

The Railyard Local

Volume 3, Issue 12

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

December 2004

Pumpkin Patch Trains Event A Huge Success

This first DRM Pumpkin Patch Trains event was held October 16th, 17th, 23rd, 24th, 30th, and 31st. The new event, designed to replace our Haunted Railyard,



The Pumpkin Patch Train arrives on Track 42 at the DRM Pumpkin Patch with a load of visitors eager to pick out their pumpkin.

was a huge success. During the six days of operation the DRM hosted 1,486 paying visitors.

Guests boarded our Railyard Local train on track 18 of the railyard. The train proceeded to the



Even our conductor, Peter King, gets a pumpkin.

turntable, where visitors were spun around on the only operating turntable in Connecticut. Guests were then taken up track 42 where they detrained and visited the DRM pumpkin patch. Each visitor picked out a pumpkin, and had an apple and some cider for a snack. The train of happy guests then returned to track 18, where visitors could take a walking tour of the railyard.

The success of this event is illustrative of the great things our volunteer staff can accomplish. Our

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Gift Shop and Membership Updates

CN Caboose Painted

During the month of October, volunteers from the Bank of America visited the DRM to assist in painting one of our most popular exhibits - the Canadian National Caboose. It was built in 1973 and is



The CN Caboose being painted during October.

a great example of a very modern and spacious caboose, complete with a full kitchen, table, two desks, and a large bathroom.

Special thanks to Ed Blackman for donating the paint to make this caboose look brand new. The

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Now Accepting Nominations

The 2005 Nominating Committee is now accepting resumes for Board of Directors and Officer candidates. If you are interested in running or nominating someone, please email the nominating committee at newsletter@danburyrail.org or call 203.778.8337 for more information. All resumes must be received by January 13th, 2005. Any member who has abilities and experience that would allow them to lead our Museum at the highest level should consider running.

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!

Philip & Colleen Hayes	Monroe, CT
Robin Howell	Danbury, CT
Tommy Lepre	Danbury, CT
Tammy Payuk	Brookfield, CT
John Ambler	Wilton, CT
Rachel Ames	Bethel, CT
Denise T. Horree	Newtown, CT
Betty & Robinson Robles	Danbury, CT

Gift Shop News

If you didn't get what you wanted for the holidays, then the Gift Shop should be your first stop! We have all the Wooden Thomas the Tank cars in stock, as well as a number of other toys, puzzles, videos and games with a train theme.

For the adults, we have a number of new books



in stock, as well as some old favorites. Just arrived:

TRAINS OF THE OLD WEST by Brian Solomon. This book tells the story of famous trains that made history, and captures the grandeur and excitement of one of the most captivating periods in American History. Member price: \$22.46

NORTH AMERICAN RAILYARDS by Michael Rhodes. An illustrated guide and unique reference to more than 80 North American railyards. Member price: \$28.76

RAILWAY MASTERPIECES by Brian Solomon. Take a global tour of railroad "masterpieces", including Grand Central Terminal, Firth of Forth Bridge,

Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The December 1994 issue of "Danbury Rail News" reported that the initial feedback from the first ever Holiday Express was very positive. It also



appeared that the money made on the trip was above projections and future excursions were going to be considered.

The G-scale layout at the Galleria on Main Street was also well received by the public. It opened on November 25th thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers and the generosity of

Union Savings Bank. That night, the tree lighting ceremony took place at the Library and immediately following was the march down Main Street with Mayor Eriquez to the Galleria. There, children could have "their photos taken with Santa, in the person of a jolly officer of the DRM well cast for the role." The gift shop also did well at the Galleria selling shirts, hats, and the DRM commemorative box car.

A brief update was given on the station and the yard. On December 9th, 1994, the station restoration contract was awarded and the newsletter reported optimistically that the station would be ready for the DRM by the middle of 1995. Regarding the yard, the DRM was still waiting for fencing to be erected.

The Amherst Railroad Society train show was advertised. The DRM's gift shop and G-scale layout was to be present.

The newsletter also mentioned that volunteers were needed for the Research Library that was to be formed. Gerry Herrmann and I were the first to sign up. A future issue will have more on the start of the Library.

On the historical side, a lengthy article was included on the loop track in Danbury. Next month, we'll take a look at that article.

DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

In this month's newsletter I would like to once again review some of the important events and projects that we've accomplished over the last four months. I've taken these excerpts from the Wednesday night meeting reports.

August 2004

1. DaMour's Construction finished track work that was needed as a result of MetroNorth derailment.
2. RR signals donated by Chris Locke.
3. By-Laws revisions to be mailed to membership.
4. Freight truck painted in yard. Frogs painted.
5. Descriptive signage posted in railyard.
6. DRM Member's Picnic.

September 2004

1. Tour Bus brought 50 people to the DRM.
2. *Changing Tracks* photo exhibit opens.
3. Taste of Danbury event - We will have a table at the green with a speeder on display.
4. Use Fred Marinelli's speeder in Newtown Parade. Justin Chapin to tow speeder through parade.
5. MNRR fantrip arrives early from Beacon. 317 people tour DRM facility with great success.
6. Bob Pitcher welding frame for new forge.
7. Ed Holowinko painted side of NYC crane.
8. Begin stenciling NH boxcar. Carolyn Taylor learning how to letter equipment.
9. Caboose 19322 work continues. West end rebuilt.
10. Move containers for temporary work area.

October 2004

1. Work continues on NYC crane. Roof repainted.
2. Participate in city-wide tag sale to raise money for Military Museum.
3. New HO layout to be started, replacing the S gauge. Jeff Van Wagenen to be project leader.
4. Yard crew clears a track by moving wheelsets to make room for Santa's coach.
5. Fleet bank paints CN caboose for their Volunteer Day.
6. Yonkers Construction donates a yard office trailer. Justin hauls into the yard with his pickup.
7. Pumpkin Patch event was a great success.

November 2004

1. Script emblems done on both sides of NH boxcar. Lettering to continue as weather permits.



2. Looking at rail test truck donated by Dapco.
3. Crew worked on Santa's coach. Painted car body and tarred the roof. Made ready for Santa trains. Electricity working, new wiring added.
4. Heritage Bus tours came to Museum with 57 people.
5. Locomotives SW8 and RS1 drained for the winter.
6. Bob Pitcher and Bill Britt remove damage in roof of RS11 Locomotive with Portipower jacks.

These are but a few of the many happenings at the Museum. I don't have enough room to list everything or everyone who has helped move our organization forward this season. I must also add that this year has been extraordinary with an increase in admissions and a better financial stability at year's end. This is all due to the dedication and further commitments of our volunteers. Our extended train service and added tours have definitely made a considerable difference in sales and again, it is our volunteer effort that made this a positive change for the better.

By the time you read this we will be very much into the Holiday season so I'll take this opportunity now to wish you all well and thank you for all of the help and optimism that you've given to our Museum. I'm looking forward to an early spring and continuing the momentum that we've started.

Thanks for your help, dedication, and spirit, and may you and yours have a healthy New Year and Holiday Season.

A Day on Board Sperry #135

By Chris Locke

Morning comes early on a Sperry car. You are the new Assistant Operator (the Stooage) and the alarm wakes you up at 6:00 am. Your first job is to make coffee, a most important job on the car.

That finished, you go, half-dressed, to the Rear Engine Compartment. A quick check of the hydraulic reservoir shows you have 3,000 psi charged, enough to engage the Rear Starter Button. You pull the Low Oil



Pressure Shutdown Knob on the Engine Fuel Rack and press the Rear Starter Button. A surge of high pressure hydraulic fluid rushes to the Starter

Motor, and the Rear Engine comes to life. This engine needs to idle and warm up prior to operating the Rail Current Alternators and the Daytime 60 Cycle Alternator. You use this time to get fully dressed, brush your teeth, catch some news on TV, and maybe have some cereal.

Fifteen minutes have passed. It's time to rev up the Rear Engine. As you increase the RPM of the engine, you simultaneously pull the clutch lever to engage the pulley for the dual 4" wide belts. The engine struggles as it starts to spin up the generators, but soon the Throttle is locked in the 'Normal' position. With the generators making electricity, you throw the Transfer Switch to use the Rear Engine and disconnect the Night Engine.

You go to the Driver's Compartment, make sure the Throttle is down, the Reverser is in Neutral, check the oil, and start the Traction Engine. The car usually shakes as the 275hp diesel lights off, but this doesn't bother the sleeping Operator or the Chief. A quick trip into the Front Engine

Compartment, and you have

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the Night Engine shut down.

The crew awakes while you are making your way to the Test Compartment to start the electronics and warm up the "Green Box." This cabinet contains the electronics used to test the rails.



You also turn on the Paint Pot Motor, which starts mixing the paint. Pigment that has settled during the night can clog up a bolt-hole type paintgun. That gun is the first one in the line and centered in the test truck (set of wheels). Being the first one and the most difficult to reach, it is rather inconvenient if it clogs up because you have to crawl under the Test

Carriage to change it. You definitely ensue the Paint Pot Motor is on.

The representative from the railroad whose track we're testing usually shows up about now. The Chief is on his third cup of coffee, and it's not 7:00 am. The RR man, usually a Roadmaster or someone from the Track Department, boards the car. He tells the Driver the route to the rail test site, say Milepost 342, and you know you can use the time to the site to catch up on maintenance you didn't finish last night. You check the Rail Current Brushes to make sure they're not worn, top off the Paint Pot, then make sure there's no water in the air system by opening the valve on the bottom of the tanks. A clean hiss will show you that it's dry. On your way back around the car, you remove the lock and the "Occupied Camp Car" sign from the track. You remove the Sperry Lock from the switch stand and leave the railroad lock in place.

The Chief yells out the Recording Room door, "Let's go to work." You climb on the rear of the car there, and as you go forward to your station in the Driver's Compartment, you check each Collision Alarm. Six rings of the bell tells everyone you did your job properly.



You sit down in the Driver's position and see in the mirror that the RR Pilot is removing the lock from the siding switch and aligning it for the main. With three Beeps, the intercom tells you it's time to back out of the siding, and that signal also means that the Operator is seated at the Recording Table looking out the rear window. Thus the car is protected for the backwards move. You release the Handbrake, release the Airbrakes, pull the Reverser back, crack the Throttle, and the Caterpillar 3406 engine rumbles to life. The Traction Control Panel clicks and clacks, and you feel the car ease out of it's nighttime tie-up position. It rocks and sways down the junky old siding as the rail creaks and settles under the 35 tons of Sperry car.

You enter the main line, and you hear a Beep at the same time the Pilot gives the hand signal for Stop. The Beep means the Operator was watching out his window too. You close the Throttle, put about 10 lbs of air on the brakes, and as the car stops, place the Reverser back into Neutral. The switch is thrown for the main, the lock is replaced, and the Pilot climbs into the Driver's Compartment with you saying, "Track is ours 'til 10:30, you're clear to Milepost 342." You press your intercom button twice, and the Operator hears two Beeps. He acknowledges with two Beeps signal, and you know you're OK to run to the test site.

You have 20 miles to go, and you push the Reverser forward, release the brakes, and pull the Throttle wide open. The car lunges forward, and you realize the Speedometer needle is pinned backwards. A few quick shots of the intercom alerts the Operator that something is up. You soon see the needle swing to full scale, about 15 miles per hour as the Operator puts his Speedometer Switch to Forward, then the needle backs down as the Traction Control Panel clicks and clacks some more, as circuitry reduces the current in the field winding circuit of the traction generator, reducing the back EMF (you were reading your Operators Manual last night, and you learned about the Traction Generator and its controls), and you feel the car surge forward again as you are now running light. At 50 miles per hour you hear, "Beepbeepbeep, beepbeep," a shorthand method the operator uses to tell the Driver to maintain his speed. You open your window, hang out your arm, and all is right with the world.

Watching the Driver's Mileage Panel, you realize you're nearing Milepost 342. You apply some brakes to slow down. The Pilot squeezes behind you to go to the Test Compartment. As your speed steadily decreases, the Driver's Control Panel comes to life. The Speedometer changes to the LO speed scale again, and

you hear the intercom give one Beep meaning "Stop the car." As the car comes to rest, indicator lights come on showing that the Test Carriage is down, as are both Brush Clusters. The morning calibration of the test equipment is in progress. You watch in the mirror as the Operator checks all the equipment, and then he



signals you to pull forward. After about five feet, he signals Stop -- the test equipment hadn't fully expanded to the 4' 8.5" wide gauge. The Operator climbs aboard, and soon you hear the familiar two Beeps. Time to test some rail.

Even from up front you can hear the Rear Engine grunt as the Rail Current Generators are loaded up and 3600 amps of DC electricity are pushed into each rail. The Speed Telegraph quickly swings to 13, and you pull the Throttle back to get the car to 13 miles per hour as rapidly as possible. When the rate stabilizes, the Telegraph turns off, and you know you're on good steel. Bad rail can't be tested very quickly.

Stay Tuned... The second half of this article will appear in January's issue of *The Railyard Local*.

What's Happening at the DRM

There's always a lot happening at the DRM. Take a look at what's going on and come on in and lend a hand!

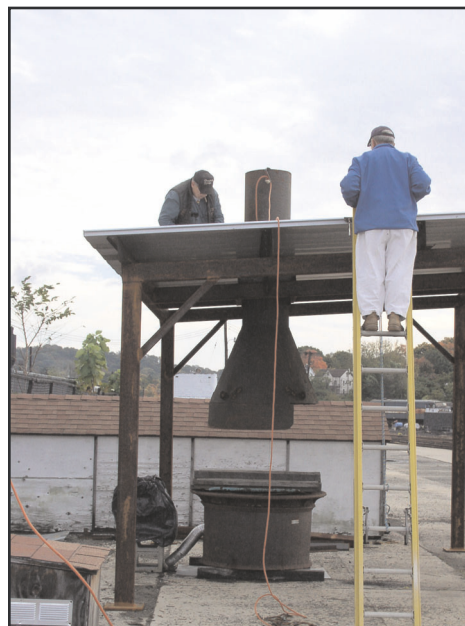
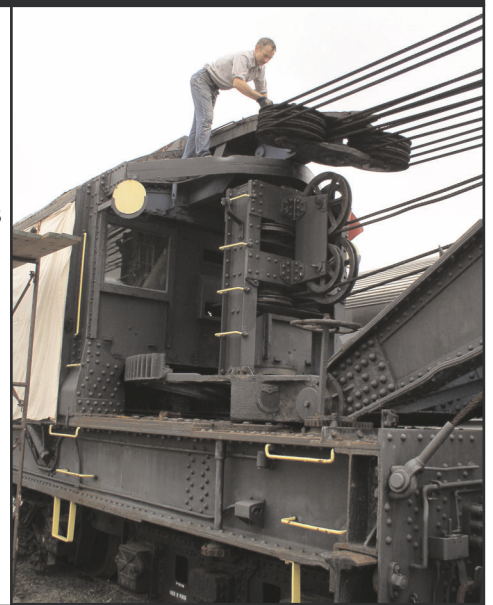


One of the regular end-of-the-year tasks is draining our RS1 locomotive. The RS1, built by the American Locomotive Company in 1948, cannot use anti-freeze. Therefore, it must be drained before the first freeze. Late after the last Pumpkin Patch Trains run on October 31st, our mechanical staff began the process of preparing for winter.



Coach #2014, our Santa Coach, was in desperate need of a new coat of paint before its yearly debut for the Santa's Special Train Rides event. Matt Landau (left) painted the coach, while Dave Roberts tarred the roof.

Ed Holowinko painted the GCT-1 double-ended crane with a gloss black. Now the crane looks as good as the NYC green flat car in front of it. Both pieces are on exhibit on our center platform.



Update on the Forge Exhibit - Bob Pitcher and Bill Britt have been hard at work. There is now a roof on the forge housing, and the smoke stack has been given a cap and a nice coat of black paint. Soon this exhibit will be in full operation.



Ira Pollack (left), Ed Holowinko, Dave Roberts, and Carolyn Taylor continue work on Coach #2014. The coach, with its new black roof and green sides welcomes our visitors to see Santa.

Thomas Table Takes a Bath

One of our most popular exhibits for the kids is the "Thomas Table." The wooden layout features a turntable, roundhouse, and engine shop. Kids visit the DRM year round just to play on this table. It has become a staple to the DRM exhibit hall. Recently



members Kyle & Christie Kayler gave the table a serious cleaning and did some necessary repair work. The table is now back in commission. Thanks Kyle & Christie!



Court TV Visits DRM

On October 29th, Court TV visited the DRM to recreate a scene that had happened here more than thirty years ago. A man who purchased a train ticket at the Danbury Station proceeded to commit a robbery. Our own Ed Blackman was the ticket-agent who sold the man his ticket. Present for the recreation were Ed Blackman (left), as well as former New Haven RR Engineer John Sullivan, and the detective who interviewed Ed after the robbery occurred.



Pumpkin Patch Trains, continued from page 1

goal was to have every visitor leave happy, and we think that goal was accomplished. Thanks to Sue



The Event was so successful that we needed to refill our supply each weekend.

Thomas for coordinating the event, as well as every volunteer who helped out.

CN Caboose, Continued from page 1

candy-apple red is a welcome addition to the railyard's



Volunteers from the Bank of America painted our 1973 Canadian National caboose in authentic CN red.

center platform, now full of restored pieces available for touring.

Gift Shop, continued from page 2

Shinkansen. Member price: \$35.96

METRO NORTH'S HUDSON LINE

Poughkeepsie to Oscawana by Thomas Panettiere. This Railroads Over Time book is the first of a series designed to explore each Metro North line. Member price: \$35.96

PICTORIAL HISTORY OF AMERICA'S RAILROADS by Mike Del Vecchio recounts, region by region, railroading's colorful past. A great book for anyone who wants a general history of railroading! Member price: \$22.46

DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

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MUSEUM CALENDAR

Dec. 29 (7:45pm)	Historic Photographs - Bob Gambling
Jan. 5 (7:45pm)	Steam in the Snow - J.W. Swanberg
Jan. 12 (7:45pm)	Railroad Slides - Ron Smith
Jan. 19 (7:45pm)	Historic Photos - Peter McLachlan
Jan. 20 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting (Open to Members)
Jan. 26 (7:45pm)	Railroad Vacations - Ed Blackman

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



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