

Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum

P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN. 37605-0432

(423) 753-5797

www.wataugavalleyrrhsm.org



Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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Back in May, we see our own Gary Price standing with the N&W 475 Steam Locomotive at Strasburg Rail Road. He was on his way back from a vacation in Niagara Falls with his family. He also got to ride behind the 611 while visiting. We are glad to hear of Gary's successful Kidney Transplant at the UVA Hospital in Charlottesville, VA. Photo courtesy of his daughter.

June 26th General Membership Meeting

The Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum will have our regular meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday, June 26, 2023 at the Chuckey Depot / Museum at 110 2nd St Jonesborough. Mark your calendar so you will not miss this meeting. The program will be on Civil War Trains 1861 to 1864. This program will promise to be a great and informative program.

Bring a friend out for a relaxing evening with your fellow members.

Member Notes

Please keep Gary Price, Fred Pfohl, Tony King and Jack Maloney in your thoughts and prayers for various health reasons. To request that one of our members or family be reported in the Whistle Stop, email a request to wataugavalley@gmail.com.

Welcome Aboard!

New members:

Timber Rice, Morristown, TN, Daniel James Levinson & Arlene Mandell, Newland, NC
Hope everyone has a good Summer and great 4th of July.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURES

If you know someone that is interested in joining the Watauga Valley Railroad Museum, new brochures are available to give out. Either go by the Chuckey Depot and pick one up or phone the WVRHS&M office at (423) 753-5797.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE DINNER ON THE DINER CAR EVENT

We are in need of some volunteers for the dinner on the diner car event on June 23 and 24. If you can help, please call Mike Tilley @ 423-335-1100. **See sign up sheet on last page.**

2023 WVRHS&M Rail Events

Plans for Dinner on the Diner follow. Lunch will be served at 12:00 pm on Friday, June 23rd, and dinner will be served on Saturday, June 24th at 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm. All meals will be served in WVRHS&M's vintage dining car, the Moultrie, followed by entertainment from an authentic railroad storyteller. Tickets are \$60.00/person for dinner and \$35.00/person for lunch, must be purchased in advance, and are available at the Jonesborough Visitors' Center, located at 117 Boone St.; by calling (423) 753-1010 between 9 am and 5 pm; or purchased online at www.jonesboroughtn.org.



Refunds are not available. Diners may choose a table for two or four; however, due to a limited number of smaller tables, parties with fewer than four may be seated with other diners. As there is limited parking at the rail yard where the dining car is parked, all patrons will park cars at the Jonesborough Senior Center, 307 E. Main St., and be shuttled a short distance to and from the dining car at no charge.

Excursion

We are happy to announce that the Watauga Valley Railroad Museum will be having a Fall excursion on Saturday September 16th on the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad. Tickets will go on sale soon. ***It will be powered by Steam.***



Chuckey Depot / Museum

With the summer season arriving, our exhibit honoring, 'The influence of women and African Americans on the railroad industry' is bringing in many visitors. On some days 50 plus visitors. We are expecting a record month in July with Jonesborough Days coming up July 1st & 2nd. It has been announced that the next exhibit at the Museum will be on the Railroads around Johnson City.

Training Sessions in the Plans for the Chuckey Depot Museum

The next training session for the museum will be in July, get **involved** to volunteer at the depot/museum one day a month. Please call the Chapter office at 423-753-5797 or email wataugavalley@gmail.com to get your name on the list. We are needing more host since the hours of the depot have been extended.



Thanks to some work, the shrubbery and landscaping are looking good around the Museum and the Southern X450 Caboose.

The former Canadian National Railways #5288 finally made it's way through our area on June 13th. It is traveling to Pennsylvania on NS 14Z as it passes the Chuckey Depot Museum. It has been on static display for around 20 years at the TRVM in Chattanooga. Built in March of 1912, it will be restored to operating conditions for use in excursions on the Colebrookdale Railroad.



WHISTLE TRUCK RENTALS

Add excitement, fun and education for the entire family at your next event or parade by renting Watauga Valley's "Whistle Truck". This truck is a self-contained trailer featuring a collection of unique, historically-significant whistles from the steam locomotive era and the means to blow them.



Steam locomotive whistles, more resonant and musical than modern, electronic horns, were audibly distinct. Also, engineers of that day had their own unique way of blowing whistles, providing an aural "signature" that identified the man at the throttle to anyone within hearing distance. The "Whistle Truck" offers an opportunity to everyone of all ages to thrill to this bygone, haunting sound and,

perhaps, create their own "signature" whistle sound.

The whistles safely use air from a 185 CFM Sullair compressor and a 125 gallon surge tank. There is no steam involved in the operation. The rig - the Truck and trailer - is towed by a custom built Ford F900 Diesel Truck.

The collection includes vintage steam whistles from railroads such as the N&W, SOUTHERN, CB&Q and WESTERN MARYLAND and an accurate replica of the famous "Casey Jones" whistle. Historically significant in the collection as well are air (diesel) horns from CSX, N&W and VIRGINIAN and various cabooses (signal) whistles.

For more information to have the Whistle Machine at your event, contact the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum at [423-753-797](tel:423-753-797) or wataugavalley@gmail.com.

PROGRAMS NEEDED FOR 2023

The WVRHS program committee is looking for General Membership programs for 2023. Please notify us at the June meeting or email wataugavalley@gmail.com if you can do a program, we are looking for speakers, also if you know someone that would come and present a railroad related program. And as always were looking for DVD and slide programs.

LIBRARY DONATIONS

Anyone that has old Railroad Books that you want to give away, please call 423 753-5797

Mechanical Department Report

by Art DeVoe



The weather has been good for the WV Mechanical team. There has been a lot of good work days at the yard. Summer is upon us and we can get some work done. **Thank you all who served.**

Were needing volunteers at the coach yard, please call the WVRHS office at 423 753 5797 or email wataugavalley@gmail.com if you have interest in working at the coach yard on Tuesdays.

ROLLING STOCK



St Augustine – Is back at the yard being repaired, as shown in the photo, getting it ready for Fall and Winter Work. [WATX 500]

Powhatan Arrow – Is in service at NCTM. [WATX 539]

Moultrie – Is back at the yard being readied for the “Dinner on the Diner” event. [WATX 400]

Crescent Harbor – Serving as an AirBNB through September 11th and then traveling to Stanton VA to serve on the 611 excursion trips.

Clinchfield 100 – Is at the North Carolina Transportation Museum getting upgrades to its wheels and bearings as shown in the photo.



GSMR Excursion

All Aboard

Great Smoky Mtn. Train Excursion was a big success with 710 or so delighted passengers on the train. All had good time, the weather held out and good fellowship for all who hosted on Saturday May 20, 2023. Below are a few photos courtesy of Member, **Bob Hand.**



Editor Photo

Bob Hand posing for his official excursion Portrait



In the News

[[Trains.com/Facebook](#)]

BRYSON CITY, N.C. — The Great Smoky Mountain Railroad has announced plans to restore operation Southern Railway No. 722, a 2-8-0 built by Baldwin in 1904.

Plans are to convert the locomotive from coal to oil firing in a process estimated to be completed in 2026, the railroad said in a press release.

The locomotive operated on the Southern until the early 1950s, then was sold to the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad in 1952 and served as a switcher in Johnson City, Tenn. It was reacquired by Southern in 1967 and was a key part of the railroad's steam program until 1980. It then went to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, where it operated until 1985. It was acquired by the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad in 2000.

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The Great Smoky Mountain Railroad is owned and operated by American Heritage Railways, which also owns and operates the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. Great Smoky Mountain launched a steam program in 2015 with a rebuild of its No. 1702, a 2-8-0 built by Baldwin in 1942 for the U.S. Army Transportation Corps. That locomotive was converted from coal to oil firing, as is planned for No. 722.



Photo: Bill Schafer

Southern Heritage Locomotive

NS 8099 has finally been repaired and put back on the road. You'll recall it was wrecked in a rockslide derailment back in December of 2021 in and around Pittsburgh. Here you see it back in service pulling a train over the hill at C.P Rocky Mount in Virginia.



Photo by: Nathan

Scenes From the Past

Submitted by Mike Tilley



In 1967 we see a Clinchfield coal train stopped right before Emberville Rd. crossing in Johnson City. The lead unit had caught fire and the Johnson City Fire Department was extinguishing the blaze.



Photo of Clinchfield No. 1 at the Johnson City Station in 1967 on its first test run. It stalled three times between Erwin and Kingsport. One coach was dropped off in Kingsport to get back to Erwin. Mike Tilley is the young lad in the yellow coat beside the engine. **Photo by David Devault**

Display in the Block

by Les Billings

For this month I thought I would add a little splash of orange around. I always like to see these orange BNSF locomotives. This adds a little color to a lot of black and white. The following are a few shots that I have been able to catch.



On a rainy February Saturday afternoon of this year, NS 288 rumbles through Johnson City with BNSF 3871. A GE ET44C4 built in 2015. Rain never stops a Railfan from getting the right photo. If you look close, you can see the rain drops.



[Left] On a special flat car train, we see BNSF 7708 (GE ES44DC), it is a bit older than one above. It was built in 2005. I photographed it in Johnson City as it is passing by the south end of the Veterans Administration on April 30 of the year.



[Left] On a late Sunday afternoon in April, NS 278 brought BNSF 7151 as a pusher. Seen here crossing the VA rear entrance in Johnson City about a mile from the downtown area. Here, he is coasting as it is downhill through JC.



Left] Passing the Chuckkey Depot Museum on NS 126, is an old BNSF Locomotive (2335) with a GSM marking . I believe it was on it's way to be stored and then restored to run on the Great Smoky Mtn Railroad.

[Right] On a Sunday afternoon in early June, I made my way to Piney Flats to catch a couple of trains. I had heard that the NS 127 had a BNSF locomotive with the warbonnet design. It turned out to be #746 a GE C44-9W. It was the 3rd unit out of 4. C.P—Curtis.



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TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Watauga Valley members

We are having our annual Dinner on the Diner Event fundraiser this Friday (23) and Saturday (24) at Coach Yard in Jonesborough. We are needing volunteers like in the past to help people on the shuttle bus, check them in on the diner and help seat people. The cater will be serving and handling food. We need as many as possible to make this event happen.

The times are as follows

Friday June 23 12 noon. _____

Friday June 23 5pm _____

Saturday June 24 12 noon _____

Saturday June 24 6pm _____

If you can work please put your name on the date and time you can work and send back to wataugavalley@gmail.com. Please note if you have already told me when you can work , please send an email anyway to refresh my memory.

Thanks

Mike Tilley