

Boston Street Railway Association, Inc.

Sixty-Second Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2021

Summary

Fiscal year 2021 (FY 2021) has been a successful one for the Boston Street Railway Association. There were several significant achievements.

Fully implementing Internet-based monthly meetings on the Zoom platform was a major accomplishment. This effort required simplifying the preparation and organization of the pre-meeting work and merging the business and entertainment sections, a major task. This work also included finalizing the format of our eBulletins, which often included a brief historical article or photograph and a direct link to our bookstore.

Speaking of monthly meetings, it is likely, but not until the Covid pandemic is well behind us, that we will return to annual, semi-annual, or quarterly in-person meetings in lieu of monthly ones. A challenge to us will be including on-line participants in these gatherings when we restart them.

Another accomplishment was optimizing the process of electronically distributing RollSign, not an easy effort for an organization which up until last year relied entirely on the United States Postal Service for this work. As we develop the distribution further, we will likely offer an option for those who prefer it to opt out of the printed version, which some of our members have requested. This is not as simple as it sounds, as it requires a rethinking of our membership structure to account for print and digital-only options.

We successfully moved Type 5 No. 5706 from its long-time stay in Connecticut to our contractor's site in Virginia, where it awaits the completion of the new shop and the resumption of the restoration project. The 5706 Fund has weathered the move comfortably, maintaining a healthy total, which we expect to increase considerably with the remainder of a large bequest that we received last year and further donations from you, our members.

The Association ended FY 2021 in a strong position with both the General Fund and the 5706 Fund. Expenses slightly exceeded income, attributable entirely to the badly needed purchase of a new computer for the Treasurer's department. Overall, income and expenses were well in line with those of recent years.

Looking ahead to FY 2021, we can now return to fundraising for the completion of Type 5 No. 5706 and the publication of our next book in the *Streetcar Lines of Boston* series, which covers the Green Line. Of course, we will continue with our monthly meetings, production of *RollSign*, the continuation of educational outreach through our website, and the many other activities that make the BSRA an asset to its members and the public.

Report of the Publications Director

In FY2021, the BSRA Publications Department produced six full Publications Catalogs, as well as monthly meeting emails, all of which produced significant sales through mail order and our online store at www.thebsra.org. First and foremost, huge thanks to our volunteer Publications Manager Ron Clough, who braves heat, cold, and lines at the Post Office to fill customers' orders and maintain our stock. We could not do what we do without him! We appreciate all your orders throughout the year, large and small, as proceeds from sales help keep the Association rolling year-round.

The 2021 annual Railroad Hobby Show in West Springfield was cancelled for the first time in the history of these events, another victim of the restrictions from the Covid epidemic, so we did not get our usual New Year's sales boost. However, we experienced tremendous sales volumes, especially online. Worth mentioning is how our online sales help with outreach to prospective new members, particularly when in-person events such as the West Springfield Show have been cancelled. When new customers

discover our store through a google search for a book they're looking for, they also find out about the BSRA.

Work continues the next installment of *Streetcar Lines of the Hub*. The book has been delayed due to the added burden imposed on our small volunteer staff by our increased online presence and related administrative tasks. We are aiming to publish the book to coincide with the opening of the MBTA's Green Line Extension in mid-2022.

As in 2020, the Publications Director also oversaw several projects to maintain an increased digital presence required by pandemic-related restrictions. These efforts included our email communications program and virtual monthly meetings:

- Our email communication program has continued, with steady and positive responses from the membership. We generally produce 1-3 emails per month: an eBulletin update on Association activities; a virtual meeting reminder and link; and a digital RollSign distribution. These all also offer direct links to our online store, and we have continued to see strong sales from these listings. We thank everyone who has registered for our email distribution list and encourage any members who have not yet done so to sign up today at www.thebsra.org/emailsignup.
- Throughout FY 2021, we continued holding virtual monthly meetings via the Zoom platform. We tend to average around 100 attendees each month, which is often more than twice the attendance at our previous in-person meetings. These also allow our members who do not live in the Boston area, or may have mobility difficulties, to regularly attend our meetings. While we hope eventually to be able to hold periodic in-person events in the future, we are pleased with the opportunities that the virtual meetings have provided to connect with so many of our members near and far.

Report of the *RollSign* Director

Since the 2020 Annual Report, the Association published 6 issues of *RollSign*. At the time of this writing, the July-August 2021 issue is in production.

The July-August 2020 issue featured an update on the MBTA's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, including a summary of Fall 2020 service changes, construction on Huntington & South Huntington Avenues on the Heath Street Line, and a This Time in History segment highlighting safety features on open cars and on old Haymarket Station.

The September-October 2020 publication included a photo survey of Green Line Extension progress by Brad Clarke, and an article by Tadd Anderson entitled *MBTA Bus Routes Provided by Private Carrier Companies*, which highlighted the region's diverse regional transit authorities.

The November-December 2020 *RollSign* featured the MBTA's new Red Line cars' entry into revenue service. Scott Page provided interesting pictures of the North Station turn back, a location inaccessible to railfans. The issue also contained MBTA current events and a This Time in History segment including West End Street Railway cathouses.

The January-February 2021 *RollSign* featured our annual MBTA vehicle inventory, compiled by Jonathan Belcher. Jonathan works constantly to provide the Association with accurate information,

and we deeply appreciate his efforts. The front cover featured a picture of a No. 1 South Shore Car on shop horses at the MBTA's Cabot facility in South Boston. The rear cover showed a New Flyer D40 bus in the snow at Nubian Station. Both photos were from Scott Page.

The March-April 2021 edition featured a spectacular article by Edward A. Anderson: *The Presidents and the Presidents' Cars*. This extensive article had a comprehensive summary of several Boston Elevated Railway presidents and their use of the company's parlor cars, including many rare photographs never previously published or were so long ago.

The May-June 2021 *RollSign* featured MBTA current events, highlighting the Commuter Rail Vax Express train, part of a statewide initiative to boost Covid vaccinations across Massachusetts. Interestingly, most of the current events used in this issue were submitted by intermediate members. It is encouraging to see the participation of our youth.

The July-August 2021 *RollSign* includes MBTA current events and will feature a preview of the Green Line Extension by the *RollSign* Director.

The *RollSign* Director and Board continue to evaluate and improve the electronic distribution process, including new guidelines and standard operating procedures.

The *RollSign* would not be possible without the hard work and contributions of many BSRA members. Fitting all this content into 112 pages each year is a perpetually challenging task. The *RollSign* Editor thanks the many members who make our popular bimonthly publication possible.

Report of the Vice-President

The Vice-President handles a diverse range of activities year-round. These efforts included assisting the other officers and directors by proof-reading reports and drafts and reviewing financial statements, including the annual IRS form 990, and Massachusetts Attorney General's form PC (Public Charities), which is a prerequisite for fund-raising.

This office also submitted our Annual Corporate report to the Secretary of the Commonwealth and maintains contact with our insurance providers for our liability policy and planned coverage for Car 5706. Additionally, the Vice-President handles our communications with the Heritage Rail Alliance, the trade group for Heritage Railroads and Railway Museums, and casts proxy votes in their annual elections.

Regularly scheduled efforts include monitoring the mailbox on the Association's website, responding directly to requests as needed or forwarding others to appropriate officers, sending acknowledgement letters for memorial donations to the General and 5706 Funds, and preparing the report of the nominating committee to the membership.

The Vice-President also participates in test runs and assists with background tasks for the monthly Association meetings.

Report of the Secretary

The Secretary maintains the minutes of the monthly business meetings and the quarterly directors' meetings. He also processes membership renewals and manages the annual election of officers and directors.

A total of 517 members and subscribers have opted into our email list, 76% of our membership, excluding complimentary recipients. However, 5 Complimentary members have also opted into the email list.

Our mailing list now numbers 703. Since October 1, 2020, we have added 37 new paid members and subscribers. We lost 41 members and subscribers due to attrition, including 12 deceased and 29 who did not renew, for a net loss of 4 members and subscribers. Our membership and *RollSign* circulation statistics, as of September 30 of each year, were as follows:

<u>Mailing List Category</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Regular	422	423
Intermediate	5	11
Associate	173	165
Subscriber	78	75
Honorary	5	5
Complimentary	<u>24</u>	<u>24</u>
Totals	707	703

Report of the Director of Car Restoration

The principal accomplishment with Type 5 No. 5706 this year was the move of the car from Guilford, Connecticut to Palmyra, Virginia, the site of our contractor's new facility now under construction. We had expected this building to be complete this summer, but a combination of contractor scheduling conflicts and materials have delayed finalization. Construction was planned for last year, but Covid-19 related restrictions prevented this from happening.

Speaking of finances, our balance for the project has done well, even after the move, thanks to your generous donations. During the year, we received a \$2000.00 grant from the Mass Bay RRE for the purchase of laminated safety glass for the side sash. We have made this purchase, one more of the materials needed for this long-standing project.

The remaining work consists of two parts: reassembly of the carbody interior and rebuilding the trucks and installing underbody equipment. The body shell has been completely rebuilt with new steel, primed and ready to paint. Interior parts have been almost completely restored or replaced and must be reinstalled.

To date, we have raised \$432,429 for this project, of which \$64,438 remains unspent awaiting continuation of the restoration. We anticipate an approximate \$20,000 or more in addition from the settlement of a large bequest that we received last year, bringing the total to approximately \$84,000. Additional contributions will add to this total, but we will need at least \$200,000 total to finish the project.

Based on our current fundraising efforts and our predicted level of support which will likely rise as completion nears, we think the job will be done in 2023-4. We cannot emphasize too much, however, that we truly need and appreciate your continued help as we near the end of the project.

We should hasten to mention the assistance of several outside groups as well over the years, including grants from the Amherst Railway Society, the Boston Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, the Mystic Valley Railway Society, the National Historical Railway Society, and the Mass Bay RRE, the last of which has followed and supported this project on a frequent and continuing basis.

Report of the Entertainment Chair

The Entertainment Committee was chaired by Lucius Chiaraviglio in FY 2021, regularly seeking out shows from presenters and producing the Entertainment Calendar. With the advent of Zoom-based meetings on the Internet, his tasks have changed somewhat to accommodate the challenges of meeting monthly productions on this platform.

The BSRA deeply appreciates the efforts all who provided entertainment at our meetings this past year, as well as those who have done so in the past. The presentations during the past year are listed below.

October 3, 2020. Carhouses of Dorchester and Roxbury. Leo Sullivan presented Boston Street Railway Shops and Car Barns through the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, including pictures, plans and an interesting narrative.

November 7, 2020. San Francisco Scenes, 1956-2002, by Clark Frazier. Most of this show focused on the San Francisco

Municipal Railway in the 1950s and 1960s, but it also included later PCC operation and the emergence of the historic streetcar operation in the 1980s. Bonus photos of cable cars, the Key System, and the Sacramento Northern were also presented.

December 5, 2020. Jim Schantz's Seashore Trolley Museum Update. Seashore Trolley Museum President and CEO Jim Schantz provided an update on recent progress at Seashore, including restoration efforts on a wide variety of cars. He gave a preview of Seashore's new 5-year strategic plan as well and reported on the museum's participation in the streetcar activities of the American Public Transit Association and the Community Streetcar Coalition, and their involvement with new streetcar projects across North America. Additional photos were shown of European transit systems from a half century ago and from modern times.

January 9, 2021. MBTA 3.0 (My Beantown Adventure part 3). Back by popular demand, **Byron Nash** made another presentation of contemporary transit photos in and around Boston, from the new Orange Line cars to the closing of Lechmere Station, and everything in between.

February 6, 2021. Boston Transit: A Twentieth-Century Postcard History. **Charlie Bahne** presented a history of Boston transit, as seen from the medium of color postcards over the past hundred years. Penny picture postcards were immensely popular in the early 1900s, and those postcard views document what our city used to look like.

March 6, 2021. Car Barns of Boston Elevated in Cambridge, Arlington & Watertown. **Leo Sullivan** returned to show more shops and car barns of the Boston Elevated Railway and its predecessors through the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries with pictures, and plans, and explained via a lively discussion.

April 3, 2021. New York, Poland, and Ukraine by Eric Oszustowicz. The presentation included recent scenes of the NYC Subway system, LIRR, Metro North and New Jersey Transit, followed by various tram and metro systems in Kiev and Lviv (Ukraine) and Poland from 2017 through 2018.

May 1, 2021. The RollSign Archives: Part 2. Nick Tomkavage provided Boston transit scenes from the *RollSign* magazine archives that were never published or were featured decades ago.

June 5, 2021. Trams & Interurbans of Japan, China, Hong Kong. **Clark Frazier** showed slides from a six-week tour of Japan in 1982, a return visit to Japan, and a tour of the Peoples Republic

of China in 1983. He visited remaining streetcar properties still in operation as many smaller interurban systems, passenger and freight operations, and shots from the Japan National Railways.

July 10, 2021. The Harvard Tunnel, Public Transportation in Boston's Theatre District, Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, Newark Light Rail, and New Jersey Transit Commuter Rail and Buses. **Bradley Clarke** and **Mike Prescott** each presented many transit topics on short notice, featuring contemporary photos and videos, with a few vintage photos sprinkled in. *This show was substituted for the MASSDOT show about the South Coast Rail Project, which will be rescheduled for a later date.*

August 7, 2021. Eastern Fans Visit the Interurbans. Although midwestern rail passenger operations have now dwindled to barely more than a few Amtrak trains and the Chicago commuter rail service area, the Midwest once had an extensive network of interurban lines carrying passengers and freight. In this show, **Leo Sullivan** presented these Midwestern interurbans as they were in the 1930s and more, with many photos over several decades. *This show substituted for the Peter Ehrlich show about The Trams of Prague, Phoenix, Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco, which will be rescheduled for a later date.*

September 11, 2021. Car Barns of Boston Elevated in West Roxbury, Brookline, and Brighton. **Leo Sullivan** once more presented Boston Street Railway Shops and Car Barns in yet another section of Boston through the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, again with pictures, plans, and descriptions, including locations that are still active or that were within the last 50 years.

Conclusion

We are at the end of the series of major changes required to implement electronic distribution of RollSign and Zoom-based monthly meetings. This will allow us to redouble our fund-raising efforts for Type 5 No. 5706 and to complete our new book on Boston's Green Line.

With the Green Line Extension (GLX) project nearing completion, opportunities for *RollSign* coverage, fantrips, and other items of interest will come. FY 2022 should prove an interesting year for the Association and its members, and we will keep you abreast of developments as they happen.

All we do is done by unpaid volunteers and your continuing support keeps our organization strong and vibrant. Thank you for your continuing interest as we look forward to 2022.

**Respectfully submitted,
The Directors and Officers of the
BOSTON STREET RAILWAY ASSOCIATION, INC.**

Bradley H. Clarke, President and Board Chair

Thaddeus S. Anderson, Secretary

Thomas Athearn, Vice-President, and Clerk of Corporation

Charles Bahne, Jr., Treasurer and Director

Jonathan Belcher, Director at Large

Lucius Chiaraviglio, Entertainment Chair

Daniel George Chaisson, Assistant Treasurer

Ronald Clough, Publications Manager

Daniel R. Cohen, Director at Large

Dana Frisbee, AV Manager

James E. Gately, Librarian

David F. Harling, Director of Car Restoration

Michael R. Prescott, Publications Director

Nicholas M. Tomkavage, *RollSign* Editor and Director

Boston Street Railway Association
Annual Treasurer's Report

Fiscal Year 2021
(after adjustments)

		General Fund		
Cash on Hand:	General Fund	October 1, 2020		\$16,958.89
INCOME FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:				
	Donations and Grants, General Fund	\$14,912.87		
	Dues, Regular	\$10,325.00		
	Dues, Intermediate	\$240.00		
	Dues, Associate	\$3,280.00		
	Roll Sign, Subscriptions	\$1,200.00		
	Postage Surcharges from Members	\$174.00		
	Roll Sign, Retail	\$615.00		
	Roll Sign, Wholesale	\$120.00		
	BSRA Publications, Retail	\$2,277.70		
	BSRA Publications, Wholesale	\$372.50		
	Publications, Resale	\$24,547.37		
	Publications, Sales Tax Collected	\$585.71		
	Publications, Shipping & Handling	\$3,855.98		
	Fantrip Income			
	Other General Fund Income	\$109.69		
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND INCOME FOR FY 2021:		\$62,615.82	
EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:				
	Management & General Expenses	\$9,571.12		
	Roll Sign Printing	\$10,427.24		
	Roll Sign Postage & Mailing Service	\$3,694.71		
	Other Roll Sign Expenses	\$1,030.87		
	BSRA Publications Printing & Production			
	Other BSRA Publications Expenses			
	Purchase of Inventory for Resale	\$19,384.72		
	Publications Marketing & Show Expense	\$4,887.24		
	Publications, Sales Tax Paid	\$606.02		
	Publications Shipping Expense	\$3,685.05		
	Other Publications Sales Expenses	\$8,154.80		
	Monthly Meeting Expense	\$831.48		
	Library Expense	\$1,800.00		
	Fantrip Expense			
	Fundraising Expense	\$738.20		
	Refunds Paid & Returned Checks			
	Other General Fund Expense			
	TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENSE FOR FY 2021:		\$64,811.45	
	GENERAL FUND SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:			(\$2,195.63)
Cash on Hand:	General Fund	September 30, 2021		\$14,763.26
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		5706 Fund		
Cash on Hand:	5706 Fund	October 1, 2020		\$59,256.89
INCOME FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:				
	Donations and Grants, 5706 Fund	\$22,738.22		
	Interest, 5706 Fund	\$13.60		
	Other 5706 Fund Income			
	TOTAL 5706 FUND INCOME FOR FY 2021:		\$22,751.82	
EXPENSES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:				
	Car 5706 Restoration Expense	\$2,738.08		
	Car 5706 Housing & Transport	\$12,289.76		
	Car 5706 Project Management	\$637.14		
	Car 5706 Fundraising Expense	\$1,885.21		
	Other 5706 Fund Expense			
	TOTAL 5706 FUND EXPENSE FOR FY 2021:		\$17,550.19	
	5706 FUND SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021:			\$5,201.63
Cash on Hand:	5706 Fund	September 30, 2021		\$64,458.52
COMBINED CASH ON HAND:	September 30, 2021			\$79,221.78
PROOF OF BALANCE:				
	Cash	\$0.00		
	Checking	\$4,383.21		
	Money Market	\$73,039.06		
	Savings	\$922.13		
	PayPal	\$877.38		
	Square	\$0.00		
	GRAND TOTAL CASH ON HAND	\$79,221.78	VARIANCE:	\$0.00
5706 FUND GRAND TOTAL RAISED TO DATE:		\$432,429.15		