



The Westconn Manifest

The Monthly Newsletter of the
Western Connecticut Chapter of the
National Railway Historical Society



www.westctnrhs.org

Since 1953

March 2005



Clock tower in Siena, Italy.



Clock tower in Waterbury, Connecticut
October 2004

A past co-worker of Bob Gambling recently went to Italy and was quite impressed in the clock tower in Siena, Italy.

This is the write-up Bob gave him and the comparison pictures are above.

There is a Website with a brief description of the Siena bell tower. It's height is stated as being 102 meters high including a metal framework holding a bell which the Waterbury tower does not have. Exactly how high is the masonry part I do not know but the sizes of both towers are probably very close. The Siena tower was built in 1325-44. Completed just before the Black Death Plague that ravaged Europe in the late 1340's.

Look at the below Website for photos and brief description

<http://www.bluffton.edu/~sullivanm/sienapubbl/palazzopubbl.html>

If you compare the two towers you will notice that the clock face is down near the bottom of the tower in the Siena Tower (Campanile).

When the Waterbury Station tower was built, I guess they thought it was high time to put the clock face near the top. By the way, the original clockworks that was in the Waterbury tower is now located in the lobby of the Waterbury Republican offices. It is there in full working order and easy to view. A hole was cut into the floor to clear the pendulum. The lobby is open during the newspaper's office hours. Definitely a worthwhile item to see if you are in the area. Call the paper to verify office hours. If I recall the clockworks was of an old Connecticut based clock maker. I think it was Seth Thomas but I am not sure.

I wonder if the folks in Siena, Italy are aware of the cloning of their tower in Waterbury, CT, USA

THE WESTCONN MANIFEST

is the official newsletter of the Western Connecticut Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society – (NRHS).

Articles which appear in

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The Western Connecticut Chapter of the NRHS is separately incorporated as a CT not-for-profit corporation.

The Chapter is involved in the preservation of American railroad history and artifacts.

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The Chapter meets monthly, usually on the 4th Monday, at the **United Congregational Church 275 Richards Ave. in Norwalk, CT** or at the SoNo Switch Tower Museum
77 Washington St. Norwalk, CT
at 8 P.M.

Meeting dates for 2005:

1/24, 2/28, **3/28**, 4/25, 5/23*, 6/27*, 7/25*,
8/22*, 9/26*, 10/24, 11/28 and 12/19.

*Chapter meeting to held at the SoNo Switch Tower in South Norwalk, CT

The SoNo Switch Tower Museum is maintained and operated by volunteers of the Western Connecticut Chapter.

Western Connecticut Chapter -
NRHS Inc.

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www.sonotower.org

Spring 2005 Board of Directors Meeting – Tony White

The Western Maryland Chapter – NRHS is the host of the spring 2005 Directors meeting.

They have an exciting menu of events and it will be worth the trip to experience the fun of the weekend and meet some of your fellow NRHS members. Besides the events planned, you could take in lots of mainline action in the area.

The agenda for the spring 2005 Board of Directors Meeting in Cumberland, Maryland April 8-10. The host hotel is the Holiday Inn of Cumberland. The Friday event will be a ride on the Potomac Eagle with rare mileage on the former **B&O** branch from Romney to Moorefield, West Virginia.

On Saturday there are two events plus the banquet. First there will be a tour of the CSX Cumberland Terminal including the locomotive shop, roundhouse, engineer school and hump yard. After lunch we will ride steam on the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad over the mainline of the Western Maryland and a branch of the Cumberland & Pennsylvania Railroad. The banquet with a guest speaker will be on Saturday evening.

The Board of Directors Meeting will commence on Sunday morning.

Photos by Anthony Gruerio



CSX and CT So at W. Springfield, MA



DRGW Caboose in Ringos, New Jersey



Photos by Janet Neulinger from a recent trip to California.

BNSF line Pinole, CA Bridge abutment



Cal Train - Santa Clara, California



Santa Clara Tower



Amtrak California- Street running
Jackson Sq. Oakland, CA - Northbound

Rarotonga

By Robert Briechle

Rarotonga is the largest island of the ten islands that make up the Cook Islands located in the South Pacific. This tiny nation of 13,000 people, about 8500 of whom live on Rarotonga, is under the stewardship of New Zealand but is, otherwise, an independent country. They use New Zealand currency but have coins of their own in the same denominations as New Zealand but valid tender only on the islands. Tourists (like me) who bring some of their currency home as a souvenir help the economy.

The volcanic island is about 20 miles in diameter, has one library, one post office, one hospital, etc. and depends, today, on tourism for sustaining its economy. It does have an airport, large only for the runway which sustained the Boeing aircraft that flew me there direct from Los Angeles. It is a four hour flight from Rarotonga on to Auckland. There is a road running around the periphery, nearly always within sight of the beach, and a secondary inner road for a good distance as well as some roads that poke a bit into the interior but not very far as the lay of the land curves up sharply to the rocky former volcano(s) that gave birth to the island.

The island has one railway which is 175 feet long, a narrow gauge labor of love put in by local attorney Tim Arnold, a New Zealander who calls Rarotonga his home. With one diesel loco, a passenger coach under construction, and the Polish 0-8-0 of the Polish State Railways Px class was built after WWII likely for industrial and/or forestry railways. It is a chunky little number and was fired up when I clambered into the cab. Note the symbol for the Polish State Railways (PKP) and class and loco number information.

However, the steam-powered air pump 'went crook' (a New Zealand expression) and, with no way to stop the thing from running into the diesel loco at the end of the line, a ride of any kind was out of the question.

Eventually, Arnold expects to place a tourist train in service to carry visitors from their hotel to a place or two of interest but realizing this will take a while. Meantime, he has made some changes to the loco, notably the headlights which are newly crafted additions. The tender is loaded with wood, a likely fuel given that coal or oil has to be shipped into the island. For further information, do a Google search on "Rarotonga Locomotive" for the story as to just how a locomotive ended up here in the middle of nowhere and for photos of the locomotive.



Rarotonga Steam Locomotive

Photos by Robert Briechle

Locomotive owner



Loco Plates

Director Musings

By Tony White

Hopefully you all had a wonderful Holiday Season and the New Year has been good to you. There have been committees in both the National and the Chapter busy working to make this a good year.

The Bylaws committee for the National has looked at the current bylaws and decided that rewriting them would be the best course of action. Last month a lengthy commentary was disseminated to explain the good, the bad and what needed total revision based on today's interpretation of current law. The proposed final version has been distributed to the National Directors to consume and be prepared to vote on it during the spring meeting. The final vote and ratification will be at the Annual Meeting in Portland, OR.

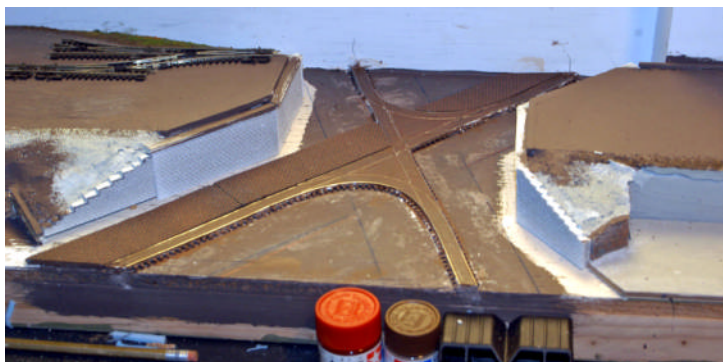
There are a lot of changes to digest in the proposed bylaws. First and foremost is the name change of the Associate member to an At-Large member. Coming in a close second is that this group, which represents the most dues to the National will have five National Directors appointed by the President and have ten votes. Oh yes, each ND will have votes based on the dues that are paid to the National. We will have two votes.

Within our Chapter, the Bylaws committee consisting of Anthony Gruerio, Newell "Buck" Neulinger, Roberta Ballard and me has completed a revision to our Bylaws, which were last revised in 1993. This will be presented to the membership both online and in the mail. We expect to vote on it in May or June. You will be notified.

Chief and I completed our Chapter write-up for inclusion in the Activities Issue 2006. It will be as informative as in the past and will showcase our members and accomplishments.

The Tower Committee, Jim Mescher, Buck Neulinger, Janet Neulinger, John "Chief" Garofalo, Roberta Ballard and myself have been active and several projects are been lined up. The model board is the most prominent one and it looks to be ready by our April 30th season opening. Computer generated routes will light as in real life. Buck, Nathan Neulinger, and Chief are working on this project. It will be impressive!

A diorama of the real estate shown on the model board is being worked on by Ed Holowinko, Lincoln Saunders, Dana Laird and me. It will not be simply looking at a model of what is seen out the windows, but some history will be included to make it more educational for our patrons.



The model board diorama is starting to look like the real thing!

A new set of displays are being worked on for the second floor and they should prove to be stimulating to all as the past one was.

The Washington DC Chapter which is close to our hearts presents many trips and activities during the year. 2005 is proving to be no slouch for them. On March 6, they sponsored a low cost guided tour of Washington Union Station and Amtrak's Ivy City plant. The Union Station tour was as popular as it has been in the past and sold out very quickly. Roberta and I were only able to get the Ivy City tour and we were not disappointed. Because of the variety of offerings they have, it would be worthwhile to sign up for their mailings.



With the budget proposed by President Bush and its no funding of Amtrak, it might be wise to take as many train rides as possible before September 30th, which is the end of their fiscal year. Mostly due to the budget crunch and lack of money, Amtrak President Dunn has suggested the terribly high tariff on private cars of \$1000 for switching in each segment of a trip. The new tariff in addition to the 50% increase in the mileage rate last year will force most private cars out of the trip business as only the well-healed will be able to afford a trip. By the way, get your Amtrak photos!



A seldom seen part of the Acela!
Here it is hitched to a trackmobile.

From Robert Briechele

January 28, 2005 Orange County Register had a letter to the editor ranting about Metrolink.
The following is a quote from that letter:

"Conversely, the push method forces passenger cars to bear the brunt of any impact, while the locomotive's engineer rides safely in the rear, visually oblivious to the danger up ahead. Graphics show that the derailment was in 'push'".

I don't know which is worse, that the person is so ignorant or that the paper prints such a flagrantly incorrect and inflammatory letter.

Then we have the following letter from the San Jose Mercury news today about Caltrain:

I am a daily Caltrain rider. Since the Glendale wreck, I am concerned for my safety. I don't believe the public has been fully informed of the potential for disaster in Caltrain's Baby Bullet service.

Having the locomotive up front would prevent many injuries. The locomotive has a "cow-catcher" plow, which might have been able to remove the SUV tires from the tracks and avoid the Glendale derailment.

Caltrain has never told us what would happen if a 70-mph bullet were to strike a stopped SUV on the tracks. I don't believe Caltrain is doing enough to inform riders of the hazards, or to mitigate them by placing locomotives up front, or to slow down the trains to make crashes survivable.

What's to keep a terrorist from learning the lessons of Glendale and applying them here?

NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN & HARTFORD
RAILROAD

Time, Year of 1897.

1/2 Fare Rates:

Union City	.55
Naugatuck	.53
East Hampton	.80
Middletown	.68
Willimantic	\$1.05
Saybrook Jc.	.78
Clinton	.68
Georgetown	.20
Westbrook	.73

Full Fare Rate:

Stepney	.65
Botsford	.80
Newtown	.90
Kent	\$1.40
Gt. Barrington	\$2.30
Pittsfield	\$2.95
Mt. Carmel	\$1.00
Milldale	1.25
Southington	1.30
Plainville	1.45
Farmington	1.50
Unionville	1.60
Simsbury	\$1.80
Willimantic	\$2.10
Middletown+	1.35
Portland	1.40
Colchester	1.95
Pawtucket	\$3.65
Boston	4.25
Berlin	\$1.25
Wallingford	1.00
New Britain	1.30
Middletown++	1.50
Windsor Locks	1.70
Thompsonville	1.80

+ Via Air Line

++ Via Hartford Line

Noroton, Conn. To:

Full Fare Rate:

Ansonia	\$0.80
Seymour	.90
Naugatuck	1.05
Union City	1.10
Waterbury	1.20
Waterville	1.25
Watertown	1.40
Thomaston	1.45
Torrington	1.70
Branford	.95
East Haven	.90
Madison	1.25
Clinton	1.35
Saybrook	1.55
Waterford	\$1.95
Wilton	.30
Georgetown	.40
Redding	.55
Ridgefield	.55
Bethel	.65
Danbury	.70

MONTHLY COMMUTATION TICKET-1917

Danbury	\$13.00
Bridgeport	11.75
Port Chester	5.85
City Island	10.12
N.Y. City	\$12.15

3 MONTH COMMUTATION TICKET-1917:

Stamford	\$ 7.85
So. Norwalk	10.00
Darien	\$ 5.50

SCHOLARS COMMUTATION 3 MONTH TICKET-'18

Stamford	\$ 6.50
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Westconn Schedule of Events

Annual Spring Train Meet

Presented by The Westchester Model Railroad Club

Sunday, March 20, 2005 - 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Greenwich Civic Center Old, Greenwich, CT

Admission: Adults \$6.00 Senior: \$4.00 Family: \$8.00

Senior & Spouse: \$6.00 - Under 12 free with adult

Plan to volunteer at the SoNo Switch Tower table or be sure to visit us.

Monday - March 28 Membership meeting - Bring your 20 best slides to show

Monday - April 25 - 6:30PM - Annual Chapter Dinner at Maneros Restaurant - Greenwich, CT
Tickets only \$36.00. 6:30 PM - Dinner to be served at 7:30PM.

Saturday - April 30 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum re-opens for the season.
12-5 PM every Saturday & Sunday thru October.

Saturday - May 7 - Long Island-Sunrise Chapter of the NRHS Spring Outing to the SoNo
Switch Tower Museum Norwalk, CT.

Saturday & Sunday, Aug. 6 & 7 - The 29th Annual SoNo Arts Celebration.
Saturday, Aug. 6: 10AM - 8PM Sunday, Aug. 7: 11AM - 6PM
Giant Puppet Parade: 3PM

Friday Sept. 30 - Sunday Oct. 2 - Western Connecticut Chapter Fall outing to
North Conway, NH. Ride the dome railroad car to Crawford Notch on Saturday
And the Cog on Sunday. Details coming soon. Save the dates!



The Western Connecticut Chapter, NRHS Inc. supports Operation Lifesaver

**Our Next Chapter meeting will be
Monday, March 28, 2005 - 8:00 P.M. at:
At The United Congregational Church
275 Richards Ave. Norwalk, CT**



Entertainment this month will be provided by:

You! Our members!
"Bring your 20 Best slides"

Bob Gambling will provide refreshments.

