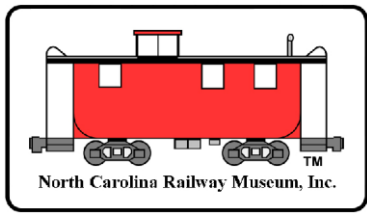


North Carolina Railway Museum, Inc.

Short NHVRy History



Updated: October 10, 2023

The railroad line you are riding today is the New Hope Valley Railway (NHVRy) that began in 1904 as the New Hope Valley Railroad (NHVRR) to run from Bonsal in Wake County and originally intended to run north through the valley

only railroad with direct trackage into the American Tobacco complex in Durham, this provided a ready, in-house means of transporting tobacco products into and out of the plant. The line operated as a NS branch line until about 1969 when the US Army Corps of Engineers determined to create Jordan Lake in the valley of the New Hope Creek. Since this would flood a portion of the line, the Corps built a 20 mile bypass line starting in Bonsal going north around the east side of what would become the lake.

The *ECC NRHS* began operating train rides for visitors in April 1984, and although early operations were somewhat sporadic, they eventually evolved into the regularly scheduled train rides operated on the NHVRy today.



In 2008 the *ECC NRHS* became the *North Carolina Railway Museum* (NCRM) that operates the historic NHVRy. The NCRM facilities at Bonsal include an outdoor exhibit of historic railroad equipment dating back to the 1910s, two steam locomotives, 9 diesel locomotives, a train of excursion cars for passengers, a working Garden Railroad (G-Gauge), the 1884 Goldston depot and numerous artifacts for the interpretation of North Carolina's railroad history. The yard area at Bonsal is designed to give the visitor the impression of a typical short line railroad yard area in the south.

The NS (including the D&S) was acquired on January 1, 1974 by the *Southern Railway* (SOU) which was one of the largest railroads in the American south.

After serving as a route for materials used to build the *Harris Nuclear Plant* starting in the 1960s, the SOU decided to abandon the line. Members of the *East Carolina Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society* approached SOU to purchase part of the line, and with that done relocated to Bonsal in August 1982.

Our future plans call for the construction of additional buildings to house our collections and for the comfort of our visitors. They will also provide additional educational experiences and opportunities.

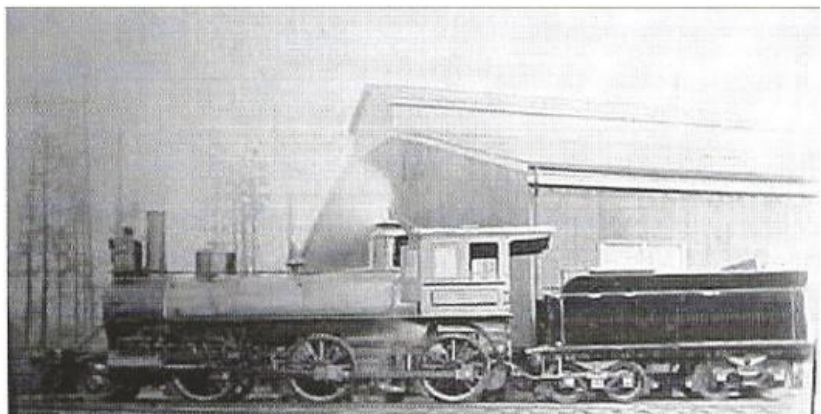
of the New Hope Creek to Carrboro (then called West End). It would connect there with the University Railroad to reach Durham. The NHVRR was founded by William Roscoe Bonsal, Samuel Bauersfeld, and Henry Armand London, and designed by civil engineer William Moncure. The primary traffic was to be lumber cut from the forests of the New Hope Valley, and agricultural products from the farms along the line.

However, within a year the owners determined running to Durham would be more profitable, so a new railroad called the Durham & South Carolina Railroad (D&S) was chartered in 1905 that acquired the land and assets of the New Hope Valley Railroad before any track had been laid. The 40-mile D&S was built by 1911.

The current 4-mile NHVRy line from Bonsal to New Hill became the historic railroad line of today. The line to the north from New Hill to Durham became the *American Tobacco Trail*, and the line to the south became the rail line into the *Harris Nuclear Plant* with the remaining track further south to Duncan being previously abandoned.

The NCRM is an all-volunteer, educationally focused 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations and ticket purchases have allowed our non-profit to serve the community for over 40 years. Thank you for visiting us today and taking a ride on the NHVRy. Consider joining us!

The D&S was never a major railroad and never reached South Carolina. It terminated at its south end at Duncan in northern Harnett County where it connected to the original *Norfolk & Southern Railroad* (NS). Eventually, the D&S was acquired by the NS at the behest of the *American Tobacco Company* in 1920, a major N&S shareholder. As the



D&S LOCOMOTIVE FROM BALDWIN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS 1909