

The

Whistle



Post

Official Newsletter of the

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club

1615 Old Louisburg Rd Raleigh, NC 27604

Phone: 919-400-5570

“All Aboard”

Wow, has this been a hot summer or what? I am really looking forward to cooler days of Fall!

I have just returned from a great vacation. We took a set of grandkids (and their parents) on a Disney vacation. We spent a couple of days at Disney parks, stayed in Disney treehouse villas, and then on a 4-day Disney Cruise on the new ship, the Disney Dream. Had a great time! If you have grands and want to be the “favorite” Grandpa, this is the way to go.

While at the Club today, storing stuff from a recent donation, I was really amazed by the progress that has been made by the HO layout committee. Nice going guys. You can really see how things are taking shape. I’m enthused – what can I do to help? What do you need?

Speaking of the donation, a big thanks is due to Bob Witwer, Ken Howard, Randy Foulke, and Tom Tieman for the hard, hot, and sweaty work in disassembling and transporting the 5-unit layout that was donated. We hope to both use parts of it in the new HO layout and sell other pieces. Really nice work guys. The donor and his wife were very pleased at your professional approach to the project.

While I was away, we had, what I hope will be our last Covid emergency, resulting in a brief Club closing to the public. Remember going forward, that even though Covid regulations are loosening, we need to be informed of any exposure and to notify Club members of their possible need to test or quarantine. We are basically a group of older adults, many of whom have additional health issues. So, always think of your fellow members and keep us all informed.

And of course, it’s time for the friendly reminder to those who have let it slip - dues are past due. Please clear your balance by the end of this month. Thank You!

One last thing – if you know anyone interested in trains, bring them to the Club, introduce them to our group - - - let us keep building our membership.

OK Train’s leaving the station on track 1 - - - ALL ABOARD

John Spach, President

A BIG SWITCH ENGINE

By Randy Foulke

On August 3, 2022, I caught Norfolk Southern (NS) Dash 9-44CW #9718 being used as a switch engine in Fuquay-Varina (NS labels the unit as a D9-44CW). In the past, we thought using an SD40-2 rated at 3,000 hp as a switch engine was overkill; now NS is using a locomotive rated at 4,400 hp as a switch engine. NS still has many active GP38-2 and GP38-3 locomotives rated at 2,000 hp, and GP40-2 and SD40-2 locomotives rated at 3,000 hp. Makes you wonder what circumstances led to such a large unit being used as a switch engine.



9718 was in the seventh order by NS for the D9-44CW. Originally, it was rated at 4,000 hp and was classed by NS as a D9-40CW. It was placed in service on December 1, 2001. It was rerated to 4,400 hp by NS in 2013 or 2014 by changing the fuel rack settings. (All other railroads originally used the same locomotive rated at 4,400 hp.)

NS ordered a total of 1,090 D9-44CW with nine orders to General Electric. They were numbered 8889 to 9978 and were the largest class of locomotives that NS ever rostered. They were placed in service from January 27, 1996 to December 20, 2004. #9718 was part of an order for 50 locomotives (numbered 9695 to 9744) and was the smallest order of the D9-44CW for NS. Currently, NS has 596 active D9-44CW and another 166 in storage. The remainder have been retired.

Another interesting detail about 9718 is that it is in the original paint scheme from 2001. It does not have the horsehead on the lettering on the side of the hood. This means the original paint has lasted 21 years and is still in decent condition. Diesel locomotive paint is highly durable.

Parking Stickers

Don't forget to contact Bob Witwer or Mike Keelean for as many decals as you have vehicles that you may bring to the Club. We are not sure when the gym will begin operations, but we should all be prepared.

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE NEUSE RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD

By Randy Foulke

A series of articles were published in past issues of *The Whistle Post* that presented the history of the Neuse River Valley Railroad (NRV). Those articles resulted in the booklet titled, *A Little Southern Railroad That Grew Up, The History of the Neuse River Valley Railroad*. George Lasley, Bruce Faulkner, and Wayne Olson compiled the articles from *The Whistle Post* for the publication of the booklet. The published history covers the railroad from the 1870's to 1991. Following is the first of a series of articles that will record the history of the NRV from 1990 to the present. The new articles will eventually be compiled for *Volume 2 of The History of the Neuse River Valley Railroad*.

Volume Two of The History of the NEUSE RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD

Chapter 1: The NRV in the 1990s A Time of Challenge, Hope, and Change

The 1990s presented a challenge for the Neuse River Valley Railroad (NRV). The high volumes of traffic resulting from Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm were quickly followed by the recession of the early 1990s. This whiplash effect created struggles for management. The economic recession of the late 1990s also strained the finances of the company as some of the online industries cut back production. In addition, coal traffic continued to decrease as the shift continued away from the higher sulfur coal of the eastern US.

Bright spots were the continued increase in container and trailer-on-flatcar traffic and the new unit trains shipping corn from eastern North Carolina to processing facilities for ethanol production. Another bright spot was the opening of GE Aviation's turbine engine facility in Durham in 1993. The NRV benefited by the delivery of raw materials to the facility and the shipment of new turbine engines and engine cores to aircraft production facilities, and the shipment of containers to aircraft production customers in Europe, South American, and Asia. The NRV also saw a big increase in refrigerated containers from the larger pork and turkey production facilities in eastern NC. Some of these refrigerated containers were sent to customers in Europe and Asia. Container traffic also benefited from new and expanded pharmaceutical facilities in the Triangle and Eastern NC.

In 1990, NRV management formed a committee and hired a consultant to review the need for an update of the corporate brand, including paint schemes on rolling stock. The committee and the consultant designed a new black and maroon scheme with yellow striping for diesel locomotives. The new paint scheme included the modern NRV lettering on the side of the long hood and the nose, but revived the NRV herald on the side of the cab. All freight cars were to be painted in black with yellow lettering, except for box cars which retained the green paint scheme, covered hoppers which were to be in maroon with yellow lettering, and auto loaders which were to maintain

the TTX yellow flat cars but include the structural frame and the railroad name plate in maroon. (The new paint schemes will be presented in new figures to be issued later.)

The resort at Burkes Garden, VA, owned by the NRV, was renovated and expanded. This included additional ski slopes and cross-country ski trails. The NRV decided to revive the ski train that had been suspended during the economic recession of the late 1970s. Two surplus F7As and one F7B were purchased from Morrison-Knudsen Co. in Boise, ID to be used for power for the ski train. The F7s were remanufactured to dash 2 standards with new traction motors and generators, and the diesel engines were rebuilt with 645 assemblies. The horsepower rating was raised to 1,850 hp. NRV management decided to paint the F7s in a maroon and black heritage scheme with the NRV modern lettering on the side and the NRV herald on the nose.

The four coaches, one dome coach, and the diner in the business car fleet were refurbished for ski train and excursion service. A lightweight baggage car was removed from work train service and refurbished for use on the ski train. A heavyweight observation in the historical collection was refurbished and altered to include a lounge and three private rooms for those willing to pay the additional cost of travelling in style to the ski slopes. The observation car was named Burkes Garden and was painted in the maroon scheme. The diner was named French Fries (a term used by ski instructors to put the skis parallel). All of the lightweight cars remained in stainless steel. All of the cars were rebuilt with electric heat and air conditioning. Power for the cars was supplied from the generator in the F7B.

The ski train left Raleigh on Friday afternoon, made a stop in Durham, and then proceeded nonstop to Burkes Garden with arrival on Friday evening. The ski train left Burkes Garden after the slopes closed on Sunday with arrival back in Raleigh-Durham late at night. On three-day holiday weekends, the ski train returned on Monday. During the week between Christmas and New Year's, the ski train made two roundtrips.

With the completion of the First Union Capital Center in Raleigh in 1990, the NRV moved its corporate headquarters to the new building in 1991. The new headquarters provided additional space and proximity to NC State government agencies.

The 1997 agreement between CSX and Norfolk Southern (NS) to split Conrail set off alarm bells in NRV's corporate headquarters. Although not directly connected to Conrail, much traffic originated on the NRV and terminated on Conrail, and vice versa. Along with some other parties that objected to the takeover of Conrail, the NRV filed a legal brief with the US Surface Transportation Board (STB) that the proposal of CSX and NS would be detrimental to the competitive position of the NRV. The STB recognized NRV's position and requested CSX and NS to negotiate with the NRV. CSX, NS, and the NRV reached an agreement that allowed the split to continue. (The results of the negotiations and the considerations that the NRV received from CSX and NS will be the subject of a later chapter, to follow soon.)

The economic difficulties of the 1990s brought into focus the cost of labor with the continued use of cabooses. The NRV began negotiations with its operating trainmen unions. After lengthy discussions, it was decided to terminate the use of cabooses but not perform any layoffs of personnel. Reduction in personnel was accomplished by generous buyouts to trainmen. Many of

the personnel that accepted buyouts were near retirement, while others decided to pursue other careers. Scholarships were offered to those who were accepted into college or technical schools. The new trains' crews were three-person with an engineer, a brakeman, and a headman (conductor) in the locomotive cab. The NRV and its unions maintained a good relationship while achieving value for its shareholders.

In 1999, the Rail Division of NCDOT approached Amtrak and the NRV about the potential for train service between Raleigh and Morehead City. Negotiations began between the three parties in 1999. Very early on, it was decided to call the new train in both directions the Croatan. (Stay tuned for future chapters that will present the result of these negotiations.)

Future Events

Tom Magnani passed on the following information from **Company Shops Railroad Club (CSRRC)** in Burlington, NC:

Put **Saturday, August 20** ON YOUR CALENDAR!!! There will be a one-day CSRRC 'Field Trip' to Roanoke, Virginia to visit both the O. Winston Link Museum and the Virginia Museum of Transportation. Details for this trip will be outlined in the August issue of the CSRRC News.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/421208222960597>

South Carolina Trade Shows

[Home \(carolinatrainshows.com\)](http://carolinatrainshows.com)

September 10, 2022

Activity & Senior Center, 310 W. Curtis St. Simpsonville, SC

Tables are 6 ft and \$35 July 31st.

9 am to 3 pm

2022 MER Carolina Special - ALL ABOARD!

Charlotte North Carolina

20 to 23 October 2022 is **OPEN!**

Hilton University Place

8629 JM Keynes Drive

Charlotte, NC 28262

To register, go to: <http://www.carolinasouthern.org/MER2022registration.html>

To reserve your hotel room, visit: <http://www.carolinasouthern.org/MER2022hotel.html>

Call for Clinicians!!! If you interested in presenting a clinic at the 2022 MER Convention, the Carolina Special, in Charlotte, NC on October, 20 to 23, 2022. Contact the Clinic Chair: Doug Algire at 2022clinics@carolinasouthern.org

38th Annual Train Show and Sale

November 5 – 6, 2022 – 9am to 5pm each day
Jim Graham Building, NC State Fair Grounds
4285 Trinity Road, Raleigh, NC 27607

Admissions: Adult \$10 / under 12 free w/adult

It's not too early to set these dates aside on your calendar and to start talking up the show to friends, neighbors, and civic and church groups.

Neat Links

Courtesy of **Jerry Davis**, here is a link to a video on YouTube of a well done HO railroad that models Raton Pass on the Santa Fe. Raton Pass is on the Colorado - New Mexico state line between Trinidad, CO and Raton, NM.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXw4xEapGbE>

Jerry also passed on another link to a model of the Southern Pacific line between Redding, CA and Klamath Falls, OR, the Shasta Division.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ma-pSkg2q-A&feature=youtu.be>

He got both links from the current NMRA Turntable, the monthly newsletter of NMRA.

Tom Magnani sent the following link from the July 2022 NMRA newsletter for those who are interested in HO gauge switches. The video runs about 15.5 minutes and compares the new Peco Electrofrog turnout with Micro Engineering and Walthers turnouts.

[NEW Peco Unifrogs Are Here: Let's Compare \(260\) - YouTube](#)

Courtesy of the Editor's cousin **George**. This is a 25 minute clip of Big Boy 4014 double-heading with Northern 844 on their way to the golden Spike Ceremony in May 2019. This posting is excerpted from a longer DVD available from 7idea Productions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GW_CqBg39c

HO Layout Committee Activities

HO Layout Committee Work Sessions of July 16th, 17th and 20th

photos by Bernie Dawson

If you haven't been to the Clubhouse in a while, you haven't seen the new bench work for the addition rising in the HO layout room. Six of the modules are now set up on casters and ready to link together. Two modules still need to be cut to fit their respective locations. Many thanks to those who have participated in the July construction sessions: Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Ted Kunstling, Jim Nelson, Don Weaver, and Bob Witwer.



Ken Howard, Tom Garren, Bob Witwer, Ted Kunstling and Don Weaver assembling modules.



The modules after assembly on July 17th.

Cost of the expansion is currently at \$335. The Board has authorized an expenditure of up to \$500 for the construction. Please plan on attending the next HO Committee Planning Meeting on August 21st at 1 pm to participate in the final design and planning phases of the expansion. Our goal is to have at least the first mainline up and operational on the layout expansion by the September 17th date for our Open House.



Construction Progress as of August 12th



Construction Progress as of August 12th

Layout Donation on August 13, 2022

John Spach, Ken Howard, Bob Witwer, Randy Foulke and Tom Tieman took a road trip to disassemble and transport a large donated modular HO layout (approximately 100 square feet), rolling stock, magazines, scenic supplies, railroad pictures, and storage drawers.

To give Club members an idea of the total size of the donation – hauling required two pickup trucks, a 5x8 foot trailer, and an SUV. The HO committee will use parts of the layout in construction of the extension. Other parts may be repurposed as we see fit. Our deepest thanks to Nelson Norden for his donation and the photos below.



The donated layout before deconstruction.



The “Gang” contemplates the disassembly process.

Real Train Photos

Ken Howard submitted the following photos taken during his June travels in Ohio and Pennsylvania.



East Broad Top 44 tonner #M-7 preparing to take out the daily tourist train from Rockhill, Pennsylvania.



CN GE ES44AC #2902 and KCS de Mexico EMD SD70Ace #4077 double heading with an ethanol unit train in Bellevue, Ohio on Norfolk Southern tracks.



Ohio Central System EMD SD40-2 #4023 hooking up to a train in the early morning in Dennison, Ohio.

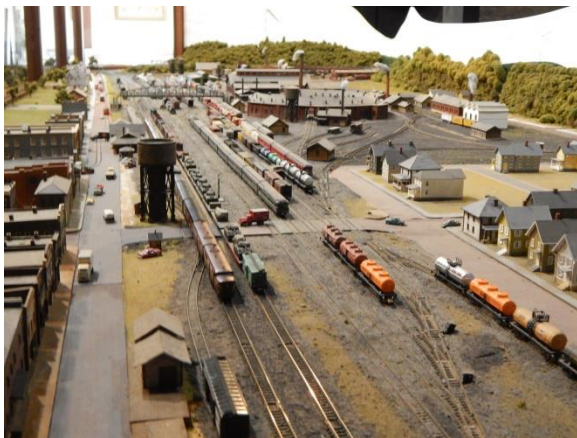


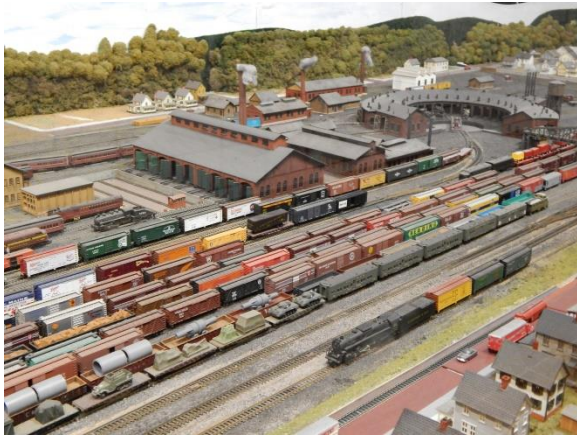
Iowa Traction electric Baldwin-Westinghouse #51 switching in Mason City, Iowa. Not bad for an engine built in 1921

Layouts and Operating Sessions

No submissions of local layouts or operating sessions were received from Members for this month's edition. In lieu of local materials, here are pictures of an N-scale layout that Ken Howard visited at the Dennison Depot Railroad Museum. The layout is an exact representation of how the Pennsylvania Railroad looked at Dennison, Ohio in 1944. All that is left today are two mainline tracks and the depot that was a stop for troop trains during World War II.

Dennison Depot was a major watering stop for the troop trains transiting the Pennsylvania Railroad between Pittsburgh, PA and St. Louis, MO. The depot has been restored (including the café that served meals to the troops). Over a million men passed through on the railroad during the war. The museum has numerous other displays of railroad cars and engines.





Covid Update

As you have been informed, the Club was closed through August 15th because of a case of Covid-19 in a member who attended the Club on Sunday, August 7th. When the member became symptomatic on Monday, he notified the Club and an e-mail alert was sent out. While a number of Club members self-quarantined and tested for Covid later in the week, no additional cases have been reported. Should anyone develop symptoms, or get a positive test result, please notify an officer of the Club so that members can be alerted. Thank you.

Upcoming Meetings and Activities

August Membership Meeting: The next meeting is on Thursday, August 18th at 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Tom Garren will present on The Wreck of the Old 97. Attendance via Zoom is optional.

HO Layout Committee Meeting: The next meeting of the HO Layout Committee is scheduled for August 21st at 1 pm in the Clubhouse. The meeting will discuss construction progress and schedule additional work dates for laying track, wiring, and scenery construction.

September Board of Governors Meeting: Because of the Labor Day Holiday, the next meeting will be held on Monday, September 12th, 7:00 pm at the Clubhouse. Attendance via Zoom is optional.

September Open House: Our next public Open House has been scheduled for September 17th from 10am to 2pm. Please plan on attending to help show off our Club and assist with parking and tours.

Breakfast Social: Every Wednesday, 9:00 am at Barry's Café, Raleigh, NC.

Notes from the Editor and Webmaster

Please send recent photos of Club activities to Bernie Dawson, at nrvwebmaster@gmail.com, so he can maintain and update our website.

Thanks to all who are contributing items for the Whistle Post. Your participation is appreciated, and your contributions will appear as space permits. Please send articles, photos of real trains, book reviews, product reviews, photographs of your home layouts, and interesting links to Ken Howard, Whistle Post Editor, at klhowardjr@aol.com.

Minutes of the Membership, Board, and Committee Meetings

Minutes of both Board of Governors and Membership meetings are now available to those who wish to read them on the Club website. Also, minutes from HO Committee meetings are now available, so members can follow the planning and construction of the new HO layout additions. The link below takes you directly to the Minutes page:

<https://nrclub.net/meeting-minutes/>

NRV Whistle Post
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First Class

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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| Wayne Aiken | Vice-President | htomc42@hotmail.com | 919-602-8529 |
| Michael Keelean | Treasurer | keeleanmike@gmail.com | 919-886-9238 |
| Tom Garren | Secretary | tomgar@mindspring.com | 919-805-0909 |
| Calfee (Richard Calfee) | At-Large | rhcalfree@yahoo.com | 301-335-1054 |
| Ken Howard | At-Large | klhowardjr@aol.com | 919-851-3805 |
| Bob Witwer | At-Large | bobwitwer@gmail.com | 919-632-0785 |

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| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------|
| George Lasley | Show Grand Poobah | glasley@bellsouth.net | 919-757-4503 |
| Calfee (Richard Calfee) | Membership Chair | rhcalfree@yahoo.com | 301-335-1054 |
| Ted Kunstling | Social Media Chair | trkunstling@aol.com | 919-787-5282 |
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