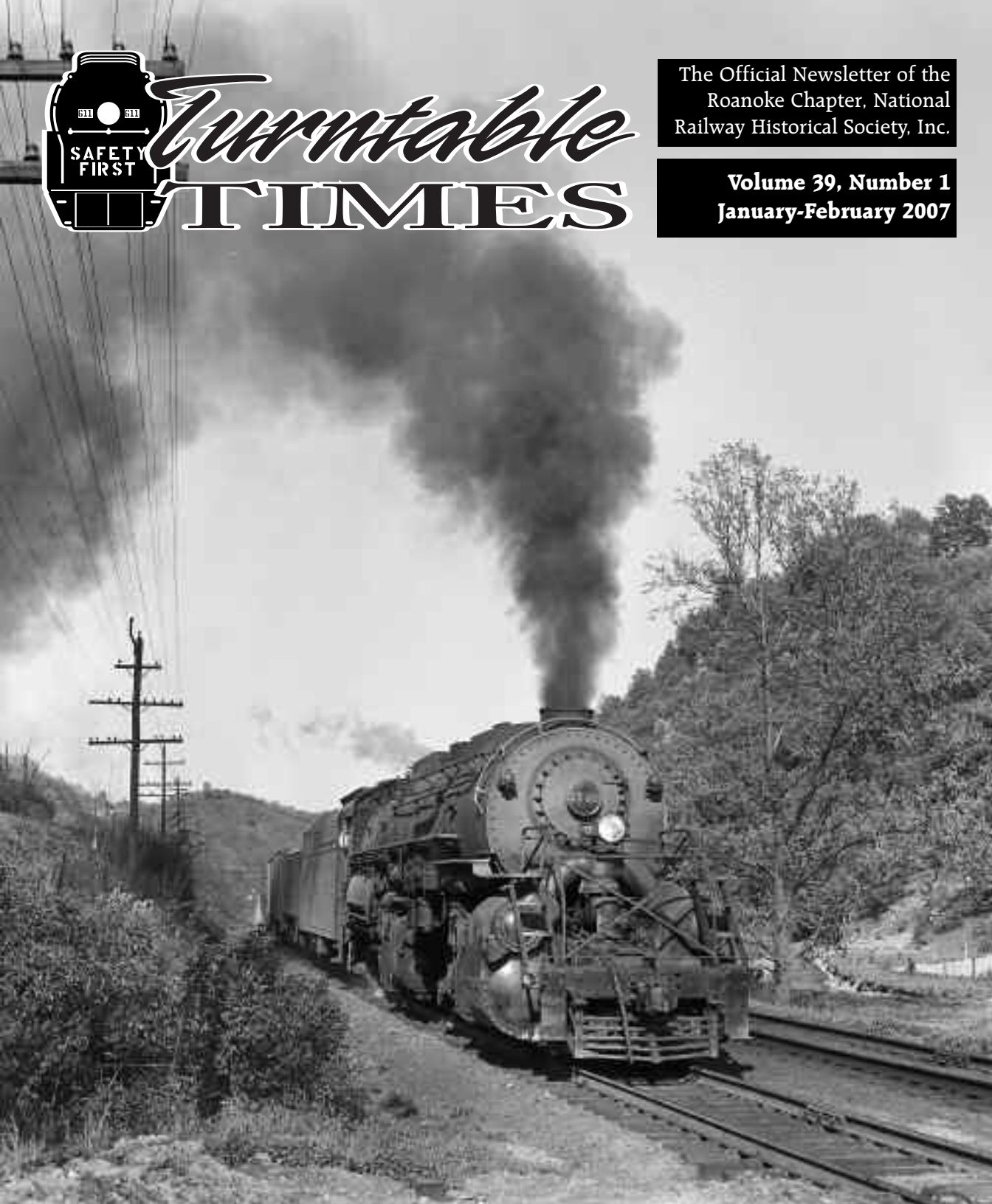




# *Turntable* TIMES

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

**Volume 39, Number 1**  
**January-February 2007**





# Turntable TIMES

**Volume 39, Number 1  
January-February 2007**

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Turntable Times is published bimonthly 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 18, 2007 at 7:30 pm. at the Link Museum located in the former N&W Passenger Station, 101 Shenandoah Avenue. Our program will be a film on Railway Post Office operations. Please attend if possible, your participation is always welcomed.

Please be sure to note our weather cancellation policy below, please note, this policy also applies to Board Meetings.

## *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 March/April 2007 issue of Turntable Times is Monday February 19, 2007. Please send articles, information and exchange newsletters to: Kenney Kirkman, Editor Turntable Times, 590 Murphy Road, Collinsville, VA 24078-2128.

### **Meeting Cancellation Policy**

Any Chapter meeting will be considered cancelled if any of the following conditions are due to weather: 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.

### **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**

Our recent western Virginia weather is more reminiscent of late spring or early fall. In that vein we present a 1956 scene with Y6 No. 2135 in the midday sun, however, there is still enough chill in the air to see the squirrel tail of steam from the turbo generator. John Krause Photo/K.L. Miller Collection

## Mixed Freight - January

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

Most of us are aware of the Virginia Railway Express service between Washington, D. C. and Fredericksburg and our nation's capitol and Manassas. This commuter service has been a success to say the least. A move is in its fancy to improve and increase passenger service between Washington and Charlottesville. The person in the forefront of this goal is a Meredith Richards. Ms. Richards, a native of Houston, Texas and a former vice mayor of Charlottesville, founded Charlottesville Citizens for Better Rail Alternatives. The purpose of this organization is to push for new and improved passenger train service between Charlottesville and Washington D.C. Service that is convenient, reliable and affordable is the goal. \$50.00 fare would be considered affordable.

Ms. Richards has noted that her group needs to raise up to \$500,000 for a feasibility study just to justify future discussions of the matter. The Virginia General Assembly received a report with some preliminary figures. 2 million dollars would be required for capital improvements, primarily for stations, platforms and a storage facility in Charlottesville. It would take an additional 1 million dollars annually to operate.

One thing I forgot to make note of in 2006 was the 20th anniversary of Norfolk Southern's Triple Crown service. The service started as a bimodal transportation service in July 1986 as a division of North American Van Lines which at the time was a wholly owned subsidiary of NS. In its beginning, Triple Crown moved automotive parts between manufacturing and assembly plants in Detroit and St. Louis. Today, T.C. has a network of 14 terminals within the eastern

two thirds of the U.S. and in Toronto, Canada. To celebrate the 20th Anniversary, NS presented a cookout in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Triple Crown's headquarters. More than 300 employees, family members and guests celebrated with The Norfolk Southern Lawmen Band and presentations by Triple Crown officials.

Most railfans have at sometime or another dreamed of or imagined being at the throttle of a locomotive. The same can be said of nonrailfans too. Very few folks get to achieve this goal even for a few moments. To make this dream come true for one or two hours, the North Carolina Transportation Museum located in Spencer, N.C. recently started a program called Tracks Of An Engineer which offers museum members and non members training in how to safely operate a diesel locomotive and then put those newly acquired skills to work. The idea had been in the minds of several museum officials for years. The first trainee for this program occurred on July 29th of this year.

For a fee of \$225.00 for one hour and \$300.00 for two hours you receive training aboard either a GP9 or Fairbanks-Morse switch engine. You will also get a one year museum membership, an at the throttle photo, an engineer pinstripe hat, an official certificate and a lifetime of bragging rights. Interested? Call Ms. Vickie Peacock @ 704-636-2889 extension 232. If you are already a NCTM member, your fee will be less than the fees mentioned above.

Starting in early December, CSX began a policy of adding more horsepower to its intermodal trains. Trains that normally operated with one locomotive now have two. Trains that normally operate with two now have three.

The Buckingham Branch Railroad began its own dispatching on Thursday December

21. As with anything new of this nature, the bugs will have to be worked out as time goes on.

To Ken Miller and all of those concerned, I visited our caboose friend Virginian # 342 in Victoria, Virginia on Tuesday December 5th. She looked great as if she had just come out of the paint shop. The only Christmas decorations I saw on her were candles on the side of the windows facing downtown. (electric candles) The grounds were clean and well kept. The weather and sun angle at 2:20 p.m. that day were just right for a portrait photo.

## **Train Mystery Beneath NYC**

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About two stories under the Waldorf-Astoria hotel on 50th Street and Park Avenue in Manhattan is an abandoned rail car on unused tracks leading out of Grand Central Terminal. Metro-North Railroad officials said the car has been there since at least 1946 and possibly before. Although some historians have dismissed the abandoned vehicle as an old postal or freight car, Richard Staropoli, assistant to the special-agent-in-charge of the New York bureau of the U.S. Secret Service, has noticed some unusual features: light armour plating on the outside, detailed wheel suspensions under the car that would provide maximum comfort for the train's cargo, and marking indicating the car was once used by the U.S. military.

Because it is just a few feet from a secret platform and elevator used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II, Staropoli believes the vehicle is more than just a freight car. About 100 feet to either side of the abandoned car are tracks still used by Metro-North trains in the Park Avenue tunnel. But the section with the abandoned car remains unused. Staropoli

hasn't seen the car's interior because the doors are padlocked. The exposed surfaces also show no signs of rust, despite the dark, dank conditions in the tunnel. That's because the car was made of industrial-strength steel, Staropoli said.

The train car most closely recognized with FDR's visit to Grand Central is the Ferdinand Magellan, which served as "Presidential Rail Car U.S. No. 1" from 1943 to 1958. The rail car was acquired by the Gold Coast Railroad Museum in Miami-Dade County, Fla., in 1959. Skeptics have asked Staropoli why the second rail car would have been used exclusively by Roosevelt, when he had the Ferdinand Magellan. But Staropoli says Roosevelt had the second car so he could get away without drawing attention during an emergency. "If the Secret Service needed to get him out of here, he probably wouldn't be taking the Magellan," Staropoli said. "There are no markings on it, because he wouldn't want there to be markings on it. It's not as heavily armoured as some would expect, because he would want to use it to get out of here quickly." Staropoli noted the car's intricately designed wheel suspensions were significantly different from a traditional postal or freight car from the era. A smooth, less rickety ride was needed for a getaway car because Roosevelt was paralyzed and used a wheelchair, Staropoli said. Metro-North officials said they don't have any records that indicate who operated the abandoned car, but they do not doubt Staropoli's thesis.

(Stamford Advocate via The Callboy and The 470).

## **A Noteworthy November**

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Service Bulletin - Anacostia (River) Bridge Closure and Reroutes. (Released November 20, 2006).

Please be advised that CSX Transportation

is re-routing north- and south-bound traffic around the Anacostia Bridge in the Washington D.C., area after routine inspections last week revealed issues concerning the bridge's support structure. Currently, CSXT is working to ensure the structural integrity and continued safe operation of the bridge.

We are working to restore normal service as soon as possible. The service plan for the reroutes is in operation, and customers should experience extended transit times of approximately 48 hours for traffic previously moving via the I-95 route. At this time, we anticipate that the structural repairs will take up to 30 days.

Infrastructure troubles described by this service bulletin which appeared on CSXT's website on Nov. 20 gave rise to some incredible train-watching which was enjoyed by Lynchburg area railfans during most of November and into December. The closure of their bridge forced much traffic to be detoured using a variety of routes. Trains Magazine News Wire offered some detail

WASHINGTON - CSX's Anacostia River Bridge in Washington has been closed owing to structural issues discovered during a routine inspection. The bridge, on CSX's Landover Subdivision in the northeast section of Washington, is part of CSX's freight-only link between the former Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac line from the south and its former Baltimore & Ohio routes from Chicago and Philadelphia. The bridge is critical to the railroad since CSX uses the line to funnel traffic from the Southeast to points in the Midwest and Northeast (including Tropicana's "Juice" train to and from Florida).

Some trains that normally come north on the RF&P Subdivision from Richmond, Va. to Washington are being rerouted west from Richmond on the former Chesapeake &

Ohio. Other trains coming out of Florida are being rerouted to Atlanta, then north on former Louisville & Nashville trackage toward Ohio.

Many, many CSX trains not normally seen in these parts became regular features of the railfanning scene for almost a month. Most of the rerouted CSX traffic could be seen on the James River. Some of the merchandise trains spotted included symbols R405, R406, R410, R411, R415, R416, R438 and R439. Garbage trains K276 and K277 were seen on a regular basis. Container train R130 was spotted on at least two occasions on the River during the rerouting. Most of these trains would operate between Richmond and Russell, KY where they would then turn north and make their way back east to their terminals through Ohio. No rerouted trains were seen on the Buckingham Branch leased line via Charlottesville.

Norfolk Southern hosted some of the CSX reroutes, too. A pair of CSX intermodal trains, R173 and R174, were handled by NS between Collier Yard in Petersburg, VA and Hagerstown, MD, being routed through Lynchburg, Manassas and Front Royal. R174 was called NS train 100 and R173 was called NS train 101. One of the R-train reroutes listed above, R415 and R416, was handed off to and from the NS at Glasgow, and were handled to and from Hagerstown. NS symbolled these trains NS 105 and NS 104 while on their territory.

Other trains were rerouted on CSX lines way out to the west through Cincinnati, the most notable being the Tropicana Juice Train, K650 and K651. Amtrak even handled a few trains on a limited basis. Short sections of intermodal train R171 and 172 were allowed to pass through Union Station during the wee hours of the night. Older GP40 sized locomotives and well cars with only one container or trailer had to be used to

meet the tight clearance restrictions going through Union Station. Near the end of the rerouting, the Juice train made a few passes through Union Station as well.

All-in-all it was an incredible few weeks of traffic through town. (Lynchburg) We are used to only one pair of merchandise trains on the James River, those being Q320 and Q303. The action was nonstop with the five or sixfold increase in train numbers. CSX had predicted they would have the ailing bridge back in service on or about December 7, and that estimate proved to be correct. By December 9 traffic was back to normal on the James River.

(This report is the courtesy of The Blue Ridge Dispatcher from The Blue Ridge Chapter, NRHS via Mr. Robin R. Shavers).

## Book Review

by Lloyd D. Lewis

Conquering The Appalachians

by Mary Hattan Bogart,

Rochester, New York

Railroad Research Publications;

hard cover: 8-1/2 x 11; 206 pages; \$52.95.

This absolutely splendid large book has not one, but two, subtitles: "Chronicling the construction of the Western Maryland Railway and the Clinchfield Railroad over, around and through the Appalachian Mountains" - and "Based on the journals, records and photography of William Cary Hattan, the civil engineer who built large portions of these railroads.

Here is a wonderful example of what the intense interest of one family member into the written records and photographs of another can have on the history of our country.

Mrs. Bogart's own father was obviously very important in the building of both the former Western Maryland and Clinchfield

railways about 100 years ago. Both the valuable properties operated on the eastern (WM) and western sides (CRR) of the awesome Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Virginia and Kentucky.

But the best parts of this volume are not just the significant details of planning and actual construction - that have been covered in other books in recent years - but the very revealing and significant gleanings of Mr. Hattan's diary that faithful daughter Mary has brought forth for the first time.

For example, from the personal diaries of this obviously highly regarded and multi-talented civil engineer, we learn the details of "Camp Life on the Mountain," just what in the world it was like to live, function and work in the new village of Altapass, NC, on top of the Blue Ridge Mountain about 1900, when this tiny settlement was literally nothing more than a railroad construction camp.

In addition, we learn from personal journals - as first-hand a source as is possible - about the surveying, laying out of drawings and actual building of the Clinchfield Railroad's famous "Blue Ridge Loops," with both drawing and a really incredible series of photographs taken by Mr. Hattan himself.

The privilege to read this type of journalism is unparalleled in Eastern Railroad and has never been seen by this reviewer.

Other outstanding examples brought to virtual life by the talented Mrs. Bogart for the very first time are work details of not only other Clinchfield Railroad projects but those of its more northerly counterpart in Appalachian coal-based railroading, the Western Maryland.

This line constructed its - with Mr. Hattan's expertise again being its finest - line along the river and streams and up the literal hollows from its original and histori-

cal base in Baltimore through track extensions to both Cumberland, MD, and Connellsville, PA, to allow both (1) the mining of rich bituminous coal deposits for the steel making furnaces of the since ended American Industrial Revolution and (2) crucial westbound connections to major railroads to allow delivery of that coal and merchandise freight to Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and other parts of the Midwest.

Just as valuable as Mr. Hattan's own words, works, engineering drawings and photographs are his daughter's digging into the histories of these once two very profitable railroad properties to tell their corporate stories both before and after her father's absolutely vital contributions to thier initial construction.

Mrs. Bogart delves into much of the tales of both WM and CRR further back into the 19th Century and then leads the fortunate reader-owner of this handsome volume into their common fate: the corporate merging of each into today's giant rail system, CSX Transportation, largest in the Eastern U.S. and among the six remaining large systems in the entire country.

The designation story of significant portions of the WM rights-of-way in Southern Pennsylvania to the modern status of rail-banked hiking and biking trails, plus a complete bibilography and an index round out a valuable reference book, which differs from most scholarly (and even footnoted) works as being a true labor of love.

## **2005 Officers and Directors**

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**A**t the December Board meeting the board Selected the following officers to lead the Chapter during 2007. Please support them and the Chapter in all its endeavors during the year.

President . . . . . Brian Crosier  
 Vice President . . . . . Eddie Mooneyham  
 Secretary . . . . . Walt Alexander  
 Treasurer . . . . . Jim Cosby  
 National Director . . . . . Carl Jensen  
 Director at Large . . . . . Bill Mason  
 Director at Large . . . . . Ken Miller  
 Our thanks go to all the candidates who ran this year, and our retiring Director and long time treasurer; Wanda Troutman.

## **Holiday Gathering**

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Over 70 members and guests had a fine evening of food and socialization on Thursday, December 14, 2006. The weather cooperated this year and no postponement was necessary. There were the usual great fellowship and great food, as well as some wonderful NS door prizes, our thanks to Norfolk Southern Public Relations for providing these nice prizes. Thanks to Bill Arnold for handling this portion of the program.

Special thanks to all those involved in the production of this excellent event: Bonnie Molinary, Kathy Overholser or Wanda Troutman and all their helpers!

## **Membership Reminder**

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**I**f you have not renewed your membership, it is very important to do so as quickly as possible, Please return those forms with your payment to Lawanda Ely, Membership Chair at the next meeting or mail it to the Chapter P.O. box.

## **Say It Ain't So!**

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**F**or the first time in 25 years, a name is missing from the list of officers published here that is Treasurer Wanda Troutman. Wanda has decided that it was

time to retire from the board, after a constant run of 25 years handling the Chapter checkbooks.

Wanda has served longer in that position than anyone in the history of the Chapter. Only those who have been a part of the job can fully appreciate what the treasurer's job entails and how many hours a week it consumes. Very few members have seen the work that goes into this position, it is one of the truly unsung jobs of the group, never seen in public.

Wanda was surprised by a small token of our appreciation at the Holiday Gathering.

While she is not retiring and leaving, she is certainly going to be missed at the board meetings. Please wish her well with all her new found spare time! Thank you Wanda for 25 years of devoted service.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

**Regular Meeting Locations are at the  
O. Winston Link Museum.**

January 18 - Regular Meeting

February 6 - Board Meeting

February 15 - General Meeting

March 6 - Board Meeting

March 15 - General Meeting

April 3 - Board Meeting

April 19 - General Meeting

May 1 - Board Meeting

May 17 - General Meeting

Early May - Possible Outing via private car on Amtrak. Stay tuned for details.

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

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