

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

Volume 42 No. 6

June 2022



GSMR GP9 #1751 leads our April 30th excursion over the Tuckasegee River west of Bryson City, NC. A beautiful spring day made for an exciting rail adventure for over 900 passengers. [Fred Waskiewicz photo.]

May 23rd General Membership Meeting

Our next General Membership meeting will be held on Monday, May 23rd, 2022 at 6:30 pm at the Chuckey Depot / Railroad Museum, 110 South Second St., Jonesborough, TN (at the railroad crossing). Our program this month features Class 1 Office cars on CSX, NS, UP and BNSF. Come out and see a great video. Better yet, bring a friend and enjoy an entertaining night of railroading with your fellow railfans.

Member Notes

Please remember the following members who have experienced deaths in their family: Scott and Becky Wise (Scott's mother passed away) and Phil Laws, whose brother Martin Laws passed away. Members on the prayer list due to sickness are Bob Hand, Fred Phofl, Jim Bishop, Gary Price, Lois Tilley, and Jack Maloney. If you know of a member who has suffered a loss or has been sick, please email wataugavalley@gmail.com.

Welcome aboard to new members Patrick Johnson, Richard Szymkowski and Kitty Kilgallon.

2022 WVRHS&M Rail Events

DINNER ON THE DINERS. The date for this year's "Dinner on the Diners" event has been scheduled for Saturday evening, June 25th, 2022, in Jonesborough, TN. The highlight of the evening will be an elegant meal in one of WVRHS&M's vintage dining cars, followed by stories from an authentic railroad storyteller. This unique opportunity allows young and old alike to relive a dining experience of a bygone era. Tickets are \$55.00 and must be purchased in advance. Tickets are available at the Jonesborough Visitors' Center, located at 117 Boone St., or by calling (423) 753-1010 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased online at <http://www.jonesboroughtn.org>. Refunds are not available.



Please note: these dining cars will be in the rail yard on static display and will not move. Both cars were built before the Americans with Disabilities Act, and due to their historic significance and age, are exempt from ADA compliance requirements. Please consider suitability when ordering tickets.

Proceeds from ticket sales will help fund the restoration program of Watauga Valley's historic rail passenger cars, and to fund new exhibits and educational experiences at the Chuckey Depot Museum. The museum is housed in the former Southern Railway train depot, which Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum, the town of Jonesborough, and the Heritage Alliance partnered to relocate and preserve.

HIWASSEE LOOP. The next Hiwassee trip near Etowah, TN is scheduled for October 15th, 2022.

MOTOR COACH TOUR TO TENNESSEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

At the April meeting it was decided to sponsor a Watauga Valley members trip to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum in Chattanooga, TN. The trip will start out with a bus ride to TVRM where we will be treated to a train ride out of the station followed by a shop tour of the TVRM repair facilities. Next, we will head down to the Chattanooga Choo Choo for a visit. This is a one-day trip; more information will be put in the July Newsletter.

GSMR. The next Great Smoky Mountains Railroad trip out of Bryson City, NC is scheduled for September 17th.

Mechanical Department Report by Jim Magill

GENERAL



Looks like summer is knocking on our door and we can finally get some work done. The weather has been good to the Watauga Valley Mechanical Team and there have been a lot of good working days at the yard over the last several weeks. If you would like to help out at the Jonesborough Coach yard on Tuesdays between 9 am to 5 pm or Saturdays 9 am to 12 noon, please call our Office at 423-753-5797 or email wataugavalley@embarqmail.com.

ROLLING STOCK

“Moultrie” diner (WATX 400) and **“St Augustine” coach (WATX 500)**: Both cars enroute to Jonesborough.

“Clinchfield 100” office car (WATX 100): Major work has continued. A new water tank has been installed along with a fuel tank. Electrical upgrades to the car have been made.

“Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351): At the Coach Yard ready for its next assignment.

“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539): Being readied to ship to Chattanooga for painting.

GSMR Rail Excursion

We operated our Spring Excursion on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad on April 30th and it was a big success. With over 900 people on the train, everyone had a great time on a beautiful Spring Day. We hope in the near future we can get back to using busses and members can host again. The next GSMR excursion will be September 17th.



Chuckey Depot / Museum

We have been getting as many as 50 plus visitors at the Chuckey Depot/Museum. With the warm weather brings more people out to see our beautiful Depot/Museum. We are expecting another record month in May.

CHUCKEY DEPOT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are looking for more volunteers at the Chuckey Depot to be trained to host at the Museum. The next training sessions will be offered soon. If you would like to host at the depot, please email us at wataugavalley@gmail.com. Get signed up to come out and enjoy your depot.

The next training host session for the Chuckey Depot will be this summer. If you would like to get involved and volunteer at the depot/museum one day a month, please call the office at 423 753-5797 or email wataugavalley@gmail.com to get your name on the list. We are needing more hosts since the hours of the depot will be extended during the summer months.

RAIL CAMERAS AT THE CHUCKEY DEPOT

Our live rail cams at the Chuckey Depot have now been upgraded with lighting at night, allowing you to see night trains really well. You have two ways to access the cams: (1.) Go to our web site at <http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org> and click on cams; (2.) Go to <http://youtube.com> and type "Jonesborough" in the search box. In the past WCYB-TV has included us on their weather cameras site. We also have a live NS/CSXT radio feed from Holston Mountain that you can visit from our web site.

In the News ...

NS Property to be Redeveloped for Wind-Energy

[trains.com] Norfolk Southern has signed an agreement to develop the Lambert's Point Docks, adjacent to its Lamberts Point Coal Terminal, into a location for both the offshore wind and defense industries.

The Virginian-Pilot reports the railroad has signed with newly created development company Fairwinds Landing for a \$100 million project to redevelop the 111-acre docks property, and that the project could create about 500 jobs.

The project, which is near two planned offshore wind farms, has 6,000 feet of waterfront infrastructure and deepwater access, and will be able to support wind-energy manufacturing, assembly, maintenance, and operations. The site, which currently is a ship-to-rail terminal and also berths U.S. Navy vessels, will also continue to offer port functions.

Charlotte Western Railroad Begins Operation

[trains.com] Charlotte Western Railroad, the newest short line of Jaguar Transport Holdings, began operations Monday, May 2, as contract operator on 13 miles of track owned by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

“We are excited for the opportunity to establish our first operation in North Carolina and the southeastern US,” Jaguar CEO Stu Towner said in a press release. “The railroad’s location, in a growing metro with access to both Norfolk Southern and CSX, along with the acquisition of a rail-served warehouse, provides us with an excellent opportunity to serve current and future customers and earn the right to grow alongside them and the local community.”

Towner said the railroad plans to work with NCDOT build a multi-commodity, multi-mode transload facility at the warehouse property. “This project, along with our focused commercial efforts to build sites along the railroad that are ready for new customers, makes this a fantastic solution for customers in the Charlotte market,” he said.

Charlotte Western is the eighth short line for Jaguar, which has financial support from OPTrust, one of Canada’s largest pension plans. Other Jaguar properties include the Missouri Eastern, Cimarron Valley, Southwestern, Washington Eastern, Oregon Eastern, Texas Eastern, and West Memphis Base railroads.

CSX Track Coming Up in Southwest Virginia



[Docket No. AB-55 (Sub-No. 799X), CSX Transportation, Inc. - Abandonment Exemption in Dickenson County, VA, dated April 5, 2022 via “High Green”, Chesapeake Railway Association]

CSX Transportation, Inc. (“CSXT”) notifies the Surface Transportation Board that pursuant to the decisions served on May 15, 2020, and March 17, 2022 in the above-entitled proceeding, on April 2, 2022, at 1200, CSXT consummated the abandonment of an approximately 13.65-mile rail line between milepost ZF 0.0 and milepost ZF 13.65, in Dickenson County, Va. via the STB.

The lone customer on the line was Mountain Forest Products, 1031 Chip Mill Road, Clintwood, VA 24228, which closed a number of years ago. It was located in Dickenson County in Southwest Virginia. On site there is still an Alco S2/S4 rebuilt by GE and acquired by Clinchfield Railroad in 1977. Reportedly it will still start and it remains for sale on the Sterling Rail website. [ED. NOTE. I think this is it: <http://www.sterlingrail.com/classifieds/classified.php?id=18082> .]



Photo at left: Across the river our GSMR excursion train passes the monument honoring Percy B. Ferebee. It is due to his generous philanthropy that generations have enjoyed the wild, scenic beauty of the Nantahala Gorge.

Display in the Block

by Les Billings

It's hard to believe its May already. Time really flies when you're having fun. Photographing trains is always fun and interesting for me. I have enjoyed over the months sharing my photos and adventures to our members through the *Whistle Stop* newsletter. This month's topic will show some of the foreign power that I have seen come through our area.

Foreign Power, as I understand, is called "Run Through Power". It allows the road locomotives to stay on the train in the exchange from one road to another. Sometimes they just get caught up in day-to-day usage. This has been found to save money and time. Fuel and Time are calculated and paid out as needed to the original road.



Above right we see a Kansas City Southern Locomotive which has a very nice color combination. It is passing MP 25 in Johnson City. It was the 3rd unit on NS 126, eastbound.



On a cloudy April morning, we can see NS 126 passing by Founders Park in Johnson City with 3 Union Pacific units. It was carrying a couple of transformers and a coach car on the end. Union Pacific seems to be the most popular of all the foreign units we see.

One Sunday morning around 7:00 am NS 126 with a BNSF in the lead was leaving Jonesborough after a crew change alongside the Chuckkey Depot Museum.

This BNSF unit was built in January 2012 as a ES44C4. The orange and black color scheme is always a delight to see. This is probably my favorite.



As we see on the left, we have a Ferromex 4640 locomotive. It was serving as a dpu on NS 202 last December as it was passing by the VA Center in Johnson City. 4640 is a GE ES44AC built in 2006. It was a real treat seeing this locomotive because it is a rare sight. Ferromex is a privately owned railroad in Mexico. And it is Mexico's largest.

The photo at the right is even a rarer sight. Seeing a CSX on a Norfolk Southern train. I was viewing the Chuckkey Depot cam and saw it pass by. I knew this would be a real catch, so I waited about 20 minutes and went out the back of my office and stood on the old Clinchfield Depot freight platform in Johnson City, hoping no trucks or cars would interfere my view. I got lucky and got the shot I was looking for. The CSX was the 2nd unit on NS 126. A good observer can tell this is 126 because of the gondola of Zinc behind it. Speaking of foreign power, the 1st locomotive was a Union Pacific.



Whistle Stop

Published Monthly by the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
P.O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN 37605-0432
whistlestop.editor@gmail.com

Opinions or viewpoints are those of the writer and may not necessarily reflect those of the organization members, officers or directors. Items of interest are welcome and will be credited to the author; however, because of space constraints, all submissions are subject to editing. Permission to reprint *Whistle Stop* articles with the exception of photographs is granted if proper credit is given. Reuse of photographs must receive permission by the editor and the photographer.



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

TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL