

Julie Bledsoe

From: Allan Paul <apaul@dot.state.nc.us>
To: Elizabeth Smith <elizabeth.smith@ncmail.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 12, 2002 6:00 PM
Subject: Re: Rolling Stock at NCTM

Elizabeth: The FGE car that we put the mini-theater in was donated by FGE to Historic Sites. We paid FGE to "restore" the exterior before delivering it to Spencer. It was part of the Master Mechanic's Office opening which had the temporary displays that included the hi-wheeler bikes and the large backlit site map. I think that was 1978.

The other FGE car I'm not sure about. I think I got it donated to the State about the same time. Have you asked Don? If Don doesn't know I can probably figure it out if I dig out some old records at home. My plan had been to use the ice bunker FGE car to interpret the old days, and to tell the fascinating story of the huge East Spencer RR Ice Plant and the towns people who worked there. The mechanical FGE car was to represent the modern era. FGE was very supportive of the project and offered lots of historic photos and movie footage for the planned exhibit. Unfortunately no one followed up with FGE after I left and no telling where all of that wonderful historic company info is today. Shortly after I left FGE went thru a major restructuring and shut down its huge shop in Alexandria and laid off alot of its labor and management. Probably the same folks I had worked with to get the 2 cars for Spencer and the photo/docs.

The 1943 Troop Sleeper was given to the State by Southern Ry. in 1977 or 1978. It had been a Norfolk Southern (old NS) MOW car as you know. It was retired and put in the scrap line at Southern's Raleigh Yard. I saw it there and asked Mr. Bisilino to intervene. It got fixed up for the move to Spencer a day later and was on a train to Spencer two days later! My plan with the troop sleeper was to restore it to its WWII Army appearance, put it with the WWII army hospital car, a WWII troop kitchen car, a WWII mortuary car, a WWII army communications car, and the 0-6-0 army switcher we got from the W.R. Bonsal company to form a complete "representative" WWII troop train. No one in the country has done it before or since. Its a huge untold story at USA RR museums. Unfortunately the completely original and equipped kitchen car I had lined up for donation was allowed to fall thru the cracks after I left. The RR that owned it got frustrated with Historic Sites not following thru with its promise to move it and they ended up scrapping it. (I do know where there are 2 other WWII Army kitchen cars in poor but restorable condition though.) Likewise no one followed up on the mortuary car or the communications car. The mortuary car still exists, but the communications car got cut up a few years ago.

The steam "crane" was built for the Newport News Ship Building and Dry Dock Company in 1940 or 41 and delivered to their new ship building operation in Wilmington, NC where it was used to assemble the 100s of Liberty and Victory ships that were built in Wilmington during WWII. As you know the ship yard

became the State Port and the Ports Authority inherited the steam crane, the Port switch engine, and the flat cars you have. All of the above equipment was put up on state surplus by the Port. We got it on an interagency purchase agreement for \$100.00 before it went out on public bid. We paid Seaboard Coast Line and Southern to move the locomotive and the crane to Spencer by rail. We paid Moss Trucking company to move the crane boom and the flat cars to Spencer over the road.

Michael Smith the Historic Sites Collections Curator at the time and I kept VERY detailed acquisition logs on all of this stuff. Is that information not around anymore? We did this for both Trans. History Corp. equipment donations/acquisitions and State equipment donations/purchases. I didn't keep a personal copy of those cards. Hope you can find them it would be a real shame if they've disappeared.

Hope some of this is helpful to you. Take care. Allan.

Elizabeth Smith wrote:

> Allan, hope you are doing well on this rainy day. We are attempting to
> clean up some of our records as related to Rolling Stock. There are a
> few pieces that we do not know anything about where they came from or to
> whom they were intended. I would like to ask you to look at the short
> list and tell me if any of this rings a bell. Thank you!
> 1949 Fruit Growers Express Car #39650
> 1956 Fruit Growers Express Car #1580
> 1943 NS Troop Sleeper #911
> Steam Derrick
>
> --
> *****
> Elizabeth Smith
> North Carolina Transportation Museum
>
> North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
> Historic Sites Section
>
> elizabeth.smith@ncmail.net
>
> ** The opinions expressed here may not be those of my agency **
> **E-Mail to and from me, in connection with the transaction of public
> business, is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law
> and may be disclosed to third parties. **