



POLICY

SUBJECT AREA: PUBLICATIONS

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Version 1.1

This document supersedes all previous policies and directives relating to the above subject area

B&O Railroad Historical Society

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CHANGE AND ACCEPTANCE LOG

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Historical Society's ("Society") Publications Committee is composed of several volunteers who are Society members. Their work is supervised by the Publications Chairperson, who heads the Committee. The Chairperson has ultimate authority for the Society's main publications, as identified below. The Chairperson will report periodically to the Society's Board of Directors. Publication expenditures will be coordinated with the Society's Treasurer.

The Publications Committee of the B&O Railroad Historical Society exists to do three main things:

1. Produce *The Sentinel*, the Society's quarterly historical journal, in both print and electronic forms.
2. Produce the *B&O Modeler*, the Society's electronic journal for those whose interests lean toward railroad modeling, on an as-desired basis.
3. Produce the Society's annual calendar, built around individual photographs/pictures for each month. Emphasis will be given to producing color images, though may include black and white.

The Publications Chairperson should also be available to pursue other projects at the request of the Society's president or Board of Directors.

2.0 FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION: THE SENTINEL

The Publications Committee's primary responsibility is to produce *The Sentinel* magazine on a consistent quarterly basis. The magazine's editors must remember that it is the ONLY benefit most members of the Society will ever get, and strive to make it worth the member's dollar.

Presently the Publications Chairperson has appointed an Editor and a Managing Editor for *The Sentinel*. These individuals work with the Publications Chairperson, the Society President, the Company Store Manager, and other key members of the Society on coordinating the writing and submission of material for both the paper and electronic versions of *The Sentinel*.

The magazine needs to come out on time, on a scheduled basis every bit as dependable as those of the passenger trains that once plied the railroad. Currently that schedule calls for the mailed copies to be delivered to members during the first week(s) of January, April, July and October each year. Meeting a schedule like this requires, on the part of the editors, a pro-active approach to soliciting manuscripts, encouraging prospective authors to collect their thoughts in a message of some sort; with the promise that the editors will provide strong support for those who "don't think I can write that well," and a willingness to develop photo and data sources both at the Archives and among individual members. In short, the editors need to be able/willing to both collect and disseminate data.

The Sentinel layout design is currently handled by Roberta Poling, a Society member doing business in Columbia, MD, as the private firm Thunder Grafix. She also communicates with the magazine's printer. Mailing lists for each issue of the magazine should be solicited from the Membership Chairperson by the editor(s) approximately two weeks before they will be needed, and sent directly to the designer. Inserts for individual issues—the annual election ballot, flyers touting the annual Eastern and Western Minicons and the Annual Convention, quarterly sales specials from the Company Store and other items as desired—should go directly to the designer rather than be routed through the editor(s), whose responsibility should be focused on telling event sponsors the deadline by which they need to have the material. Attempts to stretch material delivery deadlines should be discouraged.

There is little in the way of required content for *The Sentinel*, though there have historically been the following featured topics and sections:

- The Society's President should be encouraged to report to the members each issue.
- The Annual Convention Chairperson and/or Committee usually provides material for an article in the third quarter issue each year related to the B&O in the area where the conventions will be held. Subsequently, a report on each convention should be offered; a goal usually best met in the first-quarter issue of the following year, for deadline reasons.
- From time to time book reviews may be included. The editor(s) ordinarily will find appropriate Society members to write these reviews, which will be edited and supplemented, as necessary.
- There may be the need to publish obituaries of key B&O Railroad and/or Society members, historians, authors, presenters, etc.
- Society members are encourage to provide valuable feedback and/or interesting follow-ons to previously published articles in a section called Running Light, which usually appears near the back of the magazine.

3.0 THE B&O MODELER

The B&O Modeler is a work in progress despite its having been issued more than 40 times. Where once it was the work of a private individual/Society member who was granted permission to use the B&O name in his efforts, it is now the Society's responsibility. Thus the editors are recruited/encouraged/assisted by the Publications Chairperson, who is responsible for encouraging the issuance of multiple issues each year.

The B&O Modeler focuses on providing information for those who like to build accurate scale models of Baltimore and Ohio Railroad equipment and infrastructure. It is not expected to mimic the content of commercial magazines. *The B&O Modeler* should be considered a source for data, plans, photos, etc. of the railroad's items, and reporting on how individuals produce credible models.

It should also be a source for reviews of products labeled for the B&O and being offered commercially. Our policy will be to produce as straightforward a report as possible. Reviewers will be identified.

In addition to publishing reviews based on inspection of actual products, citations of B&O-labeled product notices from ads or other information releases will be shared with the readership. Hobby manufacturers have traditionally been somewhat cavalier in such “B&O labeling,” and this practice is expected to continue. In many of these cases, even without a physical examination of the product, there will be known or apparent aspects of the product that deviate from prototype fidelity. In these situations, an effort will be made to make readers aware of such apparent discrepancies in as factual a manner as possible while being mindful to avoid outright “product bashing”. At the same time, it will be acknowledged that a model is a representation of reality, and modelers’ standards regarding that representation will vary.

As noted, *The B&O Modeler* may appear at the discretion of its editors; an effort should be made to offer multiple issues in a year. It is the Publications Committee’s intention that *The B&O Modeler*, wherever possible, will be continually “in print.” The most recent issues will be available for free download from the Society’s website, while older issues will be available from the Company Store for purchase in digital form. The number of recent issues available for free download may vary from time to time and will be administered by the Publications Committee based on various factors including page count. After a period of time, download access will be removed and these issues will then be available for purchase.

4.0 ANNUAL CALENDAR

The Society will publish annual calendars featuring images of B&O equipment and facilities. There is a preference among Society members for publishing color views of the B&O Railroad in its “glory days”, while avoiding Chessie System and CSX schemes. Finding this kind of material is becoming more difficult as the years go on. Therefore, production of calendars with Chessie and/or CSX, or images in black-and-white, cannot be totally ruled out.

Acquiring material is primarily the responsibility of the Publications Chairperson, acting on his/her own knowledge or on recommendations solicited from members across the Society. Photos can be solicited from one member, from a given area, to match a theme, or just at random, but this may have to be a pro-active job from year to year.

Ideally the calendar is ready nine months before the start of the next calendar year, in plenty of time for sales at the Society’s first organized event of the year, which is usually the Western mini-con in May. Production work usually centers at Thunder Grafix, where Roberta Poling has the masters for the calendar view months and can work on the calendar at her convenience, usually in the first three months of the previous year.

Producing the calendar ideally involves a three to four-person crew: the Publications Chairperson, a member with a scanner capable of producing high-quality images from pictures presented for use, a proofreader with a good eye for even the smallest details of the previous and next months in each month, and the graphic designer. With the exception of soliciting the photos, an ongoing process, production of the calendar usually can be accomplished in a concentrated three weeks of effort.

5.0 MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

Periodically the Society may publish other items related to the B&O Railroad. The Publications Committee may also be asked to cooperate with non-Society publishers related to projects on B&O themes.

6.0 KEY STAFF

As in any organization, the Publications Chairperson is expected to hand in his/her resignation, even if pro forma, after each annual election to give a new or re-elected President a free hand to revise the committee's operations. The Publications Chairperson, in concert with the President, will endeavor to recruit and nurture future editor(s) for Society publications.

Other key staff include:

- Thunder Grafix/Roberta Poling is expected to continue to play a key role in Society publication projects.
- The Society Webmaster provides valuable assistance on posting and disseminating *The Sentinel* and *The B&O Modeler* in digital forms.
- The Society's Company Store Manager provides a valuable service by helping to market print and digital copies of Society publications via advertising flyers, as well as in-person table representation at trade shows and Society events.