



**MAINE**  **LINE**

WINTER 2024

# TALKING IT OVER



Happy New Year! May 2024 bring you and yours good health, happiness and prosperity!

A full 21 years after the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad faded into history, in this issue we will premiere what might be the most significant single achievement to preserving the history of this railroad that has ever been completed. My opinion might be biased, but about 1/3rd of the railroad's history is wrapped up in this particular project of preservation. If I have gotten you interested - keep reading through this issue.

This issue represents the start of the Seventh year of the reborn Maine Line Magazine. I am hoping to continue to surprise, inform, educate and occasionally entertain you, dear reader, as I look forward to another year of learning more about the Bangor and Aroostook - gone - but not forgotten!

Remember that I do not do this alone. The original Maine Line got submissions from inside and outside the railroad, from other departments and occasionally (with permission) used content from news outlets, primarily the Bangor Daily News. These are options that no longer exist, so feel free to submit a B&A story. Who knows - it might just be the next featured article!

Thank you for your continued readership, it makes the work all worth it!

*-Joey*

"Joey" Kelley, Editor

## **Maine Line Magazine**

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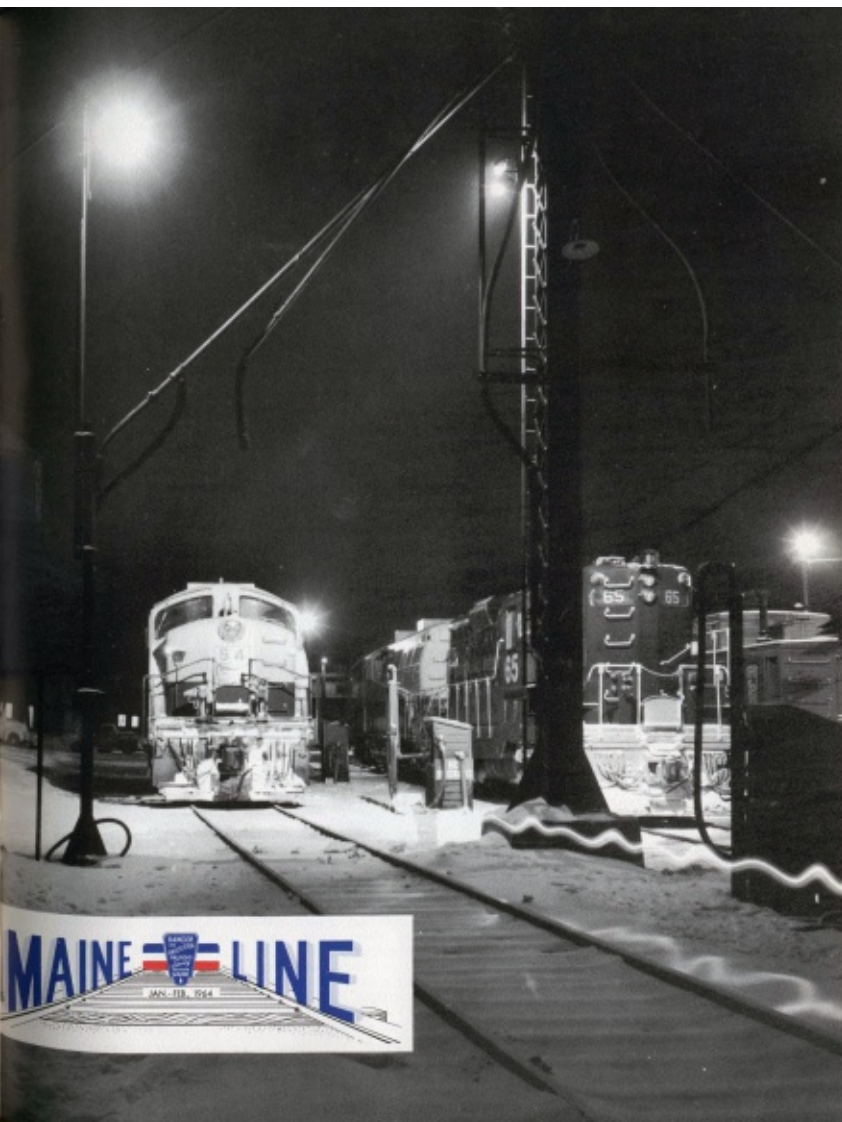


# ABOUT THE COVER



Years ago when the process of digitizing the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad marketing department photo collection began, one of the images that was discovered was this one. For those that are not aware, I have a strong interest in night photography, one that must have been shared by the late Richard W. Sprague. I was over the moon to find this - large format transparency in COLOR no less of Oakfield. Further research revealed that a very similar shot was used as the cover of the January - February 1964 Maine Line and that this photo dated from either late 1963 or very early 1964. Never before published in color, here is what is most likely a Richard W. Sprague original gracing the cover of the Maine Line exactly 60 years after the black and white version! BAR Collection of JoeyKelleyPhoto.com

# MAINE LINE REWIND



60 years ago in the Maine Line:

January - February 1964 Issue

- W. Jerome Strout is President
- New rates announced for Trailer on Flatcar (TOFC) traffic
- Two years of BARCO Federal Credit Union
- Bale Pin Co. Newest member of the BAC Family of companies
- A profile of Charlie Hickson, Railroad Salesman in Boston
- Looking at Safety
- It took more than one to get into this kind of trouble (railroad stories from long ago)
- In The Family of the B&A
- News Briefs

The January - February 1964 issue was Volume 12 and Issue number 1. In 1964, the Maine Line was being produced every two months.

Be sure to check out the back cover of this issue, for a copy of the rear cover of the January - February 1964 issue!

# CONGRATULATIONS



Arthur Woodard, a third generation railroader, retired on December 31, 2023 after 49 years of service. He started his railroad career on the MOW crew out of Northern Maine Junction. From there he worked in the engine houses at NMJ and Millinocket as a hostler. Later, he worked in the Derby Shops in the car shop, blacksmith shop and machine shop. While working for the MOW and Mechanical departments, he experienced some seasonal layoffs, which he spent driving truck (a time he talks about fondly!) and even working for Canadian Pacific (the first time) on a MOW gang in 1978. In 1990, he transferred to the Transportation department as brakeman and conductor, the same position as his father and grandfather. In 1995, after the Bangor and Aroostook was acquired by Iron Road Railways, he became a qualified engineer, a position he held until his retirement. During this period he saw the railroad change hands and change names three more times. Working for Montreal Maine and Atlantic 2003-2014 (often times by himself on a single man crew), Central Maine and Quebec 2014-2020, and finally Canadian Pacific (later CPKC) until his retirement at the end of 2023. Unlike most railroaders who never get to the Number 1 spot on the seniority roster, Arthur held that position for many years. In 2021, he was one of 15 employees across Canadian Pacific's system to receive the CP Safety Award for Excellence.

We wish Arthur a long and happy retirement!

Text courtesy of Matthew Sawyer



# TRAINS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

*Above: 3028 is on one end of the Maine Northern Holiday train in Presque Isle on December 2, 2023. Photo by Shawn Duren*

For those familiar with the Bangor and Aroostook, the holiday trains we often think of are the legendary Turkey Trains started in the Buck Dumaine era of the railroad. Alas those trains have yet to be repeated by any successor to the B&A, but 2023 saw the return of some winter time passenger trains to old B&A rails.

Maine Northern Railway saw fit to run a combination of charity and employee specials over former B&A track out of Presque Isle on December 2, and out of Millinocket on December 3, 2023. Two charity runs and an employee special were run out of Presque Isle with only one train running out of Millinocket for the benefit of Maine Northern employees and their families.

To be fair, these are not the first employee specials run by Maine Northern, but they are the first since the COVID-19 pandemic brought such events to an abrupt halt. One must applaud the efforts of the Maine Northern to bring a train like this to the rails of Maine - they don't need to do things like this, but, the effort goes a long way.

Lets have a quick photo run through these two days of holiday spirit on the Maine Northern!





*Above: This image has it all - the whole train - snow - trees and snow covered peaks!  
Shawn Duren captured this near Mapleton on December 2, 2023*

*Next Page: 3028 leading the short train through Mapleton. December 2, 2023, photo  
by Shawn Duren*





*Above: Shawn Duren captured this on December 2, 2023, along the West Chapman Road in Mapleton*



*Above: Running along Chapman Siding and crossing the West Chapman Road in Chapman this shot captures the day quite nicely. Shawn Duren photo, December 2, 2023*



*Above: On December 3, the same consist ran south out of Millinocket as an employee special. Just one run was made and the train stopped in the vicinity of Partridge Brook - North of West Sebois. Shown here is the Northbound returning train, about to cross Route 11.*

*Right: In direct contrast to the December 2 trains, the railfan community was out in force.*

*Both photos Joey Kelley,  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com*





*Above: About halfway between the stopping point and Millinocket, the train rolls over the connector between Elbow Lake and Quakish Lake*

*Right: Man's best friend (a collie out for a walk) seems not to care too much about the train above*

*Both photos December 3, 2023, Joey Kelley, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com*

After returning to Millinocket the train was done for the day. Thanks to the Maine Northern, the holidays were just a bit brighter and on track for folks in Maine!





# 156 ISSUES SCANNED

Words fail me when trying to describe the sense of accomplishment, gratitude, relief and pride that I must somehow express to you all.

For the very first time fans of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad, historians, journalists and in fact everyone from the most die-hard railroad enthusiast to the young student looking for material for a history report will be able to access 156 issues of the Maine Line Magazine going back to the first issue in 1952 and spanning 38 years to the last issue produced by the railroad in 1990.

All of these issues have been gathered, digitized, uploaded to the new Archive section of the Maine Line web page, web pages created, thumbnail images of the covers made and the pages made public. This single project, spanning 38 years of the railroad's 112 year history accounts for just over 1/3rd of railroad's existence. Accounts of the way things used to be, the way things were when written and the way things were envisioned to be in the future are all combined to tell the story of this railroad, but most importantly the people involved in it, in a way that is simply astounding.

This project is one that I proposed years ago - without any true knowledge of the scope, size, or resources required to complete it. One of the first major hurdles of this effort was to determine, exactly, how many issues there were and which ones were produced. On the face of it, that sounds easy. Initially, one Maine Line was produced every two months, later, one every three months. However, there were several over the 38 year history that were skipped. Some with explanation, some without. The year of 1989 was skipped, entirely. No explanation was given.

Volume 10 of the Maine Line is not currently available, although we hope to bring it to you as well in the future. Midway through volume 9 (after the January-February 1961 issue) the railroad went from producing Maine Lines in a small format magazine to a much larger newspaper format. When the March-April 1963 emerged it was in a 8.5 inch by 11 inch format and looked like what we think of as a magazine.

With the exception of the 10 newspaper formatted issues, the current archive is believed to contain all issues produced by the railroad. This has already proven invaluable as a resource to identify locations, people and caption photos in the collection that I had not been able to caption before. The process of referencing specific issues and mining all the issues for dates and trends has become so much easier and has resulted in the new 'Maine Line Rewind' feature that you have now seen in the last two issues.

In the next couple of pages we'll discuss the 'who, what, where and why' of this process but as a hint, the contributions of your editor were actually quite small in comparison to the work done.

The value of these works being placed out into the public for everyone to see is hard to overstate. It is only exceeded by the value that the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad put on its employees, its company, its state by producing the magazine in the first place.

Ready to check out the archive?

<https://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com/maine-line-magazine-archive/>

Or click on Archive from the Maine Line Magazine website!





*Above: The two people responsible for kick starting the Maine Line scanning project and seeing it through to completion - Judi and Rod Bushway*

Rod Bushway is the son of a B&A man and the grandson of a Canadian Pacific man. With two generations in the family, his father insisted he go to college and get an education, turning Rod's love of trains and railroading into a lifelong hobby, but not a career.

Judi has some railroad family in her more distant family relations but no direct connections. After they married in 2011, she began to get the full understanding of what it means to be married to a railroad enthusiast.

Given Rod's connection to the B&A - he met the late Richard W. Sprague at his father's retirement party - he understood the value of the Maine Line to not only railroad history but the history of Maine in general.

In December of 2022 the process of locating and gathering material began. At some point fairly early in the process, I got a call from Rod about the project and where material could be obtained. I was - quite frankly - thrilled that someone was willing to put the time and energy into this, something that I could not work into my schedule easily. My comment was to reference Oakfield Historical Society as probably having the largest collection of Maine Line magazines.

The first issue was actually scanned by Judi after being trained on the scanning equipment at the University of Maine, Special Collections department on January 25, 2023. They had to book time on the scanning equipment and were able to do so about once per week. The first part of the process was scanning everything that the University had on hand. This was not as complete a collection as hoped. The first run up to Oakfield was made in May of 2023 and several runs were made to find, organize and borrow the Maine Line issues that the University did not have.

According to Judi it takes "15 to 20 minutes to scan one issue." If you do the math that means she spent between 41 and 55 hours just scanning the issues. More time was of course spent identifying which issues were produced, which were not, cataloging, organizing the digital files and in some cases finding additional copies over and above the ones already scanned to get better copies of front and rear covers. All said and done, the project was wrapped up in October of 2023, a full 10 months after beginning.

A lot of things were discovered about the production of the Maine Line - inconsistencies - errors in Volume and Issue numbers - the entire missing year of 1989 and at times it must have been a frustrating project that felt like it would never end.

After the scanning was completed, Judi and Rod provided a complete copy of everything they had done to your editor. The intent from the beginning was to get this material out into the public and make it available for everyone as a tribute to all the B&A employees, but specifically in honor of "Ike" Bushway and Richard W. Sprague.

Your editor put his head down and began to work. Each cover page was extracted, run through Photoshop, an image created and set aside for use on the webpages containing all the issues and also for future use in the PDF file of each issue. In addition - each issue was uploaded onto the Maine Line Magazine website, a Zip file containing all the issues for each volume was created and placed on each volume page. A paragraph summarizing each volume was written and finally each issue's cover was placed on the page for each volume and linked into the issue already uploaded.

Although this is, essentially, the same process that each issue of the new Maine Line goes through, doing 166 issues, spread over 36 volumes, all at once was a bit of a challenge. It became clear that it would not be done for the Fall 2023 issue as originally hoped, but the additional time ensured that it was done right.

Proving the value of this tremendous resource, before the archive was even made available to the public, your editor received a phone call from a reporter for a national news outlet that was looking for historical background information on Maine Potatoes. Since the archive was up, but just not public, the archive was provided to this reporter and in some small way, the hours and hours invested in this became just a little bit more worth it.

It took a team effort - lead by Judi and Rod Bushway - to make this happen. Without them, this idea would still be just that - an idea.

We are still waiting for the latter half of volume 9, all of volume 10, and we believe one issue of Volume 11 to be digitized. These are the 'newspaper' style issues and it is believed that the State of Maine library has all of them in their collection. We hope to have those issues scanned and made available for all.

Thank you Judi and Rod Bushway - for this amazing contribution to railroad history!

Ready to check out the archive?

<https://mainelinemagazine.joeykelleyphoto.com/maine-line-magazine-archive/>

Or click on Archive from the Maine Line Magazine website!

# FROM THE ARCHIVES



*Photographer Robert Palmer grabbed this shot of the Milo Freight House on February 23, 1991. JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*83 is on the point of train 211 working the North end of Millinocket on February 22, 1991, Robert Palmer photo - Black and white conversion of a color slide - JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*Robert Palmer captured this shot at New Limerick on February 21, 1991.  
JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*86 was switching in Mapleton on February 22, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*86 was rolling by McCain Fertilizer in Presque Isle on February 22, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*86 was paused in front of the Squa Pan office on February 22, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*





*86 was switching in Washburn on February 22, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*91 and 94 leading the Houlton Local in Island Falls on February 21, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*91 and 94 leading the Houlton Local in Ludlow on February 21, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*94 and 91 have picked up the 84, with damaged handrails visible, presumably to take South for repairs in Oakfield on February 21, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*



*94 and 91 and 84 are rolling South through Island Falls on February 21, 1991. Robert Palmer photo, JoeyKelleyPhoto.com Collection*

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