POTOMAC RAIL NEWS

POTOMAC CHAPTER, NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 235, KENSINGTON, MARYLAND 20895-0235

OCTOBER **2024**

RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME! East Broad Top's 2-8-2 No. 16 made its first shake down runs on Wednesday, August 28th. A lucky group were fortunate to be in Rockhill Furnace, PA, attending a visit to the EBT and the Rockhill Trolley Museum during this year's NRHS Convention when the shake down runs happened to take place. Photo by: Alex Mayes

PROGRAM: Doug Scott will present a ZOOM program of images taken during the NRHS spring 2024 conference activities based out of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. His presentation will include some local railfanning, a comprehensive visit to the Iowa Interstate RR offices, dispatch center, and shops, a ride on the Iowa Interstate Business train, and a visit to the Railroad Heritage of Midwest America shops in Silvis, Illinois. Time permitting, Doug will also show a short power point multi-media presentation with music at the end.

MEETING: VIA ZOOM: October 15, 2024 at 8PM. ZOOM LOGIN LINK ON PAGE 2.

NEXT MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 2024

DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER ISSUE: October 25, 2024. Send news items to be determined.

INFO ON CHAPTER ACTIVITIES: http://potomacnrhs.org/

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THE CHAPTER FAMILY

If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, has lost a loved one, or has a new birth in the family, please contact the editor at: c.moritz@comcast.net

ZOOM TOPIC: POTOMAC CHAPTER OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING:
Time: OCTOBER 15, 2024 08:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81672625788?pwd=MHptaXJpL1RUalhEcDFwZk5vaGREdz09

Meeting ID: 816 7262 5788
Passcode: 547873

One tap mobile
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REMEMBERING BILL HOPKINS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO RAILROAD HISTORY.
BLUE MOUNTAIN EXPRESS, WESTERN MARYLAND RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, THE FALL 2024, SPEEDLETTER. LAST RUN. WILLIAM E. HOPKINS. One of the Western Maryland Railway's most prolific railfan photographers during the company's last decade of independent operation. "Bill" passed away on July 14th, 2024 at the age of 89. Bill roamed system-wide shooting brilliant color photos that have been a staple of the WMRHS annual calendar for years. Along with co-author Steve Salamon, the two photographers produced probably the finest book yet published about WM's Diesel operations. "Western Maryland Railway in the Diesel Era" published by Old Line Graphics continues to be a highly desired book, thirty-three years after its release. Bill had a respected 25-year career in the Washington, D.C. Fire Department, retiring as a Captain. He was a 44-year member of the WMRHS.

SAD NEWS

With Sadness we note the passing of Richard Walter, a long time member of the Washington D.C. Chapter, NRHS, who passed way on September 7, 2024.
July 13, 1940 ~ September 7, 2024; Born in:
Bryn Mawr, PA, Resided in: Vienna, VA.

Richard spent many hours working on the Chapter's Classic Pullman Private Railroad Car, the Dover Harbor. He also was a long time volunteer at the Chapter's Library and also a long time of member 0f the Old Dominion Division, Railroad Enthusiasts, and the Chesapeake Railway Association.

Richard also attended Potomac Chapter and Winchester Chapter meetings as well as Chapter sponsored banquets, and other events such as picnics and trackside gatherings to watch trains. Richard attended the 2024 NRHS Convention on Monday, August 26 through Saturday, August 31 in Harrisburg, PA, as well as many previous Conventions. Our Thoughts and Prayers go out to Richard's Wife and family. There is a memorial service planned for Richard on October 27th 1:00 to 4:00 at Money and King Funeral Home, 171 Maple Avenue West, Vienna, VA. In the above photo, Richard prepares to operate PCC streetcar No. 7407 during the Baltimore Chapter NRHS and Potomac Chapter NRHS Annual barbeque picnic on August 17, 2024. The BBQ was held at the Baltimore Streetcar Museum. This was the first time Richard had ever operated a PCC streetcar or any other streetcar. He learned quickly and did an outstanding job! Photo by: Alex Mayes

RAIL NEWS

BACK IN STEAM! During a routine maintenance check in April 2024, East Broad Top's 2-8-2 No. 16 was found to have two broken spokes on one of its drivers. This defect required major repairs to the 108-year old locomotive that placed it out of service for most of the 2024 operating season. The repairs were completed in mid-August 2024, and after some final checks, No. 16 made its first shake down runs on Wednesday, August 28th. Myself and others were fortunate to be in Rockhill Furnace, PA, attending a visit to the EBT and the Rockhill Trolley Museum during this year's NRHS Convention when the shake down runs happened to take place. While waiting for our 3:00 trolley ride at the adjacent Rockhill Trolley Museum we heard a steam whistle to the south and quickly crossed the EBT main and lined up for photos. A couple minutes later, No. 16 came through the freight yard, passing several old EBT coal hoppers. This first shake down run stopped just short of the Meadow Street crossing. Mechanical crew members disembarked and checked the journals, testing for any overheating. I spoke briefly with the crew, they said things looked good so far. No. 16 was placed back in service to power the following weekend's runs to Colgate Grove. (Alex Mayes)

MORE EAST BROAD TOP NEWS: FROM HARRISBURG RAIL REVIEW - SEPTEMBER 2024 HARRISBURG CHAPTER, NRHS. As per multiple reports and photos on Facebook, on 8/7/2024, East Broad Top steam engine #3 was moved by truck out of Mount Union headed for Alabama. No. 3 is a standard gauge steamer that was used by the EBT in Mt. Union yard for switching and interchanging cars with the PRR. The locomotive minus the tender had been stored in an engine house since 1956 when the East Broad Top shut down common-carrier operations. The tender had been sent south months earlier. The valve gear rods have been removed and there is some question in whether the main rod has been cut-off or just removed. The switcher and its tender were fitted with four couplers, two front and two aft, to enable it to shift both standard- and narrow-gauge cars without the use of idler cars. The locomotive was recently painted with a white/ light gray smokebox, brass boiler bands and red accents on the cab. Before the sale, No. 3 was owned by the East Broad Top Preservation Association (not the same as the EBT Foundation). The trackage and land in Mt. Union was purchased before the East Broad Top Foundation purchased the rest of the railroad from the Kovalchick family in 2020 and is not affiliated with the Association in any way. The Association still owns the trackage and land in Mt. Union, but the Foundation owns the former EBT Railroad from about four miles south of Mt. Union to the end of line at Alvan.

Beyond the above news, there is a Rt. 522 level grade crossing that is significant because it has to be the only recently-built, concrete, dual-gauge crossing anywhere and not historically in the EBT dual-gauge territory. Built some time before 2008 it's currently covered by thick weeds on both sides. The

reason it was built is that just south of it is a zoned industrial park funded by the Huntingdon County Industrial Development Authority and that group desperately wanted standard-gauge rail access, so they dual-gauged the highway crossing.

Following up, on earlier work to install track panels by the joint EBT Foundation and Friends of the East Broad Top track crew, a contractor laid and compacted macadam asphalt to complete two highway crossing projects at State Route 475 one-mile south of Rockhill Furnace and local McCoy Road near the village of Pogue. Both crossings lie along the first stage of that railroad's "March to Saltillo," a project to reopen the first nine miles of track south of Rockville Furnace. The Town of Saltillo is significant as the location of a now-razed station and water tank, both of which will be rebuilt through a fundraising campaign by the Friends. The track panels were laid on August 5 and 6; the macadam was placed on August 7 and both crossings were reopened for auto traffic on the 7th. Work was carried out in summer to avoid conflicts with school bus routes that would force lengthy detours. The restored mainline track reuses 85-pound rail that was in place before, but compromise joints transition to 100-pound rail for the crossings, because rail seal rubber fittings are more readily available for a contemporary stock size lick 100 pound rail. The roadbed had been stripped of all previous rail and fill to prepare it for laying of ties; placing, joining, and spiking of the original rail; and ultimately filling stone ballast between and under ties. (Most of the EBT news was excerpted from an article in Trains News Wire by Dan Cupper)

<u>UNION PACIFIC STEAM CLUB UPDATE NO. 36 - SEPTEMBER 16, 2024</u>. Jay Leno Climbs Aboard Union Pacific's Big Boy No. 4014. Is Jay Leno's Garage big enough for the Big Boy? The legendary comedian with a well-known passion for cars recently tried his hand at steel wheels, riding in the cab of Union Pacific Railroad's Big Boy No. 4014 steam locomotive for an episode of "Jay Leno's Garage." Union Pacific and the National Park Foundation welcomed Leno and his team on the iconic steam engine and Union Pacific's Heritage Fleet cars during a tour across western Iowa in September – part of our Heartland of America tour covering 10 states over 8 weeks.

Union Pacific is a key sponsor of the National Park Foundation, and the episode honors Union Pacific's role transporting visitors to our nation's parks, including Yellowstone, Zion, Grand Canyon and Death Valley, in the early days for their formation. Now, Union Pacific works to inspire the next generation's love of the outdoors and curiosity about the world around them through the National Park Foundation's Open Outdoors for Kids program. As part of the episode, Leno visited Union Pacific's Heritage Fleet to see the railroad's garage, where our restored passenger cars are maintained; ate breakfast in the dining car (he loved the bacon); and rode in the cab from Missouri Valley to Denison, Iowa, with Ed Dickens, Manager-Heritage Operations, and other members of Union Pacific's Steam Team.

Leno hosted "The Tonight Show" on NBC for nearly 17 years, taking over the job from comedian Johnny Carson in 1992 and becoming the nation's top-rated late night talk show host for many years. After he left the late-night show, Leno had more time to devote to his passion for rare and unique cars, which is the focus of "Jay Leno's Garage." A self-described gear head, Leno has more than 181 cars and 160 motorcycles, including a McLaren F1. The special episode was available to watch on Leno's YouTube channel starting Monday, September 23.

<u>UNION PACIFIC STEAM CLUB UPDATE NO. 37 - OCTOBER 4, 2024</u>

<u>TEXAS BIG BOY DISPLAY DAYS UPDATE</u> - The Heartland of America tour is on the home stretch, making its way through Texas. If you're planning to visit Big Boy No. 4014 in Houston (October 6) or Fort Worth (October 10-11), we have a few important event updates to share.

HOUSTON DISPLAY DAY - We are excited to welcome Big Boy fans to Houston on Oct. 6. Admission is free and open to the public from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT at the Houston Amtrak station at 902 Washington Ave.

The Steam team will be hosting a Q&A session at 10 a.m. CT. Come prepared with your questions! If you can't make it, don't worry, we will be streamlining live on our www.Facebook.page. Note: There is no on-site event parking. We encourage you to utilize Downtown Houston Public Parking options.

FORT WORTH DISPLAY DAYS - Big Boy No. 4014 will be on display in Ft. Worth Oct. 10 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Oct. 11 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 275 W. Lancaster Ave.. The number of people allowed into the site will be limited in accordance with capacity limits set by the City of Fort Worth, and long wait times are expected. Visitors should anticipate and prepare for long lines and wait times that could require standing for extended periods of times. No seating is available. We believe people will be able to get a good look at this extraordinary steam locomotive in about 30 minutes, with plenty of time to take photos. Due to the capacity limits, we encourage people to be respectful and mindful of time, allowing as many people in to see Big Boy as possible.

It's also important to note that while we strive to provide access to all guests, Big Boy is positioned in a working rail environment with uneven walking surfaces that may create difficulty for accessibility. Visitors with mobility challenges should be aware that viewing the locomotive in Fort Worth is only accessible by traversing over uneven walking surfaces, including ballast rock.

More information about the Fort Worth Display Days can be found at www.FortWorth.com.

This experience is unique, and we want you to be prepared in advance. Don't forget – the Heartland of America tour has more than three dozen additional whistle-stops in communities across our network. You can view the entire steam schedule online at www.UPsteam.com!

DID YOU MISS JAY LENO ONBOARD THE BIG BOY? In case you missed it, Union Pacific and the National Park Foundation hosted legendary comedian and classic car owner Jay Leno on board Big Boy No. 4014 in September. His entire experience is now available to watch in a special episode of www.JayLeno's.Garage.on.YouTube.

Order Your Big Boy Merchandise! Remember, order your t-shirts, hats and hoodies online so you are properly outfitted when the Big Boy comes to your town! You can check out the new 2024 merchandise exclusively at the Official www.UnionPacificStore.com website! If you are able to join us at our Houston or Fort Worth display days, you'll be able to purchase calendars with a special limited-edition poster on-site and pre-order your 2025 calendar. Can you guess which month will feature a Big Boy photo?

A Safety Reminder! Union Pacific reminds all rail fans to keep safety top of mind and stay 25 feet back from all railroad tracks when taking a picture or viewing this mammoth machine. That means never take a picture or video with the camera on the track or the ballast and never climb on the locomotive or equipment. Remember, railroad tracks, trestles, yards and right-of-way are private property - do not trespass. If you are following the Big Boy, be a safe and courteous driver - do not pace the train. And most importantly: ALWAYS expect a train when around railroad tracks. It might be coming from another direction, and it might not be the Big Boy.

We've enjoyed meeting everybody across Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas, and we look forward to meeting many more across Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado in the upcoming weeks. Not sure where the Big Boy is going? Check the official steam schedule online at www.UPsteam.com and find out where the Big Boy is currently at on our steam tracking page. The tracking map features the planned route of No. 4014 highlighted in yellow. That's all for now. Until next time, stay safe! Union Pacific Steam Club

NORFOLK AND WESTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEPTEMBER 30 2024. A Society member reported that he was informed by someone whose sister went to Damascus, Virginia today to drop off supplies that the police told her the Creeper trail is closed indefinitely as many of the bridges are washed out.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN LINES FROM GEORGIA TO WEST VIRGINIA STILL OUT OF SERVICE AFTER HURRICANE HELINE. September 30, 2024. Key corridors are back in service, but sections of Southeastern network remain out of service. ATLANTA — Norfolk Southern crews are out across the network tending to widespread damages caused by Hurricane Helene on Friday. Rail service is still suspended across many lines from Georgia to West Virginia.

Railroad crews are spending today (Monday, Sept. 30) clearing trees across a 70-mile section of its Brunswick District between Macon, Ga., and Brunswick, Ga., and unprecedented floods have wiped out rail service east and west of Asheville, N.C., on the former Southern Railway. There is no timeline on when freight trains will roll through Asheville again.

In the Virginias, power outages are affecting rail service between Bluefield, W.Va., and Norton, Va., and in the south, rail service between Augusta, Ga., and Millen, Ga., and up to Columbia, S.C., is still out of service due to downed power lines.

The railroad notes it has made significant progress restoring rail service across key parts of its network, including arteries between Chattanooga, Tenn., and Jacksonville, Fla., through Atlanta, and between Birmingham, Ala., and Charlotte, N.C., also through Atlanta. The railroad has also restored service between Macon, Ga., and Savannah, Ga., in the Savannah District. The railroad will continue providing additional customer updates as other rail lines are restored. (Chase Gunnoe - Trains News Wire)

CSX CONTRIBUTES $100,000 TO HURRICANE HELENE RECOVERY EFFORTS. September 30, 2024. Company will also match American Red Cross donations by employees. JACKSONVILLE — CSX Corp. will donate $100,000 to American Red Cross relief and recovery efforts in communities hit by Hurricane Helene, the company has announced. The company will also provide a dollar-for-dollar match for donations by employees to the Red Cross. "The devastation caused by Hurricane Helene has deeply impacted the communities where our employees, families, neighbors, and customers live and work," CEO Joe Hinrichs said in announcing the donation on Friday, Sept. 27. "Our contribution to the American Red Cross is a reflection of our dedication to ensuring that essential resources reach the people and communities that need them the most as they begin the long process of rebuilding and healing." The donation will support assistance work including working with community and government agencies to assess damage and support emergency needs. The American Red Cross is providing shelter, food, and health services to families who have lost their home and belongings. (Trains News Wire)

THINKING ABOUT APPALACHIA'S RAILROADERS: COMMENTARY. Industry hit hard by flooding in Tennessee, North Carolina. (Chase Gunnoe; September 29, 2024 Trains

News Wire) ERWIN, Tenn. — Railroaders take pride in the work they do. They provide for their families. They play an irreplaceable role in the movement of goods in the U.S. economy and they re-invest their hard-earned wages into the communities they live and work — building homes, shopping local, and supporting small communities where railroads have a big presence.

Late last week in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina, a group of railroaders were shunting cars in local yards, navigating freight across Old Fort loops, and moving coal across the old Clinchfield south of Erwin. Some 650 miles away, Hurricane Helene, then a Category 4 storm, was rolling onto Florida's Gulf Coast.

Today, much of the railroad is gone. This event doesn't compare to the flood a local conductor's granddad used to tell him about as a kid, because this storm has broken all records. The National Weather Service is calling it the region's most significant weather event of the modern era.

Appalachia's railroads are unique. They are typically identified by a river or stream parallel with a railroad, a two-lane road, and a few homes. Steep mountains encapsulate the valley, oftentimes protecting it from other weather events — except when the waters rise.

CSX and Norfolk Southern, along with their predecessors, take pride in their rights-of-way with good engineering, strong infrastructure, and ongoing capital investment. Watching fast-flowing waters at levels of 20 feet above normal bearing down on bridge abutments of structures installed a generation ago underscores the integrity of railroads' work.

But this event is different. High waters are prohibiting emergency responders and railroad officials from gaining access to communities along the right-of-way, and in some cases, entire roadway bridges have been compromised or destroyed. In the case of CSX's former Clinchfield between Erwin, Tenn., and Spruce Pine, N.C., two-lane roads leading into these valleys have eroded, bridges are gone, and segments of railroad are in the river. The damage extends at least 40 miles. No one knows how many bridges will need repaired or replaced and frankly, fixing up the railroad probably isn't top of mind at the moment.

Homes along the right-of-way, made accessible by small road bridges that could not withstand the force of the water, have isolated those neighborhoods from the rest of the region. There's no electricity and certainly no cell service. There's no way for these people — these railroaders — to know what's going on without relying on word of mouth.

All this is happening in towns where railroaders live and work. Not only are the small communities where railroaders live and spend their money in distress, but so is the source of that money, as railroaders' livelihoods rely on moving freight across lines that now no longer exist.

Today, I won't be thinking about football or when the next trains leave Erwin. Instead, I wish I could lend a hand on the old Southern Railway or get knee deep in the mud in Clinchfield country helping those railroaders who sacrifice so much for the rest of this country and its people.

POTOMAC RAIL NEWS is published monthly by the Potomac Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 235, Kensington, Maryland 20895-0235 Website: www.potomacnrhs.org

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