

# The Railyard Local

Volume 5, Issue 7

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

July 2006

## Two Locomotives Bring 88 Tons of Joy to DRM

Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup> was a momentous day for our Museum because of the long-awaited arrival of two 44-ton center-cab industrial switcher locomotives donated by Electric Boat in Groton, CT. We had been trying to bring them here since late last year. It seemed that the day would never come, but it did!

Four of our members rode the final leg of the journey from Derby to Danbury. Justin Chapin took numerous photos on the trip, so unfortunately he is not in any of them. Ira Pollack, Bill Britt, and Dave Roberts also escorted the engines.



Ira Pollack's article, DRM Express Track, on Page 3 tells more about the sequence of events which led to our finally welcoming these locomotives to our railyard. They represent an important historic example of railroading and equipment. The motive power they bring will be a big help to the Museum, and certainly enough for our purposes. Currently, they are being checked over by our mechanical crew to ascertain what maintenance and repairs are necessary before being used in a consist for rides here.

DRM Vice-President Bill Britt looks out the window as he enjoys the ride from within the cab of one of the 44-tonners.



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The Yard Inside and Ten Years Ago

## The Volunteers That Could at The Little Engine That Could

### 60 Volunteers show up to help each day

The weekends of June 17&18, 24&25 were the dates the DRM welcomed Little Engine That Could fans to the Museum. We had an outpouring of our volunteers who worked together to make the event a wonderful outing for our guests. All this was despite weather that was often rainy, and on one day unseasonably hot. Thank you everyone who helped make this event happen!



The Museum had an array of additional child-oriented attractions, and ones to fascinate visitors of all ages. The Little Engine That Could was at the head of a consist of four newly refurbished coaches, with motive power supplied by the SW-8 Pfizer locomotive. The Little Engine puffed out "smoke", brightly tooted, and chanted "I think I can" when leaving, and "I thought I could" when returning. During the train trip, a story reader read from the Watty Piper book, and train songs by John Denver played on our newly installed public address system. Families were busy taking photos of loved ones in front of the Little

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# New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members, as well as the general public, are welcome to attend the weekly meetings and free programs held Wednesdays, 7:30pm, at the Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. We invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible!

Joseph G. Cote	Danbury, CT
Andrea Protska	Beacon Falls, CT
Jill & Jim Coeks	Brookfield, CT
Meredith Siburn	Ridgefield, CT
Mark J. Nason	New Fairfield, CT
Gary Zigmond	Redding, CT
M. Tabares	Ridgefield, CT
Robert H. Kessler	Reston, VA
Russell Elfont	Danbury, CT
Desiree DeStefano	White Plains, NY
Dana Lamendola	Brookfield, CT
Georgia Santo	Brewster, NY
Kristen Ruth	Ridgefield, CT
Bradford Porter	Danbury, CT
Seth Granville	Hartsdale, NY
Cameron Lytle	Bethel, CT
C. Weizenecker	Patterson, NY
Edward Struchowski	Rockfall, CT
Wayne Ferguson	Newburgh, NY
Jeff Permuter	New Fairfield, CT
Alexandra Peretta	Bedford Hills, NY



# Donations

By Patty Osmer

Those listed below have made donations to the Museum, either to the General Fund or for specific projects, during April and May. The Museum gratefully acknowledges all donations; without your support, we could not continue to grow. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and it is our goal to acknowledge every donation in a timely manner. If you have made a donation for which you have not received an acknowledgement, please contact the Treasurer. Thank you for your support!

Daniel Carleton, Desiree DeStefano, William Patton, Berit Miller, Frank Thompson, Andrea Protska,

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Crown Custom Products, Daniel Milone.

# Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The July 1996 newsletter reported on a visit to the Museum by the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society in May. This was the first time the DRM had hosted such a large group, 364 excursion passengers. Their trip took them up the Hudson Line and over the Maybrook to Danbury. From there they went down the branch to Norwalk. They could only stay for an hour but the group was very impressed with what had been accomplished in such a short time.

A new excursion by the DRM was announced for September 7<sup>th</sup> - The Elm City Special. This trip would take passengers down the Danbury Branch to South Norwalk, reverse direction and head toward New Haven. There riders would have a choice of either cruising Long Island Sound on the M/V Liberty Belle or take a bus trip to the Branford Trolley Museum.

In July, the Museum purchased the Woodings track car #270302. Member Ken White was in Maine when he came across this piece of equipment. The price was reasonable and the Board agreed to allocate the money for the purchase. Ken delivered the track car to the DRM. The track car was in good shape and minimal restoration work would be needed.



The Woodings track car makes its home on the center platform of the DRM railyard.

Earlier Ken had located and delivered a track motor trailer car that could seat six riders.

Another important accession reported on was the strap rail donated by Charles Aldrich of New Milford. This artifact, which still is the oldest in the

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# DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

This month I'd like to talk about some of the things that have been going on at the Museum. By this time you probably know that the Little Engine That Could event has come and gone. It was a very big effort and commitment for our Museum and volunteers. We anticipated much greater attendance for this new event held by the Museum. There were many added attractions in addition to the Little Engine That Could itself. One significant problem was the weather; rain for three of the four days, and record heat the fourth. The people that did show up I'm sure had a very good time, and there were lots of smiling faces. Another positive was the way our volunteers pulled together and made the event a success despite all the



Some of the members who helped crew the Little Engine That Could are Jeff Van Wagenen, James Powell, Sean Harte, Marie Salata, Justin Chapin, John O'Hern, Ira Pollack, Steve Gould, and Dave Roberts.

other problems. Our volunteers who attended and ran the event acted very professionally and were able to route our visitors through the facilities smoothly. This kind of an event has a lot of uncertainties and we never really know if we'll do well or not, but I still feel very confident in our volunteers in whatever venture we might undertake. In the future we will have to look at this particular event closer and see if it's worthwhile to be involved at all. I'm sure many of our volunteers are relieved that we got through this in one shape or form or another, but the bottom line for me is that we pulled together as a team and focused on one goal.

In other news, in reality this time, I think, the 44-ton center-cab yard-switcher locomotives have arrived from Electric Boat in Groton, CT. It's hard to believe that they are actually sitting in our yard. I must tell you that until the very end of this project, I

was truly doubtful that we would ever receive these locomotives. There were many obstacles in our way but we persevered and finally triumphed in the end. These two locomotives were graciously donated to the DRM by the submarine base. They had suspended railroad service in their facility and wanted both engines to go to a museum that would appreciate them. Unfortunately we had a time limit on these locomotives. They had to be removed from the Electric Boat facility or be scrapped in place. Initially the DRM tried to move them by truck, but failed in the attempt. Five months were spent negotiating the move with various railroad entities, to no avail. After the intervention and help of Congresswoman Nancy Johnson to save these from the torch, we were able to finalize the moves to Danbury. There were an incredible number of phone calls back and forth among the various railroads that would move them. The biggest problem was that these locomotives have friction bearings and the liability of moving over the Northeast Corridor



Ira Pollack and Dave Roberts riding one of the 44-tonners from Derby to Danbury. Photo courtesy of Justin Chapin.

was large. After many inspections and measurements and "kicking of the tires", the locomotives were moved outside of the Electric Boat facility for movement west. The move to Danbury basically happened in three stages - Groton to New Haven, New Haven to Derby, and finally Derby to Danbury. I want to thank everyone involved in bringing these locomotives to our Museum: from Electric Boat, Nancy Johnson and her office, Providence & Worcester RR, Housatonic RR, Metro-North, Amtrak, and our DRM volunteers.

For your information one of the locomotives is an ex-New Haven #0814 built in 1945; the other is an ex-Union Pacific (1947), actually the smallest that the Union Pacific ever had. What remains now is for our mechanical staff to give these engines the once-over, but I must also add that we did receive these locomotives in running order. I'm very pleased with the result of this long and arduous project, and feel that these two locomotives will serve the Museum for many years to come. I will keep you updated as to the progress of our newly acquired equipment.

# Gift Shop News

By Patty Osmer

For the Thomas fans, we have some new items in limited stock:

**Thomas the Tank wooden vehicle items:** S.C. Ruffy, which is produced as a limited edition, Lights and Sound Thomas, Lights and Sound James, Happy Birthday Thomas, Thomas and Friends Collector Pack, Conductors Figure 8 Set, Water Tower Figure 8 Set, and the Oval Set.

**Thomas the Tank Puzzles:** We have added a number of new puzzles to our selection.



Some of our Thomas items include the Thomas & Friends puzzles, sipping mug, double decker sandwich container, and treasure box.

**Little Engine That Could:** T-shirts in sizes 2T-Youth Small (2-4), Engineer caps, and child-sized baseball caps.

All of the items mentioned as being in limited supply, probably will not be carried on a regular basis, so stop in early to make sure to get what you want. We also will continue to carry *The Little Engine That Could* books, game, and puzzle. If you missed visiting the Little Engine That Could during its stay at the Museum, or forgot to buy a souvenir, stop by to see us.

The Gift Shop has acquired a few of the new Atlas HO-scale RS-11s, painted and lettered as the New Haven #1402. We have four left. This is a model



This beautifully detailed #1402 RS-11 locomotive has the New Haven color scheme of black locomotive with the red cab, grab irons and rails, and red N/white H letters.

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of the RS-11 in our railyard, and which we are in the process of restoring. This model retails for \$100; we are offering it to members for \$80, plus 6% tax for Connecticut buyers. If you are interested, please contact Patty in the Gift Shop, or by email at [info@danburyrail.org](mailto:info@danburyrail.org) with subject GIFT SHOP. Mail orders will be accepted first-come, first serve, with \$5 shipping, optional insurance \$2.50 extra.

*Two Locomotives Bring 88 Tons of Joy to DRM, Continued from Page 1*



Just arrived in our railyard, originally a GE demonstrator, now with a bright blue paint job (above), and the former New Haven #0814, the one in lighter blue (below).



DRM President Ira Pollack can finally smile and thoroughly enjoy riding on one of our 44-tonners.

The Volunteers That Could at the Little Engine, Continued from Page 1  
 Engine. Our members in the Little Engine often found themselves in these photos, too. Talented musicians



played on a stage on a flat car, a marvelous clown was on hand each day. We had face painters, and experts at creating balloon animals. If you were looking for real animals, *Curious Creatures* arrived with exotic ones to hold and learn about at the Petting Zoo area. An inflatable slide and bouncing bus were there to provide fun. A hay maze delighted young guests. The costumed

controlled "Sparky" in his fire engine came the first weekend with his owners, the Danbury Fire Department, and attracted an adoring crowd of



youngsters. Volunteers from the Redding Fire & EMS Company spent both weekends here. The DRM had food concessions. A special gift shop tent carried a wide variety of

Little Engine That Could items. Operation Lifesaver volunteers set up inside the Museum building, along with our model railroading layouts. Can you believe everything that was happening! Most of the activities were under shelter, so we were able to carry on in style despite the weather. We could have accommodated many more guests at the event than attended, so



Eric Mayerson (left) helped man a gate, while Bob Andriola, staffing a gate helps with directions (center), and at right, Suze Blackman (who managed the Children's Activities Tent) and AnneMarie Shannon (who helped staff the Gift Shop) watch one of the people from *Curious Creatures* hold a boa constrictor.

characters of an elephant and a bear were popular. A story reader alternated with the musical entertainment. Our G-gauge enthusiasts ran garden railroading trains. The New Haven forge was fired up, Alan Stock came with hit-or-miss antique engines, and one day there was a member using a spinning wheel. Remote-

that was the only disappointment.

Thank you Ed Blackman for taking photos of the event, many of which are used in this issue. Unfortunately due to lack of space, many delightful photographs taken at the event could not be included in this issue. Everyone who helped was important!



Bob Pitcher, shown here, and Glenn Miller demonstrated at our forge.



# RPO News & Notes

By Bill Britt, Project Leader

The window replacement project is now complete. They look good and go a long way to dressing up "THE OLD GIRL". The next major project will be the rehabilitation of the roof. We plan to wire brush it and then encapsulate it with a two-part system made for this type of project. Our Project treasury has just about enough funds for this. We expect to start during July when all the hype and excitement of "THE LITTLE ENGINE" has passed.

We will need additional funds in order to buy paint for the exterior of the car. The painting, which will **really** make the car look great, will be done after the roof work is finished. It must be done during the next few months, so please help us with financing the purchase of paint. We also will need additional funds to continue other restoration. As before, please make any check donations out to Danbury Railway Museum, with a memo that it is for the RPO. Thank you for all the support that has made the restoration so far possible.

A second and major task was also completed during this past month, and that is concerning the history of our car. Art Slothower's keen eye picked up a penciled number in the car that he thought looked like a series of numbers he had seen on photos of mail cars. This number was given to Dan Foley, and with Dan's tenacious ability to get to the bottom of things, he was able to develop the car's history. It was built in February of 1910 and given a car number of 6507. The 6500 series of numbers was used by the New Haven RR. The car was rebuilt during November of 1937, at which time it was classified as a BNM-70 and was renumbered 5463. During the 1950s the car was again rebuilt and again renumbered to 6563. Number 6563 was the number Art found, the one given to Dan to research. During 1968 the car became part of the Penn-Central system. It is my guess that many of the changes we see on this car were made during the last rebuild. Things such as aluminum sash windows and a ratchet-type hand brake, as compared to the hand wheel, were installed.

**DID YOU KNOW ?** the clerks working in the RPO cars were Federal employees, and that this position was a preferred job because of wage incentives, and also because turnaround times gave many an opportunity to work a second or part-time job.

We always look forward to hearing from you with RPO stories and yarns. Again, thanks for your interest in our car. Now you know why I



referred to it as "THE OLD GIRL" in the opening paragraph.

*Ten Years Ago, Continued from Page 2*

Museum, was used on the Housatonic Railroad in the 1830's. Before the advent of T rail that we know today, railroads used iron strips fastened to pine timbers. Many times the strips would become loose, curl and present a danger to the train. Railroads soon replaced them with the T-rail and it is estimated that this was done on the Housatonic about 1844. Local farmers would use the timbers for their structures. Our piece was used for the joists in the Corn House on the Crosby Farm located on the New Milford-Brookfield border. (Editors Note: The May 2005 issue of *The Railyard Local* has an article by Stan, plus a photo, of our strap rail artifact.)



The track motor trailer car on our center platform is brightly visible with its orange and green paint scheme.

Our very first exhibit was on display in the Station. Member John Thompson had donated his toy trains, some as old as 80 years old. They are still on display in the station and include pieces by Ives, Marx, Lionel and American Flyer.

One Saturday in July, an antique car group, the Autoneers, visited the Museum. All of the vehicles were built before 1916.

Other Museum news included a call for 1940's era furniture for a Christmas display that Tom Morris was working on, a reminder that membership renewal notices were being sent out, the Gift Shop was offering more items, and we were now booking birthday parties.

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## DRM Library Sale in July

July 22&23, 29&30

Be sure to catch our Reference and Research Library's sale of duplicate books, magazines, timetables, newsletters and other memorabilia! Times for the Saturdays 10am-4pm, for the Sundays 12-4pm. DRM members will receive a 50% discount. All proceeds will benefit the Library Fund for the continued growth and maintenance of the Library's collection.

# The Yard Inside

By Wade W. Roese

Now that the Little Engine That Could has come and gone, I would like to focus on the Museum and its displays. A few people have suggested some changes and new ideas, but I would like input from more of our members. Please give me a call with your thoughts.

## Layout Status:

**N gauge:** The N gauge was a real map to visitors in the Museum during the Little Engine That Could. As usual, it gives visitors an introduction and bird's-eye view to the railyard.



The N-gauge layout at the Museum, representing the railyard as it was in the 1950s, gives visitors a historical perspective of our railyard.

**HO Gauge:** The HO gauge layout moves slowly forward despite the periodic distractions and interruptions. We are currently finishing track-work, painting, building abutments and roads, and assisting Marty with his wiring. Much work remains to be done on the HO, and we invite anyone interested in assisting to come to the Museum Tuesdays at 7:00pm.

**S Gauge:** New display is in the works.

**O Gauge:** A new O gauge design has been proposed which is multi-level, multi-loop, and multi-train. New track is being pursued which should further enhance the operating reliability. We hope to start actual construction soon, so stay tuned or come help.

**G Gauge:** The G gauge historic logging operation was a big success with the people waiting for their train rides. Having crawled under the layout to make a "technical adjustment", yours truly was greeted by a five-year-old railfan crawling in under the layout to see what I was doing. Very entertaining, I guess! The "inside scoop" regarding G Gauge, although not inside, is close by. Outside near the entrance to the

Yard exhibits, is an on-grade series of track ovals which are periodically utilized to run some G gauge during events. When active, this is a well received display that young and older seem to appreciate while awaiting their boarding time. We plan to expand and enhance this simple display to be more interesting and be a venue for operating G and live steam G. If anyone is interested in being part of this new project, please contact us.



Dave Wilson, Corey Eaton, Carol Wilson, Bob Boothe and Harry Leeds were among the G-gaugers who provided this model railroading entertainment for our guests, shown here during the Little Engine That Could event.

Other new interior displays are now in the works. We invite your ideas, input, and participation.

## Rockin' on the Railroad

Come hear great bands at the DRM!

Saturday, August 12<sup>th</sup> is the date for the Museum's fundraiser. We have booked five bands that are known to play different styles of music, so there will be tunes to please everyone. The concert will last from 12-5pm. Admission will be \$25. We will be running trains, have refreshments available, and our usual attractions. The stage that was erected on one of our flat cars for the musicians at the Little Engine That Could event will be used for this one as well. Come join us for a rockin' good time!

The railyard resounded with lively music generated by musicians performing at our Little Engine That Could event.





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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

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|-----------------|--|
| July 19(7:30pm) | Slides-End of New Haven - Pete McLachlan                       |
| July 20(7:00pm) | Board Meeting (Open to Members)                                |
| July 26(7:30pm) | Weathering Models - Steve Mayerson                             |
| Aug 2(7:30pm)   | Videos - Wade Roesse   |
| Aug 9(7:30pm)   | Slides;Where I've Been -Stan Madyda                            |
| Aug 16(7:30pm)  | Video, Steam in the 50s & 60s,<br>Canadian Steam - Dick Shubar |

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



### Contact Information

Please contact us with submissions:  
 Mail: The Danbury Railway Museum  
 Attention: Newsletter  
 PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813  
 Phone: 203.778.8337  
 Fax: 203.778.1836  
 Email: [newsletter@danburyrail.org](mailto:newsletter@danburyrail.org)  
 Editor: Carolyn Taylor

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### **Change of Address**

If you move, please send your change of address to:  
 Danbury Railway Museum,  
 Attention: Membership Chairman  
 PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813  
 Via Email to [drmmembers@aol.com](mailto:drmmembers@aol.com)

