

Whistle Stop



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

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The gleaming kitchen of our dining car "Moultrie", as clean if not more so than many commercial restaurants, stands ready to serve tasty meals to diners on our upcoming excursions. A testament to the many long hours and hard work of our Mechanical Team to keep it operational and volunteers keeping it sparkling clean, over three hundred fifty people have been served at times out of this kitchen. [Mike Tilley photo]

September 26th Membership Meeting

Our next General Membership Meeting will be held September 26th, 2016 at 6:30 pm at the Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. Everett Young will present our program this month, entitled "Coal Country Rails", which features CLINCHFIELD and C&O railroad action in Southwest Virginia and Eastern Kentucky. This program promises to be great and informative. You'll also learn details of our upcoming fall excursions to Charlottesville, VA and Toccoa, GA.

Member Notes

By Edna Carter

Please keep the following folks in your thoughts as they deal with various health concerns. George Ritchie, Kati Phelps, Gary Price and Bob Yapple. 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 Edna Carter at (423)571-3226.

WVRHS&M UNIFORMS AVAILABLE IN SEPTEMBER

Due to our supplier selling out to another company, we have not been able to purchase WVRHS&M uniforms. We now have an agreement with the new company and will have a uniform order form available soon.

Nominations for 2017 Officers and Board Members

The following members were nominated by the WVRHS&M Nominating Committee to serve as your officers and board of directors for 2017. Additional nominations will be taken from the floor at the September meeting.

PRESIDENT: Mike Tilley
SECRETARY: Jim Smallwood
HISTORIAN: Gary Price

VICE PRESIDENT: Bob Schubel
TREASURER: Jeanie Walker

DIRECTOR (3 YEARS): Jim Calhoun
DIRECTOR (3 YEARS): Don Finley

DIRECTOR (3 YEARS): Edna Carter

Fall 2016 Excursions

Tickets for the Watauga Valley RHS&M / North Carolina Transportation Museum Foundation Autumn 2016 train excursions are now on sale; please go to <http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org/excursions.php> for information and details. This is Watauga Valley's tenth year for hosting the first class section of these annual autumn rail excursions. Destinations this year will be Spencer to Charlottesville, VA on October 29th, and Toccoa, GA on October 30th. If you have signed up for the trips and have not done so, please make your hotel reservations at the Salisbury Super 8 ASAP (mention Watauga Valley to get a discount). There will be a safety meeting for all excursion workers on October 24th at the Johnson City Public Library at 6:30 pm.

MODEL OF CRESCENT HARBOR PRESENTED BY BILL HEATON

WVRHS&M member Bill Heaton has done a great job in building an O Scale model of the Crescent Harbor. The model was displayed at the last meeting and all we can say that it's beautiful. Thanks Bill for bringing the Crescent Harbor to the meeting. Look for a photo and more information on this wonderful model in an upcoming newsletter.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

by Jim Magill

ROLLING STOCK

“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATV 539): At coach yard getting a new condensing core on Air conditioning #1.

“St Augustine” coach (WATV 500): At coach yard receiving upgrades.

“Moultrie” diner (WATV 400): New convection and holding ovens are being installed.

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATV 2351): At coach yard receiving upgrades. Some of the upgrades include repairing leaking windows and repairing the fan on the air conditioning motor before heading out October 1 for three weeks (service on the “New River Train” and our Autumn 2016 excursions.

“Clinchfield” business car (WATV 100): We recently had an AMTRAK inspector review Car 100; he stated that the structure on the car was in excellent condition and was a candidate for AMTRAK upgrades. We will have to put another type of truck under the car to meet their requirements

SOUTHERN caboose (X450): Will be leaving the Jonesborough coach yard in the coming weeks to go to its new home beside the Chuckey Depot / Museum in Jonesborough. The caboose will be moved by truck / low boy trailer. An agreement between the Town of Jonesborough, Jonesborough United Methodist Church and the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum has been signed “sealing the deal” to display the newly restored caboose and allowing people to tour the car. It is also planned to offer the caboose for birthday parties. WVRHS&M is proud of our restoration work and looks forward to sharing this piece of railroad history with the general public.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT COACH YARD

With our equipment about to depart for upcoming excursions, we need volunteers to help out at the coach yard to get the cars ready in various ways including cleaning. Please consider volunteering to ensure the cars are presentable; their condition upon arrival reflects upon us all. Call the office at (423) 753-5797, leave a message, and we will call you back.



Tight quarters!!!

Despite not having the luxury of working in a car shop, our Mechanical Team does a fantastic job in keeping our cars in tip-top, road-worthy shape. Here we see Art Devoe, Don Findley and Jim Calhoun installing a new condensing core on WATX 539, the “Powhatan Arrow”.

In the News

Chuckey Museum and Depot at Jonesborough

Progress on the museum is coming along nicely; the finishing touches to the building are being done at newsletter press time. The plan is to have the museum open to the public with all displays up and running by the first quarter of 2017. Many WVRHS&M members have already put their name in the hat for volunteering at the museum when it opens, but we still need more. Please consider this. Watauga Valley finally has a museum to call its own.

Wrecking Derrick Donated to NCTM



[Brandon Roberts, Mitchell News-Journal] The boom was lowered at the end of July and after some small repairs to the brakes and the third hook, called the “stinger,” the Waycross Crane, as it is known, in the yard

at the former Mitchell Lumber Co. [Spruce Pine, NC] was ready for its new home at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer. The 389,200-pound machine, technically called a wrecking derrick, was purchased by [the late] Bud Phillips in the early 1980s and was donated to the museum by his estate. “This was my dad’s passion,” said Bud’s son, Alan Phillips. “He kind of lost interest in the lumber business to some degree – he was more of a miner – but the railroad was his hobby.” Workers from the transportation museum and members of the Phillips family gave the crane a final inspection Saturday, Aug. 6, to prepare for its trip to Spencer.

The crane was steam-powered when built in 1946 and was used primarily in Rocky Mount before being sent to Waycross, GA, hence its nickname. “If the sun hits it just right you can see Rocky Mount written under the paint,” said Doug Nixon, rail operations foreman at NCTM. “Waycross is painted over it.” The crane was converted to diesel and from two to three hooks in 1968. Capable of lifting 250 tons, the crane’s main use was clearing wrecks and derailments, but it also spent time doing other heavy-lifting duties such as bridge replacements.

Many cranes like the Waycross were scrapped instead of being converted to diesel. Railroads have turned away from using rail-bound derricks because it’s cheaper and faster to contract the work out to cleanup companies, according to an article in *Trains Magazine*. While big hooks were once stationed every 75-100 miles, now most major roads have only a few derricks on the property, used for only the most severe or inaccessible wrecks. “They’re getting rare,” Nixon said. “Many railroads scrapped theirs and some museums do have them. Many of these cranes that survived were bought by private individuals and preserved. We are really lucky to have it.”



“Wick” Moorman Named New AMTRAK President and CEO

[AMTRAK press release] AMTRAK announced that it has named Charles W. “Wick” Moorman as its next president and chief executive officer. Moorman, retired chairman, CEO, and president of Norfolk Southern Corp., began leading the company, effective September 1, 2016, its next fiscal year.

Anthony Coscia, chairman of the Board of Directors of AMTRAK said, “We are very pleased that someone with Wick’s experience and vision will lead AMTRAK during this critical period as the company charts a course for future growth and improvement. Under CEO Joe Boardman, and with the support of the Administration and Congress, AMTRAK has achieved record levels of performance and investment. The Board believes Wick can build upon this success in the coming year by launching initiatives to further enhance safety and customer service, modernize our operations, and guide our implementation of the FAST Act.”

“It is an honor and privilege to take on the role of CEO at AMTRAK and I look forward to working with its dedicated employees to find ways to provide even better service to our passengers and the nation,” said Moorman. “At NORFOLK SOUTHERN, our team fostered change by placing a solid emphasis on performance across all aspects of our business which helped develop a stronger safety and service culture throughout the company. I look forward to advancing those same goals at AMTRAK and helping to build a plan for future growth.”

Moorman, a native of Hattiesburg, Miss., comes to AMTRAK after more than 40 years at NS where he rose from management trainee to CEO and chairman of the Board of Directors. Having worked with NS from the ground up, Moorman gained an appreciation for the many facets of railroad operations and used this knowledge to modernize the way NS conducted business, served customers and worked with communities. A graduate of Georgia Tech and Harvard Business School, Moorman serves on the boards of Duke Energy Corporation, Chevron Corporation, the Virginia chapter of the Nature Conservancy, and the Georgia Tech Foundation.

“Wick’s deep operational background and track record of building teams and driving innovation is exactly what we need to provide unparalleled service to the more than 500 communities we serve,” said Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors Jeffrey Moreland. “We are confident that, working together with the Board, Wick can formulate a strong plan to take AMTRAK to the next level and assemble the management team and expertise to carry it forward.”

Moorman succeeds current CEO Joe Boardman, who announced his intention to retire last fall. “I have been humbled to lead this extraordinary organization over the past eight years,” said Boardman. “I look forward to spending time with my family and wish Wick all the best as he brings his excellent experience to AMTRAK.”

“The Board and I thank Joe for his dedicated service to AMTRAK and its customers and for his long career in public service. Under his leadership, AMTRAK delivered record ridership, introduced a series of safety initiatives and modernized its fleet. For this, he should be proud,” Coscia said.

Moorman currently holds securities of a rail carrier. AMTRAK will ensure that any conflict will be avoided as is required by federal law.

 *AMTRAK's Next-Generation of High-Speed Trains*

[AMTRAK blog] At AMTRAK we know the future of the Northeast Corridor (NEC) depends on the investments we make today, which is why we are excited to announce the upcoming arrival of the next-generation of high-speed rail. The new trainsets will replace the current Acela Express equipment and begin service in 2021. As part of this multi-faceted modernization program, AMTRAK is also investing in the infrastructure needed to improve your customer experience onboard the train and in major NEC stations including Washington Union Station and Moynihan Station New York.

This investment will expand and modernize the Acela Express service you've come to expect, while adding the amenities and ride quality of international high-speed train services. This next-generation of Acela Express will give you a more comfortable and productive travel experience throughout your entire journey. Just a few of the new amenities include:

- Approximately one-third more passenger seating, while preserving the spacious, high-end comfort found onboard today
- Modern interior design
- Improved Wi-Fi access and quality
- Personal outlets, USB ports and adjustable reading lights at every seat
- Enhanced food service options
- Exceed the ADA minimum accessibility requirements

By adding 40-percent more trainsets than the current Acela Express fleet, we are providing you with more travel options. Upon delivery of the new trainsets, Acela Express service will be offered every half-hour between Washington, D.C. and New York City during peak times, and every hour between New York City and Boston throughout the day. This expanded fleet will give you more departure options during peak travel times.

The new trainsets are among the safest, most reliable and energy efficient in the world. They have a 35-year track record of transporting billions of customers to their destinations safely. In reliability, we anticipate the new trainsets will be at least eight times more reliable than the equipment it replaces, ensuring that we will get you where you need to go on time, every time. Finally, the new trainsets will reduce operating energy consumption by at least 20 percent, through a combination of minimal aerodynamic drag and lightweight design.

This is the most significant investment AMTRAK has made in its infrastructure and technology in the 45 years of providing passenger rail service to the American public and it was important to us that these trainsets be "Made in America" as much as possible. For this project, we are pleased to be partnering with Alstom, a leading global provider of innovative systems and equipment in the railway sector. Alstom will be building these new trainsets in New York State, with 95 percent of the trainset's components being made in America, and parts coming from more than 350 suppliers in over 30 U.S. states.

We look forward to having you join us on this journey as we work to revolutionize high-speed passenger rail in the country, support the American economy and continue to provide you with a reliable, smooth and efficient ride as you travel throughout the Northeast. Continue to check back here for more details on the progress of next-generation high-speed rail on the Northeast Corridor.

To view a slick promotional video of this new service, produced by Alstom, which has signed the contract to design and build 28 of these new high-speed train sets, go to <http://blog.AMTRAK.com/2016/08/AMTRAKs-next-generation-high-speed-trains/>

C&O #1309 Restoration Update

The C&O 1309 rebuild project is unfolding more slowly than hoped. Fifty-odd years of outside storage took a serious toll. Almost 300 flexible staybolts and other boiler elements were damaged beyond repair. A chunk of the firebox door ring was shot. Kevin Rice, WESTERN MARYLAND SCENIC RAILROAD Chief Mechanical Officer, prudently concluded that a new rear tube sheet was the best option - there were too many cracks to weld. Lots of critical parts were long gone.



The C&O hadn't treated the locomotive

Front engine left-hand piston valve. [Baltimore Sun]

well over its few years of service, and it had been "rode hard and put away wet," to borrow an equestrian term. It was going to be a somewhat bigger project than first imagined. The new tube sheet will go in shortly, and new tubes and flues on the property,

In other work, the tender is completely done. Locomotive replacement tires are mounted, and the appliances are nearly ready. Contractors are fabricating a new cab and preparing to install the tubes and fix those staybolts.

Kevin Rice is a steam locomotive veteran and familiar with big and challenging projects. He is also a cautious and meticulous craftsman. When the 1309 comes together in December, it will be done correctly and be ready for 15 years of reliable service. Rice thinks WMSR will be boiling water in January and hauling people with steam in February.

In May the Governor and Maryland Legislature appropriated \$400,000 to help complete the 1309.

[Taken from "THE AUTOMATIC BLOCK", Western Maryland NRHS]

Coal Trains Return to West Virginia

[trains.com] During a time when Appalachian coal routes are being downgraded or idled, Watco is bringing one back to life. The KANAWHA RIVER RAILROAD, a Watco company, recently restored service on the entire length of NORFOLK SOUTHERN's former West Virginia Secondary in southeast Ohio and West Virginia.

The new short line railroad ran a loaded unit coal train from Dickinson Yard near Charleston, WV north along the Kanawha River to Point Pleasant and into Ohio August 22. The train operated on sections of track in southeast Ohio that had been idled by NS in February. It is the first train to operate the entire length of the route in more than six months.

The Sandusky, Ohio, bound coal train featured two NS run-through locomotives and two NS EMD SD60s on lease to KRR.

KRR managers plan to restore chemical train traffic on the north end of the route, too. NS used to operate its daily NS 380/381 trains from Watkins Yard in Columbus to Dickinson Yard, a distance of nearly 200 miles.

Spring Street Activity ...

Long hours of hard work keep our cars running. Here's just a sample of the varied activity performed by some of our Mechanical Team each Tuesday and Saturday. [All photos posted on our facebook page by Mike Tilley.]



Cline Knowles working on the "Moultrie".



Gary Street installing a two way radio in "Crescent Harbor".



Rich Freeman installing new air hoses on the "Moultrie".



Dan Freeman performs much-needed repairs in our amply-stocked work shop (ex-CRR box car #5586).



A new convection oven for the "Moultrie" ...



... and its new home (formerly housing the steam table) to be shared with a holding oven.

Upcoming Events



OCTOBER 15, 22, 29: "Super Fall Foliage Trips", TCRM, Nashville.
Info: http://www.tcry.org/pass_ops.htm.



OCTOBER 15, 16, 22, 23: "New River Train", 50th Anniversary Celebration. Info: <http://www.newrivertrain.com/nrtOrder.shtml>.



OCTOBER 29 & 30: "Virginia Autumn Special" excursion from Spencer, NC to Charlottesville, VA and the "Georgia Autumn Special" excursion from Spencer to Toccoa, GA. Info: <http://tinyurl.com/jbsqpsk>.



NOVEMBER 12 & 13: "Summerville Steam Special", TVRM, featuring #630 and #4501 double-heading. Info: <http://tinyurl.com/zwr2rjm>.



NOVEMBER 19: "Polar Express Train Ride", GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD and WVRHS&M. Info: <http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org/PolarExpress2016.php>



[trains.com] NS released this image of the latest version of its prototype "mane" paint scheme: a mane with a Tuscan Red stripe behind the cab. According to a NS facebook post, the scheme is known as the Roanoke prototype. The locomotive wearing the

new colors is NS AC44C6M No. 4002. GE built the locomotive as standard cab D9-40C No. 8789. NS's East End Shop in Roanoke rebuilt the locomotive and workers in NS's Juniata Shops in Altoona repainted the engine.

For Your Viewing Pleasure ...

Check out this 1920 Aussie film of a Class A Climax going like a bat out of hell on wooden rails: http://www.lrrsa.org.au/Lr_videos.htm#LangleyVale.

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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