



The Highball

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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 Old Dominion Chapter will be held at 7.00 PM on Feb. 19 at the Richmond RR Museum. Following updated business matters on the Museum, the February program will feature the second section of The TTX Special from Atlanta to Chicago via Chattanooga & Cincinnati, Ohio in 1999. Refreshments & Door prizes too. Bring a friend & come on down!

Please see or e-mail Bill if you have ideas for future ODC programs for 2018.

Caboose Nuptials

Greg Hodges

In what can only be described as a first for the ODC, a couple were married in the chapter's Seaboard System caboose at the museum on the afternoon of January 29th. Rainy weather did not dampen the spirits of the newlywed pair, Brian and Sarah Kelly, who reside in the Washington DC area. Both are serious train enthusiasts who learned of our museum from our website never having visited the museum before. Including the betrothed couple, there were a grand total of 4 persons in attendance, including a local minister, and the chapter's Greg Hodges, in full conductor regalia. At the conclusion of the vows, the groom kissed the bride and Greg shouted (most appropriately) "ALL ABOARD!" Part of the caboose was decorated with flowers brought by the bride, and after the ceremony, everyone munched on sparkling cider and cupcakes fetched from his car by the groom. Greg gave the couple a quick tour of the

museum, and they then left to honeymoon in the Richmond area before returning to northern VA. All in all, a very happy occasion, and the chapter gained a bit of revenue from the event as well.!

Closing the Museum

Calvin Boles

1. The Curator will determine a preliminary Museum closing schedule, if needed. Typically, these would be done one day at a time – based on updated conditions. The Curator will take into account the expected condition of the museum site, the regional road conditions and the availability of staff.

2. If the Museum is closed, no one will be authorized to be on the site until it has reopened. (The gate will remain locked when the museum is closed.) The exception is emergency response which may be needed to protect and preserve the museum (including snow response).

3. Once the preliminary closing schedule is determined, the Curator will notify the Board, Gift Shop Manager, Host Scheduler and all administrators of the Chapter/Museum websites/social media pages. In addition, the Curator will notify the three major TV network stations as soon as possible.

Other Emergency Events:

If there are other events/incidents, the Curator will consult with the President or appropriate Board member to agree on a response. For example, in the event of a power failure at the museum, the facility will be closed to the public. If work can be done safely (using battery powered lighting, for instance) it is permitted.

Museum Admission

Calvin Boles

The Board approved an Admission Charge of \$5 for all visitors age 14 and older; children 13 and under free. The Board instructed the Museum Committee to develop an implementation plan for this procedure.

This matter was extensively discussed. It was concluded that this would be a trial effort to run from 1 Mar 18 thru 31 Dec 18 to ascertain the effects on income revenue, attendance and donation/Gift Shop sales. Therefore, it should be as simple an operation as feasible. It was decided: Visitors entering the Museum will proceed to the gift shop to pay the entrance fee. The transaction would be entered in the cash-register and a cash-register receipt and a sticker to be worn on their outer clothing would be given to each adult visitor. There will be no on-line ticket sales, no passes, no discounts given during the 2018 test period. Appropriate signs will be posted on the fence gates, on the front and back entrance doors, and in the front hall at the gift shop door.

ODC members and Central Va. Modelers ON DUTY/Working in the Museum will not be charged. It will be the responsibility of the hosts and the Gift Shop staff on duty to implement this policy.

February Archives Photo

Charles Curley

Until about 1957, the Chesapeake and Ohio ran a local train service on the James River line between Richmond and Clifton Forge with gas electrics. Here we see train #9 calling at Sabot with gas electric #9053 and trailer in an Evan Siler photo. There is plenty of interesting detail in this picture including the water tank, cattle loading ramp and a C&O pickup.



Trip Dates

Ned Krack

The dates for the BBRR excursion trips have been tentatively set. The Springtime Special dates are May 12, May 19, and June 2.

The Autumn Leaf Rambler dates are October 13th, 20th, and 27th. Santa is scheduled to visit.

There is a lot of work to be done to get the train ready for this year's trips. To volunteer, please contact Ned Krack at 804-239-4067 or nedrdgfan@msn.com

President's Column

John DeMajo

As most of you are now aware, the museum, by necessity, will begin charging \$5 admission beginning on March 1. Children 13 and under will be admitted free, and the admission fee for those 14 and over can be paid by cash or credit card at the gift shop. Regrettably, while we have tried to avoid this, increases in our insurance and utility costs now make it inevitable. We may have the mechanics in place later in the year to order museum tickets on line, but for now, it's strictly admission ticket sales at the gift shop.

On a related subject, the museum will be holding a grand open house fundraiser on the evening of Friday, April 20th. As part of that evening's festivities, we will offer attendees an opportunity to view an authentic 1920s railroad related silent movie, Buster Keaton's "The General" which will be accompanied by internationally known concert organist Dr. Mark Andersen at the theater organ. The program is being made available through the help of the Virginia chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. Tickets for this event are by reservation, and the charge for the entire evening will be the museum's regular admission charge of \$5. Only 100 tickets can be sold because of space limitations in the movie gallery, so please get your reservations into the museum gift shop or email Ned at treasurer@odcnrhs.org to reserve your seat.

In other news, our trip committee will be working over the next few months to make some necessary repairs and upgrades to the excursion train. Although these excursions remain a popular attraction, we feel that the train's image needs to be improved in order to attract riders and to insure safety and comfort of our passengers. If you are available to help with the needed work, please

contact Ned Krack or Bob Dickinson. We are also in need of more volunteers to assist on the trips, so if you would like to ride the train and offer your hospitality to our trip clients, please let someone on the trip committee know of your interest. I would like to thank all of the members and volunteers who unselfishly donate their time and effort toward keeping our chapter programs operating. If you are not now actively involved in the chapter's activities, there is much fun to be had by participating in our ongoing programs.

Museum Host Schedule

Linda Nelon

3	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bill Taylor	Host	
	Bob Stevens	Host	
4	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Tim Torrez(new)	Host	
	John McKenna(new)	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Host	
10	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop	
	Calvin Boles	Host	
	Ned Krack	Host	
11	Linda Nelon	Gift Shop	
	Robert Williams	Host	
	Wayne Poates	Host	
17	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Ray Potter (11-1:30)	Host	
	Jack Newsom (1:30-4)		Host
	Bob Dickinson	Host	
18	Erwin White	Gift Shop	
	Bill Todd	Host	
	Charles Curley	Host	
24	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Calvin Boles	Host	
	Kim Young	Host	
25	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Dickinson	Host	
	Jerry Grosshans	Host	
	TBA	Host	

February Museum and Archives Report

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 290
 Donations: \$640
 Volunteer hours: 235
 Gift shop sales: \$332.72
 Chapter meeting: 28 attendees
 Tour: 9

A record breaking 290 visitors for January starts off the new year- even with snow days that closed the museum! We will start charging admission to the museum beginning in March. Final details are still being worked out. Our desire is to make the museum more self-sustaining so it does not have to rely on funds that the chapter generates from other activities. Have you noticed work being done on the outside of the station? We are in the midst of a project to replace and paint the "fascia" boards that over the years have deteriorated. Unsuitable weather has slowed down the project but hopefully with better weather it will soon be moving along again. Calvin Boles is reinstalling the "G" layout with improvements in the waiting room. The "little" visitors always like to see the "big" trains run. Spring is not quite here yet but that does not mean "spring cleaning" cannot be done. Recently a lot of unneeded material was removed from the boxcar and additional shelving was installed. We're also working on the ex-RF&P baggage-express car #185 to more efficiently organize and utilize the interior space. Thanks to Wally Winn, Calvin Boles, Ned Krack, and Chuck Breeden for working on these projects. Linda Nelon has a few new "hosts" that have volunteered for the museum but can always use more. We particularly need volunteers for the gift shop. Please let her know if you can help. Ideal situation would be for hosts not to have to work more than 1 day per month.

NS Closing Roanoke Dispatching Operations

Submitted by Dave Coldren

Norfolk Southern has announced plans to close dispatching operations in eight locations across the country, including Roanoke. WFXR, a Roanoke TV station, first reported the pending consolidation of dispatching duties to Atlanta on January 28th. The closing dates for the regional offices has not been announced. Following is the NS statement: Norfolk Southern plans to centralize its train dispatching operations at its Atlanta headquarters. The railroad currently dispatches trains from eight regional offices. Combining dispatching at one location will enable us to manage rail operations from a network perspective vs. from individual locations.

In Roanoke, 56 employees who work in NS' dispatching center will be offered dispatching positions at the consolidated dispatching center in Atlanta. In total, approximately 450 employees at

dispatching centers in Alabama, Illinois, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Michigan and Indiana will be offered positions in Atlanta. The timing for the move has not been determined. Dispatchers direct the routing of trains across the NS rail network, managing the safe movement of some 1,000 trains and an average of 180,000 rail cars each day across 19,500 miles of track in 22 states.

Museum's Train Day 2018 Date Set

Dave Coldren

Save the date! The Richmond Railroad Museum's **Train Day 2018** is planned for **Saturday, September 22nd** on the Museum grounds. The inaugural Train Day last September drew more than 1,000 visitors to the RRM for its busiest day ever. This year it will also serve as a kickoff to **Operation Lifesaver's Rail Safety Week** from September 23rd to 29th.

In addition to the rides, entertainment and food that made the first Train Day a big success, we're planning for more participation from the City of Richmond's public service units, our Virginia railroads and Operation Lifesaver. We're also working to add to our list of sponsors. If you have any contacts or suggestions for sponsors, please contact Dave Coldren, committee chair (TrainDay@yahoo.com).

ODC volunteers were responsible for last year's very successful day. Be a part of the fun this year! Volunteers are needed to handle Museum hosting, gift shop operations, traffic, membership and visitor relations. So, please circle the date on your calendar and look for signup info in the coming months. The rain date for Train Day 2018 is September 29th.

Railroading Today

Gerry Grosshans

Working on the railroad...In a number of places south of the river, CSX is busy one way or another. Crossings have been rebuilt at Bells Road and Commerce Road on the Bellwood Sub, and right now the crossing at Centralia Road is torn up and being reworked, and I assume that when that is done, Old Lane will be next, as they are about a half-mile apart and one can serve as a vehicular detour for the other. I mentioned some time ago that there was some accumulation of items

between Walmsley Boulevard and the Castlewood Overpass which I thought may be concrete ties. I now believe it's track panels and items to rebuild the Walmsley crossing, which is deficient in a number of ways. There have also been track machines running up and down the "A" line for at least a week, usually parked on the Clopton tracks. This is being written on the 9th, and as recently as last night I observed some work around the Broad Rock crossing. A truck rented or leased by CSX pulled up close to where I was parked in the adjacent parking lot of the shopping center. Two men got out and proceeded to walk back and forth on the crossing, shining flashlights on the tracks. Finally, one of the men went to his truck and unlocked the back and pulled out two of the largest adjustable "crescent type" wrenches that I have seen. One was at least two feet long and the other was several inches shorter. He threw them over his shoulder and went south along the tracks to meet a track machine and apparently boarded it. I noticed some temporary speed restriction signs when I was there on the 8th, so I wonder if there was a problem with the grade crossing sensors, as I also noticed an apparently false or partially false activation of the grade crossing gates. Added to that was the northbound passage of the Auto Train at about the time the southbound should pass. I noticed on the 9th the southbound was on time heading south. As I mentioned, this has been going on for at least a week, so I have steered clear of the Centralia area. I should mention that I saw a double-stack train headed south/east on the 2nd, the first of such I have seen in several months, mostly domestic boxes but did have a few Maersk and other international containers aboard. I have seen F 724 several times and had mentioned previously the use of an old ballast hopper on the end of the train as a shoving platform, but upon closer observation the car does have a full width railing and a reasonable place for a crewman to "perch" so CSX could do better, but could also do worse. That train is now using a GP40 most of the time, but about a month ago I saw no less than three old GP38 models, all trying to out-smoke the others. I have not been to the Collier area for a while and the last two times I was out that way, noticed several cars, apparently rail fans at the Ellington Road location (by the Carson DD) who apparently were interested in the Auto Train, since they departed as soon as it passed. I forgot to mention

that there is a large Dominion Energy (I still want to call it VEPCO) nearby so one might encounter personnel from them as well as the railroad. Certainly, don't get near the electric facilities. I also heard a radio transmission about someone on the right-of-way, but It wasn't me as the mile-post given was much closer to Collier than I was. I am concerned about the frequency and severity of the latest train incidents. The Washington (state) derailment appears to be a case of situational unawareness, as was the wreck a while back in Philadelphia. This is unusual in that a judge ordered the engineer Bostian to stand trial. A second judge set that order aside, and a third judge now put another order in place for a trial. I am not sure but believe that incident occurred in 2015, so it will be a while before we hear a definitive cause. In the Crozet incident, I have to remark about the news coverage, not only the naming the place "Crozzette" but alternating shots of the two locomotives leaving viewers to figure out that there was a locomotive on each end of the train. One interviewee mentioned that the grade crossing gates were not working while the next person interviewed said the truck was trying to weave through the lowered gates. A few years ago I mentioned the blue signs on the fixtures-holding the crossing devices, which have the location/ name of the crossing, a serial number assigned to the crossing and a toll-free telephone number to report malfunctions and incidents. That is something that ought to be given some publicity, since a number of persons came forth with accounts of crossing problems there. Now we get to the latest incident in SC. First impressions are that the switch was locked in the wrong way. It should have been locked to prevent traffic on the siding, and allow traffic on the main, rather than locking out the main and diverting traffic onto the siding. Sounds like human error.

For several months talk has been that GE is shutting down and trying to divest itself of locomotive production. Now word is out that CN is acquiring up to 200 new locomotives, and that UP is also looking to buy. Meanwhile, NS seems content to rebuild both old GE and EMD units, purging the roster of such 'oddballs' as the few PR43 units from Progress Rail. These had two powerplants, a 3600 hp. and a 700 hp. making a total of 4300 hp. I have heard nothing more on the CNG conversions of FEC's GE units.

Nothing new has apparently transpired regarding the Western Maryland Scenic with the restoration of 2-6-6-2 (mallet) 1309, as a figure of nearly a half-million dollars was the latest estimate of completion of the necessary work. The locomotive was in far worse shape than anticipated.

Lea Locomotive

Greg Hodges Follow up: Kevin Frick

Years ago, possibly when the chapter held its meetings at Broad St Station, someone showed a grainy B/W 16mm movie of the 0-4-0T working the D M Lea facility at Jeff Davis Hy & Hopkins Rd. As I recall it was from the early 1960s and was in the snow. Very short in length. Wish we knew who had/has it, or if it is in one of our 'collections' somewhere. The spur track from the adjacent ACL main may still be in place there.

The last time the 0-4-0T Lea engine ran was in 1970. Evan Siler or Carleton McKenny called me to let me know the Lea diesel was broken down and they were going to use the engine to move some cars. I was unable to leave work to see this but they showed some of the slides at one of the chapter meetings and some pictures were in **The Highball**. The locomotive is of 1924 or 25 vintage and was second or third hand to Lea. We have done some preliminary work to the engine trying to test the boiler with a hydro and at that time the boiler did not leak. Somewhere along its life, the rear washout plugs were welded up and moved forward roughly a foot which prevents the back leg of the boiler from being cleaned. There was a very unusual dynamo on this engine, and the last time I saw it Dick Hogan had it. I have not seen it since. The grates, ash pan, injectors, safety valves and steam jam break valve are all at Hallsboro under lock and key. The whistle was similar to the one on the 0-6-0T. If you were going to restore it to operating condition, I would highly recommend a new boiler. The running gear is totally worn out along with the tires. All of this would have to be reworked. There was a coal bunker mounted on the left side of the cab between the boiler and side of the cab. I can not recommend putting any of the brass pieces back on the locomotive since I feel they would be stolen. This is a H.K.Porter product and we have the parts manual in the archives.

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