

Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley NRHS
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Railroading – Past, Present and Future

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No, this is not proof that time travel has been invented. But it is proof of NORFOLK SOUTHERN's intention to re-introduce a steam excursion program. Here we see SOUTHERN no. 630 (ex-ET&WNC no. 207) on its August 9th (and its first) test run between Cleveland and Chattanooga, Tennessee. Can you spot our Chapter cars within the consist?

August 22nd Chapter Meeting

The next General Membership Meeting of the Watauga Valley Railway Historical Society & Museum will be held Monday, August 22, 2011, at 6:30 pm, at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. The program will feature the WHITE PASS & YUKON RAILROAD and will be presented by Bob Douglas. This is railroading at its best! Bring a friend and enjoy this program.

Member Notes

by Nancy Jewell

Our sympathy is extended to Chris Harmon in the death of his father, William Harmon, on July 9, 2011. Mr. Harmon joined the Chapter several years ago and Chris said his Dad really enjoyed the meetings, always having a good time.

This is the usual reminder in this column at this time of the year. Many schools are back in session already, or will be after Labor Day. Please be alert to the added traffic in the morning and mid- to late-afternoon. Look out for the walkers and school busses. Be a part of the Safety Patrol!!

Please let us know of any members, families, or friends to whom a card may be sent or a phone call made. The Chapter phone is (423) 753-5797 or call Nancy Jewell at (423) 282-0918. Thanks for helping us keep in touch.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

by Bob Yaple

General: A new wash-up basin has been installed outdoors at the entrance to the box car. It replaces the broken down lavatory that has partially blocked the box car door for years.

400 Moultrie Diner: A very successful and much appreciated clean up party was held on Saturday, July 30th, involving the 400 and Crescent Harbor. A picnic cook out was enjoyed by these hard working people.

The brake valves are now at Pittsburgh Air Brake for re-certification and hopefully will be back in time for a PC-1 inspection later this month.

Crescent Harbor: Several work items from last month's list have been accomplished and work continues on the remainder. One usually simple improvement - changing an air brake pipe bracket - led to discovery of a severely eroded crossover pipe between the brake reserve air tanks. The eroded pipe caused misalignment of reserved air tank 9 placed on the car before it was moved from Florida. These pre-conditions forced repairing the belly pan over the tanks. Such is Life! All the newly polished bright work that has been reinstalled really looks great.

Photos of the Crescent Harbor Workday

Photos taken during the July 30th Crescent Harbor Workday are now available on the Chapter's web site in the "Photo Gallery" (under the Crescent Harbor category). Looks like all had a great time and did a fabulous job. Well done, crew!

Chapter Notices

Sign-up for Fall Excursions

We still have a few car host positions available for our October 29th and 30th excursions to Roanoke, VA and Toccoa, GA. If you have not done so already, please turn in your FALL EXCURSION WORKERS form at the next Chapter meeting or mail it to WATV EXCURSION, P. O. BOX 432, JOHNSON CITY, TN, 37605.

The Salisbury Super 8 is filling up fast! Please call in your reservations ASAP at (704) 738-8888 and ask for the WATAUGA VALLEY RESERVATIONS for October 28th and 29th (and the 30th if you want to stay over Sunday night.)

Programs for 2011

We still need programs for our General Membership Meetings for the remainder of 2011. If you have any programs, including railroad slides, a video, a DVD, or know of a possible speaker, contact Nick White, the Program Director, at any Chapter meeting; call the chapter phone (423) 753-5797; or e-mail wataugavalley@embarqmail.com.

LIBRARY DONATIONS

Please bring your railroad book donations to any membership meeting or call the chapter office at (423) 753-5797. Our Railroad Section at the Jonesborough Library is growing everyday. If you are finished reading or just want to donate, put your books to good work. We have plenty of room to add more books!

Chapter Field Trip to Knoxville

It must be said that if you did not attend the August 6th Chapter Member-only field trip to Knoxville then you missed the best trip yet. We had two van loads and 3 cars following that started out in Jonesborough at 8 am for the two-hour drive to Knoxville.

After arriving, we boarded the Knoxville River Boat for a trip down the beautiful Tennessee River. Included was a very delicious lunch. Upon leaving the River Boat, we headed over to the "Three Rivers Rambler" for a great train trip behind steam to the east end of Knox County.

Chapter member Chris Starnes, our engineer, did a magnificent job of running the steam engine out of the Marble Mines. After de-boarding from the train, we headed over to the KNOXVILLE HOLSTON RAILROAD for a tour of the diesel rebuilding shop. Members saw some very interesting power inside of the shop including several rebuilds. Next, we headed to the steam shop where SOUTHERN RAILWAY no. 154 was being reassembled after its boiler test. [See pictures of the field trip in this issue's *Photo Section*.]

Homeland Security

by Gary Price

Saddam Hussein: terrorist. Osama Bin Laden: terrorist. Gary Price: terrorist?????? Well, that is exactly the way I felt when I got the email from Homeland Security. Intrigued?

As a railfan, sometimes we manage to accumulate way too much rail-related items. Whether it is railroad paperwork, or railroad memorabilia of all shapes and sizes, it all takes up space. When you combine all that with living in a townhouse complex, that space can become extremely limited. With shelves and closets full of trains, the time had finally come, and the decision was made to let some of my items go. After careful consideration, I decided that if it doesn't pertain to the NORFOLK AND WESTERN, or the MARION AND RYE VALLEY, it had to go. And how would it go? By my old faithful friend eBay, of course. Over the past several years I have moved several railroad items by this method, and I have learned to trust their services.

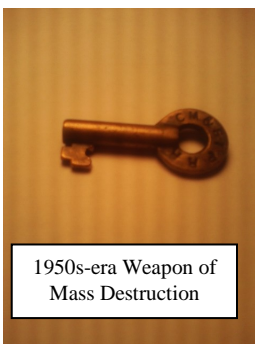
The first item selected for auction was a BALTIMORE AND OHIO RR kerosene lantern with a CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO amber globe. I had been given this lantern several years. The C&O globe was unusual, so I knew that it would spark some interest for B&O fans out there in eBay land. The auction went off with a hitch, and it will sell for more than I expected.

The second item that I put up for auction was a CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, AND ST. PAUL RAILROAD switch key. This key was made of brass, and opened switch locks with the familiar backwards nine configuration that was used on most railroads of the United States during the 40's and 50's. Around the ring of the key was stamped CM&STPRR in bold letters. I actually found this key in the bottom of a box of NORFOLK AND WESTERN stock certificates that I purchased at an antique auction. I already had a N&W, SOUTHERN, and VIRGINIAN switch key in my collection, so the CM&STP key was out of place and I just knew that a MILWAUKEE ROAD fan from Wisconsin would love to have the key in their collection. So I built the auction page for the key, and hoped for the best.

Later that day, the page for the key completely disappeared and Suzie informed me that I had an urgent email concerning my account. I was shocked to discover that Homeland Security had flagged my account, and had the page removed. The nice little note warned me that it was illegal to sell railroad keys of any age, shape, or use on online sites like eBay, or craigslist. It

goes on to explain that there are too many railroad keys still in use across America, and it is a security risk if a key is sold that could be used to sabotage America's transportation network. The warning also covered keys pertaining to aviation and public transportation.

I guess it is a good thing to know that Homeland Security is on the job and paying attention, but I highly doubt that BNSF is still using a MILWAUKEE ROAD switch lock from 1950. Better safe than sorry, I guess. Now the worry shifts to whether or not I am on the Homeland Securities POI list (Person of Interest), and if I just happen to fly in the near [continued on next page]



future will an extremely large agent with rubber gloves suddenly appear and with a gruff voice say "Mr. Price, would you please follow me?" I can assure you now, that he WILL NOT find a railroad key in the place he is about to look.

In the News - Region

CHUCKEY DEPOT REPORT

The Chuckey Depot relocation project is about to come to a close. The interior has been removed along with the roof. Projections are that the depot will be completely moved from the Chuckey site within 2 weeks of this writing [mid-August]. The station lumber will be moved to Jonesborough via tractor trailer and stored until it is put back up.

Photos of the removal operation will be available soon in upcoming issues of the Whistle Stop.

Fall Excursions out of Roanoke

Trip details and ticket ordering information for Roanoke NRHS' November 5th roundtrip excursion to Abingdon and November 6th roundtrip excursion to Bluefield are now available at http://www.roanokenrhs.org/Fall_2011_NRHS_Amtrak_Flyer.pdf. Ticket orders are now being accepted.

New Creeper Stop

The *BRISTOL HERALD COURIER* reported in June that a new stop along the Virginia Creeper Trail, Alvarado Station & Museum, is now open. The location is half way between Abingdon and Damascus. The section of trail damaged by April's tornado should be reopened by now. [ED. NOTE: Sorry, folk, but sometimes the news travels slowly to New England, where your Editor resides.]



National Narrow Gauge Convention 2011

September 7-10, 2011

Hickory, NC

For information, go to:

<http://www.tarheelpress.com/ngc/>



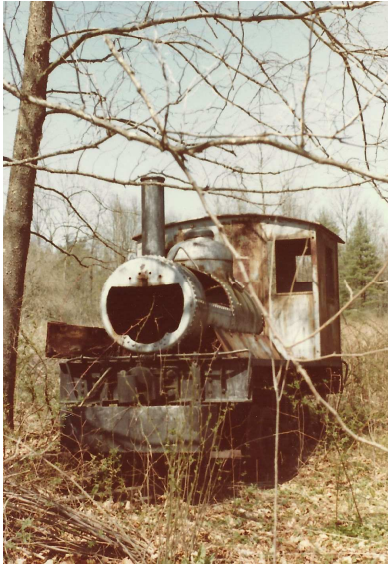
Photo Section



Don Findley sent along these shots of the Chapter's August 6th field trip to Knoxville. Steam locos, river boats and good friends! Does it get any better than this?



Resurrected?



Before



After?

When your Editor lived in Tennessee (and when gas was inexpensive) I used to take Sunday jaunts chasing down railroad ghosts. On one of those forays in 1982 I stumbled across the derelict “steam” engine pictured above on the left. Obviously a small industrial engine, it sat abandoned in what appeared to be a former industrial site south of Damascus, VA. I’ve identified it as “steam” because all of its original plumbing had been removed and replaced by a diesel engine. I was never able to uncover any information regarding either the engine or the site.

On a recent trip through Damascus an engine on display near the Virginia Creeper Bike Trail (photo to the right) caught my eye. It’s just far too similar not to be the same locomotive, resurrected from the weeds and (once upon a time) given some cosmetic restoration. Another photo I have of the derelict shows the same wheel set under the engine frame. The wheels “seem” out of place, and I wonder if this was a truck installed in the steam to diesel conversion effort. Unfortunately, there was no information offered at the display, and the origins of this tiny little work horse remain a mystery.

How Hot Was It, Johnny?



Skip Banner sent us this photo circulating the web of UP ribbon rail in North Platte, NE. Someone remarked about this kinking resulting from ribbon rail lacking expansion joints. Our observation is that it must have been rather toasty out there that day.

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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