

# The Railyard Local

Volume 4, Issue 12

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

December 2005

## Museum's Halloween Event

### Pumpkin Patch Trains Attract Many Visitors

In its second year as an event at the DRM, the Pumpkin Patch Trains once again proved to be very successful. For three weekends, beginning with October 15<sup>th</sup>, the Danbury Railway Museum had a festive atmosphere, even though the weather was unseasonably cool, blustery, and damp most of those days. Ticket holders enjoyed train and turntable rides, picked face pumpkins from our patch, and consumed cider and other refreshments. The railyard and Museum building were decorated for the occasion. Many guests happily wore pictures on their face or hand courtesy of our face-painting volunteers. We were delighted to welcome so many guests.



Picking out pumpkins and sampling refreshments.

Many thanks go to the volunteers who made holding this event possible. Extra preparation and staffing was necessary. Some of the many volunteers do not have time to come on a regular basis, but help at special events. Special thanks to Sue Thomas, who coordinated the event.

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## Winter Hours at the Museum

The Museum's hours change for the months of November through March. It is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10am to 4pm, and Sunday from 12pm to 4pm. As an exception, the hours for the Santa Trains event are 10-5 Saturday and 12-5 Sunday. Due to cold weather, train rides will not be held after the last Santa train on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> until April 2006.

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## Official Notice:

### Now Accepting Nominations

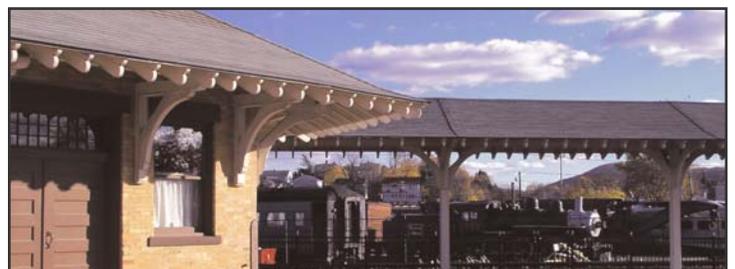
The 2006 Nominating Committee (Steve Gould, Chairman; Bob Boothe, Joe Ward) is now accepting nominations and resumes for openings on the Danbury Railway Museum Board of Directors. There will be five Director positions up for election next year for two year terms each. If you are interested in running for these positions (incumbents and new candidates alike), please prepare a resume that is no longer than one-half of an 8 X 11 sheet of paper and include information in the four sections listed below:

1. Name, address, phone number, and e-mail address.
2. Your qualifications.
3. Your accomplishments for the Museum during the last two years.
4. What you plan to do for the Museum if elected or re-elected.

E-mail your resume to Nominating Committee at [newsletter@danburyrail.org](mailto:newsletter@danburyrail.org) ; mail to PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813-0090; or put it in Steve Gould's mailbox at the Museum. **All resumes must be received by 4 PM, January 12, 2006 to be considered as an active candidate.**

Please consider running only if you feel you can commit the time and effort to help the Museum move forward, including regular attendance at Board meetings, which are held the third Thursday of each month at the Museum.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Gould at [GouldSL@aol.com](mailto:GouldSL@aol.com), Bob Boothe, or Joe Ward.



## New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members are welcome to attend the weekly meetings held Wednesdays, 7:45pm, at the Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. We invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible!

Bill Hauck	New Fairfield, CT
Helen Lasersohn	Westport, CT
Jeff Santos	Long Branch, NY
Stephanie Carlson	New Milford, CT
Tom Gerhard	Ridgefield, CT
Shannon Kaplanis	New Fairfield, CT
Robert J. Bardoorian	New Britain, CT
Bob & Sheila Pierson	Watertown, NY
Sue A. Delbianco	Stratford, NY
Adam Payne	Brewster, NY
Sudepta Panda	Danbury, CT
Benjamin Feinstein	Ossining, NY
Stephen Cianci	New Britain, CT
Carelys Hepburn	Stamford, CT
Richard Kosier	Gaylordsville, CT
Daniel Heubel	Larchmont, NY
Jim Scheef	New Milford, CT

Life Member:

J. Lefflbine	Danbury, CT
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## RR and Modeling Info List

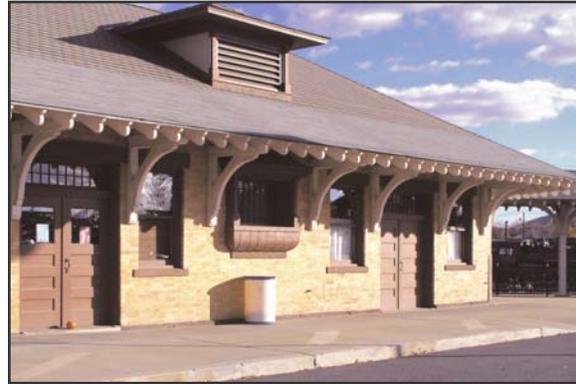
Wade Roese presented a very interesting and informative program on Kitbashing (modeling) at the Wednesday night Museum event on November 10<sup>th</sup>. He announced to an audience eager to know more, that he will be putting together a list of suppliers, magazine references, and data resources of railroad and modeling information. This list will be made available in the near future. We anticipate another outstanding program when Wade does a presentation of Scratch Building (modeling) on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Please join us for this and other fine programs, which are open to the public and free. Each newsletter lists the dates and topics of upcoming programs on the back page. A full listing is on a flyer at the Museum and on our website. Occasionally the subject must be changed due to circumstances beyond our control, but we still will have a program as long as weather is not the problem.

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## Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The December 1995 started with a recap of the accomplishments in 1995: the station dedication, yard lease signed, membership doubling, 10 pieces of rolling stock received and five trips chartered with Metro-North. The editor, Peter Cornwall, then outlined some of the tasks to be done in the coming year. They were basically what we continue to do - help the Museum grow and work towards completion of the numerous projects.



December also saw the DRM run two Holiday Express trains to New York City carrying

approximately 1200 riders. These trips required printing flyers, advertising and marketing, contacting local merchants for donations of door prizes, preparing food, and ticket sales. Many members who helped out worked both trips, arriving at 8:00 AM to prepare for the 10:15 AM departure. Work that needed to be done included decorating the cars, mounting the DRM drumhead on the last car, setting up the gift shop and loading food and drinks. Everyone involved put in 12-hour days. The station was opened by the City for passengers to see the work in progress and use the facilities. After arriving in the city, Museum members had time to themselves, then gathered in time for the return trip. Some members positioned themselves in the Concourse area wearing Museum red hats and jackets, looking very official! On numerous occasions people would approach to ask things like "How do I get to Scarsdale?" As far as we know, no passengers were left behind.

On December 7<sup>th</sup> a DRM board meeting was held at which Ira Pollack was named to the Board of Directors to fill a vacancy. At the same meeting, the size of the board was increased by two with Warren Hagenkotter and Mike Salata being elected.

In November we had Lovett Smith's privately-owned New York Central #3 in the yard as it awaited movement by the Providence & Worcester to its storage facility in Bethel. The car would make future appearances in the yard prior to being put away for the winter.

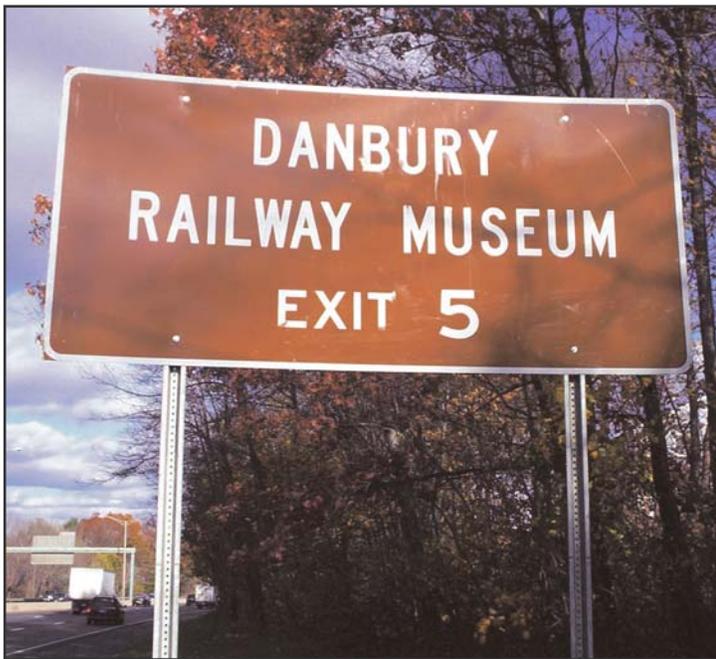
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# DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

This month I'd like to wish you good health and best wishes. I'm also hoping your holiday season will be good with all of your wishes coming true.

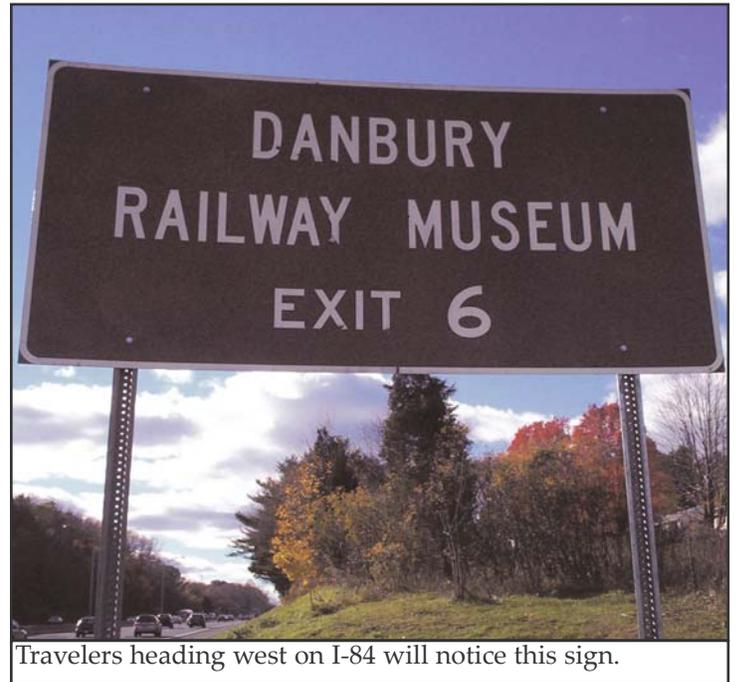
I'd like to update you on a project that has taken a long time to happen; in fact, it has been a dream of mine which has come true. I've always felt very strongly about publicizing our Museum - letting the public know what we have to offer and especially where we are located. I had written and communicated some months ago with the Connecticut State Department of Transportation requesting signage on I-84 to indicate our Museum location and the proper exits to take to reach it. (Earlier in the year, the state had erected a small directional sign at the end of the exit ramps of Exit 5 and Exit 6 off I-84 which were a big help if visitors already knew about our Museum, and also which exit to take off of the highway.) To make a very long story short, the DOT has graciously placed two very large brown "Point of Interest" signs at exits 5 and 6 on the highway. This was a wonderful surprise because I had been led to believe that they could be a long time in coming. This is a great step for the Museum's publicity. We have already seen some of the results during the few weeks since their installation. There are approximately 20,000 vehicles passing through Danbury on a daily basis. I am sure that this



The sign on I-84 greeting traffic heading east-bound.

new signage will increase our attendance. Several guests have noted in our visitors log book that they found the Museum by chance, just by seeing these signs while passing through on the highway.

I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to John Carey and Joe Ouellette of the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Mayor of Danbury, Mark Boughton, for their support and success in this long-awaited project.



Travelers heading west on I-84 will notice this sign.

The next time you visit the Museum, try looking at our guest book. There are people coming here-from many states and all over the world. In 2005, through October, visitors writing in the log book had traveled from 38 states and 13 countries. In 2004, over 20,000 people visited our Museum. It was very important that we have directional signage. They have made many positive comments about what we have and do here at the Museum. These are the things that make the efforts of us volunteers worthwhile.

We have reached a time of the year when we reflect on the current year's achievements and assess how close we came to reaching the goals that we set for the Museum at the year's onset. We extend appreciation to our family and friends for the love, giving, sharing and friendship that they gave during the year. This has happened throughout the year at the Danbury Railway Museum. Although, as with any organization, there are times of disagreement and frustration that some goals take more time to reach than we want, I ask that members look at the positives of what we accomplished this year. Look at all of our new friends and the eager faces of our visitors. Look at yourselves and be proud of who you are and what you did to make us grow that much more this year. Thank you all once again for your support and your help. I look forward to working with you once again in the upcoming New Year 2006.

# Museum Bulletin Board

## Reminder:

Santa Train Rides will be on December 3&4, 10&11, 17&18. Saturday hours 10-5; Sunday hours 12-5; \$7.00 ages 3 & up; discount for members. There will be a train ride to Santa's special railroad car to visit Santa, Mrs. Santa, elves and & Mr. Frosty, plus lots of decorations and a small gift for children. We hope to see you and your friends!

## Danbury Railway Museum will be at the Amherst Railway Society's 2006 Railroad Hobby Show

Come visit our booth at the "Big E" (Eastern States Exposition Grounds) in West Springfield, MA on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 9-5 and Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup> 10-5! We will be there with displays and Gift Shop items. It's a huge show in three buildings, and well worth spending both days browsing among the many booths, displays, model layouts, and attending model railroading clinics. We hope to see you there!

## The Museum Is Booking Winter Birthday Parties for Our Party Room



Our Museum has proved to be a very popular location for birthday parties. We have just begun booking parties for the months of January through March, now that we have a specially decorated party room in the building. Many of those holding the parties bring their own additional decorations, with one example shown at the left with Sue Thomas admiring the elaborate balloons brought for one party. The party-goers have a wonderful time. Call the Museum at (203) 778-8337 for additional information.

## DRM Guests Grateful for Helping Hands

Visitors from Madison, Wisconsin encountered car problems. The *Danbury News-Times* published a letter they wrote to express gratitude for the assistance they received from staff at the Danbury Railway Museum, New Holiday Diner, Danbury Public Library, and local Firestone mechanics. That help turned what could have been a nightmare into a positive experience.

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# RPO - News and Notes

By Bill Britt, Project Leader

The window replacement program for the ex-PRR Railway Post Office car was kicked off by a very generous donation from Ed & Suzie Blackman. Since then we have received other donations. We currently have \$1000 toward our \$2800 goal.

We will be needing other items in the future for the restoration, therefore donations in any amount, **marked for the RPO**, are welcome and appreciated, and can be sent to the Danbury Railway Museum.

The #2 canvas mail sacks that were used in RPOs are no longer used by the Post Office. We are told that the best places to find these are probably in a storeroom or basement of the Post Office buildings. If anyone, anywhere, has a friend or acquaintance that can help us, we would appreciate their help.

Did You Know? The Railway Post Office Dept. came into existence after the Civil War and operated for over 100 years, ending in the early 1970s.

We always like to hear from anyone with anecdotes, stories, or operations regarding railway post office cars.

## Photoshoot at the DRM

### WestConn Photography Students Visit

By Peirce Behrendt

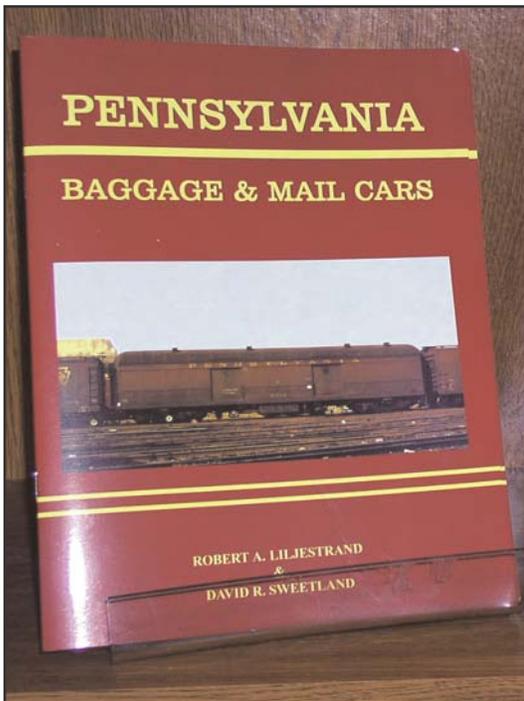
The Danbury Railway Museum has an arrangement with Western Connecticut State University's photography professors which gives their students free admission when they visit here for a class assignment. Up until yesterday, the students have come in on their own, one or two at a time. On September 28<sup>th</sup>, for the first time, we welcomed an entire class with their professor. I had the honor of being their host and guide. Naturally I took a few pictures of my own. Feedback from both the students and professor was very positive. We may be seeing more of them. What excellent public relations for both the Museum and the school!



# Gift Shop News

By Patty Osmer

Coinciding with the arrival of the DRM's very own RPO car is the new book by Bob Liljestrand - PENNSYLVANIA BAGGAGE & MAIL CARS. This 48-



page paperback book is illustrated and contains comprehensive captions. The book includes, among others, the B60, B70, and BD85, as well as a roster of all cars showing subsequent dispositions. Member price is \$16.20.

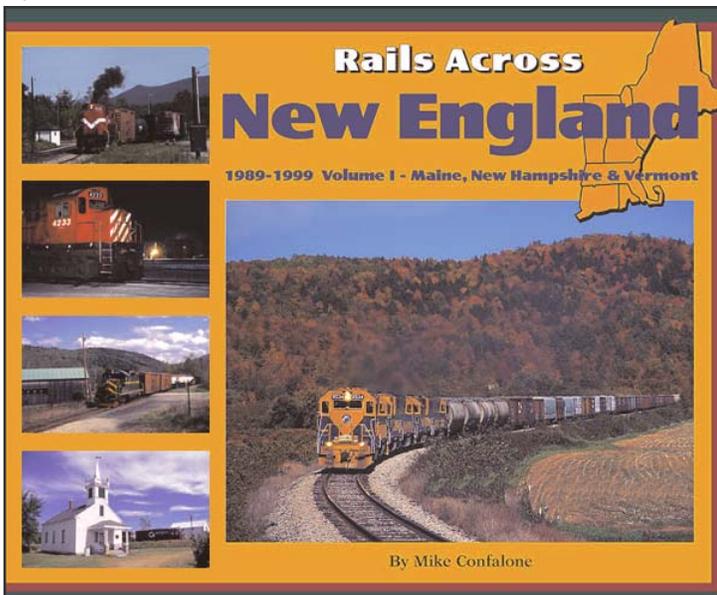
Another new book has arrived - RAILS ACROSS NEW ENGLAND 1989-1999 by Mike Confalone, from the publishers of the Railroad Explorer Magazine. This 128-page, all-color book contains over 250 never-before-published photographs from many of New England's best railroad photographers plus all-color system maps. The book covers the myriad changes that swept across the northern New England states of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont during that time span. Member price, \$35.96, plus a media mail shipping charge of \$2.50 if delivered by mail.



How do you like this newly-arrived shirt with a motif including locomotives and train scenes? Its colorful pictures on a navy blue background make it a very handsome shirt. List price is \$25; \$27 for 2XL size.



We have our very own DRM shirts! The Museum's new logo is embroidered on the medium-blue denim shirt. The inset photo shows an enlargement of the logo. List price is \$32; \$35 for 2XL or 3XL. We are looking into ordering the long-sleeved version of the same shirt.



Here is one of the many racks of items sure to please train fans of all ages. If you need a gift for a train lover, this is the place to shop! The DRM's Gift Shop is known as one of the best stocked places for train-related items.

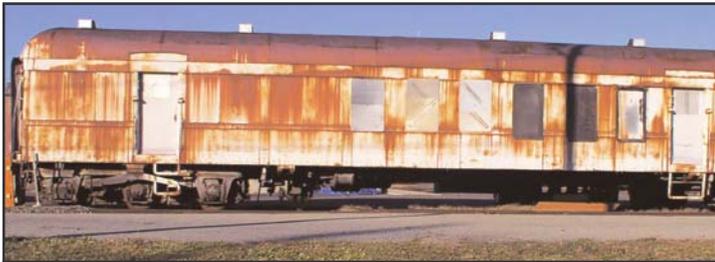
# Grant Writing Committee

## Members Actively Pursue Grants

By Steve Gould

The DRM Grant Writing Committee (John Silbert, Chairman; Mike Salata, Jerry Lawlor and Steve Gould) has been especially active in recent months, preparing a number of grant or donation award applications. Early in the summer, two applications totaling \$100,000 were submitted to the North American Railway Foundation (NARF). The first was a request for money to cover heavy maintenance work to ex-New Haven Rail Diesel Car #32. The second was for bearing replacement for the turntable and work required on the turntable pit. Unfortunately neither of these was approved.

In early August, an application was submitted to Trains Magazine for their \$10,000 Preservation Award grant to assist us in the restoration of the recently acquired ex-PRR BM series Railway Post Office (RPO) car. Some work has already begun on the



The RPO car today, with windows sealed against the weather until the windows can be replaced.

car including covering broken windows to prevent any additional water damage. Also, Project Leader Bill Britt recently visited Steamtown in Scranton, PA and toured their restored RPO, taking photos to guide us in our restoration endeavor. The outcome of our application will be known after the first of the year. Member Dan Carlton has also submitted a grant request to his company for additional monies for the RPO.

In September the committee prepared and filed another \$10,000 grant application, this one for the H. Albert Webb Memorial Preservation Award; the grant process is administered by Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts. The project selected for this application is the FCD Mack Railbus which will be restored in two phases, representing its two lives. Most of its time was spent as a freight vehicle for the Remington Arms Company in Bridgeport, CT, carrying explosives between buildings in their complex, which the first phase will capture. Once completed, it will be displayed as a Remington unit for a specified period of time. Then, the second

phase will commence which will be a restoration to its original appearance, that of a passenger railbus. Alas, it never turned a wheel in that service and was sold to Remington shortly after delivery.



The FCD Mack Railbus as it is today in the DRM railyard. It is a unique piece, but needs funds to restore it. Plans are to do restoration in two stages.

The committee submitted a progress report due November 1, 2005 for the Meserve Memorial Fund grant of \$4,500 the Museum received last December. This was for interactive exhibits and exhibit enhancements. Money from this grant has been used to increase exhibit signage in the railyard, including a large yard schematic that shows exhibit locations. Also, money was used to convert the former Wilton, CT semaphore into an interactive display which will allow guests to move the semaphore arms.

The committee is always looking for additional funding sources. If any member knows of one, please let committee chairman John Silbert know by dropping a line to the Museum.

*Ten Years Ago, Continued from Page 2*

A project was mentioned to permanently recognize railroaders who lived and worked in the Danbury area. (Editor's note: Do you have suggestions of people to recognize? Please let us know.)

Work was progressing on the station. Two areas that needed completion were the flooring and the remainder of the canopy.

There was an article about Metro-North Engineer and DRM member Mary Donche who wrote and taught a course on railroading for Girl Scouts looking to earn a merit badge.

There was an announcement about our upcoming Open House Weekend scheduled for April 21 & 22, 1996 and the hope that special events would be held every two to four weeks.

There was mention of the Pioneer Valley Live Steamers operating weekends, new donations, the opening of the Military Museum, the monetary donations to date for the RS-1 Fund, and new items in the Gift Shop.

# New York Transit Museum

## Group Visits DRM

By Stan Madyda

Each year, the New York Transit Museum offers day trips and lectures to its members and the general public pertaining to bus, subway and train transportation in the New York Metropolitan area. This year, as in past years, they have included a trip to the Danbury Railway Museum in their program. Gerry Herrmann and I worked with Laura Joseph and Luz Montano of the Transit Museum in putting



This young guest stays very still as Sue Thomas paints a picture of his choice on his face.



Gift Shop volunteer Anne Marie Shannon was one of several staff members who dressed for the Halloween event. Her son, Ken Landsiedel, helps in the Gift Shop and railyard.



Reeva Schnelker holds her daughter Avalon, who attracted many admirers in her lobster costume.



together their itinerary. This year we included a side trip to the South Norwalk Switch Tower.

On Saturday morning, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Gerry, Peter McLachlan and I met about 20 members and four staff at the South Norwalk Station for the trip up the branch to Danbury. On board the train, we spoke about the branch, the DRM, and answered their questions. We also raffled off three 10:30am DRM train cab rides. One of the winners was a young boy about four years old whose parents told us he was up all night excited about his trip. Talk about a happy visitor!

Upon arriving in Danbury, the group was greeted by Ira Pollack before departing for the 10:30 train ride. They were then given a special tour of the yard with Steve Gould, Dave Roberts and David Wilson serving as guides. They then had time for a tour inside the station and lunch. We boarded the 1:44pm train for South Norwalk, where we were greeted by members of the South Norwalk Switch Tower Museum, who escorted us to the tower. Our group was given a tour of the tower and learned of its history and operation.

Although the day was cold and rainy, we heard very positive comments from the Transit Museum tour group. Having them visit two museums in one day worked well and we expect to have them back in 2006.

The New York Transit Museum is located on the corner of Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street in Brooklyn. They are open Tuesdays through Friday 10am to 4pm and Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 5pm. Their phone number is 718-694-1600. The Museum features bus and subway exhibits and restored vintage subway cars. It is well worth a visit.



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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

Dec 21 (7:45pm)	Historic Slides - Gary Gerske
Dec 28 (7:45pm)	New Haven Slides - Bob Gambling
Jan 4 (7:45pm)	Ukrainian Steam in the Snow(slides) J.W. Swanberg
Jan 11 (7:45pm)	Out West 1964-66 - Pete McLachlan
Jan 18 (7:45pm)	Slides from His Collection - Ed Blackman
Jan 19 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting (Open to Members)
Jan 25 (7:45pm)	LIRR Encore 50's - 80's(video) - Steve Gould

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)

