



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER



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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual whose byline appears on the article and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Old Dominion Chapter – NRHS.

Chapter Meeting

Bill Todd

The monthly meeting of the ODC will be held on July 16th at 7 pm. Dale Diacount will present a slide show entitled "A Return to the Wasatch" that will feature a report from an October 2016 trip to Utah with fellow railroad retiree Stanley Short. Subjects will include ex-D&RGW/Utah double-track main line over Soldier Summit, "Front Runner" commuter train, weekly local on Rio Grande's Potash branch and street railways in and about Salt Lake City. Trains were few and far between; but we made the best of the six days astraddle "the hill." Running a bit late, Amtrak Trains No. 5 & 6 also make an appearance. All aboard?

The August 20 ODC picnic is on for Doswell. The BBRR is agreeable if we enforce security & safety, which we will do. We cannot let anyone attending get near or cross the tracks. All must stand back at a safe distance. See reservation form below.

Chapter Welcomes New Members

Dave Coldren

A number of new people have joined the membership ranks in the past month. Several signed up right on board the Springtime Special excursion trips and have already expressed interest in helping out as crew members in the future. Please welcome these new members to the Chapter:

Andrew Austin, Richmond
Braden Goin, Appomattox
Don Jamison, Richmond
Bev Karangelen, Norfolk

Robert Sexton, Richmond

We invite all members to volunteer for committees to support the Museum, the restoration yard, archives, excursions and more. A list of contacts is available in the Chapter website: www.odcnrhs.org. Thanks to our current members for signing up these new friends. We'll be looking forward to adding more new members during the upcoming Field Day of the Past (9/21-23) and Richmond Train Day (9/29) events.

Train Day 2018 at The Museum is less than 3 months away!

Dave Coldren



The second annual Richmond Train Day presented by the Richmond Railroad Museum is less than 90 days away! Volunteers are now signing up to support the Chapter's biggest one-day event of the year on September 29th from 9am to 3pm. We need your help in two major areas: Museum Hosts and Operations. If you have some experience in covering Host shifts (or will have by September), you will want to sign up for at least one of those slots. You will be very important in showing more than 1000 visitors what the Museum and Chapter are all about.

Operations volunteers are also very important in guiding our guests around the property, directing parking and keeping the facility organized. We'll have a trackless train, bounce house, railroad representatives, drag racing locomotives, a Lego layout and more. Last year was a big success and we're hoping for even more happy faces this year. You can now sign up for your shifts online at: www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0B4EAF4E28AB9-train1 or email Dave Coldren at: TrainDay@yahoo.com or see Dave in person at the July Chapter meeting on July 16th.

Field Day of the Past Car Hosts Needed

Steve Tarrant, Greg Hodges

The 3-day weekend of September 21, 22 & 23 will see the ODC responsible for the 18th year for staffing with Car Hosts the ex-SOU RY 10 Section/Observation heavyweight Pullman sleeping car MT. FORAKER. This 1923 sister to our own "DINWIDDIE COUNTY" (ex-"MT. ANGELES") still is graced with her brass-railed open observation platform and two of the original open sleeping sections and is one of only two air-conditioned exhibits on the 54-acre Field Day grounds. This is just off Broad Street Road (US 250) at Ashland Rd. (VA 623) one mile inside Goochland County. A partly-restored RF&P wooden caboose, #818, sister to our own #824, is coupled to the "MT. FORAKER", and we staff it also.

Four people are needed for each of the two shifts each day: 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM and 1:30 PM - 6:00 PM on Friday and Sunday (Sept. 21 & 23), plus 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM and 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM on Saturday, Sept. 22. You get free admission for yourself, of course, plus lunch (or a good breakfast if you're on the morning shift and get there before 7:00 AM). Having four people per shift allows a one-hour break for each of us to see the various exhibits at this unique extravaganza of antique machinery, hand-crafts, and tractor and truck pulls - it's been described as "a county fair on steroids". All of it is staffed by volunteers like us. We have all of the basic history-telling info already printed up aboard the car, and we can supply you with copies in advance if you haven't done this before.

This is a once-in-a-year opportunity to talk up ODC memberships, our Hull St. Station Museum, and our main income-producers, the Dillwyn trips, to a great many people (Attendance is now averaging

around 45,000 people for this three-day event.) in a historic passenger railway environment. We've already had many Museum visitors who tell us they learned about us at Field Day.

COME AND HELP! We badly need new additions to our aging crew. Please call Steve Tarrant at 233-2192 or Greg Hodges at 677-9786 to volunteer one or more shifts of your time, or see either of us at the June or July Chapter Meetings. We need to submit our completed list of car hosts to the Field Day office by the end of July, so if you don't contact us we'll call you!

Have You Heard Of?

Chuck Taylor

The museum has a very good display, including an electronic docent, explaining the link and pin coupler and the invention of the automatic knuckle coupler by Eli H. Janney in 1873. Recently while hosting at the museum, I was showing a guest the display when the guest asked, have you heard of Andrew Beard? Answering no, the guest told me that Andrew Beard, an African American, had something to do with the knuckle coupler but he could not remember the details. Curious, I did some research on various websites and learned the following.

In 1893 Congress enacted the Federal Safety Appliance Act which required railroad cars used in interstate commerce be equipped with air brakes and automatic couplers, replacing the very dangerous link and pin coupler. Over the years many patents were issued for improvements to the "Janney Coupler", including patents to Andrew Beard.

Andrew Jackson Beard was born in Alabama in 1849. He spent the first part of his life as a slave; after emancipation he became a sharecropper in Pinson, AL. After purchasing his own farm he built a successful flour mill which allowed him time to work on other projects. His first invention was a plow followed three years later by a second plow. Beard earned about \$10,000.00 from his two inventions which he invested in real estate. After his real estate adventures he began to work with and study engines. As Beard became better known for his mechanical ability, he worked as a carpenter and blacksmith and received competing job offers. At some point, he worked for the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad.

The Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad, a successor to the Wills Valley Railroad, completed 230 miles of a planned 293 miles from Chattanooga, TN to Meridian, MS. In 1877 the A&C RR was purchased by British Investors and renamed the Alabama and Great Southern Railroad Company. In 1890 a controlling interest in the AGS RR was purchased by the East Tennessee Virginia and Georgia Railway and the Richmond and Danville Railroad. After 1895 the line was controlled by the Southern Railway the successor to the R&D and the ETV&G. Today the line is a branch of the Norfolk and Southern Railway.

Andrew Beard's time on the railroad is not well documented. Some accounts have him being injured in an accident and losing a leg, other information has him uninjured but witnessing injuries to others. In any case, Beard worked on improvements to the Janney knuckle coupler and was granted patents in 1897, 1899, and 1904. Beard's coupler was called the "coupling Jenny" or the "Jenny coupler", historians are not sure way this name was used. Some sources report that Beard sold his coupler patents for \$50,000.00 worth about 1.5 million dollars today. During this time, Beard also received a patent for a rotary steam engine but the engine was not a commercial success. Not much is known about Beard's life after 1899. It is reported that Beard again invested in real estate and started a taxi company in Jefferson County, AL. Later reports have him becoming paralyzed and being impoverished. Beard died in 1921 at the Jefferson County Alms House.

Andrew Jackson Beard was posthumously inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2006. The National Inventors Hall of Fame, headquartered in Ohio, operates a museum in the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office at 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA.

Hosting at the museum not only gives you the opportunity to share your knowledge and enthusiasm for all things railroad but also provides an opportunity to learn from our visitors. I urge all of you to give it a try.

July Archives Photo

Charles Curley

In summer 1958 an Atlantic Coast Line work train is working on the Meadow to Clopton line as seen from the Hopkins Road overpass. Purple and silver

GP-7 #127 is pushing a Jordon Spreader. From a slide by Evan Siler.



Photo Quiz

Dave Coldren

Can you identify this passenger car? Answer elsewhere in this issue.) Hint: It served as Car #12 in the 1977 Chessie Steam Specials consist which was pulled by the venerable steam locomotive #2101, an ex-Reading Railroad T-1 Class 4-8-4.



Richmond Railroad Museum and Archives Report for June 2018

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 140 (1309 year to date)
 Admission charges \$485 (97 "paid" admissions")
 Donations: \$50
 Volunteer hours: 267
 Gift shop sales: \$378.02
 Chapter meeting: 20 attendees

Many thanks to Linda Nelson who for many years coordinated volunteers for the museum. Linda recently announced that she is “retiring” from the job! She began back when the museum was in the ex RF&P baggage - express car before the building was renovated.

There are several events that will be taking place soon at the museum. First is the annual Boy Scouts Merit Badge session to be held on Monday August 13th. If everything runs on schedule a group of the Scouts will board the Amtrak train from Newport News at Main Street Station and travel to the Staples Mill Road Station. They will then visit the museum for participation in the Merit Badge training sessions given by museum volunteers and Scout leaders. Museum volunteers needed! Please contact Calvin Boles if you can help. The museum will also be hosting a planning meeting for the Manchester Alliance on July 18th. We will also be hosting a meeting for the Historic Richmond Foundation in July.

The museum recently received a donation from former member Bill Stratton’s son. It contained many books, loco builder’s plates, photos and slides, movies, and other items. Thanks to Bill “Jr.” for remembering the ODC.

Greg Hodges and Laird Ramsey will be heading the ODC safety committee. They will be working on safety awareness and other issues for the museum, Hallsboro, and trips.

The next museum committee meeting is scheduled for Saturday August 4th beginning at 9:30 AM at the museum.

the new Chapter and Museum telephone number is 804-231-4324. The voice mail is currently being “setup” and is not working at this time but will be shortly.

Notes from Cass

Kim Young

On 6/30 and 7/1, I visited Cass including the shop tour. In doing so, I picked up some updates and an interesting perspective. (1) Buffalo Creek and

Gauley #4 is approximately 6 months from being operational with May 2019 as an anticipated date for service with it to begin. (2) Related, the line between Durbin and Cass is approximately 2.5 miles (of 15) from being reconnected. There will be additional work to do before it is ready for traffic. (3) Ridership on Cass seems to be down significantly. How much of this can be attributed to the increased cost since the D&GV took over operations and how much to the price of gas (\$2.99/gal) and the overall depressed economy in the area is open to question. (4) The Castaway Caboose on the Durbin Rocket line are booked through 2018 and 2019, and they have started a waiting list for 2020. They are attempting to acquire a 3rd caboose for this service. As for the perspective, the guide on the shop tour said that you could tell how serious a logging company was about their business by the type of locomotive they used. If they were extremely serious, they bought Shays. If they were somewhat serious they bought Heislars. If they weren’t too serious they bought Climaxes. He clarified that by adding that a casting that would need a crane to handle for a Shay could be carried by two strong men for a Climax.

Note to photographers: If you are going to ride the Durbin Rocket, take the morning run. Lighting on the afternoon trip is not conducive to good photography.

Photo Quiz Answer:

This 54-seat coach was built by Bethlehem Steel in 1925 for the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac as #532. The RF&P modernized and renumbered it to #706 in 1956. Today it is often seen along (and above) the James River as part of the Old Dominion Chapter’s excursions out of Dillwyn, Va.

(Note: Car #706 was also part of the 1978 Chessie excursions as car #17. While the 2101 previously served as motive power for the American Freedom Train in 1975-76.)

RESERVATION FORM FOR DOSWELL PICNIC 8/20/18

Cost \$5.00 per person/\$3.00 per child

Name(s)_____

Telephone No._____

Email: _____

No. Adults_____

No. Children _____

Can you Bring a Covered Dish to share?_____

If so, What?_____

ODC will furnish Fried Chicken, baked beans, drinks & cookies

RSVP Bill Todd by August 3 at WFToddJr@aol.com or 746-5735 (Earlier the better)

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