



The Highball

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
of the
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER



Volume 58

September 2018

Number 10

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

On September 17 at 7 pm at the museum, Jeff Hawkins is back in town and will present another of his outstanding slide shows, entitled "Then & Now" that will include locations throughout VA, WVA, NC and SC on the N&W, VGN, ACL and SAL. You will not want to miss this. Refreshments available. Bring a friend and come on out. Refreshments will be served, so come and bring a friend.

September Archives Photo

Charles Curley

Here is another selection from the William Stratton collection. Virginian Railway class MCA 2-8-2 #483 is seen at the west end of the yard at Victoria VA. Victoria was the division point between Norfolk and Roanoke. The yard in Victoria is long gone and Norfolk Southern abandoned the ex-Virginian through town a good while ago.



2019 Memberships

Kim Young

Normally, membership renewals for 2019 would begin with this issue. However, due to a matter to be decided at the 9/10 board meeting, that will be delayed until the Oct. issue. There will be one major change to the procedures this year. A recent audit of the roster has shown that some information is outdated or just plain wrong. Therefore, ALL payments for 2019 MUST be accompanied by a renewal form. These will be made available in the Oct. **Highball** and at the museum. If you plan to pay cash at a meeting, which is fine, please bring a completed form with you or plan for time to fill one out on meeting night. Leaving same for me in the membership box will work as well.

Gift Shop Promotion

Greg Hodges

During the months of Oct, Nov, and Dec a free TEE SHIRT promotion will be in effect for those folks who volunteer to host on a Saturday or Sunday at the Richmond Railroad Museum. A person can select a railroad tee shirt (adult or child) of their choice from the gift shop rack if they volunteer at least two (2) days during a calendar month. One can potentially garner three shirts during this three-month promotional period by volunteering at least twice during each calendar month. Whether you claim one, two, or three shirts, here's an easy way to expand your railroading wardrobe. Never hosted before? It's a snap. Just be willing to welcome our visitors with a smile and escort them about the premises to the various exhibits and displays. No extensive RR knowledge is required!

To sign up, just contact Ned Krack (NEDRDGFAN@msn.com) (804 239-4067) or Greg Hodges (junehodges@verizon.net) (804 376-7979) we'll get you on the schedule. All aboard!

Museum Host Schedule

Ned Krack

1	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Stevens	Host	
	Bill Todd	Host	
2	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Stanley Clark	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Host	
8	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Calvin Boles	Host	
	Kim Young	Host	
9	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Bill Todd	Host	
	Bob Williams	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Floodwall	
15	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Wayne Poates	Host	
	Ray Potter (11:00 - 1:30)	Host	Host
	Jack Newsom (1:30-4:00)	Host	Host
16	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Chuck Taylor	Host	
	John McKenna	Host	
	Bill Sheild	Host	
22	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop	
	Bill Taylor	Host	
	Vacant Host		
23	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Charles Curley	Host	
	Bill Todd	Host	
29	Train Day		
30	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Dickinson	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Host	

Trip Update

Kim Young

Volunteers are needed on 10/6 to get the train ready for the Dillwyn trips. Contact Ned Krack at nedrdbgfan@msn.com. Also, we need folks to help on train crew on 10/13 (25th Anniversary of BB excursions celebration), 10/20 (Tom Mix Rangers), and 10/27 (Halloween theme). Contact Dave Coldren at david.coldren@cbre.com.

Doswell Picnic

Bill Todd (Photos: Charles Curley& Richard Todd)

The ODC picnic at Doswell was quite successful. We had 35 attendees, including members and

family guests. After expenses, we contributed \$116.24 to the Chapter treasury. Lots of trains. Many members voiced a suggestion we should do this more often--maybe Hallsboro next.





Visitors through Ashland

Doug Riddell

Normally, Amtrak EMD-manufactured model F59 diesel-electric locomotives aren't seen outside of the friendly confines of Southern California or the Pacific Northwest, but on 9/2 they passed through Ashland, VA, en route Raleigh, NC, where they are to work for the North Carolina Department of Transportation, to pinch hit for a couple of NCDOT engines powering that state's Raleigh-Charlotte Piedmont service trains while they are in Pueblo, CO, to be tested for PTC--the new collision avoidance system that will be in place nationwide at the end of the year, hopefully

When I served as Amtrak company photographer, I got to see No. 461 on the point of Amtrak Surfliner trains between Los Angeles and San Diego, and No. 470 skirting the shore of the Puget Sound, running Cascades trains between Vancouver and Portland, so this was a treat to meet up with a couple of old friends, far, far from home.

On 9/3, the two NCDOT locomotives and four state-owned and operated coaches passed through Ashland, on a special non-revenue move, en route Washington and Chicago where they will be forwarded to Pueblo for those tests.

This is something akin to a total lunar eclipse for those who share a fascination for trains. It's extremely unusual, and for many people, it will be the only time they will ever get to see railroad equipment that normally runs only in a small geographic area of the country.

That said, you have to take your hats off to the Tar Heel State for their commitment to state supported passenger rail service. Their highway system is already swamped. While North Carolina is often spoofed for its leisurely, back woods lifestyle on tv and in movies, it is in fact quite progressive in its approach to business and technology. It's predicted

that by 2045, it will rank in the top six states in terms of population. Clearly the folks down there are seeing to it that North Carolina has a model transportation system that will not only adequately handle the predicted growth, but will result in its being a magnet for even more prosperity.



Museum Host Schedule

Ned Krack

1	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Stevens	Host	
	Bill Todd	Host	
2	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Stanley Clark	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Host	
8	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Calvin Boles	Host	
	Kim Young	Host	
9	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Bill Todd	Host	
	Bob Williams	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Floodwall	
15	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Wayne Poates	Host	
	Ray Potter (11:00 - 1:30)	Host	
	Jack Newsom (1:30-4:00)	Host	
16	Greg Hodges	Gift Shop	
	Chuck Taylor	Host	
	John McKenna	Host	
	Bill Sheild	Host	
22	Carl Steiner	Gift Shop	
	Bill Taylor	Host	
	Vacant	Host	
23	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Charles Curley	Host	
	Bill Todd	Host	
29	Train Day		
30	Ned Krack	Gift Shop	
	Bob Dickinson	Host	
	Steve Tarrant	Host	

“Chinese” Signals

Bob Dickinson/Doug Riddell

A recent visitor to the museum asked about the “Chinese” signal that was at the old SAL – SCL Brown Street Yard in Richmond. Doug Riddell was kind enough to respond to the question and supplied the explanation and photos and gave permission to use them in the Highball.

There actually were TWO "Chinese" signals at the south end of Brown Street that were position light signals used to convey signals to the engineer of a train or yard job, before radios were readily available, and in lieu of radio communications even after radios had become more common.

There was a single one, south of the crossover and lead to Bone Dry, on the west side of the right of way (shown in the picture with the SAL 5722 caboose on a departing southbound train) in 1977. The signal is on a post with a silver-painted signal case, in which the control handle was enclosed. It was for movements on the No. 1 (west) main track. There was another, mounted on the double bracketed signal mast (photographed from the cab of a southbound train I was on in 1977), which was used to direct movements on the No. 2 (east) main line.

With a yard engine with a long cut of cars, sitting on the bridge, near Main Street, for instance, the yard conductor would move the handle to display a vertical indication (to push north), and a horizontal indication to stop. They were out of use by the time I arrived on the property in 1977, but I remember them, and I alluded to them in the first chapter of my first book, "From the Cab." I wonder if your inquirers from Oklahoma might have read about it there.

I found a third picture, and while it is the smallest file of the three, it shows the "Chinese" signal best of all.





Museum Report

Bob Dickinson

Visitors: 219 (1770 year to date)

Donations: \$80

Volunteer Hours: 256

Sales: \$746.85

Chapter Meeting (Doswell Picnic) - 35

Tours : Boy Scout merit badge training 23 scouts +
5 adults

Recent donations:

Bill Stratton (Son of former ODC president William B. Stratton) – Books, magazines, railroading, photos etc.

Herbert Richwine (Former ODC trustee and treasurer) – Magazines, timetables, and other railroad items from his personal collection.

Barbara Richardson (Staunton, VA) – Magazines and periodicals from her late husband's collection.

Robert Penn (Oklahoma) collection of Virginian and Pullman Co. passes.

Thanks to everyone that worked at the museum during August. Lots of activities happening during September and lots of “helpers” needed. David Coldren and his “team” are preparing for TRAIN DAY on September 29th. If that isn't enough he is also working on putting together the October train excursions on the BB. Steve Tarrant and others have been busy recruiting hosts to help at FIELD DAY OF THE PAST.

Railroading Today

Gerry Grosshans

As the weather is (hopefully) turning cooler and drier, I am going to try to update information on the

various train watching places previously mentioned in various issues. On CSX in South Richmond from Jahnke Road to Carson, there is still work to be done at the Meadow location, technically located between Jahnke and Bassett Avenue, Bassett being shown now as MP 1. If one is at the museum just take Hull st. to where Midlothian Pike splits off to the right, the take Midlothian (Rt. 60) until you go over Belt Boulevard and the overpass of the tracks. Just past the tracks is Covington Street, turn right there and go to where it intersects with Boroughbridge Road (which will take you to Jahnke) just past the crossing and turn right there. You could also try turning right on Bassett, crossing the tracks and immediately turn left on Hill too, to Clarence Street, a short left on Clarence and a left on Jahnke will bring you to the location where you can park. By performing these extra moves can see both sets of signals, northbound near Bassett and Southbound near Jahnke. Going railroad south the next good location is at the Broad Rock crossing, where the MP 3.0 defect detector is located, park in the parking lot of the strip mall across the tracks. In the past there were problems with “undesirables” there, but several officers have advised that the location is being watched and a number of arrests have been made. Also, another tenant, at least one, has opened in the formerly vacant portion of the mall. I had mentioned the stub roadway left of the former Terminal Road at the Stamie E Lyttle location. That has been grown over by vegetation so you have less than a 3-yard viewing window now, just not worth it. I don't remember if I ever mentioned Transport and Industry streets, off of Balls Road between the Clopton crossing and the ending of Belt Boulevard, but the same situation exists there, all grown up with vegetation and the added bonus of plenty of fleas, ticks and other pests. Both situations will improve after a good frost. Next is Walmsley (FA) where work is still underway, the heavy work has been done to install a set of crossovers, leaving the electrical work still in progress. As the crossovers now extend beyond the Castlewood overpass, WITH CARE AND CAUTION you can go on the overpass and see the installation, but be careful. Castlewood is narrow and the overpass has a curve on both sides, hindering drivers' view. You still have the roadway leading to the north gate of the defense center (much vehicle noise from

Chippenham overhead, and the location of Quartermaster signals on Dalebrook Road) the signals are usually dark (approach lit) and as of now, the vegetation beside the road is as high as a car. If you look across the tracks, you can see a very large motor pool at the defense center. Moving on to the next good location, Old Lane at Centralia, there is still a large pile of gravel or ballast and some track panels for reworking crossings, but there is room for a couple of cars. There is no change to Curtis Street in Chester, nor to locations south of there. As to the Bellwood trackage, no changes apply there, either, but it appears that the traffic on that line is down.

For those devotees of NS, I mentioned last month about Sutherland, but somehow the directions for a shorter trip to that location from Richmond was omitted. Leaving the Amtrak Station at Ettrick (Petersburg), make a right to the light at Route 36 (River Road) turn right there and proceed to a community known as Matoaka, make a left on Rt 600 and then a left on Cox Rd. (Rt. 226) to US 460 west. You will be just east of Sutherland. Rts. 708, 623 and 750 all head across the tracks, plus there are places off of 460 where you can access parking lots near the tracks. There are 2 sets of tracks to consider the first is the downtown trackage then comes the bypass route which goes by Collier. The area where the tracks join just west of Cox Rd. is known as Jack and there is a DD there .to announce trains

One evening I was near FA to check on the work there and the DD at MP 3.0 sounded off. Since I was near FA I knew the train was south bound, and soon came a train of different cars, first general freight then some single level intermodal, followed by a few double stacks. He barely cleared FA and the DD went off again, for the other track, and a long grain train came south, with two big units in front, and two more DPU (remote) in the middle. Two unusual trains in about a 15-minute period!

Speaking of DPU trains, two different periodicals I get said two different things about CSX and remote units, one said that they were moving some to the area, the other said CSX wasn't going to use them unless the train ran over 200 miles without switching cars in or out of the train. There has also been mention of the city being "fed up" with long, slow trains. I know that one evening I heard the

Clopton local (F 726) almost pleading for track space, and another time the Fanshaw local (F 712, I believe.) was sitting for a couple of hours waiting for track space to return to Collier, only to be told they had a 13,000-foot train they were trying to yard at Collier. That's about 2.5 miles worth of train. There is no doubt that the trains are longer. I also heard fragments of a conversation on the radio about a DPU train and Beulah Road. There are several Beulah Roads in the area but the only one I know is near the city airport.

I am assuming that the various projects in the area will continue, so I am not even going to guess as to any sort of freight schedules, as even Amtrak is not often on time.

As to the BB, I don't believe they are running DPU trains as the one going west past Doswell the evening of our meeting there had five big units, all in front, when one would expect a 3&2 situation for going over the mountains, even with empties. Rumor is rampant that GE/Wabco has acquired one or more GP38 models with the idea of repowering them with a four stroke powerplant. GE does have several engines they could use, but there has not been a successful repowering of a locomotive with another manufacturer's engine. However, the EMD two stroke is, I believe, a dying breed due to its inability to remain "in spec." for the latest emission requirements.

The track grade at Walmsley will be closed from 9/11-9/18.

Update on Chuck

John DeMajo

Longtime ODC member Chuck Breeden is now in the Envoy Center in Westover Hills, 4493 Forest Hill, Room 421. Visiting hrs. are 9 am to 9pm. The facility is easily accessed from Forest Hill Ave., and there is easy parking.

What Does the Chapter Gain from Train Day?

Dave Coldren Photos: Kim Young

As we prepare to welcome over 1,000 guests to the Museum for the second annual **Richmond Train Day** on September 29th, it's a good time for us to reflect on what this celebration means to the chapter.

Obviously, it's a great way for the **Richmond Railroad Museum** to become better known in the

community. At least 25% of all annual visitors to the museum last year came on this day in 2017. It was a big shot in the arm for the Museum's visitor count. It's also a big effort by a lot of volunteers – and, it's worth it to put the museum on the map. Judging by Facebook activity, a lot of folks have circled this on their calendar and the 2018 attendance should be even higher.

But, there is a bigger prize for us. And, it affects almost every good idea we have had to improve the museum, Hallsboro yard and the excursions. The real payoff for the chapter is **recruiting new members**. If we can convert even 2% of our Train Day guests to chapter members it would add 30-40 new faces. That's about a 50% increase from our current roster,

Think about it. More museum hosts, more Hallsboro volunteers, more excursions. Or, should we say, more satisfied museum visitors, more restored equipment and more chapter income. In so many cases, what stands between us and making progress as an organization is having enough hands to get the jobs done.

So, as we prepare the museum for its big day, please also be prepared to meet our guests and invite them to join the chapter. There will be materials printed for you to sign them up, along with talking points to help encourage them. It's your chance to sell the organization and the many opportunities we have. It's really your chance to help staff the museum, get work done at Hallsboro, increase the chapter's excursion income and keep the organization energized for the next generation.

Sign up to be a part of Train Day at:

www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0B4EAF8E28AB9-train1 or email david.coldren@cbre.com See you on September 29th!



**ODCNRES
PO Box 3131
Chester VA
23831**