

# The Railyard Local

Volume 6, Issue 7

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

July 2007

## NYC/HRR Wooden Caboose

2007 Restoration update on #19322

By Gerry Herrmann, Project Leader

This year started with the fabrication of three windows for the long side of the caboose, where the siding was replaced in 2006. The lumber was prepared in the Museum yard, then Franz Gerencir and I built



*Continued on Page 2*

## The Yard Inside

By Wade W. Roesé

**Layout Status:**

**G Gauge:**

"As soon as the weather is favorable!" Well, the weather turned favorable and as you read this issue The Little Engine That Could will have come and gone. In anticipation of the little blue engine being in Danbury, we made a concentrated effort to rebuild the



outdoor G gauge as an active attraction for the kids. Thanks to Ira, Bill, Fred, Dave, Carolyn, Sue, Jim, Ed, J.R., Bob, yours truly and others, we built an 18x60 ft.x 3 ties high sand/dirt fill enclosure. After leveling, grading, and smoothing, track was set, forming two

*Continued on Page 2*

## In This Issue

~DRM Express Track - page 3

~Ten Years Ago - page 4

~Progress on the #1455 - page 5

plus . . .

RPO News & Notes and Gift shop News

## DRM Delights Event Guests

Great attractions, weather & volunteers

Once again our Museum and its volunteers combined to hold a large event that succeeded in pleasing our visitors. We had very positive comments from guests to the event. Volunteers showed up to help before and during the two weekends of the event in order to make this happen. It is clear that as an organization we can successfully hold an event of this magnitude.



June 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and July 1<sup>st</sup> marked the second year that the DRM held the *Little Engine That Could* event. There was advertising in print and on radio, and coverage on television. The weather was perfect. Our volunteers showed up in force to staff the event. Most visitors found frequent opportunities to take photos. Attractions included the train rides featuring the full-size replica of the Little Engine, story reading, turntable rides, food concession, operating new G gauge layout, NH forge demonstration, hit-or-miss engines, choo-choo train inflatable, tour guides, animal characters, "tattooing" and face painting, two gift shops, front desk reception, videos and building displays, interior model layout attractions, and railyard display equipment. All these went smoothly, and resulted in guests enjoying their experience at our event. The final attendance and financial results have not been tabulated yet, but it is clear that both were

*Continued on Page 6*

# 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!

John M. Gabriel	Poughkeepsie, NY
Richard Stirlen	New Fairfield, CT
Kevin Schilling	Brookfield, CT
Jane W. Diono	Redding, CT
Richard Mark Miano	Washington, DC
George Nikiforidis	Norwalk, CT
Jeff Perlmutter	New Fairfield, CT
Nicole Taylor	Bethel, CT
Renee Locke	Newburgh, NY
Cristina Moreno	Danbury, CT
Dana Totir	Danbury, CT

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## NYC/HRR Wooden Caboose

*Continued from Page 1*

the window sashes in my heated garage during three work days over the winter. In April, Stan Madyda and I trimmed the windows to fit the frames. The windows were primed and the glass installed. The first coat of boxcar brown paint was applied on the completed windows. John Fegley, Franz Gerencir and I installed the windows into the frames. Because the tarp protecting that long side of the caboose over the winter had worn off some of the first coat of primer, the following week John Fegley, Franz, and I applied a second coat of primer. Visitors to the Museum will see that all four sides of the caboose are completed. The long side that we have been working on still needs the finish coat of boxcar brown paint as well as the herald and numbers, which will be stenciled.

Future plans include renovation of the cupola and the application of a new roof. Additional information will be forthcoming in a future issue of *The Railyard Local*.

Volunteers for the year-to-date are: John Fegley, Franz Gerencir, Gerry Herrmann, Pete McLachlan, and Stan Madyda.

The DRM would appreciate donations mailed to the Museum and a notation made on the check that it is for the restoration of this historic caboose. Tax-deductible contributions should be sent to: Danbury Railway Museum, NYC/HRR #19322 Project, 120 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810. A plaque to honor and thank donors will be permanently affixed in the caboose upon completion of the restoration.

**2**

# The Yard Inside

*Continued from Page 1*



independent loops and one 60 ft. long point-to-point stretch. Plastic plants and buildings from various collections were added, and all of a sudden we have the start of a first-class attraction that is already a kid "katcher". Thanks to everyone that helped and supported this operation (five weeks). **WOW!**



### O Gauge:

We have finally begun construction on a new, more detailed O gauge layout with multi-tracks and multi-levels, new accessories and better reliability. Please think about joining our Tuesday work crew to assist with this or any of our display projects.

### HO Gauge:

Home stretch! Cosmetic work (landscaping, buildings, and other visual appurtenances) on the layout are complete. Electronic control and operation has been going through final testing. Three of the five operational tracks are!

### N Gauge:

The N gauge needs volunteers to build some buildings. We (Marty) have rebuilt the timing circuits on the layout to function similarly to the other layouts.

Please consider participating in the building or operation of any of our models and/or display projects.

# DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

This month I would like first to applaud and congratulate our members who volunteered to help at "The Little Engine That Could" event held last month. They are the core and heart of our Museum. These are the people who made the commitment without knowing what the weather or visitor attendance would be, and came out and supported the DRM. They were here working very hard in many ways such as prepping for the event, setting up tents, running the food concession, selling tickets, and operating our trains. These are the people who made it at all possible. Once again it's our volunteers that make our Museum what



it is today. Of course, it is our goal to make a profit on our events, but it is the spirit of our volunteers that truly gains my respect, and the public's, also. I've been receiving many compliments on the positive attitudes and exceptional friendliness of our staff. Our volunteers go out of their way to make people feel at home in either the yard or building. This has been one of my goals all along: communication with our guests; emphasizing what we have to offer to the public, and looking at how we can share our experiences with our guests. Thank you again!

As a result of the Little Engine event, much work was accomplished in the railyard getting ready for it. We were able to assemble and upgrade our G gauge layout, turning it into another attraction for our guests, not only for that event but for the future. We have found, not surprisingly, that many of our guests were able to relate to the smaller trains before they boarded the full size ones.

I have always stated that we must have and support diversity at the Museum, and show the public the variety of interests and educational tools that we can present to them. There are many more



possibilities. Displays and exhibits can be used to this end. They can be simple things requiring little or no financial expenditure, which can teach and educate a guest. An example is the brake wheel at the entrance to the yard. Simple enough, but look at how many people walk over to turn it. I am always open to ideas that you may have to expand upon our exhibits, and the more interactive the better.

Our mechanical department has been very busy making our motive power ready to use for the Little Engine event. They have spent many hours working on the SW8 and backup 44 tonner for flawless operation in our yard. They also have improved access to the #1455 steam engine's cab and tender by building a new staircase, jacking up the front end of the tender, and

installing a newly fabricated apron plate. We will be celebrating this unique piece's



100th birthday and heritage on Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> as part of a special event at the Museum.

As you know, we have many restoration projects going on at the Museum. If you have any interest in doing this kind of work, please contact me, and I will get you in touch with the project leader.

Now that the Little Engine event has passed, work will commence again on Saturdays on the #34 Track restoration. What remains now is final tamping and compression of the roadbed.

As you can see there is a lot going on at the Museum. There is progress everywhere you look, but from what I have seen, there is also a spirit that is going along with the work. Become part of it!

## Membership Open Forum

We are pleased that many of our members attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Membership Open Forum on Wednesday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, and took advantage of this opportunity to express their the ideas and opinions. This kind of communication is vital to our organization. Attendees also were updated on recent activities and plans for the DRM by President Ira Pollack and members of the Board of Directors. Light refreshments were available. Please join us on Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm for the next in this Membership Open Forum series.

# Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The July 1997 issue of the "Danbury Rail News" was one of the larger ones to date with six pages of information and two inserts.

At long last on June 4th, the Pennsylvania Railroad Caboose that was in Yorktown Heights arrived in the yard. The caboose, PRR # 477099, was donated to Yorktown Heights in 1977 but was never fully restored and had been vandalized. The Town of Yorktown Heights approached Ira Pollack about donating it to the DRM. When agreement was reached, several members became involved in preparing the caboose for the move. However, there were delays in arranging the move. Finally Ira took over the lead on the project and had it moved with the help of Mariano Brothers of Bethel who provided the crane, Matt Pfahl who donated the use of his 1955 Mack B61 truck and trailer to transport the caboose, and John Pasquance who moved the trucks. Many members of the DRM were on hand to help and to take pictures.

Also arriving in the yard was the "New York Central" 4096. This engine which is privately owned by Ed Bowers never was a New York Central engine. It



was painted and lettered in that scheme when it was at the Valley Railroad in Essex. Geoff Knees was in charge of the move and on June 26th the engine arrived in Danbury on the Providence and Worcester stone train. The plan was to make it a walk through exhibit and it remains that way today.

The Museum was also in negotiations with Dr. G. Peter Beardsley about moving his privately owned observation car, the Tonawanda Valley from Essex to Danbury. The car was built in 1928 and served on the New York Central 20th Century Limited until 1938 when new streamlined equipment was put into service. An arrangement was being discussed that would give the DRM majority ownership of the car once it was moved to Danbury and as restoration work was completed.

4

John Christy accepted the job as project manager to restore and paint the Pennsylvania Railroad box car #112432. (Editors Note: This was accomplished also with the help of other volunteers, including the lettering done by Ira Pollack.)



With all of the new equipment in the yard and on the way, Dan Foley was appointed Accession Manager. This position had been filled by Geoff Knees with the help several DRM members.

The Museum also purchased its backhoe with Tom Morris in charge of getting it ready for use.

A special thank you was given to Terri Stramiello who resigned from the Board of Directors in order to devote more time to her family and career. From the Museum's inception, Terri was involved with many day to day tasks necessary to get the Museum off the ground. She brought needed museum experience to the DRM and was our principal contact with City Hall. Today she is a Board Member Emeritus.

In the first "Volunteer Views" column, Dave Lowry was featured. The article told of Dave's interest in trains, what he does at the Museum and of his career at Sikorsky. Dave has maintained his Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday volunteer days for the past ten years.

The Ladies Tea was held on June 29th with 20 women attending. Rhoda Guider organized the event with the help of Marie Salata, Mickey Silberbauer and Sue Thomas. The purpose of the event was to get more women involved with the Museum.

Births also were taking place in the Yard. A mother duck and her young had made a nest under the John Flower coach. The coach was not moved until the ducks had left. Also a litter of kittens was found but no mother. The Blackmans took the kittens in and found homes for them.

One of the two inserts advertised the 1st Annual Members Day to be held in August. The other insert was from Board Chairman Bill Guider announcing member question and answer nights where board members and project leaders would be in attendance.

# Progress on the #1455

By Carolyn Taylor, Project Leader

During these past few weeks there have been some very noticable improvements to the 2-6-0 Boston & Maine Mogul. First of all, a new staircase has been fabricated especially for this historic artifact. It provides safer, easier access to the locomotive and tender, and is much more congruent in appearance with them. Bob Pitcher, who is im mensely talented in creating and working with metal, made this to measure, and fashioned it mostly from metal scraps already on hand. The work involved days worth of time and



effort on his part. Justin Chapin, Randy Natale, and Bob Pitcher worked together to jack up the front end of the tender by a few inches,

replaced the coil springs with heavier ones, and shimmed it. The fabrication of a hinged apron plate to bridge between the cab and tender, along with the higher level of the tender, means that that juncture is



now relatively smooth. There is a temporary bridge piece from the stairs to the cab, thanks to Ira Pollack, until the permanent one can be completed. Now the transition from the stair landing to the cab is at the same level. A coat of durable black paint to the stairs, apron plate, tender floor, and parts of the cab interior by yours truly added to an improved appearance. The stair treads will be primed and painted. All these efforts have made a significant difference. It also has been heartening to me that there are others who care enough about this locomotive and tender to give so much of their time and expertise, and be willing to share their knowledge. Thank you all!

We will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the #1455 Boston & Maine as a prominent part of the Danbury Railroad Days on Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup>. The event is in the planning stages at the moment. It will be a joyous occasion, and we hope you will join us. Of 135 of these Class B-15 locomotives originally built, this is the only one remaining.

Originally I had hoped to have this equipment powerwashed and somewhat cosmetically restored before the August 11<sup>th</sup> event. However, it looks as though the powerwashing will not happen before that time. Therefore some cosmetic restoration will be done in the interim. There also are pressing issues with the windows in the cab that need to be addressed. After the event we will continue with restoration and stabilization of its condition. This will be done in a way so as not to damage this artifact, and preserve the possibility that maybe sometime in the future it can be restored to operating condition. The goals of lubricating what needs to be lubricated, replacing the brake reservoirs, cosmetic restoration, and replacing the main rods still remain. Those of you who have expressed a willingness to help can expect a call soon! There is plenty to keep us busy for years to come!



## Gift Shop News

By Patty Osmer

### TRAIN SLIDES WANTED!

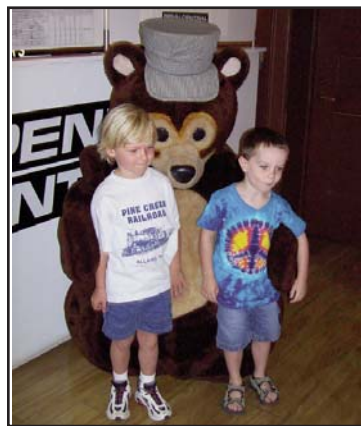
The Gift Shop has an outlet for selling slides! The railfan is looking for older slides of trains in movement, not stationary vintage trains at a Museum. He will pay your asking price. If you have older slides, perhaps duplicates, that you would like to donate, please let Patty Osmer know. Patty will send the slides to the contact, he will send back any unwanted slides, and a check for the ones he is interested in. All proceeds from the sale will go toward paying for the 44-tonner move to DRM, and you will get a tax deduction for your donation. All unsold slides will be returned to you. Professional photography is not required.

This is a good way to raise money for the DRM! Please package your slides by subject, and set an asking price. Patty will take care of the rest.

# DRM Delights Event Guests

*Continued from Page 1*

below our expectations despite all the positive points mentioned above. We think that this was due to factors beyond our control, and that we can be proud of what we were able to do as far as promoting and conducting this event. Thank you everyone who put in such great effort into planning and holding this event!



# RPO News & Notes

By Bill Britt, Project Coordinator

Since our last report we have continued working with the help of donations from Museum members and others. The interior painting is now completed with the exception of minor touching up that may be required. By the time you receive this newsletter, the table tops in front of the sorting boxes will have been completed.



Above, Art Slothower beams as he shows the progress in the RPO's newly painted interior. Below, a more detailed photo of the completed paper boxes with the handsomely stained box doors. See our website to appreciate the colors.



The next major project will be refinishing the floors. This will require rental of floor sanders and coating the floors with three to four coats of polyurethane. As you may think, this also will be expensive.

Another task will be the purchase of six 1 1/4" metal poles to use in the storage areas of the car.

**DID YOU KNOW ?** all of the postal clerks that worked the RPO were men with one exception: a Miss Dawson was a clerk that worked on a railway postal

car that ran between Kansas City and St. Louis.

Thank you for your interest in the car. We can see some "light at the end of the tunnel" with regard to completing the job.



The mail retrieval hook, which was used at stations when there was no scheduled stop, is displayed outside the door to the RPO car. It is a duplicate of one lent to us by Steamtown, and was created by Bob Pitcher.

## Alan Baker's Slides on Aug 1<sup>st</sup> Midwest between Chicago and Milwaukee

This 7:30pm Wednesday night program will mark Alan's first presentation at the DRM. It will feature photos from the late 1990's and early 2000's in that area of our country, which is where he lived until two years ago. He lived in Racine, Wisconsin, and grew up near the Chicago-North Shore-Milwaukee Road. Moving to Danbury, where he is Police Chief, has opened up another railroading world for him to explore, and he has a world from the Midwest to share with us.

Alan has been photographing trains for over 30 years. He is a past President of the Wisconsin Chapter of NRHS, and also of the Chicago-Northwestern Historical Society. About 20 years ago he and his brother wrote a railfan guide to Wisconsin. He collects train timetables and books. In following his passion of riding trains, he has traveled just about every Amtrak route that exists.

Just as we welcome Alan Baker, we also welcome you to join us at the Museum to this Wednesday night entertainment which is free and open to the public. We will be delighted if you can join us! The schedule for the forthcoming month is printed on the back page of each issue of *The Railyard Local*, and posted on our website.



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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

- |                 |                                                                    |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| July 18(7:30pm) | Video:Nevada Northern-Gary Gurske                                  |
| July 19(7:00pm) | Board Meeting (Open to Members)                                    |
| July 25(7:30pm) | New Haven and NYC - Stan Madyda                                    |
| Aug 1(7:30pm)   | Slides; 1990's - 2000's betw Chicago<br>and Milwaukee - Alan Baker |
| Aug 8(7:30pm)   | 1971 West;MetroNo. -Pete McLachlan                                 |
| Aug 15(7:30pm)  | Membership Open Forum w/DRM<br>President Ira Pollack & BOD         |

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



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