



The Westconn Manifest

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



www.westctnrhs.org

Since 1953

October 2004

Annual Chapter Picnic September 26, 2004

A gathering of 24 members, their families and friends on
a perfect September Sunday.

Photos by Roberta Ballard



Great views!



Great train watching!

Photos by Robert Gambling



Just a great time to relax, eat, and enjoy!



Chef Jim Mescher preparing his
famous "cooler" salad.



Just the appetizers!
The best is yet to come.

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
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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 P.M.

Meeting dates for 2004:

1/26, 2/23, 3/22, 4/26, 5/24*, 6/28*, 7/26*,
8/23*, 9/27*, **10/25**, 11/22 and 12/20.

*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.

77 Washington Street
Norwalk, CT 06854

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www.westctnrhs.org



Photo credit: John Mount

Northbound **Acela** and **Metro-North** train to Waterbury at Bridgeport Railroad Station platform - January 2003



Photo Credit: Robert L. Briechle - 1972

A little derelict Plymouth 0-4-0 gasoline locomotive sitting on the ground by the
end of the spur that nearly touches Skiff Street in the New Haven, Connecticut area.



New Member

Michael Cusick - Norwalk, CT

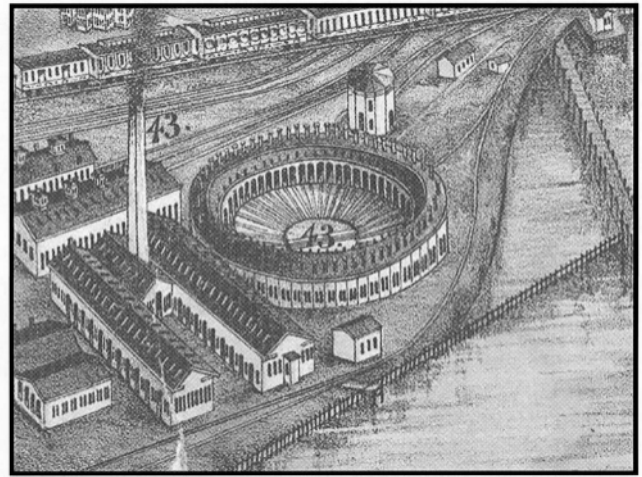
From Robert Briechle

Railroad Roundhouse Archeology in New Haven

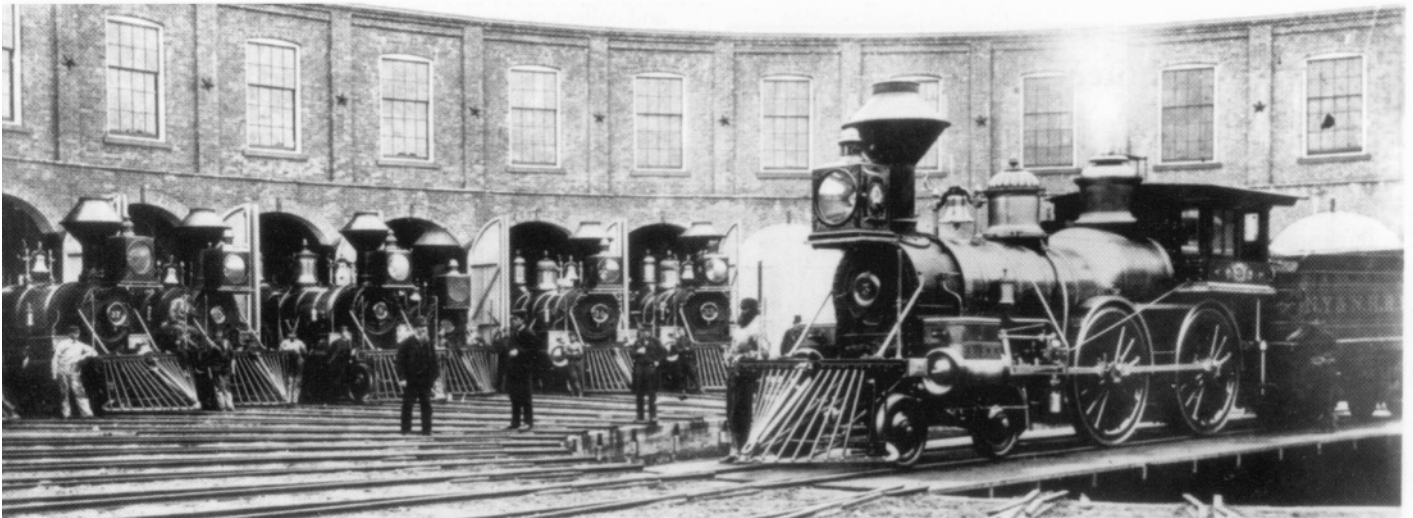
These photos appeared in the newsletter of the Society for Industrial Archeology newsletter Vol. 33 Spring-Summer 2004.

The rail yard dates from 1868 and was completed in 1870. This complex was the railroad's most important shop facility, and many of its early locomotives and rolling stock were built there.

Two more roundhouses were in the 1890s at the South end of the yard.

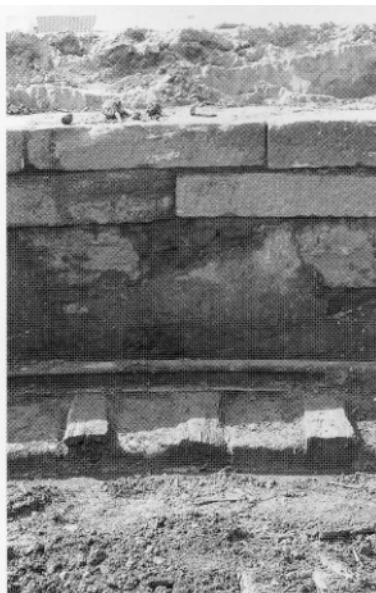


Bird's-eye view, 1879, of roundhouse and adjacent repair shops.



All photos courtesy Bruce Clouette/PAST.

New York & New Haven RR Roundhouse, ca. 1870.



Detail of turntable circumferential bearing rail at base of retaining wall.



Portion of retaining wall for turntable pit, New Haven rail yard roundhouse, 1870. Piers in background are for the Church St. overpass.

Wide Open Spaces

By: Anthony Gruerio, Jr.

Those avid readers of the Manifest may recall an article appearing in 2001 describing a grand excursion undertaken by a few members in which Southern Californian railfanning was the focal point. During that trip, scenic vistas and wonderfully different paint schemes dominated the itinerary. At the end, our adventuresome party decided to meet three years later in a similar themed vacation in which Denver Colorado, the Mile High City, would play host to another fast paced week of rental cars, fast food, and stalking foreign rails.



Photo credit: Anthony Gruerio, Jr

Union Station - Denver Colorado

Our intrepid leader (Tim Broadley) was a fellow railfan we met in 1999 and quickly discovered that along with a quick wit; he possessed a keen knowledge of railfanning the Western states. Being a resident of Southern California was very helpful in navigating the southwest railroad scene in 2001. He had also conducted many safaris into the Rocky Mountains and Western plains to capture a treasured image of Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) in both their present forms and earlier predecessor/ acquiesced railroad companies. After a survey of vacation schedules, Tim informed us that early June would be a favorable time to go, as the desert areas were not too hot, and the threat of onslaughts of snow would be remote in the mountainous regions of the Rockies. Attendees who signed on for this edition of "Broadley's Extreme Railfan Tours" included the following Chapter members: John Garofalo, your President, Jim Mescher, John Miller, and Tim Shields.

After landing in Denver, we sped off in our rental for the first of an eventual 1500+ miles. Our first stop was the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden, CO. Their fine collection of vintage rolling stock included steam and diesel locomotives as well as freight and passenger cars. We quickly realized that railroading out in the Mountain State was quite a contrast from Eastern roads due to the many pieces of narrow gauge equipment on display. The main building served as a gift shop and display area and the museum had its own roundhouse and turntable. This site is still connected to the outside world as a switch still exists to BNSF's spur which leads to the Coors Brewing Company. It is definitely worth a visit.



Photo credit: Anthony Gruerio, Jr.

DRGW St Colorado Rail Museum

Further adventures in Colorado included a morning drive down to Palmer Lake on the Joint Line. Current owners UP and BNSF ran primarily heavy coal drags through the historic area. The line is either feast or famine as two-plus hour gaps in the action allowed us to explore the town's namesake and surrounding geography, or simply relax and catch a few Zs. The day ended further south in Colorado Springs where we dined in a restaurant that was originally a Denver and Rio Grande station. The majestic Rocky Mountains provided a backdrop of tall green pines and snow-capped peaks. The Moffat Line with its famous tunnel was explored. Both ends of the tunnel engulfed and spewed long heavy freights to the delight of our cameras, which captured all the action. At this point our attention was moved north to the high plains of Wyoming.



BNSF at Palmer Lake, Colorado

Arriving in the Cowboy State allowed the anticipation of seeing the most famous piece of track in the country to become realized. The literally dozens of fast freights was a complete contrast to the recipe of slower and fewer trains typified in the east courtesy of CSX. The Armor Yellow worn by the many high horsepower locomotives seemed perfect for the dry sand colored surroundings. The geography's color provided a nice contrast to

Visitors comments from the Guest Book at Tower 44 - Aug. 29 - Sept. 6

ADDRESS	COMMENTS
Norman K ETOG 654	wow!
Tim Stamford, CT	Double wow!
Westport PA 18072	
8744, NYC 10023	Surprise to see such fantastic place
APT 124, NY 10069	Hope, and wish you Best Well!
see n y m 25	Very cool!
0645	Very interesting!
LIVE MERIDEN CT	wow!
d #33	great!
J #33	wow!
Mamaroneck, NY	Very Moving!
Mamaroneck, NY	Excellent!
Rd, Southbury, CT	wonderful! Thank you so much.
ve, Rye NY	EXCELLENT
New Canaan CT	REALLY GREAT!
Yonkers NY 10705	Thanks! God bless!
	Great Museum!
ce Brooklyn 1131	Awesome
IL	Great Presentation!
Lar N.Y.	Great

ADDRESS	COMMENTS
	Thank-You COMMENTS
BETHANY CT	GREAT TO SEE THIS TODAY.
relative	Very interesting!
	I like the switch #37!
CHESHIRE CT	Great show
WESTPORT	NEAT!
	Great!
< city	awesome great
	It's so hard to pull a lever!
	Great Museum!
POLAND	OUTSTANDING!
schelle NY 10001	Very, very interesting
x, NYC	This museum is great!
nydale NY 11737	
Township MA	
rayton	Great!
the Danbury CT	Brilliant
Kings Park NY	Thanks!
Centerport NY	great!
interport NY	Thanks for a great tour

ADDRESS	COMMENTS
name	Centerport, NY 11721 - Great
DANBURY	BEAUTIFULLY MAINTAINED
Westport	very interesting
"	The kids loved it!
BLVD STAMFORD	Keep up the great work!
367	Very cool!
n Village	Nice job, very cool!
NY	Very interesting
ystal NY	Yeah!
	A unique and wonderful Museum!
T	Great! Thanks for your enthusiasm!
Y	
NEW YORK, NY	A PRICELESS TREASURE!
u ave.	VERY NICE, & INFORMATIVE
Great	Cool
e	COOL
-Stratford CT	Sweetness
later NY 14622	impressive
Paul Pudelek	Great!
Sulheid CT	Wow! Cool!

ADDRESS	COMMENTS
KY	NEAT!
CT	Great!
Ny	Thoroughly enjoyable!
NY	Very informative
	awesome
S Norwalk	Didn't know it was here. Great!
CT	Quite an experience. Thank you!
rock, NY	Very interesting
225 W. N.Y. NJ 07933	FANTASTIC!! *Tower operator on Metro North
6850	
	Neat
3144 NY 11742	
R STAMFORD, CT	Enjoyed it
1A 01720	Thank You.
Cheshire CT	Great!
Rd. Piscataway	Fantastic!
Piscataway	GREAT.
New Rochelle NY	To go to be true!
ARD. NEW ROCHELLE NY	TO GET TO BE TOO!
KUPN, NY 11207	very informative

My sister visiting

Tower Operators for September 2004

John Garofalo	50 Hours	Robert Gambling	46 Hours
Jim Mescher	41 Hours	Roberta Ballard	26 Hours
Tony White	26 Hours	Janet Neulinger	14 Hours
Anthony Gruerio	11 Hours	Bob Westerfield	8 Hours
Buck Neulinger	6 Hours	Dick Carpenter	6 Hours
Roy Heget	6 Hours	Bavet Heget	6 Hours
Dana Laird	6 Hours	John Mount	3 Hours

Thank you for showing the Tower and telling how it operated to the public.

The Sono Switch Tower Museum

is open on Saturday's and Sunday's
May thru October from noon until 5 PM.

To volunteer, contact Jim Mescher at:
(201) 391-7362 or sign up at the Tower.
Thank you.

The Western Connecticut Chapter, NRHS Inc. supports Operation Lifesaver



**Our Next Chapter meeting will be
Monday, October 25, 2004 - 8:00 P.M. at:
At The United Congregational Church
275 Richards Ave. Norwalk, CT**

Entertainment this month will be provided by:



Dana Hunt

Bob Gambling will provide refreshments.

