



From the Conductor's Desk...

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Fred Alsop

Vice-President:

John Carter

Secretary:

Art Daniels

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 **EL TORITO** on State of Franklin near ETSU in the Kroger Plaza 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 4:30 PM and lasting until ???

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

Weathering Rolling Stock With Oils

Fred Alsop & Ted Bleck-Doran



Unless a car or locomotive is fresh from the shop or wash station, the vast majority of rolling stock seen on the nation's rails are covered with the grime of constant use and signs of visible wear and tear. To add realism to our car and locomotive fleets attention to weathering is a detail which should not be overlooked. Using oil paints is a fast and easy way to create a fleet of well used cars.

Step 1: Gather the materials you'll need -

- Flat head paint brushes
- Dental scaler or scribing tool
- Earth tone oil paints (Siena, Burnt Siena, Umber, Burnt Umber, Black, Titanium White)
- Scalecoat Flat Aluminum (Acrylic)
- Turpentine (*Turpenold* is odorless and easy to work with)



Step 2: If the car has a metal roof, begin by creating the effect of bare metal peeking through a thin worn coat of paint. Using a board square tipped brush apply a hint of flat aluminum. This is done by using a dry-brush technique. After mixing the paint (never shake a bottle as is allows paint to seep under the cap and infuses the paint with air - a battery powered mixer is readily available at *Hobbytown*). Load the brush with paint; Using a paper towel, work most of the paint off the brush until there is just a hint of color left. Apply the color remaining on the brush to the car in long brush strokes. Brush strokes should be in the same direction. Repeat the process until the desired degree of weathering is achieved. Since you are using a water based paint in this step, a damp cloth or paper towel can be used to remove some of the color if too much paint has been applied.



Step 3: Apply some dents and scratches around the doorways and sides of the car using the dental scaler or scribing tool (a nail or screw point works just as well). Remember rail cars get abused in the course of the lives. These are not delicate objects. Horizontal strokes around the doorways represent where tow motors and fork lifts have run afoul of the car.



Step 4: Using a palette (virtually any non-absorbent flat surface) squeeze out several dabs of paint and begin to create several shades of earth-tone weathering colors. With a little practice you'll have your own palette of

colors distinctive to you layout.

(Continued on page 4)

From the engineer's side of the cab: What will the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders achieve in 2009? While the answer to that question will evolve over the next 12 months some clear indications can be seen in the year just past that was crowned with an outstanding club Christmas party at Tipton-Haynes State Historical Site. 2008 saw us mark our first year as an active partner in our new home in the George L. Carter Railroad Museum on the campus of East Tennessee State University where our layouts and exhibits were viewed by more people in a single year than in the 15 previous combined years of our club's history. We saw our club's membership grow at an unprecedented rate with some truly outstanding people joining our ranks and bringing their special talents with them. The MEMRR selected a strong team of officers to lead it into the New Year with many of them being reelected to posts they had held before.

In 2008 the combined work on all three of our operating layouts, N-scale, HO-scale, and G-scale, brought new levels of detail and improvement to each of them. The museum displays continue to advance to the point that when viewed in early December, by Charles Manning, Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents, he reported to that body in his introductory remarks the next day that this museum was one of the treasures of this university and of the TBR university system. President Stanton's decision to remain the president of ETSU for the next few years provides relief and assurance of continued support for the railroad museum as we continue to grow in size and mission. Further proof of this important university support came in July when President Stanton named Fred Alsop to be the first director of the museum. We now have the time and the space to work on all the aspects that will provide a secure home for the MEMRR as well as wonderful place to embrace our hobby of model railroading. The year brought us additional space in 108 that provided a workshop room to build exhibits and to hold model railroading workshops and clinics that is much better than the small, cramped room we had in the beginning adjacent to the museum gallery. The paint booth, counters and storage space, multiple sinks, and larger floor space all combine to make an excellent room to build large exhibits like the 21 stall roundhouse project for the HO layout or the "Jack Cope" layout that will be our 'carryout' exhibit railroad when it is completed. Renovation dollars have been set aside for the 2 other rooms acquired by the museum this year and soon they will be painted, floors fixed, and details trimmed so they can become a children's play room and an additional exhibit hall. I am already working with the university's Advancement Office to identify

possible donors, both private and corporate, to provide the funding we will need for the exhibits and some club members, Gary Rabetoy, Bob Barrett, and others, have donated in-kind materials towards this end. Additionally, many model and prototype railroad items have been permanently or temporarily loaned to the museum for our displays.

We changed our club's name in 2008 to **Mountain Empire Model Railroaders** to better reflect our diversity in model railroading and with it came new shirts, new engineers' hats, and the planning for club/museum brochures and a logo for the museum that will be determined by a contest for the surrounding community. The club and the museum enjoyed widespread publicity from the media in the Tri-Cities that chronicled some of our successes and milestones while introducing many people of the region to our museum and thousands have come to visit and to talk about railroads, big and small, with us.

The view from this side of the cab is forward looking into 2009. While I see the many wonderful material things that now surround this club; our exhibits, our model railroads, the great space we are afforded on the campus of an outstanding university; they are to be noted, but are not our most important asset. I also envision the destinations ahead in the exhibits to be completed, the events we will take part in or sponsor, the visitors and new members yet to come; but these too are not our most important treasures. What I see are 70+ members of the MEMRR in their green shirts with the fellowship we have developed for each other that has ties in our hobby, but is now a personal bond that we express to each other with friendship, helping hands, volunteers, communication of knowledge and skills, the exhibition of talents for the many aspects of our hobby, and the willingness to donate some hours from busy schedules on a regular basis to make the club and the railroad museum even better in 2009. Our members are our treasure and our most important asset. They are the heart and sole of the railroad club and the railroad museum. It is the strength of the MEMRR that will carry us down the mainline into 2009 with bells and whistles sounding to destinations yet unknown. I believe 2009 is going to be a great year!

Fred Alsop
President MEMRR
Director George L. Carter Railroad Museum ETSU

Mountain Empire Model Railroaders
Christmas Party and Meeting
Club Minutes
December 16, 2008

Members gathered at Tipton-Haynes for the annual Christmas Party and for the December, 2008 Monthly Meeting.

A delicious potluck dinner was enjoyed by all in attendance.

Following dinner, Fred Alsop, MEMRR President, called the group to order for a brief business meeting. Items discussed and handled included:

1. The miniature camera previously purchased by the club and which mounts in the front of a locomotive which traverses the HO layout has ceased to function and has been replaced by John Edwards with his own funds. A motion was made by Ed Lockett

and seconded by Jim Pahr to reimburse John for the cost of this camera from the club treasury. After a brief discussion to clarify the history of this issue, the motion was passed by voice vote.

2. An announcement was made by Ted Bleck-Doran to remind everyone about the photo contest now underway. Entries are due no later than January 13, 2009, the date of the January Monthly Meeting. Photos are limited to actual railroad subjects (no models) and details about the contest can be found on the MEMRR website.

3. The on-going issue related to module owners preparing a list of items to search for during the visits to the club by the public was brought to the members' attention again. All data should be forwarded to Ted Bleck-Doran.

4. Fred gathered names for attendance for the Saturday Public sessions for the dates of December 20, 2008 through January 17,

2009 inclusive. There is an on-going need to have at least 4-6 members present throughout each Saturday from 10 AM to 3 PM.

5. Fred reminded everyone to observe on-campus parking restrictions when working in the museum. Fred mentioned the need to refrain from parking either in Handicap Parking slots or in designated Loading Zone slots. Fred is in discussion with university officials about special parking permits or other considerations for club members who are working in the museum.

Following the business meeting, Ed Lockett played host to the annual "Good Santa" gift exchange. The gift exchange was open to all members who brought gifts. Each member drew a number

which determined the order of selection of a gift, either from the gift pile "under the tree" or from a previously opened gift. All members enjoyed the fun associated with this event and many nice, but affordable, gifts were exchanged. An extra gift was presented at the end of the session to our newest member, Emile Hamm, who joined the club at the beginning of the meeting.

A special thank-you to Tipton Haynes for allowing the club to use the meeting room at the center for our party. Thank you also to everyone who contributed in any way to the successful and enjoyable evening.

Respectfully submitted December 17, 2008
by Arthur T. Daniels, MEMRR Secretary



Historic Name Trains

The City of Memphis

Nashville Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway

"The streamlined City of Memphis was conceived and born in the Nashville shops, the first time a complete train of this character was ever built in company shops in the South. At a cost of \$328,240, a rather considerable savings was effected; not only that, a fine streamliner was turned out while other roads were waiting for car manufacturers. The City of Memphis was given modern trucks, roller bearings and the latest in mechanical features. The interiors received deluxe styling and every modern facility for the comfort and convenience of its passengers was provided. The City of Memphis leaves Memphis at 8:05a.m., makes a convenient layover at Nashville and completes the return trip to Memphis at 7:40p.m., making the run of 237 miles each way in five hours flat." From S. Kip Farrington's *Railroads of Today*. *Photo: City of Memphis as a three car consist headed by a GP7 in the N. C. & St. L. Blue and Grey Paint Scheme*

PRODUCT REVIEW

Dream-Plan-Build: Real Rails Edition

Kalmbach has produced a new volume in the *Dream Plan Build* video Series. The latest volume is **No. 15** in the "how-to-do" series. It brings a mix of modeling tips, layout visits and prototype chapters to you TV screen or computer monitor. Chapters include:

Layout

- Ed Loizeaux's Industrial S Gauge Layout
- Teamwork on the Zanw Trace Club Layout
- Chicago's Multi-Scale Layout at Navy Pier
- C.J. Riley's Kanawha & Western Allegheny

Technique

- Troubleshooting DCC Short Circuits
- Bracing Walls on Wood Structures
- Painting Your Own Scale Figures
- Weathering A Steam Locomotive

Prototype

- The Historic Black Hills Central RR
- The Nicholson Bridge: The Largest Concrete Bridge
- Why We Love Trains

Of course there are .PDF files with articles to print. You can borrow the club's copy and spend a late fall evening armchair railroading for an hour or so.

Cost: \$24.90 (S&H Included)

PRODUCT REVIEW

Dream-Plan-Build: Real Rails Edition

Kalmbach has produced a new volume in the *Dream Plan Build* video Series. The latest volume is **Extra Edition** in the "how-to-do" series. It brings a mix of modeling tips, layout visits and prototype chapters to you TV screen or computer monitor. Chapters include:

Layout

- Robert Allbritton's Swiss Alps Z Gauge
- Brian Casull's Rocky g Gauge Layout
- Dean Bittick's Lionel O Gauge Layout
- Harry Clark's Indian Creek Valley Railroad

Technique

- Using Prototypical sounds on your Railroad
- Handlaying Track with CV Tie Strips
- Making Rapids on your Layout
- Tips for Multi-Deck Benchwork

Prototype

- Operations at the Transportation Test Center
- A Tour of Northern Railcar Wheelshop
- Florida's Apalachicola Northern Railroad

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MEMBER OF THE MONTH**Jim Pahr****E-mail** pahrjsj@embarqmail.com**Home Layout** Yes**MEMRR Module** No**Visitors Welcome** Yes**Occupation:** Retired US Army Program Manager**Favorite railroad:** East Tennessee & Western North Carolina (Tweetsie); Tennessee Central; Central of Georgia; Cadiz Railroad**Favorite aspect of hobby:** Researching railroad information and history; operating my layout as prototypically as possible.**Least favorite aspect of hobby:** Scenery**How did you get started in hobby:** I've been interested in trains since I was a preschooler. My earliest memories are of the Pacific Electric in Los Angeles during World War II**How long have you been a member of the MEMRR:** I joined in early 2005**What got you started with MEMRR:** Jack Cope; he knew about the club and took me to a meeting. We both joined and started a module (Ted Bleck-Doran now owns the module but the module concept and design were ours).**What dreams do you have for your layout or module:** I would like to get my home layout scened.**What other model railroad or railfan activities do you participate in:** I'm a member of Watauga Valley Chapter-National Railway Historical Society; Central of Georgia Railway Historical Society; ET&WNC Historical Society.**What one thing would improve MEMRR:**

Begin to operate the HO layout as a railroad instead of just running trains.

What Special skill are you able to share with the club:
Public Relations – promoting the club

Step 5: Continuing with the roof start to build up rust-like deposits along the eaves of the roof. Using a toothpick or dental scaler dab splotches of color along the drip rail or roof edge. Take the square tip brush saturated with turp and stroke the brush in straight lines from the center of the roof line towards the eaves.



Step 6: Repeat the same techniques along the sides and ends of the car. Again apply dabs of color and with a brush saturated with turp stroke in straight line down the sides of the car from the roofline to the sill. The color will run in streaks. If you've applied too much color additional washes of turp will lighten the intensity. Not enough color, apply additional dabs of paint.



Step 7: Use dabs of white to simulate streaks of rain washed dust and road grime. This is also a great way to simulate the fading on paint due to sun exposure.



Working in oil is very forgiving as drying times are several days. A hair dryer can be used to speed the process, but care should be taken to avoid warping the plastic car body. To finish the weathering a thin coat of dust, grimy black and/or rust can be sprayed along the bottom half

of the car body and trucks. The technique is quick and easy. Several cars can be done in a single session once you become comfortable with the techniques described above.



For those less adventuresome dig out some of those seldom run cars or pick up a couple of inexpensive cars at a swap-meet to practice on. Weathering is really child's play once you get the hang of it.



The loco is coaled and steam is up! Are you on board?



Your membership with Mountain Empire Model Railroaders is about to expire and this may your last issue of *The SIGNAL BRIDGE*.

December-January-February are membership renewal months.
So please consider renewing your membership today.

Full Membership is \$30.00
Family membership is an additional \$5.00 per member
Associate Membership is \$12.00

Send your check to:
MEMRR
c/o Duane Swank
1763 Sylvan Hill Road
Elizabethton TN 37643

The club is in new quarters at ETSU with both HO and N Gauge Railroads to operate.
Come join the fun.