

# THE RAILYARD DISPATCH

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The Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum

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## Shortlines



### DRM HOSTS WEDDING PARTY SHOOT

-Steve Gould

After days of lousy weather the skies were crystal clear and deep blue for a wedding party that arrived the afternoon of October 12. At 12:45 PM a large black bus pulled in to the DRM parking lot with the wedding party. Besides the happy



couple who were yet to tie the knot, there were six bridesmaids and six groomsmen, for a total party of 14. As they had more places to go and people to see, including having their wedding, they quickly moved through the yard, with Museum Secretary Steve Gould as host, stopping at various pieces for photos, and videos as well. They started with the RPO including the happy couple simulating a mail bag pickup from the open side door. Next were shots using the #1455 steam engine as a prop. The entire party boarded RDC #32 for photos of all of them looking out the windows. The happy couple also posed under hook of the wreck crane. Last shots of the day used RS1 #0673 with the couple on the walkway along the long hood with the rest of the party lined up next to the engine. The group departed the Museum at around 2:15 PM, happy to have the first photo location behind them.

### DRM GETS NYC WHISTLE POST

-Jeff VanWagenen



A New York Central whistle post previously located on Vic Westman's property was moved to the DRM on Halloween. In this photo, the whistle post is suspended from a small pine tree, before being

loaded onto Jeff Van Wagenen's trailer. The whistle post will be 'replanted' in the DRM yard, as soon as the decision is made as to where to put it. Stan Madyda and Pete McLaughlin take a rest while Jeff snapped the photo.

### MILL PLAIN STATION ARRIVES!

-Jeff VanWagenen

The walls of the Mill Plain station were moved to the DRM yard on Friday, October 26th. It was "touch and go" to get the 48 foot trailer over the Still River bridge and into the yard. We didn't have a "plan B" and were thankful for the tractor trailer driver's skill and perseverance.



Dan Gallo stands on the new station deck and films the crane unloading the four walls from the tractor trailer.

Marty Grossman, Chairman of the Building Committee, stands next to Stan Madyda and Dan Gallo, along with Dave Gengo and Jan Desiato of Salem Preservation, in



front of the successfully unloaded walls.

Below, Stan Madyda has captured the Mill Plain

Station being disassembled for the move.



Help us reconstruct the station. See Page 3.

## A DAY'S WORK AT DANBURY ENGINE HOUSE

-Pete McLachlan

Before I went firing, I worked at Cedar Hill Motor Storage, then Danbury for two years in the Engine House. I worked 2 nights (Wednesday & Thursday) 11pm – 7am, then three days (Saturday – Monday) 7am – 3pm. I will talk about one of my days in this article.

After signing in at 7, I would check the day line up for the engine assignments, and would go to inspect them for needed tools (for example, a hammer and a Stillson wrench), and then check to see if the locomotive had two white flags, one red flag, one green flag, six fuses, at least 10 torpedoes, rags, and one red and one clear lantern. Also I would make sure the cab was swept and the windows clean. There were about 6 diesel locomotives to check. Once done I would go to the electricians to check on them also. There were three or four for me to do. Diesels took me about 2 hours to do, electricians about an hour.

After that, back to the turntable to set the diesels out for the day's work. The hostler would run them and would position the table. The locomotives would come out of the engine house in a certain order to make up the train's power in the right order by the locomotive makeup.

After this we would turn to two or three diesels that arrive on the pit in early morning. One was the night yard switch, the other a local freight that worked during the night. The hostler would back them back to the fuel shed and I would fuel them while the machinist along with the electrician would do a look-over and repair whatever the engineer had booked. By now, it was about noon, and two diesels have arrived off the Pittsfield-GCT train and an electric arrived also.

Now over to the diesel fuel stand for the two diesels. They took fuel and water for the steam generator. After fueling I would get on top of them to sand them from a hose that hung off the sand tower to the lids over the sandbox which was on top of the locomotives. After fueling and sanding them we would separate them and put them into the engine house to work on them. I would check them for supplies, clean cabs and windows as I did on the locomotives going out earlier. Then I would cross the railyard and do the same to the motor that I received from GCT. I would fuel her and clean the cab windows and filler her sand boxes.

By now it was well past noon; work caught up, it was time for lunch, around 1 – 1:30. We would meet inside and the on-duty engine-house people would gather and talk while we ate. All NHRR personnel were a great bunch of people to work with. After lunch the rest of the shift was drying sand to get ready to blow it up to the Motor Storage or the diesel sand tower. About 2:45, I washed up and went home until the next day.

There is so much to tell about working in Danbury Engine House that it would fill a library. Night shift was a whole different ballgame – this will make for another story.

The two photos are of three electricians and four diesels I had just serviced.



1207, 1218, 1224, & 1220 at Danbury, June 1957  
Federal Fur Co in Background.



NHRR Motors 321, 324 & 320 at  
Danbury Motor Storage December 1956

## NOT ALWAYS ABOUT THE DESTINATION

-Jose A. Alves

Last week I, along with Justin Chapin and 14 other folks from local tourist railroads, took a private charter up to Niagara Falls NY aboard locally owned New York Central #3, and boy was it an amazing experience.

New York Central #3 was built by Pullman in 1928 for Harold S. Vanderbilt, then President of the New York Central Railroad. Today the car is owned locally by Varchandra, Inc, based out of Brookfield Connecticut; owner Lovett Smith has been a member and friend of the museum for many years.



This was my first time traveling aboard “private varnish”, not to mention one with a real observation deck. NYC-3 is equip with a full kitchen, dining room, lounge, and sleeping accommodations for 12 - a hotel suite on wheels capable of reaching speeds of over 100 MPH.

We enjoyed the views of the Hudson River from the windows and the occasional head-turn people would give seeing a Pullman green luxury car coupled to the sleek silver Amtrak cars. While stopped at stations people would come up ask questions and take pictures.

When the car was booked for this specific trip it was a “bare boat charter” meaning we had full use of facilities, but had to supply our own beverages and sustenance. The person who organized most of the charter and gathered the people necessary to make it happen was the very enterprising 17 year old, Orion Newall-Vuillemot. Orion is the owner of two cars stored at the museum and a boxcar in his backyard. Charters usually range from bare boat like ours to full service complete with paid crew waiting to cook and serve wonderful meals. Slicing tomatoes at 80mph is something I’ll never forget, and I can still count to ten.

The observation deck was open whenever we were traveling under 80 mph. And inside there was plenty of comfortable seating for the 10 hour trip. When we reached Niagara, we went out for dinner and returned to the car for a night cap and for one of the most comfortable night’s sleep I’ve ever experienced.

The others traveling with us were all strangers in the beginning but the shared interest in railroads, history preservation, and keeping that alive for future generations brought us closer.

The return trip was equally enjoyable but bittersweet. Throughout the trip we made friends with our fellow passengers, and the personable Amtrak employees who helped us, the engineer for the return trip even came back to ask us if his stops and starts were smooth.

Even if you aren’t a railfan, (which I never claim to be) I suggest you experience luxury rail travel at least once. The stresses of traveling are non-existent, the comradery is second to none, and even the wine tastes better aboard a train.



### HELP US RECONSTRUCT THE MILL PLAIN STATION

Now that the station has been moved to the Museum, in order to reconstruct it on its new base, we are seeking individual and corporate funds to support this endeavor. Once completed, the station will become a destination for the Rail Yard Local train which the Museum operates during weekends most of the year and at special events within the rail yard. Send your tax deductible donation to:

Treasurer, Danbury Railway Museum, PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS

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

## ARTICLE SUBMISSION

Please send articles or ideas for articles you would like to see:

### Mail:

The Danbury Railway Museum  
Attention: Newsletter  
P.O. Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813

**Phone:** 203-778-8337; **Fax:** 203-778-1836

**Email:** NEWS4DRM@GMAIL.COM

**PLEASE LET US KNOW IF  
YOUR MAILING OR EMAIL  
ADDRESS CHANGES**

If moving, please send your new address to:

Danbury Railway Museum,  
Attention: Membership Chairman  
P.O. Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813

Via Email to: [drmmembers@aol.com](mailto:drmmembers@aol.com)

**ALL NEWSLETTERS FROM 2001  
TO PRESENT CAN BE FOUND ON  
OUR WEBSITE,**

[WWW.DANBURYRAILWAYMUSEUM.ORG](http://WWW.DANBURYRAILWAYMUSEUM.ORG)

**IF YOU CAN HELP US IN ANY OF THE  
AREAS BELOW, PLEASE EMAIL**

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

**OR CALL US (203.778.8337)**

## GIFT SHOP/FRONT DESK

We need Gift Shop & Front Desk staff. If you can volunteer even ½ day a week, we need you.

## OFFICERS/DIRECTORS POSITIONS

Officer terms (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) and some Director terms, will expire in March, 2019. Although this seems like a long time away, if you are interested in helping to shape the future of the Museum, now is the time to think about running for one of the positions. Contact any director or officer for more information.

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

We need a Newsletter Editor so that we can keep the **Railyard Dispatch** going.



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