



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER



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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual whose byline appears on the article and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Old Dominion Chapter – NRHS.

Chapter Meeting

Bill Todd

The monthly meeting of the ODC will be held on Monday, Apr 15 at 7.00 PM at the Richmond RR Museum. ODC member Randy Ridgely will present a color slide program on "Railroads around Athens, Georgia" during the 1960s, including SAL, GM, SOU, GARR & CGA. Come out and relive the colorful passenger and freight trains from the good old days. Refreshments and fellowship always! Bring a friend.

Museum Volunteers Critically Needed

Calvin Boles

The Old Dominion Chapter's Richmond Railroad Museum has a serious shortage of volunteer hosts. This is particularly true when a month has five weekends and the months when the excursion trains are running at Dillwyn. We need volunteers who will interact with visitors, point out exhibits that may appeal to the guests, and generally share their interest in railroading with the public.

We have a particularly critical need for volunteers to serve in the Gift Shop. This is an ideal job for someone who is mobility impaired – essentially sitting behind the counter receiving admission fees and selling souvenirs.

No experience needed, we will train you. Try it, you might just like it !!!!!

Organ Article

The following article recently appeared in **Richmond Family** magazine.

In the early days of New York's Grand Central Station, featured among its many amenities was a pipe organ that was played daily as background music for patrons utilizing the station's lounge. Similarly, the Dundee & Newtyle Railway Station in Perth, Australia, featured organ music up until the time of its closing in the 1960s, and Toronto's main rail station still features live piano music daily in its great hall.

In keeping with that idea, the Richmond Railroad Museum recently acquired a donation of a three manual theater organ, which will augment the museum's upcoming movie series, and be available for patrons who rent the building for weddings and parties. The instrument was provided as a donation by Jim and Elizabeth Heller who reside in Woodbine, Maryland. Daffer Organ Company, and their vice president Al Murrell were instrumental in securing the gift and installing it in its new home at the Richmond Railroad Museum at 102 Hull Street.

According to Old Dominion Chapter president, and concert organist John DeMajo, the idea of installing an organ in the museum came after a recent very successful screening of the Buster Keaton silent film, *The General*, which featured live organ accompaniment by Dr. Mark Andersen, a nationally known concert organist. DeMajo and Murrell saw the possibility of the museum offering a regular movie series with features such as *Phantom Of The Opera* at Halloween, as well as other classic and railroad related presentations. By making the organ available to music students from several area colleges which offer performance degree programs, DeMajo hopes to increase the museum's attractiveness to the public by presenting cultural and entertainment programs that augment the museum's primary mission of presenting the story of Richmond's rich railroad heritage.

Archives Photo

Charles Curley

Here is Raymond Knight's view of Seaboard Air Line's Richmond roundhouse at Hermitage yard. It was located near the present Greyhound bus station. With the 1967 Seaboard Coast Line merger, Hermitage yard was deemed to be unnecessary. The yard was eventually closed and the roundhouse demolished. It appears that the demolition process has already begun as the roundhouse tracks have been torn up.



Hallsboro

Kevin Frick

The month of March was a real winner for the chapter and our Hallsboro property. The volunteers were able to get tracks one, two, three and four gauged and spiked completing this work and getting the track in better shape with the replacement of over two hundred ties. We will be working on tamping and aligning as we go forth to complete the track work and have it ready for use, the 0-6-0T has had all new windows built and installed by Stu Watson, Chuck Taylor, Barry Grantier and Lexi Cleveland. A well-deserved pat on the back goes out to all that have helped with the various projects we have going on. Stu and Chuck Taylor are heading up a project to install the rebuilt windows in car 71 to seal it off from the weather. We will be working on the 0-6-0T to get it ready for the hydro test and inspection to get it certified for operation. The Davenport will be started some time this summer to get it back into operation and see what repairs are needed. The cabooses need windows replaced and some wood replacement work on the steps. There are repairs needed to the roof of the

caboose where the shed damaged it when the roof fell on top of the caboose. There are many large and small projects that need your help in doing and we welcome any and all that are willing to help. There is a very good camaraderie between those of us that get together on Saturdays to work and chew the fat. Please come out and help if you have a mind to. Please send me your name and e-mail address so I can include you on the work session list.

N&W Records

Brandy Martin

Record of payment by N&W RR in 1884 for ad in the Petersburg Index Appeal newspaper for the Annual Meeting in Roanoke. Auditors wanted everything. How this managed to survive is somewhat amazing. Big Lick had only become Roanoke 2 years before. The coal fields had just opened. The Shenandoah Valley RR (standard gauge) was part of the N&W family though N&W was still wide gauge, and the last of the AM&O / South Side woodburners had recently been retired.





Spring Trips Press Release

Ray Potter

Catch “The Special” and celebrate Springtime in Central Virginia! On three Saturdays in May and June, the Old Dominion Chapter NRHS is running authentic railroad excursion trips just an hour from Richmond.

Join the ODC and the Buckingham Branch Railroad for an historic and nostalgic journey through rolling hills and deep forests of unspoiled beauty in rural Buckingham County. On May 11th, you’ll have the choice of two 90-minute round trips (great for the little ones) at 10:00 am and 12 noon. They are followed by a 3-hour excursion all the way to the James River bridge at Bremono Bluff at 2:00 pm. May 18th features two 3-hour trips departing at 10:00 am and 1:30 pm to the James River featuring the breathtaking view from the railroad bridge and a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the driving of the Golden Spike at the completion of the transcontinental railroad.

June 1st wraps up the Springtime Specials with two 3-hour trips at 10:00 am and 1:30 pm to the James River Bridge. The famous Tom Mix Rangers cowboys and outlaws will be aboard. Their authentic gunfight alongside your excursion is the highlight of the trip and an instant memory maker for kids of all ages.

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the bygone days of passenger travel from the unique vantage point of the vintage reclining seat coaches or the open-air sightseeing cars. Each 3-hour round trip also provides a spectacular view of the James River right below you! It’s an ideal family outing – picnic lunches welcome. Sandwiches, snacks and beverages will also be available on the train. See the website for more details.

Tickets for these trips are expected to sell quickly. They’re available online now at www.odcnrhs.org. All trips depart from the Buckingham Branch Railroad Station, 1043 Main Street in Dillwyn, Virginia. Fares for 3-hour trips are only \$26 for adults and \$13 for children 2-12. For the 90-minute trips, it’s \$15 for adults and \$8 for children 2-12. Children under 2, not occupying a seat, ride free at all Springtime Specials.

Railroading Today

Jerry Grosshans

With regard to the usual train-watching locations, nothing much seems to have taken place, the ties, rail and associated hardware are still at the Broad Rock crossing, which is deteriorating at a good rate. The paving between the two sets of rails is particularly bad. Most of the work is taking place at Janke Road (Meadow) and not by the railroad. Utility poles are being relocated. This is apparently a project covering much of the length of the road, even making the morning news traffic reports! Right at the crossing there has been a new and large utility pole erected where rail fans usually park. This is one of a number erected further away from the roadway. As I understand that the roadway will eventually be widened. There are some issues with a substandard right turn lane immediately east of the crossing, when one needs to make a right turn onto Clarence Street and the area near the southbound signals regularly accumulates a considerable amount of water, even after a moderate rainfall. I understand that the city is going to do something about this. The residents of the area are not at all happy with the constant water accumulation, and as it gets warmer, mosquitoes will accumulate and breed. At best, I can say is this will be an ongoing project- On the north side of the crossing there is a city alley and closer to the tracks a short access alley for CSX, which leads to a flange greaser on track 2. The city alley on the north is not very good, the tracks get lower and lower and, you can get close to Forest Hill and still not get a good look at the tracks.

Should anyone decide to follow Dalebrook Avenue (at the Quartermaster signals) the end of the road is now fenced off and it is hard to turn around. Of course, you have the ever-

growing motor pool at the defense center to admire'.

I am wondering about the operating patterns of several of the local trains, especially the Hopewell service. With the stopping of coal deliveries to Wheelright, the line to there and on to Hopwell has some very rusty rail as seen from the crossing at the end of Bellwood yard, compared with the trackage to and from Centralia. Perhaps Hopewell service is again out of Collier. There has been trackwork on the Clopton trackage, quite a few old ties have accumulated in several locations. The trains there depart for Acca toward evening earlier than previously. I have heard from several folks that the older track of the two-track alignment south of Collier is getting some work, so I have not been that way for a month or so.

Several weeks ago, I "made the rounds" and started at the museum, then to the ethanol facility on Gordon Street, which was empty. I went to Goodes street, by the floodwall (where there is room to park) and watched the ethanol facilities locomotive bring empties to South Yard, and return loads back to the facility. Considering that it's an old unit, it runs smoothly and has a very melodious horn. While there, a long grain train headed south, with two DPU units, and just after he passed an old GP38 with a few gondolas of scrap from off the Deepwater Terminal lead, passed north. I went on to the south and saw the rear of the grain train at Fanshaw and ended up at Centralia, where the same DPU grain train finally headed south, after an over three-hour wait. Speaking of the DPU units, there is a science to this just as in everything else. This grain train had two new ET units leading each set of power, the second unit being an older unit of 4000 hp and DC transmission, and no capability on their own to receive operating data from the lead locomotive. As a rule of thumb, I believe the AC unit of #700 (or so) upward can handle DPU duties in either position, and certainly the 3000 (or so) units are capable, from the builder, for such use. These are all GE units, and I've only seen one UMD, a SD403 rebuild in DPU service, as a second unit in front, getting instructions from the lead unit by MU connections. There is no doubt that the use of DPU power is increasing, but it appears to result in longer and fewer trains .

I am in the process of going over the AMTRAK schedules, and will try to get a concise schedule of Amtrak trains through Richmond.

I do not follow (or play) golf, but noticed that on the women's; tour a Canadian woman (Brooke Henderson) has a very obvious CP logo on her shirt, let front.

I just received, several days ago, the Schrader's catalog, and there are several models and other items, pertaining to the Bush funeral train, which by the way apparently is done touring the UP system and is now back at Little Rock.

I can't help but notice that the several minor derailments on NS in the area, were referred to on TV and in the paper, as "cargo trains" one newscaster going so far as to mention that there were no passengers on the cargo train. As far as excursions go, in addition to the cancellation of the New River Train, the Denver-Cheyenne Frontier Days train is cancelled. hopefully for just this year, The Denver Post (newspaper) citing the work on restoring the Big Boy and Golden Spike ceremonies.

From the *Trains* Newswire

Compiled by Kim Young

On 4/5, CSX announced the closure of the locomotive shop in Russell KY after over 100 years of service. 113 employees were laid off due to decreased activity there. Operations are also being reduced at Waycross GA.

Strasburg has added 5 events to their schedule during 611's visit this fall. The original schedule is sold out.

Among the 2019 grants from **Trains** was \$8000 to the Roanoke NRHS chapter to repair N&W's Jim Crow coach #512, which was used on the Powhattan Arrow.

The Baltimore Street Car Museum was closed indefinitely on 3/18 after a CSX derailment damaged an electric substation.

Fatal Accidents on the Buckingham Branch

From CBS19 website by Kim Young

On 4/1, two individuals were struck and killed by the same Buckingham Branch train within 12 miles of each other. The accidents at Crozet and Waynesboro were unrelated. CEO Mark Bryant stated that the company is offering counseling and

other support to the crew. The crew was given the option of being relieved by another crew after the first incident but chose to continue. However, they were replaced after the second incident.

Chapter Organization and Contacts

Board of Directors

John G. DeMajo – President (jdemajo@demajo.net)
Kevin Frick -First Vice President
Tim Torrez – Second Vice President
Ned Krack – Secretary/Treasurer treasurer@odcnrhs.org
Greg Hodges – Director
John Forsythe – Director
Bob Dickinson – Director
Steve Tarrant – Director
Calvin Boles – Director, Museum Curator
Carl Steiner – Director, Finance Chairman

Committees

Richmond Railroad Museum

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Archival librarian: Chuck Breeden
Physical Plant: Bob Dickinson, Bob Stevens
Museum Host scheduling: Ned Krack treasurer@odcnrhs.org
Museum building rentals: RVA EventSpace, 2221 Bywood Lane Richmond, Virginia 23224 804-322-9575
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Chapter historian: Tom Hardesty

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Membership & Excursion Tickets

ODCNRHS
P. O. BOX 3131
CHESTER, VA 23831

We are located at 102 Hull Street, Richmond, VA.
(Please do not send mail to the 102 Hull St. Address)

Our phone number is 804 – 231-4324

Note: phones are answered by voice mail when the museum is not open.

The Old Dominion Chapter- NRHS is a 501[C]3 non-profit organization chartered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, USA



Membership Application/Renewal Form - Old Dominion Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

Please type or print *legibly*

New _____ Renewal _____

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Family member(s) (if joining): _____

Special talents/interests: _____

Membership

Regular	\$11	_____
Family	\$1 ea.	_____
Surcharge for snail mail newsletter through Dec. 2019	\$10	_____
Chapter donation		_____
Designated purpose (if any)		_____
Total		_____

Please send to the following or leave in the membership box at 102 Hull St.

ODC Membership

PO Box 3131

Chester VA 23831

I agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Old Dominion Chapter

Signature _____

Date: _____

Revised September 2018 Membership valid through 12/31/19