Carolina Conductor

Volume 5 Number 2 **Monthly Newsletter of the Carolina Railroad Heritage Association, Inc.** February 2018

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

Web Site: hubcityrrmuseum.org
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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:
Spartanburg Amtrak Station
298 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29301-2330
Wednesday 10-2 and Saturday 10-2

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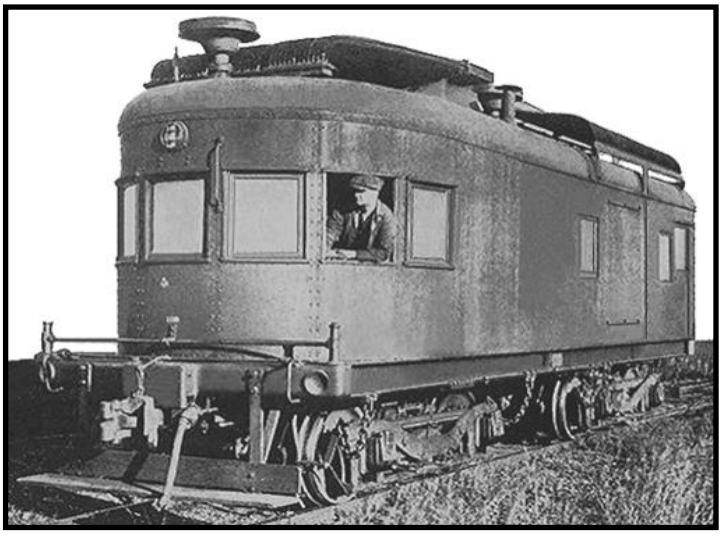
Articles can be submitted anytime.

General Electric Transportation

The General Electric Company has a history that dates to the late 1870s and today is one of the largest corporations in the world building everything from jet engines to kitchen appliances and light bulbs. Their introduction into the locomotive manufacturing market began as early as 1918 and they built modest diesel switchers during the 1930s and 1940s. The company also built locomotives in conjunction with the American Locomotive Company (ALCO) during this time, which partly explains why GE did not more vigorously compete in the market. However, during the mid-1950s the company broke ranks with ALCO and entered the main line diesel locomotive road switcher market. General Electric diesel locomotives quickly proved to be reliable machines and by the 1980s the company had reached the summit, taking away the number one production spot from then industry leader General Motors' Electro-Motive Division, a position it still holds today.

Interestingly, GE is credited with commercially producing the very first diesel-electric locomotive in 1918, a motor car design built for the Jay Street Connecting Railroad, #4. Designated as model GM-50 it was essentially a diesel-powered motor car, somewhat like an interurban car, and built in conjunction with



Early GE/IR demonstrator loco circa 1920s.

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Arrivals

GE Locomotive Potpourri

GE 50 ton locomotive—Duke Power #50.

GE 25 ton narrow gauge locomotive—America Latina Logistica #507.

GE 23 ton narrow gauge switcher on Maine Narrow Gauge Museum tracks.

UP U50.

GE U25B high-hood variant—Frisco # 804.

ATSF # 404 a GE U30CG.

Departures

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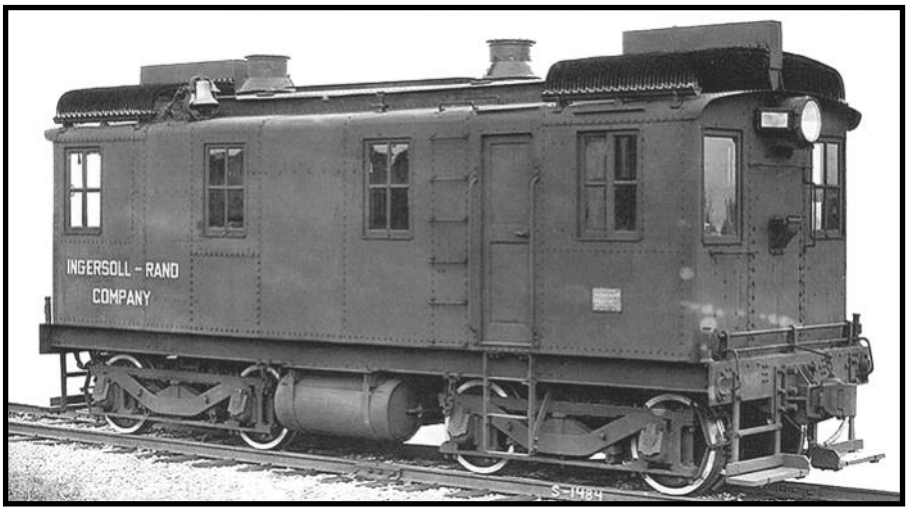
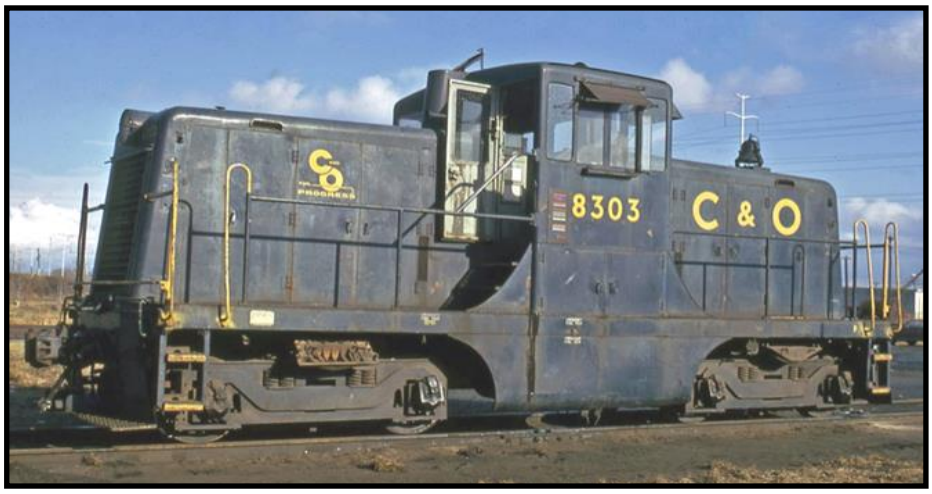


Early ALCO/GE/IR diesel electric boxcab locomotive.

ALCO and Ingersoll-Rand. Later, in 1924 the three companies built a 300 hp, 60-ton boxcab design that would be purchased by the Central Railroad of New Jersey, followed by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. In the following years General Electric diesel locomotives continued to remain small in nature and produced primarily for light branch, yard, and industrial duty. From 1928 through 1930 GE built box and some center-cab designs ranging from 300 to 600 horsepower. By 1940 the company would introduce its most successful switcher to date, the ubiquitous 380-horsepower, 44-tonner that was loved by industries for its lightweight design and ability to navigate tight curves, which were quite common within plants. When production ended in 1956 GE had built 373 44-tonners.

After the end of World War II GE followed up the success it was having with its 44-tonner model with two heavier models, a 70 and 95-tonner, both end-cab designs. The switchers were meant for branch line work on main line railroads and GE would wind up selling 385 of both models by the time production ended in 1959. In 1954 GE ended its partnership with Alco and for the rest of the 1950s the company experimented with different road unit designs (such as an A-B-B-A set of cab units known simply as GE 750) selling a short batch of its first commercial design the UD18 in 1956. The model, however, that would be the stepping stone for GE becoming the industrial leader was its U25B, first produced in 1959.

GE 95 ton loco—Cotter Merch. Storage #9.



GE 44 ton locomotive—C&O #8303.

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Manifest

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General Electric model 750 locomotive A unit – Erie Railroad #750.

The model would come to be known as the "U-boat" with the "U" standing for the Universal series, 25 for the unit's overall horsepower (2,500), and B for the number of axles per truck (for instance, B-B trucks carry two axles and C-C trucks carry three axles). There was nothing fancy about the U25B, especially its carbody, which carried simple straight lines from back to front and a short stubby square nose. However, the unit was durable and overall easy to maintain which the railroads loved, especially the maintenance crews who were tasked with keeping the locomotives running.

General Electric's Universal series would ultimately span a total of six different designs in comparable B-B and C-C setups. Ranging between 2,500 and 3,500 horsepower all the models only saw a few hundred of each built. However, beginning with its "Dash 7" series of the latter 1970s, and following with the "Dash 8" and "Dash 9" series' GE propelled itself into the lead of the diesel locomotive manufacturing race with EMD. In the 1990s through early 2000s GE further solidified itself as the leading locomotive builder by producing the suc-

GE U30C locomotive on the L&N.

GE U18B locomotive Pickens #9508 switching the GRLW yard in Belton, in 2016.

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Rare Mileage

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Norfolk Southern #8840 a GE C40-9 locomotive.

cessful AC series (AC4400CW and AC6000CW) that sold thousands of units.

The ES40DC, ES44DC, and ES44AC are part of the newest General Electric locomotives known as Evolution Series. Not included in the above are the variants and foreign examples of these designs such as the ES40ACi, ES44AC-H, ES44C4, ES44DCi, and ES58ACi. In any event, the Evolution Series followed the builder's Dash 9 models and is designed to offer just as much horsepower as conventional diesels but by burning much less fuel and in turn producing fewer emissions. The series was designed to meet the EPA's Tier 2 requirement of emissions standards and is powered by a GEVO 12-cylinder prime mover. So far, these new series continues to sell well for GE, sustaining it as the premier locomotive builder nationwide.

GE C40-8W locomotive on CSX freight.

GE Transportation, was formerly known as GE Rail, is a division of General Electric. The organization manufactures equipment for the railroad, marine, mining, drilling and energy generation industries. It is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois while their main manufacturing facility is located in Fort Worth, Texas. Locomotives are assembled at the Erie plant, while engine manufacturing takes place in Grove City, Pennsylvania. In May 2011, the company announced plans to build a second locomotive factory in Fort Worth, Texas.

GE Transportation is the largest producer of diesel-electric locomotives for both freight and passenger applications in North America, believed to hold up to a 70% market share. It also produces related products, such as railroad signaling equipment, and parts for locomotives and railroad cars, as well as providing repair services for GE and other locomotives.

Current locomotives in major production include the GE Evolution Series; for a complete listing, see the list of GE locomotives. In the spring of 2007, GE Transportation Systems rolled out a prototype hybrid diesel-electric locomotive to increase fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. In September 2010, GE Transportation announced plans to commercialize a hybrid design by 2014-15.

GE ES44AC , demonstrator locomotive.

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Marker Lights

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On July 27, 2017, GE Transportation announced that production of locomotives will move from Erie, Pennsylvania, to Fort Worth, Texas, by the end of 2018.

In addition to railroad locomotives and equipment, GE Transportation Systems also produces large electric motors and propulsion systems for the mining, oil drilling, and wind turbine industries. GE also provides medium-sized, medium-speed diesel engines for several smaller vessels, mostly tugboats and other similarly-sized vessels. These marine engines are marinized versions of their locomotive engines.

GE's battery business serves the rail, marine, telecommunications and energy sectors, including new smart grid technology. GE's Durathon battery production takes place at their state of the art facility in Schenectady, New York.

Tier 4 Heavy-Haul Loco called the "Evolution Series Locomotive" that significantly decreases emissions.

Wanted—Articles for the Carolina Conductor

Submit an article of 200 words or more with some photos and captions and see them in print. Every one of us has some unique railroad experience that would make interesting reading for our membership. Your editor always needs more contributions of local railway history and news.

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