

The Railyard Local

Volume 4, Issue 2

-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

February 2005

Easter Bunny Trains Event Scheduled for March

The Danbury Railway Museum Easter Bunny will be hopping back into town for the Easter Bunny Trains event on March 19th, 20th, 25th, and 26th. New for 2005, the Easter Bunny will have his very own caboose. Happy visitors will take a vintage train ride to the DRM railyard to the Bunny caboose, and receive a small gift from the Easter Bunny.

Reservations for this fun-filled event are recommended. Please call (203) 778-8337 for details.

Remember - members receive \$1 off this event admission.

If you can help out at this event, please leave a message for Sue Thomas at (203) 778-8337. We could always use more hands to make this year's Easter Bunny Train the best one yet!



Operations Shed for the Wilton Semaphore



The shed-type building is being lifted by the crane, while being stabilized by Mr. Merrick's sons.

Our newest acquisition for the DRM yard arrived on January 15th on a special truck equipped with a crane. It was donated and delivered by Jay Merrick, whose sons helped with unloading the 4x6 foot structure. The delivery added excitement to a cold winter day in the yard. Look for more photos on page 7.

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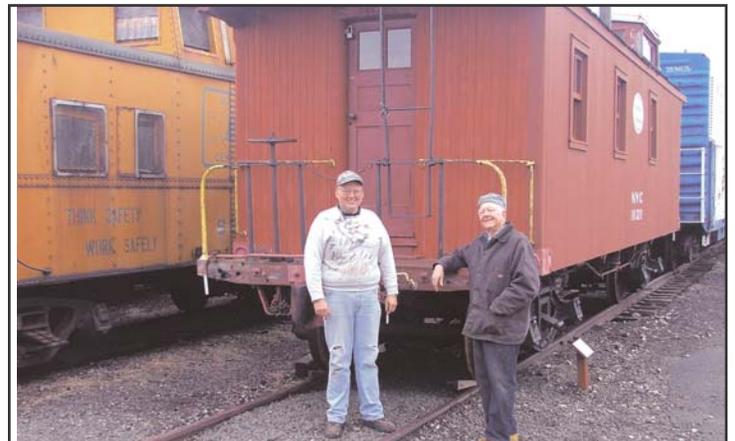
Gift Shop and Membership Updates

NYC/HRR Wooden Caboose

By Gerry Herrmann, Project Leader

Restoration Update - NYC Wooden Caboose #19322

We completed the siding on the west end of the caboose. We finished all but two boards on the east



The west end of caboose fully sided; John (left) and Gerry end of the caboose. It took between 1½ and 2½ hours to install each piece of siding. The caboose is not square, so each piece must be specially fit. Siding the

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Is It In You?

Is it in you to be a volunteer in the DRM yard as train crew, a tour guide, car host, or restoring equipment? We welcome you to take the required open book test on basic yard safety. Those wanting to be part of the train crew must also take the operations test. No previous experience is necessary. Just choose one of the following dates: February 19, 20, 26, 27. The safety test will be from 11am-12pm.; the operations test from 1-4pm on each of these days. We hope you will consider this opportunity for volunteering.

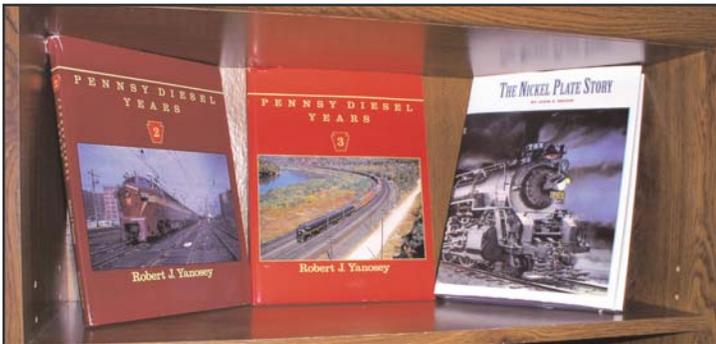
New Members

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!

Diane Garelik	Danbury, CT
Michael Reeves	New Canaan, CT
Jay & Kisa Desmarteau	Ridgefield, CT
Victoria Ceylan	Danbury, CT
Stephen & Christine Mattson	Brewster, NY
Connie Brescia	Bethel, CT
Albert P. Viera	Bedford Hills, NY
Martin Margulis	Austin, TX
Nicholas Yuschak, Jr.	Bethel, CT
Gary Czajkowski, Jr.	Oxford, CT
James Wilson	Danbury, CT
Alexander Canazzone	Ossining, NY
Maxwell Likens	Brewster, NY

Gift Shop News

Another year begins in the Gift Shop. Last year was a great for us, not only in terms of sales, but in the amount of new merchandise we were able to find and stock.



Thanks to the generosity of some of our members, the Gift Shop has received some donations of model railroading items, books, timetables, and other memorabilia. In February, we will be offering these items for sale, along with some "clearance" items from the Gift Shop's inventory. All of the items on our "Sale Table" will be sold on a first-come, first serve basis, so stop in early to see what we have available. Because of the already reduced prices, the regular member discount will not apply.

One of the books we have for sale is THE NICKEL PLATE STORY by John Rehor; this out-of-print history of the Nickel Plate Railroad lists a publisher's price of

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\$75; it will be on sale for \$46.00. Also for sale,

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Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The February 1995 newsletter started off by urging members to vote for officers and board members. This was the first election where the membership



could vote. The original board was appointed by then mayor Gene Eriquez. Seeking re-election were Charlie Bardo, Peter Cornwall, Jerrold Davis, John Flower, John Heidereich, Joseph Heyman, Albert Matthews, Peter McLachlan, Jesse Meeker, Hal Meeker, Mike Neustadt, Felice Plain and Terri Stramiello. New nominees were Ed Blackman, Lucye Boland, Charlie Buckels, Geoff Knees, Peter Mariano, Tom Morris, Sue Thomas and Roger Whitcomb. Mike Neustadt's biography was omitted when the original ballot was sent, and was included in the newsletter.

The Annual Meeting was announced for March 2, 1995, to be held at Two Steps. Hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks were being served with a cash bar. The meeting was to include a review of where the DRM had been, and what to expect in the coming year. The ballots would be counted, then the new board announced.

There were very brief updates on the station and the yard.

A new DRM excursion was announced: The Hudson River Special, to take place on May 20, 1995. The first stop was scheduled for Garrison, New York, where anyone so choosing could take a three hour Hudson River cruise aboard the M/V Rip Van Winkle. If passengers did not want to go on the cruise, the next stop was Cold Spring, offering antique shops and restaurants. The train would then layover in Poughkeepsie. The cost for members was \$24 for the rail portion, and \$20 for the cruise.

DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

The winter months give us a chance to plan our projects for the spring and summer seasons. Much of the activity is indoors, but we continue to acquire new equipment and displays. We received a 4x6 shed-type building to be placed at the Wilton semaphore, to be used as an operators shed for the exhibit. My goal is to make the semaphore operational and interactive for the public. I would like to thank Jay Merrick from Danbury for this donation and for delivering it to us by truck on January 15th. We will pour sonitube footings and slightly modify the structure to meet our needs to make the semaphore workable this coming spring.

I am also very proud to announce that the DRM has received a Meserve Memorial Fund Grant for \$4500, to be used for interactive displays in the building and in the yard. These funds will support the budgets for these, and our new exhibits at the



Museum. I would like to thank our grant writing committee for pursuing, and gaining this grant.

We also are in the process of building a console to house a new computer-generated display showing the DRM history of moving rail equipment by highway vehicles. This is an excellent way of encapsulating and consolidating the many photographs we have on this subject. I also would like to see and use other subjects using this medium in the future. We can scan our ever-growing railroad artifact collection, then use this method to show it to the public.

We must continue to expand and grow as a Museum. I have mentioned the word *interactive* quite a few times in this letter. I feel that this is the course we must follow to enhance the participation and education of our guests. I truly feel that their experience must be both graphic and visual. They will be able to get a hands-on experience through these means. I am excited by the imminent development of these new projects.

This past month our faithful, long-time volun-



teer, Ken Lee, passed away. He helped at the front desk and always had good things to say to people. We will miss him greatly. I want to extend my condolences to his family

Spring will be coming, with warmer weather. I look forward to seeing all our volunteers again on Saturdays to work on our planned projects.

Items Needed at the DRM

We are looking for donations of the following specific items:

- 1) A refrigerator for the yard office
- 2) Office furniture, such as chairs, desks, shelving for the yard office
- 3) Forge equipment, such as an anvil, bench, and large vise.



Volunteer Will Be Missed

Ken Lee, a DRM volunteer for many years, passed away December 30th. He helped at the reception desk in the Museum and had played trumpet at several of our exhibit opening receptions. He was a well-known local musician and past President of the Danbury Musician's Union. Our members and Museum guests will miss his friendly greeting. We send our condolences to the members of his family.

Library News

The Library Committee is 10 Years Old

In December of 1994, a notice appeared on the bulletin board at 16 Ives Street looking for volunteers to establish a railroad library at the DRM. The idea put forth by Peter Cornwall was to have in a library available to researchers offering books, magazines, photographs, railroad correspondence, and various railroad material pertaining primarily to New England, while not excluding the rest of the country.

Some of the members joining the Library Committee in January 1995 included Gerry Herrmann, Terri Stramiello, Peter McLachlan, Randy Natale, Jim Whiteside, Geoff Knees, Nancy Sniffen, Steve Record, Ira Pollack, Neil Shively and me. There have been many other members who have helped us out in the years since, and I will try to compile a list.



Our initial task was to start working on the Greene and Cornwall Collections. The Greene Collection was a very large collection that was donated to the DRM by his estate. Peter Cornwall also donated a part of his collection. Once we got the material to 16 Ives, we took over a closet in the back of the building, complete with exposed plumbing and a single light bulb.

In early February we met to discuss the collections and how we were to proceed accessioning them. We knew that a more permanent home would be needed and a passenger car was suggested. At the time, we did not know if we would be able to occupy space in the station. We also discussed the need for a mission statement and policies concerning the collection.

Weekly work sessions were held at 16 Ives Street. Initially, as best we could, we organized the material that came in, and looked forward to the day when we would have the tools and



resources to make the Library work.

The DRM did not own a computer at the time, so Geoff Knees set up a program on his home PC for accessions. The Library has since upgraded to an Excel spreadsheet, and we are very serious about purchasing a program called *Past Perfect* that many museums and research libraries are using to manage their collections.

In the beginning, we met with other librarians who offered their insight and thoughts about the many avenues and obstacles we would encounter. Ten years later we still attend meetings and correspond with other museums and libraries.

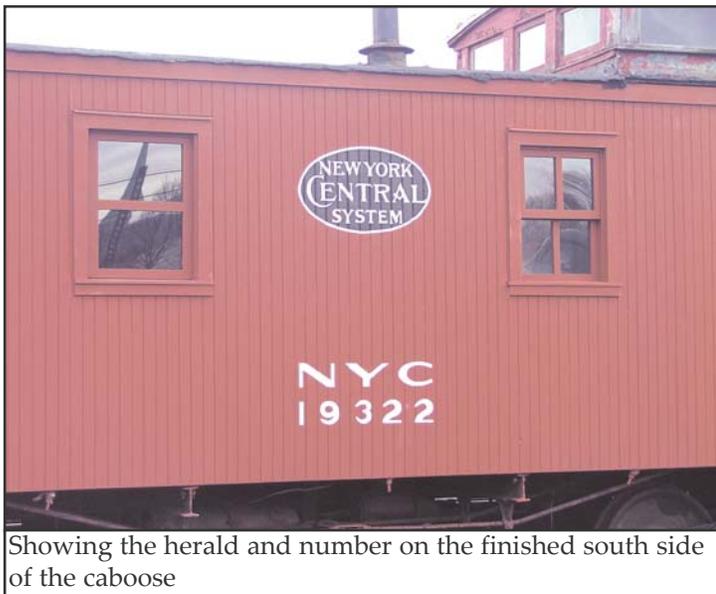
The Library continues to grow. We average 60-70 donations a year, from single objects to numerous cartons full. Space will always be needed to house everything that is donated. The prospect of having a software program designed for museum and library collections will allow us to have more control over the tens of thousands of items we already have.



caboose is like doing custom cabinetry. We had intended to complete both ends and paint the caboose with finish box car brown. This never happened because of weather conditions.

One of the problems we encountered upon arriving one Monday morning, when we had planned to work on the ends, was that we noticed a sheet of tar paper on the ground. Upon inspecting the caboose, we found that a wind storm had ripped off a 3x12 foot piece of the caboose roof. Franz Gerencir and I went up on the roof, and nailed back the tar paper that had blown off. The temperatures were too low to apply roofing cement on the open seams. Because of this situation, the caboose leaked. Unfortunately, this curtailed our efforts to complete the siding on the east end of the caboose. On December 22, the weather was warm enough for John Fegley, Michael Madyda and me to apply the roofing cement. We brought heat guns up on the roof, but found that the weather was warm enough to make the heat guns unnecessary. We built a wood fire in the stove, which helped to heat the roof, and dry out the inside of the caboose. The patching of the roof was completed in two hours. At this point, the caboose is dry inside. With the exception of the two pieces of siding missing on the east end of the caboose, it is buttoned up for the winter.

The project volunteers for 2004 were: Bob Boothe, Harry Burke, Jim Daly, Carmine DeYoung, Lauren DeYoung, John Fegley, Dan Foley, Franz



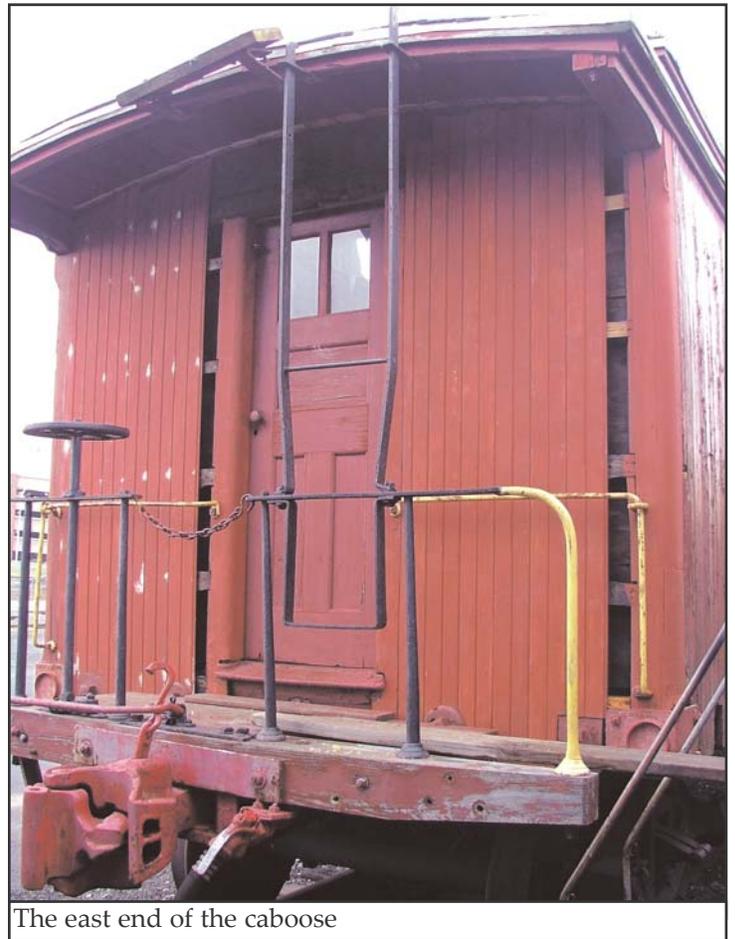
Showing the herald and number on the finished south side of the caboose

Gerencir, Mathias Manske, Michael Madyda, Stan Madyda, Steve Mayerson, Ira Pollack, Chris Sheridan, Jim Whiteside, and Dave Wilson. The total volunteer time for 2004 exceeded 715 hours.

The DRM would appreciate donations mailed to the museum and a notation made on the check that

it is for the restoration of this historic caboose. Tax-deductible contributions should be sent to:

Danbury Railway Museum
NYC/HRR #19322 Project
P.O. Box 90
Danbury, CT 06813



The east end of the caboose

A plaque to honor and thank the donors will be permanently affixed in the caboose upon completion of the restoration. Photos of the restoration's progress are by John A. Fegley.

Donations

Through December 31, 2004, we have received \$7,295 in general contributions, and \$5,216 donated toward specific projects. Since our Fundraising Campaign began in 2003, with a goal of raising \$30,000 toward track repair, we have received \$15,520.

Recent donors are: Joe Ward, Roberta Ballard, Peter King, Harry Leeds, Susan Thomas, Jay Merrick.

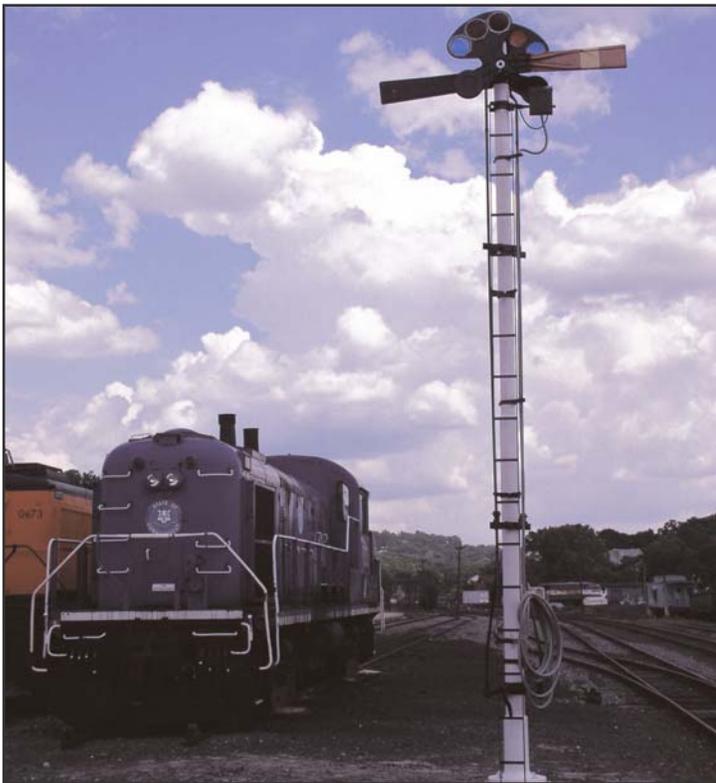
As an all volunteer, 501(c)(3) Corporation, we rely in part on grants and contributions to fulfill our Mission. Your contribution is fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. If your company has a Matching Grant program, please submit the necessary form to the Museum, and we will apply to them for matching funds.

What's Happening at the DRM

Even during the winter, there is action in the DRM yard. Activity continues inside the Museum as well. Come join us!



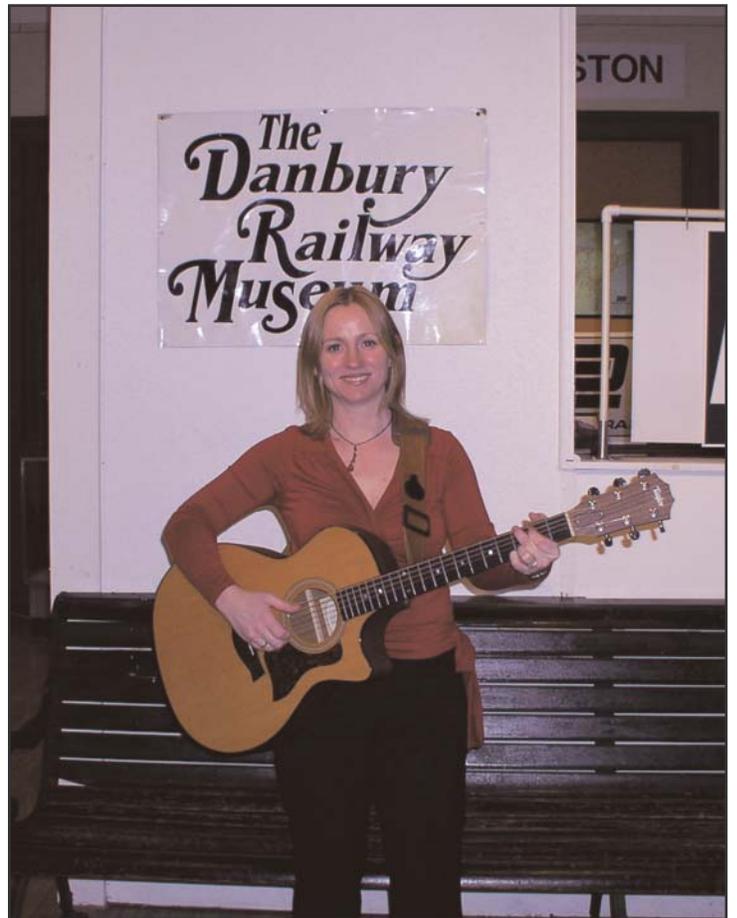
Sling still attached, the shed has just been lowered into position on to 2x4s. Its roof looks very "railroad." Now that it is in its temporary resting place, those who assisted can now look on. Volunteers John Ivansco, Ira Pollack, and Dave Roberts are shown with Jay Merrick's sons.



Once the shed has been modified, it will be an operations shed for the Wilton semaphore so that DRM guests will be able to operate the signals.

First Night at the Museum

On New Year's Eve, the DRM hosted many participants in First Night festivities. Our guests arrived by car, shuttle bus, and on foot. Everyone was welcome to tour the Museum building. They were entertained by Liz McNicholl, who sang three sets of traditional Irish tunes, popular songs, audience requests, and some of her own compositions. Of course, some of the selections were railroad songs, such as "The City of New Orleans" and "Grand Central Station." Usually she plays with a group, Liz McNicholl & Friends, but this time was just accompanied by her guitar. However, the enthusiastic audience needed very little encouragement from Liz to join in with clapping and singing. Her performance was so enjoyable that many people were eager to buy one of



her CDs after the shows. She and others remarked at the wonderful quality of the acoustics in that area of the Museum.

After closing time, there was a light buffet for Museum members who chose to stay to see in the New Year. Thanks go to Sue Thomas and Dave Roberts for staffing the Museum during the evening, and to Don Konan for bringing the refreshments. We can accomodate even more people. Hope to see you next New Years Eve!

DRM Annual Meeting

March 16, 2005 at 7:30pm

This is a grand opportunity for you to hear what the President, and other officers and committee members have to report about the Museum. **The deadline for election ballots to be received at the Museum is 7:30pm that evening.** Come make an evening of it at the Museum. Hear what's happening here. Enjoy an entertaining evening of **photo highlights** from the Library collection. Be one of the first ones to hear the **results of the election** of DRM officers and members of the Board of Directors.



Make a Gift of Your Time at the DRM Gift Shop

Be a part of the team of volunteers who maintain and staff one of the very best railroad museum shops. This is your chance to order, price, and sell a wide variety of merchandise (and be the first ones to see the new items when they arrive). This is an opportunity to meet interesting people, while assisting the shop manager, Patty Osmer. If you are interested in this volunteer position, please contact Patty or Sue Thomas.

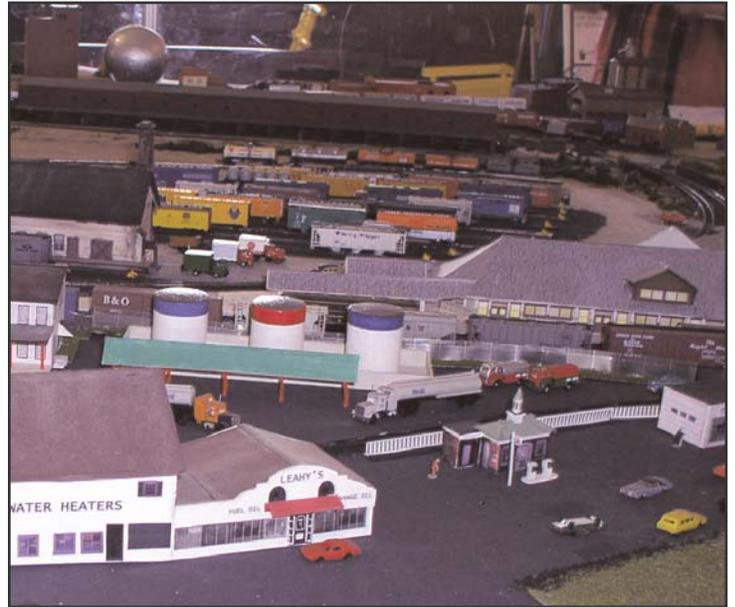


Are You a Model Railroader?

Would you like to know what motivates top HO-scale modelers? Some of their ideosyncracies and talents? Are they similar to yours? And if you are not a model railroader, but are living with one, this book may give you some insights.

There is a new book, *Playing with Trains: A Passion Beyond Scale*, by Sam Posey. The author, who lives in northeastern Connecticut, explores his, and other people's, world of model railroading. He chronicles the development of his layout over many years. It eventually was featured in *Model Railroader* magazine. His passion (and obsession?) with model railroading is shared by many of the others mentioned in the book. In his quest to learn more, solve modeling problems, and be inspired, he visited W.K. Walthers Company and Kalmbach Publishing, met numerous modelers whose layouts were published, and eventually even drove a full-size steam engine. There is also some railroading history woven into the story.

The book is available at bookstores and public libraries. List price is \$22.95.



Gift Shop, continued from page 2

will be a number of Pennsylvania Railroad books, including PENNSY DIESELS Volumes 2, 3, and 5, and ERIE TRACKSIDE.

We will also be offering some discontinued Thomas the Tank sets at very reduced prices. Please stop in and check out our "Sale Table" during the month of February. If you are interested in any of the books mentioned above, and HAVE to have it, please call and we will hold it for you, if it is still available. Happy Shopping!

DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM

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MUSEUM CALENDAR

Feb. 9 (7:45pm)	Model Railroading - Steve Mayerson
Feb. 16 (7:45pm)	West Virginia Wonders - Steve Gould
Feb. 17 (7:00pm)	Board Meeting (Open to Members)
Feb. 23 (7:45pm)	NH RR&Beyond - Peter McLachlan
Mar. 2 (7:45pm)	NH RR Photographs - Bob Gambling
Mar. 9 (7:45pm)	Boston&Albany Photos - Gary Gerske
Mar. 16 (7:30pm)	DRM Annual Meeting
	DRM Collection - DRM Library

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



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