



# THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB

APRIL 2013 - MEMBERS EDITION

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## LOCATION

ETSU Campus  
George L. Carter  
Railroad Museum

## HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 PM in:

Brown Hall  
Room 312  
ETSU Campus,  
Johnson City, TN.

Open House for viewing every Saturday from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm.

Work Nights are held each Thursday from 5:00 pm until ??

## THE 360 MAKES A VISIT

Photo Essay by Geoff Stunkard



Depot

The restored depot at Bristol, with temps just above freezing, was a fitting location to see the locomotive arrive under a plume of smoke to rival Mt. Vesuvius, which famously erupted in 1906, two years after the engine was built.

Perfect Curve



It's dawn;

Paul Haynes and I are down in the frosty confines of the Bristol, Va. yard, the only uninvited guests as Southern 630 prepared for two days of excursions out of this location. Crew people from both Norfolk Southern and the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum.



Paul and I scouted residential roads leading from Bristol after dawn, and were the only people on hand as the train rolled northbound in perfect morning light, white smoke trailing behind.

Abingdon



At Abingdon, a low level shot as the train came into town between two of the remaining N&W position light signals still existent. Of the action photos from that day, I liked this view that denoted little of the change since the end of the steam era.



Marion

We had a couple of intermittent locales, but the final shot of the day was on this curve north of Marion, visible from 1-81. The bell swing as the engine passes an original cast iron N&W whistle post, I would have to admit that I should kept chasing. It was an exception day in terms of light and color.

630 Pictorial – Saturday 3/8/13 by Geoff Stunkard

## MEMRR COORDINATOR'S MEETING

March 14, 2013

235 Campus Center Building

Meeting conducted by Vice-President John Carter was convened at 6:00 p.m.

**HO Layout:** John Edwards/John Carter (pers. com.). Main Yard is coming along fine. The main line should be open by March 23, 2013, Saturday.

**Bankus N-Scale:** Jesse Kettle The N scale saw mill is almost complete. Un attended N scale engines have a problem derailing and melting down the trucks. Operators need to be vidual watching their trains. The cost for repairs from Atlas will be \$11.00 (plus shipping). We have had several issues with this already.

**McKee G-Gauge:** Jesse Kettle. Runs fine. Need to follow up with Fred on Engine that was sent to Bauchman for repairs. Cope Traveling Layout: Gary Emmert. Nothing new. Need paint to paint the new boards for inserts.  
Rabetoy HO/HOn3: Richard Gallaher/Fred Alsop. Did not attend meeting

**Little Engineer's Room:** Duane Swank: Did not attend meeting

**Electrical for HO Scale:** Bill Hensley was not present. Larry Jackson reported that the power has been moved from the throat to the computer area. North end tortise are wired and installed most wire drops are in as well. We need 4 additional switches 8's.

**Rip Track:** Jim Hoit : nothing to report. Received the wheel sets.

**Display Cases:** Jim Pahrís. Did not attend meeting

**Sales:** Duane Swank Did not attend meeting

**Publicity:** Hobie Hyder. Did not attend meeting

**Display:** Geoff Stunkard: Steam up March 31. Display items would be appreciated. 2013 Book is to small will rework for future sales.

**Photo Contest:** Geoff Stunkard: Theme **"Steam after the Steam Era"**. Photo size 16x20 including map. Prints will become property of the museum. There will be 3 categories: **Action, Environment** and **human factor**. Photos will need to be post 1970. Contest entries submitted by June 15, 2013. These will be displayed at Jonesborough (weather permitting) for public judging. Entries submitted By Aug 1, 2013, will be judges by E.T.S.U. VIP's. Possible display in the Reece museum in the fall. Need details on pricing for entry or not. Limit 4 photos per person only 2 in any one category. Photo shop permitted.

**Events:** Hobie Hyder. Did not attend meeting.

**Publications:** Ted Bleck-Doran. Did not attend meeting

**Library:** Gary Emmert. Mike Buster donated a complete 20 year set of Mainline Modeler, items for Z scale layout and Marklin Magazine 1995-2001. All books on hand have been placed in the computer. Received 4 framed prints for the club. Gary E also donated a DC transformer to be used for the test track.

Many of these projects need additional volunteer help. Please see one of the coordinators listed in the report above and lend a hand.

*Prepared and submitted  
John Carter, Vice-President MEMRR*

## MEMRR SPONSORS A DIORAMA CONTEST Entries Due in June

### Contest Rules

1. Members of the Mountian Empire Model Railroaders and others from the Tri-Cities area are elligible to enter the contest.
2. Professional model builders (e.g., archeturtural model builders) may place an entry for adjudication but will not be elligible for an award other than Honorable Mention.
3. All entries must be constructed by the person named on the enterance form.
4. Entries must be of an railroad theme building including railroad related struchtures (stations, lineside structures, bridges, right-of-way details, etc.); railroad related industies and commercial structures; and, private structures such as residences.

5. The entry must be placed on a sceneded base 8.5" x 14" (legal sized sheet of paper). Entries entered in any other format may be entered for adjuication but not be elligible for an award other than Honorable Mention.
6. Entries may be constructed to any accepted scale (e.g., - Z-, N-, HO-, and S-/Large Scale).
7. Entries will be submitted with a Contest Entry form. The contestant will be asked to provide information regarding any contstruction techniques and special features concerning the entry.
8. Contestants must specify which category their entries will be judged:
  - a. Kit Built - the entry consists of more the 50% details assembled from commercially available kits (including detail parts as well as scenic detail such as trees),
  - b. Kit Bashed - the entry consists of details assembled from commercially available kits which have been substantially modified.
  - c. Scratch-Built - the entry consists of its main elements which have been fabricated from materials not generally available in kit or preassembled products. Entries may contain

commercially available products and details that are not the primary focus of the diorama.

9. The contest committee will determine the appropriate category for each entry should there be any disputes.
10. Prizes with monetary value will be awarded for "Best in Show", and "Best in Category" in each category. There will be certificate awards 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> - and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in each category.
11. Judging will be done by a combination "popular vote" of those visiting the George L. Carter Railroad Museum and by "adjudication" by a panel of three judges.
12. The Adjudication Panel members must not be entrants themselves.
13. Entries will be accepted through the month of June 2013.

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## MEMRR SPONSORS A PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST Entries Due in June

### RULES FOR 2013 Photography Contest "Steam After The Steam Age"

The 2013 George L. Carter Railroad Museum Photo Contest, held in cooperation with the Mountain Empire Model Railroad Club and the George L Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, will be entitled '**Steam After the Steam Era,**' showcasing steam railroading in the period after 1970.

1. All images must have been committed to film or digital media after 01/01/1970 by the submitting artists.
2. There are no geographic restrictions.
3. All physically-submitted images to the 2013 contest will become the property of the George L. Carter Railroad Museum in lieu of an entry fee; a release for the right to reproduce the same as contestants in the contest will be required to participate; no additional uses or rights is requested or implied.
4. Submissions will be judged on two occasions.
  - a. The first will be a public judging during Jonesborough Days, when the submissions will be on public display with the museum's exhibition area. The public will be allowed to vote on a Most Popular Award for each category.

14. Entries will remain on display throughout the contest from June through November 2013.
15. "Popular Voting" will be held starting July 1, 2013 and end on Sept 30,2013.
16. "Adjudication" will occur in October 2013.
17. Winners will be notified November 1<sup>st</sup> and announced in the November issue of the **SIGNAL BRIDGE**.
18. All entries will be placed in the club display cases for security and will be handled only by the contest committee and adjudication panel.
19. **Mountain Empire Model Railroaders** club and its members do not assume financial responsibility for loss or damage to any entry but will secure and protect all entries to as reasonable an extent as possible.

- b. The second judging will be done in late August by a select committee, who will vote on a 1-2-3 level award for each group, as well as a Best of Show and Best of Show runner-up for the overall contest.

6. The images which win, and additional as requested by the Reese Museum, will be placed on display in a special area under the auspices of the Reese Museum through the end of the 2013 fall semester.
7. **SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR JONESBOROUGH DAYS:**
8. **FINAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR ETSU JUDGING: August 10, 2013** (images may be exchanged if desired)
9. **Contestant eligibility:** no restrictions other than being the originating artist.
10. **Categories:**
  - **Action** - showing trains in motion.
  - **Environment** - showing trains or equipment in a static environment.
  - **The Human Factor** - showing trains with people, employees, fans, etc. Freeform - showing any of the above, in multiple image, multiple exposure, or extensive modification via Photoshop.
11. **Entries:** Limited to four (4) entries per contestant, with no more than two (2) in any single category.
12. **Era:** post 1970
13. **Dimensions:** No larger than 16" x 20" INCLUDING MATTE
14. **Awards:** form of recognition to be announced

## CSX's Heaviest Load A Look at Prototype Railroading From Jim Pahrns and Ron Vile



I received this from a NRHS friend and member of the BOD. Thought you fellows could use the info in the Chapter & Club News Letters as well as putting it on our websites.

- Jim



All! Hi All!



I awoke this morning to the sound of the CSX AA dispatcher (Atlanta division, M&M sub and PD sub). She was talking to a train and said that CSX was moving the biggest load that it ever had. I figured out from the conversation that the train would be in Molino, Florida about 7 AM. Molino is about 30 miles from home. We arrived at the north end of Molino siding about 7:10 AM and no train in sight. The track has a big curve and so we went to the south end via a one lane sand road and found the train.



We chased it for about 40 miles and ended up less than a mile from home. It stopped on Nokomis siding and we got to talk to some of the crew and riders. The transformer weighs about 840,000 pounds, the car weighs 440,000 pounds for a total of 1,280,000 pounds or about 1 million pounds more than most track maximums. The transformer is worth about \$50 million. The train can only move in daylight hours at 25 mph. All meets are at 10 mph and if this train is stopped at the meet a crew member has to be on the ground on each side of the passing train. Most bridges have a 10 mph restriction. This train has 40 axles, 20 on the transformer car, and is 380 ft. long.



Picture locations are: McDavid, FL , Bluff Springs, FL, Flomaton, AL, Wawbeek, AL, Canoe, AL, Nokomis, AL.



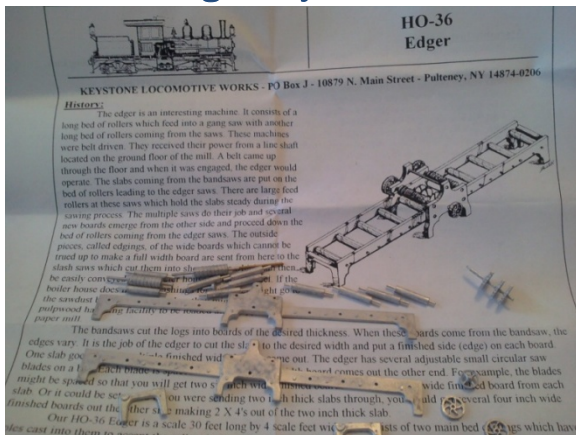


Happy Railfanning  
Ron Vile

## BUILDING A SAWMILL

### Part 2:

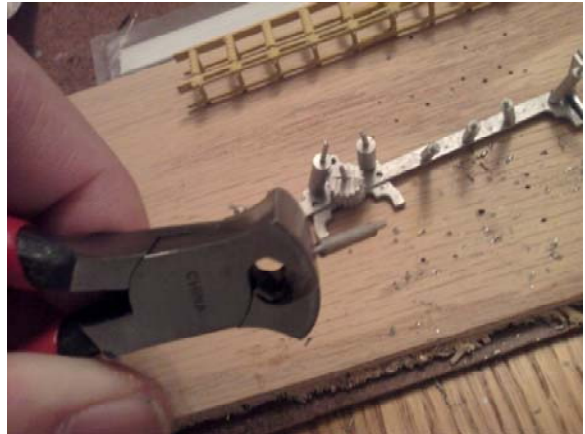
### Finishing a Keystone Models Edger



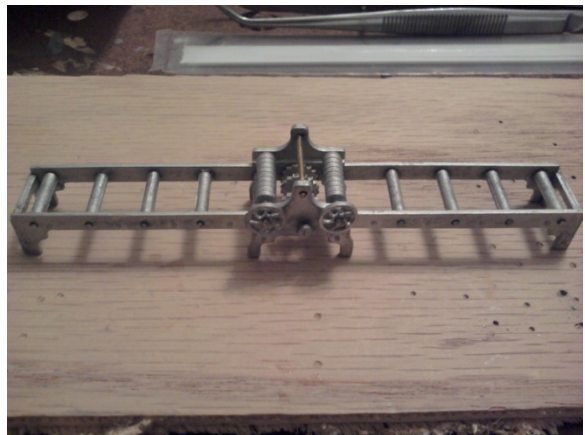
1. The lumber division of the Muskrat Mtn Railroad acquired an Edger from Keystone Locomotive Works which required some on-site assembly. The kit came in a nice plastic case (now reserved for small spare parts). The pot-metal casting came with minimal flash and required only light filing to remove the mold seam lines.



2. Once the touchup filing was done, a micro-drill bit was used to drill out the hole for the roller shafts. There are eight rollers, the edger cutting blades, a pair of drive rollers, 3 pulleys, and a tension rod to assemble.



3. After all the holes were drilled and checked for fit, the roller shafts were trimmed leaving enough length for the shaft ends to protrude slightly from the frame.



4. The photo above shows the edger assembled. ACC fast setting adhesive was used to secure the parts. One side of the frame was assembled with the second side fitted and squared. The end prices were added last once the side frames were trued. The soft metal parts allowed for the slight bending required to square the frame.



5. The edger is now ready for paint - first the entire model got a coat of primer grey. This was followed up by painting the

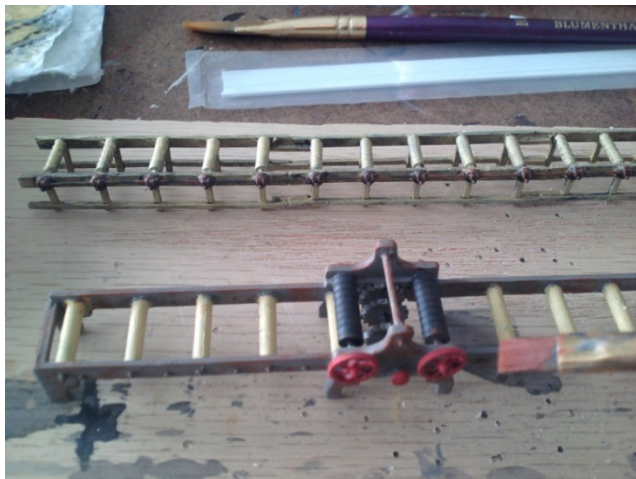
cutting blades and power rollers a mix of metallic silver and black.



6. The free rollers were then painted a blend of Desert sand and Yellow Ochre to simulate wooden rollers.



7. The model begins to “pop” as the drive pulleys are highlighted with red accents.



8. The entire model received some weathering. First rust color was dry-brushed on the metal surfaces, especially flat surfaces and nut and bolt details. A light wash of black was also used to depict wear and hard use.



9. Finally the power rollers and cutting blades received a coat of clear gloss to simulate metal polished from continued use.



10. The photo above shows how the edger mates up with the transfer table and live rollers (next month’s installment of “Building a Saw Mill.”

## Vert-A-Pac: An Unusual Way to Transport Automobiles



Until the early 1960s, automobiles that were moved by rail were carried in boxcars. These were 50 feet long with double-wide doors. Inside were room for four full-sized sedans on a two-tier rack - two raised up off the floor on a



steel rack and two others tucked in underneath them. This protected the cars during transport but wasn't very efficient as the weight of four vehicles was far less than the maximum weight a boxcar that size could carry.



When 85-foot and 89-foot flatcars came into service, it was possible to pack a total of fifteen automobiles in one car on tri-level auto racks. But it still didn't exceed the maximum allowable weight for each flatcar.

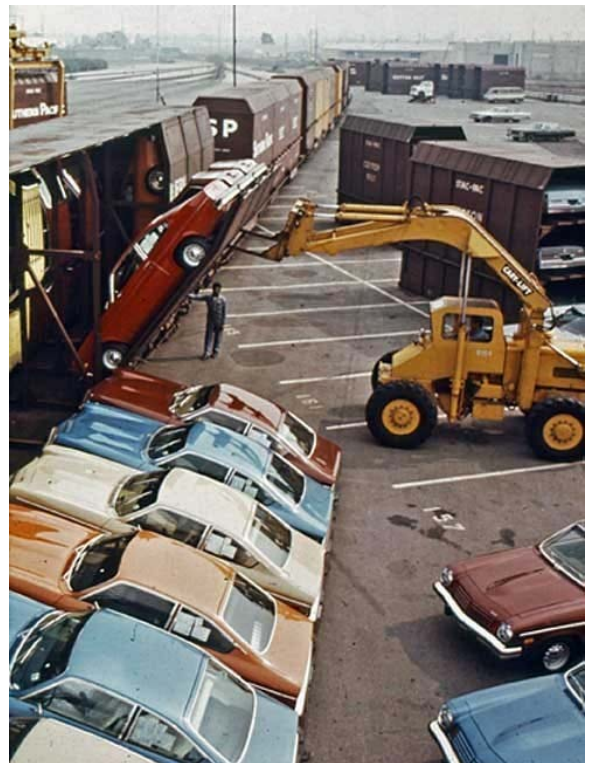


When Chevrolet started designing 'Vega' during the 1970s, one of the main objectives was to keep the cost of the car down around \$2,000 in circa-1970 dollars. At the time, the freight charge for moving a loaded railroad car from the Lordstown assembly plant to the Pacific coast - the longest distance that cars produced at Lordstown would need to travel - was around \$4,800. Since the Vega was a subcompact, it was possible to squeeze three more cars on a railroad car for a total of eighteen, instead of the usual fifteen. But that still worked out to around \$300 per car - a substantial surcharge for a \$2000 car. If only Chevrolet could get more Vegas on a railroad car, the cost per unit of hauling them would go down.

The engineers at GM and the Southern Pacific Railroad came up with a clever solution. Instead of loading the cars horizontally, the Vegas will be placed vertically on a specially designed auto-rack - the Vert-A-Pac. Within the same volume of an 89-foot car, the Vert-A-Pac could hold as many as 30 automobiles instead of 18.



Chevrolet's goal was to deliver Vegas topped with fluids and ready to drive to the dealership. In order to be able to travel nose-down without leaking fluids all over the railroad, Vega engineers had to design a special engine oil baffle to prevent oil from entering the No. 1 cylinder, batteries had filler caps located high up on the rear edge of the case to prevent acid spilling, the carburetor float bowl had a special tube that drained gasoline into the vapor canister during shipment, and the windshield washer bottle stood at a 45 degree angle. Plastic spacers were wedged in beside the powertrain to prevent damage to engine and transmission mounts. The wedges were removed when cars were unloaded.



The Vega was hugely popular when it was introduced in 1970 however it quickly earned a reputation for unreliability, rust, safety issues and lousy engine durability. When the Vega was discontinued, the Vert-A-Pac cars had to be retired as they were too specialized to be used with anything else. The Vert-A-Pac racks were scrapped, and the underlying flatcars went on to other uses.

## KATY Scenes

Courtesy of Gary Emmert and Friends



SAGINAW 1975



Red River bridge August 16 1987



Rocheport east of Norton Oct 1970



Lake Eufala August 1987



Canadian OK Aug 16 1987

## WHAT RAILROADS WORRY ABOUT THIEF CAUGHT ON UP

HOUSTON – It's not every day we come across someone accused of committing a crime involving trains, but a local man is accused of stealing train horns to make money. The crime put dozens of trains out of commission over the last three years.

Union Pacific conductor Robert Hartman was taken to jail by Houston police after detectives from several agencies said he confessed to stealing 53 train horns since 2009. Hartman's employer said the crime has cost them more than a \$500,000. The horns cost \$1,500 each.

But the time lost because of the thefts is what Houston police said hurt Union Pacific the most. Each train engine without a horn has to be taken out of service. The engines had to be lifted off the tracks and taken in for repairs.

Police said Hartman, who was reportedly a Union board member at one time, admitted to selling the horns on eBay.

## WORKS IN PROCESS PROJECT STATUS AT THE CARTER MUSEUM



The backdrop at Cranberry on the ET&WNC is showing steady improvements thanks to Fred Alsop and the Thursday Night "God Squad" (they make the puff-ball trees and only God can make a tree you know). The forested hillsides are only a couple of inches deep at the base, yet great depth of field is achieved using a painted backdrop for distant trees and several sizes of puff-ball trees ranging from dime to ping-pong ball sizes. Fred painted the mine entrance at the center of the scene. Tipples and chutes carried the mine tailings away.



Progress is also being made on the MEMRR HO layout in the Alsop Gallery. The Thursday Night track crew has been wiring turnouts and laying track. Here they are discussing installation of the tortoise switch machine under the benchwork.



NO this is not Vesuvius – it's tunnel No 3 exiting into the curve at Pardee Point in the Doe River Gorge. It's the handywork of Duane Swank. Duane is pictured below adding plaster to the gorge walls leading into the northern entrance of the tunnel while Hobie Hyder looks on.





Gary Woods has been busy wiring up stationary decoders and switch machines. He's carved out a work area in the Roan Mountain aisle. As with any task, many hands lighten the load. Why not join the Thursday Night Wiring Crew.

## STEAM IN ROMANIA Video Worth Watching



STEAM TRAIN by Misha Werder  
<http://player.vimeo.com/video/2578284>

## MEMRR MEETING MINUTES March 19, 2013

President Fred Alsop called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M. in room 312 Brown Hall, ETSU, with 16 members present. New members Susan Klugewicz and her 10 year old son Joey were recognized by President Alsop in absentia. Joey has a passion and extensive knowledge of trains and is sure to be a welcomed new addition to the club. Member Gary Emmert has agreed to mentor Joey on club operating techniques and procedures.

### 'Officers Reports'

President Alsop called for the reading of the Secretary's report from the February meeting as published in *The Signal Bridge* with a motion being made to accept them by

Hobie Hyder, Secretary, and a second by Jim Hoit. The report was accepted.

In the absence of Ted Bleck-Doran, Newsletter Editor, President Alsop reminded the membership of Ted's continued need for new information for the newsletter.

Due to sickness, Duane Swank, Treasurer was also not present. President Alsop reported to the membership on Duane's behalf the balance of the club's checking account as of March. President Alsop concluded by reporting that the club's finances were in good standing.

Bob Jones, Web Master, who is snow birding in Florida, reported via e-mail that in honor of Saint Patrick's Day that he changed the background on the club's web page to green with white text. He also reported that the members-only area had been updated to reflect only the members in good standing as of March. Bob has also updated the Heritage Day events and continues to add interesting links.

John Carter, Vice-President, reported to the membership that he is working with a contact of Allan Morton's who makes scale model trucks to do the April program. In the event that Alan's friend cannot do the April program, Lanny Norris said he could arrange for Ron Estep to come talk to the membership about a huge Construction Toy, Model Trains and Toy Truck Auction to be held in June. Jim Pahriss also volunteered to be a backup. Jim said he could show a video. For the May program, John informed the membership that Bill Langford will be presenting scenery tips and techniques.

President Fred Alsop concluded the Officer's Reports by reporting to the membership that eight more feet of lighting has been added to the Cranberry section of the ET&WNC layout for a total of 20 feet. He also said that Physical Facilities has installed a new four way light switch for the ET&WNC room next to the entry into the workroom. Roger Teinert stole Fred's thunder by also reporting that the dryer and filter on the paint booth had been repaired. Lastly, President Alsop reported that a group of Senior Citizens were scheduled to visit the Museum on March 26<sup>th</sup>. He asked for volunteers to help staff the Museum and run trains. The group plans to visit the Museum around 2:30. Members wishing to help are asked to be at the Museum at 2:00.

### 'Old Business'

President Alsop informed the membership that a box of 100, HO Scale 33 inch wheel sets was purchased at the Asheville Train Show. The wheel sets are to be used to repair club owned rolling stock.

A discussion about donations to the museum was brought up by Allan Morton. Clarification was asked for by Allan concerning who could accept donations and where do the donations go? President Alsop told the membership that any member in good standing could accept donations and

that there were three different forms for donations: the first was for a temporary loan of an item(s), the second; for an outright donation and the third; for in-kind gifts. President Alsop asked the membership to make sure the correct form was used and that all the information was filled out. Mark Woomer asked if any information about donations had been put on the club's website citing that it might be a good idea. President Alsop said that no information about donations was listed on the website but agreed that it might be a good idea to explore that option.

Hobie Hyder, also asked for clarification as to what is being done with donations to the club/museum and were there any plans to display the stored items in the ET&WNC room? Hobie also asked at what point does the club/museum stop taking donations because of limited storage space? President Alsop responded by saying that donations were still going to be accepted, however, the items needed to fit into the overall theme of the museum. Jim Hoyt reminded the membership that any rolling stock donations to the club or museum would have a yellow (MEMRR) or red (Carter RR Museum) dot placed on the bottom of the cars or locomotives to identify them as such. He suggested a list be made of any personal cars left on the layout and a color be assigned to them for anyone wishing to continue leaving their personal rolling stock on the club layout. President Alsop suggested that a list needs to be placed near the roundhouse with the type of locomotive and the owner's name of any non-club or museum owned locomotive(s). President Alsop pointed out that the club had many members and without some type of identification identifying who the locomotive was owned by, there was no way to prevent the locomotive from being operated on Saturday Operating Sessions.

**'New Business':**

The next Railroad Heritage Days for the museum will be March 30<sup>th</sup>. The theme will be '3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Steam-Up'. Vice-President

John Carter reported to the membership on behalf of the Coordinators that the HO Scale Yard is progressing just fine and that the throat to the yard would be operational by Saturday.

Electrical work is also continuing. Larry Jackson and Bill Hensley are co-coordinating the electrical work on the HO-scale layout. Larry informed the membership that he and Bill need 4 more Switch '8's' to complete the new yard.

Jessie Kittle is working on a small saw mill for the N-scale layout. President Alsop reported that five new locomotives were purchased for the N-scale at the Asheville Model Train Show.

Mike Buster donated to the library a twenty year collection of *Main Line Modeler* as well as some other items. Larry Fraser, made a donation of *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftman* to the Library.

Hobie Hyder was the overall winning bid for the Heritage Locomotive Posters and was awarded his poster at the meeting. The remaining eight will be awarded at the April meeting.

President Alsop informed the membership that the George L. Carter Chapter of the NRHS is planning a rail excursion/zoo trip May 18<sup>th</sup>. The trip is to the Knoxville Zoo and to ride the 3-Rivers Rambler steam-powered train. Anyone interesting in going is urged to purchase their tickets ASAP (information is on the club website).

The plans for the club's Modeling Contest was published in *The Signal Bridge*. The club asked for clarification on entry sizes for dioramas. John Edwards suggested that the larger scales S & O be eliminated as the published size would be too small for a diorama in either of those sizes. Mark Woomer, asked about height restrictions for the dioramas. President Alsop asked Hobie Hyder, co-coordinator for the Modeling Contest, to get with Ted and discuss the changes and report back to the membership at the April meeting.

The theme of the Photo Contest will be 'Steam after the Steam Age.' Photos will showcase steam railroading in the period after 1970. Jeff Stunkard was not present to discuss the Photo Contest, however Gary Emmert, as well as a few other members, questioned why the contest was limited to pictures after 1970. President Alsop asked Gary and others to get with Jeff and discuss any changes and report back at the April meeting.

Jim Pahriss, reminded the membership about the first annual 'Spring Fling' to be held at *The Choo Choo Café* in Erwin following the Saturday March 30<sup>th</sup> operating session at 6:00 p.m.. Jim polled the membership as to their meat preference with roast beef being the meat of choice over baked chicken. Cost per person is \$10.

In other New Business, condolences were conveyed by President Alsop to Ted Bleck-Doran over the passing of his mother. Hobie Hyder, Secretary said he would send a sympathy card on behalf of the membership.

John Edwards brought up the idea of adding a Transfer Table to the end of the HO Staging Yard for the purpose of running locomotives around. After some discussion, a motion was made by John to use the existing Transfer Table for this project and to purchase a new DCC friendly Transfer Table for the Diesel Locomotive Facility. Jim Pahriss seconded the motion. Again, after much discussion Mark Woomer made the motion to table the motion until the April meeting in order to give the membership more time to think about it. Paul Hynes, seconded the motion to table.

Wrapping up New Business, Larry Jackson explained to the membership that currently there were seven Switch '8's' to power 56 switches, however there were a total of 70 switches plus eight from the Main Line going into the Yard

therefore an additional four more Switch '8's' were needed at an approximate cost of \$50 each. Larry then put his request into the form of a motion with John Edwards seconding. Motion passed. An anonymous donor gave the club \$200 to pay for these Switch 8s.

John Carter asked the membership to pay attention to the N-Scale locomotives when operating them on Saturdays. He explained that the frame on several of the trucks have melted due to locomotives sitting in place following derailments and spinning wheels.

Volunteers for Saturdays' Operating Sessions were then asked for by President Alsop.

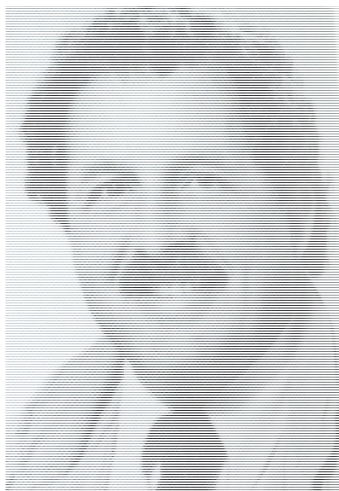
Thomas Knisley presented an excellent presentation on 'Weathering a vintage diesel locomotive on a low budget' to the membership for the program portion of the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:41 P.M.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. in room 312 at Brown Hall, ETSU.

Those who want to dine together will meet at 5:00 in ETSU's Market Place cafeteria, 3rd floor, Culp University Center.

*Respectively submitted,  
Hobie Hyder, Secretary, MEMRR*



## THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB

Spring made its arrival on the official calendar on March 21<sup>st</sup>, but the weather remained winter-like with snow for most of the next week. However, some of our Mountain Empire Model Railroaders members joined members from the G. L. Carter Chapter NRHS, 24 merrymakers in all, for our

first **Annual Spring Fling** for a leisurely dinner at the Choo-Choo Café in Erwin, Tennessee on Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. The meal was a good one, home-made style, and the setting, in the old Clinchfield Railroad company store, provided a relaxing atmosphere. One with lots of memorabilia of railroading days gone by in a town that still has an active CSX train yard created by George L. Carter for his Clinchfield RR where we could hear the sound of diesel locomotives' horns as we ate and conversed. I think I can speak for everyone present for the social event that "a good time was had by all" and that we will plan to do something similar to mark the coming of spring again next

year, however, I will attempt not to plan it for Easter weekend so that important date does not limit our attendees. I want to give a special "thank you" to **Jim Pahr** for the outstanding job he did in coordinating this Spring Fling for both our clubs.

The Senior Citizens from Abington who were scheduled to visit the Carter Railroad Museum on Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, had to cancel their trip due to several inches of snow that fell in their region of Virginia the night before their trip. I very much appreciate all of you who volunteered to come to the RR Museum to host this group, especially those who did not get the cancellation notice that was emailed on Monday night after we received word of their not being able to come and who came to the museum on Tuesday afternoon as planned. Thank you fellows and I'm sorry we learned too late to get the word out to you sooner. **This group of seniors has tentatively rescheduled their visit to the ETSU campus for Tuesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> and a second group of seniors wants to come on April 18<sup>th</sup>.** I'll keep you posted as we will need some volunteers to operate the Railroad Museum during each of their visits and to host our guests as they want to learn about trains, model railroading and what our little museum has to offer during their visits. Try to mark the dates on your calendars and help us out if you can. Both groups will be coming during the day when we are in full session at the university and parking is at a premium. If you don't as yet have your volunteer parking pass for the museum be sure to pick one up the next time you are there and place it on your vehicle's dashboard if you are parking on campus between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. as this is the time our campus parking officers are giving tickets for illegally parked vehicles. You can also stop by the Campus Parking Office and get a temporary parking hang-tag any time you need one at no cost. Parking rules are not enforced after 3:30 p.m. except in no parking zones, restricted spaces, handicapped (w/o a proper tag) and fire lanes.

**John Carter's** gang of Gandy Dancers have been making great progress as of late on the Club's HO-scale yard with lots of track going down. **Bill Hensley** and **Larry Jackson**, co-coordinators for the electrical gang have been making similar progress on the layout's wiring. They have had extraordinary help from a number of guys who not only have been coming to work on Thursday evenings, but have been providing lots of their time and talents during the week days and on some Sundays. Please forgive me if this list is incomplete and I leave your name off as I have not been there to personally see you all when you have worked on days other than Saturdays and Thursday nights, but I know the following MEMRR members have been involved: **John Edwards, Roger Teinert, Rey Dennis, Ed Champion, Gary Emmert, Jim Hoit, and .....**?

**Allan Morton** and **Ted Bleck-Doran** have been leading a great group of puff-ball tree makers on Thursday nights that are keeping me stocked with small round tree-like objects that are finding their way to the mountain sides of the

Cranberry Mine section of the Tweetsie HO<sub>n3</sub> Project. They have had help from a lot of folks with green thumbs including **Michelle Kelly, Jesse Kittle, Rich Gallaher, Jim Pahr, Hoby Hyder, Lanny Norris, Paul Haynes** and others (again, forgive me if I forgot to put you in the list as your work on the reforestation project is much valued and appreciated). We still need hundreds, perhaps thousands more little puff-ball trees in various sizes to be created (does this remind you of Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees") so if you want to help green-up the hills that Tweetsee will be running past we surely could use you. No real experience is needed as any one of the folks listed above can give you a quick lesson and you'll be making scores of little puff-ball trees in no time at all.

**Duane Swank** has been using his considerable landscape modeling skills to create the base scenery from the Tweetsie covered deck bridge eastward to the beginning of Pardee Point. If you have not dropped by lately to see the progress on the ET&WNC RR Project you will be surprised and pleased to see the miniature landscape coming together. **Gary Woods** with help from **Dave Doughty, Chris Ilderton, Brad Horrell** and others, have been working on the narrow gauge's wiring and installing switch machines. I have spent most of my time recently working on building the scenery on the mountains and backdrop that will be the Cranberry Mine complex. My background scenery work has to be completed before we can lay the tracks that serve the mine and wire it because the width of the benchwork requires me to be on top of it until the last tree is hot glued to the mountain side. We are getting closer by the week and will not turn down any model railroaders who want to get involved and lend a hand.

**Other Tweetsie Project news of note:**

**A).** Two more sections of the Tweetsie layout now have sponsors whose donations will help fund the project, and they are being sponsored by club members. The **Hampton Section** running east from tunnel #1, across the Hampton Covered Bridge and ending at the east end of tunnel #3 has been sponsored by **Carolyn and James Gregg**. The **Valley Forge Section** running east from the Coal Chute across the Valley Forge Bridge and the Covered Deck Bridge to the west end of tunnel #1 has been sponsored by the **Hobart D. Hyder Family**. A deeply appreciated thank you to these members and their families for their generous financial support is gratefully extended and the Carter Railroad Museum already has suitably engraved plaques temporarily placed on their sponsored sections and plates installed on the Donors Wall. When the construction on these sections has reached a point that will allow the installation of the painted fascia panels along their borders, these plaques will be permanently mounted. To date 4 of the 9 sections available for sponsorship now have been adopted. If you have an interest in becoming the next sponsor of a section please contact me and let's discuss it.

**B).** The 3 brass HO<sub>n3</sub> ET&WNC RR locomotives that were recently returned to the Carter RR Museum by **Rick Bell** of DCC Installs & Sales that he was unable to complete his previously contracted work on due to a medical condition he contracted in Brazil last year, are now in the capable hands of **TVW Miniatures** in Greendale, Wisconsin. There they will be converted to DCC w/sound; have a chuff wheel installed, be given all-wheel electrical pickup, and if possible, some more weight will be added to the locomotive before they are returned to the museum to begin their work on the Tweetsie Railroad. I'll keep you posted on their progress.

**Heritage Day Events** coordinated by **Geoff Stunkard** continue to be very popular with our club members and the public visitors who come to enjoy them. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Steam-up in March was a big hit with lots of visitors and many of our MEMRR members running everything on the tracks from big articulated iron horses to very, very slow 3-truck climax that managed to make one circuit of the HO layout in just under 25 minutes. The April Heritage Day Event should be a dandy! The circus is coming to town complete with circus trains and the big top. Member **Duane Swank** will be the ring master displaying some of his outstanding circus collection, but we invite any of you who can add to the event to bring your trains, circus rolling stock, and stationary exhibit display materials to the Carter RR Museum and place it on the midway. **The Circus is coming to Town!!!!!!**

The club decided to have another modeling contest in 2013 **and** a photo contest as well. Details were published in the March issue of *The Signal Bridge* and they are on the club's website. Now is the time to begin to plan and construct your entry(s) for the modeling contest and to begin to sort your photos, or plan to make new ones, for the photo contest. The more entries we have the better the contests will be and we have some outstanding modelers and photographers in the MEMRR. So, don't delay. Get your best work on display and in the competition. This will be fun for all of us. Our thanks to **Geoff Stunkard**, the coordinator of the Photo Contest, and to **Hobie Hyder** and **Ted Bleck-Doran**, who are coordinating the Modeling Contest, for the work and inspiration they are putting into these events. Please do your part by becoming a contestant.

You are all members of an outstanding model railroad club and you are the glue that holds the Carter Railroad Museum together with your talents and passion for model railroading, and the 1:1 scale railroading as well. We are making each year for the MEMRR and the RR Museum better than the previous one and we are continuing to grow in many ways. Hear the sound of the whistle of the train in the night and dream of all the destinations yet to come!

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

**THROUGH THE LENS OF...**  
**PHOTOS BY JOSIE ROBERTS**



Photographer Josie Roberts with 630 at Bristol Yard 03/10/13  
Josie Roberts took these on her own.  
Amazing the things she picked up on at age 10.



630 preparing to depart Johnson City to Bulls Gap  
03/10/13



630 in Bristol yard after Bulls Gap trip  
03/10/13



630 return trip from Bulls Gap, East Bound at New St Johnson City  
03/10/13



NS caboose with Virginia Tech stickers at Radford yard  
03/09/13





Old Camp Cars in a junk yard from the return trip from Radford  
03/09/13



Crossing Holston River Bridge in Bluff City  
03/10/13



630 getting ready to depart Bristol on Bulls Gap trip  
03/10/13



In Johnson City for passengers boarding  
03/10/13

**30 YEARS SINCE SHUTDOWN**  
**VINTAGE KCS**  
Courtesy of Gary Emmert



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