

# The Railyard Local

Volume 11, Issue 8

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

November 2012

## Elections 2012-Resumes Due

### Official Notice:

### Nominations now being accepted

The 2013 Nominating Committee (Steve Gould, Chairman, Chuck Sager, Gil Letellier members) is now accepting nominations with resumes from members for openings on the Danbury Railway Museum's Board of Directors. All Officer and four Director positions are up for election. Each will serve a two-year term. If you are interested in running for any of these positions, incumbents and new candidates alike, please prepare your resume that is **no longer than one-half of an 8 1/2" X 11" sheet of paper**, and include the following information:

1. Name, address, phone number, e-mail address.
2. Your DRM accomplishments over the last two years. Keep to 150 words or less.
3. Your plans and goals for DRM over your two-year term. Include a project or area where you would contribute your time. Keep to 150 words or less.

### There are three ways to send your resume to the Nominating Committee:

1. By e-mail to GouldSL@aol.com.
2. By regular mail to the DRM at P.O. Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813, Attention:Nominating Committee.
3. By placing the resume in Steve Gould's mailbox at the Museum.

**All resumes must be received by 4 PM, Sunday, January 13, 2013 and must be in the format described above to be considered as a candidate. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Serving on the Board of Directors is a serious commitment to the Museum and its vision and goals. Please consider running only if you feel you can commit the time and effort to move the Museum forward and help it grow. Regular attendance at Board meetings, which are held the third Thursday of each month at the Museum, is a requirement. Check the DRM By-laws, which are available at the Museum, for requirements for running for any of the positions.

If you have any questions, please contact any member of the Committee for help. Also, if you know of someone who wants to be contacted, please let the Committee know for follow-up.

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## Words from Our President

Bill Britt passed away Friday, October 26, 2012. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Bill had three sisters and two brothers. He was graduated from Bishop Loughlin High School and received his Bachelors of Marine Engineering from the New York State Maritime College in 1955. He was Vice-President of Engineering at Chase Packaging in Greenwich, Connecticut. For ten years Bill volunteered at the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen in Danbury, served for eight years on the Bethel Board of Finance, was a member of the Charter Revision Commission, and a former member of the Bethel Building Committee.



Representing the DRM, Art Slothower and Bill Britt were in Hartford, CT at the Old State House on June 7, 2010 accepting the Connecticut League of History Organizations' Award of Merit from Priscilla Brendler for their restoration of the PRR Railway Post Office Car. Photo by Steve Gould.

The Danbury Railway Museum was the fortunate recipient of Bill's propensity for volunteerism and technical expertise. Joining the Museum in early 2000, Bill worked on the model layouts, devoting most of his time and talents to the "S" gauge layout, which required much effort.

In August 2005 Bill took on the Project Manager position on our then newly acquired Pennsylvania

*Continued on Page 4*

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# Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The Museum was in preparation for the Holiday Express trip to New York City on December 7<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the Metro-North train set, the rear of the train would feature privately owned New York Central #3, a Pullman car built for NYC Director Harold Vanderbilt. The all-day excursion would again feature musicians, snacks, Gift Shop tables and a raffle.

An entire page of the newsletter was dedicated to the number of projects going on inside the station and outside in the yard. These included restoration work on FL9 2006, RS 11 1402, one of the New Haven box cars, the Tonawanda Valley, the Stratford Point, the semaphore from Wilton, painting the turntable railing, and exterior work on the station.

Inside the station, a new photo exhibit opened featuring the work of Jack Swanberg. The photographs were of Danbury yard and the surrounding area.

Member Frank Thompson, Jr. related a trip he had taken to France with his son to see what remained from World War I where his father served with the 14th Engineer Regiment which had to do with the light railway supporting the British Army. In France they found traces of the railway which was used to carry supplies and ammunition to the front and retrieve wounded soldiers. A local museum also had relics from the war. Prior to joining the Army, Frank Thompson, Sr. was night yardmaster in Danbury.

Steve Gould wrote about some of the goings on in and around the Museum during summer and early fall weekdays: the Metro-North business train visited, the Strates Carnival Train passed by, and there were interesting visitors from both the U.S. and overseas, including a couple of French families that were touring the United States in the classic Citroens.

A good reminder from the Library Committee talked about the importance of identifying photos and slides in personal collections. So many donations had been received (and still are being received) with no notes on where the image was taken and the date.

**Editor's Note:** Please see the accompanying photo as an example, and let us know if you have some information.

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## Santa Express on Its Way!

The trains are arriving early this year. We hope to see you during the event which will be on **Sundays, Dec. 2, 9, & 16** with trains running every 1/2 hour from 12:30-3:30pm, and on **Saturdays, Dec. 8 & 15**, trains 12:00-3:30pm. Ride the train in our railyard, then visit with Santa, Mrs. Claus and elves in his specially decorated coach. Children will receive a small gift there. Admission, which includes the train ride and all attractions, will be \$9 for ages 2 & up, with under 2 free. The Museum building is already dressed with holiday decorations.

If you will be able to assist during this busy and important time for the Museum, please

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contact Sue Teer or the DRM.



Can you identify the location of this photo of Metro-North FL-9 2014 taken July 1, 1997? It could be somewhere relatively local to Danbury.

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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!

**Have you noticed?** The address label on each newsletter indicates the expiration date of your membership. (If you have very recently renewed your membership the new date may not be reflected yet on the label). The membership of Life Members does not have an expiration date.

Carl Zencey  
Ian Mdnsen  
Julie Hartridge  
Mike McDonough  
Daniel V. Cardoso  
Richard E. Murray  
Alex Fridman  
Marc Lindstrom  
Irene Black  
A. Yankelewitz  
Robert Powell

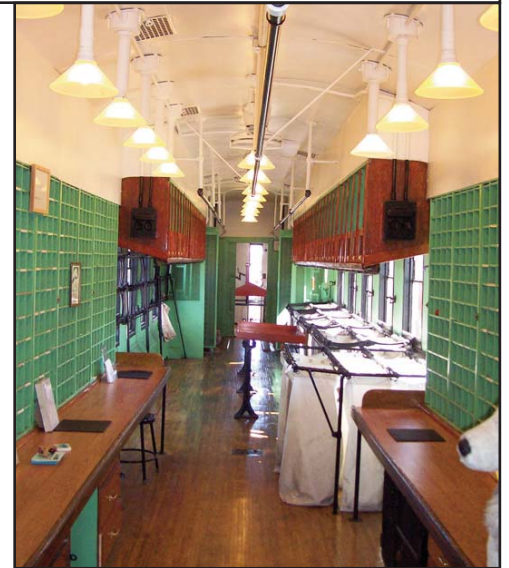
Newtown, CT  
Bethel, CT  
Redding, CT  
Carmel, NY  
Danbury, CT  
Danbury, CT  
Weston, CT  
Bethel, CT  
Danbury, CT  
Far Rockaway, NY  
Yonkers, NY

# Owney the RPO Mascot Day

The DRM welcomed train and dog enthusiasts on September 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Owney, the mascot of the Railway Post Office Service, and our beautifully restored RPO car. Admission included the appropriate refreshment of a hot dog for our guests! Masterful storyteller Marty Bishop captured the attention of Railyard Local passengers as she related the improbable life history of the stray dog Owney which became the mascot of the Railway Post Office Service and traveled worldwide. Tours were conducted of the RPO car, and volunteers were working on other restorations during the day.



While Dave Lowry and Owney look-alike greeted guests, Marty Bishop entertained passengers with Owney's life story. Below, the RPO car with crane, "Owney" guarding mail sacks and pigeon holes in the car, and a photo of the interior.



Below, guests finding a good vantage point for taking photos, a mail bag, and Don Konen ready to serve the hot dogs.



*Words from Our President, Continued from Page 1*

RPO 6563 which was built in 1910. While Project Manager, Bill worked diligently in the yard and at home to assure work progressed regardless of weather conditions or work requirements. Repairing, renovating or constructing new, no task was not achievable. Windows, doors, repainting, electrical, cabinetry – the rusty RPO was returned to its original 1910 luster. Bill accepted the Award of Merit from the Connecticut League of History Organizations on behalf of the Danbury Railway Museum on June 7, 2010.

In January 2010, Bill stepped up to be Project Leader on the newly-donated Tonawanda Valley, a Pullman observation, lounge and sleeping car built in 1928 and utilized as the last car on the 20th Century Limited. Work started shortly thereafter, focusing first on the exterior of the car, including exterior steps, platforms, and paint. "Rivets" were worked on at a feverish pace. Bill, along with assistant Art Slothower, spent many hours and work progressed at an amazing rate. Restoration work quickly moved inside the car, and the beauty and historical significance of this valued piece of equipment is coming to fruition. In 2012 Bill sadly asked to put Art in charge of the project, feeling badly that he was not able to do enough.



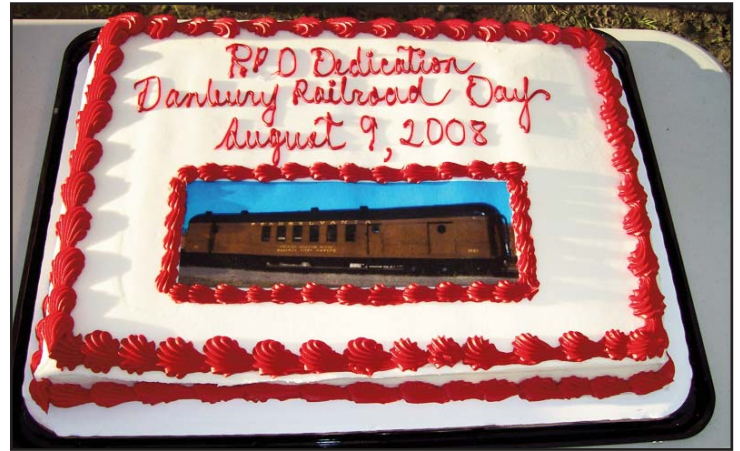
Left, Justin Chapin and Bill looked over the RPO car in July 2005 prior to its donation by the Housatonic Railroad, and right, the car after completion of the restoration.



Bill started by addressing the exterior needs of the car to protect it from the weather. After a fund drive to replace glass in the windows, at left he is shown working on the window sills; on the right, industriously working on part of the interior; below left, Bill showing a 5-quarters-thick bolster; below right, a pre-restoration interior photo



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Top left, a photo of the finished interior; top right, cake celebrating dedication of the restored RPO car; left, work on the Tonawanda Valley; right, after restoration work



I was personally fortunate to work with Bill and share his talents during many Tuesday night model work sessions. In addition, we worked together on the Board of Directors. Bill was Vice-President from November 2003 until 2006, and cared for the building and its operation, among his many other contributions. Bill set a high standard for future V.P.s to follow.

Bill was recognized as one of our "Gandy Dancers" in early 2012. Bill is another of our exceptional volunteers whose talents, expertise, caring and sharing will be sorely missed.

Sadly, on behalf of the Danbury Railway Museum, Wade Roesse

## Rail Shippers Conference Speaker

By Steve Gould

On October 4, I was the lead-off speaker at the North East Association of Rail Shippers (NEARS) Fall Conference held at the Ocean Edge Resort in Brewster, MA, which is on Cape Cod. NEARS is a group of railroads, leased rail car companies, and rail shippers that meet twice a year to promote the increased use of freight rail shipping. The title of my talk was "Railroading 101" and covered the rail shipping environment in the 1960's to the 1990's. It also included the recent history of railroads from the 1950's to date.

In May 2012, as part of the Museum's Outreach Program, I gave a talk on a similar subject to a group of retired executives that meet regularly at the library in Pleasantville, NY. The group had already visited DRM on a day tour. Someone attending the talk forwarded my name to the NEARS president, who contacted me about doing a presentation. I wasn't quite sure how it would fit in with supply chain management issues of today but he felt a talk on the early days of rail shipping and the environment shippers worked under would be an excellent kickoff for the fall conference. Part of the talk covered the regulated environment that railroads worked under before deregulation took effect with the passage of the Staggers Act in 1980. One of the interesting facts that I heard at the meeting was that tank car company manufacturing capacity is filled out until 2014 or beyond.

The talk was well received. I also used the opportunity to sell a visit to DRM including leaving a stack of brochures at a table filled with other industry handouts. I am glad to have had the opportunity to attend and spread the "DRM word" at another venue.

# Halloween with Pumpkin Patch Trains

The Museum and guests celebrated Halloween on three weekends in October with Pumpkin Patch trains featuring the festively colorful RS-1 locomotive, and a plentiful supply of pumpkins and refreshments. Thanks to Sue and Jim Teer and other volunteers, decorations were displayed throughout the railyard and building. Each year Sue finds new decor to delight everyone. Within the Museum building musician Cameron Sutphin entertained with a selection of songs. Volunteers applied temporary tattoos, and children had a great time at the play tables and operating model train layouts. It seemed that most parents were taking photos or videos. Parents were highly creative with decorations and refreshments for their lucky son's birthday party. The G-scale layout was operating rolling stock sporting theme-appropriate colors and scenery. We were delighted to greet many children dressed in costume, and some adults as well! The event seemed to be very successful all around.



Halloween with Pumpkin Patch Trains, *Continued from Page 6*



Two photos at right shot by Bob Boothe; all others by Carolyn Taylor





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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

Nov	21	CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING
Nov	28(7:30pm)	Harlem Line - Pete McLachlan
Dec	5(7:30pm)	Chicago-Denver Competition - Carl Liba
Dec	12(7:30pm)	Video: Potomac Eagle - Bill Brett
Dec	19(7:30pm)	To be announced - Steve Gould
Dec	20(7:00pm)	Board Meeting - Open to Members

**Museum hours: Wed-Sat 10-4; Sun 12-4**

See the newsletter in color at [www.danburyrail.org](http://www.danburyrail.org)!



### Contact Information

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### **Change of Address**

If you move, please send your change of address to:

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Attention: Membership Chairman  
PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813

Via Email to [drmmembers@aol.com](mailto:drmmembers@aol.com)

