

# The Railyard Local

Volume 10, Issue 8

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

November 2011

## DRM on Santa's Itinerary

Stopping here three December weekends



Santa enjoys greeting Danbury Railway Museum guests so much that he will once again be here in his specially decorated railroad car accompanied by Mrs. Santa and elves. We hope you will join all of us with your holiday wish list in hand! Santa and his entourage will visit **Saturdays December 10 & 17 and Sundays December 4, 11 & 18. Trains will depart every 1/2 hour 12:00-3:30 on Saturdays; 12:30-3:30 on Sundays.** The railyard and Museum will be festively decorated for the holiday season. The \$9 admission for ages 2 & up (children under 2 years are admitted free) includes the train ride on vintage equipment within our railyard, a visit with Santa (who will give children a small gift), hot chocolate, temporary tattoos and children's activities, as well as the Museum's year-round displays of play tables, exhibits inside and out, operating layouts, and fully stocked Gift Shop.

Reservations are suggested for this very popular annual event. This may be accomplished by going to our website [www.danburyrail.org](http://www.danburyrail.org) or by calling the Museum during business hours at 203-778-8337. Parking will be available at the Patriot Garage on Patriot Drive.

If you will be able to assist in any way on any day with the Santa Express this year, please contact Sue Teer (203) 792-1981 or call the Museum. We always need more volunteers for special events such as this. This event is a special time for volunteers also!

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## Gift Shop News

Member's extra discount coming soon

By Patty Osmer

## GIFT SHOP

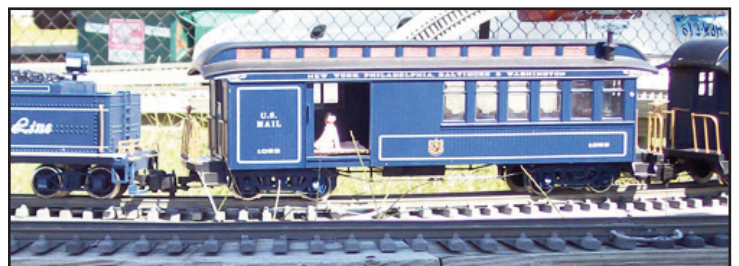
Beginning Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> and continuing through Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> DRM members, even ones joining that weekend, will be entitled to an extra discount at our Gift Shop! During this annual Member Appreciation Weekend current members will receive a 20% discount on almost every item available in this exceptionally well stocked gift shop. It is a fantastic opportunity to shop for the holidays, and maybe help some relatives who need ideas of what to buy for you! Shop early in the weekend for the best selection, since special orders are not eligible for this extra discount. Several ideas, including 2012 calendars are featured on Page 7.

*Continued on Page 7*

## Owney Honored at DRM

Famous canine celebrated on September 10

Replicas of the famous rail-riding mascot of the Railway Mail Service were visible in many places at the DRM on the Saturday when he was honored. He was glimpsed guarding the RPO car, riding the G-gauge layout, within the passenger car, on special envelopes, and in our Gift Shop.



*Continued on Page 4*

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## New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members, as well as the general public, are welcome to attend the weekly meetings and free programs held Wednesdays, 7:30pm, at the Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. We invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible!

Our Membership Chairman requests that all those renewing their membership **PLEASE return the paperwork with your check.**

Alisa Robinson	Brookfield, CT
Annmarie Hollywood	Poughkeepsie, NY
Michael Kuennen	Briarcliff Manor, NY
Rufus A. Ayers 3rd	Newtown, CT
David Main	Pawcatuck, CT

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## Grant Received from Amherst

Thanks to the Amherst Railway Society and the DRM's Grants Committee members who applied for the grant the Museum has received \$2000 to be used to make much needed repairs to the concrete floors of the Reading coaches. The Museum is very appreciative of this assistance and of previous generous grants from Amherst.



Each last full weekend of January Amherst Railway Society hosts their annual Railroad Hobby Show at the Eastern States Exposition ("Big E") in West Springfield, MA. It has expanded to four buildings in the complex. Members of the Society do a great job of organizing and staffing this monumental show. Proceeds are used to fund grants such as ones the DRM has received.

The DRM will be among the exhibitors on January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> from 9-5pm Saturday and 10-5pm on Sunday. Many railroad enthusiasts have long ago marked their calendars to attend. We hope you will

support this undertaking, come visit our booth, and have a great time!

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## Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The summer season of 2001 was a successful one with A Day Out with Thomas, good attendance and work being done on equipment and in the yard. Ira Pollack, in his monthly message presented the idea of developing an N-gauge layout of the yard as well as updating exhibits as winter projects.

The new computer system was well on its way to becoming a reality. The system would be a great asset in handling admissions, gift shop sales and inventory.

A new arrival in the yard was the former CDOT RS-3m #605. A long term lease of the engine was negotiated with the help of member John Greene. Still to come was FL-9 #2006. The RS-3m started life as Delaware, Lackawanna & Western #912. Prior to the DRM taking possession, the engine was used as a shop switcher in Harmon and New Haven and saw occasional work train service.

A crew from the Rutland Historical Society was on hand in October to paint and stabilize Rutland box car #8085. The plan was for them to return and letter the good side of the car. Other ongoing projects in the yard included the Budd Car, passenger car roof repair and the Tonawanda Valley scraping and painting of the interior.



The wooden Rutland boxcar is an important example of vintage rolling stock at the Museum.

For the seventh consecutive year, the DRM, in conjunction with Union Saving Bank, had a G-Scale layout at the Galleria office building on Main Street. The layout would officially open with the Danbury Tree Lighting Ceremony and would remain up past New Year's. Set-up and take down took about 200 hours.

The Library had received many donations including the collection of the late John Flower. This large collection included numerous books, magazines, photos, film, newsletters, maps and other railroad material. It still is an important addition to the Library Archives.

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# Words from Our President

Photography! The experts say a picture is worth a thousand words. Our newsletters convey a tremendous amount of information, as we stated last month, but are enhanced by the photographs included throughout our issues. During a visit to the Museum guests will see our history and the history of railroad-ing presented on the walls with many photographs. Many Museum members share their photographic talents with photos they have captured and display them for us. Ed Blackman, Dan Foley, and Pete McLachlan are some of our regular contributors. On Wednesday evenings these same individuals plus Carl Liba, Ron Smith, Steve Gould, Al Baker, and many others share their collective histories with our guests. Many of us have toured the country and world through the photographs (and videos) our members have shared.

In 2004 we celebrated our anniversary, which included a night photo shoot. The 1455 had been moved by the railroad out to the tracks north of the station and about 8:00 at night the Police Department closed White Street while about 25 photographers set their tripods, opened their lenses, and exposed film while multiple flashes were triggered to capture the locomotive in front of our station building.

Fast forward to November 5th 2011. Again featured as a focal point for another night photo shoot, the 1455 was the highlight of the evening. In conjunction with the Candlewood Camera Club, the DRM hosted another night photo shoot. New lighting techniques, tripods, digital and film cameras, and models resulted in a productive evening of neat night pictures. Inside and outside of the RDC, RPO, Forge and outside the Crane and, yes, the venerable 1455 steam Loco, approximately 15 photographers shot away. Collectively probably 2000 photos were taken. Jim Teer, Bob Pitcher, Pete McLachlan, Mark Freedman, Tom Peterson, et al., were live models who posed motionless for the many photographers to get their shots. Props, costumes, smoke bombs and some surprises gave the evening a feeling of stepping back into a historical past.

A high level of cooperation, participation, experimentation, and creativity resulted in an event, although short, that was successful and fun. Look forward to another night shoot in the spring and to a display within the Museum of the creative and productive efforts of our photographers. The photos can write a book!

On behalf of the Danbury Railway Museum,  
Wade W. Roesé

# P&W Stone Train Photos

On July 28<sup>th</sup> the P&W stone train was laying over on the Housatonic RR tracks due to problems on the tracks it needed for its usual trips. Many DRM members used the opportunity to take photos.

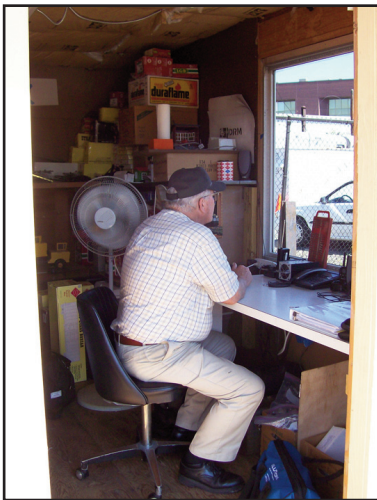


## Owney Honored at DRM, *Continued from Page 1*

The U.S. Postal Service's and the DRM's celebration of Owney coincided. That made it possible to highlight this year's Owney Day with a special cancellation of the newly released Forever stamp of Owney. The DRM had prepared cachets of several different photo designs which could be purchased with or without an Owney stamp. A Postal Worker attended the event specifically to perform the special cancellation. Thanks to our volunteers refreshments were available. Marty Bishop reprised her marvelously entertaining story of Owney and his adventures for passengers on our Railyard Local. Andre Perez also enhanced the train ride. Owney look-alikes were spotted riding the G-gauge. The DRM Gift Shop, in addition to selling the remaining cachets, has books about Owney and a fluffy Owney toy dog for sale. Tours of our beautifully restored RPO car were given to guests, who also were enthusiastic about boarding other equipment accessible to them in the railyard.

The real stuffed Owney, which lived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, has recently been refurbished at the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum. His fur has been cleaned and fluffed up, and the jacket has been replaced with a harness decorated with metals. Traces of arsenic were found in his old fur. More information can be located by visiting that Museum's website at [www.postalmuseum.si.edu/owney](http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/owney).

Question: How can a dog remain calm while also "going postal"? Answer: If a taxidermist has paid the dog a visit before the same dog is featured on a postage stamp.



Owney Honored at DRM, Continued from Page 4



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# Summer Enrichment Program Visits DRM

Passage to Excellence Corporation's participants give responses to experience

By Steve Gould

A group of youngsters and teachers from the Passage to Excellence Corporation's Summer Enrichment Program from White Plains, NY visited the DRM on June 21. During their visit and tour, DRM President Wade Roese spoke to the group about the Museum and the importance of railroads. The Museum received a letter of thanks from Minister Leanice M. Tyler, Program Director, and attached to it were a number of reports the children were asked to write after their visit. The reports allow us to see how we are viewed from a child's standpoint. Here are some excerpts:

"We were able to go on a train. It was very hot outside when we went on the turning wheel (read: turntable). I was kind of happy to go on a train because that's my first time I went on a train. I enjoyed myself today and I had fun with my friend."

"It was an honor for me to ride that train because a woman renovated/worked on the train for 7 years! (Referred to Project Leader Nancy Sniffen's work on RDC #32). In this world, we don't hear of many women working on trains"

"I had a great time and my favorite part was everything,"

"Then we went outside in the train so we could take a ride. We went back and forth because they had so many other trains that could fit in one place. Then we went on this thing called a moving table (read: turntable). When the moving table was over we went inside and this guy rang a bell."

"The train station was fun because we got to get on a train. There were lots of trains. There were blue, pink, brown and black trains. The train we went on was silver and the train was pretty slow but on the second ride it went a little faster. The train ride was fun!"

"The train was going so slow I almost fell asleep and the train went around two times. Jacob rang the bell a lot of times and rang the bell for us to leave."

"The Danbury Railway Museum was a fun experience. We saw all the different trains and learned about them. We also got to ride on a train. The whole trip was a good experience. At the end everyone was sleeping." "I learned that a woman fixed a train in 7 years. That's how I learned that not only men can do engineering." "At the end we went on a bus. The bus was not a ride of my dreams."

These comments are what it is all about and it is rewarding to see that the experience touches people in many different ways. We hope to see them again next year.

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## Railroad Terms in Common Usage

from a flyer in the Museum

**Asleep at the switch:** Train runs were long and sometimes the repetitious sound of the clickety-clack caused the engineer to become sleepy, but falling asleep was dangerous. If you are "asleep at the switch", you may miss something important that could be dangerous.

**Whistle stop:** When approaching a small town, the engineer blew the whistle. If the Stationmaster had a passenger or cargo he would signal the train to stop. Otherwise the train would go on through.

**Don't get sidetracked:** Do not digress or get diverted from the intended course.

**Milk run:** A train that stops at most, if not all, stations along its route. Often referred to in North America as a "milk train" or "milk run" (usage from the days when trains stopped at dairy farms to pick up fresh milk).



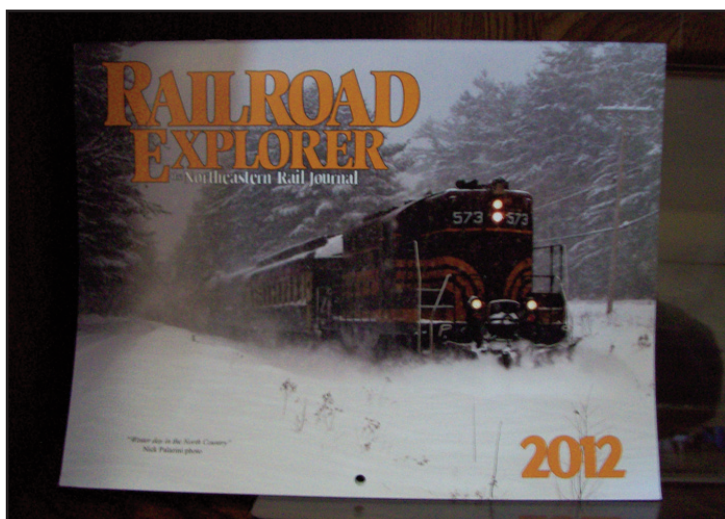
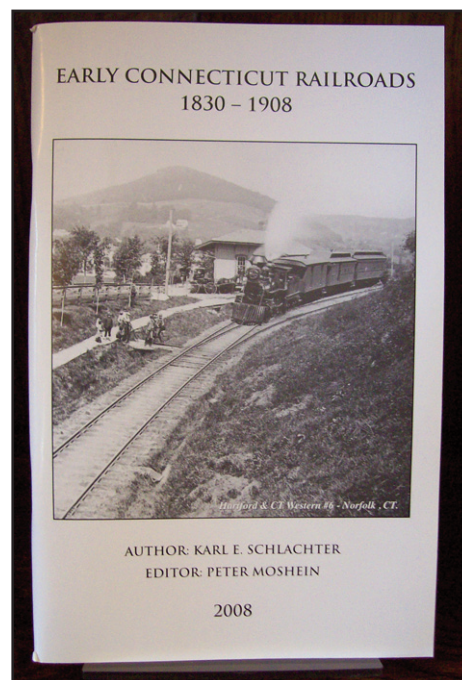
**Double header:** two steam engines pulling a train

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## Gift Shop News, Continued from Page 1

Joe Schiavone has done it again! His latest (and he swears last) book about New York Central's Putnam Division, *Last of the Old Put*, contains over 100 pages of pictures and information. Each book comes with a DVD containing vintage footage of the railroad. We also have a few copies left of *Volume 2, More of the Old Put*; Volume 1 has long been sold out. The book, including the DVD, sells for \$37 (\$33.30 for members, a 10% discount). Shipping is \$6.00, priority mail. These particular items are not eligible for the 20% discount.

Back in stock! *Early Connecticut Railroads* by Karl E. Schlachter provides the statistics showing the annual revenues, amount of traffic, effects of economic recessions and competition among the 70 Connecticut railroads. This interesting, fact-filled booklet sells to members for \$9.00.



Just in are 2012 Railroad Explorer, Mystic Railroad and New Haven calendars. Featuring outstanding color photographs, they make perfect gifts for the railroad enthusiasts on your shopping list. Recipients will have appreciative thoughts throughout the year as they enjoy viewing each month's railroad-ing photos.

For those interested in stamp collecting or even just in Owney memorabilia, the Gift Shop still has a limited number of cachets in several different designs remaining from the DRM's Owney event. They are \$1.50 with an uncanceled Owney postage stamp, \$1.00 without the stamp.



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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

Nov	17(7:00pm)	Board Meeting - Open to Members
Nov	23(7:30pm)	Video DRM - Joe Laporta
Nov	30(7:30pm)	B&O Mason-Dixon Line - Ron Smith
Dec	7(7:30pm)	Empire State Limited - Carl Liba
Dec	14(7:30pm)	Central Vermont Ry File - DRM Library
Dec	15(7:00pm)	Board Meeting - Open to Members
Dec	21(7:30pm)	LIRR - Steve Gould
Dec	28(7:30pm)	Video; TBA - DRM Library

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

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



### Contact Information

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Printing by: Infinity Printing of Danbury

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