

Whistle Stop



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

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Megan Kegley found NS SD80MAC #7227 sitting pretty for a portrait during "Railroad Day" at Natural Tunnel State Park in July. Story on page 7.

August 27th General Membership Meeting

The Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum will conduct our monthly General Membership meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday, August 27th, 2018 at 6:30 pm at the Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St. This month's program will be presented by noted NC rail historian and author Gerald (Jerry) Ledford and is entitled "NARROW GAUGE LOGGING RAILROADS IN THE NORTH CAROLINA GREAT SMOKIES". Mark your calendar so you won't miss this informative and entertaining talk.

Member Notes

by Edna Kay Carter, Membership Chairperson

Please remember in your thoughts and prayers Don Findley and family in the loss of his mother and others who have lost loved ones during the past months. Keep the following in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns. They are Nancy Jewel, Gary Price, George Ritchie and Bob Schubel. 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 number is 423-753-5797 or call Edna Carter at 423-571-4612.

We would like to welcome new members to our club. They are Chuck Taylor, Phyllis Summers, Roger and Mary Matherly. We look forward to having you on board with us.

Hope everyone is still enjoying their summer activities.

WVRHS&M News

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN TRAIN EXCURSIONS

We're still in need of volunteer hosts for our Great Smoky Mountain Train Excursions. This is your chance to experience a great train ride and have an enjoyable day. Please call Mike Tilley at (423) 335-1100 if you can help out on either Aug 26, Sept 8, Sept 23 or Nov 4. There's also a sign-up form at the end of this newsletter that you can bring to the July General Membership Meeting.

WATAUGA VALLEY WEB SITE UPGRADES

Webmaster Fred Waskiewicz is updating the WVRHS&M web site, if you have any ideas on improving the site, please email wataugavalley@gmail.com

CHAPTER UNIFORMS AVAILABLE NOW

Forms were available in the July Whistle Stop to order official WVRHS&M uniforms. If you need a uniform or name badge, that form can be found on the last page.

CAR AND BUS HOSTS NEEDED FOR SEPT 23 AND NOV 4 EXCURSIONS

We are still in need of hosts for our Sept 23 and Nov 4 Great Smoky Mountain Railroad excursions. If you can serve, please email wataugavalley@gmail.com or call the office and leave message at (423) 753-5797

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN SUMMER TRAIN EXCURSION A BIG SUCCESS

We had a very fast sell out our 2018 excursions on the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad and had 10 bus loads of happy passengers. WVRHS&M wants to thank our hosts who helped on the buses and train. By the time you receive the Whistle Stop, the August 26 trip will out be running.

2018 WVRHS&M-SPONSORED "STAR CITY RAILROAD TOUR" ANNOUNCED

See the flyer accompanying this newsletter for complete information.

Mechanical Team Report

By Jim Magill

GENERAL

If you would like to volunteer at the Jonesborough Spring Street Coach Yard on Tuesdays or Saturdays, please call 423-753-5797 or email Mike Tilley at wataugavalley@embarqmail.com. There are projects for everyone; hope to hear from you.

ROLLING STOCK

“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539): is at the coach yard getting up grades on its air conditioning.

“St Augustine” coach (WATX 500): is also at the coach yard getting some upgrades along with a 10 year roll out for an AMTRAK PC2a.

“Moultrie” diner (WATX 400): is at the coach yard getting some upgrades

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351): is in operation at the North Carolina Transportation Museum at Spencer.

“Clinchfield” office car (WATX 100): is at the coach yard getting upgrades.

Chuckey Depot & Rail Museum

Attendance at the Chuckey Depot / Museum is picking up each month. If you have not seen the new displays, please come and visit Wednesday – Sunday 1pm to 5pm except Saturday when we're open 11am to 5pm.

Plans are to have another Chuckey Depot / Museum Host Training session, which lasts about 1 hour, in September. If you would like to host at the Depot one day a month, please email Mike Tilley at wataugavalley@gmail.com stating your intention. When a date has been set for the training, we will call you with relevant information. We had over 180 volunteer hours at the depot last month with record crowds.

NEW RAILROAD RADIO BROADCAST ON AIR

Recently Watauga Valley RHS&M installed a new railroad radio broadcast on line on our web site that can be used in concert with the Chuckey Depot Rail Cams. Go to <http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org/>, click on the web cam link (see below), and then click on Norfolk Southern Live Radio Broadcast for East Tennessee to hear live railroad talk from dispatchers and trains.

RAIL CAMERAS AT THE CHUCKEY DEPOT

You can review trains back for 4 hours on the Chuckey Depot Rail Cams by moving the red bar at bottom of page. Go to our home page at <http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org/> and click on the link that says LIVE WEBCAM.

In the News ...

AMTRAK station closer to reality in New River Valley

[WDBJ, Roanoke] In the near future, northbound travelers in the New River Valley who want to avoid the interstate may be able to take the train. Organizers of the NRV Rail 2020 initiative gave an update on the proposed project to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors on Monday. The state recently approved a \$350,000 operational study to determine the feasibility of the project. "Norfolk Southern actually does the study to try to give them some idea of the infrastructure changes and order of magnitude costs that might be incurred in order to make their freight lines available for passenger rail traffic," said Larry Hincker. The proposed station would be built next to the Aquatic Center in Christiansburg. But while funding for the infrastructure changes would come from the state, funding for the station itself would come from the participating localities. "Montgomery County is a partner in this effort. Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Pulaski, Radford, etc., so we want to keep people apprised as to what's going on, as well as any new information. Very specifically, the task force looking at the site is looking at ways on how to manage that and how it might be funded," Hincker said. Hincker believes the best way for NRV travelers to show support is to start riding the train now. "We think, to a certain extent, we have to prove to AMTRAK that the demand studies that we looked at will realize and come to fruition, so the best thing people can do is to get on the train and ride it," he said.

AMTRAK Looks to Refresh Long-Distance Fleet

AMTRAK has issued a Request for Information (RFI) to explore the availability of rail vehicles to eventually replace its Amfleet I equipment, which includes single-level passenger coaches used primarily east of the Mississippi River on the Northeast Regional, Keystone, Carolinian and Illinois Service. In the RFI posted on June 27, AMTRAK says it is seeking information on all types of rail vehicles including coaches, trains and self-propelled units. Following a review of what manufacturers have to offer, the operator plans to develop and release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for specific replacement vehicles in 2019. AMTRAK says although the fleet has recently undergone a refurbishment program that has replaced many interior elements including seats, carpets and lighting features, the coaches are about 40 years old and are at the point where replacement is more cost-effective than maintenance. Earlier in June, AMTRAK issued an RFP for new or rebuilt locomotives to supplement and replace its ageing national diesel locomotive fleet. AMTRAK says it is working to make immediate changes to the customer experience with improvements including refreshed trains, new fare structures, improved on-time performance, enhanced Wi-Fi connectivity, upgraded facilities and expanded onboard experience options. [David Burroughs, *International Railway Journal*, July 9, 2018 via "High Green", Chesapeake Railway Assoc.]

NC&StL 576 Moves! (Ever So Slightly)

On August 10, the *Nashville Steam* organization reached a milestone in the restoration of ex-NC&StL 4-8-4 #576. After nearly 65 years of lying in repose, months of volunteer work and the help of a large wrecker truck freed up wheels and running gear, allowing the locomotive to roll back a few feet. For more on this restoration effort, head to <http://www.nashvillesteam.org/>.

UP #844 Fatality

[KGWN Cheyenne, WY] Union Pacific steam locomotive 844 struck a pedestrian July 21 around 7:45 pm in Henderson, CO; the pedestrian was pronounced dead at the scene. The train was running as part of the “*Denver Post Special*” that carries passengers to and from Denver and Cheyenne each year for “*Cheyenne Frontier Days*”.

Important 2018 Dates ...



AUGUST 26: GSMR Excursion #2.



SEPTEMBER 1: “*Duffield Days*”, Duffield, VA. Whistle Truck appearance.



SEPTEMBER 5-8: National Narrow Gauge National Convention, Bloomington, MN. Info: <https://nngc-2018.com/>.



SEPTEMBER 8, 23: GSMR Excursions #3 and #4.



SEPTEMBER 1, 15: “*Summerville Steam Special*”, TVRM, Chattanooga. Info: <https://www.tvrail.com/events-exhibits/rides/summerville-steam-special>

For Your Viewing Pleasure ...

 Always wanted to visit the CUMBRES AND TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD but couldn't get away? Now you can view this world-famous steam operation from the comfort of your own home courtesy of their on-site web cams. Check out <https://tinyurl.com/nt9akak> for some remarkable steam action. [Thanks to Norris Deyerle of Blue Ridge NRHS for passing this along.]



WVRHS&M members and guests had a great time on August 11 traveling down to Knoxville, riding a riverboat down the Tennessee River and enjoying a great lunch. Many other wonderful rail-related sites were also toured and enjoyed. We would like to thank the Old Smoky Railroad Museum for showing us around and having treats during our visit. For more photos, visit our facebook page. (Typing “Watauga Valley Museum” in the search box should do the trick for finding us.)

Megan's Manifest

by Megan Kegley

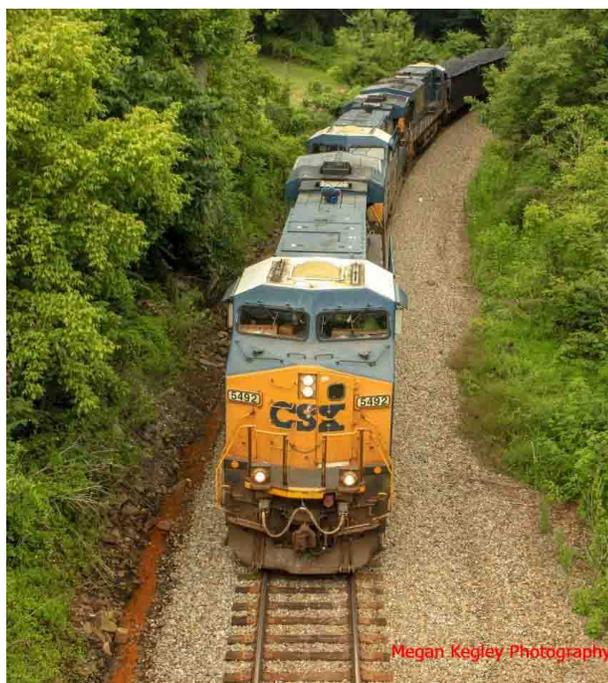
While I was on vacation during the first week of this month, I went to find some trains while staying in Wetumpka, AL with my family.



On August 9, my family and friends went out to eat at a famous restaurant in Montgomery, AL called Chris' Hotdogs. This little place has been in business for 101 years this year, pretty impressive right? It is one of the only hot dog and hamburger restaurants in Montgomery and the oldest family-owned and operated restaurant in the area. I highly recommend this place to eat if you are ever visiting Montgomery. After we ate our

famous Chris' Hotdogs, we drove by the CSX Montgomery Yard before going back to the house. I found a few locomotives that were visible from the road, one was CSX no. 2013 [above left], a GP38-3, along with CSX no. 400 [right], an AC44CW. You can't take me anywhere without my finding trains to take photos of.

On July 24, I spent almost the entire day at the Lonesome Pine Model Railroad Club helping prepare for Railroad Days and, of course, running some trains. My friend Pete



Aistrop and I heard the KT24 (T090-24) tone up to the Norfolk Southern Clinch Valley dispatcher to get the authority to come onto the Appalachia District to make its way to Frisco. When we heard our buddies that were on this train read their track warrant Pete and I jumped in the car and took off to East Stone Gap, which is in Big Stone Gap and where we shot this [left] off the highway bridge. It turns out two of our good friends were the crew on the pusher set (KT25).

Now I am going to change it up and talk about some model trains. Pictured on the next page is my HO Scale Broadway Limited [PRR class T1](#) 4-4-4-4 Duplex with Paragon 2 sound at the Lonesome Pine Model Railroad Club. I

snapped this photo of my engine running for the Appalachia Coal and Railroad Days Festival

this year. I have been into model trains all my life; it has become second nature to me over the years. After I lost my granddad to cancer in 2012, I stepped away from the hobby because I lost all the model trains that I had when he passed on. After a few years I decided I was going to get back into it and start collecting HO Scale again. In 2015 I joined the Lonesome Pine Model Railroad Club in Appalachia, VA and have been there ever since. I was welcomed with open arms and very friendly smiles,



Megan Kegley Photography

which helped me out a lot. To this day I am still in the group and still the only female. The club has been in the town of Appalachia since 1994 but unfortunately due to things that are out of our control we are in the process of moving our enormous layout to the Appalachia High School Library, so if anyone would like to see our layout, you will have to wait until we can get everything set back up and put back together.



Megan Kegley Photography

I attend Railroad Day at Virginia's Natural Tunnel State Park every year rain or shine. It gives me a chance to get some great photos and to meet up with lots of railfans from all over that come to the region just to get up close to a locomotive and be able to walk all the way through Natural Tunnel. If you have never been, I suggest going next year. It is the ONLY day during the year that they shut down the mainline and ALLOW you to walk on the tracks into the tunnel and to get up close to the locomotive for photos and selfies.

After the event ended I chased NS SD80MAC no. 7227 back to Frisco from Natural Tunnel for more shots. I caught the engine at Glenita [above left], which is just outside the tunnel on the NS Appalachia District. I caught it again at Copper Creek [below], and a few other spots. When it left the tunnel heading east to Frisco, it went as train 79K.



MEGAN KEGLEY PHOTOGRAPHY

Whistle Stop

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MATERIAL

2018 Star City Railroad Tour

Roanoke, Virginia

October 6, 2018

Catch the bus for a spectacular railroad themed adventure that will take us to the heart of Norfolk and Western country: ROANOKE, VIRGINIA!

Widely known to many as the “Star City of the South” Roanoke was, for a hundred years, the home and headquarters for the N&W, boasting office buildings, locomotive erecting shops, maintenance facilities, railyards, passenger depots and thousands of dedicated employees. Roanoke Shops built what many experts consider to be the best steam locomotives in the world. Roanoke is still the hub for five mainlines that connect the city to Norfolk, Hagerstown, Winston-Salem, Bluefield, and Bristol. Many trains can be seen daily rolling through Roanoke, carrying all sorts of cargo destined for all over the United States. Passenger Service, in the form of AMTRAK, has just recently returned to the downtown area, although Norfolk Southern has moved most all their administrative and operating offices to either Norfolk or Atlanta, there is still a strong railroad presence and pride in the city of Roanoke, and several historical sites preserved to enjoy and connect the past with the present. We are positive that you will enjoy this trip to one of our favorite destinations.

Our journey will once again begin at the Chuckey Depot, 110 S 2ND Ave, Jonesborough, TN. (Please park in spaces closest to 2nd Street) Bus will depart promptly at 7 a.m. Trip runs rain or shine.

First Stop: Virginia Transportation Museum.

Home to the largest collection of automotive and railroad history in the state, this museum has something to please everybody as the displays themselves tell the story of transportation from many steam, electric and early diesel locomotives, to restored classic cars and trucks, as well as many transportation related artifacts to explain how America once moved. The highlight of this tour will be the chance to see the Norfolk and Western “Big Three”, J-class 611, A-class 1218, and Y6a 2156. These locomotives were considered the best built, and they were built in Roanoke! As you leave, there is a wonderful gift shop with many rail related shirts, hats and other goodies.

Second Stop: O. Winston Link Museum.

During the late 1950’s Mr. Link traveled several times to Virginia and West Virginia, inspired to document the last days of steam railroading in America. His specialty was trains at night, but his recordings of the steam train sound are just as famous. This museum, housed in the beautifully restored passenger depot, features hundreds of Link’s original prints in both black and white and color. Interactive displays tell about Link’s life, journeys and techniques. Many of his personal items are on display, even his very own N&W caboose outside. There is a gift shop on site that sells Link prints, books and other merchandise.

Lunch Stop: 611 Steakhouse.

We will stop for lunch at one of our favorite places to eat in the area, the rail-themed 611 Steakhouse (food will be paid by each individual). You can order from the menu or choose to eat from the seventy-item buffet bar.

Third Stop: The Virginian Railway Depot.

Until 1959, Roanoke was home to the Virginian Railway. After the merger with the N&W, most structures were torn down and several miles of tracks were abandoned. This station is one of very few that made it through and has been lovingly restored. A guide will be on hand from the Roanoke Chapter NRHS to discuss the history of the depot and the restoration process.

Fourth Stop: The Star of Roanoke Overlook.

Erected in 1949, this 88-foot neon star has been a shining icon overlooking the entire Roanoke Valley. From the overlook, you can get an up-close look at the majestic star as well as a beautiful panoramic view of the city of Roanoke and the different rail lines that crisscross the city. We will gather for a group photo at this point before heading back to Jonesborough.

Ticket Price: \$60 per person (includes all transportation fees and museum admissions).

- 1). This will be an all-day trip, please dress accordingly, there will be a lot of walking.
- 2). Due to special arrangements, all payments must be made in advance, and received no later than October 1, 2018. NO REFUNDS, NO EXCEPTIONS. If you decide that you cannot make the trip, you have the option to send someone in your place. Passengers that are a no-show on the date of the trip shall forfeit their payment in full.
- 3). Please send your check or money order to:

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P.O. BOX 432
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