

# Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum  
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Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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The beauty of Tennessee's hills, the expansiveness of the CSX operations in Erwin, and the heartwarming sight of the homecoming of a historic rail car are all captured in one unique aerial view. More photos of ex-CLINCHFIELD business car 100's return to Erwin can be found on page 7. [Photo used with permission from Tony Ledford]

**\*\*\* Meeting Date Changed \*\*\***

**May 19<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting**

Due to our regularly scheduled meeting date falling on the Memorial Day holiday, this month's General Membership Meeting of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum has been moved to **May 19**, starting at the usual 6:30 p.m., and held at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. This month's program will feature a DVD showing the move of UNION PACIFIC's "Big Boy" #4014 4-8-8-4 steam locomotive from California to Wyoming for restoration, presented by Jim Stump. Come out, bring a friend and enjoy a great night of railroading with your friends.

## *Member Notes*

*By Nancy Jewel*



WVRHS&M has suffered a huge loss in the recent death of Helen Calhoun in Johnson City. Helen was on the WVRHS&M Board of Directors, newsletter circulation manager, nominating chairman, decorating manager on the Moultrie dining car, active in the Christmas luncheon, many other organization events, and, certainly not least, a good friend. Our sympathy is extended to her husband Jim and their family. We will all miss her. [Helen's obituary is attached to the end of this newsletter.]

Please keep the following members and friends in your thoughts as they continue to deal with health concerns: Anna Banner, Judy Freeman, Art DeVoe (knee surgery), Carrie Denny, Bob Yaple, and Coy and JoAn Edwards. As always, let us know of any members, friends, or family to whom a card might be sent or a phone call made. The office number is 423.753.5797 or call Nancy Jewell at 423.282.0918. Your help is appreciated.

## *Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report*

*By Bob Yaple*

### **GENERAL**

With the acquisition of Car 100, we have renewed interest in expanding the capacity of the Spring Street Coach Yard. We are working with our landlord in coming up with a plan as we now have five passenger cars and 4 parking spaces. Issues are property limits, town regulations regarding the Historic District and, most importantly, cost. Hopefully something will happen in the near future and construction will happen.

### **ROLLING STOCK**

539 Powhatan Arrow coach: is still involved with the NS Steam Excursions up North.

500 St Augustine coach: is also on the NS Steam Excursions up North.

400 Moultrie diner: kitchen improvements are ongoing.

2351 Crescent Harbor sleeper / lounge: work has resumed on the Genset.

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**RECEIVE THE WHISTLE STOP IN BEAUTIFUL COLOR.** If you're receiving the Whistle Stop in hard copy you are missing out on the beautiful colors and useful links to other sites each month. Whistle Stop is being offered to all members as a digital document through email which is so much more detailed and colorful plus contains links that allow you to go to other interesting sites automatically. Also, you will receive it about week earlier than the mail out hard copy. If you are interested in receiving the newsletter via email, please call the WVRHS&M office at 423-753-5797.

## *In the News*



### **CLINCHFIELD 100 ARRIVES BACK HOME IN ERWIN AFTER 32 YEARS**

On May 7, ex-CLINCHFIELD business car 100 rolled back into Erwin, TN after a 32 year absence. The car's showing was in conjunction with the CSX Transportation Erwin Health Fair. Several hundred people came by to see their ol' friend back in Erwin after all these years. Special guests included George Hatcher, the engineer on steam locomotive CRR #1 which pulled CRR 100 on the CLINCHFIELD excursions; Wilbur Craft, trainmaster on the CLINCHFIELD; and Joe Fuller, trainmaster on the CLINCHFIELD and employee in charge of the CLINCHFIELD Santa Train when CRR 100 was the tail end car.

WVRHS&M appreciates all the hard work of Tony King in arranging with CSX the car's showing at the CSX yard in Erwin.

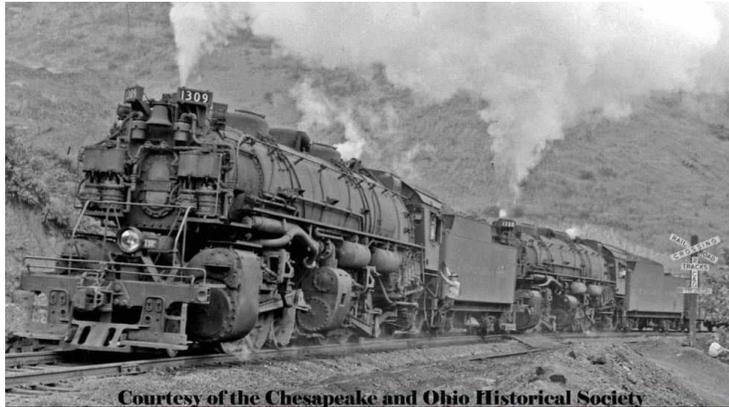


### **CASS SCENIC RAILROAD'S FUTURE UNDER DISCUSSION**

[Credit: Rick Steelhammer, the Charleston Gazette] West Virginia state officials have started a discussion about a possible partnership with the WEST VIRGINIA CENTRAL RAILROAD to help Cass Scenic Railroad State Park operate more efficiently, with an eye toward securing the future of the Pocahontas County park and its iconic tourist railroad, state Commerce Commissioner Keith Burdette has said. Rumors about a state closure of the park and the seeking of bids from private concerns to operate it have been making the rounds in Pocahontas County and Charleston in recent weeks. A "Save the Cass Railroad" Facebook page was started on April 8 and had drawn more than 8,000 "likes" as of Tuesday. "Nothing's gone out to bid, there is no contract, and we're not planning to close the state park," Burdette said. "I'm trying to reassure people that what we're discussing is not about closing the park — it's about finding a way to keep the park operating. Maybe there's a partnership out there that will be good for the state and good for the area. If that's a possibility, it makes sense that we'd talk to these folks.

"The WVCRR, which operates the Elkins-based '*Tygart Flyer*', '*Durbin Rocket*' and '*Cheat Mountain Salamander*' excursion trains and has track that connects with the CASS SCENIC RAILROAD, approached the Division of Commerce with a proposal involving a presence at Cass, Burdette said. "We've started a discussion," he said, "but there's been no action coming from it. So far, we haven't taken it anywhere." "While in general state parks don't make money," Burdette said, "we're always looking for ways to operate smarter." Cass Scenic Railroad State Park has been losing about \$1.4 million a year in recent years, he said, and could use an additional \$1.4 million or so to replace ties, as well as \$700,000 in the coming year for other priority maintenance needs.

WVCRR and CSRR have shared track access in the past to operate rail excursions from Cass to the town site of Spruce, once the highest elevation town east of the Mississippi. In 2012, during a presentation to the state Tourism Commission, John Smith, president of the DURBIN & GREENBRIER VALLEY RAILROAD, which operates the WVCRR, outlined a plan to create a 90-mile rail excursion loop using both WVCRR and CSRR track. Regarding the current discussions with Smith and WVCRR, "if anything happens from them, I don't expect it to happen for several more months," Burdette said.

**FORMER C&O BEHEMOTH TO BE RESTORED TO SERVICE**

The B&O Museum of Baltimore, MD, Western Maryland Scenic Railroad (WMSR) of Cumberland, Maryland and the WMSR Foundation announced on May 6 the transfer of former C&O class H6 (2-6-6-2) steam locomotive #1309 to WMSR for restoration and operation.

At a little over 217 tons, this Mallet-style locomotive was one of the largest steam locomotives in the

USA. Baldwin Locomotive Works built C&O #1309 in September 1949 as its last commercially built steam locomotive for use by a railroad in the USA. #1309 worked out of the C&O's Peach Creek terminal in Logan, West Virginia for coal transportation and shifting hoppers back and forth. In 1956, the #1309 was retired from service. Although most steam locomotives were scrapped, some were saved for the C&O's collection or for donation to communities along the railroad. #1309 was among those saved, stored at Russell, KY for years until it was sent to the Huntington Shops, along with K-4 #2705 and J-3a #614, for cosmetic restoration. After the restoration, the three locomotives were shipped in a special train to the B&O Railroad Museum in 1972.

Courtney B. Wilson, Director of the B&O Railroad Museum said "This historic agreement is a win-win for railroad preservation. It ensures the long-term preservation and restoration of an important steam locomotive which is central to our mission."

The locomotive has been moved to the B&O Railroad Museum's restoration facility in preparation for shipment to the WMSR shops. Once this is complete, the locomotive will travel by rail on specialized flat cars pulled by CSX to Cumberland where the locomotive will be restored to its former glory for operation on the WMSR. At this time, no timetable for the project has been published.

**PROPOSED SCHEDULES FOR ROANOKE PASSENGER SERVICE RELEASED**

Officials have released the proposed schedule for Roanoke - Washington passenger service, after the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and NORFOLK SOUTHERN signed a 29-page infrastructure funding agreement. There will be one daily round trip, leaving Roanoke at 6:19 a.m. and arriving in Washington at 11:20 a.m. The southbound train will depart Washington at 4:50 p.m. and arrive in Roanoke at 9:55 p.m. Service could begin as soon as late 2015 providing a Roanoke passenger platform and facilities for maintenance and housing of the train overnight are finished.

The state has agreed to pay the vast majority of infrastructure costs (e.g., track realignment), a total of \$92.7 million, saying the project "provides public benefits by enhancing the movement of passengers by rail, reducing highway congestion and promoting fuel efficiency." Roanoke will be responsible for providing a train station adjacent to the platform and for providing parking, the agreement said. It is also focused on upgrading a trackside culvert. NS will pay no costs under the infrastructure agreement, though it would be responsible for certain overruns if any occur.



## EAST BROAD TOP UPDATE

[Credit: Trains.com] The East Broad Top Railroad Preservation Association (EBTRPA) has expressed optimism that efforts to acquire the 33-milelong EBT National Historic Landmark will bear fruit, as planning continues for its eventual reopening as both a tourist hauler and common carrier operation. The non-profit Association now owns over five miles of the narrow gauge line between the NS connection west of Mount Union, PA and the EBT's concrete, four-arch Aughwick Bridge, a few miles north of Shirleysburg. EBTRPA has filed with the federal Surface Transportation Board to begin common carrier rail operations in Mount Union. If approved, the name of the new railroad will be the East Broad Top Connecting Railroad. EBTRPA reports that switching a proposed freight car repair facility will provide most of the new company's revenue; a marketing initiative to develop other traffic is also planned. The new standard gauge short line will provide all common carrier railroad service over the line.

Negotiations between EBTRPA and the Kovalchick family of Indiana, PA (owners of the remainder of the EBT right of way between the bridge and Robertsdale/Wood) and the railroad facilities and rolling stock at Rockhill are continuing. The rehabilitation of the standard gauge line from the NS main line to Franklin Street is continuing. The goal is to rehabilitate the northern end of the railroad so it can serve the Riverview Business Center in Shirley Township, just south of Mount Union. Although the initial thrust of the EBT project will focus on industrial development, it is hoped that income generated from the business, along with future funding sources, will help pave the way for the rest of the EBT restoration. Part of the newly-acquired line from the industrial park to Mount Union will be dual gauge so that future EBT train excursions can utilize the tracks into the borough. The acquisition of the Mount Union area railroad property along with rehabilitation of the existing track and related railroad facility improvements was made possible by a \$2 million state Capital Budget/Transportation Assistance Program grant and a local match of \$800,000.



## SOUTHERN #630 PASSES STATIC STEAM TEST

Tennessee Valley Railway Museum's former SOUTHERN 2-8-2 Mikado #630 (former ET&WNC #207) has passed its static steam test at TVRM and has received her FRA certification. This accomplishment is due to the skill of TVRM personnel in their successful completion of the fabrication and installation of the piping underneath the boiler jacket plus all external steam and water piping. Also completed was the installation of a new throttle, closure of the steam dome, and connecting the branch lines to the tender; apply lagging and a boiler jacket work is underway. Planned next is installation of the air brake system, brake rigging, rods and valve gear. The crosshead, guides, pistons and piston rods are currently being machined. Understandably, TVRM is not committing to a completion date, although the feeling in Chattanooga is that the engine has a good chance of running this year.



## "BIG BOY" MOVE

To whet your appetite for the feature presentation on the UP "Big Boy" 4-8-8-4 #4014 move at this month's General Membership Meeting, check out <http://tinyurl.com/mgdoyxm> for background information.

## Photo Section



The photo above has been making the rounds on the internet recently. We'll leave it to your imagination to provide a suitable caption.

It all started when we were getting ready to go eat lunch last week. Jim had been working underneath one of the cars and realized he had gotten a pretty bad grease stain on the back of his shirt. So, being conscientious and aware of the need for neatness and to keep the car seat clean, he draped a garbage bag around himself. Things sort of went downhill from there.  
[David R. Denny]

Our Chief Mechanical Officer, Jim Magill, starring as  
**SUPERMAN IN LATER LIFE.**



*Faster than a speeding spitwad.  
More powerful than an F60 locomotive.  
Able to leap small doghouses with a  
running start.*

## *Welcome back home, Car 100!*

The following photos, taken at the recent CSX Transportation Health Fair, serve as proof that a goal, no matter how seemingly impossible, can be achieved through perseverance and hard work. Clockwise from upper left: ex-CRR business car 100 in its final approach to Erwin; at home after a 32 year absence; Joe Fuller, assistant chief dispatcher on the CLINCHFIELD and trainmaster on the CRR Santa Train, riding on car 100's platform with Santa; aerial view (captured by drone) of the Erwin Yard, facing north [courtesy of Tony Ledford]; Mike Tilley with Bob May, who, despite health concerns, made it to the festivities; George Hatcher, fireman on CLINCHFIELD #1 during car 100's excursion operation in the 60's and 70's.



## *Upcoming Events*



**May 29 – June 1, 2014:**

“Streamliners at Spencer”, NCTM, Spencer, NC.

A four-day festival for lovers of classic streamlined diesel locomotives of the ‘30s through the ‘50s. **\*\*\*25\*\*\***

**diesel locomotives** will be gathered around NCTM’s 37-stall roundhouse for daytime photos, special operations, nighttime shots and more. Primarily a photographic event, this will be a rail fan’s delight.



*To order tickets, go to <http://www.nctrans.org/>*



**August 16, 2014:** Watauga Valley RHS&M’s Summer Excursion on the GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD in Bryson City, NC. Tickets will go on sale soon; a sign up sheet for car host duty will be available at the April 28<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting.



**November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014:** The very popular Fall Amtrak Excursions, co-hosted by WVRHS&M in conjunction with NCTM. Saturday, November 1, the train will travel from Spencer, NC to Appomattox, VA and return. On Sunday, November 2, a roundtrip from Spencer to Toccoa, GA for their Fall Festival is scheduled.



Recently added to the list of streamliners at the NCTM event noted above is NICKEL PLATE ROAD-painted Alco PA #190, under restoration by Doyle McCormack in Portland, OR. #190 is one of only five Alco PA locomotives left on earth; a broad gauge engine is on display in Brazil, two remain in Mexico and another is currently being cosmetically restored in Texas. The real NKP #190 was scrapped decades ago; McCormack’s version was built as SANTA FE #62-L in 1948. #190 won’t be running under its own power to Spencer as it is only cosmetically restored at this time; however, the trip east will mark the first time a complete Alco PA has moved on a U.S. main line since 1978, which is itself an accomplishment. Besides being a preservationist, McCormack is an engineer on SOUTHERN PACIFIC 4-8-4 #4449.

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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**TIME VALUE MATERIAL**

## *Helen O. Calhoun*



Helen O. Calhoun, 73, Johnson City, ran into the arms of her Lord and Savior after a brief illness, at the Johnson City Medical Center. Helen was a native of Erwin, TN and had lived in Johnson City for the past seventeen years. She was a daughter of the late Albert and Ruth Tipton O'Brien.

Helen was employed as an X-Ray Technician at Erwin Memorial Hospital for 35 years before retiring in 1996. She was an active member of Unaka Avenue Baptist Church where she taught children's Sunday school, bible school, was a choir member and a member of the pastoral search committee. Helen was a member of the Board of Directors of the Watauga Valley Historical Railroad Society and a volunteer for the Johnson City Medical Center Hospital.

Helen was a happy person who loved to laugh and adored her husband and grand and great grandchildren. She was known by them as "GiGi" and loved playing with them and teaching them about Jesus. She also enjoyed serving the Lord, gardening, family gatherings, traveling, playing the piano, singing, talking with her friends and all church activities. She leaves to cherish her memory, her devoted husband, Jim Calhoun; Jim's children, who became her children, Leland Calhoun and wife, Linda, Singapore, Dennis Calhoun and wife, Lisa, Jonesborough and Joy Beth Foster and husband, Mark, Johnson City; grandchildren, Philip Calhoun, Laura Persenaire and husband, Steve, Casey Calhoun and wife Jennifer, Tara Whitson, Valerie Lee and husband, Mitchell and Jarrod Foster; her precious great grandchildren, Jacob Whitson, Julia Persenaire, Katie Persenaire, Damen Licker, Calvin Lee, Christian Lee and Colin Lee and her grand dog, Giselle.

The family will greet guests and share memories from 5-7 PM Sunday, May 11, 2014 at Tetrick Funeral and Cremation Services, Johnson City, TN. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 7:00 PM. Reverend Jeff Alford will officiate. Graveside and committal services will be held at 11:00 AM Monday, May 12, 2014 at Washington County Memory Gardens under the direction of Reverend Tim Tapp. Family and friends are asked to assemble at the funeral home at 10:30 AM. Pallbearers will be selected from family and friends.

Helen's family expresses a special thanks to all friends, family, and loved ones during this time. Also a special thanks to the nurses and staff members that she developed a friendship with during her stay at Johnson City Medical Center.

In lieu of flowers, for those who wish, memorial contributions may be made to Unaka Avenue Baptist Church, 1213 East Unaka Baptist Church, Johnson City, TN 37601, The American Diabetes Association, TN Affiliate, Inc., 4205 Hillsboro Road, Suite 200, Nashville, TN 37215 or the American Cancer Society, 508 Princeton Road, Johnson City, TN 37601. Online memories and condolences may be shared through [www.tetrickfuneralhome.com](http://www.tetrickfuneralhome.com). Tetrick Funeral and Cremation Services, 3001 Peoples Street, Johnson City, TN 37604 (423)61-7171 is serving the family.