



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



B&O No. 51
THE FIRST STREAMLINED DIESEL-ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE

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B&O Railroad Museum Unveils First Streamlined Diesel-Electric Passenger Locomotive Restoration

Baltimore, MD – On February 1, 2021, the B&O Railroad Museum unveils the complete cosmetic restoration of the B&O Number 51, built in 1937 the first streamlined diesel-electric locomotive. An innovation of the time, the B&O diesel-electrics were touted as modern locomotives, assuring smoother, more comfortable rides without the need for frequent changes of engines on longer trips. This modernization contributed greatly to ending the era of steam locomotives and launched the age of diesel power in the industry.

Luxury Travel

During the 1930s, commercial airliners offered consumers more choices in travel cutting into railroad travel as the standard. To compete, B&O advertisements featured rail lines such as the Capitol Limited (between Chicago and the East) as diesel-powered, streamlined, carrying the most modern Pullman cars and serviced by a train secretary, maid-manicurist, and barber-valets. Travelers were pictured enjoying a lounge-like atmosphere in an observation car on the Capitol Limited (shown right).

THESE TRAVELERS ARE NOW "DIESEL - MINDED"

In the Sun Room Observation Car of the Capitol Limited Diesel-Powered Streamliner

SPEED WITH COMFORT AND SMOOTHNESS ON B & O DIESEL-POWERED TRAINS

DIESELS—the latest development in motive power—bring extra comforts to B & O passengers between the East and West. Both the *Capitol Limited* and the *National Limited* are operated by these modern locomotives, assuring a smoother, more comfortable ride. Diesels, embodying new principles of operation, eliminate the need for frequent changes of engines on long runs; and their steady, even pull gives one the feeling that the train is really gliding.

The *Capitol Limited* between Chicago and the East (all Pullman west of Washington) is Diesel-powered, streamlined and carries the latest type Pullman cars. It is also serviced by train secretary, maid-maunier, barber-valet . . . there is radio plus other special features.

The *National Limited*, between St. Louis and the East, (Diesel-powered between Washington, Ind. and Washington, D. C.) is a popular train with experienced travel-

The *Royal Blue* and *The Columbian*—streamliners between Washington and New York—are Diesel-operated, too.

All principal B & O trains are air-conditioned . . . and there's no extra fare.

BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD

Labor of Love

The cosmetic restoration of the Number 51 included uncovering decades of life on the railroad and took five years to complete. The 51 was a skeleton and completely restored through metalwork, carpentry, and artisanal painting. The restoration team analyzed the original paint colors to create its modern formula, utilized original engineer blueprints for lettering, even built an English wheel tool to recreate the curved stainless steel ornament giving the locomotive its modern art deco lines, and so much more. "This was a labor of love for all of us at the B&O," said Kris Hoellen, Executive Director. "The Museum's restoration team are true artists and of course, mega railroad fans. We are proud to bring such an important and beautiful locomotive back to her original glory when she rolled out in 1937 and thrilled to share this important piece of American railroad history with everyone." The #51 will be showcased in the Roundhouse for the month of February along with its original blueprints.



Press Preview Events

On Friday, January 29th at 9 AM, the B&O Railroad Museum is offering a special preview of the B&O No. 51 for press, only. The preview will take place inside the Museum's historic and spacious Roundhouse one hour prior to opening to the public. Event is subject to change should weather prevent moving locomotive. Please RSVP to Dana Goldstein at DGGoldstein@BORail.org or call 443-421-9038 by 4 PM, Thursday, January 28, 2021. **NOTE:** Due to inclement weather impacting the U.S. this week, press may schedule onsite visit by appointment or virtual interviews with the Executive Director, Kris Hoellen. Contact Dana Goldstein at DGGoldstein@BORail.org to schedule.

Please be advised face masks and safe social distancing practices are required for all visitors, staff, and volunteers. The Museum's full safety measures can be found at www.BORail.org/events/Visit.

About the B&O Railroad Museum

The B&O Railroad Museum, a full affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of American railroading and its impact on American society, culture and economy. The Museum is home to the oldest, most comprehensive collection of railroad artifacts in the Western Hemisphere including an unparalleled roster of 19th and 20th century railroad equipment. The 40-acre historic site is regarded as the birthplace of American Railroading and includes the 1851 Mt. Clare Station, the 1884 Baldwin Roundhouse and first mile of commercial railroad track in America. In 2019, the Museum welcomed guests from all 50 states and 40 countries. For further information on the B&O Railroad Museum, please call 410-752-2490 or visit www.BORail.org.

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