



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
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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 Monday, May 20 at 7.00 PM at the Richmond RR Museum. Kenneth Jones will present a program on three interesting topics (1) Restoration of the Lee Hall C&O train station (2) Ft. Eustis RR in steam & (3) Refurbishing a WW II US Army Hospital car. Please make a special effort to attend, bring a friend & refreshments available at half time.

Ettrick-Matoaca Train Day

Chesterfield County Public Library

Step into your overalls and engineer's hat while enjoying a family-friendly event-filled day in celebration of trains! crafts, story times, barrel train rides, bouncy train, model trains, Cinder & Tender mascots, petting zoo, food truck and more Saturday, May 18 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Archives Photo

Charles Curley

An Old Dominion Chapter excursion is preparing to depart Main St station in the early 1960's as seen in this photo from the William Stratton collection. The excursion is utilizing two of the three Chesapeake and Ohio RDC's that were being used between Newport News and Charlottesville as the "Chessieliners". One of the RDC trainsets would layover in Richmond most of the day. Therefore, they were available for excursions. This trip may have headed up the James River line. There was one RDC trip that went west on the Piedmont, then south on the Virginia Air Line and finally east on

the James River line back to Richmond. It appears that there is one of the N&W's open-air gondolas behind the RDCs.



Crossing Accidents 2018

Operation Lifesaver

WASHINGTON, DC, April 10, 2019 — Recently-released U.S. government statistics reveal that railroad grade crossing collisions and rail trespass deaths increased in 2018, according to rail safety education nonprofit Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI). OLI Executive Director Rachel Maleh cited preliminary Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) statistics that show U.S. crossing collisions rose 4.3 percent, crossing deaths remained constant and crossing injuries decreased 2.9 percent from 2017 to 2018. Total casualties (deaths and injuries) from rail trespassing climbed 2.8 percent in 2018; trespass deaths grew 12.0 percent and trespass injuries fell 6.3 percent from their levels in 2017.

“We are troubled to see that these tragic railroad crossing incidents and pedestrian trespass casualties continue to rise,” said Maleh. “Some indicators were better in 2018, however. Crossing deaths were flat from the previous year, while crossing and trespass injuries both dropped. Rail Safety Week, September 22-28 in the U.S. and Canada, will focus attention on these key public safety issues. These statistics show that our efforts to save lives, working with the FRA and safety partners at freight,

passenger and commuter railroads, are more important than ever,” she stated. “It is vitally important that we continue to strengthen efforts among all public, private and government stakeholders to prevent and reduce grade crossing collisions and trespass incidents,” said FRA Administrator Ronald L. Batory. “There is still much work to do, but through our longstanding partnership with Operation Lifesaver, Inc., more Americans understand how to safely traverse grade crossings and refrain from risky behavior along rail lines.” States with the most crossing collisions in 2018 were Texas, California, Indiana, Georgia, Illinois, Florida, Louisiana, Alabama, Ohio and Pennsylvania. States with the most trespasser casualties (deaths and injuries combined) in 2018 were California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia, North Carolina and New Jersey.

Museum Report

Bob Dickinson

April 2019 Visitors: 176 (Year to date: 804)
Donations: \$85
Volunteer Hours: 196
Flood Wall Tour – April 13th: 13
Chapter Meeting attendance: 20

Thanks to all who volunteered during April. Some Hosts and Gift shop volunteers are still doing double and triple duty! It’s grass and weed season again. Feel free to bring your weed-eater to the museum and help keep the vegetation under control! Big changes in the neighborhood. The last of the old paper mill across the street has been demolished and hauled away. New concrete footings and site preparation has already started for the new high-rise residential building and office building across the street from the museum. A notable improvement – 2nd street across from the station has been repaired and paved covering up the long-abandoned tracks that served the old Crawford Manufacturing Company. Steve Tarrant reports progress still being made (however slowly) with the City of Richmond on the fence relocation project next to First Street. Woops! The company that was contracted to make the new door for the Station Masters office which was damaged during the break-in seems to have “lost” the order for the

replacement door. The door was reordered and should be arriving soon. Did you happen to see the recent activity around the “Three Level Crossing” (Triple Crossing)? Turns out the Norfolk-Southern track which is at ground level was actually lowered so that “Hi-Cube” cars which are taller can make the trip to West Point, VA. Speculation is that large hopper cars carrying wood chips from the recently reactivated “chip mill” (Now served by the Buckingham Branch Railroad) in Keysville, VA will be carried by rail to the paper mill at West Point.

Railroading Today

Jerry Grosshans

It's always nice to be able to sleep late, sometimes I don't get up until noon, that's the reward for being an 80-year-old decrepit senior citizen! Several days ago, I woke up at 8 A.M. and saw an unusual scene on my TV. There on the Fox News Channel was a notation that it was 6 AM MDT. in Evanston, WY. At about that time the faces of several of the UP Steam Program were shown including Ed Dickins and the scene cut to a large steam locomotive, #4014 emitting a few wisps of steam. The Big Boy got that far and from there it was "all downhill" to Ogden, as the old UP heads used to say. By that time, I had the volume on and the announcer was mentioning that the engine was on tour for the 150th anniversary of the railroad...a minor gaffe, to be sure as the Golden Spike Anniversary is actually on the "railroad." All of the old participants in the original ceremonies are now parts of UP. I watched other channels but saw nothing else on this up to today (afternoon of May 10).

The latest edition of TRAINS magazine has an interesting comparison of the AC vs DC transmission in modern diesel locomotives. Starting tractive effort is 200,000 lbs and continuous is 175,000 lbs. on AC against 163,400 starting and 111,800 DC. Keep in mind that one of the most efficient steam locomotives, N&W 611 puts out only 80,000 lbs. Also, the AC transmission system is lighter, more durable as well as temperature and moisture resistant. This is why there is a move to convert older DC units to AC as well as upgrade some older AC units with newer more efficient electronics.

On the local scene, I can report several interesting sights. About a week ago a single large unit went

north on CSX with what I determined to be the Strates Carnical equipment...just ridge, a few trucks and related equipment, the personnel apparently go by bus. The loading appeared to be lax as some cars appeared to be half loaded. I believe that Strates does not pay here or in the area.

Also had an interesting situation about a week ago... a grain train stalled on the Bellwood trackage, I heard of this on the scanner as I was leaving my son's place in Chester. I went to Old Lane to see how this played out and listened to the bits of conversation I was able to get, whether to send out a unit from Collier or from Acca, etc. The powers that be determined help was at hand, the F 712 local from Collier to Fanshaw was nearby, so after discussions power from 712 went down the Bellwood and tied on to the grain train taking it to the Walthall area and returning to do it work. After this was over I thought that some good did come out of this, 712 was ; light (locomotives, no cars) and was nearby. What if it had some cars?

Also saw a "high & wide" northbound a large fixture of some sort on a four-truck flat with each truck four axles, plus two idler flats the load mostly wrapped in plastic but greatly resembling an oversized (by quite a bit) beer keg, all with a large AC locomotive

As for the trainwatching places I usually mention, the crossing at Broad Rock continues to deteriorate, mainly the asphalt between the tracks. Another utility pole has been erected at Meadow and a few loose ties, which look used, have been dumped at Old Lane. I did get out to the area south of Collier and noted that the crossings of the three roads south of the yard have been renewed on the older tracks. I also discovered what I believe to be the crossing just north of Ellington (a private road) which I had earlier mentioned.

About a week ago I also saw a train which could be literally a "jack of all trades" a drag with two large cuts of covered hoppers and of coal hoppers, many tanks and ending with a few empty intermodal cars, all empty except the final three wells/ platforms each of which held two boxes, double—stacked. We also have apparently gotten more garbage. On two occasions I noticed large containers (like the usual green and orange) but these were a very dark blue with a different style of car but still holding four large containers.

Tidewater and Western

Greg Hodges

For years I have been curious about the location where the old Tidewater and Western crossed over top on the Richmond & Danville/Southern Ry. Kevin Frick told me about it years ago. Today while returning to Powhatan from taking my stepson to work (off of Beach Rd in southern Chesterfield), I stopped and parked my car at the Mosley Rd. crossing not far from Dorset Rd in Powhatan. I walked maybe 300 yards west from the Mosley Rd crossing, and soon came upon the two massive stone/concrete piers still guarding either side of the N/S right of way...surrounded by trees and underbrush...but still as sturdy as when they were built back in the 1800's. No doubt the bridge crossed over the R & D back then. (pre 1894) When I departed from there, the raised fill of the old line could be seen in the woods alongside Mosley Rd before I came to its intersection with Dorset Rd. Those familiar with the old railroad know that traces of it can be glimpsed along Beach Rd not far from Pocahontas Park (behind Crumps Store), along Mosley and Dorset Roads, US 60 before getting to the Powhatan Courthouse area, and even behind the stores lining the highway thru Cumberland Courthouse.

But you'd better look quick...the massive development of big subdivisions in western Chesterfield and in Powhatan are fast obliterating traces of the old railroad

Wish I had one of those nifty "wayback": machines to observe the old T & W in action before it was pulled up in 1917!





Chapter Organization and Contacts

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 Kevin Frick -First Vice President
 Tim Torrez – Second Vice President
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 John Forsythe – Director
 Bob Dickinson – Director
 Steve Tarrant – Director
 Calvin Boles – Director, Museum Curator
 Carl Steiner – Director, Finance Chairman

Committees

Richmond Railroad Museum

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 Archival librarian: Chuck Breeden
 Physical Plant: Bob Dickinson, Bob Stevens
 Museum Host scheduling: Ned Krack treasurer@odcnrhs.org
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Membership & Excursion Tickets

ODCNRHS
 P. O. BOX 3131
 CHESTER, VA 23831

We are located at 102 Hull Street, Richmond, VA.
 (Please do not send mail to the 102 Hull St. Address)

Our phone number is 804 – 231-4324

Note: phones are answered by voice mail when the museum is not open.



**Membership Application/Renewal Form - Old Dominion Chapter, National Railway
Historical Society**

Please type or print ***legibly***

New _____ Renewal _____

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Family member(s) (if joining): _____

Special talents/interests: _____

Membership

Regular	\$11	_____
Family	\$1 ea.	_____
Surcharge for snail mail newsletter through Dec. 2019	\$10	_____
Chapter donation		_____
Designated purpose (if any)		_____
Total		_____

Please send to the following or leave in the membership box at 102 Hull St.

ODC Membership

PO Box 3131

Chester VA 23831

I agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Old Dominion Chapter

Signature _____

Date: _____