

The Railyard Local

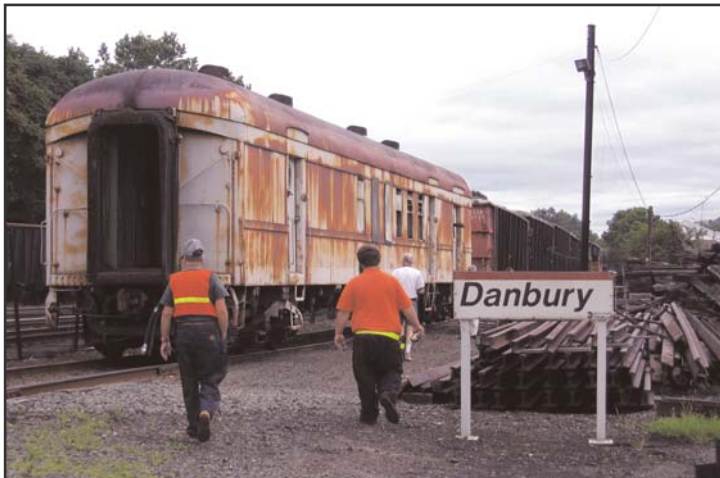
Volume 4, Issue 8

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

August 2005

Rail Post Office Car Arrives by Special Delivery

Thursday, July 7th began with great excitement when DRM President Ira Pollack received an early morning phone call from Bob Bass of the Housatonic Railroad that the long-anticipated RPO car was already in New Milford on its way to our Danbury railyard. A few calls from Ira to nearby members had them scurrying to take photos of the car en route and entering the DRM yard.



A few of our members were on hand to enthusiastically greet the RPO car as it entered the DRM railyard

We feel very excited and fortunate to be recipients of this piece of railroad history, which was originally a baggage car, then converted to an RPO car. Many thanks to Jay Hanlon, owner of the Housatonic Railroad, both for his generosity in donating this car to the DRM and for arranging for transport to Danbury. We also appreciate the technical advice given by Bob Bass.

The RPO's arrival was the culmination of several months of calls and preparations. Member Warren Haggenkotter alerted Ira Pollack that the car was available and all that would be required would be a letter of intent. A couple of trips were made to Canaan to assess the condition of this ex-Pennsylvania Railroad BM Series RPO, and prepare the car for the trip to Danbury. With the help of Bob Pitcher, Randy Natale, Ira Pollack, and Carolyn Taylor working all day in sweltering heat, the car was ready to go.

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Jeeps Plus Trains Equal Popular Event at DRM

The Jeep-Railroad Rendezvous of July 16th was so popular with visitors, members, and jeep enthusiasts that we are planning to hold it again next year. This was one of the events mentioned in previous newsletter issues that is meant to attract people of varying interests to our Museum so that they will see what we have to offer here, and have such a wonderful time that they will want to return.



Continued on page 8 (more pictures on pages 8 & 9)

Volunteer Information Open House and Members' Picnic Sunday, August 21st at the DRM

Join us at our catered members' picnic and take a turn at being "engineer" on a vintage locomotive! Come early, before the picnic to learn more about volunteering opportunities at our Museum! Details are inside on Page 2.

Continued on page 2

New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members are welcome to attend the weekly meetings 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!

J. R. Mitchell	Danbury, CT
Tessa Friedman	Highland, NY
Edward Hamlin	Danbury, CT
Deborah A. Pannozzo	Bethel, CT
Mark Pawliczko	Carmel, NY
Julia Starkweather	Sandy Hook, CT
Randall T. Heath	Southington, CT
Brain T. Colucci	Wappingers Falls, NY
Robert Andriola	Putnam Valley, NY
Karen Aranjó	Norwalk, CT
Manu Bammi	New York, NY
Deborah & Joshua Cappell	Riverdale, NY
Tabitha Carter	Fairfield, CT
Arthur Holly	New York, NY
Anne Marie Kennedy	Ridgefield, CT
John Latte	Newtown, CT
William Kelchner	Newtown, CT
Mr. Hirsh	Redding, CT
Rich & Kathy DeAngelis	Southbury, CT
Andrew Ruffler	New Fairfield, CT
Shari Gleissner	New Milford, CT
Robert T. Cuneo	Ridgefield, CT
David Pogrfbin	New York, NY
Errol & Shari Cushme	Carmel, NY
Alan Baker	Danbury, CT

Volunteer Information Open House, Continued from page 1

Our picnic is always an enjoyable social occasion accompanied by delicious food. Under the guidance of one of our engineers, many of our members operate a locomotive in the yard. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$9 for children 6-12, with those under 5 years old free. In order to plan for food and seating, we encourage signing up in advance by giving a \$2 discount off each ticket purchased by Wednesday August 17th. You may buy the tickets at the Front Desk, or call 203-778-8337 with a credit card, then pick tickets up the day of the picnic.

Prior to the picnic, we have arranged for project and area managers to be available to explain the various opportunities for volunteering at the Danbury Railway Museum. This Volunteer Information Open House will be between 2 and 4pm at the Museum. There are such diverse ways to be involved in our operations and growth that we think there is a niche for everyone! We hope you will join us.

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Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The purpose of this column was to share with readers what was happening at the DRM as the Museum was getting started. The best source has been our newsletters from that time.

August 1995 did not have a newsletter, as was sometimes the case. Nevertheless, the summer of 1995 was a very busy time at the Museum. As I mentioned last month, Wednesday evenings were work sessions in the yard. A lot of work needed to be done to clean the yard in preparation for the September dedication of the restored station. There was trash and debris everywhere that needed to be picked up. Weeds were another big problem. Several members were out every week with push lawnmowers trying to stay ahead of them. Trackwork and tie replacement was being done, and the fence was erected to secure the property.

The Budd cars were in the yard, with members busy rubbing off the graffiti with Barkeeper's Friend. The former Reading coaches were having the "Housatonic" name removed, were being repainted, and lettered.

The summer of 1995 was hot. We put in many long days making do with what little money we had. If something was available to us at no cost, we were happy to have it. At least the spirit was there, and the grounds were in very good shape by September.



Donations

Donations earmarked for special projects (restricted funds) have been received from:

Susan Thomas, Ira Pollack, the Estate of Marian Fowler, Brandon Cooper, Kenn Williams, Gerry Lawlor

General donations have been received from: Kensiton Merrill, Anton Wilson, Thomas Wyness, The Growing Tree, Frank Thompson, L. Bruno, Sharon Fairman, Chris Locke, Daniel Bellizzi

Every donation received is sincerely appreciated, and put to use to further our mission.

DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

The column this month is an update on activity in the railyard. It's been a busy summer season with many different projects progressing simultaneously.

We have received the Pennsylvania Railroad RPO (railway post office) car which was graciously donated to us by the Housatonic Railroad this past



spring. We have plans for restoring this unique piece to its original splendor once funding and budgets have been secured. Bill Britt has come forward as project leader, and is in the process of formulating a plan for the car's eventual restoration. Our grant-writing committee has applied for money to fund this project. Once it is accessible to the public, the RPO will be a unique and informative display on the history of these cars and the people who operated them. Of course we need your help and support, both with volunteer hours and donations, to move this project forward.

We have begun work on the 1402(RS 11-DL 701) locomotive restoration. With the help, expertise



and guidance of Bob Pitcher, the short hood of the unit has been patched and repaired. The next step will be sanding down the finish to prep for priming and the eventual painting. Just as is the case with the RPO car, this is an extensive project requiring the ongoing efforts of a group of volunteers contributing their time to keep it moving toward completion.

By the time you have received this issue of the newsletter, our new sign with a representative map of the railyard will have been installed at the entrance to the yard. This sign, subsidized by the Meserve grant awarded to us this spring, is essentially a guide to our pieces of equipment and their location in the railyard. It is both colorful and informative. It gives our guests an overview of our collection, as well as the scale and size of that portion of the yard. Bob Pitcher created a handsome and sturdy stand for this 6' by 4' sign. I'm very pleased to see this long awaited addition to the yard and Museum.

We also have spent time adding and painting more of the attractions for our guests to see. Among



A newly rebuilt and painted speeder cart to be used as a resting spot by DRM guests.

other things, the CN caboose has been lettered, a Pennsylvania passenger truck painted and displayed, and many new signs explaining equipment put up.

All in all, we have been very busy this year, with volunteers contributing their time and talents throughout the week. As always, I thank all of the dedicated people who have helped our Museum grow.

I am looking forward to meeting you at our Members' Annual Picnic on August 21st. Prior to the 5pm picnic this year, we would like to show those interested in volunteering what we can offer as opportunities along those lines at our Museum. Area and project leaders will be on site between 2 and 4pm to explain what they do, what the opportunities are, and speak to your interest as a volunteer. Please visit the Museum, and see what we've accomplished!

What makes this acquisition especially exciting is that it this car is essentially intact, with pigeon holes, mail bag racks, and other parts necessary to its functioning as a rail post office car. We are enthusiastic about our plans for this car. It does need restoration, and will require that funds be raised through donations and grants in order to follow through with the restoration plan. Bill Britt is the project manager and putting together this plan and budget. Those interested in joining in the restoration of this unique part of railroad history should contact him at the Museum.



Justin Chapin used the Pfizer SW-8 locomotive to pull the RPO car down the track into the DRM railyard



The RPO car as it stands in the railyard today. On its exterior work is needed mainly on the roof and windows. Then with a coat of paint covering those cosmetic rust stains, it will be an even more impressive looking piece.

it to one of the railway mail clerks on the train. If the train does not stop at that station, the pouch is attached to a mail crane and is put aboard [on the fly as the train passes the crane]. Once inside the car, the seal is broken and the contents of the pouch are placed on a large sorting table. Around the table numerous open pouches are held in place by racks. Each pouch is labeled for a certain post office, distribution station or connecting train. On the walls of the car are large cases for over-sized mail and small cases with pigeon holes

Historic Significance of Railway Post Office Cars

By Steve Gould

In the early days, mail was handled by the Pony Express, stagecoach, canal boats, and steam ships. Mail moved slowly and delivery times were measured in weeks or months. The first known rail handling of the mail was on a train powered by the locomotive "West Point" at Charleston, SC in 1831. Seven years later, Congress declared that all railroads would be postal routes. It did not take long for the volume of mail via railroad to increase from the 1,500 route miles in 1838. In 1830, postal receipts totaled \$2.0 million and this grew to \$767.0 million by 1940. This information came from catskillarchive.com.

The following is quoted directly from the above article about how mail was sorted aboard such a car:

"After a letter or parcel is canceled at the local post office, it is placed in a mail pouch with other mail. The pouch is sealed, labeled for a certain train and taken to the railway station by a mail messenger or
4 some other authorized person, who delivers



View of one end of the interior of the car, showing one of the two sides lined with pigeon holes.

for first-class mail.

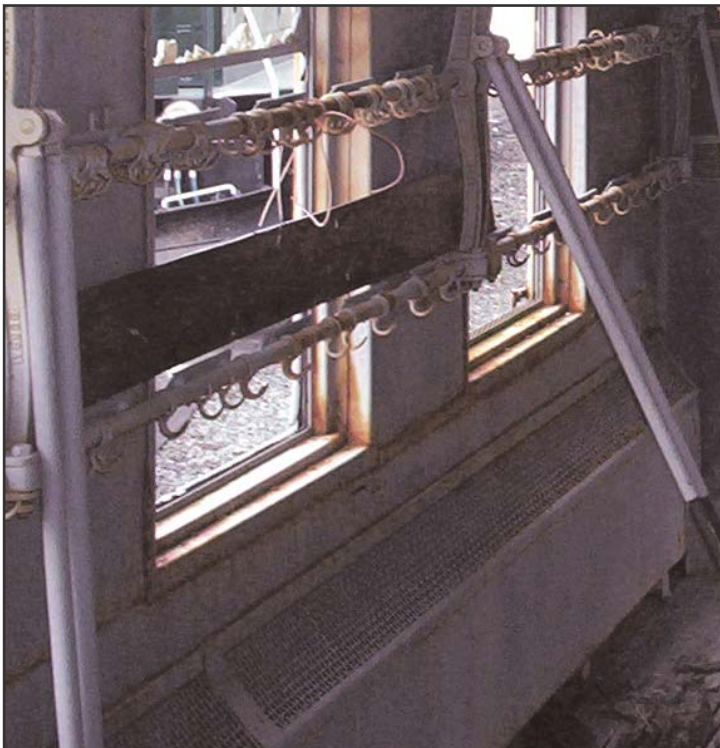
"When the train is speeding along, the mail clerks are busy sorting mail, making up pouches and performing other duties to assure the prompt and proper handling of the mails. Pouches are received and put off at nearly every station where there is a post office. Letters and postal cards are sorted and tied into bundles, each bundle bearing a slip showing the destina-

tion, the railway post office's stamp and the clerk's name. Packages and newspapers are placed in pouches, each of which is labeled for a particular post office or connecting train.



The other end of the interior showing larger high compartments. Near the windows, there are pull-down racks with hooks for hanging mail bags. Another set is in the center of the floor.

"Railway mail clerks develop remarkable speed and skill in the sorting and handling of mail. They know hundreds of railway mail routes. They memorize thousands of post offices and train connections, so it is not necessary for them to keep looking up such information in books or bulletins. Thus their memory helps them to do more work than would otherwise be possible."



A closeup of the pull-down racks with hooks for mail bags.

Our BM series Railway Post Office car still contains the sorting table, pouch racks, large mail cases and the small pigeon hole cases. The "on the fly" pouch pick up hardware is missing some parts that can easily be fabricated. This means that once the car is restored, guests will be able to see how mail was sorted and handled in the days when railroads were the major players in the mail handling business. It will demonstrate just another facet of railroad development.



Pre-DRM Rail Connection

By Steve Gould

The DRM's exhibit entitled "Changing Tracks" features the photography of DRM member Peter McLachlan. The photos on display are of Penn Central Railroad subjects and were taken by Peter from 1969 to 1976 while he was an engineer for that carrier.

Peter also worked as an engineer for the New Haven Railroad and handled many NH freights out of Maybrook Yard. Back in the late sixties and early seventies, while Peter was hogging hotshots, I was working for Standard Brands Inc. in New York City as Manager of Railway Equipment. Part of my job was to ensure our fleet of assigned box cars from various railroads was being utilized to the maximum. The cars were assigned to us free of charge for the purpose of a guaranteed line haul by the assigning railroad, and once empty at the consignee, were returned empty to the plant where they were based.

Our largest fleet of cars came from the Norfolk & Western and was assigned to the Planters Peanuts plant located in Suffolk, VA. These were used to ship finished peanut products to a number of distribution centers. One was located in Readville, MA, and here is where the connection enters. The route we used to ship cars to Readville was N&W(Hagerstown) WM-RDG-CNJ-L&HR(Maybrook)NH. This was considered the bridge route(literally, since it used the bridge across the Hudson at Poughkeepsie, NY) to Boston. So, while I was making sure the cars of Planters products were routed correctly to Readville, Peter was handling those same cars of Planters products in his trains! And, he also handled the empties routed back to Suffolk. And...therein lies the connection! It only took three decades for us to finally meet!

Volunteers in Action

A Sampling of Ways Our Volunteers Help Us Operate and Grow

The Danbury Railway Museum is an all-volunteer non-profit corporation. Our volunteers are enthusiastic, dedicated people who help meet the needs of our organization according to their interests and abilities. They wear one or many "hats" as they help us operate and grow. These photos show **just a few** of the volunteers and **just a few** of the ways they do this. Visit the Museum on any day, and you will see many more actively involved. Among the various areas available to volunteer are Gift Shop, Front Desk, Tour Guide, Train Crew, Equipment Restoration, Museum Property Maintenance, Safety, Grant Writing, Model Railroad Layouts, Exhibits, Display Equipment Enhancement, Publicity, Event Participation, Painting, Rolling Stock and Track Maintenance and Library.



Joe Ward is shown as conductor on our New Haven caboose during train rides in our yard. There is a training program for potential members of the train crew as brakeman, conductor, or engineer. Joe assists our Museum in a variety of ways, including inside the Museum building.



Bob Pitcher uses his welding and metal working skills to rebuild the points on a switch in the railyard. He also uses his expertise to restore equipment and create metal items needed by the Museum.



Patty Osmer, Gift Shop Manager, who is also our Treasurer, is at the register in the Gift Shop. Below, Vice President Bill Britt installs an informational sign for the NH gondola.



At left, Peter McLachan is a tour guide, along with Don Konen (in foreground) for a group of guests to the railyard, informing and entertaining them. Both these volunteers also assist the DRM in a variety of capacities.



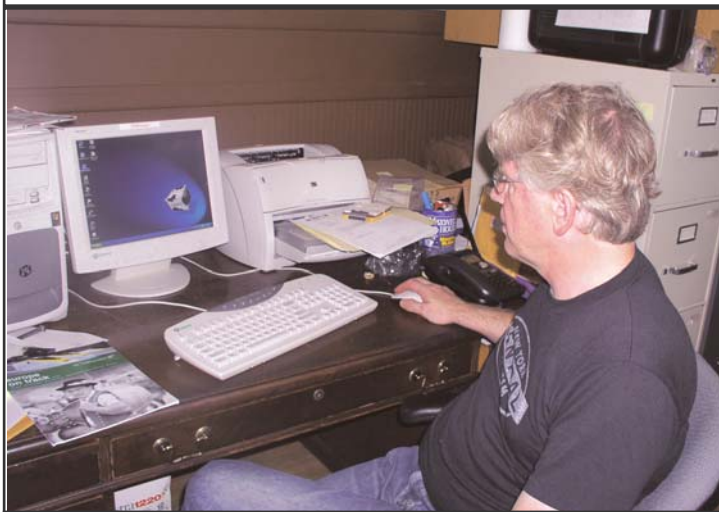
Jeff Van Wagenen and Marty Grossman lay the base for track on the HO scale layout. The Museum has several scales of model train layouts. Jeff also is part of the train crew for the 12" to 1' scale locomotives in the railyard.



Jeremy Rice, one of our engineers, is looking out the window while operating the RS1 New Haven locomotive.



Richard Shaboo extends a friendly greeting to visitors as he staffs the Front Desk within the Museum building. It is a primary position for staffing at the DRM.



Stan Madyda uses the computer to catalog donations and other materials at the Reference and Research Library in the Museum building. Stan also works on the NYC caboose, is Accessions Manager, and contributes to the newsletter.



John Ivansco uses a heat gun to enable the painted-over Penn Central letters to be scraped off. In addition to helping with this restoration, he has helped in the yard in a number of ways.



Dave Roberts regularly helps maintain the appearance of the grounds at the Museum as one of the many ways he contributes. He has participated in the railyard, and inside at the Front Desk and Gift Shop as well.



Some of our volunteers do not have to help on a regular basis, but come to assist when we need extra staff for our special events, such as the annual Easter Bunny, Santa, and Pumpkin Patch Trains.

The jeep attraction augmented our regularly scheduled weekend activities: rides on our train composed of a vintage passenger car, caboose, and locomotive; the birthday parties; tours; and Museum building attractions. We arranged to have refreshments available for the numerous visitors and exhibitors. G-gauge enthusiasts entertained guests with trains including steam engines. Glenn Miller fired up our vintage New Haven forge. Volunteers continued restoration work in the yard filled with jeep vehicles and visitors.

Doug Eddy and Tom Phillips are jeep lovers who put their time, money and enthusiasm into making this event happen. They, DRM guests and members were delighted by the stream of jeep vehicles that ended up filling available space in the railyard. At the event's conclusion, they awarded raffle prizes and impressive trophies for the variety of contest categories, such as "farthest distance traveled", "most original", "highest mileage", "muddiest", and "most original". Many of the jeep exhibitors and guests who came because of the jeeps, ended up being interested in and excited about our railroad museum. Those who came for the trains were delighted to find the extra attractions. We volunteers love the vibrant atmosphere of our Museum filled with people enjoying their day.



Above, after the bell has rung in the Museum, the passengers are led to the train. Below, it's getting crowded in here, as jeeps line the platforms.



At left, Peter McLachlan serves up hot dogs and hamburgers for hungry visitors. Below left, Glenn Miller spent the day seemingly not minding the heat of the forge added to the hot summer-day weather. He was happy to answer questions of onlookers. Below, one of the children treated to a coin activated ride in a jeep her own size.





Doug Eddy and Tom Phillips, jeep enthusiasts who made this day possible



Showing a few of the great variety of jeep vehicles registered at the event. Above, a CJ3B, fully restored; Below, a modified mud bogger; below that, a lineup of jeeps on the center platform; top right, vehicles, including a jeep tow truck; below that, Jim Beers M715 restored military vehicle; right, DRM member Jim Daly's jeep pickup; bottom right, a 1982 Laredo. The colorful display these vehicles make can be seen on our website, www.danbury.org/drm



Does Your Company Do It?

Does your company encourage community service, contribute to non-profit organizations, or have a matching gift program? Also, if an employee participates and documents the volunteer time, or makes a financial contribution, the company may help support that organization. Please check with your employer to see if such a program exists. These things add up to be a significant help to the DRM.

One company that encourages community service is the Bank of America. A group of five employees arrived at the DRM railyard on June 29th to help by scraping, sanding and painting the passenger car truck (wheel set) from a former theater car. It is a



From left to right, Al Radke, Georgette Dewan, Debbie Bobbins, Peter Osbourne, and Gus Montoya prepare the truck for painting.

display item recently moved to one of our platforms, and provides a comparison in size with another truck nearby. As the pictures show, their efforts made a big difference in how this item looks, protected it from deterioration, and enhanced the overall appearance of the whole platform area. The participants expressed satisfaction with the results and difference they had made. A couple of the volunteers this year had painted the much-admired CN caboose bright red last year. We appreciate the contribution of everyone's efforts and that of the Bank of America!



They're almost finished with the paint job. A piece like this has seemingly endless nooks and crannies. To see the bright blue-green difference go to the DRM web page, www.danbury.org/drm

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Update on the RS11 #1402 Locomotive

Thanks to the hard work by members of our Grants Committee, the DRM received a grant of \$1500 from the National Railway Historical Society last year for restoration work on this locomotive. As is the case with most grants, there are stipulations requiring documentation of progress on the restoration, volunteer hours and expenses, as well as publicity. Often there is a time limit on use of the grant money for the purposes outlined in the grant proposal. Recently the Grant Committee submitted the required progress report. This particular grant is a matching funds grant, which will be matched by funds from the #1402 restricted fund.



This means that we are facing not only a weather-related time limit this year, but a grant stipulated time limit on restoration work on this ex-New Haven locomotive. **We need a project manager** for this engine, which has a special appeal to many members. The responsibilities of a project manager are similar no what the project is, and are as follows:

- 1) Coordinate and supervise the work (in this case, the cosmetic restoration)
- 2) Schedule crews to do the work (i.e., metalwork, sanding, cleanup, eventual painting and lettering)
- 3) Generate a budget, keep a record of expenses, and volunteer hours expended. Update the budget on a 6-month or yearly basis
- 4) Report to the Board of Directors on progress (doesn't have to be every month)

Anyone interested in assuming this position, please contact DRM President Ira Pollack (203-744-0801) or e-mail him (ira.pollack@juno.com).

Work has been proceeding on the #1402, and there are members who have been devoting time and skills to restoring it. There already has been much progress made. We need someone to coordinate the effort and assume the responsibilities listed above.

Plans for the ACMUs

By Stan Madyda

By the time you read this, we hope the ACMU (air conditioned multiple unit) cars graciously donated to the DRM by Metro-North will be in the Museum yard.

Once we have the cars, what will be the next step? Below is the outline that I presented to Metro-North in the original proposal:



Grand Central Terminal, MNacmu1171,1169B, Track 114

- 1) Restoring the cars to "as delivered" New York Central livery
- 2) Create a photographic history of the cars in service with various railroads that owned them
- 3) Create a map showing the various stations and lines that the cars serviced
- 4) A recent Meserve grant received by the DRM will allow us to create interactive displays. It is possible that there is film footage of these cars in service that can be incorporated into a display



ACMUs Scarborough, NY, August 1, 1998; 1119, 1123, 1154, 1171, 1179; Are any of these among the two destined for the DRM railyard?

- 5) Interview engineers, conductors, and shop personnel that have worked on the equipment
- 6) Possibly use the cars for our weekend train rides within the confines of our property.

This is an ambitious project but one that I feel we can accomplish. Since the cars were recently in service with Metro-North they will be in very decent shape. What will need to be done is raise some funds

to accomplish the above goals, and find the manpower to complete all of the tasks. I have already received some information on the painting process and lettering, thanks to some members of the Rochester and Genesee Railroad Museum. Ideally, I'd like to paint the cars with a paint that will hold up in sunlight.

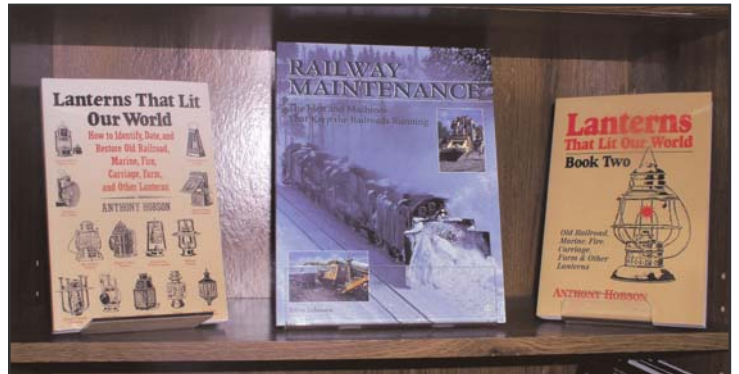
If any members have any material they would like to share on the ACMUs or would like to become involved in the project, please leave a note for me in the Library mail box at the Museum, or call me at home, 203-746-0804.

Gift shop News

By Patty Osmer

These new books were ordered in limited quantity, so stop in early to get your copy!

CIVIL WAR RAILROADS by George Abdill is now back in print. It contains more than 220 black-and-white photographs, and is the essential pictorial guide for all those interested in the role of the Iron Horse in the American Civil War. Member price is \$40.90.



For the railroad lantern collector, **LANTERNS THAT LIT OUR WORLD** is a "must" book for anyone who collects, or is just interested in lanterns or lighting implements. Both Volume 1 and 2 are both available to members for \$14.36 each. These books contain excellent advice for collectors in locating, identifying and pricing, as well as repair, restoration and care of lanterns.

RAILWAY MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT by Brian Solomon examines the different kinds of specialized machinery that railroads use to maintain and mend tracks and other property. It also explains how the equipment was developed over the years and how it works. Photographs illustrate the entire machine in action, while detail shots depict the business end of each going through its paces. This one-of-a-kind title is a perfect identification guide and history for railfans, and is an ideal illustrated reference for modelers. Member price is \$22.45.



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MUSEUM CALENDAR

Aug 10 (7:45pm)	Cass Scenic - Steve Gould
Aug 17 (7:45pm)	Maybrook Line - Roger Liller
Aug 18 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting (Open to Members)
Aug 21 (2-4pm) (5:00pm)	Volunteer Information Open House Members' Picnic
Aug 24 (7:45pm)	Historic Slides - Peter McLachlan
Aug 31 (7:45pm)	New Haven Railroad - Bob Gambling
Sept 7 (7:45pm)	His Collection Slides - Ed Blackman

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



Contact Information

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Change of Address

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