



Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

2017 H. ALBERT WEBB MEMORIAL RAILROAD PRESERVATION AWARD WILL HELP RESTORE HISTORIC DANBURY, CT NEW HAVEN RR TURNTABLE

The Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc. (“Mass Bay RRE”) announced on January 28, 2017 that the **Danbury Railway Museum** of Danbury, Connecticut has been selected as recipient of the 2017 **H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award**. This \$10,000 grant will help fund restoration of the historic **New Haven Railroad turntable**, which is located on the Museum’s grounds in Danbury. The project will replace the ties and timbers on the deck of the Museum’s 1917-vintage New Haven Railroad turntable. The timbers at one end of deck have deteriorated to the point that there is a height difference with rails outside of the pit wall, and this differential has gotten worse due to the condition of the timbers.

“We thank the Mass Bay RRE for considering the Danbury Railway Museum as the recipient of the H. Albert Webb Award this year,” said Steve Gould, Secretary of the Museum. “It is truly an honor to have been chosen. The former New Haven Railroad turntable is a showpiece of our vast collection and the grant received will go a long way to fund the restoration job at hand for this important artifact.”

Leigh A. Webb of Franklin, New Hampshire, donor of the award named for his late father, said, “We are occasionally reminded that portions of railroad’s history, crucial to the everyday functioning of a busy railway company, are often overlooked as targets of preservation. One such item is the venerable and ever-useful turntable. The Danbury Railway Museum’s efforts to restore theirs to working condition are to be applauded, and by the granting of the H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award, greatly encouraged. I am very pleased with this year’s Mass Bay RRE Award’s Committee selection and wish all those at the D.R.M. the best of luck in this endeavor.”

Mass Bay RRE President David Brown of Andover, Mass., together with Mr. Webb, presented the 2017 Award to the Danbury Railway Museum on Saturday, January 28, 2017, during the Amherst Railway Society’s “Railroad Hobby Show” in West Springfield, Mass., the largest event of its kind in New England. Several previous recipients were present to be recognized for their ongoing preservation efforts throughout New England, and future applicants were encouraged to begin the process for the next selection cycle.

The 95’ long turntable, located in the former New Haven Railroad yard in Danbury, CT and part of the Danbury Railway Museum, was constructed in 1917. It was used to turn locomotives and served a nine-stall roundhouse and servicing facility. It could handle all but the largest steam locomotives of the railroad. It continued to be used until the 1970s. When the Danbury Railway Museum first occupied the yard in 1995, the turntable pit had been filled with the debris left over from several roundhouse fires. Once the debris was removed by Museum volunteers, the turntable was found to have been protected from the elements by the debris. A gasoline engine was installed and the turntable has been operating ever since. The turntable was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 5, 2005.

Leigh Webb created the H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award in 2000 to recognize his father’s love for New England railroading. The award aids nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that preserve historically significant railroad equipment, structures or information from New England railroads.

Mass Bay RRE’s Award Committee considered numerous applications from qualified tax-exempt organizations before making its recommendations to Mr. Webb, who chose Danbury turntable project as the 2017 recipient. This year’s Award Committee consists of William Crawford, David W. Brown, and Karl R. McKinney – all presidents or former presidents of Mass Bay RRE, along with Alan B. Butler, Douglas F. Kydd, Alan MacMillan, Jr. and Andrew Jennings.

The application period for the 2018 H. Albert Webb Memorial Railroad Preservation Award will open in July of 2017. The deadline for applications for the 2018 Award will be October 17, 2017. The Award application and information will be available in July on Mass Bay RRE’s website: www.massbayrre.org.

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Completed projects funded (entirely or in part) by H. Albert Webb Award grants since 2001 include:

- Completion of interior and exterior restoration of the historic **Newfane Railroad Station** in Newfane, Vermont by the **Historical Society of Windham County, Inc.**, of Newfane, Vermont.
- Completion of the exterior restoration of the historic 1867 Boston & Maine **Shelburne Falls Freight House** by the **Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum** of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.
- Rehabilitation of four traction motors in **Union Street Railway RPO Car 302** by the **Branford Electric Railway Association** of East Haven, Connecticut.
- Stabilization of the foundation of the historic **Brooks Station** in Brooks, Maine, by the **Brooks Preservation Society**.
- Rebuilding the “flipover” seats from **Boston Elevated Railway “Type 5” car 5706**, being restored to operating condition by the **Boston Street Railway Association**, Boston, Mass.
- Expanding the equipment storage and repair building at the **Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum** in Alna, Maine.
- Scanning and preserving, in digital form, 5000 historic New England railroad images from the **Walker Transportation Collection** at the **Beverly Historical Society**, Beverly, Mass.
- Restoring **Atlantic Shore Line** electric locomotive 100 to operating condition at the **Seashore Trolley Museum**, Kennebunkport, Maine.
- Reconstructing a quarter-mile of track along the grade of the first U.S. two-foot-gauge common-carrier railroad, by the **Friends of Bedford Depot Park**, Bedford, Mass.

Projects in progress include:

- Boiler repairs needed as part of the restoration to operating condition of **ex-Bridgton & Saco River steam locomotive 7** (Baldwin, 1913) by the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad & Museum in Portland, ME.
- Restoration to operating service of **Bay State Street Railway** car 4175, built by the Laconia Car Company in 1914, at the **Seashore Trolley Museum**, Kennebunkport, Maine.
- Rebuilding the carbody of ex-**Maine Central** Alco S1 diesel-electric locomotive 954 and competing its external painting and lettering by the **Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum**, Lenox, Mass.

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Resources:

Download this Press Release in PDF Format: http://www.massbayrre.org/Press/Webb_Award_2017.pdf

Download this Press Release in Word Format: http://www.massbayrre.org/Press/Webb_Award_2017.docx

Download photo of the Danbury New Haven Turntable:

<http://www.massbayrre.org/Press/DanburyTurntable.JPG> (Photo Caption: *The historic former New Haven Railroad turntable in Danbury, Conn. will be rehabilitated by the Danbury Railway Museum. Photo Credit: Photo courtesy Danbury Railway Museum*)

For more information contact:

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