

Oakland B&O Museum Acquires and Restores 1920 Baldwin Steam Locomotive

Right: The 1920 Baldwin locomotive nearing its final restoration for display at the Oakland B&O Museum.

Below: The Baldwin locomotive arriving in Oakland, MD.



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Photography by: **Lance C. Bell**

This 1920 locomotive was originally built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works for the Jonesboro, Lake City and Eastern Railroad in Mississippi, where it was used primarily to transport logs and wood products. It served a number of large sawmills running between Jonesboro, MS, and Blytheville, AR. The locomotive originally carried the #40, but was changed to #76 when it was leased to the St. Louis and

San Francisco Railroad, aka the “Frisco” in 1925. In 1947 it was sold to the Mississippian Railway, where it was used mainly to transport Bentonite clay from a plant in Smithville, MS. The clay was an important bonding material used by foundries. Sometimes referred to as the “Bentonite Road,” the Mississippian Railway was owned and operated by two brothers, Jim and Frank Carlisle. They owned two nearly identical Baldwin locomotives that they proudly maintained in tip-top condition. Here #76 enjoyed perhaps the best time of its life, steaming merrily through the northeast corner of Mississippi for about 20 years.

In 1967 Sloan Cornell purchased locomotive #76 and moved it to Pennsylvania for service on his Penn View Mountain scenic railroad. This was a short-line tourist railway operating in an area known as Packsaddle Gap,

near Blairsville. It was really put to the test by climbing a steep 4% grade, negotiating “switch backs” to reach a scenic overlook. By some accounts this is when the 50-year-old locomotive began showing its age. Then, in 1976, Mr. Cornell closed his Penn View Mountain railway and moved his entire operation, “lock, stock, and enginehouse” to the Gettysburg area, where he operated the Gettysburg Scenic Railway. While running on the Gettysburg line, Engine #76 reportedly began a rapid decline due in part to corrosion caused by the hard water it ingested over the years. It is said that #76 was “out of square, patched up, and one very tired 1920 Baldwin” when it was taken out of service on the Gettysburg line. In 1999 it was sold to the Ohio Central Railroad to await its turn for a complete overhaul. In 2005, still awaiting restoration, the locomotive was sold to the Steam Railroading Institute at Owosso, Michigan, where it began a slow restoration process that was ultimately abandoned in favor of another locomotive.

In the Fall of 2017 the Oakland B&O Museum received a generous donation from the Daniel E. Offutt III Charitable Trust, for the purpose of acquiring a steam locomotive for display in front of the Oakland Station. This was followed by another generous donation from Tom and Sarah Kuhn to facilitate enhancements to the engine and the surrounding area.

After an extensive search, the Oakland B&O Museum was able to purchase Engine #76 from the Steam Railroading Institute of Michigan. It was moved from Michigan to Oakland, Maryland, in July 2018, and restored ‘for display purposes only’ by Diversified Rail Services, Inc. While this engine was never actually used on the B&O Railroad line, once it was moved

to Oakland, a town rich in B&O history, a decision was made to convert it to a B&O engine. In researching the history of B&O steam engines, it was determined that Engine #76 most closely resembles the B&O Class E-39 steam engines in certain respects, including wheel configuration, driver diameter, cylinder bore/stroke, gross tonnage, and operating boiler pressure. The B&O engines of that era were

assigned numbers in the “400” series. So the #476 was chosen for the adopted engine, employing the number 4 from its original identity, and the number 76 which it carried for most of its working life. The Oakland B&O Museum is pleased to have had the opportunity to preserve this piece of railroad history for future generations.

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