

First Run in 20 Years Planned on Old Railway

(Columbus Dispatch, New Straitsville, April 25, 1951) Railroad history will be re-enacted May 27 along the route of the old Hocking Valley Railroad, now the Chesapeake & Ohio, between Columbus, Lancaster, Logan and Jackson.

A special train, sponsored by the Central Ohio Railfans Association and Columbus Fans, will leave Columbus at 9 a.m., traveling over the Hocking Valley route. Residents of this area will get their first chance to ride on a train on the Dundas-Jackson line since 1931.

Passenger Train Making First Run on Line Since 1931

(Columbus Dispatch, May 27, 1951) The Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Sunday will operate a passenger train on a section of its Hocking Valley Division for the first time in 20 years.

It'll be a special event – an excursion from Columbus to Jackson, sponsored by the Rail Fans Association for amateur photographers. The train leaves Columbus at 9 a.m., returning at 7:30 p.m.

The C & O has quite a freight business on the Hocking Valley Division, but no passenger traffic. Advent of private automobile and decline of industry in southeastern Ohio were directly responsible for the abandonment of passenger trains.

A line was constructed from Wellston to Jackson in 1895 and a connection made with the Logan-Pomeroy line at what was then called McArthur Junction, now Dundas. Electric interurban cars operated on this line as well as steam trains. The electric was known as the Wellston-Jackson Belt Railway. The two principal stations on that line, Wellston and Jackson, are still in use today.

The system was reorganized with a shorter name – Hocking Valley Railway, in 1896. Use of electric cars was discontinued about 1917 and they were replaced by a steam locomotive and a single coach shuttling back and forth on the Jackson branch. Shortly afterward, however, this service was discontinued and several round trips a day were made by steam train service until 1931, when passenger service on the Jackson branch was ended.

The committee, which planned the special trip, said it hoped the railroad fans and photographers who take the trip can “relive some of the scenes and operations of past years.”

The C & O took over all lines of the Hocking Valley railway in 1930