



# The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER  
of the  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER



Volume 56

March 2016

Number 4

## Monthly Meeting

Bill Todd

The March meeting of the Old Dominion Chapter will be held at 7 pm on 3/21/15 at Hull St. Station. Richard Todd will present the program entitled "Virginia Memories - A look before and just after the CSXT and NS mergers along with an ever changing short line and finally one steam excursion from the eyes of a young man (1980 thru 1991)." Refreshments will be served. Come and bring a friend!

## The Dues Are Past Due

Kim Young

1/1/16 was the deadline for membership renewals. As of press time, we have approximately 50 2015 members who have not paid their 2016 dues. If you are one of these, please see me at the meeting or mail them to: ODCNRHS PO Box 3131 Chester VA 23831 immediately. This is chapter dues only. National dues, if you choose to pay them, are handled through them. If you aren't sure, ask me at the meeting or email me at [kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com](mailto:kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com).

## Receipt

Brandy Martin



An 1853 receipt from the Appomattox Rail Road for shipment of tobacco from Petersburg to City Point, where it was to be held for shipment by

schooner to Boston. The shipper was Lancaster Harris & Co (William L Lancaster, Giles Harris and John R Harris, partners). Schooner was Mercy Taylor. Consignee was Fisher & Co, of Boston. The railroad was the successor to the City Point Rail Road (chartered in 1836, opened for service in 1838) under a new charter granted in 1847 by the General Assembly due to financial problems, with the City of Petersburg being evidently the sole shareholder of the Appomattox Rail Road. In 1854 the line was purchased by the South Side Rail Road to allow them access to the James River, thereby avoiding having to build a new line of their own to access deeper water.

## Marconi Anniversary

John DeMajo

On Saturday, April 16th, the Richmond Railroad Museum will join forces with the Richmond Amateur Radio Club and the Museum Of Yesterday, to present a special one-day exhibit celebrating the 225th birthday of American telegraph inventor Samuel F.B. Morse. The exhibit will feature a number of rare telegraph artifacts from the DeMajo family collection including a Marconi spark telegraph transmitter from the Titanic era, a code training device originally used at the Railroad Workers' Training School in Chicago. as well as an exhibit of telegraph keys, relays and sounders, and rare publications from the early railroading era. The Richmond Amateur Radio Club will be on hand to operate a Centennial Morse Code radio transmitting station in celebration of their 100th Anniversary of service to the Richmond area, and at 2 PM that day, a movie will be shown documenting the life of Samuel Morse and the history of the telegraph. The exhibit is being assembled by ODC chapter members John DeMajo and Tom Flippin, and is

being funded, in part, by the DeMajo Family and the Museum of Yesterday.



1920s Instructograph machine from the Railway Technical Training Association in Chicago, IL.)

---

### March Archives Photo

It's June 15, 1963 and some ODC members are assisting and observing D.M. Lea's engineer in some maintenance of the 0-4-0T which presently resides at Hull St station. The ODC members are from left to right : Steve Tarrant (standing), Evan Siler (bending over with bucket) and Bill Stratton (with camera). Photo by Raymond Knight.



---

### Richmond Railroad Museum 3/16

Linda Nelon

5 Bob Dickinson Gift Shop  
Calvin Boles Host  
Bob Stevens Host  
6 Linda Nelon Gift Shop  
Kim Young Host  
Jack Newsome Host

12 Ned Krack Gift Shop  
Ray Potter Host  
Jacob Hoffman Host  
13 Ned Krack Gift Shop  
Jim Lewis Host  
Steve Tarrant Host  
19 Greg Hodges Gift Shop  
Ned Krack Host  
Randy Ridgely Host  
20 Carl Steiner Gift Shop  
Charles Curley Host  
Bob Williams Host  
26 Greg Hodges Gift Shop  
Linda Nelon Host  
Chuck Breeden Host  
27 Ned Krack Gift Shop  
Bob Dickinson Host  
Jerry Grosshans Host

---

### Richmond Railroad Museum Report 2/2016

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 181  
Donations: \$260  
Volunteer hours: 329  
Gift shop sales: \$469.22  
Chapter meeting attendance: Cancelled due to weather!  
Thanks to everyone that braved the cold weather and volunteered at the museum in February. As an old railroader told me – “it never rains or snows on the railroad” meaning it never shuts down because of bad weather!  
Up-coming events:  
Saturday March 19<sup>th</sup> – 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for a retired railfan. He started delivering newspapers in the area when 12 years old. Later he had a “retail milk route” with the Virginia Dairy in South Richmond that included the area around Hull Street Station. He remembers the crossing watchman’s “shanty” on Hull Street and said the watchman and several of the railroad employees in the station purchased milk from him each day! That job enabled him to attend medical school and later become a medical doctor- retiring in the 1980s.  
Sunday March 20<sup>th</sup> – Museum committee meeting. Begins at 4:15 PM and will last about an hour.  
Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup> – Celebration of Samuel F.P. Morse birthday. The ODC has invited the Richmond Amateur Radio Club to have

demonstration telegraph displays including an operating radiotelegraph station. The radio telegraphers will be using "CW" to see how far and how many other radio amateurs they can contact. Although railroads used the pole lines beside the tracks for telegraph there were early tests of "wireless" telegraph equipment aboard trains. Morse's "system" of equipment and code greatly improved railroad operation in the US and around the world! John DeMajo is coordinating and will have some of his own telegraph equipment on display. The museum will be open until 5 pm that day.

Saturday April 23rd – "Earth Day" celebration. The museum will open early at 10 o'clock and close at 5. "Earth Day" is one of the biggest days for visitors each year and we will need "extra" volunteers!

Parking will be limited in the area. Please coordinate with Linda Nelson if you can help.

Archives – John DeMajo now has the "server" set up in the baggage – express car and is connected to our "network". The slide scanning project has been moved from the freight room into the car. Chuck reports that over 10,000 slides have been scanned and there are at least that many more to go. There has been a work table set up in the car to begin sorting the many photos the Chapter has. John is looking for someone with computer skills who would like to learn how to scan photos and enter information about them into the database. This job requires skill and computer knowledge so that the information is entered into the system correctly. The records of the last days of operation of the Chapter's 0-6-0 Steam locomotive at Tredegar have been added to the information available on the Chapter's website about the locomotive. (The movement over the fire damaged trestle was done with a winch and cable.) Read all about it!

---

### **From the Trip Committee**

Greg Hodges

It's almost that time again.....our excursions on the Buckingham Branch RR begin on April 23. As most of you are aware, the net proceeds from these trips are currently our MAIN source of revenue for the ODC. The fall and Dec. trips have sold well over the years, but our spring excursions have struggled to sell out all scheduled trips in recent years. You can help.

There are presently two cases of trip flyers in the Station Masters office.....the next time you are at the museum, grab a big handful to take with you. Where allowed, leave some flyers where they may be picked up by the public. Your local library branch may allow you to put out some flyers since we are a local nonprofit. Most malls have food courts where free papers and the like are displayed for patrons.....place a supply of trip flyers in the rack and check to resupply occasionally. One member has a relative who works in an office building with 200 people.....she placed fliers in the building's break areas last year which resulted in ticket sales.

Ask friends who own businesses that see a lot of public traffic if you can place some flyers in their facility. Be creative. Our chapter depends on this income, and even if you are not able to work on the BB excursions, you can still play a VITAL role by distributing trip flyers to the public!

---

### **ODC registered with Kroger**

Ned Krack

The Old Dominion Chapter has enrolled in the Kroger Community rewards program. Simply register your Kroger Plus Card and every time you shop at Kroger the Chapter will benefit. Simply go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com) today and register your card. Be sure to refer to our organization's number which is 93241.

---

### **Dillwyn Work Day and Upcoming Trips**

Ned Krack

A work session will be held in Dillwyn on Saturday, March 26th to prepare the cars for the spring trips. We plan to get started at 10:00 a.m. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Ned Krack at 804-239-4067 or [nedrdgfan@msn.com](mailto:nedrdgfan@msn.com) Also we are looking for help on the spring trips. All dates (April 23, April 30, and May 7) and all positions. Please contact Ned for more information.

---

### **Old Highballs**

John DeMajo

In addition to the ongoing work of scanning the thousands of photographs and slides contained in the ODC Archives collection, we are in the process of scanning all back issues of the Highball going

back to the first issue published in 1958. The old deteriorating paper copies are being electronically restored and put into PDF format with the hope that they can be distributed later on DVD to anyone who wishes to see the progress of the ODC over the last 60 years that the Highball has been in print.

---

Editor's note: Gerry Grosshans' typewriter broke down as he was working on this month's article. It will return next month.

### **New NS Power in Richmond**

Richard Todd

Here is a picture of some new NS power in Richmond (not sure if it was the West Point local returning or the Crewe Turn heading out), The lead unit, 3092, is a GP40-2 and the slug, 926, is a RP-E4D. I photographed this set of power on 3/4/16 around 9 am sitting with a crew on board at the NS yard in Richmond.



---

### **The Times, They Are A Chang'n**

Doug Riddell

If you have not been near Acca Yard recently, you may not be aware of a great deal of work to reconfigure and enhance the flow of both CSX freight and Amtrak trains through what has proved to be one of the worst choke points along the main east coast route. While the former RF&P Acca Yard in particular is not the largest facility along the line, due to Richmond's role as an Amtrak regional terminal, and a point where more and more, CSX traffic from the midwest is being routed to points in the southeast here, AY/WAY/SAY—a triangle of tracks formed by the wye located at that important junction—the concentration of rail traffic there often leaves everything at an impossible standstill for hours.

As was the case with the entire RF&P main line after the railroad's acquisition by CSX in the 1990s, the dip in rail traffic was misread as a permanent decline, and steps were taken to lessen what was

seen as excess capacity. The same held true for the former SCL A-line, south of Petersburg. Almost immediately however, the trend reversed itself, spurred in great part by an expansion of local and regional Amtrak service. The damage unfortunately, had already been done. The building of a single track bridge at Quantico was the most glaring example of the railroad's miscalculation.

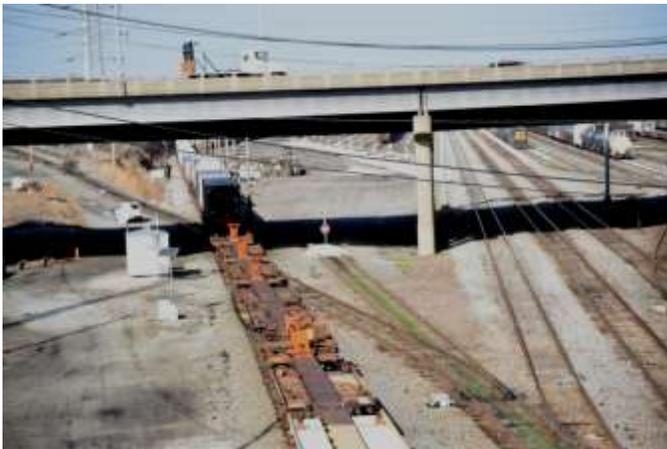
The other mistake was the reconfiguration of Acca Yard with a single track bypass (the Passenger Main,) skirting the west side of the yard, and the winnowing of the four-track main line south of SAY, to a single track, accompanied by removal of the tried and true RF&P cab signals and train control. That safety system, in conjunction with wayside signals, heretofore had permitted almost unimpeded movement through Acca. This created a virtual funnel, which, from an operational standpoint, subsequently, up until now, has resulted in but a single track route for all Amtrak and CSX trains to use from SAY to Rivanna Junction, south of Main Street Station. The delays are interminable some times.

As I understand the new plans (which have been years in the design stage,) include a second main line will parallel to the current Passenger Main from the Staples Mill Road Amtrak Station to Hermitage Road on the former SAL. There may also be an interlocking north of Hospital Street, which will allow use of both tracks, thus minimizing delays. As opposed to the slow speed turnouts at all three endpoints of the wye at Acca, new, 45 MPH turnouts are being installed, accompanied by corresponding improvements in signaling. The South Yard (the classification tracks on the west side of the yard,) has been shortened, and a new lead will be added that will permit work to be done without fouling the two previously mentioned main lines. More importantly, all tracks east of the two enhanced main lines will become yard tracks, no longer used for main line movements.

I'm told (although I've not personally witnessed it) that within the past week, the land in the middle of the wye has been cleared to not only make way for new track alignments, but that the second track between WAY and SAW may reappear and should facilitate more flexibility in routing. This track was deemed redundant after Broad Street Station was closed, and it was taken up.

As an important note to those of us who enjoy

parking behind the businesses on the west side of AY, south of the Westwood Avenue bridge: The property owners no longer welcome “trespassers,” as they term them. This issue apparently arose due to security concerns that came to a head following a recent incident at Chester, in which vandals placed a crosstie on the tracks which was struck by two Amtrak trains running at 79 MPH, and ended up impaling the windshield of the engine of the southbound train. Luckily, the engineer was able to dive to the floor and avoid serious injury. The train was pulled backward to Richmond and delayed several hours awaiting a replacement locomotive. Rather than inferring that this is a move to prevent rail fans from enjoying their hobby, be proactive. If you observe someone tampering with tracks or signals, for your own safety, TAKE NO ACTION YOURSELF. DO however contact the railroad. While these are almost always juvenile pranks by people with too much time on their hands, the results could be deadly.



### **Addition to Museum Page**

John DeMajo

We have added a new section to the home page for the museum ([www.richmondrailroadmuseum.org](http://www.richmondrailroadmuseum.org)) that is a slide show of Southern and Norfolk & Western photographs from our archives. The shows, each containing twelve repeating views, will change periodically. Hopefully, we will be able to change the show several times each week once the archive digitization project is complete. The objective is to let other groups or interested persons, and hopefully donors and grant providers know that the museum has this wealth of photographic material available as a service to the public.

---

### **Hallsboro Reports**

Kevin Frick compiled by Carl Steiner and Kim Young

2/27/16 Randy Ridgley, Richard Thomas, Jonah Collins, Greg Hodges, Devin Gray and I were able to do much today. Richard Thomas and Jonah Collins placed 1/4" plywood on all of the cut glass and broken windows on the Dinwiddie County which should prevent any more weather from getting in or someone continuing to break broken windows. This also protects our cut glass windows in the bathrooms from being broken. Richard and Greg Hodges went into the RPO # 71 and were able to figure how the windows, that were built, would fit into the openings where they could be sealed and prevent the weather from coming in. Randy Ridgley, Greg Hodges and I were able to turn over the D17000 engine in the Davenport at least two times which allowed the engine to become easier to turn over. Devin Gray did the majority of work on the New Holland skid steer loader and the backhoe attachment with assistance from Richard Thomas, Jonah Collins and me . this has greatly improved the operation of the machine and there is no loss of hydraulic fluid which is a large savings in that alone. Bob Dickinson had asked Devin to look at the gas driven air compressor in the 1202 and see what it would take to get it running. Devin took the Kohler engine off of the compressor and took it home hoping to get it running and back on by next weekend. Richard Thomas had originally planned on cutting trees that were hanging on the fence line but was gracious enough to work on covering the windows when I explained that was more important to me than the trees. We will have a tree trimming later in the year to prevent them from falling on the cars on track 4. Things are getting done at Hallsboro but we could sure use some help. Don't worry if you can't do heavy physical labor, there are plenty of jobs to do that don't require a lot of pyhiscal activity . A big thank you to all that turned out and helped today! Kevin

3-6-16 Rick Fields and I were at the property Saturday. I had to get some clips to put the backhoe attachment operational. Rick took the job of cleaning the Dinwiddie. He was able to get the entire car cleaned with the shop vac and greatly improved the interior. the car needs to be wiped down on the ceilings and walls to complete the

cleaning and this is not a difficult or hard job to do, hopefully some of the BOD members might offer to assist. I am going to purchase more 1/4" plywood to place over the broken windows on the 700 car and the cut glass of the McGirth and Brentwood, help will be needed with those tasks. I will try to get a group to go to Dillwyn to assist with any mechanical repairs. Bob please make a list of mechanical things you need help with. (I saw your list, just need it narrowed down). I was able to remove one of the stumps in the line of the fence and will be getting in touch with Hercules about the installation. We have difficulty in getting rid of certain items, two tractor tires, so I ask that no one bring any used tires to the site since these require special handling, and expense, to get rid of. I had the building measured and am awaiting an estimate for the flooring. (We will probably have to do it if the costs are too high).

Today, Randy Ridgley, Jonah Collins, Devin Gray and I were able to put up 100+ feet of fence fabric that had been waiting to be placed. We also went up and down the fence line placing ties to hold the fence to the posts on some of the new fence and some of the original fence that had been up for many years. This is now complete and is awaiting the contractor to come in on the 21st to place the remaining fence on the property, enclosing the entire Hallsboro area with 6 foot high fencing. Devin, Jonah and I turned over the engine in the Davenport trying to keep everything moving freely. We removed the trash and old vestibule curtain

from the 71 and placed it by the pile of cinder blocks in case it is needed for measurement. Randy has been working on scraping the caboose and placing wood filler in the cracking areas. He has also been using body filler on the McGirth steps to cover up the rusted out spaces. Bob Dickinson dropped off four containers of old tools and we went through them sorting out the good usable ones for Hallsboro. Devin and I finished cutting the two crossing ties and placed them at the lower end of the property in the crossing zone. We will use a drill and some crossing bolts to permanently connect them next week. I am sure Randy would welcome any help you would wish to give him. Richard Thomas came up one day during the week with a ladder platform that will fit on the rear end of a car at the vestibule that can be used to climb up and down off the car. He also did some work in the 71 concerning the windows. Randy picked up a piece of Lexan and placed it in the door window on the fireman's side of the 0-6-0-T. Devin has ordered the necessary parts to repair the motor for the air compressor to be sent to Dillwyn for the testing of the car brakes and any other things that it may be needed for. He has ordered and received the carburetor for the spiking power pack so it will be ready for use. We continue moving forward with progress at getting things done at Hallsboro but we welcome any and all help form BOD and members of the ODC.

**ODCNRES**  
**PO Box 3131**  
**Chester VA**  
**23831**