



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
MAY 2015 - MEMBERS EDITION

Volume 22 - Number 5

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:

Debbi Edwards

Debbi.edwards@memrr.org

Newsletter Editor:

Ted Bleck-Doran

Ted_mary@memrr.org

Webmasters:

John Edwards

webmaster@memrr.org

Bob Jones



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

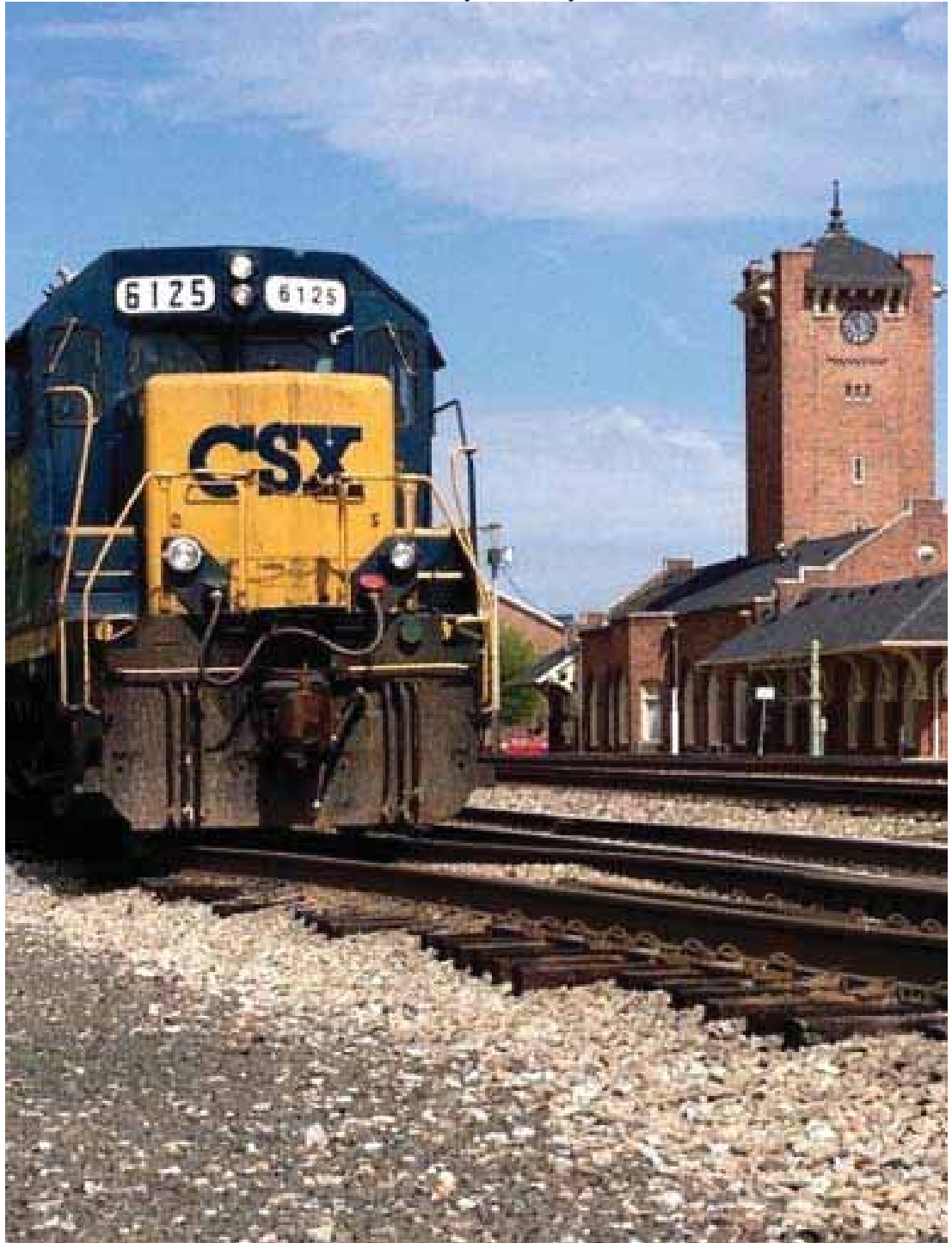
ETSU Campus,
Johnson City, TN.

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

Work Nights are held each Thursday from 4:00 pm until ??

CSX #6125 – GP40-2 KINGSPORT TENNESSEE

Photos courtesy of Paul Haynees



SPRING FORWARD AS THE SOUTHERN RAILWAY IS HONORED ON APRIL 25 AT ETSU'S

'SONG OF THE SOUTH – SERVING UP THE SOUTHERN RAILROAD'

REMEMBERING JOHNSON CITY'S RICH RAILROAD HISTORY DURING ETSU'S MUSEUM APRIL HERITAGE DAY



NS "Southern" Heritage unit #8099

The sights and sounds of the old Southern Railroad will come to life in miniature on April 25 at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum, located in the Campus Center Building of East Tennessee State University. Once again entitled 'Song of the South: Southern Railway Heritage,' this last Saturday of April will showcase equipment, artifacts and models from the SR / SOU era, which figured prominently in the original development of Johnson City. From colorful steam engines and sleek streamliners to the all-business look before joining with others to form today's Norfolk Southern empire, this event will be a classic remembrance of bigtime railroading across the Southeast. The George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and members of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club are working to bring about a memorable day at the museum.

The Southern as a corporate entity was founded in 1894 through the efforts of banker J.P. Morgan, created from a conglomeration of predecessors that spanned the width of the south from Alexandria, Va., down to Atlanta, Ga., including Birmingham, Ala., Cincinnati, Ohio, and southern Illinois. The line went from a big start of 4,400 miles to becoming an 8,000+ mile, 13-state enterprise by 1920. Bristol, Johnson City, and Jonesborough all played a role in the original 1894 founding, which included the Knoxville-

based East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad (ETV&G), an earlier line from Bristol to Knoxville that still runs through Johnson City, plus lines through Natural Tunnel in southwest Virginia and connections to Asheville, N.C.

"We have had a Heritage Day event for the Southern since our monthly programs began here at the Carter Museum," states Geoff Stunkard, the coordinator of the museum Heritage Days program. "We know the public sees the Southern as a very special railroad locally, and it meant a lot to the founding of Johnson City and northeast Tennessee. We enjoy doing this event; a lot of members bring out special equipment for it."

Model trains from many of the Southern's operations, including the steam excursion program of the 1970s, will be operating on the MEMRR club's large 24x44 1:87 HO scale layout, one of four model lines that are housed in the museum. Southern Railway artifacts and will also be on hand.

The Carter Railroad Museum is open on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and includes model railroad layouts, a special 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.

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

<http://etsu>

or

<http://johnsonsdepot.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.

2015 Dates to Remember: George L Carter Railroad Museum

- April 25: Song of the South: Southern Railway Heritage
- May 30: Modern Railroads: Moving Mass in the 21st Century
- June 26-28: ET&WNC RR Historical Society National Convention
- June 27: For Power and Glory: Passenger Trains of Yesterday and Today

SPECIAL:

Second section of Walker china collection debuts

- July 25: Go West, Young Man – Big Country Railroading west of the Mississippi

- August 29: Little Engines that Could: Industrial and Shortline Rail Operations
- September 26: ChiTown – Midwestern Lines and the Windy City
- October 31: George L Carter’s Fabulous Clinchfield Lines;

SPECIAL:

HarvestFest for Little Engineers

- November 14: Homecoming at Carter’s Place – 8th Anniversary
- November 28: Precision Transportation: N&W and NS Glory
- December 19: Home For Christmas: Railroading in the Cold Weather States

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APRIL HERITAGE DAY SIGHTS

“SONG OF THE SOUTH: SOUTHERN RAILWAY HERITAGE”

Photos Courtesy of Paul Haynes





CLASS J 611 HOMECOMING TO KICK OFF NORFOLK SOUTHERN 21ST CENTURY STEAM EXCURSIONS

J 611 HOMECOMING TO KICK OFF NORFOLK SOUTHERN 21ST CENTURY STEAM EXCURSIONS

Roanoke, Va. - Apr 16, 2015

The 611 is going home again, coming back from its second restoration to headline Norfolk Southern's 21st Century Steam excursions in 2015.

Sixty-five years after the Class J 611 was built at Norfolk & Western Railway's shops in Roanoke and placed into service for the first time May 29, 1950, the locomotive is scheduled to return under steam May 30, fulfilling the dreams of its Virginia Museum of Transportation owners and rail enthusiasts worldwide.



Chairman and CEO Wick Moorman, who launched plans for 21st Century Steam in 2010, and President Jim Squires will be aboard a J-powered train from Spencer, N.C., where the 611 has been undergoing restoration at the North Carolina Transportation Museum since June 2014.

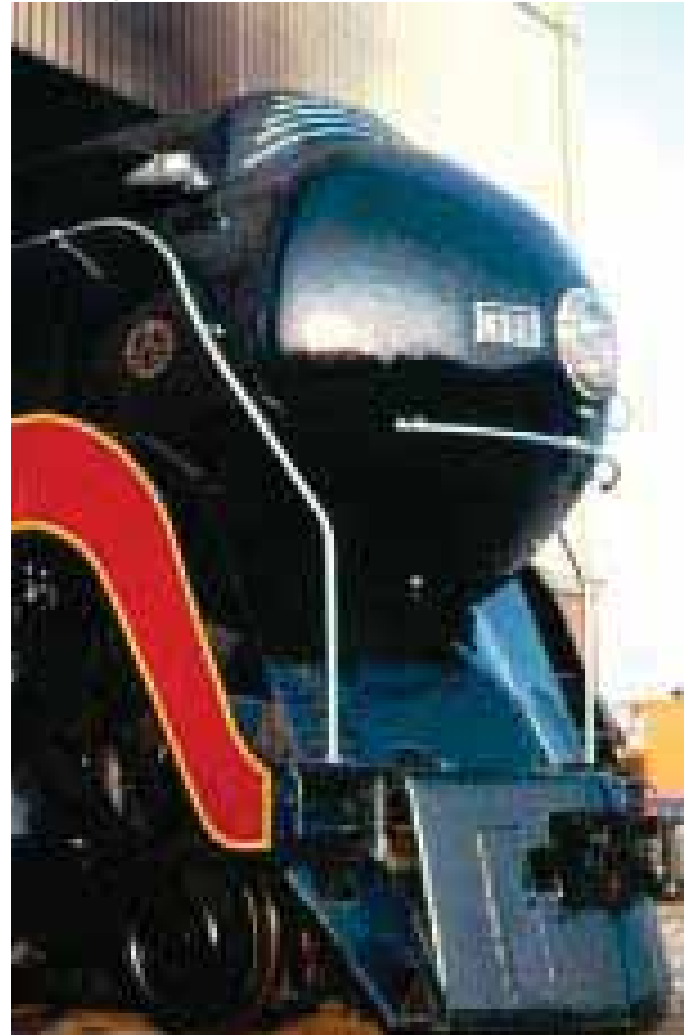
Neither progress of rail industry dieselization nor ravages of time spent lying dormant on display for decades could defeat the 611, which survived the scrap heap of other steam locomotives and two retirements to take its place among a trio of iconic engines that will power 21st Century Steam this year. The others are Southern Railway 4501 and Nickel Plate Road 765.

| Date/ Other Information | Origin – Turn Point/Destination | Locomotive | Operator |
|---|---|------------|-----------------------|
| Weekend of June 6 | Manassas – Riverton Junction, Va. | N&W J 611 | VMT |
| Weekend of June 13 | Lynchburg – Petersburg, Va. | N&W J 611 | VMT |
| June 27 | Bristol, Va. – Bulls Gap, Tenn. | SOU 4501 | TVRM |
| June 28 | Bristol – Radford, Va. | SOU 4501 | TVRM |
| Weekend of July 4 | Roanoke – Lynchburg and Walton, Va. | N&W J 611 | VMT |
| Weekend of July 18 | Fort Wayne – Lafayette, Ind. | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of July 25 | Youngstown – Ashtabula, Ohio | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of Aug. 1 | Buffalo – Corning, N.Y. | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of Aug. 8 | Allentown – Pittston, Pa. | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of Aug. 15 | Scranton, Pa. – Binghamton, N.Y. | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of Sept. 12 | Jersey – Cleveland, Tenn. | SOU 4501 | TVRM |
| Weekend of Sept. 12 Trips celebrate 100th anniversary of the Nicholson Bridge | Scranton – Nicholson, Pa. | NKP 765 | FWRHS |
| Weekend of Sept. 26 | Macon – Tennesse, Ga. | SOU 4501 | TVRM |
| Weekend of Oct. 3 | Atlanta – Toccoa, Ga. | SOU 4501 | TVRM |

VMT is a new sponsor with Norfolk Southern, joining the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum and the Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society to operate excursion trips between June 6 and Oct. 11. Tickets and schedule details will be available on the websites of trip sponsors. Here is the schedule. All excursions are round trips.

Southern Railway's 4501 was the pioneer locomotive in Norfolk Southern's initial steam excursion program that operated from 1964 to 1994. The 4501 returned to excursion service in 2014 after being rebuilt at TVRM's Chattanooga shops. Nickel Plate Road 765 was built in 1944 by Lima Locomotive Works at Lima, Ohio, and has been used in excursion service since 1979.

But it is the powerful sleek N&W Class J 611 with its bullet nose and tall-as-a-man driving wheels on a 4-8-4 configuration that many associate with the halcyon days of steam railroading. Its initial restoration in 1982 after two decades of retirement was occasion for a movie, "[Going Home](#)," produced by Norfolk Southern. "The J being alive of course is the greatest joy that we true rail fans have had in many many years," an appreciative fan says in the movie. The resurrection kept the J chugging in excursion service until 1994, when Norfolk Southern concluded its steam program, and 611 was retired a second time and put on display again at VMT.



NS Class J #611 – 4-8-4 at the Southern Railway System Norris Yard Steam Shop – August 1, 1982
Photo by Bernie Feltman

Norfolk Southern's 2010 announcement of plans to operate 21st Century Steam prompted hope that the 611 might ride the rails yet again. In 2013, VMT launched a study and then a capital campaign, "Fire Up 611!" to fund restoration of the locomotive. Norfolk Southern donated \$1.5 million from proceeds of sale of a Mark Rothko abstract expressionist painting. The 611 was towed to the North Carolina

Transportation Museum in May 2014 for display among a group of historic locomotives, and the restoration began there in June.

About Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society

The [Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society](#) was formed in 1972 with the goal of saving Nickel Plate Road steam locomotive 765 from rusting away in a city park. The organization was successful in restoring the locomotive to operation on Sept. 1, 1979. Since then, NKP 765 has operated on over a dozen different railroads from New York City to Rock Island, Illinois, hauling more than 300,000 passengers on excursion trains covering over 52,000 miles of operation. FWRHS is currently developing Headwaters Junction, a railroad tourist attraction in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

About Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum

[Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum](#) was founded in 1961 in Chattanooga to create an interpretive operating museum of historic equipment and artifacts in an authentic setting. Today it operates an extensive schedule of historic and scenic trains in Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia, supported by its East Chattanooga shop facility. TVRM is the largest operating historical excursion railroad in the Southeast.

About Virginia Museum of Transportation

The [Virginia Museum of Transportation](#), Virginia's official transportation museum, is home to two of the most powerful steam locomotives in existence today: The N&W Class A 1218 and the N&W Class J 611. The Museum attracts visitors of all ages from across the U.S. and around the world.

Through exhibits, artifacts, and an outstanding collection of rail equipment, cars, trucks, airplanes, and more, the Museum tells the story of Virginia's rich transportation history.

About Norfolk Southern

The nation's premier transportation companies. Its Norfolk Southern Railway Company subsidiary operates approximately 20,000 [route miles](#) in 22 states and the District of Columbia, serves every major container port in the eastern United States, and provides efficient connections to other rail carriers. Norfolk Southern operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East and is a major transporter of coal, automotive, and industrial products.

Norfolk Southern Media Inquiries:

[Rick Harris](#), 404-529-2310 (rick.harris@nscorp.com)

Norfolk Southern Investor Inquiries:

[Katie Cook](#), 757-629-2861 (InvestorRelations@nscorp.com)
<http://www.norfolksouthern.com>

Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society

[Kelly Lynch](#), 260-466-2766 (lynch@fwrhs.org)

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum

[Steve Freer](#), 423-331-4501 (sfreer@tvrail.com)

Virginia Museum of Transportation

[Peg McGuire](#), 540-339-2753 (pmcguire@vmt.org)

**TURNTABLE STATUS UPDATE
NOTE FROM THE ELECTRONICS
COORDINATOR**

I have connected the control box of the roundhouse turntable on the MEMRR layout to the DCC system. It works, but it has some quirks.

To move the turntable to a specific position, use a throttle to send a switch command, either CLOSED or THROWN, to the switch # that is the same as the TR # (or track #) of the position that you wish to move the turntable to.

Example. If you want to move the turntable to Stall 7 of the roundhouse, checking the list shows that TR 17 aligns the cabin end of the turntable with Stall 7. Put a throttle into Switch mode, enter 17 for the switch #, and hit the CLOSED or THROWN button. The turntable command box will start blinking TR 17, and the turntable will move to that position which corresponds with Stall 7.

Now for the quirks.

- Sometimes the turntable will only respond to the CLOSED command and other times it will only respond to the THROWN command. If one doesn't work, try the other.
- The turntable command box is powered by the DCC system using the same bus that feeds the Switch-8's. Track Power must be ON for the turntable to work. The rails on the turntable bridge are powered from the same power district that powers the entire steam servicing area. A short-circuit will kill power to the rails, but will not affect the power to the turntable command box.
- The turntable command box is still fully usable to manually select with track to position the turntable at.
- The turntable command box must be in TR mode for the box to accept DCC commands to set its position.

I will be doing more testing of the turntable system to see what can be done to improve its operation.

Frank Fezzie

NEW HERITAGE UNIT IN NS FLEET
SD40 #3170 DONS SOUTHERN RY
COLORS

A new addition to Norfolk Southern's "heritage fleet". Southern Railway SD40 #3170 was built in April of 1971 and served for Southern and Norfolk Southern until being retired in 2008. It was recently saved from the back lot and rebuilt into operating condition at NS's Juniata Shop in Altoona, Pennsylvania, and repainted into its original Southern colors at NS's paint shop at Debutts Yard in Chattanooga, Tennessee. 3170 will go back into revenue service, primarily assigned to yard and local service along the Piedmont Division.



Photo courtesy of Norfolk Southern

IOWA INTERSTATE ADDS A
HERITAGE UNIT TO ITS FLEET
ES44AC No. 513 GETS A ROCK ISLAND
MAKEOVER



Photo right: 513 heads up a freight in January 2015.
Photo top: 5113 fresh from the paint shop.

UP AT SHELL CREEK
PROGRESS IN BUILDING A VILLAGE
MODELWORK BY FRED ALSOP

Fred has been working on the final "main" structure for the village of Shell Creek, a two-story Victorian house with lots of filigree and details. He has used photos to assist with backdating the structure to its late 19th Century appearance. Tichey details have been used the building.





IN MEMORIUM
ALLEN MORTON
 APRIL 23, 2015



It was sad news to hear of Allan Morton's passing on April 23rd. His wife, Margaret, informed the MEMRR club membership of his admission to the medical center on Tuesday night, April 21st, prior to the business meeting. Allan passed on Friday after a brief hospital stay.

Arrangements are being handled by Tetrick Funeral Home in Johnson City. There will be no visiting hours, funeral or memorial services per Allan's stated preferences. An obituary will appear in the Sunday edition of the JOHNSON CITY PRESS. Cards and other expressions of condolence and support may be sent directly to Margaret (her address is available on the members page on the MEMRR webpage). There will be a memorial account designated at a later date - information will be posted when received.

MEMRR has lost a dear friend and great member. Allan will always be remembered as a people's person - his sense of humor positive attitude, and welcoming bearing were his signature trademarks. The members of MEMRR were recipients of his affections, as well as the club being a source of joy and a point of commitment of his time and energy.

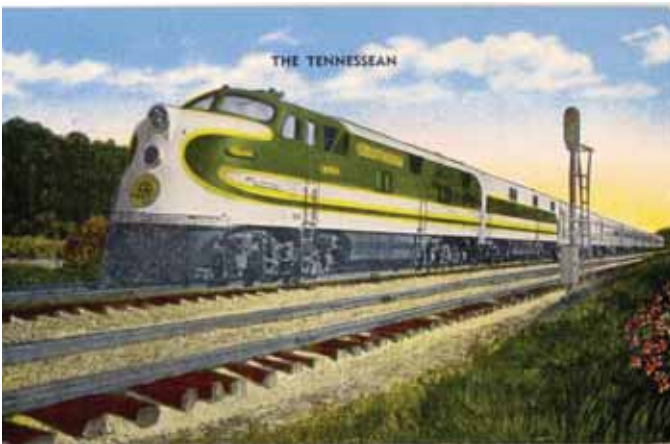
SOUTHERN RAILWAY HERITAGE
POSTCARDS AND MEMOREBELIA
From the collection of Geoff Stunkard



Railroad postcard view of Southern RY 2-6-6-4



Railroad postcard view of Southern RY 4-6-4



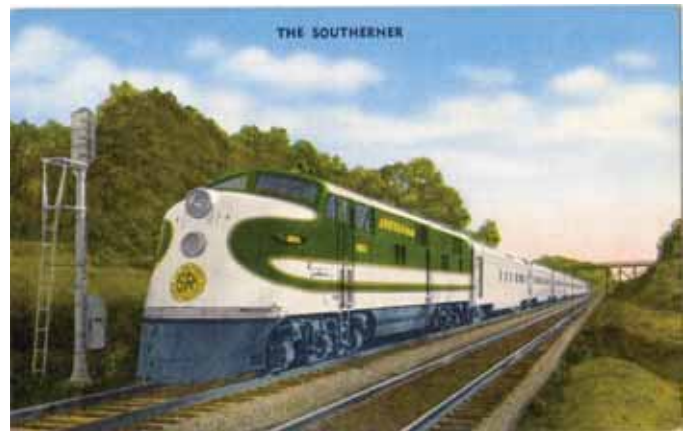
Postcard promoting the TENNESSEAN



Postcard promoting the SOUTHERNER



A second postcard promoting the TENNESSEAN



Another Postcard promoting the SOUTHERNER



Postcard promoting the NEW ROYAL PALM



The new SRY bridge at Asheville NC



Construction of the new SRY bridge over the French Broad at Asheville NC



Wreck of the old 97 in 1903 - Danville VA



PROTOTYPE IN ACTION
KINGSPORT SWITCHING
Photos and comentary by Paul Haynes



I shot these photos while a pair of GP40-2'S, #6125 and #3576, in the midst of switching cars in and out of the lead to Domtar of the CSX (ex-Clinchfield) main in Kingsport. Sitting at the throttle was M A (Mike) Hopson with C N (Chris) Ramsey, conductor and A J (Andy) White acting as the apprentice engineer.



A HIDDEN TREASURE TROVE OF PROTOTYPE HISTORY

TENNESSEE COMPTROLLER'S WEBSITE

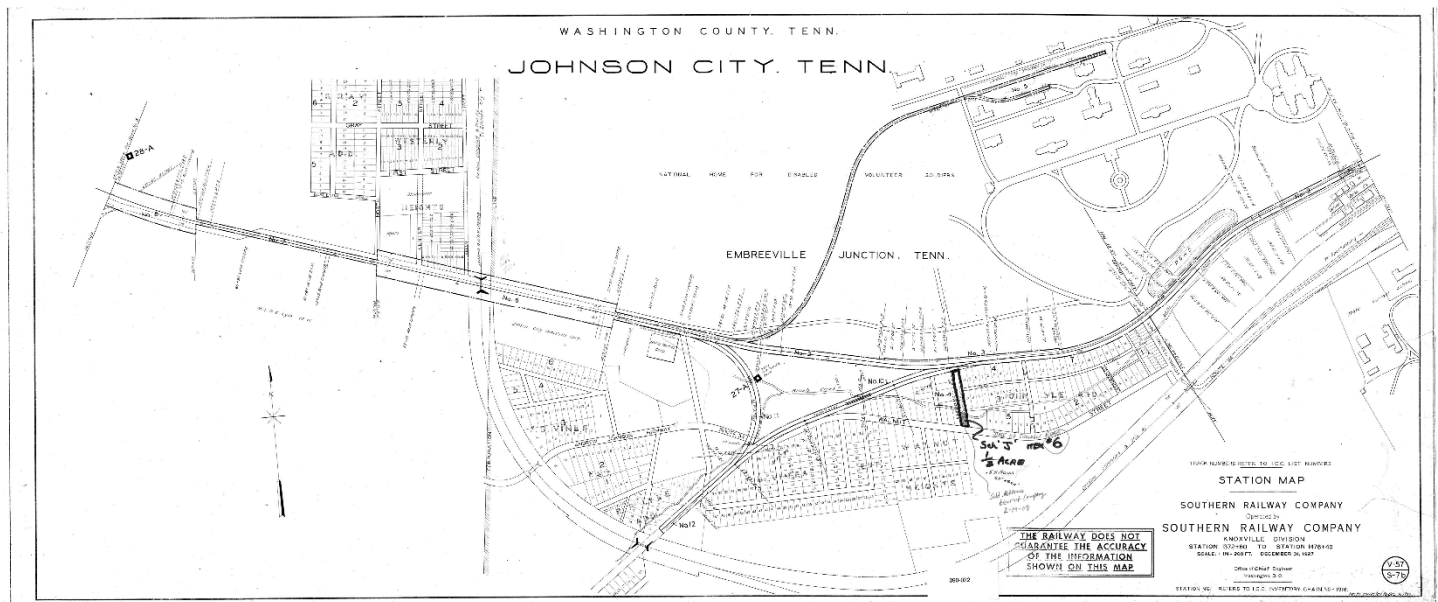
RAILROAD TAX ASSESSMENT MAPS

While doing some online research on my favorite fallen flag – the Nashville Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway – I stumbled across an excellent source of prototype information: the Tennessee State Comptroller of the Treasury – Office of State Assessed Properties website. The site has maps of railroad properties in the state of Tennessee arranged by county, railroad, active/abandoned. The maps date from the 1930's, show depots, section houses, rail facilities e.g., water columns/tanks. Roundhouses, and track layout.

I was able to find all the maps of the Tracy City Branch that ran from Cowen TN to Palmer TN traversing Franklin, Marion, and Grundy Counties. The 31 maps are in .PDF format and can be printed out a single page, or enlarged and printed on multiple sheets to 50% or 100% (50% yields a 17" x 33" sheet that is readable (6 sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper) while at 100% the map image is 33" x 66" (24 sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper).

Of local note are the Washington County maps. I have been interested for some time in following the right of way for the Embreeville shortline which ran between Johnson City and Embreeville. Of particular interest has been finding the junction where the shortline diverged from the Southern RY mainline on the south side of Johnson City.

I was questioned by a fellow railfan several years back as to the location of the junction. My first thought was that it was near the Burlington Mills on Walnut heading towards Jonesborough. The map I found in the Washington County section dispelled that idea.



The above map is from the Washington County section and depicts the Embreeville Junction on the southwest side of Johnson City. The Junction has long since disappeared under the State of Franklin Hwy. It appears to have been located to the west of the south gate of the Veterans Affairs Medical Center and across from the Kroger Plaza. The Clinchfield's original line to the Depot at Buffalo Street is also depicted. Of additional interest is the spur entering the Veterans Affairs property. All the tracks except the NS mainline have been abandoned.

As mentioned earlier the website has maps for both active and abandoned rail lines by county. These maps are an excellent tool for historical research as well as realistic track planning and design.

The website can be found at: <https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/sap/RRmaps.asp>

THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB

THE PRESIDENT'S MONTHLY COLUMN

This has not been a good month for the long-time membership of the MEMRR as we have lost two members in a very short period of time. We were saddened to learn of the death of our friend and former member, **Jack Cope**, who had long supported our club and the Carter Railroad Museum with his presence when he was more active and with the gift of the traveling layout that bears his name. He bequeathed that any memorials to him be made not in flowers, but in donations to the Carter Railroad Museum and we have received many from his friends. We were stunned to learn of the passing of our friend and member, **Allan Morton**, who was always such a free spirit when we were in his company. He was quick with a smile, one of the first to greet visitors to the museum and to engage them in conversations about model railroading. He served us so well as our first "Communications Officer" sending letters of greeting to new members and a questionnaire that he used most effectively to learn of their modeling interests and to get them actively engaged where he could in the activities of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and the railroad museum. We will miss Allan and his infectious enthusiasm for our hobby and for us as members of the club he brought so much joy to. If we can be of any help to Jeanne Cope and to Margaret Morton they have only to let us know how and we shall be ready to assist them in any way possible. **John Edwards** also has been in our thoughts and prayers as his mother passed away recently as well. John made the trip to New York and was with her as she slipped from this world.

It seems that the warmer weather of spring's promise is finally here and we must turn our attention to some of the events that we engage in for the public every June and July for many years now. The Blue Plum Festival and Jonesborough Days will be upon us before we know it and **Dean Small** has been devoting a lot of his time, effort, talent, and some money (both his and the MEMRR's) to get the Cope Traveling Layout ready for display. This should not fall to Dean to do a one-man job and he can really use some help not only with the new displays he is planning for the layout to give it a new and fresher look, but with the existing scenery, track, locomotives and rolling stock to be sure everything is ready for the layout's 2015 public showings. The layout belongs to the MEMRR, but it also represents the Carter Railroad Museum and the Carter Chapter NRHS when it is on display and serves as a vehicle to attract potential

members and visitors to join us at the museum. We need some members to step up and put in some hours with Dean to get this layout ready so that it represents us all in the best possible way.

Taylor Jesse, our Little Engineers Room Stationmaster, planned a Thomas' 70th Birthday celebration for her little engineers at the museum on May 2nd. The event included popcorn and drinks, coloring and crafts, games and a lot more. We got media coverage that included WJHL television and the kids and their parents turned out in droves. Taylor exhausted her 16th bag of microwave popcorn before 11:30 a.m. and had to go out for more. At least 165 little engineers and their parents/grandparents/guardians were counted in the Little Engineers Room that day, a new all-time record for attendance, and we had around 200 visitors to our main gallery. Our friend **Stacey Wild** brought her son, **Lowell**, to spend the day helping Taylor and his assistance was certainly needed and appreciated. Lowell is doing the public service required of all seniors at ETSU's University School and will be back for one more day of volunteer service on May 9th. Taylor is without help most of the summer so stop by on Saturdays and see if you can give her a hand. **Gary Gilliam** installed a DCC decoder in our HO Scale Thomas engine and had it running on the MEMRR layout for all Thomas' little fans (and some older ones) to enjoy and follow around the tracks with its two-coach consist.

Geoff Stunkard presented a draft of the new MEMRR brochure he has designed at the April business meeting and it met with the approval of those in attendance who voted monies for its printing. Geoff is currently getting bids from several local printers to get as many copies produced as his granted funds will allow. We should soon have a brochure with lots of color that will be most attractive to the public and that will not only promote the club but will be important for recruiting potential new members. Thank you, Geoff, for using your considerable talents to craft this excellent brochure for us.

By the time you are reading this the 2015 Spring Semester at ETSU will be history. Graduation ceremonies are scheduled for Saturday, May 9th and parking will be much easier for all of us with far fewer students on campus. Some of the university's programs run on a year-round schedule, but only a few thousand students attend summer classes outside of these programs. This is also the time of the year that I conduct some bird identification workshops for state and federal employees and this May will be no exception. I will be in South Carolina for the better part of the weeks of May 9-14 and May 18-21. I will be back both weeks for

Thursday evening work sessions and for our public openings of the museum on Saturdays. **However, I will not be in town for the regularly scheduled May MEMRR business meeting and I have asked Vice-President John Carter to preside over the meeting in my absence.** Have a good meeting and conduct the business of the club as usual.

John Edwards is now spending much of his time at the railroad museum assisting **Frank Fezzie** get all the electrical components on the Tweetsie Layout up and functioning as they are intended to perform. They have been running trains on the Rabetoy section of the yard and adjacent trackage and programming the computers to handle the operations. With the ET&WNC RR Historical Society coming to town again for their 27th Annual Convention the last weekend in June we are working very hard to have more Tweetsie to show them in the museum than was on display at their last visit in June 2014. On that Saturday **Michael Pascall** installed the Valley Forge Bridge, the 4th and final bridge that he had created for the layout, the morning before they arrived at the museum. We have come a long way since. I have completed the 10th and last scratch-built structure that will represent Shell Creek. **Ted Bleck-Doran** is busy painting all the miniature furnishings for the 3 stores in the "town" and **Ken Harmon** and **Dean Small** have been busy making hundreds of trees to forest the slopes. We still have a long way to go, perhaps a couple of years, but the layout is slowly taking shape. If you have not purchased your copy of the *HOn3 Annual, 6th Edition* that features 10 color pages of this layout we still have copies that **Jim Pahr** or **Gary Emmert** can make available to you. Not many clubs get their railroads in national magazines, and even fewer find their way into print in an annual publication, so don't wait until our supply is exhausted before you get your copy to show your friends and family the level of model railroading your club is doing.

Our up-dated club Bylaws were passed as presented at the April business meeting and were printed in the April edition of *The Signal Bridge*. They should also be found on our website for handy reference. Once again I wish to thank the members of the *ad hoc* Bylaws Committee who did the **major** work to bring about the current revisions. **Ted Bleck-Doran** chaired the committee made up of **Paul Haynes**, **Gary Emmert** and **John Edwards**. They did an outstanding job soliciting suggestions from the membership and incorporating the significant changes in membership categories, officer's duties, and the other items that will be our guidelines for club operation for several years to come.

A reminder that the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS is co-sponsoring a spring rail excursion with the Carter RR Museum on June 13 and the last day for ticket purchase is May 30th. The trip is a good one with fancy motor coaches

from Premier Transportation taking us from ETSU to the Knoxville Locomotive Works to tour their steam locomotive shops, followed by a ride behind steam along the rivers in Knoxville on the 3 Rivers Rambler and then a luncheon boat ride on the paddle wheeler, *The Knoxville Star*, on the Tennessee River before returning home. Contact **Charlene McLeod** chardanmcleod37@comcast.net, or pick up an application form at the Railroad Museum or download one at home from the MEMRR.org website. It's a great trip and you need to be on it with us!

I also wish to thank all of you who so willingly respond to my calls for volunteers for the special events that periodically happen when outside groups want to come to the museum on days other than when we are normally open. We have 90 6th graders coming from the Jonesborough Middle School, the grade that **Lanny Norris'** daughter teaches, to visit us on Wednesday, May 13th. In June our first Station Master, **Amanda Blackburn**, will bring 145 YWCA Summer Camp youngsters to visit us. The East Tennessee Railfan NRHS Chapter from Kingsport is planning a visit soon. As our popularity and our reputation grows in the region we can expect more and more of these requests for visits. It is part of the community outreach that we have fostered as a small arm of ETSU and a service to our fellow citizens. But it takes your time and effort to represent our club and the Railroad Museum and you need to realize how much you are doing for our visitors and how much they and I appreciate what you do. But, after all, the local newspaper, *The Times-News*, featured us as one of the "Five Coolest Places" in the Tri-Cities region to visit in a Sunday edition, so we can expect to continue to be a destination for a lot of folks. What better way to introduce youngsters, and others not so young, to our hobby of model railroading?

We have a lot of things to do with our layouts in the museum and in other places as we slide towards summer. There are train shows, public events, modeling to do, and people to meet and engage in discussions of our hobby. We have an outstanding club with lots of great members and a good place to call "home". We wish for all of our members to come down to our meetings and our train museum and get engaged at any level that is comfortable for them. Come join in the fun! Times are good for the MEMRR and the museum. 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

**27th ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE
ET&WNC RR HISTORICAL SOCIETY
JOHNSON CITY TENNESSEE
JUNE 26TH THROUGH 27TH**



The 27th annual Convention of the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad Historical Society will be held June 26-28, 2015 in Johnson City, Tennessee. Your Board of Directors are once again planning some new and exciting events for this year.

On Friday June 26, we will once again convene at the Carnegie Hotel in Johnson City. The kick off will be at 3 pm with registration. At 5pm the Business meeting will start. Dinner will be held at 7pm and once again there will be a special guest speaker. Please note we have been promised both rooms this year so we will not be as cramped as last year. Also this will allow us to bring memorabilia or other railroad items to share.

Saturday will start at 8am with a guided walk on the Tweetsie Trail. The tour will begin at the Carnegie with a brief lecture

from Chris Ford with aerial maps. Then a caravan will head out going by the Clinchfield and ET Station. Please plan ahead and car-pool as much as possible. The caravan will stop at Alabama Street Trail Head. There will be a brief intro to the Engine house and then a walk over the trail. This is a 2 mile round trip. Please wear comfortable shoes and layer clothing for the weather. Re-member it is easier to remove clothing layers than put on. Complete de-tails about the Tweetsie Trail can be found at their official website.

The George L Carter Museum will be open from 10 am to 3 pm on the cam-pus of ETSU. Don't worry. You will have plenty of time to take the walk and enjoy the museum if you choose. This year at Tweetsie events will hap-pen a little differently. The Management at Tweetsie is going to keep the park open till 9 pm this year, so there-fore we will not have the park to our-selves. The park will open up to the Society Membership at 3pm and the membership will have the opportunity to experience the entire park plus a special viewing of #12 if it is not operating that day. For more on this see the message from Vice President Jerry Turbyfill below. Dinner at the park will be served at 6 pm in a location specially set up for us.

On Sunday we will be visiting the Doe River Gorge for a train ride through the Gorge. Please be at the Gorge no later than 9:45 am to get loaded and head out. Lunch will be on your own and then we will head over to the Avery County Museum, Depot, and Caboose 505. The museum will be open at 1 pm for any-one who would like to drop by.

The cost for the Convention this year will be \$49.00 per person. Once again the Carnegie Hotel will be the hotel of the convention. We have reserved a specific number of rooms especially for us. As this is the weekend before July 4th do not procrastinate in getting your room. Remember the hotel and surrounding hotels will fill up quickly.

Of special note, the Cranberry Church has remodeled the front of the building. If you would like to go by and see this please feel free to stop by. This can be done on your own. Other things to do on your own are Grandfather Mountain, Historic Johnson City, shopping, dining and many other venues. Please go to the Johnson City Visitors website for ideas.

**COORDINATOR'S MEETING
APRIL 14, 2015
235 Campus Center Building, ETSU**

Fred Alsop called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Debbi Edwards, John Edwards, Dean Small, Gary Gilliam, Ted Bleck-Doran, John Carter, Geoff Stunkard.

Fred announced that Robert Myers would present the program for the MEMRR business meeting on April 21st "Modeling with Liquid Plastic and his Personal Index of Model Railroader Magazine"

N-Scale-- Coordinator Gary Gilliam. The layout needs new locomotives. The layout requires some track work. Some of the locomotives and rolling stock require new, longer

couplers. We need to be sure we have someone each Saturday to monitor the N-Scale layout. Fred said he would place an order for several new locomotives.

Cope Traveling Layout—Coordinator Dean Small. He is creating a new panel with a carnival focus. He and his wife will donate the funding for the necessary pieces. Fred will have a memorial plate with a photo of Jack Cope, deceased, to be displayed on the layout. We will contact Mike Buster to have a memorial HO passenger car created in Jack's memory.

Co-Webmaster John Edwards.—MEMRR website is up and running. John has moved his museum service attention to help Frank Fezzie with the electronics on the Tweetsie Layout where he has been programing the track layouts for the computer screens. The computer in the Alsop Gallery has obsolete software and an upgrade is necessary. Fred was asked to obtain internet access for that gallery with the MEMRR HO layout, and possibly for the Tweetsie gallery and the library. Fred promised to check into it and to make the request to the university's computer services unit.

Newsletter Editor—Ted Bleck-Doran. The April edition of *The Signal Bridge* is 26 pages. Ted thanked contributors for their articles and photos and requested that they keep contributing materials for publication. The amended MEMRR Bylaws are published in this issue for study and

comment to be voted on at the April business meeting. Ted chaired the Bylaws committee that included John Edwards, Paul Haynes and Gary Emmert.

HO Layout—Coordinator John Carter. John and his team are planning for the diesel facilities, building placement and track design for this part of the switching yard project. Everything is working in the yard, but all the connecting wiring under the benchwork is bare. Frank Fezzie is fixing all the turnouts and soldering all the connections.

Display Coordinator—Geoff Stunkard. He has completed the draft layout for the new MEMRR brochure to advertise the club. It includes contact information and an application form for membership. He will present it to the MEMRR at their April business meeting.

Fred made the group aware of some up-coming events and visiting groups at the museum with the promise of reminders being circulated to the membership with a call for volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Debbi Edwards,
MEMRR Secretary.*

**NORFOLK SOUTHERN HONORS FIRST RESPONDERS
AN SD69e GET HERITAGE PAINT AS 9-1-1**



Norfolk Southern Engine 9-1-1 painted in Altoona to honor Nation's first responders:

ALTOONA, Pa. – Norfolk Southern has unveiled the newest addition to its honorary locomotive fleet on May 6. NS Altoona-built SD60E No. 911 honors the country's hard-working emergency first responders in the law enforcement, fire, and EMS professions. The locomotive was rolled out at the Altoona shops late on 5/5 for a photograph captured by corporate photographer Casey Thomason that is featured on the preceding page.

Last summer, a petition circulated throughout social media asking Norfolk Southern to design a "hometown heroes" commemorative locomotive recognizing the men and women in public service. Shawn Leightcap, a Pennsylvania volunteer firefighter and avid rail photographer created the petition and designed his own renderings for the honorary scheme in 2014. "On average, approximately 90 to 120 firefighters lose their lives in the line of duty each year," Leightcap tells Trains News Wire. "These men and women are the backbone of our communities. Many of them are employees with Norfolk Southern and volunteers with local fire companies." Leightcap distributed his petition and drawing throughout social media, to which he received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback.

Leightcap's original drawing shows similarities to the final product released from Norfolk Southern this week. The scheme includes the Firefighter Maltese Cross, the Emergency Medial Service "Star of life", and the Police shield through a carefully designed red, white, and gold scheme. "The concept of a first responders locomotive submitted by Shawn Leightcap came to us at a perfect time," an NS spokesperson tells Trains News Wire. "We found a first responders honorary locomotive to be an appropriate fit for use on our Safety Train beginning next month."

Leightcap's original drawing shows similarities to the final product released from Norfolk Southern this week. The scheme includes the Firefighter Maltese Cross, the Emergency Medal Service "Star of life," and the Police shield through a carefully designed red, white, and gold scheme. The locomotive will operate system wide, as well as on the railroad's Safety Train that is scheduled to debut in Washington, D.C., in June.

(Above from Trainsnewswire.com May 6 & NS)

**MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL
RAILROADERS
SECRETARY REPORT
MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 21, 2015
BUSINESS MEETING**

Club President Fred Alsop called the meeting to order at 6:30. In attendance were 15 members, 1 visitor and 1 guest speaker.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

Secretary:

Debbi Edwards reported that the March business meeting minutes were published in the April edition of the Signal Bridge. The minutes were excepted as published. She has purchased 4 cards and will turn in receipts to Gary Emmert upon his return.

Newsletter:

Ted Bleck-Doran reported that the current newsletter is published on the website, consisting of 26 pages. He thanked all the contributors and reminded members that he is always accepting articles for the newsletter.

Treasurer:

No report. Treasurer is out of town.

Webmaster:

John Edwards reported that club messages are going out to members in a timely manner and everything seems to be fine

at this time. Bob Jones is out of town so there is not a report from him tonight.

Vice President:

John Carter reported that tonight's program will be Working with Liquid Styrene and the clubs Model RR magazine index system. May's program will be Key Trains by Gary Emmert.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- 1) Allan Morton was hospitalized today with pneumonia and kidney failure. (Unfortunately we have lost Allan since the meeting. Our deepest sympathy to his wife Margaret and their family)
- 2) Fred thanked the volunteers that opened the club for the Appalachian Studies Convention visitors. We did not have a lot of visitors that day but we had a great turn out of volunteers. The conference organizers promised to have better planning next year.
- 3) Jack Cope's memorial services will be held on April 23rd at 2 p.m. at the Jonesborough Presbyterian Church. The family has requested that donations be made to the Carter Railroad Museum in lieu of flowers.
- 4) Bucky's Food Pantry (located on campus) is doing a food drive for students that are in need of food and basic hygiene supplies. Please bring all donations to the club by April 25th.
- 5) We are still waiting on the Town of Jonesborough's approval of the contract for the satellite museum.

- 6) The Little Engineer's room will be celebrating the 70th birthday of Thomas and Friends on Sat. May 2nd. There will be refreshments and special activities.
- 7) Internet access has been requested from the college.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Fred Alsop called for volunteers for the planned learning sessions – there were no volunteers at the meeting. If you would like to volunteer to conduct a learning session for the club on a Thursday night please see Fred.
 - 2) The Spring Fling was a great success with good food and great people.
 - 3) The June rail excursion is coming along nicely. There will be press releases so that the community may participate. Fred Alsop will be on T.V. twice, informing the viewing audience about the excursion.
 - 4) A motion was made to approve the Bylaw changes as published in the March Signal Bridge. After a little discussion, the members voted and the motion passed.
 - 5) John Edwards reported that there has not been any work done on the operations tutorial program and checklist. He did explain to members the concept and end result of the tutorial.
 - 6) Geoff Stunkard gave a brief presentation on the new club brochure that he has designed. Membership approved the new design and having it printed.
 - 7) Bill Hensley updated members on all the wheels that are in motion for our 1st Annual Model Railroad Show.
 - 8) Ted Bleck-Doran informed the members that we are in need of some memorial cars for members that have passed away. Mike Buster stated that he has all the necessary supplies to complete the cars.
- 2) The museum will have a visit on May 13th from the Jonesborough Middle School 6th grade class. We need volunteers for this event.
 - 3) Blue Plum Festival is June 5th – June 7th. We will have the Cope Layout on display. Dean Small could use some help sprucing up the layout.
 - 4) Amanda Kelly has a visit scheduled for the YMCA Summer Camp program. They will visit on June 18th. There will be approximately 140 kids visiting the museum (in shifts). We need volunteers for this event.
 - 5) ET & WNC RR Society convention will be in Johnson City June 26th -28th. There are lots of activities planned. If you are not a member this is the perfect opportunity to join. The 4501 has an excursion planned that weekend as well.
 - 6) Jonesborough Days – July 3rd & 4th. we will have the Cope Layout set up in the Visitors Center.
 - 7) The annual Christmas party for the Carter Chapter is Dec, 15th at the Choo Choo Café in Erwin. They scheduled it on our meeting night so that the two organizations could celebrate the holiday together. After much discussion this matter has been tabled until next month.
 - 8) July 14th the TN Rail Fan meeting will be at the museum at 7 p.m.
 - 9) Members requested that if you come to the club and run trains that you leave the layout as you found it. We have a tight schedule on Saturday mornings and if things are not where they were left the previous Saturday it adds time and work before we can start running trains.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) "Song of the South" Railroad Heritage Day is April 25th. Geoff Stunkard has updated the displays with memorabilia. This is a great opportunity for the club and museum with all the visitors that we get at this monthly event.
- 2) Coordinator's meeting minutes will be published in the Signal Bridge.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 1) Marian Bankus will be visiting the museum. The date is to be determined.

PROGRAM:

A very informative presentation on Liquid Styrene and our computerized magazine indexing by guest speaker Robert Meyers of NE TN Regional Train Center preceded the Presidents report. A big thank you to Mr. Meyers for all the time and effort he has put into indexing our magazines.

NEXT MEETING:

May 19th. Club Vice President John Carter will be officiating in Fred Alsop's absence.

The call for volunteers was made.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Debbi Edwards
MEMRR Secretary

MODELING A PURE OIL SERVICE STATION
PART 5: MORE ON DETAILING THE STATION
 Ted Bleck-Doran

Before I start on this month's installment, here are three photos from Bob Jones. They were taken at the Tampa Bay Model Railroad Club's layout while Bob was away enjoying the sunshine and mild weather in Florida this past winter. Construction notes will continue in next month's issue.



EAST MEETS WEST AT BOY SCOUT
OUTING IN IOWA
CHINESE STEAM IN THE AMERICAN
HEARTLAND
 With Thanks to Dan Bagley



The *Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad* is on the way to where the Boone County Fair Grounds are located. There were 1500 Boy Scouts camping there over the Mother's Day weekend. Many of the scouts will ride the train... Could a Scout camporee get any better for a boy?

