

Danbury Departures

Volume No. 19

August 2002

President's Report to the Membership

Dear Members,

I'd like to thank you all for the help that you've given to the Museum over the last few years. In that time we've moved forward at a steady pace with many different projects and accomplishments that have made us look and operate as a viable tourist attraction in the State of Connecticut. In certain respects, we've almost moved too quickly in our growth at the Museum. Although we still have a way to go, your perseverance and dedication to the Museum and our cause have paid off over these eight years.

We must all remember to stand back every once in a while and visit the Museum and realize where we were and where we are now. It impresses and amazes me looking at the variety of equipment in the yard, the changes in the Station building, the growth of the Library, the expansion of the Gift Shop, the new exhibits, and basically the facility as a whole.

We have reached a point now where we actually have spare equipment to run on the weekends. Also, our technical staff has begun an aggressive program in the maintenance of that equipment. And speaking of equipment, the RDC 32 is one of those incredible success stories. Many of our newer members don't know what the 32 was when it came to Danbury but now we have proudly used it in regular weekend service. In due time, I'm sure, the restoration of the 32 will be complete.

Although some of our ventures weren't as successful as the 32, we must continue to plan out new ideas and expand upon some of the older ones. I'm very supportive and proud of you people who have made this Museum what it is today. Anything from the front desk people, to the N-Gauge layout, to the newsletter, or to the people who show up on Saturdays for work parties, these are the people who have taken the time to help the Museum grow. These are the people who I support and of whom I am very proud.

Keep up the good work and be proud of what you've accomplished so far.

Attention Kids!

The Danbury Railway Museum is pleased to announce a new Youth Involvement Program geared towards bringing kids into the organization. Every youth that has yet to graduate high school is eligible to participate. The program will include safety instruction, a comprehensive tour of our facilities, and then the ability to volunteer in all sorts of positions. There is a job for everyone at the museum. All necessary supplies for doing the job safely will be provided.

If you are interested, please contact Charlie Albanetti or Andrew McClellan at the museum (203.778.8337) or by email (theteentrack@aol.com or badandymc@aol.com). We hope to hear from you soon!

Mission....

The purpose of the Danbury Railway Museum is to organize and manage a railway museum in Danbury, Connecticut and to engage in any and all activities convenient to said purposes. The goal of said museum shall be to educate the public to the history of railroading and the role of the railroads, both as part of a natural heritage and as an institution in contemporary society. The corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes.

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Please send change of address to:

Danbury Railway Museum, Inc
Attn: Membership Chairman
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Danbury, CT 06813-0090

Or Via Email to:
drmmembers@aol.com

Danbury Departures is made possible by volunteers.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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The Yard Inside - August 2002

By Wade W. Roese

Donations and contributions continue: thanks to all whom have shared their collections with the museum. In addition to the many model railroad donations, we have received other donations of artifacts which we wish to acknowledge. Hopefully, we will be more personal with future recognition's.

N gauge:

Refinement of trackwork and running equipment continues. Although a few photographs of buildings in and around the yard have come to us we continue to seek photos of the area and 1950's. In addition, anyone willing to undertake an N gauge building is encouraged to hop on board.

HO gauge:

O.K. Ladies and Gentleman, now that we have some real nice HO "stuff", we need a place to put it! That means a layout, not a closet. Anyone with a magic wand or a crystal ball is encouraged to provide their ideas and thoughts.

Please contact Jeff Van Wagenen or yours truly:

Jeff Vanwagenen (203)-263-3627 or jjvanwagenen@yahoo.com.

Wade W. Roese (203)-938-3611 or Terwad@aol.com.

O Gauge:

A warm welcome back to Bob Westerfield!

G gauge and "Live Steam":

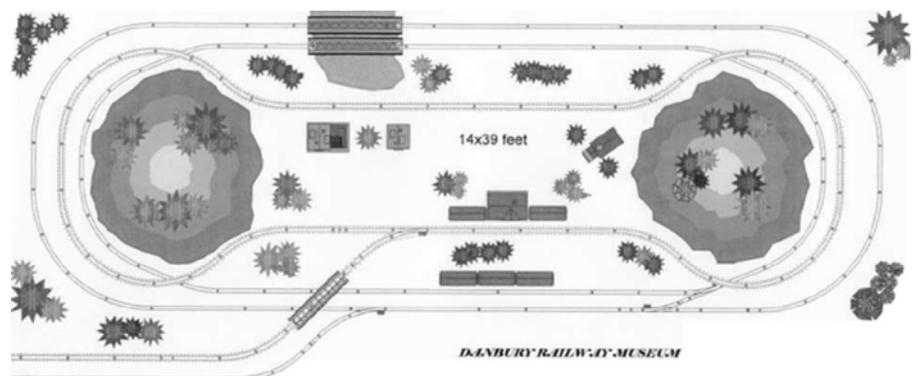
How's that sound? Not quite inside, but we're going to claim adoption privileges anyway. Bob Boothe at (914)-332-9552 or mogul1455@hotmail.com and Harry Leeds are heading up the previously mentioned Garden Railroad. They have submitted a proposed layout diagram which also includes provision for a live steam track. A copy of the layout is shown below. Bob and Harry are also hoping to attract people interested in gardening (an additional venue for members of the DRM. Please contact Bob if you have an interest in this project.

New Members:

The museum always welcomes new members. Unfortunately, they don't always arrive with a sign that says "new Member". When I joined the museum I assumed everyone I met was an old member. I continued this assumption as I met new faces. I was obviously in error, but new faces still present a problem; are they new or old members we have not met. In general, the membership of the DRM is very cordial and look forward to ascertaining the interests of new people (members, non members or prospective members).

Say hello to the boys in "the Yard inside".

Thanks,
Wade



Rail Excursion Across Canada (Part 2)

By Larry Vodra

In the last issue, we had just arrived in Edmonton, Alberta, a city of about 950,000 and located on the N. Saskatchewan River, which flows north into Hudson Bay. Among other things, the city hosts the world's largest shopping mall, the West Edmonton Mall, which is some 100 square feet larger than the Mall of America near Minneapolis. Edmonton also has two historic trolley lines, one about 1/2 mile long, and the other nearly 3 miles long (both operate only during the summer) and the Alberta Railway Museum, which we were unable to visit due to our late arrival.

After 1 1/2 days in Edmonton, we traveled to Jasper by bus (this was on one of the days when "**The Canadian**" didn't operate), over a highway which generally parallels the railway tracks. Jasper National Park is one of 4 National and 2 Provincial parks which lie adjacent to each other, and the town of Jasper is about 160 miles north of the better-known resort town of Banff, which lies on the **CP's** coast-to-coast route. Other than lots of scenic beauty, ice caves, glaciers, raging rivers, waterfalls, and wild animals, Jasper is known as an operating crew change station for **VIA** and **CN** crews (service crew remains on board) and boasts a multi-track switch yard which is always busy. If you're staying on the train past Edmonton, plan on a 75-@nute service stop (and dome window wash) at Jasper.

After 2 days in Jasper, we caught a little train called the "**Skeena**," which means "river of mists" in the Gitksan Indian dialect. This is sort of a laid-back operation. We left Jasper 15 minutes late, made 1 scheduled and 2 unscheduled stops, and arrived in Prince George, BC, 15 minutes early! The train is short (1 locomotive, a baggage/dormitory car, 2 coaches, and a 4-bedroom/lounge/dome/round-end observation car. All 4 cars are identical to the 1955-Budd equipment on the "**Canadian**"), the crew is friendly, and any time the engineer sees something of interest, he slows the train and radios back to the conductor of what and where to look. After leaving Jasper, we saw the only double-track section of line since Toronto. This was about 30 miles up through Yellowhead Pass, the lowest-elevation pass through the Rocky Mountains anywhere in Canada or the U. S., at 3,760', with maximum grades of only about 1.5% in either direction. (By comparison, the original **CP** route through Rogers Pass, has several grades that approach 3% and the pass is 4,354' elevation).

Shortly thereafter, we passed the highest mountain in Canada, Mt. Robson, which is 12,972' high. The one scheduled stop is at the town of McBride, pop. 710. After leaving town, on the parallel dirt highway, there is a sign which says "No Services next 174 km." The highway then disappears, and for the remaining 103 miles to Prince George, the train travels through mostly virgin forest where the ratio of moose to people is about 50: 1.

The "**Skeena**" spends the night in Prince George, which has a population of 72,000 and is the largest city between Vancouver and Anchorage. If you want to take the rest of the trip to Prince Rupert, which is another 465 miles, you must make your own lodging reservation for the night in Prince George (VIA won't do it for you). But there are over 50 hotels & motels in the city, so that is no problem. The train arrives at 7 pm and leaves the next morning at 7:45 am, and takes a leisurely 12 1/2 hours (3 7 mph average) for the second day of its journey.

Our final rail adventure was to be on the "**Cariboo Prospector**," which is not named for an animal (caribou) but instead for a mountain range (Cariboo Mountains) along which the train travels for nearly 1 00 miles. The first thing we noticed was that we were going to a different rail station than the **VIA Rail** station we had left the night before. Today's train was operated by **BC Rail**, which is wholly-owned by the province of British Columbia, and their station is across town from the **VIA** station. The second thing we noticed was, just like in Toronto, no train! It seems that the northbound train had hit a deer, part of which had gone under the train and knocked off some air hoses and electrical connections. It had taken about 4 hours to find a repair crew, get the spare parts needed, and ride a speeder to the location of the now-inoperative train to make the necessary repairs. The train was going to be leaving about 3 hours late, so we were taken to a little nondescript diner where **BC Rail** bought breakfast for all of us. (That turned out to be the only hot food we had all day.) There were 3 tours scheduled to take the train; our tour and another Elderhostel tour held out for the train ride, while a group of British tourists chartered a bus and got to Vancouver that way.

The "**Cariboo Prospector**" turned out to be a 3-car train of very old, tired RDC'S, with fixed direction non-reclining seats and marginal heating (we wore winter jackets the entire trip). The lead car was an RDC-2 where the British tour was to sit and which handled the occasional non-tourist passengers, followed by two RDC-1's, where the Elderhostel tours were assigned one car each, and told to stay in their assigned cars! As we got underway, a woman's voice came over the P. A. system, introducing the "service personnel" Susan and Tom, the conductor Carol, and the engineer Rick (that's the first time I have ever been "introduced" to the operating crew!). The service personnel made frequent announcements as we rolled along, telling us when to have our cameras ready and on which side of the train to look.

The north-south route between Prince George and Vancouver was one of the last major rail projects in North America, with the "silver spike" ceremony occurring in 1952. It is also one of the least straight, with nearly continuous curves for the entire 463 miles (which is much too long a trip to take in an RDC!). Occasionally the train reached a speed of 45 mph (I was sitting where I could see the speedometer in the cab of our car), but most of the trip was in the 20 mph speed range. The scenery was spectacular, much of it along nearly vertical cliffs where the train is preceded by a "rock car," which is a pickup truck on rail wheels with a variety of rock removal equipment in the bed, which leads every train over certain stretches of track. There was a crew change at Lillooet, 306 miles from Prince George, and by then it was getting dark. The new crew was less talkative, and since there was nothing to see, most passengers went to sleep. The train finally coughed into Vancouver at 1:45 am, long after its 9 pm scheduled time! (The second conductor, with whom I had a long talk, told me that the RDC operation would probably be scrapped at the end of the summer tourist season, and whether or not the line's other train, the luxury "**Whistler Northwind**" would continue was still open to question.)

After 2 days in Vancouver, we flew back to Montreal to get our car, which I had parked at the airport. The plane left on time, arrived on time, and they didn't lose out suitcases - what more can you ask for these days? Then we drove 7 hours back home to Brookfield, Connecticut.

If you're interested, I offer 3 suggestions.

- 1) Book early - the "**Canadian**" in particular often sells out months in advance.
- 2) Travel during the "off" season, when **VIA Rail** fares can be as much as 35% lower than summer fares, plus an additional 10% off all fares if you're over age 60. All **VIA Rail** trains operate year-round, but the other Western Canada tour trains, such as the "**Whistler Northwind**," the "**Rocky Mountaineer**," the "**Royal Canadian Pacific**," and occasional "**American Orient Express**" excursions through Canada, operate only during the summer season.
- 3) On the "**Canadian**", ask for double bedroom "F." It's larger than bedrooms "X" to "E," and is directly across the passageway from the shower! There is one bedroom "F" per car!



This 4-8-2 passenger locomotive is on display at Jasper. A plaque says that it was built in 1929, and operated until 1974. My question: How many of us would look this good after working for 45 years followed by 28 years of retirement?



"**The Skeena**" as it departs from Jasper.



"**The Cariboo Prospector**"
ready to leave Prince George, B. C.

And What Did You Do For The Railroad?

By Steve Gould

Like John O'Hern wrote in the July issue of Departures, I too am asked what I did for the railroad during railyard tours at DRM. And, aside from a college summer job as a relief ticket agent for the LIRR, I never worked for a railroad. But, I did work *with* railroads during a 35-year career in distribution and logistics for two companies.

After completing a three-year hitch in the U.S. Army Transportation Corps (aviation, not railroads), I joined Standard Brands Incorporated in 1964 as a staff assistant in the Distribution Division. Five years later, I moved to the position of Manager of Railway Equipment in the Traffic Department.

First, a little about Standard Brands. SBI was formed in 1929 by the combination of three companies: the Fleischmann Company, the Royal Baking Powder Company, and Chase & Sanborn. Later on, Clinton Corn Processing Company, Planters Nut and Chocolate Company, Standard Margarine Company (Blue Bonnet and Fleischmann's), Curtiss Candy Company, and International Latex joined the SBI family. In the 1980's, SBI was merged into Nabisco with F. Ross Johnson as the CEO. SBI, as a corporate identity, disappeared.

SBI had three different rail car fleets each controlled independently of the other. The largest was that operated by Clinton Corn Processing, numbering over 1,200 mostly tank cars. (In 1966, during the Mississippi River floods, the Clinton plant called railfan Lou Keller and asked to borrow his ex-IC 2-8-0 to switch cars since the high water prohibited the use of diesels. #790 currently is on display at Steamtown.) The second fleet was operated by Standard Brands Chemical Industries and consisted of tank cars for handling bulk latex. Lastly, the fleet, which I controlled, consisted of over 100 leased or company-owned tank cars, and 165 railroad-assigned damage-free (DF/B) boxcars.

This latter fleet was the most diversified of the three. The most unique cars were 30 wooden tank cars which SBI's Fleischmann Transportation Company built at their Cincinnati, OH car shop for hauling vinegar. Vinegar was a highly corrosive commodity, which could not be

shipped in mild steel tank cars. Later, stainless steel could be used but was far too costly for vinegar. Just before I took over the fleet, the Company made a decision to add two "jumbo" wooden tank cars at 17,100 gallons capacity each to replace some of the aging 8,000-gallon cars. The new cars were built from the under-frame up. Morrison Railway Supply in Buffalo, NY, the builder, shipped the finished under-frames to Arrow Tank Company, also in Buffalo. Arrow employed barrel coopers, a rapidly disappearing profession, to construct the tank out of 9,700 board feet of Douglas fir for each car. The two cars were used exclusively for vinegar shipments from SBI's Peekskill, NY plant to R.T. French in Rochester, NY, routed entirely on Penn Central.

Shortly, an interior tank lining passed laboratory tests for longevity and allowed the company to start replacing the wooden cars with lined steel tank cars.

Another portion of the fleet was reserved for blackstrap molasses. The company leased several large storage tanks at a tank farm in Westwego, LA (across from New Orleans on the Mississippi River) to store cane molasses which arrived by ship. The molasses was then shipped in train-load lots of 3.6 million pound per shipment in 35 8,000 and 10,000 gallon tank cars to two SBI plants in Pekin and Chicago, IL. The molasses was used as a "food" to grow yeast. Railroads would fall over themselves to be included in the routing as a 3.6 million-pound shipment on one bill of lading didn't happen every day! One railroad, the Litchfield & Madison, had their PR people photograph the first molasses trainload their railroad handled! SBI's Dallas, TX yeast plant received 1.2 million pound trainloads from Westwego in leased 20,000 gallon tank cars. Due to the 12 pounds per gallon weight of molasses, the 20,000 gallon cars had to be "short-loaded" to avoid exceeding the weight capacity of each car.

Fleischmann Distilling Corporation was part of Standard Brands and had an interesting array of cars for its use. There were 30,000 gallon leased tank cars for handling 190 proof grain neutral spirits produced by Clinton Corn Processing and shipped to the distilling plants in Peekskill, NY and later Dayton, NJ. There was also a fleet of stainless steel former milk tank cars built by General American Pflaudler Corporation. These cars had two tanks enclosed by a shell so they looked like a boxcar.

They were used for 140-proof bourbon shipments from Owensboro, KY to the Fleischmann plants. When the Federal DOT ruled alcoholic beverages as a hazardous commodity due to flammability, these cars had to be replaced because the tanks were not exposed. Since they were stainless steel, we transferred them to vinegar usage. In any event, three new 25,000 gallon, three-compartment, stainless steel cars were built by ACF Industries in West Milton, PA to replace them.

The assigned box car fleet was for palletized shipments of grocery products. Each car had "sidefillers" that expanded to fill voids between the car wall and the palletized stacks of product; and two movable bulkheads to lock the pallet loads in place. The company equipped each car with 56 pallets. The largest provider was the N&W, which served the Planters Suffolk, VA plant. The theory was that this was guaranteed business since the owning carrier would always have the longest portion of the haul. However, the cars usually returned to the plant empty and many a day I scratched my head as to why the carriers were happy to have the cars move empty in one direction, especially from San Francisco back to Suffolk, VA!

In 1976, I left Standard Brands to become Corporate Manager of Distribution at Pepperidge Farm. My railroad involvement was greatly diminished as Pepperidge Farm relied heavily on trucks and had its own private truck fleet. However, inbound flour to several bakeries moved by rail in covered hopper cars; and the company used stack train service to ship stuffing for warehouse storage in California from Downers Grove, IL. I can remember two interesting incidents involving flour shipments. The first involved the testing of a new "pressure differential" covered hopper which used air pressure to help unload the flour. The Norwalk, CT bakery did not have a siding so flour was shipped to a bulk-transfer site near the Westport, CT station. The day we tested the new car was rainy. I was at the unloading site watching the unloading process when a hose came loose and flour blew out of the hose and immediately stuck to my rain coat!! I looked like a snowman! One other incident was not so funny. Conrail picked the wrong siding and ran a flour car though a bumper post, the rear truck of the car dangling precariously over a Westport road. We were asked to send a tank truck so the car could be unloaded before it could be re-railed.

So, that's my story. What's yours? What did you do for the railroad. Or not, as the case... may be?

Photo - Steve Gould



SBIX 1678, an 8,000 gallon wooden vinegar tank car at Standard Brands Peekskill, NY plant.

Welcome New Members

Mary Jane Chappy	Naples, FL
Adrian Ettlinger	Hastings, NY
Jack Griebel	Newtown, CT
Thomas Heinen	Southbury, CT
David T. Hoeree	Newtown, CT
Dr. Michael R. Madyda	Irvington, NY
Bill Maeman	Flushing, NY
Carl G. Mattson Jr.	Cheshire, CT
Marcinek Family	Sandy Hook, CT
James A. Mescher	Woodcliff, NJ
John S. Miller	Budd Lake, NJ
Jonathan Padilla	New Fairfield, CT
David & Lucy Pollack	Sherman, CT
Dave Roberts	Danbury, CT
Matthew Recchezza	Pleasantville, NY
Andrew Romano	Brooklyn, NY
Andrew Sullivan	Danbury, CT
Brian Truskawski	Ridgefield, CT
King Whitney	New Fairfield, CT
William Von Zehle Jr	Ridgefield, CT
Wilhelm R. Yungk	Enfield, CT

New Life Member

Joseph A. Padula	Galveston, TX
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Upgraded Life Member

Francis J. Sullivan	Danbury, CT
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Railpace Newsmagazine Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

By Tony White

The premier news magazine dealing solely with trains and museums in the Northeast celebrated its 20th anniversary on Saturday, July 27 in style that will be remembered for years by those of us who were fortunate enough to be able to attend.

Tom Nemeth the founder, President and editor of **Railpace** and his staff decided to do something special for the railfans who write, submit photos and read his magazine. The result of brainstorming was a “**Day on the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad.**” The entire rail operation was opened by special invitation to see the headquarters, yard, diesel engine facility, turntable, steam engine house and the **C&O 614**.

We were greeted by two policemen who asked to see the invitations and tickets to this event and signed us in. **The Reading Blue Mountain and Northern (RBMN)** had shut down its entire operation to accommodate the guests of **Railpace**. After a light breakfast, we toured the corporate headquarters building. Inside the leaded glass doors were a reception and waiting areas. In the waiting area were two live steam engines and tenders! There were the usual photos adorning the walls of equipment that once rode the rails that the **RBMN** now used.

The office space upstairs was typical for a corporation. But this office had an addition of a bump out in the building that contained the control tower for the **RBMN** with all of the monitors and communications necessary for controlling a railroad. We proceeded through a connecting passageway that put us into the Board Room. It was complete with the usual meeting table and chairs fitting for a board member. A G-scale layout went around the walls near the ceiling and the shelving on the walls were lined with an array of rolling stock. In the center of the ceiling was a painted map of the entire **RBMN** system.

The **RBMN** has over 30 locomotives ranging from switch engines to SD 50's and 2 RDC's.

The mechanical crew has the responsibility to keep the railroad equipment in the proper shape to haul freight primarily Anthracite coal over some of the steepest grades in the east. North of the headquarters and diesel house is the steam engine house, turntable and **C&O 614**. We were warned about the variety of snakes in the area that also like trains!

Lunch was then served and there were no complaints about a lack of food even from some portly railfans. Many door prizes were drawn by children of the guests.

After lunch we boarded 4 coaches led by 2 SD-50m's #5022 and #5049. Both engines were so spotless that we thought they were freshly painted. We ran surprising fast north towards Jim Thorpe. Our final destination was on the Hometown Viaduct on the **Carbon and Schuylkill RR**. It is high above the ground with a magnificent view of the valley, although several riders were not too happy about being stopped in that location!

We backed up unto the wye and then resumed the trip back to headquarters facing forward. All riders on the trip were given real cool Railpace caps! A anniversary cake and coffee and we were bid a “Good Farewell” to all in attendance.

Members of the museum in attendance were Roberta Ballard, Kermit Geary Jr, Jessie and Eddie Albanetti, their son the Teen Editor of **Railpace**, Charlie and me.

The entire staff of **Railpace** magazine was terrific. They mingled and chatted with the attendees. The staff of the **Reading and Blue Mountain** was equally engaging. If you are not a reader of **Railpace**, you should because of the quality of the photos and information that is contained within its covers. If you are looking for a very nice train ride, then consider the **Reading and Blue Mountain** in the fall for some special trips in Pennsylvania.

Additional information can be obtained on the internet at www.railpace.com and www.readingnorthern.com



RBMN RDC-3 #9166
At Port Clinton

Photos by Tony White



Railpace 20th. Anniversary



Clock Tower above
Administration Building



C&O 614



Photo run-by of RBMN 5022 & 5049

Items of interest at the Danbury Railway Museum

Photo Credit - Roberta Ballard



Canadien Baggage Cart
Newly Restored
By Member Bill Britt



The Roger Williams Train Set