



Turntable TIMES

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

Volume 40, Number 3
May-June 2008





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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, May 15th at 7:30 pm. at the Link Museum located in the former N&W Passenger Station, 101 Shenandoah Avenue.

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 July/August 2008 issue of Turntable Times is Wednesday, June 18, 2008. 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

John Krause recorded the "Huckleberry" crossing over the mainline at Christiansburg this chilly morning, as a westbound freight has just cleared. Probably a bit later on in the morning, Krause climbed up on the right of way at the east side of the bridge and recorded the wonderful centerfold photo. Cover and Centerfold: K.L. Miller Collection

Outings Planned!

by Brian Crosier

On September 20th a bus trip to Cass Scenic Railway will be hosted by the Virginia Railway Heritage Coalition. Two tickets will be available; Open class tickets will be for the open cars and Closed class will be for reserved seating in an enclosed car for the ride up to Bald Knob. Both tickets include the price of the bus trip and will include a box lunch. (Vegetarian meals will be available upon request if told at time ticket is purchased and at least thirty days before trip.) Tickets will be available shortly through the O. Winston Link Museum. Departure will be from the West gravel parking lot at the Virginia Museum of Transportation. Please no parking in front of the museum as this is reserved for the daily

patrons of the museum. This will be a one day trip leaving Saturday morning and returning Saturday night. Open cars are not guaranteed seating, they are a combination of standing and seats on a first come basis. Pricing will be \$70.00 for open car and \$75.00 for closed car. Closed car capacity is 44 passenger's and will be taken on a first paid for basis. We have two Abbott busses reserved for this trip and will be opening ticket sales to the general public in April so please reserve your seats now if you plan on attending. No refunds will be given after August 10th as we can not cancel reservations after this date.

For tickets contact the O. Winston Link museum at 540-982-5465 after March 1st.

The Virginia Railway Heritage Coalition is an umbrella organization made of the Virginia Museum of Transportation, O.

Winston Link Museum, Norfolk and Western Historical Society, Chesapeake and Ohio Historical Society and the Blue Ridge and Roanoke Chapter's of the National Railway Historical Society.

Photo by Skip Salmon

April 26 marked the first outing operated by The Virginia Railway Heritage Coalition, consisting of Link Museum, N&WHS, Virginia Museum of Transportation and Chapter. From left Chapter Treasurer Jim SCosby, VMT and Commonwealth Coah and Trolley Bev Fitzpatrick and Chapter President Brian Crosier chat while stopped trackside at our former Virginian Station. We hope there will be many further joint ventures. Read the article above for the next outing to Cass Scenic Railroad,



Fire Destroys Two Historic Railroad Buildings

Fire recently destroyed two historic railroad landmarks. The first fire, which occurred during the early morning hours of Sunday, March 16th, destroyed the History Museum and Gift Shop at Tweetsie Railroad. The 1,300 square foot building was said to have been an actual train depot. It was used both to display and to sale various railroad items, many of which were related to the history of the original Tweetsie Railroad which operated from Johnson City, Tennessee to Boone, North Carolina.

The second fire, which occurred on March 28th, destroyed the former Chesapeake & Ohio Depot at Marlinton, West Virginia. The building had been home to the Pocahontas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and was unique in that it had its original furniture. Officials with the non-profit group, The Marlinton Depot, Inc., voted in mid-April, to resurect the charred structure. The north end of the depot remained somewhat intact despite the destructive fire, and the group hopes to use what they can from this part of the building as part of a new facility. For further information about fund raising efforts for the Marlinton Depot, contact the Marlinton Railroad Depot, Inc., P.O. Box 63, Marlinton, West Virginia.

Unique Display Needs Restoration

All of us from time to time have been to places where various types of train locomotives or cars are on display, be it at a museum or at a local park. But have you been to a display where a locomotive and its cars sit on an actual railroad trestle?

A locomotive and several cars from the

Denver & Rio Grande Western Narrow Gauge Railroad sit on a trestle above Cimarron Creek at Morrow Point, outside of Cimarron, Colorado. These pieces of equipment have been on display at this location for some 30 years, but now need plenty of attention as they are deteriorating. The exhibit is headed by locomotive # 278, built in Philadelphia in 1882. It was used on the D&RW's line on the Crested Butte Branch and in the Gunnison rail yards for more than 70 years. (From THE MICHIGAN RAILFAN via THE 470, April, 2008).

Kilroy Was Here!

In 1946, the American Transit Association, through its radio program, "Speak to America", sponsored a nationwide contest to find the REAL Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article.

Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts had evidence of his identity.

Kilroy was a 46-year old shipyard worker during the war. He worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piecework and got paid by the rivet.

Kilroy would count a block of rivets and put a check mark in semiwaxed lumber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice. When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark.

Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into the office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters, and asked him





2136

NORFOLK AND WESTERN

NORFOLK AND W

to investigate. It was then that he realized what had been going on.

The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk. He continued to put his checkmark on each job he inspected, but added KILROY WAS HERE in king-sized letters next to the check, and eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence and that became part of the Kilroy message. Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks.

Ordinarily the rivets and chalk marks would have been covered up with paint. With war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy Yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them.

As a result, thousands of servicemen who boarded the troop ships the yard produced saw Kilroy's inspection "trademark". His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific. Before the war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, and everywhere on the long haul to Berlin and Tokyo.

To the unfortunate troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery, all they knew for sure was that some jerk named Kilroy had "been there first." As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

Kilroy became the U.S. super-GI who had always "already been" wherever GIs went. It became a challenge to place a logo in the most unlikely places imaginable (it is said to be atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arch De Triumphe, and even scrawled in the dust of the moon.)

And as the war went on, the legnd grew.

Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for the coming invasions by U.S. troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GI's there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo! In 1945, troops built an outhouse for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. The first person inside was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian), "who is Kilroy?"

To help prove his authenticity in 1946, Jame Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard and some of the riveters. He won the trolley car, which he gave to his nine children as a Christmas gift and set it up as a playhouse in the Kilroy front yard in Halifax, Massachusetts. Now you know the story of Kilroy. (From "The Pioneer", Cumberland Valley Chapter, April, 2008.)

Centerfold

by Ken Miller

Again this issue we feature a classic N&W Asteam era photo as a centerspread. Why, you might ask? Very simple, the material you see in this issue was all that was provided to Editor Kenney Kirkman, something had to be done to fill the remaining space. This is YOUR newsletter, please offer materials to make sure we have the latest items of interest.

Now about this photo, this great view of a westbound train being lead by Y6 No. 2136 working to crest the grade at Christiansburg, Virginia. This battle up the mountain is almost over, as soon as the bulk of the train has topped the grade. The viewer can note the light coating of sand dust on the running gear of the 2136 and tender as well as the A tank trailing,

Photographer John Krause is on the end of the Blacksburg Branch bridge (see cover photo) in this mid-late morning view, the weather is just chilly enough to provide a hint of condensate.

The puff of smoke in the distance is not a certainty, but we suspect that it may be the exhaust of the Walton pusher. The pushed just shoved an eastbound train over the grade and has received a clear board to return back to Walton and await its next shove on an eastbound coal train.

The fireman on the 2136 is doing a fine job, no excess black smoke, the Worthington BL feedwater heater is pumping water into the boiler and it will be easy running from here to the next grade into Bluefield.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

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

- May 15 - General Meeting
- June 2 - Board Meeting
- June 19 - General Meeting
- July 1 - Board Meeting
- July 17 - General Meeting
- August 5 - Board Meeting
- August 21 - General Meeting
- Sept. 2 - Board Meeting
- Sept. 18 - General Meeting
- Sept. 20 - Cass Outing (see article)
- October 7 - Board Meeting
- October 16 - General Meeting

New Website: www.RoanokeNRHS.org

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