United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Chatham Southern Railway Depot
Other names/site number: Chatham Depot; DHR No. 187-0009
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 340 Whitehead Street
City or town: Chatham State: VA County: Pittsylvania
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _x_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _x_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ **national** ___**statewide** _x_ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

_x_ **A** ___**B** _x_ **C** ___**D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [x]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [x]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related: Train Depot

Current Functions
SOCIAL: Meeting Room
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Museum
EDUCATION: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
OTHER: Railroad Style

Materials:
Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, CONCRETE, WOOD; TERRA COTTA

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph
Completed in 1919, the Chatham Southern Railway Depot is a one-story masonry building with a 1½-story polygonal watchtower imbedded into the center of the overall structure's track-side west elevation. The long rectangular building footprint measures 108 feet by 32 feet, but the eaves extend six feet out from the building on all sides, making the total dimensions 120 feet by 44 feet. The hip roof with long center ridge and flared eaves is the building's most visually dominant, character-defining feature. Additional support for the deep roof eaves is provided by robust wooden brackets with slightly curving diagonal members and molded top and bottom ends. The exterior walls of Flemish bond brick masonry, with reddish-orange stretcher bricks and dark brown header bricks forming a checkerboard pattern, comprise another remarkable character-defining feature. Inspired by Colonial-era buildings, the brickwork was a thoughtful and relatively costly design element and the bricklaying was carefully executed by local masons. Among the other notable masonry features are the structural segmental arches, formed of three courses of dark brown sailor bricks, spanning the window and door openings. Encircling the exterior of the building just below the window openings is a precast concrete belt course, and the segmental-arched opening of the watchtower's first-story west-facing window is embellished with an embossed concrete keystone, both inspired by Colonial-era architecture. The light-colored concrete provides dividing and contrasting elements to the dark-colored brickwork.

Narrative Description

Location/Site Description
The depot is located near the Chatham town limits, southwest of the central downtown business district that makes up part of the Chatham Historic District [NR 2001; DHR 187-5001]. The north-south railroad tracks on the west side of the depot follow along the banks of Cherrystone

Creek. The railroad tracks remain active as the Norfolk Southern main line. The depot occupies the southwestern portion of a triangular land tax parcel with a paved parking lot to the north and a historically unassociated Southern States agricultural supply warehouse building to the east. The concrete block warehouse was constructed in the early 1950s and remained in commercial use until the late 1980s. It stood vacant until 2001, when it was donated to the historical society. Because it was a separate entity unaffiliated with the railroad, it is not included in the nominated parcel. Bounding the parcel to the north is Depot Street, to the south is Whitehead Court, and to the east is Whitehead Street. Immediately to the north on an adjacent parcel is an architecturally distinctive railroad underpass built by the Southern Railroad c. 1914–1916 [DHR 187-0016]. A Southern Railroad logo painted on the west elevation span is faded, but still visible. Ownership of the underpass is maintained by Norfolk Southern Corporation.

Detailed Building Description

The Chatham Southern Railway Depot, constructed in 1918-1919, has a hip roof with long center ridge and flared eaves as a dominant character-defining feature. The roof is clad with light red, flat-with-ridges (sometimes referred to as French-style), terra cotta tiles and decorated with bulbous terra cotta finials where the ridge and hips intersect, as well as at the apex of the watchtower's polygonal hip roof. The tiles have an unglazed matte finish. The six-foot-deep roof eaves are supported by robust wooden brackets with slightly curving diagonal members and molded top and bottom ends. The vast majority of the brackets are original to the building, though a few needed to be reproduced during a 2007 restoration project. The exterior walls of Flemish bond brick masonry, inspired by Colonial-era buildings and executed by local masons, are comprised of reddish-orange stretcher bricks and dark brown header bricks forming a checkerboard pattern. As a departure from traditional bricklaying, the mortar joints are raked back about ½-inch from the outer edge of the bricks for a more pronounced three-dimensional effect. Structural segmental arches, formed of three courses of dark brown *sailor* bricks, span each of the window and door openings. [Sailor bricks are laid on their faces, perpendicular to the wall, with only one end visible.] Encircling the exterior of the building just below the window openings is a precast concrete belt course, and the segmental-arched opening of the watchtower's first-story west-facing window is embellished with an embossed concrete keystone. The light, almost white-colored concrete provides dividing and contrasting elements to the dark-colored brickwork above and below.

Many of the building's windows are paired within single apertures spanned by broad brick arches. Some of the windows are made up of relatively large nine-over-one double-hung wooden sash, which are interspersed among smaller apertures with nine-light fixed sash. The first story of the polygonal watchtower has two window openings with concrete lintels instead of brick arches, and the second story is lighted with small six-light fixed sash.

All of the exterior doorways—for pedestrians and freight—have lighted transoms with multiple vertical muntins. The solid-wood pedestrian doors have an attractive design featuring five raised panels aligned vertically, except for the tower entrance door, which is similar, with two panels below a large single pane of glass. The two sets of folding freight doors, located on the east and west elevations near the south end of the building, are also stylish, with a faux batten design.

Along the west side of the building is a ground-level concrete loading area. A newer extension off the northwest corner of the building's main roof is an open-sided post-and-beam viewing platform, created for visitors who can now watch trains pass by from a very close vantage point.

The depot was of the type known as a "combination depot", with areas for both passengers and freight. Typical of the Jim Crow-era South, it had racially segregated waiting rooms for blacks and whites, the former being a cramped space near the center of the building, and the latter being the larger north room. The ticket master area and ticket booth were housed in the center room.

In 2007, the interior of the building was restored as faithfully as possible to its original appearance except for new acoustical-tile ceilings with built-in fluorescent lighting which were deemed necessary to accommodate the building's current functions as a library, museum, and meeting center. The interior retains the three main rooms of its original floor plan and the wooden finishes throughout the building are duplications of the original finishes. The appearance of flat plaster walls with vertical beadboard wainscoting and bare wooden flooring has been maintained. Modern bathrooms have been incorporated into the north end of the depot. A model train exhibit is installed within the narrow center room. It provides a small-scale representation of the depot's setting with models of the Town of Chatham and the surrounding topography. Along the north wall of the center room is a well-designed, informative exhibit about the Southern Railway, its executives, and their connections to the Town of Chatham and Pittsylvania County.

After being retired from service in 1975, the depot suffered from vacancy and neglect until 2001, when it was obtained by the Pittsylvania County Historical Society. An account of its long path to preservation and restoration appears in Section 8 below.

The exterior of the building now appears as it did when construction was completed in 1919. Although it was extensively restored in 2007 following its long period of vacancy and neglect, the depot retains its original brick masonry walls and its original exterior doors at both the passenger and cargo entrances. The many nine-over-one window sash throughout the building are new wooden fabrications faithfully matching the originals. The surrounding window and door openings have not been modified. The terra-cotta-tile roof installed in 2007 is virtually an exact match of the original, as seen in 1919–1920 photographs. [Fig. 1, 2.] Photos show that the original terra-cotta roof had been replaced with asphalt shingles by the 1960s. [Fig. 3.]

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1918 – 1965

Significant Dates
1918 –1919

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Fox, Robert (building supervisor)
Garrison, Charles (bricklayer)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Chatham Southern Railway Depot is located in the Town of Chatham, Pittsylvania County, Virginia. The building was begun and substantially erected in 1918, but was fully completed the following year. This is evidenced by a photograph dated to 1919, showing construction debris around the building. The depot is a well-known historic landmark, owing in part to the paramount importance of the railroad in the post-1850 history of the town and region. As the central transportation hub of Chatham and the surrounding area, the depot played a pivotal role in economic development through the 1950s. Local businesses relied heavily on the railroad as the volume of local production shipped out of the depot continued to grow throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The depot served as an arrival and departure point for businessmen, soldiers (particularly during World War II), vacationers, and the boarding students and faculty of Chatham Hall (school for girls), established in 1894, and Hargrave Military Academy (for boys), established in 1909; both schools were located on the outskirts of Chatham. The depot is also architecturally distinctive and important as a strong example of the Railroad Style with Colonial Revival influence, erected by local craftsmen. After nearly a half-century in service, the depot was closed to passenger service in 1965, but freight service continued until ten years later, when the station was retired from railroad use altogether. Since 2001 the depot has been owned by the Pittsylvania County Historical Society. The building is leased by Pittsylvania County, and operated by the County Public Library System for historic research, educational seminars, and civic functions. The depot is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Transportation and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Its period of significance extends from its construction beginning in 1918 through its closing for railroad passenger business in 1965.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Transportation

The Chatham Southern Railway Depot is significant in the history of transportation at the local level. During the first half of the twentieth century, Virginia's railroads provided considerable public benefits, including millions of dollars in tax revenue generated mainly by hauling freight. As an important agricultural, timbering, mining, and iron industry province, Pittsylvania County was dependent on the railroad and its small town depots to export its most valuable commodities. The Chatham Depot accommodated both freight and passengers, and its location helped make the Town of Chatham a prominent commercial center during the post-World War I period. Many spur routes ran between the main lines, but they were retired from business as automobile ownership increased, their tracks taken up, and the support facilities eventually razed. For this reason, only a small number of the once-numerous rail-related resources in the county survive. The Chatham Depot is today a rare representative of early 20th -century railroad building in Pittsylvania County, which is itself representative of rural Virginia.

Criterion C: Architecture

As a rare intact example of a Railroad Style combination passenger and freight station dating to World War I era, the Chatham Depot is a significant local and regional landmark. The depot provides an exceptional representation of rail-related buildings from its era of construction; yet it is a rare and distinctive example in its functional category, with its historic character defined by the craftsmanship embodied in its decorative features. Stylistically, railroad architecture in the United States became even more identifiable as its own separate category during the early twentieth century. Charles Garrison, a bricklayer from Chatham, is credited with building the outstanding Flemish bond brick walls of the depot, working under building supervisor Robert Fox, also a long-time local resident.[1] The masonry is a major factor in the building's architectural significance. Flemish bond was a throwback to the 1750-1850 period in Virginia and is rarely seen in buildings from the World War I era. Unfortunately, no construction drawings of the depot, or architectural plans of any kind are known to exist. Currently there are few surviving railroad depots within Pittsylvania County, and certainly there are none closely resembling the Chatham Depot with its Flemish bond walls and terra-cotta roof.

Acknowledgements

Although many have contributed to the depot's preservation over the years, two key individuals deserve acknowledgement of their long-term tireless efforts. Mrs. Frances Hallam Hurt of Chatham, who passed away in March 2015 at the age of 99, was for decades a cultural leader of the Chatham community. Among her numerous civic activities, she was an avid historian who wrote and compiled much of what is currently known of the area's early history. Mrs. Hurt not only led the early efforts to save the Chatham Depot from destruction after it was abandoned by the railroad in the 1970s, she continued to fight for its survival until it was finally restored for public benefit in 2007. Beginning around 2001, Mr. Glenn Giles ably took the reins as Mrs. Hurt's health began to decline. Both as a board member and as president of the Pittsylvania County Historical Society, he found sources of funding, saw the 2007 restoration through to completion, and has kept tabs on grant funding and the building's continued maintenance. Mr. Giles also applied for the National Register evaluation of the depot by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 2014. Ron Francis is the director of the Pittsylvania County public genealogical and historical library held in the depot, which also has a Southern Railway museum component, and he is the day-to-day caretaker. He assisted with the research and provided valuable information contained in this nomination.

Historical Background

The Town of Chatham

Since 1777, the county seat for Pittsylvania County has been the Town of Chatham, first known as Pittsylvania County Court House. In 1806, a controversy over where to build a new courthouse resulted in the establishment of the new Town of Competition. An 1852 act of the General Assembly changed the name from Competition to Chatham. The following year the current Pittsylvania County Courthouse, now a designated National Historic Landmark, was erected at the town center.

Pittsylvania County was historically rich in tobacco and other agricultural products, as well as minerals and mining. By 1874, a Virginia Midland Railroad line through the county connected it to the two major nearby markets of Danville and Lynchburg. Consequently, Chatham became more prosperous than many of the other county seats in the region. Slowed growth since the mid-twentieth century has helped preserve the character of the town and its National Register historic district, designated in 2001. The Town was incorporated by the Virginia General Assembly in 1874. The town limits were extended to the west in 1882 to include the railroad and remain virtually unchanged today. Chatham Hall, a preparatory school for girls, was established just east of town in 1894. By 1900, the town hosted 600 residents, two banks, three tobacco manufacturers, three saloons, two hotels, two liveries, and twelve attorneys. In 1909, the Chatham Training School, now known as Hargrave Military Academy, was established on the west side of Chatham. By 1920, the town's population doubled to 1,200. By the turn of the twenty-first century it had grown by only 200 more residents, but today Chatham remains the primary commercial and cultural center for the surrounding rural area.[2]

The Chatham Depot was important to the survival and operations of Chatham Hall, a boarding school for girls grades 9 through 12. Chatham Hall historian Dr. William Black recently prepared the following historical perspective concerning the Chatham Depot's significance to the founding and continued operation of Chatham Hall:

> Since its founding in 1894, girls have arrived in Chatham via train to enroll in Chatham Hall. The earliest yearbooks have photographs of girls heading home from first the old depot at the bottom of Depot Hill. Georgia O'Keeffe, one of the most celebrated artists of the twentieth century, travelled by train from her home in Charlottesville. Later notes in the alumnae bulletin announce that she returned for visits through the same station.
>
> The published letters of one student give impressions of her journey to Chatham's new station between 1918 and 1920. Most girls met a chaperon in Atlanta, Washington, DC, or New York City. They were then accompanied on the trip to school or the trip home. The station even entered into Chatham Hall's traditions with a song that was always sung as a vacation approached.
>
> _____ more days till vacation
> Then we go to the station,
> Back to civilization –
> The train will carry us there. (followed by loud whoops of joy)
>
> Girls still sing the song although more take the plane than the train.
>
> It is not only the girls who have used the station. Famous visitors would arrive at the station where a school driver would collect visitor and luggage for the mile trip to the school. Perhaps the most famous of these was Eleanor Roosevelt who arrived for a two-day visit in February 1948. Her speech on Valentine's Day dealt with the need for the new United Nations.

Pittsylvania County Railroad Beginnings

Railroad history in Pittsylvania County began with the arrival of the Richmond and Danville Railroad (R&D) in 1856, but building the first line through Chatham would take until 1874. The leading proponent of the railroad was Pittsylvania County native and eight-term Virginia Legislature member Whitmell P. Tunstall, a native of the Chatham area who initially proposed the railroad to the General Assembly in 1838. Tunstall tried for nearly two decades to get the railroad started, but died in 1854, two years before the R&D began operations. The R&D took a westerly route from South Boston to Danville rather than a north–south route following the present-day U.S. Highway 29 corridor through the Town of Chatham.

The first north-south rail line in the Pittsylvania County was built by a company formed in 1872 through a merger between the Lynchburg and Danville Railroad organization and the Orange, Alexandria, and Manassas Railroad, then renamed the Washington City, Virginia Midland & Great Southern Railroad. The line through Chatham was built in 1874 by this company, however it went into receivership in 1876. In 1881, it was reorganized by the Baltimore & Ohio and became the Virginia Midland Railroad. In 1894, the Richmond & Danville Company took over the Virginia Midland Railroad and the resulting company became the Southern Railway Company. [3]

The first known depot at Chatham was constructed in 1896 on the west side of the tracks (slightly to the northwest and down a steep bank from the 1918 depot's location). During 1914–1916, plans were being made to renovate the 1896 depot. However, the railroad's concurrent expansion called for the addition of a second track along the very busy main line, and the elimination of a long, steep grade between Chatham and Motley. The new grade was elevated more than 50 feet above the old grade. Steam shovels were brought in by rail to level the hillside by moving the tremendous volume of earth. The decision was thus made to run the second track along the top of the bank and to build a new depot at the same grade on the east side of the track. The new rail bed was completed early in 1917. Construction of the third Chatham Depot was begun in 1918 and completed the following year. [Figs. 1, 2.]

The Southern Railroad Company

The Southern Railroad Company was created in the late nineteenth century and grew enormously to become the leader of the American Railroad industry by the 1960s, achieving record levels of profitability until the 1980s, when it merged with the Norfolk and Western and became the Norfolk Southern Corporation. At the time of the merger, Southern had about 21,000 employees.[4]

Fig. 1 Chatham Depot, almost completed, in 1919 (Southern Railway Historical Association)

According to Davis Burke's *The Southern Railroad* (1985), "Southern began as a substantial carrier of the freight in its region, but was best known to the public for its passenger service," maintaining some of the most luxurious and famous trains in the world, such as the Washington & Southwestern Vestibuled Limited and the New York & Florida Limited around the turn of the century, as well as the later Florida Express and the Crescent Limited, hailed as the world's finest passenger trains. In the 1920s and 1930s, their green and gold-painted rolling stock made Southern an instantly recognizable brand and a favorite among travelers. Southern "outperformed its rivals by a wide margin" becoming a "model for its industry" owing in-part to its own uniquely "vigorous management style" and contributed significantly to the rise and continued growth of the New South.[5]

Capitalized at $305 million, the Southern Railway Company "was organized from the wreckage of the bankrupt Richmond & Danville Railroad" and officially began operating on July 1, 1894, with Samuel Spencer of Georgia elected as its first president. Southern brought together more than 30 railroad companies, many of which had struggled to maintain existence, thus incorporating 4,392 miles in seven states. Southern's new main stem reached from Alexandria, Virginia, southward through Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Chatham, and Danville to Greensboro and Charlotte, North Carolina, through the western corner of South Carolina en route to Atlanta.

The company began with a fleet of 629 steam locomotives, 487 passenger cars, and 18,305 freight cars.[6]

President Spencer, who became known as the founding father of the Southern Railroad, "began with the broad concept that, since the railway system was part of the south, it was his mission to promote the two simultaneously…" Spencer acknowledged that the southeast was rich in natural resources and labor, and "began a program to acquaint the public with economic opportunities along Southern's rails… In 1896 he established a Land and Industrial Department." Burke cites Spencer's aggressive program as a catalyst of the New England textile industry's migration to the South. "By 1900, 48 textile plants were already located along Southern lines, and more were added each year, a trend so powerful that half of American cotton spindles would be located in the South by the mid-1930s, and 91 percent of them by 1950." [7]

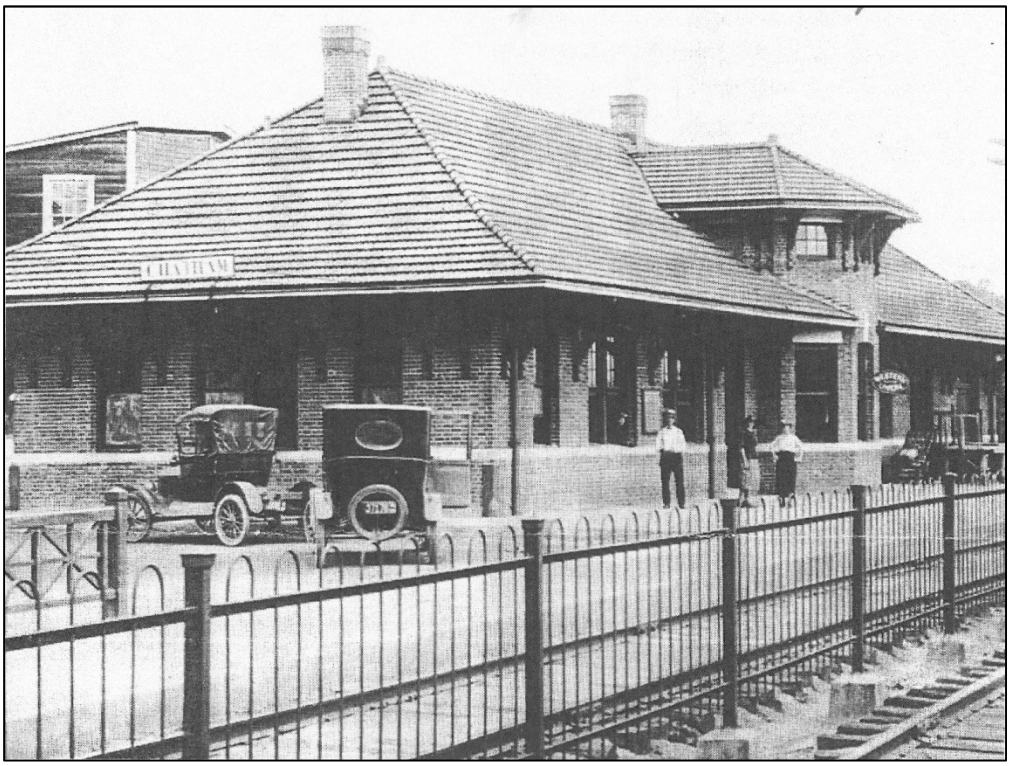

Fig. 2 Chatham Depot in 1920 (Pittsylvania Historical Society)

By 1900, Southern had acquired several more railroads, expanding its track mileage to 7,200 and had nearly 800 locomotives and more than 28,000 freight cars. Passenger service was also improved and expanded, producing about one quarter of the company's revenues. In 1902 new acquisitions in the Midwest gave Southern Railway access to St. Louis, Chicago, and Indiana's important industrial areas.[8]

In September 1903, the fabled "Wreck of the Old 97" occurred as the express mail train entered the City of Danville, Virginia, shortly after passing through the Town of Chatham. The engineer

and 13 others—crewmen and postal clerks—were killed. Partly due to the popular 1924 ballad about the incident, it became the most famous fatal accident in Southern Railway history.

Before the United States entered World War I, the company had been investing heavily in rolling stock and fixed infrastructure, buying hundreds of locomotives and thousands of rail cars, and constructing new depots. By acquiring a line between Mississippi and New Orleans in 1916, the company became an 8,000-mile, thirteen-state network. During World War I, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed federal control over all railroads and the United States Railroad Administration was formed. However, by the time federal control was ended in 1920, Southern had become more efficient and remained highly profitable, continuing to emphasize improvements to its passenger service. By 1924, the company was operating 48 dining cars and nine café-parlor cars on 45 trains.[9]

By the late 1940s, however, as automobiles became affordable and commercial air travel more common, railroad passenger service began to wane in popularity. Southern's passenger service was shut down entirely in 1979. In 1981-1982 the nation's two most prosperous railroads, the Southern Railway and the Norfolk and Western Railway, merged to become Norfolk Southern Corporation, which still maintains the active main line on which the historic Chatham Depot is located.

The Decline of Chatham Depot

Railroad freight service to Chatham Depot ceased in 1975 when the freight office in the depot was closed. The building was in good condition at the time, but was left abandoned and vandalism began soon thereafter. Four years later the depot was scheduled for demolition. In August 1979 a Southern Railroad representative told a group of about fifty citizens at the County courthouse that the company would donate the building and lease the land to any organization or governing body that was willing to erect a security fence between the depot and the tracks, purchase liability insurance, and keep the building in good repair. Unfortunately neither the newly formed Pittsylvania Historical Society nor the local governments were able to accept the offer, and the depot languished in disrepair for the next nineteen years. Then, in August 1998, workmen arrived on site to begin dismantling the building, which many considered a nuisance and an eyesore. State senator Charles Hawkins was alerted and he quickly called Norfolk Southern's president to request that it be spared, and a temporary delay was granted. After eighteen months without any progress, Norfolk Southern issued an ultimatum: either lease or purchase the property or the depot would soon be torn down. Meanwhile the building continued to deteriorate.[10] [Fig. 3.]

The Preservation of Chatham Depot

After conferring with local citizens who pushed for the depot's preservation, in March 2000, Pittsylvania County officials signed a non-binding lease/purchase agreement with Norfolk Southern. At this point the Pittsylvania Historical Society mobilized under the leadership of then-vice president Frances Hallum Hurt, who obtained enough pledges from local citizens to meet the asking price of $37,250, and organized a series of meetings with town and county officials. Finally, the historical society officially took sole possession of the depot on September 7, 2001,

and demolition was averted. In 2002, County Supervisors agreed to sponsor a project to restore and re-use the depot. The historical society funded a Phase I environmental assessment of the site, a property survey, and an appraisal.

Preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation were completed in 4 phases. The entire roof was removed in Phase I and replaced in-kind in 2006-2007. The Phase II project, completed in 2010, restored the interior ceilings and walls, replaced or repaired the windows and doors, installed new electrical components, and installed HVAC. The final phase was completed in 2012 with exterior lighting, fencing, paving, landscaping, and the purchase and installation of interior fixtures, furnishings, communication and electronic equipment, a historical railroad diorama, and a security system. [11] Today the Chatham Depot is again an important part of community life, serving as a museum, library, and meeting space open to the public. Displays within the building illustrate the history of the depot, Chatham, and rail transportation.

Fig. 3 Chatham Depot in 2006, shortly before its restoration began (Pittsylvania Historical Society)

Endnotes

1. Cooper, "Train Station May Be Saved" 1980, and Hurt, "Chatham Recollects Romance of Trains" 1998.
2. Blanton, "Chatham Historic District" National Register nomination, 2000; and "A Rich Southern History," http://www.chatham-va.gov/about-the-town/town-history, accessed 3/4/2015.
3. Glenn Giles, personal communication with the author, November 2014 – March 2015.
4. Burke, *The Southern Railway*, 12.
5. Ibid, 15.
6. Ibid, 17-27.
7. Ibid, 33.
8. Ibid, 36-37.
9. Ibid, 57-63.
10. Glenn Giles, personal communication with the author, April, 2015.
11. Ibid.

12. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

"A Rich Southern History," http://www.chatham-va.gov/about-the-town/town-history, accessed April 8, 2015.

Blanton, Alison S., Hill Studio P.C. "Chatham Historic District" National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2000.

Burke, Davis. *The Southern Railway: Road of the Innovators*. Southern Railway Company/University of North Carolina Press, 1985.

Cooper, Bonnie Ross. "Campaign to Save Old Chatham Depot Catches Eyes of Southern President." *Danville Bee*, Friday, August 24, 1979.

_____. "Train Station May Be Saved." *Danville Bee*, Wednesday, September 24, 1980.

Hurt, Frances Hallam. "Chatham Recollects Romance of Trains." *Chatham Star-Tribune*, September 2, 1998.

Gilbert, John F. ed. *Crossties to the Depot, Vol. 1: Virginia Railroad Stations*. Raleigh, NC, 1982.

Giles, Glenn. Personal communication with the author, November 2014 – March 2015.

John R. Kern, "Preliminary Information Form: Chatham Historic District," VA Department of Historic Resources, 1999.

Melton, Herman. *Picks, Tracks and Bateaux: Industry in Pittsylvania County 1780-1980.* Chatham, Va., 1993: 167-199.

Moses, Preston. "First Train Tracks Through Chatham." 1980s article in possession of the Pittsylvania Historical Society.

Traser, Donald R. *Virginia Railway Depots*. National Railway Historical Society, 1998.

Unknown author, "Chatham Depot: Saving a Landmark." *Chatham Star-Tribune*, November 22, 2006: 12A.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

_X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 187-0009

13. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 36.820810 Longitude: -79.402360
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The historic boundary encompasses the depot itself and a narrow margin of land around it, as shown on the attached map entitled "Sketch Map/ Photo Key."

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The historic boundary is drawn to include only the depot itself and a narrow margin of land around it. There are no other surviving resources historically associated with the depot. The concrete block Southern States warehouse building sharing the tax parcel, to the immediate east of the depot, was constructed in the early 1950s. Because it was a separate entity unaffiliated with the railroad, it is not included in the historic boundary

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14. Form Prepared By
name/title: Michael J. Pulice, Architectural Historian
organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources
street & number: 962 Kime Lane
city or town: Salem state: VA zip code: 24153
e-mail: michael.pulice@dhr.virginia.gov
telephone: 540-387-5443
date: April 2015

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photo Log
Name of Property: Chatham Southern Railway Depot

City or Vicinity: Town of Chatham

County: Pittsylvania State: Virginia

Photographer: Michael J. Pulice

Date Photographed: November 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1. Chatham Southern Railway Depot exterior, looking northeast
2. Chatham Southern Railway Depot exterior, looking southeast
3. Chatham Southern Railway Depot exterior, looking southwest
4. Chatham Southern Railway Depot interior, center room, north wall
5. Chatham Southern Railway Depot interior, center room, south wall model train exhibit
6. Chatham Southern Railway Depot interior, south room, looking south
7. Chatham Southern Railway Depot interior, north room, looking north-northwest

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.