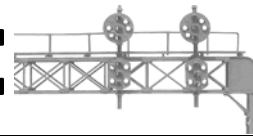


THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Volume 16

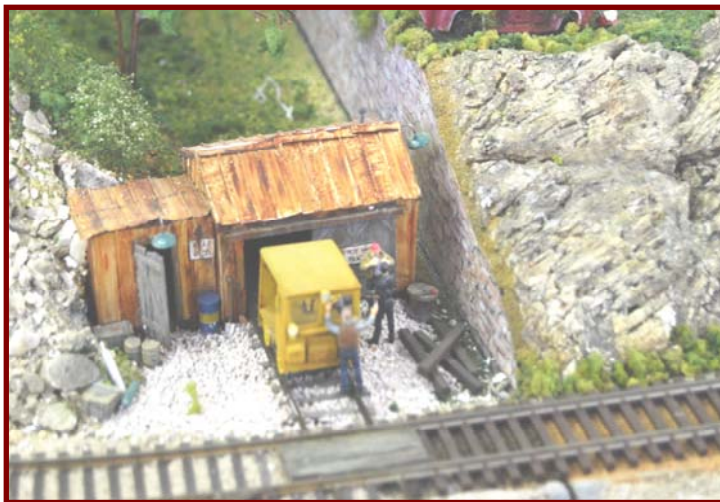
NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
APRIL 2009 ISSUE

Number 4

From the Conductor's Desk...

LESSONS FROM THE PROTOTYPE – PART 2

Last month we took a look at the prototype for hints on replicating roofs in our modeling world. Here in the South roofs take a beating from the elements. Sun fades dark colors, rain creates rust, and the residual dampness on the shaded side, mold. Along with the accumulation of dust, dirt and grime, roofs can take on eye-catching hues virtually overnight.



Here are three examples from models on the club HO layout that highlight techniques that liven roofs and create eye-catching scenes.

The first is a metal handcar and tool shed added to the High-Bridge module. It's stuck in a small niche along the module edge. The figures, speeder, ties, tools and barrels all add to the scene. However, it's the weathering of the roof and siding that gives a sense of time and character to the shed. Washes of earth tone oils bring the sheet metal roof and siding to life.



The second example is the hand care and tool shed found on the "Five Acres & Independence" module. The structure was built board-by-board with a detailed interior by Ted Bleck-Doran. Rather than hide the interior detail, a section of the roof was left exposed. A roofing crew replaces a section of roof with new metal panels. The rust colors were done with washes of earth-tone acrylics.



Not every roof needs to be weathered to the last stage of its life. Paul Haynes has created a farm house with the new roof being installed. The shingle main roof has already been installed, while the roofer nails new plywood to the side porch and the front porch has open rafters. He's created a visually interesting and varied scene.

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.

**Mountain Empire Model Railroad Club
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 17, 2009
Meeting in 312 Brown Hall, ETSU**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Fred Alsop, President.

Secretary's Report: Art Daniels thanked Ted Bleck-Doran for taking Minutes during the February Meeting. The February Minutes were approved as presented in The Signal Bridge.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Ted Bleck-Doran thanked Gary Rabetoy for helping with the February Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Duane Swank provided details of the club's financial status with a March balance of \$2,094.96. Duane reported that the club now has a business checking account, with signatory authority vested in the President and Treasurer. Duane also reported that 7 single members and 2 family-unit members had not yet paid their 2009 dues. Final notices were sent to each delinquent member or family unit.

Webmaster's Report: John Edwards reported that recent upgrades to the website were functioning properly.

Vice President's Report: John Carter reported that upcoming programs for the monthly meetings were listed in the March Signal Bridge.

President's Report: Fred Alsop reported that the new museum door locks were now installed and reminded all members that the doors will now lock whenever they are closed. Members must remember to take the key with them if they exit the museum and close the doors.

Fred reported significant progress by ETSU staff toward completing painting and other upgrades to the Children's Room in the museum, including installation of windows for viewing the room from the hallway, interior painting, floor tile repair, benches, and drop ceiling with new fluorescent lighting.

Jim Millhorn reported on progress on the paint hood and air compressor systems. Fred reminded members to not turn on the water system in the work room's paint booth, except at its enclosed sink, unless a hose is attached to the ports on the paint booth wall.

Old Business:

1. Hobbytown will host workshops and other special events at the store location on April 4th, during the Train Show that is being organized by Gary Cameron and the Southeast Regional Train Center.

2. The Photo Contest is now underway, with photos on display at the museum. Members and guests are encouraged to vote for their favorite photos.

3. John Carter has a set of old photographs which will require special handling for preservation and display at the museum. Geoff Stunkard offered to work with John to find the best way to handle, record, and preserve these photos.

4. John Edwards mentioned that the museum requires the Windows XP Operating System to properly handle all software on

the museum computer. However, he reports that, with XP loaded, there is almost no memory capacity left on the computer, which at best makes the computer very slow and, more often, renders it inoperable. Fred Alsop will check with University resources to determine if the University can make a new computer available. If not, the Club will consider other alternatives to obtain a new system.

New Business:

1. Art Daniels introduced a motion to have the club authorize a special fund for the Secretary to cover special cards and postage when the club decides to recognize members' special situations. After discussion and several additional motions, the club voted as follows: \$50.00 fund to be provided to the Secretary for use in purchasing cards and stamps as needed. The fund to be replenished as necessary and the Secretary to account for use of the fund as appropriate to the Treasurer. Cards will be sent to members under the following circumstances:

(1) Condolences upon the death of a member, member's spouse, member's child, or member's or spouse's parent.

(2) Get Well card to member or member's spouse for appropriate illness situations.

(3) Thank you to member's or others under special direction from the Officers of the Club.

2. Hobie Hyder reported upon status of the special purchase opportunity for Interstate 50-Ton Hopper cars. Members had agreed to purchase a total of 132 cars. After much discussion and several motions, the club decided to purchase an additional 18 cars to raise the total being purchased to 150 cars so that an additional discount on the entire order could be secured. The club's agreement to order these additional 18 cars will provide cars to the club to be used for future fund-raising or other club activities. The prices to be paid by members who have ordered cars will not be decreased by this action. The club expects to expend approximately \$100.00, including the differential cost for the 18 cars and freight for shipment of the entire order.

Layout Reports:

HO Layout: John Edwards reported that supplies have arrived to support the re-wiring of the DC buss to facilitate DCC operations. John Carter reported on progress on the Roundhouse.

N-Scale Layout: Wiring upgrades are proceeding. The layout now runs more reliably and further improvements are anticipated. Members have verified through experience and testing that it is safe to run the N-Scale layout on Pulse Power without overheating the engines. Running on Pulse Power enables train speeds to be significantly reduced without issues such as trains stopping on upgrades (especially within the helix). Members are encouraged to set all N-Scale controls to Pulse Power for Saturday and other running sessions.

G-Scale Layout: No report.

Other News: Fred Alsop reminded members that temporary Parking Passes may be obtained at the Parking Office on campus on Maple Street, near the University Parkway side of the campus. Parking Passes should be obtained whenever a member is going to be in the museum during normal daytime school hours and passes should be displayed so that campus security patrols may easily see them.

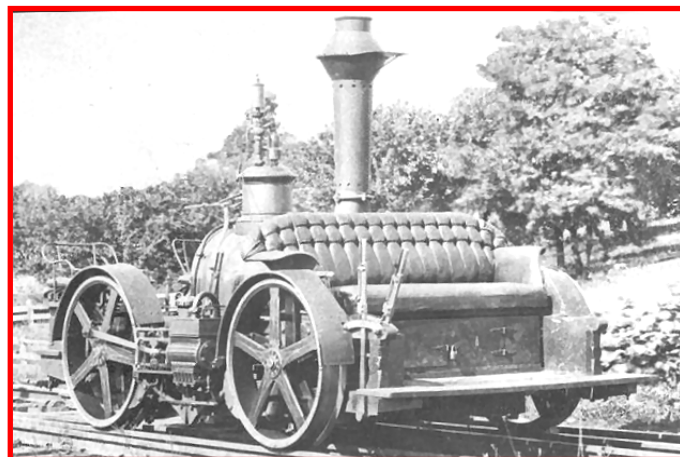
Condolences are expressed to Paul Haynes on the death of his Mother-in-law and to **Tod** Eaton on the death of his Mother.

Volunteers for the Saturday museum public hours were scheduled for the period from March 21 through April 18.

The Business Section of the meeting was concluded. The meeting continued with a photo presentation by Fred Alsop on the Cass Scenic Railroad in Cass West Virginia, visited by several club members in September 2006.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted March 23, 2009 by Arthur T. Daniels, Secretary, MEMRR.



The view from the engineer's side of the cab. Spring has arrived and the new growth is carrying over in the George L. Carter Railroad Museum and the to the layouts operated by the MEMRR. The N-Scale "gandy dancers" have been working hard to improve the performance of their locomotives and consists, and that effort is really beginning to pay off. They have been rewiring sequential blocks of main line, straightening track lines, and smoothing out curves with the result of moving trains with an excess of 40 cars and at prototypical speeds. Their work is not finished but they are to be commended on the progress they have made to bring the Bankus layout closer to smooth and reliable operation. Work continues on the HO-Scale layout with individual modelers adding details to their modules, check out Larry Fraser's and Ted Bleck-Doran's recent additions for example, and lots of effort is still going into the roundhouse project and associated structures for the rail yard. Drop into the "research" room, #108, to see how each is shaping up. We have rotated some of our static exhibits in the display cases as well. Some of the items displayed by Gary Cameron (thanks Gary) have been removed and replaced by new railroad pieces provided by Club members including Larry Fraser, Duane & Harriet Swank, and Geoff Stunkard. Come and enjoy them.

The renovation of the two "new" rooms by Facilities Management is almost completed with the carpet being installed in the "Little Engineers Room" on April 11th. Upon completion we will begin to plan on moving some display cases donated by Robert Barrett, of HobbytownUSA, into 100B followed by moving Gary Rabetoy's donated layout there sometime in May. If you are a club member looking for something to model we will soon have two projects that will need your skills: the "Jack Cope" 5 x 9 foot HO layout has been waiting for modelers for months, and Gary's donated 13 x 23 foot HO/Hon3 layout will soon be available. Some planning sessions for those who may be interested are in the works, so let me know if you want to be included.

The club's computer, donated by Gary Woods, was recently overloaded with the installation of additional software programs; a problem we discussed at our last Club meeting. The university has a program that recycles donated, refurbished computers to some units on campus as well as to area public schools. We have been the beneficiaries of this program through its director, David Robinson, and we now have a Dell system with Windows-XP, 512MB of RAM, along with a scanner/printer, that is up and running. John Edwards has installed all our old software and reports the machine to be excellent and one that will suit our needs for a long time to come.

Club support at the museum on Thursday work nights and for Saturday public running sessions has been very good. Thanks to all of you for making the effort to serve our visitors and to continue to improve our exhibits and our operations. Many of you are beginning to make Thursday nights and Saturdays a part of your regular schedule to be at the museum and that part of being a club member is paying real personal dividends in getting to know people who are part of your hobby and can share their skills with you. If you are not one of the "regulars" you are missing out on a big part of the hobby of model railroading and we are losing getting to know you and benefiting from your modeling skills. Start putting the MEMRR/Carter RR Museum on your Thursday/Saturday calendar and come join in the social life of a great model railroad club. We need your help.

Gary Cameron is to be congratulated for his successful efforts in bringing the first Annual Spring Railroad Days to Johnson City on April 4th. MEMRR participated by having the Carter RR Museum open to the public and we had more than the usual number of visitors, many associated with Gary's event, in the museum on that Saturday.

Bob Barrett, MEMRR member and owner of our local Hobbytown USA, has been able to extend very generous discounts to MEMRR members on our purchases of model railroad and related hobby supplies since he arrived in Johnson City. The current hard economic times are affecting his store as well as hobby shops across the country. Because of this he is having to adjust those discounts to us as he has notified me in the following email. Please remember how much Bob has helped the club, and you as individual members, and please continue to support his efforts to provide a high-quality hobby shop in our region by thanking him for that support and those discounts, and by being regular customers. Here is his email:

"Fred, I need to clarify the discounts that I give the club members and what is available to them for discounts. After reviewing some sales transactions and looking at discounts provided, I have actually lost money on some items. This does not help me and keep my business viable. So from now on, this is all I can offer the club members.

1.) No club discounts can be offered on items which already have a RED Sticker, or \$ off coupons. Generally, these already give more than a 20% discount.

2.) No club discounts for non-train items since some of these items are already discounted and I don't want my employees worrying about whether they are allowed to offer the discount.

3.) Discounts apply only to items which are not already discounted by the hobbytown price.

4.) The following lines can not be discounted: Kadee, Lionel (except track), LGB, Atlas O, MTH, KLINE

5.) Items ordered from Walthers must be purchased at the Walthers price unless prepaid and a price agreed to by myself, unfortunately. Walthers margins for dealers have been decreasing and I can not discount below their advertised price.

6.) Generally, there is no problem giving the 20% discount for woodland scenics, atlas track, atlas cars, atearn products, bachmann products and the like. But since margins on special cars like Kadee, Intermountain, Walthers and several others have been decreasing, giving a 20% discount takes my profit to less than 5% when using a credit card. I can't sustain my business that way. I will make a complete list for the staff to use when giving club discounts, and will forward that to you when complete.

It is no wonder why hobby stores are diminishing in quantity throughout the country. This year alone I have been told that close to 250 stores have closed since Thanksgiving that were hobby related. The stress that the internet with the unfair tax advantage it offers makes the competition very tough, and then the costs of operations are going up and the margin of profit is diminishing. And it is very disappointing to me when club

members admit they buy online to save the 9.5% sales tax. That certainly wouldn't keep me in business and keep the 7 employees I have working. (Just my beef).

Hope this doesn't alienate anyone, but if I am making little to no money on the transactions, losing the sale doesn't effect me that much."

Greg Soots, President of the Southern Railroad Historical Association (SRHA), visited the museum on Saturday, 11 April. He was scouting the facility after we have been exchanging emails for several weeks as advance planning for a big railroading event in mid-October. The SRHA will be renting the entire refurbished Bristol Train Station on Saturday, 17 Oct., 2009, for a combined event with the SRHA, the Watauga and Clinchfield, and perhaps Tweetsie, chapters of the NRHA. Greg has a number of outstanding modelers and contributors to national model railroad magazines lined up to put on modeling clinics on that day at the station. He wants the attendees to be able to tour our Carter RR Museum on Friday night, October 16th as part of his event. We, in turn will be invited to participate in Bristol the following day. I will keep you posted as we get closer to the event and we get a copy of his agenda. gsoots@yahoo.com

That's all the steam I have for now; the signal is green and we're rolling!

Fred Alsop,
President, Mountain Empire Model Railroaders
Director, George L. Carter Railroad Museum.

Thanks for the Memories - Saving your old photographs

Geoff Stunkard

The railroad hobby, in all of its breadth, is unique. Thanks to the pioneering efforts of Model Railroader, TRAINS, and various historical societies, many if not most railfans quickly realized they could document what they witnessed on film, and spent money on equipment, film, and processing (plus invested time and effort to get 'the perfect shot'), leaving the 21st century with a rich variety of images that spanned the literal breadth of the globe during the past century. Today, we could be considered the caretakers of that record.



During the past several decades, large advances have been made in preserving older photographic images. Indeed, the passage of time showed that some of the methods previously in vogue – acidic black paper, adhesive lined pages, and non-archive plastic

– are not only poor choices but critically damaging. It behooves us to consider ways to stabilize the photographs we presently own to prevent their further decay. The modern era has also made it possible for us to actually use digital tools to repair or upgrade images in need of help.



Negatives

For people who own negative collections, the primary goal is to stabilize them and keep them from damage. All film can be impacted by excessive light, so it is imperative to store negatives, transparencies, and even prints out of direct exposure to light of

any sort for extended periods of time. Museums actually use specialized binders that are completely enclosed when they are shut. Smaller negatives (2.25 or 35mm) should also be sleeved separately in open-ended archival film sheets, which not only assists preservation but allows indexing; larger examples on sheet film can be stored in archival envelopes of the same material.

The biggest enemies of negatives are moisture, fungus, and poor initial processing. Moisture is avoidable by choosing a storage location that is free from humidity or excessive variations in temperature; if your negatives have become stuck together, there are certain chemicals and processes that MAY save them, but the best bet for longevity is prevention. Fungus is avoided by the same means; if your film begins to appear with spidery webs or spots, isolate what is affected from the rest of your collection; the damage can often be slowed with film cleaners. Poor initial processing is not so much a problem today; frankly, most images not correctly fixed by 2009 are likely already beyond hope, but a professional restorer would have to make that call.

Slides

Slide collections are a large part of the railfan experience; only recently with the advent of better and more economical printing processes have we been able to fully appreciate the depth of these archives. Slides can be easily stored in carousels, boxes, and sheet protectors made specifically for them. However, there are a couple of things to look for in your slide holdings.

Like negatives, the emulsion used for slide film is susceptible to fungal growth, so dry, climate moderate storage is important. Slides are also light sensitive; many people are not aware that excessive projection is harmful to the coloration of the slides, especially Kodachrome which is normally considered the archival standard. The digital age has ended most of that; many slides are now scanned once and then stored almost in perpetuity. The final problem has also been somewhat fixed by the digital age; this was the wide color shifts that occurred in earlier Ektachromes, Anscochromes, etc. Thanks to modern digital technology, it is now possible to restore color to these, even as some movie film has been colorized. Some of them can be adjusted in programs like Photoshop; severe cases will need to be evaluated and professionally restored, but the situation does mean that it is not hopeless.



Prints should be removed from older albums not created to archival standards

A important end note is that some slide sheet protectors from the 1970s are NOT archival; if your collection is in these, you will want to upgrade to modern materials, as these older pages can cause permanent damage due to the chemicals in the plastic.

Prints

For a long time, prints were considered disposable since the 'master' existed. This is no longer the case. I own several amateur print collections purchased from families who informed me the negatives were no longer existent, make those prints the only examples of those exposures. These are important archives.

Prints being preserved should be sleeved separately; if notes are on the back in pencil, they are excellent historical references, so that should be visible. If those notes are on older album paper, the paper should be clipped and sleeved separately behind the print (or stored in the same sleeve separated by a piece of archival acid-free cardstock). The acidic content in scrapbook paper is harmful over the long term as it decays, so moving images from those sources is also important. If the prints were put into a 'magnetic album' with lines of glue, they need to be removed since the glue will eventually soak through the photograph. I have had some luck in this by cooling the pages, but valuable collections, especially on thinner paper, should be shown to a professional restorer for suggestions on removal without damage. It is not wise to laminate or otherwise seal an image permanently, as this will ruin its reuse in the original form.



This is a 3" square print from an estate; the detail shows the before and after of using Photoshop.

Prints showing damage can be repaired digitally; this will require a good photo editing program with the ability to 'clone' a group of pixels. I have used this extensively when restoring prints to removes scratches, tears, even holes on photos and film. It is time-consuming, but worth the effort once you see the finished effort. Older tape will often be dry enough to fall off, but if you have images with tears, emulsion cracks, or other damages, the best thing to do is 'fix' them digitally and archive the damaged original without further repair.

Conclusion

Our film archives are often an important part of our avocation; taking the time to preserve them now will ensure that the next generation of railfans will also enjoy the

1ST ANNUAL MEMRR PHOTO CONTEST UPDATE



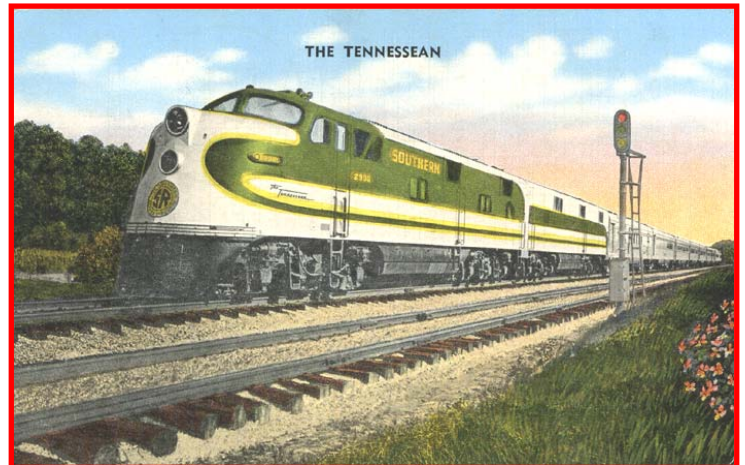
The people have spoken.. the winners are in... There were 29 entries by 5 club photographers. There were not enough entries to award prizes in the original 4 categories so the voting was a simple vote by popular acclaim. Ballots were collected throughout the month of March and tallied the first week of April. The contest proved to be a popular activity with out visitors with many voting early and often. The top three winners will be awarded a certificate suitable for framing and be featured in the next two issues of **THE SIGNAL BRIDGE**. This month's photograph is the 3rd Place winner. The photo was taken by Geoff Stunkard and features a Double Headed team of ex-Mississippi #98 and ex-VBR #58 on Wilmington & Western trackage.

Historic Name Trains: Norfolk & Western's Tennessean

The *Tennessean* was a named passenger train jointly-operated by the Norfolk and Western Railway (N&W) and the Southern Railway (SR). Inaugurated on May 17, 1941, its route ran from Washington, DC to Lynchburg, Virginia on the SR, then on to Bristol, Tennessee on the N&W, terminating at Memphis Union Station via the SR. The St. Louis Southwestern Railway inaugurated a new passenger train, the *Morning Star* from Memphis to Dallas, specifically to provide close connections with the *Tennessean* at Memphis.

Intended to replace the *Memphis Special* as the preeminent carrier on the Washington–Memphis run, one of its critical duties was the transportation of mail for the Railway Mail Service division of the Post Office Department. The train's almost immediate success was further bolstered by a sharp rise in passenger traffic during World War II. The *Tennessean* carried a Bristol-Nashville sleeping car, a Chattanooga-Memphis sleeper, and a New York-Memphis sleeper.

The heavyweight Pullman sleeping cars were painted silver to help them blend in with the train's stainless-steel, streamlined baggage cars, dining cars, coaches, and observation cars. Following World War II, streamlined sleeping cars replaced the heavyweight sleepers on the *Tennessean*.



The amenities provided on the *Tennessean* were gradually curtailed as Southern Railway attempted to reduce operating losses. By the early 1960s, the train carried only coaches and a single Pullman sleeper, in addition to the railway post office car and express and mail cars. Due to a decline in overall ridership, and Southern Railway's determination to escape the expensive burden of operating Memphis Union Station, the *Tennessean* was discontinued on March 30, 1968. This discontinuance ended all Southern Railway passenger train service to Memphis, allowing abandonment of Memphis Union Station.

From Wikipedia