



Turntable TIMES

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

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September 2004





Turntable TIMES

**Volume 36, Number 9
September 2004**

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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, September 16, 2004 at 7:30 pm.

Our program will be a surprise! Either a video of the Western Maryland and B&O around Cumberland, Md where our Chapter outing went, or a tape of the SAL and ACL.

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 Saturday, September 18, 2004. Please send 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.

Cover Photo

Summer weather still prevails on September 29, 1939 when K1 No. 108 leads a heavy train No. 15. The Cavalier near Naugatuck, West Virginia. Only the slight blur to the rods and drivers gives an indication of speed in this fine portrait. Business appears to be good on the Cavalier this day with an RPO and four mail cars ahead of a combine and coaches, followed somewhere back there with a diner and sleepers. No one could have recognized it the moment this shutter was snapped, the world was changing. Traffic is picking up as Germany had invaded Poland on September 1. The military and related business would help bring the N&W (and others) business out of the dark days of the Depression. A grand portrait of the N&W passenger service with its well maintained right-of-way belies the even darker days ahead.

N&W Photo/K.L. Miller Collection

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will be held at the First Presbyterian Church on the corner of Crystal Spring and McClanahan Street on Thursday, November 18, 2004. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm. At this time we will hold our annual election in which five (5) directors will be elected.

Our nominating committee is headed up by Carl Jensen. Board members whose turn is up are as follows:

Alan Easome

Chad Jordan

Bill Mason

Ken Miller

Wanda Troutman

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting, please be sure you have that persons consent before making a nomination. The committee is searching for nominees for these five positions

Instructions for Absentee Ballot: This year we will be electing four (4) directors. Election will be by secret ballot. Any member in good standing may vote by absentee ballot.

Please Note: if you are interested in running, or know of another Chapter member who is, please contact the nominating committee as soon as possible.

To vote by absentee ballot, one must:

1 - Request an absentee ballot from the Secretary or a member of the nominating committee. The nominating committee is chaired by Carl Jensen. You will receive (a) one ballot; (b) one "ballot" envelope; and (c) one mailing envelope.

2 - Mark the ballot (vote for not more than five (5) directors. If more than five (5) votes are cast, the ballot will be discarded).

3 - Place the ballot in the "ballot" envelope

and seal. Do not put your name on the ballot or "ballot" envelope.

4 - Place "ballot" envelope in the mailing envelope. Write your name and return address on the mailing envelope and mail to:

Roanoke Chapter, N.R.H.S.

P. O.Box 13222

Roanoke, VA 24032-1322

or the envelope may be hand delivered to the Secretary anytime before the election at the annual meeting.

Mixed Freight - September 2004

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

I don't know about the rest of you, but I have been quite pleased with the photos from yesteryears gracing the front of this publication since December 2003. If a time machine is ever designed and built, I may be a customer.

RAIL DAY 2004 was a success. The Blue Ridge Chapter NRHS was the sponsor this year and from what I heard from the group's officials, things went well as planned. Most dealers were pleased with sales. There was a steady rain during most of the event which is a good thing for inside events like RAIL DAY. The rain stopped when it was time for the event to cease and the business of taking down and loading bout began. The former N&W mainline was close by and 19 trains were counted between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Too bad we could not see them as they were in a ravine bordered by heavy vegetation.

A few months back, I mentioned that CSX would be dropping intermodal trains Q175 and Q176. From what I've been hearing on my scanner, it appears Q176 runs on an as needed basis.

Where in the name of Casey Jones did the summer go and the year itself seems to be

rolling away at an accelerated pace. By the time this publication reaches the membership, schools will be in full session, vacations for most people will be a not long ago memory and Christmas catalogues will be making appearances. On the railfan side of things, autumn excursions and train shows will be a short distance down the line as in the past, I encourage you all to get out and participate in some of the upcoming events. Keep in mind, good railroadiana and collectibles can often be found at model railroad shows and flea markets.

The Tidewater Division Model Railroaders will be having their annual show and sale on September 18 & 19 at The Virginia Beach Pavilion located at 1000 19th Street. The times both days are 10:00 a.m. til 4:00 p.m. For additional 411 call 757-426-2811.

Moving northward RAILFEST 2004 will again embrace Altoona, PA during October 2nd and 3rd. The Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum will be the headquarters for this annual event. For further info phone Jerry @ 814-693-1673. Become a spider and hit the websites GG1K41361PA@AOL.com or ADMIN@RAILROADCITY.com

The Great Scale Model Train Show held at The Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium, Maryland will occur on October 9th and 10th. Times are 9:00 a.m. til 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and 10:00 til 4:00 on Sunday. For more info phone 410-730-1036 or log onto www.GSMTS.com

The Bunker Hill Train Club will have a show and sale at The U.A.W. Hall located at 2625 Papermill Road in Winchester, VA on Saturday October 30th. The event will operate from 9:00 a.m. til 2:00 p.m. For more info phone Joe @ 304-229-1930 or Ginny @ 1-800-671-3303.

The Blue Ridge Live Steamers will offer their final public open house for 2004 during the last weekend of October on the 30th

and 31st. Keep in mind the public is accommodated on Saturday only from 10:00 a.m. til 4:00 p.m. For more 411 phone 540-387-0124.

On Saturday August 14th I paid a visit to the small community of Chantilly Virginia to attend a combination Greenburg Toy & Train Show in conjunction with a national N gauge convention. About five years ago the N gaugers had a mini convention in Northern Virginia and assembled the world's largest model railroad layout. It was such a success that it made the national news at 6:30 p.m. and was officially recorded in The McGinnis Book of world records. They surpassed that record in 2004. There is not a word in the dictionary that would do that layout justice. You had to be present to see and experience it for yourself. Believe me, a lot of folks did pay the \$7.00 admission to experience it for themselves. Though it was an N gauge convention, the Greenburg Show had dealers selling merchandise for all gauges of model railroading. Layouts of other gauges were up and running too. Weatherwise, it was a beautiful day.

Watch out along Norfolk Southern Trackage

Norfolk Southern now has over 800 locomotives fitted with its Railview Camera System. This system videos each time the train engine whistle blows and documents whether the bell is blown at crossings. Over 300 people have been documented and those who went to court against NS have lost simply because the Judge can now see whether the signals worked, the whistle was blown or whether the person ran in front of the train. (From Gondola Gazette, C.P. Huntington Railroad Historical Society newsletter).

2005 NRHS Convention to be in Portland, Oregon

The 2005 NRHS Convention will be held in Portland, Oregon July 5-9. It will be hosted by the Pacific Northwest Chapter. The convention hotel will be the Lloyd Center DoubleTree Hotel. Events may include the following: Main line excursions, Port of Tillamook Bay Railroad, Mt. Hood Railroad, Lewis & Clark Explorer to Astoria, steam operations on the Chehalis-Centralia Railroad, and local streetcar and light rail. Non-railroad trips include Mt St. Helens National Volcanic Monument, Antique Powerland Museum (lots of steam powered equipment and streetcars), the End of the Oregon Trail, and the Columbia River Gorge.

Pre-registration is \$10.00 for the NRHS member, and the deadline for pre-registration is January 31, 2005. Visit the website at: www.hrns2005.com

Logging Train Thoughts

by Kenney Kirkman

As some of you know, I have had quite an interest in the history of a narrow gauge logging railroad called the Mount Airy & Eastern Railway which operated from Mount Airy, North Carolina to the village of Kibler, in Patrick County, Virginia from 1900 until the 1920s. During the early years of its operation, the Mount Airy & Eastern ran special excursions to Kibler, where the passengers enjoyed picnics and other festivities.

Memories of what the excursions to Kibler must have been like came to my mind on Saturday evening, August 7th, when an English friend of mine, Geoffrey Mossford, and I boarded a dinner train on the Cass Scenic Railroad for Whitaker. For those of you who haven't been to Cass lately, the

Cass Scenic Railroad now offers a dinner train from Cass to Whitaker as part of recent additions to its schedule.

Some 200 people were on board our train as it left Cass at 5 pm. The weather was absolutely gorgeous, with not a cloud was in the sky, and the view was unlimited. As we proceeded up the mountain, we passed the old lumber mill at Cass, the engine shop, and crossed several roads where the locomotive engineer blew a hearty blast on the whistle. All these things were once a part of the Mount Airy & Eastern Railway as well. About the only difference between the two rail lines was the gauge of the track.

Upon our arrival at Whitaker, everyone lined up at the picnic shelter to partake of an evening meal which consisted of barbeque, baked beans, slaw, cornbread, chocolate cake, tea, lemonade and coffee. The temperature at Whitaker was quite cool, and many folks took the time to huddle around a cozy fire in the picnic shelter fireplace before our train started on the return trip to Cass at 7:30 p.m.

As I took in the beautiful and quiet scenery at Whitaker, I thought about the folks at Kibler who gathered near a lumber mill to enjoy food and other entertainment. With various railroad logging equipment and cars on display at Whitaker, as well as a good meal, Geoffrey and I were doing almost the same thing in 2004 that the folks had done at Kibler all those many years ago.

Today, the Mount Airy & Eastern Railway and its lumbering connections are long gone. But at Cass, you still have the opportunity to relive the memories of the railroad logging era. So take the time to visit Cass and enjoy those moments of time that was so much a part of our nation's railroad history.

Roanoke Chapter Equipment, Part 2

by Ken Miller

Continuing our series describing some of the Roanoke Chapter's rolling stock collection past and present.

This month, I will focus on the first three cars the Chapter acquired. All but one have now passed on to other usage and ownership.

It was July, 1968, the Roanoke Chapter had been reorganized less than a year, but was already setting out to acquire equipment. The Southern Railway had a variety of surplus heavyweight equipment available. The two coaches had run as recently as the first six months of 1968, in regular service on the Carolina Special between Cincinnati and Columbia, SC. On July 25th, car No. 1204 rolled into town from the south on Train No. 18, baggage car No. 128 arrived 3 days later and coach No. 1205 on the last day of July.

On August 24th, on the station platform, W. Graham Claytor presented title to the three cars to Chapter President George H. Kelch.

128 Baggage and Express Car. Heavyweight car with clearstory roof built by Pullman in 1922. Retired and donated by the Southern Railway in August, 1968. Currently used as a storage car for Chapter materials. Removed from its trucks and placed on the ground in October, 1987. Never operated in Chapter excursion service. Presently painted in N&W standard Maintenance of Way gray. Still in use at Chapter Maintenance Facility in Roanoke.

1204 "GEORGE H. KELCH" former Southern Railway coach 1204 donated to Roanoke Chapter in 1968. Named after the Roanoke Chapter's original Chairman of the Board of the Chapter. This and car 1205

served the Chapter for a number of years and in a number of Southern excursion trains. This and 1205 both retained their Southern Pullman Green paint with gold lettering for their entire service life with the Roanoke Chapter. As the excursion trains evolved the realities of friction bearings, old brake systems and general age took its toll on these cars. Their days of mainline service were ending. Removed from service, 1980. Sold to Waccamaw Coast Line railroad in 1984 and moved to North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

1205 "L. JACK WHITE" former Southern Railway 1205 donated to Roanoke Chapter in 1968 converted from a divided coach to a Coach/Souvenir Counter Car in early 1970's. Named after a long standing member of our Mechanical Crew. Like the 1204, 1205 was suffering from all the ailments of age, and was retired gracefully to the Roanoke Transportation Museum for service as a seating area and souvenir car in stationary service. After the Transportation Museum moved to its present location, the shop operated in the car for several years. It was deemed best that only one shop inside the Museum was best, and a contract was agreed upon to close the car and move the shop inside in 1988. The car was sold to Waccamaw Coast line railroad in 1989.

Membership Renewal

Membership Chairperson Lawanda Ely will soon be mailing out your renewal notices. This is part of the change over of the NRHS National system to have memberships run over the calendar year, and not be still accepting renewals through the end of February. Please send your renewal in as quickly as possible, it will simplify her job immensely!

Reflections

by Bill Mason

Recently, Chad Jordan and myself made a trip to Princeton, West Virginia to see the replica Virginian Railway depot they are building. We also journeyed to Mullens, West Virginia to see what was left of the former Virginian facilities there.

As we crossed the highway bridge over the remaining three tracks in the Princeton Yard, I looked over at the remaining buildings of the Princeton Shops. At that time, seeing the abandoned facility here and at Mullens, I thought of all the history these and other railroad buildings represent.

Quite often, I will go to the N&W station and just take a quick walk around the lobby and just try to remember what this place was like 50 years ago. It gives me a good feeling to know this building will last another 50 or more years.

What point am I trying to make? Simply that things are changing rapidly in this day and age, the railroads are no exception to this rule. Therefore it is vital for organizations like ours to make the effort to preserve as much as possible of our railroad heritage and to share it with the public in all forms.

When I am working on our equipment at 9th Street it is quite satisfying to see a car or locomotive returned to an appearance like it was when it was in regular service; looking just like it did when it came out of Roanoke or Princeton Shops.

Seeing the name "Norfolk and Western" or "Virginian" appear once again on our equipment in fresh paint or after a good cleaning, makes all the work worthwhile. Just knowing that this is a piece of historic rail equipment that will not meet the scrapers, but will serve as a preserved part of our railroad heritage and a salute to the former employ-

ees of those roads.

My hope is that soon all our equipment that is easily restored at 9th Street can again be shining examples of our areas rail history. This can be accomplished by our dedicated members. As an organization, we need to share our love of rail heritage and history with the public and recruit new members, both young and old to share that love.

What is the best way to share our railroad knowledge with the public and recruit new members? That is something I do not have any "magic formula" for. But, I believe it is something we should do, so people in this area will not forget that it was the Norfolk and Western and Virginian Railways that built this area into what it is today.

Anyone who has any ideas on how to share our knowledge and experience with the public and recruit new members (both young and old). Please contact me or any Board member. This, I feel, is very important.

September Meeting

by Ken Miller

As discussed at the August meeting, we are intending to have somewhat of a work session at the September meeting. The idea of such a work session is to discuss the direction of the Roanoke Chapter and explore membership interest in various ideas and suggestions. This will be a fun session, not actually work. We are looking for participation from everyone and invite everyone to come, there may be more information mailed to each family prior to the meeting date. I was quite pleased to see the turnout for the important August meeting, and again, a reminder to all not to discuss the matter further.

The September meeting can be as impor-

tant, and we will need YOUR input for this organization. Remember, it is fine to come up with ideas for activities and suggest them, but keep in mind one thing, it also needs a suggestion as to how such an idea can be implemented, it also does not hurt to be willing to work on any such idea presented!

Looking forward to seeing a good turnout once again.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

September 13, 2004 - Regular Meeting

October 5, 2004 - Board Meeting

October 21, 2004 - Regular Meeting

November 2, 2004 - Board Meeting

November 18 - Annual Meeting and Election of Directors

December 7 - Board Meeting

Holiday Gathering? Stay Tuned

January 4 - Board Meeting

January 20 - Regular Meeting

February 1 - Board Meeting

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

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