

Photo Credit: Turner Railroad Collection/Connecticut Historical Society

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The Monthly Newsletter for the members of The Connecticut Eastern Chapter of the NRHS & the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum
Tom Nanos - Editor in Chief | Bob LaMay - Editor
Volume 11, Number 6 November 2003

CT Eastern RR Museum
Willimantic, Connecticut

Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum Presents
The Fall Model Train And Die Cast Toy Show

Windham Middle School
123 Quarry Sreet - Willimantic, CT
December 7, 2003
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Admission:
Adults - \$5
Senior Citizens (62+) - \$4
Children (8-12) - \$1
Children Under 8 FREE

Free Parking
Wide Aisles
Handicapped Accessible

FREE FOR KIDS 8 & OLDER!
Make & Take Boxcar Clinic
Make your own boxcar and take it home!



Tom Nanos Photo

What's New at the Museum

This is where you can find up to date news about what's happened the past month at the Museum, as well as tid-bits about future activities.

Fall Foliage Excursion Recap

The excursion was a great success! The train was nearly sold out (only about 20 seats weren't sold), making for a great day! The weather started out foggy and drizzly, but once the train reached Gardner, the sky cleared up, and was a nice sunny day the rest of the trip. However, due to wheel slip problems on the beginning leg of the trip, the photo runby that was planned couldn't be done. Oh, well - next year! Thanks to all of the members who made this trip possible, and who worked on the train selling merchandise and drawing tickets! Next issue of the *Ghost Train Journal*, we will feature some more photos from the excursion - here's one below of folks enjoying the ride in the Observation Car:



Saturday Work Days

Even though things are winding down, the Saturday Work Days will continue as long as weather permits. Also, while there are volunteers working inside the museum, we will still be offering tours to visitors that happen to come to the gate. In other words, we won't turn anyone away! The "Open Saturday & Sunday" sign will be coming down, but the "Closed for the Winter" sign won't be going up just yet.

The M.O.W. The Member's Own Words

Chasing The Housatonic Railroad's Train NX-13

Article and photos by Tom Nanos

Nestled into the northwestern corner of Connecticut, Canaan is the home base of the Housatonic Railroad - a shortline covering 160 miles of rail - from Pittsfield, MA to Danbury, CT running north & south, and from Beacon, NY to Derby, CT on it's east/west axis.



The remains of the Canaan Station in Canaan, Connecticut

Never having railfanned this road, I decided to hit the road early one Sunday, and catch train NX-13 before it leaves the Canaan area for it's final destination - New Milford, CT.

On the crisp late winter morning of March 23, 2003, I arrived in the Canaan, CT area at about 7 AM, well in advance of NX-13's departure from the engine house. So I decided to check out the Canaan Station - a recent victim to arson, started by some teenagers. Most of the structure is still standing, but is fenced off due to obvious safety concerns. The burned out sections, which were to the left in the photograph above, were removed leaving only the foundation, and the remaining part of the building was sealed off. I'm sure it was a beautiful building when it was in use, and perhaps, someday in the future, it will return to it's splendor. As of this writing, the Canaan Historical Society was in the process of getting a grant to rebuild the burned down sec-



The conductor of NX-13 rides the front "porch" as the train makes it's way to Specialty Minerals in Canaan, CT, dropping off two loaded hoppers.

The Golden Spike Ceremony



Article & photos by Bob LaMay

For the past three years members of the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum have been very busy doing the very physical job of track building. The entire track in and around the museum's village area was non-existent since we took over the area in 1990. We literally had to build the track from the ground up. Excavating the right-a-way, pouring and spreading ballast, putting down ties, laying down steel rails, joint bars added for support, leveling and gauging the track, and finally spiking the rail to the ties.



Paul Shamonis hands golden spike to one of the first hundreds visitors to the Golden Spike Ceremony.

Our goal now and for the next few years is to build enough track so we can possibly add train rides. The additional track will also enable us to move our equipment around the museum. Currently at the museum the Groton Freight House siding and switch connecting it to the mainline is almost completed. The Air Line trackage, which originates in our rail yard at Bridge St. and extends westward to the museum village, is almost complete. Our mainline track, which starts at the west end of the museum (near the Rte 66 overpass) than passes through the museum village area, is almost completed.

For a short time on Sunday October 26, 2003

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Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum & Connecticut Eastern Chapter, NRHS, Inc.
P.O. Box 665
Willimantic, CT 06226

Golden Spike Ceremony Continued

the site where the east and west section of track-age became the Promontory Point of Connecticut. At precisely 1:30PM the sounds of golden spikes could be heard all around the museum. Despite the rain and damp conditions the spirits of over 400 men woman and children

could be heard cheering as each spike was pounded into the ties. Individuals from all steps of life provided their muscle power. Connecticut Senator Donald Williams was present as was Representative Walter Pavlakevich, Selectman Mike Palhus, and Chief

Mechanical Officer David Rutkowski. Each also gave a very positive talk about the museums past and present progress and future plans. Museum President Mark Granville also acted as master of ceremony by explaining a lot of information about the museum. He also introduced the various speakers.

Numerous groups had tables to display many items. Dave and Barbara Peters of Wallingford had the Operation Life Saver table. The Windham Textile Museum had a table as did the Danbury Railway Museum. Snacks and drinks were available throughout the day. Members of the Model T and A Club had some of their classic vehicles at the museum.

Overall the museum had a very successful day in spite of the rainy conditions. Lots of good memories were made that day as people went home happy.



The inclement weather didn't keep the people from lining up at the ticket booth for the Golden Spike Ceremony later that day.

Calendar of Events

- Nov 14 Goods & Services Auction.
- Nov 16 Membership Meeting
- Dec 7 CERM Train Show
- Dec 7 Business Meeting
- Dec 21 Membership Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Connecticut Eastern Chapter, National Railway Historical Society will be at Windham Community Memorial Hospital 112 Mansfield Ave., Willimantic, CT on Sunday, Nov 16th @ 7:00 PM.

Please note: The monthly business meeting will be held at the same location on the first Sunday of the month. **All members are welcome and encouraged to attend!**

Only Two Roundhouse Windows Left!!!

After more than a year of selling the windows in the Columbian Junction Roundhouse, there's only two windows left to sell! If you, or anyone you know, is interested in purchasing a window, please contact Mark Granville at 860-456-3956 for more information. Windows cost \$1,000 each, are tax deductible, and will have an inscribed plaque beneath the window purchased. Purchase it for yourself or a loved one, and immortalize that person forever in the Roundhouse!

2003 Goods and Services Auction

As you probably know by now, will be co-sponsoring the 2003 Goods and Services auction with the Connecticut Textile Museum and the Windham Historical Society again this year. The auction will take place on November 14, 2003. We have already started to get donations for the auction, but we still need more! If you know of a business, or own a business, that is willing to donate something, whether its goods or services, please contact Ray Axelrod at 860-228-3197.

This event is a great fundraiser for the Museum, so any help, whether it's in gathering donations or helping out at the auction, will be appreciated. Contact Ray if you want to help out with the actual auction.

The auction will be at the Windham Textile Museum on November 14, 2003. Preview of the auction items begins at 6:30 PM and the auction begins at 7:30 PM.

M.O.W Story Continued

tion, and start restoring the station.

Just as I was finishing up at the station, I heard

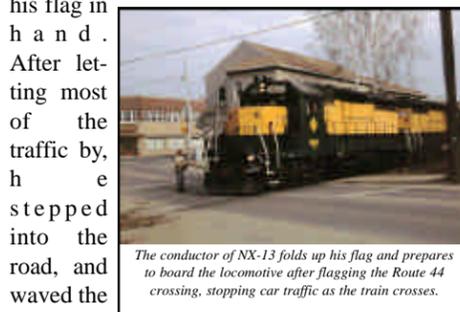


GP-20M #3602 leading NX-13 in some switching moves before heading south.

the scanner start to speak - NX-13 was receiving it's permission to leave the yard from the Housatonic dispatcher, and head out to start performing it's duties! So from the Canaan Station area, I decided to head a mile or so south to the engine facility, located on Route 7. to catch the power leaving the yard. With some covered hoppers in tow, NX-13, powered by GP35s #3602 & #3603, headed south to switch out BD Medical, just south of the engine facility.

After about 45 minutes of switching inside the BD plant, and a little breakfast for me from MacDonald's, the crew finished up their duties, and headed back north to get ready for their next stop - Specialty Minerals.

Passing the old Canaan Station, the locomotives crossed over Route 44 - a grade crossing that has only crossbucks as protection. So as the train approached the crossing, it slowed to an easy stop, and the conductor jumped down, with his flag in hand.



The conductor of NX-13 folds up his flag and prepares to board the locomotive after flagging the Route 44 crossing, stopping car traffic as the train crosses.

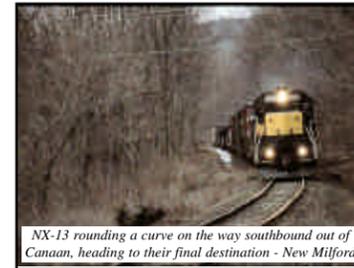
After letting most of the traffic by, he stepped into the road, and waved the locomotive across the grade crossing into the yard. After about 10 minutes of switching, they were ready to head up to Specialty Minerals - a limestone processing plant according to their website - with a few hopper cars. On their way past the station area where I was standing, the conductor yelled down asking me "Are you Tom?" I, of course, replied, yep, and he said that people do read things on the Internet. I had posted a question to the HRRC Yahoo Group a

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M.O.W Story Continued

couple days before asking about NX-13's schedule. Turns out the conductor is a member of the group as well!

Once the crew was done with their duties at



NX-13 rounding a curve on the way southbound out of Canaan, heading to their final destination - New Milford

Specialty Minerals, they again headed to the Canaan Station area to assemble their train for the southbound journey to New Milford, CT. A few switching moves later in the small yard, the train was ready to head south. The conductor radioed to the locomotive to proceed and clear the crossing so he can hang the marker on the tail end of the train. After the conductor finished connecting the end of train marker, and tested it, they were ready to head south.

After a short chase as far as West Cornwall, I decided to call it a day and head home. Three rolls of slides later, I was a happy railfan - I had captured another New England railroad for my collection of photos. For more photos from this trip, visit my website at:

<http://www.railfanzone.com>

2003 Train Show

This year's Train Show will be on December 7, 2003 from 10 am until 3 pm. This show will be a bit different on a few different fronts - all for the better.

First off, the show will be held at the Windham Middle School on 123 Quarry Street, Windham, CT. This gives us the opportunity to have all of our vendors in one room, instead of in the main gymnasium, and in the hallways around the "main room" giving everyone a more captive audience.

Also, we will be conducting a "make and take" boxcar clinic for children ages 8 and older. The clinics will provide each child with a boxcar kit, and will be instructed how to assemble it. Best of all, the clinic is free!

And finally, as you've probably noticed by the new title, we will be including die cast toys in this show, adding to the possible accessories for your layout!

Photos From Around The Museum

Golden Spike Ceremony - October 26, 2003



The FL-9 and 44 Tonner meet at the Versailles Shanty for the Ceremony. Despite the rain, the turnout was excellent! Tom Nanos Photo



Bob Hassett tells museum visitors about the FL9 #2023 at the Golden Spike Day at the museum. R.A. LaMay Photo

Museum & Chapter Contact Information

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