

The Railyard Local

Volume 11, Issue 4

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

May 2012

All Ears and Kept Hopping DRM volunteers busy during Easter event

The almost 1700 people purchasing tickets during the five days of the Easter Bunny Express helped keep our volunteers more than busy listening to our guests and doing all possible to ensure they would have a wonderful experience during their visit at the DRM. This year it was held on March 25, 31, April 1, 6 & 7. Weather was a bit damp and cool for the first cou-



ple of days, but fabulous during the last two. Both advance and walk-in ticket sales were comparable to last year, with Gift Shop sales inexplicably somewhat less.

As is usual with popular children's events here, the atmosphere was filled with excitement and anticipation. Children had a great time at the play tables, pushing buttons on the four operating layouts, receiv-

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Hours to Change for Season Starting Memorial Day open 7 days a week

The DRM is continuing the schedule instituted a couple of years ago of being open 7 days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The time each day also will be extended until 5pm during the summer season. The DRM will be open on the Memorial Day and Labor Day holidays from 12-4pm. For the days in between, it will be open Monday-Saturday 10-5pm, Sunday 12-5pm. We hope see you, your family and friends during that time!

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DRM Annual Meeting

March 14th Wednesday Night Program

The Annual Meeting featured the Board of Directors election results, an inspiring address by DRM President Wade Roese, reports by the organization officers and project leaders, plus the presentation of awards to deserving volunteers. The business part of the meeting was followed by a video of Equador steam by Joe Laporta.

Chairman of the Board Don Konen explained that according to the by-laws, ballots must be sent out even in the instance of an uncontested election. DRM Secretary Steve Gould announced the results: Al Baker, Don Konen, Jeff Van Wagenen, Chuck Sager and Gil Letellier were elected to 2-year terms on the Board of Directors. Congratulations! Of the 371 ballots



Dave receiving Gandy Dancer Award from Wade

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Day to Honor Dads at DRM Museum celebrates Father's Day June 17th

The DRM will be offering Dads(or Grandads) a free train ride when accompanied by a child who has paid for the ride. The Museum anticipates forming a consist called a "caboose train" especially for this day. Of course everyone will be welcome, but Dads will receive this extra treat.

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!

Have you noticed? The address label on each newsletter indicates the expiration date of your membership. (If you have very recently renewed your membership the new date may not be reflected yet on the label). The membership of Life Members does not have an expiration date.

Ian Jenner	Ridgefield, CT
Amala Hold	Redding, CT
Elyse Shapiro	Redding, CT
Eric Christensen	Ridgefield, CT

FOUND! Sources of Railroad Slang

Look in the DRM's Library!

DRM volunteer Gerry Herrmann responded to the request in the April issue of the newsletter for additional sources of railroad terms in common usage and railroad slang. He spends much of his time in the DRM's Reference and Research Library and is familiar with many of the resource materials available there.

One of the binders in the collection is titled *Railroad Slang Glossary* by "The Forensic Historian" of Brookfield, CT. Museum and Historical Society (dated August 2003). It consists of several sections filled with railroad slang, lingo, and fun facts. It is very thorough in its listing of numerous sources for its information. **Come on in and have fun!**

This is just one of the many reasons to frequent the DRM's Library. It is filled with historic information and photographs, as well as books and access to railroading magazines. The Library is open by appointment, so if you want to make sure to have access, please call ahead. Most often it is staffed on Tuesday evenings beginning a bit after 7pm, and at various times on Saturdays, but again, call ahead to be sure.

The Library can use assistance in accessing and identifying collections of various materials and photographs. If you would like to be involved in this process, please contact Gerry Herrmann or Stan Madyda at the Museum. Also if you would like to donate materials, or know of someone who would, please get in touch with them.

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Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

Preparations were under way for Railfair 2002 to be held on May 18th. Among the attractions being planned was a hot riveting demonstration, track gang work, antique trucks and engines, operating layouts, speeder rides and a photo freight. The U.S. Army 1205th Transportation Railway Operating Battalion stationed in Middletown, CT at that time was also planning to attend.

The Annual Easter Bunny Trains were very successful, having been run on two weekends in March. These trains signaled the start of the operating season.

With warm weather approaching, yard works and painting of equipment were planned with the hope that a box car would be completed. Some painting had already been done on coach #1547. Mechanical work was also planned for the SW8 switcher recently donated by Pfizer.

Inside the station, work was progressing on the N-scale and HO-scale layout projects. It was noted that many buildings on the N-scale layout would have to be scratchbuilt in order to accurately represent Danbury in the 1950s.



A family entranced by the N-gauge layout as it is today. Would you enjoy working on its completion?

Dan Foley wrote a book review for "Photo History of the Prince Edward Island Railway" giving a short but detailed account of this 278 mile railroad. The railroad eventually became part of the Canadian National and was abandoned in 1989.

Steve Gould gave a detailed account of a recent trip he and his wife made on Amtrak Auto Train. By now, he had become a veteran traveler, having made 12 previous trips on the Auto Train.

Words from Our President

Here it is April, no fooling, the days are getting longer and warmer, although we have been spoiled this winter, and it is time to resume work on projects at our Museum. April 28th is scheduled to be "Track Day". We will work, have lunch, and work! hopefully. Please join us.

Following is a list of projects which are in various stages of progress; some are staffed, some almost complete, and some that need to be implemented. If you see something you might be interested in assisting, please consider joining us.

PROJECT

- NYC caboose
- Tonawanda Valley coach
- 1455 steam locomotive
- Locomotives
- Pavilions
- Botsford water tower
- New Haven M-U (washboards)
- G-gauge garden layout
- Forge addition
- Landscaping of yard
- Prepare map of railyard
- Volunteer ID tags
- Track work

PROJECT LEADER

Gerry Herrmann
Bill Britt and Art Slothower
Bob Boothe
Justin Chapin and Jeff Van Wagenen
Gil Letellier
Gil Letellier
Andre Perez
Don Konen and Wade Roesse
Bob Pitcher
Michael La Gue
Wade Roesse
Joseph Alves
Jim Teer

OTHER PROJECTS:

work on turntable restoration
clean out semaphore shed
paint rail cars
relocate Dapco truck
relocate scale test car
restore Burro crane
create access to FL-9
update/add new signage
build open bench flat car
clean up office
rearrange interior exhibits
redo interior exhibit

construct new equipment storage shed
repaint yellow line on Track 18 platform
replace yard limit signs
do inventory of storage in various box cars
do inventory of paints we have,
repair concrete base of platform base
repair fence at Metro-North gate
create video (story of DRM/Union Station)
create handout of exhibits in railyard
remove mildew from building exterior
repair Krane car
install low fence at yard limit



There are additional latent projects to be worked upon, and shall be added as manpower and interest permit them. Please consider assisting or undertaking any of the projects above and bring forth your questions.

All Ears and Kept Hopping, Continued from Page 1

ing tattoos, and making artistic creations at the coloring station. Outside, families were enthusiastic on the train ride around the railyard and meeting the Easter Bunny in the specially decorated coach. Many availed themselves of the chance to tour the rest of the railyard. All the while, parents and other relatives made full use of the many photo opportunities both inside and outside the Museum. Actually so did a newspaper reporter and this editor!

The winner of the contest to guess the number of colorful plastic eggs in a basket was Mia Marschner of Bethel. She was closest to the 88 number of eggs, and therefore won 4 passes to the Museum at any time during 2012, including Pumpkin Patch or Santa train events.

Thank you to the numerous volunteers who make this event a success! Many were "frequent volunteers" for our major events. Several members of the train crew dressed in appropriate railroading costumes. Sue Teer and her assistants did a fabulous job of preparing and decorating for the festivities.



All Ears and Kept Hopping, Continued from Page 4



DRM Annual Meeting, *Continued from Page 1*

mailed, 108 were returned (28.8%). For the past , couple of years appeals for donations for a select few projects have been included with the ballots. This year it has resulted in at least \$2000 in generous donations being returned with the ballots - well worth the postage of mailing the ballots!

President Wade Roese emphasized better communication and cooperation as keys to success of the organization, with many people helping and plenty of ideas. He mentioned a long list of accomplishments during this past year, then prospective projects and ideas for the coming season. These are included on Page 3 of this issue in his *Words from Our President* column. Please consider how you will be able to assist.

Superintendent of Operations Jeff Van Wageningen mentioned various people who have been doing operations activities and asked for ideas for the coming year.

Vice-President Stan Madyda, who is responsible for building issues and accessions, and who also volunteers in the DRM Library, discussed maintenance of the Museum building. The Library is now using Past-perfect software program to catalog items. The Library has received collections. He has continued to pursue donations of equipment.

Steve Gould has found our membership is 62% from Connecticut, 24% New York, 4% Massachusetts,

and 10% from elsewhere. He conducts Car Host and Tour Guide training sessions. A member of the Grants Committee, he helped secure a \$2000 grant from Amherst Railway Society in 2011 for floors in coaches.

Patty Osmer, Treasurer, explained the DRM financial situation. The Annual Financial Report was published on Page 6 of the April newsletter issue. In essence, the DRM has managed to survive during this period of poor national economy largely because we reduced our expenses by 8% although our income declined by 4% this past year. This resulted in a net gain of almost \$37,000. Active projects continued by using monies from restricted funds. By wise management the Museum has risen from close to bankruptcy in 2001-2 to solvency with almost \$300,000 in funds.

The fun part of the meeting began with Wade Roese presenting awards. In last month's issue he described the origins and significance of the Gandy Dancer Award, who and why each of this year's recipients was chosen. Each of these volunteers were presented with a handsome plaque and each will be listed on a plaque hanging in the Museum. The recipients were Stan Madyda, Steve Gould, Patty Osmer, Dave Roberts, and Bill Britt. In addition, several volunteers were awarded a Certificate of Recognition for their assistance to the DRM. They were Joseph Alves, John O'Hern, Art Slothower and Carolyn Taylor. Congratulations to all, and thank you for your assistance at the DRM!



Recipients of awards: Left top, Stan Madyda, below, Wade with Steve; Right top, Patty with Wade, below, Wade with Carolyn

WANTED!

RAILROAD STORIES AND NICKNAMES

"700 words or less"

It is important to write down or record these stories before they are lost forever.

We would like to put them in booklet form, possibly as a fundraiser for both the Danbury Railway Museum and the SoNo Switch Tower Museum.

We are looking for:

**Railroader nicknames and how they came about

**A collection of stories, memorable moments while working on the railroad

Along with your story, please provide your name, address (or both) email address, the railroad you worked for and date of hire.

Your story will be put in quotes in order to keep the flavor of the language intact.

Important: If concerned with retaliation by your present employer, write "KEEP ANONYMOUS"

Email to: suzeb80@gmail.com

or mail to: Suzanne Blackman, P.O. Box 8073, New Fairfield, CT 06812

Submitted by Suze Blackman and Roberta Ballard on behalf of the above organizations.

Connecticut Open House Day - June 9, 2012

By Stan Madyda

Each year the State of Connecticut Office of Tourism sponsors Connecticut Open House Day, which encourages residents to visit cultural and historic sites throughout the state. This year the Museum has joined with the Arts Network of Danbury to promote art, culture and history in Danbury. A number of art galleries will be open with special events planned. The Danbury Museum and Historical Society will open their exhibit "Covering All the Bases - A History of Danbury Baseball." At the DRM, sculptor Brian Walters will have some of his work done in metal on display. The forge also will be open.

Plan on spending June 9th in Danbury and visit the many venues. For more information, please visit the website www.greaterdanburyopenhouseday.wordpress.com.



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MUSEUM CALENDAR

- May 9(7:30pm) Big Country Railroading - Ron Smith
- May 16(7:30pm) West Coast + Misc. 1978 - Pete McLachlan
- May 17(7:00pm) Board Meeting - Open to members
- May 23(7:30pm) New Look Back at Old Put - Joe Schiavone
- May 28 **Memorial Day - Open 12-4pm**
- May 30(7:30pm) To be announced - Ian Jenner

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

Beg May 29, Summer Hours: Mon-Sat 10-5; Sun 12-5

See the newsletter in color at www.danburyrail.org!



Contact Information

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Via Email to drmmembers@aol.com

