



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER



Volume 57

August 2017

Number 9

Chapter Meeting

Kim Young

The monthly meeting of the ODC will be held on 8/21 at 7 pm at Hull St. Station. The program will be entitled "Cass Scenic RR 1962 – 1977." I have gone through the archives' collection of slides from Cass and pulled out what I consider the best and most interesting. This is the annual Hawaiian Shirt Night. (Note: The collection does not include any fall foliage slides. If you have any that I can use, please email me at kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com or just bring them to the meeting.) Refreshments will be served, so bring a friend and join us.

Photos from Ashland Meeting

John DeMajo



A Visitor from Australia

Ray Potter

July 10th the Richmond Railroad Museum welcomed Mae Jasper from Melbourne, Australia. Ms. Jasper is hopscotching her way by rail across the U.S. visiting all sorts of railroad museums and tourist railroads. She is putting her comments and interviews out on the Internet in the form of a podcast called the "Random Article." (An online search calls it "an audio documentary style podcast.") ODC President John DeMajo picked up Ms. Jasper as she arrived at the Staples Mill Amtrak Station bright and early Monday morning. After a quick breakfast on the way they were greeted at the museum by members: Steve Tarrant, Chuck Breeden and Ray Potter.

There ensued a lively conversation about the history of railroads in Richmond and the current state of passenger railroading in the U.S. As the Museum's resident railroad expert, Steve Tarrant supplied many interesting facts and stories. Other members interjected comments and questions as appropriate as everything was recorded. A great time was had by all in the few hours Mae Jasper was here before she was whisked away by Amtrak to her next destination.



Streetcars Are Not Old-Fashioned

Steve Tarrant

Editor's note: Steve wrote this in response to an editorial which had previously appeared in the Times-Dispatch. In the print edition, his grammar was incorrectly edited at the beginning of the second paragraph, so he asked me to publish the correct version here. I was happy to do so.

Recently, in your "Week's End" you characterized trolley cars (also known as streetcars or light-rail vehicles) as anachronistic and old-fashioned.

It is you who are old-fashioned. You are blinkered by an antique image of Richmond's pioneering but tired old streetcar system, which died in 1949. (And we never called them trolleys.)

You clearly are unaware of the revolution in performance, comfort, and appearance that has taken place in light-rail vehicles in the 68 years since 1949. If this modern mode of electric transit is so anachronistic and old-fashioned, why are 25 American cities — including Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, Charlotte, Denver, San Diego and Seattle — currently operating, modernizing, expanding or building new streetcar lines?

I grant you that a streetcar line might not be the best option for the Jeff Davis Highway in south Richmond, given that electric transit is best adapted to high-volume service, but to condemn modern light-rail vehicles in general is just plain wrong-headed.

From the President

John Demajo

I am extremely pleased with the work that David Coldren and his committee are doing with regard to planning our Train Day celebration on Sept. 23. These plans are tentative depending on what kind of support we can get, but David tells me that he has spoken with entertainers Markiss Blowfish and Roger Reynolds the Singing Conductor who are both available. In addition, Norfolk Southern has said that they will send someone to man a table with materials to hand out. The railroad bears Cinder and Tender are confirmed, and James Dunlap is working on vendors and clubs with model layouts. We are looking at the possibility of a kiddie train and bounce house and we have at least one food truck available. Although it may be shooting for the stars right now, we are hoping to arrange for track car rides on the team track, and our friends at the

Richmond Amateur Radio Club may be available for code demonstrations.

If we want to see this happen, the main thing we need right now is financial support. If you know of any businesses or persons who may be willing to underwrite any of the above-mentioned features and activities, David would like to get them on board quickly. If we can do this successfully, it will be a real publicity opportunity for the club and future museum support. The ability to make this happen will rely strictly on community and member participation.

On a separate matter, I have been asked to remind everyone that current laws prohibit smoking in the museum. All hosts are asked to abide by this and also make sure that all guests extinguish tobacco and vaping products before entering the museum.

August Archives Photo

Charles Curley

Norfolk and Western's Y6b #2177 blasts out of Montgomery Tunnel with a westbound time freight. Evan Siler.



August Museum Host Schedule

Linda Nelon

5	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop
	Ned Krack	Host
	Bob Stevens	Host
6	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop
	Jack Newsome	Host
	Steve Tarrant	Host
12	Ervin White	Gift Shop
	Linda Nelon(11-1:30)	Host
	Calvin Boles	Host
	Jim Lewis(1:30-4)	Host
13	Ned Karck	Gift Shop

	Bob Williams	Host	
	Charles Curley	Host	
	Steve Tarrant/Ned Krack		Floodwall
19	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Ned Krack	Host	
	Stanley Clark	Host	
20	Linda Nelon	Gift Shop	
	Wayne Poates	Host	
	Ray Potter	Host	
26	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Tom Emory(11-1-1:30)		Host
	Jim Lewis(1:30-4)	Host	
	Kim Young	Host	
28	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Dickinson	Host	
	Jerry Grosshans	Host	
	Tom Emory	Host	

Richmond Railroad Museum and Archives Report for July 2017

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 370 (2038 year to date)
 Donations: \$320.
 Volunteer hours: 333
 Gift shop sales: \$534.10
 Chapter event at Ashland: about 30
 Floodwall tour: 4

Thanks to all that volunteered in July either as hosts or doing other necessary jobs around the museum. Several have been busy with weed and trash control around the building - Randy Ridgely, Greg Hodges, and others. The restrooms don't take care of themselves but thanks to help from Gerry Groshans, Charles Curley, Ned Krack and others they are ready for business on the weekends. We continue to have problems with our internet service which sometimes causes trouble with the air-conditioning system knowing when to turn on. John DeMajo continues to work on the problem. Truly "high speed" internet is what we need to remedy the problem. FIOS or cable would be great but it seems the utilities cannot or will not run it under or across the NS railroad track! (One "quote" to bring service in was \$28,000!) The museum always can use more hosts and gift shop personal. Please volunteer if you can. You need not commit to work all day. A "Railroad" day event is being planned for September. Music, motor car rides, food, etc. are some of the items being considered. The modelers continue to add to (and sometimes redo) the train layout. There is a growing number of "kids" who regularly visit the model room every weekend. Hopefully some of these will catch the "Railroad" bug and become Chapter members and volunteers. There are always changes being made or new items being added to the exhibits. Please stop by and visit if you have not

been by for a while. There are a few items that we would like to have for the museum including a "touchtone" wall telephone that would be used in the utility room, and an older style coffee "percolator" (non-electric), a small cast iron frying pan, and "porcelain" dipper that would be used as part of a display about cooking on the stove in the caboose.

The next museum committee meeting is scheduled for September. All interested are invited to attend.

Train Day 2017

David Coldren

On Sept. 23, the Richmond Railroad Museum will hold the first-ever Richmond Train Day. The TD committee has been working hard to make it a memorable event. The fun will include musical entertainment by Markiss Blowfish and Roger Reynolds (the Singing Conductor), Cinder & Tender the live railroad mascots, a beautiful kiddie train, a one-of-a-kind locomotive bounce house and food from local vendors.

From 9am-3pm, our guests will be able to chat with a Norfolk Southern rep, see Morse Code demonstrations, scale models, railroad vendors, public safety equipment and, of course, tour the Museum. There'll be contests with prizes like excursion tickets and ODC memberships. More features are still being added.

The only thing we are missing is you! You can sign up to help inside or outside the museum, with parking or in the gift shop. All you need to do is go to our Signup Genius at this link: and follow the directions. www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0B4EAF4E28AB9-train You can sign up for one 3 ½ hour shift or for the whole day.

Circle Saturday, September 23rd on your calendar and invite all your friends for the best, free railroad event around. See you there!

Librarian

Kim Young

At the July board meeting, Chuck Breeden was appointed librarian and tasked with the responsibility for tracking and organizing the materials in the REA car.

Politics in The Highball

Kim Young

At one time, **The Highball** was essentially an in-house publication only seen by chapter members. Those days are gone. It is now available to anyone,

including potential donors and grantors of significant sums of money. For that reason, I will not be including any articles which may be interpreted as political, even those with which I may agree strongly, as doing so could have a negative impact on a donation or grant application.

Picture

Doug Ridell (Editor's Note: This is a picture that Doug sent me last month but I didn't have room for.)



SCL Hoop'n Up Orders At Milan NC 1980

Railroading Today

Gerry Groshans

TRAINS magazine regularly comes out with extra editions or issues, and their latest one, **Big Steam is Back**, is worthwhile and interesting. On the front cover is a photo of UP 844 departing North Platte on its way to Memphis on a recent journey. In almost the center of the cover is the cab of the locomotive, with a youthful blond guy (no cap or headgear) as engineer, and in addition to his lack of headgear, he's wearing a short-sleeve sport shirt. This person is not named, but brings to mind the fact that while the locomotives (most of them, anyhow) remain, the operating crews have changed. No longer do you see Steve Lee, Bob Krieger, or Lynn Nystrom in the UP cabs. You don't see Jack Taylor or Bob Saxtan in 611, nor Tom Stephens or any of several others in 765. In fact, only Doyle McCormick (with 4449) and Steve Sandberg (with 261) remain. So, how does one become a steam engineer or for that matter, a fireman? I have not

heard of the present operating individuals until the actually were operating the locomotives in service. There are a few "peeks" at persons who are learning the ropes. A young lady named Rachel Weibel is a part of the 765 operating crew acting as night hostler and is learning to be a fireman. Cheri George will have competition: A young lady named Teddy Becker, only a teenager, is working with the restoration of ATSF 2926, which may be operating late this year or early next. Of course, the main focus of steam operation is the restoration of Big Boy 4014 scheduled for completion in 2019, after which time Challenger 3985 will receive work, the goal for UP is to have three operating steam locomotives by 2020 or thereabouts.

Keeping to the Big Steam articles, N&W 611 is featured, too. As long as I can remember, 611 was said to put out 80,000 lbs. of tractive effort, but it was hooked to a dynamometer car for some of the 2015 trips and put out 84,981 lbs. of tractive effort, more than when it was new, and so it retains the title of the most powerful 4-8-4 with ATSF 2926 rated about 5,000 lbs. less.

Now to some more familiar diesel locomotives...CSX trains are carrying a mixture of locomotives now, more so than in the past. Many trains include a SD40 or SD38 and even a butthead shows up now and then. All of the CW60 units are supposedly downgraded to CW44-6 status and only less than a half-dozen of these are active but regularly operate through here. There are the leasers and foreign power. Trains do seem to be a bit shorter, and there seems to be a lot of variation in the schedules. But in all fairness, there is construction in the area. The Bellwood tracks are apparently finished but I have seen a number of things on the "A" line, several days ago a large hi-rail tandem dump truck full of ballast was slowly moving south at Centralia.

I recently mentioned a lumber or building materials car which resembled a cross between a depressed center flat and a regular lumber car. I did see one about a week ago, appearing to be hauling some insulating board, and I believe the reporting letters were AOK (Oklahoma Arkansas and Kansas?) There are so many leasers (ID ends with X) that one cannot keep track of them, much less the smaller railroads.

Recently a driver was killed as he drove around the crossing gates on Broad Rock Road, here in Richmond. I occasionally get in that area so I decided to check out the crossing protection. Going

south (away from downtown) there are two gates, one on each side of the road. Northbound there is only one gate, however it has a longer arm to extend over both of the traffic lanes. Apparently the driver was headed north, and the photographs of the scene in the local papers show the front of his vehicle, the photographs apparently were taken with a mild telephoto from the location of the Broad Rock signals. I haven't seen signs of any work there but it appears that one could easily drive around the gate and there is not much visibility for a northbound vehicle and a southbound train. I am not going to dignify the reports going around of the decedent keeping a log of his close calls with trains, but it sounds like something a person such as he would do. By the way, Broad Rock is one of a number of city streets with duplicating or repeating numbers, one set for Broad Rock Road, and other for B.R. Blvd.

I don't have much to add concerning the situation in and a-round Ashland But I still believe that diverting some traffic between Doswell and Centralia using the ex-SAL and ex-C&O would help the situation and would also be the least expensive option. I would also like to see what the RF&P did during WW2 and the Korean war as far as number of trains and the length of them. Axle counts and number of cars would not be of much help...too variable.

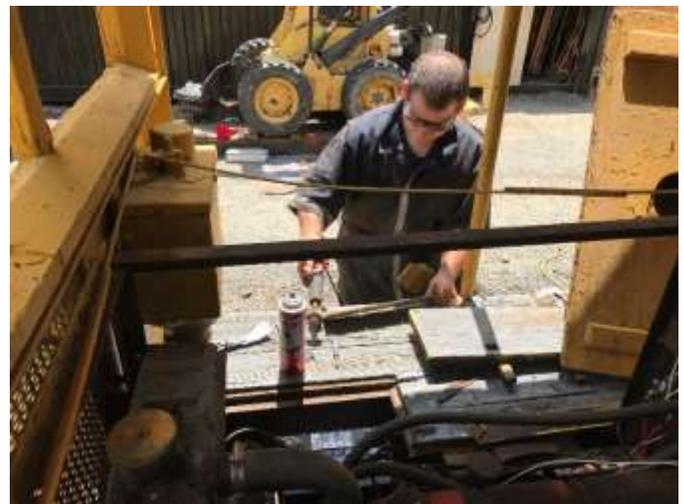
Anyone with access to the first quarterly issue of Passenger Train Journal will note an article on the UP "Butte Special" as well as other service to Butte. The article only covers the train from Salt Lake City to Butte but I happened to pullout my old 1967 UP passenger schedule which shows the service is actually from Los Angeles, via Los Vegas to Salt Lake City and eventually Butte showing it was more than a minor north-and-south train on an east-west railroad. The article, through brief and incomplete (in my viewpoint) was interesting in that two photographs over a year apart show a Challenger handling a train which could have used a 4-8-2 or a 4-6-2, both types also being shown as well as diesel E and F units. As for articulateds in passenger service, UP frequently did so, but the SP used one and sometimes two cab-in-fronts on the Owl a heavy overnight train between Los Angeles and San Francisco. N&W used the first class A units in service to and from Bristol until the 600 class J locomotives were built and I have heard that the SAL used their 2-6-6-4 locomotives on occasion

north of Hamlet, but that was before my time here, if indeed such occurred.

Hallsboro 8/5

Kevin Frick (Editor's note: Kevin and others have been very busy at Hallsboro almost every Saturday. This is included because John Estes was kind enough to provide me with some excellent pictures from 8/5.)

We had a good day Saturday. Devin worked on the skid steer but the control valve is still leaking badly even after he did some repairs on it also replacing the seals. He is looking into a replacement but it could run as high as \$1,800.00 to replace it. The HM-6 was started and we located an oil leak from the old fuel pump. A new gasket stopped the problem but the radiator core has rotted and needs to be replaced. Wally Winn repaired the window on the Davenport where the handrail had broken it and placed a piece of sheet metal over the broken side window. John Forsythe came out and continued work on spike removal. He located another yellow jackets nest but was not stung by the little devils.





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