



The Highball



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

of the

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

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Monthly Meetings

Bill Todd

ODC Hallsboro Picnic September 24, 2016

The ODC will **not** meet in September at the RR Museum on the third Monday as usual. Instead ODC will host a picnic featuring fried chicken at its Hallsboro Yard on Saturday, September 24 between 11.00 AM and 3.00 PM. If you are interested in attending, and have not already done so, you must RSVP as soon as possible but no later than 9/10/16 on the following form. The Hallsboro Yard is located on County Line Road south of Route 60 between Chesterfield & Powhatan Counties. It is adjacent to the NS Rwy. tracks. Hint: On CL Road take the right fork and turn left just before the tracks.

Hawaiian Shirt Night Photo

Kim Young



Cleanup Help Needed

Kevin Frick

Volunteers are needed to do weed whacking and help with the clean up around Hallsboro on

Saturday, September 17th to prepare for the September 24th chapter picnic and outing.

Museum Host Schedule

Linda Nelon

3	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop
	Calvin Boles	Host
	Bill Taylor	Host
4	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop
	Steve Tarrant	Host
	Stanley Clark	Host
10	Ned Krack	Gift Shop
	Ray Potter	Host
	Bob Dickinson	Host
11	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop
	Bob Williams	Host
	Jim Lewis	Host
	Steve Tarrant	Floodwall Tour
	Ned Krack	Floodwall Tour
17	Randy Ridgely	Gift Shop
	Bill Taylor	Host
	TBA	Host
18	Linda Nelon	Gift Shop
	Jack Newsome	Host
	Charles Curley	Host
24	Ned Krack	Gift Shop
	Chuck Breeden	Host
	Bob Stevens	Host
25	Ned Krack	Gift Shop
	Bob Dickinson	Host
	Jerry Grosshans	Host

Richmond Railroad Museum and Archives

Report for August 2016

Reported by Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 257 (2089 total for year so far)

Donations: \$283.94

Volunteer hours: 295

Gift shop sales: \$307.68

Chapter meeting attendance: 28

Thanks to everyone that helped at the museum in August. The grounds and parking lot look better this year than usual thanks to the efforts of Richard Thomas (Richard travels from Newport News several times a month to work on projects at the station and at the yard!), Randy Ridgely (Randy is always working on something at the Yard, Museum, or the archives!), and Steve Tarrant. All of these guys have been very busy this summer cutting weeds, spraying weed killer, picking up trash etc. We also have a new wire trash basket recently installed at the corner of Hull Street and 1st Street locked to the fence. We are very pleased at the amount of trash that it has collected so far. Every piece that the can gets is less for our volunteers to have to clean up!

Thanks to Calvin Boles we have a new stand alone display located in the freight room. The new display board consolidates historical information about Hull Street Station in one place. Calvin designed, paid for, and assembled the board. With a few minor improvements we plan to develop several more boards for other topics.

There is a new station sign installed on the wall in the freight room. "Natural Bridge" - Mile Post 292.9 on the N&W was donated to the Chapter years ago by member Brandon Martin. We have another in the archives that Brandy hopes to return to the community.

Another of Brandy's donations recently was transferred to Bill Yuhase for restoration. The many pieces and parts from a model of a Pennsylvania steam locomotive that has been in the Chapter archives for a number of years was recently moved to Bill's basement for restoration. Bill has a lot of work to do to complete this project as it needs to be completely rebuilt. The archives committee decided it best for the Chapter (with Brandy's approval) to give Bill the parts – hoping that in the future it be restored.

Henrico County TV has recently produced a documentary about the RF&P railroad. It is being shown on the county TV channel from time to time. If you would like to see it and cannot get the Henrico channel we have the DVD at the station and can show it there if desired.

Bruce Wingo – Vice President of Governmental Affairs for Norfolk Southern in Richmond and friend of the Chapter for many years will retired on 8/31. Tim Bentley an attorney for NS in Norfolk

will be moving to Richmond soon to fill Bruce's position. Good luck Bruce and Tim!
Please join us at the next museum committee meeting at the museum on Sunday September 25th at 4:15 PM.

Scouts at Museum

Calvin Boles

The ODC hosted a Boy Scout Railroad Merit Badge training session at the RRM for 19 boys and their leaders on 19 Aug 16. The boys and their leaders boarded Amtrak at the Staples Mill Station and detrained at the Main Street Sta. They were given a tour of the Station clock tower and waiting room before car pooling to the Richmond Railroad Museum. There they received training on railroad subjects required for the merit badge as well as a tour of the facilities. The day's events were conducted by John DeMajo, Greg Hodges, Bob Dickinson, Fred Terry and Calvin Boles. Lunch was provided by the Scout Leaders.



Display Boards for Museum

Calvin Boles

The Museum Station Committee is developing a new set of Display Boards for the Museum. The first Board was placed in the museum on 18 Aug 16 as a test of the concept. It was well received. After some further development and modifications are made, the first two Boards will be permanently installed. ODC members are invited to contribute to the development of subsequent Boards. Contributors' names will be recognized on the Board to which they contributed.

Trips

Greg Hodges/Ned Krack

We have about one month left before our October BBRR trips begin in Buckingham Co. We still need

everybody's help in getting the word out. As you know these trips are the chapter's PRIMARY source of revenue for the museum, Hallsboro, and other projects. There are still some yellow trip brochures left at the museum in a box directly under the sign-in sheet in the entrance hallway. Grab a bunch and distribute them wherever you can. Perhaps relatives or friends have businesses that would allow trip brochures to be placed there, or you might be able to leave a few at a library or other public area. Even if you are not able to help out on the trips at Dillwyn, this is a way you can definitely help to strengthen your chapter.

On Saturday, September 17th there will be a work session at Dillwyn to prepare the cars for the fall trips. The start time will be 10:00 a.m. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Ned Krack at 804-239-4067 or nedrdgfan@msn.com. Also, help is needed for all positions for the trips on October 8th, 15th, and 22nd as well as the December 3rd and 10th Santa. To volunteer, please contact Ned.

Call for Board Member

Ned Krack

The nominating committee is seeking a member who wishes to serve on the Old Dominion Chapter Board of Directors. We are seeking someone to serve a three year term ending in 2019. In order to serve, one must be a member in good standing and at least 18 years of age.

If you wish to serve on the Board, please contact one of the following committee members:

Ned Krack at 804-239-4067 or
nedrdgfan@msn.com

Greg Hodges at 804-794-1926 or
junehodges@verizon.net

Ray Potter at 804-716-5162 or
rpotter122@comcast.net

The Three-Step Prayer

Randy Ridgely

Concerning the chapter and our need to get things accomplished

We all can use this system, and here is how it works

1. Ask for forgiveness for things we have done wrong. (This applies to us personally concerning the chapter and our everyday life)
2. Thank God for all we have. (He has been very kind to us.)

3. Ask God for help in solving our many projects and dealings.

September Archives Photo

Charles Curley

The famous Civil War locomotive the General is seen beside the RF&P's Bryan Park shops during it's tour on April 25, 1963. From a slide by Evan Siler.



Get'n A Lift

Doug Riddell

It might not seem like much to get excited about, but when I passed the Ashland depot last week, I was very pleased. There, on the west side platform, chained to a "no parking" sign, was a brand new manually-operated handicap wheelchair lift. It's been a long time coming, and while there is supposed to be one for both platforms, half a loaf is better than no bread at all. Special needs patrons wishing to board or detrain at Ashland have historically been accommodated at Richmond and provided taxi service to and from the Hanover County town—a very expensive and inconvenient method of dealing with the dilemma. Since Amtrak doesn't own the Ashland station, it must rely on those who do to comply, or face the loss of service. Why does it matter? It's the law.

The Federal Americans with Disability Act (ADA) turned 26 this year. Passengers with special needs will quickly tell you they're tired of waiting for America's railroads to live up to it. Amtrak has sought, and has thus far been granted an annual exemption from compliance by Congress, citing two distinct issues that make doing so virtually impossible. First, there is no height standard. Amtrak itself uses both low level entrance Superliners, as well as traditional equipment with aisles reached using steps. Additionally, the changes necessary to accommodate either, or cars with an adopted universal height, would mean significant

changes to boarding platforms at almost all stations, many of which are listed on state and national historic registries where design changes would be prohibited.

One of my closest associates when I worked at Amtrak headquarters in Washington, David Nelson, headed up the company's handicap outreach, and I received quite an education. David, who is deaf, explained the specifics of the ADA to me. While there is a "grandfather" clause that permits some leeway for existing service, the law makes clear that any "new" service must be ADA complaint from inception. Were the new high speed rail to stop at Ashland, for instance, boarding platforms would have to be aisle-level and long enough to accommodate the entire train—roughly eight car lengths, whereas current regional Amtrak trains could continue to use the existing platforms with lift equipment.

The freight railroads, over which Amtrak operates, do not permit aisle-level platforms, and for a very good reason: passing freight trains with their excess width and shifting loads, could not only damage the platforms, but striking them could cause a derailment. They have agreed to platforms that do not exceed 18 1/2 inches above the height of the rail, as are the ones at Staples Mill Road. While not ideal, lowered steps on traditional equipment does reach them, and when necessary to stop the Auto Train at Richmond, Superliner entrances dictate a minor step-down.

Ideally, every railroad passenger car should have some type of self-contained access equipment, as do the cars used by VRE commuter trains, and maybe someday, all equipment will. For the time being however, while there is a contentious atmosphere surrounding the implications of high or higher speed rail for Ashland, it's nice to be able to report that we're taking a step in the right direction to see that existing Amtrak service at Ashland will remain viable and attractive to everyone who wishes to ride.



Moorman New Amtrak President

Kim Young from *Trains Magazine Newswire*

Former NS CEO Wick Moorman took over as Amtrak President on 9/1. Mr. Moorman retired from NS in 2015 after a 40-year career with the Southern and Norfolk Southern railroads. Among his most public achievements in recent years are the NS Heritage fleet and his major role in the restoration of 611. In an open letter to Amtrak employees he stated, "My immediate priority in the next 60 days as I transition into the new role is to spend time with the leadership team and to get out and see as many of you as I can, in order to get a better understanding of what we do, and how we do it. I also encourage all of you to let me know your thoughts on what we can do together to improve the company."

Railroading Today

Gerry Grosshans

WORKIN' ON THE RAILROAD...I am certain that CSX has a number of projects in the area, but I will concentrate of several of particular interest, the first being the restoration of double track south of Collier Yard. I went down there over the Labor Day weekend, having not been there in several months. Going by the three roads I earlier had mentioned, the three crossings all had trackage across the roadway. Plenty of ties have been placed, and I note that all appear to be concrete. I was unable to see any actual work being done, but it appears that with concrete ties, a plastic piece, bright green, is laid on the tie after which the rail is laid and fastened with clips. At the southernmost of the three roads (Ellington, I believe) there are not only extra ties, green pads and other materials, but a good sized mobile office trailer and what appears to be a structure to span the tracks and appears to hold places for three signal arrays (for two tracks) just south of the crossing. No new ballast has been spread, but the work done in the several months is such that if you visit the area now, much more has been done.

The second project of note is what appears to be more than just train control apparatus just south of Walmsley Blvd. (FA) as on both sides of the tracks a roadway has been constructed, very smooth going south to the area of the Castlewood overpass. The roadways could be for vehicular use or perhaps as a base for the laying of new trackage, perhaps a southward lengthening of the Clopton trackage,

which would entail the moving of the switch on track two. Over the weekend a semitrailer loaded with what appeared to be mostly 40 ft. rail lengths was parked next to the Walmsley crossing, but was moved by Labor Day. One cannot get a good view of the area, but the rails may have been left at the location of the signal. Several words of caution...Do not drive up to the signal: Also, the overpass is very heavily infested with brush and weeds, and there is no convenient place to park along Castlewood, no walkways or slight clearance for pedestrian travel. Drivers also seem to travel at speeds unnecessary.

At the end of Gettings Lane there is quite a collection of materials, several electrical sheds labeled for Marlboro and for Falling Creek, also many signal heads and masts which appear to be replacement items. It is hard to see at night, but I believe the signal at the north end of South Yard was recently replaced. Also the grade crossing signals at Dale Avenue have been replaced with LED lights. Speaking of Dale Avenue which is at the north end of Fanshaw Yard, for at least two weeks there has been a loaded coal hopper with Virginia Power makings, which has been sitting there. I can't figure out what, but it appears there is a problem with the wheelset (truck) on the south end of the car. It is always good to check out Fanshaw, I have seen two CW60 and two older 70mac units sitting there having delivered coal to the Cogentrix facility, also a long train of older ballast hoppers, heading north and awaiting a signal, which train was powered by a nearly new "ET" unit, #3391.

As of early July, the intermodals to and from Portsmouth are coming into Richmond by a B&O and RF&P routing, at least Q135 and 136 no mention of 130 or the occasional baretable 139. As I have gotten older, I have paid less attention to NASCAR and for that matter, most auto racing, but this past Friday I was reading the special pages in the newspaper about the weekend's races. CSX sponsored the #34 Ford of Chris Buescher in the 400. As I said, I don't follow racing as much as previously, but this appears to be a first although I seem to remember that a while ago AMTRAK sponsored Rusty Wallace.

Depending on the source, it appears CSX is suspending the rebuilding of older 4 axle EMD power and scrapping older GE 4 axle units. Norfolk Southern is retiring or scrapping its gen-set units, citing poor performance and not fitting into the general operational plans. One of the specific

problems was the inability of these units to "kick cars". In my ancient vocabulary of railroading terms that would mean getting a car or cars up to a good speed, then uncoupling from the locomotive, depending upon speed and momentum to join cars, often over a switch. I'm not certain of the exact NS procedures, but UP uses gensets in a one and one set with an SD38, giving combinations of power from 750 to 4100 hp. Of the few gensets CSX has, one never hears good or bad about them.

The dining car situation for AMTRAK in the east is well past critical, with up to four cars removed from service with structural problems, some believed beyond repair. After years (literally) of delay after delay, still no word when the new cars will go into operation. Linda, pack your lunch.

California's Metrolink recently acquired a group of control cab cars which were later determined to lack structural strength, so it is leasing a group of BNSF freight units to lead on trains operating in the "push" mode.

CSX is planning on having one of the Virginia Avenue tunnels operational by year's end. I believe that these tunnels are the last impediment to the operation of true double stack trains through Richmond

On July 27 the southbound Auto Train was somehow diverted toward NS tracks at BX, by what is thought to be a dispatcher error. #125 (the Amtrak service to Norfolk) was behind the Auto Train and it is thought that the dispatcher believed that 125 was in the lead rather than 53 (the Auto Train). On July 5, a similar mis-routing sent the Lynchburg train (#171) up the ex-RF&P rather than up the NS, resulting in an almost 2-hour delay in getting to Lynchburg.

Union Pacific has 844 back in operation with a simplified look to the front end with a centered headlight and the removal of the red light which formerly sat above the headlight. Now UP says the next item is the completion of the restoration of the Big Boy. The other steamer, Challenger 3985, is "stored serviceable"

Someplace on CSX are two tier IV units built by EMD, in UP colors. Two in BNSF colors are testing on that road.

Dinwiddie County Voted "Most Endangered"

Kim Young

The ODC's Dinwiddie County was voted the "most endangered artifact" in Virginia in a poll conducted

8/1 – 8/31 by the Virginia Association of Museums. We received 20,700 votes and out-distanced the runner-up by 4,000 votes. Thanks to all who voted! Now it's up to us to find ways to use this designation to obtain the funding and recruit the volunteers to make the repairs that it needs.



Preserving Railroad Artifacts

John Forsythe

One part of preserving the railroad history of central Virginia is actively preserving antique rolling stock and engines. The ODC has several ongoing projects that are central to the ODC's mission. These projects include maintenance on "The Rebel" and renovating RF&P Coach #706. These projects cost more money than the club current operating budget of the ODC.

To augment the ODC's operating budget, I have volunteered to write grant applications. The ODC should think of grants as bonus money. Grants augment the current operating budget and granting foundations expect that the receiving organization to match the grant with internal fundraising.

The ODC's main source of revenue is the excursions run out of Dillwyn, VA on the Buckingham Branch Railroad. The ODC uses RF&P Coach 706 and Southern Coach 1006. Each of those cars needs renovation so the ODC's guests remain comfortable.

The first car that will be worked on is Coach 706. The seats in 706 were last reupholstered over 40 years ago. They now need reupholstering to keep our passengers comfortable. This past summer Bob, Ned, and I with the approval of the Board of Directors submitted a grant application to the John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust. The ERHT has conditionally approved a \$10,000 grant. The condition is that the ODC must raise a matching amount of \$10,000. Reupholstering the seats will cost \$20,000.

John Estes has graciously helped the ODC efforts by crunching numbers. The ODC can easily the majority of the \$10,000 by simply putting \$.25/day in a jar for the now until March 15, 2017. Here is a breakdown of how much can be raised from so little with good member participation.

Per Day		\$0.25
Per Year		\$91
100%	126	\$11,498
90%	113	\$10,348
80%	101	\$9,198
70%	88	\$8,048
60%	76	\$6,899
50%	63	\$5,749
40%	50	\$4,599
30%	38	\$3,449
20%	25	\$2,300

To help remind us all to donate; cut out the label below and put it on a jar to collect coins in. A good jar would one that tomato sauce comes in. I will be applying for more grants from local companies and other foundations. These applications will be centered on the idea that those companies or foundations will match dollar for dollar up to \$3,000 what the ODC membership raises by March 15th. After the OCD matches the \$10,000 grant, the remaining amount will first go towards Coach 706 and then "The Rebel." Kevin Frick is doing an amazing job doing the maintenance on the ODC's steam engine. However, the steam engines needs new parts and an operational budget that is separate from the normal Hallsboro budget. I am applying to Trains magazine's 2016 Preservation award. While that award would be nice it is not guaranteed. The ODC is asking for your support to get the engine operational again for the 2017 ODC picnic. We will need money for new parts such as a new smokestack and also fuel for it to run. Money is not the only support the ODC needs. The current volunteers will be unable to maintain the ODC's mission. The skills we will need are trades such as electricians, carpentry, welding, and writing. Let me know your skills and interests and I will let you know where you can continue the ODC's mission.

Renovate 706

Reservation Form for Hallsboro Picnic 9/24/16

Name(s)

Telephone No.

No. Adults _____

No. Children & Ages _____

Allergies, if any?

Can You Bring a Covered Dish to Share?

If so, What?

RSVP Bill & Ann Todd at 804-746-5735 or
WFToddJr@aol.com immediately.

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