



The Highball



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Volume 52, Number 7

June, 2011

CHAPTER PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

June 20th General Meeting: Bob Bryant, President of the Buckingham Branch Railroad, will visit the Old Dominion Chapter's, 7:30 PM June 20 meeting at the Hull Street Station and bring ODC members up to date on BBRR's progress since his last talk with us several years ago. Bob will discuss the business activities of both the Buckingham Branch as well as the longer regional route between Richmond and Clifton Forge. Since ODC has an excellent working relationship with the BBRR for our spring, fall and Christmas excursion trains, we are sure members will make a special effort to attend this important occasion to meet and greet both Bob and his wife, Annie. Visitors welcomed. Refreshments available.

Archive Committee Meetings: The Archives Group will meet on Thursday June 23rd for our regular meeting at 3600 West Broad St. We will also be having a special June Archives meeting on **Saturday, June 11 at 10:00 AM** at the Hull Street Station, 102 North Hull Street. The purpose of this special meeting is to begin installation of exhibits in the museum's freight room. We will need as much help as possible.

A museum committee meeting will also be held on Saturday, June 11th at 10:00 AM It's been a while since the last Museum committee meeting so this would be a good time to get together to review the progress at the Museum. The archives committee plans to be working at the station so many of us will be there for that meeting also.



Join in the FUN of RAILROADING!

The Old Dominion Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society welcomes new members. If you would like to enjoy the experience of working on actual railroad rolling stock, and assisting with excursion trips and other functions of the chapter, please contact Kim Young at wrgoodie@henrico.k12.va.us for an application form or more information

FROM OUR TRIP COMMITTEE

Marsha Cox reports the following: Two items are being sent for publication in the Highball. This first item is transcribed from a card given to the trip committee plus a cake on May 21 in gratitude for letting them sell baked goods and cocoa at the Santa train trip in December.

This message is to the Old Dominion Chapter-NRHS from the Relay for Life Team of the Buckingham Change United Methodist Church.

To all ODC Chapter Members-

"Our Relay for Life Team thanks you so much for your graciousness to us in December allowing us to sell hot chocolate, cookies and doughnuts for our cause. Your donation of the paper products and hot chocolate was so appreciated and kind.

The day was cold but beautiful with the snow falling. Our crusade to fight cancer is one step closer with groups such as yours helping ours to continue our reason to relay. Again, our many thanks. Please enjoy this small token of our appreciation. (A really delicious chocolate cake which the Trip Committee enjoyed at dinner on May 21).

The Buckingham Change United Methodist Church
Signed by: Brenda & William Marks; VA Garrett, Mary Taylor, Valerie VanWitzenburg, Crystal & Chuck Martin, Samantha VanWitzenburg, Connie Kershner, Penny Allen, Katie Taylor, Alice Gormus, Ben Gormus, Rev. Veronica Barrell, Jewel Harris, Winnie Brown, Christine Thomas, Gene Absher, Woody & Talmadge Hanes, Elaine Davenport, Brenda Absher, Mary Health, T.J. Steger, Chastity Taylor, Nyska Worley, Taliyah Turner

The second item is Hyco Kid's latest exciting installment on life as a U.S. Marshal.

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FROM OUR TRIP COMMITTEE

continued from Page One:

The second item comes to us from Marshall Hyco Kid.

The Dramatic Events of the Somewhere in Time on a Day in May; Here's what actually happened:

It's the James River Rambler – as told by the U.S. Marshal Hyco Kid

The deputies, four of us, soon to be three, surprised the bad guys by boarding the train at an unknown railroad siding in Dillwyn, VA. However, as soon as we boarded, one of my deputies changed sides. He said there was more money to be made in outlawin' than law-dogin'. However, this left me in a real quandary.

I was already in tote with the notorious outlaw Rattlesnake-aka Concho Kincaid to meet his maker at a necktie party in Yuma, Arizona. Unknown to me, five outlaws boarded the train in Dillwyn at the railhead. They already had robbed the northern passengers and also had plans to hit the center boxcar where the Wells Fargo safe was located.

The next thing I knew, Rattlesnake's brother slipped him a gun whilst my back was turned. Held us at bay and made a break for it heading for parts unknown.

Upon departing the train, a gunfight ensued. The odds were three to five. I was really nervous. Thereupon, on down the track came four of the Tom Mix Rangers to save the day and the train from the bad guys. However, they were detained by a huge copperhead snake, which darn near bit the horses. If it wasn't for Captain Bob Toney of the Tom Mix Rangers killing the darn snake, no telling how the events of the day would have turned out.

I also found out later, two of the outlaws didn't show their faces because they heard the U.S. Marshal Hyco Kid was on board! 'Sew' in the end, justice prevailed as always!!

The outlaws who changed sides was known as Rooster-the other one called himself Jack. Myself and Greg, a writer, rounded up what was left of the outlaws and took 'em off to jail. Last seen, Mitchum was heading for the hills – still running, I guess. However I did hearst a jail house rumor. The bad guys are planning on trying to hit the train in October, again. I's doesn't think 'sew'. I'll have something in store for 'em!!

See you down the trail...good shootin'...
Hyco Kid!!!



FROM THE YARD

By Kevin Frick

Not a lot to report this month mainly due to involvement in other projects of the chapter. Randy and I did manage to get some work done on the track under the new train shed.

Kevin

For information or work day schedules at the Hallsboro Yard, please contact Kevin Frick (ckfrick@gmail.com)

MAY PICNIC IN ASHLAND

ODC Chapter members and guests gathered at the Ashland Station, on a pleasant evening in May, to enjoy bar-b-que, camaraderie, and to do some train watching. Turnout was good, the weather was cooperative, and a good time was had by all. Here are some scenes from the event.

(Photos by Charles Curley III)



FIELD DAY OF THE PAST HELP NEEDED

September 16, 17 & 18 will see ODC responsible for the 10th year for staffing with Car Hosts the Pullman 10 Sec/Obs heavyweight "Mt. Foraker" (12/23), an unmodified (still has her brass-railed open observation platform) sister car to our own "Dinwiddie county" (ex-"Mt. Angeles") (and the only air-conditioned exhibit at Field day), and the ex-RF&P wood caboose coupled to it on static display.

We need four people for each of six shifts: 9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. Friday and Sunday; and 8 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday. This will allow for sight-seeing breaks for each Car Host while still providing the minimum of three people to staff these two cars.

You get free admission and free lunch. This is an extremely worthwhile event for us to support with our active assistance; and this immensely popular exhibit gives us a great opportunity to advertise our own activities: the Hull Street Museum, the Buckingham "Rambler" trips and Membership.

If you possibly can, volunteer for more than one shift, on the same day or on two or three days. If you have family members or friends, late teenage or older, who you think would like to learn about and participate in all this good stuff alongside you, sign 'em up. We have all the basic storytelling information you'll need already printed up, each part of it on a separate sheet. These are the same handouts available to our visitors aboard the car – but most people don't read them, and you are needed to tell the essentials verbally.

We badly need new additions to our crew. Some of us old-timers have gotten creaky and breakable, and some who have helped in the past are no longer with us. We ODC Members are the only people who can tell others about this fascinating history in a knowledgeable way. Beginning in July, please call Steve Tarrant at 233-2192 or Bob Timmins at 740-3424 to say which shifts you are will to serve on, whether definitely, probably or possibly. We'll confirm back to you in any event.



THE WORLD OF RAILROADS

by Jerry Grosshans

Department of corrections and explanations...In last month's issue I mentioned that the University of Virginia was involved in a proposed design for an Amtrak station in Roanoke, courtesy of a newsletter "Tower Topics." The subsequent edition of that newsletter refers to the proposals and studies as being done by Virginia Tech! I guess to those out-of-state persons there is no difference between a Hokie and a Wahoo!

THE WORLD OF RAILROADS *by Jerry Grosshans* Continued ...

Also, I mentioned that CSX is retiring and getting rid of Also, I mentioned that CSX is retiring and getting rid of the SD80's inherited in the Conrail division. Several sources have said that at least 3 of these troublesome units are still plying CSX trackage.

Concerning orders for new locomotives, UP still get 40 SD70ACE units (#9871-8710) from EMD and 60 C45ACCTE units (#7469-7526) from GE. That GE model designation is strictly UP's for a ES44AC unit with controlled tractive effort. CP will get 60 ES44AC units, to be numbered in the 8900 series. Ferromex is getting 44 SD70ACE units. NS is getting the previously announced AC units from both GE and EMD.

Other chapter's newsletters and national magazines reporting on area railroading continues as the Central New York Chapter's Green Block has an article on Doswell in the May edition. One of the accompanying photographs shows an AC60 (#623 repainted in the latest scheme. I also noted \$614 in the new scheme several weeks ago, and from a distance I believe another of these units, so if CSX is repainting them, then should be around for a while.

For those interested in "fallen flags" and abandoned rails, there now is a site for this, www.abandonedrails.com.

Washington's Union Station has installed a large train information board in the main hall and a similar installation has been made in Baltimore's Penn Station (NARP News).

The valuation of goods going through the Port of Tacoma, WA in 2010 was triple the value in the previous year. The port is served by both UP and BNSF and is heavily involved with the KIA and Mazda vehicles. Remember, Tacoma is the 2011 NRHS convention site!

Japanese bullet trains have resumed service on April 25th, only six weeks after the earth-quake which ravaged that nation.

The historic Roanoke Shops of N&W/NS have gone one million injury free hours, the equivalent of over three and a half years! (The Rail)

Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority has acquired several of the "kitbashed" GP40WH-2 units retired by Maryland's MARC. Build in 1995 by Morrison-Knudson (now MotivePower/MPI) in Boise, ID the units are newer than all but two of the MBTA units now in service. MBTA is to get a number of units from MPI to be powered by a GE prime mover, a first for MPI (Interchange).

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THE WORLD OF RAILROADS by Jerry Grosshans
Continued from previous page....

A Civil War era television pilot is being filmed in New Mexico on the Cumbres & Toltec, for NBC Entertainment. "Reconstruction" is about a Civil War veteran settling in a Missouri border town. (Potomac Rail News)

When I used to work at the Courthouse, I would occasionally see some Federal Employers' Liability Act suits which bordered on the asinine or ridiculous and apparently such an action is pending against CSX in Alabama. Michael T Brand was a CSX conductor and while his train was stopped for roughly 30 minutes a man came aboard the locomotive and began firing weapon. Brand pretended to be dead so the assailant went through his pockets and took his wallet. After waiting a while, Brand summoned help and discovered that the engineer was dead. The suit basically accuses CSX of failing to provide a safe place to work. (Potomac Rail News)

Champlain Valley Chapter member Jim Jones (802 862 3407) is looking for video footage of ALCO locomotives in the Southern USA

In order to fully comply with the "made in USA" requirements of a number of rail lines, Caterpillar, through its Progress Rail unit, will open a plant in Muncie, IN which has been vacant since 1998. EMD is now a component of Progress Rail.

For the first time in 13 years, UP has had to use the ex-SO rotary snowplows on the Donner Pass line in late March. Most of the railfan railroad press has covered this action in the latest issues. Much traffic was detoured over the Feather River route, but that line was also plagued by slides over that period of time.

GE has announced a \$1.41 billion deal with China for locomotives, signaling and other support functions. (The Green Block)

The April edition of NRHS News has a nice article about the chapter, our excursions and the museum.

CSX is to spend at least \$160 million to improve clearances for double stack trains through Richmond. Among local changes are the closures of two old bridges over the tracks, on Blue Shingles Lane and on Platinum Road. The latter is a vehicular bridge now closed to all but foot traffic. This bridge is unusual and missing some railing, so it is ideal to see top sides of trains.

I should advise that I was told by a Richmond police officer that we can not park at the Walmsley Blvd. Crossing. The nearby land is not posted, but apparently there is some trespassing issue involved. If you want to watch CSX, I suggest Old Lane at Centralia, just before the connector line to the old SAL branches off.

The deaths of Curtis Katz (cartoonist, writer and Amtrak attendant) and Eugene Huddleston, professor, author and C&O expert) are noted.

Several nationally published magazines have reported on the updating of signals along the C&O lines in West Va. Such work continues in the local area too.

I note that NS has erected several signs at the Hull Street and Second Street intersection, probably due to apartment residents parking too close to tracks.

As of Memorial Day, I saw no evidence of construction work on the new connector between CSX and NS for the Norfolk passenger service.

REPORT ON RECENT DILLWYN RAILROAD DAY
By Tom Hardesty

Thanks to everyone who helped with the seventh Dillwyn Railroad Day on June 4, 2011. We had nearly ideal weather this year, unlike the big monsoon that dumped on us during the locomotive tour step disassembly last year.

Railroad Day would not be possible without the incredible support of the Buckingham Branch Railroad. This year the BB had unusual activities in the form of the equipment storage track rehabilitation to deal with simultaneously. This placed their former Virginia Power stainless steel passenger cars in the spot where the Railroad Day displays are normally placed. Giles Scott put many hours in working on the stainless steel passenger cars' brakes to ready them for the move. Then Gary Farrish, Adam, and Mark Waldrop went above and beyond the call of duty relocating caboose 222, the General locomotive BB 4, and the stainless steel passenger cars in 90 degree weather so the caboose and locomotive displays were in their usual location for June 4. The caboose has received its lettering on its shiny paint job and it really looks impressive.

The Old Dominion Chapter wishes to express its thanks for Operation Lifesaver's participation again, as they have every year since our second Railroad Day in 2006. Melvin Jones and Veronica Rohrer worked hard to get their message of safety around railroads to the passengers of our nearly sold out trains on June 4.

Finally thanks to all the ODC members, Roanoke Chapter members, and volunteers who helped with the event. Jesse Bryant's and Jens Metts' trucks were essential for moving the locomotive access steps to and from the storage container. Jesse, Jens, and Ned Krack helped me assemble these steps on May 28, and Jesse and Jens took them apart themselves June 4. Jesse made a great presentation board for the General locomotive from the old Army tech manuals showing all the inside details. On the day of the event, Jesse and Jens staffed the displays. Paul M. Howell, Paul V. Howell, and Nichole Howell also helped with the displays while not working food service during station stops, and Dave Hebel helped when not parking cars.



Here are some photos of the chapter's recent activities with Railroad Day and Tom Mix and his gang. Thanks to Marge and Tom Hardesty for getting these to us in time for the June newsletter mail-out.



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Please send news items to:
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Highball Editor at
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**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

*We're on the WEB at
<http://www.odcnrhs.org>*

FEATURED PHOTO

This month's photo from the ODC Archives Collection



Featured Photos are selected by Charles Curley III

The June Archives photo is a slide from the Evan Siler collection. Featured is ACL GP-7 #127 and a Jordon spreader on a work train on the Meadow to Clopton line in South Richmond. The view is looking east from the Hopkins Road overpass. Apparently some drainage improvement is underway. The time is the summer of 1958. Since then, the line has been abandoned and removed.