

The Westconn Manifest

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



www.westctrhs.org

Since 1953

July 2006



Galloping Goose No. 5 at the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad
June 8, 2006

The Rio Grande Southern "Galloping Goose"

These were unique rail vehicles built by the Rio Grande Southern Railroad, called "Galloping Goose". The Galloping Goose was a product of the Great Depression.

The Geese were introduced by the Rio Grande Southern Railroad as a more economical means of transporting freight, mail and passengers and added an extra twenty years to the life of the railroad, but in 1952, the Rio Grande Southern abandoned its railroad forever.



Welcome New Member



Victor Zolinsky from Hackensack, NJ

THE WESTCONN MANIFEST

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

Articles which appear in

THE WESTCONN MANIFEST

do not express official NRHS position unless specifically noted as such.

Material from **THE WESTCONN**

MANIFEST may be reprinted in other publications, provided the credit is given.

Please address comments, any contributions of material, complaints and exchange copies of other chapter newsletters to:

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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.

Chapter Officers

President : Buck Neulinger
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treasurer@westctnrhs.org
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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 8:00 P.M.

Meeting dates for 2006:

1/23, 2/27, 3/27, 5/1 (Annual Dinner),
5/22*, 6/26*, **7/24***, 8/28*, 9/25*, 10/23,
11/27 and 12/18.

***Chapter meeting to be 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.

77 Washington Street
Norwalk, CT 06854

203 246-6958

www.westctnrhs.org
www.sonotower.org

June Volunteer Hours for The SoNo Switch Tower Museum

John Garofalo	: 40	Janet Neulinger:	32	Buck Neulinger:	32
Jim Mescher	: 20	Bob Westerfield:	20	Bob Gambling :	44
Tony White	: 14	Roberta Ballard:	14	Dick Carpenter:	1
Dana Laird	: 14	Anthony Gruerio :	6	Steve Biffoni	: 6

Total for June = 243 hours Thank you!

To Volunteer call: 203 246-6958

We now have both Western Connecticut Chapter and SoNo Switch Tower pins for sale in the Museum Gift Shop

Cost is only \$5.00 each and members receive a 10% discount.

Simulated Train Disaster

The Red Cross and other regional agencies will be conducting a simulated terrorist train attack in South Norwalk on Saturday, October 28. The purpose of this exercise is for the various agencies to practice working together so they can be prepared in case of an actual disaster.

Volunteer victims and rescuers will be needed. If you are interested, please contact Beth Siegelbaum or Ed Holowinko at 203-852-7187.



This photo of a Norfolk Southern conductor was taken by a friend of Tony Fitzherbert in New Jersey.

Check out the non verbal communications!

They say actions speak louder than words! What was he saying?

Beth and Ed in Missouri

By Beth Siegelbaum & Ed Holowinko

This article is dedicated to all you rail fans who think that recreational rail trails are an abomination. We say it's better to preserve the old rights of way and along with them, a big part of railroad history while providing the public with safe and scenic places to ride bicycles, skate, walk or run.

Of course we're fans of the Rails to Trails Conservancy. We're also avid users of these trails and have just returned from an exciting trip during which we biked along the 225 mile Katy (Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroad) trail in Missouri. This is the longest rail trail in the USA.

Can we start by saying that this trip was Ed's present to Beth for having graduated from two long years of radiography school? The original plan was to go to New Orleans, but Katrina and Rita came along and washed out those plans. So Beth decided she would like to go to Charleston and Savannah. So how did we end up in Missouri? Well, it's like this. Ed said it would be too hot and muggy in Charleston and Savannah in June, so he cooked up this trip in Missouri where it was..... hot and muggy! More likely the weather did not have much to do with Ed's aversion to Beth's choice, but its lack of connection to the railroad may have had something to do with it!

So off we went to Missouri! By bus! (Oh heaven forbid)! Well, we must say that strange people ride the buses (ourselves excluded, of course) and even stranger people drive the buses! In addition to all of the usual "rules of the bus," our drill sergeant driver between New York City and Pittsburgh had a few of his own. He warned the passengers: "If you have smelly feet and you have left your odor eaters at home, then do NOT take off your shoes!" Anyway, the buses ran on schedule and we got to St. Louis safe and sound and with no foot odor violations.

Our real adventure started at the eastern end of the Katy trail in St. Charles, just outside of St. Louis. We rented bicycles and were then driven four hours to Clinton, Missouri, at the western end of the Katy. Ed found a self-guided tour manager who arranged all of our overnight accommodations and for our luggage to be transported for us so we could ride unencumbered. The trip manager also provided us with maps and with suggestions of places to stop for lunch, which was handy because there weren't too many eateries in the corn fields.

At the Clinton trailhead, a caboose, painted the Katy green and yellow colors, stands as a reminder of the Katy, which rolled through this area between 1892 and 1986. We biked 38 miles that first day, through deserted towns and over the abandoned Rock Island Line. This was hardly a challenge for Ed, who had been training daily for the trip, but for Beth, who had been spending her time studying and only rode on weekends, it was another story. By the end of the day, she thought her thighs were going to explode!



The first night's stopover was Sedalia, which aside from being the home of ragtime's most famous composer, Scott Joplin, is also the home of the restored Katy depot and railroad museum. The Katy railroad maintenance yards were located in Sedalia and this was also the junction point to Kansas City. Our overnight accommodations were at the Bothwell Hotel, a 1930's art deco hotel which was hopping with people, although the town seemed more or less abandoned.

Continued on page 4

Near Rocheport, our next stopover, is the only tunnel on the entire Katy Line. It was built in 1893. Other than this, the only remnants of the railroad along the trail are two depots, the aforementioned Sedalia depot and the Spanish mission style Boonville depot, the lift bridge over the Missouri River at Boonville, the turntable in Franklin, and a signal stand, also near Boonville.

Our next stop along the way was in Jefferson City, the state capitol. This city is small, but has a typical capitol city look to it, with its domed capitol building dominating the skyline.



Next was Hermann, a quaint and hilly town created as a homeland for German immigrants and still possessing a definite German aura. It is home to the Stone Hill Winery, which has the largest series of underground wine cellars in North America.

The following night, we made our way to Augusta, a former riverboat landing which is now another winery town. So far as we could tell, the entire town consisted of about four blocks. We had dinner in the only restaurant and Ed was intrigued by the Dr. Pepper cake on the dessert menu. When we asked the waitress what it was, she said she didn't know but her boss had told her to "get rid of it." Well, she found the right customer in Ed and he was served about a quarter of the cake!

On our final day, we made our way back to St. Charles. This was Missouri's first capitol and is now a quaint tourist town with many restored buildings from the early 1800s. The American Car Foundry was located there and the building still stands. Today it houses artists' studios.

The bicycle trip over, we were scheduled to ride the Amtrak Texas Eagle from Alton, IL to Chicago to get the Capitol Limited to Washington, DC. We checked in with Julie the night before and the train was already three hours late. By the morning, it was six hours late, so we decided to cancel our tickets and rent a car. It's good that we did because by the time the Texas Eagle arrived in Chicago, our train to Washington had long since departed. Well, that train did not do much better. It was delayed because of flooding on the tracks and later because of freight traffic, so we got to Washington seven hours late! We were much luckier returning to Connecticut. Though the service was not perfect, we got home somewhat on time and the following day, all service from Washington to Philadelphia was cancelled because of serious flooding.



An easy way for you to help your Chapter.

If you do on-line shopping you can earn money for The Western Connecticut Chapter
By going to either www.westctnrhs.org or www.sonotower.org and clicking on the Shop for Charity Day banner.
or www.shopforcharityday.com/4052

This will take you to their site and as long as you stay within this link - your purchases will earn a percentage of your purchase for the Chapter.

They have over a 1,000 stores listed. Just look for the store you want to shop from or browse through the list. The prices are the same and our chapter benefits from your purchases.

This is just a few of the stores listed on the site:

Office Max Thompson Cigar Lillian Vernon Target Kalmbach Publishing Buy.com USA
Kmart Home DePot Brookstone eBags Flowers USA 1-800-PetMeds Hotwire

This site does not require you to give any personal information, nor are there any hidden charges .

Thank you!

Please contact Roberta Ballard at: 203 792-8558 or editor@westctnrhs.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Westconn Schedule of Events

July 18 - 22 - Buckeye Rails 2006 - The National Railway Historical Society Convention - Ohio Central New Philadelphia, OH

Saturday & Sunday July 22 & 23 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Monday July 24 - Western Connecticut Monthly Meeting - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 8pm

Saturday & Sunday July 29 & 30 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Saturday Aug. 5 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 10:00 - 7:00

Sunday Aug. 6 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 10:00 - 6:00

2006 SoNo Arts Celebration - Saturday, August 5, 2006: 10am – midnight Sunday, August 6, 2006: 11am – 6pm
Puppet Parade: 3pm

Exhibiting Artist booths are open Saturday from 10am – 7pm and Sunday 11am – 6pm.

Saturday & Sunday Aug. 12 & 13 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Saturday & Sunday Aug. 19 & 20 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00



The Western Connecticut Chapter, NRHS Inc. supports Operation Lifesaver

Our Next Chapter meeting will be held at **8 PM** on
Monday, July 24, 2006 at:

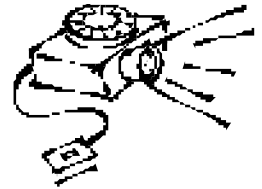
The SoNo Switch Tower Museum

77 Washington Street South Norwalk, CT

Entertainment will be provided by:

Anthony Gruerio

Bob Gambling will provide refreshments



The SoNo (Railroad) Switch Tower Museum

is now open on Saturday's and Sunday's

Please help us show the Tower and how it operated to the public.

To volunteer call: (203) 246-6958 or sign up at the Tower.

Thank you, your help is greatly appreciated.