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Last Locomotive Built for B&O Retired

See page 3



Message from the President

Ah, the warm days of summer and no snow to clear. Hope everyone has a safe and wonderful summer season. The Society continues to progress toward our goal of educating and preserving the history of the B&O. Recently, we acquired an extremely large slide and photo collection from one of our charter members; I will leave the details for Grant's archives report. I made the trip to Columbus, Ohio for the Western Mini-Con and quite enjoyed myself, except for the seven-hour road trips out and back. The attendance was lower than normal due to a post office delay with *Sentinel* mailing. We will correct that for next year by mailing earlier. The 2020 calendar is available for sale, but we reduced the press run, so get your order in quickly!

I have been in communication with the B&O Museum in Baltimore about several topics. First, we are going to make a stronger effort to share upcoming activities for each other through social media and mailings. Second, we have been requested to help the museum with organization and structuring of their archives. Since they

currently do not have an archivist or collection curator, they need outside assistance and were impressed with what we have accomplished. Third, I have been asked to participate on the museum Board of Trustees, and will have made a presentation to them by the time you read this letter. But, just to make things clear, the first mission of the Society is to care and provide for the membership. Cooperation on both our parts will be greatly beneficial for all parties in the future. We are just starting the talking stage, but I will keep you informed.

The *B&O in Baltimore* book is wrapping up with only the review of the last three chapters remaining. As of this date, everything on the book is on schedule. At the last minute, a large number of color images have been received, and we made some changes to include more in the book. A special thanks go to the following archive volunteers for their countless hours on the book: Brian Rochon, Joe Nevin, Al McEvoy, Don Plotkin, Wally Figiel, Skip Nichols, Mike Williams, Traver Stavac, Craig Close, and Greg Smith. This team researched,

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P. O. Box 1608
Sykesville, Maryland 21784

E-mail: info@borhs.org

Website: borhs.org

Missing *Sentinel*: storemanager@borhs.org

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president@borhs.org

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vp@borhs.org

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Contributors welcome:

Articles, manuscripts, photographs, reviews, and other historical data are solicited for publication. Original material will be returned upon publication. Send all material to:

Ken Wing, sentinel@borhs.org
or mail hardcopy material to
P.O. Box 1608, Sykesville, MD 21784

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On the Covers

FRONT COVER: Photographer Olev Taremae captured B&O's last locomotive fulfilling Arch McElvany's plan of a single unit on an eastbound coal train at Cumberland, Maryland, on October 13, 1984. The new SD50 had been in service just over a month. (*Collection of Dwight Jones; image used with permission of original photographer*)

BACK COVER: B&O 98 heading east at Dolton, Illinois, at approximately the same spot the *Westerner* once stalled in the opposite direction when it ran out of fuel. See the article on Page 29 for the story.



in the



era



Three SD50s shove an eastbound coal train at Amblersburg, West Virginia, on October 31, 1985. Assisting B&O's last locomotive, 8595, is sister units 8590 and 8593, three SD50s replacing four SD35s. Up front is lead unit demonstrator EMD4 and C&O 8624, first unit from C&O's last order of 20 units. (Photograph by Dwight Jones)

Last Locomotive Built for B&O Retired

By Dwight Jones

The last locomotive built for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad recently was retired by CSX, bringing to an end a nearly 200-year chapter in the motive power history of America's first common carrier railroad. This history dated from the venerable Tom Thumb of 1830 to a mammoth 3500-horse-power SD50 giant from 1984.

I had hoped this last B&O locomotive would find its final resting place at the B&O Railroad Museum, keeping company with the museum's Tom Thumb reproduction (the author applied a DO NOT DISMANTLE museum stencil to the unit in April 1994). Unfortunately, the unit later was repainted by CSX and the museum stencil was not retained on the new scheme. Over the years the unit's special history

disappeared into the ranks of the large CSX fleet, and it was unceremoniously sold in late 2018 to used-locomotive dealer Larry's Truck Electric at Lordstown, Ohio, along with 14 other former B&O SD50s, accounting for 75% of the B&O SD50 fleet.

SD50 HISTORY

General Motors' Electro-Motive Division (EMD) built some prototype SD50s in 1980 with the model being formally introduced in May 1981. The heritage of the CSX SD50 fleet began with Seaboard System purchasing 53 SD50s in 1983-1984 numbered 8500 to 8552. C&O units came next in 1984 and were numbered 8553 to 8575. This was the first time there was a coordinated numbering of motive power between the two lines in anticipation of

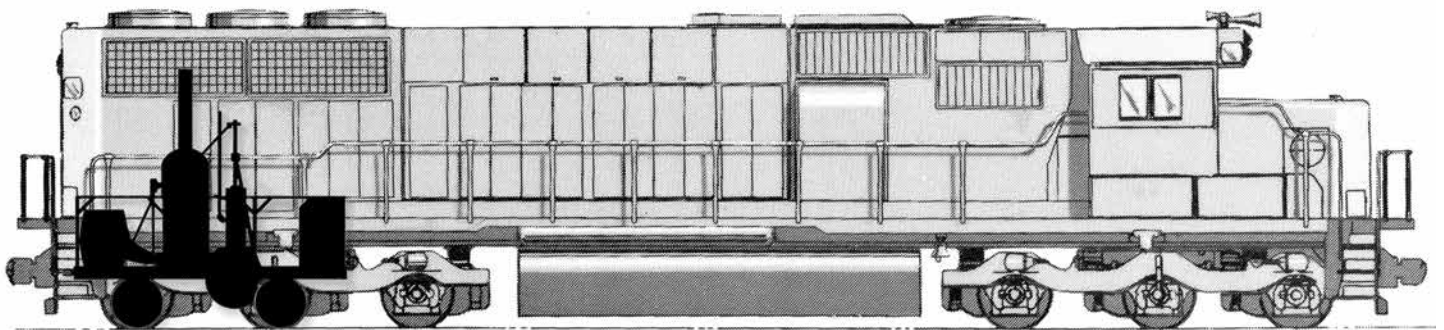
future CSX combining of the locomotive fleets of the lines. B&O units came next in 1984 with 20 units numbered 8576 to 8595. These would be the last units built for B&O. Seaboard got an additional 28 units next in 1984 (8596 to 8623), with a final C&O order of 20 units numbered 8624 to 8643. The 8631 gained notoriety by appearing in a dynamic photo at the east end of the Mt. Royal station tunnel at Baltimore that was used in the 1985 CSX Annual Report. Other SD50s came with CSX's partial acquisition of Conrail.

The first batch of C&O units was sent for service on the B&O in the West Virginia mountains, including helper service on the grades between Grafton and Keyser. An extensive report by the author on the initial arrival of these units can be found in



The 8595 is shown arriving at Grafton, West Virginia, at the yard office, as the second unit on an empties train on September 15, 1984. The unit is only one month old. At this era the only technology on the roof of the cab is a single radio antenna.

(Photograph by Dwight Jones)



This graphic compares the size of B&O's last locomotive with that of the Tom Thumb, a reproduction of B&O's first locomotive.

(Dwight Jones)

the March 1984 *C&O Historical Newsletter*, including several photos. The delivery of the 20 B&O units saw them sent to the same territory, all being assigned initially to Cumberland for maintenance. An article in *Chessie News* announced the purchase of the 20 new units, part of a 42-unit CSX order with the other 22 units going to Sea-

board. The announcement indicated that "The new locomotives have an advanced modular control system which utilizes integrated circuitry, a new dynamic brake arrangement, and a radar system designed to reduce engine wheel slip and provide more adhesion. They are more fuel efficient than older models now being used. They

will pull Chessie coal trains moving to electric utility plants and other industries in the Midwest and Southeast, and to coal export terminals on the East and Gulf coasts." In reality some of these characteristics did not live up to their billing.

The original per-unit cost for the 20 B&O SD50s was just under one million



On April 14, 1985, SD50 8595 is shown in this broadside view at the M&K Junction helper station at Rowlesburg, West Virginia.

(Photograph by Dwight Jones)



An employee is seen servicing the 8595 at the M&K Junction facility on April 14, 1985.

(Photograph by Dwight Jones)

The 8595 is shown at Columbus on April 16, 1994, wearing its first CSX paint scheme, which has been described as the Yellow Nose 2 scheme (YN2).

(Photograph by Dwight Jones)



B&O SD50 Roster

Number	Built	Builder No.	Retired	Disposition	SD50 Type
8576	07-17-1984	837081-01	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8577	07-17-1984	837081-02	12-27-2018	Sold to Lake State Railway	-2
8578	07-20-1984	837081-03	03-12-2019	Stored: Russell, Kentucky, awaiting disposition	-2
8579	07-24-1984	837081-04	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8580	07-25-1984	837081-05	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8581	07-25-1984	837081-06	12-27-2017	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8582	07-26-1984	837081-07		Active on CSX	-3
8583	07-27-1984	837081-08	12-27-2017	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8584	07-30-1984	837081-09	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8585	07-31-1984	837081-10	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8586	07-31-1984	837081-11	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8587	08-01-1984	837081-12	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8588	08-01-1984	837081-13	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8589	08-02-1984	837081-14	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8590	08-07-1984	837081-15	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8591	08-09-1984	837081-16	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8592	08-09-1984	837081-17	Date not available	Sold: Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern	-2
8593	08-09-1984	837081-18	Date not available	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
8494	08-10-1984	837081-19	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2

Last locomotive built for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad

8595	08-14-1984	837081-20	02-13-2019	Sold to Larry's Truck Electric	-2
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Roster compiled by Dwight Jones



This closeup view shows the stencil applied by the author for the B&O Museum, photographed at Columbus, Ohio, on April 16, 1994. (Photograph by Dwight Jones)

dollars at \$932,213, slightly more than was paid for the C&O engines. At the time the prices were regarded as very good, likely because of the many trade-in engines provided. B&O's EMD order number, 837081, with the third digit of "7," indicated use of remanufactured parts in the new units. The following older 80 units were reported as trade-in stock on the B&O SD50s:

- 4 B&O GP7s
- 37 B&O GP9s
- 10 Western Maryland GP7 and GP9 units
- 29 C&O GP7 and GP9 units

All 20 B&O SD50s were reported as delivered by Labor Day 1984.

B&O's last locomotive, 8595, carries an official build date of August 1984. It served the railroad for nearly 35 years until its recent retirement.

Chessie System's Chief Mechanical Officer, Locomotive, issued a report dated March 10, 1986, indicating that Baltimore & Ohio six-axle diesel ownership consisted of 5 SD7 locomotives, 10 SD9 units, 5 SD20-2 units [*Ed. Note: rebuilt from SD35*], 15 SD35 units (all listed as leased), 24 SD40 and SD40-2 units, and the 20 new SD50 units, all 20 of which were reported as leased and rated at 3500 horsepower. B&O's total locomotive fleet was reported as 836 plus two slugs. These 79 six-axle units accounted for only 9.4% of the total B&O fleet. B&O was definitely a four-axle railroad. Interestingly, during the CSX era, almost all new power has been six-axle.



Wording for the B&O Museum's equipment stencil.