



Turntable TIMES

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

Volume 39, Number 6
November-December 2007





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EDITOR

Kenney Kirkman
KKIRKMAN50@hotmail.com

MIXED FREIGHT

Robin R. Shavers

SMALL RAILS

Dave Meashey
kndmeashey@msn.com

HISTORIAN

Kenneth L. Miller
klmiller@rev.net

All materials should be sent directly to the Editor:
Kenney Kirkman
590 Murphy Road
Collinsville, VA
24078-2128

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, November 15, 2007 at 7:30 pm. at the Link Museum located in the former N&W Passenger Station, 101 Shenandoah Avenue. This will be our annual meeting and election of directors for 2008. Please attend if possible.

Please be sure to note our weather cancellation policy below, please note, this policy also applies to Board Meetings. There is no December general meeting scheduled at present.

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 January/February 2008 issue of Turntable Times is Tuesday, December 18, 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

Roanoke Chapter's own GP30 No. 522 and Alco T6 No. 41 together for the first time since the Chapter acquired the units. Posed in a scene that must have been seen at sometime in the 1960s. Roanoke Shops open house, September 8, 2007. See related story in this issue. K.L. Miller Photo

Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will be held at the O. Winston Link Museum on Thursday, November 15, 2007. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm. At this time, we will hold our annual election in which four (4) directors will be elected.

Board members whose terms are expiring are as follows:

Jim Cosby
Brian Crosier
Carl Jensen
Bill Mason

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting, please be sure you have that person's consent before making a nomination. The committee, headed by Jim Cosby, is searching for nominees for these three positions

Instructions for Absentee Ballot: This year we will elect four (4) directors 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 promptly.

If there are no more candidates than positions, a motion to elect by acclaim will be accepted.

To vote by absentee ballot, one must:

- 1 - Request an absentee ballot from the Secretary or a member of the nominating committee. You will receive (a) one ballot; (b) one "ballot" envelope; and (c) one mailing envelope.
- 2 - Mark the ballot (vote for not more than four (4) directors. If more than four (4) 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, NRHS
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 - November/December

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

My goodness this year is rollin' quick to completion. By the time you folks read this, it'll be the middle of the holiday season which for a lot of people that starts with Halloween.

I just received word that the Buckingham Branch Railroad is repainting RF&P GP7 No. 101. The locomotive was last painted by the RF&P back in 1985. It looks awful. The engine is the property of the Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS on loan to the Buckingham Branch. The locomotive works out of Dillwyn, VA.

The official paint cost \$3250.00. The lettering will be vinyl. By the time you read this, the project will be completed in time for the Christmas Santa Claus excursions.

In my last column I gave a brief report on the time I spent with the Altoona Railfest 2007. I reported that some ner'do wells had paintballed the first excursion train out of Altoona on Saturday. All I heard that week-end was that the culprits had not been apprehended. According to an in depth arti-

cle I read in RAILPACE MAGAZINE, the folks responsible were indeed arrested. It was a small group of juveniles.

Those of you whom stay on top of today's railroad scene are aware that most of the railroad companies are doing well in terms of profits being made. A lot of shippers are up in arms because they feel the service does not equate to the profits. Many are pushing for the way things were prior to the Staggers Act. A recent study claims that the five major railroad companies have over-charged shippers more than \$6.5 million under the guise of fuel surcharges. This occurred between 2005 and the first quarter of 2007. The study was commissioned by a consortium of businesses that have accused the railroads of anti-competitive behavior. The amount was more than double what some railroad customer groups had expected. Federal regulators in January banned excessive fuel surcharges and imposed strict rules on the fees that many railroads have openly credited with bolstering their earnings.

A change is coming to Norfolk Southern's Crewe Yard. MAERSK Intermodal will be using part of the yard as an intermodal transfer facility hopefully as early as early 2008. Originally it was supposed to open this year. It is my understanding that MAERSK will occupy the eastern half of the yard. NS will continue to operate on the western end.

If all goes as planned, our friends to the north in Clifton Forge, Virginia at the C&O Railway Historical Society will have their first C&O Railroad Heritage Center opened before 2008 arrives. The center will be on a six acre site which was the former Smith Creek Yard next to the former C&O high iron. It is within walking distance of historic Main Street. The Center will be a state of the art, interpretive site that features the

C&O Railway as a paradigm for the American railway experience. It will be designed to bring to life the story of the railroad, the community, and the people of the region and will portray the railroad as an integral part of life and it's place in the history and development of America.

For more info contact the C&OHS at 540-862-2210 or www.cohs.org The idea of the C&O Heritage Center working closely with The Virginia Museum of Transportation and The O. Winston Link Museum is already in the works to work together as a POSSIBLE team to attract more visitors to the relatively close 3 museums.

For the past four or more months, there has been a certain amount of misinformation and general confusion about railfanning at North Collier Yard at Petersburg, VA. Back in mid summer, a CSX official did not appreciate what he saw at North Collier on a wonderful summer day. What he saw was a healthy contingent of motor vehicles and people too close to the mainline in his opinion. As a result, five portable signs were placed about halfway between the CSX ballast and Halifax Road. Fans still gather as they have for the past 30 plus years. None of the signs say NO TRESPASSING or NO PARKING. Legally you can park in the space between the portable signs and Halifax Road. But some CSX officials don't see it that way. These guys don't want people parked between the signs and the road either. This turf of controversy is about two standard freight car lengths long. Sometimes fans are ordered to move from this small stretch and sometimes they are not. But be there as it may, you can still enjoy the action there if you want. Just park north or south of that little stretch.

While most folks tend to visit the kitchen or toilet during a commercial break on television, I prefer to browse thru past issues of

my railroad magazines from twenty or more years ago. It is truly amazing how long ago some things have happened. While browsing thru September 1977 TRAINS (not sure) I saw and reread about the passing of The First Lady of TRAINS, managing editor Rosemary Entringer. She passed on July 29th, 1977. I sat in disbelief. I kept asking myself, has it really been 30 years already since she passed? She missed the 1977 National Convention in Roanoke by a little over a month.

I spotted a letter and postmark while browsing thru March 1978 TRAINS as a few of us reminisce about the NRHS Convention 30 years ago in Roanoke. The late Joe Austin sent that postmark and letter to TRAINS magazine. In memory of Joe and that convention.

Friends Of The Virginian Railway At Milepost 2007: Second Editon

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

I debated long and hard about doing this second section. For starters I don't know what happened to the last part of my article that appeared in the May-June 2007 Turntable Times. It did indeed bother me that the missing part just left you readers hanging and wonderin' what da heck happened? Despite a six month gap since the event, I will try to write this 2nd section as I remembered it and wrote it six months ago.

After Skip Salmon performed a commendable rendition of the song "Waiting For A Train" on his six string, the remainder of the program continued. A brief talk was given on the purpose for The Friends Of The Virginian Railway, it's past achievements and future endeavors. Without a doubt, the meat and potatoes for the

evening was the slide presentation of Virginian Railway trains, structures and employees. The slides came from attendees and were quite interesting. Questions were asked and answered and of course wise-cracks flew in all directions. To quote myself, it was an evening well spent. Things wrapped up early around 9:00 p.m. I spent two hours trackside to see a grand total of two trains before heading to Danville to spend the night.

Saturday was a big day for Milepost 2007 participants as a busload of them headed east towards Victoria visiting numerous points of interest along the former Virginian. I did not participate on the tour as I opted to spend time on the former Southern in Danville and northwards towards Hurt – Altavista.

The headquarters for this weekend event was the former Southern Railway depot located in Altavista, VA. For the 2 and one half day event, the main room of the depot was transformed into a shrine of Virginian artifacts, photos, maps, model railroad items and one vendor selling a nice variety of railroad related clothing merchandise.

Saturday nights activities commenced with a prayer before dinner at 6:00 p.m. Our meal was delicious and plentiful and was catered by a local caterer. Every participant received a bag of goodies donated by Norfolk Southern and other businesses. As we ate, conversations ranged from what was experienced during the bus tour to what fun we had back in the days of the SR an NS excursions programs.

At 7:00 p.m. Skip Salmon again kicked the program off with a train song he sang as he played guitar. After commentary about the gathering and what to expect on Sunday, Mr. Salmon introduced the speaker and entertainer for the evening, Mr. Harry Bundy. Mr. Bundy's program was a slide

show entitled "The Norfolk Division" Remembered – VGN/N&W". His program was educational and entertaining. Typical railfan humor was paramount. Mr. Bundy's memory and knowledge was remarkable. Things wrapped up around 9:30 p.m.

Sunday morning greeted us with a heavy overcast sky. Today we would auto caravan from Altavista to Roanoke. The Altavista Holiday Inn Express served as our departure point. At 8:45 a.m. about ten vehicles departed in a light drizzle. We stopped at about ten points of interest along the former Virginian. The rain bounced between light and heavy all the way to Goodview. I really enjoyed the caravan tour and I learned a lot as did everyone. Not everyone drove all the way to Roanoke. People did what they had time for. We arrived in Roanoke around 12:30 and had lunch at a restaurant in Vinton. It was about ten of us left. This concluded the Gathering For The Friends Of The Virginian Railway At Milepost 2007.

Are we already looking forward to Milepost 2008? You Betcha.

Small Rails

by Dave Meashey

Early this year I accepted some new duties at my church, without giving up any of the ones I was already performing. This really cut into my spare time, and I found that Chapter meetings, garden railroad club meetings, and the occasional model railroad project left very little time over for writing projects. My musings on model railroading also suffered from the fact (Senior moments?) that I never seemed to know which month I should turn things in for the Turntable Times. I regret the absence, but the newsletter seemed to fare well enough without my intrusions into print.

Rather than produce a blow-by-blow account of this year's meetings of the Big Lick Big Train Operators, I will just cover the highlights from March through October. In March several of our members worked to dismantle the late Bill Sours indoor large scale layout into sections, and place them in a storage unit. The membership hopes to find a place to permanently display Bill's handiwork, and perhaps operate trains on it.

April came and went without a club meeting. In May the club met at Otto Hartenstein's home in Blacksburg. We also had a display for Celebration at the Station and the O. Winston Link Museum.

June's meeting was at Steve King's 7/8th inch scale gathering at his home in Rocky Mount. Steve has no power to his track, and I wanted to run something, so I concocted a whimsical 7/8th inch scale locomotive. I call it a D Cell locomotive because its power comes from six D batteries. The batteries also provide weight for traction. The locomotive runs at a sedate pace on the nine volts provided by these batteries. The "engineer" is an Albert Einstein "action figure," purchased locally. Since the engineer's claim to fame is his "Theory of Relativity," the gages in the cab read "Relative Speed, Relative Brake Pressure, and Relative Amps."



July's meeting was at my home, with track set up on my carport. Both track and club members were shaded from the hot July sun by the carport. In August the meeting was at

John Singleton's home. John had a new branch line in operation. His back yard was also in a state of disarray from home remodeling, but we all had a very good time regardless of the clutter.

September's meeting was held at Otto Hartenstein's home again, and it is always delightful so see his railroad and operate on it. October's meeting was at the home of Karen and Tom Harris in Wytheville. Karen is the garden railroader, but she spent most of this season getting her pond installed and balanced. Subgrade for the new track has just begun.

Tom Harris has a world-class HO scale layout in the basement of their home, so the meeting was not at a loss for running trains. I spent an enjoyable afternoon "rail-fanning" Tom's Lakeside Lines Railroad. I even managed to get a John Allen style shot of a LifeLike Y-3 steam locomotive heading a coal train over Tom's high steel trestle.

There may be a few more meetings this year. There was talk about going to Carl Weaver's live steam layout in Lexington in November, but a date has not been set as yet. Still, it has been a fine year for the Big Lick Big Train Operators.

K.L. Miller Photo



Roanoke Shops Open House

by Ken Miller

On Saturday, September 8, the management of Roanoke Locomotive Shops held an open house for employees and family plus a handful of invited guests. The folks who were lucky enough to get in were treated to quite a site. The railroad held out no stops in bringing in attractions, borrowing Class J No. 611, Class A No. 1218 from Virginia Museum of Transportation, GP30 No. 522 and Alco T6 No. 41 from Roanoke Chapter, plus the Ohio Central's newest acquisition, former NKP Berkshire 763, in addition to a variety of others on display.

Displays included the N&W Historical Society, O. Winston Link Museum, and Roanoke Chapter NRHS. The crowd of people visited all the displays on site, and seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves.

I'd like to thank a variety of members who came and helped out with the display, in no particular order, Jeff Sanders, Richard Shell, Dorr Tucker, Walt Alexander, Eddie Mooneyham, Brian Crosier, Rick Rader, Bill Mason, and probably some others who I cannot remember.





Steam Power Moves on Norfolk Southern!

Well, in tow anyway, the 763 headed westward to its new home on the Ohio Central on Thursday, November 1. The trip was made without incident. We look forward to seeing the 763 in steam in the future.

Rick Rader Photo

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

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

November 15 - Annual Meeting

December 4 - Board Meeting

January 8 - Board Meeting

January 17 - General Meeting

February 5 - Board Meeting

February 21 - General Meeting

March 4 - Board Meeting

March 20 - General Meeting

April 1 - Board Meeting

April 17 - General Meeting

May 6 - Board Meeting

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

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Roanoke Chapter NRHS
P.O. Box 13222
Roanoke, VA 24032-1322

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