

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

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Turntable Times is published quarterly 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 or contributors of the Turntable Times and do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or directors of the Chapter.

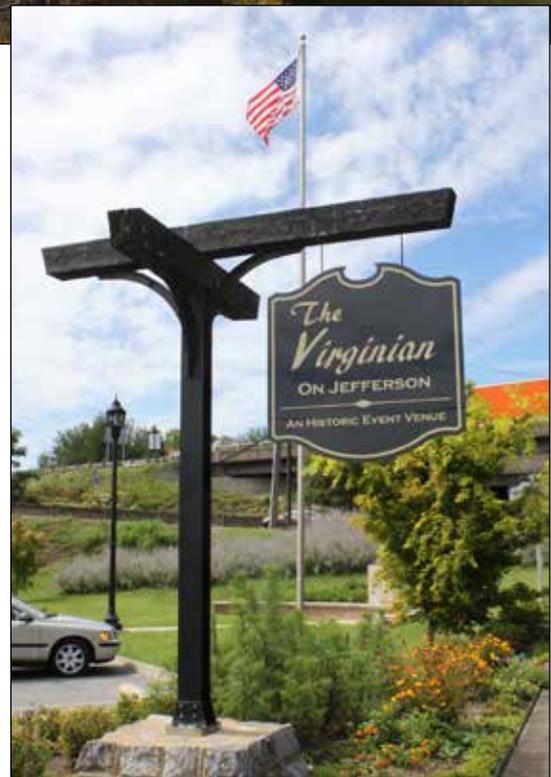
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**Cover Photos**

Placement at its new home, Norfolk and Western BPe combine No. 600 has migrated almost 40 miles from its home of the last 40 years to preservation at Roanoke. The rare car, the only survivor of its class (a small class with only six members to start with!) had served as a restaurant at a hotel in Blacksburg which was closed and torn down. Thanks to Lynchburg Crane's generous donation of crane and trucks to move the car it will be preserved.

Right: Skip Salmon caught a great view of the brand new sign for the event space at our Virginian station. Once events can be held, this can be a special place for any events!



**Meeting Notice**

With the pandemic, the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society has cancelled all meetings and gatherings until further notice. When the meetings resume, they will be held Fellowship Hall at St. Marks Lutheran Church at 7:30 pm. Please see the description on the next page for specific directions.

This is our new location for monthly meetings, please be sure to make a note of it. While we regret not having meetings during the current emergency, we intend to follow the Governor's orders. (Please be aware, this may change.)

Please note the Annual Meeting Notice inside.

# From The Head End

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## Cards and Flowers

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If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, lost a loved one or has a new birth in the family, please contact Delta Helmer Pelgram. Delta is responsible for Chapter cards and flowers and can be reached at membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com or 703-627-7847.

## Deadline for Turntable Times

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The deadline for the next issue of Turntable Times is Friday, November 6, 2020. Please send articles, information and exchange newsletters to: Editor Turntable Times, P.O. Box 13222, Roanoke, VA, 24032. All parties sending newsletters to the Roanoke Chapter via email should send them to Gary Ballard gtgns611@aol.com, Dorr Tucker at joandorr@cox.net and Ken Miller at klmiller@rev.net

## Meeting Cancellation Policy

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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. Obviously, we have cancelled all meetings until further notice due to the pandemic. We hold Board Meetings via Zoom and will go to in-person meetings as soon as it is safe to do so.

## New Chapter Meeting Location and Time

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Effective with the January 16th, 2020, monthly Roanoke Chapter meeting, we will have a new location and starting time for all our regular meetings. Of course, all meetings are cancelled until further notice due to the pandemic. We publish directions for the purpose of making people aware.

We will be meeting at St Mark's Lutheran Church, 1008 Franklin Road, SW, at the corner of Highland Avenue in Old Southwest, Roanoke 24016. There is NO parking on Franklin Road; instead turn east onto Highland and enter and park in the lot off Highland directly behind the church.

Enter the church through the doors down the steps below the overhanging breezeway. This is technically the rear of the church, but is the most convenient and closest to the parking.

When inside proceed to the elevator on the right (about 15 feet) and go down to level 1 and follow the NRHS signs into the meeting room.

The church doors will be locked 10 minutes after the starting time so please be on time. Should you know that you will be late, please arrange in advance to con-

tact a member already in the church when you arrive so that someone can meet you at the door to let you in. Thank you for your cooperation in this.

## Chapter Cards and Flowers

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If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, lost a loved one or has a new birth in the family, please contact me, Delta Helmer Pelgrim. I am responsible for Chapter cards and flowers and can be reached at membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com or 703-627-7847.

I need people to sign up for food for the meetings, we have June covered. If no one signs up everyone will just go hungry. Reimbursement is available if you are concerned about the cost.

## Sick List

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Nothing has been reported as of this time

## Emergency Notification Phone Numbers

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You may use these phone numbers to report emergencies or other conditions affecting railroad operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc. If at a railroad/highway grade crossing try to provide the unique crossing number/DOT number posted nearby, usually on a small blue sign.

Norfolk Southern . . . . . 800-453-2530  
CSX . . . . . 800-232-0144  
Amtrak . . . . . 800-331-0008

## 2020 Chapter Directors -

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Chuck Akers . . . . . President  
Lewis Foster . . . . . Secretary  
Gary Gray . . . . . Vice President  
Delta Helmer Pelgrim . . . . . Treasurer  
David Foster . . . . . National Representative  
Ken Miller . . . . . Director  
Rick Rader . . . . . Director  
Richard Shell . . . . . Director  
George Stein . . . . . Director

Our Chapter Board meets at least once a month, usually the first Tuesday; contact a board member to find the date and location. Board meetings are open to the membership. Please note, in-person Board meetings have been discontinued as per the Governor's order through October. The board has met virtually via Zoom the past few months, and anticipates continuing that for the time being. The Board will take up business as necessary via email or telephone until then. Please remember to Stay home, stay safe!

## Membership

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Delta Helmer Pelgrim

As of August 15, 2020, we have 162 members and

everyone has been registered with National who paid me. All membership rosters were e-mailed or mailed to all members. If you did not receive your roster, please let me know. Membership forms for 2021 should be coming out in October.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me – membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com.

## **Treasurers Report**

Delta Helmer Pelgrim

Please continue to sign up/use your Kroger and Amazon.com community support. We have received over \$2500 in money from these organizations this year. Also if you work for a company that does matching donations please consider making a donation that can be matched.

A great big thank you to my faithful auditors, Paul and George. Also thank you to Rick who has been ensuring that I receive the bills on time.

I am always available to provide information and our financial statements. Feel free to send me e-mails at treasurer.rcnrhs@gmail.com

## **Notice of Annual Meeting**

As everyone knows, we are in the midst of a pandemic and many things have to change as a result. At its meeting on September 1, 2020, the Board acted as per the By-Laws, Article 2, Section 4: Annual and Special Meetings of Members. The Annual Meeting of the Members of the Corporation shall be held on the third Thursday in November of each year, unless a resolution from the Board of Directors shall provide for an alternate time, for the purpose of electing Directors and for advising and making recommendations to the Directors on matters of policy and management and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. Since indoor options for the meeting are limited, the board acted as follows:

Due to the COVID19, the Board had passed the following resolution:

The Annual Meeting of the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will be virtually held on Saturday, October 10, 2020 with a rain date of October 17, 2020. The meeting will begin at 2:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the breezeway of the Virginian station, masks and social distancing are required. The only business to be undertaken at the meeting is the election of directors as follows.

The members who's terms expire are:

Lewis Foster  
Ken Miller  
Rick Rader  
Richard Shell

Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting, please be sure you have that person's consent before making a nomination.

The Roanoke Chapter is soliciting nominees for Directors to be voted on at the November Annual Meeting. There are four (4) positions to be voted on. Please consider putting your name in nomination. Please consider helping out. You may contact a member of the nominating committee - headed by Andy MacArthur and Gary Gray. Instructions for Absentee Ballot: This year we will elect four (4) directors by secret ballot. Any member in good standing may vote by absentee ballot.

Please Note: if you are interested in running, or know of another Chapter member who is, please contact the nominating committee promptly.

If there are no more candidates than positions, a motion to elect by acclaim will be accepted.

To vote by absentee ballot, one must:

1 - Request an absentee ballot from the Secretary or a member of the nominating committee. You will receive (a) one ballot; (b) one "ballot" envelope; and (c) one mailing envelope.

2 - Mark the ballot (vote for not more than four (4) directors. If more than four (4) votes are cast, the ballot will be discarded).

3 - Place the ballot in the "ballot" envelope and seal. Do not put your name on the ballot or "ballot" envelope.

4 - Place "ballot" envelope in the mailing envelope. Write your name and return address on the envelope and mail to;

Roanoke Chapter, NRHS  
P.O. Box 13222  
Roanoke, VA 24032-1322

or the envelope may be hand delivered to the Secretary anytime before the election at the annual meeting. The ballot must be in the Post Office box prior to October 10, 2020.

Please note, this meeting is strictly a business meeting only, no refreshments or program is planned.

## **Time To Remember Our Friends**

It is sad to report the loss of two people with connections to the Roanoke Chapter. During the month of August, we lost Carol Jensen's sister, Katherine Paschal. Katherine was from Greensboro, North Carolina. Some of us may remember Katherine from working on the Independence Limited to Detroit in 1984.

Our member Jeff Sanders and his wife Susan, lost Susan's mother, Irene Leonard after a recent illness in August.

May we keep our friends in our thoughts during this

time. If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, lost a loved one or has a new birth in the family, please contact Delta Helmer Pelgram. Delta is responsible for Chapter cards and flowers and can be reached at membership.rcnrhs@gmail.com or 703-627-7847.

## Mixed Freight

By Mr. Robin R. Shavers

They're really serious. Not long after Norfolk Southern announced reduced use and humping of freight cars at its Linwood, North Carolina, Yard back in early spring, the electric power was turned off.

Many of us lament the departure of visiting N&W Y6B No. 2156 this past June 10th. Folks, that was a FAST FIVE YEARS. It only seemed like a few months ago when it arrived. I wish I had known when it was to depart Roanoke. I did not find out til a few hours after it departed the Virginia Museum of Transportation grounds.

A lot of us are elated about the rebirth of The East Broad Top Railroad. For the record, their olive green caboose No. 28 turns 100 years old this year.

Ya know folks, sometimes it takes years and even decades to find out or discover the truth about something. Back in the years, there was a Southern Railway northbound freight that operated thru my hometown of Danville, Virginia. To those who paid any attention to trains at all, they referred to that train as The Bean Man. One very hot Sunday afternoon in the 1950s, just south of the Virginia-North Carolina border within the little community of Pelham, The Bean Man experienced a spectacular derailment. I have yet to find out The Bean Man's symbol, AKA train number. What made the derailment so bad was that on that day there was a block of loaded stock cars as in pigs and hogs. It was indeed an awful sight and sound according to local newspapers. In that pre-era of animal concern, the authorities shot the badly injured and residents were allowed to take home and consume what they wanted. My dad and his family who resided in nearby Stokesland along the tracks of the Danville & Western, AKA Dick & Willy, ate HIGH ON THE HOG for many weeks. Now folks, here is the fact that I found out after many years about the beans in The Bean Man. A major daily commodity aboard that freight train were boxcar loads of soybeans. I always thought the beans were every day consumer household beans such as Lucks, Campbells and Van Camps. NOPE. Soybeans, and I found this out back in the fall while reading an article within the pages of a TIES magazine from the Southern Railway Historical Association. To this day, I think about that derailment when I drive thru that area via the old U.S. 29.

I am not ashamed to admit it. I did not adhere to the governor's stay at home order. But despite this, there was one personal interest that I was not able to pursue. That would be my second greatest interest behind railroading, going out listening to live music everywhere. Railfanning period went on as usual but of course organized scheduled events were cancelled by the dozens. I did spend a three day Memorial Day weekend within Roanoke and Christiansburg. To save cash and see more trains, I car camped almost beneath that pedestrian bridge that connects The Hotel Roanoke with Roanoke's Market Square. With nearby restaurants for take out meals and facilities and comfortable temperatures, I was one content individual who logged 50 train movements. Oh yeah, in the community of Cumberland about an hours drive west of Richmond on U.S. 60, gas was just \$1.05 for three weekends straight before it shot to \$1.15.

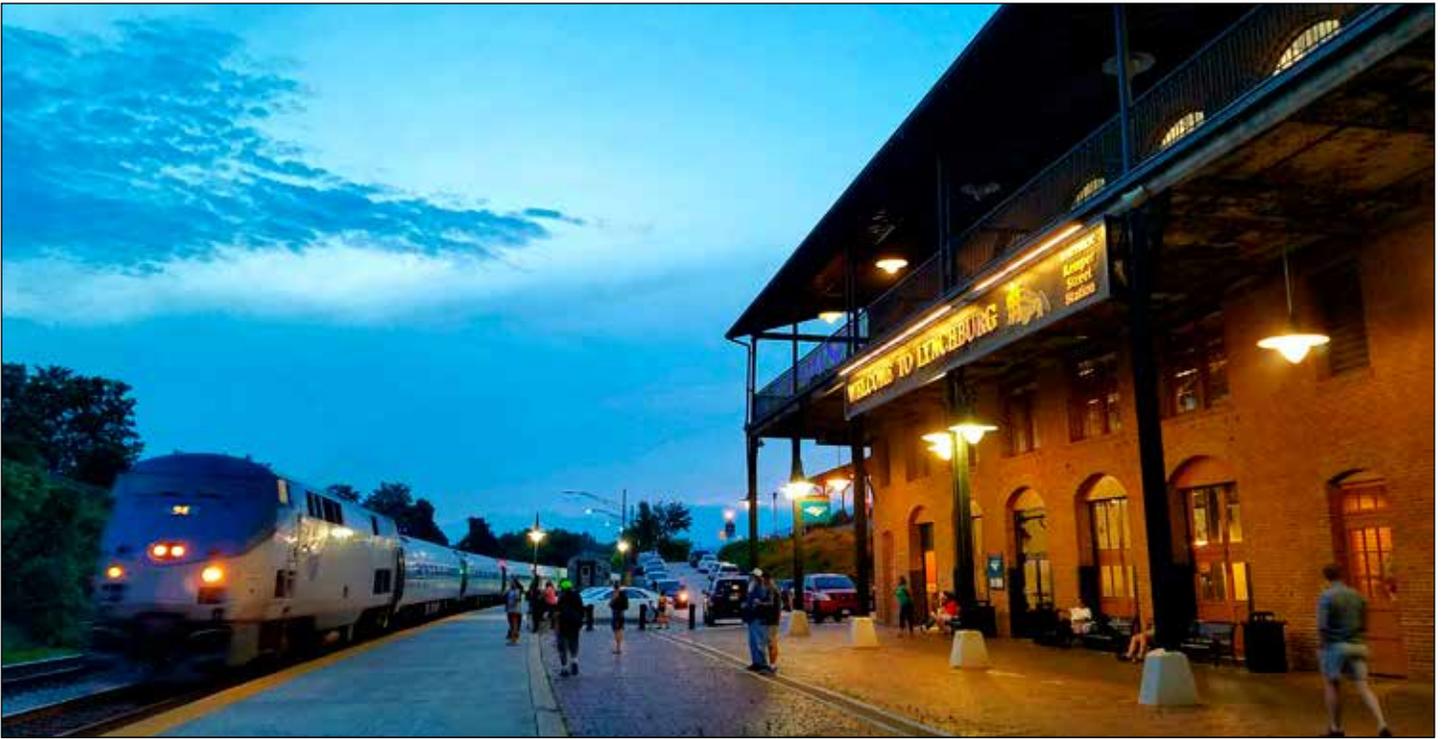
Nights with no live music were spent doing my own personal Yadkins. Revisit my Yadkin Rails article for the first quarter Turntable Times a few months ago. However, my personal Yadkins included viewing prints and enlargements as well as railroad scrapbooks and my VHS railroad tape collection. TALK ABOUT MEMORIES. I viewed subject matter I have not seen in decades. As I viewed colored prints and newspaper clippings, I was constantly asking myself the following question: Has it really been that long ago since this or that happened? Holy Toledo, this past April marked three years since I last rode aboard a 611 powered excursion. It was a round trip Roanoke to Walton trip.

I have and have viewed a lotta tapes featuring Roanoke Chapter excursions. I became happy and saddened as I viewed the footage. Happy to view such happy moments and saddened to see the smiles and waves of Roanoke Chapter members as they performed their excursion duties many years ago while they were alive. So many have passed on. This also includes the paid professional railroaders that made those excursions possible. I often think of the day that Grace Helmer alerted me of the just arrived to the chapter's concession car brand new 1218 number plate belt buckles back in 1987 on that engines's second excursion for the chapter to Lynchburg from Roanoke. It was also great seeing subject matter along the right of way that is no more in today's railroad world such as ole school signals, pole lines, shanties, depots and clean rolling stock, just to mention a few.

## Last Call For The Station Agent

by Gary Ballard

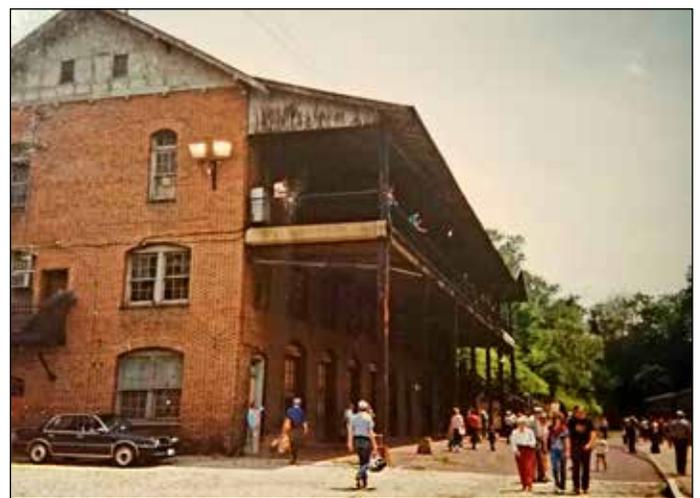
As the editor of this newsletter, a member of this fine chapter of the NRHS and a retired trainman



for Amtrak, I can easily relate to the story of the retirement of a long time Amtrak employee and station agent at the Kemper Street Station in Lynchburg . As reported on July 28th, 2020 in the local paper, "The News & Advance", Mr. Garland Harper retired that previous Friday. Garland wrapped up 45 years of trusty proud service on the railroad. He reportedly was a familiar face at the Kemper Street station since 1975.

I marvel at that achievement due in part at knowing how one starts at any post offered by Amtrak when you first hire on. Whether it be onboard services such as lead attendant in the dinning car on the Capital Limited and The Cardinal for myself in my first year in Washington, DC. or just about any position dealing with the trains or station services. You take moving around resulting in being "bumped" by someone with more seniority and take what's left, usually the Extra Board, which meant sleeping by your phone and jumping into action with a two hour call. While I do not know how Garland's first years went in those regards, his great story of nearly half a century at Amtrak reflects many years nonetheless at the Lynchburg station since 1975.

Garland told the local paper, "I'll miss it. Once rail-roading gets in your blood it's hard to get out." He was known for being helpful. Think about what he said and sit back and replay the memories we all have of that station. How many of us remember the NRHS Convention Special going to Asheville, North Carolina from Alexandria, Virginia on July 18, 1989? The 1218 steam locomotive was added to the 611 powered train



at Kemper Street station for the rest of the run to Salisbury that evening. The station had a dark exterior appearance back then. Mr. Harper's years at the station go back to that time as well.

When I moved to Roanoke in 1990, talk of restoring the station was highly envisioned, though it was slow to get things beyond that stage. Then came the fire inside the structure that apparently was started by a few vagrants staying inside. Luckily, the fire did not get out of control, but it started a wave of getting some form of restoration to the station. I recall Norris Deyerle (no stranger to the Roanoke and Blue Ridge Chapters) coming to our meetings and describing to us the new push to get the station into a much better shape both structurally and to the eye. That was a long time ago, but today the Kemper Street station is a showcase. And Garland Harper was there through it all.

There was a time when there was only one Amtrak train that called at Lynchburg, the Crescent. No matter if you were going south or north, the time of arrival in Lynchburg was either late at night or around the time the roosters started their ritual in the morning. It was all we had then. Today, we have an Amtrak Regional train making stops in The Hill City on its way to Roanoke, but that train had early beginnings as it only went as far as Lynchburg for years. We all remember looking at that train and saying to ourselves, "One day it will go to Roanoke". And one more thing to mention about the success of this station. You will hear many Amtrak employees telling you that the overwhelming success of the new Regional train to Norfolk helped to pay the way for additional train service at Lynchburg and we can tie Garland Harper into that mix.

Garland was known for providing extra service to those passengers who needed it through all the years we have mentioned. He helped passengers with their luggage before he left for the evening, directed folks to the nearby bus before the bus service became a fixture at the station such as it is today. He was known to find safe shelter for unhoused individuals. All of this going on at this great former Southern Railway station. Garland even extended his courteous ways to me on more than one Amtrak trip where I used to wait for the Amtrak Bus to take me to The Star City. That is one more success story about this station and of the station agent there. It is a known fact that the Amtrak motor coach service from Lynchburg to Roanoke paved the way to have trains running that route today. Garland's way of taking care of his passengers certainly is part of that success.

Railroading gets into your blood. I have always said this is not a job that you answered to in a want-ad in the newspaper. You got to want to do this type of work and from the first day, you have a ton of stuff to learn and you are glad you made the decision to apply for the job. Thanks to Garland Harper for 45 years of great dedicated service at Amtrak!

## **Hawaiian Rail News**

by Gary Ballard

This story is paraphrased from the original articles by Jeff Livingston, Historian of the Hawaiian Railway Society, and by their editor Janet Lorimer, concerning some blue GE built locomotives they had years ago. This story of the GE locomotives includes some interesting Hawaiian railroad history that has ties to the Civil War back on the mainland.

The American Civil War (1861-1865) was a boom to the sugar trade in Hawaii largely due to the northern states being cut off from sugar production from

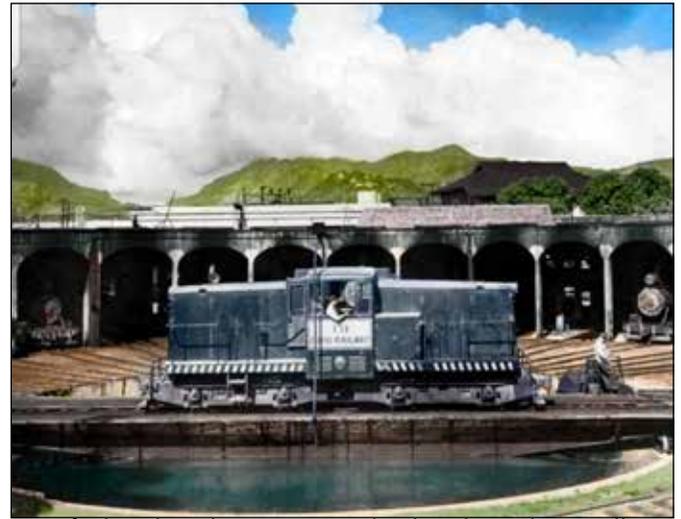
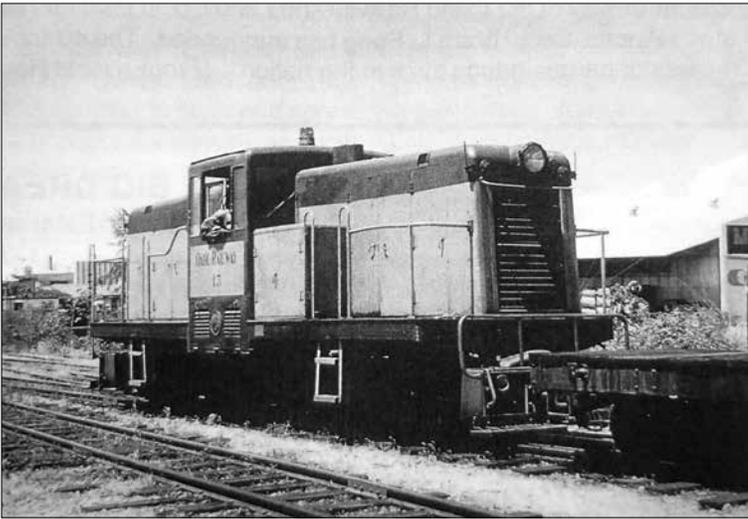
Louisiana and other southern states. Not to be starved of sugar, the northern states directed their quest of it to the plantations of Hawaii. The Civil War lasted four years, but the market was already established. The demand was there. By 1866, there were twelve large plantations in operation on Maui, eight on Hawaii, six on Oahu and four on Kauai. Sugar exports soon accounted for half of the business just from the plants operating on Maui alone.

Transporting the product to the port for export had to be reliable and such to endure the rigors of the countryside. Early trials of shipping by boat from the plant to local seaports was time consuming and the lack of a suitable all weather port did not help. Shipping around the world would be by ship. Moving the sugar on land by rail became the mode of transport. The first common carrier in Hawaii was the Kahului and Wailuku Railroad. It began operations on Maui on July 21, 1879. It later became the Kahului Railroad. Just in time, as the sugar production was now in high gear. In 1880, Hawaii Island was the largest sugar producing island overtaking the output from Maui with 24 plantations versus 13 on Maui.

Although there was high interest by the Government in railroad construction on Hawaii Island, it fell to the private sector during this new period of moving sugar by rail. In just a few years, 1881 – 1883, the Hawaiian Railroad Company was the new common carrier as overseen by the Hon. Samuel G. Wilder and Associates. The tracks did not directly connect with the plantations. Inbound and outbound freight was delivered to the various stations along the line for shipment.

Sugar continued to be a commodity in high demand. Expansion on the railroad was in the planning stages. Within three years, Mr. Wilder went stateside to seek financial assistance from investors. With no success, he traveled to London to finance the railroad. With no investors biting at his offer, he returned to Hawaii and the expansion plans were abandoned. The Hawaiian Railroad Company was renamed the Hawaiian Railway Company in 1896. The sugar industry was still very busy, but the railroad lost the man who tried to obtain additional funds to allow it to expand. Mr. Wilder died in July of 1888. The railroad was sold to the sugar plantations it served in 1900.

This is but one chapter in the amazing history of Hawaiian railroading. Another railroad, The Oahu Railway and Land Company (the OR&L) was founded by Mr. Benjamin Dillingham in 1889. Benjamin had no idea he would become a railroad man in his early years. He arrived in Honolulu as a sailor in 1865. The old saying "break a leg" did not serve him well as he fell from a horse and broke his leg. Dillingham was now con-



Left photo by Robert Ramsey, right photo by Anthony Williams

fined to recuperate in Hawaii and eventually decided to stay there and make the island his residence. Benjamin had a keen business sense about him and now with his home in Hawaii he became very wealthy with a good reputation in the Honolulu community.

Benjamin was interested in development plans and soon learned that a lack of water and available transportation in the Ewa Plain made the all-day horse drawn wagon trip undesirable. A railroad was needed, and his plans quickly came together. He leased land from James Campbell and started two sugar cane plantations. Following the sugar trade blueprint of others, Benjamin obtained a charter for establishing a railroad in 1888. Ground was broken in March of 1889 with a goal of 12 miles of rail. The OR&L celebrated opening day on November 16, 1889. Free train rides were offered to 4,000 curiosity seekers who came to see the new railroad.

The railroad tied into the Ewa Plantation Company owned by Benjamin. Freight and passenger business flourished on his railroad. Mr. Dillingham built a hotel by 1897 at Haleiwa on the north shore where his line now connected to the rugged Oahu territory of Ka'ena Point. By 1892, the line was extended to 18.5 miles. As proof to his keen sense of business, his railroad hauled more than sugar. It carried mail, parcels, general freight, passengers and garbage from the city of Honolulu. The OR&L served the military bases of Pearl Harbor, Hickman Field and Barber's Point Naval Air Station. Benjamin built a new passenger terminal for Honolulu in 1926.

Fast forward the clock to the time of World War II, his railroad suffered heavy use and wear. The equipment, as in almost every railroad in the nation at this time, was beaten and worn. As history tells us in many instances after the war, business dropped off. People had other choices of getting around prior to the war

and eventually the line's passenger operation was closed. The years of 1945 – 46 were struggling times for his railroad. Servicemen were still being carried to the bases, though things on the accountant's books were going downhill. The final moment for the line came during the Aleutian Islands earthquake and tsunami on April 1, 1946. A wall of sea water 55 feet high sealed the fate of the railroad. The line operated a final excursion on December 31, 1947 behind steam locomotive No. 70 for invited guests. Counting all the time since day one, the railroad was finished after a 58-year run. The OR&L replaced its operation with trucks. The railroad's Honolulu Harbor Branch was renamed the Oahu Railway and operated until December 31, 1971.

The story of the two GE built locomotives goes back to October 1943. GE 47T diesels 15 and 19 were delivered to the railroad in early 1944. Originally in battleship gray with dark lettering, I have obtained information from Wikipedia that states these units came from the Navy. This would make sense due to the Naval operations on the islands and the fact that this railroad did a substantial business with the Navy bases there, though I've not been able to confirm this with the Hawaiian Railway Society. Soon after delivery, they were repainted dark blue and silver. Hawaiian Railway Society member Robert A. Ramsey was a fireman for the railroad for three summers beginning in 1950. Mr. Ramsey was known to have taken several photos of the units and are now part of the HRS collection. Both locomotives were repainted yellow and green around 1965.

Today, the remaining track of the branch line is owned by the State of Hawaii and the HRS is the official caretaker. In the wake of the current pandemic, public excursions have returned as of June 20, 2020. Trips are held on weekends. The operation is following CDC guidelines. Reservations are required, however if a passenger who made a reservation doesn't show up for

the ride, a drop-in may be able to get onboard. Steve Vendt, Operations Manager, says the train usually holds 180 to 200 passengers, now they carry on average about 50 passengers due in part to social distancing guidelines. Trips run 90 minutes each day. The ice cream stop is closed largely because the Ko'Olina Resort it is in, is completely shut down. Steve reports the gift shop is open and is doing better than first expected. During the week, track work is ongoing keeping the track gang busy. The Hawaiian Railway Society provides me with their newsletter and I want to thank them for delivery to my mailbox which allows me to share this bit of history and current news to you from the "Land Where Palm Trees Sway," which is a line from an old Bing Crosby Christmas song. And that is another story!

## Norfolk & Western 600

By Lewis Foster

On September 2nd, the Chapter accomplished a long-standing preservation goal. For the past 40 years, the car body of Norfolk & Western BPe class combine No. 600 has been part of a hotel restaurant in Blacksburg, VA. This is the only remaining combine of this class (only six BPe cars to begin with!) and one of only three N&W combines known to still exist. The 600 was a short (70 foot) car used primarily in branch line service mixed freights.

Early this year members of the mechanical committee learned that the hotel in Blacksburg had closed and the lot was going to be redeveloped. We contacted the demolition contractor who was clearing the property and arranged for the donation of the car body to the Chapter. Removal and transportation to the Chapter's yard at 9th street would have represented a significant expense, were it not for the generosity of Lynchburg Crane. They arranged to donate the services of a heavy lift crane as well as a pair of tractor-trailers to move the

car.

When the 600 was originally placed at the hotel, the center sill and trucks were removed from underneath and the car body was cut in half in order to make moving it easier. Once it had been placed at the hotel the two halves were joined by welding a filler panel over the gap. Over several work sessions this spring, the 2x4 and drywall interior that had been added inside the car was removed, the two halves were separated by cutting the filler panel, bracing was welded inside the doorways and across the interior, and the poured concrete floor was cut and removed in several places so that lifting beams could be inserted underneath.

On Wednesday, September 2nd, several members of the Chapter met the crew from Lynchburg Crane at the site of the old hotel at 9:30 am. It took about an hour and a half to deploy the crane with the full counterweight, outriggers, and lifting cables since the weight of both sections of the car was unknown. The baggage end of the car (19,000 lbs) was loaded by noon and the passenger end (18,000 lbs) by around 1:30 in the afternoon. Everything was ready to head out by about 3:00 pm and arrived at the Chapter's yard by around 4:30.





After a brief rain delay, the crane was set up and the car was placed in an area that had been cleared for it. The car was in place around 6pm and everyone headed home after a successful day.

While future plans for the 600 are still being developed, the near-term goal will be to seal up the car body and re-connect the two halves in the center (in the correct way rather than a filler panel). The condition of the side sills and the rest of the car body are remarkably good after being set in concrete and attached to the hotel for 40 years. This will definitely be a long-term project but if the appropriate materials can be found you may see N&W 600 back on the rails sometime in the future. All photos: Lewis Foster

## Mechanical Committee Report – Spring 2020

By Lewis Foster

After things moving pretty slowly for the first half of 2020, work on several projects has picked up this

summer at the yard. The biggest news is the acquisition and move of Norfolk & Western BPe class combine #600 (more on this elsewhere in this issue).



We are close to completing the restoration of the Panama Canal mule at the Virginia Museum of



Transportation. The last of the metalwork, bodywork, and rivet replacement have been completed. The marker lights and cab lights have also been rewired so that they can work off of an extension cord. Over the Labor Day weekend, we were blessed with cooler, drier weather and were



able to apply two coats of the battleship gray finish paint. As long as weather continues to cooperate, we plan to finish painting the grab irons, steps, and top deck black and the cab rooves white next weekend. Then the lettering will be applied after the paint has time to cure. Hopefully this project will be complete later this month.

All: Lewis Foster Photos  
 Top: Completed painting on the mule.  
 Middle: N&W 512's completed window frames. Bottom: poured concrete base and brackets for structure.

The new window glass and gaskets arrived for N&W P-2 class coach No. 512. That allowed us to set up a "window shop" and rebuild all 24 windows for the car. The aluminum frames had been cleaned and polished



earlier this spring and these were repacked with the new glass and inner rubber gasket. New screws with anti-seize were used when the frames were reassembled to help prevent the issues we encountered taking the frames apart in the future. The windows for the two small bathrooms were rebuilt with double pane glass with the inner pane fogged using a bead blasting process to replicate the as-delivered appearance. We are now working on replacement gaskets for the end doors and vestibule windows. Work is also progressing in the vestibules where the step treads have been removed and the step frames re-drilled for new hardware.

The mounting hardware for the frame of the car shelter has been added to the foundation. The building frame is starting to go up this week. We hope to have the building up by the middle of September and the track laid through the building shortly after that. This will give us a covered area to work on the exterior of the 512 this fall and winter.

If you're interested in volunteering at the yard on the weekends, or even if you'd just like to drop by and see what we're working on, feel free to contact Gary Gray or Lewis Foster. Photos of our projects are also available on the Chapter Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/roanokenrhs>

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

**Regular Meeting Locations are at the St. Marks Lutheran Church, see directions inside. Board Meetings move around, please get in touch with a board member to attend.**

September 17 General Meeting

October 6 - Board Meeting

October 10 - Annual Meeting

See the meeting notice elsewhere in this issue. Inclement weather is October 17.

November 3 - Board Meeting

November 19 - Annual Meeting

December 1 - Board Meeting

December 17 - General Meeting

January 5 - Board Meeting

**Please note, all meeting dates are cancelled until further notice due to the ongoing pandemic, they are listed here for convenience!**

**We will send notice via email for any meeting scheduled.**

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

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