

# *THE Arrow*

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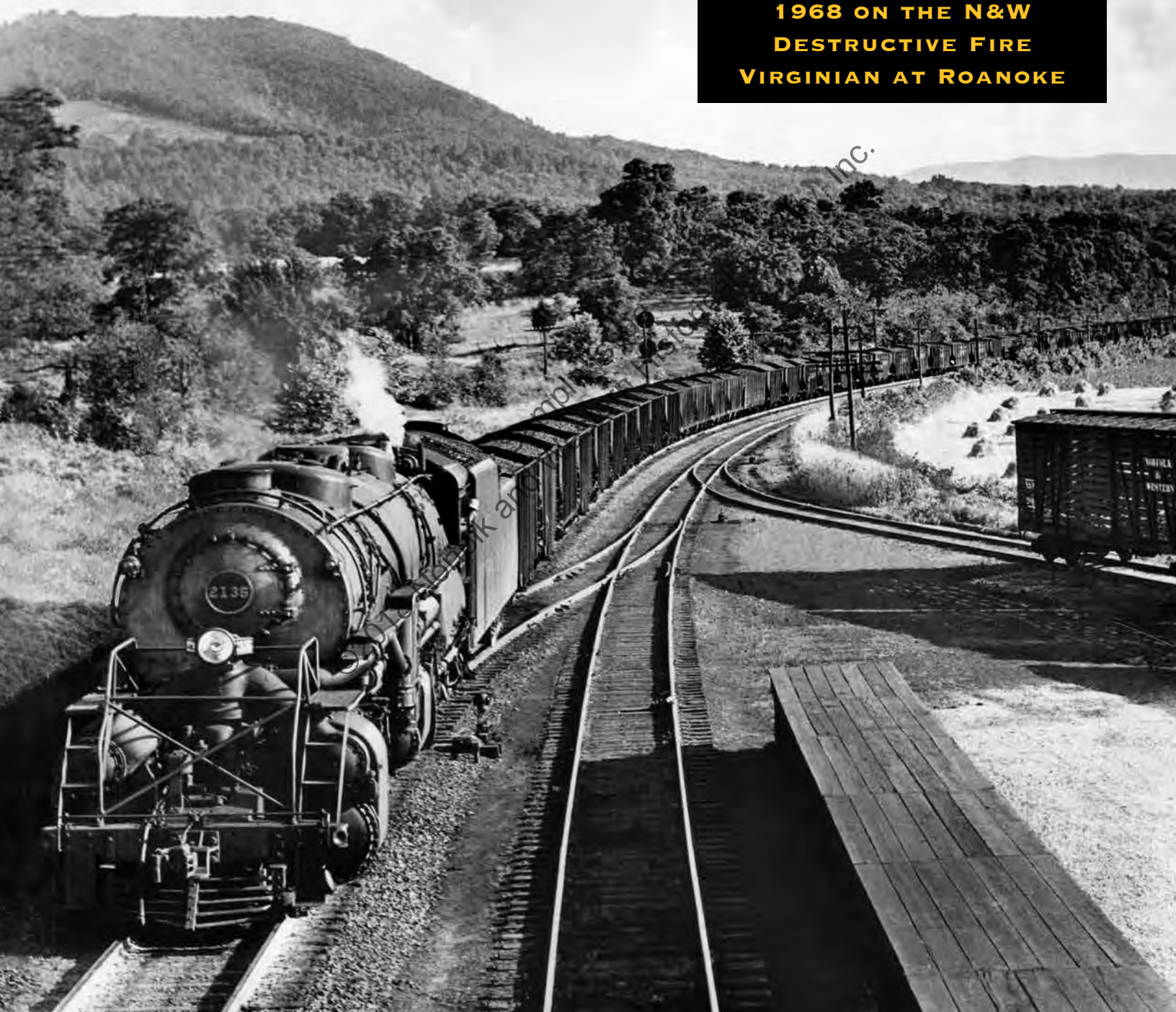
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**OUTWITTING THE U-BOATS**

**1968 ON THE N&W**

**DESTRUCTIVE FIRE**

**VIRGINIAN AT ROANOKE**



**Norfolk and Western**  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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## Cover Photo

This issue's cover is simply a tribute to those great N&W Company Photographers who recorded such great examples for us to enjoy and study all these many years later. They truly did fantastic work and have received minimal recognition to this day. Look for a feature on the Norfolk and Western Photographers at some time in the future. This scene of Y6 No. 2135 has loads of coal in tow as it curves into Front Royal, Virginia. This was featured on the cover of the July 1942 Norfolk and Western Magazine as part of our feature story from the archives on defeating the U-Boats, a classic World War II piece. With German U-Boats prowling off the Eastern seaboard sinking ships almost at will, the U.S. was drastically concerned about fuel that was shipping via tanker and freighter. On May 15, 1942, the Office of Price Administration began gasoline rationing in seventeen eastern states, and followed with the rest of the country late that same year.



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[www.nwhs.org](http://www.nwhs.org)



# THE HEAD END

BY RON DAVIS - PRESIDENT

## Changing Times

It is a fact. No matter how hard we try, we cannot stop time. As hard as it is for many of us to believe, it has been 36 years since the 1982 merger of the N&W with the Southern Railway. We look around at Conventions and the Archives and what little hair remains on our members heads is getting mighty gray. The numbers of those who worked for the N&W/VGN or took pictures along the right-of-way is slowly dwindling.

Your Board has recognized this problem and been discussing what to do about it for a few years. One choice is to stand by, keep on doing things the same way, and hope that things will get better. A second choice is to be proactive, make some changes, and do our best to ensure that the Norfolk and Western and Virginian railways do not fall from the pages of history.

I have used the phrase “spread the umbrella” to describe broadening the Society’s focus to include other related interests outside our core mid-20th-century steam era. Three areas for growth came out of the Board’s discussions:

(1) The period following the 1964 merger with the Wabash and Nickel Plate railroads. This merger significantly expanded the geographical area covered by the N&W and brought a broader mix of traffic to N&W tracks.

(2) There are many excellent model railroads based on the N&W being built by modelers who barely realize that the NWHS exists as an organization. Modelers have long been asking the Society to do more modeling articles and support more modeling products.

(3) Younger railfans and modelers who have grown up post-1982 with the Norfolk Southern Railway as their primary interest. These are the people most likely to keep the Society going after the rest of us have gone to the great roundhouse in the sky.

With these three points in mind, we are in the process of making a number of changes.

The first and most visible change was to take more responsibility for publication of *The Arrow*. While we are thankful for the many years that White River Productions did a great job publishing our magazine, differences over the content and the costs led us to take editorial control of the magazine. By better responding to our authors we hope to have more articles and more variety in future issues of *The Arrow*.

You will notice the environmentally-friendly biodegradable outer cover on the magazine replacing the old plastic bag. The new cover will provide space for announcements about Society activities and new products from the Commissary. The middle of the magazine will contain the new and improved *Talk Among Friends* where you will find society news, modeling articles, capital campaign postings as well as a listing of items available from the Commissary.

Next, our Model Advisory Team (formerly the modeling committee) has been working with a number of model manufacturers to bring more N&W/VGN models to market and utilize the Archives to make them more accurate. There was a time in the past where proposals from some manufacturers were very one-sided, contained considerable up-front costs to the Society, and were therefore rejected by the Board. Now the Board, the Team and the manufacturers have worked together to make new partnerships a win-win for the Society and the manufacturers. The results of a number of these partnerships will be on display at this year’s Convention and announced in *Talk Among Friends*.

While we have operated over 30 years as a largely volunteer organization, the need to have someone to answer the phone during business hours has been felt. We have contracted Ken Miller to field those calls, emails and other requests as well as and performing a number of other functions for the Society. Ken’s biggest task will be editing *The Arrow* and *Talk Among Friends* and encouraging new authors to submit material for our flagship magazine. Ken will also be tasked with producing books, magazines, and other products from the Archives.

Another task for Ken will be to launch a new electronic publication focused on the history of the Norfolk Southern Railway Corporation. This publication will tell the story of the N&W and Southern railways after their merger in 1982 with articles on NS history, modeling, and current events. Norfolk Southern has been in existence for 36 years so there is history there to document and share before it is lost.

This new journal will also lay the groundwork for providing other publications in electronic format, including current and back issues of *The Arrow* and the *N&W Magazine*.



Another publication focus will be the creation of books with more information useful to modelers. With one of the best archives among railroad historical societies, it is time for us to put all that information into a format that modelers and others can use. We plan books on rolling stock, structures, and the territories where they operated. These guides will contain information on painting and lettering, coloring, standards and variations from the standards, drawings, maps and photographs to give you information you can use to better model our favorite lines.

Through our modeling partnerships, the Commissary will carry products made specifically for and only available from NWHS.

To give you a stage to showcase your models, we have started a "Free-mo" interest group within the Society. The group plans to premier its modular model railroad at this spring's convention. Any member who wishes to build a module and join in the fun is welcome. Details for building a Free-mo module are posted on the web site at <http://www.nwhs.org/modeling/Free-moGuide.pdf>. More information is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Norfolk-and-Western-Historical-Society-Free-mo->

## THE HEAD END

BY DEAN TAYLOR - VICE PRESIDENT

We have a Facebook page with (on 03/09/18) with 7,690 likes. The SHRA (Southern) has 2,186 likes. The C&O 5,918 likes. Lets have a look at the BIG western railroads Union Pacific HS has 4,900 and the Santa Fe 4,700. Of the random ones picked the Pennsylvania HS is the only one that has a larger number at 9,100. That is only a difference of 1,410. These are not membership numbers, but it does beg the question, how can we with, roughly 1,150 members, convince the 6,540 who like us to become a part of our organization. The answer may be as simple as showing them that the Norfolk and Western Historical Society is a worthy place for them to become a member of. I have talked to people over the course of a year or so, and quite a few said "I didn't know you existed" or "I used to be a member but...."

The answer to that is a simple. Do things that people enjoy.

group-263894403973457/

Next, for those who like to work with the real 1:1 scale stuff, we have formed the Extra Force. The gang has their own custom hat that can only be earned by working on the crew. Last year, our gang cosmetically restored an N&W color position signal on the New River Trail State Park, formerly the N&W's North Carolina Branch. There will be other projects coming along as well.

This leads us to our next effort, which is to partner with museums and other historical venues. Last summer Vice-President Dean Taylor gave evening talks to folks camping at Foster Falls along the New River Trail State Park. In addition, the State Park has been carrying some of the Society's books in their gift shop.

The Norfolk and Western Historical Society is more than a magazine. It is the go-to place for the most accurate and comprehensive source for all things to do with the N&W and Virginian railways. We want that information to be known to many other folks.



The officers and directors have been working on a project that we hope we may be able to provide offer a sneak peek of at the 2018 convention.

We have begun creation of an electronic magazine for people take interest in the Norfolk Southern Railway. Much in the spirit of the *Arrow*, it will encompass the NS post 82 and beyond with articles on NS history, modeling, and current events. We will put the same TAF in this magazine as the *Arrow*. By letting people experience what they know and have a passion for will allow them to see what the Norfolk and Western was. The details have not been worked out but the foundation has been laid. This will open the doors to many possibilities.



# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

BY KEN MILLER



## Greetings from Roanoke!

Greetings one and all. Some of you know me, or at least recognize my name. I've been involved with the history of the Norfolk and Western and Virginian since I was young. My history goes back to being handed up as a 15 month old child to the cab of the Class M, No. 475. My father was a brakeman working that day on the Salem Shifter. The Shifter was a local that worked the industries around Salem, Va. from Roanoke. The 475 was freshly out of the shops and was on a couple of days of break-in before the NRHS convention on Labor Day weekend 1957.

Yes, I do remember it obviously made a huge impression on me, it was miserably hot, noisy, and dirty. Why did my father do this you ask? Honestly, I don't really know, I never thought to ask him, when I thought about asking, it was too late. I will say my father loved his job, at the time had been with the N&W since early 1947, and he was history minded. He saw so many things in his life, he was on duty as a radioman in the Navy when Pearl Harbor was attacked, and he saved the copy of the famous message "Air raid on Pearl Harbor X This is not drill." I still have it to this day. He watched the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay in September 1945. He instinctively knew that steam was going away, and maybe he just thought he'd be able to tell me years later "You know, son, you rode in the cab of one of those steam engines when you were just little." He had no way of knowing what an imprint he put on me. Even then, my mother would indulge me and take me to watch them shift around Salem. We did that for years. She always told me how I loved to go see the Shifter and my father. My father would take us out to see a wreck that might have occurred close enough to get to and see.

My mother continued our frequent trips to go watch the Shifter for years. We moved to Salem when I was four. I began to get a clue other folks had the same interest when I saw the August 1962 issue of *Railroad Magazine* on the newsstand and convinced my mother to buy it for me. The feature article became one of my other favorite railroads, West Virginia's Buffalo Creek and Gauley. But, other railroad compared with my hometown N&W or Virginian. I devoured the (then) monthly *N&W Magazine*.

Once I was old enough to ride my bike, I'd ride off and sit and wait for trains at the nearest road crossing. I got a little notebook and started making notes of units, times, caboose numbers etc. Then, I got a camera and began taking train pictures, never dreaming anyone else might do the same, or have an interest in it. In those days,

virtually nothing was available in print on the N&W. I must have checked out H. Reid's *Virginian Railway* from the county library at least 30 times before I finally got my own copy. In the mid-to late-1970s, I became involved with Roanoke Chapter National Railway Historical Society and was very involved with 611 and later 1218's restoration and operation. As time went by, I started studying the history more and more, and the deeper I got, the more I wanted. So, here we are today.

As Editor, I have some big shoes to fill. Kevin EuDaly did a great job for 11 years on the magazine; even when there was nothing to publish, Kevin managed to put together a magazine. Before that, Jarrel Greever fought the battle. I'm sort of in the same boat, so all you folks who that materials or ideas, let's put some of them to paper and pixels.

You'll see my interests reflected here. Every editor worth their salt puts his/her own stamp and personal interests in any publication. Railroad history is obviously a big part of those interests, but related to that, I've been a life-long collector of many things (as my late mother and now my wife will attest). I've also got much interest in World War II and local history.

As part of my World War II history, I purchase a British magazine called *After the Battle* (ATB). This magazine will revisit battle sites and has an in depth article and recent photos of historic scenes side by side. I find it fascinating, and want to see some of our features in the same way. You will see in an upcoming issue a feature article about the 1927 wreck of the Virginian train No. 3 that collided head-on with an eastbound electric powered coal train that features some then and now photos.

Many famous N&W photos are virtually impossible to recreate with the growth of underbrush, and sometimes the entire railroad is gone. I think readers will find these ATB scenes to be quite enlightening.

Enough with all this. I am eagerly expecting your ideas, articles, and photos. We have a great archives, but it can always use more and new material!





## From the Editor

On occasion we will reprint an article from a vintage *N&W Magazine*. These articles, which probably have not gotten wide circulation among our readers, are excellent examples of how it used to be on the railroad. Recommendations for article reprints can be sent to the editor, the address on the inside front cover. Keep in mind, the articles are presented EXACTLY as printed, references are all to the time frame as written, in this case, 1942

This article from the July 1942 *Norfolk and Western Magazine* is an excellent example of the spirit of unity on the home front during World War II. It conveys the vital role the railroads and more specifically, the N&W played during the war. When this article had been written by a Magazine staff writer, the time was ripe with the German U-Boat threat, just off the east coast of the U.S. Four days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Germany declared war with the United States.

America had only begun to prepare for war. Germany knew the way to prevent U.S. involvement was to cut off supplies to England: food, munitions, weapons, and eventually troops. Germany hoped to force England into a surrender prior to the U.S. arrival. The Battle of Britain had gone down as a defeat for Germany in the summer and fall of 1940, but German bombing raids continued in hopes of destroying the British spirit. Next was the effort to stop shipments of the vital war supplies at the source.

Barely a month after the declaration of war, German U-Boats (or submarines) began unrestricted warfare off the East Coast. As Germany had expected, the U.S. was unprepared. The U-Boats operated with little fear and sank ships in plain sight of the coast.

This article reflects the concerns of the seemingly impervious U-Boats and how the N&W was stepping up efforts to ship the now essential coal to the industrial Northeast. Several sources reported that the Northeast would lose almost 95% of its fuel oil shipments by tanker through 1943.



## Outwitting THE U-BOATS

By A. Cheff

***Our railroad helps combat the submarine menace by hauling coal all-rail between Roanoke and Hagerstown.***

Sixty years ago, last month (June 1942), the first train was operated from Hagerstown to Roanoke over what is now a part of the Shenandoah Division of the Norfolk and Western—then the Shenandoah Valley Railroad. In the 60 years that have passed since that memorable day when a little engine puffed laboriously into Roanoke with a few small cars, the Shenandoah Valley road has become a vital link between the northern and southern states. Over its rails have moved many millions of tons of freight, many thousands of passengers.

Today, if William Milnes, Frederick J. Kimball, Sydney F. Tyler and the other pioneers who built the Shenandoah Valley Railroad were alive they would see a railroad operating somewhat differently than originally planned, but one which would justify their faith in its future. For today, business is booming on the Shenandoah line. Coal trains, carrying thousands of tons of “black diamonds,” move out of Roanoke and up the valley to Hagerstown where the loads are delivered to connecting railroads for further movement to points in the northern and New England states.

The possibility that the Shenandoah line would one day become a full-fledged artery in the movement of coal

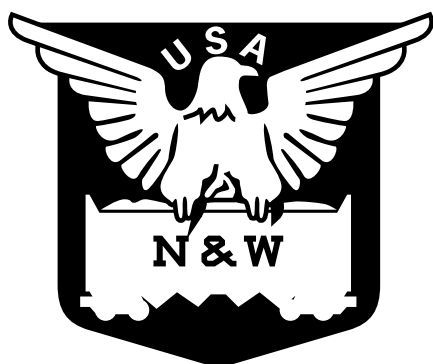
from N. & W. fields probably did not occur to Messrs. Milnes, Kimball and Tyler. They had planned the road as a connecting link between such

northern roads as the Pennsylvania and B. & O. and the young and thriving Norfolk and Western Railroad, with its connections to the South and West. For 60 years the Shenandoah line served faithfully in its appointed role. Moreover, it took on added responsibility as the territory it served grew in population and industrial and agricultural development.

A few months ago, however, a new usefulness emerged for the Shenandoah line. Axis submarines began striking at shipping along the Atlantic coast, thereby endangering the heavy water-borne coal traffic that moved between Hampton Roads and the northern and New England ports.

At once arose the necessity of finding alternate all-rail routes so that coal mined in the fields served by the Norfolk and Western would





Kenneth L. Miller

War-time graphic, recreated for this piece, was used small in the original article.

be available to help keep Eastern industries going on war production, to help generate electric power and to keep warm the millions of homes and schools and hospitals in the northern and New England States. Our Shenandoah Valley line was one of the all-rail routes available. By April 1, the division's rails were ringing with the rhythm of coal cars. By the end of May more than 800,000 tons-or nearly 14,000 carloads of coal had been diverted for movement over the Shenandoah route. In May alone, 6,350 carloads of coal were moved north over the line, as compared with 1,193 carloads in May, 1941—an increase of 430 per cent.

Over the 240 miles of single track between Roanoke and Hagerstown as many as 30 trains, mostly freight, are operated in a 24-hour period. To handle this traffic, the Norfolk and Western has doubled the number of Shenandoah Division train crews; now uses three sets of train dispatchers to handle movement between Hagerstown and Winston-Salem, which was formerly handled by two sets of dispatchers.

To get a first-hand glimpse of how the

**Roanoke**

Shenandoah line is operating under war conditions, I accompanied a coal train from Roanoke to Hagerstown and returned on a train of empties. It was a thrilling and interesting experience from beginning to end.

Reporting at the Roanoke Terminal yard office at 6:30 a. m., I extended an early morning greeting to my old friend, K.O. Barnett, who was on the job as relief yardmaster. Kindly taking me in tow, Mr. Barnett explained that our train would be designated as 3d No. 88 (third section of the time freight train of that number) and would leave Roanoke following passenger train No. 14. He further explained that our train was already made up in the yard, having been classified during the night. The classification took place as the coal loads were pushed over the new hump in Roanoke Yard and assembled so that all of the cars in a particular group or "cut" would be assigned to the same destination or connecting railroad, thus eliminating the need of additional classification further along the way.

Relief

Yardmaster Barnett introduced me to Conductor L. F. Myrtle, who was busy with waybills, etc., but who took time to extend a hearty handshake and "hello." It wasn't long before the locomotive which was to pull our train rolled down through the yard. In the engine cab were two other old friends—Engineer J. N. McFarland and Fireman W. E. Wright.

Pictures taken and acquaintance renewed, I got to the rear end just as the caboose was hitched on to the helper engine, piloted by Engineer C. B. Conner and Fireman R. H. Shropshire. Two signals from the head engine whistle and we were moving away from the yards, past the general office building and the shops and out on the main line, to North Roanoke for

No. 1.

When

No. 1

had passed, we resumed our journey.

Conductor Myrtle

(who was very patient and accommodating throughout the trip)

explained that the movement of our train between Roanoke and Cloverdale was governed entirely by

the train dispatcher at Roanoke, who regulates the switches and signals by remote control. Our first train order was received from the operator at Cloverdale. It specified, among other things, that we would meet Second No. 51 (a southbound time freight train) at Troutville, and that Second 51 would take siding. I learned from Conductor Myrtle and Flagman M. J. Zirkle that our train consisted of 75 carloads of coal, 15 of which were



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NWHS Archives Collection

Fourteen years after her small starring role in the story, the 2124 is still a valuable piece of equipment on the Shenandoah Division. Shown here at Shenandoah on October 14, 1956. While this looks like business as usual, this scene will be gone in a matter of months. The diesels are coming rapidly, and the Shenandoah Division will be dieselized in 1957.

were points in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey. Riding the caboose of a freight train is a fascinating experience. Instead of feeling that you are merely watching railroad operations from the

sidelines you have the sensation of participating in handling the train, in sharing some of the responsibility in getting it over the road. Furthermore, on a fine summer's day it is thrilling to stand on the rear platform and watch

have a meaning all their own, and to see the brakeman lean down with outstretched arm to pick up train orders from a telegraph operator.

We crossed the heavy grade at Nace, rolled down the slope to Buchanan, then on past Natural Bridge to Loch Laird where the train stopped for coal and water.

"I'd like to ride on the locomotive," I told Conductor Myrtle. "All right, go to it," he said. "We'll be here about ten minutes.

I boarded Engine No. 2124, a powerful machine having a tractive



N&W Magazine Photo

Ready to highball! Engineer J. N. McFarland (right) and Fireman W. E. Wright proudly pose for the *Magazine* in the cab of 2124.

the beauty of the countryside unfold as the ties recede in the distance and the wheels go clicking over the rails. Yes, this railroad business is a fascinating business. It's fascinating to pass another freight train, for instance, and listen when the crews shout to each other, identifying their trains, to watch as they exchange hand signals, which

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# A Half Century Ago

## The Norfolk and Western in 1968 – Part One

by Kenneth L. Miller



### From the Editor

While it is hard for me to believe, it HAS been 50 years since 1968! Sad to say, but the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were simply part of the day. Remember; John F. Kennedy had been murdered less than five years before. So further killings seemed like this was the way things are done.

I always read the *Norfolk and Western Magazine* when it came in, but it was sure not as good a magazine as it used to be. It was now coming every six weeks or so, and it really had changed. My interest in railroads faded, somewhat. My life would begin to revolve around school and baseball, I followed the Detroit Tigers to their World Championship during 1968. While I still had my Lionel trains, they took a backseat to other things in 1968. But by winter, somehow, my railroad interest came bursting back.

Now, in retrospect It was a turbulent time in American 50 years ago, not just the country, but on the Norfolk and Western as well. This is not meant to be an all-inclusive article, but a look back at some of the events in that year following "the summer of love." Material was primarily gleaned from the *Norfolk and Western Magazine*, *Norfolk and Western Annual Reports*, materials from our Archives and some other sources.

To help frame the events of the year, a number of other news and pop culture events are included. These events, while not directly effecting the N&W, certainly affected its employees and families. Indeed, volumes have been written on 1968, but to help it come in perspective, I feel it is helpful to see some of the things that came into play during that year.

When I first started this project, I thought it would be an easy 1,500 word essay. Wow, was I mistaken! The more I studied, the more interested I got.

A fresh start was the theme of the cover of the first issue of the *Magazine*, dated January 1, 1968. In that era, the *Magazine* was issued every six weeks. On the inside of that front cover was a message from President Herman Pevler stating "I daresay many of you are not too sad in having such a year pass into oblivion, for it was one that caused more disappointments and more unrest than any previous year in my memory."

He went on to say:

*"Business atmosphere and personal lives were greatly disturbed by the turbulences which seemed an almost daily occurrence. We were constantly confronted with problems inherent to the war in Vietnam, riots which caused much disruption in many of our cities, the demonstrations that occurred over just about any controversial issue, the full emergence of the hippies and their unusual manner of living, the cautiousness of people who were concerned about the political and economic conditions which governed business, and the constant threat of further involvement in world affairs that could ultimately extend our battlefronts."*

Pevler went on to discuss the disappointing business year of 1967,



N&W President Herman Pevler

with strikes in the coalfields and automotive industry as well as other industrial strikes that also directly affected the N&W's business. He

went on to say that the railroad faced the new year with "renewed vigor and optimism" and signs appeared to point to improved economic conditions.

Despite Mr. Pevler's hope for a calmer year, it certainly was not to begin that way. On January 23, North Korean patrol boats captured the USS Pueblo and its 83 man crew. The North Korean claim was the intelligence gathering ship had violated their twelve mile territorial limit. On January 31, North Vietnam launched its Tet offensive with almost 70,000 troops. This event is considered a major turning point of U.S. attitude about the war. The next day, a South Vietnamese general was caught in a then shocking, Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph executing a North Vietnamese prisoner. The following day Richard Nixon announced his candidacy for President.

In happier N&W news, the N&W ran a special train for the Virginia state legislature to visit Norfolk on January 20-21. The delegation toured, among many other things, Norfolk International Terminal to see a brand new crane put in service to load and unload containers. The N&W dining car department received a number of compliments on their food and service from the delegates.

On television there were three network channels and public broadcasting, and you changed

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# Norfolk and Western's Freight Car Fleet

## Unusual Covered Hopper HC-11

by Kenneth L. Miller

Research can lead you in some funny directions. This little exercise started with a check for information on wood chip hoppers.

Now how does one get on the subject of wood chip hoppers? Well, this time, I spotted one in a 1970s photo and remembering seeing them in Roanoke Yard.

The cars were, for their time, unusually tall and really stood out in the yard. So, searching the *N&W Magazine* and our Archives have led me to a fair amount of information about those cars, classified as H-34/H-34a, but that story is for later.

These cars were originally Virginian H-14 hoppers, built at Princeton in a large group built between 1955-57. An additional batch of cars was ordered prior to December 1, 1959 and completed after the merger.

This led to a diagram book for freight cars, and the now curious HC-11. Accordingly, the diagram for these cars was completed in October 1960 for 70 cars numbered 71900-71969. But in the photo below, the date built is obviously February 1961.

Now these covered hoppers were not like N&W's other covered hoppers. For starters, they were not painted

the normal gray. Secondly, for a bit of mystery, these cars were built to handle a product called "coal char." Now I had never heard of coal char, and found little about it on the internet. Thanks to Alex Schust, who reported back: "During 1960-1970 the government funded a number of studies to find other commercial uses of coal,

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# A Norfolk and Western Prototype You Can Model!

## Drawings from the N&WHS Archives

by Kenneth L. Miller

Exploring the Archives is always a pleasure. You honestly never know what curious find you might make and usually learn something new about the railroad.

Such is the case with drawing D92952 from February 1934, listed as "Commissary Car Building, Roanoke Shops." As soon as I looked at the drawing, I knew this was a model just waiting to be built by someone.

Long before recycling became an issue, the railroads led the way. From the earliest days of the railroads, they found ways to reuse and repurpose older equipment, materials and supplies.

The wooden passenger car era was rapidly ending with the downturn in traffic after the onset of the Great Depression. In late 1933 and early 1934, many wooden cars were scrapped or burned (below).

Accordingly, at least two survived as part of the commissary for Roanoke Shops employees. They were built into this unusual building using two Pf class coaches. The Pf coaches were 20-window cars, but it is easy to see that the railroad converted two windows on the one side to sliding doors.

On the original drawing, some of the lines for the counter were so weak, drawn in pencil, they had to be recreated in the scanned drawing based on the remaining pencil marks.

This drawing reflects that 85 stools were available at the counter or

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All: N&WHS Archives Collection

