

The Railyard Dispatch

Volume 16, Issue 3

The Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum

May - June 2017

DRM Attends Two CLHO Meetings

By President Stan Madyda; *Photos courtesy of Michael Madyda*

For a number of years, the Danbury Railway Museum has been a member of the Connecticut League of History Organizations after having first learned of the League through their Housatonic Valley Regional group. In recent years, under the guidance of Executive Director Liz Shapiro and along with other organizations, they have offered a number of programs and networking events. These not only provide good networking opportunities for members, but many are held at various museums and historical sites around the state allowing us to see their exhibits and facilities.

On April 26th, Mike Madyda, Jim Teer and I travelled to Mystic Seaport for an afternoon of touring their collection storage and new exhibit space. Time did not allow us to tour some of their buildings and ships. We first met with Paul O'Pecko, Vice President



Paul O'Pecko (left, above & center, below) shows the group some artifacts on display in Mystic Seaport's collections research center.



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Boy Scouts Visit the DRM for Railroading Merit Badge Program

By Secretary Steve Gould

On April 13, 2017, 13 Boy Scouts and 7 adult leaders from Red Oak Mill, NY visited the Museum to work on the Railroading Merit Badge after camping out at the Boy Scout camp ground in Redding, CT. Tom McCullough, who is a Merit Badge Counselor, and Steve Gould conducted the full day program which consisted of a ride on the Rail Yard Local, a ride on the turntable and a tour of the railyard and the open exhibits. It also included a short video of different types of trains and locomotives and a talk covering many of the requirements for the Merit Badge. The group then toured the station and checked out all the model train layouts and other displays. A visit to the Gift Shop concluded the visit.



Photo courtesy of Brian Colucci

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!

Place Jim	Rocky Hill, CT
Louis Davis	New York, NY
Terri Martinez	Oxford, CT
Elissa Williams	Redding, CT
Lewis Schaller	Watertown, CT

Upcoming Events at the DRM

May 14th - Mother's Day

Mothers ride **free** with child's paid admission.

May 29th - Museum Open 12-4.

June 10th - Steel & Wheels Car Show

The Danbury Railway Museum presents the Steel & Wheels car show to benefit ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) research.

General admission is **\$10** for visitors ages 3 and up (under 3 years free) and includes admission to Museum, car show, train rides, and exhibits and displays in our historic 1903 Station and railyard.

If you would like to enter your car, the show car price is **\$10**. Goodie bags and dash plaques will be given to the first 100 cars. There will be a special owners and people's choice award.

Registration starts at 8:30am and show cars must enter off Patriot Drive by the Metro-North Station (west side of Metro-North parking lot).

Call 203-778-8337 or email info@danburyrail.org for more information.

Rain date: June 11th.

June 18th - Father's Day

Fathers ride **free** with child's paid admission. Special **caboose train** operating!

July 4th - Museum Closed

July 15th - Owney, the Railway Post

Office Dog Day

History, stories and children's activities to honor Owney, the famous Railway Post Office dog.

Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda, President

With warmer weather here, members began working on track work. It was determined that Track 34 needed immediate attention to be followed by the turntable lead and then Track 42. Crews worked digging out ballast and old ties and replacing the area with new ties and ballast. Most of the work was done by hand with some help from the backhoe. An electric drill was used to make new holes in the ties for the spikes which were either hammered in by hand or with a pneumatic spiker.

Outside restoration work resumed on the RPO with more wire brushing and priming on the sides. Inside there were 880 small mail slots that needed painting and this was completed along with the ceiling. Also refurbishment of the mail bag hook was near completion. Throughout the restoration of the car, work could only progress with whatever money was on hand in the restricted account. When money was low, there was fear the project would have to be interrupted. But funds continued to trickle in allowing work to proceed.

When the DRM acquired the RS-11 in 2001, it was unable to move on its trucks. A solution was found by borrowing the trucks from our FA-1 and sending them to Georgia where the RS-11 was located. It took several years, but in 2007 the FA-1 was again sitting on trucks. With the help of Modzeleski Towing donating the time of two heavy lift wreckers and crew, the locomotive body was lifted and spare trucks that we had were rolled under. To have paid for this work would have been costly and the museum was grateful to James Modzeleski and Wade Roeser who coordinated the work.

Another project that was active was on our steam engine, the 1455. Plans were made for its continued stabilization, lubrication, cleaning and painting. A new metal staircase would also be built allowing safer access into the cab.

A grant from the Merserve Memorial Fund was received. The Museum had received grants in the past and this one was to be used for computer upgrades.

Parking Deal on Weekends

Thanks to the generosity and cooperation of the staff at the Danbury Parking Authority, guests at the DRM will be able to get their admission ticket stamped at the Front Desk for a \$1 discount on parking at the Municipal garage across the street.

Words from Our President

Dear Members,

Activities around the museum are in full swing. In the yard, work has resumed on our restoration projects. As always, there will be track work to be done. Inside the Museum, we expect another busy season with travelers stopping in, groups visiting, birthday parties and more.

One of the groups we have seen for several years are the students from Danbury's elementary schools. This year, we expect about 300 students spread over four visits. This is a program we do in conjunction with the Danbury Historical Society. They start their day visiting there and then walk over to the DRM for an Operation Lifesaver video and talk along with a short train ride. This is just a small way we give back to the community and continue our education mission.

A big thank you goes to all our members and volunteers who help out with our annual Easter Bunny Trains. This year, we had good weather for all of the days the train ran. Overall, our attendance was slightly down, but our income was up due to increased prices for the event. Based on what I heard from visitors, the event was well received.

I recently made two appointments that the membership should be made aware of: Dave Fuller is now the new Safety Officer. John O'Hern, who held the title for many years, asked if he could step back a bit from his duties and recommended Dave to take over more of the day-to-day responsibilities. John will continue to administer our yearly safety tests and will be available to assist Dave. Secondly, I have appointed Mike Madyda as Yardmaster, a position that has been vacant for several years. While members have pitched in over the last several years doing various tasks in the yard, we really need someone who will oversee the entire yard making it safe, secure and pleasing to our visitors. Good luck Dave and Mike on your new responsibilities, and thanks John for your past and continued years of service!

President Stan Madyda



Left: Dave Fuller. Photo courtesy of Carolyn Taylor.

Right: Michael Madyda. Photo courtesy of Louis Pisacano.



News Channel 8 Visits the Danbury Railway Museum

By Secretary Steve Gould

The ABC New Haven, CT affiliate, WTNH Channel 8, visited the Danbury Railway Museum on April 6, 2017 to do a piece on our Easter Bunny Trains as a part of the stations' "Cruisin' Connecticut" series.

Reporter Ryan Kristafer and a cameraman were at the Museum on a raw and rainy day to do the shoot.

Steve Gould was interviewed about the event on Coach #1547 as he explained the train ride and the visit to the Easter Bunny's special railroad car. This was followed by shots of the Rail Yard Local running in the yard in the rain, with Tom McCullough as engineer and Dave Fuller, Conductor. Reporter Kristafer then visited with the Easter Bunny. All-in-all, the WTNH crew was at the Museum an hour-and-a-half; the TV spot lasted about a minute-and-a-half. It was shown throughout the day on April 12th with both Ryan Kristafer and various news anchors promoting our event that coming weekend.



Photo courtesy of Steve Gould

2017 Easter Bunny Express Trains

By Sue Teer; Photos courtesy of Carolyn Taylor

The Easter Bunny trains were very busy this year. Due to the #32 being out of service, the consist of the 44-tonner, #1547 coach and Maine Central caboose was used, all decorated and looking very Spring-like inside. This year's ride included the handing out of coloring books on the moving train as well as a narration of a bunny story during the ride before the big moment of seeing the bunny in his own special car.

The yard looked very festive with decorations, blow-ups and a general, cleaner appearance. The station was also full of bunnies, games, "guess the number of eggs", tattoos (featuring chicks and bunnies) and all the usual entertainment. Allison from Metro-North joined us one day for balloons and giveaways for the children too.

Our thanks to the many volunteers who worked during the four days to make this a successful event. Our visitors came from as far away as Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Long Island. All who came had a great day!





2017 Easter Bunny Express Trains, Continued from Page 6



DRM Attends Two CLHO Meetings, *Continued from Page 1*

of Collections and Research, who took us through their very large collections storage facility. During the tour, he mentioned that they have over 1,000,000 objects housed or on display within Mystic Seaport. The collection facility has hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of moveable shelving. Time again prevented us from seeing the tens of thousands of books in their library. Before heading home, we had time to see their new building with interactive exhibits.

Then, on May 1st, Gerry Herrmann joined the three of us as we attended a Colleague Circle meeting at the Railroad Museum of New England. Howard Pincus and staff led the discussion on their museum and an open forum on what makes good exhibits. Whether a large or small museum or historical society, we are all faced with telling a compelling story about our collections to the point where visitors leave learning something new and wanting to come back. After the meeting, we got to tour some of the equipment on display at the Thomaston Station.



Paul O'Pecko (*above*) shows the group some of the pieces of scrimshaw in storage drawers in Mystic Seaport's collections research center.

Paul (*left, below*) points out some more things in movable storage shelves behind the camera with Stan Madyda (*right*) looking on.



Paul O'Pecko (*right*) shows the group some literature, maps and charts stored in Mystic Seaport's collections research center (note the special movable wall mounting system behind Paul used for storing pictures and paintings).



Below left & below: CLHO members at RMNE's Thomaston Station discussing how best to exhibit displays and other issues relating to collections.



CAR SHOW

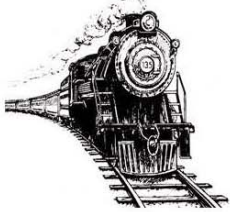
DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

presents

STEEL & WHEELS

to benefit

The ALS Association, Connecticut Chapter



June 10, 2017

(rain date, June 11)



RAFFLES!

FOOD!

9am - 3pm

FAMILY FUN!

120 White Street, Danbury, CT

GENERAL ADMISSION \$10 (age 3 & up, under 3, free)

Includes: admission to Museum, train rides, tour vintage railroad equipment, operating railroad forge, and car show.

www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org/info@danburyrail.org

203.778.8337

Show Cars, \$10.

Goodie Bags and Dash Plaques for first 100 cars. Special Owners Award, People's Choice, Surprises! Registration starts at 8:30. Show cars only enter off Patriot Drive by Metro North Station. Call 203-778-8337 or email info@danburyrail.org for more information.



MUSEUM CALENDAR

Important Announcements:

***Note** - Wednesday night meetings and programs are scheduled to start at 7:30pm.*

Due to a lack of presenters on Wednesday nights, there will no longer be any listing of presentations in the newsletter. All presentations will be emailed to you through our new email service. You may also call the Museum during open business hours to find out what's on Wednesday nights.

Board of Directors meetings will still take place the **third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm**. Museum members may attend these meetings.

Museum hours: Wed-Sat 10-4; Sun 12-4
After Memorial Day: Mon-Fri 10-4; Sat 10-5; Sun 12-5
View the newsletter online at our new website:
www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org



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