

# THE RAILYARD DISPATCH

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM  
WINTER 2019-20

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**STAN MADYDA**

The last quarter was an eventful time for the Museum. We started off with the Pumpkin Patch Trains which were successful. Some changes were made to enhance the event. Next up were the Santa Trains and this event would see further enhancements as well. Planning and preparations were going along until the flood in the basement.

On Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, it was discovered that a plug on a water main valve burst flooding the basement with seven feet of water. The boilers, electrical panels and some computer equipment were all damaged. This same valve broke several years ago. The burden of the liability fell on the City of Danbury. The Department of Public Buildings, Water Department, Public Works, paid firefighters and volunteers from the Mill Plain and Beckerle Hose were on the scene that day to get the water pumped out. Once that was done, the building was secured and the Department of Public Buildings took over assigning their workers as well as outside contractors to get the building repaired.

With the first Santa Trains scheduled for the coming weekend, it was decided to cancel the first weekend. This decision was made with much thought given to it. But with no water, electricity, heat and equipment set up inside the building, going forward would have created an unpleasant and unsafe environment. To recoup some of the lost revenue, Friday evening trains were scheduled over the next two weekends. They were not as successful as we had hoped, but are worth revisiting for 2020. The next two weekends saw good crowds. Our revenue could have been better, but we were not that far off from previous years. I did hear that other organizations holding Holiday Events did not have the turnouts they expected. Possibly with Thanksgiving being so late limited families to the available weekend time to take in events, shopping and visiting.

When I was at the event, I stationed myself outside the Santa Car helping people off. The comments I got from families were overwhelmingly positive. Many thanked us for having such an event. Seeing the interaction with our Santa Claus and the families, I said to someone that they wouldn't get this personal attention at the Mall.

The building was ready for the weekend of December 14<sup>th</sup>. Over the next few weeks, the city and contractors were back to do some additional work that did not impact our operations.

A big thank you goes to all of the city workers, volunteer firefighters and contractors who worked long hours to get us up and running.

Our members came out in force to make the Santa Trains successful after the flood. There was no shortage of people willing to give up their Friday evenings so we could add the additional trains. Thank you to all that helped.

A big change is occurring inside the station as the front desk area is being replaced. While the old desk served us well for many years, an idea surfaced a few years ago to make it more user friendly for our staff and visitors. The idea is to make it look a little more like a ticket window similar to the ones by the office and cloak room. Also, woodwork that matches what we already have in place around the station has been milled and is being installed.

With the cold weather upon us, major restoration work in the yard takes some time off. But there are always small repairs and maintenance that needs to be done. Speaking of the yard, be on the look-out for two new pieces of equipment to be coming our way. Metro North has agreed to donate (actually sell for \$1.00 apiece) a covered hopper that they were using in sand service and a New Jersey Comet coach. I'll have more details when the equipment is delivered and we have a little more history on them.

We looked forward to a very active and successful 2020.



CHRISTMAS OUTSIDE IN THE YARD AND INSIDE IN THE SANTA CAR

**DRM Superintendent of Operations  
Annual Report of Operations for 2019  
January, 2020**

The Danbury Railway Museum completed another successful year of operations. My thanks go out to our operating crew, and all of our other museum volunteers that made this possible.

In 2019, we ran 95 days of train service for our visitors, in addition to switching sessions to rearrange exhibits and to prepare for "Hands on the Throttle" events. This year we had eight "Hands on the Throttle" sessions, which was a new record. Tom McCullough already has some lined up for 2020. We ran 16 days of service encompassing our three major events (Easter, Halloween and Christmas), as well as 62 days of Railyard Local trains. These RYL days included other events such as Owney Day, the car show, Danbury Railway Days, and the member picnic.

Primary power in 2019 was 44-tonner 1399, and RS1 0673. Budd 32 was used for Santa trains. We are now down to one coach, pending repairs to two others. Once again, Justin Chapin and Jim Teer did a great job keeping our equipment operating. Hopefully, repairs to one of the coaches will be completed in 2020. Thank you guys.

As a result of being down to one coach, Orion Newell-Vuillemont's SPV business car was pressed into service for the "Pumpkin Patch" event, making for an unusual consist. I am reasonably sure that this was the first and only time an RS-1 could be seen pulling an SPV! Thank you, Orion.

Scheduling a voluntary crew can sometimes be a challenge. The LaPorta brothers, Joe and Mike, seemed always willing and able to step in on short notice. Sometimes, no notice at all! Their service was much appreciated.

We added Alden Burns to our operating crew as a Conductor. He qualified just in time to head back to college. We are looking forward to his participation in the 2020 crew rotation.

Turntable reconstruction continues. Jim Teer completed the milling of the new timbers, and several were placed on the turntable using Justin's crane. This project has been slow, but we are looking to complete this by early summer this year. Jim also lead two trackwork weekends, and headblock timbers were replaced on two switches, along with several regular ties. Justin put our old/new tamper to good use. It was great to have this piece of equipment. Thanks to those who helped! This work is ongoing, and we will need to schedule several track work weekends every year.

We have room for additional Conductors and Engineers, track workers, mechanical department volunteers and car hosts. We welcome newcomers; please pass the word, and consider volunteering as you are able. Please contact me directly if you are interested: [jjvanwagenen@yahoo.com](mailto:jjvanwagenen@yahoo.com).

To all of our operating crew and supporting volunteers, thank you again, and looking forward to working with you in 2020.

**Jeff Van Wagenen, Superintendent of Operation**

## LOCOMOTIVES IN THE YARD

**ALCO 2-6-0 Mogul (1907) Boston & Maine 1455**

**ex Cape Cod 1455**

**exx Edaville 1455**

**exxx Edaville 100**

**exxxx Boston & Maine 1455**

**nee Boston & Maine 100**

**Arrived Danbury 3/22/00**

**Purchased from George Bartholomew, Cape Cod ,**

**Built 1907 by ALCO (American Locomotive Company) Manchester, NH Works**



**MA**

This 2-6-0 was one of 135 Class B-15 Moguls acquired between 1903 and 1910 by the Boston and Maine RR. 2-6-0 signifies two lead wheels, six drive wheels, and zero trailing wheels. Steam engines are called out by the number of their lead, drive and trailing wheels - this particular configuration is known as a "Mogul". 1455 was the sole survivor of the B-15 class Moguls, considered the symbol of the light and backwoods branch lines of the B&M. In 1956 it still ran on commuter trains out of Boston's North Station to Clinton, MA. Thereafter it was displayed at the Edaville RR in South Carver, MA and then sat by itself in Hyannis and Rochester, MA before DRM acquired it.

**ALCO RS-1 (1948)**

**New Haven 0673**

**ex DRM 400**

**exx Green Mountain 400**

**exxx Illinois Central**

**exxxx Gulf Mobile & Ohio 1053**

**exxxxx Illinois Terminal 1253**

**nee Illinois Terminal 753**

**Arrived Danbury 1/19/96**

**Purchased from Green Mountain RR 12/27/95**

**Built 1948 by ALCO in Schenectady, NY**

**Dimensions: L 55' W 10' H 14'6"**



Bought by the Green Mountain RR in 1976 and put in storage until 1983, and then spent several years in seasonal excursion service; it was used in freight service as recently as December 1995. The last New Haven RS-1 was numbered 0671; DRM continued the numbering sequence after painting it in New Haven colors. (Another organization had already created an 0672). ALCO pioneered the concept of the road switcher with the 1000 horsepower, 6 cylinder RS-1. Prior to delivery of the first RS-1 in 1941, all diesel locomotives were built for one kind of service, such as yard switching, road freight, or passenger trains; the RS-1 could perform all three functions. This concept was an immediate hit with many railroads anxious to cut the tremendous expense of running steam locomotives. World War II manufacturing restrictions meant they had to wait several years to take advantage of the flexibility RS-1s and other road switchers offered, but the railroads eventually bought 417 ALCO RS-1s between 1941 and 1960. This 19-year production run is by far the longest for any diesel locomotive produced in the United States. This unit is operational.

## "Untapped New York" Visits the DRM by Stan Madyda

"Untapped New York" is a website that features things to do in New York City as well as exploring the many secrets of the city, its arts and culture. When founder Michelle Young learned that the baggage car that was stored for years under the Waldorf Astoria was in our museum, she wanted to come and learn all about the car. Of course, this is the car that for many years has been an urban legend as being the car that transported President Franklin D. Roosevelt's baggage whenever he visited the Waldorf. This myth has been broadcast on the History Channel, the Today Show, PBS and even the BBC. Michelle's mission was to debunk



this myth that has been allowed to go on way too long.

Michelle contacted the Museum and arranged to visit on December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting with Steve Gould and me. Steve made a copy of a Trains Magazine from several years ago for her as an introduction. We spent some time discussing what we knew about the car, the myth and how we got the car from Metro North. We then went into the yard so she could see the car first hand, take pictures and ask questions.

What we do know is the car was built for the New York Central Railroad in 1924 by American Car & Foundry.

Early numbers on the car need to be researched as this particular lot of cars had two re-numberings. In 1948, the car number was 7447. At some point, the car was given a five-digit number, 24206, most likely a maintenance of way car number for either the New York Central or Penn Central. The car was then used as a tool and storage car for the cranes, eventually becoming part of the double ended crane consist.

Michelle's article is below:

<https://untappedcities.com/2019/12/12/secret-fdr-train-car-no-longer-beneath-grand-central-and-was-never-his/>



These doors are typically not found on a baggage car. This is the typical door on a baggage car. Why the strange doors????

## About the Pocket Watch From Gary Meno

### The best watches were found at the train station.



Sound a bit funny? Well, for about 500 towns across the northern United States, that's where the best watches were found. Why were the best watches found at the train station? The railroad company wasn't selling the watches, not at all. The telegraph operator was. Most of the time the telegraph operator was located in the railroad station because the telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks from town to town. It was usually the shortest distance and the right-of-way had already been secured for the rail line.

Most of the station agents were also skilled telegraph operators and it was the primary way they communicated with the railroad. They would know when trains left the previous station and when they were due at their next station. And it was the telegraph operator who had the watches. As a matter of fact, they sold more of them than almost all the stores combined for a period of about 9 years.

This was all arranged by "Richard", who was a telegraph operator himself. He was on duty in the North Redwood, Minnesota train station one day when a load of watches arrived from the East. It was a huge crate of pocket watches. No one ever came to claim them. So Richard sent a telegram to the manufacturer and asked them what they wanted to do with the watches. The manufacturer didn't want to pay the freight back, so they wired Richard to see if he could sell them. So Richard did. He sent a wire to every agent in the system asking them if they wanted a cheap, but good, pocket watch. He sold the entire case in less than two days and at a handsome profit. That started it all.



He ordered more watches from the watch company and encouraged the telegraph operators to set up a display case in the station offering high quality watches for a cheap price to all the travelers. It worked! It didn't take long for the word to spread and, before long, people other than travelers came to the train station to buy watches. Richard became so busy that he had to hire a professional watchmaker to help him with the orders. That was

Alvah. And the rest is history as they say. The business took off and soon expanded to many other lines of dry goods. Richard and Alvah left the train station and moved their company to Chicago -- and it's still there.

YES, IT'S A LITTLE KNOWN FACT that for a while in the 1880's, the biggest watch retailer in the country was at the train station. It all started with a telegraph operator: Richard Sears and partner Alvah Roebuck!



## Wednesday Night Presentations By Stan Madyda

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Wednesday night presentation featured Dan Gall, Sr. talking about the Putnam Division of the New York Central Railroad. Dan, a life member of the DRM, has always had a passion for this line and authored the successful book "The Putnam Division." Through the years, Dan have given many talks on the subject. With a bit of publicity, we had 29 people in attendance on a very cold night. Six people were members we don't see on a regular basis and six were visiting the Museum for the first time. A couple of them signed up for Hands on the Throttle.

Wednesday night meetings go back to the early days of the Museum when we were based out of a store front on Ives Street. The meetings were designed to keep members and the general public apprised of efforts being undertaken to move the Museum forward. Almost every night ended with a presentation on railroading, mostly on the form of slides. Over 25 years, we have kept the Wednesday night tradition going. In recent years, we have seen a drop off of the number of available presenters and many nights need to substitute a video. As a result, attendance has dropped off.

We'd like to see more programs like Dan presented. Earlier in the year, member Kent Patterson did a talk on railroads in Westchester County and had copies of his book available for signing. Kent's program was also well attended. If you have slides or electronic media of trains and would like to do a presentation on a Wednesday night, please contact Stan Madyda or John Barton. We have equipment that you can use. This does not have to be limited to DRM members. Anyone who has a collection they would like to share are welcomed.



**Pictures from Dan Gallio's presentation on Wednesday Dec 18, 2019.**

**WHAT:** ANNUAL SEMINAR ON THE ROLE OF TOUR GUIDES AND CAR HOSTS

**WHERE:** AT THE MUSEUM

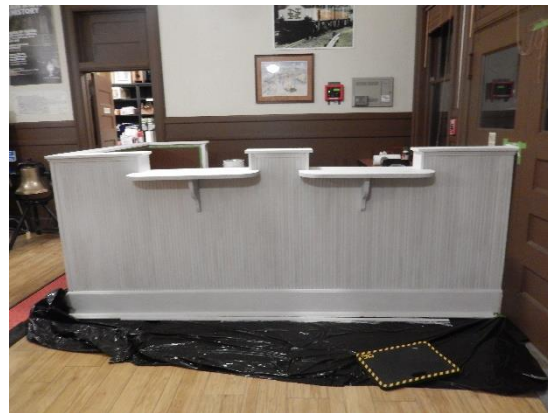
**WHEN:** SATURDAY, MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup>

**TIME:** STARTING AT 10:30AM.

COORDINATED BY John Barton  
Returning and new volunteers for these two important museum activities are invited.



### ON GOING ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM



### FRONT DESK RENOVATIONS



### THE MILL PLAIN STATION



## DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM 2020 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday Evening Events, 7:30 pm

Train rides weekends April - November, subject to availability

<b>January 25 &amp; 26</b>	Amherst Train Show	See us at the "Big E" Train show, W. Springfield, MA
<b>* April 4, 5, 10, 11</b>	<i>Bunny Trains</i>	<i>Train rides to the Easter Bunny's Special Coach</i>
<b>May 10</b>	Mother's Day	Mothers ride free with child's paid admission
<b>May 25</b>	Memorial Day	Open 12-4
<b>* June 13</b>	Steel & Wheels Car Show	Car show, raffles, prizes. To benefit a local nonprofit
<b>June 21</b>	Father's Day	Fathers ride free with child's paid admission.
<b>July 3</b>	Independence Day Observed	Open 10-4 With train rides, Closed on July 4th
<b>* July 18</b>	Owney, the Railway Post Office Dog Day	Stories, history, and children's activities to honor Owney, the famous RPO dog.
<b>* August 1 &amp; 2</b>	Danbury Railway Days	Special Celebration with special activities. Free admission for past & present railroad employees.
<b>September 7</b>	Labor Day	Open 12-4
<b>September 12</b>	First Responder's Day	Free admission & train rides for First Responders (with Id card or in uniform) & their families
	Member Picnic	Open to all members, signup required
<b>* October 3,4,10,11 17, 18, 24, 25</b>	<i>Pumpkin Patch</i>	<i>Take a train ride to the Pumpkin Patch. Free pumpkin for children, Free Cider &amp; Cookies for everyone</i>
<b>November 7</b>	Military Appreciation Day	Free train ride for past & present military personnel (with id or in uniform) and their families
<b>* December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20</b>	<i>Santa Trains</i>	<i>Santa's Special Train Rides. Special evening trains on Saturday, the 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, &amp; 19<sup>th</sup></i>

**\*Special Fundraising Event with Special Admission.**

Contact the Museum or visit our web site for up-to-date schedule. Reservations suggested for Easter Bunny and Santa Trains. Reserve online at [www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org](http://www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org)

**CLOSED MOST HOLIDAYS. CHECK WEB SITE FOR SCHEDULE, OR CALL.**  
Hours and pricing may differ for Special Events. Check our web site for more information and for hours. All events & schedule subject to change.

**HOURS: June 1 - August 31: Closed Mon. Open Tue - Fri, 10 - 4, Sat 10 - 5, Sun 12 - 5**  
**September 1 - May 31: Closed Mon & Tue. Open Wed - Sat, 10 - 4, Sun 12 - 4**

**Like us on Facebook, & follow us on Instagram @DanburyRR!**

### DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

120 White Street  
Danbury, CT 06810  
203.778.8337

[www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org](http://www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org)  
1/19/2020 V4

[info@danburyrail.org](mailto:info@danburyrail.org)



# DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>FEB. 19 CONRAIL 1972 PENNA. 1852<br/>HISTORIC PROMOTIONAL FILMS<br/>PRODUCED BY THE TWO LINES</b> | <b>JOSE ALVES</b>      |
| <b>MAR. 11 CATSKILL MOUNTAIN RAILROAD<br/>1904 FILM BY THOS. EDISON</b>                              | <b>JOHN BARTON</b>     |
| <b>MAR. 18 DRM ANNUAL MEETING</b>  |                        |
| <b>MAR. 25 SLIDES: NEW HAVEN RR<br/>BOSTON &amp; ALBANY RR</b>                                       | <b>GARY GURSKE</b>     |
| <b>APR. 8 SLIDES: GOLDEN DAYS<br/>NEW HAVEN RR</b>   | <b>PETER MCLACHLAN</b> |
| <b>APR. 22 MOVIE NIGHT COMMUTING PART I<br/>APR. 29 MOVIE NIGHT COMMUTING PART II</b>                | <b>TOM MURRAY</b>      |
| <b>MAY 13 MULTI MEDIA PRESENTATION<br/>YANKEE RAILROADS 2019</b>                                     | <b>STEVE GOULD</b>     |

Danbury Railway Museum  
WEDNESDAY EVENING  
PROGRAM SCHEDULE --  
Winter-Early Spring, 2020



- Programs begin at 7:30 pm.
- Building and Gift Shop open at 7:00.

Jan 29	"The Little Engines that Could" (1982) East Broad Top RR. Last of the Narrow Gauge	Dan Foley
Feb 4	Demise of a British Branch Line Railway ... and Its Community Based Return Part I [popcorn - comedy]	
Feb 11	do. Part II	
<del>Feb 19</del>	<del>President's Choice</del>	<del>Stan Madyda</del>
Feb 26	Leap Year - Under-ground Over-water (UK)	John Barton
Mar 4	President's Choice	Stan Madyda
Mar 11	Catskill Mtn Rwy Archival Thos. Edison (1904)	John Barton
Mar 18	ANNUAL MEETING - DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM	
Mar 25	New Haven Railroad [slide program]	Gary Gurske
Apr 1	April Fools' Day t.b.a.	
Apr 8	Golden Days of the New Haven RR [slides]	Peter McLachlan
Apr 15	President's Choice	Stan Madyda
<del>Apr 22</del>	<del>Around North America [slide program]</del>	<del>John Barton</del>
<del>Apr 29</del>	<del>Chris Hansen collection - video narration</del>	

- Future Program ideas needed, especially original material:  
slides and film/video by members and friends of the Museum  
are most welcome -- both historical and contemporary.

Submit information to DRM Front Desk. (203) Spring 8-8337.



### WHEN YOU VISIT THE MUSEUM SEE IF YOU CAN FIND:

COMMON STOCK CERTIFICATE FOR  
THE NEW YORK, CHICAGO, AND ST LOUIS  
RAILROAD CO.

TICKET TAKERS HAT

PICTURE PAINTED BY THE ARTIST VIC  
WESTMAN

AN AMERICAN FLYER MODEL TRAIN  
DISPLAY

TRACK 23 SCHEDULE BOARD

# DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

## 2020 EASTER BUNNY EXPRESS



**April  
4, 5, 10 & 11**

Friday & Saturday, trains every 1/2 hour 10:30—2:30\*

Sunday, trains every 1/2 hr. 12:30—2:30

\*No train at 12:00

**\$12 ages 2 + (Under 24 months, free)**

**Ride a vintage train through the Railyard to the Easter Bunny's Special Coach!**

**Receive a gift from the Bunny!**

**Coloring station, temporary tattoos, operating model layouts, play area & more!**

**Reservations available**

Reserve online: [www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org](http://www.danburyrailwaymuseum.org)



120 WHITE STREET  
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PHONE: (203) 778.8337

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[info@danburyrail.org](mailto:info@danburyrail.org)



# DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

## Birthday Parties!

Available January- November

Celebrate your child's birthday in our 100-year-old station.

### January - March Parties include:

Admission to Museum & Railyard, use of party area, Locomotive Cab Ride Pass\* for Birthday Child & 1 adult, 10% off in the Gift Shop for all party purchases. Party Fee: \$150

### April - November Parties include:

Admission to Museum & Railyard, Vintage Train Ride, Turntable Ride, Locomotive Cab Ride for Birthday Child & 1 adult, 10% off in the Gift Shop for all party purchases. Party Fee: \$200

The party fee provides for 24 attendees. Additional attendees will be charged \$6 (winter) or \$8 (summer). A non-refundable deposit is required at time of reservation. Museum members receive \$10 off regular party prices. Train, turntable, and cab ride subject to availability. Weather permitting, party will be held outdoors under the canopy of our 1903 station. \$25 surcharge for parties held during Special Events. \*Cab Ride Pass good from April - Nov and does not include Museum Admission.

Parties are held on Saturdays from 11am - 1pm and 2pm - 4pm, and on Sundays from 1pm - 3pm

Call (203)778-8337 for Reservations.



120 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810  
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