

The Railyard Local

Volume 4, Issue 1

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

January 2005

Santa Trains a Big Attraction Very Successful Event

The Danbury Railway Museum welcomed 2428 visitors to our Santa's Special Train Rides event, which took place on the weekends of December 4-5th, 11-12th, and 18-19th. Guests even came from other states to



The #1455 steam locomotive is decorated to greet our visitors.

attend. A New York City newspaper featured it as an attraction. Based on this train-filling response, we will continue to hold it as an annual event.

The colorful holiday decorations on display throughout the Museum and railyard immediately put everyone into a festive mood. Our guests bought tickets for a ride on one of the two self-propelled Budd

cars. Every half-hour, the bell in the Museum would ring to signal it was time for a volunteer greeter to escort passengers to the train for a ride to see Santa.

Continued on page 7

Hi-Rail Truck Donated

Just arrived at the DRM - the exciting addition of a GMC rail flaw detection truck. It was graciously donated by Dapco Industries. Look for additional information in a future issue of *The Railyard Local*.



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A Trailer for a Yard Office

The DRM was fortunate to receive a construction trailer, courtesy of Tri-County Construction. This bright yellow trailer, now in the railyard, will house the offices of the mechanical staff, train crew, and yard



The DRM's new yard office. The pre-formed concrete steps are shown in place, with railings soon to be added.

crew. It will be the base of operations for the yard personnel. The trailer has a small office on each end, and a common space in the middle. Yard records and a volunteer logbook will be kept there.

A set of pre-formed stairs was graciously donated by a different source. Volunteer Bob Pitcher, who volunteers his expert welding skills, installed the wrought iron railings on the stairs.

Now that service for heat has been connected, the process of moving into these new quarters can begin. It will provide a place for the yard staff to thaw out during the winter months. In hot weather, the air conditioning will give relief from the heat.

Congratulations on getting your new home!

New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members are welcome to attend the weekly meetings held Wednesdays, 7:45pm, at the Danbury Railway Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. We invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible!

Peggy Connor	Alice Cahn
Peter F. Morrell	Joanna Tinios
Zendrie Smith	Michael Nadler
Tommy Palmer	Jill Meyer-Cocks
Ellen Crovato	Jennifer Kendra
Brian Ford	Vic & Yvonne Ortiz
Stephen R. Gass	Steve & Karen Miller
Ed & Nicole Bornemann	Shirley & Grant Retalick
Maria & Gregg Rochman	

Volunteers Recognized

By Patty Osmer

Recognizing that our volunteers are what "make" the Danbury Railway Museum, your Board of Directors is working on a program to acknowledge volunteers for the time and service they provide to the Museum. In order to do this, we need your help!

If you are not currently recording your volunteer hours, we need you to start doing so. Not only do we want to recognize you, but many of the grants that are available require us to have an accounting of volunteer hours.

Starting in January, books for recording hours will be set up and located at the Front Desk, Gift Shop, Volunteer Lounge, and new Yard Office. We are asking every person who volunteers to be sure to record hours worked in the most conveniently located book. If you can't find a book, please see Ira Pollack (Yard), Sue Thomas (Events), Dave Lowry (Front Desk), Kathie Fay or Patty Osmer (Gift Shop), or Nancy Sniffen (Operations).

If anyone has any comments or suggestions regarding this program, please email me at posmer@core.com, or drop a note in the Treasurer's mailbox in the Museum Office. We are counting on everyone's participation!

Library Update

By Stan Madyda

On November 11th, the DRM was visited by Terri Stramiello's history class from Western Connecticut State University. Each semester her students spend an hour at the DRM, touring the railyard and learning about the impact railroads have had on U.S. history. Her students have been continually impressed by the DRM. Thanks to Peter McLachlan, Bob Boothe, Steve Gould and Dave Lowry for helping out that afternoon.

On November 13th and 14th, we held a duplicate book sale in conjunction with the Brookfield Museum and Historical Society at their location. We will continue to work with them on joint ventures, such as their model train exhibit in April. Marty Scatola, Bob Westerfield, Dan Foley, Peter McLachlan, Ron Smith, Gerry Herrmann and I all volunteered. Bob Brown and John Furlong from the Brookfield Museum assisted us in setting up and taking down the sale.

Below are just some of the books that we still have available. If you are interested in purchasing a book, please email me at s.madyda@worldnet.att.net.

"The Last Steam Railroad in America" by O. Winston Link - \$30
"Classic North American Steam" by Nils Huxtable - \$20
"Ulster & Delaware" by Gerald Best - \$40
"Great American Train Stations" by Hans & April Halberstadt - \$25 (all color book)
"Diesel Locomotives of the New Haven" by H.F. Cavanaugh - \$75 (much more at train shows)
"Railroad Stations" by Brian Solomon - \$15 (mostly color)
"The Spirit of Steam" by William Withuhn - \$15
"America's Colorful Railroads" by Don Ball - \$25 (reprint)
"Decade of the Trains" by Don Ball - \$30 (black & white, paperback)
"The Rutland Road" by Jim Shaughnessy - \$50 (1st edition)
"Model Railroading with John Allen" by Lynn Westcott - \$37.50
"Treasury of Railroad Folklore" by Botkin - \$10
"Great American Rail Journeys" by John Grant - \$15 (companion book to PBS series)
"The Putnam Division" by Dan Gallo - \$15
"Rio Grande" by Beebe & Clegg - \$20
"Pennsylvania Railroad" by Alexander - \$18
"Vanishing Markers" by Ralph Fisher - \$20 (memoirs)

DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

I hope that the holiday season was safe and healthy for you and your family; also, that you received every present of your dreams.

Now that the holiday season is behind us, it is time to start planning for the upcoming spring season. We will have many projects at the Museum, both old ones to be completed, and many new ones. I need your input, support, and help to succeed with them.

Among my priorities for this coming year will be finishing the lettering on the New Haven Boxcar, and completing a cosmetic restoration of the #1402, our RS11 diesel locomotive. As a start on this restoration, our staff has done an incredible job of repairing the roof on this locomotive. I would also like us to finish erecting the temporary storage shed by the fall of 2005. There will be other priorities that must fit in between these projects. We also must keep upgrading our trackage and exhibit areas on a continuing basis.

In the New Year 2005, we also will be reemphasizing the recording of the volunteered time spent on the various projects going on at the Museum. Keeping this log will be very important to us in the grant-writing process. For volunteers' convenience in recording their hours, there will be logbooks both in the station, and new yard office by the turntable. I'm sure that we'll all be quite surprised at the thousands of hours that we've accumulated, working to keep our Museum moving forward.

In order to tie these hours into an incentive program, we are also in the process of beginning a Volunteer Acknowledgement Reward Program. This is a small way of showing our appreciation and gratitude for the work and hours that our volunteers have contributed to the Museum. Everyone volunteering for the Museum will be part of this new program that will start within the next few months. Volunteers reaching certain designated levels of hours worked will be eligible for recognition by a gift. With each increased level, the gift will be more substantial. I will update you and explain the details of this program as it is developed.

I'd like to sincerely thank Charlie Albanetti and Peter Hanen for their service to the newsletter and to our Museum. Charlie will be pursuing an internship out of state, and Peter has moved out of the area. They both will be greatly missed by our membership and me. Charlie, by himself, is a powerhouse of energy. He has helped us considerably in advancing our advertising program to new higher standards. Peter's expertise in editing has enabled us to provide a quality product.



I wish them both well in their new ventures.

I'm looking forward to an early spring, and continuing the momentum of this past year. This has been the Museum's most successful season ever. I am very proud of our volunteers' efforts to get to this stage.

Keep up the good work and thank you for your service.

Your New Editor

By Charlie Albanetti and Peter Hanen



This issue of *The Railyard Local* is the first by our new editor, Carolyn Taylor. She has graciously accepted the responsibility of providing DRM members and friends with an informative and entertaining publication.

Carolyn, a former school teacher, is currently employed at Mamaroneck Public Library. Her life-long love of trains has led her to become an active volunteer at the DRM, painting equipment, helping with events, and now producing our monthly newsletter.

Peter is moving from Connecticut to warmer climates in Florida, while Charlie will be taking a few months to study in Washington, D.C. We have enjoyed your support and compliments over the past few months and hope you will be equally welcoming to Carolyn. Thank you for the opportunity to produce your newsletter. Good Luck, Carolyn!

Day on Board Sperry #135

Part II

By Chris Locke

Continued below is the second half of the article published in the December issue of *The Railyard Local*.

As Milepost 342 passes your window, you press the Update Button on the Driver's Mileage Panel. Then the computer can keep track of the car's location, actually to within six inches. Almost as quickly as you went to 13 mph, you hear a single Beep for Stop, and you see the Brush Carriage Lights on the Driver's Control Panel go out. Three Beeps now mean it's time



to back the car up as the Operator has identified some thing for further investigation.

You back up and he stops you with a single Beep, jumps off, and continues to back you up with hand signals. When he stops you again, you close the Throttle, place the Reverser in Neutral, and apply some brakes. These three

controls are close together and can be operated simultaneously, allowing quick control of the movement of the car.

The ultrasonic Reflectoscope (a Sperry patent), mounted on the rear of the car and used for hand testing,, has a cord that is only about 6 feet long. Thus the car needs to be quite close to the paint spot marking the suspected rail flaw. While watching your mirror, tyhe Operator gives the "Ahead" hand signal as he climbs on. You move the car forward and see that the Bursh Carriage Lights once again indicate the test equipment is down on the rail and testing. It is truly amazing that the Rear Engine doesn't spill it's guts every time the rail current is turned on. The sound it makes is

pure struggle. As you

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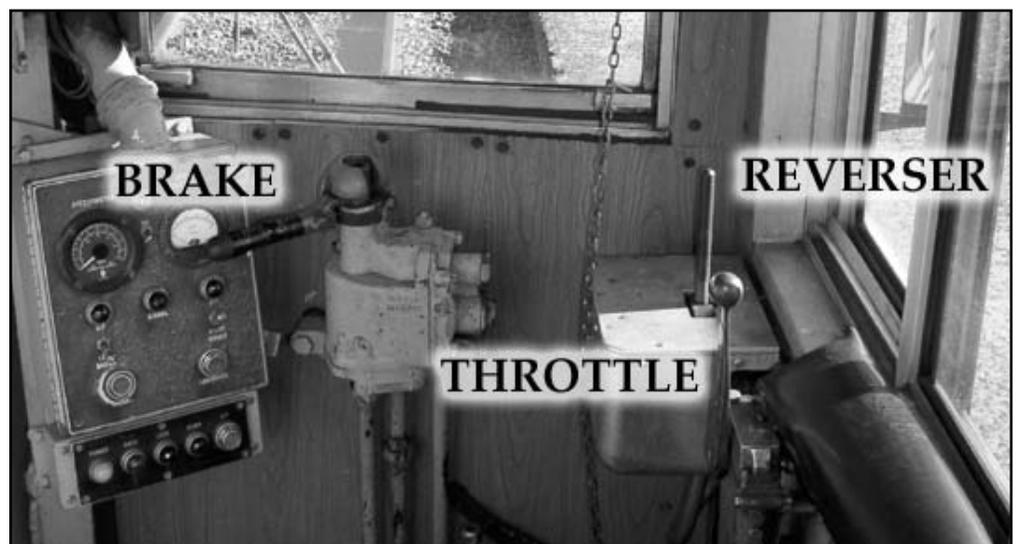


come up to speed, you flick on the Counter which wil record how many "back-ups" the car makes today.

This scenario--stop - backwards - stop - hand test - forward--repeats itself throughout the day. There are no trains to clear during this day, so you have just one long day of driving. It is a relief to take a break at noon for lunch, but since you'r still the Stooge on the car, you don't get to "sit on the tape" just yet.

About 4pm, the Speedometer drops back into the HI scale, the Test Carriage Lights go out, and you hear two Beeps. You yank the Throttle back, and the car is soon up to 50 mph. The Airfone on the wall rings and you answer. "We're closer to another siding for tonight. Take us to Milepost 383 and we'll enter the west end of the siding. How many back-ups?" "72," you reply. We tested 20 miles of track today, and that means we can show a 20-mile runlight.

After a few minutes of enjoying the wind blowing through the Driver's Compartment, you find the Pilot standing behind you to watch the track with you. You pass the east end of the siding and he says, "The siding is a mile long - we've got a ways to go yet." Coming to the west end you slow to drop him at the switch. He lines up the switch and with 3 Beeps for the Operator you start backing into the siding. Then the car rolls way over as you cross the points on this off-camber switch. Of course that's a Federal



Railroad Administration (FRA) violation but the railroad rarely uses this siding and will simply pay the fines when it's inspected.

As the Pilot re-aligns the switch for the main, you stop the car, apply 10 lbs. of air, and set the Handbrake. You shut down the Traction Engine and start the Night Engine, then quickly walk to the Rear Engine Compartment. In the Test Compartment the Chief is printing the reports for the day and is very appreciative of the quiet time. The Traction Engine has been hammering in his ears all the day long. You throw the Transfer Switch once again to the Night position, release the clutch of the Rear Engine, and let it idle down for 15 minutes. The turbo has to cool; otherwise the oil will sit on the bearings, and the hot turbo will cook the oil. If this happens, it will do damage to the bearings the next time the Traction Engine is run.

Before the Operator and the Chief come into the Rear Engine Compartment, you sweep and mop - a chore the Assistant Operator does every day. After that you have flat tires to repair. These are the tires for the roller search units of the ultrasonic test equipment. This you can do quickly, and the rest of your daily maintenance chores are soon accomplished. You make your dinner in the Kitchen, take a shower, brush teeth,



and catch a few TV shows. But bedtime can't come soon enough to insure a good night's rest for your kind of work. For certain, morning comes the earliest for the Stooge on the Sperry car.

Restoring the #1402, Our RS11 Diesel Locomotive

Thanks to the skills and efforts of volunteers Bob Pitcher and Bill Britt, the dent caving in the roof of this locomotive was removed. They painstakingly jacked out the dent from the inside, then smoothed over the outside. With a coat of paint the roof will look as good as new.



They also made a welding repair in the engine's side. This is the beginning of a major push to restore this RS11 as an attractive display piece.



Recent Donations

Through December 5, 2004, we have received \$6871.68 in general contributions and \$4253.76 donated toward specific projects. Since our Fundraising Campaign began in 2003, with a goal of raising \$30,000 toward track repair, we have received \$13,270.

Recent donors include:

Alain Redder Studios, William McNeill, Frank Gerencir, Peter McLachlan, Russell Strilowich, Charles Bardo, Nelson Nordquist, Nels Anderson, J. Peirce Behrendt, Theodore Cleveland, Jerry's Handyman Service, Boy Scouts, Richard Imperati, Robert Ebling, Ruth Fenster, Amos Hewitt, Jr, Stephen Gould, Jeffrey English, IDENIX, James Eden, Richard Moreton, Joseph Miller, Dan Carlton, Ed Blackman, Justin Chapin, Prime Collectibles, T. F. Wahl, James Stevenson, Dave Roberts.

Thanks to all who have donated!



What's Happening at the DRM

Even in the colder weather, there is a lot of activity, and many projects to keep our volunteers busy. We always need some additional hands to help.

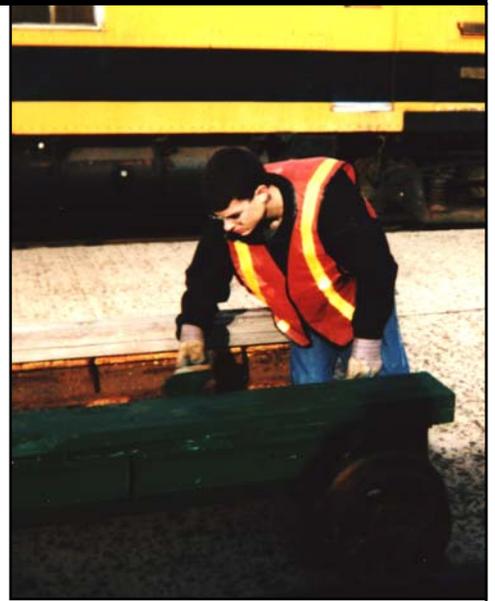


The pre-formed concrete steps have been delivered by truck to the entrance of the DRM yard. They need to go in front of the yard office trailer at the back of the yard. Once again our indispensable backhoe is put to use - this time to carry and place the stairs in position for the yard trailer (see page 1). Volunteer Bob Pitcher arranged for the donation of these stairs. He, Glenn Miller, Justin Chapin, and DRM President Ira Pollack worked together to accomplish this. Joseph Grimes, who brought the stairs to DRM, is also pictured here.



Volunteers Jeff Van Wagenen (left) and Marty Grossman carefully build the framework for our new HO layout. The layout, located in the DRM great hall will be complete with interactive buttons to allow visitors to run the trains. Look in a future issue of *The Railyard Local* for more information about this project.

A warm day sandwiched in between cold ones, is enough to put paint brushes in the hands of our volunteers. Matt Landau was one of several taking advantage of the weather to paint our equipment. He is shown putting a coat of hunter green on a boat dolly



donated by a marina in New Fairfield, CT. This display piece was once used to support and ease small marine craft on rails into the water. Now freshly painted, it is on view in the DRM railyard.



This young man is giving Santa an extensive list of presents he would like to receive for the holiday. Santa is listening very intently. Our young guests also received a small gift while aboard the decoration-filled train.

Members of the train crew and other volunteers wore holiday accessories, and the Budd cars also were decorated. Passengers were treated to a trip down the tracks in the railyard, where the train was switched to the far track for the journey to the Santa Train. There,



Santa, Mrs. Claus and elves stand ready to greet our enthusiastic guests on the Santa Train.

guests were greeted by Mr. Frosty, elves, and, of course, Santa and Mrs. Claus. The Santa Train was filled with decorations. All the children received a gift. There was an opportunity to have a photo taken with Santa. The joy of the passengers was contagious! Within the Museum, there were free face painting, videos, and music, in addition to our year-round attractions. Refreshments were available. The well-stocked gift shop was busy. Most importantly, it



Visitors board the decorated Santa Train to meet Santa, Mrs. Claus, elves and Mr. Frosty.

appeared from seeing the happy faces and the comments from our guests that they had a wonderful time.

The phenomenal success of this event is a tribute to the many volunteers who coordinated their efforts and to their DRM spirit. It was a true DRM team-sponsored attraction. Thanks to Sue Thomas,

who was the event coordinator, and all the volunteers who were instrumental in it's success.



Ten Years Ago at the DRM

By Stan Madyda

There was no newsletter for January 1995.

A very good article appeared in the December 1994 newsletter about the loop track in Danbury, and how it came to be. In 1886, the Danbury & Norwalk RR (D&N) agreed to lease trackage rights to the Housatonic Railroad. This would allow their through trains from the Berkshires to reach South Norwalk and Wilson's Point. However, the Housatonic RR did not interchange with the D&N, and therefore had to negotiate with New York & New England Railroad (NY&NE) for trackage rights. The Housatonic RR would also need to build a track crossing the NY&NE to connect with the D&N. That is how the loop track came to be built. At the time, the D&N station was located on Main Street where the Post Office stands today. Southbound trains off the Housatonic RR would cross the NY&NE onto the loop track, and then back into the station. Northbound trains would pull into the station, then back, and proceed around the loop.

The Housatonic RR could have traveled down the D&N's Hawleyville branch through Bethel to South Norwalk. But the railroad wanted to stop at the Main Street station for its passenger, mail and express business. The three railroads would soon become part of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, and the loop track would continue to be used.

DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

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MUSEUM CALENDAR

Jan. 12 (7:45pm)	Railroad Slides - Ron Smith
Jan. 19 (7:45pm)	Historic Photos - Peter McLachlan
Jan. 20 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting (Open to Members)
Jan. 26 (7:45pm)	Railroad Vacations - Ed Blackman
Jan. 29 (9-5) and Jan. 30 (10-5)	DRM at Amherst Railway Society Hobby Show at "The Big E"
Feb. 2 (7:45pm)	Historic Photos - Bob Gambling

Be sure to look for the full color version of this newsletter on our website: www.danbury.org/drm/



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