

Member Notes

By Nancy Jewel

Our sympathy is extended to Ray Tolley on the loss of his mother and to Mike and Lois Tilley in the recent death of Mike's Aunt, June Bullock of Frederick, Maryland.

Please keep the following folks in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns: Sidney Blankenbeckler, Carrie Denny, Bob May, Bob Yapple and Jim Magill. 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.

DUES NOTICES FOR 2015

2015 Dues Notices have been mailed out and sent electronically via e-mail. If you haven't done so already, please get your dues and check back into the membership chairman Suzie Price at Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum, P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN 37605. You have several options to consider in renewing: (1) joining the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum for \$20.00 individual, adding family members at \$5.00 each; (2) joining the National Railway Historical Society for \$70.00, adding family members at \$5.00 each; (3) joining the Railroad Heritage Alliance for \$35.00 individual, adding \$5.00 per additional family member; or joining all three organizations for \$85.00 individual, adding family members at \$5.00 each. A renewal form is appended to the end of this newsletter. For questions, e-mail wataugavalley@gmail.com.

LIBRARY DONATIONS

Bring your railroad book donations to any membership meeting or call our office at (423) 753-5797. Our Railroad Section at the Jonesborough Library is growing every day. If you are finished reading or just want to donate, put your books to good use. We have plenty of room to add more books. NO MAGAZINES PLEASE.

2015 EXCURSION UPDATES

"CHERRY BLOSSOM SPECIAL" TRAIN EXCURSION

WVRHS&M and the North Carolina Transportation Museum will once again be operating the annual "Cherry Blossom Special" train excursion, leaving on March 12th and returning March 15th. These roundtrips are scheduled from Spencer, NC to Washington, DC. Tours of our nation's capital are included in the trip. For information and tickets, call NCTM at (704) 636-2889 ext. 237.

2015 WVRHS&M EXCURSIONS

At *Whistle Stop* press time, our 2015 excursion schedule has not been announced. We hope to have the schedule available at the January 26 General Membership Meeting.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

The WVRHS&M Mechanical Team is looking for more volunteers. As most of you know, the team is composed of volunteers, retired and many still working, with all kinds of different experiences, a great bunch of guys enjoying working together to keep our equipment up and running on the rails. We now have five operating passenger cars and it takes a lot of manpower to keep the equipment up and running, thus we need volunteers to help with all kinds of projects, even if you do not have any experience. Work days are Tuesdays from 9 am to 5 pm and on Saturdays from 9 am to 12 noon. If you're interested, please call the WVRHS&M office at (423) 753-5797 and leave a message that you are interested in volunteering – and don't forget to let us know how to get in touch with you. If you're tired of lying around the house during the winter months, here's a great chance to get out and make a significant contribution to your organization.

CLINCHFIELD CAR 100: WVRHS&M was recently notified by the AMTRAK inspector that Clinchfield 100 was a candidate for upgrade to AMTRAK. The structure of the car was in excellent condition, although we will have to put another set of upgraded AMTRAK trucks under the car in order to operate it at AMTRAK high speeds. The mechanical team is putting plans together for this upgrade.

ST. AUGUSTINE COACH (WATX 500,

MOULTRIE DINING CAR (WATX 400): Both cars have been in excursion service at the North Carolina Transportation Museum during the past few months. As of press time they are headed back to the Jonesborough Coach Yard.

POWHATAN ARROW COACH (WATX 539): Is at the North Carolina Transportation Museum for interior up grades. The interior is getting painted, the seats are getting upholstered and a new floor will be installed in the car with the Powhatan Arrow logos along the center of the isle as it was when the car was built in 1949. The following souls braved the single digit temperatures and came to the coach yard to unload the 539's seats and place in storage to be moved to the upholsterer: Art Devoe, Frank Rohrer, David Denny, Jack Maloney, Ralph Clark, Bob Hand and Mike Tilley. Thanks to all of you for your help.

CRESCENT HAROBR LOUNGE/SLEEPER: Is in winter storage at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

TRACK EXTENSION: plans for the track extension at the Jonesborough Coach Yard are being worked up. Details will be announced when they are firm.

PLEASE CONSIDER AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF THIS NEWSLETTER

We are still asking members to help us save time and money by switching over to the electronic version of the Whistle Stop. The electronic version (PDF) is in living color and the quality is so much better than the printed copy. You also can take advantage of quick links to referenced material. Please try it! Call the office (423) 753-5797 and provide us with your e-mail address so you can get your next copy on line. You'll be glad you did.

In the News



Jonesborough Depot Railroad Museum Update

Plans call for construction on the railroad museum to begin in early summer. Mike Tilley has been meeting with Jonesborough's Town Manager Bob Browning on the details for the building. Watauga Valley's SOUTHERN Caboose X 450 will be moved to the depot site for display. It will be repainted and restored to its original state. The Depot Committee has also met with Linda and Phil Babb who donated the depot to the town of Jonesborough. Linda and Phil and their son have given us some great ideas on ways to restore the depot to its appearance as it stood for many years in Chuckey, TN.

WVRHS&M members will be doing the planning on the exhibits that will be on display in the museum. Tom Austin of Greeneville, TN donated a semaphore for the station and CSX Transportation donated a signal to be placed beside the station. We have been waiting years for the depot to be erected - now it's really going to happen this summer!



N&W #2156 Update [From "Turntable Times", Roanoke NRHS]

As of this writing, ex-NORFOLK & WESTERN Y6a 2-8-8-2 #2156 remains waiting at the gate for the UNION PACIFIC to pick her up from the St. Louis Museum of Transportation. The rumors as to why she has not moved continue to circulate but nothing factual has been announced. Factually speaking, NORFOLK SOUTHERN has asked to use the Roanoke Chapter Tool Car 1407 to accompany the #2156 back to Roanoke. That will likely make the 1407 the only N&W head end car to ever operate behind each of the 'big three' [A, J and Y class of locomotive]. It has been reported that the #2156 will move in the first quarter of 2015 to Roanoke, where it will be on display at the Virginia Museum of Transportation for five years.



Tazewell Railroad Depot Added to Virginia Landmarks Register

[By BLAKE STOWERS, *Bluefield Daily Telegraph*] The Tazewell railroad depot, located 1.5 miles north of the county courthouse, has been added to the Virginia Landmarks Register

Terry Mullins, chairman of the Tazewell Train Station Preservation Committee, has been spearheading the preservation of the train depot.

"The town was given the deed to the train station several years ago, before I was on town council. And since I've been on town council I've been interested in the town proceeding to do something to save the train station for future generations," Mullins said.

According to Mullins, they're also looking at local funding to bring about the restoration of the train station.

"We had to go through several steps, and we have a consultant who came in from Roanoke with some of the detail specifics. It's quite an involved process of meeting people in the community and a lot of research here at the Tazewell County library," Mullins said. Ann Beckett conducted the research.

"The train station that is still standing and that we're trying to save is actually one of 13 train stations that stood on the Clinch Valley line at one time," Mullins said. [See next page]

According to Mullins, restoration has not begun yet on the railroad depot because they're waiting on the historic status that was just approved.

"The town asked us to assemble a committee. We have a committee of about 30 members of the community and the region who are serving on the train station committee. And they have met numerous times. They've donated more than 1,000 hours now between meetings and looking it over, and we even hosted an open house," Mullins said.

According to Mullins, the depot has been empty since the 1970's when it was last used as a freight station.

CASS SCENIC RAILROAD Update

[Posting on Yahoo by Earl Knoob of DURBIN & GREENBRIER VALLEY RAILROAD]

D&GVR assumed control on January 1st and brought some of the mechanical staff back to work. As we get ourselves better organized, more employees will be brought back to work.

In addition to the annual winter work being done on the operational locomotives, we will be completing the long-stalled overhaul of Pacific Coast Shay #2 that has laid in a disassembled state in the Cass Shop for several years. It is our hope to have #2 running sometime this summer.

This year, we plan to have in service: Shay #2 (mid-season); Shay #4; Shay #5 (which will be 110 years old this year!); WESTERN MARYLAND Shay #6; and Heisler #6. Shay #11 is out of service needing boiler inspection - 1472 day inspection.

Our annual Railfan Weekend will be held May 15-17 and will feature all four operational locomotives as well as the Climax operating out of Durbin, WV on the D&GVR. In one weekend you can observe all 3 types of geared locomotives in action. Tickets will be available soon through our website (www.mtn-rail.com).

2015 Lincoln Funeral Train

[From "Cinders", Philadelphia NRHS] The 2015 Lincoln Train is an attempt to historically recreate the train that carried President Abraham Lincoln's body after his assassination in 1865 from Washington, D.C. to burial in Springfield, Illinois. Thus far the "train" will consist of a working replica locomotive and a newly-built car intended to resemble the wooden car that actually carried Lincoln's coffin along with that of his son "Willie," who had died three years earlier. The 4-4-0 locomotive *Leviathan* and the passenger car will follow the route of the original train but will be carried on flatbed trailers over the highway. A display of the engine and car near Philadelphia's National Constitution Center is planned for April 23, 2015, nearly 150 years to the day that the original train stopped in Philadelphia. To learn more about this train go to <http://www.the2015lincolfuneraltrain.com/>.

CSX Corporation Announces Record Fourth-Quarter Results

CSX Corporation (NYSE: CSX) announced record fourth-quarter 2014 net earnings of \$491 million, a 15 percent increase from \$426 million for the same period last year. The company also generated record fourth-quarter earnings per share of \$0.49, up 17 percent from \$0.42 per share in 2013.

 ***Caboose for Sale (House Optional)***

[From "Automatic Block", Western Maryland NRHS] In Ridgeley, WV, there sits on a hill a lonely caboose lettered for the C&O Railway. The caboose was a birthday gift from loving wife Linda Thomas to her husband, Richard Thomas, who passed away this past July. The big house on the hill with the caboose is not practicable for one person. Linda has offered to sell the caboose for \$3000 prior to letting the house go. You could also buy the big house and caboose for \$75,000. The location on a hill means a heavy lift off the hill and relocation. The caboose appears to be complete; however, it has friction bearings, so could not be interchanged. Preliminary estimates are \$11,000 for the lift off of the hill plus mileage and possible extras. A scrapper has also made a bid on the caboose.

 ***CP Sells DELAWARE & HUDSON Lines to NS***

[Keith Barrow, *International Railway Journal*, November 18, 2014] CANADIAN PACIFIC announced on November 17, 2014 that its DELAWARE & HUDSON RAILWAY (D&H) subsidiary has agreed to sell a 455km (282.7-mile) section of its network in the northeastern United States to NORFOLK SOUTHERN for \$192.6 million. The transaction concerns the line from Sunbury, PA, to Schenectady, NY, which connects with the existing NS network at Sunbury and Binghamton, NY. The acquisition of the line will give NS direct access from Chicago and the southeastern United States to Albany, NY, and the railway's recently-completed intermodal terminal at Mechanicville, NY. NS will also gain improved links to its joint venture subsidiary PAN AM SOUTHERN, which serves New England. The deal will include D&H's shops at Binghamton, NY along with other facilities along the route. NS will also take on 150 D&H employees in the area. The completion of the proposed transaction is subject to approval by the Surface Transportation Board. CP will retain the northern section of the D&H from Montreal to Albany, which carries significant volumes of freight from the Bakken oil field.

 ***Steamtown Update***

[*"Harrisburg Rail Review"*, Harrisburg NRHS] There is some positive steam news coming out of Steamtown. The Park Service fired up its rebuilt 0-6-0 Baldwin #26 and put the locomotive through its first full-scale pressure test on December 15. #26 is the switch engine built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1929 that will be powering Steamtown's yard shuttles by summer. The engine has been out of commission since 2000, when Steamtown sidelined it for the inspection that the FRA mandates for all locomotives after 1,472 service days. #26 now is back in the locomotive shop where appliances are being taken off in order to prepare it for boiler jacket installation, plus installation of the pistons, valves, rods and anything else needed. She will also get a few more coats of paint. Steamtown's operating season normally begins in the middle of April during National Park Week - the goal for her routine operation to begin. As for ex-B&M 4-6-2 #3713, plans are to begin work on the boiler in 2015. Some delay in restoration occurred when approval from the FRA for a welding repair that was made last year was slow in coming. The new Superintendent of Steamtown, Deborah Conway, would like to have four operating steam locomotives to complete the park's mission, and #3713 is a "top priority." Fundraising for #3713 work has started again in earnest. Go to www.project3713.com for raffle and sales opportunities.

Upcoming Events in 2015



WATAUGA VALLEY EXCURSION TRIPS: WVRHS&M will be announcing our 2015 excursion schedule in the next couple of months.



FEBRUARY 6, 7, 13, 14 & 15: "Valentine Special Dinner Trains", TVRM. For details, go to <http://tvrail.com/pages/valentine-dinner-train>



FEBRUARY 14: "Valentines Day Murder Mystery Excursion Train", Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. Information: http://tcry.org/pass_ops.htm.



MARCH 6 & 7: Asheville Model Train Show, WNC AG Center, Fletcher, NC. Details: <http://www.asheville-trainshow.com/>.



MARCH 12-15: The "Cherry Blossom Special" roundtrip from Spencer, NC to Washington, DC. Call NCTM at (704) 636-2889 ext 237 for information and tickets.



MAY 15-17: Cass Railfan Weekend, Cass, WV. Includes rare mileage trips between Spruce and Cheat Bridge. For details - <http://www.cassrailroad.com/> and <http://mtn-rail.com/>



JUNE 14-20: NRHS National Convention, Rutland, VT.



JUNE 18-21: Norfolk & Western Historical Society Annual Convention, Marion, OH.

Photo Gallery

WHERE ARE THE PHOTOS? That's what your Editor would like to know. We exchange newsletters with several other rail-related organizations (that's where a lot of the news comes from.) Most of those newsletters publish wonderful photographs of rail activity, be their own, commercial or excursion related or of a historical nature. One recent publication offered several beautiful shots of the CSX Santa Train en route. And this from a photographer who traveled hundreds of miles to capture the shots! Yet nothing from WVRHS&M despite this event occurring in our own back yard! How embarrassing! Is train chasing a thing of the past in our region? Remember, it's not always about steam locomotives. We need to capture current rail activity for posterity. So knock the dust off of those cameras and get out there and take some pictures. And send them into the newsletter at wataugavalley@gmail.com.

For Your Viewing Pleasure



Kati Phelps passes along this fascinating video clip of a diminutive, century-old Australian steam train (actually, a steam-powered rail car) fondly nicknamed the "Coffee Pot". On line at <http://tinyurl.com/m4tz38z>

Whistle Stop

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MATERIAL

WVRHS&M LATE 2015 DUES NOTICE

IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR 2015 DUES, YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE WATAUGA VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM **EXPIRED** ON DECEMBER 31, 2014. TO RENEW, YOU HAVE A CHOICE OF WHICH TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP YOU DESIRE. PLEASE SELECT WHICH MEMBERSHIP YOU CHOOSE AND MAIL THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR CHECK (NO CASH, PLEASE) TO WATAUGA VALLEY RHS&M, P. O. BOX 432, JOHNSON CITY, TN, 37605-0432. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID YOUR DUES, PLEASE DISREGARD.

___ **OPTION 1: WATAUGA VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM**

Dues

Individual Membership \$20.00

Family Membership. \$ 5.00 per each family member

\$ _____

___ **OPTION 2: WATAUGA VALLEY CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Dues

Individual Membership \$70.00

Family Membership \$ 5.00 per each family member

\$ _____

___ **OPTION 3: WATAUGA VALLEY RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM AND THE RAILROAD HERITAGE ALLIANCE**

Dues

Individual Membership \$35.00

Family Membership \$ 5.00 per each family member

\$ _____

___ **OPTION 4: MEMBERSHIP IN ALL THREE ORGANIZATIONS ABOVE**

Individual Membership \$85.00

Family Membership \$ 5.00 per each family member

\$ _____

Donation to Watauga Valley RHS&M \$ _____

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