



Turntable TIMES

The Official Newsletter of the
Roanoke Chapter, National
Railway Historical Society, Inc.

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Turntable Times is published monthly as the newsletter of the Roanoke Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. Opinions and points of view expressed herein are those of the staff members of the Turntable Times and not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or directors of the Chapter.

Meeting Notice

The Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will hold its next regular meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2004 at 7:30 pm. The meeting will be held at the First Presbyterian Church on the corner of McClanahan and Crystal Spring Avenue in Roanoke.

It is your organization, we need volunteers for a wide variety of things, programs, gift shop staff, mechanical volunteers and more. We have things almost anyone can participate in, just let a board member know of your interest and what you can do to help make this a better group!

From The Head End

Cards and Flowers

If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, lost a loved one or has a new birth in the family, please contact Bonnie Molinary. Bonnie is responsible for Chapter cards and flowers and can be reached at 362-0273.

Deadline for Turntable Times

The deadline for the next issue of Turntable Times is Monday, January 19, 2004. Please send all articles, information and exchange newsletters to: Kenney Kirkman, Editor, Turntable Times, 590 Murphy Road, Collinsville, Va. 24078-2128.

Material for Turntable Times

We are always in need of articles, photos or news items for the Turntable Times. Due to copyright restrictions, we cannot reprint articles from most newspapers; a condensed rewritten article crediting the source, however, is acceptable.

We love having articles of news, of a historical nature, the staff will be glad to assist in finding information or illustrations if you do not have any available.

Cover Photo

Precision Transportation. On this April 1, 1949, every train was "On Time." The occasion was the opening of the newly remodeled Roanoke Passenger Station. When the last passenger train departed on May 1, 1971, could any of us foresee that this scene might be recreated in the newly refurbished station almost 33 years later? N&W Photo/K. L. Miller Collection

Meeting Cancellation Policy

Since it's that time of year, as a reminder we have the following policy regarding inclement weather.

The meeting will be considered cancelled if any of the following conditions are met: Roanoke City Schools are closed on the day of or for the day after the meeting, or Virginia Western night classes are cancelled for the night of a meeting.

2004 Officers and Directors

At the December Board meeting the board elected the following officers to lead the Chapter during 2004. Please support them and the Chapter in all its endeavors during the year.

President	Ken Miller
Vice President	Alan Easome
Secretary	Dave Meashey
Treasurer	Wanda Troutman
National Director	Carl Jensen
Director at Large	Lawanda Ely
Director at Large	Grace Helmer
Director at Large	Chad Jordan
Director at Large	Bill Mason

Condolences

Long time member Elwood Jennings passed away in early December. Elwood was quite devoted to our mechanical crew at 9th Street and worked as a car host on many trips. He was a determined worker and never met a task he was not willing to take on. Unfortunately, age and health problems cut his ability to participate in those things he loved so much.

On December 20. Claudine Miller lost her older sister. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families left behind.

Ken Jensen was hospitalized for some back surgery recently as well.

Holiday Gathering

by Bonnie Molinary

Almost 70 members and guests enjoyed an evening of great food and socializing on our Holiday gathering of Thursday December 13. A treat was a previously unseen video tape of the 1987 Convention which attracted a lot of attention and commentary.

Our thanks go out to Bonnie Molinary, Kathy Overholser and Wanda Troutman as well as their helpers for another outstanding holiday event!

Mixed Freight - January

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

It has been the talk of all kinds of folks from all walks of life for many years and on Wednesday morning December 17th at 10:39 a.m. it finally happened, the return of intercity passenger service at Richmond, Virginia's historic Main Street Station. The Richmond Times Dispatch covered just about every nook and cranny of information about the station and train service both past and for the future. Extensive articles could be found within the pages of the Sunday December 14th edition, the Wednesday, December 17th edition and the Thursday December 18th edition.

The station is by no means complete. The 102 year old structure is undergoing a \$51.6 million dollar project to become a total transportation complex that will include Greyhound, local transit, taxis and a shuttle to and from Richmond's RIC Airline Terminal. Amtrak serves the station with 4 trains daily between points north of Richmond and Newport News to the east. Northbound trains depart at 10:46 a.m. and 3:55 p.m. Eastbound trains depart at 10:37

a.m. and 5:12 p.m. More trips hope to be added as patronage dictates. Tickets are to be sold via a self service ticket kiosk at the station. For more information, phone Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL or visit their website at www.amtrak.com See even more coverage than I can possibly offer in this column by visiting Times-Dispatch.com A slide show of the station's renovation is also included. The last time a train served Main Street Station was on October 15, 1975. After that day, Amtrak customers were served at the then new Staples Mill Road facility in Henrico County. This facility will continue to serve customers for the foreseeable future.

It doesn't seem that long ago but December 3rd 2003 marked the 25th anniversary of one of the deadliest passenger train derailments in the Old Dominion. The day was the early morning hours of December 3, 1978 when the northbound Southern Crescent derailed at Shipman killing 6 and injuring 62. The derailment was the result of the engineer being distracted by a locomotive in cab malfunction. He failed to slow down for a 45 mile per hour curve. I attended The Blue Ridge Chapter's NRHS November Fun Night the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day. Chapter member Rick Johnson presented a thorough slide presentation of the derailment as he and another fan casually photographed the wreckage up close and personal. Shipman is located about halfway between Lynchburg and Charlottesville.

Here and There

by Kenney Kirkman

A Thanksgiving Day fire caused some \$50,000 in damage at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. The blaze started before daylight on November 28 in

some trash and spread up a wall in the vicinity of the ticket window, requiring firemen to cut into the roof to put out the flames. No historic railroad equipment, artifacts or documents were harmed, and the museum's sprinkler system kept the suspicious fire contained. (Sacramento Bee, via The Ferroequinologist, newsletter of the Central Coast Railway Club).

During November, Alaska Railroad President Pat Gamble said, 'the company is considering the possibility of an eastward rail access to Delta Junction' (a highway intersection). This would require 80 miles of new railroad and could prove the first step toward linking Alaska to Canada and eventually the lower 48 states. (Fairbanks News via Cinders, Philadelphia Chapter newsletter).

From Hawaii comes word that a Governor's task force has OK'd a \$2.6 billion light rail system for Oahu; the City Council there then called for a study of a proposal that would connect West Oahu to downtown Honolulu. If built, this would be the first time that Hawaiians could ride the rails in more than 50 years, not counting tourist trains. (Honolulu Advertiser via Cinders, Philadelphia Chapter newsletter).

Grand Canyon Railway has proposed creating a \$186-million high-speed light rail line aimed at easing traffic congestion along the South Rim. Railway leaders said that under the proposal, high-speed rail service could begin in 2005 from Williams to the canyon and reduce the South Rim's vehicle traffic by 50 per cent. The Railway's proposal is one of six that will be considered by the US Park Service. (Utica "Observer-Dispatch" via Utica and Mohawk Valley Chapter newsletter 'Tower Topics').

And, Ralph Graham was arrested recently in DeKalb County, Illinois for criminal trespass on Union Pacific property. Who's he?

Graham, a drifter, was discovered riding the second trailing unit on a UP freight train, because he kept sounding the horn! (C.P. Huntington newsletter Gondola Gazette via Philadelphia Chapter newsletter Cinders).

Awesome then, awesome now

by Dorr M. Tucker

Awesome is a word many young people (and Hollywood as well) use today to describe anything amazing, impressive or spectacular. Back in 1949 as a pre schooler with a limited vocabulary but unlimited imagination I had an experience that I remember to this day as being awesome.

The venue was my first visit to the "new" Norfolk and Western passenger station in Roanoke. Although I remember little of those early days that particular visit stands out vividly in my mind.

I don't remember the date or the season, but I do remember that it was "late" at night—about 8:15 as we entered the largely deserted building. My college age brother directed me past the massive N&W system map that stood guard behind the ticket counter. Heading into the concourse we paused at the appropriate tuscan red schedule board on the center wall near the Union News stand. I was disappointed to discover that we had missed both the eastbound Powhatan Arrow and the westbound Pocahontas—the latter by only 10 minutes! The Birmingham Special was due in around 10, too late for a youngster of 5. I would have to wait until 1952 before I got to see that nocturnal "Southern" train. But, I did get to hear the clanking rods of a 2100 passing below as No. 52 headed toward the Shenandoah Valley route. The escalators were turned off, and the steps to trackside were off limits.....Too late! Too young!

Now some 54 years later I enter the refur-

bished station building to see the Roanoke Valley Visitors Center and the O.Winston Link Museum. Once again I have a memorable impression that I will not forget. Once again, I'm excluded from trackside, but for an entirely different reasons.

Today, however, I feel fortunate, not just for myself, but for generations to come that the building is preserved and serving as a magnificent information center in a spectacular style that will always be awesome.



How The Railway Timetable Got Its Start

By Arthur L. Stead London
Correspondent



From N&W Magazine, August, 1951

In many branches of railroading progress has grown out of the initial ingenuity of one great pioneer. In the motive power department, the genius of George Stephenson was to the fore in early days. Another outstanding pioneer, and a contemporary of the "Father of Railways," was George Bradshaw, "Father of the Timetable."

Many N. & W. men and women may never have heard of George Bradshaw, to whom we largely owe the railway timetables. Actually, the world's very first timetable was produced in England by Mr. Bradshaw in September, 1839—twenty-nine years prior to the first appearance of that now well-known American publication, The Official Guide.

To appreciate George Bradshaw's unique contribution to railroading, we have to go back to the old stage coach days, before the

"Iron Horse." In that romantic era, it was the habit of the stage coach proprietors in England to advertise their services by means of printed bills, usually displayed outside the historic coaching inns. These advertisements were not genuine timetables as we regard them, but more or less general indications as to the services provided by the stage coaches. Times of departure were given, but intermediate timings and arrivals at destination usually were cleverly omitted or only hinted at very vaguely. In time, the stage coach proprietors did give definite departure and arrival times in their announcements, but right up to the coming of the railway nothing comparable with a genuine timetable made its appearance.

On the opening of the world's first public railroad—the Stockton & Darlington—in September, 1825, there was produced an official advertisement which gave the times of departure of trains from Stockton and Darlington, respectively, but cleverly relieved the company of responsibility for delays by prefixing the little word "about" before the arrival times. Thus, the train leaving Stockton at 7:30 a. m. was advertised to arrive at Darlington, about 9:30 a. in., and so on, right through the day's services.

Five years later, the Liverpool & Manchester Railway was opened to the public, and on this line, too, the proprietors fought shy of giving definite train arrival times in their advertisements. Even in 1835—after the Liverpool & Manchester Railway had been carrying passengers for five years—the company continued to give details of train departures in their announcements while carefully avoiding publishing arrival times. Imagine what confusion and inconvenience today arise were the N. & W. and other American railroads to merely advertise the hour of departure of trains and leave

arrival times more or less a matter of guesswork!

In the 1830's, "Railway Guides" by the score appeared in Britain, each containing a history of railroads and a description of the territory passed through, but carrying little detailed information as to train arrivals. One guide of the period, however, did improve upon its contemporaries. This was *The Iron Road Book and Railway Companion*, written by Francis Coghlan and published by A. H. Baily and Company, London, describing "the towns, villages and mansions" on each side of the line, and giving—unlike previous publications—the times of departure and arrival of trains on the London & Birmingham Railway, then opened from Euston Station, London, to Denbigh Hall; and from Rugby to Birmingham.

September 17, 1838, saw through rail communication established between London, Birmingham, Manchester and Preston, and this momentous event brought into the limelight the genius of the railway timetable—George Bradshaw, born at Windsor Bridge, Salford, Manchester, on July 29, 1801.

George Bradshaw came of humble parentage. He was the only child of Thomas Bradshaw and his wife, Mary Rogers, and while they gave George as good an education as their purse would permit, it became necessary for the boy to leave school at 14, when he was apprenticed to a Manchester engraver named Beale. In 1820, Bradshaw moved to Belfast, Ireland, and commenced business as an engraver, but moved a year later to Manchester, England, where he commenced the engraving of maps. In 1831, an apprentice named William Blacklock came to work for Bradshaw, and letterpress printing having been added to the firm's activities, Blacklock became a partner and the name of

the firm was changed to Bradshaw and Blacklock.

When Bradshaw first began to toy with the idea of printing railway timetables, it was the custom of the various local railroads which had sprung up in Britain to advertise the times of their trains in the newspapers serving their particular regions. It became obvious to Bradshaw that travelers required some handy sort of guide they could keep in their pockets for ready reference.

Out of this idea came the first issues of Bradshaw's Railway Timetables, issue number one being dated "10th Mo." (the Quaker equivalent for October) 1839. The complete title of the book was Bradshaw's Railway Timetables and Assistant to Railway Travelling. It was a slender volume in a green cloth cover, measuring three inches by four-and-a-half inches.

Bradshaw's first book of timetables sold at sixpence per copy (about 10 cents). There were three issues, all dated October 19, 1839. On October 25, 1839, George Bradshaw published another book covering the English railroads to the south of Manchester, including the London & Birmingham and the Great Western systems. On the same date, he also published a third volume which was a sort of combination of the other two works, and bore the title: Bradshaw's Railway Companion.

The Companion for a time proved a instant success. By 1841, it had grown to about 50 pages, and in 1845 it commenced to be published monthly. Bradshaw's Railway Guide actually was being published at the same time as the Companion (later discontinued), the first number appearing in December, 1841. This original number may today be inspected by visitors to the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It carries the title: "Bradshaw's Railway Guide: containing a

correct account of the hours of arrival and departure of the trains on every railway in Great Britain; a map of England with the railways completed and in progress; hackney coach fares, etc." From this it will be seen that, while railways were gradually coming into favor, the good old hackney coach was still a power to be reckoned with.

When publishing his Railway Guide, Bradshaw faced most of the problems which today confront the timetable experts and the printers, plus a host of other difficulties arising out of the fact that railroads were then in their infancy, the electric telegraph had not been perfected, and universal time did not exist. The various local railways in Britain each favored their own pet methods of train timing, the larger systems frequently making alterations to train running at any moment that suited their convenience, without any prior consultation with connecting systems. Today, of course, throughout the world of railways, alterations to train timings and additional trains which affect neighboring systems normally only are made after prior arrangement with the interested companies.

Bradshaw fought all his life for timetable uniformity among the different railroads, but it was not until long after his death in 1853 that the railways agreed to adopt a standard system for announcing changes in their train services, and to furnish the railway timetable printers with details of all changes by a recognized date-in Britain the fifteenth of the month preceding issue of the timetables.

Bradshaw is published every month with clockwork regularity. In addition to Bradshaw's Railway Guide there is also an ambitious volume, Bradshaw's Continental Railway Guide, covering rail services throughout the European Continent; and a

British and International Air Guide. Bradshaw is found in all European, and in many American travel offices, hotels, steamships, and so on. Throughout a great part of the world it rubs shoulders in the friendliest fashion with the well-known Official Guide of the United States, published by the National Railway Publication Co., of New York City.

There is no railroad timetable in the world which has not, in one way or another, been largely influenced by Bradshaw, and as N. & W. employees thumb their own company timetables, they will be interested to know that across the Atlantic more than a century ago a clever Englishman, George Bradshaw, invented these invaluable railroad guides and laid the foundations of railway timetables everywhere.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

- February 3, 2004 - Board Meeting
- February 19, 2004 - General Meeting
- March 2, 2004 - Board Meeting
- March 18, 2004 - General Meeting
- April 6, 2004 - Board Meeting
- April 15, 2004 - General Meeting
- May 4, 2004 - Board Meeting
- May 20, 2004 - Regular Meeting
- June 1, 2004 - Board Meeting
- June 17, 2004 - Regular Meeting
- Chapter Outing? More to come.

<http://community.roanoke.com/RoanokeChapterNationalRailwayHistoricalSociety>

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