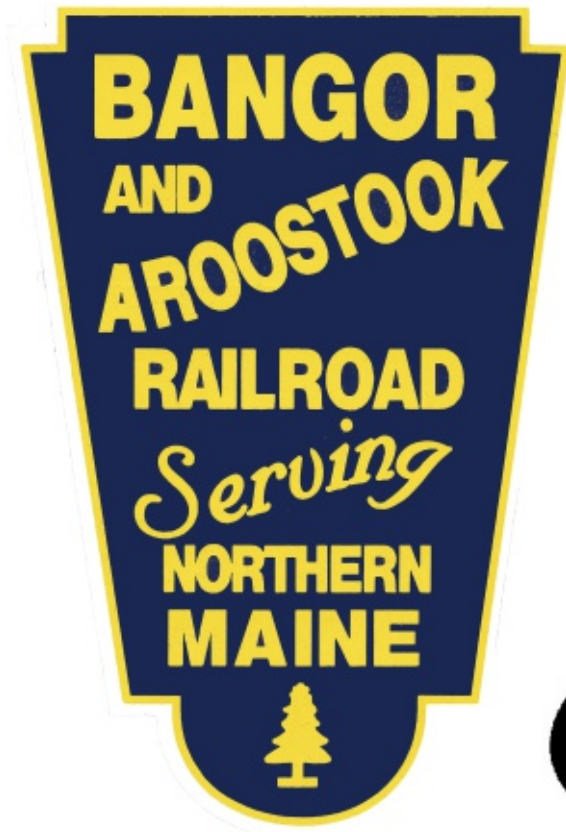
In conclusion, these locomotives are a high performance, highly detailed and relatively affordable addition to the list of HO scale locomotives in production today. They look good. In fact, when matched up with authentic B&A cars (see the photo below) they look right at home.

The one complaint about these units is that the B&A never had any. Of course, in the world of model railroading, one can do just about anything and these units are certainly a good choice for something that could have been. Should you buy one, or three, you will find yourself with a high quality model railroad product that looks and performs as it should. An excellent choice for someone who takes a proto-freelance approach to their model railroading these represent a 'what might have been' if things in Maine had gone a bit different. Your editor is quite happy with his purchase and if you should buy one, hopefully you will be too.

*All photos for this review were shot on the Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club layout in Orland, Maine. Check out the club at [EasternMaineModelRailroadClub.org](http://EasternMaineModelRailroadClub.org) or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/EasternMaineModelRailroadClubInc>*



# CANADIAN PACIFIC TRADEMARK FILING



Did you know that you can search online for company names and find out who owns the trademarks for that company? Check out: <https://www.trademarkia.com/> and do a search for Bangor and Aroostook.

Late in July of 2025, Canadian Pacific Railway Company applied to register the Bangor and Aroostook keystone herald, the Triangle or Tri-color logo and the Central Maine and Quebec Railway 'moose' herald as copyrighted trademarks under US law.

Far from the only marks applied for, others include: Minneapolis Northfield and Southern, Kansas City Southern Lines, Soo Line, the Dakota Minnesota & Eastern, Iowa Chicago & Eastern, Gateway Western Railway and the Texas Mexican Railway.

Given that 21 trademarks were applied for between late July and early August of this year, it would appear that CP has decided to register nearly everything in its back catalog. As of this writing, none of these had been granted and were listed as 'pending'.

Far from the first railroad to do this, over the last 25 years many of the current and past railroad heralds, logos, slogans and various other types of intellectual property have been registered by their current owners.

*CMQ photo above Courtesy of Rod Bushway*



# HOT RODS AND MOTORCARS



Visitors to the Cole Land Transportation Museum's Cole Classic Car Show on September 20, 2025 might have been surprised to see what was wedged between a hot rod Ford pickup and a Chevy Impala. Joe Kelley brought over a pair of his restored Bangor and Aroostook motorcars for the event, a benefit for Veterans.

Given that it can be very hard to bring people to a railroad, particularly one that no longer exists, Joe brought a couple of pieces of the railroad to the people: specifically motorcars #69 and the 'OX 1045'. 69 is a two-stroke Fairmont with belt drive and the narrower windscreen, indicating it was probably used for track inspection. Built in 1953, 69 looks like the decades have never passed with its full restoration completed in 2020. Compliant with modern railroad motorcar lighting rules it looks a bit different than stock with LED lighting and a 12 volt electrical system.

The OX 1045 is actually older being a 1949. A Fairmont A5 gang car, the Bangor and Aroostook had two of them and this is the only surviving example. Now wired with strobe lights and LED lighting all around, OX 1045 is still powered by a Waukesha FC engine, but its number is a nod to long time B&A equipment mechanic Warren Cain - OX for Houlton and 1045 was his employee number. When Warren hired on in 1977 installing a replacement engine block in this car was one of his first projects.









*Previous Page: Groups large and small stopped by to ask questions and talk railroads.*

*Above: Two of the volunteers at the Cole Museum, one a Maine Central man, talk with Joe about the OX 1045*

Getting the Bangor and Aroostook in front of more people encourages questions and answers. Who knows what will become of some small child who saw a 'putt putt car' at a car show and one day decides to get into railroad history as a result!





# THE BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK TURKEY TRAIN BY RICHARD W. SPRAGUE

*Editor's Note: For the first time since 1990, a piece from the late Richard Sprague, editor of the Maine Line from 1957 to 1990, appears in these pages. This piece was originally printed in the Railroad Historical Society of Maine's Pine Tree Flyer, Volume 1, Issue 2, Winter 1982. The piece appears to have been written specifically for that audience and to my knowledge did not appear in any other forum until now. The words are Mr. Sprague's, the original photos have not been used due to the lack of availability. Enjoy this never before in the Maine Line piece! -JTK*

*Above: An unknown photographer shot this scene in Madawaska of the 1980 Turkey Train, with snow and smiling faces all around!  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection*





*Above: 42 and the Turkey Train are shown here at Eagle Lake on December 8, 1979. Photo by James P. Marcus, Shawn Duren collection*

Every December for the past six years the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad has operated what may be the most unique special train on any railroad. It started out its life as the "Christmas Special". BAR Chairman and CEO, EC. "Buck" Dumaine wanted to express the company's appreciation for what he felt was a high degree of employee loyalty and effort during the initial period of Amoskeag's ownership of the Maine road. He conceived the idea of giving every employee a 20-pound turkey as a thank you, not an unusual Christmas gesture for many companies. But he stipulated that the turkeys be delivered personally by the road's management group. BAR people, in their traditional practice of simplifying names and titles, promptly dubbed the "Christmas Special" the Turkey Train, a name that has stuck even in official correspondence. And it has succeeded, even beyond Dumaine's original goal, in linking the men and women of the railroad together. The Turkey Train isn't your garden variety special train with a staff of skilled attendants, linen, silver and fine China. The only paid employees on the three-day run are the train crew. All the rest are volunteers. During the 1981 trip Executive Chef Howard L. Cousins, Jr. (vice president-marketing) and his kitchen crew served nearly 400 meals to the supervisory staff who traveled with the train. They consumed several hams, roasts of beef, pots of beans, pies, mountains of salads and sandwiches, and the piece de resistance, a five-gallon seafood stew which is Cousins' specialty. The volunteer crew that travels the 500-mile route sleeps either in one of the road's two business cars, the SCHOODIC or BURNT HILL, the crew and kitchen car FIVE ISLANDS, or stays at local motels where the train ties up at night.



*Above: "Buck" Dumaine himself has a turkey in a box preparing to hand it out at Squa Pan during the 1989 edition of the Turkey Train, December 2, 1989 - photo by Larry D. Kemp*

At rail points like Madawaska, Fort Kent, Squa Pan, Presque Isle, Oakfield, Millinocket, Derby and Northern Maine Junction, all hands turn out to distribute turkeys from a mechanical refrigerator decorated for the season with a Christmas tree and lights. Others mingle with the crowds of employees, greeting acquaintances and friends.

Jim Garrity, assistant to vice president operations, and Harold Garcelon, special agent, alternate days at playing the role of Santa Claus. The railroad Santa distributes treats for all the children who are attracted to the stations in the towns where the special stops.





*Above: Buck Dumaine, Santa and smiling folk mingle at the Presque Isle stop of the 1985 Turkey Train - December 7, 1985 - Larry D. Kemp photo*

"The Turkey Train is really our Christmas party", says BAR President Walter E. Travis. "We can't have all our people in for the occasion so we take the party to them. I think it has become a symbol for that indefinable quality of spirit and attitude that has helped BAR to remain healthy in a society of giant railroad systems."





*Above: The Turkey Train is stopped at Derby in this Don Marson photo from December 12, 1978. JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection*

Even though the operation of the Turkey Train is hard work for many of the volunteer work force, there's a festive air about the trip. In a sense it reinforces the idea that the Bangor and Aroostook is very much a family. While that notion may not be valid for much of the industry, BAR has turned the small-is-beautiful concept into an asset.

"Big isn't necessarily bad", Travis says, "but it isn't necessarily better either. A small company can turn on a dime when it has to. If it's doing things right, it earns a kind of commitment from its people that's an asset on the balance sheet. Our Turkey Train is part of that idea." Linwood W. Littlefield, vice president-operations, thinks the railroad's Turkey Train is an extension of the road's loosely-structured management style. When a course of action is determined everyone pitches in to do the job.





*Above: Stopped in Presque Isle on December 12, 1981, Larry D. Kemp captured the film crew from NBC's Today Show about to see the door of the Reefer opened.*

Although the road has not sought public notice of its unusual Christmas party because it's considered a family affair, the Turkey Train has inevitably attracted media notice.

The 1981 Turkey Train was filmed by a network NBC crew from Boston and aired on the TODAY show Dec. 17. A story by writer Bruce Ellison also made page one in the Boston GLOBE earlier in the week, and Russ Van Arsdale of WLBZ-TV featured it in a local newscast.

All the media attention won't change anything for BAR folks, though. They still consider the Turkey Train their own private Christmas party.



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## THEY SHOULD HAVE...

If I had a dollar for every time I'd heard someone say 'The railroad should have....' I would be writing this from a private island surrounded by restored railroad equipment. Often its bought X locomotive or kept Y in service for another two years or built the track to Z town. These comments are sometimes flights of fantasy or as we've seen in various Maine Line articles over the years, plans that even the railroad had but never happened.

While looking at Turkey Train pictures, I struck upon an idea. Why on earth didn't the B&A repaint one of the reefers for Turkey Train service and make it match the business car fleet? You have this classic, amazing tri-color paint scheme on the locomotive and the business cars, but the reefer car containing the turkeys is this gray or orange blotch on what is otherwise this amazing looking train.

Before anyone stands up and yells at me for this, I realize that there are several reasons that this probably did not happen. The B&A did not have a budget surplus most years and the Turkey Train was already a considerable expense. The reefer used was an interchangeable car that could have gone off line at any time and a special paint job was not necessarily warranted. Perhaps the biggest reason was that the 57 foot mechanical reefers were not that old and the paint on them was most likely in good condition. Had they been coming in for refurbishment, maybe they would have held one aside. Who can say?

The nice thing about model railroading is that one can make decisions the railroad did not and in this case I decided that someone did decide to paint up a matching reefer for the turkey train. The model itself is a Walther's Mainline which was stripped and painted by Glenn Roberts, who was featured with his complete model B&A roster in the Fall 2024 Maine Line. The colors are standard tri-color, the decal set used is for the gray variant of the actual 57 foot reefers, with some individual letters and numbers used to number it 7, the next odd number above the business car fleet of 1, 3 and 5. The final extra touch was provided by Tim Franz, a Merry Christmas decal and styrene sheet matching the actual one found on the Turkey Train. (Although we did put it in a slightly different spot to not cover up the triangle logo) This was a surprise as I had no idea anyone even had decals for that



and I am thankful and humbled that Tim was willing to make that up for me.

I was quite happy with the results and think the car looks quite good and strikes an excellent balance of looking quite authentic while still being different.



Speaking of Tim Franz, he is the only one in the State of Maine that I know of with an authentic model of the Turkey Train, so I set off for his house in Augusta where he graciously put up with my requests to move the train forward and backward to get it into the best shooting location. The 42 is a Bowser model but the rest of the cars have been custom painted and in a lot of cases kitbashed to add or remove windows or other details to make the cars correct to the prototype. The results are stunning and Tim has done an amazing job. Combined with the fall scenes on this portion of his layout, the Turkey Train looks right at home with its Tri-color paint!







Tim is known for being a prototype modeler, not prone to fantasy cars or locomotives. I took it as a great compliment when, upon seeing the Tri-color reefer for the first time, his response was "Wow. They should have done that." Although it never happened, I think it should have and I quite agree with Tim! My thanks to Kevin Smith who did some pre-production artwork for me, Tim for making his layout and train available for a photo session and a great big thanks to Glenn for his excellent modeling work!







# ONE SPECIAL TRAIN BY DANIEL MCFADDEN

*Above: On the return trip, 502 and the Turkey Train arrive at Oakfield on December 8, 1991.*

When the turkey train began in 1976, word of it spread far and wide. This railroad from Northern Maine was doing something unique and the story of this train spread, catching my attention even in my New Jersey home.

Seeing this special train had been on my bucket list for a long while. This train's appeal spread far from Northern Maine as this train was both a nice thank you to BAR employees as well as a beautiful start to the Christmas season for the kids. It was quite a trip from my home in New Jersey, especially with the possibility of nasty winter weather. But when the BAR restored an EMD F3 unit for their Centennial celebration in 1991, it occurred to me that it might be on the Turkey Train and I resolved to make the trip.

On the first Friday of December 1991, I hit the road. Late that evening, I pulled into Northern Maine Junction. Just across from the yard office sat the equipment for the Turkey Train. A friendly employee in the office gave me the schedule for the weekend. I took a little video and then found a place to put my head down for the night.



# BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK RAILROAD COMPANY

## Turkey Train Schedule December 7 and 8, 1991

### SATURDAY, December 7

| <u>Schedule</u>     |           | <u>Distribution</u> |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Lv. No. Me. Jct.    | 0500      |                     |
| Ar. Millinocket     | 0715      |                     |
| Ar. Houlton         | 0910      | 0910-0930           |
| Lv. Houlton         | 0930      |                     |
| Ar. Oakfield        | 1000      | Turn Engines        |
| Lv. Oakfield        | 1020      |                     |
| Ar. Squa Pan        | 1130      | 1130-1140           |
| Lv. Squa Pan        | 1140      |                     |
| LUNCH STOP - MP P10 | 1150-1220 |                     |
| Ar. Presque Isle    | 1250      | 1250-1320           |
| Lv. Presque Isle    | 1320      |                     |
| Ar. Squa Pan        | 1405      |                     |
| Ar. Fort Kent       | 1555      | 1555-1620           |
| Lv. Fort Kent       | 1620      |                     |
| Ar. Madawaska       | 1650      | 1650-1710           |

### SUNDAY, December 8

|                    |           |                   |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Lv. Madawaska      | 0700      |                   |
| Ar. Fort Kent      | 0745      | Turn train on wye |
| Lv. Fort Kent      | 0800      |                   |
| Ar. Oakfield       | 1055      | 1055-1115         |
| Lv. Oakfield       | 1115      |                   |
| Ar. Millinocket    | 1225      | 1225-1255         |
| Lv. Millinocket    | 1255      |                   |
| LUNCH STOP - MP 98 | 1305-1335 |                   |
| Ar. Derby          | 1425      | 1425-1455         |
| Lv. Derby          | 1455      |                   |
| Ar. No. Me. Jct.   | 1555      | 1555-1615         |

### EQUIPMENT

Diesel Unit 502  
Diesel Unit 94  
Mechanical Refer BAR 261  
Living & Cook Car P-3 (Five Islands)  
Business Car P-1 (Schoodic)  
Business Car P-5 (Burnt Hill)

The schedule showed a total of nine planned stops for distribution of turkeys to the BAR families and presents for the kids, five stops on the Saturday northbound run, and four on the Sunday return. There were also planned lunch stops on each day for the crew, not in a town or station, but sort of in the woods with specific milepost locations. The power for the trip was F3A number 502 (built October 1947) and GP-38 number 94. The 502 had been renumbered to 42 and regained it's original number when restored for the Centennial. Number 94 was a second-hand unit, purchased from Conrail. Built for the Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Lines, it retained its cab configuration from its PRSL days. For most of the trip, the 502 was in the lead. It was clearly the showpiece on the train.

What no one knew at the time was that there would be only three more Turkey Trains after this one. I am very glad I made the trip, not only to see the 502, but to capture this unique train and the railroad that ran it.

They say a picture is worth 1000 words, so here are the highlights from two days of the 1991 Turkey Train. Enjoy!





## HOULTON

With the train leaving Northern Maine Junction in the dark at 5 AM and no familiarity with the roads, I decided to find the train in Houlton. This was the first planned stop for turkey distribution and Santa meeting the kids. It was a cold gray day, but spirits were high, especially for both crew and families meeting the train. The train had five cars, one more than shown in the plan of operations. The power was run around the train in Houlton, one of the few times the Geep took the lead.





## **NEXT PAGE: SMYRNA MILLS**

The stops for meeting the kids and distributing turkeys made it easy to keep up with the train in spite of road conditions. Smyrna Mills was one of the few locations I caught the train on the move. The power had again swapped ends so the 502 was back in the lead.









## SQUA PAN

The conductor gives a friendly wave as the Turkey Train departs Squa Pan. The 502 is back in the lead here. The snow was coming here and the roads seemed a bit dicey to this Jerseyite.





## PRESQUE ISLE

My final first day stop was Presque Isle. Turkeys were distributed and Santa again made the kids happy. The snow was getting heavier and finding a hotel in town, I used some common sense and called it a day. I did not see another railfan that day, maybe another indication of the driving conditions.







## PREVIOUS PAGE: OAKFIELD

On the Sunday return trip, I met the Turkey Train in Oakfield where I found a beautifully restored station. The sun was out, not a cloud in the sky and the driving much easier. With fresh snow and great sunlight, the train with the 502 in the lead was a fantastic sight. I knocked off a full roll of Kodachrome in Oakfield and took video to boot.



## MILLINOCKET

By the time I got to the second stop in Millinocket, the bright sun had gone away. While the turkeys were distributed in Millinocket, two Geeps were sorting things out in the yard.





## MILEPOST 98

The Sunday lunch stop at Milepost 98 was tucked in the woods, pretty much out of sight from the roads. Santa must have needed a quick respite from his adoring fans. A short hike gave the opportunity to shoot the train in fresh unbroken snow. Without the plan of operations in hand, these pix would probably have been missed.





## DERBY

Derby was my final stop. It seemed like more folks showed up in Derby than the other stops, surely because, with Derby the home of the BAR shops, more BAR employees lived in the vicinity. The last shot of the day was Santa waving from the observation car as the train started off to its last stop in Northern Maine Junction. The light was fading fast, and it was time for me to head back home.







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# EXCURSION TRAINS FUND CHARITIES

Over 25 years after the last B&A excursion train, Maine Northern Railway hosted four excursion trains for charity on September 27 and 28, 2025. The first two were run out of Presque Isle, boarding within sight of the former Aroostook Valley passenger station. Both trains appeared to be sold out! The Aroostook Area Agency on Aging was the charity of choice for the two trains out of Presque Isle and one could only see smiles amongst the staff and volunteers spread out all over the area, parking cars, checking folks in and giving directions.

A few minutes before the 0830 departure time, NB Southern 4302 and 4303 (with the three car train sandwiched between them) rolled past the 40 foot boxcar being used for storage and into the 'station'. With the passengers boarded, 4303 whistled for departure and headed South. Rolling along at a leisurely pace, passengers were treated to views of Aroostook County not easily seen elsewhere. The morning train crossed the bridge in Mapleton, then stopped and switched ends, returning to PI. The 1100 train repeated this, but extended the run further South giving even more opportunity for sightseeing.

From a photography standpoint, the deadhead run to move the train from Presque Isle to Millinocket for Sunday's trains was actually more exciting as the train had to pass over the causeway along the end of Scapan Lake. It was a great way to cap off the day!





*Above: The old and the new. Passing a 40 foot boxcar now used only for storage, some of the newest locomotives on the NBSR roster were picked for this duty. 4302 and 4303 are GP31ECO-M units, according to the Locomotive Wiki on Fandom, these are 3000 horsepower, 8 cylinder 710 cubic inch per cylinder Tier 1 emissions complaint units.*

*Below: The boarding line for the first train was quite orderly and happy!*







*Above: Par 4 - Water hazard. Passing the private golf course off the Mapleton road (Route 163) we are actually looking at the Southbound first train of the day.*





*Above: Still Southbound, the first train of the day is crossing the bridge in Mapleton. They would stop and switch ends just after crossing this bridge. Nice to see a shadow of the old Bangor and Aroostook still present on the bridge!*





*Above: Returning from the first run, 4302 and train are rolling across the Presque Isle Stream.*





*Above: Potato fields and foliage are on either side of the Southbound second run for the day, here in Mapleton.*







*Previous Page: The crew helps passenger disembark from the second run of the day.*



*Above: Here is the crew that made it all happen on Saturday. After the second run they graciously posed for a picture!*





*Above: After the crowds had gone home, it comes down to two railroaders to safely get the train from Presque Isle to Millinocket. Using the South end of the Long Yard they placed the two locomotives together and headed South.*

*Below: Playing Through... Rolling past the same golf course we saw earlier, but now with the fountains turned on, the 4303 and train are playing through.*









*Previous Page: Two views from the same spot between Presque Isle and Mapleton proper. Green locomotives, colorful cars and beautiful Aroostook County Foliage. It really does not get much better than that.*



*Above: Rolling Southbound past the site of the Mapleton Wye, today this is only Milepost 18, with nothing more than the history of a long-gone track off to the left.*





*Above: Crossing the East Inlet of Scopan Lake, the deadhead move is in beautiful setting sun, before turning and heading more South to parallel the Walker Siding road. This would be the last spot before giving up the chase for the day, but what a way to end!*



Sunday, September 28 found the Maine Northern Railway playing host to two passenger excursions out of Millinocket. These two were to benefit the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Foundation. Initially, only one trip was planned but due to "overwhelming" demand, a second train was added, leaving at 11 AM from Millinocket. The format was much the same, locomotives with the three car train sandwiched between, headed Southbound for about 40 minutes, switch ends and return.



*Above: This was the scene in Millinocket as people boarded for the first trip. Somehow this spot just does not look right without a station or the yard office. Photo courtesy of Doug Boudrow*





*Above: This spot just above North Twin never gets old and the water reflecting the train just adds something. The first run of the day is Southbound here.  
Photo courtesy of Ted Bockley*





*Above: Returning to Millinocket, with Katahdin in the background, the first excursion of the day was sold out.  
Photo courtesy of Doug Boudrow*





*Above: The sun came out for the second run of the day and it really does not get better than fall in Maine, mountains in the background, foliage in the foreground and a green locomotive powered train in the middle.  
Photo courtesy of Mike Peverett*





*Above: The second run of the day followed the same route, but with the sun out, the Bridge at North Twin really looks spectacular from the air.  
Photo courtesy of Mike Peverett*





*Above: Long after the crowds had left, the two locomotives are leading the three cars South, their job done for this weekend.  
Photo courtesy of Mike Peverett*

Maine Northern should be commended for their donations to charity and the crew members involved should give themselves a well deserved pat on the back. Keeping that spirit of community that the Bangor and Aroostook used to have alive in 2025!





# WELL, THATS DIFFERENT

*Above: The three new RMT State of Maine Products boxcars*

Long time readers of the Maine Line will no doubt recall my extensive collection of 40 foot O gauge state of Maine Products boxcars. (I am deliberately not keeping track of the number, lest it scare me) Thus when Ready Made Trains (formerly Ready Made Toys) released these 40 foot cars I was happy and confused. The road names listed are, in my opinion, very odd. The New Haven railroad is a legitimate and correct choice, but the number sequence appears to be quite far off from the one below. That photo comes directly from the BAR Marketing Department photo archive. That brings us to the other two in the picture above. One is lettered Maine Central and the other Boston and Maine. Historians of New England railroading will know that although the New Haven had State of Maine cars, they are stereotypically associated with the Bangor and Aroostook. It is almost a cliché. Want to make your model railroad look more like the Bangor and Aroostook? Toss in a State of Maine Products boxcar! They are so well known, so popular and so distinctive that they have been made in every commercially available model railroading scale, from Z to G. Remember the Winter 2020 Maine Line cover?



Why then would RMT ignore the Bangor and Aroostook and pick two fantasy roads to do instead? The Maine Central and Boston and Maine never had anything close to cars in this paint scheme. Honestly - I do not know.

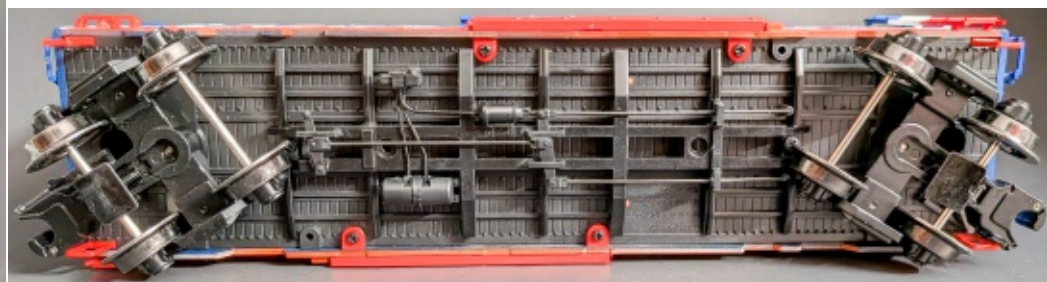






Let us talk about the cars themselves. Retailing at \$39.95, these are an excellent value in a modern O gauge boxcar. They are full size, scale pieces. As you can see from the O-27 sized semi-scale boxcar above, the scale sized RMT one behind it towers over it, as it should. The graphics are in general sharp - a few imperfections here and there but they do not detract from the overall product. All three cars are basically identical except for the road name and number. The ladders and roof walks are individually applied, not molded on, and the brake rigging underneath is reasonably well detailed. Trucks and couplers are metal and seem to be of quality construction. There is a load in the car, visible through the operating sliding doors. Individual foot stirrups are applied to each corner, adding just that much more detail.

In short - these three cars are a welcome addition to my O gauge fleet of State of Maine cars!







One final note on these cars, they are individually numbered and therefore are a limited run. For \$39.95 they are a great value in O gauge and they are well made and good looking cars.

If anyone from RMT should happen to read this, how about coming out with some Bangor and Aroostook ones? I would certainly buy one!







## THREE YEARS IN THE MAKING

If you cast your mind back to the Winter 2022 issue of the Maine Line Magazine, you might remember the announcement that Ready Made Trains (formerly Ready Made Toys) said that they were coming out with Bangor and Aroostook Chip Cars in O gauge. The expected availability was Spring 2022. Your editor pre-ordered two of these cars and watched with sinking heart as the availability date was pushed back, many times. Eventually the date of availability was set for September 30, 2025. After so many pushbacks - hopes were not high. On the 25th of September an email blast went out that the woodchip cars were in stock! Not long after - your editor received a shipping notice! Finally after more than three years, the RMT woodchip cars were being shipped.

Although there are various woodchip cars on the market, representing many variations on the type, these are the first Bangor and Aroostook cars to be mass produced by any manufacturer, in any scale.

*Below: A long line of chip cars, in brown, in 1967. Photographer unknown.*







*Above: 3400. Unknown date, unknown photographer*

Typically, the more well known and final, paint scheme for the chip cars was the Jade Green with the triangle logo is thought of as 'the' chip car paint scheme. However, the Chip cars were converted in the latter half of the 1960s, before the bold colors and triangle logo had been thought of. Thus the chip cars were produced in Boxcar Brown, with the keystone logo and white lettering. The photo above shows 3400 fresh from the paint shop (or so it appears) photo from the BAR Marketing Department collection.

When speaking about these models however, note that the small number under the BAR reporting mark is not repeated under the large BAR off to the right.





On the other hand the WOOD CHIP SERVICE does not appear on any BAR woodchip car and the note about the Potatoland National Bank in the upright left corner is a complete fabrication. These cars are individually numbered, a limited edition and only 300 were produced.

When it comes to size, these cars match up very well with the custom built cars already in your Editor's collection. The small differences in height can be attributed to different initial cars used for conversion. The cars come with a 'load' which, quite frankly, reminds one of some sort of overcooked cheese or perhaps a burnt marshmallow more than a load of wood chips. The ladders are molded into the body, a step down from the 40 foot cars reviewed in this issue. There are no foot stirrups on each corner. Unlike the prototype, the doors slide open like a boxcar. The trucks and couplers are metal and look and function as they should. RMT describes these cars as having been 'inspired' by prototypes so one cannot be too critical. At a retail price of \$39.95 we can forgive a few non-prototypical things.

RMT - if you read this, please do another run and do it in jade green!







# FRENCHVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REBUILDING STATION

## BY CHRIS BOUCHARD, BANGOR DAILY NEWS

*Above: The Frenchville station in 1977, photographer unknown,  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*

The Frenchville Historical Society is reviving a unique piece of Maine history through its efforts to rebuild the Frenchville Railroad Station, originally built by the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad in 1910.

In 1995, the Frenchville railroad station and water tank site was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The water tower was also built by the railroad company in 1910. The station itself was demolished about a decade ago after falling into a state of disrepair. The site also contains a caboose built during World War II in 1943. The site is among just a few in Maine on the national registry.

The station was sold to local farmer Gerard Raymond in 1971 and used for storage. Raymond, like many in the area, also worked for the railroad company in his youth. The building eventually fell into a state of disrepair and was demolished in 2015.



Shortly before the demolition, retired contractor Charles Collin took photos and created a digital blueprint of the station in case the society ever considered rebuilding it.

The railroad company, during its heyday, was among Aroostook County's largest employers. Through this effort, the society hopes to revive and preserve an important piece of the town and region's history.

"What's happened recently is that we have been turning down artifacts," Paradis said, "because we have no place to put them."

Aside from the house, Paradis said some artifacts are in the caboose, some are in a shed behind the Wylie House, and that the society recently purchased a cargo container for extra items.

Roughly one year ago, the society decided it was going to move forward with rebuilding the station. Collin is helping the group put a bid package together to recreate the 640-square-foot building.

While the project is just in its preliminary stages, Collin said that it will likely cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000. He said this is based on his experience as a contractor and the price per square foot, but that many of the project's details have not yet been solidified.

The Frenchville Historical Society is based in the historic Wylie House on Main Street, which is located across the street from the water tower and caboose. Historical Society President Jackie Paradis said they are quickly running out of space and that the restored station would also help store and display newly donated items.

As the project moves forward from the preliminary planning stage, the society plans to put out more information about what it will entail and to begin fundraising efforts.

The Frenchville Historical Society was established in 1984. Earlier this summer, Aroostook County Commissioners awarded founding members Karen and Phil Levesque with a Spirit of America Award for working to preserve the town's history. Paradis said the couple was instrumental in starting the historical society.

Alice Carpenter, a board member who formerly served as the society's president, said that back in 1984, the caboose was the society's only building. The water tower, while administered, cleaned and taken care of by the historical society, is owned by the town. The town would have to apply for any grants needed for repairs, for example.



In 1994, the town gave the Wylie house to the society to maintain. Carpenter said the society has done well in the past 30 years maintaining the house with grants and using volunteer work to replace certain parts like some of the windows. But many parts of the house are authentic, like the hardwood floors and tin ceilings.

Anyone interested in donating to the railroad station project can mail the Frenchville Historical Society at P.O. Box 184, Frenchville Maine, 04745.

*Editor's Note: We would like to thank Chris Bouchard, Paula Brewer and the rest of the staff at the Bangor Daily News for allowing us to re-print this article which appeared on: <https://thecounty.me/2025/07/23/home-featured/an-aroostook-historical-society-is-reviving-a-century-old-train-station/>*

## UPDATE

Before this issue went to press, your Editor had a chance to speak with Jackie Paradis of the Frenchville Historical Society to get an update on the progress since the piece was written for the Bangor Daily News.

Jackie reports that plans are still being finalized but are moving forward within the Society. Once enough donations have been received they will begin with the work to rebuild the station!

We here at the Maine Line wish the Frenchville Historical Society success in this project and look forward to bringing you further updates!

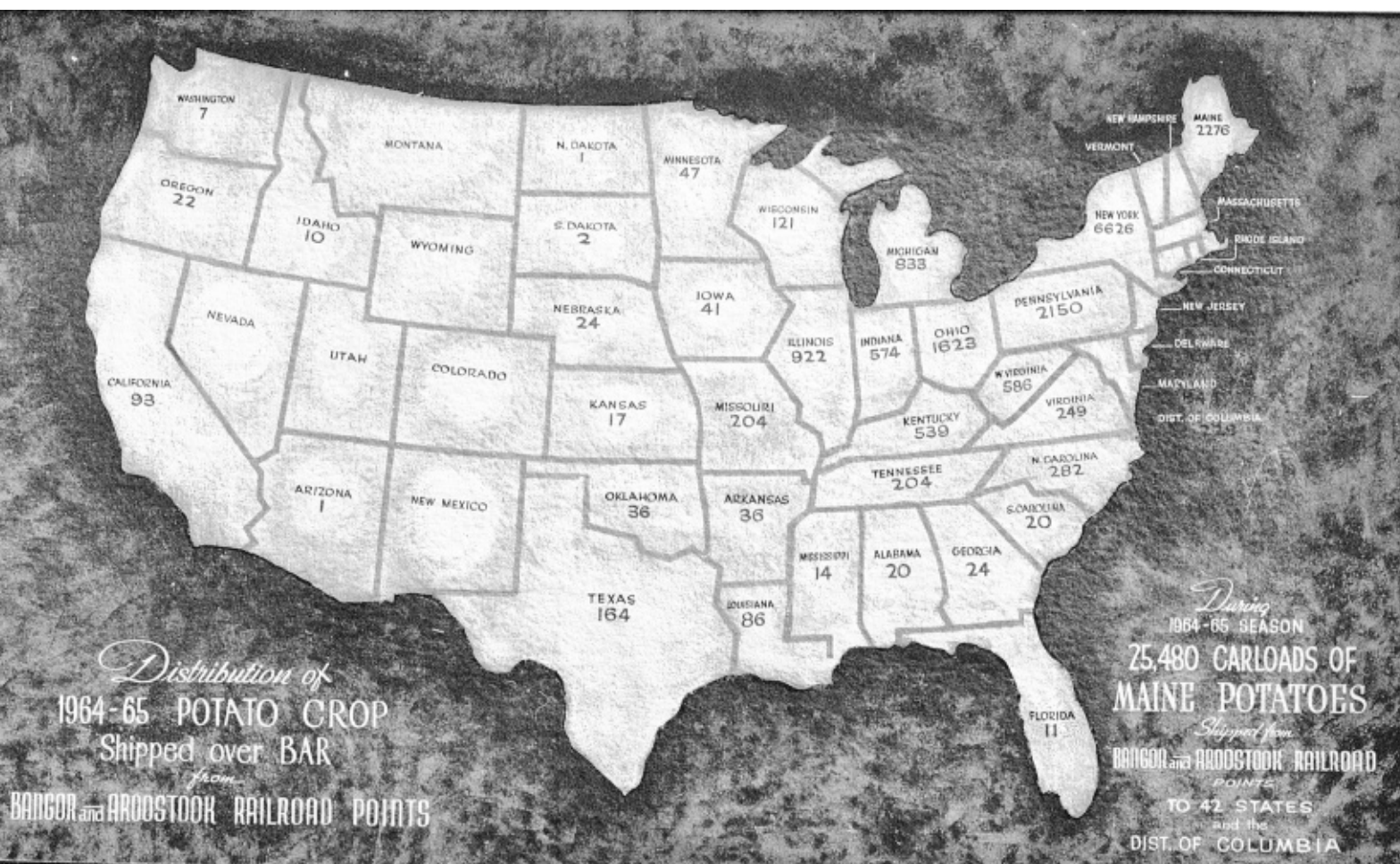


# FROM THE ARCHIVES



*For several years now, it has been my great privilege and honor to be the current curator to a portion of photos from the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Marketing Department photo archive. Long time readers have seen these sprinkled throughout the 8 volumes yet produced, but here I thought I would run some of that collection as a gallery. No doubt most of these have been used (or are from the same roll as one which was) by the railroad. Unfortunately, the identification process is lagging behind the scanning, so feel free to reach out if you recognize a photo or a person and help with the process. This one is easy - this is the 1965 'Gondola Excursion' by the Downeast Railroad Club.*





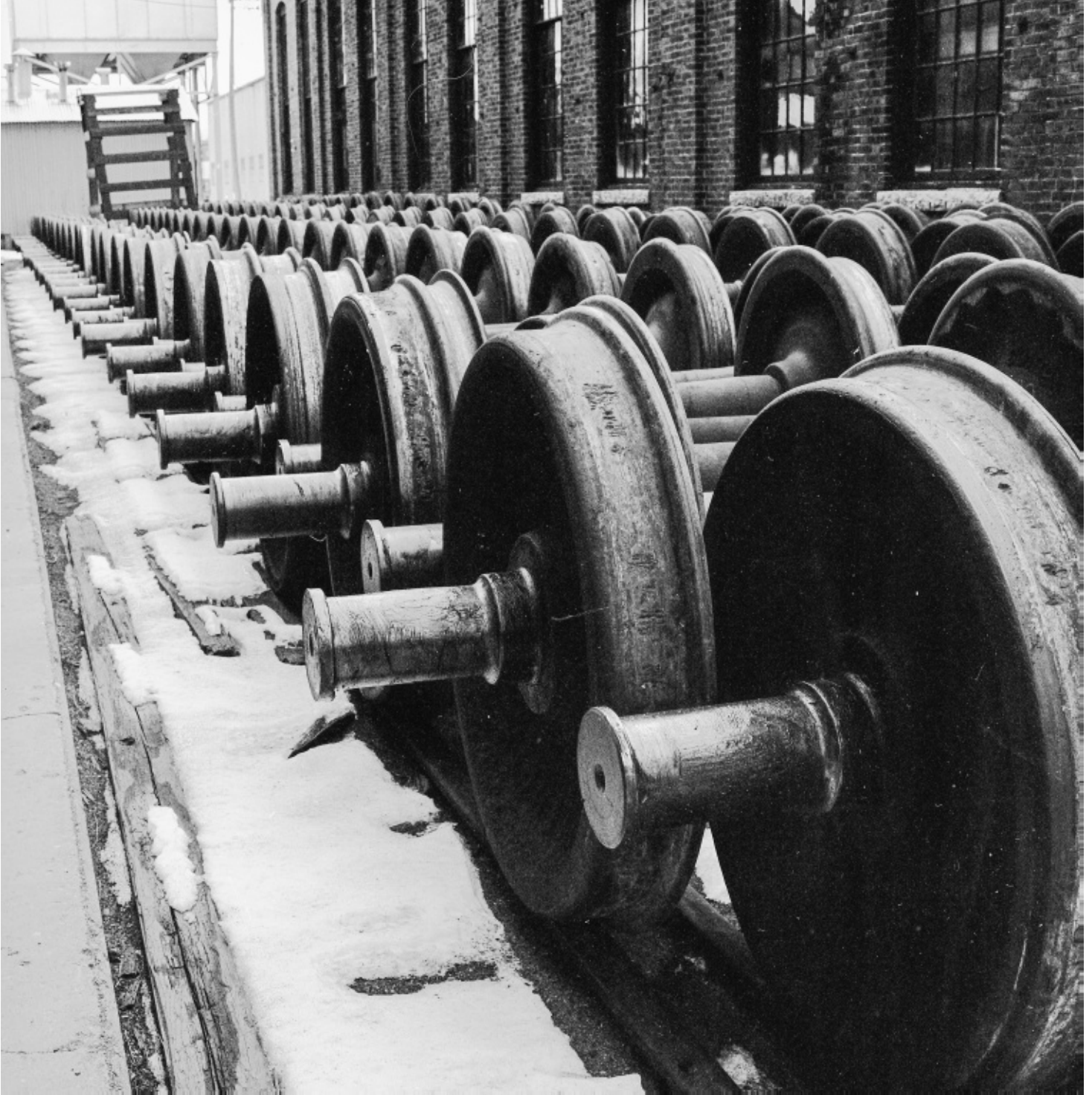
You may have seen this one before. However it is a great illustration of the variety of photos in the collection, since it is of very little interest to anyone outside the railroad community. Perhaps the most hilarious thing to me is the 10 carloads of Maine potatoes shipped to Idaho - a state of course known for its own potato production. I would like to know the back story behind that! This photo was shot during one of the 75th anniversary trains in 1966 and this graphic appeared on the side of one of the reфриgerated boxcars.





*I admit, this one was chosen partially because of the motorcar, a Fairmont M14, either identical to, or perhaps the very same one my Father owns. From this angle, there is no way to tell. However it also shows both a time that is long gone, not only were motorcars in everyday use, but no radios! A railroad telephone, complete with the temporary connection to the phone line was being used to contact dispatch! Although I am nearly certain that this photo, or one from this day at least, was used in a Maine Line at some point I have yet to nail down which issue that was. We are however at MP A24 - making the location known. Perhaps the greatest part of this photo is the preservation of history for future generations.*





*One of those photos that someone had the good thought to take that could be used on a variety of articles. The marketing department collection is very wide in terms of its scope - everything from people to equipment to locations. One presumes this was probably outside Derby shops, but when and what exactly was the intended use of this particular photo? Unless someone recognizes it, a long will be a painstaking dive through the Maine Lines will be required to find it.*





*A railroad is only as good as its people - the cars are only as good as those who maintain them. Railroaders at work - that is an ongoing subject of interest, not only for myself, but anyone interested in railroading. Fortunately, the B&A was willing and the photographers were able, to get into the shops and photograph the work in progress. If anyone recognizes the person in question - please reach out. Face illuminated by a cutting torch - one wonders what is going on in this photo?*





*Part of a series of photos, presumably about the dangers of close clearance buildings, here we have an unidentified employee boarding a boxcar, presumably asked to hold the pose mid step. In the background we have a two-tone painted BL-2 and the "New" (at the time) Houlton Shops building. That nails down the location and the paint job on the BL-2 places this most likely no later than the middle 1960s, although that is a guess.*

*This is just a small sample of the photos currently in the marketing department collection - but if you can ID anyone in these photos - please reach out, it makes the process of getting all the information on them so much easier!*



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