



The Railyard Dispatch

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

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Timber(s)!

During the last full week of August, several volunteers toiled away re-decking our 95 foot, 1917-built turntable, one of our high priority projects. Many thanks to Phillip Beard, Jose Alves, Justin Chapin, and Alden Burns for completing this task. The turntable awaits the completion of one more item before work can progress. The four timbers supporting the arch must be replaced. To do this, the arch must be removed from the turntable. A crane company has been called to remove the lattice structure. Once the arch has been removed, the girders will be repainted where the arch timbers previously sat and new timbers will be placed. Then, our volunteers can begin placing rail and decking! (continued on 3)



Left above: Aerial photo of the redecked turntable. Photo by Justin Chapin.



Left below: CMO Justin Chapin and Vice President Bill Wagner maneuver a metal beam between the bottom sides of the arch. Because of how the arch is constructed, it must be braced towards the bottom to prevent it from collapsing in on itself when the crane lifts it. Photo by Alden Burns.

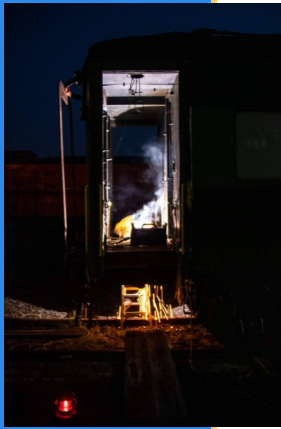
The President's Report

It is with a heavy heart that we report to you, in this issue, the passing of our treasurer Patty Osmer in June. Patty continues to be missed every day by all of us here at the museum, every day we still find ourselves asking "What would Patty do?" and "How did Patty do this?" She not only served as Treasurer for 17

years, she also was the powerhouse behind the Gift Shop, handled advertising for our seasonal fundraiser events, she was our in-house I.T. person, managed our library pass program, staffed our Front Desk and Gift Shop, helped run our seasonal events, and so much more. She was an integral part of

this museum, both as a volunteer and a friend. Patty will be sorely missed by so many people, not just at the DRM. She was also active with the Brewster Presbyterian Church, amongst many other organizations, as an ordained elder and deacon, and even served as the secretary and treasurer for them as well. (continued on 2)

Reading Company coach #2015



Above: CMO Justin Chapin works on one of 2015s vestibules.

Much work has been done to prepare Reading Company coach 2015 for Pumpkin Patch service! Project manager Art Slowther has done it again and worked his magic to deliver 2015 a shiny new coat of paint. Justin Chapin and Phillip Beard repaired the east facing vestibule, as years of rust damage had buckled the diamond plate walkway.



The President's Report (continued)

When a non-profit organization loses someone like Patty, it's tough to bounce back without burning out those who pick up the reins in the midst of the grieving period and confusion. We have managed to overcome this struggle for now, but continue to find ourselves short staffed

on the two days that we are open. We re-opened on the week-end of July 4th to over 800 visitors, many taking advantage of the CT Kids are Free Summer initiative. The program was a huge success, with grant money awarded to our museum by the state of Connecticut as part of the American Rescue Plan. We (and by we I mean Steve Gould, whom without we wouldn't apply-to let alone receive 95% of the grants we receive) supplied the state with a count of visitors from July to September from the pre-pandemic years. The state awarded us \$16,000 to cover the general admission of visitors under 18 and one

accompanying adult, from July 3rd through September 6th. The program proved to be a success, and visitors were happy to be back in museums. Railyard Local ridership and Gift Shop sales were both positively impacted by the increased attendance. While the grant only applied to CT residents, we decided it would be in our benefit to extend it to out of state residents as well as we're right on the New York boarder, we kept these numbers separate from CT residents as to not sully the grant's requirements.



Right: President's Report

Timber(s)! (continued)



Above: With Secretary Don Konen at the wheel of the forklift, our volunteers construct the cribbing necessary to support the arch when removed from the turntable. Special thanks to Tom McCollough, John Barton, Franz Geren-cir, Don Konen, and Jim Teer for their hard work!

Below: Justin Chapin and Bill Wagner again, this time caught preparing the arch brace for installation. Photos by Alden Burns.



Above: Here, we see the completed cribbing. The top of the arch will lay on the smaller stack, with the braced end laying on the taller stack to prevent damaging the diagonal angle iron supports.

Rutland X-578

Over the span of a year, Eagle Scout Candidate Sami Al-Abid has been working hard to restore the oldest car in Danbury Yard, Rutland flatcar X-578, which was built in 1902. He's nearly completed the restoration and it looks outstanding! All that's left to do is install the handbrake and apply the lettering!



Left: A southeast facing view of the redecked and repainted X-578. Photo by Justin Chapin.



Right: A northeast facing view of X-578.

Grant for the Archives - Stan Madyda



Since the inception of the Museum, it had been the wish of one of our founders, L. Peter Cornwall, that we establish a first class research library for all to use. Over the years, the Museum has received well over 1,000 donations of books, ephemera, photographic images and artifacts. We have had researchers and authors contact us for all types of information having heard about our holding through word of mouth or by visiting our website. The general consensus of members volunteering their time was that not enough people knew what we had.

That is now changing. Last summer, Conservation ConneCTion announced new grant opportunities for their Traveling Archivist Program. We were a recipient of an earlier grant where Brian Stevens, Archivist with Western Connecticut State University, did an on site review of our physical with recommendations on how we it could be better set up with the proper storage and supplies. With a new grant opportunity, we explored ways to best use this money if we were successful in our application. It was decided that a good use of the money and training would be to start digitizing our photo collection. We applied and received our requested amount plus an additional \$1,000 that the review felt could be spent with

additional consulting time. Again, Brian Stevens would be assigned to help us.

Of the photo collections we have, Vic Westman's was chosen as the initial project. Vic's collection consisted of thousands of images he took from the 1950s through the 1990s. What made Vic's collection more appealing to start with was author John Ham was looking for photos to be included in several books he was writing. Also, we had an inquiry from Matt Kierstead who was researching the CNE and Upper Harlem line for rail trail panels he was creating. While Vic labeled and dated most of his photos and negatives he had them scattered in numerous envelopes making it cumbersome to look for something.

After an initial conversation with Brian concerning the goals of the project, it was obvious we needed to not only digitize photos, but to get start the process of getting out holdings and collections know with Connecticut Archives Online. This is a project that Brian has worked on for many years where various museums and historical societies can make their collections known to researchers. While it is not practical to have all of our photos available through Connecticut

Archives Online, we can have a representative sample. For instance, a researcher may want to see photos of the Hudson Division during the New York Central and Penn Central eras. Doing a keyword search will show them we have photos from the Vic Westman Collection of those time periods and in which storage box they can be found. As time permits, an inventory of all of Vic's images can be included.

Our photo collections are not the only things we will be adding to Connecticut Archives Online. We have over 11,000 timetables, 4,000 books, magazines and newsletters, annual reports, railroad passes, Official Guides, railroad ephemera and correspondence and accident investigations that can be included.

The Traveling Archivist Program Grant not only taught us proper ways to scan and identify photos but it also taught us the process and rules of presenting our holdings in an online environment. When Peter Cornwall presented his vision of a research library in 1994, the internet was still in its infancy. Thanks to the TAP Grant we are able to use the power of internet to share our collections. This project was made possible through funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and administered by the Connecticut State Library on behalf of the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board and Conservation ConneCTion.

The Boxcar Kid Finds a New Home



Above: Outside braced wooden Boston and Maine boxcar #72249

At the age of 15, DRM director Orion Newall-Vuillemont purchased a outside braced, wooden boxcar from the Railroad Museum of New England for \$1 and moved it to his home in Woodstock, CT. Five years later, the restoration of the Boston and Maine #72249 is nearly complete and the time has come for it to relocate to a new home. Orion has chosen the DRM as its new home for the next ten years. Soon, the vintage freight car will be located to Danbury Yard. It'll look great behind 1455, our B&M steam locomotive!



Danbury Railway Museum

120 White Street, Danbury CT 06810

Phone: (203) 778-8337

Email: editor@danburyrail.org

Website: danburyrail.org

Editor: Alden Burns

Hours: Saturday & Sunday, 10AM-4PM

