

Volume 7 Issue 1





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Front Cover: *Photo by Edward J. Ozog.*

“ON THE NEW HAVEN TODAY”

I would like to make a friendly suggestion, if I may. I wish the *Shoreliner* could have a current news column reporting on the current condition of former New Haven rail lines.

In the last few years, there have been some interesting developments. The state of Massachusetts has been pursuing (in fits-and-starts) the resumption of commuter rail service to Fall River, Massachusetts. I was told by a representative from Rhode Island DOT that they would consider reviving the line all the way to Newport, but they want to see what happens next door in Massachusetts first.

Meanwhile, resumption of passenger service to Pittsfield, Massachusetts and possible re-electrification of the Danbury branch have also been cooking on the rear burner.

I was looking through some of my old *Shoreliners* from the 1980s. Back at that time they ran a feature called *Along the New Haven Today*, or something like that.

I wish that feature could be brought back.

Fred M. Cain, Topeka, IN

SPEEDWITCH

Fred, I believe the *Shoreliner* feature you refer to was “On the New Haven Today”. In the late 1980s, it was decided that *Shoreliner* should contain articles and information limited to the history of the New Haven Railroad. Our newsletter, the *Bulletin*, would contain Association-related material - news and modeling articles. This was done to maintain the integrity of *Shoreliner* as an historic publication.

When *SpeedWitch* replaced the *Bulletin* it was intended to include contemporary information and news regarding the former New Haven, its lines, facilities and equipment. *SpeedWitch* was also to serve as the publication where New Haven modeling information and articles could be shared.

This issue of *SpeedWitch* includes two articles that concern present day information about former New Haven equipment and facilities. Howard Pincus of the Railroad Museum of New England has provided an article detailing the restoration of the former New Haven Railroad's 8-3-1 heavyweight Pullman *Breslin Tower*; and John Desmond has provided us with the account of the amazing restoration of Hopewell Junction station.

The content of *SpeedWitch* is dependent on contributions from the membership. Additional contemporary information from news clippings, etc. would be most welcome. It had also been hoped that our members would contribute photos of their modeling work for the enjoyment of others. *SpeedWitch* relies on membership participation; page count and frequency depend on it.

I am grateful to all who have contributed to *SpeedWitch* since its inception and welcome additional contributions from the membership.

Bill Dulmaine, Editor

REUNION AND DINNER TRAIN

SEPTEMBER 8, 2018

The Valley Railroad is once again offering NHRHTA members a special price of \$75.00 for the Dinner Train which includes taxes and gratuities. Contact the Valley Railroad by telephone and identify yourself as an Association member to receive the special \$75.00 price.

For reservations call Pam Amodio at 860-767-0103, ext. 217.

Please be advised that you will not be able to receive the special pricing on line.

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# NEW HAVEN'S R-3-a CLASS 4-8-2

A Photo Story Featuring HO Scale  
New Haven R-3-a Class 4-8-2 3554  
by Edward J. Ozog

The last R-3-a 4-8-2s were retired in 1951, three years before I began photographing steam action. Despite not having a camera as a youngster when New Haven steam was still at work, my HO layout allows me to be trackside and to photograph an R-3-a as though I was transported back to the late 1940s. Because my favorite pictures of the real thing have plenty of smoke and steam, I added such effects to my model photos using a free PhotoStudio 6 program with which I "painted" various shades of white and gray on the digital photos. All were taken with a compact Olympus Camedia camera and fluorescent room lighting.



The R-3-a class consisted of ten engines numbered 3553-3562 built in 1928 which followed nearly identical R-3 class 3550-3552 built in 1926. The thirteen locomotives were similar to the R-2-a class 3501-3507 built in 1926 but were powered by three cylinders rather than the normal two. The prototype for the 1926 and 1928 group was R-2 3500 of 1924 which was essentially a USRA light 4-8-2 with a higher capacity boiler. The New Haven was pleased with the performance of the 49 R-1 4-8-2s built 1919-1924 to a design of the United States Railroad Administration, the agency which controlled the railroads during World War I. It therefore improved the USRA design to create high horsepower locomotives which could move freight quickly without impeding passenger traffic. All the New Haven's 4-8-2s were built by ALCO in Schenectady except for the first ten which were built in Richmond.





The three-cylinders of the R-3-a had the advantage of smoother driver rotation requiring less adhesive weight relative to the force applied, less strain on the mechanism because of the division of power, and better fire drafting because of the six piston strokes per driver revolution. A serious disadvantage was that the interior cylinder location and rod movement was almost inaccessible and consequently difficult to maintain. Several railroads purchased three-cylinder power but most found the disadvantages of the drive greater than the performance improvements and so many were converted to ordinary two-cylinder engines. However, the New Haven was able to cope with the difficulties and never converted the R-3 and R-3-a class, nor the sixteen Y-4 and Y-4-a 0-8-0 switchers which also had three cylinders.





A feature of the R-2 and R-3 class was that they were all built with water tube fireboxes of the McClellon type. Increasing steam pressure is one of the most effective ways to increase a locomotive's power but in the early 1920s it was widely thought that the staybolted construction of the orthodox boiler was not compatible with high pressure and therefore some designers felt constructing a firebox with the water and steam in tubes as in stationary and marine boilers would permit higher pressure. The New Haven purchased two J-1 2-8-2s with water tube boilers in 1916 and found them generally satisfactory although structurally the fireboxes were weak. In 1924, 1926 and 1928 the New Haven purchased twenty-one 4-8-2s with water tube fireboxes but soon found the structural weaknesses could not be eliminated and had the 4-8-2 boilers replaced with staybolted fireboxes in 1929. However, the two J-1s did not get staybolted fireboxes until 1942 although they were not active for most of the Depression years. The B&O, with engines in many classes equipped with water tube fire boxes, also could not solve the problems nor could the D&H, the other major proponent. It is interesting that a three-cylinder locomotive with a water tube firebox still exists. Baldwin's number 60,000, a compound 4-10-2, resides in the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and moves back and forth using hydraulic power.

The New Haven was purchasing the R-2 and R-3s at the same time that the Lima Locomotive Works was using the slogan "Super-Power" for locomotives with four-wheel trailing trucks such as the 2-8-4 and 4-8-4. The New Haven's R-2 and R-3 4-8-2s were as capable as the so called superpower despite the two-wheel trailing truck. Many railroads found the firebox on a 4-8-2 more than adequate for producing high horsepower. The New York Central, Pennsylvania, Baltimore & Ohio, Seaboard Air Line, Florida East Coast, Illinois Central and many others in the East placed their faith in the 4-8-2. Although the Boston & Albany and Boston & Maine first turned to the 2-8-4 type, the Boston & Maine subsequently purchased 4-8-2s when it needed modern power, and the steam era on the Boston & Albany ended when a 1940-built 4-8-2 left South Station in April 1951.





I purchased my model of the R-3-a in February 1981 and so it has served longer than any of the New Haven's Schenectady-built ones. It is a Custom Brass offering which I painted and decaled. It needed additional work for greater accuracy, mainly the shortening of the smokebox, the reduction of the superheater header and the cutting back of the tender slope sheet. The mechanism was not good, and I never achieved much improvement. In fact it is now without a gear box so it rolls smoothly and operates well as a helper or double header which was not a common role for the R-3-a on the New Haven. The details that identify the model as a three cylinder locomotive are the valve stem extensions which are connected to a conjugating lever which controls the steam to the center cylinder, the wide spacing between the first and second driver to accommodate the center main rod, and the outer main rods connected to the third driver rather than the usual second driver. Given the similarity between the R-2 and R-3 it might seem possible to convert an R-3 model. However, the driver spacing and the main rods to the third driver complicate a conversion.

All the photos of R-3-a 3554 were shot on my layout in a 16x23 second floor bonus room. One of the long walls is an industrial area, most of which is shown in the photos. The other long wall has a six track double-ended staging yard with a capacity of over 250 freight cars. The middle of the room has a line of high book cases forming a room divider which hides a work area and the staging yard. The layout has a gradeless, single level and a very simple track plan. Micro Engineering code 70 and 83 track and switches were used. The buildings are mainly kit-bashed with some scratch-built. All are recycled from two previous layouts in another home. For example, the large building in the photo was once part of a non-compressed model of a diesel shop built from railroad plans. There are no survivors from my first layout from the early 1950s but my DC control system isn't that much different from what I first used. I have not attempted to model any specific place but since my first 22 years were spent in Rhode Island I like to think there is a resemblance to where I lived not far from the New Haven.





R-3-a 3554 is easing through a yard lead switch and will soon be hitting her stride on the main line. Her tank is full, her fire clean and she displays the recent work of the Readville paint shop and the Southampton Street wash pad. In a while she will be at Cedar Hill. There she will be inspected and lubricated, receive a load of coal and more water. Ashes will be dumped, the fire cleaned, the boiler blown-down and the dual sand boxes filled. Perhaps she will linger a day for a boiler washout or receive some routine maintenance before hauling HB-2 to Boston. Number 3554 no longer shakes the ground nor commands attention with the beat of the exhaust of her three cylinders, but a model almost brings her back to life.

## 2018 REUNION & TRAIN SHOW VALLEY RAILROAD, ESSEX, CT

SEPT. 8, 2018 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.





# RAILROAD MUSEUM OF NEW ENGLAND RESTORES NEW HAVEN 8-3-1 PULLMAN *BRESLIN TOWER*

by Howard Pincus

Over a 5-month period in late 2015-early 2016, Railroad Museum of New England restoration specialists restored Pullman sleeping car *Breslin Tower*.

Built in 1925 as *Point Bank*, it was rebuilt in 1939 to Plan 4090 *Breslin Tower*, with 8 sections, 3 double bedrooms, and one drawing room. New Haven took ownership of the car in

the 1947 Pullman divestiture; at that time, the car was painted Pullman Green and lettered "PULLMAN" on the letterboard. The car was repainted to Dark New Haven Green and was lettered for New Haven, with "PULLMAN" appearing in small letters at the outer corners of the letterboard. In 1957, it was again repainted, this time into the two-tone gray Pullman "pool colors,"

resembling New York Central cars. That is the color and lettering scheme *Breslin Tower* carried to its retirement in 1962, and during the 29 years it spent in Jim Bradley's back yard.

Once part of James Bradley's famed collection of six "Pullmans On The Hill" at his property in Stonington, Conn., *Breslin Tower* was purchased by RMNE from the Bradley Estate

Stripping of paint and work on the car body was in progress when this photo was taken.



after Jim's death, and moved back to live rails on April 5, 1991. Stored by RMNE for many years, *Breslin Tower* was in need of stabilization and restoration.

In December 2015, the car was moved into RMNE's restoration shop in Thomaston, Conn., located alongside the former New Haven branch-line between Waterbury and Torrington. The line is operated by RMNE's Naugatuck Railroad subsidiary for freight and excursion passenger service.

Work done to *Breslin Tower* started with measuring and recording all lettering on the car. The roof was mechanically cleaned of rust, petrified roofing tar, and rust. Ventilators were removed, exposing holes in the roof plates; these were patched and the ventilators re-applied. All the roof seams were caulked with flexible auto body seam sealer, to keep water out of the car. Sides and ends were also mechanically cleaned,



*Breslin Tower* carried a number of paint schemes in its operating career on the New Haven. The RMNE decided to paint the car in the dark green paint exposed during the preparation of the car body, which was carefully matched to the NHRHTA color guide sample of 212 Hunter Green. The lettering was painted white. Industrial enamel was carefully matched and mixed and applied to the car in mid-April. Over ten gallons of dark green, five gallons of black and ten gallons of primer were needed.

After final touch-up of paint and details, and application of lettering, *Breslin Tower* emerged into the spring sunshine, looking superb. It has been on display at RMNE's Thomaston Station display track, and is occasionally opened for tours of the interior, which is in very good condition.

Subsequent to *Breslin Tower*'s restoration, a surprising bit of information about the car's service during New Haven ownership came to light. During the early 1950s, *Breslin Tower* (and sister cars *Bok Tower* and *Victoria Tower*)

removing old paint and rust on the carbody. Steel patches were applied as needed on the car ends, vestibule doors, and car sides. Deteriorated wood window sashes were removed from the car, and some were repaired and re-installed. Other windows were replaced with refurbished window sashes from other RMNE heavyweight passenger cars.

All seams along the car sides were carefully cleaned and then sealed with auto body seam sealer, after priming the cleaned metal. The object was to keep water from entering the car sides, and to provide a smooth, paintable surface.

By April 2016, *Breslin Tower* stood in the Restoration Shop, roof, trucks and underbody equipment already primed and painted in two coats of gloss black enamel, and the carbody in primer, awaiting the final paint work.





All photos by Howard Pincus.

were regularly assigned to overnight Springfield, Mass.-Washington, DC service. In the small hours after midnight on January 15, 1953, *Breslin Tower*, having rolled south from Springfield earlier, was attached (along with two other New Haven sleeping cars) to the rear of Train 173, *The Federal*, bound from Boston to Washington, DC. *Breslin Tower* was the 15th car of the 16 car train that departed south for New York's Penn Station and transfer to the Pennsylvania Railroad. At 8:38 that morning, *Breslin Tower* came to a stop at Washington Union Station; at the head end of the train, PRR GG1 #4876 had crashed through the bumper at the end of Track 16, destroyed the Stationmaster's Office, and then crashed through the floor of the main station concourse! This was the famous "Runaway *Federal Express* wreck, which has been extensively covered in books and magazine articles.

*Breslin Tower* is apparently the only car of that 16-car train still extant. The PRR GG1 locomotive 4876 was rebuilt and operated until 1983. It is part of the B&O Railroad Museum collection in Baltimore, un-restored and in poor condition.





Foreground: Restored Hopewell Junction depot; background: Replica of S. S. 196 in 2018. Photo by Rich Taylor.

# WE CAN STILL HEAR THE WHISTLE BLOWIN'

An Account of the Restoration of the Railroad Depot at Hopewell Junction, New York by the Volunteers Who Renovated, Repaired, Refurbished the Depot, Replicated the Signal Tower and Designed the Pavilion  
by John Desmond

## RESTORING THE DEPOT

The earliest railroads in Dutchess County, New York were the north-south routes that served New York City, Albany, and Montreal. They were built between 1849 and 1851. These routes were relatively stable and successful.

With that success as incentive, an east-west railroad was chartered and built between 1868 and 1870. It ran from Dutchess Junction located on the Hudson River, through the Hamlet of Hopewell Junction, to the Connecticut state line. In 1881, a railroad was built from Danbury, Connecticut to Hopewell Junction. In 1892, still another railroad was built from Poughkeepsie to Hopewell Junction. All three railroads carried both freight and passengers.

The Hamlet of Hopewell Junction moved away from Railroad Avenue to Route 82 in the 1960s. The trains stopped running through Hopewell Junction in 1982. Most of the tracks

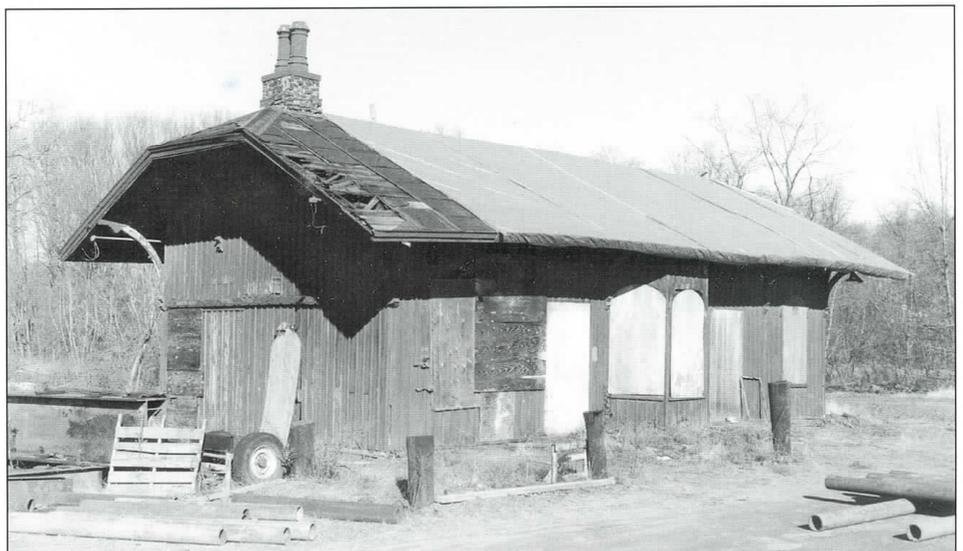
were pulled up in 1984. The Hopewell Junction depot was abandoned and neglected in 1984.

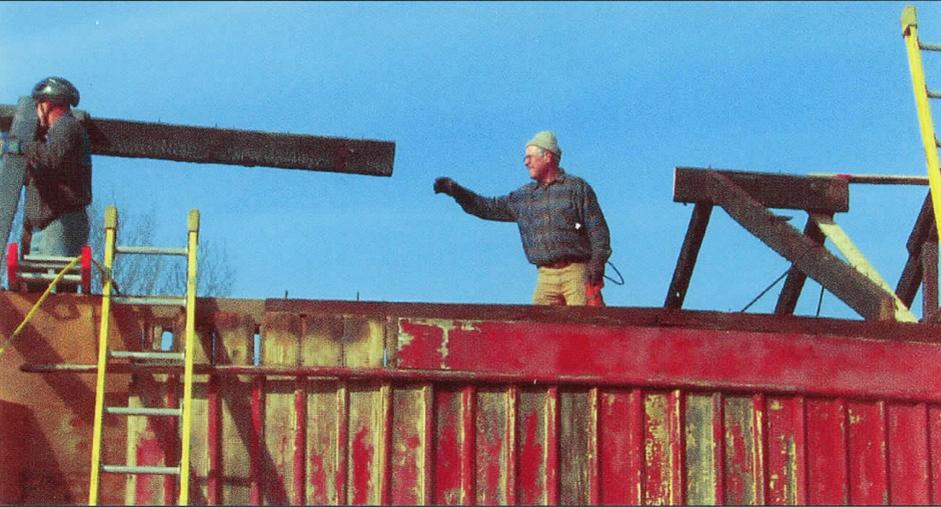
Yet the artifacts and written accounts of life in Hopewell Junction from its railroad days remain. The depot has been restored. Those artifacts and accounts have been collected and placed inside it. In addition, a replica of Signal

Station 196 has been built. A pavilion for visitors is planned for 2018.

The depot and its holdings are a museum of, a monument to, and a testament about the significant business of railroading, the resilience of the railroaders' hamlet, and the considerable and substantial role the depot played in the histories

Tarps had been applied to part of the roof and plywood plugs have been installed over window openings when this photo was taken on November 24, 1996. Photo by J. W. Swanberg.





**Top: Reconstruction work has begun on stabilization and rebuilding of what by this time was just a shell. Above: December 2010, Al Marotta, Rich Taylor, removing rafter. Below: Volunteers remove debris from the interior of the dilapidated Hopewell Jct. depot circa 1997. All photos by Rich Taylor.**

of both the railroads and the hamlet. Restoration overturned abandonment, neglect and forgetfulness.

As the late Bernard Rudberg, one of the first to volunteer to restore the depot, said of the other men and women who volunteered, “[They]



respect the memory of the people who conceived, designed, built, and ran the railroads.” In order to appreciate the labor of the volunteers who restored the building and inaugurated the museum, this article recounts the story of the restoration of the depot. Let us begin with Bernie Rudberg:

**Bernard T. Rudberg**  
*From Hopewell Depot: Railroad Years and Restoration 1873-2013*

“In 1995, a group of local citizens decided to do something about the deteriorating condition of the Hopewell Junction depot. They formed a non-profit organization called the Hopewell Depot Restoration Corporation (HDRC). The objective was to save the depot and turn it into a small museum and educational facility.

“The HDRC began organizing and trying to raise funds. In August 1997, the Dutchess County Legislature agreed to sell the depot building to the HDRC for the lofty sum of one dollar. The legislature also agreed to a fifteen-year renewable lease on the land under the building.

“The entire inside of the building was as black as charcoal. Debris was piled all around. To add to the misery of the HDRC members, rain water and snow had soaked the debris.

The group was discouraged but began work by nailing sheets of recycled plywood over the roof holes and placing a tarp on the whole roof. Over the years, several tarps were used because a single tarp would last only one season.

“There was very little salvageable material inside the depot. Among the items tossed out was the rusting hulk of a 1960s-era oil burner. For some strange reason, the railroad had poured about two inches of concrete over the old floor. Of course, it was cracked. Volunteers swung sledge hammers to break up the concrete, loaded wheelbarrows with the broken pieces, and hauled the heavy loads out of the building.

“Almost all the walls had to be cleaned of the charcoal due to the [1986] fire. Wooden racks that had been used by the railroad signal crew were crumbling and had to be removed. The basement was wet and partly filled with sand washed in by the rain, runoff from the old railroad bed. The sand was shoveled out.

“In the basement was a rusting coal-burning furnace that was pulled up and went out for scrap metal. Behind the furnace, the chimney bricks were aged and crumbling. They were braced with cinder blocks.

“The sills of the building were rotted after years of resting in the dirt and mud. Large, laminated beams were bolted to the walls, and house jacks were used to raise the building up high enough to repair and/or replace the sills.

“Inside, the old floor was held up with a salvaged section of discarded rail from the tracks. During most of 2003 and 2004, the floor structure was rebuilt. Then the lifting beams were re-

moved.

"Some of the interior walls were missing, and the outside walls were leaning out. Bracing was set against the outside walls. The inside walls were rebuilt. Cables were attached to the outside walls and were used to pull the outside walls back into place.

"The bay-window frames were badly damaged by the fire and had to be rebuilt. In the original building, few of the dimensions of the frames were exact or the angles correct. The rebuilt bays look alike but are slightly different in size and angle.

"The work on the depot continued through 2006 and 2007. The tarps continued to be replaced. In the past ten years, the roof had deteriorated to the point that no one could walk on it. A borrowed bucket truck provided the only way to drape still another tarp on top of the declining roof.

"In 2007, work on the depot halted. The Town of East Fishkill withdrew its funding. For the next three years, the best that could be done was to change the tarp and keep the weeds cut down. The County was in the early stages of planning a rail trail that would pass by the only partially restored depot.

"By 2010, the depot deteriorated even more due to its exposure to the weather. The Hopewell Junction Depot Restoration Corporation did not have enough money to repair the roof. Things looked very bleak for the depot and for the volunteers who wanted to restore it to its former dignity. Then I called Rich Taylor."

### Richard Taylor

"On the afternoon of October 12, 2010, I got a call from Bernie Rudberg. I could tell by the tone of his voice that he was in serious trouble.

"He told me that he just came from a meeting with Charlie Traver, the Commissioner of the Dutchess County Department of Public Works. Traver told him that he would need to come up with a plan in two days or the depot would be demolished.

"Bernie told me there was machinery near the depot. I thought the machines were there to work on the Dutchess County Rail Trail and not on the depot. I told Bernie not to worry; nothing was going to happen to the depot. I said I would come up with a plan, including funding; send it to the County; and set up a date to meet with Charlie Traver.

"After Bernie hung up, I started to put a plan together that would show that the work to restore the depot would be done within two years. My "Restoration Plan" outlined five phases of construction:

**"Phase 1:** Complete all weatherproofing of building by December 31, 2010

**"Phase 2:** Complete all exterior restoration of building by July 2011

**"Phase 3:** Complete interior restoration of building to make ready for public access by Au-

gust 2012

**"Phase 4:** Set up interior with furnishings, artifacts, pictures [...] etc.

**"Phase 5:** Complete exterior grounds and decking by June 2013 or earlier depending on funding

"Funds to complete all five phases will come from members' dues, donated materials, grants, and other fundraising efforts.

"On that day, my dream of saving and restoring the depot was also restored after four-teen years of witnessing a steady decline in the condition of the depot.

"Several days after Bernie's phone call, I met with Charlie. The first part of my plan was to replace the roof with a trussed rafter system and to tear off the existing, badly burned and water-damaged roof system.

"However, once the Dutchess County Engineer discovered this part of my plan, he sent a letter to Bernie to have work on the roof stopped, have an outside engineer re-engineer the complete building plan, and submit that plan to the County before doing any work on the depot.

"I had a feeling this would take several weeks. Since I had promised Bernie that I would have the depot open to the public within two years, I and two other volunteers continued working on the demolition of the roof structure and the straightening of the walls.

"After receiving the new engineered plans six weeks later, I did not care for the design of the gable overhang and continued with my plan to keep the original design. We kept moving forward with our small crew, working every Saturday and sometimes Sunday.

"I wrote an article for the *Poughkeepsie Journal* seeking help. Not one got back to me. We had been struggling with three snow storms without a roof on the depot, and it was getting time to install the trusses. Since there were only four of us, I scheduled to have my friend help lift the trusses with his cherry picker on January 15, 2011, at 8 am.

"That morning, as we were getting started with the temperature at 3 degrees below zero, I noticed more and more trucks come into our parking area. I knew then with the added twenty-five volunteers, we could install all trusses and all the plywood sheathing that day. That was the end of any more snow and ice in the depot.

"I first became interested in the depot in December 1995 when I came over to Philip Ortiz's in Hopewell Junction to have some welding done on my truck. I saw this dilapidated building from across Ortiz's yard that looked like it might be a train station. I instantly knew this building had to be saved and restored. The next day I came back and took pictures of the depot.

"The area around the depot was being used as storage with piles of large pipes and steel panels. The place where the depot was located was unattractive with other rundown buildings, a short road leading to an abandoned railroad bed, and a junk yard across from the railroad bed. No

wonder no one seemed interested in it.

"I spent the rest of December trying to get railroad buffs interested in restoring the depot and setting it up as a railroad museum. No one seemed interested.

"I came up with another idea of contacting railroad people out of the area. I contacted Jack Swanberg who had been a fireman on trains running through Hopewell Junction and who is a Connecticut resident. He encouraged me to write articles in the local newspapers and said he would also put an article in one of the publications of the New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical Association, Inc.

"In February of 1996, I put a notice in the *Poughkeepsie Journal* and the *Southern Dutchess News* announcing two meetings to be held at the East Fishkill Library, not far from the depot. The notice stated that I was not only interested in preserving the structure of the depot but also interested in preserving the history of Hopewell Junction.

"Jack Swanberg's advice on publicity paid off. Twenty-six people showed up at my first meeting. That evening two people signed up to be on the steering committee.

"On the second meeting two more volunteered to work on the steering committee. Carpenters, painters, historians, railroad buffs, business owners, and interested citizens filled the East Fishkill Library's meeting room.

"Work on the depot went slowly and money was hard to come by. We did bring in some funds through donations and selling tee shirts sponsored by local businesses.

"As time went on, the Board started losing volunteers. They left either for lack of interest or in frustration. It was taking too long to work on the depot because of a lack of funds.

"By 2010, the project became stalled with problems concerning materials, money, and a waning interest even among the original Board members. Protecting the building from the weather completely stopped. The Board dwindled to three people, and funding became almost out of reach. The County was after Bernie Rudberg to get moving with a concrete plan or the building would be demolished.

"I was never worried about having enough money to restore the depot. Bernie wrote his first book, a history of the development of the railroads in Dutchess County titled *Hopewell Junction: A Railroader's Town*. It was sold at the depot and at speaking engagements he gave to historical associations and civic organizations.

"An anonymous local businessman donated funds to pay for the trusses and plywood sheathing. Since I was skilled in working with volunteers, the restoration went along as planned. We worked every Saturday and started working on Wednesdays as well.

"My second major plan was to restore and paint the exterior of the depot. This attracted more volunteers and funding. We set it up so people could have their names etched on plaques mounted on the outside walls of the depot. This



**Interior of the first waiting room in the restored Hopewell Jct. depot in 2018. Photo by Rich Taylor.**

offer resulted in more sponsors.

"In the fall of 2011, I made a presentation to the East Fishkill Town Board of how much the roofing was going to cost. I did not ask for any money.

"After my presentation, the members of the board huddled. When they broke their huddle, they presented the depot board with \$11,000.00 and arranged to have Toll Brothers install the roof. The contribution was formally presented September 22, 2011.

"In April 2012, we opened the Visitors Center to the public, fifteen months after starting the restoration on January 15, 2011. Six months later, the museum sections were open. In twenty-one months, I had completed three phases of my five-phase plan that I outlined the night of October 12, 2010."

## Replicating the Signal Station Designing the Depot Pavilion

Part Two of this article recounts the story of the building of an exact replica of the signal station and the planning of the Depot Park Pavilion.

Signal Station 196 was built by the Newburgh, Dutchess, and Connecticut Railroad (ND&CRR) in 1892. It was built to protect the junction of all three railroads running through Hopewell Junction. The three were the ND&CRR; The New York and New England Railroad; and the Dutchess County Railroad.

In 1933, passenger service was discontinued on all three railroads by the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad (NYNH&HRR),

the successor to the ND&CRR. Only freight service remained. Five years later, in 1938, the ND&CRR tracks running along side the station which crossed the Maybrook Line were pulled up, the freight depot was razed, and S. S. 196 was demolished.

Freight trains then ran directly from Poughkeepsie, New York to Danbury, Connecticut or directly from Beacon, New York to Danbury. The depot became the freight station. The junction no longer needed the elaborate signal system, so the place where the two-story signal station once stood remained empty until 2015.

### Rich Taylor and Charlie MacDonald

"What motivated us to build an exact replica of the Signal Station 196 was the need for restrooms. The women who volunteered at the depot had to drive into Hopewell Junction to use a restroom.

"Also we had invited a group of senior citizens to tour the depot. After the group arrived and just before we began the tour, they asked to use the restrooms. We had none to offer. The incensed leader of the group said the tour was over before it began and escorted the seniors back on the bus, presumably in search of restrooms elsewhere.

"It was after that incident that we decided to build restrooms for future visitors as well as to build a replica of the Signal Station 196 to add to the restored depot.

"We worked off of several old, black-and-white photographs showing the signal station in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

We also used plans Bernard Rudberg had collected from the files of the Newburgh, Dutchess, and Connecticut Railroad.

"We began construction in the fall of 2014, continued through the relatively dry and warm winter of 2015, and finished in the spring of 2015.

"We built a foundation for the restroom apparatus, a state-of-the-art, environmentally sound system. In the original signal station, the bottom floor was probably used for storage of signal equipment.

"In the replica signal station, the bottom floor is for the restrooms themselves. These restrooms are not only available to visitors of the depot but also to users of the Dutchess County Rail Trail that runs past the station.

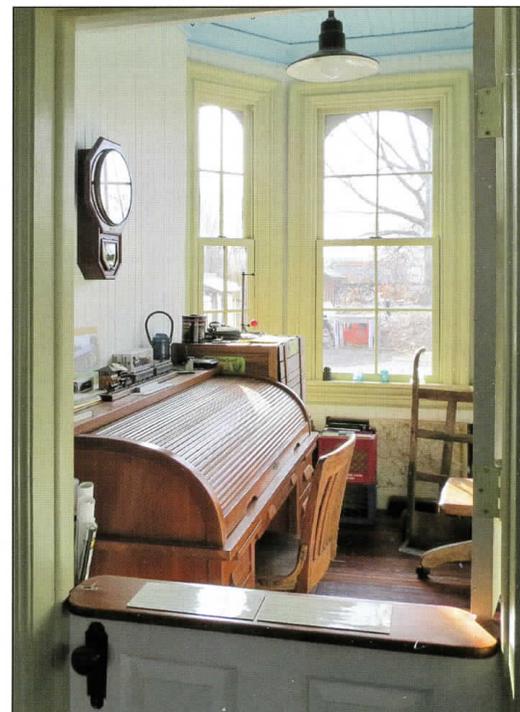
"In both the original and the replica, the second floor is the signalmen's office. The original signal station had 20 signal levers. Two signal levers were donated to us, and those two are installed and in movable condition in the signalmen's office.

"Our next big project is to build a pavilion twenty feet by forty feet to provide a place for depot and rail trail visitors to stop, rest, picnic, or enjoy a casual meeting place. We have the plans completed, but we need to get the proper insurance to protect not only the users of the pavilion but also the Depot Restoration Corporation."

## MANAGING MUSEUM ESSENTIALS

Part Three of this article recounts the story of the development of the museum housed within the depot and relates the accomplishments and aspirations of some of the depot volunteers.

### Interior of station agent's office in restored Hopewell Jct. depot in 2018. Photo by Rich Taylor.



## Celeste Rudberg

"I joined HDR (Hopewell Depot Restoration) in 1996 as a family member with my husband, Bernie. The most I did, as I recall, was help clean up the area on the outside, and paint pictures on the plywood covering the windows in an attempt to let would-be vandals know that someone owned the building. I also attempted to sell T-shirts and to hand out brochures.

"I have always been a lover of history. When I saw Rich's item in the paper that a group was forming to try to save the depot, I called it to Bernie's attention and suggested we get involved, since we both loved history, and he loved the railroads.

"The project I am most proud of was obtaining our IRS 501 (c) 3 designation. At a meeting in late 2010, one of our volunteers raised the question of whether we were a 501 (c) 3. Bernie, who was doubling as president and treasurer at the time, said our designation was a 501 (c) 7 instead.

"In addition, I have worked on fund-raising projects (which I am the least fond of) and acted as a tour guide. I am not working on any projects to complete but rather working on ongoing projects, such as keeping our records in order, maintaining a connection with our insurance carrier, and working on fund-raising projects.

"The things I have mentioned... school programs, historical talks... would further spread the information we are trying to get out to the public, which is the importance of the railroad and the depot to the changes and growth of Hopewell Junction."

## Joe Sullivan

"I joined in 2011 as a building volunteer after seeing folks working on the depot as I was coming back from a bike ride on the Dutchess County Rail Trail. A major part of the work had been completed. Cleaning and painting the exterior and finishing the interior were in process.

"I joined because I wanted to gain more construction experience and be a part of a historic restoration. I helped to complete working on the building restoration. For three years, I have been the president of the organization.

"I would like to see the new pavilion built and the railroad signals erected as well as help to get the depot on the National Registry of Historic Places. Railroad signals would add to the historic value of Depot Park, and a pavilion would enhance our visitors' experience. Being on the National Historic Registry would allow the museum to apply for grants to encourage even more visitors to experience Depot Park."

## Paul Stitch

"I joined the depot group in December 2011. The roof was completed, the exterior was painted, and much of the interior structural work was done.

"I was interested in the restoration project because of the fact that historically Hopewell Junction originated as a railroad town, and the depot group was seeking to preserve and propagate its heritage.

"Since I joined I helped complete the interior restoration and all the work on the Signal Tower. My primary involvement has been in designing the museum, acting as a tour guide, publishing the newsletter, and curating the collection.

"I created the various informational panels hanging on the wall of the depot waiting-room that serves as a museum. I continue to curate the museum and publish the newsletter. I also have established the structure of field trips for elementary and middle-school students.

"Hopewell Junction has been a community in transition for the past half century. By educating newcomers and current residents on the origins of the hamlet, the depot and its staff can nurture and perpetuate a sense of belonging. Properly cultivated, this education should translate into a desire to be of service on a local level."

## Charlie MacDonald

"I joined the Hopewell Depot Restoration Corporation probably in April 2012. I designed

pockets themselves.

"I would like to see a caboose added to the museum. We know of a New York, New Haven, and Hartford Rail Road caboose sitting in a field and used as an office by someone selling Christmas trees. It would be good if we could get it, restore it, and have it next to the depot."

## Laura Wiegand

"It was Charlie MacDonald who reminded me that I started volunteering at the depot in October of 2011, a few months before he started. I had retired and moved to Hopewell Junction.

"I can tell you that Rich, Maureen (Rich Taylor's wife), Bernie, and Celeste inspired the volunteers to keep working. I worked on the roof, under the building, on the ceiling, on the floor, and on the walls. Thank goodness for the skilled construction people!

"After the depot building was restored, we had to assemble museum displays and a storage shed for tools and lumber. I helped out with grand openings, receptions, and traveling displays.

"One of the community outreach events is the East Fishkill Community Day. We started building parade floats in 2012. Charlie and I have been on the float committee for the last five years, and we've won first or second place



**A 2018 photo of the interior of the second waiting room in the restored Hopewell Jct. depot. The featured diorama of Hopewell Junction in 1925 in the display case was built by Charlie MacDonald. Photo by Rich Taylor.**

and built the diorama representing the history of the junction in the 1920s. It is based on drawings and photos of the yard and the buildings surrounding it. The junction changed constantly, according to the drawings and the photos.

"I am curious how the coal pocket worked. I think I have figured how the workers positioned the coal cars on the coal pit, released the coal into the pit, and conveyed the coal up to the

awards every year!

"I look forward to enhancing the museum experience with Depot Park, the ultimate marriage of the depot restoration with the rail trail. Walkabout tours on site and lectures off site will further our educational mission. Ongoing participation in family-friendly, community-wide events will foster a new generation of railroad history enthusiasts."

## Joyce and Dave Pfirman

“David and I became members of the depot in the fall of 2015. We had come upon the depot when we used the rail trail and were attracted to the charm of the building. When we saw an article in the *Southern Dutchess News* that the Depot Restoration Corporation needed volunteers, we attended the announced meeting and signed up together. Having recently retired, we were looking for a local organization with which we could both get involved.

“Since joining, I have been involved with the museum as a greeter and tour guide. I have taken on the scheduling of volunteers for the museum and also handle membership. I have been part of the team that welcomes groups of school children to present the history of the depot.

“To ensure we have volunteers on hand to greet and provide a tour to visitors, I use a software application to generate a monthly schedule for our hours of operation. We have two members at the depot during our open hours. Volunteers receive the schedule which gives them flexibility to sign up for timeslots which are con-

venient for them.

“For membership, we continue to look for new people in the community to support the depot through contributions. This enables us to operate the depot and expand the park surrounding the building as an attraction for the community. Through visiting the depot and other outreach functions throughout the year, we encourage new memberships.

“Annually, we send reminders in our newsletter for people to renew their membership and continue their support. I maintain the database of all members. This is used to create the distribution list for the monthly newsletter, the annual meeting and the annual dinner.

“Dave has been involved with the construction team and was part of the group that built the signal tower replica. He became involved in the board of directors and is now vice president.”

## Linda Heitman

“The beauty of the physical restoration was the first catalyst for me to join the Depot Restoration Corporation. A call for volunteers

in an article by Rich Taylor that appeared in the *Poughkeepsie Journal* in December 2017 sparked a desire to deepen my own knowledge of both local history in general and railroad history in particular. Lastly a welcoming first meet with the restoration volunteers made me want to be a part of this group.

“Since joining, I have served as a greeter and tour guide for both regular station hours as well as special events (students and seniors), served on both the fundraising committee and as a director of our board, and submitted an application for Museum Charter Status to the New York State Education Department that was granted in January 2018.

“I would like to see the Hopewell Depot Museum pursue sustainable projects, funding, and partnerships. My next task is to pursue incorporation of the newly chartered museum.”

## John Desmond

“I joined the Hopewell Junction Depot Restoration Corporation the same day as Linda Heitman. Since that morning, I have become a greeter/guide on weekends to welcome visitors and show them around the museum, and I have assisted Paul Stitch explaining the history of the railroads, the depot, and the hamlet to junior-high students,

“I have conducted interviews with a former train engineer and a former fireman who operated trains by the depot, a former station agent who worked at the depot, two track-maintenance workers who often used the depot as their headquarters, and a long-time farm customer of the depot. These interviews create a living history of the depot.

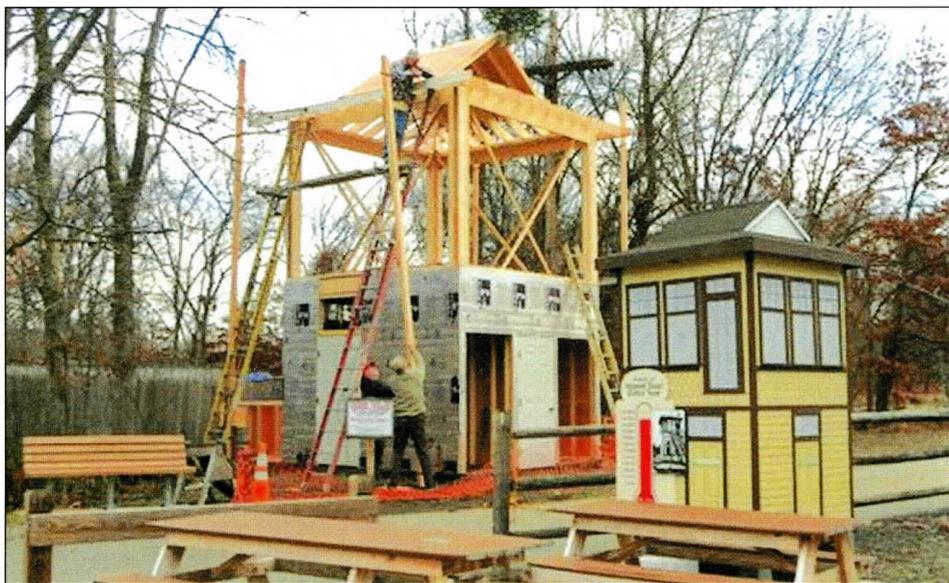
“As Charlie MacDonald mentions previously, I would like to see the depot acquire a caboose. To exhibit a caboose open to visitors was an exceptional experience both for those who remember them and for those who have never seen one before.

“The histories of the railroads that ran through Dutchess County, of the depot itself, and of the hamlet of Hopewell Junction are complex. Mastering those histories has opened my eyes to the history of Dutchess County, a place I have lived in for thirty-six years, yet, it seems to me now, I had known little about.”

## JOIN US

If you would like to be part of our continuing effort, consider joining us at 36 Railroad Avenue, Hopewell Junction, New York.

For more information on visiting or volunteering at the depot, please contact Rich Taylor at shelter3@aol.com or writing the Hopewell Junction Restoration Corporation, attention Rich Taylor, Post Office Box 1044, Hopewell Junction, New York 12533. By the way, 1044 is the number of the last train to run through Hopewell Junction.



Above: A 2015 photo of the construction of the replica of S.S. 196. In the foreground is a model of exterior of S.S. 196. Below: The completed replica of S.S. 196 was photographed in 2015. Both photos by Rich Taylor.

