

The Railyard Local

Volume 3, Issue 8

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

August 2004

Wilton Semaphore Stands Tall

by Dave Roberts

Battle scarred and weary, the Wilton Station semaphore arrived at the Danbury Railway Museum, having been presented and delivered to us by Metro North Commuter Railroad in the form of the mast, a collection of parts, and a loose-leaf binder containing photographs taken of the disassembly process at Wilton. The mast found its way to the back of the yard near the turntable, while the remaining parts were moved to Gerry Herrmann's box car.

The only issue to be resolved in restoring the mast was determining the color scheme as there was virtually no paint left on it.



Bruce Van Wyk signals to raise the semaphore, while Bill Britt, Bob Pitcher, and Justin Chapin wait to help place the new exhibit.

The question was answered through a quick examination of the color photograph hanging in the DRM station of a Southbound FL9 moving past the Wilton station, which clearly showed the white mast and black accessories of the semaphore as it had stood during its career as a train order signal.

Continued on page 5

Birthday Parties Now on Sundays!

The Danbury Railway Museum has expanded its birthday party program now to offer availability on Sundays. In addition to the two parties already held on Saturdays, there will be one Sunday party from 2:00pm - 4:00pm.

Holding birthday parties has been very successful for the Museum this year, and we are looking forward to expanding our offerings for next season.



In This Issue

- ~The Wilton Semaphore
- ~Lettering the Steam Locomotive
- ~Our Museum is Growing
- ~Private Car Train Visit
- plus...

Library, Gift Shop, and Membership Updates

Member's Picnic

This year's DRM Member's Picnic will be held on Sunday, August 15th at 5:00pm.

Our tasty selection of food will be catered this year. Just bring yourself and be ready to have fun! Go for a ride in the cab of our locomotive, see the Wilton Semaphore and all the other new exhibits in the yard, as well as our ever-growing gift shop.

Tickets purchased before August 8th - \$10 for adults and \$5 for children ages 5-12 (children 4 and under are free). After August 8th, tickets will be \$12 per adult and \$5 per child. Tickets are on sale now at the front desk!

McLachlan Photo Exhibit Soon to Open

A new photo exhibit will be opening in early September. Featured will be the work of renowned photographer and historian Peter McLachlan. The subject of the exhibit will be the Penn Central Railroad and its unique history.

Pete's forty-three year career on the railroad brought him great knowledge of the industry and provided photo opportunities with trains almost every day. His vast collection of Penn Central photos will be the subject of this exhibit, using a mix of color and black & white prints. The exhibit will also be adorned with Penn Central artifacts from Pete's own collection as well as the DRM collection.

Check your mail for an invitation to the opening ceremony.

The DRM Goes Offsite

The Danbury Railway Museum will again have an exhibit at the Danbury Public Library during the month of August.

The exhibit will be located in the lower level next to the video library. Be sure to visit!

New Members...

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members are welcome to attend the weekly meeting held Wednesday at 7:30pm. Members meetings are held at the Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. Also, we invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible.

REMINDER - Send change of address to:

Danbury Railway Museum

Attention: Frank Sullivan

P.O. Box 90

Danbury, CT 06813

Email: DRMMEMBERS@aol.com.

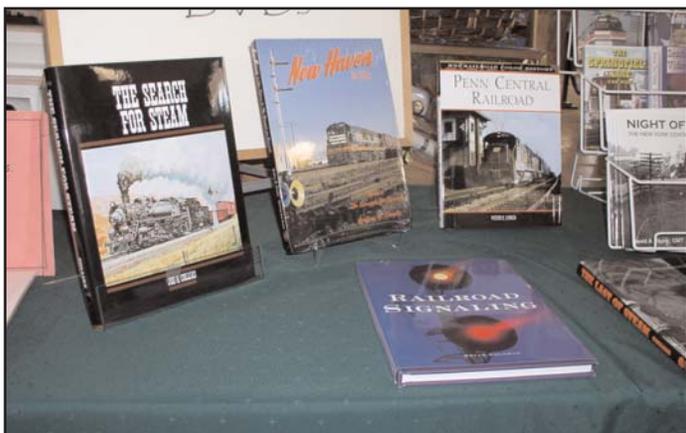
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Kathy Darrah
Larry & Ruth Oshin
Steve & Susan Brown
The Craft Family
Sheila Donnelly
Jeffrey Linson
Diane Lynch
Richard G. Rausch
Jon & Jackie Armstrong
Ben Poole
Richard Leach

Norwalk, CT
Bethel, CT
Weston, CT
New York, NY
Boynton Beach, FL
Croton, NY
Cold Spring, NY
Weston, CT
Danbury, CT
Weston, CT
Fayetteville, GA
Pawlet, VT

Gift Shop Update

Gift Shop Managers Kathie and Patty have been doing a great job, as usual, making sure that we members always have something new to purchase.

This month the Gift Shop has many new



books and DVDs.

New books include Peter Lynch's Penn Central book, and a new book called *Railroad Signals*. Also, Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*, which was filmed in Danbury with scenes of our station, is now available on DVD!

Library News

by Stan Madyda

There doesn't appear to have been an August 1994 issue of the Museum's newsletter. We'll continue next month with reporting what was happening at the DRM ten years ago.

Most recent acquisitions include:

~The Library purchased five photos of the New York Central and Hudson River caboose 19322, which is currently being restored.

~An anonymous donor gave us two books, track diagrams of Danbury Yard, and various prints.

~Frank K. Thompson, Jr. has on several occasions donated items that belonged to his father who was employed by the New Haven in Danbury. In 2003 he gave us personal papers from the New Haven, his father's 40 and 50 year pins, photos of his father at the anniversary events, passes, and other photos.

~Al Hoffman donated an excellent collection of reference books. They include ICC Statistics of Railways in the United States 1928-1945, ARA Proceedings Mechanical 1919-1932, ARA Proceedings Mechanic Association 1917-1918, and ARA Proceedings Master Car Builders 1917-1918.

~Robert Connelley donated a 1945 Santa Fe timetable and two 1945 Southern Pacific timetables.

~From Barbara B. Merritt we received a New York Central step box.

~J. E. Brooks donated books, a Metrolink button, a drinking ladle from the New Haven, a Conrail Employee timetable, and an HO Highland Park Society Anniversary Car.

~A 2001 Field Manual of the AAR Interchange Rules was received from Stan Madyda.

Strategic Planning Sessions

by Steve Gould

For the last several months, the DRM Board of Directors and a number of other members have been attending strategic planning meetings chaired by Jim Whitney of the Northwest Connecticut Convention and Visitors Bureau. The process has the Museum identifying one, five, and ten year goals, and then gaining focus on a few from each exhaustive list. It has been an exciting process and one which will refine the direction your Museum is taking. But, we don't want to give away any secrets just yet. Stay tuned for further information and announcements. This truly is an exciting time for the DRM!

DRM Express Track

by Ira Pollack, President

Our first priority during the past few months has been the development of our business plan. As Steve Gould notes on page two, we were able within this process to consolidate the Museum's immediate -, it's five-, and it's ten-year goals and objectives. Now we must maintain the momentum and see the plan through to completion. We are very grateful to Jim Whitney for his time and initiative in helping put us on this course. With commitment and resolve we all can now work to plan and see our progress every step of the way.

Over the past few weeks, our mechanical team has been working on our SW8 locomotive. While replacing the brake shoes, they discovered a bent traction motor case, the result of a past derailment. The bent case is causing binding in the brake swing-arm on the forward truck and must be replaced. Bruce Van Wyk is also looking into a possible replacement casting for the engine.

Metro North has requested an estimate for the repair of our yard lead track which they damaged in a derailment in May. Our contractor, Mike DaMour, has surveyed the damage, and we will be submitting his estimate to Metro North shortly. Mike estimates the work should take about two days and cost about \$5,000. He will be replacing some forty ties and 75 ft of rail bed and will reuse the existing rail, tie plates, and joiners.

In other track work, we are working on weekends tightening and replacing track bolts with our limited track crews. We also have installed a point guard at



the changeover switch. This will force the wheel sets away from the problem area in that switch and allow us once again to run on Track 42 and the south yard. Our objective is to maintain all active trackage on a routine and standardized basis. More of you volunteer Gandydancers are needed.

Contact Bruce Van Wyk by email: rdcman@hotmail.com.

Our yard crew has moved a freight truck and two speeders along with a boat dolly onto the track 34 (center) platform. We intend to add more displays on this platform and also to clear the rip and wreck tracks for

some display space. Ed Bowers will be taking back his wheel sets to help with this cleanup. Once cleared, we will move the NYC caboose onto one of these tracks. We plan to do some other equipment switching shortly and provide access for our visitors.

Crew training sessions are continuing at a slow pace and few new volunteers are turning out. This means we are straining to keep our yard locals running throughout this season. All of you who love operating - as trainmen in any capacity - please contact Nancy Sniffen at danburymuseum@sbcglobal.net or John O'Hern at jeohjr@aol.com.

Metro North's One Day GetAway program bootstraps DRM admission to a Danbury roundtrip ticket, and it is gaining popularity. This is positive encouragement for our efforts..

With your support DRM's momentum can continue.

Our thanks go to Debbie Kern for her great service to the Museum in producing the Newsletter over the past year. She has resigned and the team of Charlie Albanetti and Peter Hanen will handle production at this time.

Our Museum is Growing

by Charlie Albanetti

We are always striving to fulfill our goal of education here at the Danbury Railway Museum. One of the ways we educate our visitors is by giving personal tours of our six-acre railyard, now home to over seventy locomotives and cars. Our knowledgeable volunteer staff acts as ambassadors of the Museum, giving each visitor a taste of the great history that we strive to illustrate.

In order to make our Museum better, we have been working at enhancing the railyard with new exhibits and consolidating the exhibits we already have. We are trying to create a central point in the railyard, where all the exhibits are close together, providing our tour guides with the ability to teach visitors a lot, while not requiring them to hike around all six-acres of our property.

We have set up three new exhibits on the center platform of the railyard. First is a Vulcan freight-car truck (wheel set), which will be used to explain



Volunteer Matt Manske paints the Vulcan freight-car truck, a new exhibit on the center platform.

how freight cars actually move, what bearings are and why their maintenance was so important, and to show how big trains actually are. Second are

two track speeders that will be used to explain the maintenance of way department and its importance in keeping railroading safe and efficient. Third is an old boat dolly on train wheels once used to lower boats into Candlewood Lake at a railed boat ramp in New Fairfield, CT. This is a one-of-a-kind artifact, the last remains of the only railroad ever in New Fairfield.

We have also tried to locate as many walk-through exhibits as possible. Currently on the center platform (tracks 34 and 36) are the 1907 Steam Locomotive, the 1941 Maine Central Caboose, the 1953 Budd Self-propelled Passenger Car, the 1971 Canadien National Caboose. The GCT-1 double-ended crane is also on the center platform. There are plans in the works to move the remaining walk-through exhibits to the center platform. This will put all the exhibits within close walking distance.

The Mechanical Department is also hard at work to ensure our operations are safe. They have been working on three important projects in the past few

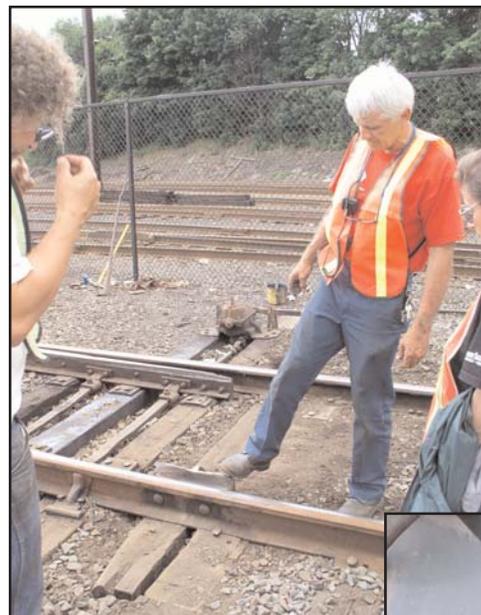


The new look of the center platform.

weeks. The first has been the installation of a "point guard," which is a piece of metal fastened to a tie located just before the point of a switch. This has been installed at the changeover switch, the heart of our railyard. The changeover switch connects the north half of the yard with the south half of the yard. The switch has presented some problems for us over the past few months, causing a derailment. With this switch out of service, we haven't been able to run our Railyard Local train rides to the farthest track out, track 42. The Mechanical Department's installation of the point

guard should correct this, and once again we can give our visitors a great tour of the railyard.

The second Mechanical Department project is maintaining yard track-age. This requires hours of hard labor, tightening bolts and



Top: Bruce Van Wyk (center) explains to Ira Pollack (left) and Nancy Sniffen how the newly installed point guard will work.

Right: The test - our RS-1 about to go over the point guard for the first time.



hammering spikes to make sure our tracks are in tip-top shape.

The third project is the replacement of the brake shoes on our SW8 diesel locomotive. We have obtained new brake shoes for the locomotive, but replacing them is a difficult and time consuming task. Some of the old shoes are very tightly in place, making it very hard to remove them. Our Chief Mechanical Officer, Bruce Van Wyk, also found that the



Volunteers Ira Pollack, Matt Manske, Bill Britt, Dave Roberts, and Bob Pitcher work on maintaining our railyard trackage. (Not Pictured, Glenn Miller)

casing for the traction motor is bent. This also makes it difficult to access the brake shoes and will need replacement.

Clearly, there is a lot going on in the railyard every weekend. If you would like to help out, we would love to have you - just call the Museum. Be sure to visit us as soon as you can to see how your Museum is growing!

Semaphore, continued from page 1

With research complete, the restoration process could begin. The base, mast, ladder, brackets, and actuating rods all were stripped of rust with wire wheels and a wire brush, then primed and painted with oil based enamel - the mast white, every thing else black.

Back at the boxcar, Gerry had examined the various parts of the signal assembly. Metro-North's photos had indicated that one side of a key load-bearing assembly called a pillow block had developed a large crack. In fact it had split into two pieces and required a sophisticated process of welding,



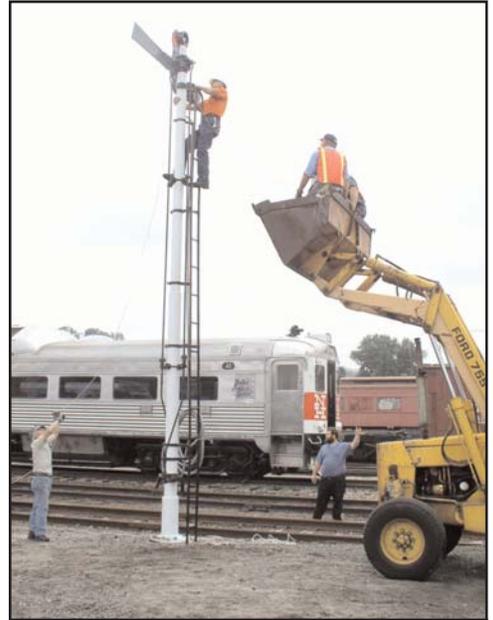
grinding and sand blasting to restore it to usable condition. In addition the two rigid sheet metal frames (called spectacles) which support the colored lenses, were worn beyond repair and had to be duplicated. Both the repair and the replacement work were performed by Gary Herrmann, Gerry's son. This highly technical work was the only work contracted out during this restoration.

Gerry determined what replacement hardware would be required and saw to its availability. Finally these parts as well as the counterweights, connecting rods, and levers were cleaned, primed, and painted.

A metal-topped wooden box mounted near the top of the mast and containing a transformer for the electrical service to the semaphore's light was unsalvageable. A replacement was designed and constructed by Bill Britt. Although the restored device will be supplied with 120 volt input and thus has no functional use for this box, we felt it desirable to reproduce it to maintain the Wilton look and feel. One-inch flexible conduit loaded with three strands of twelve-gauge wire, supplied to the Museum by John Ivansco, was used to approximate the look of the weather-worn heavy gauge wire that had to be removed from the mast.

With all parts ready and the repaired pillow block pre-installed and torqued to spec, an eight foot deep concrete foundation assembly was sunk and allowed to settle for a couple of weeks. Then on Saturday, June 26th the mast was mounted to the base, and the signal arm assemblies were hoisted up and mounted to the pillow block. (The adventures experienced during these phases of the process deserve more space than can be afforded here and will be described in a future issue.) A couple of trips up and down the length of the mast to retouch areas that were previously inaccessible or which had taken a beating during the erection process completed this phase of the project.

The final phase of this project is the construction of a small building in which to install the operating levers to allow actual manual operation of the signal exactly as it was done during this fine old artifact's working career. Stay tuned...



Placing the second blade of the Semaphore are Bruce Van Wyk on the mast, Bill Britt and Bob Pitcher in the bucket of the backhoe, and l to r Dave Roberts, Justin Chapin on the ground.

Boston & Maine 1455 Update

by Bob Boothe

By now you've probably noticed the "Boston and Maine" herald painted on the sides of the tender of the 1455. We have Sandy Shepard of the Boston and Maine Historical Society (B&MHS) to thank for the artwork. How this came about is an interesting "tale of two locomotives."

Only four steam engines remain from the entire fleet that once ran on the Boston and Maine. Our 2-6-0 "Mogul" was built in 1907 by the American Locomotive Company Manchester, VT Works. Another is the B&M 410 which is a 2-6-0 switcher (built by Manchester in 1910)



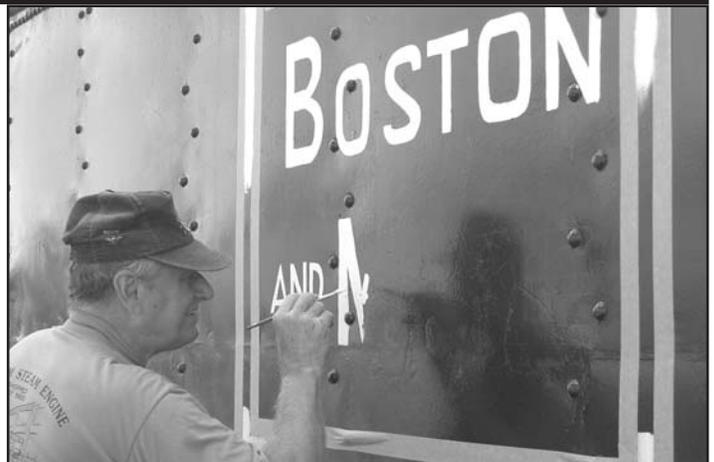
B&MHS's Sandy Shepard taping his stencil to the 1455 tender with the help of Harry Leeds.

which is on display and undergoing the final stages of cosmetic restoration by the B&MHS at its site at the Lowell National Historical Park (Lowell, MA just northwest of Boston, website - <http://www.nps.gov/lowe/>).

The DRM was contacted initially in 2002 for information on the windows we made for the 1455. Since then we've developed a great working relationship, with several members of the society sharing information and photos. I



Sandy Shepard lettering the tender while Dan Foley observes.



A close-up photo of Sandy Shepard meticulously painting the B&M herald on the tender.

started talking with Sandy about the B&M herald which was common to both our locomotive tenders. Sandy was able to create a full-size stencil of the herald they uncovered on their tender. We weren't so lucky. We could only salvage one corner of the herald box.

I was hoping we would be able just to borrow the stencil. Sandy not only "lent" us the stencil, he volunteered to bring it all the way down from Boston and do the lettering himself, as he had done for the 410. Ira Pollack, Sue Thomas, and Steve Mayerson put on a good coat of semi-gloss black paint in advance. We had masked off the corners of the herald box for reference.

Sandy made the trip to the DRM in September and spent five hours on a stepladder doing each letter by hand. He used a 1/2 inch artist's brush to trace the outline of the letters with his stencil.

We're looking forward to several other projects with the B&MHS. For a look at the current status of 410 visit their website at <http://www.trainweb.org/bmrrhs/> or better yet stop off and see it yourself in Lowell, MA.



Above is Jayne's Hotdog Stand, a new addition to our front platform. Our visitors can now enjoy tasty chili dogs and nachos. Come down and try 'em!

Caboose Donation Ceremony

by Charlie Albanetti

On Saturday, June 19th, the Danbury Railway Museum held a ceremony to accept a donation from the Kearney family in memory of their father.

Their gift was a donation of funds in support of our project for the restoration of the New York



Gerry Herrmann discusses his restoration plans with the Kearney Family.

Central and Hudson River Railroad Caboose #19322. This ongoing restoration project, led by volunteer Gerry Herrmann, is coming along very well, with one full side completed.

The caboose was built in the early 1910s in East Buffalo, NY. It is a fully wooden caboose, which complicates its restoration, since wood is so prone to rot. It was donated to the DRM by the Canaan Historical Society and was transported to Danbury from Canaan by truck.

President Ira Pollack welcomed the Kearney family to the Museum on Father's Day weekend for the ceremony to commemorate their father's life.

A plaque was hung in the caboose to memorialize Mr. Kearney. The plaque reads



The Kearney Family

"The Restoration of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Wooden Caboose #19322, Dedicated in Loving Memory of Gerald B. Kearney, 1921-2003, In Honor of His Lifelong Love of Trains, Donated By His Children."

On Home Rails

by Charlie Albanetti

On May 6th the Danbury Railway Museum had a special guest visitor, ex-New Haven Pullman sleeper "Pine Tree State." The private car, now owned by the North Carolina Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, came to the DRM on a train of three private cars, which was touring the full trackage of the Housatonic Railroad.

High Iron Travel (a railroad tour company out of Waunakee, Wisconsin) hosted the three day excursion of the Berkshire Route.



High Iron train arrives at DRM.

Originally the train was supposed to stay in the DRM yard over night on Saturday, May 8th, but plans changed and the train had to stay over two nights, the night of Thursday, May 6th, and again on the originally scheduled night of May 8th. This would have been no problem except for a slight mishap on the Metro-North tracks just outside our yard early Friday morning. The first MN train to leave for New York City out of Danbury derailed, causing damage to the track that connects the DRM yard to the outside world. This derailment left the private car train stranded in Danbury for most of Friday, while MN crews worked to get the track back to passable condition. By



Ex-New Haven sleeper car "Pine Tree State."

4pm, the track had been cleared for passing and the train was able to depart and continue on its way to tour the Berkshire line up to Pittsfield, MA and the Maybrook line to Beacon, NY. The train did brave our yard again for the originally scheduled Saturday night layover. Passengers were able to tour the Museum again Sunday morning before their final departure back to NYC.

The train consisted of three private cars including "Cimarron River," "Pine Tree State (PTS)," and "Caritas." The PTS is an ex-New Haven Pullman sleeper built in 1955. The car has lounge, small kitchen, five double sleeping rooms, and can accommodate ten over-night guests. It was great to see the PTS back on its home New Haven rails for the first time in years.

DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

120 White Street
Danbury, CT 06813-0090

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MUSEUM CALENDAR

DRM Railyard Local Train Rides Are Now Running Every
Saturday and Sunday!

August 4 (7:45pm)	NHRR Pullmans - Peter McLachlan
August 11 (7:45pm)	Historic Slides - Dan Gallo, Sr.
August 15 (5:00pm)	DRM Members Picnic
August 18 (7:45pm)	Texas Railroads - Dan Foley
August 19 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting
August 25 (7:45pm)	Railroad Vacations - Eric Mayerson
Oct. 16,17,23,24,30,31	Pumpkin Patch Trains
Dec. 4,5,11,12,18,19	Santa Trains



Contact Information

Please contact us with submissions:

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