

The Ghost Train Journal

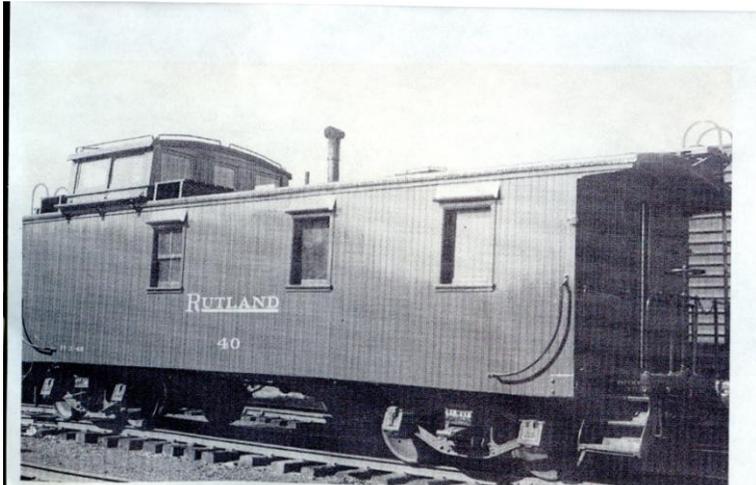


Photo Credit: Turner Railroad Collection/Connecticut Historical Society



This photo shows the late John G. Talcott, Jr. standing next to his Rutland #40 caboose prior to its restoration.

The Rutland Caboose at Plymouth, MA.



No. 40. Caboose, Burlington, Vt. 4/10/43. V-11.

This photo shows the Rutland #40 as it looked at Burlington, VT. On 04/10/1943. Note the unusual lettering.

The Rutland #40 in its earlier Years

Connecticut Eastern Chapter, NRHS, Inc.
Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum
PO Box 665
Willimantic, CT 06226

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- 01/18/2015 – Annual Banquet – Geoginas of Bolton 2:00PM
- 01/24-25/2015 – Big Train Show – Amherst Railway Soc.
- 02/01/2015 – Monthly Business Meeting – Windham Memorial Hospital – 7:00PM
- 02/15/2015 – Monthly Membership Meeting Windham Memorial Hospital – 7:00PM
- 05/02/2015 – Museum opens with Metal Fest – watch for details

Vol. 40 - Number 1- January 2015

**Monthly Membership Meetings
Held 3rd Sunday each month.**

**Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015 @ 7:00 PM
Windham Memorial Hospital
Please note! If you have photos, short
articles, or just want to make a
comment – please forward them to:
Robert A. LaMay - Editor
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Special Issue

**Rutland RR Caboose #40
Richard Arnold**

History

The Rutland Railroad constructed 8 new cabin cars for use on its routes in the Green Mountains of Vermont in the early 1920's. They were given road numbers 90-97. However, later on November 22, 1924 they were renumbered 40-47.

The 40 series cars were built of wood on American Car & Foundry steel frames. They rolled on friction bearing, leaf spring trucks and were painted Tuscan Red with the name Rutland in white with a white line under the 'utland' part of the railroad name. The road number was centered under the railroad name. These cars were designed with a high cupola and so had an outside platform on the sides so crews could walk around the cupola rather than over it. They also had unusually large "J" shaped drip caps over the windows, which were of double hung and pocket slider types. The Rutland Railroad ended service in 1961.

F. Nelson Blount, of Steamtown fame purchased the #40 for his Monadnock, Steamtown & Northern Railroad in July 1961 and later transferred it to the Green Mountain Railroad. The Green Mountain Railroad offered the #40 for sale by a sealed bid.

John G. Talcott, Jr. of Plymouth, MA., won the bid in 1979 and went to Bellows Falls, VT., to see the #40, as he had only seen

Winter -2014-15

Chapter Leadership

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photos of the car. The Green Mountain Railroad told him, however, that because another caboose was involved in an accident, the #40 was out on the line, having been returned to service. He made arrangements to have the #40 shipped by rail to the New Haven Railroad yard at Plymouth, MA. It was then moved by dolly to Mt. Talcott's estate and set up on a 60 foot section of track in the yard at his home. He loved showing it to his family and friends. With age and weather, however, it fell into disrepair and rot.

Restoration begins – 2005

In 2005 Mr. Talcott, Jr. purchased a tubular steel frame with a canvas cover to protect the caboose and hired Kenneth Gedutis to rebuild the caboose. Mr. Talcott, Jr. sold his estate to a developer who then built a golf course on the property. He retained life use of his home as well as some additional land surrounding the house. He transferred ownership of the #40 to the Talcottville Railroad Company LLC which comprised of his grand-children and son, John G. Talcott III, and wife Dottie. Work continued on the #40 until John G. Talcott, Jr. died in 2013 at the age of 105. His heirs had just six months to clear out of the property as the owners of the golf course took over the

land. They considered moving the caboose to Talcottville, CT., where his son, John G. Talcott, III resided in the family home of six generations. They decided, however, that was not the best option, and contacted the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic, CT. to see if they were interested in receiving it.

Dick Arnold, a member of the Acquisitions Committee for the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum met with the family. He then travelled to Plymouth, MA. to see the caboose first hand on October 18, 2013. Dick was amazed to find the caboose had been completely rebuilt from the steel frame up.

The restoration involved everything above the steel frame, including new exterior siding, a new roof, new end beams, and new doors and windows. The interior of the roof was returned to a varnished natural finish and the interior walls were repainted. New bench cushions were made with horsehair filling and new leather covers. The railroad had replaced the cupola seats in the 1940's with cast iron framed seats, so they were just cleaned and reupholstered with new leather cushions and arm rests.

The coal burning stove was replaced by the Green Mountain Railroad, as the original was stolen while the car was being transported to Plymouth, MA. Mr. Talcott spent approx. \$250,000 on the restoration to date.

Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum & Rutland #40

Dick Arnold told the Talcotts that the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum would love to have the #40 caboose in its collection. The family agreed to donate the caboose to the museum with the agreement the car would be housed inside the restored Columbia Jct. Roundhouse, and open for display to the public.

Dick told the Talcotts that the museum could not afford, however, to transport #40 from Plymouth, MA., to Willimantic, CT., but would prepare the car for the move, and assist with the loading and offloading. John Talcott III said that he would personally donate the money to the museum to cover the cost of the move.

The move would be a difficult one as the #40 was inside a building in the middle of one of the best golf courses in the US. (Old Sandwich Golf Club) of Plymouth, MA. The

narrow winding roads through the course and the rolling terrain posed special problems as #40 even without its wheel sets was very tall. The Old Sandwich Golf Course granted a one year extension, as the process, paper work, and contracts exceeded the estate terms of six months.

Planning the Big Move

One of the largest and best crane and rigging companies in New England, Shaughnessy & Ahearn Co. of Boston was asked to bid on the move. They estimated it would cost approx. \$45,000. Since the golf course was not open to having new and wider roads cut through their property, it was decided that the only way to get the #40 out of the middle of the golf course was to load it on a short high clearance trailer and move it to an area next to the gatehouse where it could be offloaded from the high trailer and then reloaded onto a double drop, extendable low bed trailer, for the move over the public roads.

The trip to Willimantic, CT. had to be made on secondary roads, as the load was too tall to travel on the Interstate highway system. The route was mapped through MA., RI, and CT. The moving company had to survey and travel the route and certify that it was clear and able to accommodate this oversize load. Because some of the trip would involve traveling into the oncoming lanes of traffic, a police escort was required in all 3 states.

Getting #40 Ready for the Move

On August 14, 2014, Dick Arnold, Bob Hassett, Adrian Atkins, and Ken Sigfridson, all members of the museum, traveled to Plymouth, MA., to determine what work was necessary to prepare the #40 for the move to Connecticut. All four sets of the #40 steps had to be removed along with the air brake hoses, brake rods, and brackets, as well as the smoke stack. They agreed to disassemble the tubular steel and canvas structure, and transport it to Connecticut, since the family agreed also to donate it to the railroad museum. When all of the terms of the donation and transport were agreed upon, a schedule was worked out.

On October 9, 2014, a team of 7 museum members, including Dick Arnold, Adrian Atkins, Bob Hassett, Ken Sigfridson, Stephen Melady, Rolf Kohson, and Duke York, went Winter -2014-15

to Plymouth, MA. With 4 trucks and a trailer. They then took down the canvas structure and loaded it onto the trailer. The parts of the caboose that needed to be removed were then loaded into the trucks and taken to the museum in Willimantic, CT. and unloaded during a 16 hour workday.

On November 4, 2014 museum members Dick Arnold, Bob Hassett, Adrian Atkins, and Jeff Laverty again went to Plymouth, MA., and loaded the wheel sets onto a flatbed trailer for transport to Willimantic, CT. The main body of the caboose was then loaded onto a brand new Landall trailer and pulled through the golf course with no major problems. Just a bit of tree trimming was required. The crane was set up again in a wide area of the road next to the club gatehouse. The caboose was then lifted up in the air and the Landall trailer was driven from under it, and the double drop extendable low bed trailer was backed under the caboose for the trip over public roads. #40 was then left on the golf course property for the night.

The Big Move from Plymouth, MA. To Willimantic, CT.

On November 5, 2014 early in the morning, the procession made up of a police car, pick-up truck with clearance pole attached, the trailer with the loaded caboose, a second trailer with the wheel sets, and a rigging truck, all departed Plymouth, MA., headed to the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum at Willimantic, CT.

The group arrived in Willimantic approx. 6 hours later, where another crane was waiting to pick the caboose off the low bed truck and place it back on the wheel sets. Museum members then lubed the bearings and coupled the caboose to the museum's car mover. Rutland #40 was then moved into the museum compound, onto the Armstrong turntable, and into bay number 6 of the Columbia Jct. Roundhouse at Columbia Jct.

A yearlong dream come true, thanks to the museum volunteers, the Talcott family, attorney Donald Quinn, and Shaughnessy & Ahearn Co. of Boston, who flawlessly planned and completed the move, and billed the museum much less than originally estimated.

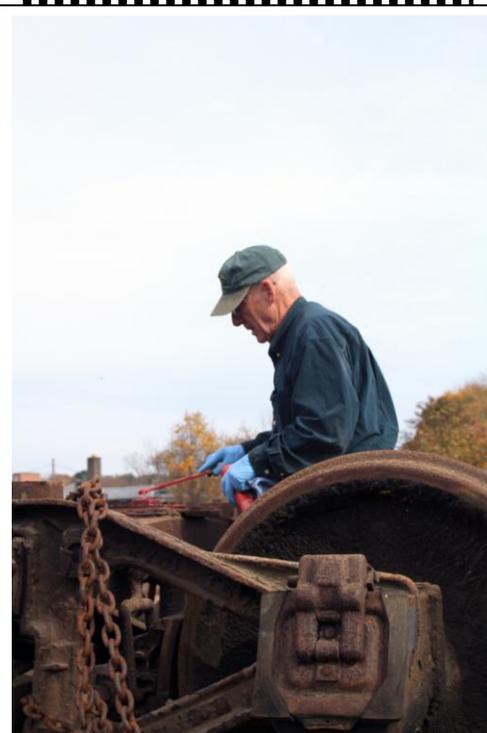
Connecticut Eastern's New Caboose

Rutland #40 will be a primary display at the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum. Work is in progress to outfit it as it was in its original service for the railroad for 55 years.

The museum also plans to rebuild the brake system, and the running gear to allow the #40 to be moved about on the museum's tracks.

A dedicated fund is being set up with this purpose in mind. The museum is a 501-C3 nonprofit corporation with an all volunteer work force and seeks tax free donations to continue its mission.

The museum's entrance is located at the railroad crossing at 9 Bridge Street in downtown Willimantic, CT. It is open to the public on weekends from May to the end of October. We hold 2 major events each year. Metal Fest is the first Saturday in May and this is when the museum opens to the public. Our other major event happens the Saturday before Labor Day. Please stop by on any weekend we are open and see Rutland #40 first hand.



Bob Hassett applies lubricant to caboose truck where pin will hold caboose body in place. (Robert A. LaMay Photo)

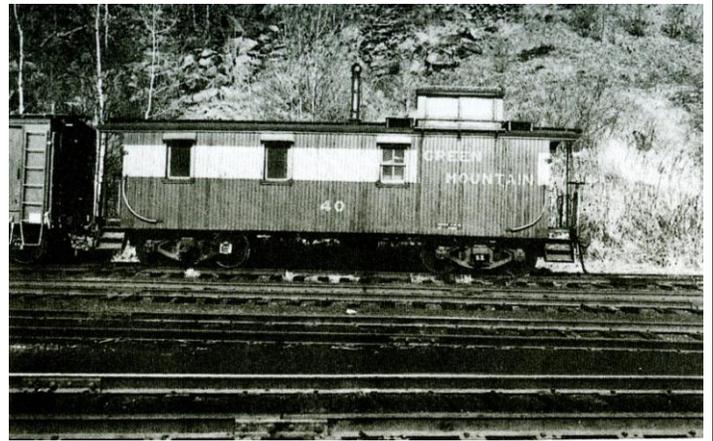
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Photo Credit: Turner Railroad Collection/Connecticut Historical Society



Brand new crane lifting Rutland #40 onto a brand new Landall trailer at Plymouth, MA. (Richard Arnold Photo)



While under control by the Green Mountain Railroad, it was painted into the GM colors but, however it retained its original number. Shown here sitting in yard at Fitchburg. November 1946.

Various Pix Of the #40 Move



Winter -2014-15



L to R, Cliff Lund, Dick Arnold, Aletha Talcott Parsons, daughter of John Talcott III and one of the principles of the Talcottville RR Co., and doner of the #40. Donald Quinn – John Talcott’s attorney and one of the key players in arranging the donation. (Robert A. LaMav Photo)