



The Coal Road

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The Monthly Newsletter of the George L. Carter Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee Volume 6, Number 1, January 2016



The Drawbar

Forty-seven merry souls helped to ring in the holidays on a cold night that was spitting the first bit of snow in the air for the year on Friday, 18 December, when members of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS gathered at Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site to make a little history of their own. **Charlene** and **Dan McLeod** brought boxes of Christmas decorations for the room and bright tablecloths to add to the color along with recorded music. **Jim** and **Charlotte Pahriss**, **Jan** and **Roger Teinert**, and **I** came early to help set everything up for the crowd to follow. **Jim Pahriss** had once again taken on the responsibility for booking the room and taking care of many of the odds-and-ends that make our parties go so smoothly. By 6 p.m. the merrymakers had mostly arrived and all were laden with wonderful culinary dishes, desserts, and gifts for the “his-and-hers” tables flanking the Christmas tree. The dinner was wonderful with plenty of seconds to go around and more than the crowd could consume. It was special to see everyone in their holiday dress and the warm, friendly atmosphere that abounded in the room.

Following our social events we had a brief business meeting with the highlight being the first awarding of the **George L. Carter Railroad Museum Member of the Year Award**. During the previous month nominations were solicited from the members of both organizations for this award that is to become an annual event. With all the nominations gathered by the end of November the officers of the MEMRR and officers and Board of Directors of the Carter Chapter NRHS voted to select a winner. All the nominees were outstanding and the task of singling out a winner was most difficult, but **Carolyn Gregg** was selected as our first winner. Her hard work in bringing our recently published *Tales of the Rails* into life, a 300+ page book of local oral histories of railroads and railroading, played an important part in the process of making our selection. Congratulations Carolyn! She was presented with a plaque to mark the occasion and the Carter RR Museum will have a

plaque on the wall with our Donor's Plaques with this year's award winner and spaces for next year's awardee and for many years to come.

The special guest arrived following the conclusion of our business meeting and "**Dirty Santa**" held court for more than an hour of fun, laughter, and perhaps a tiny tear or two, as gifts were selected from under the tree, or taken from temporary proud "owners" before they could get them safely home to enjoy them. There is always that special gift that someone gets and that others covet, and this year was no exception. A copy of *Life along the Line*, a pictorial essay on the Norfolk & Western RR photographed by O. Winston Link became the prize to select passing through the hands of at least 5 "recipients" before coming to the end of the line where no one else could select it. For the first time we had gifts for the guys and for the gals so that a railroader's spouse could get something she might like to have instead of another railroading item that would wind up in hubby's stocking. We have tried our Holiday Parties for a couple of years in a very nice railroad-themed restaurant with the meal already prepared, but the overwhelming feeling I got was that the covered dish banquet in a room of our own with only members present gave a much more family atmosphere to the festivities and added immeasurably to the joy of this social event. Perhaps something we need to consider as we plan our calendars for the coming 2016 year at our January business meeting.

As you are reading this I will be birding in the southern-most tip of South America, in Patagonia, a place I have wanted to visit for many years. Our Vice-President will preside in my absence at our January meeting and the program will be focused on creating our operating calendar of events for 2016. Be prepared to bring your ideas for Heritage Days, social events, public showings of our work at festivals, and all the other important things which will build a calendar that we will all share in and look forward to.

November always kicks off our drive to renew our memberships and you can do your part to make the life of the treasurer easier by renewing your 2016 membership early. It also makes my life easier in that I will not have to draft an email letter to you later this month reminding you that time is running out and you have not paid your dues. Think of all the benefits you get from your membership in the MEMRR and/or the Carter Chapter NRHS and think what you will be missing if you don't pay them. At the end of January we will change the code in the key box on the outside entrance to the Carter Railroad Museum and only paid-up members will be given the new code. I know you don't want to be on the outside looking in. The membership is most inexpensive and it has not been raised in years, so take advantage of a very good thing and renew now!! We need you in our organization and we certainly like having you as a member.

If you have not yet purchased your personal copy of the 2015 *HOn3 Annual* with its color section on our Shell Creek region of our Tweetsie Layout you really need to do so at the reduced member's price of \$15 so you can read **Geoff Stunkard's** fine article on the building of the miniature community and see his wonderful camera work that illustrates the 9 page article. What an outstanding privilege to have our

Tweetsie Layout published in a national/international publication. I know we are all proud of the work that has gone into our little railroad museum and this kind of recognition is important as we continue to create turf for ourselves on a busy growing university campus. Copies are available for sale at the George L. Carter RR Museum every Saturday.

The George L. Carter Chapter NRHS has just brought the website that **Bill Beagen** has been working on to life. The site design is by ETSU graduate student Alex Holt. Check it out at glcarternrhs.com. I will have an improved web site for the G.L. Carter Railroad Museum up and running early in 2016.

The museum gets better and better and the outstanding contributions you make as “volunteers” are its heart and soul. Your talents have created the great exhibits and your kindness towards our weekly visitors creates an atmosphere that keeps many coming back and recommending a visit to their friends. We are averaging approximately 100 guests each Saturday, and more importantly perhaps, we are averaging more than 20 of our members at the museum each Saturday. That sends an important message to everyone that this is a good place to spend part of your weekend and to share your hobby not only with our visitors, but with each other as well. The Carter Railroad Museum comes alive every Saturday as a destination for members and the public alike. Keep up the good work! I have placed **ETSU Volunteer Forms** at several locations in the Museum in early December. Many of you have completed one and I have sent them on to ETSU’s Office of Human Resources. For your protection the completed form gives you some security as an “official volunteer” of the University. I have a “completed” copy in **red font** as a template near each stack of blank forms for your guidance in case you have questions about how to fill it out. When you have completed your form you are an “official” volunteer for a calendar year. Please fill one out the next time you are at the Railroad Museum and leave it nearby, or give it to **Jim Pahr** or **Gary Emmert** and I will make sure it gets recorded in HR when I get back in town. It is important for me to have each of you working in the museum with the public registered as an ETSU Volunteer. Thank you in advance for taking the time to do this; and thank you if you have already completed your form.

2016 is here and it is a year filled with promise and potential for each of us; for the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter NRHS; and for the Carter Railroad Museum. We have had the time away from our jobs and our normal routines with the holiday break and we have ushered in another New Year. Some new train-themed gifts may have found their way into our households and have already been tested on museum trackage; or a new railroad book has been demanding much of our reading time; or we just found a few days to rest and relax. Thank you for another great year at the Carter Railroad Museum and for all you do for the MEMRR and/or the Carter Chapter NRHS. Together we continue to build strong organizations and a railroad museum that is becoming more widely known across the region. 2016 will be what we make it, so let’s make the most of it together. Hear the sound of the whistle of the train in the night and dream of all the destinations yet to come.

Happy New Year! Happy 2016!!

Fred J. Alsop III

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

**Business Meeting
This Monday, January 18 at 6:30 PM
Room 328, Brown Hall**

MEMBERSHIP

2016 Business Meeting Dates (Tentative)

Monday – 1/18/2016	Monday – 5/16/2016	Monday – 9/19/2016
Monday – 2/15/2016*	Monday – 6/20/2016*	Monday – 10/17/2016*
Monday – 3/14/2016	Monday – 7/18/2016	Monday – 11/14/2016
Monday – 4/18/2016*	Monday – 8/15/2016*	Christmas Party -TBD

Dates with an * indicate B.O.D. Meeting also



The George L. Carter Chapter NRHS

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

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

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

Editors Ramblings

Not a whole lot, this month. Just want to echo Fred's wish for a Happy and Healthy New Year for all our members and those of the MEMRR.

Please attend our meeting this month as it will be very informative in regards to the coming year. We will set our calendar and figure out when and where we want to go on our excursions for the coming year.

Also attached to this newsletter are a few articles from various magazines that might be of interest to all our members.