



The Coal Road

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The Monthly Newsletter of the George L. Carter Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee Volume 4, Number 11, November 2014



The Drawbar

Wow! Can you believe the first day of November dawned with the first snow fall of the season everywhere in depths from a skiff of the white stuff to many inches depending on where you live? A beautiful sight greatly enhanced with all the trees in their fall yellows, reds and oranges. It was homecoming on the ETSU campus and we had great museum visitation even with the cold weather. Looks like the beginnings of the season for model railroaders to be indoors practicing their hobby and running trains.

November is a huge month for the MEMRR, the Carter Chapter NRHS and the George L. Carter Railroad Museum as well as for our train hobbies in general. November is **National Model Railroad Month** to be celebrated across the United States. What other hobby has its own national month? Friday, November 14th is **National Take a Toy Train To Work Day** and I have a displayed model of the 2-8-4 Berkshire commemorative locomotive and tender we did for ETUS's 100th Anniversary in 2011 in my office window. November 15th marks the 7th **Anniversary** of the dedication of our model railroad home, the **George L. Carter Railroad Museum** and we have a very special event planned for the public to celebrate the event. The Carter Chapter NRHS is hosting the **National Fall Conference of the National Railway Historical Society** headquartered at the Johnson City Carnegie Hotel November 13-16, a meeting that will be presided over by the newly elected president of the NRHS, **Al Weber**. **Michelle Kelly** and **Taylor Jesse** have planned a special day for our Little Engineers on the 22nd with their "**Hero of the Rails Day**" with lots of treats for the kids. Our Heritage Day Events Coordinator, **Geoff Stunkard** has a very popular event lined up for us this month on November 29th when we will bring our people-movers to our layouts in "**Varnish and Chrome: When Beauty Rolled the Rails on Passenger Trains**". November is also the month when we start to pay our annual dues renewal for 2015 and when we elect our officers for the coming year. And we may get a special bonus present if White River Publications publishes their HOn3 Annual and our Tweetsie Project is seen in print and

photos from coast to coast and beyond! What a November!!! We have too many great things to do this month to let a little snow on the first day of the month, a Saturday, to be anything more than a beautiful, brief distraction. Now, let's look at this month and get our trains on the track.

Officer Elections: Bill Beagen and Carolyn Gregg have volunteered to be our nominating committee charged with producing a slate of officers to be voted during the month. All officer positions are always open at each annual election cycle. Additionally, those candidates on the committee's slate can have their positions contested with write-in nominees. As we did last year ballots will be prepared and circulated to the entire membership allowing everyone a chance to cast their vote for the candidates of their choice. Please vote and please give serious consideration to being a candidate whether you currently are serving as an officer or would like to serve if one of the above committee members asks you to do so, or if you want to run for an office please let Bill or Carolyn know your desires so they can get your name on the ballot. Let me say how much I appreciate all the work our outstanding 2014 officers have done for the growth and progress of the Carter Chapter NRHS and for the G.L. Carter Railroad Museum. They have all worked very hard to carry out their assigned responsibilities and they make my job very easy to do. We have a history of being blessed with men and women who are willing to shoulder the work that organizations such as ours need in order to operate as a club and they often do it with such professionalism that we sometimes fail to understand how easy they make the often difficult tasks seem. Let me also say what a privilege and honor it is to be associated with such a wonderful group of men and women that constitute the membership of the George L. Carter Chapter and to have been given your trust and friendship. It is always a pleasure to be in your company. You have done great things for the university and for the community you reside in.

Dues: November begins the renewal process for our dues and the dues have not increased in years, and I see no need for them to do so in the near future. We have saved money by not having to use the US Postal Service to deliver our newsletters and have the luxury of being able to funnel our dues monies back into the projects of the Carter Chapter. We have had big years with big projects with two successful rail excursions completed again this year and the hosting of the National NRHS Fall Conference. But, it is important to try to keep our membership at the current levels, and if at all possible to grow it, not only for the financial comfort this level of membership brings, but more importantly for the tremendous diversity of talents, personalities, experiences, and opportunities having 30+ chapter members provides in every facet of our club and for the railroad museum. So, renew your membership as soon as you can and get that money out of your pocket and into the hands of the treasurer and you won't have to be subjected to all the reminders to "pay your dues" into January 2015.

7th G.L. Carter RR Museum Anniversary: It seems almost impossible that it could have been 7 years, on 16 November 2007, that then ETSU President Paul E. Stanton, Jr. and the crowds of invited special guests helped to dedicate the George L. Carter Railroad Museum with a day of special events. That museum has doubled in size and last year attracted more than 6,000 visitors from near and far. We have become a destination venue for a railroad enthused public and declared by a local newspaper to be one of the"

Five Coolest Places in the Tri-Cities Region". Way to go fellow MEMRR members and chapter members of the NRHS!! WAY TO GO!!!! Together we have accomplished a lot in 7 years and the potential is there as we continue to improve our exhibits and build our memberships for a very bright future. We are going to celebrate our museum's birthday with the first public unveiling of the **Reverend Howard Walker Railroad China and Silver Collection**. Rev. Walker of Joliet, IL has not only favored us with the gift of his railroad library, but with an outstanding collection of dinner ware, cups, plates, serving dishes, silver dishes, bowls and pitchers, and other commemorative ware that he collected over a period of many years from many different railroads. They are now on display in the locked glass-fronted cases in our main gallery and they represent an excellent collection. The silver pieces have been brought back to a gleaming luster after residing under years of collected oxidation and tarnish with the painstaking work of **Myra and Bill Hensley** who took these pieces home with them and spend hours in a 7-step process to make them shine brightly once more. Bring your cameras as you will want to have photos of some of the items that passengers on the elegant dining cars of the past used at their tables as the scenery rolled by outside their windows as the cars rolled along.

NRHS National Conference: When we think of attending a national convention or a national conference we often realize that we will have to make travel arrangements to go hundreds of miles to be a participant, but not this November. The National NRHS has its Fall Conference being hosted by the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS right in Johnson City at the Carnegie Hotel. The attendees will be visiting the Carter Railroad Museum on Saturday the 15th during our regular hours and again on Sunday, 16 November, from 1-3 PM. Some of the conference is open to non-NRHS members, but this would be a great opportunity to meet their national officers right here in our backyard without having to travel more than a few miles and being able to go home for the night and sleep in your own bed. **Alan Bridwell**, the founder of the Johnson's Depot website with all its local railroading history including a section on the Carter RR Museum, will be the featured evening speaker at the Society's banquet on Saturday night.

Our hats are off to all the chapter members who have worked to bring this National Fall Conference to Johnson City and to make it a success. Our Vice-President **Jim Pahr** has worked very hard making arrangements with the Carnegie Hotel, with an ETSU Blue Grass band, in arranging the Friday field trips, running the routes for the trip, making arrangements with Tupelo Honey Café and double checking with Christian Ministries on the Doe River Gorge leg of the outing, plus countless other things that are critical to the success of this conference venue. Our Editor **Bill Beagen** has worked as the coordinator of registrations taking care of the paperwork for approximately 70 conference attendees, printing the souvenir menus and corresponding with everyone planning to attend. Our Treasurer **John Dodge** has been handling all the finances, cash in and checks out, in a most professional manner and **Gary Emmert** also made the initial reservations for the train ride at Doe River Gorge. Many of our other members have done what was asked of them and will be active assisting as needed during the conference. My thanks to all our Chapter members who have shouldered the responsibility of making this conference a success and who have taken their time and provided their talents to this end.

Smoky Mountain Railway Trip: The Carter Chapter just had a successful October trip to Bryson City, NC and the Smoky Mountain Railway transporting 163 guests for a great fall day in the mountains of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. The weather could not have been better for a day well spent outside with wall-to-wall sunshine and the fall colors of the mountains making a beautiful backdrop to a most pleasant train and bus trip. **Jim Pahr** made the initial reservations for us with Smoky Mt. RR, but the bulk of the work for this trip was in handling all the paperwork involved around registering 163 attendees, taking their checks and waivers of liability, sending them confirmation notices and handling their many questions by telephone and/or email. This work was magnificently done by **Charlene McLeod** with able assistance from husband **Dan**. Much of the success of this trip we owe to the outstanding work the McLeod's provided for the chapter, including two road trips to Bryson City prior to the trip to pick up tickets and to straighten out reservation problems at the railroad's end of the line. The Chapter thanks you special folks for all the work you put into this fund raising venture for the Chapter and for the Carter RR Museum. Watch for our plans for a May trip in 2015 and make your plans to be a part of it. The trips are well organized and lots of fun.

"Hero of the Rails Day": Little Engineers Room Station Master **Taylor Jesse** and **Michelle Kelly** have a big day planned on November 22 for the children. They are planning a party that will feature popcorn, face painting, games and kids dressed in costumes for a railroad heroes contest. Prizes will be given and you can expect more than the usual number of little folks to be in the museum that day. The Little Engineers Playroom is always an exciting place, but expect more action than usual and more noise and more people crowded into that room and around the museum. Do what you can to help the girls and their little charges enjoy the fun of railroading that can be participated in at any age level. It's going to be an outstanding day at the museum!

Heritage Day: Our Heritage Day Events Coordinator, **Geoff Stunkard**, continues to do a great job of planning these special events that are into their third year now at the museum. The excitement and publicity that has been generated around these monthly events featuring particular railroads, railroads of a region, specialty railroads, and period railroads have done a great service to us all by giving the public of the area a series of special reasons to return to the museum on a monthly basis and to bring their friends along with them. Heritage Days are highly publicized by the region's media and they have help put us on the map. Get out your favorite passenger train(s) and bring them down to the museum on the last Saturday of the month, November 29th, and bring back the glory days, those golden days of the railroads when passenger trains ruled the rails from coast to coast. They will be a great compliment in motion to the displays of the dining car china and silver we have on display this month. If you have more passenger trains than you can operate by yourself conscript some help to get your varnish on the rails. Let's see how many different railroad we can represent with passenger service, diesel and/or steam!!

Our special National Model Railroad Month is at hand. By the time you read this it will be well underway. Take an active part in it. Come down to the museum and run your trains, or the club's trains, or bring something to show the members and our visitors. Come and greet the public on a Saturday and give them a tour of the museum from the

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kid's room to the big gallery with its operating layouts, to the Tweetsie Project that is not completed, but well underway. Share some of your railroading knowledge and love for trains with us and with our guests. Don't forget work nights on Thursdays as we can use your help and talents as well as your company. Bring a toy train to work on the 14th and tell all who will listen about the fun of model railroading and about the clubs and the railroad museum they should perhaps visit. We have a lot to celebrate in November including planning the Christmas party that is little more than a month away !

Happy National Model Railroad Month! Happy birthday George L. Carter Railroad Museum! Thank you all for all you do for the hobby, your club, and the railroad museum. Listen to the sound of the whistle of the train at night and dream of all the destinations yet to come.

Fred J. Alsop III

President, George L. Carter Chapter NRHS
Director, George L. Carter Railroad Museum, ETSU

George L. Carter Chapter of the NRHS

. Minutes for October 20, 2014

The October 20, 2014 meeting was called to order by President Fred Alsop. Twelve members were present—Fred Alsop, Bill Beagen, Dick Conger, Gary Emmert, Carolyn Gregg, Paul Haynes, Charlene McLeod, Dan McLeod, Lanny Norris, Charlotte Pahriss, Jim Pahriss, and Paul Markey. The president announced that, in the absence of Acting Secretary John Dodge, Carolyn Gregg would be taking notes for the meeting.

Vice President Jim Pahriss (and also newly elected 5th District Board of Director of the NRHS) reported that the National Organization really needed money. He encouraged all the members to send their 2015 dues to Treasurer John Dodge as soon as possible. The dues are \$50 for National with an additional \$7 for spouse, and \$10 for the Chapter with \$5 for the spouse (family). To ensure that everyone has the correct address for John Dodge, Bill Beagan will email all the members with the address and send a letter to members without email. Members may join the Roundhouse Club with a \$90 donation. Anyone willing to participate is asked to list their donation as unrestricted so that it may be used to cover the bills of the Society. A meeting of the Roundhouse Club will be held in June in Vermont.

The Vice President also briefed the Chapter on the NRHS meeting in June where he was briefed on the status of the Society financially and the possibility of Chapter 7 Bankruptcy—liquidating all assets and the possibility of the logo, etc. being sold to someone else—and Chapter 11—the opportunity to reorganize with a possible trustee. If the Chapter 11 cannot be completed successfully, then the Society would be forced into Chapter 7. The first asset of the Society is the Library—no one knows how many books are included since they are stored in Massachusetts in a climate-controlled environment. Since the Society cannot use them, they may be liquidated. The second asset is a

collection of photos, videos, and paintings. These are in the process of being converted to a digital format so their value can be assessed. They are in New Jersey.

Lanny Norris questioned how the National Society had become so financially strapped. Jim Pahrns reported that the membership had been decreasing at 5 to 7% per year. The largest size in the 1980s was 20,000. The membership last year was around 11,000. When the Society cancelled the steam excursion program, revenue dropped. Leadership decisions that were rubber stamped by the Board members contributed to problems. When the President arbitrarily raised the dues from \$37 to \$50 two years ago, more members left. Since losing the election, the past President has made expenditures and tried to implement a new business plan—based on no members and 2 committees. If that had been approved, the membership would have had to vote on an unacceptable plan. The former President removed funds to print proxy ballots for members to vote on these changes. The Board rejected that proposal. Some money was spent on other things as well. When asked about the Fernley and Fernley Contract, he reported that has been modified. The new President took office in September even though the old regime had tried to keep him out of the picture. The Society needs 7-9,000 members for 2015. The former Treasurer is still in office. The New President will need to create a vision for the future. At this point, he is significantly challenged with the problems that he has inherited.

Bill Beagen questioned the NRHS Fund and the former president's name as director of that. The NRHS Fund is totally separate from the Society, it was an endowment given as an investment. It was used up this year. Gary Emmert asked when Roundhouse money could be given and was told that it may be given at any time. Lanny Norris asked how much debt is owed by the Society. Jim Pahrns said that the debt is unknown, but he thinks that the Society needs \$200,000 or more.

There was not a Treasurer's Report due to the absence of the Treasurer for medical reasons. The Secretary's Report had been printed in "The Coal Road." Jim Pahrns moved that the Secretary's Report be approved, the motion was seconded by Dan McLeod, and the membership approved it.

Bill Beagen, Editor, asked that articles be sent to him for "The Coal Road." He reported on the NRHS Fall Conference that, at the present time, there are 31 members registered with 10 spouses. Sixty-seven nights are reserved. Jim Pahrns said that NRHS President Al Weber had asked all the Board members to send in their reservations. The deadline is October 31.

Carolyn Gregg, Historian, shared the articles printed for the book to date and told of a Railroad Reunion of two girls who met when Brownie Allison dropped his daughter off Tweetsie at Shell Creek to visit with the Postmistress's daughter. The two were reunited in Johnson City last week after more than 50 years. They visited the Tupelo Honey Café for lunch.

Gary Emmert, Librarian, said that he would be selling magazine binders at \$2.50 in the Library for anyone interested.

Lanny Norris, Director, reported that the Directors were meeting on a regular basis and have been exercising their fiduciary duties in an exemplary fashion.

Fred Alsop reported on the Board of Directors meeting and asked the members to support the Chapter in the upcoming National Conference in Johnson City. The members will be responsible for displaying Southern Hospitality to the national representatives. They should invite participation and discuss the future in a positive light.

Bill Beagen announced that the other Editors would be meeting during the Conference.

Fred Alsop reported on the Tweetsie Board Meeting that was held on Saturday, Oct. 18th from 8:30 until 5:30. It was held in Johnson City. Their mission being discussed was to offer opportunities for members to participate in activities. This was the first board meeting held for the ET&WNC RR Historical Society in more than 20 years.

It is important for the members to be shareholders in their Society; then they will want to protect it and grow it.

Lanny Norris stated that our chapter does a lot with a few people and few resources. The National NRHS should take notice. They have had a lot of resources and yet couldn't seem to function. Our railroad museum has two girls who are paid to operate the Little Engineers Room, and everything else is done by volunteers. The Museum had 6,000 visitors last year. Bill Beagen stated that the *Johnson City Press* had an article in the day's paper about "Railfanning in the 1880s." Fred Alsop asked him to reprint it in "The Coal Road" if possible.

Since the young man developing the Website for the Chapter graduated and did not leave any information, the Board was informed that Jim and Charlotte Pahr's daughter's roommate might be able to set up one for the Chapter. They will check on possible costs. Bill Beagen will try to locate the information from the earlier attempt.

Fred Alsop thanked Dan McLeod for delivering and returning the Cope Layout and the "How to. . ." layout to Greeneville for the International Festival at Notre Dame Catholic Church on September 20th. He also thanked James and Carolyn Gregg and Bill and Myra Hensley for manning the displays for the day.

The Chapter will have an election next month for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Directors. The Editor, Historian, and Librarian are appointed positions. Fred asked for a Nominating Committee, and Bill Beagen and Carolyn Gregg volunteered. He reported that Mark Woomer was willing to keep performing the duties of Secretary, Membership Chairman and Webmaster if someone was willing to take notes for him at the business meetings. He hopes to move back to the area in about a year. Ballots will be created with spaces for write-ins who may be nominated from the floor. Bill Beagen will put the information in "The Coal Road."

Dan and Charlene McLeod reported on their progress with the Saturday, Oct. 26th Excursion. After some problems with registration, they have made two trips to Bryson City and have gotten things straightened out. Some people were willing to move to a lower coach selection and will have some money refunded as well as receiving a mug. A few people were moved higher with no extra cost. They said that more of the higher prices tickets should be reserved for next time. This excursion will have three buses with 163 people. Buses will be boarded between 7:15 and 8:00 with the return at 10:30 on Saturday night. The hosts for the buses will be the McLeods, the Pahr's family, and the Beagens. The cost for the train was \$11,010.78, the buses will cost \$3,720, and other expenses are projected to be around \$300. Eighteen thousand dollars have been deposited in the Chapter account for about \$3,000 profit. Dan and Charlene were thanked for all their hard work. Since the Chapter received three complimentary tickets, Gary Emmert was asked to contact the Channel 5 reporter and offer one to her to film the trip. People suggested to receive the other tickets were President Noland and family, Delanna Reed, and Carol Fox.

For the November NRHS Conference, two buses have been contracted and can be cancelled if seats are not needed. Fred Alsop is arranging for a shelving display for the Walker china and silver. He would like to display around 100 pieces. That display will be in the Carter RR Museum and open to the public as well as the Conference goers. The Museum will be open on a regular schedule that Saturday and will be celebrating National Model Train Month and National Take a Train to Work Day as well as their 7th anniversary.

Bill Beagen, Dick Conger, and their committee will be preparing the packets for registration and the bus trip. Registration will begin on Thursday, Nov. 13th, at 4:00 at the Carnegie Hotel. Registration will also be open at 6:00 on Friday, the 14th for those who arrive after the closing on Thursday. The bus trip will begin at 7:30 on Friday morning for Copper Creek (high and low viaduct, hoping for a train), proceed to Natural Tunnel and take a chair lift down to the bottom, then go to Duffield to see Kenny Fannon's Station/museum used in the *Coal Miner's Daughter*, caboose, and railroad artifacts. Jim Pahrns reported that Kenny's wife had offered sausage biscuits, but Jim told him there would be too many. If two buses are scheduled, the groups will be divided with one going to Kenny's first. Lunch will be at Tupelo Honey at 1:30. After lunch, the bus will go to Elizabethton to see the Fireless Cooker and then to Doe River to ride the train. That will end the day's trip. Saturday will be the Board Meeting and Installation of Officers. A Mix-and-Mingle will be help prior to the Buffet Banquet on Saturday night at 7:00. Jim Pahrns requested Dr. Noland to welcome the group and the ETSU Blue Grass Band to play for the Mix-and-Mingle. Fred will work on it. Gary Emmert will man the Book Sales for the Convention.

With no further business and due to the lateness of the hour, the meeting was adjourned without presenting the video program on steam locomotives.

Carolyn Gregg

MEMBERSHIP

2014 Business Meeting Dates

Monday 1/20/2014	Monday 5/19/2014	Monday 9/15/2014
Monday 2/17/2014	Monday 6/16/2014	Monday 10/20/2014
Monday 3/17/2014	Monday 7/14/2014	Monday - 11/17/2014
Monday 4/21/2014	Monday 8/18/2014	12/16/2014 - Christmas Party -Choo Choo Cafe

The next scheduled general meeting is Monday, October 20th, on ETSU Campus, Brown Hall Science Building, Room 312, at 6:30 p.m.

ETSU's cafeteria "The Market Place" on the 3rd Floor of the Culp University Center will be open for those members who wish to meet for dinner at 5:00 p.m. prior to the Chapter business meeting. Meal price is \$5.45 per person but you must mention that you are a staff member (by volunteering in the RR Museum) in order to get this reduced price.

Editors Note

This is an article from Trains Magazine.

One month after taking office, new NRHS president outlines upcoming changes

By Justin Franz | October 29, 2014

RELATED TOPICS: GENERAL NEWS | STEAM/PRESERVATION

PHILADELPHIA – The National Railway Historical Society’s new president has outlined a series of changes in a new letter posted online this week. But his predecessor says the changes are too little, too late to save the ailing 80-year-old organization.

President Al Weber writes that in the coming months some the organization’s publications, including the NRHS News, will become an online-only product. He says the board is also considering whether or not it will continue to publish the NRHS Bulletin and, if so, how many issues it will print each year. He also writes that the board is also considering bringing back the Annual Activities issue as a web-only publication.

Weber, who was elected in August after a tight race with former president Greg Molloy, also addressed the proposed New Business Model that the board voted down in September. The model would have turned the NRHS into a donor-based foundation to support rail preservation, rather than a social group, which some people believe is a flawed and outdated model. Weber says that although the model was voted down, parts of it will be implemented in the coming years. Weber himself voted against the New Business Model because he disagreed with the plan to move away from the chapter-based model.

“We appreciate the New Business Model committee for their time and effort in putting this plan together, (and) even though it did not pass, many gains for the society will come from,” Weber writes.

But Molloy tells Trains News Wire that he believes the NRHS’ future is “highly uncertain at this point” and that the plan outlined by Weber doesn’t address the group’s big issues: declining membership and financial coffers. In 2013 the group lost \$72,000 and more than three times that amount the year before. Membership has also taken a hit and in 2013 the NRHS had 11,573 members, a 7.2 percent drop from the previous year.

“The latest letter to the membership talks about continuing services and even expanding them, but it doesn’t address the fundamental issues of what those products and services will be and how we are going to pay for them,” Molloy tells Trains. “Nor does it address some of the less exciting but more critical issues we are facing in the short term – how to re-start suppliers who have stopped work on NRHS programs, how to solicit and process dues and donations to keep anything running, and whether the traditional income sources will generate enough revenue to keep the lights on.”

Trains News Wire is unable to reach Weber for additional comment.



The George L. Carter Chapter NRHS

The Monthly Meetings are the Monday preceding the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM in room 312 of Brown Hall, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN. The room is on the Third floor entering from the northeast entrance doors. For more information, please write to the Chapter at:

George L Carter Chapter NRHS
P.O. Box 70697
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN 37614

The George L. Carter Chapter NRHS Newsletter is prepared and distributed monthly prior to the meeting. Opinions expressed by the writers are not necessarily the views of East Tennessee State University and its employees, the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS, and its members, officers, and board of directors and the National Railway Historical Society. Contributions of articles are welcome and encouraged. For permission to use the material in this newsletter, please contact the editor, Bill Beagen (rrbill@embarqmail.com). Contributors are Fred Alsop, Jim Pahriss, Mark Woomer and John Dodge

NRHS Convention sales now on line!

The ticket sales function now is operating with a link from the NRHS website. The dome and first class seats are selling fast but, of course, plenty of coach seats are available.

Those of you who are chapter officers, please get the word out to your members.

Thanks,

Walter Zullig

Chairman, VERMONT RAILS 2015

To get to the NRHS site, go to www.NRHS.com and click on the appropriate link.

NRHS Fall Conference

Don't forget, our Chapter is sponsoring the Fall Conference of the NRHS this November from the 13th to the 16th. We will need everyone to help out and make this a truly memorable experience for the attendees.