

Spring 2025

# MAINE LINE

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



MaineLineMagazine.JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

# TALKING IT OVER



My fellow Bangor and Aroostook enthusiasts, with this issue, we hopefully have (finally!) said goodbye to Old Man Winter and entered Spring. A time of rebirth, where the birds sing, the flowers bloom and the days seem just a bit brighter than they did even on the clearest of winter days. 22 years after the Bangor and Aroostook went into history, interest in this railroad we all care about seems high. This issue contains a mixed bag of new things, old things and some historical research. A lot of questions have been asked in various articles and I for one would welcome the answers.

We are facing a crisis - now that we are over two decades past the end of the Bangor and Aroostook, I really must stress that those who have information, experiences, documents, stories of the Bangor and Aroostook reach out. Your stories are valued by all of us in this little railroad community. We need to get them recorded before the opportunity to do so is lost. Reach out - let's talk.

This issue has some unique stories and some research never before published, I would like to think this is at least one resource people will point to when looking for information on the B&A's Troop Sleeper cabooses.

In addition, a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes to make the Maine Line website a clearing house for all things Bangor and Aroostook. Its very much a work in progress, but you will find documents published on the website that you will literally find no where else.

A quick reminder, articles, photos, topics of interest are always able to be submitted, please reach out, this magazine is only as good as the content, which is only as good as the material I have to work with! Happy Railroading!

*-Joey*

"Joey" Kelley, Editor

## **Maine Line Magazine**

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# ABOUT THE COVER



Bob Schmidt photographed C-89 trailing a Northbound into Northern Maine Junction on September 28, 1971. Given the oil tankers this is most likely coming from Searsport. From the JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

REAR Cover: An advertising display from the B&A reminding you to Think Twice - PRE-ICE! Courtesy of the B&A Archives photo collection





# Rule of the Month

STORES DEPARTMENT  
APRIL 1986

17.16 - Wear proper protection when using equipment. Proper protective clothing should include hear protection, leather welding gloves, oil-free clothing without cuffs or open pockets where slag could become lodged. High safety shoes should be worn and trousers should not be tucked in. Cup type goggles with colored lenses must be worn when using equipment. Ear protection must be worn when performing overhead work where unusually high potential for ear injury exists.

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

cc: S. C. Hamlin  
C. W. Witham  
G. E. Mossey  
**File**



## BANGOR AND AROOSTOOK RAILROAD COMPANY

**SUBJECT:** CO-ORDINATION OF FREIGHT TRAIN SERVICE - BAR, MED, B&M, &  
NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN & HARTFORD

**TO -** H. P. Lee

**FROM -** P. H. Swales *J*

I have agreed to meet with representatives of the Maine Central, Boston & Maine, and New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad in the Maine Central Railroad conference room in Portland at 10:30 A.M. on Thursday, May 25, 1967 for the purpose of discussing possible co-ordination of freight train schedules and I would like to have you accompany me to this meeting.

I am attaching copies of two memoranda prepared by H. F. Vaughan, Assistant General Manager of the Boston & Maine Railroad which contain certain specific recommendations with regard to changing train service on the railroads involved. Although these recommendations do not contemplate our putting on additional freight train service to connect with the recommended 1:00 P.M. departure from a Maine Central train from Bangor, I am sure that somewhere in the background considerable thought has been given to our doing substantially more classifying of traffic than we are doing at present.

Please be prepared to comment on the various suggestions contained in these memoranda. You should also make notes on any suggestions you may have for more expeditious handling of this traffic.

Frankly, the schedule suggested by Mr. Vaughan in his memorandum of May 10, 1967 does not appear to be too realistic as it does not give very much time at interchange points. I notice too, that it allows only four hours of transit time between Northern Maine Junction and Rigby.

Bangor, Maine

May 18, 1967

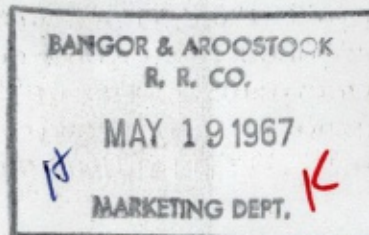
PHS/cad

2

File: 00.91

Attachments

cc: H. L. Cousins, Jr.





# MAINE LINE REWIND



57 years ago in the Maine Line:

March - April 1968 Issue

- W. Jerome Strout is President
- What happened to the Family Farm?
- Don Campbell's Hunting Hounds
- Don't let your children play on the tracks!
- Smith and Wesson open a plant in Houlton
- The Advisory Council approach to Management - A success!
- In The Family of the B&A

The March - April 1968 issue was Volume 16 and Issue number 2. In 1968, the Maine Line was being produced every other month.

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



Photo by Richard B. "Dick" Gassett - 82 being re-railed at Millinocket - July 19, 1976 - JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

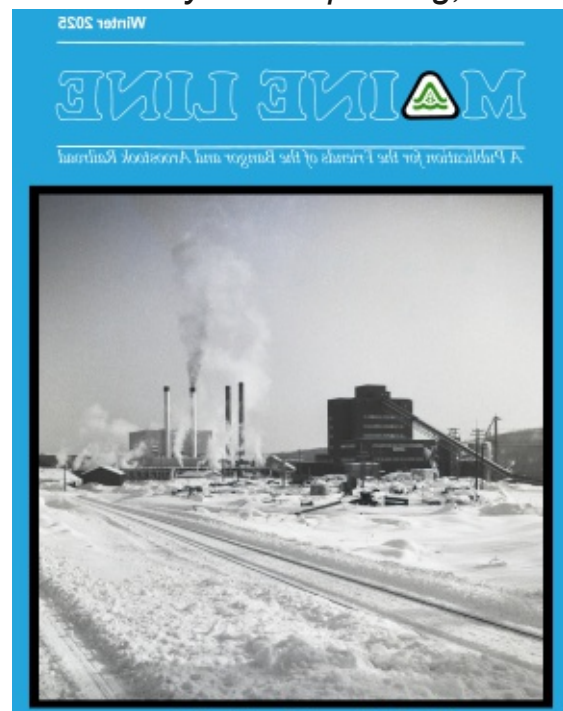
# RE-RAILINGS

Despite our best efforts to keep the *Maine Line* on track, occasionally something slips. In this issue we would like to address two failings to provide the most accurate magazine possible from our last issue, the Winter 2025 issue.

Reader Billy Grimes commented on the announcement of the Rapido models of 91-94 that the article mentions that four were on the roster. Billy quite correctly pointed out the error - five were in fact on the roster, for some reason Rapido has started at 91, when the first one on the roster was 90. Thank you Billy for the correction, you are correct, the error was on this end. Note the picture of 90! Curious though, why Rapido would start their numbering one into the series? Perhaps we will never know. *Photo by Mike Spearing, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



Right: Well this one is truly embarrassing! Somehow, despite all of the people who saw the Winter 2025 cover, only one reader, noticed that the picture on the cover was actually reversed! Apparently, the negative was scanned backwards and without any immediately obvious lettering to indicate it was backwards, your humble (?) editor missed it. If you look to the right, the cover has been reversed but the picture is now correct! The mistake was an honest one, the image looked like the East side of the East Mill, but was in fact a reversed image of the West side. Our apologies and thank you for the correction!







## NOT QUITE RIGHT

Within the model railroading world, there is a subset of modelers called 'Rivet Counters'. Sometimes used as an insult, sometimes used as a compliment it refers to those who would painstakingly count the number of rivets on a particular piece of real equipment then ensure that their model matched. Although your editor will admit that he does jump back and forth across this line, occasionally one finds that one cannot even fathom how wrong something could be.

Late one night (always the best time to be making purchasing decisions on the internet) your editor was kicking around on a model railroad supplier's website and found that the Walthers 57 foot mechanical reefer cars were on sale! Four numbers available! Limited stock! Well lets get all four before they are gone! Soon the cart had four reefers in it and before you could say 'Hold on a minute' the credit card was charged and four reefers were headed for Maine.

It was only AFTER hitting the BUY button that your editor began to realize that something might be wrong. When the reefers arrived, it was clear that someone had very badly misjudged the proper paint color.





Above: Three pictures by Richard B. "Dick" Gassett, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection - 6986 in Framingham, MA in 1981, 5877 in Framingham, MA in 1972 and 9000 in Springfield, MA in 1972.

As you can clearly see from the photos above, the B&A certainly had cars that are nearly a dead ringer color wise for these models, each of these are classes of boxcars, not refridgerator cars.

As far as your editor is aware, there were 57 foot mechanical reefers in an orange / yellow color that was very different, some in green and some in gray. A web search revealed a photo with a 300 series reefer in grey.

Next Page Top: 11131 in an unknown location in January of 1980, photographer unknown, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

Next Page Bottom: 214 at Northern Maine Junction, October 28, 1974, Richard B. "Dick" Gassett photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection







Lest we become too critical, the cars themselves are of high quality. They are quite heavy, roll very well, have metal wheels right out of the box and in general excude a high quality model feel. Graphics are crisp, the detailing is well beyond the minimum required for an HO model with air brake equipment, the step to access the door and fuel tank all modeled accurately. The models themselves are top notch.

With the exception of the completely wrong color, these are excellent (and when on clearance quite affordable) models.

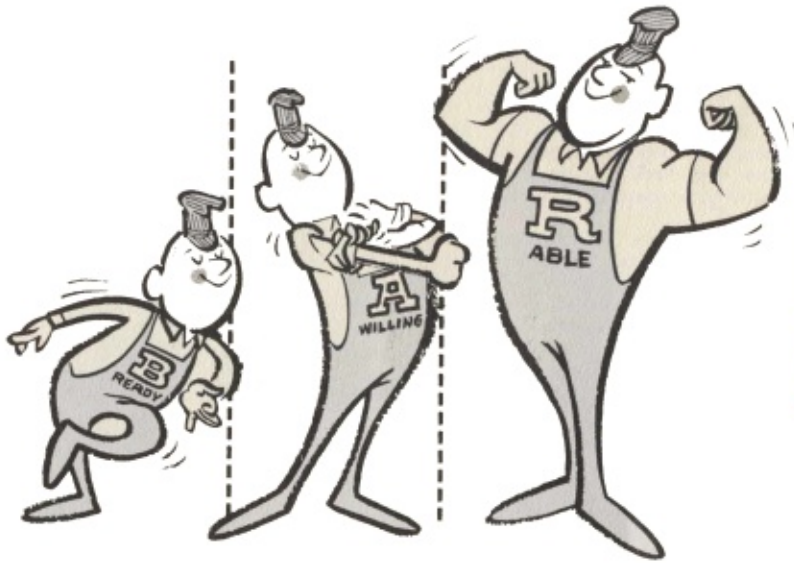
Which leaves us with a question. Obviously the B&A car shop had this color (or one very close to it) available. How come the reefers never got this color? Honestly it looks good, is distinctive and eye catching.

These four will see a lot of service and they will represent to your editor an excellent example of a path not taken.

*Model photos for this article were taken on the Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club layout in Orland, Maine. All four are in active service. 303 is spotted below near the warehouse to unload some perishable beverages.*



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## B&A AT THE BIG E

*Above: B&A wooden sign at a vendor table at the Big E.*

The Big E. The Springfield Show. Officially known as the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show, it is held annually at the Eastern States Exposition (aka The Big E) in West Springfield, Mass each January. From their website, [RailroadHobbyShow.com](http://RailroadHobbyShow.com) "The Railroad Hobby Show is the largest railroad-themed trade show in America. The event occupies 350,000 square feet in four buildings on the Eastern States Exposition fairgrounds. The show covers all facets of the railroad hobbies - model railroads, railroad art and photography, railroad history and preservation, tourist railroads, railroad artifacts, and railroad books and videos."

If it is the biggest in the US, I would be surprised if there is one bigger somewhere else. In 2024 17,000 people attended on Saturday alone - and the rumor for 2025 was 18,000 on Saturday alone! If you want to hit one train show in a year - this is the one to hit. Vendors come from all across the country and in fact the world. It is both awesome in size and scope and a bit intimidating. One person put it best. "If you see something you want to buy, you better get it because if you don't, someone else will. Or you will forget where you saw it!" This is very true!

But, 22 years after the Bangor and Aroostook ceased operations, what can you find of it at the Big E?





The answer? Quite a bit! Although I made no effort to catalog, photograph or even guess at the number of HO scale models of Bangor and Aroostook cars and locomotives around for a railroad gone for two decades, there were several. The Bowser CMQ 9017 model pictured came home with me! I neglected to get the name of the folks that produced that excellent illuminated mirror, but the quality seemed quite high. Creative Reproductions, which you can find on eBay at: <https://www.ebay.com/str/creativereproductions> offers these wooden signs with various railroad logos on them and also offers them as a magnet. Both came home with me!



Bespoke Rail - [bespokerail.com](http://bespokerail.com) - offers a line of tumblers in various railroad colors. They are hand painted, graphics are applied by hand and the whole tumbler is covered in epoxy. At \$45, for the 30 oz size, they are not cheap, but they are extremely good quality. I have been using mine daily and like it very much. I asked about doing a tri-color tumbler, but due to the painting required, each one would have to be painted three times and masked, just like the real thing.







*Previous Page: Products from Mohawk Design and the 30 oz tumbler from Bespoke Rail*

Mohawk Design - mohawk-design.com - has a variety of Bangor and Aroostook products. A beanie with the Keystone logo flanked by red white and blue stripes, a long sleeve t-shirt featuring the keystone on the front and a map on the back and my personal favorite, the State of Maine boxcar shirt, with a color image on the back and blue lettering on the front. A copy of each came home with me!

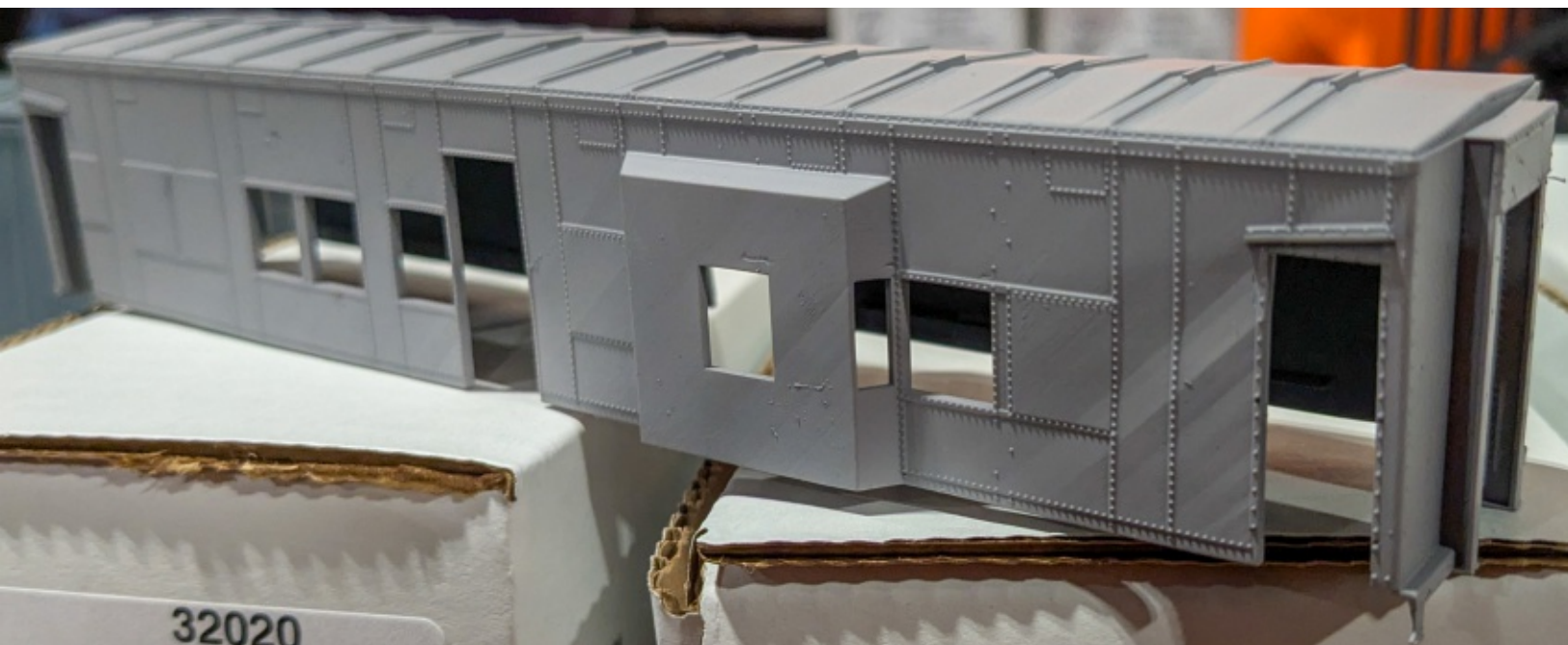
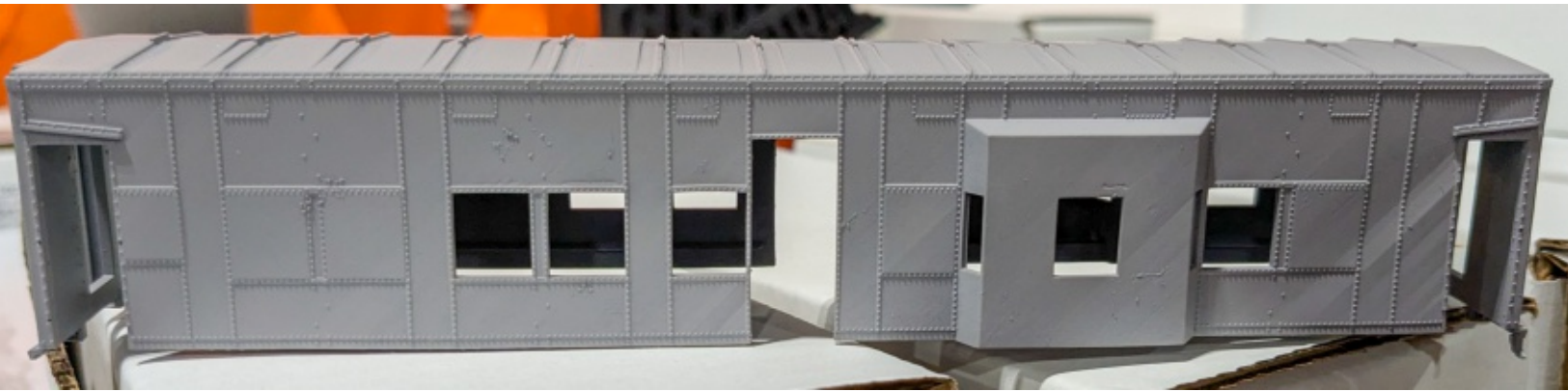
I expected to find things like shirts, books, some slides and of course models in various scales at vendor tables. I came home with at least one example of each of these. I was not expecting to find this calmly sitting on a manufacturers display shelf.



This is a Bangor and Aroostook tri-color painted GMD GP-40-2W being offered by Atlas, in HO. No, this is not an April Fools joke! They are being offered in three numbers and are scheduled to come out sometime soon. Atlas of course works through hobbyshops and distributors so final pricing is up to the retailer. Not available at the show, but, I came home and pre-ordered one of each of the numbers. Be looking for a review in greater detail once they arrive. An interesting comment from a different manufacturer, paraphrased, is that since there are so few major railroads now, we will probably see more of these fantasy paint schemes as manufacturers try to get more road names out there for their tooling.

If you liked this - wait until you see whats on the next page!







Announced the day before the show, 3D Central, a company specializing in 3D printed model railroad kits and some pre-assembled models, announced that they are going to release a 3D printed model of Bangor and Aroostook troop sleeper cabooses. This is HUGE folks. This is the first time that someone has offered for sale anything remotely resembling a troop sleeper caboose. You have been able to buy troop sleeper kits for years, but to make them into a B&A caboose? Well, that was a bit more difficult. Just to give a brief summary - one has to cut doorways on both sides of both ends of the caboose, cut out part of the side to install a bay window and plate over some of the windows. That's the short list - there are numerous other details to convert a troop sleeper into a caboose and no one has offered anything close in a production model. The photos really do not do it justice - the detail is incredible. I am in hopes to leverage my photo collection along with other documentation in order to help make these as accurate as possible.

The single greatest thing that I found at Springfield 2025 was the number of people who went out of their way to say hello, to compliment the magazine, to offer encouragement or just thanks for continuing to put out this magazine. It really means the world to me and I appreciate every person who took the time out to say something. Yes folks, it's all about the people in the end and it was great to catch up with the guys from New England Railroad Uniforms as shown below.







# BACK ON THE MARKET: 90 DIESEL SHOP ROAD

If you flash back to the Fall 2023 Maine Line - you might remember that the former roundhouse property at 90 Diesel Shop Road, Hermon, had just changed hands. After a long chain of tax liens, foreclosures and mortgages, the property was finally free and clear by August 14, 2023. Owned by a MAVACA, LLC out of Florida, the price on the auction website for the purchase at the time was \$675,000.

Thanks to one of our readers who bumped into your editor at Springfield (you know who you are and thanks!) your editor became aware that the property was back on the market. Officially listed back in September, the current agent, Douglas M. Erickson, CCIM, Managing Director SVN The Masiello Group, took over the listing around January 1st. Mr. Erickson has graciously provided the photos in this piece so thank you to him! Currently the asking price is \$2,900,000.00 or \$2.9 million.













If you would like more information on the property, the listing is available at:

<https://svnmasiellogroup.com/property-search/1420870-sale/>

or just do a search for 90 Diesel Shop Road, Hermon, Maine and you will find it.

Who knows what the next chapter is for the property down at the end of Diesel Shop Road!

Thanks again to Mr. Erickson for the use of the photos!



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**HISTORICAL AND TECH. SOC.**

# A TALE OF TWO ORGANIZATIONS

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,  
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness...."  
A Tale of Two Cities - Charles Dickens, 1859*

If the names of either of the organizations above fails to ring a bell in your memory, even distantly, it is not surprising. Ironically, the story of these two organizations seems like different chapters in the same book, with the same sad ending.

This tale begins long after both of these organizations ceased to exist when one day my adopted Grandfather, Neil MacDonald, was cleaning out some old paperwork and stumbled upon a few of the newsletters of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Historical and Technical Society. (We will use the BARHATS abbreviation from here on out as the full name is simply too long) When I asked what had happened to this organization that I had, literally, never heard of - all I got was a shrug. Into my collection these went and there they would reside, literally for years, until a chance encounter with some MORE copies of this newsletter sent me into research mode.

Before I get too far down this story of two organizations - if you go over to the Maine Line website: <https://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com/> - you will find pages labeled Pine Tree Flyer - Railroad Historical Society of Maine and BAR Historical and Technical Society. Both contain PDFs of newsletters, a lot of which is the source of what you are about to read. The BARHATS page is missing a lot of the issues, if you should happen to have any of the missing ones, please reach out!

One of the issues missing from my collection is the premier issue of the BARHATS newsletter. I would like to have a copy of that issue to hopefully answer a few of the questions about who started it and why. This issue would be from somewhere around January of 1974. Unfortunately, we are left largely with guesses on those fronts, particularly the why. One might assume, quite logically, that the BARHATS would be based out of Maine, with the Bangor and Aroostook confined to the Northern half of the state, this would make logical sense. However, the organization was initially based out of New York. Issue number 2 of the first volume of the newsletter lists a Don M. Greenburg as President and a Waldo R. Kingston as corresponding secretary. Those interested in corresponding with BARHATS were directed to mail their letters to an address in Peakskill, NY.



The content of the newsletters in my collection is surprising. Although always related to railroads in Maine, it would seem that the BARHATS newsletter was a bit light on content about its namesake. The Maine Central figures prominently in many newsletters, but one is almost completely devoted to the Monson Railroad. The content is good, but just not about the B&A. The last issue in my collection, the June 1977 issue contains a note about the newsletter having been mailed in April of 1978. Although I cannot confirm this, this may be the last issue released by the BARHATS. What became of the organization? If you or anyone you know remembers this organization please reach out!

Skipping forward a few years to 1981, the Railroad Historical Society of Maine (RRHSOM from here on) released its first newsletter in the Fall. The Pine Tree Flyer would release a total of six issues. Not being restricted to a single railroad, the B&A content is mixed in with other railroads, current and past. The first issue however lists Jerry Angier as the treasurer and contains a lengthy article by Herb Cleaves, on the Maine Central. To say that the membership was aware of the B&A is a bit of an understatement given those two being involved!

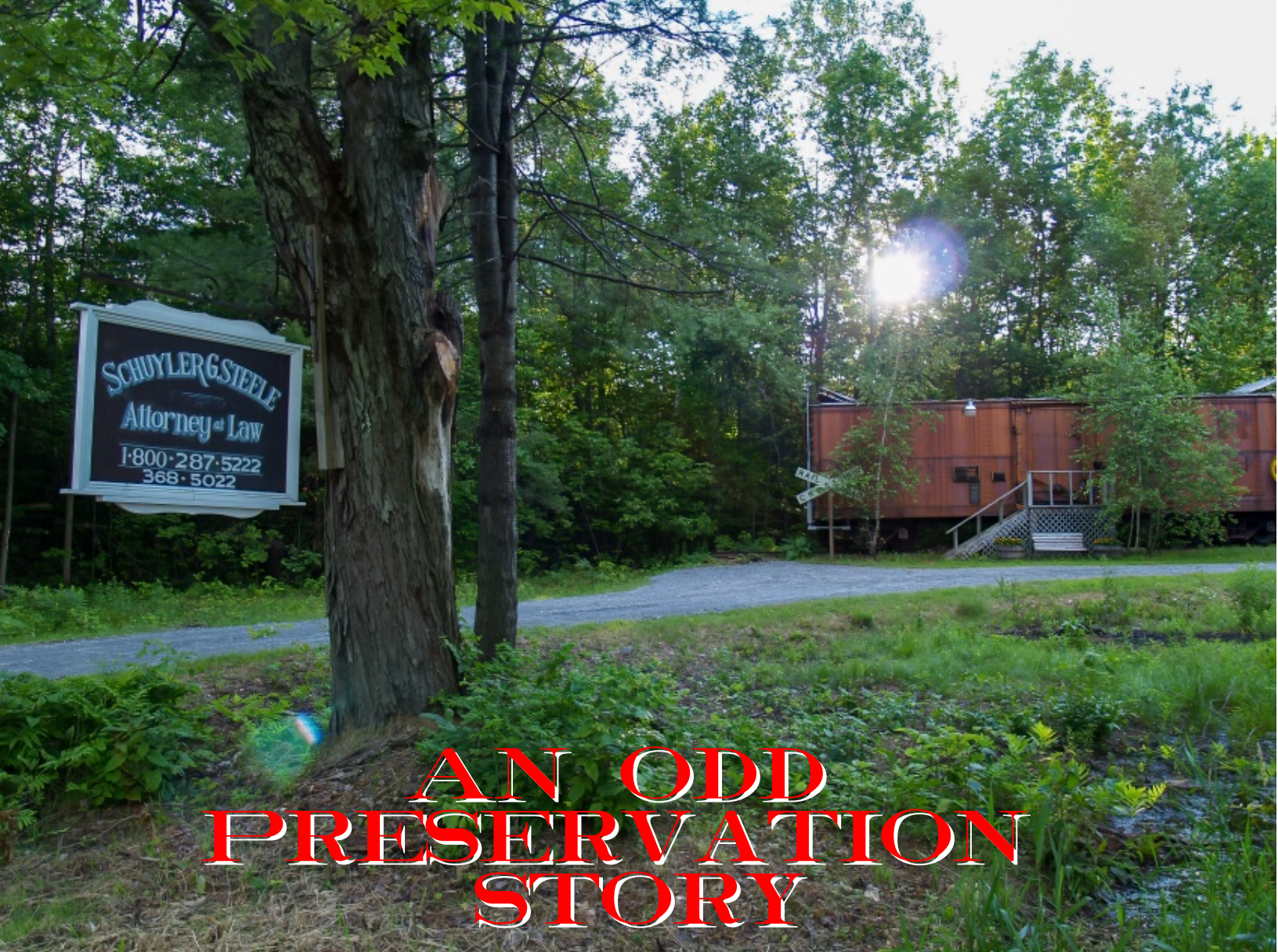
The second issue, Winter 1982 is of particular interest - it contains an article on the Turkey Train by Richard Sprague, yes, Editor of the Maine Line Magazine Richard Sprague. His photos illustrate the article and one appears on the cover. A short read of this piece gives the impression that it is not a piece from the Maine Line, but in fact a piece that was written for a more general audience. Immediately following is a one-page summary of the B&A's diesel locomotive roster, compiled by Robert Worcester. There is at least some Bangor and Aroostook content in every issue of the Pine Tree Flyer, even if it is only a picture on the photo page or a note or correction on a previous issue's article.

Despite a professionally printed newsletter and over 300 members, something began to slip. Volume 2, Issue 2, came out in 1984, a long time after Volume 2, Issue 1. There are a pair of notes, talking of how busy the organization has been and one about how Volume 2, issues 3 and 4 will be combined and that they are working on getting them out as soon as possible. Attached to the last issue is a very different style document - type written - dated January of 1985. It contains a presidents message and short piece from the Editor of the Pine Tree Flyer, Ron Palmquist. Apparently costs to produce the Pine Tree Flyer have shot up by as much as 50 percent and that they are trying to find another printer. Since this is, literally, the last piece of information your editor has been able to locate about the RRHSOM, it would seem that they were unsuccessful.

In a strange twist, the IRS website lists a 501c3 non profit organization on its website, with a tax-exempt status revocation date of 2010. It notes that was automatically revoked after three consecutive years of not filing the appropriate paperwork. Does this mean that from 1985, when the last printed information can be found, to the year of 2007, someone was filing the paperwork each year to keep RRHSOM alive? There is no information to be found on the organization, the tax ID number does not bring up any hits. Did the RRHSOM vanish in 1985 or did it survive well into the 2000s? Why can no trace of it seem to be found? Why are there no newsletters or publications? Does anyone out there know?

Two organizations - similar stories. Lets see if someone can help fill in the blanks!





*Above: 8319 as the office of Schuyler G. Steele, Attorney at Law. Right on route 100 in Palmyra, Maine July 6, 2006 Photo by Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com*

Those traveling the roads of the State of Maine should not be shocked to find various pieces of railroad equipment scattered around on lawns, back lots and in yards being used for everything from sheds to arcades.

Perhaps the most unique use of a retired boxcar was this one. 8319, a 1954 vintage 40 foot refridgerated boxcar, was along side Route 100 in Palmyra for many years. Schuyler G. Steele, Esquire, set up his law practice in 8319 in 1991. His obituary is sprinkled with train references and despite losing a battle with colon cancer on March 8, 2010 at the age of 51, you have to admire a man who put his law practice into a 40 foot reefer!

In late 2016 the 8319 was put up for sale, with the condition that it needed to be moved. Your editor tried and failed to have it donated for preservation to the Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad, only a short distance away. When this failed and the reefer disappeared, your editor feared the worse.

Somehow, years later one cannot remember exactly how, word reached your editor that it had moved to Machias. From the outside this was an odd, costly move that did not make a lot of sense. Your editor wondered why.





*Above: 8319 in Machias, Maine, adjacent to the former Calais Branch of the Maine Central, now a trail. February 16, 2022, Photo by Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com*

Fast forwarding to 2025, 8319 had been sitting in Machias since 2017. On February 6, 2025, Kehben Grier posted a link on the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad Facebook page that 8319 was for sale. The asking price? \$11,000. It turned out that Kehben was the owner and since relocating to the Portland area owning a reefer in Machias no longer made a lot of sense. Kehben had bought the car with the intent of turning it into a tiny home when living in Machias. That was not to be and it was time to move on.

On February 26, 2025, the Machias Ridge Riders Trail Club purchased the 8319 and have arranged to leave it where it is in order to become a club house. It is literally on the trail that used to be the Maine Central Calais Branch.

The Machias Ridge Riders were unable to be reached for comment. We wish them well with their new club house!





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# TROOP SLEEPERS: BRINGING UP THE REAR

*Above: C-10 at Northern Maine Junction, September 29, 1978. Photographer unknown, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection*

For those that are not aware, the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad over its more than 100 year history had about 100 cabooses. This number is based upon a bit of research, although that research was not conclusive. Some time back a negative of caboose C-7 was added to the collection. On the other extreme is caboose C-99. A logical guess is that at some point they started with C-1 and went all the way to C-99. This is, your editor points out, speculation and is not necessarily true. However, it is based upon photographs and the best number available.

Of those approximately 100 cabooses, 19 of them were Troop Sleeper conversions. The Bangor and Aroostook was big into recycling. As far as can be determined, none of the cabooses was purchased new as a caboose. All were converted from something else. These range from passenger cars, to steam locomotive tenders, boxcars, refrigerated cars and of course the Troop Sleepers.

Although this story ends on the Bangor and Aroostook, perhaps we should begin at the beginning, 1943.



Back in 1943 we were still in World War II and the need to move troops around the country was paramount. Simply put, there was not enough passenger equipment to efficiently move the volume of troops around the country that needed to be moved. The call went out to Pullman and to American Car and Foundry. Pullman got a contract for 2400 sleepers and AC&F got a contract for 440 Troop Kitchens which, obviously setup differently, were to be based on the same overall design. Speed and efficiency were the words of the day and the Troop Sleepers were neither the best looking rail cars, nor, one presumes, the most comfortable. Based off the 50 foot AAR boxcar but fitted with Allied Full Cushion trucks, the sleepers were designed to carry 29 servicemen and a Pullman Porter. With bunks stacked three high - the old saying about 'sardines in a can' comes to mind.





*Previous Page: Photos of Troop Sleepers in service are extremely hard to find. These two came from the Hagley Library and Museum, Pennsylvania Railroad Collection and appear courtesy of them. Special thanks to Doug McQuirter for obtaining them out of the collection. Photos: AVD\_PRR\_14525\_001 and AVD\_PRR\_14526\_002 - date on the negatives seems to indicate October 1943. One would presume then these were just about to enter service.*

Seeing service through 1947, the Troop Sleepers were put up for sale and disposal. Not all were sold and particularly the kitchen cars were kept for conversion into other uses by the Department of Defense. Being disposed of at surplus prices, America's railroads picked them up and converted them to a variety of civilian uses. They were after all, essentially a boxcar. The New Haven picked up a few and converted them to Railway Express and baggage cars. You might note however that somewhere along the way, this car lost its Allied Full Cushion trucks in favor of a more common type.



*Above: NH 3659 at the Railroad Museum of New England. May 16, 2023, photo by Howard Pincus*





*Above: Located at the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, this Troop Sleeper is nearly stock appearing from the outside. Photo by Kyle Flanigan, March 29, 2025. In 2025 the number of stock appearing Troop Sleepers is rather small!*

At this time the date the Bangor and Aroostook made the purchase of the Troop Sleepers is unknown but a photo has recently surfaced that shows un-altered Troop Sleepers at Derby on October 19, 1949.

Its hard to believe that the Troop Sleepers arrived before steam locomotives left, but if you happen to have a copy of either of the Jerry Angier / Herb Cleaves books on the Bangor and Aroostook, look at the last page of Chapter 7 of Part 3 of the book, in the background of the photo of a Maine Central locomotive hauling B&A steam locomotives to be scrapped is one of the Troop Sleepers, dated July 27, 1951. This is the earliest dated photograph available showing a Troop Sleeper as a cabooses on the B&A.

For those that have not been to the Maine Line Magazine website lately - <https://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com> - there is now a Cabooses page which contains nearly every photo of a Bangor and Aroostook cabooses in the JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection and many that are not. There are around 100 photos of just Troop Sleepers! Thanks to all the contributors and photographers who made that possible!

Many people think of the Troop Sleepers as being identical. That is of course, not as true as modelers of the Bangor and Aroostook would like! Simply put, each one being hand converted was a little bit different. Also, changes seem to have been implemented across the fleet as ideas changed. Paint schemes varied, although there was a lot of similarity and the last three to be converted appear to have been done with some very different ideas.

A careful study of the Troop Sleeper photos on the Maine Line website will show differences between the same cabooses over time as retrofits were done and doors and windows were changed.

Lets have a look at a rough timeline for the Troop Sleepers Cabooses!





*Un-altered Troop Sleepers at Derby on October 19, 1949. Collection of Matthew Sawyer, the B&A Archives*





The first Troop Sleepers to be converted seem to have started with C-80. Although black and white, we can assume these are silver in color, compared to the wooden caboose also pictured which is likely to be in either brown or boxcar red. Some have stated that these were a light blue, however it is your author's opinion that this is likely a color shift or simply how the silver showed up on that particular type of film. These are some of the earliest photos in the collection of Troop Sleepers and may be the earliest that have a confirmed date. These are dated 1952 and were shot by Vinton Neal in Presque Isle. C-83 with C-82 next to it, both seem to match in coloration.  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection







The photo above comes from the Marketing Department of the B&A and is a companion photo those on the Maine Line website. This particular photo is from Matthew Sawyer's B&A Archives collection. It has crop marks on it, indicating it was probably used in a Maine Line or other printed material. Being undated however, it is difficult to know where to look for it and it remains undated. It is a match to the three photos of C-80 on the Maine Line website, indicating that they came from the same photo session. A close look compared to the photos on the previous page shows some differences. The lettering on the 1952 photograph is different from the one above. The largest difference is the large herald on one end, but also note that there are now red white and blue stripes across the top. The Radio Equipped logo also indicates that we are into the radio age. The photo below comes from Shawn Duren's collection and is a Ralph L. Phillips photo, unfortunately badly color shifted. As near as can be told the body of the caboose should be silver in color. It is however dated, August 1960. Giving us an approximate date of 1960 for this paint scheme. C-87 in Caribou, August 1960.







*Above: C-94 at Northern Maine Junction, June 16, 1963 George Melvin photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*

Less than three years after the previous picture, the paint scheme had changed rather radically. This shot from 1963 shows C-94 in the now familiar red with yellow ends. In addition, the double stripes on the bay window make it more distinctive. The Radio Equipped marking remains, but the rest of the lettering appears to have come straight from the boxcar fleet, including the keystone herald along the top. Look closely and you will see the broken line that indicates this was stenciled on. The stripes on the bay window were white in color and the rest of the lettering yellow, with the caboose number on the ends in black. Take note of the windows - they are still the same size as used on the original troop sleepers, except for the bay windows. The door in the side is also full length and in its original position. The passenger style stairs however have been removed and if you should miss that first step, its a fairly rough drop to the ground.





Above: C-94 at Northern Maine Junction, June 1, 1974. Richard B. "Dick" Gassett photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection

Sticking with C-94, we have the same caboose, just about 11 years later. Still in the red with yellow ends, the most significant change is the windows and center door. The center door has been cut off, plates have been welded in and it has been turned into only a window. The windows to either side (not the bay window however) have been reduced in height by several inches. Given that the red paint is considerably brighter on those metal patches, it would seem that this was a recent change to the configuration. If modeling the Troop Sleepers, one must not only find out which one, but what year one is modeling!





*Above: C-10 in Houlton after a recent rebuild. April 12, 1972. George Melvin photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*

Let us talk about the one-off Troop Sleeper for a moment. C-10 was unique. It had the triple-window bay windows, the other windows were of a completely different configuration and were not in the same places as the other cabooses. It was also blue with yellow ends, yellow lettering and yellow end steps. Essentially the same color scheme as the locomotives at the time. Note however that the side lettering and keystone logo are essentially the same as the red troop sleepers. Six years later, in the photo below from September 29, 1978, the keystone logo is gone, the triangle logo has been applied and one set of steps has either been repainted, or swapped with another caboose.

Photographer unknown  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com  
collection







*Above: C-99 at Northern Maine Junction, June 2, 1980, Richard B. "Dick" Gasset photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection*

Although most of the Troop Sleepers were in the red with yellow ends scheme, three, C-97, C-98 and C-99 were painted in a variation of the tri-color paint scheme, in keeping with how the locomotives were being painted at the time. Taking C-99 as an example, C-99 emerged in 1979 from the shops (somewhere around April) painted as you see above. Large grey stripe, lettering that looks borrowed from one of the locomotives and of course the triangle logo on one end. Notice that the windows not on the bay window are of a third variation, this time they open left to right as opposed to up and down. The other significant difference is on the end without the bay window - large open viewing windows have been cut into both sides on that end, allowing for greater visibility, while reducing the chance of falling out. This also means that the internal wall on that end has been moved in, reducing the amount of space inside of the caboose.





*Above and Next page: Neil MacDonald stuck his camera up to the glass in the end doors of the newly finished C-99 in April of 1979. So new the mattresses are still in the plastic! Although unverified, the rumor is that the desk and chairs are hardwood sourced from Moosehead Manufacturing. You might recognize the blue seats - they are from Amtrak coaches, complete with the Amtrak spec 'toppers'. These came from the cars that went into MoW service, or so the story goes. From the inside, its hard to tell that these once carried bunks in three levels and 29 enlisted men (and one porter) occupied this space!*









*Above: C-99 at Northern Maine Junction, March 6, 1982. Alan W. Belcher photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com collection*

Within three years, C-99 was repainted, with a much narrower gray stripe and larger red bands top and bottom. The lettering is much different - with the triangle between two windows near the center. The Bangor and Aroostook (again appears to be sourced from locomotive lettering) and the C-99 are centered on the triangle. The lettering is not centered however. Although difficult to see at this angle, the K in Aroostook. is just to the left of the bay window, making the lettering off center, slightly to the non-bay window side of the caboose.



As mentioned earlier, the B&A had 19 troop sleeper cabooses. If you add in the two Heater Cars, H-1 and H-2, one has a total of 21 cars converted from troop sleepers. But this leaves us with more questions than answers. After passenger service ended in 1961, H-1 and H-2 were used only rarely on special trains. Photos exist of H-1 in use at NMJ as late as 1973. Perhaps it was used to provide steam for something at the enginehouse? However after 1973 there are no photos of either H-1 or H-2. Scrapped? Converted into one of the cabooses? There are no photos in the collection of C-80 other than it being painted in silver. Same for C-83. Did 80 and 83 get rebuilt into one of the other cabooses? Wrecked and scrapped? If C-95 and C-96 existed, there are no photos available. Why skip 95 and 96? Or did they build C-99 first and begin to work backwards down the numbers, with intent to fill in the numbers as cabooses were overhauled? Perhaps we will never know.

Good news for history, many of the troop sleepers survive, two preserved by historical societies. You can find C-87 next to the preserved water tower in Frenchville, and find C-92 in St. Francis. Photos below by Shawn Duren, February 1,



2025. Many others, including the still-in-blue C-10, have found their way into private ownership. Many occupy back yards and spare lots around the state. Alas, only the C-10 is on active rail, currently located in New Hampshire and at last report, undergoing restoration. Some have been scrapped, although some lasted into 2004. The number that survive however gives one hope for the future of these unique B&A cabooses!

Looking for more on B&A cabooses? Check out the Maine Line Magazine Website and click on Cabooses!





# FROM THE ARCHIVES

*The name Rod Bushway should be familiar to many of our readers. He and his wife Judi are responsible for the archive of Maine Line Magazines now hosted on the Maine Line website and both his Father and Grandfather were B&A men. Rod was a familiar face around the railroad in the Iron Road era, volunteering on passenger excursions. He was granted special access to the property and many of his photos were used for promotional purposes by the railroad. That relationship continued through the MM&A and into the CM&Q! Rod has made available his photo collection and although we have not yet scratched the surface of what Rod shot, here is a very small sample of this decades spanning collection. Thank you Rod!*



*Rod shot this on May 24, 2001, the Brownville Junction bridge is playing host to an interesting consist, HLCX 3669 in its Iron Road Paint leading. Although its hard to tell, one suspects this is an NBSR train, given the trailing unit.*





*May 24, 2001 found this Southbound going through Milo. The wonderfully placed float plane makes for a good contrast in not only color but transportation method!*

*Next page: Reflections of Iron Road. An SLGG boxcar with both the B&A and CDAC logos is on the Brownville Junction bridge - 5/24/2001*









*Having grown up in Derby, Derby Shops holds a special place in Rod's heart. April 21, 2002 - Less than 9 months to go before the B&A would be history, but no one knew that yet. LLPX 2243, in Union Pacific colors, is in the shop.*





*Lot of history - in one photo. Just outside Brownville Junction proper, 500, 2259, three of the 'Amtraks' are leading not just a freight, but their future replacements. Look carefully and you will see some of the MMA's future grey GE's ahead of the train. December 31, 2002. The B&A has 8 days to live, but the changes are already here.*





*The companion shot to the one on the previous page, the new guard of GE's has not even been stenciled MMA yet. This is their first trip onto their new home rails and have not gotten to Derby yet! 12/31/2002*



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