



The Highball



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Volume 57

December 2016

Number 1

odcnrhs.org

Monthly Meetings

Bill Todd

The monthly meeting of the ODC will be held at 7 pm on Monday, 12/19 at Hull Street Station. Please come to our annual Christmas party with a festive feeling and an appetite. Featuring ham biscuits, "train" sheet cake, fruit tray, mixed nuts, chips & dip, etc. A short slide show by Bill Todd will feature railroad action around Petersburg. Bring a friend and enjoy. Lots of fun.

In Memoriam

Greg Hodges

We are sad to report that on 11/16/2016 long time chapter member and supporter, Gordon "Gordy" Smith took that long last train ride to Heaven's Station Immortal. Gordon was the consummate salesman, an avocation that suited him perfectly in that he had recruited several members to join the ODC, including yours truly. He was very active in the American Legion, an organization that he served quite well for many years. As a veteran, Gordon had a soft spot in his heart for those who had served our country, and (amazingly!) amassed over 6000 hours of volunteer service to the men and women at McGuire Veterans Hospital. He is survived by his wife, Betty, and sons Gregory and Donald. Gordon, you will be missed.

Ashland Train Day 2016

Greg Hodges

Nov. 5th was a beautiful, sunny day, and people turned out by the thousands to celebrate all things RAILROAD at Ashland Train Day. On that day, the "Center of the Universe" hosted numerous displays and vendors celebrating the historical ties that the little Hanover County community has had with trains for well over 150 years. A great time

was had by all.

The ODC was among the many organizations present as Ned Krack and Greg Hodges set up shop offering our gift shop wares on the front porch of the Henry Clay Inn. We had been at that very spot a year earlier when the weather had been cold, raw, and rainy, and the crowds were somewhat sparse. That was certainly not the case this year. Approximately \$1050.00 of toys, shirts, books, etc were sold, the net proceeds of which went directly into your Chapter's coffers. Here's hoping for an even better result in 2017!

Museum Host Schedule for December

Linda Nelon

3	Linda Nelon	Gift Shop
	Bill Taylor	Host
	Bob Stevens	Host
4	Ned Krack	Gift Shop
	Steve Tarrant	Host
	Jim Lewis	Host
10	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop
	Jack Newsome	Host
	Jim Lewis	Host
	Sam Williamson	Host
11	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop
	Calvin Boles	Host
	Robert Williams	Host
17	Bob Dickinson	Gift Shop
	Chuck Breeden	Host
	Ray Potter	Host
18	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop
	Charles Curley	Host
	Jack Newsome	Host
24	CLOSED	
25	CLOSED	
31	CLOSED	
1-Jan	CLOSED	

Expanded Model RR Hours

Ray Potter

The OD C Modelers have announced special Christmas Season hours for the display of their H layout at the Richmond Railroad Museum. This huge model railroad will be open for four weekends - November 26 through December 18. The hours of operation will be from 10AM through 4 PM each Saturday and Sunday. A great deal of expansion has taken place over the past year and the members are eager to show off their accomplishments. In one corner of the layout a cityscape of Richmond is rising from the waist-high framework. A featured building is the Broad Street Station (now the Science Museum). In another area a bucolic country scene features a herd of cows and people in leiderhosen. Group leader Alan Cox says, "Some of the scenes from last year have undergone a makeover so the action is more visible. Several animated signs have been added to compliment the C.F. Sauer sign from last year." A model of the Southern Railway passenger station (the Hull Street Station) is on the front mainline of the layout. Areas of the model have been populated with people, dogs and cats, and cars and trucks of the 1930's on up. All sorts of rolling stock will be running on the tracks including steam locomotives and more modern diesels. Passenger cars and different types of freight cars make up the train consists moving around the layout. Please come out and enjoy this tremendous model during the lead-up to Christmas. It is a featured part of the Richmond Railroad Museum. Admission is always free but donations are cheerfully accepted. Children of all ages are welcome. The Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, Inc., is a voluntary, non-profit Virginia educational organization.



Train Show

Greg Hodges

During the long weekend of Nov 25-27 crowds thronged Broad St. Station (aka: Science Museum of Va.) for the 39th annual Model Railroad Show. The ODC was an integral part of the action with a large display set up in the station's huge rotunda that highlighted the Morse Code and the development of the telegraph.

John Forsythe expertly wired a telegraph line from a telegraph key out to a "station" (flashing light) at the end of a table. He even incorporated glass insulators into his design ! Approximately 400 children had their names written in Morse Code on a large index card and then were invited to send their message (name) out to the "station" by depressing the telegraph key to simulate dots and dashes. Quite a few adults as well tried their hand at 'brass pounding'.

The chapter's large lighted telegraph display cabinet from the Station Master's office was put on display and attracted quite a bit of attention. The ever resourceful John DeMajo was able to have a number of the chapter's historic Kodachrome color slides of BSS down through the years blown up into large photos that were displayed on two tables. These elicited much comment from visitors to our exhibit, especially from older folks who shared stories of long ago departures and arrivals at the big station. Several men recalled tearful family farewells as they boarded trains for far-away military installations.

Several hundred flyers were handed out that contained info about Morse Code as well as info about our own museum on Hull St., which folks were urged to visit. Other members assisting over the weekend were Calvin Boles, Jim Lewis, Wayne Poates, James Dunlap, and Greg Hodges.

December Archives Photo

Charles Curley

We have a Christmas-like scene for this month's archives photo. A classic wooden red Atlantic Coast Line caboose trails a freight in the Belt Line in the January 11, 1955 Evan Siler shot.

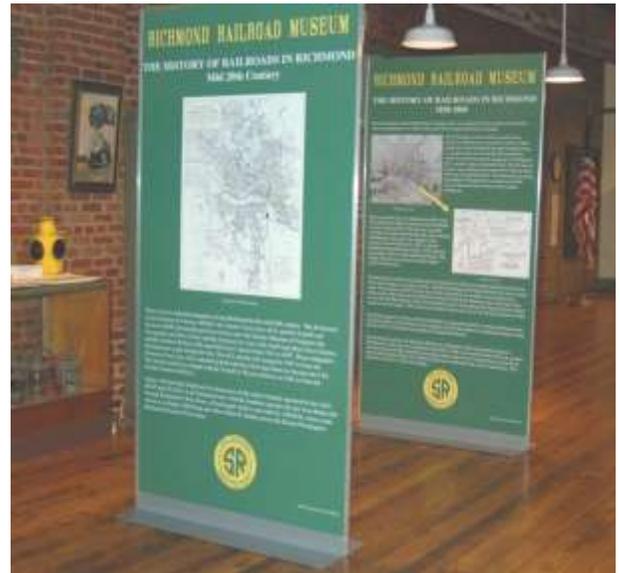


New Display Panels

Ray Potter

Members of the Old Dominion Chapter have started creating new exhibits for use in the baggage room of the museum. The Board of Directors and the Museum Committee have designed several new, light-weight display panels to replace old, heavy, plywood folding screen type panels. The new panels were manufactured by Richmond Signscapes and owner Jennifer Tompkins and feature a background of "Southern Railway green" with the S-R logo at the bottom in yellow.

Lighter, easily moved displays are desirable because the displays need to be moved to the side when the museum is rented out for events such as dances, birthday parties or wedding receptions. In addition the new exhibit panels are much more attractive with an up-to-date design. There is nothing that will fade on the boards and they could actually be used over again by simply printing a new covering. The new display panels cost about \$400 each. This includes the cost of design, layout, some scanning, printing, delivering, assembly, printing materials, metal brackets and floor mounts. Work is already underway on more display panels. Donations are always welcome for the cost of new exhibit panels - either in whole or in part. Donors are given credit on each board.



What Almost Was, and Might Some Day Be

Doug Riddell

Imagine boarding the *George Washington*, *FFV* or *Sportsman* in Richmond—at Broad Street Union Station. No, not Main Street Station; Broad Street, with the RF&P, ACL and SAL. Yes, a map I purchased on eBay from the C&O's engineering department confirmed a story I'd once heard that C&O wanted out of Main Street, along with Seaboard. SAL DID vacate the old station in 1959 that it had opened jointly in 1901. It almost happened, and if the VDRPT gets its way, something on the same order, possibly using Broad Street Station might still happen as part of the high speed rail initiative.

The map shows a "proposed" connection from the Piedmont Subdivision, at MP 86, just north of Hospital Street, crossing Valley Road, and joining

the Seaboard Air Line right of way at the First Street crossing at grade. There is no date on the map, but given the street names and absence of some major thoroughfares, I would safely guess it to be post WWII. It's part of a map that has the entire Richmond railroad panorama with most yards having their turntables and round houses shown—clearly when steam was still in use here. I'd heard that C&O even looked at using the RF&P James River Branch quarry spur to bring its trains up the canal to the water treatment plant and after doing so, would enter Broad Street Station via AY. Another part of the plan envisioned the C&O obtaining trackage rights to northward to Doswell. Had this happened, it's possible that with the elimination of the slow and meandering C&O trackage between Main Street Station and Doswell, service to Charlottesville from Richmond might still be competitive with driving. Obviously, the trackage rights and/or the considerable grade from the quarry up to AY nixed it.

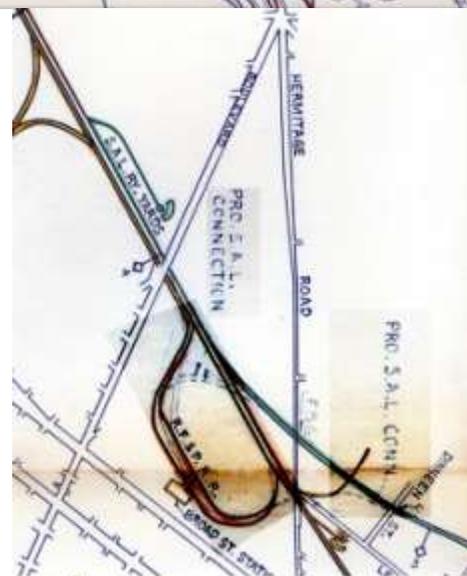
The plan depicted in this newly discovered map indicates that after accessing the SAL in Shockoe Valley, both SAL and C&O passenger trains would take a new connection at Dineen Street, using the RF&P industrial lead serving the large warehouse complex along Hermitage Road and head into the east end of the big terminal's loop tracks at a point about where the present VA DMV headquarters building now stands.

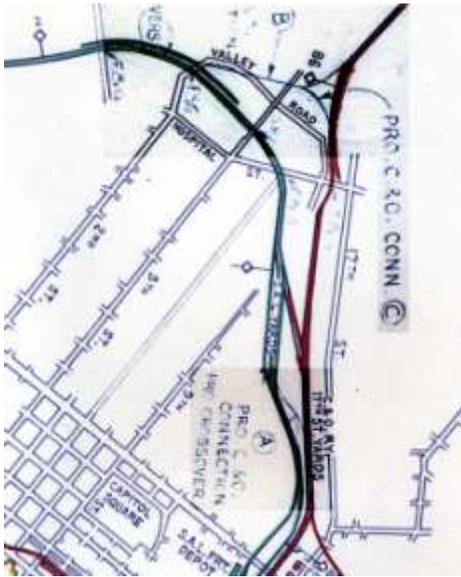
Further up the hill, near the old SAL running repair shops, another connection would permit SAL and C&O trains to enter the west end of Broad Street Station's loop tracks, so that C&O trains could simply loop back out, down the hill, and resume their trip to Newport News or Charlottesville, if it could not obtain trackage rights to Doswell. Had this been done, even if the C&O had remained at Main Street Station, SAL trains that began using Broad Street Station in 1959 would not have had to make those time consuming backup moves that it was forced to perform until a connection was made between it and the ACL at Dunlop (Colonial Heights) following the merger that formed the Seaboard Coast Line.

All things considered, had trains to and from the east been using Broad Street Station decades earlier, it's realistic to justify that Amtrak should simply have kept Broad Street Station and never moved out to Staples Mill Road.

I've included the pertinent portions of the map, and enlarged the proposed connections, which appear

very light (for which it was necessary to darken for purposes of publication.) Amazing what you can find by simply looking on eBay.





Trip Report

Ned Krack

12/10

9:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 116

Pulled = 111

Santa – Richard Siebigteroth

10:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 100

Santa – Charles Gauntt

11:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 106

Santa – Richard Siebigteroth

1:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 116 – includes one trackside sale

Pulled = 108

Santa – Charles Gauntt

2:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 116

Pulled = 113

Santa – Richard Siebigteroth

3:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 116 – includes one trackside sale

Pulled = 114

Santa – Charles Gauntt

Crew for the December 3rd trips:

BBRR crew: Ralph Whittus (Engineer) and Andrew Bernier (conductor)

Trainmaster (ODC): Fred Terry

Car 706: Calvin Boles, John Williams, and Sam Williamson

Car 1006: Ed Fielding and John Forsythe

Souvenirs: Ned Krack

Announcer: John Estes

Santa Conductor: Tom Hardesty

Santa's helpers: Marge Hardesty, Cindy Siebigteroth, and Bella Siebigteroth

Parking: Bob Dickinson and James Dunlap

Souvenirs:

\$1035.00 gross sales

\$465.75 net sales

Donations = \$138.00

1/17

9:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 110 (44 children)

Santa - Bill Butler

10:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 117 (53 children)

Santa - John Ambrose

11:30 a.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 100 (39 children)

Santa - Bill Butler

1:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 101 (41 children)

Santa - John Ambrose

2:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 80 (28 children)

Santa - Bill Butler

3:00 p.m. trip

Sold = 115

Pulled = 109 (43 children)

Santa - John Ambrose

We also hosted the Dillwyn Library's reading of the Polar express after the 3:00 p.m. trip.

There were 50 guests who rode on the move from the depot to the equipment track.

Crew:

BBRR crew: Greg Rohrer (Engineer) and Sam Thibodaux (conductor)

Trainmaster (ODC): Fred Terry

Car 706: Calvin Boles and John Williams

Car 1006: Laird Ramsey and John Estes

Souvenirs: Ned Krack

Announcer: Greg Hodges

Santa Conductor: Tom Hardesty

Santa's helpers: Marge Hardesty, Barbara Ambrose, and Barbara Butler

Parking: Bob Dickinson

Souvenirs:

\$584.00 gross sales

\$262.80 net sales

Donations = \$104.00

Memberships

Kim Young

Please remember to get your dues in ASAP. I will no longer be including the form in **The Highball** in order to save space. If your information has not changed, you may simply mail a check to ODCNRHS PO Box 3131 Chester VA 23831.

Richmond Railroad Museum and Archives Report for December 2016

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 183 (2,724 total for year so far)

Donations: \$354.00 (Includes \$250 from the RF&P modelers for participation in the SMV event)

Volunteer hours: 252

Gift shop sales: \$1248.98 (includes \$ 1040.75 from sales at Ashland event.)

Chapter meeting attendance: 22

Tour visitors: 25 from OLLI on November 5th

Thanks to Doug Riddell for the interesting program at the November meeting about the history of Auto Train. The next time you visit the museum take a minute to look in the 1971 RF&P train dispatchers record book for December 6, 1971 (45 years ago). It lists information for the first revenue Auto Train that was operated over the RF&P. Interesting facts included are the engineer and fireman's names (W. S. McNor and M.U. McClintock), locomotive numbers, number of cars, and times passing manned stations etc. A later entry on Friday December 10th notes that Auto Train # 2 (Northbound) picking up (probably "hooping up") orders at HN (Hanover Junction or Doswell). At that time Doswell was manned and there were still passenger trains running on the C&O that would stop there if requested. (Jack Yowell, later engineer for the BB and ODC excursions would often be the engineer or fireman for these Newport News and Charlottesville bound trains). May 1st, 1971 is the date that Amtrak took over operation of most of the nation's passenger trains. May 1st entries look no different from the day before as it was a while before locomotives and passenger cars labeled as Amtrak started showing up on the railroads. Looks like the

passenger business was good that year for the Florida trains as trains 81 and 82 had 2 sections with 27 and 26 cars each on December 5th!

The next museum committee meeting will be Saturday morning January 7th starting at 9:30 AM in the museum. All interested are invited to attend.

Railroading Today

Gerry Grosshans

Before going further, I would like to clarify last month's column as due to several problems, I had a few hours instead of several days to get it out. About the northbound train leaving Carson as I returned to Collier, I passed over his power at the third Halifax overpass just north of Carson. Due to the trackwork, I was certain that I would reach Collier before the train, and indeed as I crossed over the overpass at the south end of the yard. I saw a lunar (white) signal for the train at South Collier, so I went to the north end at the usual railfanning location to wait. It was not long before the train appeared, running about half way through the yard and stopping. In a very few minutes another northbound showed up, the Tropicana train, after which the other train passed the place where I was parked and went probably as far as BX, sat for a short while and then backed up past the locomotive service and storage area, and then the rain started up heavily so I returned home. The close passage of the train by my car was what made me certain that only two of the unit were on line, the rest a long for the ride

The closeness of the Tropicana train as well as the three intermodals at South Collier which I mentioned, were reasons for the reinstallation of the double track. By the way, the northbound Tropicana train is still only reefers, but the return south always has a cut of intermodal up front.

This also brings to mind the fact that NS, while having two tracks through most of the area, is restricted to one between Abilene and Burkeville, since the abandonment of the line through Farmville that used the Appomattox high bridge.

I have seen more photographs of the Cajon Pass fire area and the landscape is basically grey. Several things that I forgot to mention when I wrote about the fire is that the San Andreas fault goes right through the fire area, and one of the secondary roads is the remnant of Historic Route 66.

In the local area work is still being done on the upgrades needed for positive train control. Many of

the installations are being worked on covering the "S" line or what is more commonly known as the Bellwood Sub, with the notable absence of Falling Creek and Marlboro, the electrical sheds for which still repose at the end of Gettings Lane. (Editor's note: As of 12/10, the shed for Marlboro has been moved.) Most of the new signals, etc. are at least 100 ft. north of the old location. I believe that the dwarf signal at the south end of the Bellwood Yard will be replaced with a regular mast/pole installation, and it is likely that the other dwarf at the north end of Bellwood Yard (governing the Hopewell track) will also be replaced. As one can see from the work on the Bellwood, it is no wonder that it is taking a while for PTC to be fully in service.

I have not seen local F724 for quite a while, except for an early afternoon run of a GP38 and four cement hoppers for the cement facility near the old David M. Lea plant. I have not had much better luck with F705 but have caught F-712 often, although it seems to be running a bit later, recently.

In the December 7 issue of Chesterfield's VILLAGE NEWS there is a nice article about the new display boards at our museum. The Fausz family, who put out this paper, have given us good press for quite a while, and I remember them at the various community meetings on rail matters. The city has done considerable paving in the area of the museum, now Decatur Street is almost as good east of Commerce Road as it is by "Mayor Jones' Church"!

If travelling on Bells Road, take a look at the "critter" at Smith Metals. It is decorated for the season, even sporting Santa as engineer.

Speaking of critters, I finally received the TRAINS issue of their locomotive annual which mentions a Canadian firm which makes a latter day version of a critter by a unique method. They take an SD40 and literally cut it in half, making a small three axle unit out of each truck/wheelset! It uses a 375 hp. CAT powerplant and has a surprisingly roomy cab.

The project to replace the overpass of Jeff. Davis at the Bellwood Yard is complete and although it didn't appear to have a sidewalk (added at the end of construction) such is in place and all speed restrictions have been removed. The sidewalks (on both sides of JD) look as though they would be good photographic locations.

I managed to see an unusual locomotive on the evening of the 9th, a KCS "Belle" unit leading five others west on the Bellwood tracks and even at

twilight, the red, yellow and black unit stood out. I wonder why the western lines have colorful power while here in the east we have to endure dark blue and yellow or black and white!

If there is anyplace other than North America where familiar appearing locomotives exist it is Australia where local firms build under license from the U.S. builders. The weekend of September 30 an assembly of EMD and ALCO look-alikes gathered in a meeting appearing much like the recent gathering at Spencer .

I just got the January issue of TRAINS which has a graphic photo on pages 44-45 of the devastation in Cajon Pass. Most photographs of the area usually show BNSF tracks and trains, but this one is of a UP train on the Palmdale Cutoff.

An Outsiders' Viewpoint (written by Gerry's daughter Kimberly)

On November 11th I was fortunate enough to take a weekend anniversary trip with my husband to N.Y.C. via Amtrak. Overall, our trip was great. We were able to acquire a "roomette" for the trip. This allowed us to relax in privacy and pull out a bed if we needed a nap. The room was a little smaller than anticipated but overall was quite quaint and comfy. We had a great window view of the scenery. And of course we were able to see things you don't ordinarily see via the interstate, which was great. The trip north was rather smooth, surprisingly better than expected. Even when we stopped in DC to switch over to electric the process was fairly quick. We were told to expect approximately 30 minutes for the change out, but the crew had it completed in about 15-20 min and we were even able to depart the station early, very surprising. The trip back south to Virginia (Staples Mill Station) was not quite as smooth, the car rocked and swayed the majority of the time until we hit DC to switch engines from electric back to diesel. Then the car did seem to not rock and sway as much, but still not as smooth as the trip up. On our way up we were able to eat breakfast and enjoy the scenery, and even get a nap in before our arrival in NYC. But with the trip back being rougher it made it harder to enjoy our dinner. As a side note, the food was pretty good as well, they even had "steak" on the menu. Very surprising to me. The staff in our car (coming & going) were very personable and polite. Very attentive to our needs. With that being said my husband has a very regimented medicine schedule that he has to adhere to, and the staff was very

accommodating to him in that regards. (Because our tickets included breakfast & dinner accommodations) Overall, I was very surprised since this was the first time I had taken the train for a lengthy trip since I was a child. So, if you are

thinking that the train might not be the mode of transportation for your next trip, re think taking the train, you might be pleasantly surprised.

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