

# The Railyard Local

Volume 6, Issue 11

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

November 2007

## Gift Shop News

### Kathie Fay retires

Long-time Museum volunteer Kathie Fay has retired after volunteering at the Museum for over 12 years. When the Museum first opened, Kathie walked in and asked if there were any volunteers needed. When asked what she liked to do, she responded, "count money", so she was immediately put to work in the Gift Shop where she soon became involved in ordering, and in 2002 became the Gift Shop co-manager. For many years, Kathie has been responsible for



Kathie Fay(l.), retiring Co-manager of our Gift Shop, being presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by the other Co-manager, Patty Osmer. Photo by Steve Gould.

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## Rail Post Office Car Restored

The interior of the former PRR rail post office car is virtually complete, under the leadership of Bill Britt, and with the help of several volunteers. Since Bill last updated progress, a staircase for accessing the car has been fabricated by Bob Pitcher, and stanchions in the baggage compartment also installed by him. Areas such as the lavatory and water cooler have been cosmetically restored. Accessories and interior signage, including acknowledgement of donations and other assistance with the project, have been added. If you would like to tour this special piece, please call the Museum to make sure there is a tour guide available. Exterior diaphragms remain to be replaced, and Bill will breathe easier when that is complete. Donations toward this focal piece in our railyard are welcome.

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New Members and Santa Express

## Pumpkin Patch Trains

### 3-weekend event more popular than ever

Thanks to all who volunteered in this team effort, the Pumpkin Patch event was conducted very smoothly, and resulted in pleasing the increasing number of guests to the DRM at this event. The passengers rode a vintage consist to the Pumpkin Patch, where a turntable ride and refreshments also awaited them. Ticket holders were especially pleased by the extended train ride on the last weekend of the event, enabled by the restoration of Track 34 to service. This essentially-doubled the length of the train ride.



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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!

Katie & Rob Shepherd	Westport, CT
Tim Gershon	White Plains, NY
Anson Moffatt	Darien, CT
Dan Biesterveld	Cheshire, CT
Mary & Stephen Jones	Wilton, CT
Robert Hancox	Monroe, CT
Gene Martin	Poughkeepsie, NY
Jane Powell	New Fairfield, CT
Sebastian Buis	Wilton, CT
Robin & Ryan Scott	Danbury, CT

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## Santa Express Better Than Ever

### Longer train ride, new decorations

We can practically hear the whistle of the Santa Express coming to Danbury Railway Museum, right on time according to the DRM event timetable. We will be holding this very popular event on three week-ends in December beginning Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> and ending on Sunday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Santa Express trains will depart every 1/2 hour, 12:30 - 4:00pm. Tickets will be \$8 for ages 2 and up, with those under 2 years old free. Reservations are suggested, either online at [www.danbury.org/drm](http://www.danbury.org/drm) or by calling the Museum at 203-778-8337.

Our guests will be riding with Frosty on a longer train ride, now that we have more tracks in service. They, as well as Santa and Mrs. Claus, will be pleased by the newly stained interior and decorations in our special Santa railroad car. Admission will include the train ride, a coloring station, temporary tattoos, hot chocolate, and a small gift for children. The station and railyard abound with decorations especially for this occasion. Operating layouts, train toys and exhibits delight visitors. Our Gift Shop awaits holiday shoppers looking for items for train enthusiasts. Full-sized unique and vintage railroad equipment and displays enthrall those touring the railyard.

If you will be available to help in any way on any of the days of this event, please contact Sue (Thomas) Teer and Jim Teer at (203) 792-1981. We always need extra help for these special occasions.

**2** There is extra excitement and electricity in the air at these popular events. Come join us!

## Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

As the Danbury Railway Museum moved into the winter months, there was news of more equipment on the way to the yard. The November 1997 newsletter highlighted a report by Ron Freitag on the donation of former New Haven NE6 caboose #687.

In April 1997 Ron had mentioned at the monthly board meeting that this caboose might be available to the DRM. It was owned by the United Railroad Historical Society which received it as a donation from Conrail. The intention at the time of the donation was to have the caboose be part of the collection for the planned New Jersey Transportation Museum. URHS, eventually deciding against keeping the caboose, donated it to the DRM. In May, payment was made to Conrail to move the caboose from Ridgefield to Danbury by way of Pittsfield. The next couple of months were spent readying the caboose and the track it was stored on for the movement. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, Conrail put it on a train for movement to Selkirk Yard and then on to Pittsfield. When the caboose got to Selkirk, it was put on a track with out of service cabooses, and for the next six weeks it was lost. Conrail had no record of it in their computer tracking system. Finally found, it was put on a train to Pittsfield and delivered by the Housatonic on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Because of major alterations done to the caboose when it was Penn Central property it was decided that it would not be restored back into New Haven. Today it is on display in the yard as Penn Central #23662.



Our first flat car, a New Haven T-27, was trucked in from Bridgeport. Three more freight cars were on their way to Danbury: Erie Lackawanna hopper #33841, Pennsylvania hopper car #666573 and Pennsylvania box car #45924. The hopper cars are on display, and the box car serves as our Carpenter Shop.

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# DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

This month I would like to update you on some of the things going on at the Museum. To start with, as you probably know by now, we've been working on our trackage over the past 7 or 8 weeks. I am very pleased to tell you that we have rebuilt the turntable lead switch, put Track 34 and 42 back into service, and will have the 24 switch finished very shortly. This grand project was a necessity for our operations at the Museum, and we have succeeded in enhancing the length of the Railyard Local with flying colors. I am very proud of the volunteers who came forward to help me make this possible. In reality, these volunteers put in over 1500 hours of hard labor to replace the many ties that were needed to stabilize our trackage. We also have replaced the many joiner bars that were loose or cracked, and therefore in need of



our attention, a defective section of rail, and a cracked switch point. Whatever the problem was, we were able to solve it, and move forward. Of course, this maintenance work must continue on a regular basis in the yard. I feel very confident in what we have done and, once again, that whatever challenges face us, we can see them through. This was a team effort right from the start, and we succeeded.

Now that we are finishing up on our tie and track maintenance project for the year, I will tell you that I am planning out a display stand acknowledging the people who donated funds for this project. Plaques have been produced mentioning these people's names, and will be displayed for all to see. I am hoping to build this before the really cold weather sets in. Just a reminder that we are still collecting monies for this tie and track fund. It takes a \$35 donation for a tie purchase. Initially I had planned on placing a plaque on the tie that you had bought, but it will be a lot easier and safer to have the acknowledgements all in one

area for display. For instance, it would be hard to tell you that your tie is on Track 34, the 335<sup>th</sup> tie from the east end of the switch. I certainly do not want people wandering around in the yard looking for their tie.



In other news, we have completed another Pumpkin Patch event. This year's event surpassed all previous years. We grossed over \$15,000 during the three weekends of the event, even with one rainy day. The Pumpkin Patch has proved itself a successful undertaking, with limited volunteer and staffing needs. Even so, the people involved in running this event worked very hard to make it that successful. I thank them all for coming forward and praise their dedication toward our Museum.

Before you know it, our Santa Claus trains will be coming. Time certainly moves quickly at the DRM. This, too, is an event well thought out and planned for. We do need your help, though, with all the different tasks to do, both in the station and on the train. Please step up to the needs of the Museum.

At this time of year, I am very thankful and grateful to all of the volunteers who helped run our Museum this year. I also would like to wish you all a pleasant and healthy holiday season, which will be coming very shortly.



# Changing Tracks

It's a lot easier now that the turntable lead switch has been rebuilt,  
and Tracks #34 and #42 are back in service



Running again on  
Tracks 42 and 34!

## Rail Post Office Car Restored, *Continued from Page 1*

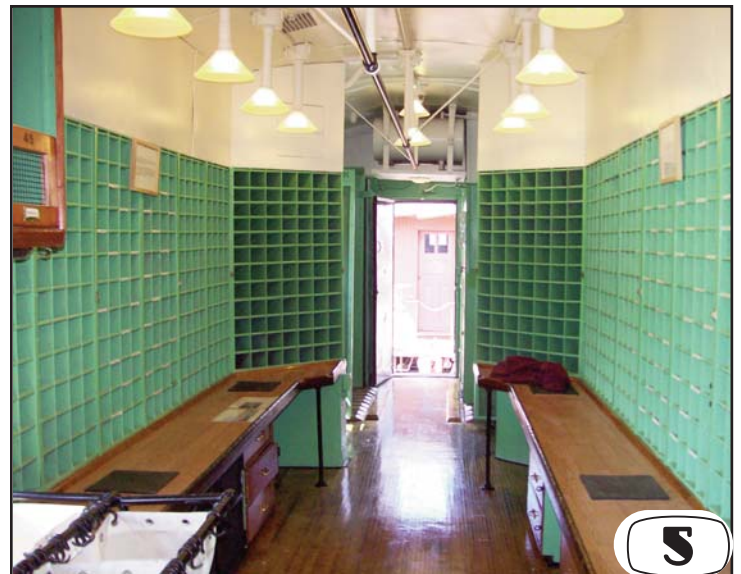
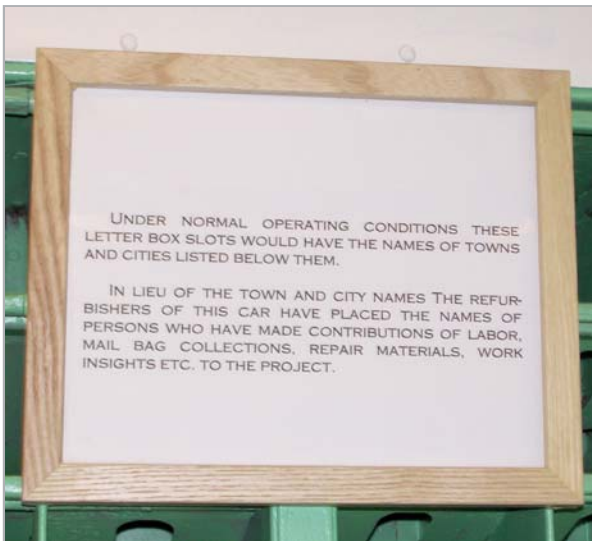


WELCOME TO OUR CIRCA 1910 RAILWAY POST OFFICE CAR. THE CAR WAS ORIGINALLY OWNED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD AND LEASED TO THE RAILWAY POSTAL SERVICE DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES POST OFFICE.

THE DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM RECEIVED THE CAR FROM THE HOUSATONIC RAILROAD CO. ON JULY 7, 2005.

WHILE WE ARE NOT EXPERTS IN MATTERS CONCERNING THE RAILWAY POSTAL SERVICE OR RAILWAY POST OFFICE CARS WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING THE SERVICE OR CAR.

THANK YOU FOR COMING!  
ENJOY YOUR VISIT!



## Gift Shop News, *Continued from Page 1*

ordering most of the children's merchandise, and she has always had a knack for rearranging things to make more space for the new items which have been added.



Kathie putting out merchandise for display. Photo by Patty Osmer.

In addition to working in the Gift Shop, Kathie also served as the Treasurer's Assistant, balancing the Accounts Receivable and preparing deposits, and authorizing Gift Shop Accounts Payable. In past years, she helped fill ticket orders for events and worked at the Big "E" train show in Amherst.

Kathie's interest in railroads began at an early age; she grew up riding the train to school with her brothers and sisters from the hills of Virginia into the city of Lynchburg. Her great grandfather laid track, her grandfather was an engineer on a steam train for the

Southern Railway, and her father was a boilermaker.

Kathie has five sons and several grandchildren.

She also volunteers as a reading mentor at the Morris Street School, and in the Library at the South Street School, both in Danbury.

Kathie has been a huge asset to the Museum, and is indeed one of its "unsung heroes". She will be sorely missed.



Gathering of well-wishers. Photo by Pete McLachlan

Over a dozen friends and co-workers gathered on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> to wish Kathie "good luck" in her retirement from the Museum. She was presented with a wooden plaque containing a "Certificate of Appreciation", and a Vermont Teddy Bear dressed in an Engineer's costume, complete with a red scarf with DRM embroidered on it. Kathie hasn't named the bear as yet, but knows it will occupy a place among her many other stuffed "critters".



Kathie, new teddy bear and Patty. Photo by Steve Gould.

### NEW BOOK!

"The Old Put" by Joe Schiavone with Brian Vangor is now in stock. The high-quality, hard cover book contains over 70 pages of photographs of the New York Central's Putnam Division Railroad (or "The Old Put", as it was fondly known) from Brewster to High Bridge. The book comes with two DVD's. The first disc contains home movies of the last freights and



the end of steam on the line, in black and white and color; the other DVD shows a walking tour of the present rail-trail built on the old roadbed, and describes how the line used to look, as well as showing artifacts which remain. The book, with the 2 DVDs, sells for \$30 - a true value in today's book market.

### MEMBER APPRECIATION WEEKEND

In appreciation of the support of our members, the Gift Shop will hold its annual Member Appreciation Weekend on November 23, 24, & 25. Members will receive 20% off on most items (The books "The Old Put" and "Bridging the Hudson" are excluded - these will remain at 10% off). Sorry, no special orders; first come, first served. Now is the time to stock up for Christmas!

## Pumpkin Patch Trains, *Continued from Page 1*



## Ten Years Ago, *Continued from Page 2*

Mickey Silberbauer, Ed Blackman and Mike Salata attended the annual convention of the Tourist Railway Association, Inc. in Strasburg. Mickey wrote a report on the convention and the seminars that were offered. Among the topics discussed were promoting the museum or tourist train, railroad shop practices when working on projects, the motivation of members, and FRA regulations.

Also reported in the newsletter, was the election by the Board of Mike Salata as secretary to be assisted by his wife Marie, and the appointment of Chris Blackman as Station Master. The DRM received it's own radio frequency from the American Association of Railroads. Member John Greene was in the process of reprogramming them. The Slide Auction held in October was a success, with more planned.

The Birthday Party Crew, headed by Marie Salata, with help from Shirley Peatfield, Suze Blackman, Kathy Fay, Nancy Sniffen, Christen Russo, Jan Carisi, Cindy Moore, Betty Fusek, Diane Harmon, Anna Ridolfi and Cora Weiss, was recognized for having completed its 100th party. The parties were more labor intensive than they are today.



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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

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|-----|------------|---|
| Nov | 28(7:30pm) | Video; caboose odyssey-Gary Gurske  |
| Dec | 5(7:30pm ) | Slides; steam fan trips Pt 2 - Pete McLachlan                                 |
| Dec | 12(7:30pm) | Slides; G.N. empire builder-Carl Liba   |
| Dec | 15(7:45pm) | <b>SAT. NITE</b> ; Electrics & classic diesels of the Northeast-Rick Abramson |
| Dec | 19(7:30pm) | MEMBERSHIP OPEN FORUM   |
| Dec | 20(7:00pm) | Board Meeting (Open to Members)   |
| Dec | 26         | HOLIDAY MERRY CHRISTMAS   |

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



### Contact Information

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### **Change of Address**

If you move, please send your change of address to:  
 Danbury Railway Museum,  
 Attention: Membership Chairman  
 PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813  
 Via Email to [drmmembers@aol.com](mailto:drmmembers@aol.com)

