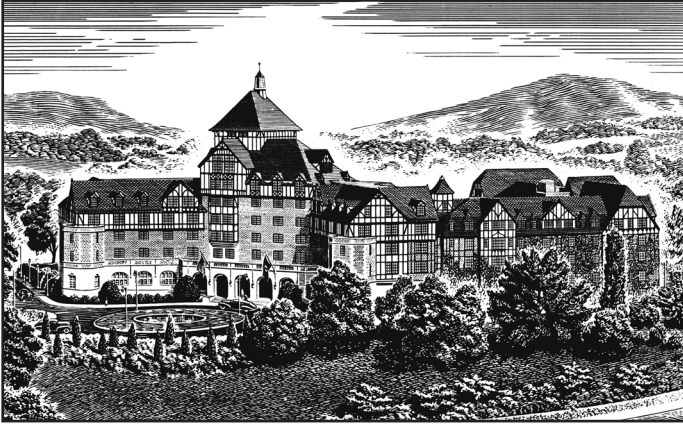




NORFOLK & WESTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Convention 2026

Homecoming to Roanoke! June 11-13



The N&WHS would like to invite you to the 2026 N&WHS convention in Roanoke, Va. This year's convention is being held at the famed Hotel Roanoke. Long an N&W property, and as far as Roanokers go "**The Hotel**" Getting the Hotel is a really special thing, as we had previously been told we simply were not big enough a group. With personal connections, we have negotiated a great rate for our group. **Normally, the Hotel is \$299 a night plus tax, we have negotiated a rate of only \$189 a night plus tax.** Parking is available in the Hotel lot. Rooms are limited, please book early, long before June, to ensure the best rate and availability of rooms.

Roanoke really needs no introduction to N&W fans, unfortunately, as we see almost everywhere, there is less and less historical places and more difficulty in getting onto the railroad property. As in the past few years, bus transportation is unfortunately out of reach. So, with that in mind, as we have the last couple of years, the focus will primarily be on fellowship and getting together. We are in the process of organizing several interesting outings, which may change as we get closer to the date. Buses continue to be too expensive for our group and car-pooling will continue to be the usual procedure.

Modeling Committee Chairman Jim Cochran asks everyone to bring their latest entries.

A tentative schedule – some events very much subject to change – is listed as follows:

Thursday, June 11

Morning: Registration begins outside the conference rooms at 9:00 a.m. and should be staffed through the afternoon and early evening; however, there may be a break or two for meals, so if no one is there, check back later.

11:00 a.m., the N&WHS Board Meeting will take place at the Archives.

Afternoon: The afternoon is open for you to railfan around Roanoke if arriving early.

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Archives open.

5:00 p.m. Always a popular event, our barbecue at the Virginia Museum of Transportation

A complete schedule of seminars and presentations will be issued as it is finalized.

Friday, June 12

All Day/Evening: Seminars TBA

Afternoon: 1:00 p.m. Tour of Kidd Locomotive Works (tentative) in Roanoke Shops, preregistration required, tour limited to 50 participants. Hard soled, closed-toe shoes required. Registration at desk.

Evening: 7:00 p.m. Seminars Begin in the Conference Rooms.

8:00 p.m. Modeling Committee Meets

9:00 p.m. – Virginian Interest Group Meeting

Afternoon and evening: There will be a welcome and socializing in the Hotel's "Speakeasy" known as AKA. This is a vintage room in the basement of the Hotel with quite a nice history feel.

Saturday, June 13

9:00 a.m. Annual membership meeting.

10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Archives open.

6:00 p.m. Cocktail Hour (On your own & Banquet at the Hotel Roanoke, speaker to be announced.

Sunday, June 14

Time to go home! Enjoy a breakfast at the Hotel and some final time of fellowship before departing.

Talk Among Friends



Norfolk and Western Historical Society

2026 Board of Directors

The Society elections are here. On the following pages are the forms that folks who have stated their interest in running for the available three seats on the Society's Board of Directors beginning at the Board Meeting in June 2026. We elect three Directors every year, and in 2026

The following directors seats are up this year:

Sam Phillips (term limits)

Dr. Frank Scheer (term limits)

Christine Williams

Each of these positions is important in the operation of the Society. Sam Phillips and Dr. Frank Scheer have reached the end of their second term, so they are not eligible for re-election.

The future of the Society requires that we have a competent and committed group of officers and directors in leadership positions. It is also essential that there be new participants in this process to ensure fresh ideas, relief for those currently serving, and the spread of the responsibilities necessary for the smooth functioning of the organization.

The Board meets at least three times yearly, with meetings in the Fall, late Winter, and at the annual convention. Occasionally, they will also meet at additional times as needed. In addition to a review of the Society's finances, the schedule includes var-

ious relevant topics. The Board meets virtually (via Zoom) and, if at all possible, in person. Much of the Board's business is also conducted electronically, via email to the Board list.

The future and continued health of the organization make it essential that more members step forward and "get involved!" We have a roughly 750-member organization with less than 20 members carrying the load to make things work. Description of the Duties of a Director

The Board of Directors collectively assumes fiduciary, legal, and philosophical responsibility for all N&W Historical Society activities. The Board of Directors is responsible for establishing society policy, approving the Society's finances, and determining the goals of the Society per its mission statement.

A Director should be very interested in the Society's purpose and goals and in serving the membership. In addition, a member's experience in or knowledge of administration, finance, program development, marketing, media communications, railroad, regional history, and railroad modeling is a valuable strength that easily applies to the administration of the Society and its projects and plans.

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2026 Candidates (displayed in order received)

Mark W. Robin
Roanoke, VA

1. *Describe briefly the skills and experience you would provide to the Society if elected to serve on the Board of Directors.*

With a 41 year career in Information Technology, Business Process Engineering, Project Management, and Consulting, I have a broad set of business and technical skills honed over decades supporting our nation's military and federal civilian information needs. I believe this experience can be directly applied to the mission of the

N&WHS in the areas of membership outreach, retention, and growth as well as support the other board members and society officers in reaching their goals.

2. *What are the goals, programs, and activities you would like to have the Society undertake or improve upon during your term?*

- a) I would like to support and encourage a more structured approach to membership outreach, retention, growth and engagement by using all means available to the society.

2026 Board of Directors

The candidates all received and submitted the same form. They are presented here in order of receipt, from earliest to last. These are unedited from their responses.

To vote, clip or copy the ballot form on page, vote for no more than three candidates, any votes for more than three will invalidate the ballot.

Instructions for the Ballot: This year we will elect three (3) directors by secret ballot. Any member in good standing may vote.

1 - Mark the ballot (vote for not more than three (3) directors. If more than three (3) votes are cast, the ballot will be discarded).

2 - Place the ballot in an envelope marked "ballot" and seal. Do not put your name on the ballot or "ballot" envelope.

3 - Place "ballot" envelope in a separate mailing envelope. Write your name and return address on the envelope to validate your vote, and mail to;

N&WHS Election

P.O. Box 13908

Roanoke, VA 24038

The ballot must be in the Post Office box prior to May 31, 2026. The Society cannot be responsible for delays in the postal service

b) I would like to support our leadership's current efforts on outreach, particularly increasing our involvement with the community at large, to include other similar institutions. I believe collaboration is critical to the longevity of the N&WHS and our continued ability to meet the societies mission objectives.

c) Current N&WHS leadership is already thinking about and taking action to recruit student interns to help support our ongoing activities for the archive. I would like to support these efforts by working with leadership to create a formal internship and mentoring program. A formal N&WHS internship program would allow us to better market the N&WHS to local educational institutions.

3. *What ways would you suggest that the Society could improve its operations and the archive?*

a) Modernize/update our current computing infrastructure, to include new servers and data storage. As I have already started to work on membership activities, I've noticed an increasing lag when launching large email campaigns to our membership base.

b) During my short time as an active member/volunteer, I've noticed that we consistently run short of "boots on the ground"; that is, active volunteers in the archive that are available to support various society projects as they arise. By increasing membership outreach, my hope is we can recruit more active volunteers in the Roanoke area that can realistically be called upon to physically support the Archive.

4. *What should the Society do, in your opinion to sustain its membership base and continue to be a viable and effective organization?*

a) We must increase our membership. It's an old adage, "Grow or Die." As I've taken on more membership related activities, I've done a brief analysis of our available membership records. As many of you suspect, membership has been slowly falling off over the years. My immediate recommendation is that we expend our greatest effort to stop this membership contraction, and then do our best to start expanding again. We need these members and their dues to support the mission objectives of the N&WHS. Without volunteer effort from our membership base, and the money raised from their membership fees, meeting our mission will become more difficult over time, and eventually impossible.

b) How do we get there? Recognize there is a problem. Create a mitigation plan with realistic goals. Execute the plan. Correct the plan as needed. If elected to the board, I will create, execute and maintain this Membership Plan.

c) In order to monitor the problem, membership contraction, I will create a quarterly membership report that will give the society the dashboard needed to manage membership actions. A sample report was provided to the BoD in January of 2026.

d) Increase communications with membership through an increased cadence of emails, social media posts and other means of communications as the society sees fit to do. I've already begun this increased cadence.

e) Work with our existing volunteer IT team to better track membership data from our existing database. I've already started this activity.

f) Explore the possibility of implementing a dedicated commercial membership software package, and analyze if it would benefit the societies membership retention and growth efforts.

**Chad Jordan
Roanoke, VA**

1. Describe briefly the skills and experience you would provide to the Society if elected to serve on the Board of Directors.

I have been around railroads my whole life. I grew up along the SCL in Roanoke Rapids, NC and became enamored with the N&W at a young age. This was due to my Dad taking me to Crewe, VA to see the yard operations there. Of course the 611 helped seal my affection for the N&W during 80s and 90s excursions that I rode. I hired on the railroad on May 29, 2003 and am a qualified conductor in all directions out of Roanoke and an engineer on the Winston-Salem district. I have studied the history of the N&W for years and enjoy learning more details about it. I am on the crew of 611 as an engineer / fireman and enjoy preserving and keeping N&W history alive for future generations to know about the best railroad in the world.

2. What are the goals, programs, and activities you would like to have the Society undertake or improve upon during your term?

I have seen first hand the cooperation between the N&W HS and VMT. I would like to see more joint activities with not only VMT, but other organizations also. The recent program at VMT about the 611's worst day, was great event.

3. What ways would you suggest that the Society could improve its operations and the archive?

The search feature on the website needs some attention. It is sometimes difficult to find things. The archive itself is amazing and I highly recommend those who haven't been to see it recently, to try and do so soon.

4. What should the Society do, in your opinion to sustain its membership base and continue to be a viable and effective organization?

The *Arrow* is one of the best publications available and anyone that sees it whether they are a N&W fan or not would have to agree. I do believe we need to put our name out in the spotlight more. Flyers in different museums and business to setting up at community events. It was great to see the Society at Goshen, VA last year during the 611 excursions.

**Ben Shank
Callaway, Va**

1. Describe briefly the skills and experience you would provide to the Society if elected to serve on the Board of Directors.

I have served on the BOD before. I am a volunteer at the archives, so I am familiar with the archives operation. I also have experience with building maintenance.

2. What are the goals, programs, and activities you would like to have the Society undertake or improve upon during your term?

I think the main goal we should achieve is finding a way to have more people volunteer to continue our mission of digitizing all our material, so it could be available for use.

3. What ways would you suggest that the Society could improve its operations and the archive?

We have been doing some remodelling already and we probably need to some more to make the building much more usable. I think when we get some more volunteers we need a list of projects that could be selected to be worked on.

4. What should the Society do, in your opinion to sustain its membership base and continue to be a viable and effective organization?

I think we need to advertise the society in the train magazines, emphasizing what we do and what is available as resources for potential members. I think the ad should include photos as well.

**Christine Williams
Sadieville, KY**

1. Describe briefly the skills and experience you would provide to the Society if elected to serve on the Board of Directors.

I would bring to the Norfolk & Western Historical Society a strong blend of nonprofit leadership, board governance, and strategic project management developed over more than two decades in mission driven organizations. My professional background in healthcare IT—focused on process improvement, systems analysis, and stakeholder engagement—equips me to strengthen organisational operations, enhance communication, and support long term sustainability. I also have extensive experience in volunteer development, training, and community engagement, which I would apply to expanding membership, supporting volunteers, and helping the Society preserve its history while planning strategically for the future.

2. What are the goals, programs, and activities you would like to have the Society undertake or improve upon during your term?

I would like to see the Society strengthen its long term

sustainability by expanding fund development efforts, cultivating new donor relationships, and exploring grant opportunities that support preservation and education. I am also interested in developing programs that broaden public engagement—especially initiatives that introduce railroading history to new audiences through digital content, community partnerships, and hands on learning experiences. Enhancing outreach, creating accessible entry points for rail enthusiasts of all ages, and promoting the Society's collections and expertise more widely would help grow membership, increase visibility, and ensure the continued relevance of the Norfolk & Western legacy.

3. *What ways would you suggest that the Society could improve its operations and the archive?*

I believe the Society can strengthen its operations and archive by investing in more consistent processes, modernizing digital infrastructure, and expanding volunteer capacity. Streamlining workflows for cataloging, digitization, and research requests would improve efficiency and reduce bottlenecks, while developing clear documentation and cross training volunteers would help preserve institutional knowledge. Enhancing the digital archive—through improved metadata, expanded online access, and updated technology—would make the collection more discoverable to researchers and the general public. I also see opportunities to strengthen communication, both internally and externally, to ensure that members, volunteers, and donors understand the Society's priorities and the value of its collections. Together, these improvements would support long term sustainability and help the archive better serve railroading enthusiasts, historians, and future generations.

4. *What should the Society do, in your opinion to sustain its membership base and continue to be a viable and effective organization?*

I believe the Society can sustain its membership and remain a viable, effective organization by strengthening its value proposition, expanding engagement opportunities, and investing in long term relationships with both current and prospective members. Prioritizing consistent communication, meaningful programming, and visible progress on preservation and archival initiatives will reinforce trust and relevance. At the same time, diversifying fund development, expanding volunteer involvement, and creating more accessible entry points—such as digital content, community partnerships, and public facing railroading programs—will help attract new audiences. By combining strong stewardship with proactive outreach, the Society can grow its membership base and

ensure its continued impact for future generations.

**Larry Evans
Kenova, WV**

1. *Describe briefly the skills and experience you would provide to the Society if elected to serve on the Board of Directors.*

Fifty years in railroading preservation, rail car ownership and steam locomotive restoration projects Former N&WHS Board Member and current C.P Huntington Chapter NRHS Treasurer. Avid collector of N&W Locomotive Hardware and N&W historic artifacts

2. *What are the goals, programs, and activities you would like to have the Society undertake or improve upon during your term?*

Long term Archive Security, more Multimedia Products and Research & Development activities. Web Site sales improvement and availability

3. *What ways would you suggest that the Society could improve its operations and the archive?*

Increase involvement and spread-out tasks, and be more inclusive to all members. We already have the best archives in the country but there is always room for improvement

4. *What should the Society do, in your opinion to sustain its membership base and continue to be a viable and effective organization?*

I have no great answer here. It's a problem that has been ongoing with all rail organizations -- not just N&WHS . As a former board member, I have worked on it, as have all the recent board members. We are going have to try some broader methods to get the get younger generation involved. Got to make it fun and educational. We need to sponsor more events like photo charters and field trips Seminars to make it happen. But if we don't make it fun, no one is going knock at our door or face the facts that it might not be possible. And we need to focus on ways of securing archives materials for a longer run. Status quo cannot continue.

Ballot is on page 2

**Must be in our Post Office Box by
May 31, 2026**

Board of Directors Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting of N&WHS Board of Directors, Zoom as well June 11, 2025 – Virtual/Highlander Hotel

The virtual meeting was called to order by Chairman Frank Sheer at 11:00 am. Attending:

Virtually: Brent Stevens, attending in person: Frank Scheer, Ron Davis, Christine Williams, Tim Hensley, Ken Miller, Kurt Reisweber, Stephen Warren, Ken Musante, Rick Musser, Andre Jackson, Doug André, and Jim Cochran. Not attending: Bob Gordon.

Welcome by the Chairman. It is noted that members should keep reports very concise. Frank said our primary discussion should be what to talk to the members at the Annual Meeting on the following Sunday. Frank introduced Tim Hensley.

President Hensley introduces all the board members and asks them to introduce themselves, which was done around the table by each individual member; these introductions are not included here.

Tim has provided a written report and summarized it.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting. Minutes were approved with no corrections.

Treasurer Report: Everything looks good; we are in good financial shape. \$120,000 in unrestricted funds and \$171,000 in restricted funds, which he summarized in his email.

Membership: Nothing new to report. Jim discussed a proposal for short-term membership. Jim makes a motion for a six-month trial or gift membership, covering two issues of the Arrow, for \$35. Seconded by Rick Musser. Motion passed.

Archives Report: Doug summarized his written report, discussed volunteer areas, and outlined the work on the building to be done after the convention.

Sales/Publications: Ken previously sent out reports. The chairman suggests making a proposal for the next report.

Fund Development: Christine has provided an outline, previously sent out, on a suggested plan of action. Suggests we find a major donor to match other donors' campaigns. She emphasized that every board member participates in donating to the campaign. We need a plan. Because we didn't communicate it well, we need to talk to people. We need a clear mission and a clear statement on such.

Society News - March 2, 2026

The Arrow

Unfortunately, the Arrow has been delayed. Not due to technical issues, but simply your editor lost most of December, January and February due to his wife's grave illness, which resulted in her passing on January 29. He is hoping to get the *Arrow* completely back on track by mid-year and

President Hensley discusses the potential demise and closure of the C.P. Huntington Chapter of NRHS. Once they have the C&O 1308 transferred to the Age of Steam. The Chapter will likely close down, and N&WHS and C&OHS will be the beneficiaries of the remaining funds.

Old Business

2025 Convention – Going on now.

Modeling Committee: Jim Cochran reports

Archives Building: Already discussed.

New Business:

Fund Development: Christine Williams sent a proposal for an immersion experience for the N&WHS Archives. She describes how the Taubman did an impressionist painter's experience. She thinks she has a donor who can support this type of idea, outside the Roanoke area as well. Christine makes a motion for the board to give approval and authority for research and concept development to assess the feasibility of an immersion experience at the N&WHS Archives. Jim Cochran seconds the motion. Some discussion on the topic. Motion passes.

Officers and Directors: Stephen asks if we have elected officers and directors. Ken makes a motion that we elect the officers and directors for another year. Motion seconded and passed.

Convention: Ken suggests we begin calling the Archives the headquarters to help members understand that it is what it is all about. Ken also makes a motion to form a permanent convention committee, consisting of Ken Miller, Doug Andre, Frank Bongiovanni, and Steve Summers, seconded by Tim Hensley. Motion passes.

Ron reports that we now have the capability on our member website, where folks can opt in and be connected with members.

The next meeting is virtual on Saturday, September 20, 2025, at 9:30 am, in person at Salem Avenue. Zoom is available as a medium.

Motion to adjourn at 2:34 pm. The motion was by Christine Williams, seconded by Ken Miller. Motion passed.

*Respectfully submitted
Ken Miller, Secretary*

apologizes for the delay, but family and health comes first.

Membership

While we continue to emphasize that we need to increase membership and bring in younger members.

2026 Annual Convention
Join us for the Homecoming
in Roanoke, June 11-13, 2026.
Details Inside

Norfolk and Western Historical Society, Inc
P.O. Box 13908
Roanoke, VA 24038-3908

Homecoming to Roanoke!
N&WHS Convention • June 11-13

