

# THE RAILYARD DISPATCH

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM  
WINTER 2020-21

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**STAN MADYDA**

Usually at this time, the Museum is in the process of preparing for the upcoming operating season with safety tests being administered, equipment being prepped and the station tidied up. Instead, we are still closed to the public. We continue to monitor the Covid situation to determine the best and safest time to re-open. Once we do re-open, we are going to need volunteers to handle the front desk and gift shop. The more people we have to help, the more days we can be open. Fortunately, our reserve funds have seen us through the pandemic. However, it would have been a whole lot better if these funds could have been put towards our mission as a museum rather than paying day to day operating expenses.

There has been some news with the electrics in Glenmont. The land on which they sit will start to be developed by the Port of Albany for a wind turbine manufacturer. At some point in the next several months, they will have to be moved so the Port can get access to that section of land. The Port understands the significance of the locomotives and is willing to work with us, but warned there can be no delays. A group of members spent three days in Glenmont preparing the locomotives for an eventual move. Whether they move immediately to Danbury remains to be seen.

Although the Museum was closed, some projects were worked on. Art Slothower finished painting and lettering Reading coach 1547. Repair work on the Danbury Railway Museum coach 2015 was completed although we did have to hire an outside contractor to assist with lifting the coach. The Boy Scouts were able to get some more painting done on the Rutland flat. Wood for the decking has arrived and I expect them to resume work one the weather improves. Some clean up has been done in the yard but there is much more to do. The O Gauge layout is seeing an overhaul with the plan to make the layout smaller but to add more exhibit space for our model train collection.

There will be a couple of new additions to our museum collection in the yard. One is the retired sand car from Metro North Railroad which was donated to us about a year ago. Due to Covid, delivery of the car was delayed. It was once a 34-foot cement hopper and when it arrives on the property, we hope to determine its heritage. The other car is a Flexi-Flo hopper developed

by the New York Central for the shipment of cement. This particular was used as a scale test car for CSX and it is the last one to exist. It was literally on its way to be scrapped when an employee of CSX who has been in touch with the Conrail Historical Society about donations, noticed the car in the yard at Selkirk. CHS will either keep the car for themselves or donate it to the DRM.

The Archive/Library was awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,267 from the Connecticut State Library Conservation Connection. The purpose of this grant is to work with an archivist to inventory, begin digitizing and develop a procedures manual for our photo and slide collection. Along with this grant, we have received two grants which allowed us to purchase a large flatbed scanner. Work has begun on this project with the archivist working with us through Skype meetings.

A reminder, if you are an Amazon shopper, the Museum is registered with them under the Amazon Smile program. Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase to the non-profit you designate. To do this, go onto Amazon Smile and sign up. When purchasing, make sure you are on the Amazon Smile webpage where it notes that donations will be made to the DRM. Every little bit helps.

## In Memoriam

Recently, the Museum lost two long time members. Hal Meeker, 70, was our first Chairman of the Board. When the idea of a railroad museum getting formed in Danbury, Hal along with Charlie Bardo were two of the downtown store owners who offered tremendous support. As owner of Meeker's Hardware, Hal felt that a rail museum would help revitalize the downtown area which was losing some of its appeal due to the mall and various strip malls that were taking away business. In the early days, there were a lot of meetings with the city and state needed to get the Museum started and the Station renovated and Hal was a key representative.

John O'Hern, 96, was active in many areas at the museum. As a member of our train crew, John trained many others on being a conductor and handled the job himself on many weekends and special events. He was also our Safety Officer, up until retiring a couple of years ago. It was his responsibility to write and administer safety tests to our members wishing to work in the yard and on the train. When not in the yard, John could be found manning the front desk on several days during the week. He also served on the Board of Directors. The Danbury Railway Museum sends out condolences to the families of Hal and John.



## **Remembering the DRM Excursion Trains** **by Stan Madyda**

Recently, I was talking with Jim Teer about all of the different excursions the Museum ran in the past to bring awareness to the Museum and to raise money. It got me to thinking about writing an article on some of my recollections.

Our first ever excursion was the 1994 Holiday Express to New York City. With enthusiasm growing about the DRM, this was the Museum's way of thanking the Danbury community for its support. The idea behind the trip was that this was to be a non-stop to New York, with music, refreshments and a visit from Santa. Eddie Blackman was appointed Trip Chairman and he did so much to organize and promote the train, as he did with future excursions. Members went out to various businesses and asked for door prize donations. Advertising consisted of putting flyers out in various stores and libraries. The 1994 Holiday Express was a sellout which led to future excursions, not only to the city, but along the Maybrook and to the Hudson Line.

The typical day for a Holiday Express train started a couple of hours before the train would depart. We built special counters that would fit between the seats to hold the refreshments and these had to be loaded. Several of the counters were also used in the car that would have items from the Gift Shop. At first, we were able to have access to the train starting around 8:00 but with some later trips, Metro North said we had to wait for the crew to report. This cut at least an hour off our prep time. The train would depart after the local Metro North train left. One year a lady missed her train and was happy to purchase a \$25 ticket on the Holiday Express. Once underway, Santa would stroll through the cars from one end while a musician would start at the other end leading riders in singing Christmas songs.

Once in the city, riders would have five hours to shop, attend a performance at Radio City Music Hall, visit the tree at Rockefeller Center or whatever else they chose to do. Many of the car hosts would visit the large model railroad that was set up at Citicorp. Of course, we would stroll the city too and I remember one time we had a teenage member with us who obviously was in the city for the first time. He walked along looking up at all the tall buildings. This was fine until he walked face first into a No Parking sign.

Our train would always run diesels first which meant turning the train and departing on a different track than what we arrived on. We never knew which track would be the departing track so we made announcements to look for car hosts stationed in the concourse. In order to stand out in a crowd, the idea of wearing red hats and jackets came into being and it worked. We looked pretty official standing there and in addition to guiding our riders to the correct tracks, we answered Metro North questions such as "when does the next train to Scarsdale leave?" or "what track is the train to Stamford on?"

On several trips, Lovett Smith graciously loaned us the use of New York Central 3. We were able to sell tickets at a premium. Specially prepared meals by Don Konen was included in the price. As I mentioned the train had to be turned which meant coming in on a little used loop track. Car hosts were eager to ride around the loop. With NYC 3 on the rear of the train, Metro North assigned a couple of workers to walk behind the train to make sure there was clearance. Another time, the train was turned at Mott Haven making another rare mileage trip for car hosts.

One valuable lesson we learned on the first trip was mixing free coffee, soda and juice with families and children overloaded the bathrooms. We tried to stress on future trips to use the facilities in the station. Once back in Danbury, the task of unloading and cleaning the train took place. For car hosts, this made of at least a 12-hour day. Dave McKee, who never rode the train, was always there in the morning and in the evening to help.

In addition to the Holiday Express trains, we ran a number of excursions to the Hudson River by either the main line or the Maybrook. One year, a trip to the Museum originated in Poughkeepsie. The trips to the Hudson sometimes included a boat ride that left Peekskill, a bus tour of West Point or stopping for shopping and dining at Cold Spring. There was always a fair number of riders that would continue with the train to Poughkeepsie. By this time, I was Car Host Supervisor, later assisted by Tony White. This meant I had to have all the answers. On one of the train/boat excursions, Pete McLachlan came looking for me to say he had a lady in his car asking all kinds of questions that he could not answer. Oh geez, now what? The lady turned out to be my mother and once I got her straightened out, she and Pete had a nice remainder of the trip.

The trips along the Maybrook were sometimes the entire length or short ones to Towners. The Maybrook trips allowed us to sometimes do photo run bys organized by Dan Foley and Ed Blackman. Since the line was little used, there was always the chance of something unexpected happening. One year through Beacon, the train hit a parked car that was too close to the right of way. Fortunately, a couple of museum members were photographing the train and got the incident on film. Also, there was a Metro North police officer at a nearby grade crossing. In New York State, the railroad assigned a couple of patrol cars to run ahead of the train and flag busy crossings. The train was delayed and the "owner" of the car got in and sped away before information could be collected. The delay did cause the crew to outlaw just as we were approaching White Street that evening. With Metro North officials waiting for the train, everyone agreed to allowing the train to get back to the station.

George Humphries was one of our regular Metro North conductors on many of our excursions. He really appreciated the help DRM car hosts provided in handling large numbers of people. Most trips were uneventful but there were a couple of Maybrook trips that stand out. At one of the crossings near the state line in New York, George got off the train to flag the crossing. This one particular time, some whacko in a car had a real problem with the train using the Maybrook verbally assailing George. George got safely back on the train and I believe the incident was reported to Metro North Police. Another time at Segar Street, the train passed going East and the gates would not go up. After several minutes, Tony White and I got off to find traffic backing up on Segar Street and George trying to manually raise the gates. It took the three of us to get the gate to go up but not before a Danbury Police officer demanded to know what was going on. We quickly explained and jumped back on the train before he could ask any more questions.

There was only one time I remember that I wanted to throw a passenger off a train. It was a Maybrook trip to Towners on a day after a bad storm went through the area. Mike Salata wisely brought a chain saw along and we did have to stop several times to clear limbs that fell across the rails. You could see that passengers were unhappy with the delay but, for the most part, were understanding. Except this one guy. At Towners, Paul Gassner came to get me saying he had a very unruly passenger on his car. When I got there, he was in the vestibule which was a good thing so the other passengers wouldn't hear him. He went on and on about how the train was late, how we had kidnapped him and held him against his will and that he was going to sue the Museum and Metro North. Explaining that the delay was caused by nature and everyone else wanted to complete the train ride did not help. He continued to rant and make threats.

Finally, the train got underway back to Danbury and he shut up. We never heard anything more from him

The excursions we ran were always a lot of work and for the most part money makers. There was a dedicated group of car hosts that we could always rely on to make the experience positive for the riders and needed little direct on loading and unloading the trains. In recent years, we have made inquiries about running excursion, but costs of using a Metro North train have risen to the point where we felt ticket prices would be too high for the average family.



## VIC WESTMAN COLLECTION

The photos we received from Vic Westman's Collection show many scenes from Connecticut and New York. Not only did Vic document the abandoned right of ways of the CNE, he travelled and photographed the New York Central, the New Haven and their successor railroads. Here are some samples.



Rhinecliffe, NY Station June 20, 1960.

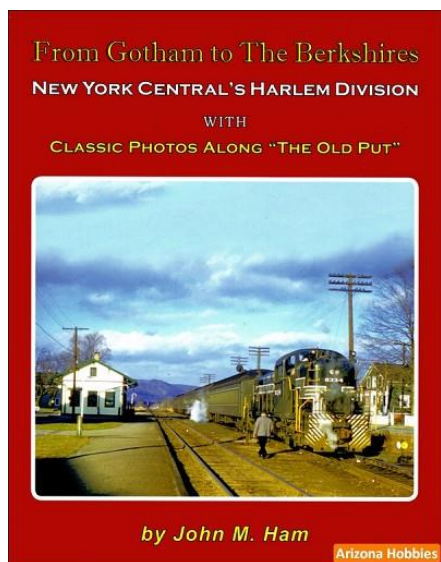


Cruers, NY Station April 1956



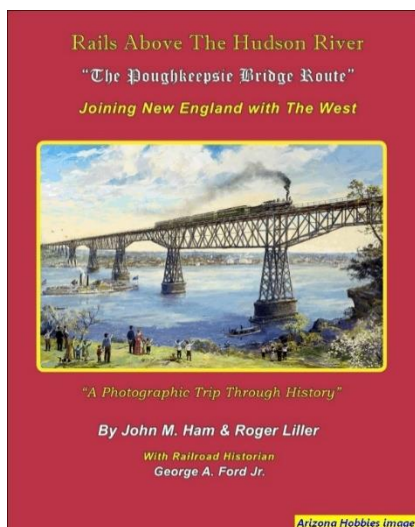
Wreck at Newtown, CT 1959

## NEW LOCAL INTEREST BOOKS FOR SALE



The Gift Shop has acquired copies of the now out-of- print book by John Ham, **FROM GOTHAM TO THE BERKSHIRES: NEW YORK CENTRAL'S HARLEM DIVISION.** This is a photographic look at the history of this railroad that was the driving force in developing the region along the eastern border of New York State from New York City to the heart of the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts. Both noted photographers as well as railroad historians have allowed him to use their collections and they are the major

source of the nearly 600 images, maps, and timetables in the book. The book originally retailed for \$65 and will sell to members for \$55. Shipping will be \$7 by insured media mail.



In case you missed it we have acquired some additional copies of John's CNE book **RAILS ABOVE THE HUDSON RIVER - THE POUGHKEEPSIE BRIDGE ROUTE**, which can be purchased for \$65 plus \$7 shipping. Please contact [giftshop@danburyrail.org](mailto:giftshop@danburyrail.org) or call Patty Osmer, 845-225-3546 if you are interested in either or both books.

## USED BOOKS FOR SALE

Recently, the Library received several collections of books in very good to like new condition. Listed below are the we have for sale. More are being added, so if you do not see something, ask. Prices are below what others on Amazon are asking and some of the books are out of print. For DRM members, we'll take another 20% off the prices listed. Please contact Stan Madyda at [President@danbury.org](mailto:President@danbury.org) or 203-746-0804 to check availability and to arrange payment and delivery. If we have to mail, there is an additional charge for media mail postage.

4449 Album - \$5.00

722 Miles Building of the Subways and How they Transformed New York by Hood - \$5.00

A Guide to New York, Ontario & Western Railway's Southern Division Liberty to Sidney - \$25.00

All Aboard – Golden Age of American Steam by Yenne - \$5.00

Along the East Broad Top by Heimburger - \$45.00

Along the Iron Trail by Blount and Richardson - \$14.00

America's Colorful Railroads by Ball - \$7.00

America's Fighting Railroads by DeNevi - \$8.00

America's Railroads The Second Generation by Ball - \$7.00

Appalachian Crossing the Pocahontas Roads by Huddleston - \$10.00

Art of the Streamliner by Johnston & Welch - \$7.00

Atlantic Coast Line by Griffin - \$60.00

B & O Power: Steam, Diesel & Electric by Sagle & Stauffer - \$25.00

Beauty of Railroad Bridges in North America by Cook - \$18.00

Boston & Maine City & Shore by Jones - \$60.00

Boston & Maine Forest, River and Mountain by Jones - \$60.00

Boston & Maine in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century by Heald - \$15.00

Boston & Maine Three Colorful Decades by Jones - \$60.00

Boston's Main Line El: The Formative Years 1879-1908 by Chaisson - \$12.00

Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway by Pietrak - \$20.00

Burlington's Zephyrs by Zimmerman - \$24.00

By Streamliner New York to Florida by Welsh - \$50.00

Cabins, Crummies and Hacks Vol. 5 Northern North America by Maywald – 30.00

Caboose by Schafer - \$5.00

Caboose of the New Haven and New York Central Railroads - \$20.00

Camelback Twilight – Hard Coal Carriers by Bernet - \$10.00

Canadian National Steam in Color by Holland - \$45.00

Canadian Sunset A Farewell Look at North America's Last Great Train by Wolf - \$35.00



Cape Cod Railroads including Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket by Farson - \$20.00  
 Cars of Pullman by Welsh, Howes and Holland - \$22.00  
 Cast Iron Eagles of Grand Central Station by Morrison - \$20.00  
 Central Railroad of New Jersey: Its History and Employees by Reilly - \$25.00  
 Central Vermont Railway by Beaudette - \$10.00  
 Central Vermont Railway A Yankee Tradition Vol 5 by Jones - \$60.00  
 Chasing Australia's Last Steam Trains by Hardacre - \$20.00  
 Change at Ozone Park by George - \$40.00  
 Classic American Locomotives (1909 Steam Locomotive Technology) by McShane - \$10.00  
 Classic American Railroads by Schafer - \$5.00  
 Classic American Streamliners by Schafer and Welsh - \$8.00  
 Classic Freight Cars Vol 4 Open and Closed Hopper Cars by Henderson - \$35.00  
 Classic Steam (Center of Railroad Photography and Art) by John Gruber - \$5.00  
 Connecticut River Railroads Bellows Falls through Wells River by Nimke - \$100.00  
 Conrail Volume 2: 1983-1990 by Hartley - \$25.00  
 Decade of the Trains by Ball - \$7.00  
 D&H Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment by Odell - \$40.00  
 Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Equipment & Marine Operations - \$50.00  
 Delaware & Hudson in Color by Sweetland - \$30.00  
 Delaware & Hudson Steam in Color by Yungkurth - \$40.00  
 Denver Rio Grande Western Superpower Railroad of the Rockies by LeMassena - \$40.00  
 Diesels to Park Ave. The FL-9 Story by Snopek and LeMay - \$30.00  
 Doodlebug Country by Keilty - \$35.00  
 Electric Car Builder's Images 1915-1950 - \$20.00  
 Electric Heritage of the Long Island Railroad by Ziel - \$10.00  
 Engine Houses and Turntables on Canadian Railways 1850 - 1950 by Bush - \$30.00  
 Erie Lackawanna in Color Volume 1 The West End by DeYoung - \$40.00  
 Erie Railroad in Color by Sweetland - \$25.00  
 Evolution of the New York City Subways by Sansome - \$30.00  
 Extraordinary Railway Journeys by Tom Savio - coffee table book - \$10.00  
 Faces of Railroading by Swanson - \$40.00  
 Freight Train Cars by Schafer and McBride - \$5.00  
 Ghost Trains - Images from America's Railroad Heritage by Bell - \$5.00  
 Green Mountain Railroads by Jones - \$35.00  
 Guide to North American Steam Locomotives (Trains Magazine) by George Drury - \$15.00  
 Hiawatha Story by Scribbins - \$17.50  
 Hudson Bergen Light Rail: New Jersey's New Interurban by Fazio - \$14.00  
 Iron Horses Across the Garden State by Rosenbaum and Gallo - \$10.00  
 Jersey Central Lines in Color Volume 3 by Appel - \$30.00  
 Jersey Central Steam in Color by Pennypacker - \$32.00  
 Journeys Through Western Rail History Colorado Rail Annual #22 - \$15.00  
 L.M.S. Pacifics by Rowledge - \$25.00  
 Lackawanna in Color Volume 2 by Plant - \$40.00



Lackawanna: Superpower Railroad of the Northeast by LeMassena - \$20.00  
 Lackawanna Railroad trackside with Henry Peterson by Del Vecchio – \$25.00  
 Late Great Pennsylvania Station by Middleton - \$15.00  
 Lehigh Valley in Color Vol 2 by Yanosey - \$27.50  
 Lehigh Valley Memories by Marcham - \$20.00  
 Lima Locomotive Catalog #16 - \$20.00  
 Long Island Railroad by Fischler - \$12.00  
 Magnetic North: Canadian Steam in Twilight – by Cook and Zimmerman - \$10.00  
 Maine Central in Color by Plant and Melvin - \$60.00  
 Manhattan Gateway: New York’s Pennsylvania Station by Middleton - \$25.00  
 Mansions on the Rails by Beebe and Clegg - \$25.00  
 Metro North’s Hudson Line Poughkeepsie to Oscawana by Panetierre - \$20.00  
 Model Engineer 1941 (Vol 84) - \$20.00  
 Motive Power of the Union Pacific - \$12.00  
 New England Rails 1948-1968 by Sweetland - \$40.00  
 New Haven in Color Vol 1 Battle for Profits 1945-1961 by Doughty - \$40.00  
 The New Haven Railroad’s Streamline Passenger Fleet 1934-1953 by Doughty  
 New Haven Trackside with Thomas McNamara by Plant - \$30.00  
 New York, Ontario & Western and the Dairy Industry in NY State by Mohowski - \$75.00  
 New York, Ontario & Western in the Diesel Age by Mohowski - \$24.00  
 New York Central Facilities in Color by Doughty - \$35.00  
 New York Central’s Stations and Terminals by Doughty - \$40.00  
 New York City Electrified Railroads in Color Volume 1 (GCT) by Fazio and Hodgson - \$45.00  
 New York City Subway Cars by Greller - \$40.00  
 New York City Subway Interborough Rapid Transit by Cudahy - \$15.00  
 New York City Trolleys in Color by Volkmer - \$22.00  
 New York Connecting Railroad: Long Island’s Other Railroad by Sturm and Thom - \$70.00  
 New York Railways The Green Line - \$10.00  
 New York, Ontario & Western in Color by Lubliner - \$40.00  
 New York, Westchester & Boston Railway Company 1906 – 1946 by Bang - \$75.00  
 NYC Color Guide to Freight and Passenger Equipment by Sweetland and Yanosey - \$22.00  
 Next Station Will Be Vol 8 Erie, Susquehanna, PA to Salamanca, NY - \$15.00  
 Nickel Plate Story by Rehor - \$30.00  
 Nicholas Morant’s Canadian Pacific by Garden - \$30.00  
 NYC Electric Locomotives and MU Cars by Liljestrand and Sweetland - \$15.00  
 Penn Central Power by Yanosey - \$60.00  
 Pennsylvania Railroad by Schafer & Solomon - \$32.00  
 Pennsylvania Railroad Under Wires by Middleton – 18.00  
 Pennsy Diesel Years Volume 1 by Yanosey - \$23.00  
 Pennsy Electric Years by Volkmer - \$20.00  
 PRR: Hudson to Horseshoe by Volkmer - \$15.00  
 Railroads in Mexico Vol 1 by Franco - \$60.00  
 Rails by Don Ball - \$7.00  
 Rails Across the Tundra by Cohen - \$5.00

Rails Along the East Branch The Delaware & Northern Railroad by Ham - \$40.00  
 Rails Along the Oriskany – A History of NY, O&W Utica and Rome Branches by Taibi - \$65.00  
 Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad by Griffin - \$45.00  
 Ridin the Rails – Passenger Equipment of the NY, O & W by Houck - \$15.00  
 Rio Grande in Color Volume 1 Colorado by Grenard - \$25.00  
 Rio Grande in Color Volume 2 Utah by Sandrin - \$30.00  
 Royal Trains by Kingston - \$5.00  
 Rutland in Color by Jordan - \$50.00  
 Scranton Division New York, Ontario & Western - \$15.00  
 Second Avenue El in Manhattan - \$30.00  
 Speedway to Sunshine: The Story of the Florida East Coast Railway by Bramson - \$20.00  
 Steam at Allandale (Canadian National) by Ian Wilson - \$25.00  
 Steam Memories of Lindsay (Canadian National) by Ian Wilson - \$25.00  
 The Brooklyn Elevated by Greller & Watson - \$20.00  
 The Classic Railway Signal Tower by McEvoy - \$35.00  
 The Great Road (Baltimore & Ohio) by Dilts - \$10.00  
 The Manchester Street Railway – Bulletin #35 by Cummings - \$15.00  
 The New Haven Railroad Along the Shoreline by McGuirk - \$9.00  
 The New Haven Railroad in the Streamline Era by Doughty - \$18.00  
 The New York Connecting Railroad by Sturm & Thom - \$70.00  
 The Original Ontario & Western Observer – 18.00  
 The Old Somerset Railroad – A Lifeline for Northern Mainers by Walter MacDougall - \$5.00  
 The Penny Era on the Long Island Railroad by Ziel - \$23.00  
 The Railroad Caboose by Knapke - \$18.00  
 The Rutland 40 Years of Trying, Vol. 1 – Motive Power & Equipment by Nimke - \$50.00  
 The Rutland 50 Years of Trying, Vol 5 Part 2 – Main Line Rutland to Alburgh by Nimke - \$50.00  
 The Rutland 50 Years of Trying, Vol 6 Part 1 – O & KC Division by Nimke - \$50.00  
 The Rutland Road 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (paperback) by Shaughnessy - \$10.00  
 The Steam Liners by Holland - \$45.00  
 The Virginian Era by Lewis - \$15.00  
 Thoroughbreds by Stauffer and May - \$40.00  
 Trackside Along the New Haven 1950–1956 with Arthur Mitchell by Byron - \$40.00  
 Trackside Around Buffalo 1953-1976 by Koenig - \$50.00  
 Trackside East of the Hudson with 1941 – 1953 with William J. McChesney by Plant - \$35.00  
 Trackside Maryland by Gallagher - \$  
 Trains of America by Heimburger - \$7.00  
 Tumult on the Mountains Lumbering in West Virginia by Clarkson - \$30.00  
 Western Cameraman 1951 – 1962 by Blenkinsop - \$40.00  
 Western Maryland in Color by Sweetland - \$40.00  
 Yale Bowl and the Open Trolleys - \$10.00  
 Zephyrs Through the Rockies by Edmondson & Goodheart - \$20.00