

JANUARY 2023



Marc Glucksman photo

THE FIRST POST-COVID HRA CONFERENCE ATTENDEES POSE IN FRONT OF THE RAILROAD MUSEUM OF NEW ENGLAND'S THOMASTON, CT DEPOT. PULLING THE NAUGATUCK RAILROAD EXCURSION TRAIN IS NEWLY RESTORED EX-NORFOLK & WESTERN GP9 #859 (EMD 1959).

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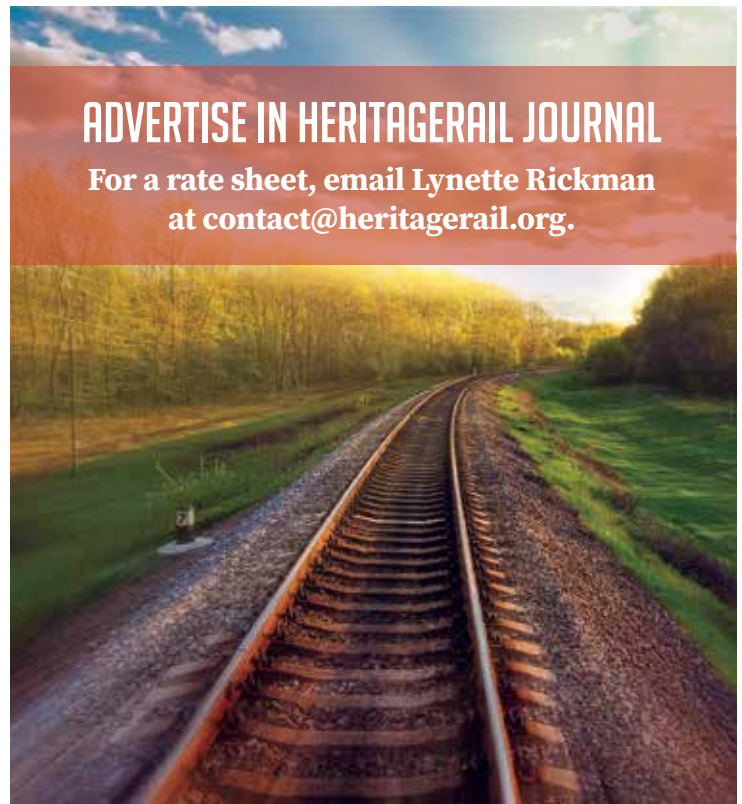
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FROM THE HEAD END

By Bob LaPrelle, HRA President

Gratitude, and looking forward...

Welcome to my first column as president of HRA. I hope this finds you well and in the midst of Fall and Holiday events at your organizations.

First things first, we've had some leadership changes following recent elections. A few familiar names reached their term limits and deserve acknowledgement and appreciation. I want to thank G. Mark Ray for his many years of service to HRA. His tenure spanned dual board roles at ARM and TRAIN, and as the first President of ATRRM/HRA. Our gratitude also goes to Scott Becker, and Jim Schantz for their many years of dedicated board service, as well as Stathi Pappas who brought much knowledge to HRA.

Thanks are also in order for Terry Koller's tireless efforts in pulling off a great Fall conference in Hartford – our first since 2019. Terry and his team rose above many challenges to re-start what was a major effort even before you throw in the after effects of Covid and inflation.

Our gathering in Hartford was a homecoming of sorts, with a long-awaited, in-person return of colleagues and kindred spirits. For many including myself, HRA conferences are a healthy dose of motivation, knowledge, and fellowship that stays with you throughout your career.

Finally, our sincere thanks to the vendors and suppliers that sponsored the Fall conference. Their support allows us to continue these events and provide the amenities that help make them enjoyable and sustainable. It's a great way to showcase their goods and services and meet the needs of the Heritage Rail field. Our sponsors are on a first name

basis with many HRA members as a result of the face-to-face meetings at conferences.

So, what's in store for HRA in 2023? In short, building on our accomplishments and adding new initiatives to the mix! We learned much from listening to our members during Covid and at the conference.

Covid revealed our strengths and weaknesses. Trade associations are truly put to the test when their industry is threatened as a whole. I'm pleased to say that we have emerged stronger as a field, but our way of doing business has changed, which requires HRA to respond in kind. Among other things, this is an opportunity for our larger members to help our smaller more vulnerable members – a hallmark of ARM, our predecessor organization.

We're also working hard to represent our members across all disciplines of railway preservation – a promise made during our merger process in 2013. This includes museums and tourist railroads (including our all-important trolley organizations), as well as historic properties and historical societies. Our trolley members are credited with being among the first to organize and set standards for preservation and operation of heritage equipment.

HRA's leadership will be incorporating these and many other topics in a year-long strategic planning process. The first session was led by Jim Cullen in Hartford. Spanning two days, the session revealed a wealth of future opportunities for HRA, and just how talented and diverse our leadership is at achieving future goals.

More to come! Thank you for your faith in me as president. Stay safe.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR RAILWAY MUSEUMS PART 7: MUSEUM FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

This section begins with this sentence: *The infrastructure necessary to sustain railway museum storage, exhibit, conservation, and restoration activities is often much greater than that of many other types of museums. Demonstration railway operations add greatly to these infrastructure requirements, especially as safety and security must remain paramount.*

If there is one area where railway museums have come up short, it's in facilities and infrastructure. In most cases, we do less than the minimum. That happens because of not enough money and is made worse by competing priorities.

We all started by acquiring rolling stock while simultaneously trying to figure out where to put it. The first hurdle was finding a site. Some of us were able to

purchase land. Many were not and chose to rent, often from friendly government agencies. Renting is fine so long as the landlord is happy with it. We all saw what happened to Indiana Transportation Museum when they got crosswise with their landlord. Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum has been uncomfortable renting from the city and recently arranged to purchase its site. We can't all do that, but we should try.

OK, you've got a site, on which is a collection of tired rolling stock exposed to the weather and looking worse every year. If you restore a piece and leave it outside, in ten years you'll have to redo much of the exterior. There are too many pieces, which means you'll never get ahead of it. From this comes the stereotype of railway museums as junkyards.

The obvious solution is to erect storage buildings, which dramatically slow deterioration. Unfortunately buildings range from expensive (storage-only pole building with tight track centers and a dirt floor) to very expensive (exhibit barn with wide track centers and a paved floor).

Although protecting the artifact should be the first priority, few museums have their entire collection under roof. Examples include many of the trolley museums, Exporail, Wilmington & Western and that's about it. Let me know if I missed any.

There are ways to prioritize. Put the wood cars inside first and seal the roofs of whatever has to stay outside. Reduce the number of needed buildings by disposing of pieces that fall outside the collection policy, would have a better home elsewhere, are duplicative, not historically significant, or are too far gone to salvage. Paint the steel freight cars, so they at least look presentable. Move the junkiest pieces and the piles of spare parts away from the main display areas.

Tarpping appears to be counterproductive, trapping moisture and accelerating rot and rust. Strasburg Rail Road

had success with plywood cocooning, which allowed the cars to breath. Both are unsightly.

Why aren't more storage buildings being built? They're competing with other infrastructure priorities. Building and maintaining an operating railroad may be the most common competitor. Museums need a revenue stream and a train ride usually raises more money than admission to view static displays. In many organizations, running trains was the goal all along, not artifact restoration and display. Running trains, with its safety and regulatory requirements, tends to soak up the available funds and volunteer hours. Track repairs and upgrades are always needed and very expensive. Once the train is running, there's more money to be made opening a gift shop and providing decent bathrooms. A shop building is required to maintain the train ride equipment. There are other competing priorities, including fire prevention and security fencing. All these tend to push storage buildings to the back of the line.

Years ago the West Coast Railway Association in Squamish inherited a derelict collection of unsheltered rolling stock. Led by the late Don Evans, they took the unprecedented step of asking how much revenue would be needed to properly preserve the collection for the long haul. The price turned out to be shockingly high. It led to a business plan that created a profitable roundhouse/event facility, an ambitious grant writing campaign and a whole string of small fund raising initiatives. There were also deaccessions. Despite those efforts, which are more than most museums have attempted, much the collection is still unsheltered. That shows us the challenge we face.

Recommended Practices urges us to get real about our infrastructure needs, if we value long term survival.

To download a copy of Recommended Practices, go to heritagerail.org and log into the Members section.

BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

Because of Covid, the HeritageRail Alliance was unable to hold an in-person conference in 2020 and 2021. That ended this year. Connecticut has one of the highest densities of museums and tourist railroads. We were based in Hartford, within an hour or so of several, which we visited each afternoon.

Valley Railroad

The Valley Railroad is known for its stable of steam locomotives pulling Pullman green heavyweight consists. A for-profit company, it has been in business since 1971. After

the New Haven entered bankruptcy in 1961, the line, which follows the west bank of the Connecticut River north from Old Saybrook, fell into disrepair. The last train ran in 1968.

The Connecticut Valley Railroad Association, the Empire State Railway Museum, and private investors created the Valley Railroad, obtaining a charter from the Connecticut State Legislature. The State of Connecticut took ownership of the line from Penn Central, and designated it as a linear State Park. It authorized the company to use the southern

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22.67 miles for freight and passenger service. On July 29, 1971 the first train ran 3.7 miles from Essex to Deep River. Service was extended to Chester (4.3 miles) in the late 1970s and later expanded north to Goodspeed (Milepost 13.5, now the terminus of diesel powered dinner trains). The line is intact another 8 miles. Volunteers have made two of those miles operational and are gradually working on the rest.



Trains leave from the Essex depot, the railroad's operating base.

At Deep River, passengers have the option to transfer to the riverboat Becky Thatcher for a 75-minute cruise. Originally operated by a separate company, the boat is one of three owned by the railroad. One is currently undergoing repairs. Although the train-boat connection happens at Deep River, other cruises depart from Eagle Landing near Goodspeed, and from Middletown, 9 miles beyond Goodspeed. Annual ridership appears to have recovered from Covid and is in the 140,000-150,000 range.



With its new arch-windowed cab, Chinese Class SY 2-8-2 #1647 (Tang Shun 1989) has been modified and renumbered to give a good imitation of a New Haven Class J-1 (Alco 1916), receiving the next higher number.

The railroad's connection to the general rail system is 4 miles south of Essex at Old Saybrook, where it meets the former New Haven Shore Line, now Amtrak's Northeast Corridor. Although this segment only sees occasional special movements, it's home to the Valley's rail bike operation, which started in 2019. Rail bikes also occasionally run north from Essex, but only when regular trains aren't on the line. The bikes were a helpful source of revenue during Covid.



The Valley's photo freight consist.

Besides trains, boats and bikes, the railroad runs an event business called River Valley Junction in the former witch hazel bottling plant next to the Essex depot.

Train crews, boat crews, maintenance staff and office/retail/service staff are all paid employees. Volunteers are working to improve the out-of-service track on the north end of the line, and have a weekly shop session where they work on rolling stock.

With J. David Conrad at the throttle, we ran north at good speed—until he had to big hole it to stop short of a tree that had fallen across the track. Appropriate tools were summoned from elsewhere on the train, and we resumed with little delay.



Passengers transfer to the river boat at Deep River.

Another steam locomotive acquisition is in the works, Bonhomie & Hattiesburg Southern 2-8-2 #300 (Baldwin 1923) which has been on static display in Hattiesburg, MS. The railroad is attempting to buy it, but there is resistance from the city and ownership is clouded.

Railroad Museum of New England

Founded in 1968 as the Connecticut Valley Railroad Association, it was a partner in starting and operating the Valley Railroad at Essex, Conn., from 1970 to 1986. The

decision to leave the Valley Railroad led to the investigation of multiple sites, including the Danbury depot. That fell through but inspired other preservationists to form the Danbury Railroad Museum. Similarly, RMNE's brief interest in the Willimantic engine terminal led others to form the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum.

In 1995 RMNE settled on a new home on the state-owned portion of the ex-New Haven line from a point just north of Waterbury to Torrington. They created an operating subsidiary company, Naugatuck Railroad Company, to run both heritage excursion passenger trains and commercial freight service.

The Naugatuck Valley route had daily passenger and freight, with the last passenger trains north of Waterbury operating in December 1958. Metro North continues to serve Waterbury. The 9-mile Torrington-Winsted segment was abandoned and removed in 1964. The New Haven was taken over by Penn Central in 1969, and the Torrington Line became part of Conrail in 1976. Freight service had declined to once per week by that time. CDOT purchased the line north of Waterbury in 1982, leasing it to Boston & Maine Corporation for operation. In 1995, with virtually no freight activity left on the line B&M gave up its lease; CDOT leased the line to the new Naugatuck Railroad Company.

Excursion service began in 1996. Regular excursions head north from Thomaston Station (see front cover) a short distance, then south to Watertown with a stop at the Fascia chocolate factory. Dinner trains travel north 10 miles to Torrington. There they lay over for 2.5 hours so passengers can shop and visit the local art galleries.

Occasional freight service was operated "as-needed" until the opening of a major shipper in 2016. Frost Bridge Associates, located at Watertown, 4.5 miles north of Waterbury, processes and ships out construction and demolition debris. Freight trains run twice weekly. About 1000 freight cars were moved in 2021, and the number is increasing.

The railroad is headquartered at Thomaston Station, built for the original Naugatuck Railroad in 1881. The neglected building was sold to the nearby Plume & Atwood Brass Company and housed several small businesses during

the 70s and 80s. In 1993, it was torched by an arsonist, destroying the roof and opening the interior to the weather for three years. RMNE became the owner of the building in September 1996, reroofed it in 1996-1997 and has since restored the exterior and interior.

RMNE used the HRA special to unveil its latest restoration, Norfolk & Western GP9 #859 (EMD 1959). It's one of two ex-N&W GP9s that retired steam, the other being #686. Both are painted in schemes reminiscent of their N&W colors.

Danbury Railroad Museum



The Danbury Railroad Museum is housed in the former New Haven depot. The tracks at left are still used by Metro North to access the layover yard behind the camera. The tracks at right are the former Maybrook freight line to the Poughkeepsie bridge over the Hudson River.



New Haven FL9 #2006 rides the restored turntable at the far end of the property. At left is the museum's yard shuttle train.



Filled with museum rolling stock, this is the former freight yard, viewed from the engine terminal.

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By 1991, Danbury Union Station had become so dilapidated that Metro North Commuter Railroad was only using the ticket office portion of the 90 year-old building. Around the same time the Railroad Museum of New England, based out of Old Saybrook on the Valley Railroad, was looking to relocate. Union Station and the underutilized freight yard were attractive to them and the city was interested. RMNE and the City of Danbury began talks. In 1992 the city was awarded a 1.5 million dollar ISTEA grant for the restoration of Union Station. However in early 1994 negotiations fell through, and the RMNE committed to Thomaston, Connecticut.

Danbury's mayor turned to members of the Western Connecticut chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and asked them to come up with a proposal to make use of the city's rail assets. The Danbury Railway Museum was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in March 1994.

In 1995 the museum signed a lease with the city making it the sole tenant of the rail yard. Rolling stock began arriving. In 1996 the fully restored Danbury Union Station opened and is now filled with displays. There are now over 60 pieces of equipment on the property.

The track layout is unusual. Danbury is the north end of the Metro North commuter rail line to South Norwalk, where it joins the Northeast Corridor. Formerly electrified, the single track branch features off-peak shuttles to the main line and a few rush hour through trains to New York's Grand Central Terminal. Trains arriving in Danbury navigated a horseshoe curve around the perimeter of the freight yard and engine terminal, stopped for passengers at the Danbury station, then laid up in the coach yard beyond the station. With the station abandoned, and needing a high platform, wheelchair accessible facility, in 1996 Metro North build a new station on the west side of the loop. Out of service trains continue past the station to the layup yard, so museum visitors cross active track when walking from the station into the freight yard, now full of museum equipment.

The museums runs short shuttle trains from the north end of the freight yard to the engine terminal, where equipment restorations happen in the open air. The turntable has been returned to service.

Currently the museum is working to rescue a pair of endangered New York Central electric locomotives that ran from Grand Central to Harmon, NY. Class S-1 #100 (Alco GE 1904) was the first NYC electric locomotive. Class T-3 #278 (Alco GE 1926) is the last survivor of the T class. Originally owned by the Mohawk & Hudson Chapter NRHS, they are located outside a power plant near Albany. The rail connection has been severed and extraction will be very expensive. To that end the museum is raising the funds needed to rescue them.

Connecticut Trolley Museum



Montreal sightseeing car #4 (home built 1924) and Chicago, Aurora & Elgin interurban #303 (Niles 1906) await departure at the recently restored 1913 Isle of Safety from Hartford.

The trolley museum movement in North America began in New England, with the founding of the Seashore Trolley Museum in 1939. Close on its heels in 1940 came the Connecticut Trolley Museum. Its birth coincided with the end of Connecticut Company streetcar operations in Hartford. The first car was Connecticut #65 (Wason 1906) just retired from Hartford. The museum purchased a site at Warehouse Point, including three miles of the Hartford & Springfield Street Railway's Rockville branch, abandoned since 1926. The 1.5-mile demonstration railway, opened in 1954, begins at a large waiting shelter rescued from downtown Hartford, where it went by the wonderful name "The Isle of Safety". It has recently been restored. The first of three steam locomotives was acquired in 1956, but steam would ultimately be regarded as outside the museum's mission and would be gone by 2002.



Inside the main carhouse/visitor center. Left to right are Springfield Terminal combine #10 (Wason 1901), Northern Ohio Traction parlor car "Northern" (Niles 1909), Ponemah Mills steeplecab (GE 1894), Illinois Terminal PCC #451 (St. Louis 1949), Cleveland Interurban #1201 (Kuhlman 1914) and Five-Mile Beach open car #36 (Brill 1895).

Because the museum began collecting so early, it was able to acquire some unusual pieces. There are ten from the Connecticut Company, one of Montreal's theater-seating open tour cars, a Five-Mile Beach (New Jersey) single truck open car and most of the Springfield Terminal's roster. New England's mills and factories had in-plant railroads and from these a number of excellent rarities were acquired, including the pioneer "Black Maria" steeple cab locomotive from Ponemah Miles.



Riding Montreal sightseer #4 on the demonstration railroad.

In the late 1980s a large 4-track visitor center was constructed in the style of a classic car barn. Like many early museums, CTM over-collected and has been downsizing. Recently North Shore Line interurban #162 (Brill 1915) was sent to East Troy Electric Railroad. Canadian National boxcab locomotive #6714 (GE 1917) will be leaving for Toronto Railway Museum. The decision has also been made to dispose of New Haven classic open platform wood combine #2765 (Osgood Bradley 1908) that formerly housed a food service. A few other pieces have been scrapped. There are currently 47 electric cars on the property. Annual visitation is about 30,000.

The current primary restoration project is Connecticut Company double-truck Birney #3001 (Wason 1922). There is currently a capital campaign underway to convert the large theater inside the visitor center into a multi-use event space. The museum is also applying for state bonding to build a new restoration shop.

Shore Line Trolley Museum



Connecticut Company parlor car #500 (Brill 1904) awaits passengers in front of the Sprague visitor center on River Street. At right is the body of Connecticut Company #855 (Wason 1905). It had been located off-site at a nearby shopping center and was returned in 2021 to highlight the museum's entrance.



The old streetcar barns sit on low ground, subject to flooding. Recently completed Barn 8 and 9 sit atop the highest spot on the property, hopefully above future floods.

The Shore Line Trolley Museum was incorporated in 1945 and began assembling a collection of streetcars, some of which it stored at the Connecticut Company's car barn in New Haven. With abandonment of the local streetcar system imminent, Shore Line purchased the 1.5 miles of the Stony Creek line. When the Connecticut Company ceased operations in 1948, it kept the track connection to the new museum line intact, and supplied power for a year. Thus was Shore Line the first operating trolley museum in North America.



Rhode Island Company emergency car #1504 (home built 1904), a mobile shop equipped to handle any repair, sits at the east end of the demonstration railroad, a former Connecticut Company line.

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Scheduled operation for the public commenced in 1953. Shore Line also was something of a pioneer in opening a visitor center early. The dignified brick Sprague Building was funded by the family of Frank Sprague, who made electric traction commercially viable.

Although it was able to purchase an intact electric railway, the museum's location has proven to be a problem. Located in a tidal marsh, the site is subject to flooding. Two hurricanes proved disastrous, submerging the motors of over 60 cars. With assistance from FEMA, the museum is well on its way to repairing most of them, but it has been a difficult and expensive recovery.

Looming over the museum is the probability of future flooding, made worse by sea level rise from global warming. The museum has responded with the Elevate the Collection project. Two large new carbarns have been built on the highest spot within the site, along with addition outdoor tracks for temporary storage during high water. The hope is that it will be enough.



One of the iconic Connecticut Company open cars, #1425 (Osgood Bradley 1911), sits on a raised shop track, another measure to stay above flooding.

WHILE IN NEW ENGLAND...

By Aaron Isaacs, HRA editor

Attending the HRA conference is always an opportunity to extend the trip and visit other railway preservation. My Minnesota Streetcar Museum colleague (and former HRA Board Member) Jim Vaitkunas and I arrived early to do just that.

Preservationists have always loved narrow gauge railroads, and the Maine 2-footers are no exception. The state has five museums devoted to them: Maine Narrow Gauge Museum, Wiscasset Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum, Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes Railroad, the newly formed Bridgton & Saco River Railroad Museum and the oldest of all, the Boothbay Railway Village.

Boothbay Railway Village



Pulled by a German 0-4-0T, the excursion train completes the loop around the village.



The Village is notable for its collection of railroad structures. On the far side of the loop is the Belfast & Moosehead Lake depot from Thornton, ME, the Maine Central section crew shed from Woolwich and the crossing tower from Bath.

It started in 1964 as the privately owned project of George McEvoy. He collected railroad equipment and structures on his land, circled it with a loop of 2-foot gauge track, and imported vintage historic buildings. In the 1980s the village became a non-profit and today has a professional staff, plus volunteers. The train departs from the former Freeport, ME depot. In the course of the trip, it passes a series of Maine Central buildings, including three crossing shanties, two crossing towers, four section crew sheds and the Belfast & Moosehead Lake Thorndyke, ME depot. There's a static display of 2-foot rolling stock; S. D. Warren 0-4-0T #2 (Baldwin 1895), three boxcars and Franklin & Megantic combine #11 (Laconia 1885). Passengers ride in a nicely done steel replica WW&F coach, mostly pulled by German 0-4-0Ts. Meanwhile, Bridgton & Saco River baggage/RPO #11 (Jackson & Sharp 1900) is under restoration. In the shop I saw recently restored S. D. Warren 0-4-0T #1 (Baldwin 1895).

Wiscasset Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum



An overview of the Sheepscot operating base. From left to right are the depot, the engine house, the roundhouse under construction and the carbarn.



Inside the carbarn. It was recently expanded to house this equipment from the Maine Narrow Gauge Museum.



Brakeman Nicole Orminski tightens the brake before descending the 4 percent grade to Trout Brook.

The WW&F has been a preservation hot spot over the last decade. It adopted the Cumbres & Toltec's strategy of mass work weekends. The WW&F is remarkable for the progress it has made on multiple fronts. We rode their newly completed line over the mountain to Trout Brook. The railroad is now 3.5 miles long and features a 2.5-4 percent grade from Top of the Mountain down to Trout Brook. There the locomotive is turned on an original Bridgton & Saco River turntable from Maine Narrow Gauge Museum. Up front was WW&F 0-4-2T #9 (Portland 1890), recently equipped with a new boiler. Behind it was a collection of original Maine two-footer equipment. WW&F is hosting 20 or so pieces from Maine Narrow Gauge Museum. Evicted

from its long-time headquarters on the Portland waterfront, MNG funded an expansion of the WW&F carbarn and relocated much of its roster, which WW&F gets to use. Meanwhile, the museum is building a roundhouse, building a new replica locomotive and coach from scratch, and equipping its rolling stock with a replica Eames vacuum brake system, an extinct technology. Visit if you can.



At the north end of the line, 0-4-2T #9 is turned on a former Bridgton & Saco River turntable before running around the train.

Seashore Trolley Museum



Eastern Massachusetts streetcar 4387 (Laconia 1918) waits at the visitor center loop.

I hadn't been to Seashore for about 25 years. Longtime President and outgoing HRA Board Member Jim Schantz walked us around the property. The oldest railway museum in North America and the largest trolley museum, Seashore has an amazing collection and sets the standard for high

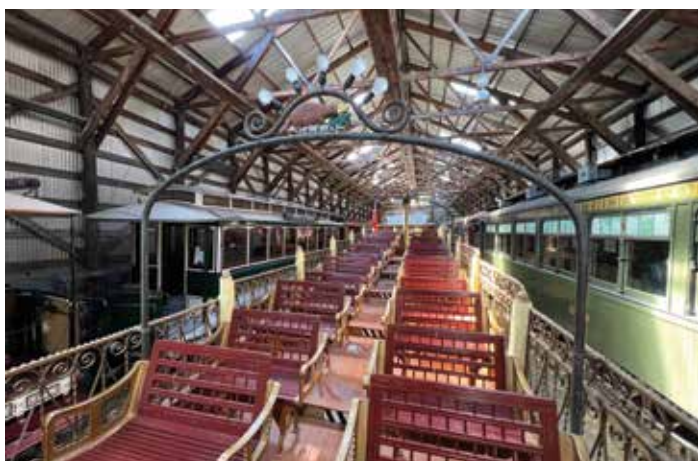
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quality restoration work. At the same time it has more rolling stock than it can ever restore or even place under cover. However, during Covid a policy shift has happened and a deaccession list has been drawn up. On it are South Shore Line interurban #32 (Standard Car 1929), Long Island Rail Road MP54 MU car #3352 (ACF 1930), six ex-Dallas Boston double end PCC cars (Pullman 1945), three Boston PCCs (Pullman 1944), and Boston MTA line car #3283. In addition, 18 buses have recently been sold or scrapped.



Inside the Town House Shop, Seashore Board Chair Jim Schantz shows us the ongoing restoration of Portland-Lewiston interurban #14 Narcissus (Laconia 1912).

Work is underway to enclose, expand or replace a couple of the early pole barns (literally held up by wood poles). A donor has underwritten the importing of a huge private model railroad, including a new building to house it. The building will include much needed meeting/event and office space. The parking lot and driveway are being repaved. A deal had been made with a rail bike operator to extend the 1.6-mile demonstration railway another 1.5 miles beyond its Talbot Park loop on museum-owned ex-Atlantic Shore Line right of way. There are several new exhibits, including a good one on Boston rapid transit inside restored Boston Elevated Tower C. A solar panel farm will be installed on other currently vacant property the museum owns.



Inside the rebuilt Riverside Carhouse.

Hoosac Valley Flyer



The RDC awaits departure at the new Adams depot, opened in 2020 along with a mile of re-laid railroad.

Some years ago the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum in Lenox, MA lost its rights to run excursions on the Housatonic Railroad, the former New Haven Berkshire line. In 2015 they found an alternate site, the former New York Central/Boston & Albany branch from Adams to North Adams, MA. It was purchased by the state to preserve freight service to a pair of shippers and built a bike trail next to the track. In 2020 the state re-laid the southernmost mile of track to again reach Adams and built a high level loading platform for the tourist trains. The museum brought in former Boston & Maine RDC #6126 (Budd 1955) for most of the 8-mile round trips. For fall colors and special occasions a locomotive and several passenger cars are used. The crew is all-volunteer. It's a gentle ride up the Hoosac Valley, about 15 mph on a mostly tangent track. Grade crossing protection is still lacking, so a traveling flagman paces the train, which makes positive stop at a couple of the crossings.

Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum



Car 10 at the carhouse, as a Norfolk Southern freight passes on the former Boston & Maine.

In the land of very old trolley museums, one of the newest and smallest is located in Shelburne Falls, Mass. It owes its existence to a carbody that beat the odds, a TEA21 grant, and a trolley bridge that survives as a civic landmark. Shelburne Falls is a charming town in western Massachusetts. From 1896 to 1926 it was served by the

seven-mile Shelburne Falls & Colrain Street Railway. Until 1908, the line consisted of two isolated segments that met at the Deerfield River, where passengers and freight had to transfer to wagons and reload on the other side. In 1908 the line built its own bridge, a distinctive multi-arch concrete span that crosses the river at a 45-degree angle. When the line was abandoned, the bridge survived. Eventually someone got the idea to decorate it with flowers in the spring. Soon it became known as the Bridge of Flowers, a community attraction that has kept the long defunct electric line in the public eye.

The line's first car, combine #10 (Wason 1896) survived on a local farm as a shed from 1928 until 1992, when the body was donated to the newly formed museum. A \$350,000 TEA21 grant was secured and the car was professionally rebuilt. It's an odd little creature, double trucked, yet at 33 feet, as short as some single truckers. It's also very narrow, only 7.5 feet wide, and the deep end windows that extend below the belt rail only emphasize this. It rides on a pair of Taylor trucks that are a reasonable match for the long gone originals.

The museum has leased a privately owned building located in what was formerly the Boston & Maine freight yard. A few years ago it built a separate new carhouse. The yard is still intact, and the car shuttles back and forth on 1200 feet of track. The power supply is an oddity. Lacking the funds to install 600 volt DC, the museum brought in 240 volt single phase rectified to 220 volts DC. The car doesn't go very fast, but then it doesn't need to.

The group has also acquired a Boston PCC, a 1934 Baldwin 0-4-OT, Central Vermont wood caboose #4015 (1910) and a Bangor & Aroostook "American Flyer" coach (Osgood-Bradley 1937) converted for work train service.

SoNo Tower



The SoNo Tower occupies a tiny site in the South Norwalk commercial district.

Unfortunately Jim had to return to Minneapolis with health issues. Fellow conference attendee Steve Heister from Northern Ohio Railway Museum joined me for a visit to SoNo Tower in Norwalk, CT. It guarded the junction of the New Haven's Shore Line and the Berkshire line to Danbury and Pittsfield. SoNo is not its real name. During New Haven ownership it was Signal Station 44. When Penn Central took over they renamed it BERK. Built in 1896, it was closed in 1984 and sat vacant until 1993. During that time it was vandalized and filled with pigeon droppings. Because it sits on a tiny triangular piece of property unsuitable for redevelopment, it survived. Even better, the interlocking machine was never removed. Now Metro North owns it and leases it to the City of Norwalk, who decided it should be named SoNo for the South Norwalk neighborhood in which it sits. The city subleases it to the Western Connecticut Chapter NRHS, who runs it.



Inside the tower. All the levers work. The replicated model board at right runs a 14-train simulation.

The building was rehabbed with government grants, plus volunteer labor from the NRHS chapter. It opened for the public in 2003. The interior staircase didn't meet modern building codes, so an exterior stairway was added. At first the interlocking machine levers didn't budge. The chapter brought in a couple of New York City subway signal maintainers. After a couple of days of lubing and working them the levers were freed up and the machine functions as designed. Routes and the interlock safety features are demonstrated for visitors, which number about 2000 annually. A replica model board has been installed. It plays a computerized program of 14 different train movements. The train watching is also excellent, with dozens of movements each day.

HERITAGERAIL AWARDS

As usual the conference closed with a banquet, followed by the HeritageRail Awards.

Significant Achievement-Steam

Western Pacific Railroad Museum for WP 0-6-0 #165 (Alco 1919)

Nevada County Narrow Gauge Museum for Nevada County 4-6-0 #5 (Baldwin 1875)

Significant Achievement-Diesel

470 Railroad Club for Boston & Maine F7 #4268 (EMD 1949)

Significant Achievement-Electric Car

Fox River Trolley Museum for Chicago Transit Authority L car #4451 (Cincinnati 1925)

Significant Achievement-Passenger Car

National Railroad Museum for Chicago & North Western hospital car Lister (Pullman 1930). Constructed with wide aisles and doorways for wheelchairs, it ran between Chicago and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

Significant Achievement-Freight Car

Exporail for Canadian Pacific automobile boxcar #295544

Significant Achievement-Non Revenue Car

Illinois Railway Museum for Union Pacific rotary snowplow #900075 (Lima 1949). It was steam powered, even though Lima had already stopped building steam locomotives.

Significant Achievement-Infrastructure

Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railroad Museum for reconstruction of the WW&F to Trout Brook.

The museum has rebuilt 3.5 miles of the original WW&F, abandoned in 1934. This required extensive right of way acquisition, much tree removal and grading, track construction; the acquisition, transportation, rehab and installation of a former Boston & Maine wood truss bridge; and installation of a former Biddeford & Saco River turntable from the Maine Narrow Gauge Museum.

Significant Achievement-Archives

Illinois Railway Museum and Milwaukee Road Historical Association for a new joint archives building.

There has been a movement in recent years to co-locate railroad-specific historical societies at established railway museums, creating a synergy that benefits both. To this end, IRM and MRHA have jointly constructed a new building to house IRM's formerly off-site Pullman Library and MRHA's offices and parts of their collection. Currently under construction next door is another new building that will house the Chicago & North Western Historical Society.

Friend of Railway Preservation

Andy Muller for bringing steam and tourist trains to the Reading & Northern

This award recognizes someone who went out of his/her way to make railway preservation possible. Andy Muller has a railroad to run and didn't have to create a very large tourist passenger operation and restore two steam locomotives, but he did anyway.

Lifetime Achievement

Bill Wall for his contributions to trolley museums

J. David Conrad for his contributions to the preservation of steam locomotives



Bill Wall and J. David Conrad with their Lifetime Achievement Awards. With Bill at right are HRA President G. Mark Ray, HRA Board Member Scott Becker and Awards Committee Chair Aaron Isaacs. Kate Kratville Wrinn photos.

Both of these gentlemen were honored for their major impact on railway preservation that extended beyond their home railroad or museum. Besides being a prominent volunteer at Shore Line Trolley Museum, Bill Wall singlehandedly brokered complicated trades between trolley museums that benefitted everyone. His signature accomplishment was overseeing the orderly dispersal of the large Trolleyville collection.

J. David Conrad has been one of the foremost practitioners and teachers of steam locomotive preservation and operation, at the Valley Railroad and also Illinois Railway

Museum. He is currently working on an updated edition of his essential Steam Locomotive Directory of North America, first published in 1988.

Jim Wrinn Award for 2022's Biggest Railway Preservation Story

This is a new award approved by the HRA Board of Directors to honor the memory of Trains Magazine editor and dedicated railway preservationist Jim Wrinn. While the other Significant Achievement Awards are for completed projects, this award recognizes Jim's career as a journalist and answers the question, "What was the year's biggest preservation story?"

EBT Foundation and Friends of the East Broad Top for the rebirth of the East Broad Top



Jim Wrinn at the North Carolina Transportation Museum with his favorite locomotive, Graham County Shay #1925. Kate Kratville-Wrinn photo.

ACQUISITIONS



Santa Fe steel caboose #999060 (1934 Santa Fe shops) by Arizona State Railroad Museum.

Milwaukee Road bi-centennial SD40-2 #156 (EMD 1972) by Oklahoma Railway Museum

North Shore interurban #162 (Brill 1915) by East Troy Electric Railroad from the Connecticut Trolley Museum.

Wabtec has donated GECX, ex-Union Pacific wide cab AC6000CW #7511 (GE 1998) to the Lake Shore Railway Museum. It returned to GE to serve as part of the test fleet.

Genesee & Wyoming has donated ex-Chicago & Illinois Midland RS1325 (EMD 1960) to Illinois Railway Museum.

An E8A and E9B from the Iowa Pacific fleet to Illinois Railway Museum.

Chicago & North Western SD50 #7009 (EMD 1985) by Illinois Railway Museum the first of its model to go to a museum.

Canadian Pacific has donated the ex-Milwaukee Road turntable from Bensenville yard to Railroading Heritage of Midwest America for use at the Silvis Shop.

Heavyweight private observation car Gritty Palace (Pullman 1912) by Minnesota Transportation Museum.

Great Northern RPO #41 and Milwaukee Road baggage car #478 donated by Minnesota Commercial Railroad to Minnesota Transportation Museum

Reading Blueliner MU car #9123 (Bethlehem 1932) to The New Hope Railroad from the Reading Technical & Historical Society

Illinois Central SW1400 #1407 by Monticello Railway Museum.

Burlington Northern SW1000 #3613 (EMD 1972) by Oregon Rail Heritage Center

Grand Forks Railway has donated ex-Canadian Pacific SW8 #6703 (GMD 1950) to the E&N Division, Canadian Railway Historical Association.

Northern Pacific dome-sleeper #310 (Budd 1954) from Quebec's now-closed Orford Express by Conway Scenic Railroad. The sleeper portions have been converted to table seating.

A 1940 Norfolk & Western maintenance of way track gang dining car by Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum.

Heavyweight sleeper Donzetti (Pullman 1924) is going from the Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum to the Colebrookdale Railroad.

HERITAGERAIL NEWS

SMS Rail Services

SMS, which runs seven industrial switching operations in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, is starting tourist trains on 18 miles of the former Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore lines between Swedesboro and Salem, NJ. It already has a rail bike operation there. SMS has acquired coaches 1305, 1306, 1312, 1313, 1317 and 1319 from the Green Mountain Railroad. Rails will be hauled behind one of the company's Baldwin diesels and eventually the ex-Army 0-6-0 SMS has been restoring.

Gold Coast Railroad Museum

The museum is rationalizing its collection, getting rid of duplicates and deteriorated pieces that have no hope of being restored. Most notable is Florida East Coast 4-6-2 #113 (Alco 1913). It's almost identical to their FEC 4-6-2 #153. Also going are an E8, an FP10, some ex-Chicago & North Western bi-level commuter coaches tank cars and cranes.

Walkersville Southern

The Frederick County Society of Model Engineers has housed its model railroad layout in a Chesapeake & Ohio 1937 heavyweight horse baggage car. The land it was located on was sold. In July 2022 it was relocated onto the Walkersville Southern tourist railroad.

Colorado Railroad Museum

Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge 2-8-2 #491 (Burnham Shops 1928) returned to operation.



Waynesburg & Washington narrow gauge 2-6-0 #4 (Alco Cooke 1916) has been cosmetically restored at the Greene County Historical Society in Waynesburg, PA

Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum

Railroads museums know that their futures may be in doubt if they don't own their sites. The Mad River Museum

in Bellevue, OH had that same concern and did something about it. Much of the museum was located on city-owned property. Museum management approached the city and asked to acquire the land. The city was in favor of the idea, but did not have authority to simply donate the land. The law required the city to put it up for bid, with a five-week publicized window for bids to be received. There was a tense waiting period when things could have gone terribly wrong. Thankfully, the museum's bid won and they now own their entire site.



The Pullman National Monument visitor center has opened in the former administration building. Inside are displays on Pullman history. Aaron Isaacs photo.

North Carolina Museum of Transportation

The State of North Carolina has awarded the museum \$10 million for the Powerhouse restoration and the restoration of the Car Repair Shed. An architect has been selected. When complete, the Powerhouse will be event and exhibit space and the Car Repair Shed will be a place to store and maintain passenger equipment under cover.

Rocky Mountain Rail Society

We need to be periodically reminded that long-term steam restorations are still progressing. Such is the case for Canadian National 4-8-2 #6060 (Montreal 1944). Most recently the crown sheet patch was welded in place and holes drilled in firebox were plugged and welded to repair firebox walls. Next up-- Replace previously removed stay bolts, throttle valve repair and replace superheater tubes inserted through smoke box and fire tubes.

Adirondack Railroad

Following a major state-funded track repair project, the railroad is extending train service 36 miles from Beaver River to Tupper Lake.



Anthracite Railroads Historical Society has restored Lehigh Valley 60-foot boxcar #8221, built in 1965. Richard Jahn photo.

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum

The museum has received a \$200,000 Save America's Treasures grant to restore Southern Railway sleeping car Maitland (Pullman 1925).



Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad has created an Edu-Trainment activity car for children. In the left foreground are interactive window exhibits to engage children with what they are seeing outside the train windows. Beyond them is a child size locomotive with interactive dials and levers. The distant yellow area contains toy train tables, and under the windows a diagram of the train's route from Rockside to Akron Northside Stations. At right are two reading nooks that also offer a view of the passing scenery.



The North Shore Scenic Railroad plays a pivotal role in the annual Grandma's Marathon. Marshalling every passenger car it owns, the railroad sends out two trains from Duluth early in the morning. The first, at 5:30AM, transports about 1000 runners 26 miles to the Two Harbors starting line. A separate pace train (seen here) follows the runners for the first 12.5 miles, then hurries ahead and off-loads them in Duluth to watch the end of the race. Derek Montgomery photo, courtesy North Shore Scenic Railroad.

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