

The Piedmont and Western Railroad Club

May 2016



The Bulletin

A Visit to the Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railway





THE PIEDMONT & WESTERN RAILROAD CLUB
THE OLD ROCK SCHOOL, 400 W. MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 513, VALDESE, NC 28690

TIM SKIDMORE, PRESIDENT; GRANT ROBBINS, VICE-PRESIDENT;
GENE AUSTIN, TREASURER, ALAN COLEMAN, SECRETARY AND
BULLETIN EDITOR, KEN HUMPHREYS, WEBMASTER,
KEVIN STINE, OPERATIONS CHAIRMAN.

THE BULLETIN IS THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
P&WRR. ALL OPINIONS ARE SOLELY THOSE OF THE
EDITOR OR CITED CONTRIBUTORS.



ON THE COVER: The May 14, 2016 Aberdeen Carolina and Western excursion for the Southern Railway Historical Association at Oakboro, NC. SD-40-3's No 6939 (ex Wisconsin Central, ex ex Alstrom Canada, nee Canadian National) and 6926 (ex CN) provided the motive power for this "rare-miles" trip. Our coverage of the SRHA's visit to the AC&W begins on page 3. *Photograph by the Editor*

Next P&WRRC Business Meeting: Thursday June 2, 2016 at 7:30 PM

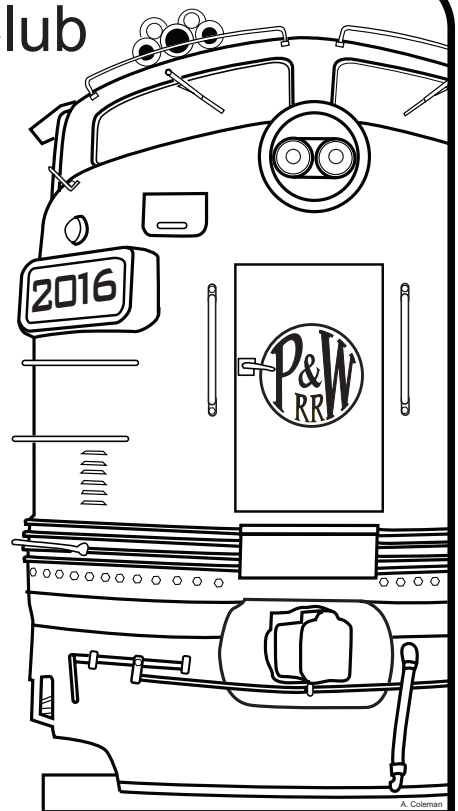
Piedmont & Western Railroad Club

Waldensian Festival Open House

Saturday, August 13
9:00 am until 3:00 pm

Ground floor of the Old Rock School

SINCE 1989, ONLY \$2.00 ADMISSION FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN OVER 12



Piedmont & Western Railroad May 2015 Club Minutes

The meeting was called to order on May 5, 2016 at 7:37 PM by President Tim Skidmore.

Members in Attendance: Tim Skidmore, Arlene Koski, Bill Poteat, Gene Austin, Josh Garrison, Frank Steele, Alan Coleman, Larry Weed, Michael DeVore*, Jeff Whisenant, Dick Miller, Keith Garrison, Garatt Jackson*, and Reggie Stroud*.

Wiring Report: Tim stated little work on the wiring “to do” list since April, with the exception of the acquisition of a critically needed \$232.00 Digitrax DCS unit.

Software has been loaded on our main computer in the dispatch office; Bill has written all the software for the Train Brain with the exception of the still-changing Murphy Branch.

The DCC programming computer remains inoperable: the good news is that Ronnie Harmon of **Burke Onsite Computers** is donating a replacement hard drive. Our thanks to Bill Poteat for arranging the donation. The CPU will be running Windows 7.

We will be scheduling a workday to pull in 5VDC lighting buses for the layout- 3.3 to 4.2volt resistor-equipped LEDs will provide computer-controlled lighting for buildings, street lights, etc.

Track Report: Tim noted that we have a burned-out frog contact on the turnout located just outside the helix at Bridge- the Tortoise will need to be replaced.

One of the Asheville Yard crossover Tortoises has had its linking music wire pulled loose, which will require the fitting and clipping of a new wire; Asheville Tower-end track 3 to 4 also has problems, we may need to install a remote linkage kit. Our younger members were encouraged to help with this project- some of our more “experienced” veteran members can no longer crawl around under the layout.

Jeff will be installing two new turnouts at Sylva for the future coal-fired power plant.

Scenery Report: Frank continues to work on buildings for the future Hot Springs scenery addition which will replace the current dispatcher’s platform. Jeff has been working on the logging camp, relocating the portable bunk houses to a more prototypical location. Jeff has also completed the scenery around the logging line trestle.

Tim brought up the need to “refresh” the layout’s scenery work - some of which is 25+ years old. Much of downtown Asheville is in need of urban renewal, e.g. interior walls and detailing, lighting installation, etc. The abutment facing the yard is badly in need of replacement. All of which is to say there are many scenic areas in which members can demonstrate their talents.

Financial Report: Treasurer Gene Austin noted that six members are still in arrears on their second quarter dues. Our current balance of \$2,727.20, plus dues pending, barely puts the club at the break-even point for covering next

year’s 2017 fixed expenses- we have a zero balance for any new projects or unexpected expenses. A lengthy discussion followed- among its points: dues have not been raised in 17 years, having remained at the Associate (\$25 per qtr), Senior (\$35), and Patron (\$75) rates. Tim will be calling a meeting of the club officers to review our expenses such as insurance on the layout and income sources like dues and donations. Bill suggested a \$10 per quarter dues increase.

Tim emphasized that the board realizes that it needs to make everyone member’s experience more positive, and that every effort will be made to that end.

Old Business: Our layout is again hosting rodents- either that or Frank has figured out how to add organic HO scale horse droppings to the road leading from the fairgrounds to Steele’s Farm! So once again- **please do not leave trash in the club spaces.** All trash, especially food or drink items, should be placed in the scullery trash cans off the Waldensian Room kitchen. These cans are emptied on a regular basis compared to those in our rooms. RE the mice: Larry suggested that we install a electronic rodent repeller- if anyone can donate one it will be most appreciated.

Speaking of housekeeping- all of the rolling stock will need to have their wheels cleaned prior to the Waldensian Festival Open House in August. More on the festival- given the shift of stages and activities away from the Old Rock School, our traffic has been on a downwards spiral. Discussion followed on how we might deal with this issue. In past years we had onboard camera broadcast to a booth and we sold the adult tickets at the booth as well. Other ideas included a raffle, advertising our open house, etc. Tim will inquire about booth availability and cost before the next meeting. If available we need to see if Mike Outen, Jr. still has a tent we can borrow.

The need to acquire five stair railing holders to complete the back steps railing was discussed (again).

New Business: By unanimous acclimation the club voted in three new members: Michael DeVore, Garatt Jackson, and Reggie Stroud. Welcome, gentlemen!

Jeff reminded folks that scenery which is being replaced should be gleaned for usable materials- foliage and other materials are not cheap....

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Submitted by Alan Coleman

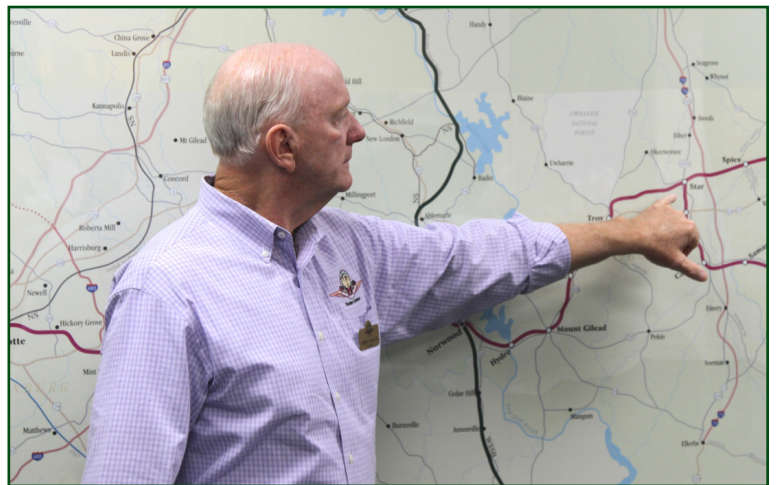


AC&W's headquarters and main shops building in Candor is the largest and finest short line facility in North Carolina. For a sense of its size, note the large covered hoppers parked across the street (NC 211) at one of the railway's grain customers.

Aerial image © Google Imagery, Digital Globe, USDA Farm Service Agency. All other photographs © the editor.

A Visit to the Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railway

The highlight of the 2016 **Southern Railway Historical Association** Convention was its May 14 shop tour and excursion on the Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railway. SRHA and P&W members Larry Weed and your editor were among those amazed by the AC&W's immaculate shop building and its contents. That alone was worth the price of the convention - the railway then hosted a "rare miles" excursion from Star to Oakboro, NC which made the weekend one to remember. Here are some images from our visit to this friendly and first class railroad company.



President Robert Menzies has owned and operated the AC&W since 1987. In that year Mr Menzies bought the Aberdeen and Briar Patch Railroad which operated the original Norfolk Southern Railway's 34.6 mile line from Aberdeen to Star. In 1989 Mr. Menzies leased the ex-NS Star-to-Charlotte line from Norfolk Southern Corporation; the AC&W's 150 mile route now extends from near Sanford in Chatham County to downtown Charlotte.



The *Mission Santa Ynez* (ACWR No. 150) and the *Roamer* (ACWR No. 600) share shop space with two hoppers being readied for aggregate service and an SD-40-3. The passenger cars' magenta paint was selected after an order of business cards came from the printer with a magenta "ribbon" and outlines on the company logo instead of the correct red - the company was looking for a distinctive color for its passenger cars and found it through the printing company error!



Two thirds of the AC&W's EMD F unit fleet undergoing restoration...



... and the third unit.



One of the AC&W's ex-Canadian National GP-40-2LW's, No. 9538, sits outside the shop building.



The Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railway performs overhauls and maintenance on locomotives belonging to other companies. Leasing company DAK America is one such customer- its SW-14 No. 1001 has a past history with RailCar Limited, Illinois Central and Illinois Central Gulf.

The excursion...



LOOKING TO THE FRONT: The leading rolling stock was No. 300, one of AC&W's two twin-unit dining car sets which has counted AutoTrain, Seaboard Coast Line, Atlantic Coast Line, and the Chesapeake and Ohio as owners. The train is shown backing to the Star depot to get to the main line to Charlotte.



The former original Norfolk Southern depot in Star served as the Aberdeen Carolina & Western's previous headquarters and shops location. The railroad's drop pit and fueling operations are still located in Star.



FOOT PRINT FROM THE PAST: the foundation piers of the old Norfolk Southern water tank from the steam era is still present in Star.





This shot captures just a fraction of one of Jordan Lumber Company's operations.



The rotary kiln at the concrete block plant near Oakboro appears to have turned its last some years ago.



Passing over a Winston-Salem Southbound Railway ethanol train at Norwood.



The editor's on-board camera location of choice: No. 401 is a flat car converted into the AC&W's *Patio Car*, complete with umbrellas and cup holders around the top railing.

A partial view of the Lake Tillery Dam from the bridge over the Pee Dee River.





LOOKING BACK: The view of the rest of the train as seen from the *Patio Car*. We are looking at baggage car No. 901; converted flat No. 402, the *Canopy Car*, and No 7014, the *Pineburst*, a beautiful Pullman-built heavyweight.

Many thanks to all the railroaders of the Aberdeen Carolina & Western who gave up their Saturday to give us an unforgettable ride on their railway.

