

Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
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Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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WVRHS&M members and guests are treated to a ride of recently-acquired ex-CLINCHFIELD business car 100 during "Clinchfield Days" at the North Carolina Transportation Museum. For complete story, see page 3. [Photo by Kevin Gilliam]

March 24th General Membership Meeting

This month's General Membership Meeting of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum will be held at 6:30 pm on March 24, 2014 at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. Our program this month, presented by Richard Baker, features a DVD highlighting the NORTHERN PACIFIC steam trains, both passenger and freight. Come out, bring a friend, and enjoy a great night of railroading.

Member Notes

By Nancy Jewell

Please keep the following folk in your thoughts as they deal with health concerns: Helen Calhoun (surgery), Linda Calhoun (broken leg recovery), Bob Yaple, and Walter Byrd. As always, let us know of any member, friend or family to whom a card might be sent or a phone call made. The office phone number is (423) 753-5797 or call Nancy Jewell at (423) 282-0918. We want to keep in touch.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

By Bob Yaple

GENERAL. The bad weather has again taken its toll on the Watauga Valley Mechanical Team in working at the yard the last several weeks. Hopefully the weather will turn around and we can get some of the work done that was planned for the spring.

Powhatan Arrow coach - Is still in service at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer. 539 recently had its roof repainted along with buffing of some bad spots on the car body. New brake shoes, shade repair, new toilet install and generator work has been preformed on the car. 539 was cleaned and serviced for the "Cherry Blossom Special" to Washington.

St. Augustine coach - The mechanical team has replaced the rubber tile in the restrooms along with the lighting ballast and rewired in the car. A new window has been installed to replace the broken one. New wall paper was installed to replace the train design border. The 500 departed the Jonesborough coach yard on March 13 for service on the "Cherry Blossom Special" to Washington DC on March 21.

Moultrie diner – WVRHS&M members have been doing cleaning on the kitchen area.

Crescent Harbor sleeper / lounge - Work has resumed on the Genset. Also, head end power wiring repair is ongoing under the car.

MOTOR CAR STORAGE NEEDED

We are in need of a dry place out of the weather to store our motor car, preferring a building. If any of our members has or knows of such a place, please give us a call at (423) 753-5797.

CAR HOST TRAINING FOR BRISTOL TRIPS

All WVRHS&M volunteers for the Bristol trips will be receiving the car host line up along with safety instructions for hosting these two trips in the next couple of days. Car Host training will be held on Friday evening, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. and on Saturday morning, March 22, at 9:00 a.m. at the Jonesborough Coach yard. All workers are asked to attend one of these meetings for car host training and operating updates.

**Programs (speakers, DVDs, films, etc.) are needed for 2014 Membership Meetings.
Contact Nick White at (423) 753-5797.**

CLINCHFIELD DAYS AT NCTM

On Saturday, March 15, 2014, the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC held its annual Spring Kickoff Event, the theme this year being the CLINCHFIELD RAILROAD. Chief among the events was the official public debut of WVRHS&M's ex-Clinchfield Office Car #100, resplendent in its fresh, new paint in official CRR colors. The Clinchfield 100 brought up the markers on the NCTM passenger train which offered five rail rides around the property. (The 3:30 p.m. trip was open only to WVRHS&M members and guests who were provided with many photo opportunities.) In addition, a lineup of featured speakers were present covering the Clinchfield 100, both past and present, along with a presentation on the new book on the Clinchfield One-Spot by A.J. "Alf" Peoples and Mark Stevens. The Watauga Valley Whistle Machine was also on location, along with an appearance by steam locomotive Lehigh Valley Coal Company 0-6-0 #126 on the museum's caboose train and a model train show. Members were treated with the opportunity to purchase CLINCHFIELD Railroad T shirts picturing the CLINCHFIELD 100 at the NCTM gift shop.

Program speakers were as follows:

Mike Tilley, WVRHS&M President, spoke on the history of Car 100 along with details for future plans.

Skip Oldham, President of Oldham Travel, recounted his experiences in riding on Car 100 when it was in service on the CLINCHFIELD.

Alf Peoples and Mark Stevens presented a program on their great, new book, **The One and Only**, a history of CLINCHFIELD No. 1 steam locomotive. There are many photos of Car 100 in the book.

Bob Willetts, President of Willetts Rail Car Services of Spencer, NC, spoke of Car 100 during its years before the CLINCHFIELD on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad as a coach and as a dining car "Orlando". Bob summarized the restoration of the car in the NCTM Spencer Shops the last couple of months. He talked of taking care of the Car 100 for 16 years at the Lancaster & Chester Railroad passenger car shops.

Jim Lonon Jr., son of Jim Lonon Sr., CLINCHFIELD RAILROAD superintendent, relived about his experiences of riding aboard Car 100 with his father. Jim was thrilled to ride her again after 40 years!! Jim said it was a blessing to know that his two little granddaughters (ages 6 & 3) got to ride where there great-grandfather once stood.

The Watauga Valley RHS&M would like to thank Kelly Alexander and all of her wonderful volunteer staff in making this a day a huge success. We appreciate the following members who came to Spencer to offer a helping hand: Mike & Lois Tilley, Tony King, Art DeVoe, Cline Knowles, Ken Thacker, Alf Peoples, Nick White, Walker and Penny May, Ian Ring, Skip Oldham, and Bob Klemper.

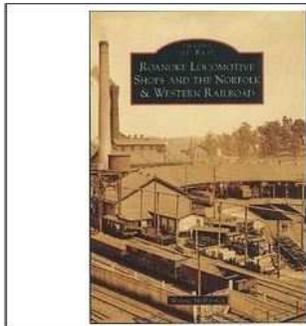
Check out photos of this terrific event on the next page.

Photo Section

Thanks to Kevin Gilliam for these wonderful shots of WVRHS&M cars 100 and 539 during the March 15th Clinchfield Days at NCTM.



Railfan's Corner



Roanoke Locomotive Shops and the N&W

The Roanoke Shops have been an indispensable part of the Roanoke Valley for more than 125 years. This pictorial history chronicles the history since its founding in 1881. With more than 200 images, many of which have never been published. Includes history from the Roanoke Machine Works days, N&W and on to current NS operations.

Authored by NWHS member **Wayne McKinney**.

Softcover, 128 pages, Arcadia Publishing

By **Wayne McKinney**

Shipping late March

SKU# 138.180

\$21.99 Add to Cart



WE ARE RAILFANS. Check out this great short video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C12ayclepqA> [Thanks to Kati Phelps]



For some interesting information and photos of Appalachian coal country and rail action, past and present, go to <http://www.coalcampusa.com>.

In the News



A 17th locomotive has joined NCTM's upcoming Streamliners at Spencer event. IOWA PACIFIC #515 (at right) is the latest locomotive to join the roster. The 61-year-old engine has enjoyed a long history on the rails, pulling passengers and freight through both the cold winters of Chicago and the desert heat of Arizona. These days the engine wears the colors of IOWA PACIFIC, inspired by the paint scheme of the ILLINOIS CENTRAL RAILROAD.



Photo by Ed Ellis



#4501 UPDATE.

Fabrication and installation of all the piping that goes under the jacket plus all the external steam and water piping has been completed. All that is lacking for the steam test is completing the installation of the new throttle, closure of the steam dome, and connecting the branch lines to the tender. After the steam test, the restoration team will apply the lagging and jacket. Still to be installed are the air brake system, brake rigging, rods, and valve gear. Valve gear work has started and a long standing problem was initiated through the execution of "Operation Valve Square.". The crossheads, guides, pistons, and piston rods are currently at a local machine shop being reworked. Nothing has been freshly painted; any green or black seen is leftover from previous paint jobs.

A date for completion is yet to be determined. A restoration team member notes that anyone who has ever been involved in a restoration project knows that picking a completion date is a kiss of death. They do feel confident that she will run sometime in 2014. [Railway Preservation News]



DURBIN & GREENBRIER VALLEY rebounds from accident

The DURBIN & GREENBRIER VALLEY RAILROAD recently has published its 2014 operating schedule. Of note is Railroad President John Smith saying that the "Cheat Mountain Salamander", a popular roundtrip scenic excursion operating from Elkins to Cheat Bridge and return, will operate on schedule this season. The train was struck by a log truck in October of 2013, severely damaging its passenger consist and disrupting the remainder of its 2013 schedule. The railroad plans to repair the two passenger cars that were involved in the accident and also place a similar car, purchased two years ago, into service. Additionally, a former DELAWARE & HUDSON Railway Post Office car will also be featured in the "Cheat Mountain Salamander", a newly restored acquisition by the railroad. The 142-mile railroad operates a variety of passenger trains out of Elkins and Durbin in the mountain counties of northern West Virginia. [Interchange, Baltimore NRHS]



The GRAND CANYON RAILWAY will fire up their 1923 ex-CB&Q 2-8-2 #4960 for a regularly scheduled trip to the south rim of the Grand Canyon on April 5th, her initial trip in 2014. The #4960 will repeat this route on the first Saturday of each month until the season ends. The significance of this engine is that it has local ties as it once powered excursion trains from Bristol to Hiltons, VA over the short-lived BRISTOL & NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD in 1980 and briefly out of Benham, VA in 1981.



AMTRAK EXHIBIT TRAIN CROSS-COUNTRY TOUR ON TRACK FOR 2014.

For the third consecutive year, AMTRAK is showcasing its past, present and future in a traveling Exhibit Train that will make various stops to communities around the country. The Exhibit Train allows visitors to take a self-guided tour to catch a glimpse of more than four decades of AMTRAK providing mobility and connectivity to the nation. The first stop of the 2014 tour will be at the Arizona Railway Museum in Chandler, AZ on March 1 and 2 to complement their 30th anniversary celebration.



Since the train's inception in 2011, new displays have been added such as workable signals, interactive virtual sleeping accommodation tours and trivia with returning favorite displays including the locomotive stand and horns. In addition, it features photos, uniforms, vintage advertising and memorabilia from AMTRAK's beginning in 1971 to today's modern-sleeping cars and high-speed rail service. Exclusive AMTRAK merchandise will also be available for purchase. The Exhibit Train includes two

locomotives, three renovated baggage cars and one bistro car, all with historic paint schemes. For most stops, the AMTRAK Veterans' Locomotive will lead the train. Introduced in 2013 and featuring a patriotic paint scheme, it is a tribute to our servicemen and women and supports the company's goal that 25 percent of new hires will be from the military by 2015. Regionally, the exhibit will make an appearance from May 30 to June 1 at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer and on October 18-19 at the Virginia Transportation Museum in Roanoke.



The first of Amtrak's 70 new ACS-64 electric locomotives from Siemens Rail Systems U.S. entered revenue service on the Boston-New York-Washington D.C. Northeast Corridor on the morning of Feb. 7, 2014. The ACS-64, Amtrak's new electric workhorse, known as the Cities Sprinter, will become the mainstay of Northeast Corridor operations, powering all Northeast Regional and long-distance trains, and will match existing trip times at speeds of up to 125 mph. Eventually, they also will operate on the Keystone Service linking New York, Philadelphia, and Harrisburg, Pa.



The new locomotives will replace Amtrak's existing AEM7 fleet. The AEM7s have between 25 and 35 years of service and average mileage of more than 3.5 million miles traveled with some approaching 4.5 million miles. Amtrak expects to have several more ACS-64s enter revenue service in the coming weeks and then will receive monthly delivery of the remaining units through 2015. The ACS-64 "is designed for improved reliability and easier maintenance, leading to faster turn-around times and increased availability for service," Amtrak said. "A state-of-the-art microprocessor system performs self-diagnosis of technical issues, takes self-corrective action, and notifies the locomotive engineer. In addition, there are redundant systems to ensure HEP (head-end power) is maintained to the passenger cars to keep heating and cooling systems working, the lights on, and the doors operational. The locomotives are energy efficient and use a regenerative braking system to feed energy back into the power grid. Together, the 70 locomotives could save over 3 billion kilowatt-hours of energy and could result in more than \$300 million in savings.

Upcoming Events



March 21-23, 2014: “Cherry Blossom Special”. SOLD OUT!!!
 Passengers will travel in style and comfort aboard WATV coaches 500 and 639 on this trip.



April 5-6, 2014: NORFOLK SOUTHERN 21ST Century Steam excursions (Bristol – Radford, VA and Bristol – Bulls Gap, TN) hosted by WVRHS&M in partnership with NORFOLK SOUTHERN and TVRM.

BOTH TRIPS ARE SOLD OUT. 14 coaches, powered by steam locomotive #630 (ex ET&WNC #207, which operated between Johnson City and Elizabethton between 1952 and 1967) are sure to be a railfan’s delight.



April 12, 2014: 12th Annual NC Railroad Expo at the Hickory, NC Metro Center. Vendors will have on hand items for all models scales. Also for sale will be lanterns, locks, photographs, videos, DVDs and books. For details, read <http://www.tarheelpress.com/APRshow.pdf>



May 29 – June 1, 2014:
 “Streamliners at Spencer”, NCTM, Spencer, NC.

A four-day festival for lovers of classic streamlined diesel locomotives of the ‘30s through the ‘50s. **17 diesel locomotives** will be gathered around NCTM’s 37-stall roundhouse for daytime photos, special operations, nighttime shots and more. Primarily a photographic event, this will be a rail fan’s delight.



To order tickets, go to <http://www.nctrans.org/>

***** JUST ANNOUNCED *****

WVRHS&M SUMMER EXCURSION will be on the GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD in Bryson City, NC on Saturday, **August 16, 2014.**

The **Fall AMTRAK Excursion** will be operated on **November 1st** and **2nd, 2014.** Details will be forthcoming in the next issue of the Whistle Stop.

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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