PRIVATE VARNISH®

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SPECIAL EDITION

SUITSME

AUGUST 2015

Original VARNISH

Ayuh, it SUITSME

Illustrating the unusual circumstance where something very special is carefully preserved, and two Nebraskans travel a long way to find it.

This is a special reprint edition of the Original Varnish feature as appeared in Private Varnish No. 143.

BY NELLIE MACCALLUM WITH STEVE ESPOSITO

The year was 1928, and Maine's Bangor & Aroostook Railroad (BAR) had just put forth its most profitable year ever. Wall Street's wild tumble was still a year away, and no one could have predicted that the Great Depression was looming ominously in the shadows of our nation's history. The robust economy appeared as if it would last indefinitely, the end of those good times, nowhere in sight.

In keeping with the costly ostentation made famous by that era's railroad tycoons, the president of the Bangor & Aroostook, Mr. Perry Todd, allocated a princely sum for the purchase of a heavyweight "executive car" from the Pullman Manufacturing Company of Chicago, Illinois. Upon inspection of the handsome Pullman for the first time, Mr. Todd was asked what he thought of his new "palace on wheels." His response: "It suits me!" appeared the very next day, painted in gold on the name boards.

For the next seventy five-years, the Pullman was assigned to the President of the Bangor & Aroostook for his exclusive use; entertaining guests, hosting business

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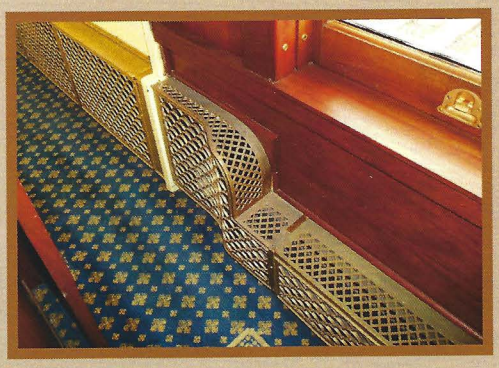
COVER: **Back in 2012, the *Suitsme* carried the markers of Amtrak's *California Zephyr* through Fraser, Colorado.** DARRELL ARNDT PHOTO

BELOW: **The *Chattanooga Limited*, AAPRCO's train to its namesake convention in 2012, was the *Suitsme's* debut after major work was performed between the rails and the car's floor. This night shot was taken on the Biltmore spur at the Norfolk Southern yard in Asheville, North Carolina, during the evening layover.** CHASE GUNNOE PHOTO









The lounge exudes a warm feeling, and the drawn blinds give a clue as to its source. Natural sunlight compliments the blues and browns better than a flash ever could. These views, shot during the layover in Cheyenne, Wyoming, the destination for AAPRCO's 2013 *Cheyenne Cowboy Limited,* really show the car off nicely. The Bangor & Aroostook undoubtedly refurbished *Suitsme's* interior during its 75 years on the property. The beautifully refinished woodwork appears to be original. R.J. BARTON PHOTOS



On September 26th, 2012, AAPRCO's *Chattanooga Limited* crossed the Holston River at Strawberry Plains during its trek across the Norfolk Southern mainline from Asheville, North Carolina to Knoxville, Tennesse and south to Chattanooga. The view from the train was spactacular! Whether the *Suitsme* is chartered as part of a train like this one, or as a stand alone car on the rear of an Amtrak train, you can be assured of confortable accomadations, fine dining, and views like this one from her big windows. CHASE GUNNOE PHOTO

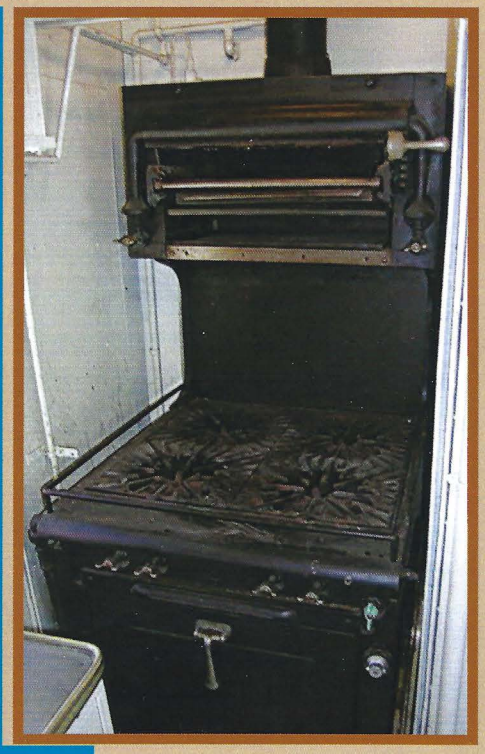


LEFT: **Prior to the galley renovation and commissioning back to regular meal service, in 2011, the original Pullman build was still wonderfully intact, having been conscientiously maintained, and refurbished in the 1990s.** WARREN LUCAS PHOTO

BELOW LEFT: **Two years later in Cheyenne, we found the galley all spic and span between meals. The chef had thoughtfully left a bowl of fruit on the counter and hid all the junk food in an effort to promote a healthy diet for foraging guests.** R.J. BARTON PHOTO

BELOW RIGHT: **The original stove had a broiler above the stovetop. Looks like soldered water pipes and threaded gas piping on the wall.** WARREN LUCAS PHOTO







LEFT: **Beverage service, and prep on the counter, with a dishwasher, and trash compactor, all in one corner. The contempory stainless equipment exudes efficiency. Much of the original Pullman build has been kept, though the copper hot-water tank is not functional. The cupboards and brass rail look like something you'd find on a Maine-built schooner, despite being built in Illinois! The whole package looks to be aesthetically pleasing, yet suitable for a professional chef to create splendid fare, from breakfast in the morning to midnight snacks.** R.J. BARTON PHOTO



LEFT: **The copper hot water tank has seen years of elbow grease if the shine is any indication. Plumbed with a "torpedo" inside connected to the boiler, it provided water for beverage service. A handy valve right below the tank metered the pressure when in use or eliminated it during storage. Not only was the range gas-fired, the car's water heater and refrigeration were propane-fueled as well.**
WARREN LUCAS PHOTO

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meetings, and providing special travel accommodations for the privileged few. Through the years, the car was stored inside, meticulously cared for and seldom, if ever, left home rails.

From the early seventies the car wore the BAR's new black, red and grey striped scheme and was renamed *Schoodic* after the mainland portion of Maine's Acadia National Park on the Schoodic Peninsula. Later, owners of the Bangor & Aroostook, Iron Road Railways, reconfigured the car's interior.

Business of railroading aside, part of the history of the *Suitsme* includes Ted Williams (aka the Splendid Splinter), the famous left fielder for baseball's Boston Red Sox. After retiring "the first time" from the Sox in 1954, Ted was invited by BAR President Curtis Hutchins, to celebrate his retirement, and create some long lasting memories for "Ole Number 9", on a fly-fishing trip to Presque Isle, Maine. That September, Curtis ordered BAR *No. 100* to pick up Ted in Boston-along with all his fishing tackle-for an overnight ride to Maine. As he set foot off the car, Ted must have been envisioning fly-casting on the Presque Isle River. "Lets get some leader material and make dust!" This was the Williams that Maine knows. "Always in a hurry to go fishing." said the Bangor Daily News, September 28, 1954.



LEFT: **Stainless drawer pulls added to the commercial range keep errant pots on the stovetop while traveling. Above the hood sits a microwave. Looks like a toaster is on the shelf. On-board refrigeration appears to be a commercial unit.**
R.J. BARTON PHOTO

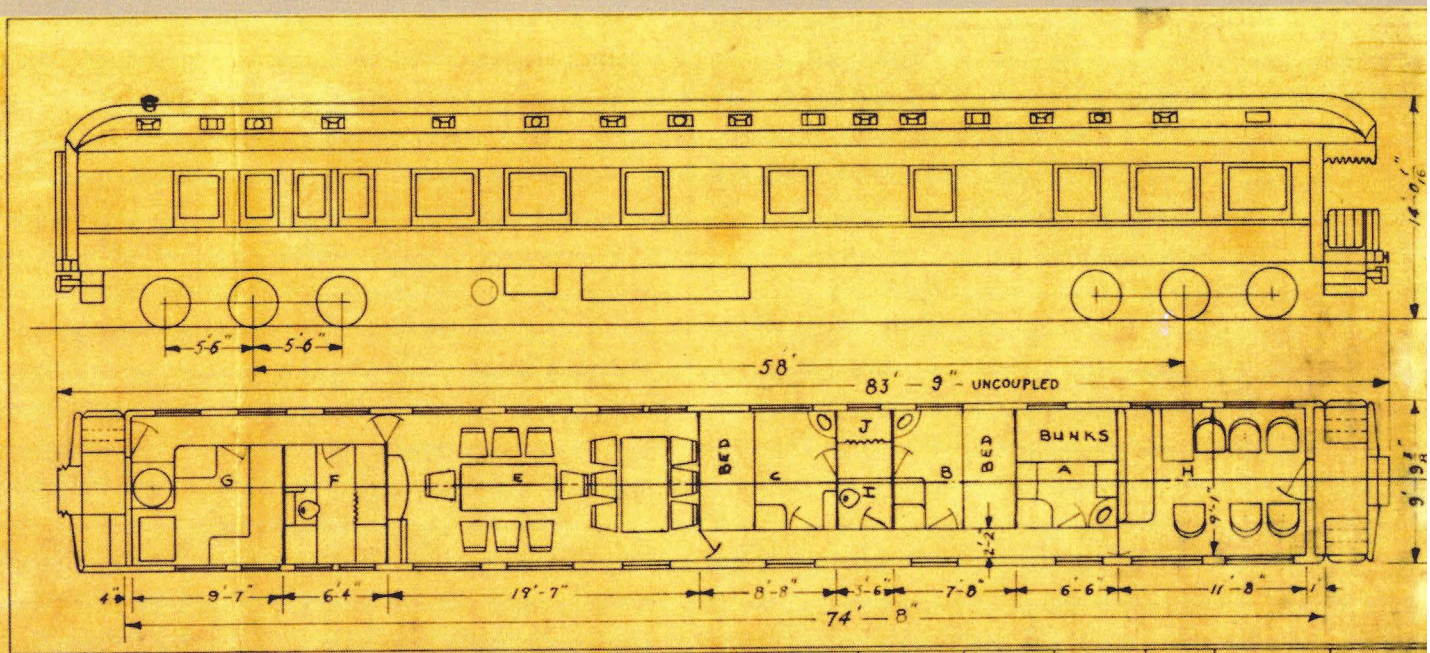


Fast forward to 2003—the Bangor & Aroostook deemed *No. 100* surplus to their operational needs, and the grand dame ventured to New Hampshire to take up residence among the foothills of the White Mountains.

Purchased by the Clark family's Plymouth and Lincoln Railroad, and in loving hands, the *Suitsme* was available for private charter in service "along New Hampshire's lakes and through the White Mountains." The Pullman car graciously plied the iron highway, and evoked images of the Golden Age of Railroading. Her grandeur and timeless elegance provided a lifting tribute to the long forgotten era of travel by private railcar. Once the exclusive

ABOVE: **June 19, 1955 finds B&A No. 100 in Boston's North Station, painted light grey with blue window band to match BAR's new diesels and lightweight passenger cars. Behind the 100 is a stainless B&A sleeper headed for Van Buren, Maine. Ahead of the 100 is a Maine Central office car. At the time, the Maine Central and B&M were under common ownership so a lot of the MEC equipment was painted B&M red instead of MEC green.** LAWSON K. HILL PHOTO, JERRY ANGIER COLLECTION

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LINE	NUMBER OLD	NUMBER NEW	CLASS	LENGTH OVER BUFFERS	LENGTH BAGGAGE SPACE	SIZE OF MAIL COMPARTMENT	NO. AND SIZE SIDE DOORS BAGGAGE END	SEATING CAPACITY	LIGHT	HEAT	KIND OF END	WINDOWS	WEIGHT
A		100	BUS	83-9"					ELECT	VAPOR	WP	DOUBLE	198,700
B													
C													
D													

LINE	DATE BUILT	SIZE OF JOURNALS	SIZE OF WHEELS	CONSTRUCTION
A	1929	5½"X10"	36"	ALL STEEL
B				
C				
D				



luxury of the rich and privileged, PV travel was made famous in the fifties by Lucius Beebe's "Mansions on Rails," an account of the history of private railway cars, and their owners.

During her stay with the Clarks, the car's interior was refurbished and Ben Clark and his crew repainted the exterior in its current scheme, reminiscent of the BAR's EMD-inspired livery in the fifties. There has been speculation that Car100 was delivered by Pullman in Pullman Green, but that has never been authenticated. Renamed *Suitsme*, it was one of the many jewels in the collection of Clark's Hobo Railroad, indeed a very handsome family favorite.

In 2011 Omaha Nebraska's Robert E. Owen and Terry Peterson of Zephyr Rail Services were delighted to acquire *No. 100*. Warren Lucas oversaw the purchase, trip home and subsequent rebuilding and refurbishment, which included new trucks, and updated couplers and draft gear, diesel generator, updated waste and water systems. Amtrak-compatible air brakes and electrical upgrades were all part of the package. As such, a new era is born. It *Suits Us* would certainly be apropos!

Special thanks to Jerry Angier, Ben Clark, Bill Howes, and Warren Lucas.

More photographs on the next page.

ABOVE: **No. 100 became the *Schoodic* in the seventies, just in time for new paint. To celebrate new management, everything on B&A rails wore black, red, and grey from EMD F3's to GP 38's.**

The current blue and grey scheme on the *Suitsme* is reminicent of the original paint applied to the B&A's GP9's built at LaGrange in 1954; the handsomest diesel livery on the line, says Editor Steve.

LARRY EASTWOOD PHOTO, JERRY ANGIER COLLECTION

FACING PAGE AND BELOW: **Bangor & Aroostook diagram sheet. Revisions from 1955-1968 are noted in the left-hand margin.**

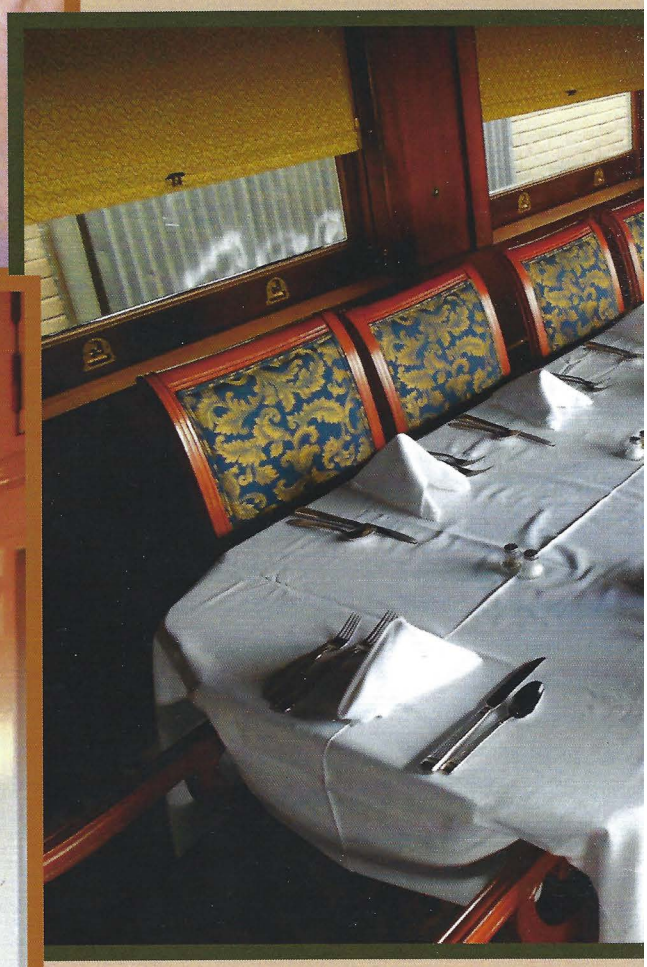
JOHN W. BARRIGER III NATIONAL RAILROAD LIBRARY; ST. LOUIS MERCANTILE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI ST. LOUIS

CAR 100

A - ONE UPPER AND ONE LOWER BUNK WITH TOILET AND LAVATORY
B - ½ WIDTH BED WITH TOILET AND LAVATORY
C - SAME AS B
TOTAL SLEEPING CAPACITY - 4 PERSONS
E - DINING ROOM SEATS 10 MAXIMUM 8 NOMINAL
F - PORTERS ROOM WITH TOILET AND SHOWER
G - KITCHEN WITH GAS STOVE, GAS REFRIGERATOR, GAS HOT WATER HEATER
H - OBSERVATION SEATS 9
I - PUBLIC TOILET
J - SHOWER FOR STATEROOM B&C
NOTE: CAR HAS MOTOR GENERATOR, AIR CONDITIONING IN A, B, C, E, F & H, CONNECTION FOR STANDBY POWER, CAR EQUIPPED WITH COAL BURNING BAKER HEATER FOR USE WHEN STEAM NOT AVAILABLE.
MOTOR GENERATOR - KOHLER 5 KW., PROPANE DRIVEN, MODEL 5 RM-22
AIR CONDITIONERS - OUTSIDE ROOF MOUNTED, 3 DUO-THERM UNITS, MODEL 75, ¾ TON
- IN ROOM F, FRIGIDAIRE MODEL A-938L ROOM UNIT, ¾ TON, ON STANDBY POWER ONLY.



R.J. Barton photo





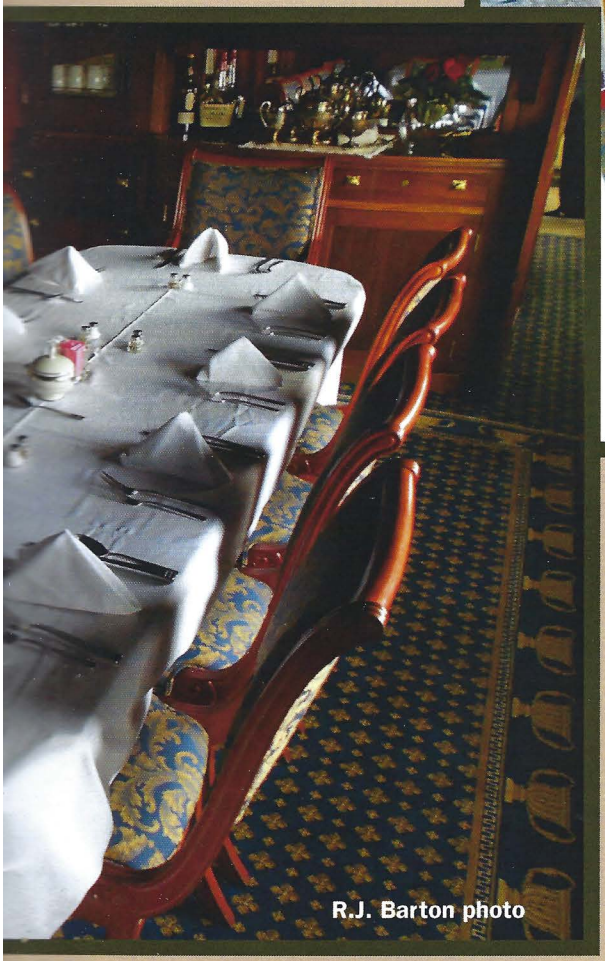
R.J. Barton photo

The "Ted Williams" bedroom is as cozy a spot as you'll find onboard the rails. Nestled between the beautifully detailed dresser and the brass hand rail the "Splinter" might have curled up and dreamed about landing big Atlantic Salmon with his bamboo Orvis fly rod as the miles to Presque Isle, Maine, 'clickidy-clacked' all the way up north.

Though the staterooms all have fans and sinks, a fella rated an attached toilet and shower. See the floor plan on page 18.



R.J. Barton photo



R.J. Barton photo



R.J. Barton photo



Warren Lucas photo

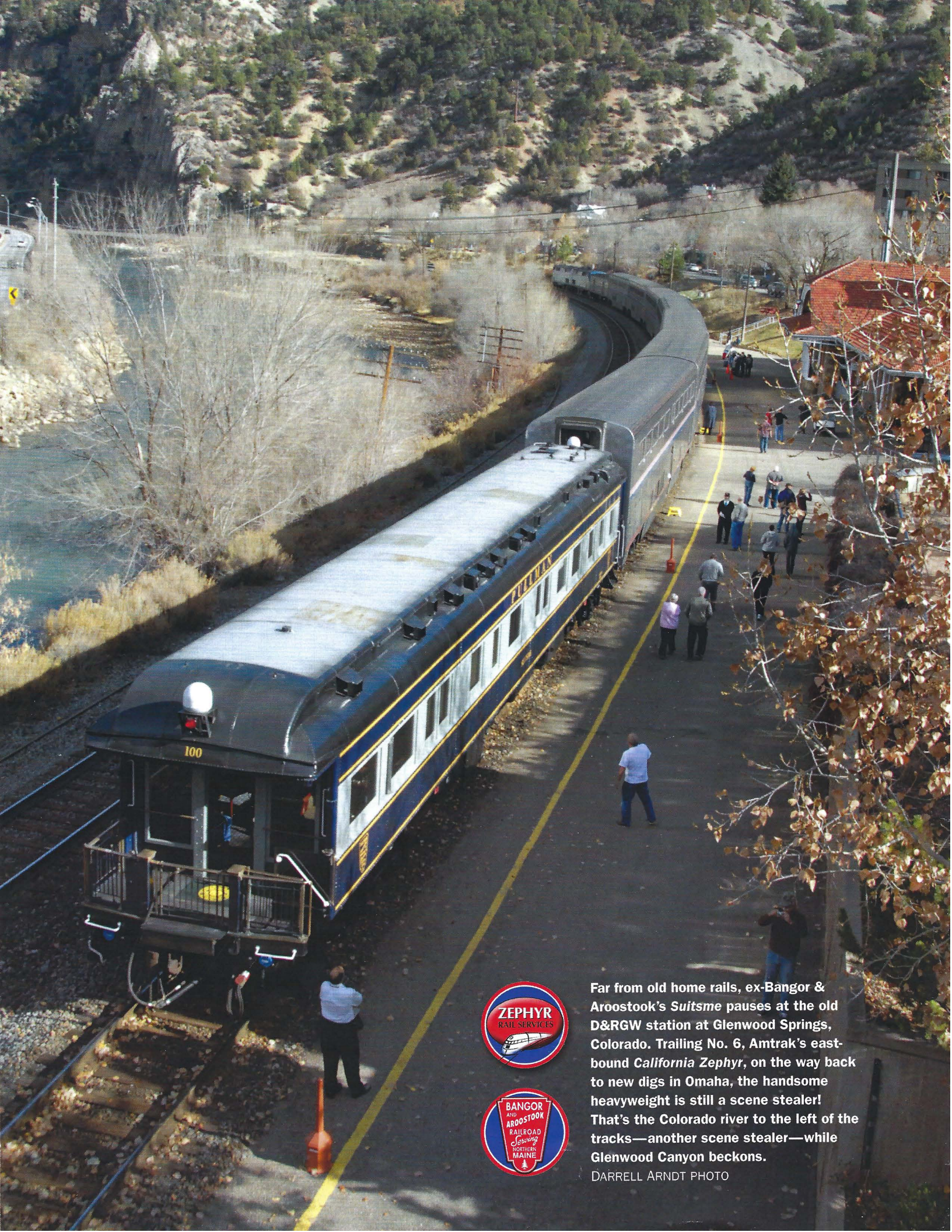


R.J. Barton photo

The dining room still has the look and feel of the Pullman original. Most, if not all, of the details are intact from the ceiling fan to the window's sash hardware and the drawer pulls on the mahogany hutch. During the Chattanooga convention trip the table was set for 10 guests, and aromas of a fine dinner wafted out of the galley. A year later the dining room was set up for a buffet during the stay in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Just a few years earlier when the car called Lincoln, New Hampshire, home, framed photos of Ted Williams adorned a vintage table at the other end of the dining room. Today one of the photos and an autographed sketch reside on a shelf above the bed in the "Ted Williams" bedroom. The fellow in the sports coat was the Bangor line's Director of Marketing, Howard Cousins. Like Williams, Cousins was a WWII Marine and a favorite of B&A President Curtis Hutchins. Like many an old line B&A management man of that era, Smilin' Howie was still on the job in the seventies. The silver New York Central President's Safety Award is from 1928, the year the *Suitsme* was built.

PV



Far from old home rails, ex-Bangor & Aroostook's *Suitsme* pauses at the old D&RGW station at Glenwood Springs, Colorado. Trailing No. 6, Amtrak's eastbound *California Zephyr*, on the way back to new digs in Omaha, the handsome heavyweight is still a scene stealer! That's the Colorado river to the left of the tracks—another scene stealer—while Glenwood Canyon beckons.

DARRELL ARNDT PHOTO