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Featuring the Golden Age of Trains

HISTORY TRAIN 2018

TO NEW YORK & VERMONT



View from the Moonlight Dome car



View from Mount Defiance showing Fort Ticonderoga, center, on Lake Champlain

8 Days June 16-23, 2018 From \$4323*

- Unique rail journey itinerary • Private restored train cars from 1950s • Fine dining • Premium beverages and snacks • Choice of sleeping accommodations • Central Illinois departure included • Chicago • Albany • Lake Shore Limited • Group size limited to just 25 people • Bennington, VT's Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys • Hildene mansion of Robert Todd Lincoln & Pullman Palace car • Lunch at the restored historic Equinox Hotel Marsh Tavern Room • Grant Cottage • Fort Ticonderoga • Lake George • Mount Defiance • Lake Champlain • Fort William Henry • D&H RR's historic station • Saratoga Battlefield National Historical Park • Saratoga Springs • Choice visit to one of three museums: The National Horse Racing Museum, New York State Military Museum or Saratoga Automobile Museum • Hudson Valley • FDR home • Vanderbilt Mansion

- Kinderhook, NY • President Martin Van Buren's home, Lindenwold • Crailo, an 18th century Dutch historic home • Lunch in Albany at the private University Club of Albany • Philip Schuyler Mansion

ALL ABOARD for our 7th private rail journey. Join our history-themed tour as we travel east to New York and Vermont. A local guide will join us most days and at historic sites we include sightseeing and museum visits. Travel with us next summer and celebrate the golden age of trains on private, restored train cars built between 1946 and 1950. Our private cars include a dome car, Moonlight Dome with 4 special sleepers, and the Birch Grove with roomettes and standard double sleepers. Our train cars are hooked to the end of Amtrak's Lake Shore Limited then unhooked and parked at our destination.



Itinerary

Day 1 Saturday: Chicago-En Route

You can board our private motor coach in Springfield, Decatur or Champaign to Chicago or join us at Union Station. Meet your tour leader, Joe Luka, in the First Class Lounge to board Train #48, the *Lake Shore Limited*, departing at 9:30 P.M. Once on board our private train cars and settled into our rooms, the crew serves drinks and snacks as we head east along the south shore of Lake Michigan. Greg Parrott, a historian, travels with the group providing insight into our upcoming touring.

The Lake Shore Limited is the descendent of the former New York Central Railroad's train of the same name, along with the 20th Century Limited that plied the same route, albeit with all-Pullman (sleeping car) service. Making its first run in 1902 out of New York's Grand Central Station, the train ran for almost 70 years. Many patrons were rich and famous with paparazzi awaiting their arrival— perhaps getting a glimpse of James Cagney or William Randolph Hearst. The most famous incarnation of the train was the new streamlined version designed by Henry Dreyfuss that debuted in 1938. However, “cowled” steam locomotives soon gave way to diesel power at the conclusion of World War II. In 1970 after the failed merger of the New York Central and Pennsylvania Railroad (Penn Central) Amtrak was formed to take over passenger service. On October 31, 1975, the Lake Shore Limited returned to the route with service that included both coach and sleeping cars, more closely aligned with its namesake than with the 20th Century Limited.

Day 2 Sunday: En Route-Albany

We continue our rail journey along some of the most beautiful shorelines of the USA. You'll travel along the south shore of Lake Michigan, the Mohawk River and the Erie Canal, following a famous Native American Highway. Once in New York state, you'll pass through the Finger Lakes region for our scheduled arrival of 2:25 P.M. into Albany, capital of the Empire State. While en route,



our onboard historian, Greg Parrott, will talk about the Erie Canal and other historical sites along the way.

Our cars (shown at lower left, and top, right of the next page) are detached from the train and parked in the “yard”, a short walk to the Rensselaer station. The rest of the day is free. (B, L, D)

Day 3 Monday: Albany-Bennington & Manchester, Vermont-Saratoga Springs

After breakfast our guide, Bruce Venter, meets us at the train station for our drive to scenic Vermont. Our first stop is in historic Bennington where Bruce will discuss Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys. Allen was one of the founders of Vermont and head of the militia organization, the Green Mountain Boys who captured Fort Ticonderoga on May 10, 1775.

We visit Hildene (below) in Manchester, Vermont,



the mansion of Robert Todd Lincoln, first-born son of President Abraham Lincoln, who later became chairman of the Pullman Company. Our visit includes the Welcome Center & Museum Store, the exquisitely restored Pullman rail car, *Sunbeam* (below), the goat dairy and



cheese-making facility and the home. We will enjoy an included lunch at the restored historic Equinox Hotel.

Next, we are off to Mount McGregor, near Saratoga Springs for a tour of Grant Cottage (below). This is the house where General Ulysses S. Grant completed his famous memoirs a few days before his death in 1885.



After a full day of touring, we return to our private rail cars for social hour and dinner. (B, L, D)

Day 4 Tuesday: Albany-Fort Ticonderoga-Lake George

After breakfast Bruce accompanies us to Fort Ticonderoga (below) along a route that parallels Lake George. Stop at Mount Defiance, looming above the fort, which gives a magnificent view of the fort, Mount Independence and Lake Champlain. Fort Ticonderoga was pivotal in both the French & Indian War and the American Revolution. Lunch can be purchased in the fort's cafe.



Visit Lake George, NY to discuss its significance in the 18th century and see the restored Fort William Henry which was focal to James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*. We will see the Lake George battlefield and the Delaware & Hudson Railroad's historic station in the village. We return to our rail cars for drinks and dinner. (B, D)

Day 5 Wednesday: Albany-Saratoga-Saratoga Springs

After breakfast our journey today takes us to Saratoga National Historical Park to visit this battlefield (below) and make several stops as Bruce describes this important event. The surrender of the British Army here was a great turning point of the Revolutionary War, because it won for Americans the foreign assistance which was the last element needed for victory.



We will have free time in downtown Saratoga Springs where there are dozens of restaurants for lunch and many stores for shopping including an excellent used book store.

In the afternoon, you get to choose between visiting one of three different museums in Saratoga Springs: The National Horse Racing Museum (Saratoga has a world famous historic race track), the New York State Military Museum or the Saratoga Automobile Museum (classic cars and vehicles). The bus will drop off at each museum and make a circular route to pick everyone up before returning to our private rail cars for another delicious dinner and time to mingle. (B, D)

Day 6 Thursday: Albany-Hudson Valley-Hyde Park

Today after breakfast, Greg will give us some background on the Vanderbilt and FDR families as we travel south down the scenic Hudson Valley to Hyde Park. We start with a visit to the Vanderbilt Mansion (below) in Hyde Park, NY. An American Beaux-Arts design, we get a glimpse at the opulence of American's post-Civil War gilded-age of rapid industrialization. The mansion's owner, Frederick W. Vanderbilt was a director of the New York Central Railroad for 61 years (which his father, Cornelius Vanderbilt, acquired in 1864) and director of 21 other railroads. He worked in various departments learning all aspects of the railroad business. In 1938 Vanderbilt died at the age of 82 leaving nearly \$80 million to charities and one niece.



Enjoy time for lunch on your own at Uncle Sam's Canteen - styled after a WWII-era cafeteria offering a diverse menu in a beautiful setting. Uncle Sam's Canteen is located near the Wallace Visitor's Center, at the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site.



This afternoon we embark on a guided tour of Franklin D. Roosevelt's home (above). He expressed his love of the house by saying, "All that is within me cries out to go back to my home on the Hudson River". The only president to be elected to four terms, FDR led the USA through the depression and World War II. The estate was bought by FDR's father in 1866 for \$40,000 (the equivalent of about \$2 million today). He was born here in 1882 and buried in the estate Rose Garden in 1945. His mother, Sara, oversaw the expansion of the house to accommodate his political career, running the house from a room called the Snuggery until her death in 1941. FDR donated the estate in 1943 on the condition that the family could continue to live there but the family relinquished that right in 1945. We head back to Albany for social hour and dinner on our private rail cars. (B, D)

Day 7 Friday: Albany-En Route

After breakfast Bruce takes us to Kinderhook, NY to visit President Martin Van Buren's home, Lindenwald. The eighth president founded the Democratic Party and his increasingly abolitionist views led him to support the Union and Abraham Lincoln after the start of the American Civil War.

Then we continue to Crailo in Rensselaer, NY, an example of an early 18th century Dutch historic structure built by Hendrick Van Rensselaer, son of the first patroon of colonial New Netherlands. Furnished with Dutch decor, legend holds that "Yankee Doodle" was written here in 1755.

We include lunch at the University Club of Albany, a private club established in 1911. This afternoon we visit the Philip Schuyler Mansion, built in 1764. Schuyler was an Albany merchant and landowner, Revolutionary War general and New York political leader. His daughter married Alexander Hamilton in the house. We will see a bit more of Albany before saying farewell to Bruce and return to our private cars at the Rensselaer train station. Enjoy mingle time and a drink before dinner then train #49, the *Lake Shore Limited*, departs at 7:05 P.M. bound for Chicago. (B, L, D)

Day 8 Saturday: En Route-Chicago

After breakfast we are scheduled to arrive Chicago at 9:45 A.M. with wonderful memories of this unique tour and the special ambiance of a bygone era. All passengers detrain upon arrival into Chicago's Union Station and Central Illinois travelers board our private motor coach to return to Champaign, Decatur and Springfield. (B)

Price Options

Code	Type	Train Car	Double	Single	Triple	Quad
UL	Double Bedroom Upper & Lower	Birch Grove	\$4,323	8,522	5,723	4,323
RM	Roomette	Birch Grove	N/A	4,823	N/A	N/A
2L	Double A,B,C 2 Lower Beds with Facilities	Moonlight Dome	5,523	10,922	N/A	N/A
FL	Double D Full Bed, No Facilities	Moonlight Dome	5,223	10,322	N/A	N/A

What's Included: • Round trip motor coach transportation from Central Illinois • Rail transportation with sleeping accommodations • Motor coach touring • Guided sightseeing • Admissions • 16 Meals: 7 Breakfasts 3 Lunches 6 Dinners • Led by Joe Luka

Accommodations: (7) total number of nights
 Private Train Car (1) Sleeping Berth, en route Lake Shore Limited
 Private Train Car (5) Sleeping Berth, in the Albany station yard
 Private Train Car (1) Sleeping Berth, en route Lake Shore Limited

What's Not Included: • Unlisted meals • Crew tips paid at the end of the journey \$105 to chef and \$84 to each of the two servers • Travel insurance

*All prices are per person, based on occupancy, double: \$4323, single: \$4823 in the Birch Grove. Additional cost applies for special double bedrooms in the Moonlight Dome • Document required is a photo ID. • Insurance coverage is Deluxe Group Plan from Travel Guard at a cost of 7.2% to cover cancellation charges, for coverage details see www.tourgroupplanners.com/insurance.html. Other terms at www.tourgroupplanners.com/terms.html incorporated by reference. • Price and details are subject to change. Acct#180616-TGP

Join us from • Chicago • Champaign • Decatur • Springfield IL. Tour Coordinator is Judy or Abbey, email: Judy@TourGroupPlanners.com or Abbey@TourGroupPlanners.com, or call 217-422-5002 for more information. To book, a \$1300 per person deposit includes cost of insurance. Mail check to **Tour Group Planners**, 363 S Main St, Suite 307, Decatur IL 62523 (sorry no credit cards accepted).



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This is a fund-raiser trip for WILL.

A non-refundable donation (minimum of \$200/person) is included in the trip cost. Thank you for your support of WILL.

About our Vintage Train Cars

Birch Grove was built in 1950 by the Budd Company as part of a twenty-five car order from the Southern Pacific Railroad. They wanted to rebuild the rolling stock used on their famed Sunset Limited route between Los Angeles and New Orleans.



Moonlight Dome (interior above) was the first of three private room-dome cabin cars originally built for the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway (C&O) and intended for service on The *Chessie*, the planned but never-operated Washington-Cincinnati *dayliner*. These cars were called Strata-Domes. These three C&O dome cabin cars were ordered in 1946 and built by Budd. Without a need by C&O, the three cars were sold to the Baltimore & Ohio in December 1950.

Sleeping Accommodations

Each car has a shower for car occupants to share.

The **Birch Grove** (exterior shown at upper right) has 2 standard types of rooms as shown below:

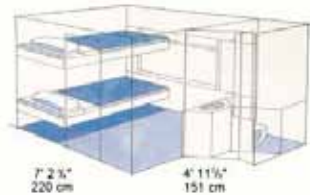
Double Bedroom



Two double bedrooms may be converted to a quad bedroom by removing the partition and used for a party of 3 or 4 people.

- **Double** bedroom with upper and lower twin berths.

- **En-Suite** bedroom with 2 lower twin berths being 2 double bedrooms with partition removed. The double cost is \$8,522 per person.
- **Triple** bedrooms cost more because it is actually a Quad bedroom with an unused berth.
- **Quad** bedroom is actually 2 Double bedrooms with the partition removed.



By night, the upper berth is lowered and the couch (or chairs, used by day) converts to a lower berth. Each bedroom has a small room for facilities (sink and toilet accessible day and night), facilities door opens into the bedroom.

Roomette



In addition to the seat(s) or couch in your compartment, there is seating in the dome car.

Single roomette for one person is available.

Single occupancy of a double bedroom is at a higher cost.



By day, some roomettes have a toilet and sink. There is a door on the roomette. By night, the berth takes up the whole roomette. To use the toilet during the night, you must lift the berth or go down the hall (each car has a shared toilet).

Special Accommodations

The **Moonlight Dome** (exterior shown at right) has 4 special rooms as shown below:

- **2 Lower Beds** with facilities. We have 3 rooms identified with the letters A, B & C. Each bedroom has a small room for facilities (sink and toilet accessible day and



night), facilities door opens into the bedroom.

- **1 Full (Lower) Bed** without facilities. We have just 1 room, identified with the letter D.

Diagram and pictures are for a general indication. Accommodations vary in configuration. While completely refurbished and modern features added, a key goal of the restoration is to maintain the 1950s look and feel.

Dining

Chef Bill, at right, has logged over 1 million miles in the U.S. and Canada working on private charters, and is known as a culinary innovator, producing top quality meals out of the smallest galleys under harsh conditions & over rough tracks. His guests disembark with wonderful lifelong memorable experiences.





Above: Daytime in a Birch Grove Double Bedroom; below: Facilities



Above: Daytime in a Dome room with 2 lower beds; below: at night



BACK FROM our History Train 2015, our guide, **Dr. Bruce M. Venter** is an independent historian, author and president of **America's History, LLC**, a tour company best known for its highly successful annual conference on the American Revolution in Williamsburg. He has led tours on the Revolutionary War, French & Indian War and the Civil War.

Bruce is the author of *The Battle of Hubbardton: The Rear Guard Action that Saved America* and *Kill Jeff Davis: The Union Raid on*

Richmond, 1864. He has published articles in *Patriots of the American Revolution*, *Blue and Gray*, *Civil War Times*, *Civil War*, *Goochland County Historical Society Magazine*, *Burlington Free Press* and the *Washington Times*.

Bruce and his wife, Lynne and their beagle, Sally divide their time between Lake George, New York in the summer where their home faces Diamond Island, a British supply depot during Burgoyne's 1777 campaign and Goochland County, Virginia for the rest of the year.

Booking form: To reserve your place,
please fill in & return to Tour Group Planners

WILL History Train June 16-23, 2018

Full Name as on ID (including Middle name/initial if any)

Nickname

Gender

Today

Birthdate for Insurance

Exact Name as on ID Verified, for office use

1 _____

M

F

____/____/____

2 _____

M

F

____/____/____

Address _____

Insurance: Yes
 No

City St Zip _____

Phone _____

Cell _____

Balance of tour payment due February 16, 2018.
Confirmation & statement will be sent after the receipt of this booking form. Name must match ID.

E-Mail optional _____

Sorry, no Credit Card on this tour.

Check: made out to *Tour Group Planners LLC*

\$1300/person non-refundable deposit due, Payment enclosed \$ _____

I want to join the tour at (circle): Chicago / Springfield / Decatur / Champaign

Occupancy 1 2 3 4 I want to share a room; with _____

Accommodation Type Double Bedroom for 1-4 persons with upper & lower beds Roomette
 Two lower beds for 1-2 persons Full bed for 1-2 persons

Vegetarian Gluten free Diabetic Food allergies _____

Emergency Contact _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Send to:

Thank you!

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