

The Highball

The monthly newsletter of the Old Dominion Chapter
National Railway Historical Society

Volume 51, Number 12

November 2010

ODC CHAPTER NOVEMBER MEETING

Time & Location, Monday, November 15, 7:30 PM

Richmond Railroad Museum

102 Hull Street, Richmond

Program: Annual Meeting & Short Slide Show on PNW

ODC will conduct its usual Annual Meeting & Elections. If you plan to attend, you can vote on officers then, but if you cannot attend, please e-mail one of the ODC officers your voting choice, or to WFToddJr@aol.com. Refreshments will be served following the Annual Meeting and then we will have a short slide show on the Pacific North West by Bill Todd. This will represent Part One of three parts dealing when the Todd family lived out in the Seattle area between 1981-83. Please make a special effort to attend this important meeting and bring a friend. Door prizes too. See you on the 15th.

OFFICERS FOR ELECTION

The BOD nominees are: Steve Harrison and Kevin Frick for three year terms. Bob Dickinson, Randy Ridgley, and Calvin Boles for one year terms. Kevin Frick has agreed to be president.

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AUTUMN LEAF RAMBLER and THE SANTA CLAUS TRAIN!!!

By Marsha Cox

A BIG THANKS from the Trip Committee to all who assisted with the **Autumn Leaf Rambler trips on October 9, 16 and 23**...from those who spent every weekend waiting for the phone to ring at the Museum to the smallest child who assisted in the Commissary. We had three great weekends and lots of super assistance. Some new members car hosted and we received assistance from members from other chapters with car hosting and parking. The weather was beautiful...the scenery was beautiful and the passengers were friendly. **Tom Mix Rangers** put on a great performance on October 9 and were kind enough to give an encore performance on October 16. Thanks to all the Tom Mix Rangers for giving their time and talents for the enjoyment of our passengers. Our passengers just love the Cowboys!!! A **very special thanks** to Sam Williamson, who has retired as ticket agent. He and Dave Hebel filled in after Keith Crump's passing last year and helped make our trips possible. Also, thanks to the Buckingham Branch Railroad and **our** engineer, Gary Farrish, who has endless patience with the many questions posed to him by rail fans...young and old!!

The Santa Claus trains are sold out for December 4 & 11 (6 trips per day). We'll have a decoration day in Dillwyn on Saturday, November 27 (the weekend following Thanksgiving) starting at around 10 a.m.!! We will need volunteers on these three dates to help decorate (Nov 27) and also to car host (Dec 4 & 11).

We will all MISS our faithful friend and member, Nelson Burks. Nelson was so helpful with ticket sales and car hosting, among other things. He was at the Museum nearly every weekend this past August to October helping with ticket sales (and many other times in the past, I'm sure). He also was a car host for many years.

CHRISTMAS PARTY TIME

On Monday, December 20 ODC will have its annual Christmas Party & Meeting. ODC member Jeff Hawkins will present again one of his famous slide shows currently under preparation. He is thinking of presenting a CSX/C&O extra. Stay tuned for further announcements.

Hull Street Station – Richmond Railroad Museum

by Bob Dickinson

The contractor has completed the first phase of the contract for renovation of the station. The Chapter is working to complete a few items on the project so we can get the final occupancy permit. The contractor is now in the process of getting the necessary permits to finish the front room of the building. This room will be used for the model train layout that will be built by modelers group. The architect expects that the contractor will have the necessary permits by about the middle of November and will start shortly there after. The room will be finished similar to the other rooms in the station but will not have the “fancy” woodwork and trim on the walls. The ODC will be responsible for the painting and floor covering once the contractor has completed their part of the contract. This was done to save some of the expense and allow us to do the project now.

The archives committee has begun to move materials from the ODC archives to the museum. Over the next few months material from the RF&P baggage car, the boxcar, ODC yard, and archives will be moved into the museum. It all will have to be sorted out, inventoried, cleaned and in some cases repaired before being put in the exhibits.

The gift shop committee has been busy with the trips and the Museum shops event so they haven’t had much time to work on the shop at the museum during October. They will be working on this after the first part on November. Please let Sue Rasmussen, Anne Thorn, or Ned Krack know if you would like to help with the gift shop.

There is a lot to be done before the museum opens. We will be doing the “stationmasters” office first. Next will be the “waiting room” area. We would like to do exhibits on all of the railroads that are connected with the area. If you have an idea for an exhibit and would like to put it together please let someone on the committee know. Will it be possible for the museum to be open by the new year? That’s what we are working for!

Archives Committee Report by Calvin Boles

The Archives Committee has inventoried a large portion of the collections that are currently stored at 3600 W. Broad St., in the box car and express car at the Hull Street Station and at Hallsboro Yard. Many of the inventories are in the form of computerize searchable files (all inventories will eventually be computerized). The master plan is to provide an Internet link between the Hull Street Station and the Archives server.

Current efforts are directed at inventorying the extensive collection of technical manuals and drawings, the timetable collection, and the newsletter collection. The magazine collection inventory is being revised and updated. The collection of miscellaneous artifices is being consolidated and updated. The scanning of the photographic collection and inventory data entry are ongoing operations.

The Archives Committee developed updated rules for the operation of the Archives and the accession/de-accession of items. These rules were approved by the Board and have been implemented. We have identified and disposed of duplications in the collection as well as items in poor condition. We have donated surplus items, and items not pertaining to Virginia railroad companies, to other historical societies and museums.

The Committee has identified pictures, furnishings, and other items that can become part of the permanent displays at the Hull Street Station. We have also selected duplicate books from our collection that are in fair to good condition that can be sold as “second hand” in the Gift Shop.

The Archives Committee will meet on 11 Nov 10 @ 3600 W. Broad St. at 1900 hrs. This will be the only meeting during November due to the Holidays.

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Railfan Travel Guide

by Kim Young

Starting next month, I’m going to be writing an article each month on a railfan site within a one-state radius of Richmond. Among the sites that I’m going to cover are the COHS Museum, the B&O Museum, Cass Scenic Railroad, the tourist operations of the Durbin and Greenbrier Valley, the museums in Surry, Roanoke, and on the Eastern Shore, Tweetsie, the Western Maryland, East Broad Top narrow gauge, Strasburg, and Steamtown. I will start out with the ones that are open year-round then move to the summer-only operations. To the extent that I can, I’m going to include first-hand reviews. Since there are far too many of these that I have not visited, I welcome any input from the chapter members. Anyone who would like to contribute may email me at kimyoungmarshall77@gmail.com. Thanks! Kim

Souvenir and Raffle Sales by Ned Krack

Totals for the Autumn Leaf Rambler trips were as follows:

Souvenir sales \$1846.50
Cab ride raffle 234.50(net)
Total receipts \$2081.00

Thanks to Randy Ridgley, Sue Rasmussen, Hazel Henshaw, Kathleen Frick, Fred Terry and Robin Shavers for their help with Souvenir and raffle sales.

Virginia Railway Pictorial—Pictures and Stories—

press release from Suffolk Seaboard Station Railroad Museum

The Suffolk Seaboard Station Railroad Museum would like to announce a very special book signing with Railroad author Aubrey Wiley. Mr. Wiley's new book, **Virginia Railway Pictorial—Pictures and Stories**, is the first new book on the Virginian in many years, and is the largest one in over forty years. It contains over 225 black and white photographs from private collections, including his own, and stories of the employees and the people who lived along and rode the Virginian line.

Mr. Wiley is a native of Virginia and has co-authored three other railway books. He is a photojournalist, artist and retired history teacher. He has had a strong love of the railroad all his life and has collected vintage photographs, stories and memorabilia much of which he now shares with us in this wonderful volume.

We are very excited to have Mr. Wiley at the Suffolk Seaboard Station for a signing of his new book on December 4, 2010 from 12:00 to 3:00pm. His book will be available for purchase in our gift shop. We are located at 326 N. Main Street, Suffolk Virginia, just two blocks south of the intersection of business 58 (Constance Road) and Main. For more information please call us at 757-923-4750, or email us at trainstation@exis.net. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Marie Carmean
Museum Coordinator*

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BLAST FROM THE PAST by Bill Todd

On November 5, 1925 the RF&P RR will open bids on a construction project in Fredericksburg, Virginia dealing with the elevation of its tracks through Fredericksburg and the erection of a new bridge across the Rappahannock River which will be located near the site of the present bridge. Slightly less than a mile in length, most of the work will be done within the City proper, but in order to locate the new bridge, it will be necessary to change the alignment of the tracks in Stafford County, which will be significant.

When completed, the RF&P will run all of its trains through Fredericksburg on an over head track instead of on street level passage now used. The elevated tracks will be on top of a concrete embankment which will be filled in with dirt.

(Condensed from "The Mail Pouch" Rappahannock Chapter, NRHS, October 2010)

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HALLSBORO by Kevin Frick *(see photos by Tom Hardesty)*

Hallsboro: Randy Ridgley continues his work repairing and painting the cars at Hallsboro. So far he has painted the 71 RPO. the Dinwiddie County, the Brentwood, the 494 and the 1202. These cars look great and will be protected for a while from the weather. Charles Smith has reworked a ladder on the Davenport which will make it much easier and safer to get on and off the locomotive. He has said he will do the other three ladders also. Randy and Bob Stevens are working to clear cut the right of way on the north side of the property. This needs to be done so we can put up the remaining fence to enclose the Hallsboro property. We have been given a quote on a replacement building at Hallsboro and it will be discussed at the BOD meeting, Monday the 8th. We continue to cleanup the debris from the fallen car shed placing it in the pile to be removed.

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HIGHBALL EDITOR DEVELOPMENT by Betty Staples

John DeMajo will be unable to takeover the responsibility of editor of The *Highball* until later because of health issues. We wish John a complete recovery and look forward to his editorship in the future.

John, our prayers and thoughts are with you. Until his recovery, I shall continue in this capacity. Thank you.

NELSON BURKS—Died November 2, 2010 by Betty Staples

Nelson Burks, 62, a beloved active member in the ODC Chapter has died. Nelson was a National Director, Secretary of the Board of Directors, Membership Chairman of the Chapter, and Host on the Chapter Train Trips from Dillwyn. He was always volunteering for the various Chapter projects. Not only all this, Nelson was a real friend. He was a member of Huguenot Road Baptist Church, most active in Chesterfield Fire Department Volunteers, of which he was Treasurer. His funeral will be Sunday, November 7 at 3:00 pm at Woody Funeral Home at 1020 Huguenot Road. He will be buried in the family plot in West Virginia.



The World of Railroads by Jerry Grosshans

News about locomotives.....BNSF is taking delivery of 28 more GE ES44C4 units (with the unique A-1-A truck configuration. So far it is the only road to use this model. NS is finally making moves to get on the AC transmission bandwagon, with 25 EMD SD70Ace units (to be numbered 1000-1024) on order, after its initial order of 24 GE ES44AC (numbered 8000-8023) units. 43 more ES44AC units will arrive by the end of 2010 with an additional 25 per year until 2014. NS will also get 25 EMD SD70Ace units per years until 2014 for a total of 100 of this model. NS is not only buying from the two major builders but is also getting four more PR43C units from Progress Rail. These units are technically rebuilds, using a unique combination of two Caterpillar prime movers, one of 3600 hp and a smaller one of 700 for a 4300 hp total. Meanwhile Canadian National has an order with GE for ES44DCunits, to be numbered 2310-2344 with the first three already on the scene, and is also getting SD70M2 units (some call them SD70DCe's) numbered 8915-8964. CN seems to be the only line now ordering a substantial number of DC transmissions units. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority is getting the first of a new model from Motive Power/Boise Locomotive. Contrary to earlier reports these units (20 with an option for 20 more) will NOT be the familiar MP36 or MP40 models (which used EMD powerplants) but a new unit called HSP46AC will use a 4650 hp GE Evolution series prime mover, similar to those used in the familiar ES44 freight units....but note the increase in power output, still with only 12 cylinders! Virginia Railway Express is putting into use its MP36 acquisitions, prompting remarks on how quickly these units were put into use after Maryland's MARC, with the same model, took quite a few months to make theirs operational. BNSF has taken at least one cables GP60B (#347) and had a cab attached from a retired UP SD40-2 to make a conventional SP60, #170. If evaluated well, the other cables units could also be converted. Union Pacific sent 10 SD60M units back to EMD for replacement of the 3800 16 cylinder 710 powerplant with a more fuel efficient 3150 hp 12 cylinder version of the 710 prime mover. For some reason, these units also got larger radiators in a carbody which was widened in the radiator area. While these relatively new nits were repowered, UP is sending a number of older EMD SD40-2 units through a life-lengthening rebuild program. Canadian National has been acquiring older GE C41 units from UP as they come off lease and has added some C40 units from BNSF, also coming off lease Mexican road Ferromex (Grupo Mexico) says it will acquire 44 new units, but no builder was announced.

Union Pacific has never been shy about special paints and logos for locomotives, it was not given the usual publicity when it unveiled an ES44AC unit, #7400 with a large pink ribbon on the long hood end in honor of breast cancer research. UP was also the year's recipient of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure outstanding volunteer group award.

The World of Railroads (continued)

What was long in the railfan rumor mill turned out to be true on September 28 when UP put Challenger 3985 on the head end of the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey circus train on the run from Speer, WY (the Cheyenne junction point) to Denver, in the longest steam powered train of the 21st century. The Circus consist was 61 cars, and UP added four business cars with the two auxiliary water tenders totaling well over 6000 tons.

Not exactly railroading, but I earlier mentioned the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which is the successor to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in Beantown. Go back a number of years to the Kingston Trio and their hit song “MTA” about the line, a commuter named “Charlie” and a fare increase. Back to the present....a card good for multiple trips on the present MBTA is known as the “Charlie Card.”

Axion International has announced that an unnamed class I railroad has committed to the purchase of a large number of plastic ties, made of recycled materials. These ties are rot proof, easier to handle since they are lighter in weight and should have a life span longer than preserved wood.

Coal exports at Norfolk’s Lambert’s Point docks are running high enough that Norfolk Southern is shipping coal bound for China and Korea out of the CNX Marine Marine Terminal in Baltimore. The Baltimore shipments are of coal mined in Pennsylvania and the northern Appalachia region; coal from Virginia and West Virginia will continue going through Lambert’s Point, which should very well set a tonnage record by the end of the year.

Similar to what the Old Dominion Chapter is doing with the modelers and the museum, the Rochester and Genesee Valley Chapter of the NRHS and their museum have combined under the banner of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. This is a substantial operation with a number of locomotives, construction and maintenance equipment, rolling stock, etc.

A tunnel along the abandoned Western Maryland will not be a part of a proposed recreational “rails to trails” path in Maryland. The 4,350 ft. Indigo Tunnel will instead be maintained as a bat sanctuary. The tunnel is near Little Orleans, MD.

The Alaska Railroad has awarded a contract to Kiewit Pacific for initial construction on the 80-mile line extension between North Pole (the town) and Delta Junction. The extension will have the largest bridge in Alaska as well as a substantial levee near Salcha. First construction is to begin before the end of the year.

Providence & Worcester is acquiring three widecab GE B40-W units from BNSF to replace three EMD GP40’s. P&W has a large GE roster of a number of models, even older cabless units from BN.

Although Warren Buffett’s BNSF is a private venture and not required to report earnings and revenue; if comparable railroad stocks are used, he could have already made as much as \$14 billion off of his purchase.

It’s time to think about 2011 calendars and Norfolk Southern’s is now available, from Nyberg, Fletcher & White, 801 Cromwell Park Drive, #100, Glen Burnie, MD 21061. Cost is \$12.99 per calendar, which includes postage, handling and taxes. One can order by mail at 1-800-264-4394.

Recently a youth was hit and killed by an Amtrak train in Chesterfield County, at the overpass of Chippenham Parkway. Perhaps the timing of this tragedy was such that it did not make a number of news programs, so I will try to enlighten about the area....at least, as I frequently stop there to watch what CSX has to offer, since the roadway, with a wide shoulder is only a dozen or so feet from the right-of-way, with no plant life to interfere. First thing—vehicular traffic on Chippenham is much louder than the trains, which are surprisingly quiet. I have seen all sorts of pedestrian and trespasser misbehavior....including the use of baby carriages or strollers to cross the tracks. One time a train (intermodal) went into emergency and was stopped. No less than three different parties carried strollers with infants over or through the train!

And it’s not just youths—several persons I saw appeared to be at least my age (70+) and almost as decrepit.

CSX is doing signal work on the “A line” with new signals at FA (Walmsley Blvd.) up and running and the next signal south (Quartermaster) has had a culvert placed to vehicles can reach the site.

HOT TIMES AT FANSHAW.... With my son getting off of work sometimes well after midnight, I sometimes meet up with him then for a bite and drink; hence I been known to check the area out well after midnight and action can be interesting as CSX apparently is trying to be a good corporate citizen and confine operations as best it can, to nighttime. One night there were four trains at Fanshaw—a Cogentrix coal train leaving, one arriving, a Wheelright train going south and the local parked....no room for anything else.



Tom Hardesty took these photos this past August at Hallsboro. In Tom's words, "On my way back home to Newport News, I stopped by Hallsboro yard to photograph the beautiful work Randy Ridgely has done on 494. The car looks great in new Pullman green with the Central of Georgia lettering reapplied in that art deco font. The real work of the new black roof shows as well, plus John DeMajo's great new door. Just compare that with the before outside shot of December 2008 in the July 2010 Highball, what a difference! Since it is coupled to McGirth that Randy previously repainted, the two of them together really make a site!"



*Another quote from Tom's e-mail written in August—
"I performed the time honored tradition of "brightening" the lettering (restencilling) on the commissary car BB 810 on the side facing US 15. Sam Watkins had painted that side of the car light gray last year, and I finally got around to touching up the lettering with fresh black paint so it looks better, as the attached photo shows. (Brightening is the term B&O used in its Circular No. F-60-H dated May 1, 1940, for the kind of restencilling work I did). Now I only need to get the other side looking as good, as it has some streaks of rust that could use repainting." Thanks Tom for sharing.*

*From Sam Watkins,
"Remember when railroading was fun?
Farmville, VA 1977.
Westbound, Amtrak train #55—The Mountaineer."*



*From Charles Curley
"a photo of Tidewater Junction on Norfolk Southern in Norfolk. This picture is looking east and shows the new Norfolk Light rail crossing over NS on a new bridge."*



Thanks to all for sharing.

Membership Chair Report

All 2010 memberships expire on December 31. Renewal forms for 2011 are scheduled to be mailed by National the week of October 3. Renewals should be submitted before the end of the year. As always, you should return your renewals to the Old Dominion Chapter mail box, as indicted on the form. For those making a donation to the chapter, please check that box on the form and, if you want to designate the donation for a specific purpose, please enclose the following form or write the information on your renewal card. Note that those new members who joined in September are already 2011 members and will not need to renew until this time next year.

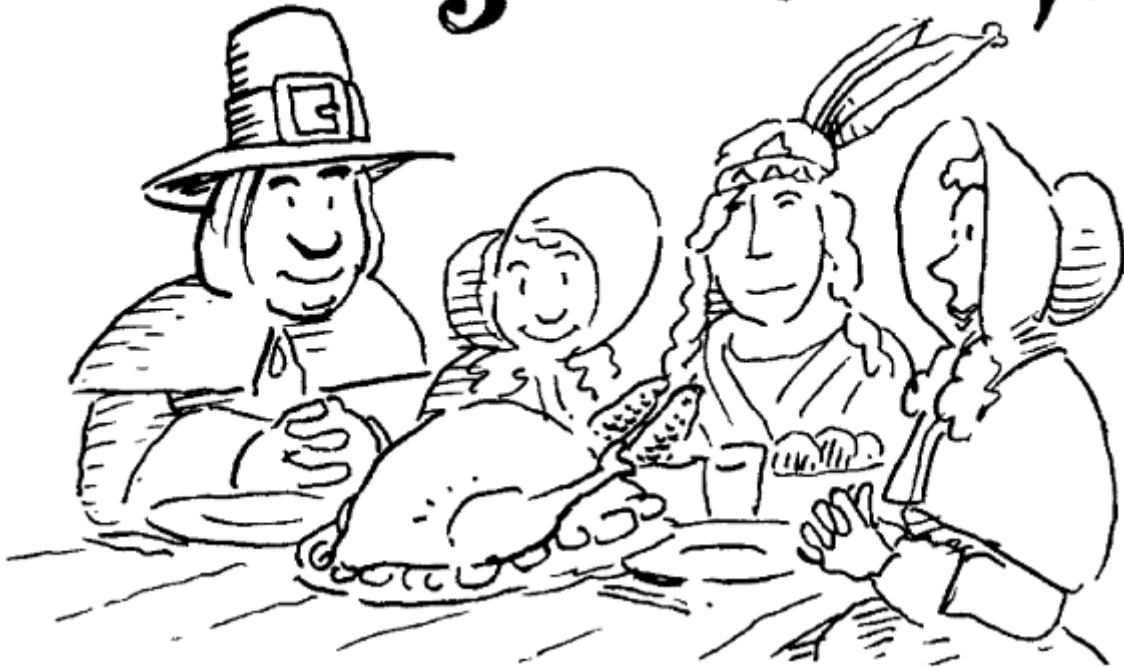
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Please allocate my contribution to the Old Dominion Chapter as follows:

Archives and Library	\$ _____ .00
General Fund	\$ _____ .00
Hallsboro Yard and Rolling Stock	\$ _____ .00
The <i>Highball</i> , Programs and Meetings	\$ _____ .00
The Museum Renovation Capitol Fund	\$ _____ .00
Other: _____	\$ _____ .00
TOTAL	\$ _____ .00

Please enclose this sheet with your dues payment and write the total amount shown above on the "Chapter Donation" line on the renewal card.

Let us give thanks..



*Happy
Thanksgiving*