



Turntable TIMES

**Volume 33, Number 7
July 2001**

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MIXED FREIGHT

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SMALL RAILS

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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 general meeting on Thursday, June 19, 2001 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. Our program will be a video tape which will be a surprise.

Our July program will be a video tape on the Flying Scotsman provided by Dave Meashey. It will be about one hour long.

Our August program will be "Independence Limited International" by Carl Jensen. This program was postponed, but is now back on the schedule and will be excellent!

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 Wednesday, July 18, 2001. Please send articles, information and all 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 many newspapers; a condensed or rewritten article crediting the source is acceptable.

Cover Photo

N&W boxcars, Class B6 (topleft) and B7a (lower right) similar to cars acquired by Roanoke Chapter recently, see story in this issue.
Norfolk and Western Photos/Brian Crosier Collection

Chapter Outing

Every member is encouraged to participate in the summer outing to the Strasburg Railroad; the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum and the B&O Museum in Baltimore on July 28-29.

Joe Austin and Paul Howell have put together a great package at a very economical price. This is tourist season in this area, and hotel costs are very high, but we have the package which includes the bus, the Strasburg ride, admission to Pennsylvania Railroad Museum, dinner, the hotel and a visit to the B&O Museum all for a low price of \$140 per member. We need as many participants for this outing to make it a huge success, this is our first outing since TVRM several years back, contact Joe or Paul. There may still be some space remaining!

Mixed Freight - July

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

For many years, the railroad activity and importance of Enola Yard at Enola, Pennsylvania had been on the leveling off under Conrail. Norfolk Southern is currently implementing plans to change that to enhance operations at Enola Yard. Work began in April of this year with a two month completion schedule that will enable NS to quadruple the yards switching capacity and streamline traffic flows between numerous origins and destinations. This will in turn create at least 15 new employment positions for the Harrisburg - Enola area. The benefits of this project should be in effect by the time you read this.

Before the yard improvement projects, Enola sorted about 125 cars a day. That will

increase to about 600. The project involved the rehabilitation of 28 track miles and replacement of 10 miles worth of crossties. The price tag was \$1.9 million. The company has invested \$47 million in the Harrisburg area alone already since it's acquisition of Conrail's Harrisburg area trackage two years ago.

Last month I said I would let you know on the status of the restoration of former PRR K4s No. 1361. The locomotive will not be ready until the summer of 2002 if all goes well according to a staff employee at The Horseshoe Curve National Historic Site. So plans for July 4th and the upcoming Altoona Railroad Festival in October with the 1361 are out.

The good folks at The North Carolina Transportation Museum reported that this years RAIL DAYS was a big success. Attendance was about 3,500 which surpassed last years attendance by 1,000. This was the 14th year of this now annual event. I thoroughly enjoyed myself despite the invasion of so many Roanoke Chapter members. Lord have mercy, the maroon was out in force. I especially enjoyed the outdoor session with talks of past excursion experiences from Mr. James Bistline, Mr. William Purdie and our own Carl Jensen. As the three above mentioned railroaders spoke to an audience of maybe a hundred, I too thought of my own personal experiences as I chased and rode excursions under both the Southern Railway and Norfolk Southern. As each man reminisced, I made constant eye contact with Carol Jensen to my left and Grace and David Helmer to my right. All four of us could more than I identify with what the men

were talking about. Thru out the day, volumes of Jim Wrinn's new book STEAM'S CAMELOT were sold. If you are a fan of the steam excursion programs from SR and NS, this book is a must for your railroad book collection. Of course, buying the book was one thing, having Mr. Purdie and Mr. Bistline autograph it added so much more to the book's value, especially from a steam fan point of view.

With RAIL DAYS weekend moved up six weeks ahead of it's normal first weekend of June schedule, I was able to attend The Manassas Railway Heritage Festival on Saturday June 2nd. It was the first time I had attended this event since 1996. I was impressed with how the event had grown. The weather was perfect despite the fact threatening clouds appeared and then disappeared. There were more vendors of railroading and model railroad merchandise, more model railroad layouts and activities geared towards families and kids. And food. Calories consumed by the boxcar load and mainly by folks whom needed the stuff the least. The event was well attended by railfans and the general public alike. As usual, the Virginia Railway Express excursions were a big hit.

One more thing I forgot to mention with regards to RAIL DAYS at The North Carolina Transportation Museum in regards to the three men of the steam program was the delicious barbecue feast presented to ticket holders at 5:30 pm. After a person received his or her first dinner plate, seconds were available after everyone had been served their first helping. Those whom opted not to partake of this event indeed missed a real treat. Of course the three men of

steam took part too. I had the pleasure of joining Tommy Duncan and his wife Jeannie during this second good southern meal. Mr. Duncan is a buddy of mine and a dispatcher of Norfolk Southern's Virginia Division. He usually works The New River segment and comes from a family of N&W railroaders. Needless to say, we had a lot to talk about. A big fan of steam, 611 and 1218 are like daughter and son to him respectively.

Railroads of Denmark and Norway

by Raymond Myers

The wife and I recently had a most enjoyable cruise to these two drastically different countries. Denmark is near level while Norway is all rugged mountains. Railroads of the two countries have the following in common: 1.) Electric powered received from a catenary on most main lines; 2.) European -styled couplers with chain, hooks, turnbuckle and posts; 3.) Engineer on right side - one person in the cab; 4.) Most cars have shoe brakes with some newer cars disc brakes; 5.) All cars have extensive information stenciled on the side near the bottom - their language was "Greek to me". There is no lettering on the space above the windows on passenger cars; 6.) Many passenger cars are mated together thus there is about a 6 foot opening between cars for passenger use; 7.) Most passenger equipment is painted a deep red; 8.) Many locomotives look like Amtrak's AEM-7's and bear a HENSHEL nameplate; 9.) Track gauge is same as ours with approx. 130 lb rail fastened by clips (like pig-tails) to wood and concrete ties.

COPENHAVEN, DENMARK - Central Station has 12 depressed run through tracks over which there is a large station building for ticket office (billets), many shops and restaurants and large concourse. A through train to Sweden was in the station. It was painted all white with a large red band thru the door area. Of note are the large number of bicycles most of which are painted black. I understand they are used on the honor system - you take one from a stand and leave it at another stand for the next persons use. There were hundreds outside the station.

ARHUS, DENMARK (2nd largest city) - The station is large and includes the post office and telegraph office, but has only three tracks which I believe are used by commuter trains only. I saw one red and one white two car diesel powered trains.

BERGEN, NORWAY - A very picturesque city of 250,000 at the head of a long fjord. The very busy station has four stub tracks with fine restaurants (we ate at one of them). Two 7 car trains arrive and depart daily for Oslo (6 and 1/2 hour trip) plus many commuter trains. Bergen's streets are also host to LRV's painted yellow.

OSLO, NORWAY - I only saw this station from a distance. It had about 12-16 stub end tracks. The large number of cars in the coach yard indicated it was a busy station. The city streets are host to many LRV's painted in two shades of blue with white trim.

FLAM TO MYDRAL, NORWAY - We rode this hour long trip which has the steepest adhesion track in the world through 20 tunnels and numerous snow sheds. In one tunnel the river runs through the moun-

tain under the track.

The cars were dark green with silver roof with the word FLAMSBANA painted in large letters on the side under the window. The train consisted of four cars between a electric locomotive on each end. This rail line was opened in 1940.

The worst part of a European trip is riding in the 'back of the bus' for seven flying hours - in this case an A320 Air Bus over and a Boeing 767 returning.

Small Rails - Back on the Timetable

by Dave Meashey

Things did not work out in Northern Virginia. The company I was working for got into financial difficulty and did not pay their employees for over a month. Since I am back in Roanoke, I have decided to help out with the Turntable Times as often as I can.

The Roanoke Valley Model Engineers have begun working on a new portable layout. It will allow the club to participate in train shows. The portable layout will also serve as an outreach tool for attracting new members.

The Big Lick Big Train Operators held their first regular meeting at the home of their president, Jim Davis, on Saturday, May 19th. Only a few of us were able to attend, but we had a good time. We ran some trains on Jim's small temporary layout and planned for future meetings.

BLBTO members were invited to attend Steve King's 7/8th scale gathering in June in lieu of a regular meeting. I visited on Friday, June 8th and had an enjoyable time. 7/8th scale trains running on number one

gauge track represent Maine 2-foot gauge and other 2-foot gauge industrial equipment. Most of the locomotives are either battery powered or live steam. The next regular BLBTO meeting will be at my garden railroad on Saturday, July 15th.

Roanoke Chapter Acquires Historic Boxcars

by Ken Miller

The Roanoke Chapter has purchased two vintage Norfolk and Western boxcars in an effort to preserve some once common freight equipment.

The Chapter has been interested in preserving vintage freight equipment for some time and Bill Mason had spotted the cars in October when they first returned to Roanoke. Naturally, they were here for scrapping. After several months of misinformation as they had already been sold, or there was no record, it was finally learned that they were on a massive list of equipment to be auctioned off in early February. Our mechanical folks arranged to inspect the cars in January where they were stored near 12th Street. Out of the four vintage boxcars we selected the two best and most original condition cars.

The delivery process was the hardest part of this journey; after a series of phone calls, the two cars arrived on June 15th. While they are not the prettiest pieces of equipment you have seen right now, they will be nicely redone sometime next year we hope.

The lesser condition of the two, N&W 515091 (former N&W B6 exact number and other details still being researched) has a fair amount of body work to be done first,

besides adding a roofwalk back on. The other car N&W 526648 (former N&W B7a No. 50269) is the better condition and more intact, but both are valuable additions to the roster.

The B7a No. 50269 was originally a class BS car built by Roanoke Shops in 1928 and rebuilt to a B7a in 1949. It is of the same series as the boxcar featured in the 1951 N&W film "Operation Fast Freight" (N&W 50450)

An Old Friend at the Beach

by Dorr Tucker

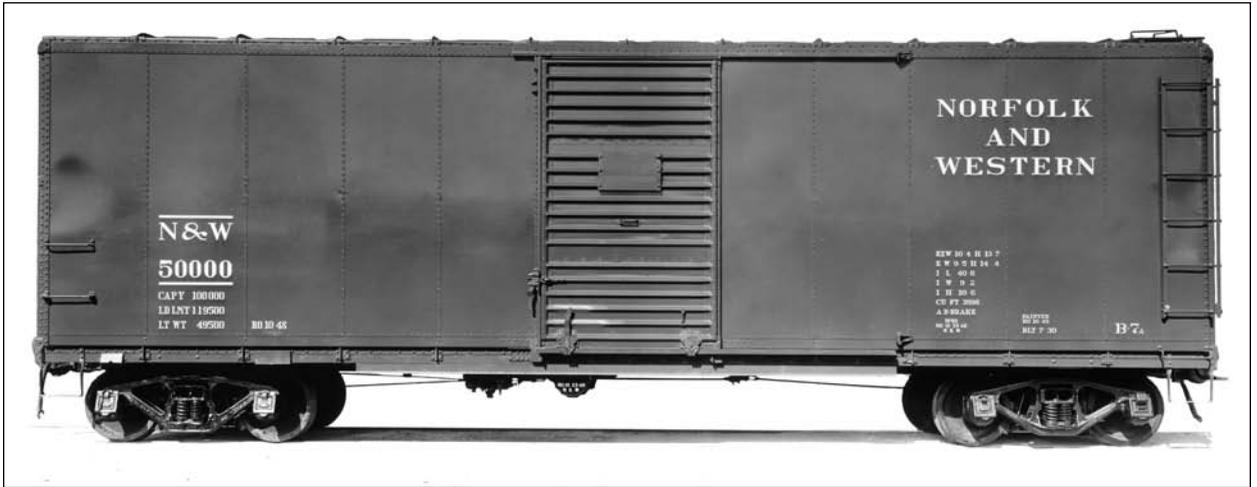
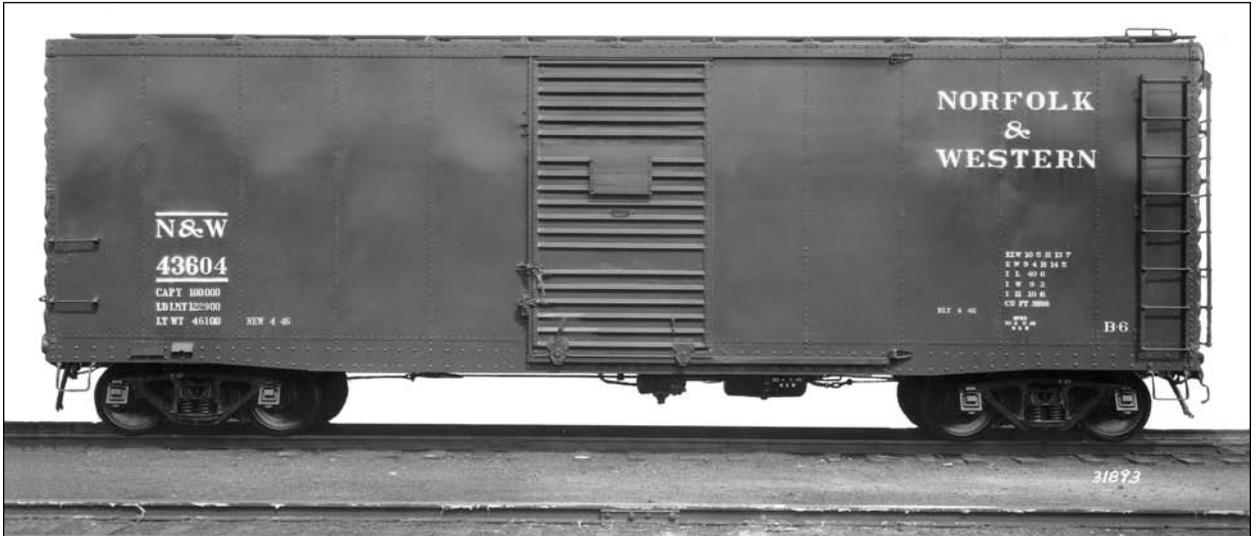
Roanoke Chapter members visiting in the Myrtle Beach area may want to check out the Carolina Southern line between Conway and the beach. On June 22nd the first train in over 12 years operated over this route. The passenger special was a pilot for the proposed service from Conway into a reopened and refurbished 1920 era depot at the beach. Like the Grand Canyon Railroad the line is designated to serve at a transportation artery as well as a mode of entertainment (do they need any more????).

We found our former open window coach 1204 that we named after George H. Kelch in the cut of active rolling stock at Conway. Perhaps some of our members who will be in the area this summer can find out when regular service will begin???

Condolences

The Chapter sends its thoughts to Grace Helmer and family on the recent loss of her mother.

Member Roy Allman is still at Friendship Manor and would welcome visitors.



Norfolk and Western Photo/Roanoke Chapter Archive Collection

Although quite similar at first glance, there are a number of differences in appearance after close inspection. The B6 in the top photo from April 11, 1946, and the former BS class rebuilt to B7a on October 23, 1948. These would be considered typical N&W boxcars from the late 1920s through the middle of the 1960s before being replaced by larger and larger cars.

Turntable Times

In the May issue of Turntable Times, Kenney Kirkman had an article regarding the future direction and format of this newsletter.

He asked for input from the readers, to date we have only had two or three responses from this article, we know there must be more interest in this subject than is shown, we urge you to submit your opinion, either in writing or via email:

Please forward your comments to either Kenney Kirkman at his Collinsville, Virginia address listed within Turntable Times or to Kenney at kkirkman50@hotmail.com Or you may contact Ken Miller at: KMiller611@aol.com Or you may contact Kenney Kirkman or Ken Miller in care of the Chapter P.O. Box if you wish.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

July 19, 2001
General Meeting

Chapter Outing
July 28-29, 2001, Strasburg and more!

August 7, 2001
Board Meeting, 7:30 pm

August 16, 2001
General Meeting

September 4, 2001
Board Meeting, 7:30 pm

September 20, 2001
General Meeting

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