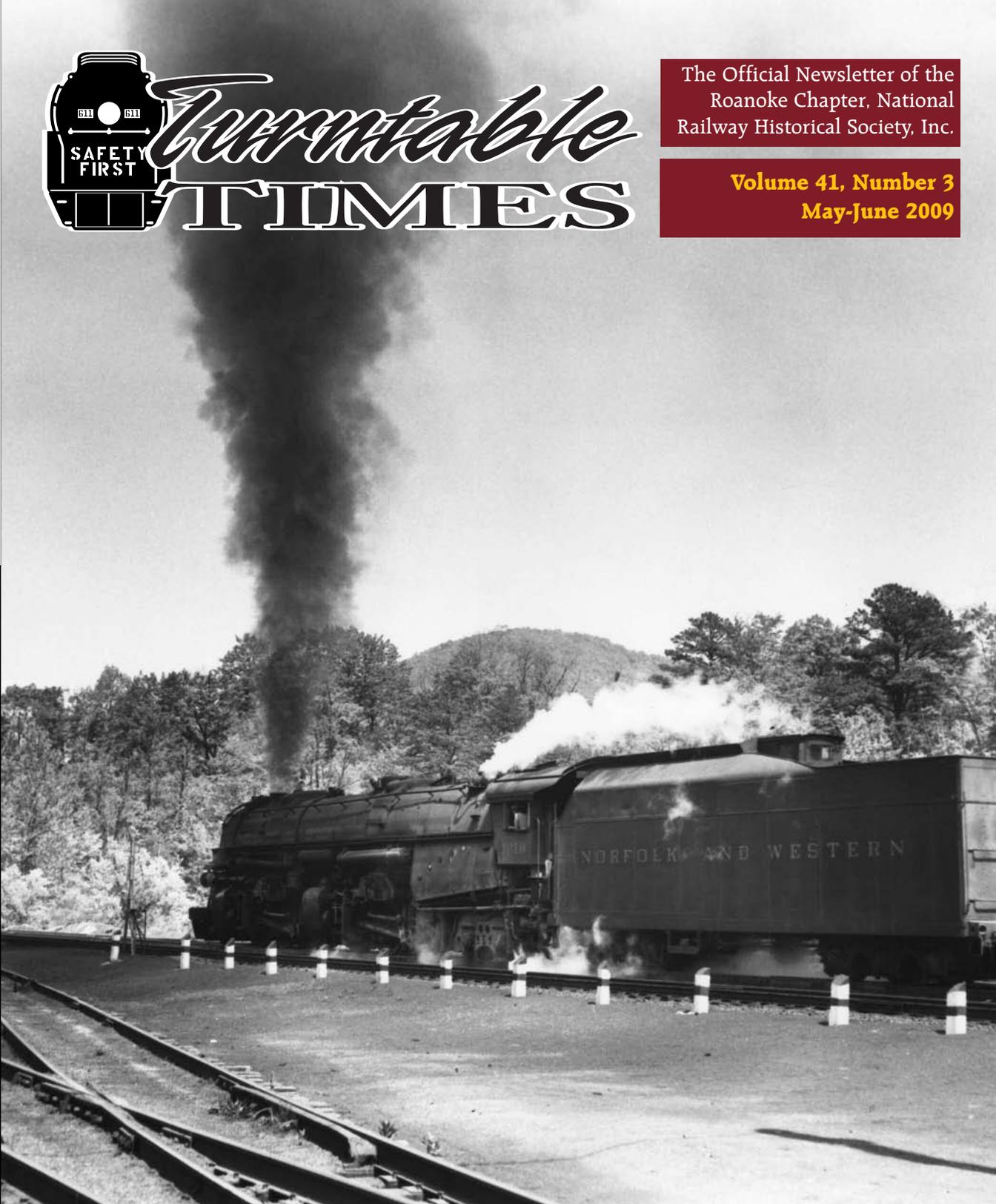




# *Turntable* TIMES

The Official Newsletter of the  
Roanoke Chapter, National  
Railway Historical Society, Inc.

**Volume 41, Number 3**  
**May-June 2009**





# Turntable TIMES

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**May-June 2009**

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Turntable Times is published bimonthly as the newsletter of the Roanoke Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. Opinions and points of view expressed herein are those of the staff members of the Turntable Times and not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or directors of the Chapter.

## *Meeting Notice*

The Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will hold its next meeting on Thursday, May 21st at 7:30 pm. at the Link Museum located in the former N&W Passenger Station, 101 Shenandoah Avenue. The June Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 18th at 7:30 p.m. in the same location.

## *From The Head End*

### **Cards and Flowers**

If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, lost a loved one or has a new birth in the family, please contact Bonnie Molinary. Bonnie is responsible for Chapter cards and flowers and can be reached at 362-0273.

### **Deadline for Turntable Times**

The deadline for the July/August 2009 issue of Turntable Times is Thursday June 18, 2009. Please send articles, information and exchange newsletters to: Kenney Kirkman, Editor Turntable Times, 590 Murphy Road, Collinsville, VA 24078-2128. All parties sending newsletters to the Roanoke Chapter via email should send them to: kirkman50@hotmail.com and Ken Miller at klmiller@rev.net As noted elsewhere in this issue, the Roanoke Chapter will begin sending the Turntable Times to other groups via email beginning with the May/June 2009 issue.

### **Meeting Cancellation Policy**

Any Chapter meeting will be considered cancelled if any of the following conditions are due to weather: Roanoke City Schools are closed on the day of or for the day after the meeting, or Virginia Western night classes are cancelled for the night of a meeting.

### **Material for Turntable Times**

We are always in need of articles, photos or news items for the Turntable Times. Due to copyright restrictions, we cannot reprint articles from most newspapers; a condensed rewritten article crediting the source, however, is acceptable.

### **Cover Photo**

May-June 2009 marks the 50th Anniversary of regular steam operation over Blue Ridge grade. This grab shot by John Krause was not made in 1959, but it is rarity, depicting the 1218 in regular service at Blue Ridge.

## **New Train Service**

The State Transportation Board recently approved a project to add two round trips to Washington, one each from Richmond and Lynchburg. The Lynchburg train will leave there at approximately 7:45 a.m. and reach Washington about 11:30 a.m. with a return departure about 5:00 p.m. and arrival at Lynchburg about 8:30 p.m. The Richmond train will leave at about 7:00 a.m. and arrive at Washington about 9:30 a.m. Returning, the train will leave Washington at 4:00 and arrive back at Richmond at 6:30 p.m. Both the Lynchburg and Richmond trains are scheduled to begin operating in the fall of 2009, and each train will have up to eight cars, including a cafe car and a business class car. (Various Sources)

## **Mechanical Department News**

by Eddie Mooneyham and Bill Mason

After many months with no report from the mechanical department, we are now trying to provide our members with a report of what's going on, and our plans and progress at 9th Street. So, here we go.

In December, Southeast RR contractors finished major track repairs, including the finishing of track four which we began installing a few years ago, repairs to track two and three which involved replacing many ties and ballasting. Repairs were also made to the switches, and the "main line" to 9th St. So as a result we now have safe and good solid track to operate on without flange squeal or worrying about rotted crosssties. Thanks to Eddie for working with Southeast on this very important project, and to all members who helped over the years on our own track gangs.

We completed body repairs, paint and lettering on N&W caboose No. 518409 in

November 2007, including painting the roof brown as it was many years ago. Hopefully this time the paint will last about five years before we need to paint again.

Our list of projects for 2009 are many, and we can use help for them. A lot of the work involves paint sanding, scaling and scraping which most anyone should be able to do. Yes, it is somewhat dirty work but everyone has a good time and enjoys the fun and friendship of working together as a team to bring a piece of our local railroad heritage back to life as a tribute to the many people who worked for the N&W and VGN over the years.

Now, to our project list for 2009. One of the first is to repaint the roof of tool car No. 1407 and possibly some touch-up on the body paint also. This car is in too good of a condition to let it deteriorate, also we may wax the car after painting is completed.

Next up is the start of restoration of our VGN caboose No. 322, this will include interior as well as exterior work, in fact a good vacuuming and sweeping of the interior as well as pressure washing will be a great help on the start of the interior work.

We will also have some work to do on our locomotives No. 41 and No. 522. Some of this may be done by professional experts, but there are many small jobs we can take care of.

Don't think that all we do is work sometimes. We use our equipment for train rides for members and guests. In fact, on June 14th we will be entertaining visitors from the Washington Chapter and in July visitors from the N&W Historical Society during their convention here in Roanoke. When August arrives we will be having a "Birthday Party" for T-6 No. 41, which will turn 50, yes, 50 years young that month. So we will need member assistance for all these events. More details on these events will be

## Turntable Times PDF?

Walt Alexander

A few months ago, we began asking Roanoke Chapter members to give us e-mail address information in order to receive a PDF version of each issue instead of the mailed paper version. Obviously, some people do not have e-mail, so we are still going to be printing and mailing some paper copies as well as having a limited number available to hand out. But the fewer we have to mail the better when it comes to paying the bill.

During recent years a substantial portion of each member's Chapter membership fee

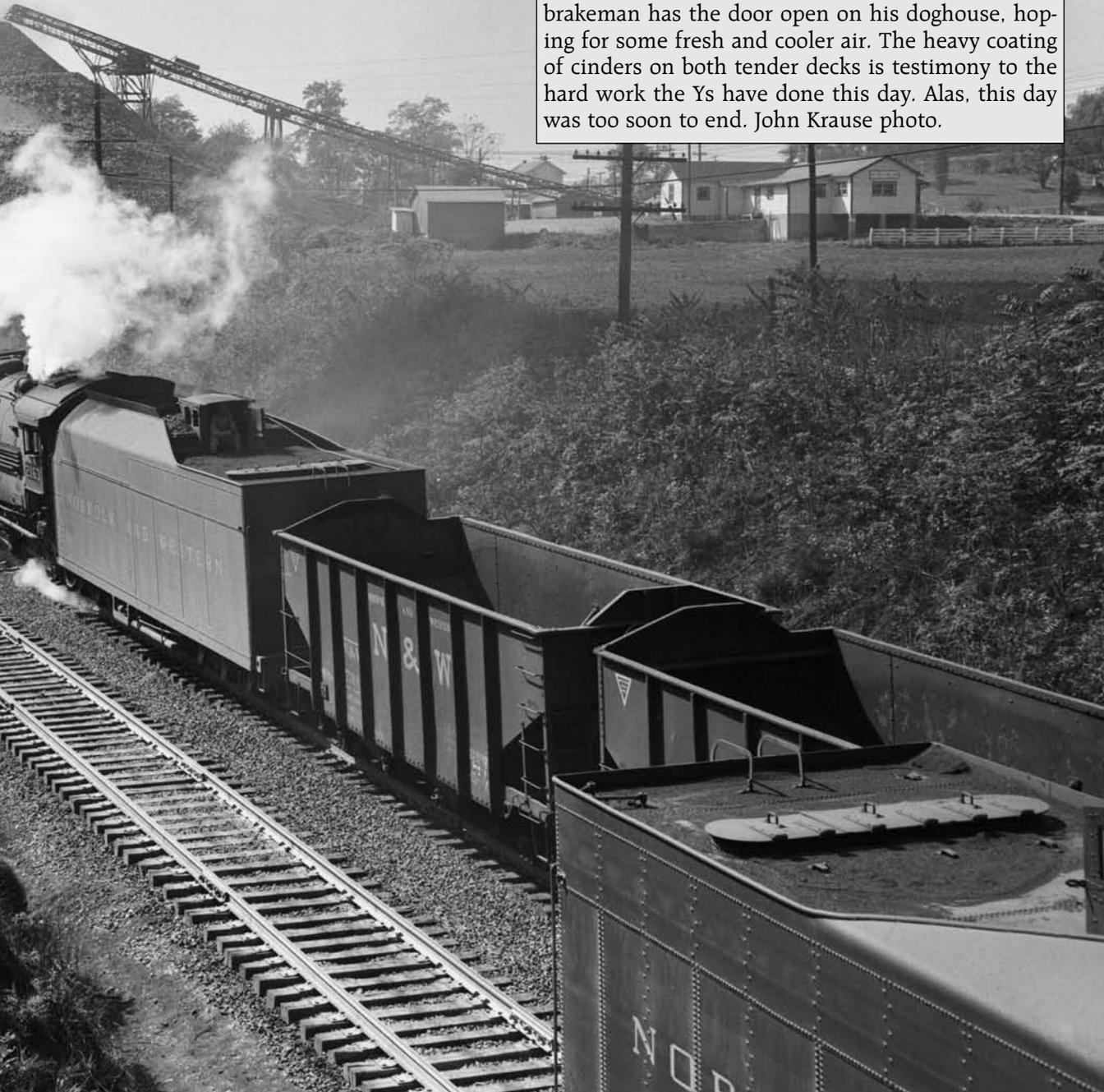
has gone to pay for the printing and mailing of this newsletter. Producing a quality newsletter is a high priority, but very little is left over to cover other activities or projects. We have raised our dues slightly in recent years, but that barely covers the increased costs of printing and mailing. We need to reduce our costs but do not want to increase dues.

Many of your fellow members have already opted to receive the PDF and they get the newsletter up to two weeks earlier than those who have not. Please, if you have e-mail and are willing to read the newsletter on your computer monitor, immediately send us the e-mail address where you want to receive it and tell us "I want Turntable Times via PDF delivery." Send to [terrpin66@cox.net](mailto:terrpin66@cox.net). We'll start sending your PDF of each issue to your designated e-mail address and eliminating one more printing and mailing cost. Thanks for your cooperation.

Along this same line, I began directly contacting our exchange newsletter editors in mid-January urging them to sign up for PDF delivery by e-mail instead of mailed hardcopy. The response has been encouraging. We've also begun receiving more of their newsletters as PDFs, helping eliminate some of their expense, too. Every railroad museum, historical society and Chapter has the same sort of expenses we do; they recognize the need and have responded accordingly.



As mentioned on the cover photo caption, May/June marks the end of regular steam over Blue Ridge grade. It was a hot summer afternoon when Y6a No. 2163 was about to crest the grade westbound with a hopper train as the pusher awaits clearance to back down to Boaz for another shove east. The head brakeman has the door open on his doghouse, hoping for some fresh and cooler air. The heavy coating of cinders on both tender decks is testimony to the hard work the Ys have done this day. Alas, this day was too soon to end. John Krause photo.



announced at a later date.

So, if you have never been to 9th St. to see what we do, please consider coming down at our next work session and give us a try. Work sessions are the Saturday after the membership meetings, and usually other Saturdays and Sundays also. You may be surprised at what you can learn to do, get dirty, and have fun all at the same time. Remember none of us are experts and we all have learned and are still learning as we go. Anyone who comes down will be welcomed.

## **The Bonus Army's Transportation**

---

by Joe Fagan

After World War One was settled our fathers and grandfathers and maybe a few great grandfathers were back home and all was looking good -- except the greedy people who were at work with their scams and scheming -- Does that remind you of something?

In 1929 the stock market crashed and the Great Depression got under way. All was down hill from that time. In 1924 Congress had passed a benefit bill to pay the veterans a bonus of \$1.25 per day served overseas and \$1.00 per day served stateside. The catch was that it was not to be paid until 1945. That is no misprint. NINETEEN FORTY FIVE.

By 1932 the depression was kicking almost everyone where it hurts the most. Congress being Congress nothing was happening. The veterans organized a march on Washington and that is where railroad passenger service comes into the story.

Plenty of guys were willing to go to Washington but they could not afford the passenger train tickets. There were plenty of freight trains going that way so problem solved. Every freight train leaving Bristol heading east was loaded with veterans.

Dozens of them if not hundreds at times. They even hitched rides between the coaches of passenger trains. I was in the first grade at Wallace school that year and it was great sport for me and my buddies to throw ballast rocks at the trains. All that bunch of men hanging on was fair game for us. They were hoboes and made good targets and we took advantage of that. When my parents saw what we were doing they put a stop to it before we hit someone and caused them to fall. Well there was always the train crew on the caboose.

President Herbert Hoover ordered the army to remove the veterans from public property and put General MacArthur in command with Major Dwight Eisenhower as liaison with the D.C. police and Major George Patton in command of the cavalry and infantry. With fixed bayonets the army chased the veterans across the Anacostia River to their largest and main camp.

I think my Father received his check in about 1936. He was working for the N&W Ry and thankfully did not go to Washington. About ten years later another whole war full of veterans did not get a bonus either.

## **Big Shays on Class I Railroads**

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There was a recent article on Shays owned by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway written by Karen Parker in the Holiday edition of the C&O historical magazine.

In 1903, the C&O tried a 150-ton four-truck Shay to see if more tonnage could be pulled on coal lines in the New River Valley of West Virginia. The Shay easily outhauled C&O 2-8-0s on the line and eventually the C&O owned 16 of the 20 4-truck Shays built by Lima. These monsters were longer than all the other Shays built, but were also heavier, with only two exceptions.

The Western Maryland Railway, another Shay purchaser, owned five, including Shay

No. 6, currently at Cass. No. 6 is the second heaviest Shay built, at 269,000 pounds.

Kansas City Southern owned two Shays, one of which, at nearly 288,000 pounds, outweighed WM 6 by about 19,000 pounds. Not only that, both the WM and the KCS "leavies" were only three-truck Shays.

It must be mentioned that the Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk Railroad in West Virginia, the logging railroad at Cass, converted a 3-truck 150-ton Shay to a 4-truck 203-ton behemoth in 1933. GC&E No. 12 was actually the heaviest Shay to exist, but this was not a factory model.

The Canadian Pacific Railroad owned one 90-ton Shay that it inherited from a line it acquired.

The New York Central owned six 2-truck Shays, factory build with enclosed "covered wagons" sheet metal.

Norfolk and Western followed the C&O's example and, in 1907, tried one 4-truck 150-ton Shay in their southern West Virginia coalfields. Sold after ten years, it then passed through six other railroads, ending up converted to an oil burner in Northern California on a small lumber railroad.

The only other Class I railroad to own Shays was the Southern Railway. In 1907, SR bought two 150-ton 4-truck Shays similar to the C&O models, delivered to eastern Tennessee. They were numbered 4000 and 4001 and the boiler jacket has been speculated to be Russian iron color, which has a slightly blue/grey shade.

Southern used these engines until 1916, when they were sold to the C&O, becoming No. 14 and 15 respectively. They were deadlined in 1923 with the other C&O Shays. The ex-SR Shays were scrapped in Huntington, WV in 1944.

C&O Shays 6 and 11 were instead sold in 1923 at scrap prices to the Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk Railroad and were rebuilt as its No. 13

and 14 respectively at the Cass Shops. No. 13 was deadlined in 1942 and scrapped in 1957. But No. 14 was sold yet again to the Western Maryland in 1930, becoming its No. 5. It was scrapped in 1954.

Unfortunately, none of the large 4-truck Shays have survived, but parts of them have. Presently at Cass, for example, the cab of famous 80-ton 3-truck Shay No. 5 (the second oldest existing Shay and the oldest operating Shay in the world) is from one of the C&O 4-truck Shays.

The only other place where one might find one of the large 4-truck Shays, interestingly enough, is as a download from the Train Simulator website. Someone has created an operating version of C&O Shay No. 4 for use with Microsoft's Train Simulation game, and did a very good job. (The Greensboro Chapter 'The Roundhouse' via Baltimore Chapter newsletter 'Interchange').

## **An Old Freight Car's Thoughts**

Not as many of us are left anymore but I am still here. My days are numbered but have not ended just yet. Still plodding along among the younger members of my kind, some consider me a ghost from the past. Admittedly only the kindest person could call me pretty. My colors are faded, rust has gathered from years of neglect, and the name and logo of my original master has faded almost beyond recognition now.

Despite the bangs and bruises both me and brothers of my generation still earn our keep. A load of grain for an elevator, lumber for the mill, rolls of paper that will contain tomorrow's news, or bundles of scrap paper that is news no more. Look closely at the faded letters and you can see the proud names my brothers and I once carried with pride. Missouri Pacific, Southern Pacific, Rock Island, Santa Fe, Chicago & Northwestern, and many others, all gone now through

inevitable evolution of the railroad.

How long will I be around and my final fate is uncertain. Many of my generation have already fallen victim to the torch or sit rusting on some forgotten track. Yet, fate is not always bad. Some of us have been restored and now proudly display the names of our former masters so future generations will not forget.

Take advantage while I am still here. Come and watch me pass by and be sure to wave. Point me out to the young and tell them my story and the story of the proud railroad I once served. Take a picture so future generations will know of me. Most important never let anyone forget the importance of my kind, old and new, play in the growth and support of this great nation every day. (From the Arkansas Railroader via Midwest Rail Scene Report March 2009 Issue).

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

**Regular Meeting Locations are at the  
O. Winston Link Museum.**

May 21, 2009 - General Meeting

June 2, 2009 - Board Meeting

June 18, 2009 - General Meeting

July 7, 2009 - Board Meeting

July 16, 2009 - General Meeting

August 4, 2009 - Board Meeting

August 20, 2009 - General Meeting

September 1, 2009 - Board Meeting

September 17, 2009 - General Meeting

October 6, 2009 - Board Meeting

October 15, 2009 - General Meeting

**Visit us on the web: [www.RoanokeNRHS.org](http://www.RoanokeNRHS.org)**

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