

# Carolina Conductor



Volume 2, Number 10

Monthly Newsletter of the Carolina Railroad Heritage Association, Inc.

October 2015

## Preserving the Past. Active in the Present. Planning for the Future.

### Meeting Site:

#### Woodmen of the World Bldg.

721 East Poinsett Street  
Greer, SC 29651-6404

Third Friday of the Month at 7:00 pm

### Hub City Railroad Museum and SOU Caboose #X3115:

#### Magnolia Street Station

298 Magnolia Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29301-2330

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Newsletter articles and news due

by 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month.

## Preserving The Past—Active in the Present

by Bruce Gathman

Photos by the Author

If you look at the box immediately to the left you will see two of the goals of our organization—*Preserving the Past* and *Active in the Present*. The definition of *past* is “the time or a period of time before the moment of speaking, photographing (ed.) or writing”. We have all enjoyed the past articles by Jim Sheppard very much. And why do we find it so fascinating? Maybe because he was able to record on film the railroads in the area over the years.

We photograph trains in the present but as soon as the pixels are stored on the camera memory chip or light hits the film we are talking about the past. So get out with your camera, scanner, and maps and start exploring our area. Some day the images you make will be from the past and might be historically important.

Think of all the special train trips, unusual lash-ups, and once in a life time events you have witnessed. Hopefully you had your camera with you and you recorded the significant occurrence. The following photographs have all been



Not historically important in the present but will we remember when all the UP units were on NS trains? NS #172 on main one being passed by hotshot NS #204 at Haywood on a severely overcast morn.

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# Arrivals

*Scenic Southern Rails 2015*

*Blue Ridge Autumn Special - Oct. 31 to Asheville, N.C.*

*Virginia Autumn Special - Nov. 1 to Charlottesville, Va.*

## Railroads Begin Using Drones

Railroads in the United States are exploring the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) — although at the moment, their use has been limited mostly to track inspection. In March, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) granted BNSF Railway Co. permission to use drones, provided the railroad complied with several restrictions. According to the FAA's letter of exemption issued at the time, the railroad can only operate UAVs over its own railroad infrastructure and needs to keep drone speed below 50 knots, among other limitations.

"The use of unmanned aerial vehicles is intended to allow BNSF to maximize safety in railroad operations," said spokeswoman Roxanne Butler via email. The Class I hopes the technology will supplement existing inspection protocols with added aerial surveillance, she said, noting that drones would not eliminate the need for in-person visual inspections, which are mandated by the Federal Railroad Administration.

In May, the FAA announced that BNSF was one of three companies selected to participate in a program known as Pathfinder, which the agency launched

to explore the commercial use of UAVs. CNN and unmanned aerial systems manufacturer PrecisionHawk also were chosen to take part in the venture. "We are still in the early stages of this program," Butler said, adding that BNSF's Pathfinder initiative wouldn't launch until late 2015.

Meanwhile, the use of drones is gaining traction in the transit-rail realm. Last summer, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), for example, began employing drones to assist contractors working on one of the agency's extension projects. In particular, VTA is using UAVs to snap high-resolution photographs and provide real-time data to the team working on the Bay Area Rapid Transit Silicon Valley Berryessa Extension project, according to the agency's "Headways" blog.

"The progress photos give the contractor a comprehensive view of the project that allows them to avoid potential issues," VTA officials said at the time.

Other railroads also are looking into using UAVs, but they face a slew of challenges in doing so, Hot Rail's Gent said. For one, the FAA and state legislatures are still hashing out

laws regulating use of the technology. Additionally, railroads would need to bring on more staffers to coordinate the use of UAVs.



# Departures



**Motive Power & Equipment Solutions, Inc.**

MP&ES of Greenville, South Carolina, was founded in 1999 with the vision of leading locomotive re-manufacturing with innovation and a constant striving to set the highest performance and quality standards in qualifying, rebuilding and re-manufacturing single and multi gen-set locomotives. The company grew quickly, meeting the strong US demand for its services, primarily in refurbishing older locomotives with modern technology. At the same time, the company made donations to museums and non-profit organizations to preserve vital rail history. Further, during the process of qualifying and re-manufacturing locomotives for various industries, MP&ES developed its own electronic braking system, PLC based locomotive control systems, operator interface/control stands and many other innovations.

In 2007, founder of MP&ES David Wilkerson furthered his innovative vision by commencing the design of a completely new line of single and multi gen-set locomotives, focused on environment, ease of maintenance, being more operator friendly and having more quality service and less down time. The company sold the first fleet of the new MP900C-BB locomotives to one of the world's largest nickel mines, located in Africa. Exemplary of the high quality MP&ES product, the fleet has provided superior service and the customer has continued to purchase additional locomotives to grow its fleet. International sales to a wide array of customers on four



Isle of Man narrow gauge diesel.

continents now constitute half of the MP&ES business volume.

Moving forward with technical innovation and a focus on the opportunities presented by tightening emissions standards, MP&ES has continually increased its market presence in both the domestic and international sectors. With Tier III and Tier IV gen-set locomotive products in single, double and triple engine configurations, the company has provided its customers with cost effective solutions to reduce fuel and maintenance costs and increase reliability, all while reducing emissions. MP&ES is currently re-manufacturing North America's first all AC, 4 axle switcher locomotive, recently delivered the first diesel electric locomotive for the Isle of Man and is re-powering an EMD SW1200 locomotive to be equipped with Tier IV emission compliant engines and upgraded electrical control systems, amongst other projects.

MP&ES is now poised for another key innovation that will deliver unprecedented value for our customers. The company, with key partners, has developed a design for a dual fuel (natural gas and diesel) genset locomotive product line that will drastically reduce fuel costs by replacing expensive diesel fuel with low cost, domestically sourced, compressed natural gas (CNG). New and repowered locomotives will now be available with an ROI justified by the fuel cost savings alone. The major advantages in maintenance, reliability and emissions reduction come along with the package as included features.

# Rare Mileage

## Preserving the Past in the Present

Heritage locomotives produced in the last century that can still be photographed today.

Greenville & Western (GRLW) # 4203 ex-ATSF END GP-30 from the 1960s.



Pickens RR (PKHP) #9508 an GE U-18B from the 1970s.



EMD meets GE—who will survive the longest?



Greenville & Western #3751 an EMD GP-9 from 1957.



Carolina Piedmont Railroad (CPDR) #2020 a GP-38-2 from 1969.



Blue Ridge Southern (BLU) #4242 an EMD SD-40 from the 1960s.

# Manifest

## Continued from Page 1 - *Preserving the Past*

recorded here in the upstate area over the last few years. I hope you find them engaging enough to inspire YOU to do the same!



NS #203 passes through the town of Liberty. But the locomotives are not black. Unusual run-through power makes train watching interesting. KCS “Southern Belles” are a very pretty scheme.



Unusual weather always make the shot a little more interesting. Again NS #204 heads toward CP Metler. The two different paint schemed BNSF units help ad interest to the historical record.

### Wanted—Articles for the Carolina Conductor

You too can be famous! Submit an article of 100 words or more and some photos and see them in print. Every one of us has some unique railroad experience that would make interesting reading.



The same train over an hour later at CP Haywood highlight the Grinstein Green BNSF diesel. The “diverging clear” signal shows the trains is going to single track.



A general merchandise train, NS #153 passes through Easley, as the track gang and their equipment congregates for lunch along Main Street.



Three 4000+ H.P. locos head up NS #172 around the curve near Hayne Yard in Spartanburg. There was a time when freight traffic required only two locomotives per train. An increase in the economy has made the trains longer and require three locomotives.



# Marker Lights



## My Trip to Iowa by Bruce Gathman

I found myself in Iowa at the Amana Colonies recently for a family reunion. As luck would have it the bed and breakfast was located across the street from the mainline of the Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) and I was granted an afternoon off to railfan. I found the company shops only 2 miles from the town of Homestead where we were staying. The IAIS is proud of its Rock Island heritage as can be seen in the photos. SD-38's and GP-38's, a couple of slugs and many ES44's are on the locomotive roster. Also two Chinese "QJ" class steam locos and passenger cars round out the railroad's equipment.

The railroad was formed on November 2, 1984, using former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (CRIP) tracks between Chicago, Illinois, and



Omaha, Nebraska. It was in partnership with real estate firm Heartland Rail Corporation that the IAIS was able to operate. Heartland purchased the right-of-way and infrastructure for \$31 million (of which, \$15 million was a loan from the Iowa Railway Finance Authority), and then leased it to IAIS for operations.

The railroad's mainline is roughly a straight line between these two terminal cities with a branch line connecting Bureau to Peoria, Illinois. In recognition of the railroad's Rock Island Railroad heritage, the IAIS logo uses a shape similar to the original railroad's logo and recently painted #513 in a CRIP heritage paint scheme.



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