



Turntable **TIMES**

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

Volume 49, Number 4
Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2017

*Merry Christmas From The
Turntable Times Staff*





Turntable TIMES

**Volume 49, Number 4
Oct-Nov-Dec. 2017**

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Turntable Times is published quarterly 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 or contributors of the Turntable Times and do 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 regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 18th. The meeting will be held in the auditorium at the O. Winston Link Museum at 7:30 pm. Please be sure to enter at the west end of the building on the track level. Prior to that will be our annual holiday gathering on what is the normal meeting night of December 21st, please see the article in this issue for details.

Our February meeting will be held Thursday, February 15th. Please be sure to check the cancellation policy below.

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 966-4809.

Deadline for Turntable Times

The deadline for the next issue of Turntable Times is Monday, February 19, 2018. Please send articles, information and exchange newsletters to: Editor Turntable Times, P.O. Box 13222, Roanoke, VA, 24032. All parties sending newsletters to the Roanoke Chapter via email should send them to Jim Overholser: jgoverholser@verizon.net, Dorr Tucker at joandorr@cox.net and Ken Miller at klmiller@rev.net

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.

Cover Photos

Steam trains in the snow always conjures up the holiday season. The snow blowing, steam heat pushing clouds around the vestibules, and finally, a Class J, in this case the first No. 600 rushing the Powhatan Arrow westbound in the freshly fallen snow. Our wish to you is may all your Christmas dreams come true and thanks for being with us this past year. Norfolk and Western Photo.

For current information on the FIRE UP 611! campaign,
see www.FireUp611.org

From the Editor

Coming up Thursday, December 21 (our usual meeting night) is our annual Holiday Gathering. See below for more information.

Daily Amtrak service returned to Roanoke on October 31 with the on-time departure of train 176 at 6:19 AM. Many Roanoke Chapter members joined over 100 others for a ride on the first day of service. Over 20 Chapter members rode a Commonwealth Coach and Trolley Museum bus back to Roanoke from Lynchburg, arranged by President Jeff Sanders. Ridership on the train has been very good, from all reports.

Unfortunately, early the next morning, on November 1, a devastating fire struck the Commonwealth Coach and Trolley Museum garage. Many buses were destroyed or damaged, but several were saved. This Museum, affiliated with the Virginia Museum of Transportation, has been spearheaded by VMT retiring executive director Bev Fitzpatrick. Bev, and others associated with the Museum, we are sorry for the loss. Hopefully some of us can assist in the rebuilding efforts.

Congratulations to our newly elected Board members, Chuck Akers, Delta Helmer Pelgrim, and George Stein. The three retiring board members they are replacing, President Jeff Sanders, Treasurer Jim Cosby, and former Secretary Skip Salmon, have served for years and are to be congratulated on their accomplishments. See the report elsewhere on the Annual Meeting and Election held November 16.

Be sure to send your renewal in for 2017. Delta Helmer Pelgrim has provided information on how to pay your Chapter and National dues in this issue.

The Chapter wants to sponsor a young camper (high school age) at a Rail Camp this coming summer. Please contact Carl Jensen

for more information.

Norfolk and Western 611 is in Spencer, NC, for winter maintenance. We are hopeful for excursions in 2018 – but time will tell.

This issue of Turntable Times is shorter than recent editions. We are looking for more local input. Please consider contributing to your newsletter next time.

Jim

Holiday Gathering December 21

Roanoke Chapter's annual Holiday Gathering is scheduled for 6 PM Thursday, December 21, at Calvary Baptist Church, 608 Campbell Avenue SW, Roanoke. Enter the building from the lot in the rear. Members, their families and guests, are invited to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to go with Chapter provided meat, drinks, paper products, and utensils. Please plan to attend this joyous holiday event, our December "meeting." A few volunteers are needed to help with setup, beginning at 3:30 PM December 21. Questions? Contact Bonnie Molinary (966-4809) or Kathy Overholser (343-1928).

Condolences

The Chapter sends condolences to Gary Gray on the loss of his father, Clarence Gray, on September 29.

Former member Bill Sherman passed away on October 13 at age 96.

The Timetable

December 2 and 3 – Candy Cane Express trains rides by the Chapter at VMT. Contact Gary Gray or sign up at Chapter meetings to help.

December 21 – Annual Chapter Holiday Gathering dinner, 6 PM, Calvary Baptist Church. The Chapter provides some meats and beverages. Members bring a covered dish, salad, or dessert. Guests are wel-

come. Contact Bonnie Molinary or Kathy Overholser for more information.

December 23 – Blue Ridge Chapter Holiday Gathering, Amtrak Kemper Street station, Lynchburg, 9 PM.

May 17 – 20, 2018 – Joint N&W Historical Society, Southern Railway Historical Association, and ACL – Seaboard Historical Society convention, Spencer – Salisbury, NC. Information at www.nwhs.org

August 7 – 12, 2018 – NRHS Annual Convention in Cumberland, MD. Planned activities include the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad with (maybe) restored C&O steam engine 1309, Potomac Eagle excursion, and other activities.

Board of Directors

Our Chapter Board usually meets at 7 PM the first Tuesday of each month in the Chapter's Virginian Station. Members are welcome to attend.

At the November 16 Annual Meeting and election of the Chapter, five directors were up for election to two year terms. President Jeff Sanders, Treasurer Jim Cosby, and Director Skip Salmon had announced they were retiring from the board. We all owe them a big THANK YOU for their ability to get things done over the last several years, including restoring the Virginian Station and many other accomplishments including working with VMT on the 611 excursions. Choosing to run for re-election were Gary Gray and Carl Jensen.

The nominating committee headed by Gary Gray and Fred Boettner nominated Chuck Akers, Delta Helmer Pelgrim, and George Stein to fill the vacancies, and they agreed to serve. Nominations from the floor were solicited but none were received, and the slate of five directors was accepted by the members by a vote of acclamation.

2018 Directors and Officers as elected by

the Board at their meeting of December 5.

Chuck Akers	.....	President
Gary Gray	.....	Vice President
Lewis Foster	.....	Secretary
Delta Helmer Pelgrim	.....	Treasurer
Carl Jensen	...	National Representative
Fred Boettner	.....	Director at Large
Ken Miller	.....	Director at Large
George Stein	.....	Director at Large
Percy Wilkins	.....	Director at Large

Emergency Notification Phone Numbers

You may use these phone numbers to report emergencies or other conditions affecting railroad operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc. If at a railroad/highway grade crossing try to provide the unique crossing number/DOT number posted nearby, usually on a small blue sign.

Norfolk Southern	.....	800-453-2530
CSX	.....	800-232-0144
Amtrak	.....	800-331-0008

Programs

Dorr Tucker has been in charge of Chapter meeting programs for a number of years but would like to retire. If you would be interested in taking over this job, please contact him or the President. In the meantime, if you want to volunteer or have a suggestion for a program, please contact Dorr.

Membership Report

By Delta Helmer Pelgrim

Included in this issue (page 11 and 12) of Turntable Times is a copy of the 2018 membership renewal application with renewal information. The completed application can be mailed to the address shown or given to me at the Holiday Gathering or a Chapter meeting.

In addition to the 2018 membership

renewal application, I also sent out an addendum to the membership roster to all Roanoke Chapter NRHS members. If you did not receive your addendum please let me know. If you have any questions regarding renewing your membership this year please do not hesitate to contact me. As always I can be reached at membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com or 703-627-7847.

Mechanical Committee Report – Fall 2017

By Lewis Foster

This fall has seen several important milestones at the 9th street yard. First, SW 1001 No. 1 (nee AEP No. 1, from the Glen Lyn power plant) has been blue carded and is officially in service. Several of our members put in long hours this summer taking care of several things that were required to make the locomotive FRA compliant. The No. 1 has been moved to the Virginia Museum of Transportation and went into service starting with the "Candy Corn Express" event on October 28th, where we carried over 1,200 passengers.

We have also made progress on refurbishing P3 coach No. 537 this fall. The repairs to the bottom of the side sheet on the south side of the car are about 50% complete. We will begin preparing the car for paint as soon as the exterior metal work is complete.

Interior work on the 537 is nearing completion. The seats have been reinstalled and we are in the process of finishing details like touch-up, upholstery cleaning, and a final coat of floor sealer. We have also been adding finishing touches like reproduction Pullman-Standard builder's plates on the doors.

The air conditioning work is now complete on the coach and has been tested. We are in the process of finishing the remaining HVAC control systems for the car. When fin-

537 again proudly displays its Pullman-Standard built plate on the end door, while the floor reflects the original arrows in reference to the Powhatan Arrow. Bottom: The roof shows its repairs and new coating. All: Lewis Foster Photos



ished, there will be two stages of overhead heat in addition to the base-board heat and the car will automatically control temperature and humidity levels.

Work has continued on several other projects around the yard as well. We re-sealed

the roof of the shop building and repaired the flashing at the edges. The Hyster forklift is now back in service after clutch and transmission work. The off-road crane has received quite a bit of maintenance as well, with a new radio, replaced fluids, and various upgrades to make it more reliable.



Our next operating day at VMT will be on December 2nd and 3rd for the Candy Cane Express. This is our largest event of the year and we expect a big crowd again. We can always use more hands to help and we hope to see a lot of you there.

If you're interested in volunteering at the yard on the weekends, or even if you'd just like to drop by and see what we're working on, feel free to contact Gary Gray or Lewis Foster. Photos of our projects are also available on the Chapter Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/roanokenrhs>

Report of Fall 2017 NRHS Advisory Council and Board of Directors Meeting

By Carl S. Jensen, Roanoke Chapter National Representative on AC

The Advisory Council (AC) and Board of Directors (BOD) met in Kansas City, MO October 21, 2017. Overall Society finances are in good shape, after years of struggle to restore fiscal viability. NRHS received a \$200,000 plus donation this year, which was transferred to the NRHS Fund and the BOD approved transfer of another \$200,000 from Society funds to the NRHS Fund. Money collected through the efforts of our own Chapter on behalf of the annual Grants Program total \$9,600 and is also held in the Fund as earmarked money for grants. After considerable and persistent urging by members of the AC, management finally released details of the Treasurers Report to the BOD and AC at the meeting.

As mentioned above, our campaign to raise additional Grants funds has basically stalled at the \$9,600 level. We have not been notified of additional earmarked money being received, for which our pledge of a 10% match still holds. I do think funds from other sources will be forthcoming by the time the Grants applications are reviewed

and approved next April.

The membership data base has been transferred to NEON-crm, replacing Amelia and all membership data has been transferred to the new vendor. Dues renewal was to have begun in November, following completion of a new interface with the NRHS website. It was agreed that chapters like ours could (and we are) continue to collect both local and national dues simultaneously and remit the national part direct. When our members receive a renewal notice from national, they may either pay direct back to national or through our combined chapter and national membership option. Membership Chairperson Delta Pilgrim has already sent notices to all members with instructions on how to proceed. There will be no change in dues costs to members, either locally or nationally.

The national website individual chapter info needs updating. It is the responsibility of each chapter to furnish the national website with current info. Each chapter was asked to review their information, update it as necessary and submit it to Dawn Holmberg at dawn@dholmberg.com. She is the national webmaster.

The BOD, acting on recommendation of the AC, approved a proposal to define the requirements for a group to become a Chapter of NRHS. Subject to several by-laws changes the requirements will be: (1) a minimum of 10 NRHS members are needed to form a chapter; (2) a minimum of 5 NRHS members are needed to maintain the group as an NRHS chapter; and (3) the chapter must have an NRHS member as their representative of the Advisory Council. Assuming By-laws committee approval and recommendation these will be voted on by the membership at the next Annual Meeting at the convention in August 2018.

Another successful RailCamp program

Roanoke Chapter National Railway Historical Society

Dear Member,

It is now time to renew your chapter membership. The Roanoke Chapter can process your National dues again this year or you can submit the national dues directly to Nationals on your own. You must be a member of both the Roanoke Chapter and the National to be a member in good standing.

Chapter rates are as follows:

Regular Membership \$18
Additional Family Membership \$3 each
Student Membership \$12
Youth Membership \$3

National dues are as follows:

Regular Membership \$50
Additional Family Membership \$7 each (up to six family members)
Student Membership \$16
Youth Membership \$5

Please make your check payable to "Roanoke Chapter NRHS". Unfortunately we are not set up to receive chapter payments electronically at this time. Applications may be given to me at a general meeting or mailed to:

Roanoke Chapter NRHS
Attn. Membership Chairman
PO Box 13222
Roanoke VA 24032-3222

National is switching its software system so I cannot give you electronic directions for your national membership renewal at this time. When it becomes available, I will e-mail and mail the instructions.

If you have any questions you may call me at (703) 627-7847 or email me at membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to renew with the chapter.

Delta Helmer Pelgrim
Membership Chairman, RCNRHS

**Roanoke Chapter National Railway Historical Society
2018 Dues Renewal Form**

This form is to be completed by all members renewing for 2018. Please complete all information even if it is the same from previous years.

Name	
Address	
City, State, Zip	
Telephone	
E-mail	

Additional Family Member Names (up to six at the same address)

Turntable Times Format: _____ Print _____ Digital _____ Both

		Quantity		Amount
Regular membership \$18 local + 50 national = \$68			x 68	
Additional family members \$3 local + 7 national = \$10 per member	Number additional family members		x 10	
Student \$12 local + 16 national = \$30			x 30	
Youth \$3 local + \$5 national = \$8			x 8	
	Total Dues:			
	Voluntary Donation to Roanoke Chapter:			
	Total Remittance:			

Please initial here if you have already paid national dues: _____

Please make checks payable to "Roanoke Chapter NRHS" and mail check with this completed form to:

Roanoke Chapter NRHS
Attn. Membership Chairman
PO Box 13222
Roanoke VA 24032

Signature: _____

Date: _____

was completed this year, with 24 young people attending the East camp in Newark, Delaware, and 12 more at the West camp in Tacoma, WA. Roanoke chapter again sponsored a camper, Jacob Owen. We have already committed the chapter to sponsor another candidate in 2018, for the 20th anniversary of the RailCamp program. Applications will be available January 1 on the NRHS website, and absolute deadline of April 1 for submission. There will be no change next year of the \$1,290 tuition fee, \$50 of which is paid when the application is submitted and is non-refundable.

Both the NRHS News and the Bulletin will have had print copies distributed to members during the last quarter of this year. Members should have received theirs by the time you read this. Additional mailed print copies are budgeted for 2018. Digitation of NRHS Bulletins since they began in 1938 is nearly completed. There is discussion about the best way to make the data base searchable, as among other factors is the question of copyright agreements. Also in the digitation process is the ongoing effort to convert movies and still photos in the NRHS film library. The 8mm and most of the 16 mm films are complete. No word yet on how they will be made available for use, such as for programs at the chapter level.

Negotiations are nearly complete to transfer most of the NRHS Library material to the DeGolyer Library in Texas, expected to occur in early 2018. Any excess material will be subject to potential donations or selloff.

The 2017 convention in Nashville had a profit of \$22,000 and the 2016 Denver convention had a profit of just over \$9,000. The 2018 convention at Cumberland, MD will be August 7-12 with activities starting August 8 with a trip to Cass Scenic; then trips on Western Maryland Scenic, Potomac Eagle, and a steam trip on the Evert RR

(Pennsylvania).

The convention committee is still working on details of the May 2019 celebration of the 150th joining of the Transcontinental railroads at Promontory Point, Utah. Convention headquarters will be at Salt Lake City, UT. The May date is the earliest NRHS has ever held our Convention, but the significance of the Promontory Point event of 1869 in the history of US railroads and our nation is deemed the appropriate time to have a railroad historical organization commemorate the event. The Railway and Locomotive and Historical Society is also planning to participate.

As always, please contact me if you have any National or RailCamp questions.

The Audio Side of Railroading and Railfanning

By Mr. Robin R. Shavers

Over the years of writing articles for the Turntable Times, I have often noted that the collection of newspaper articles for my railroad scrapbooks was my first project as a young guy crazy about railroading in my hometown of Danville, Virginia. This project continues with much less activity with the advent of the Internet and the dwindling of railroad related articles found in newspapers. There was, however, another project going on during my junior and senior high school years. Out of the clear blue sky I thought of the possibility of seeing the same freight car or cars more than once. I decided to commence collecting Southern Railway freight car, locomotive, and caboose numbers. It was simple. I would jot down on scrap paper the numbers and added prefix for ID purposes – E for engines, B for boxcars, C for coal cars, etc. The numbers would be neatly written on sheets for inspection to see if a car or engine had been jotted down before. One boxcar in particular showed

up numerous times. It was a forty footer assigned to the Riverside plant of Dan River Mills, Danville's number one employer at that time. The car was number 22578. It was a car that sported Southern's new boxcar format minus the circular company logo THE SOUTHERN SERVES THE SOUTH. That slogan adorned the new image but without the circle within the circle logo.

This primitive method of collecting the numbers went on for years until one Christmas morning when Santa delivered something I had not requested, a portable battery powered reel-to-reel tape recorder. It could also be powered via a power cord into the wall socket. In the beginning, I used it to record my favorite top forty songs off the radio. THEN BAM.....FREIGHT CAR AND ENGINE NUMBERS.....Not only could I collect more numbers per train, I could enjoy viewing the train as well. Here is where it got interesting. While talking the numbers into the microphone, the sound of the locomotives got recorded too along with the other sounds generated by a moving train. MAN THOSE DIESELS SOUNDED GOOD.....DARN GOOD.

It would be many years and the cassette era before I started making dedicated tapes of train sounds thanks to the Southern Railway Steam Program.

During that era, the Southern had a dual service car No. 726 named The Man O War. Two-thirds of the car was for carrying passengers/excursionists and one-third was for sound recording complete with electric sockets and small wall mounted shelves to support tape recorders. The car was so popular, there were far more tape recorders than available sockets and shelves so a lot of us had to hold onto our recorders as the train progressed onward. The only issue was people walking into the recording section running their mouths because they had no idea

as to what was going on. They obviously ignored the KEEP QUIET.....RECORDINGS IN PROGRESS sign on the door.

I basically had two types of railroad recordings, trackside and from the recording section. From steam, I started recording the every day (and night) freights. And yes, I did indeed record Southern Railway No. 1, The Southern Crescent, with its three to four E8A diesels and anywhere from 15 to 18 cars. My recordings of it occurred usually between 12:30 and 1:30 AM. I positioned myself behind Mrs. Odarises house where I had privacy and three grade crossings for a real air horn concert while it pulled the grade known as Schoolfield. During warm weather, my recordings were blessed with a chorus of crickets, distant barking dogs, and a nearby bird. One guy tried to tell me that birds don't sing at night. I replied, "They do in Danville."

Unlike a lotta railfans, I recorded entire slow freights. I would select a spot where the rails joined or at a switch joint instead of continuous rail. I will never forget a night I went out to record the Southern Crescent at the second crossing from where the train departed the station. It began to rain so I remained in my car. The cops arrived to investigate a break-in at the nearby Sears warehouse. Instead of finding a criminal, they find me with a microphone covered with a zip lock sandwich bag awaiting a train at almost 2 AM. They asked if I had seen any suspicious characters recently in the area. I replied "no" and that was it. That was in the seventies when I and others sported those huge afros and I had some of mine stuffed under my pinstripe engineer hat. For small town cops, they were pretty cool.

I have 23 cassettes of real railroading sounds including the retarder sounds of our beloved Potomac Yard in Alexandria. I do indeed miss the sounds of second genera-

tion motive power pulling grades and slowing down the tonnage via dynamic braking.

Today's modern third and I guess fourth generation locomotives just don't do much for me audio and visual wise. Back in the years, it was not uncommon for me to drive miles ahead of a train just to hear it work a grade or whine down grade. Norfolk Southern, CSX, and shortlines offer some second generation motive power music and I enjoy it when I can. With my tapes, I simply insert the cassette and hit play for a trip back to that era. I mainly listen to those tapes when I am getting ready for a day out along the high iron or a train show or other railfan related activities. Living alone, I don't have to deal with Turn that annoying stuff off or down. The cats, however, give "that look" when they are cranky. A pouch of cat treats usually takes care of that.

Dissimilar Trains On Campbell Avenue Wye

By Dorr Tucker

This writer has always been captivated by the Campbell Avenue Wye, just east of the Roanoke City Market in downtown.

One can see all three sections of the track layout without trespassing on Railroad property, although observers should be on constant lookout for motor vehicles.

Most of us are familiar with the west leg as it diverges from the main right of way across from the old passenger station. This is the beginning of the Winston-Salem District, more commonly known as the "Punk" for Pumpkin Vine. Traffic on this section has diminished over the last 20 years as coal trains going south now run out of the old Virginian yard, in a push/pull mode. Also, general merchandise traffic for points on or to the south of The Punk now come up from Linwood Yard, near Spencer, North Carolina, on the old Southern main

line. Loaded and empty auto rack cars for Walkertown, set out above North Winston, still use this line along with empty hoppers returning to the mines. In addition, about once a week ethanol tank cars go to a facility below Winston-Salem on the old "Southbound."

Over the years, both sides of the wye have seen yard movements handling different cuts of cars (and locomotives too) for proper placement and spotting in the terminal. A now abandoned spur diverged about 60 yards from Campbell Avenue, up a 3% grade parallel to the main line tracks behind a gas station to serve an H.L. Lawson warehouse along with Ideal Laundry.

That being said, I have always been captivated by various thru movements using the East leg of Campbell Wye to get from one operating district to another.

First to come to mind was the EISENHOWER 1952 Campaign Train on September 26 of that year. I distinctly remember being excused from Burlington Elementary School Class so I could see Ike with my parents that afternoon. After the General's speech in South Roanoke Park, the 21-car passenger extra headed toward Petersburg with class J locomotives 612 and 613 heading around the east leg of the wye.

A few years later, in the early morning hours of December 2, 1957, VIRGINIAN RAILWAY manifest freight No. 72 wrecked and demolished a large section of the Phenix trestle some 86 miles east of Roanoke. The bridge was rebuilt in a record 13 days by American Bridge of Roanoke. In the meantime, Virginian freights operated through the east side of Campbell Avenue. This was a rather awkward movement requiring back up moves at JK and slow running over Blue Ridge. However, Norfolk & Western arranged for class Y6 pushers to assist the yellow and black Fairbanks H16-

44s on the point.

Beginning with the Virginian merging into the N&W on December 1, 1959, it became rather commonplace for "Virginian" empty hopper trains out of Crewe to head into South Yard via the Campbell Avenue Wye. These trains would head into a new hand operated switch at JK allowing entrance to the yard track 1-A. This was to allow for class EL-2b & class EL-C motors to have a train to take back to Elmore. However, for some reason this practice was continued, on an occasional basis, well into the late 1960s, eight or more years after the end of electrification. Who knows the answer to this?

During the first era of Norfolk Southern Steam Excursions in the 1980's and early '90s turning various consists on Campbell Avenue Wye was rather commonplace. And this practice continued well into the recent VMT sponsored trips.

It was no surprise that this writer was waiting on Norfolk Avenue behind The Taubman Museum after the NRHS meeting on November the 16th as the consist of Amtrak No. 171 was quickly and quietly backing to clear 8 & one-half street adjacent to Freight Car America. Soon flashers protecting East Campbell Avenue started blinking and I was reminded of the last of the wig-wag warning bells and lights that were in place as the 611's train was turned back in 1984 under the auspices of Carl S. Jensen. It was alluring to see No. 171's consist heading through this section of track in the dark of the night at 10 mph. Even more captivating was watching the Amtrak conductor bend the iron at Albemarle Avenue before the consist was spotted in place at the new Roanoke Amtrak maintenance facility.

Who would think that such a short section of track could inspire so much history?

Now and Then

By Dorr Tucker

Amtrak No. 145 rolled 9 cars to a stop at the new Roanoke platform on Sunday, November 26th at 10:17 PM, 29 minutes late account heavy passenger loading along the Northeast corridor. The Blacksburg Smart Way bus connection was completely filled with students returning to Virginia Tech following the Holiday. Another group of 50 to 60 folks headed toward awaiting limousines, taxis and family SUVs. Not a bad showing considering considerable traffic going to the long established destinations of Charlottesville and Lynchburg.

Going back to Sunday, November 26, 1967, No. 17, the Birmingham Special, out of Washington, arrived at the "old" station in two sections within a half hour of the advertised 9:01 PM schedule. I didn't get the consist that year but did better on the Sunday after Thanksgiving in 1968 when No. 17 came in with 10 coaches, 10 head (and rear) end cars, plus Southern Railway dining car 3312 behind two SR F units and a E-7. The train had the usual CNO&TP heavyweight combine, two N&W pre-war lightweight PM coaches, a Southern lightweight coach, 7 of the standard Southern heavyweight coaches with friction bearings, and a lightweight SR dormitory combine for the dining car crew to occupy when deadheading back to the SR main at Monroe on train 42 to be in place for service on The Peach Queen. Bringing up 17's markers were three of the ubiquitous nondescript PRR box express cars that always seemed to mar the appearance of the six "Southern" trains operating on the N&W.

Such as it was for this observer in the Star City back in the late '60s when we all knew that they were going but had no idea of a return some 50 years later.

Amtrak Reservations

Train departure on weekdays (to Boston) is 6:19 AM and 8:40 AM on weekends and holidays (to New York City). Return times to Roanoke are around 10 PM. More information is available at www.Amtrak.com or by calling 1-800-USARAIL or visiting the Amtrak agent in Lynchburg.

Amtrak News

Richard Anderson, a former chief executive of Delta Air Lines, has been hired as the next Amtrak President and CEO. Former Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman is serving as co-CEO through the end of 2017. When Mr. Moorman took over as Amtrak CEO in 2016 he said he would not be staying long but has agreed to stay on as an advisor after December 31.

Amtrak has started a "Refreshing" of the hundreds of Amtrak Amfleet I cars used in Northeast Regional trains. Seat cushions, lights, carpeting and other work will be completed on the approximately 40-year-old Budd-built cars over the next nine months. Amtrak information says some of the work is being done in Roanoke.
<http://blog.amtrak.com/2017/08/amfleet-refresh/>

Old Dominion Chapter Excursions from Dillwyn

The Santa trains are scheduled for December 2nd and 9th with six 45-minute trips each day.

Tickets for the trips are on sale now and some may be sold out. www.odcnrhs.org

It was 50 Years Ago Today...

by Kenneth L. Miller

This seems to be a recurring theme now, as we have another memorable event from 50 years ago to look back on.

This event has been a part of many of our readers (and writers!) lives, and is directly related here. Back in the fall of 1967, a hardy band of folks came together to reorganize a dormant organization; the Roanoke Chapter of the NRHS.

Details of the original group are few and far between, and at best sketchy, but in 1955, much at the push of W. Graham and Robert B. Claytor a small group of local railfans were put together and organized, it is believed primarily, to host the 1957 National Convention. Steam was disappearing rapidly across the country, and now the N&W had dipped its toes in the water with Alco RS-3s. The group would run the very successful convention, but began to run into difficulties the following year, with a very unsuccessful Father's Day excursion that left them basically bankrupt. It was the beginning of the end of the group, coupling that with the end of steam, the group membership dropped dramatically, and finally was so few members, that the National Organization made the charter dormant sometime in 1961. Five years later the 4501 was making its trip home to Chattanooga, and over-nighted in Roanoke. This is the event that seemed to bring out a number of folks who now began to meet up with others of like interest. Several discussed reforming the Roanoke Chapter and by fall of 1967, a reorganization meeting was held at the Roanoke Times and World News building in their auditorium. We know for certain that members Carl Jensen, Jeff Sanders, Dorr Tucker and S.R. Winegard were present, several others are not certain if they were or not. It was decided to proceed with incorporating the organization which occurred in January 1968, with a reported \$36 in the treasury! Not but a few months down the road, the very first Turntable Times appeared and in May, the group operated its very first excursion.

sion train! A bit later that summer, the group received its first donation of passenger equipment; Southern coaches 1204 and 1205 and baggage car 128.

When you look at all the Chapter has accomplished over those five decades, it really is pretty amazing feat. We've run two successful National Conventions, much equipment, saved and restored a fire damaged depot, and had some fun in between! I doubt anyone at that organizational meeting could even have imagined, much as none of us can image the next 50 years.

Congratulations to those far-sighted folks who reorganized this group in that fall of 1967, and for those who have lead the charge in those 50 years.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

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

- December 21 - Holiday Gathering
- January 2 - Board Meeting
- January 18 - General Meeting
- February 6, 2018 - Board Meeting
- February 15, 2018 - General Meeting
- March 6, 2018 - Board Meeting
- March 15, 2018 - General Meeting
- April 3, 2018 Board Meeting
- April 19, 2018 - General Meeting
- May 1, 2018 - Board Meeting
- May 17. 2018 - General Meeting

Visit us on the web: www.RoanokeNRHS.org

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