



## **Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc.**

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### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MASS BAY RRE**

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#### **WHAT IS MASS BAY RRE?**

Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc. (“Mass Bay RRE”) is a Massachusetts non-profit educational corporation. Our mission is to educate the public and our members about railroading and the contributions railroads make to present-day America.

#### **WHAT DOES MASS BAY RRE DO?**

Mass Bay RRE sponsors several chartered train excursions each year in cooperation with railroads throughout the Northeast. These trips are open to the public and range from larger trips such as our popular *Fall Circle Tour* on the Providence & Worcester Railroad to smaller, “rare-mileage” tours on freight railroads, including our July 2009 trip over the Griffins Industrial Track in Hartford, Connecticut. In its 79 year history Mass Bay RRE has sponsored hundreds of special train excursions: steam-powered trips from Boston through the White Mountains of New Hampshire; mainline runs on the Boston & Albany, Boston & Maine, Maine Central and New Haven Railroads; and explorations of obscure or now-abandoned branch lines around New England and beyond. We’ve journeyed to paper mills in Maine and rolled past gigantic asbestos mines in Quebec. Indeed, there are very few rail lines in New England that have not seen a Mass Bay RRE excursion at some time.

We also offer small-group visits to railroad facilities and conduct seasonal tours of the archeological sites in West Quincy and East Milton, Mass. related to the Granite Railway, America’s first chartered commercial railroad (1826).

Mass Bay RRE holds monthly meetings, with programs on railroad history, operations and rail travel presented by knowledgeable speakers. We publish *The Callboy*, a monthly newsletter that keeps our members in touch with Mass Bay RRE activities, railroad news from New England and elsewhere, and the railroad history of New England. Mass Bay RRE’s “Show Crew” appears at train shows throughout the region, promoting our own events as well as New England’s many tourist railroads and railroad museums.

Mass Bay RRE assists in selecting recipients of the annual H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award for the preservation of New England railroad history and administers the yearly \$10,000 award grant on behalf of the donor. The 2013 recipient of the Award was the Brooks Preservation Society of Brooks, Maine, to support the restoration of the Brooks railroad station.

Mass Bay RRE volunteers conduct all its activities; there are no paid employees.

#### **DO I HAVE TO BE A MASS BAY RRE MEMBER TO RIDE YOUR EXCURSIONS?**

No. The public is welcome aboard all Mass Bay RRE train excursions. Members do receive discounts on our trip and event ticket prices, and preferential seating on some excursions.

#### **WHERE AND WHEN DOES MASS BAY RRE MEET?**

Mass Bay RRE normally holds its program meeting at 8:00 PM on the third Thursday of each month at the Union Church in Waban, Mass. (a village in the city of Newton). An informal “Social Hour” with light refreshments is held starting at 7:00 PM before each meeting. The Union Church is at the intersection of Beacon Street and Collins Road, west of the bridge over the MBTA Green Line. Use the Collins Road entrance off the rear church driveway; the meeting room we use is immediately to the right. Guests and new members are always welcome at all Mass Bay RRE meetings!

*If you drive*, to reach the Union Church from Route 128 (I-95), take Exit 21 onto Route 16 east, then fork right onto Beacon Street at the first traffic light east of 128 and continue 0.9 mile into Waban. The Union Church is on the right just before you cross the MBTA bridge. *If you come on the T*, take a ‘D Riverside’ car to Waban, walk upstairs to Beacon Street, turn left and cross the bridge to the church.

## **HOW DO I JOIN MASS BAY RRE?**

For a membership application, email us at [trips@massbayrre.org](mailto:trips@massbayrre.org), send U.S. mail to **Box 4245, Andover, MA 01810**, or visit our website: [www.massbayrre.org](http://www.massbayrre.org). Annual membership dues start at \$35 (\$25 for seniors); family and youth memberships are also available. New members are always welcome!

## **HOW DO I LEARN ABOUT FUTURE MASS BAY RRE TRIPS AND EVENTS?**

To receive Mass Bay RRE trip and event announcements, send a request to the above address, or visit our website, where you can sign up for email notification. Mass Bay RRE members receive advance notice of all trips and events through email and the *Callboy*.

## **HOW OLD IS MASS BAY RRE?**

Mass Bay RRE traces its origin to 1933, when its founders organized the “National Association of Railroad Enthusiasts” in Boston, primarily for people who liked to ride and photograph trains. In 1935, the informal “N.A.R.E.” incorporated as The Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc., an “umbrella” group with local “Divisions” in the East and Midwest. The first RRE Division, the Boston-based New England Division, incorporated separately as Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc. in September 1972, keeping its affiliation with the National RRE. In 1981, Mass Bay RRE received [501(c)(3)] charitable tax-exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. Mass Bay RRE is also registered as a “public charity” with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

## **WHEN WAS MASS BAY RRE’S FIRST SPECIAL RAILROAD TRIP?**

On Sunday, August 26, 1934, “N.A.R.E.” founder George Becker organized the “First U.S. Railfan Trip” over the **Boston & Maine** and **Hoosac Tunnel & Wilmington Railroads**, an all-day round trip from Boston to the small Green Mountain village of Wilmington, Vermont. Exactly fifty years later, August 26, 1984, Mass Bay RRE ran a commemorative special train on the B&M to Hoosac Tunnel and placed a memorial plaque at East Portal. Unfortunately, we could not ride the HT&W as well; its little rails had been torn up for scrap in 1971.

## **WHAT IS THE H. ALBERT WEBB MEMORIAL RAILROAD PRESERVATION AWARD?**

Leigh Webb, a Mass Bay RRE member from New Hampshire, created the H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award in 2000 to recognize his late father’s love for New England railroads, and his father’s many years of membership in Mass Bay RRE. The \$10,000 award grant supports nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that preserve historically significant railroad equipment, structures or information from New England railroads.

Grants from the H. Albert Webb Memorial Award have contributed to the restoration of a 1934 **Boston & Maine** express-passenger-train steam locomotive in Pennsylvania (2001), a 1955 **New Haven Railroad** sleeping car in North Carolina (2004), a 1957 **Boston & Maine** diesel locomotive in Connecticut (2005), a 1906 **Atlantic Shore Line** electric locomotive in Maine (2006), a 1924 **Boston Elevated Railway** trolley car (2009), a 1913 **Bridgton & Saco River** steam locomotive in Maine (2010), and a 1945 **Maine Central** diesel locomotive in Lenox, Mass (2011). Other grants assisted in restoring an historic section of two-foot-gauge track in Bedford, Mass. (2003), preserving 5000 historic railroad photographs through digital scanning in Beverly, Mass. (2007) and expanding a railroad museum’s car-repair and storage building in Alna, Maine (2008).

In 2001, Mr. Webb asked Mass Bay RRE to assist him in selecting award recipients and administering grants. Each year, Mass Bay RRE accepts applications for the H. Albert Webb Memorial Award grant from qualified tax-exempt organizations. The application period normally closes in late September, and Mr. Webb announces the award recipient the following year. For more information, contact Mass Bay RRE or visit our website.

## **HOW DID THE CALLBOY NEWSLETTER GET ITS NAME?**

A callboy, or crew caller, is the railroad employee who tells train crews to report for duty. (The term originated in the theater – a “callboy” told actors when to appear on stage.) Since the early days of railroading, the crew caller has been an informal source of news for other railroaders. During World War II, the RRE New England Division sent an occasional newsletter to its members in military service. In February 1947, this became *The Callboy*, a monthly publication for all Division members, and it has appeared continuously since.

## **HOW DO I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MASS BAY RRE?**

Email us at [trips@massbayrre.org](mailto:trips@massbayrre.org), visit our website at [www.massbayrre.org](http://www.massbayrre.org) or call our information lines at **617-489-5277** or **978-470-2066**. For a sample copy of *The Callboy*, send your name and address plus \$2 for return postage to: **Box 4245, Andover, MA 01810-0814**.

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We have organized railroad excursions since 1934.*