



LOCOMOTIVE 5128: A HIGH-HOOD HERO FINDS A NEW HOME ON THE SECRET VALLEY LINE

When an austere Norfolk Southern EMD - Locomotive 5128 - rolled onto the auction block in Roanoke in 2017, few imagined it would soon wear a coat of Victorian blue and gold. Thanks to Scott and Susan Bentley's gift, the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust secured the 1974-built, high-hood diesel and began writing a fresh chapter for Pennsylvania rail history.

"When Susan and I provided the funds for the Colebrookdale Railroad to purchase 5128, I had no idea how much I would enjoy accompanying Nathaniel Guest to the auction," recalls Scott Bentley. "It has been a matter of great pride to help the railroad acquire a second locomotive to provide reliable passenger and freight service—and I'm thrilled with how good it looks now in its new paint job."

From Southern Staple to Secret Valley Showpiece

Built for Southern Railway, 5128 spent decades hauling freight before moving to the Colebrookdale Railroad roster. Its high-hood silhouette and 2,000-horsepower EMD prime mover earned a reputation for sure-footed pulling power—perfect for Colebrookdale's steep grades and tight curves. By pairing 5128 with our GP10 #7236, the railroad can run push-pull, eliminating time-consuming run-around moves and increasing capacity for both excursion and planned freight services.

A Community Effort, One Brush-Stroke at a Time

The diesel's mechanical health was solid, but its weather-beaten black paint offered little hint of the Edwardian splendor our guests expect. Enter longtime supporter Robert Hart Sr.:

"When Nathaniel showed me a rendering of 5128 in Colebrookdale colors, I knew I wanted to help make that vision real," Hart says. "Funding the paint work was my way of letting this locomotive shine again, and I'm delighted with how she turned out."

With Robert's gift in hand, volunteers and craftsmen stripped, primed, and transformed the locomotive into a rolling ambassador for Secret Valley hospitality—complete with pinstripes that echo the livery of our first-class coaches.

What the Engineer Sees

"I consider it an honor to be a part of the great team that achieved the paint job of 5128. 5128 is the backbone of our railroad services, both freight and passenger. I want to give special appreciation to Robert Hart Sr. who without him this job would never have come to fruition. I have been a part of a number of other railroads, and the railroaders here are as good, or better than any railroad that I have ever been affiliated with. I think that the engine looks fabulous." - Engineer Andrew Sellers.

Advancing Our Mission Through Collaboration

5128's journey mirrors Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust's broader mission: preserving history, creating opportunities, and empowering people through collaboration.

- The Bentley family's leadership gift secured the locomotive.
- Bob Hart's generosity delivered its elegant new appearance.
- Dozens of volunteers logged hundreds of hours to prepare the unit for service.

Together they proved that when community, philanthropy, and craftsmanship unite, an everyday freight locomotive can become a symbol of regional pride and economic revival.

Today, 5128 stands shoulder-to-shoulder with first-class coaches, sensory-friendly programs, and educational excursions—carrying our story, and our passengers, into the future.

Ride behind 5128 on an upcoming excursion and watch history, heritage, and heart converge on the rails of the Secret Valley.

To learn more about the Colebrookdale Railroad, please visit our website at www.colebrookdalerailroad.com.