



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
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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 ??

CSX #2646 – GP38-2 SWITCHER DUTIES IN KINGSPORT, TN



Photos courtesy of Paul Haynes



MODELER'S CLINIC
A BRIEF LOOK AT WATER ELEMENTS FOR
MODEL RAILROADERS.

By Fred Alsop

Photos courtesy of Fred Alsop & Ted Bleck-Doran



[Editor's Note: Fred initially thought of titling this article "WATER COLUMN" – but thought better of it.]



The Pond Base consists of a foam insulation board base that has been carved and covered with *Sculptamold* plaster



The Meandering Stream sample



Three samples of water effects – Ponds, Mountain Stream, and Meandering Stream



Here's the Mountain Stream based which has also made from insulation board layered, shaped and covered with plaster – note Fred has incorporated several small rock castings into the slope of the hillside

Every model railroader who is working with scenery for his layout will at some point decide that a little water is needed on it. Water effects can range from wet puddles in the roadway, to ponds and lakes or bays, to flowing water in small streams and big rivers. The steps on how to get there are basically the same and there are many articles in model railroad magazines, scenery books, sites on the web, and videos on disks that will all give you great information on how to get started and how to proceed to the creation of that last drop of "water".

I began working with scenery modeled water with my first club module and found that with modern products the process is not so difficult and the results can be very pleasing. And, like so much of the model scenery we create, if the finished product does not suit you, it can always be redone, often with improved results just from the practice and experience you gained from making the first one.



EnviroTex hardener and resin used to make the "water"

There are lots of good products on the market from a variety of manufacturers and most of them give very good results. I will tell you how I do most of my "water" elements for my own modules and for some of those belonging to club members as well as some that I am creating for our Tweetsie Project that has small mountain streams, creeks and ponds, the middle sections of the Doe River as well as some of its larger and deeper sections as it reaches the Hampton area of the layout.



Fred has marked the shallowest portion of the meandering stream using Yellow Ocre paint taking care to have the depth conform with that in nature – shallowest where the water is the slowest and drops the sediment it carries

Like other facets of our modeling the world in miniature, it pays dividends to study the subject before trying to emulate it. Look at photos of water in books, magazines, on calendars and in the photos you take. This is especially important if the subjects are similar to those you wish to build on your layout or diorama.



With the water's flow in mind Fred uses increasingly dark colors to simulate increasing depth in the streambed – one does not have to be exacting – nature certainly isn't

Learn and study what happens when a stream drops and creates cascades, waterfalls, rapids, pools, riffles, and the runs of the stream in between these features. When a river curves what physical geological effects are created? In a curve in a stream the water is running much faster in the outside of the curve than it is traveling in the inside of the bend. Imagine marching in a band with every row straight across and the band comes to a corner that requires the rows of marchers to maintain that perfect row as they negotiate the turn. The outside marchers have to go at a rapid step while the band members on the inside of the row must slow to almost stepping in place.



The shallow portions will receive some rock and debris for detail – to accent how the stream has deposited rock, silt, and logs during high water and flood stage periods.

There is a lot of force on the outside of the bend of a stream and the water is carrying a lot of sediment and objects along with it while it eats out at the banks of that section and scours away at the stream bottom.



Fred spreads the full strength white glue in scenery cement in the shoal area of the stream in preparation for adding the deposited rocks

Nothing is being deposited in the outside curve of the stream bend, but the inside of the curve has water that is moving so slowly that sediments are dropping out with the result that this side of the stream is getting shallower and gravel and mud bars are being constructed. Make your stream look more natural by putting the deep water and the shallow bars where they would naturally occur and you go a long way towards creating the effect you want.



A piece of cardstock or paper folded in a "V" is used to spread the rocks – start with the finest grains and work up to larger rocks – and finally to tree limbs and other highlights



Tube or bottled acrylic paints are used throughout the project – colors include earth tones (Yellow Ocre, Raw and Burnt Siena, Raw and Burnt Umber, Payne's Grey, Titanium White, and Forest Green)

Begin your project by selecting the location of the water element you plan to create. Small bodies of water can be as effective as larger ones, so size here does not matter as much as the illusion you seek to create. The products I like to use need a sealed surface to support them and my favorite is a product called EnvioTex Lite manufactured by Environmental Technologies, Inc. This is a two-part liquid product that has one container of resin and one equal-sized container of hardener. It is used by mixing it in equal parts and pouring and spreading it on the surface of your pond or stream to create the glossy water look. But, that is one of the last steps as first we have to prepare the surface. Most surfaces will take EnvioTex, but not foam board without some sealer on it as the resin product will eat it away. You will have to paint the surface of the foam board, or put some plaster in some form over it, i.e., sculptamold, plaster, hydrocal, etc.,



Pour equal amounts of resin & hardener into a plastic, glass or waxed paper container (not Styrofoam) and mix for 2 minutes

Make sure there are no holes in the pond/stream bed or the poured EnviroTex will find it and flow with gravity through it covering whatever is beneath. If you are building a water element that ends at the end of your module you will have to create a dam to hold your newly poured "water" back until it has a chance to thicken and harden, a process that makes take several hours (the mix is completely dry at room temperature in about 24 hours; read the instruction sheet in the box). I have found a material that works perfectly for me and that dries clear, a perfect see-through dam, in using silicone for this. Get the kind that dries clear and just squeeze on a little wall of it at the end of the water element-to-be and let it dry before you make your pour.

You will achieve the illusion of depth of your water not with the thickness of your resin mix pour, for it will be only 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch thick, but with the tones and hues of the paint you use to cover the water element's bottom. Two colors in your paint box are almost never to be used; black and blue as they are almost never found in natural water. Water surface color often is a reflection of what surrounds it, but more importantly, what is beneath it. If the water is to be represented by clear water as in a mountain stream, the rocky substrate on the stream bed may be what shows through. Water that is deeper and carrying sediments may not be clear, but more translucent or even murky with its turbidity.



Here Fred is creating the illusion of depth in a pond. He will use darker colors to simulate the deepest portion of the pond



Fred uses a broad flat head brush to apply the paint to the bottom of the pond.

I like to use a lot of earth colors; tans, raw umber, burnt umber, raw sienna, burnt sienna, various greens from light to dark, and for the deeper, darker water; Payne's gray. My favorite paints are acrylics. Acrylics are water soluble when they are fresh and can be thinned with water; but when dry they are water insoluble. Clean up of the brushes is easy with soap and water.



The "mountain stream" w/o water poured



The pond is now ready for the pouring of the "water" – notice the green "algae" highlights



The "pond" and "river" without the water

Use the lighter earth tones to simulate the shallows of the pond or stream with the lightest hues edging out from the shoreline graduating into darker hues and finely into the greens and dark grays of the depths. Blend the colors as you paint the pond or stream bed so that there are no sharp lines. Move the painted strokes to follow the contours of the banks and the shallow peninsulas or islands that may protrude from your water scene. The flowing lines of the blended paint will help you achieve the look you want of the underwater pathways that have been carved by the movements of the "water".



Bubbles are removed by blowing through a straw directed towards the water and held just above it. The carbon dioxide in your breath removes the tiny bubbles.



When poured and spread into the prepared model basin the mixture will look frothy with tiny bubbles in it.

If you want to place objects into the water, in the shallows, on the stream or pond bed, do so after you have finished with you painting of the water element's bottom and after the



The pond pour after the bubbles have been removed. The work needs to be set aside for approximately 24 hours for the "water" to harden.

Following the mixing directions with the product mix it thoroughly (a full 2 minutes for EnviroTex Lite) in any container that is not Styrofoam, and then pour it onto your prepared surface. Make sure the pour is thin, not more than 1/8 inch deep, and spread it evenly over the entire surface of the water scene using a toothpick, small stick or paint brush handle. If you find you did not mix up enough resin-mix you can make up more and continue where you left off with the first batch and the finished pieces will blend together seamlessly. As this mixture dries it has the

tendency to creep up the sides of everything it comes into contact with just a little. After everything has dried if these glossy areas are not the look you want you can "erase" them by taking a small brush and using clear, dullcoat paints, just paint over them and they will lose their bright wet look when the dull paint dries.



The pour into the "river" is done in a similar fashion without attempting to cover the entire area. The envirotex will be spread evenly using a toothpick or small brush handle.



Spreading the "water"

Moving water often does not have the flat finished surface that EnviroTex will produce. Woodland Scenics makes a product called "Water Effects" that you can spread on areas of your smooth water to give it some texture and relief. It goes on white and opaque, but dries clear. You can shape it into ripples around rocks and logs, create wakes for boats or swimming waterfowl, or just currents in the stream. For higher water drops such as cascades and water falls it is best used with other materials. We may cover these special water effects in a later workshop and article.



Use Scotch brand magic tape to make "water" cascades for the mountain stream. Cut off small pieces and ball/mash into rounded shapes and place beneath fall areas to represent swirling water.



Placing formed tape in place beneath rapid



Stream bed with small pieces of wadded up magic tape in place beneath the falls in the dark areas on the model.



Pouring the mountain stream "water"

For now, check out some of the water elements that have been created on the various layouts in the Carter Railroad Museum to see how they appear and think about creating your own. It is really not very difficult and I will be happy to discuss my techniques with you any time. Just ask and we can test the waters together.



Spreading the envirotex to make the stream "water" consistently spaced along the streambed

**ETSU RAILROAD MUSEUM
CONCLUDES 2014 SEASON WITH
DIXIE RAIL EXTRAVAGANZA**

*GEORGE L. CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM
SHOWCASES SOUTHEASTERN
RAILROADING ON DECEMBER 20*

With eleven dates completed for this year, the railroads of the south will featured during the Heritage Day event at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum, located in the Campus Center Building of East Tennessee State University in Johnson City. Dixie Rail Extravaganza was chosen to culminate these popular displays for 2014, and visitors to the free-admission facility on December 20 should find this a chance to see the familiar and not-so-familiar in railroading.



Norfolk Southern "Lehigh Valley" Heritage Locomotive on the HO Layout at the GL Carter Museum



Norfolk Southern freight train rumbles through Jonesborough on a misty December day

"Railroading in the southeast was varied, yet comprehensively it was unique to the region," recalls the museum's Heritage Day coordinator, Geoff Stunkard. "You had sprawling systems and tiny enterprises, the latest equipment and worn-out rust-buckets that looked like they should have been retired decades before, mountains and swamps. Couple that with making everything from turpentine to steel, and it's hard to define except it to say it's 'our own.' So our Extravaganza will encompass southern railroading heritage, and probably a few surprises."

The Carter Railroad Museum is open on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and includes model railroad layouts, a special 'Little Engineer' child's activity room, and ongoing programs. There is no admission fee but donations are welcome for its upkeep. The museum is also seeking artifacts for display, including the newest addition dedicated to the long-defunct, but well-remembered 'Tweetsie' line, the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad; this room, still under construction, again will be open for guided tours during event days



Fred Alsop works on the Shell Creek School House for the ET&WNC layout



Striving for authenticity Fred has done some field research on the School House – He's using sheet styrene and Tichy casting to recreate the structure in miniature

This was the fourth year of the Heritage Day program series, and the great trains of the Southern, Clinchfield, Louisville & Nashville, Seaboard and other long-defunct corporate names will serve as a great variety of color, equipment and era to conclude it. These are railroads that helped settle, civilize, and accelerate both business and pleasure below the Mason-Dixon Line. From the hills of Virginia and Kentucky to the ill-fated extension of the Florida East Coast out to Key West, 'Dixieland' was a place where railroading offered great careers, travel was a mile-a-minute or a leisurely jaunt, and men with initiative sometimes fixed things with nothing but baling wire, cannibalized parts, and a few choice expletives that shouldn't be repeated in 'pleasant company.'

In addition to the displays, there is also a growing research library, the National Railway Historical Society chapter, membership opportunities, and an oral history archive being established as part of the museum's programs. Info can be found online at

"No, we won't doing be any of that," says Stunkard with a laugh, "but we're going to have fun."

Model railroad layouts in the museum will be operating with associated equipment spanning several eras, while an exhibit showing some of the variances between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' in corporate southern railroading will be displayed in the main hall. Tours of the ET&WNC layout currently being constructed will help conclude the 2014 season. This event is held one weekend earlier than the final Saturday of the month due to campus and holiday conflicts.

<http://etsu>

or

<http://johnsonsdspot.com/glcarter/cartermuseum.htm>

The Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) works in conjunction with the museum to demonstrate and maintain the model layouts, museum exhibits and other projects. More info can be found at <http://www.memrr.org>.

Membership opportunities are available to adults, and include special benefits and model railroading enjoyment.

The George L. Carter Railroad Museum is located on the campus of East Tennessee State University, Campus Center Building, 176 Ross Drive. The entrance door is adjacent to the flashing RR crossbuck; for more information contact the Museum Director, Dr. Fred Alsop, at telephone 423/439-6838 or by email at alsopf@mail.etsu.edu.

GEORGE L. CARTER RAILROAD HERITAGE DAYS SERIES EVENTS FOR 2014

December 20: Dixie Rail Extravaganza

2015 Heritage Days Dates to be announced.



FROM THE PROTOTYPE MODELING IDEAS TO ADD FOR MORE REALISM

Photo courtesy of Paul Haynes



CSX has been busy readying its right-of-way for double-stacked container cars to ply the mainline routes in the eastern part of the US. They have embarked on a multiyear project and investment to upgrade clearances throughout the Appalachian region. The project has included lowering the floors of tunnels, rebuilding tunnel liners, open-airing tunnels and by cutting "cat ears" (grooves cut into the tunnel portals and liners to accommodate the extra height of double stack container cars.

Here's an example of one tunnel with new "cat ears" cut into the tunnel portal.



NORFOLK SOUTHERN LOCOMOTIVE LOSES IT MAGIC BLUE SMOKE

DCC DECODER GETS FRIED

(WITH APOLOGIES TO JOHN EDWARDS)

Still photos from YouTube clip



Norfolk Southern #9499 loses its magic "blue smoke" which in turn fries the DCC decoder.



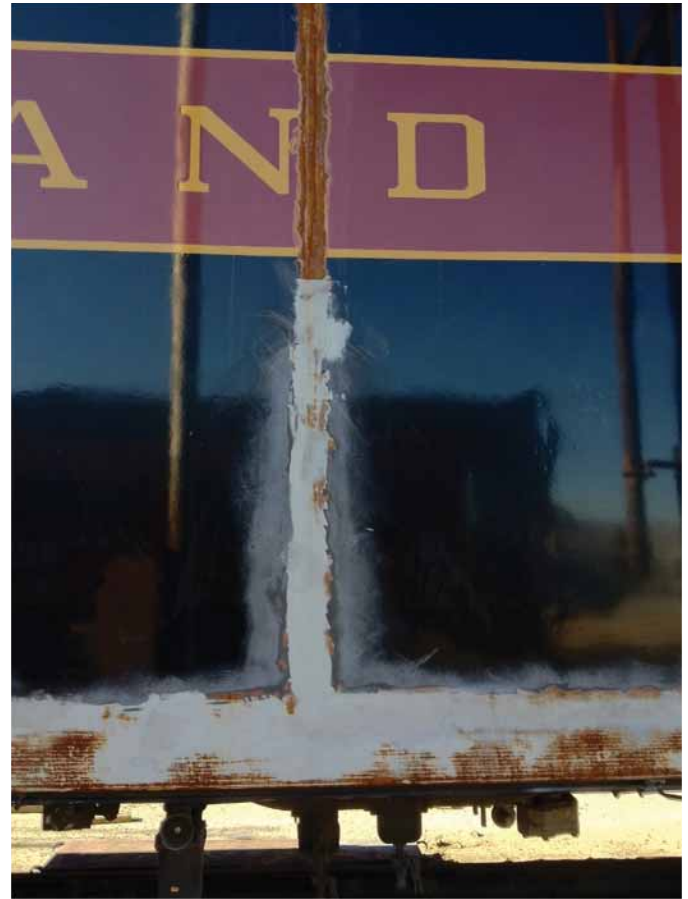
These photos were taken near Dunkirk NY on the NS main south of Buffalo NY – October 21, 2013.
The locomotive is actually back in service today.

THE RESTORATION OF N&W #611 TENDER REPAIRS

Photos courtesy of Paul Haynes



The tender (#220165) arrived at the shops in Spencer NC along with the 611. While #611 is getting a major overhaul, its tender is also receiving some TLC.



There appears to be some major repair to a seam on the tender's left side



Similar work has been done on the left side as well



Here's a view of the right side with some rust repair (light gray) to the lower portion



The tender will retain its dedication plaque to Robert Clayton who saved 611 from the scrapper's torch



The auger pipe for the automatic stoker is visible in this shot (see the red safety cone)



More of the tender has received primer



A preview of things to come – 611 will received a new dual beam headlamp assembly – the housing appears newly chromed ready for instillation.



CSX GP40-2's #6111 (ev-B&O #4212) and #6114 (ex-B&O #4215) perform switching duties at Kingsport, TN
Photo courtesy of Paul Haynes

UPDATE ON THE HO LAYOUT ELECTRICAL SYSTEM CHANGES FOR THE INSIDE SIDING

Gentlemen,

The inside siding on the mainline from turnout #17 all the way to the end where it joins the mainline is now powered from the West Inside Mainline power bus.

Testing has confirmed that the Mainline Power buses are now properly separated from the yard power buses. There are still problems with the yard power buses but these will be corrected later as we install the reversing system.

I made some wiring changes and corrections to the track wiring under the corner mainlines around turnouts #14, 15 and 16. I think all tracks and rails are now powered. Run various trains through this section and see if you observe any problems. There is still more work to do in this area and I currently have some of the connections made with jumper clips.

I'll be there Saturday and we will see what we can clean up. I have a little work to do on the wiring under the "Y" tracks. Also, I fired up the Tweetsie and got the standard gauge section running. There are some minor problems to work on there.

Frank Fezzie
Coordinator, Electronics Committee



BNSF C44-9W #4084 on the point of a southbound freight outside of Johnson City, TN
Photo courtesy of Paul Haynes

THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S
SIDE OF THE CAB
THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Amanda Kelly Blackburn with her sister, Michelle, Amanda and yours truly on Dec 13th when we gave the ladies plaques for all their work in the Little Engineers Room

Welcome to 2015! Does it seem that long ago that we were celebrating the arrival of the millennium? It is my wish that you and your family enjoyed a great Christmas and a wonderful New Year and experiences a most joyous holiday season and I shall not be surprised to see some new, out-of-the-box locomotives and consists soon operating on the MEMRR HO layout.



The Ramey's and the Norris'

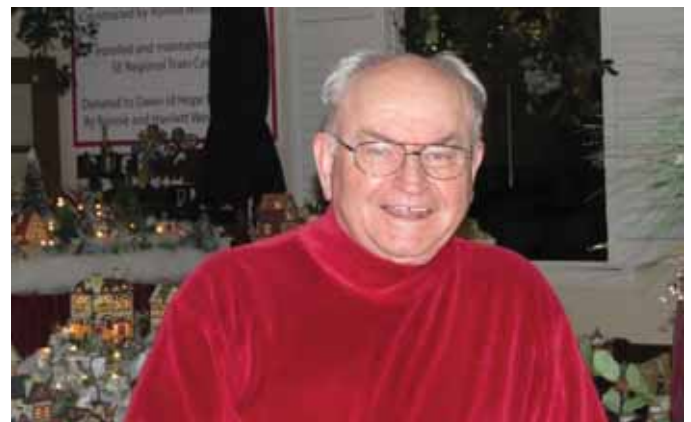
We held our Annual Christmas Party for the second consecutive year at the Choo-Choo Café in Erwin, TN on the night of December 16th. Our gratitude goes to **Jim Pahr** who made all the arrangements and so skillfully coordinated this year's event. It was a festive occasion for the 45 merrymakers, members, spouses and guests, who attended.

Café owner and chief-cook, Brenda, had a great meal prepared to our order and the building was decorated with a mix of railroading memorabilia and Christmas ornaments including a big Christmas tree.



The Swank's and the Frazer's

We had a short business meeting for both our represented club/chapter groups during which I took the opportunity to review some of the many accomplishments achieved by the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders, the G. L. Carter Chapter NRHS, and the Carter RR Museum. They were many and commendable in 2014 and every member should be proud of the outcome of their work and dedication to our hobby and our passion for trains, railroading and engaging the community. Dirty Santa paid a visit after desserts were finished and he was in a milder, friendlier mood this year with little stealing of presents from our crew. We all had a wonderful time socializing with each other and enjoying the pleasure that such good company brings. It is always good to have the opportunity to back away from the business side of our clubs and the museum and engage in a great meal with family members and colleagues in railroading in a venue outside of our normal meeting arenas. I am already looking forward to our next schedule social event.



The host for the evening – Jim Pahr

As we come into this new year we welcome the new members who joined the Mountain Empire Model

Railroaders in the final quarter of 2014 and we look forward to all that they will bring to our club and to the Carter Railroad Museum. As a reminder to those members who still have not renewed their memberships this window to do so that opened in November 2014 will close for you at the end of January. So, please get your membership dues, which have not changed in more than a decade, to Gary Emmert, our treasurer, as soon as you can.



Larry, Jonathan, and Alan

We want to keep you on our membership rolls and you want to keep all the privileges that come with your full membership of having a voice in your model railroad club, open access to the Carter Railroad Museum and all the opportunities that provides including access to layouts in 4 scales, modeling opportunities, the monthly subscription to an outstanding newsletter and the comradeship of a great group of model railroaders. **If you have not already done so renew your membership now.**



Dan McCloud being served in the dinner line

Several of our members have struggled with illness as we enter the winter season and our thoughts and wishes for a speedy return to good health goes out to **Mike Buster, Allan Morton, Myra Hensley**, and all our other treasured members

who may have suffered some medical issues with their health. We hope to see you back with us soon.



Mike Buster, Ted & Mary Bleck-Doran, Loise Woods

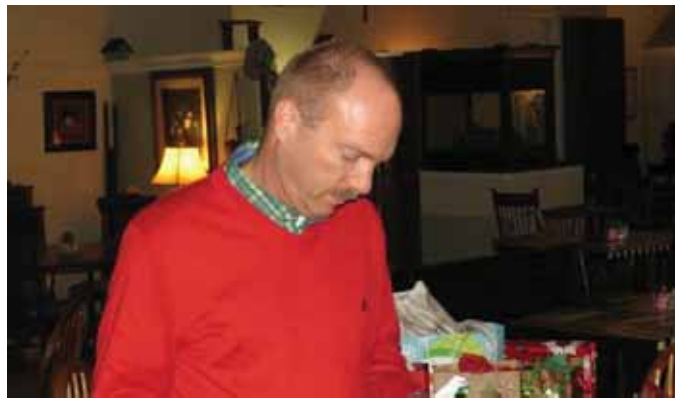
As you are reading this I should be near the end of a birding trip in extreme northeastern India. I have never had the opportunity to bird in Asia and hope to survive this trip where I am seeking to see several hundred bird species that will be new to me (remember, I am a biologist who is an ornithologist and birding has been a hobby of mine for more than 50 years) as well as seeing a new part of the world, its people and culture and perhaps, even a tiger in the wild. If all goes well I will see you at the January business meeting.



Ed Locket unveils a gift

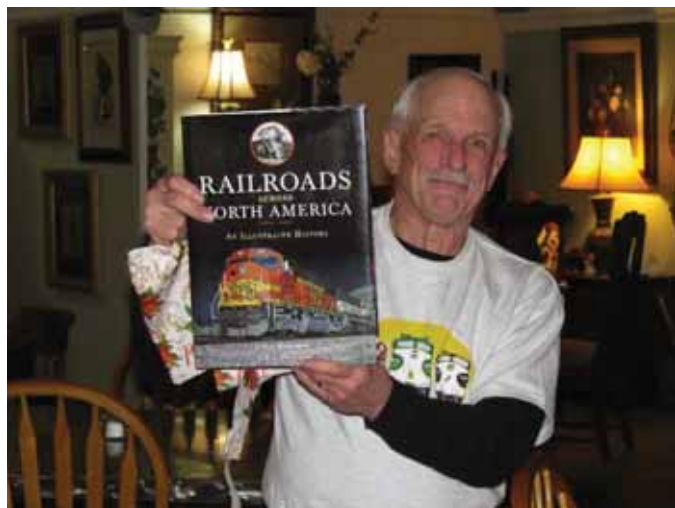
Our thanks go to **Geoff Stunkard**, our Heritage Day Coordinator, for planning another spectacular series of monthly events in 2014 for us to participate in. They not only serve to give us a focus on a particular railroad line, types of railroads, or railroads of a particular region, but they provide an outstanding avenue for media press releases and create interest in the Railroad Museum, the MEMRR and the Carter

Chapter NRHS. These events, and the other special attractions we advertise are helping to bring thousands of visitors to the university campus and to our museum home annually. A case in point is the December 20th Heritage Day in which we celebrated "Dixie Extravaganza" that was covered by the *Elizabethton Star* and by TV station WJHL both sending reporters to the museum for interviews. This is priceless publicity that has helped to make the Carter Railroad Museum one of the "5 Coolest Places to Visit in the Tri-Cities Region".



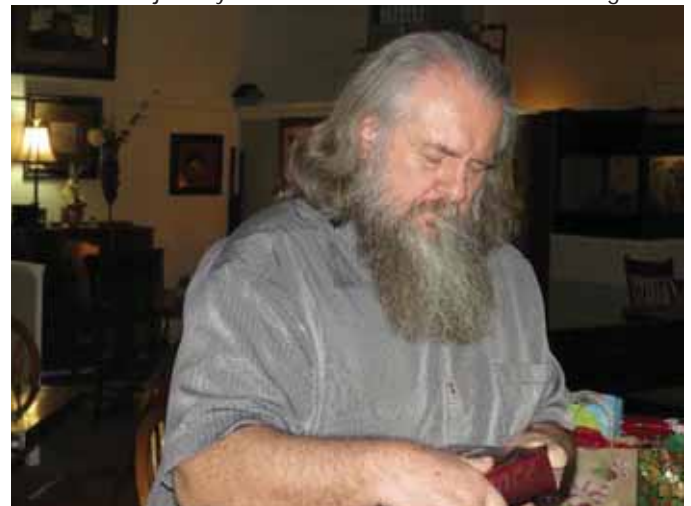
Hobie Hyder unwraps another present

Your modeling talents and experience coupled with your enthusiasm for your hobby that you share willingly with our museum visitors creates a venue that many of our visitors enjoy, tell their friends about and motivates them to return to the museum again and again often bringing their friends and family members with them. When we do promote a Heritage Day theme it is important that we all do our best to be sure that we are operating trains and providing displays that truly represent to the visiting public the railroads we advertised and that they are expecting to see. So, please on Heritage Days make it a priority to run the equipment we have told the media and their audience we will be running.



Paul Haynes shows off his present

Our January meeting is an important one for the club and the Carter RR Museum as it is the meeting in which we will be attempting to establish our event calendar for the year. Come prepared to provide your suggestions for the things you feel will be important for the MEMRR and for the Railroad Museum and our sister chapter, the Carter Chapter NRHS. **Geoff Stunkard** has drafted suggestions for the 12 Heritage Events for 2015 for our review and comments. We will plan social events based on what we have done in the past, i.e. Spring Fling, Summer Picnic, Christmas Party, but all of these are open for comment, suggestion and possible changes. We can add to them or decide not to engage them all as the club and the Carter Chapter wishes. If we want to create some special workshops for the public, or for members only, those opportunities will be on the table. We have discussed the possibility of sponsoring a regional train show in 2015 and some work has been done by **Bill Hensley** to gather information about the mechanics and possible costs of doing so as a fund-raiser for the club and the museum. So, be sure to put the January 20th meeting on your calendar and some prepared to help your officers and fellow club members create an exciting calendar for 2015. The Carter RR Museum will be hosting the ET&WNC RR Historical Society for their 27th Annual Convention in Johnson City again in 2015 and well will be much further along with our Tweetsie Project by the time of their late June meeting.



John Edwards reveals his gift

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this the long awaited 6th Edition of the *HOn3 Annual* will be on the shelves of booksellers and hobby shops across the nation. This is the edition that will carry 10 pages of text and photos of our Tweetsie Project in the Carter RR Museum. I was told on December 20th by **Geoff Stunkard**, the author and photographer, of the modeling article that representatives at White River Productions have told him the magazine is at the printers. I provided information in my December column that will allow you to call or go on line to purchase your personal copy(ies) and we have asked **Bob and Mary at**

HobbyTownUSA to stock 20 copies so we may be able to get them locally.



Gary Woods takes center stage in the "Dirty Santa" portion of the evening's agenda

Michelle Kelly, our FWS student worker, who has brought such energy and innovation to the Little Engineers Room, working first with her big sister, **Amanda**, and then with our new Station Master, **Taylor Jesse**, graduated with honors with her degree from ETSU on December 13th. We asked her to drop by the museum with her family on that Saturday following the graduation ceremonies and she did so along with Amanda, their parents and other family members. We used the opportunity to give Michelle and Amanda each a plaque commemorating their outstanding service to the Carter Railroad Museum and for the children whom they engaged with on countless Saturdays and for giving us the opportunity to know them, respect their work and to be their friends. They both went well beyond their job descriptions bringing joy and learning opportunities to their small charges in the playroom, but expanded the offerings of the museum to children and their parents/guardians by the special events they created and the Facebook technology they used to make coming to the Little Engineers Room a treasured and anticipated weekly experience for many of the areas children. Thank you, Michelle, for a job well done and the best to you in your new job in Kingsport. Come back and see us and the Little Engineers whenever you can. You too, Amanda! Michelle is working to help find her replacement so that Taylor will have plenty of help in this most popular room.

Our newsletter editor, **Ted Bleck-Doran** presented an excellent workshop on constructing Jordan Miniatures line of 1920s era Ford cars and trucks on Thursday evening, December 11th, for our members. In addition to tips on how to best assemble the kits with their array of tiny detail parts, Ted provided a lot of modeling advice on painting, weathering and detailing the little tin lizzies. Ted does a marvelous job with his painting and weathering skills on the

smallest of modeling items with a steady hand and a good eye for what looks "right" and what does not. His previous workshops on modeling "little people" showed us early on what an outstanding modeler he is. Check out some of the photos of his finished little antique Fords in the pages of the November 2014 edition of *The Signal Bridge*. Ted and Mary are about to enter a new phase of life in 2015 as he has announced his retirement from the Veterans Administration. This will give them more time to do some of the things they want to do including some travel, and it is my hope that we will get to see more of him at the RR Museum.



Lanny reveals an HO tractor trailer

In addition to any "Honey Do" list that Mary may have in store for him I am soliciting his help on the Tweetsie Project to paint and detail the interior pieces that will soon be ordered to decorate the interiors of three of the business buildings in the Shell Creek section of the layout. It is our fondest wish that he and Mary will continue to reside in Jonesborough and be long-time members of the MEMRR for many years to come. Congratulations on retiring from you long career with the VA and we do hope that you enjoy the coming years.



Just a portion of those in attendance

We had a very good 2014 and the future looks very bright for the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders Club and, with your continued help, for the George L. Carter Railroad Museum as well. The new year of 2015 has the potential for being even better with the new challenges it will bring; but new challenges are also new opportunities. Listen to the sound of 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*



THE TUPELO HONEY PROJECT
SPECIAL N-GAUGE LAYOUT FOR 2014



The Clinchfield Depot in miniature – now home for the Tupelo Honey in Johnson City



The ET&WNC Depot in the distance – the prototype is being renovated into a micro-brewery



The Mill in Johnson City



While not prototypical to Johnson City – the city scene is typical for East Tennessee communities – Johnson City even had a trolley.



The dormitories and classrooms at ETSU are represented in this scene



Eye level looking toward the downtown business district of Johnson City



Another view of the Mill in Johnson City as modelled on the Tupelo Honey layout



A rooftop view of the downtown business district



Inside the bar area of the Tupelo Honey in Johnson City – the N-Gauge layout is in the foreground

UNDER THE CANTANARY THE ELECTRONICS SHOP FRANK FEZZIE

The DT402 throttles have a number of options settings that allow you to customize how the throttle operates. In this column, I will discuss these options along with my recommendations for settings. And I will also cover the procedure on how to set them.

In general I recommend that you use the Factory Default setting for most of the option settings and the DT402D throttle can operate with all settings at the Factory Default values. However, there are a few option settings that I suggest you change. The DT402R throttle requires two settings to be changed from the Factory Default settings in order to function properly.

The basic process to review and adjust these settings is as follows:

1. Power up the throttle with a battery.
2. Press the OPTN button. The display will show "Options" blinking
3. Turn the right knob one click clockwise. The screen will show the first option setting, "IR mode", and its current setting, usually "on".
4. Each click on the knob shows the name of the next option and it's current setting.
5. The last option is "FactoryD" and it says "off". Changing this to "on" with the "y +" button and pressing ENTER key resets all options to the factory default settings.
6. To change any option follow steps 1 through 4 until you reach the option. Change the option with the "y +" and "n -" keys. Repeat step 4 to check any additional options. Press the ENTER key to save all changes.
7. Pressing EXIT leaves the Option mode without saving any changes.
8. The throttles retains all option settings until they are changed by this process.

Options that you might want to adjust are;

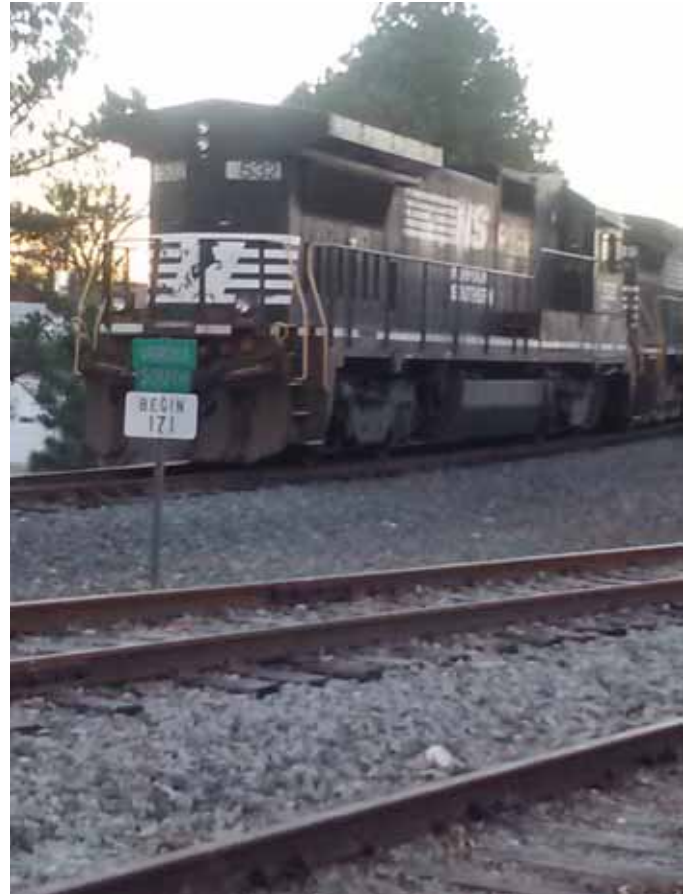
F2Analog – If your sound locomotive supports this mode, change this option to "yes". Pressing softer or harder on your F2 key will change the sound coming from the horn on your locomotive.

Backlight – Setting are MIN, 1, 2, Max. This controls the brightness of the backlight on the screen. Brighter uses more battery power. In battery mode the throttle reduces this setting one step. I use 1 on my throttles so that when plugged in the throttle uses 1 and on battery power it uses MIN.

PWRSaver - I recommend that you leave PWRSaver mode on. If your throttle is inactive for about 3 minutes it will

switch the power saver mode and show "r-ps" on the screen. To wake up the throttle press and hold the EXIT button for a few seconds. The throttle will wake up and resume normal operations. Do not twirl knobs or press function buttons to wake the throttle up. I have experienced unusual operations when this is done.

Some clubs recommend turning the Power Saver mode off. I disagree. I have had no problems with power saver mode since I started using the EXIT button to wake the throttle up as outlined above.



Norfolk Southern 532 (a GE Dash 8-32B) idles at Varnia Station
NC

Note – the throttle must remain with radio range of the layout at all times to retain control of locomotives. If the throttle cannot communicate with the Loconet due to being out of range then locomotives controlled by the throttle may be purged by the command station. If this happens the throttle will lose control of the locomotive and you must dispatch and re-acquire the locomotive to regain control.

SLFollow – I turn Slot Following to ON as I want to know if someone else tries to control my engine.

DxRxLPwr – I turn this OFF so that Slot Following will work in radio mode. It does use more battery power.

NoIDLSho – I turn this OFF so I see the message TRACK = IDLE in addition to the flashing dot if the layout is put into IDLE mode.



Norfolk Southern 9589 (a GE Dash 9-44CW) waits with stablemate 532 at Varnia Station, NC

The DT402R throttle requires that two options be changed from the factory default settings.

“RF1 mode” must be set to “on”. This turns on the simplex radio installed in the unit and tells the throttle to operate in simplex radio mode.

“DuplexRF” must be set to “off”. This turns off the duplex radio and related modes.



An interesting corner building in Varnia Station, NC

Here is the complete listing of option settings on a DT402 throttle. My notes are in ().

- IR mode = On
- RF1 mode = Off (You must turn this ON for DT402R throttle)
- Clicks = On
- Fclock=Off (I do not use it currently)
- 12HrClock=On

- NoBlstic=Off
- STimeout=On
- F3Static=On
- F2 Mom=On
- F2Analog=Off (Turn this ON if your sound locomotive has “playable” horn or whistle)
- Msgfiltr=On
- SLFollow=On (I want to know if someone tries to grab my train)
- ES->Idle=Off (I do not want EMRG STOP button to put entire layout into IDLE state.)



“The Brick” in Varnia Station, NC – a reuse for an old railroad hotel

- PWRSaver=On (I like power saver but you have to use it properly. See notes above)
 - IRRelease=Off
 - DplxBad=On
 - DxRXLpwr=Off (This must be OFF if you want slot following to work in radio mode. I think it also must be on for fast clock to work in radio mode. Leave it ON for DT402R throttle)
 - NewTypes=On
 - Nu Type=128
 - ReCall#=RC04
 - Backlite = MIN or 1 (2 or Max uses more battery power)
 - RF1 Freq=A
 - Throt ID=XXXX (I leave this as set at factory.)
 - XPFnHold=On
 - XP Slots=On
 - Duplex RF=On (You must turn this OFF for DT402R throttle.)
 - noIDLSho=Off (I want to see message TRACK=IDLE in addition to little flashing dot if layout does go to IDLE condition.)
- The DT402 manual contains additional information and explanation of these throttle options. If you follow the recommendations above for option settings I believe you will be very happy with the way your throttle works.

