



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
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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 ODC will feature vintage archives programs on March 19 and April 16. The first by Chuck Breedon is on The History of ODCs Hallsboro Yard, with its vintage rolling stock. Meetings start at 7 pm at the museum at 102 Hull St. Please come out to see this history and bring a friend. Refreshments & door prizes.

From the President

John DeMajo

Remember that our open house evening and silent movie presentation of Buster Keaton's "The General" with Dr. Mark Andersen at the Mighty Wurlitzer, will be held on Friday, April 20th at 7 PM. Seating is limited, so please contact Ned Krack at nedrdgfan@msn.com to reserve seating. There is no charge for the movie, but the regular museum admission policy applies for the evening.

As you may have heard, our excursion train is now at the point where some upgrading is needed. Our trip committee is working hard to have the train painted and some mechanical repairs made to make the trip more enjoyable for all. Stay tuned for more news on this. Most importantly, volunteers are needed to help get the train in shape. If you can help out, please get in touch with Ned. A reminder too that tickets for the Spring trips are now on sale. Finally, we are always trying to build our membership numbers. The success of this organization relies on volunteers, and there is lots to do. If you have friends, or even happen to meet people on the street who express an interest in

trains, please let them know that the Old Dominion Chapter offers lots of opportunity to have railroading fun, and to participate in some fulfilling activities.

Positive Train Control and Steam

Chuck Taylor

There has been a lot of news about Positive Train Control (PTC) and the delays in its implementation. Recent rail accidents have brought renewed focus on the system and its use. Simply put, PTC is a safety system designed to monitor the speed and location of a train and in certain emergency situations override the controls, reducing the throttle and applying the brakes. The federal mandate for PTC becomes effective December 31, 2018. How will PTC affect mainline steam locomotive operation? The adaptation for a steam locomotive is challenging with the requirement of a programmable on board computer, server for information access, a dedicated power source with a power backup, and more all installed in the environment of a steam locomotive cab. Additionally, since the locomotive may operate on different host railroads, the system may need to be compatible with different technology and software systems.

Railroading Heritage of Midwest America (RHMA), which had its beginnings in the Friends of the 261, Inc., owns and operates the Milwaukee Road No. 261 and a growing fleet of passenger equipment. RHMA believes that while the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has not made the final ruling regarding steam locomotive operations that relying on waivers is not a long term solution for operating steam powered excursions beyond 2018. RHMA has been working with the FRA, other mainline steam operators, potential host railroads, and suppliers on adapting PTC to steam operations. The cost estimate of installing a PTC

system on the MR 261 is \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00. RHMA has identified and applied for several grants and is starting a fund raising campaign to allow the installation and operation of PTC on the 261. The organization hopes to be able to help other mainline steam operations such as Nickle Plate Road No. 765, Norfolk and Western No. 611, and Southern Pacific No. 4449 continue to operate.

Much of the above information comes from RHMA news releases; more information including tickets for an upcoming steam powered excursion between Minneapolis, MN and Duluth, MN to raise funds for PTC can be found on the website, www.261.com.

**Richmond Railroad Museum and Archives
Report for February 2018**

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 280

Donations: \$610

Volunteer hours: 319

Gift shop sales: \$588.86

Chapter meeting: 29 attendees

Thanks to all that volunteered during February! We have a couple of “new” volunteers - but can always use more. As we begin the New Year one of the goals of the museum is to generate more funds to cover operation and for future expansion. Visitation for the first weekend of March was good and hopefully ticket sales will offset the ever-increasing expenses of operating the museum. We are actively seeking groups to use museum space for their meeting or activities - particularly at times the museum is closed. Are you connected to a group that needs meeting space on a regular basis at a reasonable cost? Please contact Ned Krack, John DeMajo, or Bob Dickinson to discuss needs.

Thanks to Calvin Boles for putting together signage that was required for the new admission charges. Steve Tarrant is continuing to work with the City of Richmond on the project to relocate the fence to the other side of the track. He is also working on adding the necessary features to the track motor car to allow safe operation for passengers to ride. Planning for “Train Day” in September 2018 is underway. If you would like to be a part of this project please contact David Coldren. Don’t forget the “Open House” event with the movie “The General” and organ music coming up on April 20th. Buy you tickets now before they are all sold out! Greg Hodges is in the process of developing a new

Christmas ornament that will be sold in the gift shop for next Christmas. The Chapter has signed a contract with Comcast for higher speed and more reliable internet service at the museum. This also includes updating the telephone service which has been prone to outages caused by old cable serving the end of Hull Street that Verizon has not kept in repair. Telephone and internet service to the museum has been unreliable for a long time and as far as we can tell very little effort has been done to improve it! The “new” lock on the rear gate belongs to “Dominion Energy” so they can have access to the electric meter. Continued use of the combination lock is under discussion at the present time.

March Museum Host Schedule

Linda Nelon

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

March Archives Photo

Charles Curley

Chesapeake and Ohio G-9 2-8-0 #1031 sits in a dead line along with other locos in 17th St Yard in Richmond around March 1961. It is sitting near where it was built in 1909 at the Richmond Locomotive Works. It was the last G-9 scrapped. Evan Siler photo.



Museum's Train Day 2018 Date Shifted

Dave Coldren

The new date for the Richmond Railroad Museum's **Train Day 2018** is **Saturday, September 29th** on the Museum grounds. The date has been shifted by a week to accommodate the ODC's annual participation in Field Day of the Past. It will be a busy month for the chapter.

In 2017, the inaugural Train Day drew more than 1,000 visitors to the RRM for its busiest day ever. This year it will also serve as part of **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 and our Virginia railroads. 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 September 29 on your calendar and look for signup info in the coming months. The rain date is October 6th.

C&O Locomotive Returns (Almost) Home

Dave Coldren

ODC Board member Chuck Taylor braved a late winter snowstorm to inspect the Lake Shore Railway Museum's General Electric B30-7 locomotive earlier this month. The former CSX/C&O unit was repainted to its original Chessie Cat scheme at the railroad's Huntington shops and delivered to the North East, Pennsylvania museum last June. Number 8272 now rests less than 10 miles from Erie where it was built in 1980.



Dillwyn Work Sessions

Ned Krack

The Trip Committee will have work sessions in Dillwyn on March 17 and March 31. Sessions will also be held April 14 and 28.

We will be preparing the interior and exterior of the train for the spring trips. If you want to volunteer, please contact Ned Krack at 804-239-4067 or nedrdgfan@msn.com.

Here is a list of repairs to be made. (Note: Some of this work has been completed.)

706

Replace starter on generator and other maintenance items on it. Replace water tank. Recharge AC unit.

1006

Repair toilet. Repaint exterior primarily on the engineer's side. Repair window sills. General repairs.

Moo 1 & 2

Paint gates and replace as needed. Replace roof on Moo 1.

Commissary Car

Paint exterior.

Railroading Today

Gerry Grosshans

Trackwork is continuing along CSX trackage, with a number of crossings rebuilt and a few to go. After the completion of the work on the Centralia Road crossing I assumed that the next item on the Agenda was the crossing at Old Lane, which as of today (3/9) it shows no sign of work beginning soon. With the removal of some of the accumulated panels and other items (for the Centralia Road work, one can again park at Old Lane, but the view is impaired by the remaining materials, and it appears that there may be a shortage of panels. The area's worst crossing, Walmsley Boulevard, is apparently high on the agenda, as cuts which would comfortably hold a 2x4 have been made across the pavement on either side of the tracks. That is a place needing some serious work, but I am afraid that, like in the past, work will not improve the situation there. It only seems to get worse! I've mentioned several times in the past that in 1946 (city's master plan) cited this location as the worst in the area, and it has not improved. Check some of the older photographs of the crossing in the days of steam and you will see what I mean. The location cries out for a vehicular underpass!

While checking out things in the area, I note that trackwork has taken place on the tracks to the Deepwater Terminal, including a bit more ballast. From the actions taken by drivers at the Broad Rock crossing it may be that there will be work coming up there.

There may very well be litigation about the situation with Hunter Harrison, and many have said that it appears there was some covering up of his true physical condition long before he came to CSX. Photographs have surfaced showing him intubated.

As far the actual operation of the railroad is concerned, since the beginning of the year I have only seen two (eastbound/ southbound) double-stack trains. In fact, operations seem like they were before the Virginia Avenue tunnel opened. You

still have 3 or 4 Amtraks and as many as 3 intermodals in the late afternoon and early evening hours Things quiet down after the passage of the Norfolk train 125. I haven't seen the Tropicana cars. though.

Recent editions of the national magazines have done a little to throw light on the recent wreck, and it appears that the problems are human-related.

There do not seem to be any equipment failures.

We have a new historical artifact in the city, a rebuilt GP7/GP9 working the ethanol unloading facility at 520 Gordon Avenue in south Richmond. It is a darker shade of yellow than used by UP with a chopped nose and a winterization hatch over one of the cooling fans. It is trimmed and lettered in black for Rail Serve and numbered RSSX 8215.

The easiest way to see it is to leave the museum on Decatur Street, turn left on 4th street, go past the Maury street exit from 195 to Gordon Avenue, and turn to the right on Gordon. The unit is usually parked by the office, at the end of a string of cars being unloaded. I presume it goes to South Yard where the cars are stored. CSX interchanges with NS there, but it is unlikely this unit participates in that. At one time CSX kept a small 4 axle unit there, but I have not seen such for a while. The ethanol facility being what it is, please use caution and do not trespass. The unit may make only a couple trips to the yard per week, so it could be observed there from Goodes Street.

There continues to be rebuilding activity on older GE locomotives. Union Pacific is turning older C6043 units into AC traction. They were built for, but never received the 6000 hp powerplant. As rebuilt they will keep a 4400 hp FDL engine. Remember, UP is rebuilding these but got rid of the equivalent EMD SD9043 units, NS picking up some of these and turning them into what is essentially a SD 70 variant. CSX was to do something with its "big" GE units currently being stored.

NARP has rebranded itself as "Rail Passengers" and its publication as **Passengers Voice**.

Have you ever wondered about the "certainty" of the assertions of activation and workings of grade crossing flashers? If you can get close to the crossing, look at the flashing lights. As the red flashes for traffic, an opaque/white light, smaller in size flashes down the track, which can be seen by the crew and also any forward looking camera.

This shot down the original claims of non-

functional signals in the wreck at Crozet. It was all caught on camera.

Hazel Hanshaw

Greg Hodges

Hazel Henshaw, a long-time member of the ODC, and a fixture on many of the chapter's Dillwyn excursion train trips, died peacefully on March 3rd at her Chester home at age 95. The petite Hazel, who was a real dynamo when it came to helping with on-board souvenir sales, is perhaps best remembered for her easy knack of buttonholing waiting train patrons in order to sell raffle tickets for chances to ride up front with the engineer. She would approach someone in line who usually towered over her with a sincere and heartfelt sales appeal that just couldn't be resisted. Afterward, Hazel would make her way back aboard the train with money bulging from every pocket. She always had a twinkle in her eye and a good word for everybody she met. A real trooper and a genuine asset for the ODC. She will certainly be missed.

Chapter Contact Information

Board of Directors

President - John DeMajo (jdemajo@demajo.net)
504-858-7689

Vice president – Kevin Frick
(ckfrick@hotmail.com) 804 536 0899

Secretary-Treasurer – Ned Krack
(nedrdgfan@msn.com) 804 239 4067

Director- Tim Torrez

Director- Chuck Taylor

Director- Greg Hodges junehodges@verizon.net
804 677 9786

Director- John Forsythe

Director- - Steve Tarrant

Director - Finance Committee Chairman- Carl Steiner papastrainyard@verizon.net 804 512-7389

Director – Museum Committee Chairman - Bob Dickinson redbrr@comcast.net, 804 262 0516

Hallsboro Yard

Kevin Frick – Yard Superintendent
ckfrick@hotmail.com 804 536 0899

Richmond Railroad Museum

Curator of Collections - Calvin Boles

Host scheduling: Linda Nelson nelonlinda@yahoo.com
804 349 2978 (c), 804 745 4974 (h)

Archives Librarian – Chuck Bredden

Museum rentals - RVA EventSpace, 2221 Bywood Lane
Richmond, Virginia 23224 804-322-9575

Gift shop: Greg Hodges junehodges@verizon.net 804 677 9786

Physical Plant - Bob Dickinson redbrr@comcast.net, 804 262 0516

Trips

Chair: Ned Krack nedrdgfan@msn.com, 804 239 4067

Ticket agent: Kim Young

kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com/tickets@odcnrhs.org

Food service: Tom Hardesty 757 591 2910,

TRHardesty@aol.com

Souvenir sales: Ned Krack, Greg Hodges

Mechanical: Bob Dickinson / Kevin Frick

Trainmaster/co-ticket agent: Fred Terry 804 339 4201

History

Rail historian: Brandy Martin

abjemart@hotmail.com

Chapter historian: Tom Hardesty

Archives: Bob Dickinson (acting)

CHAPTER OPERATIONS

Publicity Director – Ray Potter 804-716-5162

rpotter177@comcast.net

Safety Committee Chairman – Steve Tarrant

Finance Committee Chairman – Carl Steiner

Meeting Program Coordinator - Bill Todd

WFToddJr@aol.com, 804 746 5735

Membership: Kim Young

membership@odcnrhs.org

IT Director & Webmaster - John DeMajo

jdemajo@demajo.net

Highball – Social Media Editor - Kim Young

kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com

Updated Pix of RFP 101

Chuck Taylor





**ODCNRES
PO Box 3131
Chester VA
23831**