

Whistle Stop



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

Volume 42 No. 3

March 2022



The CSX Business Train, decked out in its fine B&O-style livery, crosses the ex-CRR Boones Creek trestle on a beautiful winter day. [James Guffey photo]

February 28th General Membership Meeting

Our next General Membership meeting will be held on Monday, February 28th, 2022 at 6:30 pm at the Chuckey Depot / Railroad Museum, 110 South Second St., Jonesborough, TN (at the railroad crossing). Our program this month celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum in Chattanooga, TN. We will also have a special guest from Erwin who will discuss the future of the Clinchfield Railroad General Office building. **THE BIG QUESTION: WILL IT BE SAVED OR TORN DOWN?** Come out, bring a friend, and enjoy a great night of railroading with your fellow railfans.

Member Notes

Please keep Connie Hunt, Gary Price, Lois Tilley, and Jack Maloney in your thoughts and prayers for various health concerns.

Welcome new members Richard Szymkowski , Kitty Wilgallon and Joe Wilson.

If you know of someone interested in railroads, please hand them a New Membership Brochure. We have the brochure available at the General Membership meetings.

2022 Officers and Board of Directors and Appointees.

Congratulations and Welcome Aboard! to this year's officers, directors and appointees.

Officers. President: Mike E. Tilley; Vice President: Howard Orfield; Secretary: Jim Smallwood; Treasurer: Jeanie Walker; Historian: Gary Price.

Directors. Art Devoe, Frank Gricus, Rick Chinouth, Brad McCroskey, Jim Calhoun, Ralph Clark, Scott Wise, Bobby Hand, and Tony King.

Appointees. Jim Magill: Chief Mechanical Officer; Art Devoe: Asst. Chief Mechanical Officer; Fred Waskiewicz: Newsletter Editor; Jeff Forrester: Webmaster; Cline Knowles: Whistle Stop Circulation; Mike Tilley: Trip Director; Frank Gricus: Grant Director; Frank Gricus: Depot Camera Director; Robert Mushet: Broadcastify Director; Mike Tilley: Chuckey Depot Advisory Board; Rick Chinouth: Chuckey Depot Advisory Board and Sub Committee Chairman; Sarah Valk: Chapter Attorney; Frank Gricus, Jeanie Walker, and Billy Walker: Nominating Committee.

LATE DUES NOTICE FOR 2022

If you have not paid your dues as of press time, your membership expired December 31, 2021. Please submit your dues ASAP so our membership chairman will not have to send you a LATE NOTICE and to keep receiving your issue of the "*Whistle Stop*".

Membership Dues for 2022 are:

Dues: Individual Membership	\$ 20.00
Family Membership	\$ 5.00 per family member

Benefits: 12 issues of the "*Whistle Stop*", Watauga Valley's newsletter.
Membership in the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum.
Participation in all Museum functions and events.

Dues should be sent to Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum, P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN 37605. For questions email wataugavalley@gmail.com.

PROGRAMS NEEDED FOR 2022

WVRHS&M program directors Howard Orfield and Brad McCroskey are looking for General Membership programs for 2022. Please call (423) 753-5797 if you have an interest in showing a program or let us know at the next General Membership Meeting. We are looking for speakers; let us know of someone who would come and present a railroad related program. And as always, we're looking for DVD and slide programs.

2022 WVRHS&M Train Excursions

The Watauga Valley Excursion Committee is working on several excursions for 2022. The dates and destination of trips identified so far are as follows:

April 2	Hiwassee Gorge
May 14	Great Smoky Mountain Railroad
Sept 17	Great Smoky Mountain Railroad

It is our hope to be able to bring bus service back for these trips.

Chuckey Depot / Museum

A new artifact display will be coming March 4th at the Chuckey Depot. Please attend the grand celebration on Saturday, March 5th at 1pm to 3pm with music and railroad storyteller Gary Price. Make plans to come and see some of your favorite railroad artifacts.

Whistle Truck

The Whistle Truck is now available for lease. Any person or group who has a special event that they would like the Whistle Truck to attend should call (423) 753-5797 to reserve.

Mechanical Department Report *by Jim Magill and Art DeVoe*

GENERAL

The Watauga Valley Mechanical Department is looking for volunteers on Tuesdays to help maintain our passenger cars. If your spouse wants you out of the house after a long winter, please call the office at (423) 753-5797 and leave message or email wataugavalley@gmail.com.



We have three cars at the Watauga Valley coach yard which are 100, 539 and 2351. The restoration projects on the cars are going great. A lot of updates will be going on with the Watauga Valley Railroad Museum equipment. At left we see WATX 539 and 100 at Glade Spring, VA on their trip back to Jonesboro.

ROLLING STOCK

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351), “Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539), and “Clinchfield 100” office car (WATX 100): are back in shop at the Spring St. Coach Yard.

“Moultrie” diner (WATX 400) and “St Augustine” coach (WATX 500): are in service at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

From the Photo Vault ...

This 1950s shot shows the State Street crossing guard shack on the Tennessee side of Bristol. Can you name all of those car models?



ET&WNC 2-8-0 #208 works the east end of Elizabethton, TN, steaming past the freight house. The empty coal cars suggest a return from Coal Chute? (Although too late for the narrow gauge.) [Gilbert Collection, March 1958 photo]

In the News

WATAUGA VALLEY RR SCANNER ON LINE

Watauga Valley RHS&M is happy to announce that a railroad scanner has been installed on 4400-foot-high Holston Mountain, TN. This radio will pick up dispatchers and trains on the Norfolk Southern's A-line from Morristown, TN to Radford, VA and on CSX, where dispatchers have been overheard talking to trains from Elkhorn City, KY to Spartanburg, SC. If you want to hear all kinds of railroad action, the radio can be accessed from your computer at home at no cost. To listen, go to <http://www.broadcastify.com/listen/feed/35435>, click on the listen arrow, and you're there. Thanks to Bob Mushet for the installation work.

New Boiler Will Allow BC&G No. 4 to Run Again

[Alan Byer, *Trains News Wire*] Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad 2-8-0 No. 4, the last steam locomotive in revenue service on the fabled West Virginia short line, will steam again, thanks to a plan to obtain a new boiler for the Consolidation.

John Smith, CEO of Cass Scenic Railroad and West Virginia Central Railroad operator Durbin & Greenbrier Valley Railroad, tells *Trains News Wire*, "I'm meeting with the contractor" — Sistersville Tank Works Inc. of Sistersville, W.Va. — "and the [Federal Railroad Administration] steam inspectors at the start of the new year, to finalize as many of the details as possible prior to the start of constructing the new boiler to make sure we eliminate as many surprises as possible.

"We have the first two progress payments on hand and will do our best to raise the remaining \$300,000 to finish. Once work on the boiler is started it is estimated to take one year to complete."

The locomotive last operated as Southern Railway No. 604 for the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, N.C., hauling visitors on the grounds of the former Spencer Shops from 1987 until the locomotive's FRA-mandated 1,472-day service inspection in 2001. During disassembly of the 2-8-0, museum staff discovered more damage than anticipated, and work eventually stopped when Norfolk & Western 4-8-4 No. 611 came to Spencer for restoration. The museum sold No. 4 to Durbin & Greenbrier Valley for \$150,000, and the locomotive and its tender were moved to Cass in late 2015.

Cass Scenic Railroad Heisler No. 6 previously received a new boiler from Sistersville Tank Works, which has been selected to produce a boiler for BC&G No. 4. Evaluation by the Cass shop crew determined the boiler shell was in good shape, but the flue sheets and firebox would require replacement. Because the Cass crew was busy maintaining its geared-locomotive fleet, and there would be no place to operate No. 4 until the Greenbrier River line was completed, management determined replacing the boiler would be the best option. Sistersville Tank Works, which constructed a boiler for Cass Scenic's Heisler No. 6 some 20 years earlier, was chosen for the job.

Those interested in helping fund the effort can visit the new BC&G No. 4 website (<https://www.steamthe4.com/>) and click on the "donate" link.

Display in the Block
by Les Billings

Hope this finds everyone well. This month I wanted to share some photos from our adventure on the Polar Express Train Ride at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, NC. Our ride was on December 21st. We were scheduled to ride on Train A (Car: Jingle). Unfortunately, this was not one of our 4 cars that was being used. We started the morning touring the museum itself and all it had to offer. That Tuesday was a very cold day, and a lot of the exhibits are in buildings that have no heat. I would recommend warmer weather for the best experience.



Locomotive # 6133 EMD FP7 pulled our Train A.



Walking to our car for loading. Our car was the first car behind the locomotive.



This was our car, a Norfolk Western #44 "Florida", named Jingle for the Express.



The show and ride begin.



The story is read with illustration from the book.



Santa greeting everyone and handing out bells.



A stop at the North Pole with singing and dancing.



A warm ride for the conductor in the caboose with his fire in the stove.

Below are our cars used in the Polar Express Train ride this year. These photos were taken as they were being used. Three of the cars went over on September 16th; they left the yard around 11:30pm. (St. Augustine, Moultrie and Clinchfield car 100). I have a nice video of them passing through Johnson City. The Powhatan Arrow was already in NC. Clinchfield Car 100 and the Powhatan Arrow returned home on February 8th around 2:00am. This was a late night for Mike.



Powhatan Arrow #539 served on Train A. It was named "Blitzen"



Moultrie served on Train A. It was named "Holly".



St. Augustine served on Train A. It was named "Donner".



Clinchfield Car 100 served on Train B. It was named "Cupid".

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Published Monthly by the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
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TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL