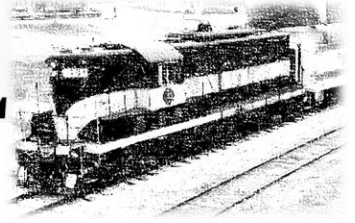


# THE HIGHBALL



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER  
of the  
OLD DOMINION CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 65

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Number 3

Any opinions expressed herein are those of author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Old Dominion Chapter.

## Join us Monday 3/17 for our March Meeting at the Museum

*Rich Todd, Editor*

The Old Dominion Chapter welcomes members, guests and visitors to its monthly meetings held on the 3rd Monday of each month. Join with other people who enjoy sharing an interest in railroading at the **Richmond Railroad Museum, 102 Hull Street, at 7pm.**

The program for March will be presented by our very own ODC member Charles Curley entitled "Simply Scenic". A pictorial host of scenic railways Charlie has seen and ridden recently. This will surely be an interesting look at history being preserved of our nation's heritage of train travel. As usual, snacks and beverages will be provided as we enjoy watching trains on the big screen. So, remember to bring yourself and a friend (or many friends for that matter) to take this journey with you as we look back in time at what once was railroading in Virginia at our February meeting ☺ !

The ODC's Richmond Railroad Museum is housed in the former Southern Railway Hull Street Station, and the meetings feature a brief informational presentation followed by a program on historic and / or contemporary railroad topics of interest. The Museum is easy at the south end of the 14th Street (Mayos) Bridge, just across from Shockoe Slip in the vibrant Manchester section of Richmond. We're open every Saturday 11-4 and Sunday 1-4 for those wanting to visit outside of Monday night's meeting time. 🍷

## Calling all members...The Old Dominion Chapter needs your help!

ODC members, thank you for coming out and helping at the Greenburg Train Show back in January. Now we are looking for members to come down to the Museum and help share your love of railroading with visitors to the museum. Please see Ned Krack, Greg Hodges, Bill Scanlon or myself if you can help on either a Saturday or Sunday. 🍷

## Roanoke Chapter Acquires Roanoke Railway and Electric Company # 51

*By Roanoke Chapter NRHS*

The Roanoke Chapter is pleased to announce the acquisition of Roanoke Railway and Electric Company # 51. Built as a Master Unit in 1929 by J. G. Brill Company, the car ran as #115 for the Virginia Electric Power Company in Lynchburg, VA until 1937 when it was moved to Roanoke as the # 51. It served in Roanoke through 1947 when it was retired. It went into private ownership and moved to the Seaside Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, ME in 1991. (Continued on Pg 3)

### Inside:

- P.1** A new home for an old car
- P.3** RRM collaborates with Studio 2 3
- P.4** CSX's Jim Hinrichs mends the past
- P.7** Metro-North debuts NYNH&H unit
- P.10** Artifact of the Month – Rail Pass
- P.11** Steam History–Geared Locomotives

## Blue Ridge Rambler

Sunday, June 1, 2025

By DC Chapter NRHS



*The Dover Harbor at Roanoke, VA. Photo by Richard Shell*

Experience luxurious rail travel aboard the classic Pullman car Dover Harbor—traveling to Roanoke VA. After an 8:15AM departure from Washington Union Station, then boarding stops at Alexandria VA and Manassas VA, enjoy the scenic ride as Amtrak's Regional train #151 ambles south along the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Make new friends as we pass through Charlottesville and Lynchburg. Relax in the comfortable Pullman surroundings while our white-jacketed attendants serve you beverages, libations, and Brunch!

At 1:16PM, Dover Harbor will arrive at Amtrak's Roanoke station. You'll have three hours in downtown Roanoke on your own to visit nearby attractions such as the Virginia Museum of Transportation, Science Museum of Western Virginia, and Taubman Museum of Art (all within a few blocks walk) or stroll up the hill to the Hotel Roanoke, to enjoy mountain air and the view overlooking downtown.

Dover Harbor is scheduled for a 4:23 PM northward departure from Amtrak's Roanoke station with Amtrak's Regional train #66. A delicious supper will be served enroute to an evening return to Manassas, Alexandria then ultimately at 9:28PM, Washington DC!

### PER PERSON FARES (FIRST CLASS):

All fares include round trip rail travel on Dover Harbor between the listed cities and meals as described above, beverages, snacks, and spirits aboard the car while enroute.

Washington/Alexandria/Manassas to Roanoke and return

DCNRHS Members: \$419 Nonmembers: \$469;  
Child (ages 2-12): \$389

### CONDITIONS:

1. The Washington D.C. Chapter, NRHS makes every effort to accommodate the physically challenged; however, Dover Harbor as a historic railroad car is not wheelchair accessible. Operator requires those physically challenged passengers requiring special assistance from others to travel with someone who is able to assist them.
2. Those with special dietary needs such as food allergies or vegetarian /vegan meals must notify the reservations agent at least two weeks in advance of the trip. Please include a note in the comments line when placing your order or send an email to [reservations@dcnrhs.org](mailto:reservations@dcnrhs.org).
3. **No refund or credit of purchased tickets after May 1, 2025** other than by operator's cancellation of the trip or reselling of the space. The operator suggests passengers obtain trip insurance to cover cancellations resulting from personal emergencies, illness or other causes.
4. Package does not include hotel accommodations, gratuities, personal incidental charges, tours, admissions, local transportation or meals except enroute aboard Dover Harbor as described above.
5. Children's fares apply to ages 2 – 12. Children under age 2, not occupying a seat travel free (submit names of children under 2 with your reservation). Each child must be accompanied by a fare-paying adult. Above age 12, the full fare is applicable.
6. The General Conditions for tours, trips, excursions, and events as published on the DCNRHS web site ([www.dcnrhs.org](http://www.dcnrhs.org)) apply. By making a reservation, participants agree to be bound by both the General and these specific Conditions.

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or call 202-627-6978. 



## MUSEUM NEWS

### Richmond Railroad Museum collaborates with Studio Two Three

Story and Photos By ODC member George Saunders

Consistent with the Museum Committee's goal of establishing relationships with other organizations that are mutually beneficial; the museum and Studio Two Three held an exhibit from February 22 to March 1 at the studio shop.



200 people showed up for opening night to view the massive mural painted on the wall depicting railroads of today and yesteryear.

The artists who created the mural were quite knowledgeable about which railroads still operate on the banks of the James and which ones crossed the river years ago.

They also erected an exhibit on the Church Hill tunnel collapse which spurred sales of the book from our gift shop.

To the benefit of both organizations, items from the museum shop were sold to attendees and the money split between the museum and the art gallery.



(continued on Pg 10)

## CHAPTER PRESERVATION NEWS

### Roanoke Chapter Acquires Roanoke Railway and Electric Company # 51

By Roanoke Chapter NRHS

(Continued from Pg 1)

Brian Tenaglia shop foreman at the Seashore Trolley Museum said this about # 51, "The Master Unit kind of marks the end of technological development on the 'traditional' streetcar. The later (1936) PCC design was a total departure from "traditional" design in almost every respect."

The museum has determined that it is appropriate for the # 51 to return to its original home territory and has donated the trolley car to the Chapter.

We will be working on plans to move # 51 in the future. But for now, the chapter is delighted to have secured this important piece of Roanoke history.



### CSX CEO makes progress mending fences with employees: Analysis

By Bill Stephens *trains.com*

The way to create happy customers, Joe Hinrichs insists, is to first build a positive company culture that creates happy employees.

CSX CEO Joe Hinrichs is not one to shy away from a tall task. Since arriving at CSX in September 2022, he has been on a mission to repair the railroad's damaged relationship with its employees.

His goal: Build a culture of respect and trust, where workers feel valued and appreciated. It's the cornerstone of the ONE CSX strategy Hinrichs mentions everywhere he goes, from impromptu visits to terminals and shops to shipper and investor conferences. The idea is that high morale will motivate employees to provide better service, which will produce happy customers, which in turn will attract more freight and lead to higher revenue and profits.



*CSX CEO Joe Hinrichs chats with employees and their families at a Family Day event last year. . CSX*

To get to this promised land, Hinrichs will have to overcome three things.

First, the rank and file still feel the sting of E. Hunter Harrison's 2017 implementation of the low-cost Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model. CSX now has 20% fewer people on the payroll. And Harrison and his cadre of mean-

spirited minions went out of their way to make railroad life miserable.

Second, unionized workers have a lingering bitterness over the 2019 round of contract negotiations. Talks dragged on for three years, created uncertainty, and delayed raises. The fact that the railroads told the Presidential Emergency Board that workers don't contribute to profits has not been forgotten.

Finally, there's more than 150 years of confrontation between railroads and the unionized workers who keep the trains moving. "We go back a long time fighting ... with our employees," Hinrichs says. "And that isn't sustainable, especially in the world we live in today."

He's right, of course. If you've ever had a lousy boss or worked at a place with low morale, you know how that can sap your motivation.

Hinrichs insists the challenge is not insurmountable. "Intelligent people who listen to each other and work together can solve almost anything," he says.

That's a lesson Hinrichs brought to CSX from Ford Motor Co., where he led the automaker's negotiations with the United Auto Workers through four contracts. Over that stretch, rival General Motors experienced two strikes. Ford had none. "We had a competitive advantage because we had a relationship that was better," Hinrichs says.

Another lesson Hinrichs brought to CSX as a former customer: Shippers do business with railroads because they have to, not because they want to. That's been a barrier to growth, he says, and it can't be fixed unless the railroad's culture changes.

There are encouraging signs that Hinrichs is making progress.

CSX was the first Class I railroad to reach contract agreements with most of its unions last year, well in advance of the start of national negotiations. And in 2023 it was the first Class I to reach sick time agreements with unions.

About 20,000 people — employees and their

# A MEMBERSHIP FOR EVERY RAILROAD!



No matter which historic Central Virginia railroad is your favorite, the **Old Dominion Chapter** covers the history you're interested in. Meet fellow enthusiasts and share a love for our rail heritage.



**REMEMBER TO RENEW FOR 2025**



*Your Benefits*



- ✓ Free, unlimited admittance to Richmond Railroad Museum for the member and a guest. (Same guest only once a year.)
- ✓ 10% discount for Museum gift shop purchases.
- ✓ 10% discount on most Chapter rail events
- ✓ Throttle Time – During Hallsboro open house
- ✓ 12 emailed issues of the **Highball** newsletter (not including optional US mail delivery)
- ✓ Access to the ODC's monthly business/entertainment meetings



Individual membership \$30. Family membership \$40.

To Join, just go to [www.olddominionchapter.com/join](http://www.olddominionchapter.com/join)

To Renew, sign into: [www.olddominionchapter.com](http://www.olddominionchapter.com) and click the profile icon.

Questions? Email: [odctrains@yahoo.com](mailto:odctrains@yahoo.com)





## CSX CEO makes progress mending fences with employees: Analysis

(continued from Pg 4)

families — attended CSX Family Day events around the system last year. You don't go to a work-related event if you're ticked off at your employer.



CSX Family Days at Acca Yard in Richmond, VA during July 2024. by Rich Todd

Sentiment in annual employee surveys has improved. The net promoter score — “I would recommend employment at CSX to a friend” — is up 39 points from the initial 2022 survey that was conducted before Hinrichs arrived.

Ratings on the jobs site Glassdoor show the same trend. Just shy of three quarters of reviewers approve of the CEO, up from 35% in 2022 and 18% in 2020. Although only 43% of CSX employees would recommend the railroad to a friend, that's the highest among the Big Four U.S. railroads and also ahead of some trucking companies, including intermodal users J.B. Hunt and Schneider.

Jared Cassity, who began his career as a CSX conductor in Russell, Ky., and is now the SMART-TD union's alternate national safety and legislative director, acknowledges that Hinrichs says and often does the right things. But there's still a disconnect between the C-suite's message and how some mid-level managers treat workers, Cassity says.

Like Hinrichs, Cassity believes the labor-management relationship can be overhauled. “But it will take an absolute commitment from the CEO and

from all levels of management to value employees,” he says. “Workers ... need to feel they are the backbone of the industry. And that right now is unfortunately absent.”

Hinrichs understands the skepticism. And he admits not everyone has climbed aboard the ONE CSX bandwagon. “Trust me, I get all the notes in the survey comments and whatnot,” he says. “We win 'em over one at a time and we'll get 'em all eventually — or at least most of them.”

Customer attitudes are changing, too. At the railroad's November investor day, nearly a dozen shippers gave testimonials about how CSX is more customer-focused and is providing better service. “We didn't tell 'em what to say,” Hinrichs says, noting that two years ago shippers would not have had good things to say about CSX.

CSX also has ranked at the top of several recent shipper surveys.

Hinrichs contends that the railroad's improved relationship with its employees and customers is starting to show up in financial results. And last year CSX became the first Class I railroad to see its traffic return to prepandemic levels.

More than two years into the job, Hinrichs remains optimistic. “I know people love trains. We really want to get 'em to love railroads,” he says. “They don't right now. But we can get there.”



Your Highball Editor got an engineer's view in the cab of CSX.1973 at CSX Family Days in July 2024 at Acca Yard. Photo Don Rickle



## Metro-North's New Haven locomotive to debut Friday

By trains staff - trains.com

NEW YORK — Metro-North's latest heritage locomotive, honoring predecessor New York, New Haven & Hartford, will make its operating debut on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, the commuter railroad has announced.



Metro-North's New Haven locomotive will make its operating debut on Feb. 28, 2025. MTA/Emily Moser

The locomotive will debut on train No. 1841, a 7:51 a.m. departure from Danbury, Conn., arriving at Grand Central Terminal on 9:55 a.m.

“The Heritage Series honors and educates Metro-North customers about the railroad’s rich history,” Metro-North President Catherine Rinaldi said in a [press release](#). “We hope our customers enjoy the addition of the vintage colors of the then New Haven Railroad and that the new locomotive sparks some curiosity about the predecessor railroads that paved the way for Metro-North.”

The locomotive was announced last week.

Its design, with colors described by Metro-North as Olive Green and Dandelion Yellow, was used on New Haven



MTA/Emily Moser

locomotives until 1954. It joins a heritage fleet launched in May 2023 with a locomotive wrapped with the original Metro-North design. Others honor Conrail, New York Central, Penn



A side view of the locomotive. MTA Metro-North Railroad

Central, Penn and Metro-North employees.



## Parent agencies of Virginia Railway Express approve funding to purchase Manassas Line

By Trains Staff

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The parent agencies of Virginia Railway Express have approved a \$155 million agreement to help purchase the commuter operator’s Manassas Line from Norfolk Southern.

The nonprofit news site [Virginia Mercury reports](#) the boards of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac and Rappahannock River Transportation Commission approved the agreement in separate meetings on Thursday, March 6. The deal calls for six equal payments to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, the last of which is projected for July 10, 2029.

VRPA negotiated purchase of the line from Alexandria to Bristow, Va., last summer as part of a \$599 million deal, including the VRE contribution. VRE will control and dispatch approximately 24 miles of track. That deal also rescinded an earlier agreement to purchase 28 miles between Roanoke and the New River Valley, and included a deal to allow passenger trains to operate over a former Norfolk & Western line to Christiansburg, Va.

The route is used by eight weekday VRE round trips as well as three Amtrak round trips — two to Roanoke, Va., and the New York-New Orleans Crescent.



## CURRENT RAIL NEWS

### Parent agencies of Virginia Railway Express approve funding to purchase Manassas Line (Continued from Pg 7)

“This is a long-term investment towards the future,” said Sarah Bagley, vice chair of the Northern Virginia board and chair of the VRE operations board, at Thursday’s meeting. Both agencies characterized the purchase as critical to VRE operations present and future.



Virginia Railway Express will contribute \$155 million to purchase of its Manassas Line from Norfolk Southern. VRE

The purchase also includes Alexandria’s Seminary Yard, where VRE will construct a midday layover facility.

“The property acquisition piece of this was not something that we had maybe contemplated a couple of years ago,” VRE Chief Financial Officer Mark Schofield told the Mercury, “but we are making a very positive trade in terms of the cost of the midday storage yard.”

### Norfolk Southern continues service restoration efforts in flooded areas

*Progressive Railroading.com*

Norfolk Southern Railway is making progress in restoring normal service across the Heartland Corridor after service outages occurred following severe flooding in southern WV, eastern KY, southwest VA and eastern OH, the Class I announced. Train service between Portsmouth, OH



and Bluefield, West Virginia, has been restored. The route previously returned to service on February 18

but was later closed due to residual wash outs near Williamson, West Virginia. Both mainlines were operational as of February 21, 2025, NS officials said in an update to customers.



Other NS storm damage news brings hope for Asheville, NC customers. The line north to New-port, TN is expected to reopen by March 31, 2025. NS also committed to rebuilding their line east to Salisbury, NC but gave no estimate when that work would be completed.



## RICHMOND RR MUSEUM



### A Request to you for program ideas

*Rich Todd – Editor and Program Helper*

Welcome to 2025! A hearty “Thank You” to Doug Riddell for his presentation of the Seaboard’s Portsmouth subdivision in February. Our programs are a great asset to both current and prospective members who love railroading, history and preservation. I have some leads and ideas going forward, but once again would welcome any suggestions for the later part of the 2025 season. Do you have any programs? Or have you heard a speaker that would make a good fit for the RRM? Some suggestions are making the member photos night an annual event and one individual offered to have an evening at his house along CSX’s mainline. Any other ideas are welcome so see me as I’m open to your thoughts.

### *Richmond Railroad Museum March at a Glance*



**Guests = 184 (371 YTD)**

**Guest Income = \$1260**

**Donations / Rental = \$320.16**

**Gift Shop Sales = \$407.73**

**Volunteer Hours = 210**

## Use Your Kroger Purchases to Donate to the ODC



All you need to do is sign up for Kroger Community Rewards and choose the ODC as your recipient. Then they will donate a portion of your purchases to the ODC. **At no additional cost to you.** But, it is important funding for us.

**Kroger Community Rewards ID:**  
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## Recommend the Richmond Railroad Museum to Friends and Family!

*Invite your family and friends  
to come visit the Museum!*

Open Weekends 52 Weeks a Year

Saturdays 11am -4pm

Sundays 1pm – 4pm

102 Hull Street + Richmond, VA

[www.richmondrailroadmuseum.com](http://www.richmondrailroadmuseum.com)

## MUSEUM NEWS

### Richmond Railroad Museum collaborates with Studio Two Three

Story and (continued from Pg 3)



*Eastbound Helper set drifts back downgrade to Fulton Yard as it passes the mural explaining the C&O Viaduct and its importance to Richmond on 02142016. Photo by author*

Several other displays are in the works with other groups like the Greek Festival and the Richmond Kickers.

Stay tuned!

**[Editors Note]** What a great way for the Richmond Railroad Museum to become a featured and known organization within Richmond and its surrounding communities. If any of you know of other locations or organizations that could and would promote our museum, please contact George Saunders with their name and contact information. We greatly appreciate George's efforts to bring the spotlight on Richmond's railroad history via RRM.

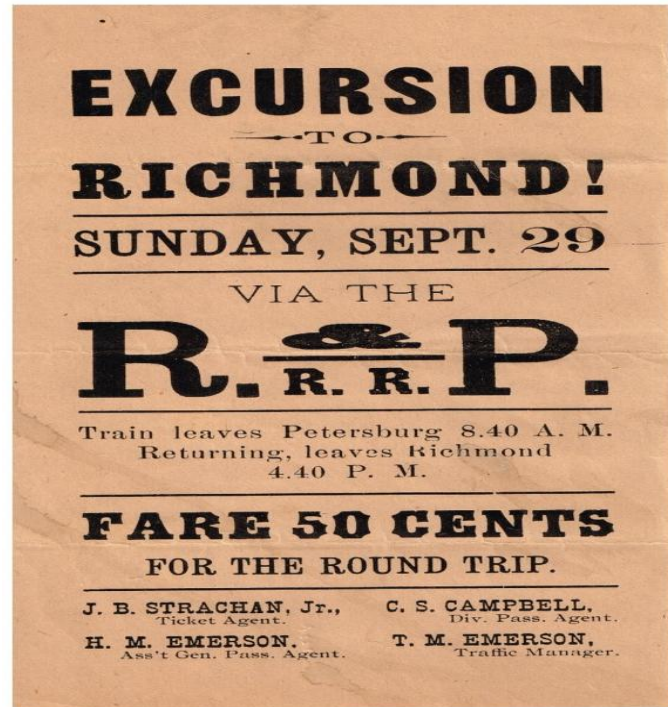


## ARTIFACT OF THE MONTH

### History of the USRA

By Mitch Horner

ODC Members - here is a piece of ephemera. I got it about 10 years ago in an auction in Victoria. Did not know year of issue. Finally determined to be 1895 by reference to staff data found in the Biographical Directory of Railway Officials of America, 1893 edition, published by Railway Age and Northwestern Railroader. There would also be a reverse excursion flyer to Petersburg. These excursions were advertised in the newspapers for many years.



## MERGER HISTORY

### Burlington Northern history remembered

By George Drury

When created, Burlington Northern had a greater extent than any other U. S. railroad: Vancouver, British Columbia, to Pensacola, Fla. If you crossed North America from east to west, you had to cross BN rails or get your feet wet in the Gulf of Mexico or find your way around the north side of the city of Winnipeg. It was created on March 2, 1970, by the merger of the Northern Pacific Railway; the Great



## Geared steam locomotives

By Lucas Iverson

As the saying goes for these “oddball” machines:  
Don’t judge a book by its cover



*The Cass Scenic Railroad Parade of Steam features multiple operating geared steam locomotives. Walter Scriptunas photo*

Compared to their traditional reciprocating rod-driven counterparts, geared steam locomotives can be seen as “oddballs” to the casual eye. They certainly fit that bill with their unique styles of running gear consisting of cylinders positioned at different angles and connected to the drive shaft through a series of gears to ultimately power every wheel on the short trucks. But as the saying goes: Don’t judge a book by its cover.

This strange cosmetic feature of geared locomotives made them shine mechanically when it came to working in the rugged backwoods environment of the logging industry, coal mines, and occasional short lines. It was a world where the tracks were mostly laid down both temporarily and in earnest to haul out the timber, coal, and other traffic. The high iron itself was usually multiple ribbons of steep grades, tight curves, and light track. This type of infrastructure wasn’t ideal for most rod locomotives with a long wheelbase. But geared engines — small, lean, flexible, and powerful (despite their low speed) —were right at home.

These machines’ genesis began in the 1870s with Ephraim Shay. A Michigan lumberman, Shay recognized that reciprocating rods and big driving wheels weren’t very effective negotiating the

extreme twists and turns of the light track in logging. Believing that part of the solution was to have a locomotive with power-driven trucks that would pivot like a freight car, Shay designed a prototype and later commissioned Ohio’s Lima Locomotive Works to build what would become the first geared steam locomotive.



*Western Maryland three-truck Shay No. 6 works a coal plant on the Chaffee (W.Va.) Branch not long after delivery in 1945. The 324,000-pound giant was the last of nearly 2,800 Shays built by Lima Locomotive Works. Today it works on the Cass Scenic Railroad. Western Maryland photo*

As described by future Editor Jim Wrinn in the May 1996 issue of *Trains*, the first Shay-type rolled out in 1878 as a flat car with two four-wheel trucks, an upright boiler, and two vertical cylinders. “The cylinders drove a longitudinal shaft that drove the axles through bevel gears to reduce speed and increase torque.” Over time, the design was fine-tuned with the horizontal boiler iconically positioned on the left side of the frame to offset the weight of the cylinders and gearboxes on the right.

Another key player in the Shay’s evolution was the Willamette Iron & Steel Works of Portland, Ore. In the early 1920s, this producer of logging equipment tapped into Lima’s expiring patents and the overall concept of its general designs. The end result was a “Shay-inspired” locomotive called the Willamette that came with significant improvements, such as superheaters and steel trucks. Only 33 were built. Lima responded in 1926 with the Pacific Coast  
(continued Pg 12)

ODC Highball March 2025

## Geared steam locomotives

By Lucas Iverson  
(Continued from Pg 10)

Shay, which incorporated the improvements from the Willamettes, but were standardized.

Through 1945, Lima constructed 2,770 Shay locomotives, achieving their common use and popularity based on quality and durability. But it would be remiss not to give recognition to two other builders of geared engines: Climax and Heisler.




*Cass Scenic Railroad Climax No. 9 steams in 2019 after a restoration. The three-truck model previously belonged to Moore-Keppel & Co. Cass Scenic Railroad photo*

The Climax Manufacturing Co., in Corry Pa., in 1888 took a different approach when designing its own geared locomotive. The Climax-type's boiler remained centered with two cylinders on each side. However, the cylinders themselves were mounted on an incline and connected to a traverse shaft geared to the central drive shaft for the axles to be powered. By the time manufacturing ceased in 1928, Climax had constructed 1,100 of these engines.

Roughly 30 miles to the northwest, in Erie, Pa., the Heisler Locomotive Works in 1891 decided to try its luck with geared locomotives. The appropriately named Heislars had a V-mount for the cylinders on each side of the locomotive and under the boiler. They would directly power a central drive shaft from under the frame to turn only the trucks' outer axle; side rods then connected the outer and inner wheels. Production concluded in 1941, Heisler Works only mustered roughly 600 of its namesake machines.

Of the three main types, the grand total of geared steam locomotives built in the U.S. topped out at around 4,500. Despite being a niche breed, they held on until the end of the steam era. Shay No. 1925 of North Carolina's Graham County Railroad even lasted until 1970, touted as one of the last steam locomotives to be retired from regular service.

A healthy dose of Shay, Climax, and Heislars survive today in the preservation world. For those still in operation for museums and tourist railroads, some retain their original purpose of tackling the rugged backwoods to the delight of visitors and passengers. From West Virginia's Appalachians to California's Redwood forests, they still make an impressive sight. 

## Burlington Northern history remembered

By George Drury  
(continued from Pg 10)



*Icons of Burlington Northern history: a pair of EMD SD40-2s lead a Chicago-bound intermodal train along the Mississippi River in September 1993. The track is the former Chicago, Burlington & Quincy route between the Twin Cities and Chicago. Jeff Wilson photo*

Northern Railway; the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; and the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway. It was during most of its existence the longest railroad in North America, edging past the previous title-holder, Canadian National Railways.

Great Northern and Northern Pacific covered most of Minnesota north and west of the Twin Cities and the eastern third of North Dakota. West of there, the main lines of the two roads were as much as



# BN History Remebered

By Greg Drury

(Continued from Pg 12)

200 miles apart, coming together at Spokane but separating again to cross Washington. The two roads were instrumental in settling much of the northern Great Plains, and they pretty much divided the northern tier of the country from the Mississippi River to Puget Sound between them (as the Milwaukee Road eventually learned).

The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy's main axis was its Chicago-Denver route. Branch lines covered much of western Illinois, southern Iowa, northern Missouri, and southern Nebraska, and long branchless lines reached to Paducah, Kentucky, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Billings, Montana. Despite its image of diesels and stainless-steel Zephyrs, it was a very conservative railroad. The Spokane, Portland & Seattle was built to give the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific access to Portland, Oregon, from the east. It was owned equally by GN and NP, which acted more like stingy uncles than loving parents.

## Making Burlington Northern history

Burlington Northern existed in a way long before the merger formalities of 1970. In 1901 Great Northern and Northern Pacific each acquired almost 49 percent of the stock of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, assuring a connection to Chicago from St. Paul, the eastern terminus of GN and NP. At the same time NP came under the control of GN. In 1905 GN and NP organized and constructed the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway. In 1927 the Great Northern Pacific Railway was organized to consolidate GN and NP and lease the CB&Q and the SP&S, but the Interstate Commerce Commission would approve it only without the inclusion of the CB&Q.

The companies resumed merger studies in 1956, and in 1960 the directors of GN and NP approved the terms. Government approval and actual merger took another decade.

BN merged the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway (the Frisco) in 1980. At the end of 1981 BN absorbed the Colorado & Southern, which had

been a CB&Q subsidiary, and transferred C&S's Denver-Texline route to the Fort Worth & Denver, a C&S subsidiary. On Jan. 1, 1983, FW&D was also merged into BN.

BN developed into the nation's top coal-hauler because of the development of the coalfields in the Powder River Basin of eastern Wyoming. It slimmed down by spinning off several large chunks of its network, including strategic segments of the former NP main line.



*An eastbound freight with lots of covered hoppers rolls out of Skykomish, Wash., on the Burlington Northern's ex-Great Northern line in 1980. Reg Hearn photo*

## Merger mania

Meanwhile, BN's neighbor to the south, Union Pacific, was expanding, acquiring Western Pacific, Missouri Pacific, Missouri-Kansas-Texas, and partial ownership of Chicago & North Western. By 1990 UP was almost as big as BN.

The proposed Southern Pacific-Santa Fe merger would have created a three-railroad situation between the Midwest and the Pacific — SPSF across the south, Union Pacific across the middle, and BN across the north. After the ICC ruled against SP-Santa Fe, the Denver & Rio Grande Western acquired SP, leaving Santa Fe on its own.

Gradually the western railroad situation shook out and settled down. In June 1994, after some months of denying rumors of impending merger, ATSF and BN announced their intention to merge — BN would buy Santa Fe. The deal was consummated in 1995, creating the BNSF. The name officially became BNSF Railway Co. in 2005. 🍷

## ORGANIZATION/CONTACTS

### Board of Directors

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Justin Anger – [justin.t.anger@gmail.com](mailto:justin.t.anger@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Vance Tomei – [pmcville@earthlink.net](mailto:pmcville@earthlink.net)

**Treasurer:** Andrew Taunton – [taunton.Andrew@gmail.com](mailto:taunton.Andrew@gmail.com)

### Program Areas

#### *Fiscal Management*

Manager : David Coldren  
Records management: Ned Krack

#### *Richmond Railroad Museum*

Chair: George Saunders  
Crew Schedules: Calvin Boles/Greg Hodges  
Curator of Exhibits: Calvin Boles  
Museum Shop Mgr.: Greg Hodges  
Construction/Maintenance Mgr.: Devin Gray  
Special Projects Mgr.: (open)  
Rentals Coordinator: Ned Krack  
Meeting Programs Coordinator: Rich Todd / Devin Gray

#### *Hallsboro Restoration Yard*

Yardmaster: Devin Gray

#### *Rail Excursion Operations: (temporarily suspended)*

Ticket Agent: Dave Coldren [ODCTrains@yahoo.com](mailto:ODCTrains@yahoo.com)  
Food Service: Tom Hardesty 757-591-2910,  
[TRHardesty@aol.com](mailto:TRHardesty@aol.com)  
Souvenir Sales: Ned Krack/Greg Hodges  
Announcers: Greg Hodges/Nancy Carter  
Mechanical Operations: Devin Gray

Info: [Tickets@olddominionchapter.com](mailto:Tickets@olddominionchapter.com)

#### *Collections*

Manager: Devin Gray  
Chapter Historian: Brandy Martin [abjemart@hotmail.com](mailto:abjemart@hotmail.com)  
Chapter Historian: Tom Hardesty [TRHardesty@aol.com](mailto:TRHardesty@aol.com)

#### *Membership and ODC Webmaster*

Manager: David Coldren  
Dues Collection: [membership@olddominionchapter.com](mailto:membership@olddominionchapter.com)

#### *Public Relations and Museum Webmaster*

Manager: Nancy Carter [nancy.trainsinva@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.trainsinva@gmail.com)

#### *Standing Committees*

Safety: Greg Hodges  
Highball Editor: Rich Todd

### Chapter Mailing Addresses

Old Dominion Chapter, NRHS  
102 Hull Street  
Richmond, VA 23224

*Museum/Chapter Phone*  
804-231-4324

Send your Highball submissions to:  
[rich\\_f\\_todd@yahoo.com](mailto:rich_f_todd@yahoo.com)  
by the 5th of each month, when possible.



**RENEW YOUR  
CHAPTER  
MEMBERSHIP  
TODAY!**





# Membership Application/Renewal Form - Old Dominion Chapter

## National Railway Historical Society

Please type or print legibly

**To complete online: [olddominionchapter.com/join](http://olddominionchapter.com/join)**

*Renewals: go to [olddominionchapter.com](http://olddominionchapter.com) and sign in*

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family member(s) (if joining): \_\_\_\_\_

Special talents/interests: \_\_\_\_\_

New members only: How did you find out about the ODC? \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Membership Dues

Individual	<b>\$30</b>	_____
Family <b>including primary member</b>	<b>\$40</b>	_____
Surcharge for US mail newsletter through Dec. 2025	<b>\$30</b>	_____
Chapter donation		_____
Designated purpose (if any)		_____
<b>Total</b>		_____

You can leave application and payment in the Membership mail slot or send to:

**ODC Membership**  
**102 Hull Street**  
**Richmond, VA 23224-4240**

*I agree to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Old Dominion Chapter*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Old Dominion Chapter NRHS  
102 Hull Street  
Richmond, VA 23224**