

Whistle Stop



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

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New England? No, Tennessee. Mike Tilley captured this eastbound NORFOLK SOUTHERN freight rolling through Jonesborough, TN on a snowy, wintry day.

March 23rd General Membership Meeting

The next General Membership Meeting of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum will be held on March 23rd, starting at 6:30 p.m., and located at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. This month's program, presented by Jerry Harris, will feature a DVD on the EAST TENNESSEE & WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA RAILROAD and several short lines. Come out bring a friend and enjoy a great night of railroading with your friends and fellow railfans.

Member Notes

By Nancy Jewel

Our sympathy is extended to Lois and Mike Tilley in the death of Lois's sister, Grace Brink, on February 23rd in Oregon. Sympathy is also extended to Don Findley in the death of his longtime companion, Margaret "Peggy" Brown, on February 26th in Bristol.

Please keep the following folk in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns: Sidney Blankenbeckler, Gary Price, Carrie Denny, Bob May, Jim Calhoun, George and Margaret Holley, and Bob Yable. As always, let us know of any member, friend or family to whom a card might be sent or a phone call made. The office phone number is (423) 753-5797 or call Nancy Jewell at (423) 282-0918. Your help is appreciated.

LATE DUES NOTICES FOR 2015

Late dues notices were recently sent out to all members who have not renewed for 2015. Please act fast and get your dues notices mailed back to WVRHS&M, P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN, 37605-0432 **BY MARCH 31st**. Non-renewals will be dropped from the membership rolls on that date.

MARCH & APRIL TRAIN EXCURSIONS SOLD OUT!

We are happy to announce that the March 12-15 "Cherry Blossom Special" was a **sell out** and the April 11th "Hiwassee River Gorge" train excursions has **sold out**.

FALL AMTRAK EXCURSIONS

Details of the October 31st and November 1st, 2015 Fall Amtrak Excursions will be published in the next issue of the Whistle Stop.

CLINCHFIELD 100 HATS FOR SALE



We still have a few Clinchfield 100 hats for sale at \$13.00. All proceeds go to the restoration of Car 100. Call the WVRHS&M office at (423) 753-5797 if you're interested in purchasing.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

GENERAL. The bad weather has again taken its toll on the Watauga Valley Mechanical Team in working at the Jonesborough Spring St. Coach Yard over the last several weeks. Hopefully the weather will turn around and we can get some of the work done that was planned for this Spring. If you would like to volunteer at the yard, please call the WVRHS&M office AT (423) 753-5797 and leave a message; the mechanical team will call you back. We are in need of several more volunteers to help on our cars.

539 “Powhatan Arrow” coach: The interior has been painted and the car is headed back to Jonesborough at press time to have the floor and walls reworked along with air conditioning repair. The seats have been upholstered.

500 “St Augustine” coach: The St Augustine departed the Spring Street Coach Yard on March 3rd for the “Cherry Blossom Special” to Washington, DC on March 12-15.

400 “Moultrie” diner: WVRHS&M members have been doing cleaning on the kitchen area.

2351 “Crescent Harbor” sleeper/lounge: departed the Spring Street Coach Yard on March 3rd for the “Cherry Blossom Special” to Washington, DC on March 12-15.

100 “Clinchfield” business car: Work continues with the car; expect to see some major changes during the restoration of this car.



Wintry weather didn't prevent these stalwart WVRHS&M volunteers from lending a hand in preparing the St. Augustine for the upcoming “Cherry Blossom Special”. At left are Jeanie Walker, David Denny, Bob Hand, and Billie Walker, out of sight in the rear. At right we see Jack Maloney commandeered for Snow Removal Duty.

In the News



JONESBOROUGH RAILROAD DEPOT / MUSEUM

Plans are in place with the Town of Jonesborough to start pouring the footers for the Jonesborough Railroad Museum / former Chuckey Depot. Watauga Valley's cabooses, which we donated to the Town of Jonesborough, will be moved in the coming weeks before the depot is erected. We are looking forward having the cabooses on display and repainted. Having our own railroad museum will be a great asset to the WVRHS&M. REMEMBER, WE WILL NEED VOLUNTEERS TO MAN THE MUSEUM EACH DAY. PLEASE BE THINKING ABOUT THIS.



NORFOLK SOUTHERN 20TH CENTURY STEAM EXCURSIONS

At press time, Norfolk Southern has not announced the 2015 steam program schedule. We are hoping that the schedule will be announced by next month.



AMTRAK ACCIDENT ENGINEER FROM ROANOKE



Associated Press photo

By now you must know of the terrible AMTRAK accident on March 9 at Halifax, NC that injured 55 people, including the engineer, Chuck Akers, who is from Roanoke, Va. It is reported that Chuck and the injured passengers will survive.

CORRECTION ON ELIMINATION OF ROANOKE NS RAIL YARD LAYOFFS

Last month the Whistle Stop reported that NORFOLK SOUTHERN announced plans to layoff 140 from its Roanoke Terminal hump yard. While true, that happened TWO YEARS AGO! Your editor, with much egg on his face, promises to be more diligent in the future when publishing information found on social media.

 **611 UPDATE**


Photo: Mike Tilley

[From FireUp611!] **611's Hydrostatic Test Complete! Superheaters installed and side rods tested, cleaned and polished.** The Virginia Museum of Transportation announced that the 611 mechanical crew, led by Scott Lindsay, their chief mechanical officer and president of Steam Operations Corporation, has completed the hydrostatic test of the boiler required by federal regulations. "The restoration is progressing quickly," said Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., VMT's executive director. "We expect the Norfolk & Western Class J 611 to

return to her home [from NCTM] in Roanoke in mid-2015."

Fitzpatrick said that the 611's homecoming and excursion schedule is being developed with the help of NORFOLK SOUTHERN. "We appreciate NORFOLK SOUTHERN's interest in 611's restoration and all the help they are providing to make her homecoming a celebration that will be remembered for a long time."

The Virginia Museum of Transportation hopes to announce her homecoming and early excursion schedule in a few weeks. "But with any restoration as thorough and complex as 611's, it's important to remember that the unexpected is expected," Fitzpatrick said. "The mechanical team in Spencer, North Carolina, is working seven days per week to make this happen safely. We are so proud of their hard work and dedication to this restoration."

Fitzpatrick also credits the team at NCTM in Spencer, North Carolina, for the success of the restoration to date. "The team at the NCTM has welcomed the 611 and has been so helpful to us throughout the restoration. We are so thankful for all they have done for us!"

In other 611 restoration news, the superheaters were installed and side rods are being cleaned, tested, repaired and polished to a shine!

 **HERITAGE SOUTHERN RAILWAY SD40**

[NS Press release] Norfolk Southern has unveiled a new addition to its vaunted heritage fleet: Southern Railway SD40 No. 3170. The locomotive was recently saved from the back lot; rebuilt into operating condition at NS's Juniata Shop in Altoona, Pa.; and repainted into its original Southern colors at the railroad's paint shop at Debutts Yard in Chattanooga.

No. 3170 will go back into revenue service, primarily assigned to yard and local service along the Piedmont Division.



Electro-Motive Division built the 3,000 hp No. 3170 in 1971, and the locomotive was used throughout the Southern Railway's 10,000-mile system. The locomotive carries the Southern Railway's trademark high short hood.



NORFOLK SOUTHERN Names Jim Squires Chief Executive Officer

[NS Press Release] Norfolk Southern Corporation (NYSE: NSC) today announced that James A. Squires will succeed Charles W. “Wick” Moorman as chief executive officer. The action by the company’s board of directors is part of its planned succession process and will be effective June 1, 2015.

Squires will continue in his current capacity as president and with all major divisions reporting to him, while Moorman will continue as executive chairman of the board of directors. Moorman and Squires will work closely together to ensure a seamless transition of leadership responsibilities.

“Jim has the right experience and vision to advance Norfolk Southern’s traditions of safety and service,” said Steven F. Leer, NS’ lead independent director. “NS is well-positioned to continue leading and innovating, and the board of directors is confident in the ability of the entire Thoroughbred team to deliver for our customers, shareholders, and communities.”

“Building on our record results in 2014, we are entering a great new time of performance and possibilities,” Moorman said. “Thanks to the dedication of Norfolk Southern people, the support of our customers and business partners, and the outstanding leadership team in place at Norfolk Southern – led by Jim Squires – I am confident that the company is poised for continued growth, success, and shareholder value creation.”

“Leading NS is an incredible honor,” Squires said. “I join our 30,000 employees in pledging that we will do everything possible to exceed the expectations of our shareholders and the people and businesses who depend on us. We welcome that opportunity, and we will meet that challenge.”

Squires, 53, joined Norfolk Southern in 1992 and served in several law positions before being named vice president law in 2003, senior vice president law in 2004, senior vice president financial planning in 2006, executive vice president finance in 2007, executive vice president administration in 2012, and president in 2013.

Virginia Business magazine recognized Squires with its CFO Award for Publicly Traded Companies in Virginia in 2011. Appointed by then Governor Tim Kaine, Squires also served as chairman of Virginia’s Transportation Accountability Commission.

A native of Hollis, N.H., Squires is a graduate of Amherst College, where he received a bachelor of arts in Ancient Greek in 1983. After graduation, he spent a year as Amherst-Doshisha Fellow at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan. He then served in the U.S. Army from 1985 to 1989. In 1992, he received a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Chicago Law School, where he has served as a member of the Visiting Committee.

Moorman has championed public-private partnerships to create rail infrastructure that benefits America long-term, led NS’ efforts to improve its environmental footprint and sustainable business model through “conservation capitalism,” and was among the earliest freight railroaders to seek more cooperation with the long-distance passenger and commuter railroads that use freight tracks. He is an advocate of balanced regulation to best serve the interests of railroads and their customers.

Said Leer, “On behalf of the entire board of Norfolk Southern, I thank Wick for his innumerable contributions as CEO. Wick raises the bar for an entire industry. His gift is to see where railroads need to go, find workable ways to get there, and generate the optimism that makes everyone want to get on the train. We will continue to benefit from that with Wick as board chair.”

A native of Hattiesburg, Miss., Moorman, 63, joined NS predecessor Southern Railway in 1970 as a coop student. He was named chairman, president and CEO in 2006, succeeding David R. Goode. In 2011, Railway Age magazine named Moorman “Railroader of the Year.”

Upcoming Events in 2015



APRIL 11: "SPRING 2015 HIWASSEE RIVER" rail trip sponsored by WVRHS&M. **SOLD OUT.**



APRIL 21 – MAY 3: Lincoln Funeral Train. See <http://www.the2015lincolnfunealtrain.com/>



MAY 15-17: Cass Railfan Weekend, Cass, WV. Includes rare mileage trips between Spruce and Cheat Bridge. For details - <http://www.cassrailroad.com/> and <http://mtn-rail.com/>



JUNE 14-20: NRHS National Convention, Rutland, VT. For details - http://www.nrhs.com/2015_Convention. Check for convention updates at <http://www.NRHS.com> or www.facebook.com/RailPreservation.



JUNE 18-21: Norfolk & Western Historical Society Annual Convention, Marion, OH. <http://www.nwhs.org/convention/2015marion/>



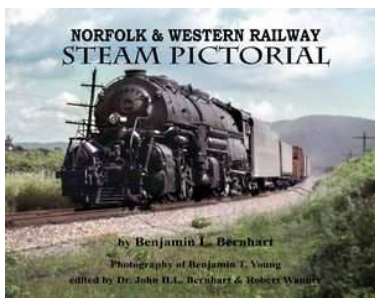
OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 1. Fall AMTRAK excursions.

For Your Viewing Pleasure

The Rural Retreat Depot Foundation has commissioned a documentary entitled "The Rural Retreat Depot—Its History, its Impact, its Future". Running about 30 minutes, this documentary will be released in April. The final version will feature old photos and interviews that discuss the Civil War, Morse Code, the O Winston Link photos and more. The home page of the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation website has a link to a two-and-a-half minute trailer. See www.theruralretreatdepot.com. [Info courtesy of N&W Historical Society]

New Product Announcement

Norfolk and Western Railway Steam Pictorial!



This book features steam locomotives of the Norfolk & Western Railway during the late 1950s. Images of the A, J, and Y classes as well as S, K, & M classes are included. The book primarily focuses on activity at Shaffers Crossing Engine Terminal in Roanoke and at Crewe, Virginia, but several other locations are also included in the publication. This landscape book is printed on high-quality 80 pound sterling premium gloss paper and features over 100 black and white photographs of Benjamin T. Young. Shipping Now, In Stock, hardcover, 80 pages, \$29.95. For ordering information, go to <http://www.nwhs.org/commissary/new.html>.

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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