



The Westconn Manifest

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



www.westctrhs.org

Since 1953

August 2006

"ROLLING" MUSEUM STOPS AT SS #44

By John Garofalo

Photos by Robert Gambling

On August 19, 2006 15 members of the **Connecticut Crank and Yank Model T Club** visited the SoNo Switch Tower Museum. Their members come from around Connecticut and were on a three-day tour of the area with seven classic Ford Model T's.



Our special visitors enjoyed learning about the tower's operations and mechanical "Armstrong" switch machine. The enthusiastic group asked many questions and tried their hand at throwing lever 37.



After their tour of the Tower, the Model T owners showed off their rolling museum to Tower Volunteers. Most of the classic automobiles dated from the 1920's while two were 1912 models. It is hard to imagine that the operating 1912 editions pre-dated our Tower's mechanical "Armstrong" machine (1919) and even the Cos Cob panel (1914)!

As the car owners *cranked* up their delicate machines, we couldn't help but think that they could have thrown mechanical tower levers all day. Members of both "museums" posed for group photos before the Model T's and their proud owners paraded off to their next venue.

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

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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

July Volunteer Hours for The SoNo Switch Tower Museum

John Garofalo : 66	Janet Neulinger: 18	Buck Neulinger : 18
Jim Mescher : 14	Bob Westerfield: 6	Bob Gambling : 66
Tony White : 36	Roberta Ballard: 30	Dick Carpenter : 1
Dana Laird : 2	Anthony Gruerio: 12	Steve Biffoni : 12
Kevin Feeney : 6	Steve McEvoy : 6	Beth Siegelbaum: 6

Total for July = 299 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 or by mail.
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 Month's Book Review

RAIL POWER

By Steve Barry. 2006. 192 pages. Soft cover. Voyageur Press, MBI Publishing Co., 380 Jackson Ave, St. Paul, MN 55501. \$14.95

Steve Barry, a staff member of 'Railroad & Railfan' magazine, has covered familiar territory in a new and interesting fashion. In the 3 chapters covering steam, diesel, and electric power he chronologically traces the types of motive power by generic type. This is particularly useful for steam and diesel types since each different type gets its own page. Thus it becomes possible to go past the endless list of confusing names and wheel arrangements for steam and the letter and number abbreviations for diesel locomotives. Coverage is limited to the USA and Canada. More than 250 high quality color photos are shown. Each type has its own page.

Unlike the steam and diesel chapters, the electric chapter is highly abbreviated and limited only to current types plus the GG1. Other than the GG1, there isn't any coverage of historical electric locomotives. Mr. Barry doesn't provide any explanation for the omission in the text.

Also, some of the newer switcher locomotives from the new manufacturers are not shown, although MPI's commuter locomotives for Caltrain, Metra, and the startup New Mexico system are shown.

As reviewed by Stuart Werner

Letter received from SoNo Switch Tower visitor Ted Shradly

July 21, 2006

SONO Switch Tower Museum
77 Washington St.
South Norwalk, CT 06854

To Andy, John, Bob, and Lincoln:

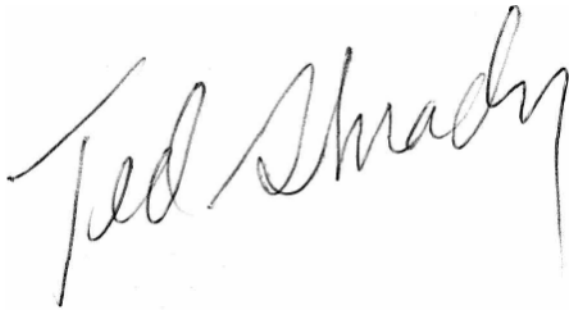
I really enjoyed my visit (with Jack Swanberg) last Saturday and left with a wonderful impression of a first-class, railroad renovation. Hard work and cooperation between town and enthusiasts made an important piece of railroad history come back to life.

The fact that the tower is in better condition than in its later life means it will be around for a long time. Volunteers are eager to show off the structure and educate visitors to the world of railroading. The genius who made the diagram board come to life with simulated routes is to be commended.

My sincere thanks to the crew for keeping the tower open a little later so we could get interior and train pictures, especially the down Danbury train. Just like old times!

I am enclosing a donation that I failed to leave then (I really did forget my wallet).

Best of luck and good railroading.



Could this be "Westconn 1" the new Presidential Limo?



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:

Macys 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

Saturday & Sunday Aug. 26 & 27 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Monday August 28 - Western Connecticut Monthly Meeting - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 8pm

Saturday & Sunday Sept. 2 & 3 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Labor Day - Monday Sept. 4 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Saturday & Sunday Sept. 9 & 10 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Saturday & Sunday Sept. 16 & 17 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Saturday & Sunday Sept. 23 & 24 - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 12:00 - 5:00

Monday September 25 - Western Connecticut Monthly Meeting - SoNo Switch Tower Museum - 8pm



The Western Connecticut Chapter, NRHS Inc. supports Operation Lifesaver

Our Next Chapter meeting will be held at **8 PM** on
Monday, August 28, 2006 at:

The SoNo Switch Tower Museum

77 Washington Street South Norwalk, CT

Entertainment will be provided by:

Tim Shields

DVD on New York, Westchester and Boston Railroad

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.