

FRIENDS OF ESMONT MINUTES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

1. Organization's status with IRS

- Incorporated and approved as Non-Profit, 501 (c) (3)
- Any donations/gifts to Friends are tax deductible

2. Meeting held with Liz Palmer, Board of Supervisors representative

“Control+Click” on this link for background on Yancey School, now Yancey Community Center:

https://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/yancey-committee-will-continue-its-work/article_7eec044e-a964-11e7-a256-436c4a4152eb.html

- Suggested we get involved with Yancey Community Center and made several introductions.
- We have been invited to attend Yancey Advisory Panel Initial Meeting.
- Meeting Thursday (9/20) with Siri Russell, Management/Policy Analyst with County, and member of Yancey Advisory Panel (and friend of Anna)
- Suggested we check out The Quarry Gardens in Schuyler.
- <http://quarrygardensatschuyler.org/>
- Recommended we submit our Rails to Trails Plan to the County when we are ready, asking for their participation.
- Said there is a trail behind Yancey School.
- She was not familiar with Fulfillment Farms:
https://www.albemarle.org/upload/images/Forms_Center/Departments/Board_of_Supervisors/Forms/Agenda/2007files/20070711/WildlifeFoundationAttachment.pdf
- <https://www.vawildlife.org/projects>

3. Yancey School has funding for The History and Heritage Project.

- We need to take note as applicable for our Depot/Museum Project. They received a “Heal Charlottesville Grant” for a historical display in the lobby of the Center. Various groups and historians are working on the project.
- A History Day is planned for Oct 27 when community members and others are invited to bring photos and memorabilia and Oral Histories will be videotaped.

4. Information on Culvert attached.

Because of concerns about flooding in the area, we made inquiry to DOT re the viability of culvert in Esmont under RT 6. The DOT response is attached. The culvert will not be replaced any time soon.

5. Map attached to email for Rails to Trails

The No. 1 Project on our Project List is Rails to Trails to bring back into use the former railroad path, converting it to walking/riding paths. **Per the attached map**, there are approx. 20 miles of path we could work with. The path from Alberene to Warren is approx. 10 miles and the path from Rockfish to Guthrie is 10 miles. No. 4 on the Project List is to replace the former Esmont Depot in its previous location. This fits in nicely with the Trail and could house a small museum, similar to the planned Yancey Community Center Lobby museum.

6. Value of registering as “Friend of Esmont” on website

There are 30+ Friends listed on the Friends of Esmont website. It is important for the future of the organization and its success, to have as many Friends as possible. Organizations we approach asking for assistance will check out that information when making funding decisions.

7. Friends of Esmont Top 5 Projects List:

At the August meeting, list of 14 projects was voted on to select the Top Five. See below.

1. Rails to Trails – converting the former RR track path to walking/riding trails. Four people signed up for the Committee during the meeting. There are several who have expressed interest but could not be at the meeting. Plan to get this committee working in the next several weeks.

2. Work with owner of Purvis’ Store to save the structure – the structure is about to collapse upon itself and the owner is reluctant to do anything about it. Chris Perot will meet with the owner to determine what can be worked out. A suggestion was made to ask the owner to gift the property to Friends of Esmont to get a tax deduction.

3. Create Wildlife Refuge along Ballinger Creek – we would like to see this Refuge or Wetland created and connected to the Fulfillment Farms property. (see below)

4. Build replica of Depot on/near original site (contain museum) – mentioned in conjunction with the Rails to Trails project.

5. Fulfillment Farms – public use. See link above. Friends of Esmont plans to approach the Va Wildlife Foundation for community use of the 200 acre section abutting Ballinger Creek and containing the Slate Quarry.

8. Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP) – through discussion with AHIP representative we believe that eventually Esmont will become a “target” for AHIP, meaning they will visit each house along Esmont Road and Red Hill to determine if the property needs renovation and meets AHIP requirements. AHIP has done work on Porter’s Road and in Chestnut Grove, now working in Alberene.

9. Other

The Movie “Virginia” was filmed in Esmont and Scottsville in 1941. We are hoping to get a showing at the Victory Theatre in Scottsville.

A New York chorus girl (Madeleine Carroll) comes home to claim her family plantation and must choose between two men (Fred MacMurray, Sterling Hayden), one rich, one not.

Director:

[Edward H. Griffith](#)

Writers:

[Virginia Van Upp](#) (screenplay), [Edward H. Griffith](#) (story) | [1 more credit](#) »

Stars:

[Madeleine Carroll](#), [Fred MacMurray](#), [Sterling Hayden](#) | [See full cast & crew](#) »

A great story told about Virginians and filmed in Virginia

[Steven Whaley](#) 20 March 2005

I sought out this movie because it was filmed in Howardsville and Albemarle county here in Virginia. I heard about the film because my grandfather, Willis Floyd Martin of neighboring Nelson county, was hired by the film company. He and others were put to task beating the tree branches to keep that summer's swarming locusts at bay. Apparently, the song of the locusts was drowning out the director and actors. The locations are authentic. A highlight was to see the now defunct Nelson-Albemarle, or was it Albemarle-Nelson, railway. The script reveals a genius that I was startled to hear uttered in 1940, when this movie was filmed. While grandpa was busy scattering locusts on the set, grandma was birthing my mother. Would love to have a copy of this gem, all I have is a poorly recorded network TV airing. Another great local movie is a comedy filmed about life in Lynchburg, "The Vanishing Virginian."

southern flag-waving in technicolor

18 January 2012 | by [jimakros](#) - [See all my reviews](#)

this is one of very few color pictures made, up to that time, so it's interesting if only for that. The cast is great looking, MacMurray and Madeleine Carroll made many movies together, here one also gets a very young Sterling Hayden. This was supposedly shot on location, which was very uncommon in those days, and it shows in a beautiful horseriding sequence. The story is pure southern flag-waving, the south is represented by the MacMurray character, who is a poor, educated, honest farmer full of ideals about southern tradition. The yankees are a bunch of ignorant, too rich with too much time on their hands folk, who are only interested in a good time. Anyway, if one gets over the flag-waving, it's still a good-looking picture with some attractive actors.

Culvert Letter

From: Denunzio, Joel <joel.denunzio@vdot.virginia.gov>

Sent: Friday, August 24, 2018 12:11 PM

To: Karen Firehock

Subject: Re: Fw: The culvert under RT 6

Karen,

The type of funding used for replacement of existing bridge structures is based on the structural adequacy to carry traffic. The hydraulic capacity of a structure is not taken into account for the adequacy of a structure. So existing structures that do not meet the current design standards for hydraulics do not have a trigger for replacement unless they are structurally deficient. If we have a structurally deficient bridge or culvert that we are replacing, we will bring the hydraulic capacity up to the current standards for the proper class of road. This would mean that a structure on Route 6 would be brought up to a minimum of a 25 year flood event.

One thing I did notice about the calculation that was sent is that it assumes the culvert design should pass a 10 year storm. That is not necessarily the case according to our design standards. A new culvert would normally be designed to the 10 or 25 year storm but it would allow a certain amount of ponding to occur on the upstream side. This ponding is generally allowable so that the design storm does not overtop the roadway and cause traffic issues. So the depth of cover on a culvert is considered in the calculation. We do however review the effect of any ponding on the upstream side where damage to property or life needs to be considered. In those cases we would likely use a larger structure.

So, if the structure gets replaced due to a structural deficiency, we would design a new one to a minimum of a 25 year storm for route 6. I looked at our ratings and I don't see any deficient box culverts on Route 6 so it does not look like this is scheduled for replacement. Also, we have about 6 box culverts on Route 6 and they all look like they were built prior to 1932. There may be other ways to fund a project outside of bridge maintenance funds including SmartScale and possibly even the Albemarle County Secondary Six Year plan. I would think that replacement would be considered in cases where there are serious property or health risks at stake.

Please let me know if you have questions, sorry for such a long e-mail.

Thank
Joel

Joel DeNunzio
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February-March 2010 Article

This Month's Article - February/March 2010

Depots and Stations -

Interchange of Freight & Passengers

The Nelson & Albemarle Railways had two very distinct beginnings starting very close together and combining to form the now-defunct and abandoned railway that interconnected the Southern Railway at Rockfish with the C&O Railway in Warren along the James River. With the building of the Alberene Railroad (running to Esmont and thence to Warren on the C&O), and the Schuyler Railway and its interchange with the Southern Railway at Rockfish in Nelson County. Those two early lines would become the formation of the N&A and only require the addition of track between Schuyler and a point on the Alberene line at Guthrie.

Now the Schuyler Railway was an 'electric' railway with cars purchased from the Lynchburg Street Railway that were already old when acquired. The interchange at Rockfish must have been quite interesting as cars with freight were deposited there and transferred to the Southern's local train. Passengers travelling along this line and getting off the crack varnish in Rockfish and jumping onto an old, rickety open-air car, might have thought better the next time to take another route! The Rockfish station was built by the Southern Railway, (year yet unidentified), and while an exact diagram of the as-built doesn't seem to exist, similar buildings were noted in a compilation of station diagrams at the Southern Museum of Civil War and Railways that can be found at:

http://www.southernmuseum.org/archives/srha_photos_va.html where a 1957 photo of the Rockfish Station is also available.

Now both freight & passenger service ended on this line in 1944 when a flood took out many small bridges and much roadbed along the route that ran beside the Rockfish River. Never being rebuilt, the track was formally abandoned and pulled out shortly thereafter. The station at Schuyler also served as the company store and I don't have a diagram of this combination company store and terminus for what was primarily a company town that was built to support the workers being close to the soapstone works. Between Schuyler and Rockfish there were many 'whistle' stops, but no shelters that any document has shown.

The Alberene Railroad started out trying to reach Warren, going through Esmont to get there. The builder, H. L. Lane (sounds familiar, doesn't it), had issues with land owners, but persevered, though it would be a tenuous time with local farmers for years to come due to his methods of getting business done. As the line was completed, the C&O leased it immediately and bought it outright in 1902!

Warren, on the C&O Railway, had a very traditional look with house tracks right behind the depot. The Esmont Station was built very much in accordance with standard drawings that can be found in the C&O Historical Society's collection in Clifton Forge, Virginia. I've included a thumbnail photo collection of the Rockfish station, the Schuyler depot, the Esmont station and the Warren depot and URL note for a couple of views of the Alberene depot. I've included my favorite Warren Depot photo as it is from 1962 just months before abandonment would end the charming little standard gauge line's life into soapstone country. With careful scrutiny, you might notice that there is a Nelson & Albemarle diesel in the photo though hard to see and even harder to determine which one.

Esmont was the site of a great Caterpillar advertisement for the engines in the GE diesel #1. This type of station is covered well in the latest issue of the COHS periodical, Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Magazine in a feature article by Tom Dixon. It's interesting that I started collecting this detail about stations/depots several months ago and in the February issue of the COHM, Tom has his great article covering just the data I needed to give basic background to this article.

At Alberene, the soapstone company built the station alongside the assembly buildings and while none of this exists any longer, the photo from 1917 of the station shows that the 'company' built integrated buildings with connections to other structures to save costs and space. See the description of the depot (listed as 1900, but likely 1917 as other photos of the immediate area at this time show similar views: <http://repo.lib.virginia.edu:18080/fedora/get/uva-lib:84435/uva-lib-bdef:100/getFullView>

Between Warren and Esmont, a shed was built at a siding at Boiling Spring and while there are no known photographs of this, there was a diagram from the C&O engineering staff that can be acquired from the C&O Historical Society at www.cohs.org URL. The 1937 (reprint) of C&O Railway Co. Side Track Records/Charts; Rivanna, Buckingham, V.A.L. & Alberene Subdivisions shows this shed.

Once the Nelson & Albemarle took over operations and extended the reach from Schuyler to Guthrie to interchange with C&O trackage, life changed, and the N&A took ownership of everything north of Esmont in the deal while the C&O retained track between Esmont & Warren causing train number changes each time a crew came in from Schuyler headed for Warren for interchange with the C&O. The only known schedule that I've found was from a collection in the library in Iowa. See the info at URL: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/spec-coll/msc/tomsc500/msc468/employtimetables.html> as this paper schedule, likely posted on a bulletin board at Schuyler and possibly Esmont, was the only way you'd really know what train you were on and what scheduled was being maintained!

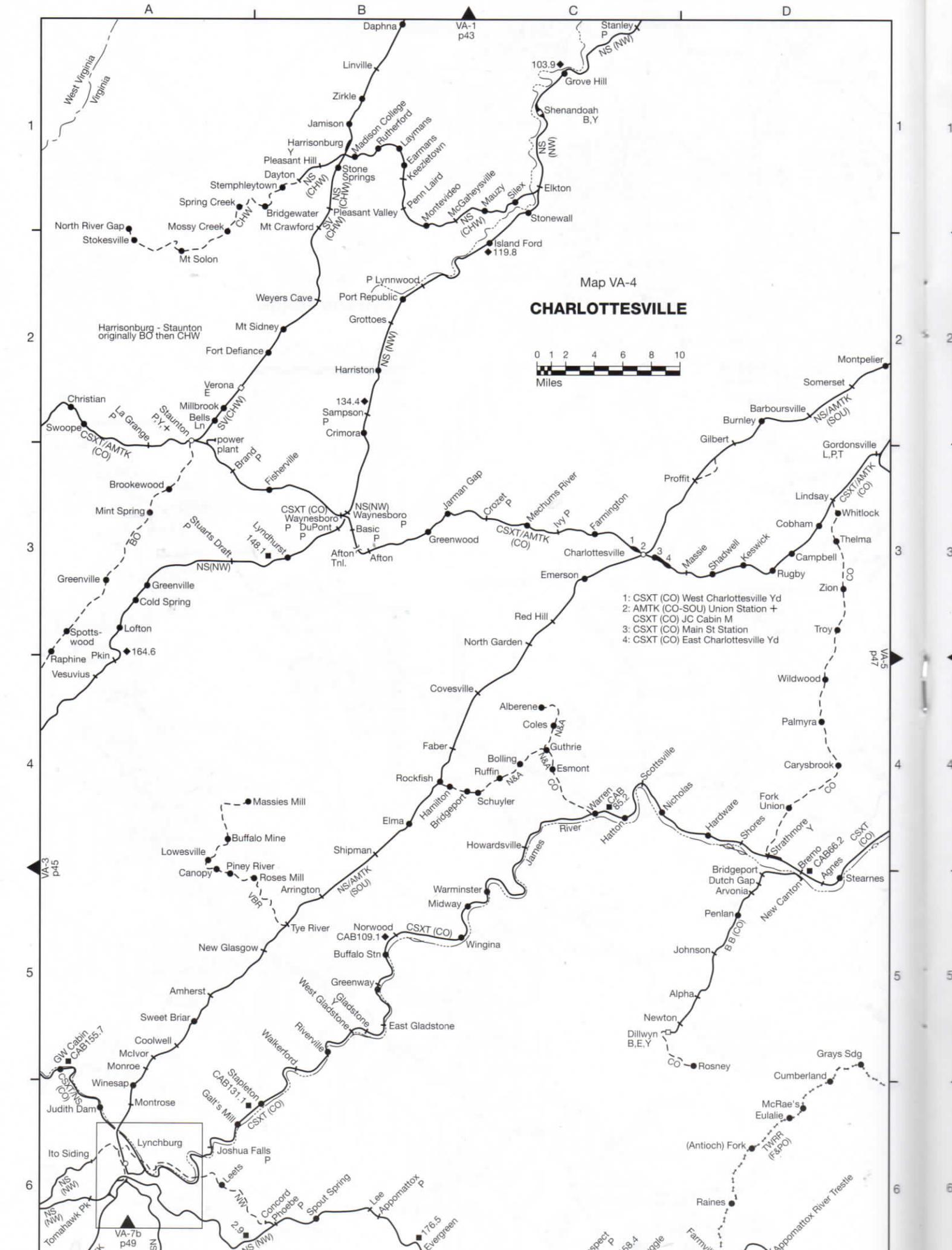
It's unfortunate that Alberene ran out of good stone in the 1930's and the factory there closed in about 1936. On a visit a decade ago, I was hard-pressed to see where buildings had been and how the community had been forged around this industry. Rockfish station may have been in use for many years after the N&A pulled up tracks in the mid-to-late 40's, serving the business and industry of that community with the Southern system, but is now long gone also. A sidebar, at URL http://www.wunderground.com/wximage/viewsingleimage.html?mode=singleimage&handle=nobyter&number=18&album_id=12&thumbstart=0&gallery= you can see where the Rockfish PO has been converted for solar webcam use - pointed out at the Southern Railway bridge over the Rockfish River.

Esmont, perhaps my favorite little village, saw the demise of its depot once tracks were pulled up by the C&O after the 1963 abandonment of the N&A. And while Warren may have originally been a vibrant community served by a major railroad with an interchange connecting middle Albemarle county, it too saw the loss of its station. So, what remains? Nothing except the Schuyler depot as the local office of the New Alberene Soapstone Company. You can still walk the path along the roadbed albeit covered by brush and almost, if not entirely, impassable by now.

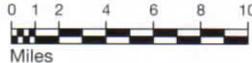
Yes, the shed at Boiling Spring is also gone. I'm going to have to start a contest to see who can identify the next closest station left on the now Norfolk Southern line north or south of Rockfish as well as the closest station on the CSX line east or west of Warren.

There were stations/depots at: Alberene, Esmont, Warren, (shed at Boiling Spring), Schuyler, and Rockfish. A small railway that served a great function in a time that can never be recreated and only imagined of how life must have been when the best way to spend your vacation might have been to get on the train at Rockfish and ride down to Warren and back.

Please note any comments on "This Months' Articles" in the comments section either on the MAIN page or in the sidebar archives section.



Map VA-4
CHARLOTTESVILLE



- 1: CSXT (CO) West Charlottesville Yd
- 2: AMTK (CO-SOU) Union Station + CSXT (CO) JC Cabin M
- 3: CSXT (CO) Main St Station
- 4: CSXT (CO) East Charlottesville Yd



Map VA-4 details the rail network around Charlottesville, Virginia. Key features include:

- Stations:** Numerous stations are marked, including Daphna, Linville, Zirkle, Jamison, Harrisonburg, Pleasant Hill, Dayton, Stempleytown, Spring Creek, Mossy Creek, Mt Solon, North River Gap, Stokesville, Weyers Cave, Port Republic, Grottoes, Harrison, 134.4 Sampson, Crimora, Verona, Millbrook, Bells Ln, Staunton, Swoope, Christian, La Grange, Brookwood, Mint Spring, Greenville, Cold Spring, Spottswood, Lofton, Raphine, Vesuvius, 164.6, Greenville, Cold Spring, Spottswood, Lofton, Raphine, Vesuvius, 164.6, Greenville, Cold Spring, Spottswood, Lofton, Raphine, Vesuvius, 164.6, Greenville, Cold Spring, Spottswood, Lofton, Raphine, Vesuvius, 164.6.
- Lines:** Lines are labeled with abbreviations such as NS (Norfolk Southern), CSXT (Chesapeake and Ohio), AMTK (Atlantic Mainline), BO (Blue Ridge), and TWRR (Tidewater Railroad).
- Geography:** The James River is shown flowing through the region, with various crossings and bridges.
- Grid:** The map is overlaid with a grid of letters A-D and numbers 1-6 for reference.
- Scale:** A scale bar indicates distances up to 10 miles.
- Legend:** A legend in the center-right identifies four specific stations of interest.