

Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN. 37605-0432
(423) 753-5797
www.wataugavalleyrrhsm.org



Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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Frequent *Whistle Stop* contributor Mike Pierry, Jr. captured GE ES44DC #7683 hauling intermodal train NS 23G just west of Jonesborough on this sunny winter day. [Photo used with permission.]

March 26th General Membership Meeting

The Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum will conduct our monthly General Membership meeting at 6:30 pm on Monday, March 26th, 2018 at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. The program will be on the "*Rocky Mountain Express*" by Mike Noonkester. You do not want to miss this program. Come out, bring a friend, and enjoy a great night of railroading with your fellow railfans.

Member Notes

by Edna Kay Carter

Let's continue to keep the ones who have lost family or loved ones in our thoughts and prayers.

Please keep the following in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns: they are Bob Yapple, Nancy Jewel, Gary Price, Doug and Gail Zimmerman. 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 is (423) 753-5797 or call Edna Kay Carter at (423) 571-3226.

We've had too many new members to list here but to all: WELCOME ABOARD!

Hope all of you are ready for spring and will enjoy all of its beauty.

WVRHS&M News

SPRING EXCURSION SOLD OUT

We are happy to announce that the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad Excursion on March 24 has sold out. We have a large group of passengers going on this trip.

SEPTEMBER TRAIN EXCURSION

Since we had a sell out for our Spring Excursions, we will offer it again on Saturday, September 8th, 2018. Plan an enjoyable spring train with us aboard the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad! TICKETS GO ON SALE ON MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018.

WVRHS&M / NCTM FALL AMTRAK EXCURSIONS

Excursion Committee work on the Fall AMTRAK trips out of the North Carolina Transportation Museum is still in the planning stages; dates are set for November 3 and 4, 2018. Details will be published as they become available.

WATAUGA VALLEY DUES NOTICES - PLEASE ACT IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID

Late dues notices were recently sent out to all members who have not renewed for 2018. Please act fast and get your dues mailed back to WVRHS&M, P O Box 432, Johnson City, TN. 37605-0432. NON-RENEWALS WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE MEMBERSHIP LIST AT THE END OF MARCH; THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST WHISTLE STOP.

NEW EXCURSION MAILING LIST

WVRHS&M has put together a new mass e-mail list for people to get advance notification of future excursions. Anyone interesting in getting on the advance list, please e-mail your information to wataugavalley@gmail.com.

WATAUGA VALLEY UNIFORMS NOW AVAILABLE

The Watauga Valley uniforms are available. Get your order in now for these beautiful uniforms. Call our office phone at (423) 753-5797 for ordering information.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

by Jim Magill

GENERAL

All of the Watauga Valley passenger cars are back in the yard now; a lot of work is needed on the cars since several of them have been on the road for over 6 months. The bad weather has again taken its toll on the Watauga Valley Mechanical Team in working at the 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 the spring. If you would like to volunteer at the Jonesborough Spring St. Coach Yard, please call the WVRHS&M office at (423) 753-5797 and leave message; the Mechanical Team will call you back. We are in need of several more volunteers to help with the WVRHS&M cars.

ROLLING STOCK

“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539): Air Conditioning, and general cleaning.

“St Augustine” coach (WATX 500): Generator repair.

“Moultrie” diner (WATX 400): Having upgrades to the kitchen.

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351): Having work done on the electrical system and new blinds in the bedrooms.

CLINCHFIELD OFFICE CAR (WATX 100): On going work with the car,

MECHANICAL TEAM AT WORK



Don Findley working on WATX 539



Cline Knowles and Art Devoe getting ready to anti-freeze the WVRHS&M Cars

SUBMITTING PHOTOS FOR WHISTLE STOP

Several members have asked about contributing photos for the *Whistle Stop*. Please send your photos to our editor, Fred Waskiewicz at whistlestop.editor@gmail.org.

Important 2018 Dates ...



MARCH 24: GSMR excursion sponsored by WVRHS&M. **SOLD OUT.**



APRIL 4: Tennessee Valley Railway Museum trip to Summerville GA with steam (4501 and/or 630). See <https://www.tvrail.com/>.



APRIL 7: *NC RAILROAD EXPO*, Hickory, NC. See <http://www.tarheelpress/Trainshow>.



MAY 17-20: N&W Historical Society Convention, NCTM, Spencer, NC.



MAY 18-20: "Rail Heritage Weekend", Cass Scenic Railroad, Cass, WV. See <http://mountainrailwv.com/tour/spring-photo-special/>.



May 19: Tennessee Valley Railway Museum trip to Summerville GA with steam (4501 and/or 630). See <https://www.tvrail.com/>.



AUGUST 5-12: NMRA National Convention, Kansas City, MO. Info: <http://www.nmra.org>.



AUGUST 7-12: NRHS National Convention, Cumberland, MD.



SEPTEMBER 5-8: National Narrow Gauge National Convention, Bloomington, MN. Info: <https://nngc-2018.com/>.

From the Archives ...

John Wolf sends along these pictures of CRR F3Au #800 that he shot in Erwin, TN back in the 1970s. At lower right we see the #800 parked next to sister F3A #801.





Megan's Manifest

By Megan Kegley



NS 741 came into Appalachia, VA during the afternoon of 2/22/18. Canadian National Tier 4 locomotive no. 3120 was set off on the siding on the back side of town, just outside the door to the Lonesome Pine Model Railroad Club. CN 3120 was part of the ET44AC purchase by Canadian National from GE. The ET44AC (**E**volution Series **T**ier 4, **4**400HP, **A**C Traction) replaces the ES44AC model locomotive. The ET44AC units have been purchased by most of the Class 1 Railroads in North America.

In August of 2017 we see the Original Norfolk Southern Heritage no. 8114 leading NS741 Duke Power train through Appalachia, VA to Andover Yard. The 8114 is an ES44AC locomotive built by General Electric in 2012. The Original NS scheme was planned for a SD70ACe until a Penn Central scheme was added as the 19th heritage unit. The PC scheme was applied to an SD70ACe and the Original NS scheme was changed to an ES44AC unit. The Penn Central heritage unit is now NS SD70ACe no. 1073.



On August 9, 2017 NS 386 had Union Pacific SD70M no. 4046 and BNSF SD70ACe no. 9177 leading a coal train. With this kind of foreign power in town and it being such a beautiful day, I figured I would take advantage and catch 386 coming across the famous Copper Creek Trestle.

In the News



CHUCKEY DEPOT / MUSEUM AT JONESBOROUGH



The Chuckey Railroad Depot and Museum is coming alive in the spring. Over the last several weeks attendance has been very good, especially on the weekends, with over 100+ visitors coming to see the beautiful depot.

The Depot provides a terrific platform for viewing rail action. At left we see railfans enjoying a safe, closeup of NS intermodal 23G as it rolls through Jonesborough.

If you have not been at the depot, come on down. Open hours are Wednesday through Sunday 1 pm to 5 pm.

We have a special announcement on what is happening at the Chuckey Depot next month; get ready for the surprise.

CHUCKEY DAYS

In appreciation to the people of the great community of Chuckey TN, we are sponsoring Chuckey Days on May 5, 2018, 11 am – 1 pm , inviting all the people from there to come and honor their community the beautiful Chuckey Depot. More details will be announced in the next *Whistle Stop*.

CHUCKEY DEPOT VOLUNTEERS

We are nearing the 50 mark in getting Watauga Valley members trained to volunteer at the Chuckey Railroad Depot / Museum but we still need more. The next training sessions will be Friday, April 20, 6 pm to 7 pm and Saturday, April 21, 10 am to 11 am. Please call our office at (423) 753-5797 any time day or night or e-mail wataugavalley@gmail.com. Most volunteers work around one day a month.



#1309 RESTORATION on HOLD

The WESTERN MARYLAND SCENIC RAILROAD has chosen to place the costly restoration of its steam-powered locomotive on the back burner while it focuses on adding additional family and adult-themed excursions. The price tag for rehabilitating the former CHESAPEAKE & OHIO 2-6-6-2 steam locomotive has reached the \$2 million mark. The scenic railroad has been facing financial struggles stemming from the costly restoration of the locomotive. The railroad had received a \$450,000 capital improvements grant in 2017 to help with the cost of restoring the engine. However, crews working on the restoration continue to find additional areas of deterioration resulting in added costs.

John Garner, WMSR CEO, said the railroad has not given up on restoring the steam engine. "We work on it as we have money for the project," Garner said. "We must keep the whole railroad alive and financially healthy. 1309 is one of many projects. It is still moving forward, just much slower." Garner said the railroad continues to raise money for the steam engine restoration through donations and fundraisers, including a letter writing campaign. Maryland state delegate Mike McKay, who sits on the House Appropriation [continued on next page]

Committee, says the return of steam will be a big boost for the railroad. "That steam engine (No.1309) was mothballed for 40 years," McKay said. "It was estimated low ball (for repairs). We just can't go back now. We have to get the steam engine fixed and get them offering steam engine rides once again. When they get it done, it will be the largest active steam locomotive in North America." [Cumberland *Times-News* via "*The Automatic Block*", Western Maryland NRHS]

STEAMTOWN POSTAGE STAMP TO BE ISSUED

A commemorative stamp featuring the Steamtown National Historic Site will be issued in 2018. The stamp will be included in the annual "*Passport to Your National Parks Regional Stamp Set*", which is sponsored by Eastern National, a nonprofit support group for the Park Service. The stamp features a photo by Steamtown volunteer James Benetzky of a locomotive on the museum turntable. [Trains Magazine Newswire via "*The Timetable*", Washington DC NRHS]

THEFT OF RAILROAD PARTS

In recent news, the theft of historic and valuable railroad parts, including pieces from steam locomotive No. 1309, was reported by WMSR's Executive Director John Garner. The railroad learned of the theft after local salvage yards reported receiving suspicious locomotive and passenger car parts. Scottie A. Nixon, 39, of Cumberland, MD, a former WMSR employee, has been charged with the thefts and will face trial on April 3. Stolen items include rare light fixtures and brass hardware from WESTERN MARYLAND Office Car No. 204, brass bearings and wear plates from No. 1309, and miscellaneous locomotive and passenger car parts. Some of the stolen items have been recovered, but others will be very difficult to replace, such as the 12 300-lb. crown brasses taken from No. 1309's driving axles. [Trains Magazine Newswire via "*The Timetable*", Washington DC NRHS]

WVRHS&M Facebook Page

For a real railfanning treat, visit the WVRHS&M Facebook page and enjoy all the items you'll discover there. Historian Gary Price does an excellent job keeping the page interesting and current. For example, there's a video of daylight footage of a NS accident in Kentucky. Share your photos and railfan experiences on this page (but **please** stay on topic). To view the page, go to Facebook a search "Watauga Valley".

Chuckey Depot Benefit Dinner

Just announced! April 14th benefit dinner on our dining car for Chuckey Depot. See flyer attached to this newsletter for complete details.

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whistlestop.editor@gmail.com

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Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



Watauga Valley RHS & Museum
P.O. Box 432
Johnson City, TN 37605-0432

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MATERIAL



Benefit Dinner for Chuckey Depot

The Town of Jonesborough, Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia and Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society are pleased to offer a fundraiser with a one of a kind dining experience aboard a restored 1950 train dining car on April 14th. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go to help fund the museum inside the restored Chuckey Depot, now located in Jonesborough which houses a railroad museum.

Built by the Southern Railway in 1906, the Chuckey Depot, until recently, was privately owned. It was located on Norfolk Southern Railroad property, who had plans to demolish it if it was not moved. Although it was no longer utilized as a train depot, it was added to the National Registry of Historic Places in 1979 for its historical architectural significance, adding to the importance of saving it from demolition.

The Depot was given to the Town of Jonesborough who located it adjacent to the Jonesborough downtown district, parallel to the railroad that runs through Town. Preserving and repurposing the Depot as a museum fits into the Town's unique development strategy as Jonesborough recognizes its railroad history.

Patrons can choose from two lunch seatings at the All Aboard! Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. or 1 p.m., designed specifically for children and their parents, with a kid-friendly lunch option and another option for adults. Patrons who choose the child ticket will receive Chicken Fingers, Apple Slices, Macaroni & Cheese and Juice. In addition, children will also receive a souvenir engineer train hat, whistle and red bandana to take home. Patrons who choose the adult ticket for lunch will receive a BBQ sandwich, Macaroni & Cheese, Cole Slaw and Tea or Water. The price for each child and adult ticket is \$30 must be purchased in packs of 2 or 4 tickets due to dining car seating arrangements.

The dinner seatings will allow for a fine dining experience with all the extras at 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. will include a more extravagant dinner of Stuffed Chicken with Spinach, Feta Cheese, Sundried Tomato in a White Wine Butter Sauce, Roasted Garlic New Potatoes, Roasted Vegetable Medley, Roll and Lemon Blueberry Tart for Dessert. Beverages include choice of Tea or Water. Tickets for the dinner seatings are \$65.

The lunch and dinner seatings will take place on a stationary dining car on April 14th. Patrons who dine at either dinner seatings will receive a tour of a passenger car and a brief presentation on the history of the railroad in Jonesborough from the Heritage Alliance at the start of the program. The meal will promptly follow.

Patrons are asked to park at Jonesborough Senior Center located at 307 East Main Street and arrive 20 minutes prior to their seating. From there, they will be transported to the train Dining Car off of Spring Street.

For tickets call the Historic Jonesborough Visitors Center at (413) 753.1010 or visit Jonesborough.com/tickets and choose the April 2018 calendar.

Passengers may choose from true vintage dining in the Dining Car (four to a table) or the smaller tables for two. Parties of less than four in the dining car are subject to assignment with other passengers.