



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

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

Volume 22 – Number 12

Published for the Education and Information of Its Membership

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Fred Alsop

ALSOPF@mail.etsu.edu

Vice-President

John Carter

carterjohn92@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Gary Emmert

jbox1015@comcast.net

Secretary:

Debbi Edwards

Debbi.edwards14@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor:

Ted Bleck-Doran

Ted_mary@memrr.org

Webmasters:

John Edwards

webmaster@memrr.org

Bob Jones

bobjonesmemrr@gmail.com



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 ??

SPECIAL FOCUS THIS ISSUE



Shell Creek, TN the last community east on the ET&WNC RR before crossing the state line into NC. Modeled by Fred J. Alsop III, Director of the George L. Carter Railroad Museum in 2015. Shell Creek is the first of several communities served by the railroad that will be modeled on the H0n3 scaled layout. Many of the buildings are still in existence and they were photographed and measured so they could be used along with a few historical photographs to model them in miniature.



Looking east along the tracks into Shell Creek before foreground scenery has been added



Shell Creek school made of styrene from Evergreen Scale Model plastics in a clapboard siding finish and tin roof. The two structures on the left are outhouses and there is a spring house on the right.



This is the Church home as it appeared in an 1890s photo. The inset is the way the home currently appears. The windows, doors, trim pieces, and porch railings are all from Grandt-Line Products. The chimneys are produced from plastic sheeting with a brick motif.



Model of the Brinkley house with an inset on the right of the home around the turn of the twentieth century and the inset on the left of the house as it currently appears. Note: all of the structures modeled are still in existence in Shell Creek with the exception of the ET&WNC RR depot.



This building is the Church store as it appeared in the 1890s. The inset photo shows it as it currently appears in Shell Creek. Note: most of the scenery in the back ground was created by Ken Harmon and the areas around the buildings have not been scened.



The barn at the Brinkley farmstead is made of stripwood attached to a construction board shell. The roofing is made of Campbell paper shingles.



This is the Brinkley store. It housed the village post office, general merchandise, and the barber shop. The coal

company sign and the original barber pole (black with white striping) still exist inside the current store that now serves as a western supply store.



The Esso station was a wooden structure with metal “brick” sheeting covering the outside walls. The Esso sign pole was created from plastic and brass tubing and the decal is from a commercial decal company. The garage doors with their cross bracing were scratch built from styrene materials.



Garrison's Garage was the only block building in town and is constructed from Plastruct sheeting. Grantd-Line doors and windows, but the garage doors were scratch built from styrene materials



Garrison's Garage also housed the Cherokee Grill, the only local “eat out” place in town. The roofs of all the buildings modeled are detachable components of the structures to facilitate interior detailing in many of them and lighting in all of them.



The roof's supporting structure is suggested with the plastic beams. The interior period (1920's) advertisements are copies of matchbook covers supplied by Geoff Stunkard for the project. The cut-away wall is to allow a view of the interior of the Cherokee Grill. This is the rear view of Garrison's Garage.



The peopled interior of the Cherokee Grill from a bird's eye view. The tables are scratch built. The floor tiles are blackened with a magic marker. Customers are Preiser figures. Bottles are from SS Ltd.



A view of the basic structures that make up the commercial district of Shell Creek on the south side of the railroad

tracks. They have been rotated 180 degrees for the photo, as they will face the tracks seen running behind the buildings in this photo. The cardboard structure on the far left is the proto model of the Loven house. Cardboard mockups were created for all the buildings to check size, angles, and footprint size for the layout.



The Shell Creek commercial district as viewed in place from above the Church house as they face the road. The railroad tracks are out of view screened by the house and foliage in the foreground.



This is the Loven home. It stands between Garrison's Garage and the church. The modeled structure depicts its appearance in the 1920s while the inset shows its modern, current-day appearance. The bay windowed design in the front room makes it's a most attractive and interesting house.



This is the Shell Creek Christian Church in its early design to fit the period we are modeling for the railroad. It has been turned 180 degrees for the photo as it will be positioned to face the railroad tracks. The Loven house is on its right.



The depot is the only wooden building in town and was constructed of board and batten sheets with Grandt-Line windows and doors. Campbell shingles adorn the roof. This view of the building is the one that will face the railroad tracks seen behind the structure in this photo. The green paint with red trim matched the colors used by the Tweetsie for their depots and other buildings prior to the 1940s when the green was replaced by gray and the trim became white.



This aerial view shows the layout of Shell Creek (the school is out of this frame to the left of the willow tree). Much of the landscaping has been placed around the buildings and the stock pen has been added (the yellow livestock will be toned down to more natural colors). The great weeping willow tree was created by Michael Sagers and depicts one that still stands on the Brinkley property.



This is a current photo of Shell Creek as it appears today. Some of our modeled structures are easily identified as being little different from what the prototype has become. One can easily recognize Brinkley's store, now with a "horse" on the roof, and the Loven house. The old Esso station and Garrison's Garage have had their storefront exteriors significantly altered, but still stand in their original locations. The highway covers the old Tweetsie roadbed and the depot is long gone.

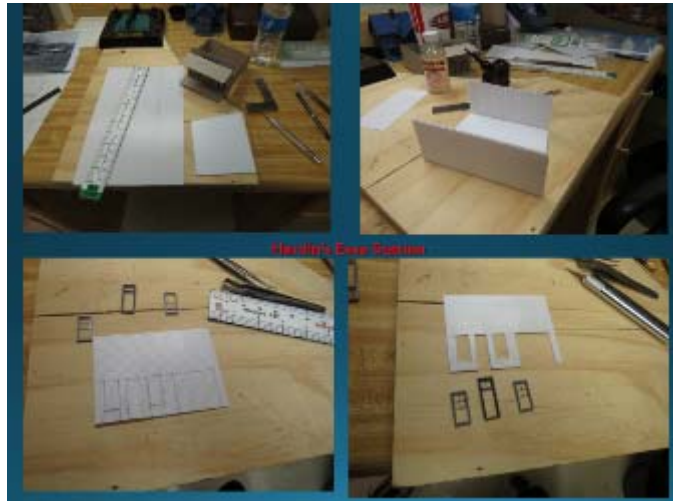


Because of space requirements many of the locations along our Tweetsie right-of-way have to be tightly compressed. The school house shown here would be further to the right and not in this close proximity to the rest of the town, but we are depicting 34 actual miles of track scenery into 8 scale miles and this requires some modeling license. Shell Creek is no exception.



This collage of photos quickly steps you through the major steps of construction of the Brinkley barn. From top left to lower right: the cardboard base of the barn painted black to make the cardboard less absorbent to the white glue that will be used to fix the wooden strips on the base. The barn is not a complete square/rectangular structure, but is designed to fit into the scenery at a 45 degree angle and on a slanted surface. This can be seen in photos 2 and 3. Scale Lumber strips are being applied to the cardboard base with Elmer's white glue. Campbell paper shingles are applied to the roof using white glue. The wood exterior is stained with a series of acrylic paint washes and then overwashed with a diluted India ink wash to create an aged appearance. The barn in place and scenery placed around it to blend it into the small space it will occupy on the

layout. The final photo showing the completed diorama of barn, house and fencing.



The Esso station is constructed from Plastruct plastic brick sheeting, Evergreen plastic stripping, and Grandt-Line windows and doors. Plastruct liquid cement was used in the adhering of all plastic parts. The cardboard model and some of the basic tools for cutting plastic are shown in the photos. Photos from top left to bottom right: measuring and cutting the styrene for the walls. Note the double-thickness of the walls to simulate the thickness of the modeled structures as this building will have an open back to allow the viewing of the detailed interior. Measurements for the windows and doors are drawn onto the plastic building and then removed with straight edge and exacto knife (keep the blades sharp).



Photos top left to lower right: Plastic building compared to the cardboard prototype. The rear view of the building showing the double-thick walls; the angled floor is to fit the position of the building the layout. The unpainted building centered in position between Garrison's garage and Brinkley's store. An angled view of the Esso station as seen

above the green depot and sandwiched between the store and Garrison's. Note the cardboard buildings that will be the Loven house and the church further to the right.



From upper left to lower right: adding the porch and the brass poles that will cover the gas pumps of the service station. The "concrete" protection at the base of the posts are made of balsa wood. The cut-away ceiling with the plastic beams of to support the roof are being added. The "roof" and ceiling are built as a single unit that rests on the building, but will not be permanently attached to it.



Top left to lower right: The supporting rafter structure before the "metal" Evergreen plastic roof is attached. The shed roof protecting the service bay is made from brown paper strips to simulate the tarpaper roof on the prototype. The Esso sign in place to the east of Brinkley's store and on the left side of the Esso station.



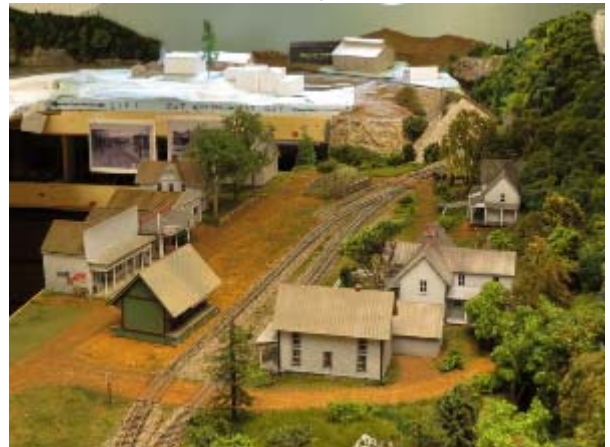
Detailed view of the side of the Esso station with sign in place and the posts and gutters painted. School house in the background to the right beyond the tracks.



Interior details of the Esso station include white metal 1920s garage interior from SS Ltd and a Jordan motel-T ford constructed and painted by Ted Bleck-Doran.



Gas pumps and oil can rack from SS Ltd. are constructed, painted and in place. Tarpaper roofing was painted with dark gray acrylics, chalk weathered and dry-brushed with pale gray acrylic paint.



Aerial view of Shell Creek looking northwest with all buildings painted and in place and much of the landscaping completed.



Aerial view of Shell Creek looking south west with most landscaping in place including a garden to the right of the Brinkley home. Tracks have been painted, ties weathered and track ballasted. Trees planted in Loven's yard.



Waiting for the train to come by from a seat on the porch of Church's store. Our Railroad Museum's Shell Creek will be featured in the *HOn3 Annual, 7th Edition* published by White River Productions that will be on newstands by the time you are reading this. Get your copy at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum. It will feature text by Geoff

Stunkard and photos by Geoff Stunkard, George Riley and Fred Alsop.

CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM HONORS ITS NAMESAKE AT NOVEMBER HERITAGE DAY THE CLINCHFIELD RAILROAD

JOHNSON CITY – On Saturday, Nov. 28, East Tennessee State University’s George L. Carter Railroad Museum will hold its monthly Heritage Day and will dedicate the day to its namesake.

The museum houses historic photos of Mr. Carter and the building of the Clinchfield as well as displays of Clinchfield Railroad historic memorabilia.

Heritage Day Coordinator Geoff Stunkard says, “The museum is a memorial to George L. Carter, founder, builder and owner of the Clinchfield Railroad and the donor who provided land to the state of Tennessee for the founding of the East Tennessee Normal School, now ETSU, in 1911.

Our November Heritage Day honors Carter’s own Clinchfield Railway. We feel this is especially appropriate since the museum celebrates its anniversary this month and November is National Model Railroad Month.”

Members of the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) club will coordinate the exhibits. Visit www.memrr.org to learn more about MEMRR, which helps demonstrate and maintain the model layouts, museum exhibits and other projects.

The Carter Railroad Museum is open every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are welcomed. The museum can be identified by a flashing railroad crossing signal at the back entrance to the Campus Center Building. Visitors should enter ETSU’s campus from State of Franklin Road onto Jack Vest Drive and continue east to 176 Ross Drive, adjacent to the flashing RR crossing sign.

CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM RELEASES ORAL HISTORY BOOK ON ANNIVERSARY

JOHNSON CITY – On Saturday, Nov. 14, East Tennessee State University’s George L. Carter Railroad Museum will celebrate its 8th anniversary with the introduction of “Tales of the Rails,” an oral history project created by the George L. Carter National Railroad Historical Society and the museum.

The 300 page book contains 25 stories of the ET&WNC, or “Tweetsie” railroad, 20 concerning the Clinchfield or CSX railway, 31 about the Southern or Norfolk-Southern line and 20 stories about other lines.

Carolyn Gregg, Historical Society chapter historian, compiled the tales and photos with the help of ETSU’s Dr. Delanna Reed, other interviewers and the membership of the society.

Dr. Fred Alsop, president of the society and director of the museum, notes that the book will be on sale at the museum and by members of the society.

Members of the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) club will coordinate the exhibits. Visit www.memrr.org to learn more about MEMRR, which helps demonstrate and maintain the model layouts, museum exhibits and other projects.



AMTRAK Carolinian arrives in Raleigh NY only 15 minutes late
November 26, 2015

CHRISTMAS PARTY DETAILS

TO BE HELD AT TIPTON-HAYNES DECEMBER 18TH

Our Christmas Party is scheduled for Friday, December 18th at Tipton-Haynes to begin at 6pm.

John Edwards is putting together a list of those who will attend the Party and what food items they will be bringing with them. I will be posting this list to the members so that we can avoid over duplication of items. We don't need 10 bowls of potato salad :-)

Please reply to John by E-mail (john_edwards@memrr.org) with who will attend and what dish you will be bringing. Remember this gathering is for members and their adult guests only (children are not invited).



AMTRACK "CAROLINIAN" departs Raleigh NC

ALL-TIME HERITAGE DAYS LISTING
MEMRR'S POPULAR THEME SATURDAYS

Geoff Stunkard has provided a list of the ever popular Heritage Days.

2012 HERITAGE DAYS

April	Yankee Rivals – NYC, PRR B&O, and so-called Friends
May	Here to Stay – Modern American Railroading (in honor of National Train Day May 7)
June	Song of the South – Serving Up The Southern Railroad
July	Meet Me in St. Louis – Great Railroads from a Great Town
August	Appalachian Conquest – Eastern Mountain Coal Roads from Tidewater to Timberline
September	Stainless & Steamless – Streamliners and 1st Gen Diesels
October	Our 100 Year Heritage – Carter’s Fabulous Clinchfield Lines
November	Steam’s Finest Hour – Articulated Locomotives from Coast to Coast
December	Nights & Weekends – Long Trains on the N&W

2013 HERITAGE DAYS

January	Might and Money: Eastern Railroading Spectacular
February	Mixed Train Daily: Short Lines & Industrial Railroading (with logging railroads)
March	3rd Annual STEAM UP! Steam Railroading Remembered
April	Circus Trains are Coming to Town
May	Here to Stay: Modern American Railroading (in honor of National Train Day May 7)
June	Song of the South: Serving Up The Southern Railroad
July	Big Sky, Prairie Life: Western Railroading in Action
August	Midwestern Movers: North, South, East and West across the Heartland
September	Atlanta’s Loop: The Unbroken Circle of Classic Railroading

October	(Not Just) Steam’s Last Stand – N&W railroading also Heritage Units in action
November	Our 100 Year Heritage – Mr. Carter’s Fabulous Clinchfield Lines
December	A ‘Tender’ Tennessee Christmas – Railroading in the Volunteer State



Frank and Jonathan puzzle out the electronics on several overhead cameras for the Tweetsie layout

2014 HERITAGE DAYS

January	Rails Through Metropolis: The Northeast Big Shots
February	The Sound of Railroading, Country Style: Nashville’s Railroads
March	4th Annual STEAM-UP
April	Norfolk & Western Then & Now
May	Modern Railroads: Power in the 21st Century
June	Song of the South: Southern Railway Heritage
July	Big Power & Black Diamonds: Coal Roads of Appalachia
August	Prairie Fires and Mountain Peaks: The West Side of the Mississippi
September	Thunder in the Timber: 120 Years of Logging Heritage
October	Varnish & Chrome: When Beauty Rolled the Rails on Passenger Trains
November	George L Carter’s Fabulous Clinchfield Lines

December Dixie Rail Extravaganza

2015 HERITAGE DAYS

- _____ January 31: Yanks Go Railroading: Northeast Lines
- _____ February 28: Appalachian Conquest: Coal and Mountain Railroads on the Blue Ridge
- _____ March 28: 5th Annual STEAM-UP
- _____ April 25: Song of the South: Southern Railway Heritage
- _____ May 30: Modern Railroads: Moving Mass in the 21st Century
- _____ June 27: For Power and Glory: Passenger Trains of Yesterday and Today
- _____ 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: Precision Transportation: N&W and NS Glory
- _____ November 28: George L Carter's Fabulous Clinchfield Lines
- _____ December 19: Home For Christmas: Railroading in the Cold Weather States

2016 HERITAGE DAYS

- March 6th Annual Steam-UP
- May Modern Railroads
- November Carter/Clinchfield

Some Suggestions (we have four open days in 2016)

- Specific On The Pacific: Railroads with the Pacific name in their titles
- Pulling Power Parade: Articulated Steam Only
- Next Stop Nashville: L&N, N C& St.L

Days Already Planned To Be Placed on Schedule

- Southern Serves the South
- Northeastern Lines
- Midwestern Lines
- N&W/NS Heritage
- Little Lines: Shortlines/Industrial/Logging



Fred copies several historical photos of thee ET&WNC Ry loaned to the George L Carter Museum

**G. L. Carter Railroad Museum
Coordinator's Meeting
November 2015**

The meeting was called to order by club president Fred Alsop with 9 coordinator's in attendance.

Mr. Alsop requested members come in on Saturday to help set up for a children's party. He then reminded everyone that Saturday is the museum's 8th birthday. We will have a celebration on our 10th year. Caroline Gregg will be delivering 200 copies of her book "Tales of the Rails". They will be sold for \$25 (including tax). This month's press release included the museum anniversary, books for sale and that this month's Heritage Day will be Clinchfield. There is nothing to report regarding the Jonesborough satellite museum.

N Scale - Jesse Kittle reported that he and Gary Gilliam have been working on the track and they need more metal wheels. They have been working on converting couplers.

Tweetsie - John Edwards said that he needs a copy of the book "Blueridge Stemwinder" to do research. He has taken home a caboose kit and needs info on the paint color.

There has been a little trouble running trains. He is not able to locate a track cleaner car. He is going to look at one for HO and see if he can make one.

Fred Alsop reported that they are going to standardize the tracks. We have 50 pairs of HO N3 trucks on order. Frank Fezzie is working on the panel that he moved. After that he will install the 9 cameras.

Cope Layout - Coordinator not in attendance.

G Scale – Mike Baker reported that there are no issues. He will be out of town after the Thanksgiving holiday.

Communications – Roger Teinert stated that he has some letters to send out. He passed out a lot of flyers and cards at the Bluefield Train Show.

There was discussion about sending fliers to upcoming train shows. Roger will get with Bob Jones to send out information via the web site.

Web-master – Bob Jones said that he will put the press release on the web site. He has been working on links to other web sites.

John Edwards reported that he is still having computer problems. Members with Embark email addresses are being bounced back.



The boxes, cartons, crates, storage racks, and pallets above were crafted by Dave Cole. Dave used graph paper and manila folder stock for the project. A future how-to article has been promised.

Rip Track – Jim Hoyt stated that the Clinchfield cars are ready and on the layout.

Newsletter - Ted Bleck-Doran said The Signal Bridge is 22 pages. There is a nice article on researching. The December issue will contain an article on Shell Creek.

Jim Hoyt submitted an article on his home layout. Ted would like to feature home layouts in future issues.

He would also like to feature a new member article each month.

Deadline for submissions is December 8th.

Library – Bob Jones reported that there is 30 new books cataloged and are now listed on the web site.

HO - Ted Bleck-Doran reported that he is replacing the hilltop houses at the yard wye.

Roger Teinert said that 6 turnouts are now laid.

Locomotives – Gary Gilliam reported that all is running good and will continue to as long as the wheels are kept clean.

Fred Alsop reported that there are 5 Tweetsie 10 wheelers are being worked on in Wisconsin.

President – Fred Alsop ended the meeting telling us what a great job Caroline Gregg did on the book.

Fred Alsop adjourned the meeting.

*Respectfully Submitted
Debbi Edwards, Secretary
Mountain Empire Model Railroaders*

**MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL
RAILROADERS
Secretary Report
Business Meeting
November 2015**

The meeting was called to order by club president, Fred Alsop at 6:40 p.m. with 21 members in attendance. Mr. Alsop then introduced new members Amy & Ben Merritt.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

SECRETARY:

Debbi Edwards made a motion that the minutes from the October Business Meeting be accepted as published in the Signal Bridge. Motion passed.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Ted Bleck-Doran reported that the Signal Bridge has 22 pages. Thank you to all that contributed. President Alsop told how informative the article on researching your favorite railroad. There is a new feature in which member Jim Hoyt shared his home layout. We would like to continue featuring member's home layouts.

TREASURER:

Gary Emmert gave an update of club income and expenses. Fred Alsop reminded members that dues for 2016 are now due.

WEBMASTER:

John Edwards reported that the email addresses are up to date. 2 members stated that they have not received the newsletter. Mr. Edwards will look into and resolve those issues.

VICE PRESIDENT:

John Carter stated that we need volunteers for next year's programs.

PRESIDENT:

Dr. Alsop told members about an interview he did with radio station WETS. The interview will air on Nov. 21 at 7:30 a.m. and on Nov. 22 at 2:00p.m.

Thank you to Jim Pahr, Dan McLeod and Gary Emmert for making the trip to collect the donated items from the late Rev. Howard Walker.

The G.L. Carter Railroad Museum is celebrating its 8th year. President Alsop thanked all members for the work you do in making the museum such a success.

There is a local website that rates area attractions. We are getting 4 & 5 star ratings on the site. Comments are very positive. All of this is due to the dedication of our members. Thank you for making the museum experience such an enjoyable one.

Carolyn Gregg's books have arrived and are for sale for \$25.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1) Planned learning sessions - we need volunteers to conduct these learning sessions. Please see Fred Alsop.
- 2) The Rail Excursion to Big South Fork Scenic RR went well. There were pretty fall colors and people seemed to enjoy the trip.
- 3) HOn3 7th Edition is on the newsstands and should be a spectacular layout. The museum has ordered 50 copies to sell. \$15 for members and \$20 for non members.
- 4) Train Show - Roger Teinert reported that things are moving along. We still need tables for the show - any loans would be appreciated.

**Dave Cole's freight added to the Cranberry Depot loading dock****NEW BUSINESS:**

- 1) The November Heritage Day (Nov. 28) will feature "George L. Carter's Fabulous Clinchfield Railroad." If you have any memorabilia that you would like to add to the exhibit please see Fred Alsop;
- 2) Coordinators Meeting details will be published in the newsletter.
- 3) Roger Teinert reported that the polls are closed and the slate of officers was voted and accepted by membership.
President - Dr. Fred Alsop
Vice President - John Carter
Treasurer - Gary Emmert
Secretary - Debbi Edwards
Newsletter Editor - Ted Bleck-Doran
Webmasters - John Edwards
Bob Jones
- 4) Member of the year nominations are due by Nov. 28
- 5) Radios are not being utilized in the HO layout. Please use them.
- 6) Ted Bleck-Doran made the motion to re constitute the "Operating Committee". Motion was 2nd and passed. They will begin meeting in January. If you are interested in joining this committee see any of the committee members.
- 7) John Edwards is still working on the operating tutorial.
- 8) Geoff Stunkard talked about Heritage Days. He will be sending out a survey to members so they may tell him what their favorites are and get ideas for future Heritage Days.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1) Next Coordinators meeting is December 10th at 6 p.m. All officers and coordinators should plan to attend.
- 2) This year's Christmas party is December 18th at Tipton Haynes State Historic Site. Dinner and social hour begin at 6 p.m. There will be 2 Dirty Santa tables. One for railroad items and one for non-railroad items. Price range is \$15 - \$20.

After the call for volunteers Roger Teinert provided a DVD presentation "Big Steam Locomotives".

Meeting adjourned

*Respectfully Submitted
Debbi Edwards, Secretary
Mountain Empire Model Railroaders*

The weather outside is not frightful; but rather delightful with sunshine and 60 degree weather, but the winter season with its holiday cheer is almost upon us. I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving holiday and that you all are looking forward to the shorter days of winter ahead. I always find this a good time to catch up on my reading of my model railroad magazines, some books on the prototype, and to do some model railroading; the kinds of things the colder weather and longer nights seem most suited to.

One holiday event we all enjoy is the **Annual Museum Christmas Party**. Notices have been circulated for weeks and I hope you and your spouse, or significant other, will be attending. We are going to have our festivities at the Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site on South Roan Street in Johnson City with pot-luck dishes supplied by our members and the two meats paid for by the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter NRHS. Besides the great food and fellowship, Dirty Santa will be paying us a visit and for the first time we will have two piles of gifts, one for the gals and one for the guys (this may be the first year some of the fellows do not get two gifts with the ladies keeping what they receive instead of giving some train-related present to their man in addition to what he picked out). Festivities begin at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 18th.

We will also present our first annual **Member of the Year Award** at this year's Christmas party. We had 5 very strong nominees provided by our members. The elected officers of the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter NRHS conferred by email and via telephone to vote on this year's recipient. The decision was exceedingly difficult as all the nominees were most worthy of selection, but the tallied vote produced a majority winner and that person will be announced at the party and be presented a plaque marking their selection by their peers. I wish to congratulate everyone who was nominated and only wish we could have honored each for being so well thought of for their service to the museum by those who nominated them. We have begun a tradition of recognition and that will continue for many years providing the opportunity for this special tribute to those of you who put so much into the success of the Carter Railroad Museum with your talents, your time and your service.

We are coming to the close of another great year for the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS. Both organizations have gained members and both have helped move the George L. Carter Railroad Museum forward. We have held our annual elections for officers and have been fortunate that all agreed to stand for another term providing strong continuity for the leadership of our organization. We have also lost members who have passed and whose company and friendship we enjoyed and looked forward to being in their company; they are sorely missed.



The rock face of the Doe River Gorge takes on a realistic appearance with the addition of moss and grass effects

I received the museum's order of 50 copies of the **HOn3 Annual 2015** today from White River Productions. The long-anticipated edition has 9 color pages featuring the Shell Creek section of our museum's Tweetsie RR layout. The article was written by **Geoff Stunkard** who also took many of the photos. The magazine sells on the newsstands for \$19.95, but we are discounting the price for our members to \$15.00 (tax included). Be sure to get yourself at copy at the museum's sales table on Saturday or get one from **Gary Emmert** at the museum on Thursday nights. I know many of us have subscribed to model railroad magazines for lots of years and we have looked at the photos carefully to learn how other modelers created their layouts and their structures on them. I have always been interested in seeing how they did their scenery; all phases of it have appealed to my artistic senses. The magazine editors pride themselves on their reputations for having the best information on modeling, often expressed through the model railroad layouts they feature in their pages. It was a wonderful unexpected event to have our Tweetsie layout selected for publication in the 2014 *HOn3 Annual*; to have our work and our museum featured in two consecutive years is more than anyone could have hoped for. All of you are to be commended for the effort, time and passion you have put into the Carter Railroad Museum for 8 years now and I know you share my pride in what we have accomplished together. Get your personal copy of this edition and enjoy it and show it to your friends. You belong to an organization whose contributions to model railroading are being viewed nationally and internationally.



Bob Jones and Roger Teinert swap tales at at Saturdeay open house at the museum

We have another book event to rejoice in as many of you know. Through a lot of passionate work, **Carolyn Gregg**, the Carter Chapter's Historian, has compiled and edited a lot of interviews, many she recorded herself as part of our ongoing oral history of Appalachian railroading initiative, into a book that was published by the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS last month. In addition to the personal stories about railroads and railroading, there are scores of photographs, most never before published, that richly illustrate the 300+ pages of the book. Our **Tales of the Rails** is available for purchase at the Carter RR Museum for \$25 (tax included) and besides making a good read for yourself, will make a good unique gift for someone for Christmas.

East Tennessee State University is finishing its Fall Semester this week (Dec7-10) with final exams. Graduation's commencement ceremonies will be held twice (10 a.m. and 2 p.m.) on Saturday, Dec. 12th. The following 4 weeks will have almost no students on campus and no classes in session, so parking should be easy, not only on Saturdays when the museum is open, but during the week as well. If the difficulty in finding a place to park has been a reason for you not to visit the museum to run your trains or to help with creating the many exhibits in there, you will not have to worry with this for the next month. Staff and administrators are still working except for the week around Christmas, but most of the parking areas will be open.

We will not be closing on Saturdays during the holidays (none fall on a Saturday) and will only be closed if severe weather creates driving hazards that warrant us to do so for safety purposes. We have become a Saturday destination for many folks in the area, and we have recently had some visitors tell us they found us on their travel app. and dropped in to see the museum as they were passing through.

We are averaging approximately 100 visitors every Saturday and the MEMRR and Carter Chapter members have been active in their support with 16-20+ members being present in the museum most Saturdays. This is a

wonderful tribute to all of us for the outstanding exhibits you have created and maintain and for the warm welcome you extend to the public coming to spend some of their time with us when we are open.

The MEMRR has been gaining about 3 new members a month and the current roll stands at more than 120 paid members. But, **remember, we pay annual dues beginning in November and extending to the end of January** and we are into that important time period. Many of you have already renewed your personal or family memberships, but I strongly encourage you who have not done so yet to get your checks to our treasurer, **Gary Emmert**, as soon as possible. Our dues are most reasonable at \$30 per individual, and \$6 per additional member sharing a household. All your club dues go back into the MEMRR; none of it goes to the Carter RR Museum. This money is used on the club's HO layout to continue to improve it and its operation. Many of the modules in the layout are privately owned and their owners are responsible for most of what goes in, on or under their modules, but improvements required by the club are paid for by the club on all modules such as the wiring work that has been going on for some time now. Your dues provide you with personal access to the club website, a terrific monthly newsletter that you are reading now superbly produced and edited by **Ted Bleck-Doran**, a choice of layouts in 4 scales that you can operate your locomotives and consists over, club locomotives and cars you may operate, and 24-7 access to the Carter Railroad Museum for all full members. It also provides you a forum to vote and provide club direction at our business meetings and on line. What a bargain for less than the price of taking your family out to a local movie and concession stand for one show! We will be changing the code on the lockbox on the outside museum door at the end of January, 2016, and only paid-up members will have the new code; so, **please renew your membership if you have not already done so and continue to enjoy all your privileges of full membership in a great organization.**

Several months ago we decided to establish a sales table in the museum hallway on Saturdays and **Jim Pahrts** has volunteered to be in charge of it on the days we are open that he is in town. In addition to making sales this table has provided a point of interest for many visitors to talk to Jim and for him to make accurate clicker counts of all of the folks who come into the museum. (Our Station Master, Kelsey, and "conductor" Chris, in the Little Engineers Room also keep clicker counts of their little visitors and their accompanying adults.) Sales have increased dramatically through this new operation and we have been able to keep more accurate headcounts of our visitors as well. The latter is most important for the annual reports I have to make to ETSU administrators that help to justify our existence as a railroad museum, a rare commodity on any university campus, where academic space is a high priority. My thanks also go to **Roger Teinert, Jim Hoit** and other club

members who have operated this table for us in Jim's absence.

We will keep any organizational business to an absolute minimum at the Christmas party, but it also serves as the business meeting for the month of December. It will be important to bring everyone up to date on any important news and to solicit volunteers for museum operations on Saturdays bridging the old and new years. **Keep in mind that an important event for our January 2016 business meeting is the establishment of a calendar of events for the year.** We will use a template based on past years to work from, but come prepared with ideas for fun things for us to plan to do for 2016 and let's discuss their merits and put as many on the calendar as we can agree to. Our officers will strive to keep the organization running smoothly, but it is largely the desires of our membership that steer the course you want us to take. Bring your ideas and we will have a productive meeting that will create calendar filled with events we can all look forward to participating in.

2015 has been a year in which we have made great strides in our clubs, our hobbies, and our friendships. The public becomes more aware of our museum and our organizations and many come to visit us and bring their friends; and some decide they want to become members joining us in our hobby and our work. 2016 holds the promise of being even better. Our clubs are strong and our members' cooperative to the projects we engage in. We are strengthened by the affiliation of the ET&WNC RR Historical Society this year and we are planning a big train show for June. I am proud to be a member and look forward to many more years with you all. Hear the sound of the whistle of the train in the night and dream of all the destinations yet to come.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO YOU ALL AND A GREAT NEW YEAR!

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



Mike Buster works on the ballast for the Southern Railway right-of-way in the Johnson City portion of the Tweetsie layout

**LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION
IT'S WHERE YOU FIND IT**



Above is a vintage photo of the Johnson City trolley. This photo was the inspiration for the new module Ted Bleck-Doran is working on for the area near the south yard throat. The city module will replace the 4 hill-top houses in the near future.



Baltimore Transit Co. Semi-convertible # 5267 is making its way to the end of the #9 streetcar line in Ellicott City, Maryland on April 19, 1948 at 4:30 PM. Service lasted seven more years until June 19, 1955. Photo by Leonard Rice from the Lee H. Rogers Estate (Maryland Rail Heritage Library Collection). Courtesy of the Baltimore Chapter National Railway Historical Society.

HOME LAYOUTS

REVEREND HOWARD WALKER'S ALDER CREEK RAILROAD



Last month a team of members (Jim Pahriss, Gary Emmert and Dan Mcleod) drove to Joliet Illinois to box and bring back to Johnson City a sizeable train collection which had been donated to the George L Carter Railroad Museum.

The Reverend Walker had been very generous in his relationship with the Carter Museum when he was alive. His generosity continued in his passing,



His model railroad collection consisted of over 400 railroad cars of various types of rolling stock (including freight, passenger and Maintenance of Way cars), more than 70 locomotives, and numerous structures,



One of the benefactors of the George L Carter Railroad Museum has been the Reverend Howard M. Walker. He has donated a railroad china collection, core volumes in the museum library, and most recently his model railroad – the Alder Creek Railroad.



His layout filled a basement room and featured an around-the-wall running oval and center-aisle industrial switching operation.



While built as a flat-top layout it demonstrated his diverse interest and modeling ability.



Reverend Walker decorated his layout room with railroad related artifacts, prints, and photos from his collection



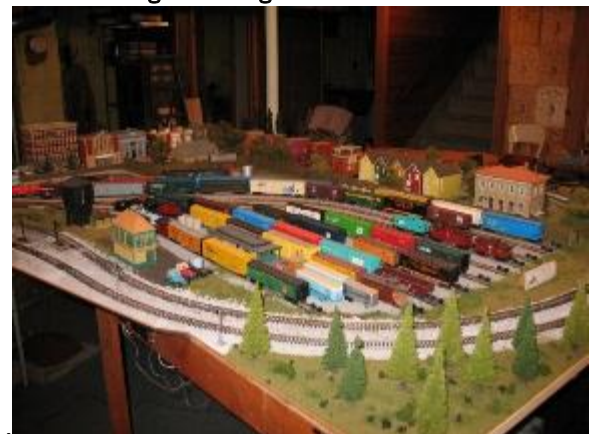
A view of his engine facilities... the layout was DC-block operated



A trolley line with overhead wire allowed for the running of interurban cars



A small village set along the around the wall mainline



And a yard full of rolling stock