



# BLUE RIDGE DISPATCHER

Vol. 24

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**Monroe Station, Courtesy, Amherst County Museum & Historical Society, Frank Leslie Cash Collection**

Program Notes - As I indicated in last month's newsletter, I have arranged for the presentation of what I feel certain you will find a unique and most intriguing program. I first saw it in the spring at the Amherst Historical Museum and came away knowing this was a "must see" for our chapter.

The program is titled "Depots of Amherst County" and has been assembled by Octavia Starbuck, director of the museum. The images in this presentation have been gleaned from the collections of several generations of Amherst County families. Though the main focus is on Amherst, Sweet Briar, and Monroe, there are also photos of more obscure locations, including some on the C&O James River line. I am grateful for the Museum's permission to reproduce this image for the BRD.

Without a doubt the rarest and most intriguing shots are those taken by Frank Cash, a local man variously identified as "mechanic, furniture maker, or casket maker" in census records. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries he wandered around the area taking photos using glass plate negatives. Fortunately for us, the objects of his interest included a number of railroad structures. I had never seen a glass plate negative and assume many of you haven't either. With the understanding that they are extremely fragile, I have asked Mrs. Starbuck to bring one for display at our meeting.

The presenter at our program is Russell North. His father was a conductor on the Southern Crescent between Monroe and Washington during its last years of operation.

I cannot help wondering how our own images will be perceived a century from now. I only hope that people will experience the same sense of excitement we do, doubtless marveling at the "primitive methods" used to create them.

**Wednesday, December 13, 2017.**

**Charley's Restaurant. 707 Graves Mill Rd. Lynchburg, VA.**

Dinner: 6p -7p. Business: 7p - 7:30p. Program: 7:30p.



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NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Lynchburg, Virginia



## **Blue Ridge Chapter, NRHS Minutes of Meeting – November 8, 2017**

President Rick Johnson called the meeting to order at Charley's Restaurant at 7:32 pm. Rick welcomed 27 members and 1 guest for a total of 28 in attendance. Our guest for the evening was Dona Duvall. Rick thanked the BRC membership for their condolences and beautiful flowers sent for his mother's memorial service. The minutes for the August, September and October meetings were distributed in the November "Blue Ridge Dispatcher". There were no additions or corrections and all minutes were approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report: John Tanner had no report.

Old Business: Norris made a final call for payment to the upcoming December 2nd Christmas Banquet to be held at the Altavista Train Station. Cost is \$20.00 per person and he would be accepting final payments this evening. Derek Wimberly volunteered to provide the Christmas music and Norris volunteered to present a DVD video for the banquet program. Rick asked that anyone wishing to present a meeting program next year, let him know. Wayland Moore requested the November 14, 2018 program.

New Business: Rick stated that the BRC officer elections will be held at the December meeting. All current officers volunteered to run again: Rick Johnson - President, Gale McKinley - Vice President, John Tanner - Treasurer and Bob Leslie - National Representative. Lloyd Lipscomb volunteered to run for the vacant secretary position. Fred Mayer (chairman) and Skip Hansberry volunteered to serve as the nominating committee. If anyone would like to run for any officer position, please contact Fred or Skip. Rick reminded everyone that 2018 BRC local membership dues at \$13.00 were due. Many member's paid their dues this evening. Rick asked that all National dues be paid directly to National. Lee Hawkins is planning a train trip for the BRC. He asked that anyone interested in riding a bus to Roanoke to ride Amtrak's Northeast Regional back to Lynchburg, contact him.

Vice President's Report: Gale McKinley – Deferred her report to Bob Leslie, which will be covered in his National Representative report.

Blue Ridge Chapter, NRHS National Representative: Bob Leslie - Attended the NRHS director's meeting and briefly highlighted many points of interest. Bob suggested the BRC make a \$500.00 donation, to match a \$250.00 donation that both he and Skip Hansberry were making, for a NRHS Heritage Grant. Norris put a motion on the floor for the donation, it was seconded by Lloyd Lipscomb and passed by a unanimous vote.

Blue Ridge Chapter, NRHS Chairman of Virginia's Rail Heritage Region Partners: Norris Deyerle - No report.

Rick asked Norris about 2017 donations that were usually made after Lynchburg Rail Day. Norris stated that no 2017 donations have been specified, approved or made. Rick asked that a list of suggested donations be presented at the January 2018 meeting for discussion and approval.

Webmaster Report: John Siegle - No report.

Editor's Report: Garland Harper was not present. Rick thanked Garland for getting the newsletter out.

Program: Wayland Moore presented a wonderful program featuring many slides from the collection of the late Dick Myers.

Upcoming Programs: There will be NO "Fun" meeting in November due to Thanksgiving. Skip Hansberry has arranged for special guests to present a program featuring historic photos of Amherst County railroad stations for our December 13th meeting.

50/50 Winner: Gale McKinley won!

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rick Johnson, acting BRC Secretary

Dear BRC Members and Friends,

It is with sadness that I inform you of the death of former BRC member, Jeff Thaxton's mother, Anne Stevens Thaxton. Mrs. Thaxton passed away at 8:30 am November 28th, in her home surrounded by her family. A funeral service was held at 10:00 am Dec. 2 at Court St. United Methodist Church in Lynchburg. Tharp Funeral Home & Crematory, Lynchburg, is assisting the family. To read the obituary or to send condolences please visit <http://tharfuneralhome.com/funeralpress/anne-thaxton/2244/>

Please keep Jeff and his family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Sincerely,  
Rick

### **The Virginia Museum of Transportation has named a new Executive Director to take over after Bev Fitzpatrick's retirement. ROANOKE, Va. (WDBJ7)**

Lisa Sphar, of Roanoke, will officially take over the position starting January 1.

"I am thrilled for the opportunity to continue the good work and positive momentum the museum has experienced in recent years. If you consider the history of Roanoke, the growth of the Commonwealth, and certainly the nation, advances in and access to transportation are major influencers shaping our society. I look forward to celebrating and honoring that heritage," said incoming Virginia Museum of Transportation Executive Director, Lisa Sphar.



"I have a passion for partnering with the community in support of deserving non-profit organizations and I look forward to focusing my efforts on securing the future of the Museum."

The future of the museum includes: a preservation and Education Facility and a three-track, climate controlled facility that will preserve the 611.

"We have the utmost confidence in Lisa's ability to engage the community and build upon the strong bonds that have been formed with our individual and corporate supporters," said Board President William L. Harris, III.

There will be an event to honor Fitzpatrick's legacy on January 20.

**Kemper Street gathering reminder** - The annual Blue Ridge Chapter get-together at Kemper Street Station is scheduled for December 23 this year. We meet annually and informally for food and fellowship between the two Amtrak trains. 8:45 to 9:00 p.m. is the usual start time. Bring a snack and/or a Rule-G compliant beverage to share.

Never heard of "Rule G"? Here is the wording from a major carrier's Book of Rules:  
G. Drugs and Alcohol. An employee who reports for duty under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicant, cannabis in any form, an amphetamine, a narcotic drug, a hallucinogenic drug, any controlled substance (as defined by federal law), or a derivative or combination of any of these, or who uses any of the foregoing while on duty, will be dismissed. Possession of any of the foregoing while on duty, or possession, use, or being under the influence of any of the foregoing while on Company property or occupying facilities provided by the Company, is prohibited.

**Amtrak in the first snow of the season** - An unusual early snowstorm on Dec. 8 dropped much snow along a long stretch of the east coast, from Louisiana to New England! Freight traffic issues coupled with weather issues delayed the northbound Crescent to the tune of 4 1/2 hours by the time it made it to Lynchburg. Several BRC members took advantage of the situation and captured #20 the morning of Dec. 9 as it passed through town. The top photo, courtesy of Ian Whaley, has #20 crossing over the LU entrance. On the bottom is #20 north of town at Angelo, courtesy of Skip Hansberry.





Several fund-raising trips for the benefit of 611's care and maintenance using B&O car Moonlight Dome, built in 1948, were operated in mid-November between Washington and Roanoke on the Regional train. Skip Hansberry captured said car on the rear of #156.



A most unusual locomotive consist was captured in the wee hours of December 7 by Chapter member Ian Whaley. Three SD40-2s, ancient by today's standards, were caught by Ian at Seneca on the ex-VGN. Thanks for sharing!



Chapter members Lee Hawkins and Roy Evans ventured out to Southwest Virginia Nov. 18 to capture the 75th annual running of CSX's Santa Claus train featuring CRR 800. Here is the train crossing the Copper Creek trestle.



Then and now. Lee Hawkins took this shot of a northbound Southern Ry. train leaving Kemper Street c.1968 with the Craddock-Terry "West End" factory in the background. The scene is almost recreated in 2015 by your Editor.



Norris Deyerle gives the assembled crowd at the annual Christmas banquet in Altavista instructions prior to dining. Dec. 2.

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Chapter Elections at the December meeting. Come vote! Dec. 13.  
Kemper St. Khristmas get-together. Dec. 23. ~9:00 p.m.  
Lynchburg Rail Day 2018. 40th year! Saturday, August 11, 2018.