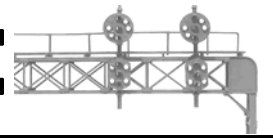


THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Volume 14

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODULAR RAILROADERS CLUB
JUNE 2007 ISSUE

Number 7

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Fred Alsop

Vice-President:

John Carter

Secretary:

Mary Doran-Bleck

Treasurer:

Duane Swank

Newsletter Editor:

Ted Bleck-Doran

Webmaster:

John Edwards

LOCATION

ETSU Campus, George L.
Carter Museum

HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 7:00 PM at ETSU Campus, Brown Hall Science Bldg, Room 312, Johnson City, TN.

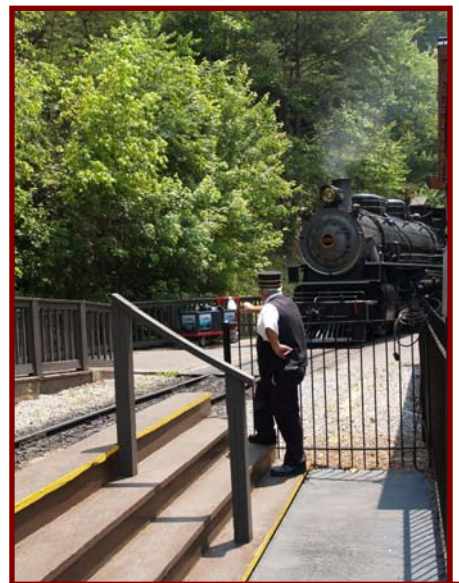
- A social gathering is held prior to the business meeting at **RUBY TUESDAYS** on State of Franklin across from ETSU starting at 5:45 PM. Visitors and those interested in joining MEMRR are invited to attend.

- Work nights are held weekly on Thursday evenings starting at 5:00 PM and lasting until ???

- Open viewing and operating layout is available every Saturday from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

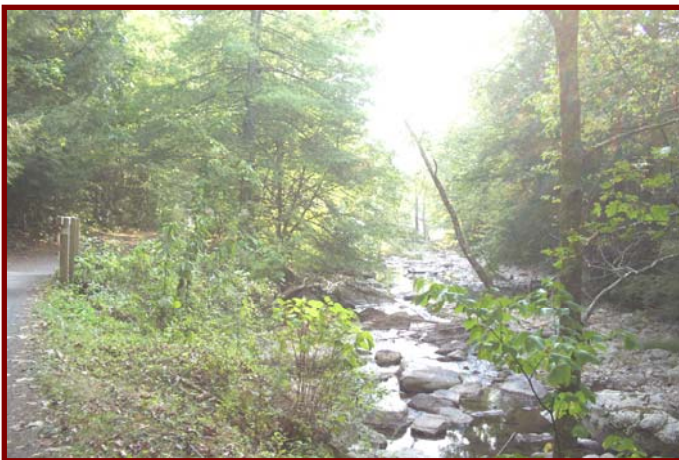
From The Conductor's Desk...

Summer is a time for travel, vacations and railfanning. John Edwards has provided some photos from a trip he and Debbie took to *Dollywood* last summer. In an era when big steam is a rarity or even non-existent, steam-lovers have to travel to shortlines and tourist attractions that cater to their hunger to see, hear and smell railroading as it was. The steam diehard will even stoop to ride a steam loco held captive on amusement park loop of track (Tweetsie anyone....?).



A second option for summer fun is to bike or hike one of the

green way trails that have been developed within an easy drive from the Tri-Cities area. One of the most popular of the Rails-to-Trails green ways is the “Virginia Creeper” – the former Norfolk And Western’s Abingdon Branch made famous by Winston Link’s photos. One can rent mountain bike in either Abingdon or Damascus VA. Outfitters include a van ride to the top of the trail at White Top Station 1.5 miles from the North Carolina – Virginia Border. One can almost coast the 17 miles from White Top to Damascus along a 4% downhill grade. Another trip takes the biker from Abingdon to Damascus. Eight miles is downhill along a 2% grade to the Holston River bridge and back up a 2% grade to Damascus. The railfan is treated to bridges, trestles, cuts and beautiful scenery along the entire right of way – and a great cardiovascular workout. Ted and Mary have done two trips along the Creeper with the following photos as a result.



Top to Bottom: Damascus, Green Cove, Right-Of-Way, Bridge, Low-boy Trestle; Holston River Bridge

PRODUCT REVIEW

MEMRR Club Video Library

The following DVD titles are available from the MEMRR Club Video Library. Loan of the DVD's is a member benefit. All that is asked is:

1. Don't check out more the 2 or 3 at a time, and
2. Return the borrowed DVD's within 2 weeks

There's a checkout roster in the DVD cabinet. Back issues of **THE SIGNAL BRIDGE** have included descriptions of the contents of several of the DVD's.

Prototype/ Historical:

- The Big "A"
- Cab Ride Through The Rathole
- Coal Story: This is Clinchfield
- In Search of the Tweetsie
- Norfolk Southern : Pocahontas Division
- Norfolk Southern Diesels: The Southern
- Norfolk & Western: Hooters on the Blue Ridge
- Norfolk & Western: Steam in the 50's Vol. 1
- Norfolk & Western: Steam in the 50's Vol. 2
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 1
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 2
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 3
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 4
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 5
- Norfolk & Western: Pocahontas Glory Vol. 6
- Runnin' That New River Train
- The Southern in the 70's

Dream-Plan-Build Series

- Volume 1 through 8
- Real Rails: F Units in Action
- Real Rails: Horseshoe Curve
- Real Rails: Big Power
- Special Project Edition: Realistic Layout Operations



A Norfolk And Western 2-8-0 is on display at the Abingdon end of the "Creeper" - not as impressive as an "A" or "J", but a piece of history just the same,

Next Meeting: JUNE 19th, 2007

**Location: RUSSO'S
King Center, S. Roan Street
Johnson City, TN**

**Dinner: 7:00 PM
Program: Special recognition for Penny
McLaughlin, Director, Tipton-
Haynes Historic Site**

**Reservations are encouraged so
Contact Mike Buster
423 282-5060**

Mountain Empire Modular Railroaders
Minutes
17 April 2007

Fred Alsop reporting

8 members gathered for dinner at Ruby Tuesdays at 5:45 p.m.

10 members were present for the regular club meeting which was convened by president, Fred Alsop, at our new meeting room, Room 312, Brown Hall (science building) on the campus of EAST TENN STATE UNIVERSITY, at 7:00 p.m.

Program: Because of the absence of our program presenter there was no program. John Carter moved we rearrange our meeting schedule to have the programs at the end of the meetings. The motion was seconded and approved.

Officer's reports:

Secretary's report: No action taken in the absence of the secretary and because the March minutes were not yet available.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Editor was absent and April *Signal Bridge* had not been mailed. (The president noted the recent death of Ted's father and the disruptions such a loss brings to a family and asked the club to understand that it may take a little while for Ted and Mary to get the less important things back on track. They both are in our thoughts and prayers.)

Treasure's Report: Duane Swank reported an April balance of \$1,245.48 (and an unencumbered available balance of \$980.93). The president asked about memberships in arrears and asked the treasurer to send one more letter to all unpaid members. The treasurer agreed to do so and the president will send him an electronic copy of our letterhead to use for those letters.

WebMaster's Report: John Edwards reports the new site is going smoothly. The only difficulty is the restricted space that prevents some of the newsletter fitting into it.

Vice President's Report: John Carter requested ideas and volunteers for upcoming club meetings. The new ETSU meeting room has AV equipment that will facilitate the showing of VCR, CD, and DVD media and is equipped with sinks and chemical-resistant counter tops that will allow "how-to-build-this" type demonstrations.

President's Report: Fred Alsop thanked everyone for all their efforts that went into moving the club's layout from Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site to ETSU. He reminded everyone the top priority now is getting the N-scale layout up and running and that in addition to the regular Thursday night work schedules we will be putting in additional time on Saturdays (the latter in lieu of the time formerly spend operating the layout at T-H).

Old Business:

1. Hobie Hyder brought the new Atlas N&W caboose to donate to the club
2. Joe Roberts distributed a draft for a club calling chain and asked for corrections and/or additions.
3. John Carter got one set of Shortline wheel sets locally and has not yet ordered the remaining ones needed.
4. Mike Buster inquired as to the two passenger coaches to be donated to the club as memorial cars by Charles Causey so he could letter them. John Carter indicated he thought Charles was still trying to locate them in his inventory.

New Business:

1. Hobie will purchase a club appreciation plaque for Penny McLaughlin. Mike and Fred will draft the wording on it. The plaque will be presented at our June meeting.

2. The club will take Penny to dinner at Russo's Restaurant, 300 E. Main at our regular June 19 meeting. Dinner will begin at 6:00 p.m. and Mike Buster will make the reservations.
3. ETSU Museum: Work schedule every Thursday night beginning around 5:00 p.m. and we will work on Saturdays (no scheduled time-just come when you can) with emphasis on the Bankus N-Scale layout. Members can work on their personal modules or on the N-scale at their convenience as we have 24/7 access to the room housing them just as we did at Tipton-Haynes. Lockbox combination is 4501. WE NEED FOR EVERYONE TO HELP GET THE MUSEUM OPEN AND FOR THAT TO HAPPEN THE LAYOUTS HAVE TO BE OPERATIONAL!! Members are encouraged to visit the Archives of Appalachia in the ETSU Library and make a list of the railroading photos we may want to have enlarged for display in the museum. Ideas for display items we may need to purchase are also sought (display cases, shelving, signage, RR memorabilia, etc.)

Announcements: Jim Milhorn, 527 Old Stage Road, 477-7955 is selling all his extensive HO scale train inventory (rolling stock, locomotives [some custom painted], track, power supplies, detail parts, decals, etc.). Call him and go by and pick out what you want at bargain discount prices.

May Meeting: Tuesday May 15, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. in 312 Brown Hall, ETSU campus. (Note: President Fred Alsop will be out of state conducting workshops and VP John Carter will be presiding). Dinner for those who want to eat and enjoy some fellowship prior to the meeting at Ruby Tuesdays on State of Franklin at 5:45 p.m.



Here's a scenic idea – place a street festival right next to the tracks – it's both safe and fun – and the locomotives will drown the unwanted sounds from a poor band – Photo taken in Johnson City at the Blue Plum Festival Main Stage, June 3, 2007

Mountain Empire Modular Railroaders
Minutes
15 May 2007

John Carter reporting:

Meeting was called to order by Vice-President John Carter at 7:30 PM with 8 members present.

Officers' Reports:

1. Secretary's Report was deferred
2. Newsletter Editor's Report was deferred
3. Treasurer's Report was provided by Duane Swank (see summary in Treasurer's Report Box).
4. WebMaster's Report: John Edwards reported that the new website was up and running with most members making the switch from the site on Yahoo. The Yahoo account shows 19 of 35 member households with Yahoo accounts. Message traffic on the Yahoo mail group has declined significantly.
5. Vice President's Report: John Carter reported that the N scale layout has been reassembled and work is progressing with electrical and track repairs. Parts of the layout are becoming operational each week. The HO layout is off the floor but not operational. All members were encouraged to participate in the Thursday work nights. The club room is available 25/7 for members to work on either their HO modules or the N-scale layout (though preference should be given to getting the N-scale layout operational).
6. President's Report was deferred

Old Business:

1. Plaque for Penny McLaughlin: Hobie Hyder volunteered to obtain a suitable plaque as a thank you for Penny's assistance over the past 18 months while the club was at Tipton-Haynes.
2. Mike Buster has made reservations at Russo's for 6 p.m. June 19 (our next regular meeting night for a dinner to recognize Penny and her support. Members wishing to attend should contact Mike to insure adequate space is available.
3. Shortline wheel sets for club F7 A&B units have been ordered by John Carter with one set received and a second set now available from Walthers at sale prices.
4. Mike Buster reported that he not received the memorial passenger cars from Charles Causey. Mike will send a letter to determine the status. Once the cars

are in hand Mike will letter them for deceased members.

New Business:

1. The June Meeting and program will be the dinner honoring Penny McLaughlin and will convene at Russo's Restaurant. Any important business will be conducted in a short business meeting at the end of the dinner meal. Spouses, significant-others, and other guests are invited. Dutch Treat will prevail.
2. Update on the progress on the Bankus N-Scale layout: the club has received \$1,000 from ETSU as financial support for operations and repairs. The members present voted to spend \$998.83 on the following items:
 - Digitrax Super Chief DCC Control System with FRE200 radio
 - Digitrax starter set with 5 UP35 universal panels
 - Heritage Berkshire in Pierre Marquette lettering for ETSU Presidents' Train
 - Walthers Passenger cars with 7 sleepers and 1 lounge in L&N (blue and gold) paint scheme
3. John Carter offered to coordinate an additional club member order to Digitrax parts and systems. Members wishing to place an order need to see John by July. Members will receive a 35% discount off the Walthers list price.

Announcements:

1. Hobie announced the sale of a collection consisting of a 6' x 12' logging outfit in G gauge. Price is \$5,000 with an original purchase value of \$9,000. See Hobie for details.
2. John Carter is drumming up interest in a rRoad trip to Knoxville. Come to the next meeting with dates in mind...

Program:

Weathering with Acrylics by Ted Bleck-Doran was delayed. John Edwards attempted to show a selection from the Dream-Plan-Build series but had technical difficulties with the projection system.

June Meeting: Tuesday, June 19th, 6:00 p.m. Club and guests meet for dinner at Russo's Restaurant, 300 East Main Street, Johnson City.

JOIN THE FUN THURSDAYS ARE WORK NIGHTS

THE CREW GATHERS BEGINNING AT 5:00 OR SO...
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO LEARN – SEE – OR - DO

**SIGNAL BRIDGE
MEMBER-OF-THE-MONTH
Ed Lockett**

Email: (None at present)

Home Layout: Yes

Visitors Welcome: Yes

Occupation: Art Instructor – Tennessee High
MEMRR Module: Yes

Favorite Railroad(s):

German Reichsbahn Circa 1936 (HO)

Favorite Aspect of the Hobby:

Scenery, Structures, Layout Construction

Least Favorite Aspect of the Hobby:

Wiring turnouts

How Did You Get Started In the Hobby:

1973 – bought a used Fleischman HO German trainset

How Long Have You Been a Member of MEMRR:

4 Years

What Got You Started with MEMRR:

Read about the club in the LOAFER Weekly

What Dreams Do You Have for Your Layout of Module:

Expand the layout to include an engine terminal and working yard.

What Other Model Railroad or Railfan Activities Do You Participate In:

I work part-time at Hobbytown USA weekends as a train specialist

What One Thing Would Improve MEMRR:

Expand membership with "Bring a friend" meeting night..

PRODUCT REVIEW

Dream-Plan-Build Video Series, Vol. 9

Coming fast on the heels of the Real Rail Edition – F Units in Action, Kalmbach Publishing Co.'s has released the 9th volume in the Dream-Plan-Build Video Series. This DVD contains the blend of modeling, rail history, layout tours and tourist segments in a format similar to that of the other DVDs in the series. Of interest, the DVD contains segments on:

Model Railroad Techniques

- Step-by-Step: Installing a Tortoise
- Creating Custom Modular Structures
- Building a Sturdy Deck Girder Bridge
- Casting Your Own Molds
- Creating Realistic Stone Walls
- Adding Realism with Freight Car Loads

Model Railroad Layouts

- Diverse Scenery of the Underground Railroad HO Layout
- B&O Railroad Comes to Life on Don Cassler's Layout
- A Family Activity: The Webb's Garden Layout
- An Assortment of Bridges on the Train Barn O Gauge Layout
- San Diego Model RR Club's Massive HO 70 Gauge Layouts
- A Unique Modular Layout: The Orlando Society of Model Railroaders

Prototype

- A Ride on the Historic Texas State Railroad
- An Impressive Narrow Gauge Railroad: The Durango & Silverton
- An Engineering Landmark: The Hellgate Bridge

This volume contains much of what we've come to expect in the series. Borrow the club's copy, sit back, and enjoy an hour or so of interesting ideas.

Cost: \$24.90 (S&H Included)

Below: a Lineside Industry in Abingdon VA **At Right:** Fred working on a mountain to cover the helix at the club



