



Turntable TIMES

Volume 33, Number 9

September 2001

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





Turntable TIMES

**Volume 33, Number 9
September 2001**

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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, September 20, 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 announced at the meeting, but it will be a good one!

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 Tuesday, September, 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

Remember when 600s hauled passenger trains through Southwestern Virginia? These are not what most people first think of with that statement, but it was done for a time before the introduction of the Hilltopper and arrival of the GE units. Amtrak's infamous SDP-40 No. 607 leads the eastbound Mountaineer on a beautiful October 15, 1976. K. L. Miller Photo

Notice of By-Laws Change

In accordance with Roanoke Chapter, NRHS Bylaws (revised October 6, 1987) Article VII, notice is hereby given of amendment to Article II, Membership in Corporation, Section 6-Quorum as follows:

Present:

"A Quorum for Members meetings for the transaction of business and election of officers shall consist of at least twenty-five per centum (25%) of the entire Membership of the Corporation, or fifteen (15) Members, whichever is greater.

Change:

"A quorum for Member's meetings for the transaction of business and election of officers shall consist of fifteen (15) Members."

The above change is consistent with the National Railway Historical Society Inc., Bylaws.

The Board of Directors approved such a change at their regular scheduled meeting on September 4, 2001.

The membership can comment on said amendment at the General Monthly Meeting of October 18, 2001

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 16, 2001. 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.

Instructions for Absentee Ballot: This year we will be electing six (6) directors.

Election will be by secret ballot. Any member may vote by absentee ballot. The nominees will be included in the November issue of Turntable Times, and announced at the October meeting.

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. Members of the nominating committee are Chairman Bill Mason, Brian Crosier, and .

To vote by absentee ballot, one must:

1 - Request an absentee ballot from the Secretary or a member of tile 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, 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 - August

by Mr. Robin R. Shavers

In my column and via other sources, it was reported months ago that Norfolk Southern would reduce it's freight car

inventory by 12,000. As of this writing over 9,000 have been sold thus yielding the railroad \$33.3 million. I also reported that NS plans to reduce its motor vehicle fleet by 1,000. So far, 500 vehicles have been disposed of. Of this, 278 have been sold adding \$740,000 to the railroad's account.

Closing some facilities to reduce costs and secure the bottom line are on Norfolk Southern's agenda. The Hollidaysburg Car Repair Shops near Altoona, PA and the Coster Wheel shop plus Birmingham Frog Facility are to be closed.

CSX Transportation plans to combine the intermodal traffic of Q175 with the Tropicana empties of K651. K651 will continue to exist. Northbound Q176 will continue as is.

As of this writing on Sunday August 19th I am informed that CSX's Baltimore Tunnel is back to full service after that massive fire that occurred back in July.

CSX has reorganized its grain train symbols. The grain train symbols have been reorganized by corridor routing plus a miscellaneous category. The new symbols are as follows: G001 to G099..Miscellaneous trains; G100 to G319..Southeast via Nashville; G320 to G391..Former B&O line; G392 to G449..Southwest via A&WP Subdivision; G450 to G619..Southwest via Nashville; G620 to G681..Former Conrail line; G682 to G829..Southeast via KD Subdivision; G830 to G901..Rocky Mount via former C&O line; G902 to G999..Hamlet via Kingsport Subdivision.

Most of us whom spend time trackside or visit yards have probably seen freight cars that would probably be more at home in a museum instead of revenue service.

The Federal Railroad Administration mandates that when a car reaches 50 years of age, it must be retired. I do not know what role rebuilding plays in the retirement decision. Back in 1951 American Car & Foundry manufactured 400 covered hopper cars for CSXT predecessor Atlantic Coast Line. CSX has recently retired over 100 of the cars to Mansbach Metals of Ashland, Kentucky. The cars were in dedicated service hauling phosphate rock and fertilizer in Florida. The roof hatch assemblies will be salvaged for future gondola conversions.

Most of us have favorite locations where we enjoy seeing a train or trains. Most of us enjoy seeing the location on photo or painting canvas. A firm recently went into business with the train enthusiast in mind and it is called Creation Images and is located in beautiful downtown Troutville, Virginia. To get its business on track so to speak, the firm is soliciting ideas for railroad subject matter paintings which will sell for \$30.00 each.

Below are eight suggested ideas. The public is encouraged to supply ideas of their own. You may respond via the following: CREATION IMAGES, PO BOX 23, TROUTVILLE, VA. 24175. E-Mail noahslandling@juno.com Phone No. is 540-992-4491. The eight ideas are: 1.) Southern E's going over Virginian Train Masters with a coal train in Altavista, Va. 2.) Virginia Electrics racing with an N&W Y with a coal train in Salem, Va. And a red Geep going west with a passenger train. 3.) C&O Steam passing Shays at Cass, WVA. 4.) Southern Piedmont going by the Thomasville Chair in Thomasville, N.C. 5.) The Southern Crescents meeting in Greensboro, N.C. at

night at the old Terminal. 6.) N&W Articulated leaving Island Yard crossing in front of a C&O Alleghany leaving Lynchburg Yard. 7.) Old NS at Star, N.C. with a Baby Berk in the Station and Baldwin Diesels going over bridge to Aberdeen, N.C. 8.) C&O Local coming off the New Castle Branch meeting a Main Line train in Eagle Rock, Va. 9.) Other suggestions please write, call or e-mail.

Small Rails

by Dave Meashey

The Roanoke Valley Model Engineers held a business meeting August 7th to decide on a final track plan for the new portable layout. The club is also hosting a model railroad show on September 22nd. The show will feature model train and railroad memorabilia dealers. There should also be some model railroad exhibits as well

When communications break down on a railroad, operations come to a halt. Unfortunately, the same can be said for model railroad clubs. The Big Lick Big Train Operators had to cancel their August meeting, as the meeting notices did not get sent in time due to some thwarted communications. Hopefully, we will be back in full stride by September's meeting

Chapter Outing, Part 2

by Jim Overholser

On Monday, September 24, 2001, the Mountain State Railroad and Logging Historical Association and the Cass Scenic Railroad State Park will operate an excursion from Cass, WV, to the old ghost town of Spruce, and then on the former Western

Maryland track now operated by the West Virginia Central.

Leaving at 10 AM, the special geared steam train will operate to the "Big Cut" at over 4000 feet elevation and down Shaver's Fork of the Cheat River to Twin Bridges and is scheduled to return to Cass at about 5 PM.

Jim Overholser has agreed to coordinate a special chapter outing for this trip. By ordering our tickets as a group we will save \$5 per person.

Tickets include a box lunch with a hot entree and are \$40 per person. We will car pool to Cass early on the morning of September 24 and return that night or, alternatively, you can make your own arrangements for lodging and driving if you want to go up the day before.

Sign up at the August Chapter meeting or contact Jim Overholser (343-1928). We need at least ten people for the group rate. Make your checks (for \$40 per person) payable to the Roanoke Chapter NRHS.

Condolences

Long time Chapter member Dorothy Kelch passed away on August 9th. Dorothy and her late husband Floyd had been ardent supporters of Chapter activities for many years, and were the first recipients of the "Thank You" Award some years back. For many years Dorothy and Floyd handled the mailing party at their house for the Turntable Times. Dorothy had also headed up the Souvenir operation until she "retired" some years back. After Floyd's passing in 1999, Dorothy kept the Chapter Archives in mind with several different donations of many books and some arti-

facts now on display at the facility.

Dorothy and Floyd could always be counted on for help on any project when they were still able to do so, but age and medical problems forced them into a lesser role in the last few years.

Dorothy will be sadly missed by her many friends and family.

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 has been 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.

Strange Sightings

by Gary Ballard

Here are two Amtrak "Heritage" Dining Cars, spotted recently at New York's Penn Station. Amtrak Diner No. 8514, (ex-New York Central; Amtrak Diner No. 8559 (ex-Southern Pacific).

Can you come up with the original dates that these cars operated on their original roads?

Clue: The ex-SP car still has the big

square name plate under the window band...It can barely be detected, the old insignia of the S.P.R.R. and car No. "SP 102?". What was the complete number for this car? Does anyone know?

Editor's Note: I suspect the cars fit the following: The Southern Pacific car is one of the Budd-built cars in 1950 for Sunset Limited service. The New York Central car is a Diner/Grill car delivered between March and May, 1948. They were used in pool service on the NYC, converted to diner-lounge cars by Amtrak and then converted back to a 44-seat diner. Amtrak renumbered cars sometime since the last roster I had available, so I do not have a reference for the current Amtrak numbers/original numbers.

Great Railway Journeys

By Bill Arnold

Nine members of our Chapter participated in Blue Ridge Public Television's fund drive for pledges for programming at WBRA (Ch 15) August 9. We "manned" the phones to accept pledges during a special program on railroading in America featuring Mountain Railway Journeys; Alaska by Rail; and Across America. Several levels of pledges were available. Your Chapter donated 24 copies of our Norfolk and Western Class J book signed by Ken Miller to be combined with a video tape of the program (\$125). All copies were pledged, and we managed to secure the largest single program total of \$5,651. Thanks to Chapter members Brian Crosier, Willard Hamill, Paul & Ruby Howell, Carl Jensen, Ken Miller, Jim Overholser, and Bill Sherman.

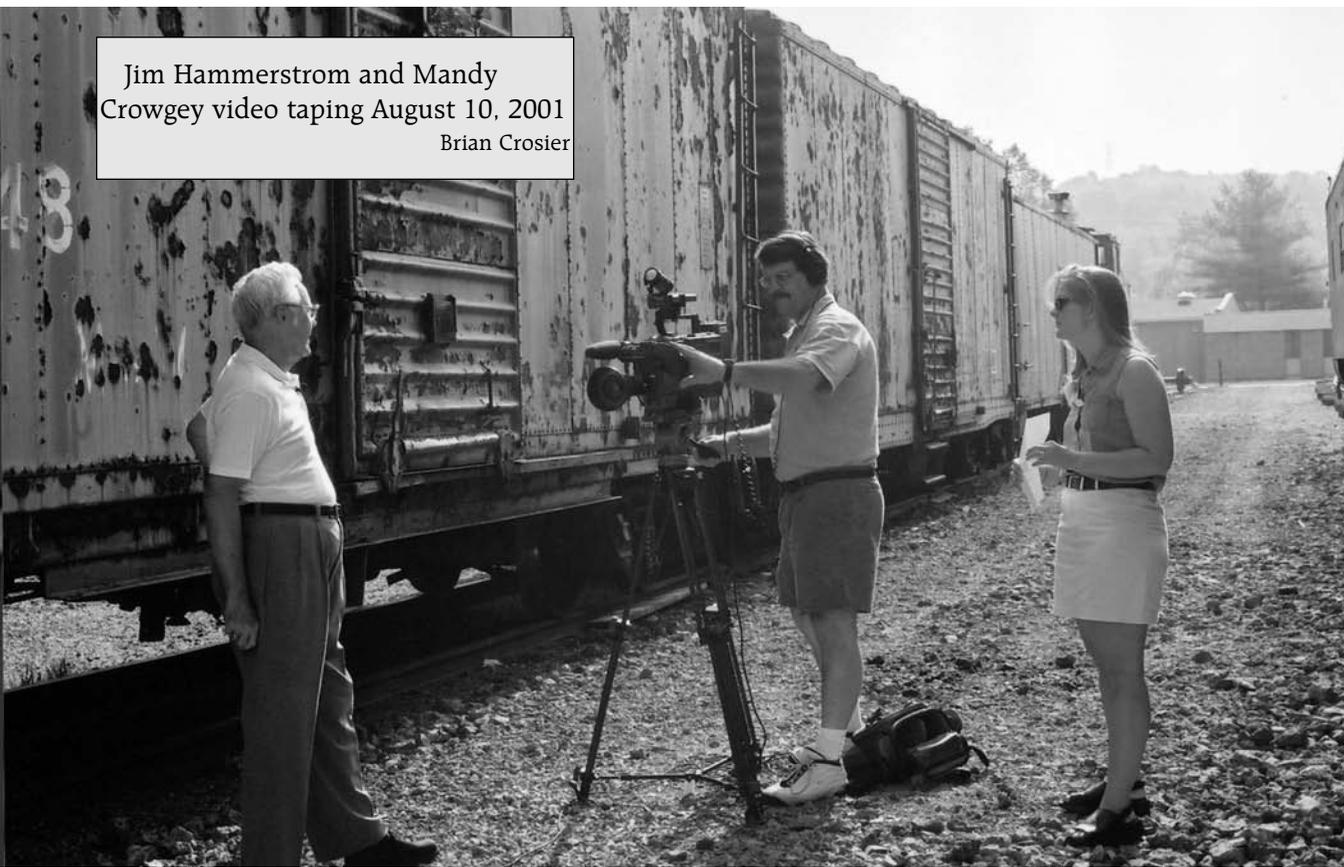
Blue Ridge Public Television Excursions

By Bill Arnold

On August 10, your Chapter was featured in a four+ minute segment on PBS' local public television station. The 30-minute weekly program titled Excursions films and interviews people in their viewing area to provide information on a cross section of things that are happening or about groups that have a story to tell. We were fortunate to have been selected to provide information about what our Chapter does to promote the importance of rail history and sustain this knowledge for

present and future generations. We were able to cover the restoration efforts ongoing at our siding with the GP30 locomotive, N&W caboose, and our newest addition; two box cars were featured; a visit to our archive facility covered the 60,000+ drawings, photos, books, films, and artifacts that we own; and lastly, a visit to the gift shop at the Virginia Museum of Transportation with a visual listing of the 1000+ items that we sell there. Our thanks to WBRA for taking us on one of their excursions. Brian Crosier, Bill Mason and Ken Miller contributed to our efforts to let the viewing audience know who we are and what we are doing.

Jim Hammerstrom and Mandy
Crowgey video taping August 10, 2001
Brian Crosier



WVC's state-owned BL2 leads our passenger train on the New Tygart Flyer.
Bill Arnold



Alive and Well

By Bill Arnold

Recently, Ellen and I took a weekend trip to Belington, WV to see and ride our train that has been operating on the West Virginia Central. This is the third year of operation and if the two days we were there is any indication of success, we can be proud of the way things are going. The trains (New Tygart Flyer and Cheat Bridge Connector) are clean and well staffed. We were impressed with the operation and staff. We received many favorable comments from the passengers on our cars and the beauty of the trips.

On Saturday, we drove to Belington (we had spent the night in Elkins) to catch the New Tygart Flyer for its trip to Bowden with stops in Elkins, and Woodrow. The trip up the mountain followed a bold rocky

creek through an "S" tunnel and past several campgrounds. At Bowden, passengers were allowed to detrain and ride the Cheat Bridge Connector (more on this trip extension later). Our return trip duplicated the earlier leg to Belington. Each stop picked up additional passengers. From Belington, our trip followed the Tygart River to Tygart Junction (interchange with CSX). The Tygart River contained many large boulders (some the size of a large automobile). The river bed was covered with "pebbles" ranging in size from 6 to 12." The beauty of the trip was the rushing white water around the boulders. When we arrived at the passing siding at Tygart Junction, CSX had left a gondola and a boxcar for one of the railroad's commercial customers. So we returned to Belington with a "mixed" train. Ellen and I had agreed to help out on the morning run to Bowden if needed.

Our T6 No. 41, coach 1827 and tool-car 1407
returning to Elkins.

Bill Arnold



We were, and assisted in the 1248 souvenir/food combo. Sales of both food and souvenirs were brisk. I had taken 6 copies of our J-Book to add to their souvenir stock. One was sold to a railfan from Ohio. The 3305 was staffed by a hostess and a cold-cut buffet served to these passengers riding "lounge class." Besides the former cars, passenger cars 512 and 537 complete the consist. This run is made Saturdays and most Sundays.

On Sunday, we caught the 9:00am Cheat Bridge Connector from Elkins to High Falls with stops at Woodrow and Bowden (same as NTF on Saturday). The CBC waits in Bowden until the morning run of the NTF arrives so that passengers can go on to High Falls and connect with the Salamander ride to Cheat Bridge. They return in the afternoon to meet the CBC/NTF connection back to Belington. From Bowden to High Falls, the track winds its way further up the mountain along the river with some spectacular scenery. At

High Falls, passengers are allowed to take the short trail down to the falls. The water level was down some when we were there, but we were treated to a fine display of falling water. After a thirty-minute stop, the Salamander loaded passengers for Cheat Bridge and we returned to Elkins. This train consists of our Alco T6 locomotive, 1407 tool car, and 1827 passenger car. It is presently running Thursday-Sunday;

We highly recommend that Roanoke Chapter members take this trip to Elkins/Belington to ride. The ride is free (show your Chapter membership card). If the train is full, you may have to stand and if needed, you can volunteer to work (as we did). If you really want to go first class, call and make reservations for the 3305 lounge car. You'll have to pay the published rate for this option. Call 1-877-686-7245 for reservations and charges.

Whichever you choose, you'll enjoy the trip!

The High Falls alongside
West Virginia Central.

Bill Arnold



Here and There

by Kenney Kirkman

Thomas the Tank Engine will be at the North Carolina Transportation Museum at Spencer, North Carolina the weekends of October 5-7 and 12-14. For more information contact the museum at 704-636-2889 or visit their website at: nctrans.org

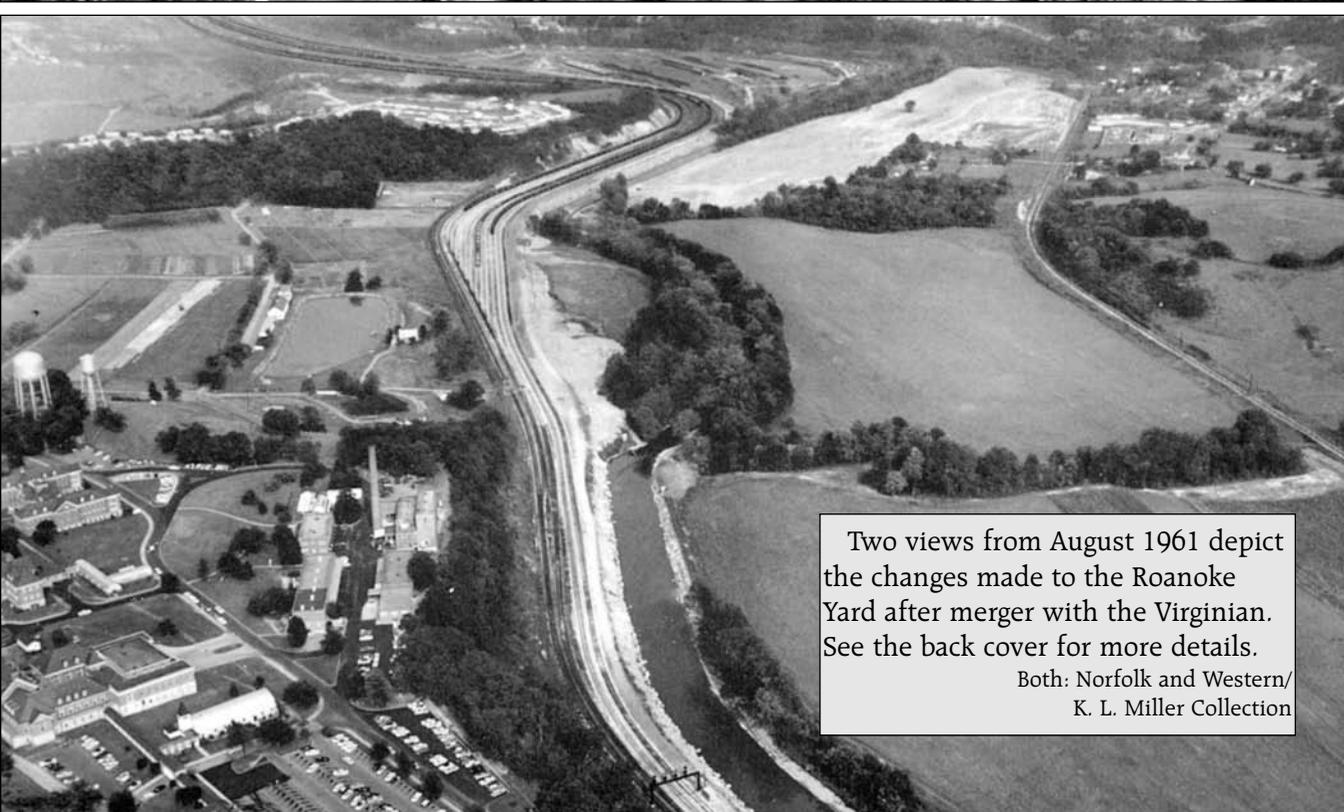
According to a report in the August, 2001 issue of The Company Mail, newsletter of the Samuel Spencer Chapter, NRHS, the first phase of a long awaited restoration/move of the Hamlet, North Carolina depot has begun with the station being surrounded by a chain link fence while the lead-based paint/asbestos is being removed. After completion of this it will be made ready to move to what is now part of Main Street. The move will be undertaken as soon as the City of Hamlet relocates Main Street some 150-feet south of its current location. After the depot is moved to its new site the facility will be restored to

its 1950s appearance.

If you're interested in riding the Amtrak Carolinian to the North Carolina State Fair at Raleigh, book your trip early. The Fair will be held from October 12 through 21st and the Carolinian makes a special stop right across the street from the main entrance. This writer has ridden the east-bound Carolinian from Greensboro to the Fair where one can visit for about 5 hours or so until the westbound train arrives, plenty of time to have lots of fun.

August Newsletter

For our readers information, the August Newsletter was mailed on August 20, at this writing (September 3) it has still not arrived in any local mailboxes. If this is any indication of the present state of the postal service, the electronic media seems to have a huge edge!



Two views from August 1961 depict the changes made to the Roanoke Yard after merger with the Virginian. See the back cover for more details.
Both: Norfolk and Western/
K. L. Miller Collection

Forty Years Ago

(See Inside Back Cover)

Improvements to the Roanoke Yard had been completed. The complete article from the Norfolk and Western Magazine will appear in a future issue of Turntable Times.

These two aerial views depict (top) looking east from Shaffers Crossing shows the addition on the south side of the yard of seven tracks for classification and forwarding. The car department repair facilities are at lower left. The bottom view is of the new east and westbound tracks, and pull-in tracks for 200 car trains are central. The relocated Roanoke River channel required the relocation of almost 2/3 mile. The Veterans Hospital is at lower left. The graded area in the upper right is the Blue Ridge Industrial Park. The former Virginian is at the right.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

September 20, 2001
General Meeting

September 24, 2001
Cass Outing

October 2, 2001
Board Meeting

October 18, 2001
General Meeting

November 6, 2001
Board Meeting

November 15, 2001
Annual Meeting

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