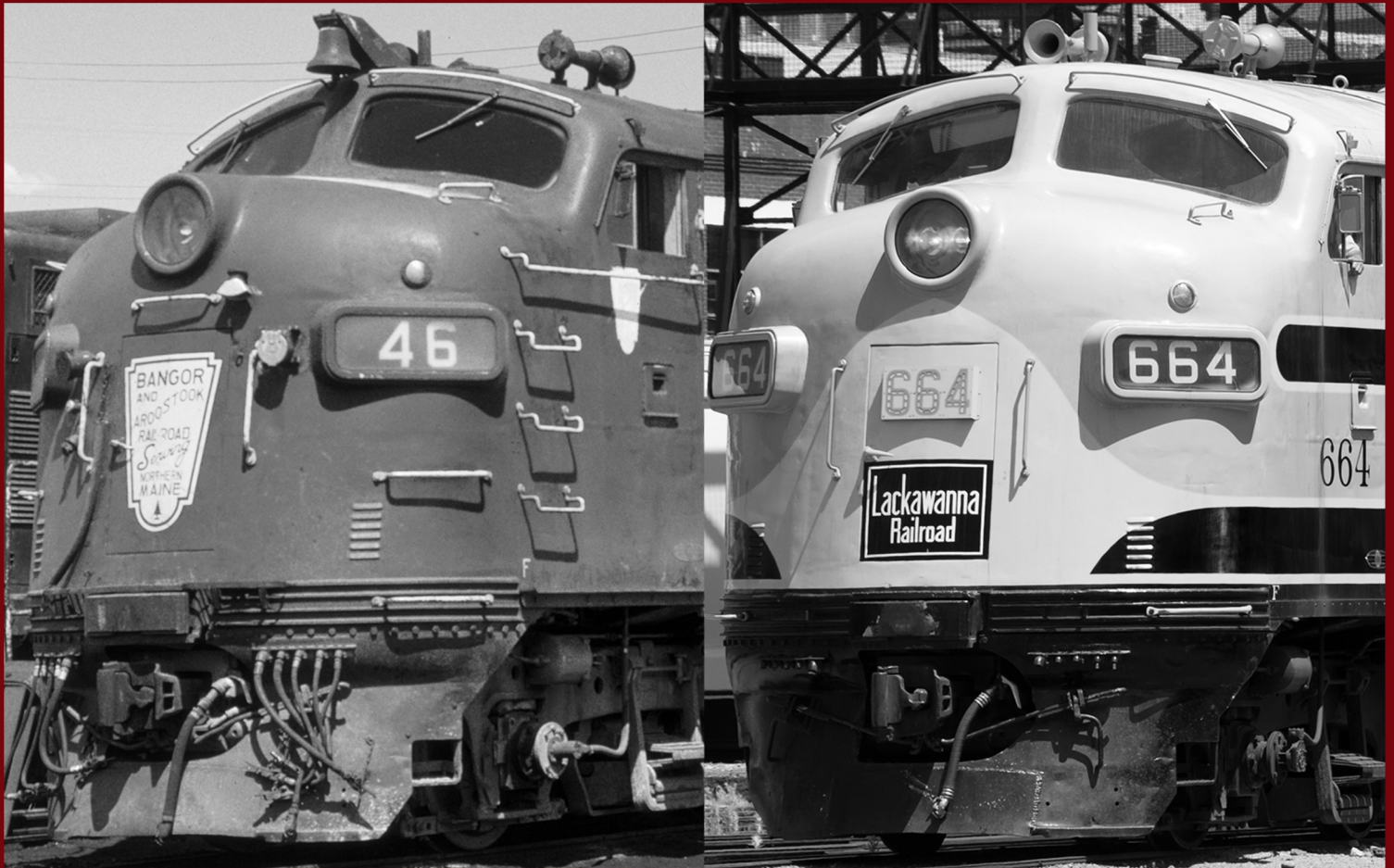


MAINE LINE

A Publication for the Friends of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad



Talking It Over



One of the great debates within the field of railroad preservation is do we preserve, restore or operate. There is no one answer to this – each owner or organization must decide for themselves what their intended goal is. Recently I

was confronted with multiple answers to this question and frankly, I discovered that in each case, I happened to agree with the answer chosen.

On one hand, at the Railroad Museum of New England there is a Boston and Maine switcher locomotive, #1109. It is non-operational. When I inquired why, I was informed that it was original – completely original. As far as could be determined, no major components had been altered since the factory. RMNE has preserved it as an original piece, knowing that if it were returned to operation, its originality would need to be lost.

On the other end of the spectrum are the ex-Bangor and Aroostook F3 units featured in this issue. They have been transported many states away from their original home, have been painted into non-original paint schemes and one has had a complete engine transplant. They have been re-numbered and in some small ways, modernized and upgraded to make them more reliable and take advantage of the advancement of technology since they were produced. On the face of it, that sounds pretty far from preservation. But as I can confirm from personal experience, the thrill of being aboard a running, operable, pair of F3s far outweighs any concerns about the changes. In effect, the experience of the locomotives has been preserved.

Static preservation has its place – but the experience of operating equipment is what will inspire future generations to preserve an ever more distant past.

- "Joey" Kelley, Editor

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RACING AGAINST TIME: PRESERVING 44 AND 46 BY MIKE DEL VECCHIO



44 and 46 at Conrail's Oak Island in Newark, NJ, en route to the Morristown & Erie. Photo and lighting Mike Del Vecchio with Bob Bahrs – January 21, 1986

Among the true gems of American railroad preservation are the pair of Bangor & Aroostook F3s operating out of Steamtown National Historic Site. Dressed as Lackawanna 663 and 664, both were recognized by TRAINS Magazine as the "Must See" locomotives of 2013. With the addition of a former-Boston & Maine F7B backdated to the appearance of an F3B, they were invited to attend the

Streamliners at Spencer event in 2014 as part of the largest gathering of cab-units since the end of the streamliner era. The trio were the only A-B-A set of cab units at that grand gathering. The B&A F3s are two of the three oldest operating EMD (Electro-Motive Division of General Motors Corporation) cab units in the world, the third being Canadian National 9000 in Alberta. All three were delivered during May 1948.



EMD Builders photo, Mike Del Vecchio collection, 1948. None of the Lackawanna F3s survived into preservation

Railfans were long aware of the fleet of classic “chicken wire” F3s running on the Bangor & Aroostook. By the 1970s they were the last group of intact units. Others had been rebuilt and reconfigured for commuter service, traded in on newer power or cut down and rebuilt into road switchers as was the case on the Santa Fe with their CF7 rebuild program. As the 1970s turned into the 1980s, railfans were making trips to Maine and place names such as Oakfield and Searsport and Northern Maine Junction were becoming talked about at railroad club meetings as often as Sand Patch, the Southern Tier and Horseshoe Curve.

When B&A President Walter Travis, a former-Lackawanna man, had the 42 and 49 painted in the new three-color image, along with BL2 54, it appeared that

these classics might indeed survive another generation. Then, in 1984, news broke that the B&A retired and scrapped F3 No.45.



10 Years before it was scrapped, 45 along with 44, 56 and 46 were at Northern Maine Junction. Of the locomotives photographed, only the 45 has been scrapped! September 1974, photographer unknown, collection of JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

Two members of the Tri-State Chapter loved the B&A and were frequent travelers to Maine, Mike Miterko, a Director, and Bob Bahrs, a past president and newsletter editor. After the loss of the 45, Bob Bahrs called the Bangor & Aroostook to inquire about the fate of the fleet and if F3s were available for preservation. The B&A responded that it would consider selling one, asking \$45,000 for an operating unit and \$8000 for an empty shell. This was a lot of money in the mid-1980s. Rail preservation wasn't nearly as mature as it is today. But the railfans and rail history groups started talking.



At first glance, one could guess they had fallen back in time! The Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad used Alco RS-3s to tow the F-units to their interchange, in preparation to send them to the Streamliners in Spencer event. May 13, 2014, Slateford, Pennsylvania, Ron Tilley Photo

Bahrs and Miterko put together a proposal and pitched it to the Tri-State Board. Acquiring a real locomotive was a new concept then for a non-profit group, though Tri-State had just finished a decade of successful excursions and was the strongest of the area groups financially. Opinions were strong, discussions at public and board meetings were heated. Another F3 was scrapped and more were heading that way. Bahrs and Miterko stepped up the pressure, stressing that any preservation effort was racing against time, and that once they're gone that's it. Their initial proposal was to purchase a shell with an intact cab that can control a trailing unit so that it could be used on fantrips, and to paint it as a Lackawanna passenger F3. In January 1985 a contract from Tri-State was sent to Director of Purchases and Materials Harold Bell at the B&A for the purchase of an F3 shell, pending a mechanical inspection by Morristown & Erie owner Ben Friedland, a Tri-State director at the time.

By February 1985 Harold Bell reported that two units had been retired and were available for inspection, the 46 and 49. B&A 44 at the time was stored serviceable. It was mothballed in 1981 during a traffic downturn, then resurrected in 1984 for a few weeks when B&A Geeps were loaned to the Maine Central. Ben Friedland and Bob Bahrs went to Northern Maine Junction on June 11, 1985, to inspect the two units. The 46 looked good and had no cosmetic issues, but it also had no traction motors and a bad wheelset. Ben and Bob then told Harold Bell that they'd rather have a complete F3 if the price were right. Bell responded that they would sell a complete unit to be preserved for \$22,000, FOB Bangor. {*FOB: Freight On Board – in other words, buyer pays shipping – Ed.*} At the July Board meeting Tri-State agreed to offer \$19,000 for the 46 without traction motors. Harold Bell held to the \$22,000. At the September Board meeting, Tri-State decided on one last offer in writing for \$19,000 for the 46, expiring September 23. Harold Bell returned the call on September 23 saying that the intact 46 was Tri-State's for \$19,000. The deal was done. Or was it?

It turned out that the B&A shops had begun removing parts from the 46 to keep the GP7s running. An embarrassed Harold Bell made good on the error, offering the 44 instead, which was in operating condition. Meanwhile, the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society was still interested in a shell and finished the purchase of the clean-looking 46. On Friday, January 10, 1986, Tri-State's Bob Bahrs and ARHS's Rich Jahn went to Maine with respective club checks for the purchase of both units. Bob and Rich were permitted to remove body parts from the 49. On January 17, 1986, both units were picked up by the Maine Central, bound for the Morristown & Erie where a restoration plan could be developed.

Following Page: Richard Jahn hands Harold Bell the check to buy 46 from the Bangor and Aroostook, January 10, 1986.



It's been quite an adventure in the past 33 years since they left Maine. The ARHS had logistics troubles in Morristown, so they arranged to move the 46 to the old Reading Company shops closer to home. It was a large facility with overhead cranes. The 44 was set up for service by the M&E, and it did run a day here and there in freight service while Bob Bahrs led Tri-State work sessions to clean up and paint the interior. With Steamtown Foundation now in Scranton and needing diesels to supplant the steam, it leased the 44 from Tri-State under the condition that it be painted in the Lackawanna passenger paint scheme and numbered 806A, one number above the Lackawanna F3s. Tri-State was given permission by NJTransit to remove a nose door with a headlight from one of the then-retired former-Southern Railway E8s. In Scranton, the Steamtown shops began the cosmetic changes to make the 44 into a Lackawanna passenger unit.

Back in New Jersey the Tri-State Chapter, which had also been accumulating cabooses and passenger cars, hosted the 1988 NRHS Convention. "Garden State in '88" was a grand affair with many events and main line steam. But in the end Tri-State took a bath and spent years settling claims while losing morale and participation. Steamtown, meanwhile, purchased a pair of FP7s and an SD24 and no longer needed a leased F3. The 44 went back to Morristown in B&A blue with a headlight in the nose door. The Tri-State Board of Directors over the next two years, dealing with little interest and many debts, looked into selling the 44 to solve its problems.



ARHS members gathered around their new purchase during the 1987 ARHS convention.

Meanwhile, the ARHS made great strides with the 46 in Reading, PA. Cleaning was done and the shell of 46 was evaluated. The good news was the BAR had not been aggressive with a torch but rather Derby Shop forces had properly unbolted the equipment they needed. Working in conjunction with members of

the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society, ARHS volunteers were encouraged to be told that 46 could be made into a operable locomotive if the right parts were found. In late 1987 the owner of the Blue Mountain & Reading found that the Santa Fe was anxious to sell CF7's and offered them at ridiculous prices if you bought at least five at a time. But the Santa Fe would choose the ones to sell promising there would be good ones and others needing work. Blue Mountain & Reading wound up purchasing 25 CF7's - reselling most of them. One - number 2649 was the first CF7, and it needed to be completely rewired as the Santa Fe only did a mechanical overhaul to test the CF7 concept. One of the Blue Mountain & Reading partners had a idea: this CF7 would be the perfect donor to make F3 #46 operable once again. ARHS and Blue Mountain & Reading agreed on \$10,000 and the path was now clear. Being that it was the first CF7 ARHS tried to offer it to other museums in trade for equivalent parts, but there were no takers. The CF7 and 46 were moved into the former Reading shop in May 1988. Using the overhead crane facilities at the old Reading Shop complex, the former-F7 innards from 2649 went into the 46. ARHS was racing against time. There was no electricity to operate the overhead cranes, but clever Blue Mountain and Reading and Reading Company Technical & Historical Society folks had found a way to back-feed DC power into the shop by tapping the generator on a running CF7 parked outside the building. It worked like a charm - the building owners would have had a fit if they knew the cranes were operational and heavy equipment was being moved around inside the shop. The body of 46 was put on the CF7's trucks and the engine, generator and air compressor were taken from the CF7 and put inside 46. With changes taking place at the Reading shop location the ARHS moved their equipment 40 miles to the Upper Merion & Plymouth Railroad to finish electrical work and do the body work and painting. It was in a little building on the UM&P that F3 #46 came back to life. ARHS held a fundraiser to determine the paint scheme. Based on contributions the Jersey Central tangerine-and-blue raised the most money. It was painted and renumbered 56. CNJ's numbering was 50 - 59 for F3's. 60 to 69 was reserved for Alco FA's which were never bought. It had to be a 50 series number so honoring its heritage the second digit of "6" was kept - so 46 became 56. Soon ARHS made a deal with George Hart and his RailTours company for them to lease the F3 for their trains. By the fall of 1989 CNJ F3 56 was running on CNJ trackage. Also in 1989 ARHS found and purchased Boston & Maine F7B 4268, but it had been robbed for parts by its former owner so its first stop was the Rome Locomotive Works for power assemblies and other work. When it arrived in Jim Thorpe it was painted to match. The Farr grilles of the F7B were replaced with screens from the same manufacturer who supplied them to EMD for the F3s.

Following Page: Jeannette Jahn captured 46 repainted, but not renumbered yet in May of 1989 at the UM&P



In 1991 there was new life on the Tri-State Board who didn't want to sell the 44. It instead leased the 44 to ARHS to be painted CNJ to match the 46, and the original nose door went on it. Back-to-back CNJ F3s on that line was exciting back then. B&A 46 became CNJ 56, and the 44 became CNJ 57.



Re-creating the Jersey Central – September 1993 – Jeanette Jahn photo

The B-unit arrived in Jim Thorpe and soon it was painted, carrying the letter D as was CNJ practice. There was now a set of A-B-A Jersey Central F3s, 56-D-57. The B-unit was a long-way from making power, but the set looked great posed or on the road. After a trip to Steamtown in September for the annual Railfest, a formal dedication of the A-B-A set was held on November 6, 1993, in Jim Thorpe when the Tri-State unit was dedicated to the memory of project originator Mike Miterko, who had passed away in 1992 after a long battle with cancer.

The trio made a lot of friends over the next dozen years. But they did leave Jim Thorpe in 1994 for wheel and truck work, sent to the Winchester & Western

shops at Bridgeton, N.J. Tri-State received a grant from the NRHS that helped put all-new wheels under the 44, and ARHS also bought a couple of wheelsets for the 46. As a side note, during the shell game from the CF7 / 46 / 44 wheel change outs, the trucks from the CF7 are now under the 44; the trucks from the 44 are under the 46, and the trucks from the 46, that came without traction motors, went to scrap in Reading with the CF7 carbody. Major components from the first CF7 survive in both units.



Richard Jahn shot the pair on a freight train in Mannington, NJ - November, 1995

In the middle 2000's the Reading & Northern took over the scenic trains out of Jim Thorpe, rendering the F3s jobless and not pulling trains. Inactivity is the worst thing for old locomotives. Tri-State was considering bringing the 44 to Morristown to work on it. It was a call to Steamtown superintendent Kip Hagan in 2009 that pitched the idea to bring the pair to Scranton. We later met Hagan and his staff with a presentation showing the Lackawanna F3s working alongside

steam in Scranton and serviced in the very shop designed for F-units that Steamtown uses today. Painted in Lackawanna freight colors, the B&A F3s could help tell the story of steam by showing what vanquished it. These are steam-era diesels, after all. As a Scranton son who remembered the F3s in service, Superintendent Hagan liked the idea and supported it. The ARHS collection moved to Scranton later in 2009 (ARHS still leases the Tri-State unit, and the exhibition permit at Steamtown is in ARHS's name). The National Railway Historical Society was going to hold its annual convention in Scranton the last week of June 2010, so that became a goal and gave the project a deadline.



F-Troop Members doing the body work in 2010 – Photos by F-Troop Members

The first step for Tri-State was fund raising. In a very generous gesture, the Volunteer Railroaders Association agreed to jointly run an Easter Bunny train with Tri-State to help start the project. It was very successful and created seed money. A "Buy-A-Panel" campaign got the new panels and the 440 pan-head screws to hold them in place paid for. As soon as the winter weather let up we went to work. Since the 46 needed mostly lighter work it went into the roundhouse. The 44 needed work that was much more involved, so it stayed outside. The sides were so rusty that every screw and bolt had to be torched off. Stripping the 44 down to its skeleton revealed a lot of rust and dust that had accumulated over the past 60 years. The college-age volunteers were great

about getting into the tight places, such as the area under the cab floor. The entire unit was cleaned, sanded and needle-scaled. A new floor was welded into much of the engine room, and the nose had rusted through below the door and around the number boxes. Tri-State volunteer Joe VanHoorebeke was a master welder and was a craftsman around the front door. We called it “Joe’s Nose” throughout the project. Each work session was immediately followed with pictures and descriptions in a newsletter circulated via e-mail and social media. Interest and enthusiasm grew, and so did the contributions of money and time. The regulars began calling themselves the “F-Troop,” and the name stuck.

When the work on the 46 was completed, it was moved to the painting area and the 44 was moved into the roundhouse. There a hot water high-pressure power washer removed the CNJ paint easily and quickly, and in many places the paint came off in sheets. The high-pressure water got into the screened areas well without removing any metal, and it had no grit to cause damage and other issues. The original body panels were thin sheets of metal on both sides of a sheet of plywood. A local metal shop made heavier steel sheets with flat bar stock welded to the perimeter to make up the thickness, and then had the entire assembly powder-coated to protect it for generations. All ten panels were done this way, and we also had the exterior grab irons and hand holds powder-coated, as well as the batten strips that support the body panels. The panels attached easily, and we continued with the body work to make the 44 look as new as possible while ARHS continued to mask and paint.

Masking the striping required much more time than either group planned. The stripes, of course, were numerous in that paint scheme. It’s now the end of the first week of June and the 46 is still being sprayed. With less than ten days to go, the 44 gets to the painting area and we begin prepping and finishing the last of the sanding.

With time before the convention rapidly running short, we decided to mask the maroon letters and shoot the entire unit gray for the Convention. In the late 1950s the Lackawanna began repainting the F3s in a solid gray scheme to save time and money. We acted as if we planned it, but we had a Lackawanna “gray ghost” painted and parked just for Convention goers. It was right up to the wire; we were putting the grab irons and horns on it just hours before the Convention night shots. But the Gray Ghost was a hit.



Volunteers striping and painting in 2010 – Photos by F-Troop Members

We were back in Scranton on July 4th weekend masking the curves and the stripes. With the gray paint already on we had to mask for the maroon, and then again for the gold, and yet again for the black. More than 4000 feet of masking went on and had to be pulled off of each locomotive. The painting and masking and scuffing for the next coat and painting again required nearly five weeks during brutal hot days in Scranton. We worked outdoors with a steam locomotive passing maybe a dozen times some days. On August 17, 2010, we saw a fully painted Lackawanna 663 for the first time. It was magnificent.



Still missing its horns – 663 is just hours away from its debut – 6/23/10, Mike Del Vecchio photo

It's been a good relationship in Scranton. The F3s have become an integral part of the Park experience, and Steamtown management and mechanical teams have been so very supportive. And the F3s have become a draw on their own. The relationship between ARHS and Tri-State has been solid and cooperative, and it's safe to say that it's this relationship that's kept these beauties running. The overall project chairman is Rich Jahn, who was involved from the beginning more than 30 years ago.



*August 17, 2010 – Paint job completed! This paint scheme was developed by EMD's Leland Knickerbocker, known for the Santa Fe's Warbonnet scheme.
Mike Del Vecchio photo*

The 663 and 664 have been good runners in Scranton. They're now 70-year-old locomotives and problems do pop up, especially after sitting out the winters. But the ARHS and Tri-State volunteers and the Steamtown shop people keep them going. Early in July 2013 one of the engineers reported a vibration in the compressor of the 44. We pulled it out for a rebuild, by PowerRail in nearby Duryea, PA. While surveying the main generator we discovered pieces of it where they shouldn't be. That required a couple of the crankshaft bearings to be replaced. Once again, help came from all over and we were able to have the

original main generator completely rebuilt to better-than-new specs, by EMS in Altoona where they did a magnificent job.



Richard Jahn tending to his charges - June 30, 2018 - JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

We enlisted old-school NJTransit mechanics to help reinstall these major components, which had to be dialed in with precision. In 2014 another fundraiser produced grants from the NRHS and others for the purchase of a set of brand new batteries. Since then the 44 developed transition troubles, and Mike Schreiber from George Silcott Locomotive Services helped us resolve those. Among the goals for 2019 is to get the dynamic brakes working in the 44 to help the Steamtown crews on those stiff Pocono Mountain grades. (46 never had dynamic brakes.)

Lovers of the Bangor & Aroostook F3s should plan to see them at Steamtown.

The season begins Memorial Day weekend and culminates with the fall foliage trips in October. Labor Day weekend features the annual Lackawanna Railfest weekend that features the F3s and other visiting equipment and special displays. Tri-State and ARHS also run special trains with them, and there are high hopes to have them pull vintage freight cars.

The preservation community is grateful to the Bangor & Aroostook and its employees and managers for taking such good care of the F3s to keep them running long enough to be preserved, and for the help of Harold Bell and others for supporting their preservation. Future generations will get to experience the majesty and drama of the streamliner era as a result.

To keep in touch, both ARHS and Tri-State have facebook pages, and websites (www.anthraciterailroads.org; www.tristaterail.org) Please consider a contribution to keep the units running. Even a \$5 or \$10 monthly recurring paypal contribution means so much, and it makes the donor part of the "F-Troop." The F3s are still racing against time, but this time they are in service and keeping a schedule. Long may they race against time.

About the author:

Mike Del Vecchio is serving his 25th year as president of the Tri-State Chapter NRHS, first joining the Board in 1986 and again in 1991. Through his working career he has been the associate editor of Railfan & Railroad, Railway Age, and the engineering editor at Railway Track & Structures, before hiring out on the Morristown & Erie as a trainman, trainmaster and a superintendent. Today he is employed by Watco at the Bayway Terminal Switching Company as a trainmaster. He also serves as an editor to the Tri-State Chapter's "The Block Line" magazine and as the F3 Project Leader for the Tri-State NRHS chapter



On September 15, 2018 during the 2018 Anthracite Railways Historical Society Convention, the ex-B&A F3's bracket an ex-Boston and Maine F7B, going through Lehigh Summit, Pennsylvania. This beautiful shot appears courtesy of Richard Jahn.

A HEART TRANSPLANT: HOW A GROUP REBUILT 46 BY RICHARD JAHN



*46 proves that locomotives were not meant to fly, but fly they must! This 1988 photo inside the Reading, PA shops shows 46 and the donor CF7 used for parts.
Richard Jahn photo*

Bangor and Aroostook 44 and 46 arrived in New Jersey in the spring of 1986. ARHS had purchased the 46 and although the cab was left intact, there was a big empty space where the engine, main generator and air compressor should have been. There also were no traction motors or electrical switch gear. Options were to restore the exterior and park as static display, restore for operation as a cab car mated to Tri-States F3, #44, or go all the way and restore it as an operating locomotive. We decided to move forward on the last option. A move from the M&E to the former Reading Co. Shops at Reading proved to be fortuitous as we gained a better working location, railroad people from local area to learn from, a facility to work in and luckily a source of needed parts from an unwanted Santa Fe CF7. Actual work began in the spring of 1987 with cleaning of the engine room, minor cosmetic work and removal of remaining old wire. Over the next several months wiring diagrams were obtained, CF7 switch gear installed into the F3 and rewiring the main control cabinet and entire cab. This continued through the winter and spring of 1987 and 1988.



46 and its donor CF7 await the transplant, April 1988, Richard Jahn photo.

By late March and early April we were able to move the unit and CF7 from outside the shop to inside where, using the large overhead cranes, a truck swap took place so we gained traction motors. We also removed the engine, generator and air compressor from the CF7 and reinstalled these components into the F3. Finally she was looking more like a locomotive.



September 1988, 46 is being prepped for paint and being wired in Swedeland, PA. Richard Jahn photo.

Many had doubted us and said this F3 would never run again. This only spurred the Restoration Committee on. Because the Reading Shop buildings had been sold we once again had to move in late summer of 1988, this time to the Upper Merion and Plymouth Railroad near Conshohocken, PA. We continued wiring and started body work at our new location, which was on the property of a former

Alan Wood Steel mill while it was being demolished. We removed rust, hired a welder to patch holes and other metal work and had the unit sandblasted while on the UMP. We also replaced almost all lower body side panels which had rusted through. Original EMD side panels were a composite ply-metal which was thin sheet metal over plywood. Later improved replacements sold by EMD were smooth metal facing backed by corrugations. Both types were subject to failure by rusting from the inside out. We replaced both types with solid 1/8" steel. Meanwhile the electrical wiring had been mostly completed and new batteries were purchased and installed. With all the primer work done outside a small building with track in it was located on another part of the UMP. We negotiated to use this building for the final painting of the Central New Jersey blue and tangerine colors. Masking and painting took place in this small building out of the weather. Painting was completed in August 1989. One other historical moment occurred while the F3 was in this building: we started and ran the unit for the first time. The diesel engine could now run but the locomotive still could not move as the generator was not making current. Once again the F3, now painted and lettered as CRP#56, was on the move north to Jim Thorpe, PA. The last bugs would be worked out in Jim Thorpe where #56 would finally move once again under its own power. Our small group of non-railroaders had achieved what some had said was not possible.

About the author:

Richard Jahn co-founded the Anthracite Railroads Historical Society in 1975, still serves as the first vice president of the ARHS and is the editor of 'Flags Diamonds & Statues', the ARHS magazine. He is the Chief Mechanical Officer for both of the F3s at Steamtown and has been involved with the 44 and 46 since 1985



Inside the hood of 664 (46) June 30, 2018. Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

AT A LOSS FOR WORDS

BY JOEY KELLEY

I suppose titling an article “At a loss for Words” is a bit ironic – but words do seem somehow insufficient to describe an experience so unique, so wonderful that I cannot truly explain it, but I will try.

Early in 2018, I reached out to Richard Jahn, Chief Mechanical Officer for the ex-B&A F3s located at Steamtown in Scranton, PA. I asked him about dates that they would be running and that he might be around to give a tour of the units – the sort of behind-the-scenes, up-close and personal tour that you get only with someone who has spent decades with two pieces of equipment. We nailed down a date and I made travel plans. Another railfan and I made the trip down and arrived on the morning of June 30, 2018, at Steamtown. Mr. Jahn was right there and after greeting us, took us to meet up with the F3s. We went through both 663 (B&A 44) and 664 (B&A 46) and I must say, I was impressed with the care, attention, maintenance and in some cases upgrades and updates that have been done to various parts of these two locomotives. We were rapidly approaching the excursion train departure time and I planned on departing soon to get ahead of the train and get some pictures. Mr. Jahn had another idea. He invited us to ride the units.

Those who know me personally know that I am rarely unable to come up with something to say. This was one of those times. We accepted and climbed aboard.

I had been in an F-unit before so some of the noises and vibrations were familiar. My friend however, had never been in an F-unit before. As we rolled through the yard, the familiar whine of a 567 series EMD prime mover echoing around the cab, I had no idea what was coming.

As the tail end of the train cleared the yard limit, the engineer widened out the throttle – I’m pretty sure all the way to the 8th notch. It was glorious. This was no sleepy shortline excursion train – this was ON-44 hammering up grade. The 567s turned up – the floor vibrated – the countryside flashed past at a track speed somewhere around 25 MPH – not the sleepy 10 I had expected. Those original single tone horns, with their loud foghorn-like blast called out for each crossing and we rode those two perfectly tuned beasts up that grade without a hint of exhaust smoke. It was an incredible experience. Nothing prepared me for the rush of knowing that I was riding where countless B&A employees had tread – nothing prepared me for the realization that these locomotives might be ‘retired’, but they were still able to put out the horsepower when asked – thanks to people like Richard Jahn.



I can fake being an engineer with the best of them!

The rest of the trip was almost anticlimatic compared to that initial run up to track speed on the trip out. Approaching the lunch stop at Moscow, PA, we met an opposing freight train, powered by Alco and MLW built locomotives, that I got to photograph from inside the cab of a B&A F-unit! Later, a young railroad fan (about 10 years old) was sent up into the cab to have a look around. I got to give him a tour and even take his picture at the controls of a locomotive easily 7 times his age. My friend and I rode the trip back down in the locomotive cab as well and it was a great trip – but nothing – nothing – compared to that run up the hill – when I could shut my eyes and believe, if only for a moment, that I was back in time.

Thank you Richard Jahn – for providing an experience I will never forget!
If you wish to support the Anthracite Railways Historical Society – which keeps the F3's operational – take out a membership, as I have, by joining at <http://www.anthracerailroads.org> and clicking on membership.



MLW built Alcos pass our excursion train on the trip out and from inside the cab of 663 on the return trip – both June 30, 2018, Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com



Captured after the excursion train returned, These two F3s still sound good on June 30th, 2018. Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

From the Archives



Winter Storage: From left to right, 56, 44, 46 and 557 are in storage at NMJ. What is really interesting about this shot, is that all of these locomotives have made it into preservation. Only 52 and 54 are missing from the preserved roster. January, 1982, photographer unknown, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection



46, 57 and 56 were captured by an unknown photographer in Searsport sometime in 1977. Collection of JoeyKelleyPhoto.com



44 and 76 are in Van Buren on September 14, 1972, George W. Turnbull photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

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