



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
DECEMBER 2013 - MEMBERS EDITION
Volume 20 - Number 12

Published for the Education and Information of Its Membership

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Fred Alsop

ALSOPF@mail.etsu.edu

Vice-President

John Carter

carterjohn92@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Gary Emmert

jbox1015@comcast.net

Secretary:

Hobie Hyder

juliehobie@earthlink.net

Newsletter Editor:

Ted Bleck-Doran

Ted_mary@memrr.org

Webmaster:

John Edwards

webmaster@memrr.org



LOCATION

ETSU Campus
George L. Carter
Railroad Museum

HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3rd 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 ??

SPECIAL EDITION: WEATHERING ADDING AN ELEMENT OF REALISM TO YOU MODELING



Weathering starts with an idea and the best ideas come from studying the prototype. In this issue of *The Signal Bridge* you will find several examples of well weathered pieces of rolling stock. There are plenty more waiting to be discovered along track side. Grab your camera and explore.



MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS MEETING MINUTES November 19, 2013

President Fred Alsop called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M. in room 312 Brown Hall, ETSU, with 18 members present.

President Alsop called for the reading of the Secretary's report from the October meeting with a motion being made to except them as published by Hobie Hyder with Roger Teinert seconding the motion. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote by the membership.

Newsletter Editor Ted Bleck-Doran, reported to the membership that the November issue of *The Signal Bridge* was short because he needed material. President Alsop said that the narrative on Track Maintenance Equipment featured in the November issue of *The Signal Bridge* was very informative and commended Ted for his continued good work. Ted stated that the next issue of *The Signal Bridge* will feature weathering.

Duane Swank, Treasurer, reported the club's finances were in good standing. President Alsop stated that the membership dues for 2014 would remain the same, at only \$30 a year.

Bob Jones, Web Master, before making his report announced the birth of his new grandson John Robert Stevenson, informing the membership that the baby weighed 17 ½ pounds and was 7 inches long. (note: reported weight and size as reported by Bob, not a typo). Bob then continued with his report, stating that the website was up to date. Bob stated that there had been 26 changes to the membership list in the past year and that the website had grown from 325 MB to over 608 MB. He also informed the membership of his intentions to turn the Web Master duties over to John Edwards for the coming year.

Vice-President John Carter stated that he is in need of programs for upcoming meetings. Jim Pahrns volunteered to show a video featuring the Nuremberg Model Railroad for the February program. Our January program will be the planning session for events for 2014.

Concluding the officer's reports, President Alsop gave special thanks to all who helped with making the Carter Railroad Museum's 6th Anniversary a huge success. He said that approximately 50 people attended the first showing of the Thomas the Tank Engine movie in the "party" room. President Alsop also gave thanks to John Carter for presiding over the October meeting in his absence. President Alsop continued his report by informing the membership that he and Jim Pahrns went to Rev. Howard Walkers home in Joliet, IL and had brought back lots of donated railroad memorabilia to the museum. The collection of Conductor

hats is on display now in the main room and the Railroad China will soon be.

President Alsop told the members that this year's Christmas Parade will end at ETSU and that President Nolan would like for the museum to put a running train on a conference table in the Administration Building as a part of the event. President Alsop concluded his report by telling the membership that President Nolan had been in a serious car wreck, however was expected to fully recover.



Colorado Flooding 2013
A section of track is left hanging in mid-air.

'Old Business':

the absence of Geoff Stunkard, Photo Contest Coordinator, President Alsop reported that the contest needed to be wrapped up and that he would contact Geoff.

Following President Alsop's report, a rather lengthy discussion about radio operations on the HO scale layout ensued beginning with John Edwards report to the membership. John recommended a Motorola MH230 radio with a pair of 56320 headsets for the HO layout operating sessions. He said, however, that any brand of two-way radios, as long as they operated on the Family Radio Service Frequency, would work. John further stated that some ground rules needed to be set to prevent everyone from "walking" on each other during operating sessions. Duane Swank suggested the membership consider the purchase of six radios for the club and a couple of chargers with individuals being responsible for purchasing their own headsets. Dan McLeod asked if the radios could also be used for the N scale layout. Dan stated that you couldn't see from one end to the other end of the N scale layout and if there were problems it would make fixing them much faster. Ted Bleck-Doran did a quick Internet search and stated that six packs and ten packs of radios were available on E-Bay. John Edwards then made a motion to adopt the concept of using radios as a part of the HO scale operations on Saturdays. He stated that the use of radios had already begun and had worked well. Before John's motion could be voted on, Ted Bleck-Doran made a motion to amend John's motion to reflect three points; 1), that the club purchase

three Motorola Hand-held radios; 2), that members will be encouraged to purchase their own; 3), the club buy ten sets of headsets for resale to members. Paul Haynes seconded Ted's amendments. Jim Pahrís proposed to amend further the current motion to reflect an effective start date for using radios as part of the HO scale operations of January 1, 2014. Chris Ilderton seconded this motion. Ted Bleck-Doran then moved to previous question to vote on a start date of January 1, 2014. Motion passed by unanimous vote. He then moved to vote on his three-part amendment to John's motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote. Lanny Norris then made a motion that the club purchase an additional seven radios for club use by the members of the same make and model with matching headsets. This would then bring the total of radios and headsets purchased by the club to 10 of each. Jim Pahrís seconded this motion. John Carter, Vice President, suggested that the club put out a memo asking how many members wanted radios.

John Edwards stated that there was still a problem with chargers. According to John Edwards there is only one charger per every two-pack of radios purchased, therefore if two members go together to save money by purchasing two radios, one would be without a charger. The membership passed Lanny's motion by unanimous vote.

Continuing with Old Business, President Alsop said to date no one had submitted an entry for the MEMRR 20th anniversary patch design contest. He put a deadline for submission as the Christmas Party on December 17th.

John Carter, Vice President then lead a discussion concerning the problem with batteries being discharged when placed too close to each other. Bob Jones confirmed John's findings with the manufacturer. He said that the manufacturer agreed to replace any defective battery at no charge within one year. He also stated that he could get the rechargeable batteries for \$12.99 with free S&H and will handle purchasing ten new batteries for the club.

Bill Hensley then addressed the membership about having a Compliance Station. He said this was necessary for smooth operation during Saturday operating sessions. Bill suggested that President Alsop appoint a committee to establish operating rules. President Alsop then appointed

Bill Hensley, Jim Hoit and Chris Ilderton to the committee with a report to come soon.

'New Business': The next Railroad Heritage Days for the museum will be November 30th. The theme will be 'Steams Last Stand - The N&W Railroad from Steam Locomotives and coal drags to Modern Locomotives and Heritage Units.'

Jim Pahrís, Tupelo Honey Café N-Scale project coordinator reported to the membership that the construction contract that Lanny Norris has been working on is ready to be sent to Tupelo Honey's lawyers. At present, the layout is expected to be 16 feet long by 31 inches wide. Meeting nights for anyone interested in helping with this project are Mondays at 6:30 in the work area down in the paint shop.

Jim Pahrís has also arranged for this year's Christmas party to be moved from Tipton Haynes to the Choo-Choo Café in Erwin. Cost per person will be \$14.50. Everyone wishing to participate in the Dirty Santa gift giving is requested to bring a gift between \$15 and \$20. Jim reminded the membership that you must purchase a ticket to gain entry to this event.

The 2014 slate of officers are in place and are as follows: Fred Alsop, President; John Carter, Vice-President; Hobie Hyder, Secretary; Gary Emmert, Treasurer; Web-Master, John Edwards.

No coordinators meeting will be held during December, but will start back January 16th. Volunteers for Saturdays' Operating Sessions were then asked for by President Alsop. The business portion of the monthly meeting was concluded at 8:11 P.M.

Because of the lateness of the hour no program was presented.

Next meeting will be Tuesday January 21st, 2014 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 THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN.

The first snows of the year covered the ground with a soft white sheet a few days before Thanksgiving and set the tone for the winter yet to come. Many of us will be spending more time indoors in the coming months and that makes it a perfect time to pick up on our hobby of model railroading and

take up those modeling projects that we have placed to one side. There is also the hope that Santa will remember to bring that special locomotive, piece of rolling stock or special structure we have put on our Christmas list. It is time to put the oval of track around the yuletide tree and watch the little train with its consist travel in those captivating endless circles. It is also time for our annual Carter Railroad Museum Christmas that hosts our MEMRR members and those of our sister chapter, the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS. This is always a special social event of the season with lots of good food, great company that includes our spouses or significant

others, and that visit from Dirty Santa with gifts to give and gifts to be stolen. I hope you made your reservations to join the party at a new location for us this year at the Choo-Choo Café in Erwin. This is a town with a rich railroading history centered on the railroad work of George L. Carter, our museum's namesake, and the party venue is one of his company stores with lots of displayed railroading memorabilia. I truly hope you will not miss this event and there might be the possibility of squeezing you in if you contact our Party Coordinator, Jim Pahriss, in time.

It is with great sadness that we say "good bye" to our friend **Reyburn H. Dennis, Jr.** who passed away at his home in Limestone, TN on 19 November, 2013. Rey was a welcome fixture at the museum and a great ambassador of our hobby of model railroading. He always reached out to our museum visitors and engaged them in friendly conversation, often giving them the throttle of his train to share the fun of operating a locomotive and its special consist on the club's HO layout. Rey spent many hours helping fellow members work on the wiring and the construction of the new HO freight yard and sharing some of his stories of his previous flying days in the military and beyond. He was a great supporter of his church and an avid singer and choir member. He was a military airman and hero of WW II and we are all the better for having had the opportunity to share his company. We send our condolences to his family and we will long remember him for the wonderful person he was. Another flag has fallen.

We conducted our November elections of officers at our last business meeting and I wish to thank our Nominating Committee members, **Allen Morton, Paul Haynes** and **Duane Swank** for serving the club in this role this year. For the first time in our club's 20 year history we mailed ballots to the entire membership and tallied their votes for this election, rather than just having those members present at the November meeting decide the election with their vote. I wish to thank you all for once again electing me as your president and you can trust that I shall continue to do the best job I know how to do for our club. It is truly an honor and a privilege to be associated with such an outstanding model railroad organization and I take great pride in all you have achieved for the club and for the Carter Railroad Museum. I look forward to working with the other elected officers; Vice-President **John Carter**, Secretary **Hobie Hyder**, Treasurer **Gary Emmert**, and Web-Master **John Edwards**. **Ted Bleck-Doran** has agreed to continue to serve the MEMRR as our Editor of *The Signal Bridge*, a role in which he produces one of the most outstanding club newsletters in the country and does so, unfailingly, month after month. **Gary Emmert** has also agreed to continue to serve the club and the museum as our Librarian. Thank you gentlemen for all you have done for the MEMRR and for taking on the additional responsibility to serve as our officers for the 2013-2014 year. I would be remiss if I failed to once more thank **Duane Swank** who has served us so well as our treasurer for many years now and **Bob Jones** who has done such an outstanding job as our Web-Master. Both gentlemen have readily agreed to assist

their successors with their transitions into their new roles for the club.

After several months of research and discussion the MEMRR has voted to begin operations of our layout in the Carter RR Museum with the aid of radios to converse between a "dispatcher" and our "engineers". There are many advantages to this and the decision to take this step was not entered into lightly. **John Edwards** will be providing an article in our newsletter outlining how this technology will promote better operation of our club layout as it has become more complex and as the noise levels in the museum and the distractions to operators has continued to increase, and what equipment is needed and recommended to make it all work. The club voted to purchase a number of radios as "club radios" for use by members and club guests who may not currently have their personal equipment; a move similar to the club DCC throttles we have long provided to facilitate locomotive operation for those who do not have one of their own. We are in our beginning stages of this kind of operation and it will take some time to work all the "bugs" out of the system, but come join us and get in on the learning curve and see how you like operating in coordination with others on the main lines and in the yard.

Speaking of the "yard" a lot of the work that has gone into construction of the new staging yard and the large freight yard on the club's HO layout is nearing completion and it will soon be possible to make up trains using locomotives instead of our hands and to operate the interior of the layout with hours and hours of switching cars without ever venturing out on the main lines. We are approaching a point in our 20-year history as a club where we will be able to operate our trains on a working layout that approaches the activities seen on the prototype. If you have not had the opportunity to run your trains, or the club trains, on the layout in a while come on to the museum and try it out for yourself. I think you are going to be surprised and delighted at what you find and if you have helped to create it, I know you will take pride as your locomotives and their consists glide over the layout. A lot of work and inspiration has gone into this layout over the past couple of years and it is now running better and more reliably than ever. Thank you fellows for all you have done to improve the working performance and the enjoyment of operating our trains on our layout.

Smooth operation of locomotives and rolling stock makes our hobby of model railroading a pleasure as we operate our models on the club layout, but a piece of equipment that constantly derails, comes uncoupled, wobbles down the tracks, creates electrical shorts, etc., etc. soon takes the joy of the moment far away and becomes a problem for the operator, and occasionally, for others as well. **Bill Hensley** and others in the club have begun discussions about helping members in such situations by creating a place, a Compliance Station, where such problems might be quickly remedied. Such a station would be used to check wheel gauge, coupler height, car weight, and other problems associated with smooth, problem-free operation. New and

untested equipment could be checked even prior to placing them on the layout to see if all the basic operating features were in specification, and if not, adjustments could be made. It is disappointing to get a new-out-of-the-box locomotive, passenger or freight car that does not operate flawlessly from its initial rollout on the track, but we all know it happens and often it does so because we did not personally check the specs on our purchase. We all trust the manufacturer to have done this for us, to have quality control on every piece sold, but we often find our trust has been misplaced. A compliance station is a good idea and I look forward to having one put in place soon to be available to all of us bringing untested model railroad equipment to operate on the layouts.

We have some new "landowners" in the club. **Duane Swank** recently sold his corner modules to **Gary** and **Johnathon Gilliam**, a father and son who have been regulars at the club and in the railroad museum since joining the MEMRR several months ago. They will soon be busy designing and landscaping their new real-estate and we will look forward to the watching what they will be placing on their part of the club layout. Please lend a hand with your talents and modeling skills, and sage advice, should they need some assistance in getting their little railroading corner of the world back up to museum quality as part of what we have to display to our weekly visitors. With our limited space "new land for sale" is a rare opportunity for members and it is always exciting to know that our "property" has market value and there are new potential tenants waiting to become module owners. Best of luck guys and please don't hesitate to ask any of our members for any assistance as you build your section of Southern Appalachia into the club's HO layout.

By the time you are reading this Tupelo Honey Café will have delivered a 16' x 3' laminated base to ETSU for a group of your fellow modelers to begin to create a bit of bygone Johnson City in N-scale on. If you would like to become part of this group and contribute your time and talents to the project please contact the Project Coordinator **Jim Pahr**. The group has been meeting regularly, has created a track plan for the new layout and has a lot of modeling work to do before their March 7, 2014 deadline that will arrive all too soon. It will be an exciting project that once completed and in place in the new Tupelo Honey Café in the old CC&O RR station on State of Franklin will bring a lot of interest to the club and the Carter Railroad Museum.

If you have not visited the Tweetsie Project in the Ken Marsh Gallery of the RR Museum in some time you need to do so. We have a great opportunity to teach you how to make some great looking trees for the layout and we need a lot more to forest the Appalachian mountainsides we are constructing. The hardshell landscape is now almost complete over the entire layout and attention is once more being concentrated on the Cranberry Mine section to complete the background scenery there and to lay the track on that section. Once the track is in place we can wire that section and begin to test run locomotives over most of the layout from "Johnson City to Cranberry".

There are lots of opportunities for you to use your personal modeling skills at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum on layouts in 3 scales and 4 gauges. Join us on a Saturday and operate your trains, or the club's, and join in the fun. Attend a work session on a Thursday evening and help with track laying, wiring, scenery making and the many other facets of scenery work that could use your helping hands. There is a lot of model railroading going on in more than 5,000 square feet of exhibit space and you are missing out if you are not being a part of it.

Don't forget that this is the quarter that you need to renew your dues to remain a member of this big active railroad club. At only \$30 a year for a full membership it is a tremendous bargain and all your dues monies go directly into the MEMRR, not to the Carter RR Museum. They are used to support the monthly newsletter, the upkeep of the club HO layout and the many additions and upgrades to it. Your dues money stays with your club and your club depends on these funds to do all the things that a big club requires. Please renew and send your dues payment to our Treasurer soon. You are a valued member and we want to have the pleasure of your company and learn your modeling skills from you this year and in the years to come. Here's wishing everyone a happy and safe Holiday Season, a merry Christmas and a wonderful and healthy New Year.

Listen to the whistle of the train in the night and dream of all the destinations yet to come!

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

THOUGHT TRACKS RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Engineer: "Train 2365 East to yardmaster. Over."
Yardmaster: "Go ahead 2365 East."
Engineer: "We are at MP20 (milepost). What does it look like getting in? Over."
Yardmaster: "Four times out. I'll call. You stay at MP17 crossing. Out"

Note: East bound train 2365 is heading towards the yard and home with 7,000 feet of cars. The engineer has called the Yardmaster for permission to approach the yard and enter. He has called knowing that 7,000 feet of train takes time to stop and that there is a crossing 3 miles ahead. The Yardmaster has a clogged main in the yard due to a crew having timed out and needing a crew exchange. He orders 2365 to stop short of the crossing at Milepost 17 and wait.

His “out” command means “wait for me to call you, I’m busy.”



Cobra CXT345 2-Way Radio FRS / GMRS Walkie-Talkie w/Up to 23 Mile Handheld Radio – This model can be found for \$20-25 locally.

On the third Saturday in November John Edward brought in 5 handheld 20-way radio sets for those running trains that day. MEMRR members have been talking for a few months about using radios to facilitate communications during Saturday open houses and future operating sessions. Gone would be the shouting across the room “Hey Jack, your train’s split.” – or – “Jim, your locomotive caught my caboose.”

During the session on the 20th Chris and Ted worked the yard using two of the handhelds. Chris acted as the conductor/breakman working the ground and directing the moves. Ted was the engineer in charge of the yard switcher. Turnout control was handled by John Edwards acting as the Yardmaster as requested by Chris. Things worked very smoothly with Chris using hand signals and radio calls to orchestrate Ted switching moves.

Out on the mainline Jonathan, Tommy, Paul and several others used the remaining handhelds to communicate with each other and with John. It was interesting to listen to the radion chatter and the “over” tone at the end of each transmission. The operators on the mainline could talk with one another even if they were on opposite sides of the layout. John, acting as the Yardmaster, could issue hold orders for opposing trains should another train be crossing the inside main entering or leaving the yard.

Things worked out beautifully for the most part. Lessons learned:

Use a separate dedicated channel for multiple task, for example:

- communicating with the yardmaster. Things got really hectic for John when trains on the main wanted permission to enter the yard and the yard crew was clamoring for a switch to be thrown.

- The yard crew should be on their own channel with the breakman handling all turnout control with a Digitrax throttle. The only time he needs to bother the Yardmaster is when the switcher needs access to the yard main or secondary.
- Likewise, a dedicated channel should be designated for use by crew(s) while on the mainline.

The handhelds John brought have a 14 channel Family Radio Standard (FRS) capability. During an operating session we could operate with the following dedicated channels:

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Channel 8 | Yardmaster |
| Channel 7 | North Yard Crew |
| Channel 6 | South Yard Crew |
| Channel 5 | Mainline Train Crews |
| Channel 4 | Hostlers (Steam/Diesel Shops) |

The handhelds can be set to scan other channels as well... so, the North Yard Crew could be set for channel 7 and listen to the South Yard Crew’s chatter and scan for instructions from the Yardmaster.

Sounds cool (or “kewl” as we say up north). You bet!



Motorola Mh230r Motorola Talkabout 23 Mile Range Radio – This model can also be found for \$20-30 locally.

Yardmaster: “2365. How’s your time looking? Over.”
Engineer: “We have 2 and a half hours left. Over.”
Yardmaster: “East 2365 - Tie it down. Out.”

Note: The Yardmaster checks to see if the crew is still awake. He knows full well how much time the crew has until a replacement crew is need. The Yardmaster still has a mess on his hands. He tells the ecrew to set the brakes and wait.

At the November Business Meeting the membership present voted the following:

- That MEMRR will implement train operations using handheld 2-way radios for operating the layout starting the first Saturday in January, and that the club experiment with radio operations throughout the rest of November and December.
- That MEMRR purchase 10 Motorola MH250 handhelds for use by club members (similar to the practice of providing club owned throttles for member use).
- That MEMRR purchase 15 Motorola compatible “over-the-ear boom mikes for resale to members.

- That MEMRR members be encouraged to purchase their own FRS compatible handsets.



D-Shape Headset with Boom Mic for Cobra Radios –with hand free VOX – this model is available for \$15-20; Motorola makes a similar product for \$11-15.

Yardmaster: "2365 East... Over"
Engineer: "2365 East, over."
Yardmaster: "2365 slow roll in here. We will catch you in the yard. Over."
Engineer: "2365 East slow roll to yard. Out."

Note: It looks like the crew of 2365 has got permission to enter the yard and finish the run without timing out, but the Yardmaster still needs time to clear the mess on his hands.

"Slow roll" means the railroad will have a public relations nightmare tomorrow. Since 7,000 feet of train will be drifting into the yard it will take 20 minutes to clear each highway crossing instead of the usual 5-10 minutes.

The comments which follow are just thoughts on the use of radios to conduct operating sessions. They in no way reflect "official" or "standardized" rules covering operations at the club.

Radio Protocol and "Rules":

- The use of railroad radio practices should be followed as closely as possible. This would give another level of realism for both the club members and for museum visitors who chance to overhear the radio traffic.
- A speaker could be set up and set to low volume somewhere in the layout room so that visitors can listen to the transmissions. A sign near the speaker would indicate what the transmissions were about.
- The Yardmaster/Dispatcher would direct the flow of traffic to and from the yard and on the mainline.
- Trains could be identified by railroad, engine number, and direction, For example: Ted's operating NS Heritage loco 8013 clockwise on the outside main. His identification would be **NS-8013-East (or North)**. Paul is operating a Clinchfield diesel 801 counterclockwise in the inside main. His call would be **CRR-801-West (or South)**.
- Likewise the yard crews would be **Yard-North** or **Yard-North-Ground** and **Yard-South** or **Yard-South-Ground**.

There are lots of variations waiting to be discovered. Those of us who have used radios during the Saturday open-house sessions are pretty well convinced that they are the way to go. Come out some Saturday and give them a try. See what you think.

**THREE RIVERS RAMBLER
 KNOXVILLE'S EXCURSION TRAIN**



A night shot of #203 – a Consolidation 2-8-0

One of the Seasonal delights is a ride on the 3 Rivers Rambler, an excursion train out of Knoxville TN. It's just an hour and a half from the Tri-Cities region, excellent for a day trip or family outing. Taking I-81 – I-40 – into Knoxville is not a problem. It is essentially expressway driving all the way into Volunteer Landing on the Tennessee River. There is convenient parking across from the station and adequate dining near by. Arrive early to enjoy Knoxville's renovated river front.



Here is the Rambler's #154 – a Consolidation 2-8-0 ready to depart from Volunteer Landing

The **Three Rivers Rambler** is a scenic train ride in Knoxville, Tennessee along the Tennessee River provided by the Knoxville and Holston River Railroad, a subsidiary of Gulf and Ohio Railways.



View of Volunteer Landing from Neyland Stadium showing the **Three Rivers Rambler** parked underneath the roadway bridges



The Ride The ride starts at the boarding area in Volunteer Landing in the downtown riverfront area, near Neyland Stadium. The train then follows the landing down Neyland Drive, going past the County Building, and under the Henley Street and Gay Street Bridges. The train passes the **Star of Knoxville** riverboat and the locomotive's watertower and shed at the end of Volunteer Landing, where it parallels the Knox County Greenways down the river to Governor Ned McWherter Riverside Landing Park. Beyond McWherter Park

the train goes through the General Shale Brick Company and the Knoxville Utilities Board water treatment plant. The train then follows the river for a ways past Knoxville Downtown Island Airport, before turning away from the river and going under Riverside Drive and past the Hines Compost Company. The train then reaches Three Rivers Trestle, where the French Broad River and the Holston River come together to form the Tennessee River. The train slows on the bridge to allow passengers to take pictures of the osprey nest built above the tracks. Once on the other side of the river the train reaches the quarry at Marbledale, where the locomotive uncouples and runs around the train and then pulls it back along the same route in reverse. The trip takes an average of 90 minutes.

The journey as described in the route flyer is as follows:

1. *As we start down the track we pass under the Henley Street (1931), Gay Street (1907) and South Knoxville Bridge (1990). The 3RR engine house is in front of Volunteer Marina.*
2. *Next we pass through the former site of General Shale Brick Company, now owned by KUB. On the left is KUB's Whittaker Water Plant (1927) Knoxville's main source of drinking water. The plant produces 35 million gallons per day for 170,00 customers downtown.*



3. Look up in the sky for small planes!. Across the river you can see historic Island Home Community and Airport. This community got its name from Knoxville's merchant-prince Perez Dickenson (Emily Dickenson's cousin) who built "Island Home." The airport was opened in 1930 by Tom Kesterman, TVA's first chief pilot.
4. Next we pass by George McNutt's farm, given to McNutt as payment after he fought in the Revolutionary War. The "mansion" on top of the hill was built in 1942 for the Lyon's View mental hospital. In 1972 it became the Knoxville Community Service Center, housing 250 prisoners. Now it is operated by UT.
5. Under the Three Rivers Trestle the French Broad and the Holston River meet to form the Tennessee. The Holston, which flows from Southwest Virginia, is named for the British explorer Stephen Holston, who navigated the river in a canoe in the 1740's. The French Broad, in the far south, flows through Asheville and western North Carolina.



6. Gilliam's Station is the large white house below the trestle, built in 1786 by Knoxville's early settler, Devereaux Gilliam. Gilliam's Station served as home, fort, inn, and tavern for ferry boat passengers and riverboatmen. The house burned down in 1792 and was rebuilt by Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey (author of The Annals of

Tennessee). It was destroyed by rogue Union troops in an infamous fire in 1863. The present home is owned by Pozzolan Contracting and Supply, an asphalt reclamation company.



7. Lebanon-on-the-forks, a humber cemetery to the north of the trestle is the site of the first church in Knox County. The Presbyterian Church was founded in 1791 by Rev. Samuel Carrick. Rev. Carrick also had a private school that evolved into the University of Tennessee. Samuel Carrick's wife, Elizabeth, was buried in the

Lenamon-in-the-Forks Cemetery in 1793; her grave is the oldest marked grave in Knox County. A church was maintained at Lebanon-in-the-Forks until 1980, when it burned/ The bell and four columns are all that remain.

8. *The industrial area southeast of the FrenchBroadRiver is Burkart Enterprises, a Materials handling business that distributes commodities by barge, truck, and rail. Once known as Burkhart's Warf, the present day docks are also where Knoxville's first steamboat, the Atlas Lander in 1828.*
9. *After the Labanon-in-the-Forks Cemetery, we pause next to Asbury Quarry where "Knox Gray Marble" is mined. In the 1900s Knoxville was known as "the Marble City/." It's sbelieved that fully half the ornamental marble in Washington, D.C. – like that of the Lincoln Memorial – originated in East Tennessee. To this day Tennessee is the nation's second largest marble state and the veins are at their thickest in the Knoxville area*

The train is usually pulled by a steam locomotive east to the quarry where is is cutoff and run back on a siding. There the cab crew stop and chat with the passengers for 15 or so minutes. The train has one of the diesel switchers coupled to the rear of the train which in turn powers the train on its trip back to Knoxville.

Equipment.

Washington & Lincolnton #203

Washington & Lincolnton #203, *Lindy*, was built in 1925 by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a 2-8-0 and run on select days of the year and the *Christmas Express* in November and December.

San Antonio and Aransas Pass #60



San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway #60 is a 4-4-0 built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1923. The railroad was merged into Southern Pacific Railroad subsidiary Texas and New Orleans, who renumbered the engine to #220. Paulsen Spence eventually bought the engine for his Louisiana

Eastern Railroad, and initially numbered as 2. The engine was briefly renumbered as the second #1 until 1963 when it was sold to the Stone Mountain Scenic Railroad, who had also previously bought the LE's original #1. Stone Mountain restored the engine to its original SA&AP number and named it the *Texas II*. The engine operated until 1983 when it came in need of boiler work and other mechanical issues, though it continued to occasionally "pull" the train while pushed by a diesel until 2002. Afterwards, the engine remained in the Stone Mountain rail yard until donated to the Gulf & Ohio in 2013. The engine is currently awaiting restoration.

Southern Railway #154



**#154 in Asheville, NC assigned to the Gloucester Lumber Company in 1946
Photographer Ed Griffin from the Collection of C.K. Marsh, Jr.**

Locomotive #154 is a 2-8-0 "Consolidation" type steam locomotive that was built in 1890 by the Schenectady Locomotive Works in Schenectady, New York. Schenectady built steam railroad locomotives from the mid 19th century through its merger into the American Locomotive Company (commonly known as ALCO) in 1901-1902. This locomotive is one of only ten preserved Schenectady built locomotives that are still in existence today.



**A rare color view of 154 in Asheville, NC on March 14, 1949.
Ed Griffin photo, Southern Railway Historical Association (SRHA) collection**

The locomotive was delivered in 1890 to the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia (ETV&G) as locomotive

#466 (builder's #3114). In 1894 the ETV&G and the Richmond and Danville Railroad merged to form the Southern Railway. After the merger the locomotive became Southern Railway #154 and served in the East Tennessee area until it was given to the City of Knoxville to be put on display in August 1953. In the last few years of its active career for the Southern Railway the locomotive was leased to the Smoky Mountain Railroad between Knoxville and Sevierville, TN.



#154 with another Southern Railway locomotive in Johnson City, TN in 1936

Photographer R.T. Crawford from the Collection of C.K. Marsh, Jr

Since 1953 the locomotive has been on public display at Chilhowee Park in Knoxville. In 1989 the locomotive was given to the Old Smoky Railway Museum which donated the locomotive to the Gulf and Ohio Railways in August 2008. The City of Knoxville and the Old Smoky Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society cared for and maintained the locomotive while on static display which kept it in a condition that makes this restoration possible. At the completion of the restoration #154 will become the oldest operating Southern Railway steam locomotive and also the oldest operating locomotive built by the Schenectady Locomotive Works.



#154 in service in Knoxville, TN February 9, 1952

Photographer J.P. Ascher from the Collection of C.K. Marsh, Jr.

Chattanooga Traction Company #4

Chattanooga Traction Company #4 is an EMD SW1 switcher built in 1947. She worked as Southern, Norfolk Southern, and RJ Corman #1007 before being acquired by Gulf & Ohio for use as the motive power on the *Rambler* when #203 is not running.

Three Rivers Rambler #9

Locomotive #9 is a rare EMD SW60 built in 1954. She used to be the primary power for the *Rambler* until the end of the 2008 season when she was sent to the K&HR's K line south of the river and was replaced by #4. She still wears her *Three Rivers Rambler* lettering and can often be seen from Volunteer Landing across the river at Holston Gases.

Trustworthy #838

1932-Coach Car built by Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company (Bethlehem Steel) for the Reading Company. Operated originally in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs as a commuter car. Retired in the 1990s.

Intrepid #879

1931-Coach Car; built by Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company (Bethlehem Steel) for the Reading Company. Operated originally in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs as a commuter car. Retired in the 1990s. Includes "walk over" seats (seat backs flip/reverse direction) so passengers can face forward on the return leg of the trip.

Resourceful

1932-Contains restrooms and gift shop. Built by Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company (Bethlehem Steel) for the Reading Company. Operated originally in Philadelphia and its surrounding suburbs as a commuter car. Retired in the 1990s.

Forthright

1940-Open air car, converted from freight car.

Desire

A caboose that is available for charter.

External links

- <http://www.threeriversrambler.com/>
- <http://www.southern154.com/>
- <http://www.gulfandohio.com/>



Here's another weathering candidate stored along the Rambler's right-of-way

PARTNERSHIP FOR THE TWEETSIE FORMED SERGENT ENGINEERING PROVIDES SUPPORT

From Fred Alsop:
To Whom It May Concern:

I want to purchase your HOn3 couplers for a layout we are building of the ET&WNC RR at the Carter RR Museum on the Campus of East Tennessee State University. When I attempted to do this electronically your web site automatically added sales tax. The university is tax exempt. How can I make the purchase using the university VISA credit card, but avoid paying the tax? I wish to order EN87KB (144 coupler kits) AAR type E at \$114 + S&H of \$6.00. Please advise.

Fred J. Alsop III

From Frank Sergent:
Hi Fred,

I'm sort of glad you didn't go ahead and place the order. I heard about this project second hand from Johnny Graybeal a few months ago. I would like to provide these at no charge. I've been a member of the ETWNC historical society for many years and am very interested in helping here if I can.

Our new Sharon couplers are more accurate for the ET&WNC than the type E couplers you mention. Actually about half the ET equipment had Sharon's and the other half had Climax couplers. I'd like to first send you a sampling of the Sharon's with our different shank styles and then you can let me know what you need more of. If this sounds OK with you, just give me a shipping address. If you have different idea, just let me know.

I've spent a long time making couplers that I could have spent building my dream HOn3 ET&WNC layout. Maybe I can get some satisfaction knowing I helped building. Thanks,
Frank Sergent

From Fred Alsop:
Frank:

How very generous of you. I shall gladly accept your offer to supply us with some couplers and test them on the layout for you. We are still laying track on the Cranberry mine yard, but all the other track in down. We are currently building some of the rolling stock we need and have only a few finished to date, but enough to begin to test couplers. If you are coming to the ET&WNC RR Historical Society Convention in Johnson City in June 2014 you will have an opportunity to visit our museum and to see what we are doing. I would welcome your input. My shipping address is: Dr. Fred Alsop, P.O. Box 70697, Carter Railroad Museum, East Tennessee

State University, Johnson City, TN 37614. We have enough kits to build about 45 freight cars and 6 passenger cars. Best regards and thank you again.

Fred



An example of a mill gondola in scrap metal service



Getting the right shades of pastels, rust and grime would be the real challenge in weathering this box car



This gondola might be an easier weathering project – just don't forget to add the newly applied reflector stripes