

Whistle Stop



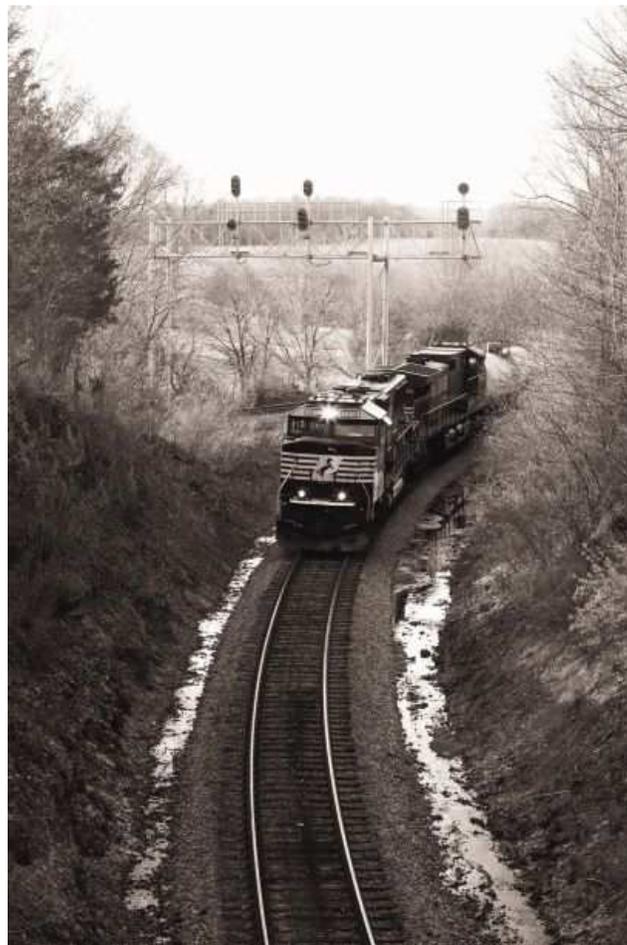
Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
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Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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Member Megan Kegley captured NS 162 at Bulls Gap, TN. For complete story, read this month's *Megan's Manifest*.

March 25th General Membership Meeting

The Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum will conduct our monthly General Membership meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 25th, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St. For this month's program, Megan Kegley will show a video she put together on her 2015 railfan trip to Pennsylvania. We're looking forward to a very entertaining evening offered by a stellar railfan.

Member Notes

by Edna Kay Carter, Membership Chairperson

Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers as they deal with various health concerns. They are Nancy Jewel, Gary Price, Sharon Eaton, Terry Worley, Sharon Slagle, George Ritchie, George Holley, Gary Street, Bob Mushet, Bob Hand and Don Findley. 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 number is 423-753-5797 or call Edna Carter at 423-571-4612.

Welcome to new members Jim Hilbert and Jennifer Goodman.

Hope everyone will enjoy the spring weather.

WVRHS&M News

WATAUGA VALLEY LATE DUES NOTICES

Late dues notices were recently sent out to all members that have not renewed for 2019. 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 AND THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST WHISTLE STOP.**

PHOTOS FOR WHISTLE STOP

Several members are wanting to contribute photos for the *Whistle Stop*. Send your photos to our editor, Fred Waskiewicz, at whistlestop.editor@gmail.com. Photos should be clear, composed well, and of regional interest.

NEW EXCURSION MAILING LIST

WVRHS&M has put together a new mass email list for people to get advance notification of future excursions. Anyone interested in getting on that advance list should send your information to wataugavalley@gmail.com.

WVRHS&M Rail Excursions

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAIN TRAIN EXCURSION

We are happy to announce that both the March 30 and May 19 Great Smoky Mountain Railroad train excursions have sold out for a full day of fun for our passengers.

Chuckey Depot and Rail Museum

The Chuckey Depot and Rail Museum at Jonesborough is right on track for our 2019 season with new displays and our motor car on display in the museum. Anyone wanting to volunteer at the Depot, please call the Watauga Valley office at 423-753-5797.

Visit the Chuckey Depot web cam at www.wataugavalleynrhs.org. See all the trains passing through Jonesborough.

Mechanical Department Report

by Jim Magill

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, 423-753-5797, and leave a message. There's work for all skill levels.

ROLLING STOCK



“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539): 539 was recently in an accident in North Carolina and is in the shop at Spencer, NC getting repairs and a new paint job. (Photo at left.)

“Moultrie” diner (WATX 400) and “St Augustine” coach (WATX 500): Both cars are at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in service.

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351): Is at the North Carolina Transportation Museum and will be released soon to return to the Jonesborough Spring St. coach yard.

“Clinchfield 100” office car (WATX 100): Major work is ongoing on Car 100. The bedrooms have been removed. New structural repair on the ceiling and floor is underway as well as window replacement and new wiring for the car. The car will have a new look in the coming months. The photos below barely scratch the surface in capturing the hundreds of hours that are going into the 100's restoration.



Our contractor, SERVPRO, providing professional car cleaning services.



WVRHS members Jim Sutterlin and Mike Dowdy hard at work.



WVRHS members Mike Dowdy and Gary Lombard working in a confined space.



SERVPRO illustrating the measures they take during the cleaning process.

In the News ...

N&W 611 To Visit Strasburg Rail Road



[trains.com] Norfolk & Western Class J locomotive No. 611 will travel to Pennsylvania's Strasburg Rail Road for four weekends of events in September and October.

The Virginia Museum of Transportation and Strasburg will combine for events including an opportunity to ride behind the restored N&W 4-8-4, opportunities to operate and fire the locomotive, cab rides, and photo charters. Classic car shows, behind-the-scene shop tours, and other family-centered events are also planned. "Since its restoration, the Virginia Museum of

Transportation has sought opportunities for the 611 to engage people from all walks of life," museum board member Brian Barton said in a press release. "The partnership with the Strasburg Rail Road allows us to spark a fascination with steam locomotives and transportation, our history, steam technology, mechanical engineering, and design."

The events will reunite No. 611 with Strasburg's N&W Class M locomotive, No. 475, a 4-8-0 built in 1906 and in service on the N&W until 1962.

"Reuniting 475 and 611 is a rare opportunity for railfans and heritage railroad tourists alike," Steve Barrall, station master at Strasburg, said in the release. "When the two locomotives are side-by-side, you will see, hear, and feel how the Norfolk & Western Railway revolutionized steam technology in under 50 years."

The Strasburg events include:

- Sept. 28-29: A Norfolk & Western Railway Steam Reunion.
- Oct. 4-6: Railfan Photography Extravaganza
- Oct. 12-14 Rail & Road: A Transportation Evolution
- Oct. 19-20: At the Throttle of Norfolk & Western Steam.

Tickets, which range from \$5 to \$750, depending on the event, are available at the Strasburg Rail Road website, <https://www.strasburgrailroad.com/>, beginning Friday, March 15.

Norfolk Southern played an instrumental role in bringing the two organizations together, Barton said. "Without the support from Norfolk Southern, the VMT would not be allowed to ferry the locomotive to special events. For the safety of the railroad's crews, railfans, and the general public, the ferry moves will not be announced beforehand."

The Strasburg trip will be the first action for No. 611 since a Virginia Museum of Transportation event in September 2018. The trip to Pennsylvania reflects an idea first suggested by museum director Beverly Fitzpatrick in 2017, that the museum was interested in "broadening the base" of the locomotive's operations by sending it farther from home.

 *Nickel Plate No. 765 Will Run in Ohio*

[*Trains News Wire* via “*The Green Block*”, Central New York NRHS] Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad representatives said they will be glad to host Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 No. 765 again on excursions this fall for two long weekends, Sept. 20-22 and 27-29. Tickets will go on sale much earlier this year than last year when they were offered starting in July. This is the sixth year in a row for No. 765 at the popular annual Steam in the Valley event that typically sees the famed Berkshire, which in 2019 is celebrating both its 75th birthday and its 40th year since restoration, pull two 2-hour trips each day through the scenic and historic Cuyahoga Valley National Park near Cleveland. Norfolk Southern and CSX will ferry No. 765 between its base just outside Fort Wayne and Cleveland. No. 765’s return to Cuyahoga Valley is welcomed news to mainline steam fans. Between Amtrak’s ban on special excursion trains and the implementation of Positive Train Control, mainline steam other than on Union Pacific will be scarce in 2019. Cuyahoga Valley operates over its own tracks, a former Baltimore & Ohio route, that does not fall under PTC rules. See <http://tinyurl.com/y5ccazny>.

 *Norfolk Southern to Slash 3,000 Jobs, 500 Locomotives by 2021*

[WVVA, Bluefield, WV] Norfolk Southern has announced its plan to reduce the number of workers and locomotives over the next two years in an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiency. Details were released during an investor conference held by the company on [February 11]. The plan calls for the elimination of 500 jobs by the end of the year and a total of 3,000 jobs by the close of 2021. The company would also reduce the number of locomotives in operation by 500. “Our strategic plan capitalizes on the strength of our exceptional franchise to lower costs, operate more efficiently, and deliver stronger margins,” said Chairman, President and CEO James A. Squires. Norfolk Southern is relocating its headquarters from coastal Virginia to Atlanta, Georgia. The move will take about two years to complete. “As we implement precision scheduled railroading, our initiatives are focused on five key principles: serving our customers, managing our assets, controlling our costs, working safely, and developing our people,” said Squires. “The success of our customers, our employees, and our company will ensure the success of our shareholders.”

 *NS Declines Participation in AMTRAK Service Study*

[“*The Roanoke Times*” via “*Turntable Times*”, Roanoke NRHS] Norfolk Southern has declined to participate in a study needed to prepare for possible extension of Amtrak service to the Christiansburg area. Virginia would have paid for the study. The \$350,000 study that intends to determine what improvements are needed to bring Amtrak service to the New River Valley has been placed on indefinite hold. In December 2018, officials with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation said that Norfolk Southern has halted its involvement in the study due to the company wanting to prioritize other matters related to its rail network. At the very least this pushes back several years any thought of extending Amtrak service to the New River Valley as NS generally requires a study to be done by them before considering any additional passenger service.

Check out our Facebook page for up-to-the-moment news.

More on NS Locomotive Sales

[Source: this information circulated within railfan internet chat rooms] NS will be selling off 124 locomotives, including all 48 remaining EMD SD60's, all 53 SD60M's, 21 SD60I's, and 2 MP15E's. The road numbers are as follows:

MP15Es: 2363, 2367

SD60s: 6548, 6587, 6597, 6604, 6626, 6628, 6629, 6630, 6635, 6643, 6647, 6648, 6649, 6651, 6652, 6655, 6658, 6659, 6660, 6661, 6662, 6663, 6669, 6670, 6671, 6673, 6674, 6677, 6691, 6692, 6694, 6698, 6700, 6702-6716;

SD60Is: 6728, 6732, 6744-6762

SD60Ms: 6763-6815

NS has also returned all units it had on short-term lease and as of the beginning of February has about 600 locomotives in storage.

L&N 4-8-4 No. 576 "Rolls" through Nashville

Historic ex-L&N "Dixie" class steam locomotive #576 made a stop at Nashville's Union Station on its way to the Tennessee Central Railway Museum for a complete restoration. To view the story, go to <http://tinyurl.com/y38njtp6>.

Upcoming Railfan Events



MARCH 30: GSMR excursion sponsored by WVRHS&M.



APRIL 5: Opening Day at Tweetsie Railroad, Blowing Rock, NC.



APRIL 6, 20: "Summerville Steam Specials", TVRM, Chattanooga, TN. See <https://tinyurl.com/y5gaxffk>



MAY 4: "Summerville Steam Special", TVRM, Chattanooga, TN. See <https://tinyurl.com/y5gaxffk>



MAY 7-11: Registration is now open for the 2019 annual NRHS convention, "Golden Spike Rails", scheduled for May 7-11 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The host hotel for the convention will be the Radisson Downtown hotel on South Temple. Complete details on the event may be found on the NRHS website <http://nrhs.com/content/2019-convention>. Included there are links to the registration booklet, mail-in registration forms, and the on-line registration form.



MAY 18: National Train Day.



MAY 19: GSMR excursion sponsored by WVRHS&M.

NS and CSX Train Identification ...



NORFOLK SOUTHERN A-LINE INFORMATION

Knoxville, TN. to Bristol, VA

15T Allentown PA to Chattanooga, TN
 16T Chattanooga, TN. To Allentown, PA
 201 New Jersey to Memphis, TN.
 202 Memphis, TN to New Jersey
 134 Chattanooga, TN. To Linwood, NC
 T24 Greeneville TN to Piney Flats, TN. Switcher
 816 Coal Trains Princeton, IN to Norfolk VA
 817 Empty Coal Trains Norfolk, VA to Princeton, IN
 22A Intermodal Norfolk, VA to Louisville, KY
 23G Intermodal Louisville, KY to Norfolk, VA.
 M5 Extra 15T Allentown, PA to Chattanooga, TN.
 M6 Extra 16T Chattanooga, TN. To Allentown, PA
 I8 Extra 23G
 27V Auto Rack Train Winston Salem NC to Louisville, KY
 24Q Empty Auto Rack Train Norfolk VA to Louisville, KY
 23Q Empty Auto Rack Train Norfolk VA to Louisville, KY

Radio Frequencies, Bristol, VA to Knoxville, TN.

Channel 1 Main channel 160.560
 Channel 2 161.040.

Hot Box Detectors Bristol to Greeneville HEARD ON CHANNEL ONE 161.040

11.3 Bluff City Detector
 27.2 Johnson City Detector
 40.3 Washington College Detector
 52.9 Greeneville Detector



CSX TRAINS RUNNING THROUGH JOHNSON CITY

Q692 Freight Waycross, GA to Russell KY
 Q693 Freight Russell, KY to Waycross, GA
 F689 Yellow Dog switcher between Kingsport to Erwin, operated as needed
 Rock Trains to Brice, NC- operated as needed.
 Various Coal Train along with empties to and from Brice, NC

Radio Frequencies

161.100 Road
 161,520 Dispatcher
 161.550 Yard, Kingsport, TN

Megan's Manifest

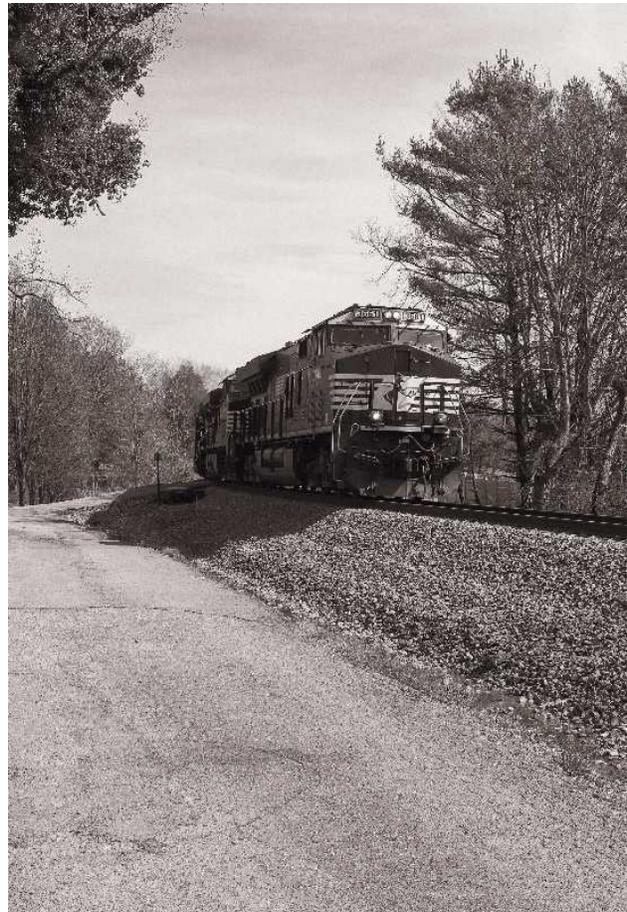
by Megan Kegley



It is already March! WOW!! To start this *Manifest*, I will be sharing ALL black and white photos! The first photo I am sharing was from my birthday trip that I took to Roanoke, VA. I had already made plans to go to Floyd, VA for my birthday to dance to one of my favorite "old time" bands, but then I began thinking ... Roanoke is only an hour from Floyd. My step dad and I both love trains and neither of us had ever been to the Virginia Museum of Transportation. As you can see from the photo at left, we decided to make our trip even more worth it by going to

the Museum and two model train stores in Roanoke. Unfortunately, I did not get to take as many photos as I wanted while I was there due to the simple fact - it was pouring rain! As for this photo, I decided to get a little creative. I shot this photo down the fireman's side of N&W #1218 to make it seem as if I was looking out of the cab window. I had a great trip overall even though the weather was not in our favor. I will definitely make another trip to Roanoke in the summer when it is warm and not pouring rain all day long.

On a nice 70-degree winter day, I decided to take a trip down to Bulls Gap, TN to see Bill and Chester Haskins. It was too pretty of a day to sit at the house all day. I had already received word that NS 728 was in Bulls Gap waiting on a crew change. It had come down the Clinchfield [CSX] and the Appalachia District super early that morning. I didn't arrive at the museum until later in the morning. I heard this one leaving as soon as I got to the museum. My friend AJ Gray pulled in and hopped in the car with me and we rode out towards Whitesburg, TN to catch this 728 that was bound for Savannah, GA. I had never shot at this particular location but I have to say, I am a fan! I will probably take more photos there eventually.





Lately I have really gotten into black and white photography. As you all know I am always taking photos, and most of them are in color. So, I figured why not change things up. Pictured at left is a NS 745 heading west on the Appalachia District over the Bootleg Trestle [near Natural Tunnel State Park in Virginia.] I have taken a few photos here before, but never a black and white one until now. It was a fairly warm and a sunny day last month, so I took advantage!

At right we see NS 68V on the NS BL line with a Canadian National (CN) ES44AC in the lead. I was at the Bulls Gap Railroad Museum and heard this one coming behind the building on the BL line. AJ Gray and myself jumped in the truck and went after this to see what it had leading. When it came by the Railroad Museum, we didn't see the lead units because we were running model trains on the layout. We went about 5 minutes away from the Railroad Museum and saw it had a CN leader. I will admit, I have not photographed many CN locomotives. We do not get them in this area very often, so they are considered "foreign power". I am happy we decided to go after this 68V; it will add to my very small list of photographed Canadian National locomotives.



The last photo for this month's manifest, pictured on the front page, is of a NS 162 at Bulls Gap, TN. The signal in the background is actually the Justice Signal on the NS A line. The 162 is seen getting on the NS Appalachia District from Kite. Once again, AJ Gray decided to go and photograph this train. We ended up catching it in Bulls Gap and also photographing it up at Whitehorn. (If you are familiar with looking at the ATCS [Advanced Train Control System], Whitehorn is around the Summit signal - MP 82.3TC - on the Appalachia District.) I have been to Bulls Gap several times over the last few months, but never have shot a photo off this bridge until now. I remember seeing lots of railfans taking photos off this bridge whenever we ran out 630 / 4501 excursions from Bristol to Bulls Gap, but it never really occurred to me that this was the bridge I've seen people on until recently.

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