

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

Volume 35 No. 8

August 2015



NS SD60E locomotive 911, dedicated to First Responders, parked next to Watauga Valley's coach "Powhatan Arrow" at NCTM in Spencer. [Photo: Mike Tilley]

August 24th General Membership Meeting

The next WVRHS&M General Membership Meeting will be held on Monday, August 24th, starting at 6:30 p.m., and located at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. In this month's program we'll travel with Art Devoe to Alaska and a ride on the WHITE PASS & YUKON RAILROAD. Come out bring a friend and enjoy a great night of railroading with your friends.

Member Notes

By Nancy Jewel

Our sympathy is extended to Patricia Nelson and her husband Lou in the death of Patricia's mother, Winona Laws Langston, on July 25, 2015 in Johnson City. Mrs. Langston had been a lifelong resident of Johnson City.

Please keep the following folk in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns: Jim Calhoun, Sidney Blankenbeckler, Carrie Denny, Gary Price, George and Margaret Holley 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 Nancy Jewell at 423-282-0918. Your help is always appreciated.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN SUMMER TRAIN EXCURSION A BIG SUCCESS

We experienced a very fast ticket sell out of our Summer 2015 excursion on the GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD. We had 10 bus loads going down this year with nearly 600 passengers. Excellent weather stayed with us all day on the bus rides and the 16 car plus four locomotive excursion train. The GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD and the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum teamed up to put the largest excursion trains ever run on the GSMR. WVRHS&M wishes to thank our 27 volunteers that provided wonderful hosting service on the train and buses.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

By Bob Yapple

GENERAL. As stated in the last Whistle Stop, there is renewed interest in expanding the Spring Street Coach Yard in Jonesborough. Discussions continue with the landlord with the goal in making this happen in the next few months. Drawings and surveys have already taken place.

ROLLING STOCK

"Powhatan Arrow" coach (WATV 539): is in excursion service on NORFOLK SOUTHERN Steam program.

"St Augustine" coach (WATV 500): is in excursion service on NORFOLK SOUTHERN Steam program.

"Moultrie" diner (WATV 400): kitchen improvements continue.

"Crescent Harbor" sleeper / lounge (WATV 2351): is in excursion service on NORFOLK SOUTHERN Steam program.

"Clinchfield" business car (WATV 100): the mechanical team continues its search for another set of trucks to go under the 100 that will meet AMTRAK requirements.

As always, volunteers are welcome! Call 423-753-5797.

In the News

Chuckey Museum Restoration Update

Progress is going well on the restoration of the depot. The roof is on the building and work has begun inside the structure.

CSX Announces RR Heritage Unit Series Tribute



Photo credit: trains.com

CSX Transportation has announced it will recognize its predecessor railroads by applying the logos of said railroads below and ahead of the engineer's cab window on selected locomotives. A freshly painted GE AC44CW, No. 256, displaying the red, white and black SEABOARD COAST LINE emblem was spotted in Waycross, GA, recently. A CSX spokesperson stated that ten predecessor railroads' logos had been selected, but the

final number has not yet been determined. ["Blue Ridge Dispatcher", Blue Ridge NRHS]

Louisville & Nashville 4-6-2 No. 152



The Kentucky Railway Museum in New Haven, KY, plans to evaluate No. 152 for a two-phase restoration. The Pacific was built by the Rogers Locomotive Works in 1905 and was used to power excursions at the museum. However, the engine has been out of service since the fall of 2011 due to leaking boiler tubes at the bottom of the rear tube sheet. The museum is seeking donations and volunteer workers to return the locomotive to service. [Trains Magazine Newswire]

The #152 being serviced in Johnson City prior to Watauga Valley's June 1987 excursion to Natural Tunnel, VA. [Photo; Fred Waskiewicz]

Amtrak Twin Cab B-B Electric Locomotive AEM-7 No. 915

Retired AMTRAK twin cab B-B electric locomotive AEM-7 #915 will be preserved at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg. No. 915 is one of 54 AEM-7s built between 1979 and 1988 (#915 was built in 1981) as replacements for AMTRAK's ex-PRR GG-1s. The units were constructed by EMD with major portions designed in Sweden by ASEA, which merged with Brown Boveri in 1988 forming ABB. ["The Timetable", Washington, DC NRHS]



Chesapeake & Ohio 2-6-6-2 No. 1309

The shop at WESTERN MARYLAND SCENIC RAILROAD has added a second crew and is working 7 days a week on restoration of No. 1309. The first crew is working on the tender, which was found to be in very good condition. Among other tasks, the stoker assembly has been removed and is currently being rebuilt. It should be ready for re-installation into the tender by mid-August, and all of the tender work should be complete by the end of August. The second crew is working on the locomotive itself and is currently engaged in boiler work. Later in August, the crew will begin reassembling the boiler. The first of the major appliances (air pumps) is being prepped for shipment to be reworked. According to a status reported to Trainorders.com, it is guardedly optimistic that No. 1309 will be ready for the opening of the WMSR 2016 season.

Recently announced is the award of a \$50,000 grant from the Maryland Historical Trust to aid in the rehabilitation of the locomotive. The grant is administered by the Maryland Department of Planning and will be matched by an additional \$50,000 generated by the railroad ["The Timetable", Washington, DC NRHS]



Former CP Locomotives Returning to Canada

[ED. NOTE. Much has circulated throughout the railfan community about the November 2014 passing of railroad preservationist and tourist line operator Jack Showalter. Jack operated the ALLEGHANY CENTRAL tourist line on the ex-C&O Hot Springs Branch out of Covington, VA from 1975 to 1983 and then moved that operation to Maryland where it ran from Cumberland to Frostburg as the ALLEGANY CENTRAL from 1989 to 1991. The operation was then moved to Staunton, VA where attempts were made to operate over CSX trackage as the VIRGINIA CENTRAL RAILROAD which failed due to the cost of insurance. The motive stars of Jack's lines were ex-CANADIAN PACIFIC G5 class 4-6-2s #1238 and #1286. The #1238 was built in Montreal in 1946 and the #1286 was built at Kingston Locomotive Works in 1948. Stored in Staunton for the last 15 years, the locomotives, purchased by a private individual, are now headed home to Canada, being moved to The Vintage Locomotive Society Inc., the operator of the PRAIRIE DOG CENTRAL RAILWAY in Winnipeg. Five passenger cars will go to NCTM in Spencer. Those cars include three 1948-built Pullman coaches for the GRAND TRUCK WESTERN, an ex-B&O diner, and an ex-U.S. Army diner. NCTM intends to place the B&O diner into service for the Museum's popular Polar Express excursions later this year. The three remaining passenger cars in Showalter's collection, ex-RF&P heavyweights, will go to the Virginia Museum of Transportation for restoration. The following newspaper article provides a more human side to the story. Sources: Chase Gunnoe, Trains NewsWire; Wikipedia; and the Winnipeg Model Railroad Club.]

Staunton Steam Engines Set for Long Trek to Canada
Mike Tripp, Staunton [VA] News Leader

The cranes raised them up onto railway cars that will transport them back home. For years, steam locomotives 1238 and 1286 lived at C&O Flats on the western edge of downtown Staunton. They were the pride and joy of Jack Showalter, steam locomotive preservationist, who always loved the dream of seeing them running the rails, pulling cars filled with passengers.

Some years the dream was a reality while other years the locomotives were left idle. [Continued on next page.]

With the coming of BUCKINGHAM BRANCH RAILROAD to C&O Flats, the locomotives seemed to disappear from view.

“We’ve been storing them on the SHENANDOAH VALLEY RAILROAD hoping we’d have an opportunity to operate them again, and it just never came to pass,” said Sally Kammauff, daughter of Showalter, who died in November. “So they’ve been in Verona since 2004,” she added. That is until recently.[Just recently] the locomotives and their tenders have been seen again at SHENANDOAH VALLEY RAILROAD’s location over on Commerce Road in Staunton.

“Steam locomotives are both very tough and very fragile at the same time,” said Kammauff. “So to protect the locomotives and to speed their passage, they’ve been craned onto flatcars and are now being tied down to protect the load from shifting while in transit.”

That’s right ... The trains are being prepped to go home. “They’re going back to Canada,” said Kammauff. “My father and I would ...” Her voice trailed off a moment as if thinking about her father. “In discussions, we decided that when it was time for us to pass them along ... if we had the chance ... we would like to see them returned to Canada,” she said finally. “The 1238 was built in Montreal in 1946,” she explained. “The 1286 was built in Kingston Locomotive Works (in Ontario) in 1948.” “And they’re sister locomotives,” she added. “They’re both G5 class, and they’re both built for the CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILROAD.” And it seems Canada never forgot. “Since we bought them in 1974, every summer we would have visitors from Canada who would come and kind of mope around,” said Kammauff. “You know ... pine after them in other words because they loved them so much.”

“And they’d come and spend a week or even longer, watching them run and wishing that they were back in Canada,” she continued. “So that’s where we got that from.”

And so very soon, the locomotives will depart Staunton one final time on a long railway trek north. They will ride the rails once more — not under their own steam, but instead as passengers headed home to Canada.



The photo above, circulating the railfan digital network, serves as evidence as to why it is UNSAFE to walk or stand along active rail trackage.

Upcoming Events



AUGUST 28-30: Lincoln Funeral Train and the Leviathan Locomotive. Tours, music, Civil War reenactments and other period activities. See <http://www.nctrans.org/Events/2015-Lincoln-Funeral-Train.aspx>.



AUGUST 29-30: Tweetsie Railroad Heritage Weekend 2015. Blowing Rock, NC. See <http://tweetsie.com/special-events/heritage/>



SEPTEMBER 11-13: Western Maryland Scenic Railroad "Steel Wheels Festival". For details: <https://www.movingfullsteamahead.com/content/steelwheels>.



SEPTEMBER 12-13: Tennessee Valley Railfest. For details: <http://tvrail.com/pages/railfest>.



OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 1. NCTM / WVRHS&M Fall AMTRAK excursions. See below.



NOVEMBER 7-8: 27th Annual Railfest model train show, Bluefield, WV. See <http://tinyurl.com/ptndyqs>.



The remaining schedule for this year's 21st Century Steam Program:

NKP #765

SOU #4501

AUG 22-23: Allentown – Pittston, PA
SEP 12-13: Scranton – Nicholson, PA

SEP 12-13: Jersey – Cleveland, TN
SEP 26-25: Macon – Tennille, GA
OCT 3-4: Atlanta – Toccoa, GA

For ticket information, visit the website of the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum at <http://www.tvrail.com> (#4501), or the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society at <https://www.fortwaynerailroad.org> (#765).

FALL AMTRAK EXCURSION TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets will go on sale for NCTM's Autumn Train Excursions on July 22nd for NCTM and WVRHS&M members and July 23rd for the general public. Scheduled are "The Blue Ridge Autumn Special" from Spencer to Asheville, NC Saturday, October 31st and "The Virginia Autumn Special" from Spencer to Charlottesville, VA on Sunday, November 1st. For detailed trip descriptions and ticket ordering, go to <http://tinyurl.com/oq443aq>.

VISIT WATAUGA VALLEY ON FACEBOOK

You're invited to visit Watauga Valley's Facebook page, hosted by Gary Price. You get news faster than a monthly newsletter and you'll see great photos for which there just isn't room in the Whistle Stop. To date we have nearly 600 folk who have friended us. Finding us is easy: search for "Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum".

Photos



Watauga Valley members attending the August 8th meeting of the Railroad Heritage Alliance at the Craggy Mountain Railroad in Asheville had an opportunity to inspect restored ex-ET&WMC motor car #2. Festivities included a picnic and meeting besides motor car rides. All told, there were nearly 80 in attendance.

Bobby L. Hand captured some of the fun and excitement of last week's GSMR Excursion in the photos below. For more photos, check out our Facebook page.



Whistle Stop

Published Monthly by the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
P.O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN 37605-0432
wataugavalley@gmail.com

Opinions or viewpoints are those of the writer and may not necessarily reflect those of the organization members, officers or directors. Items of interest are welcome and will be credited to the author; however, because of space constraints, all submissions are subject to editing. Permission to reprint *Whistle Stop* articles with the exception of photographs is granted if proper credit is given. Reuse of photographs must receive permission by the editor and the photographer.

Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



**Watauga Valley RHS & Museum
P.O. Box 432
Johnson City, TN 37605-0432**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MATERIAL