



# THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB  
SEPTEMBER 2016 - MEMBERS EDITION

Volume 23 – Number 9

Published for the Education and Information of Its Membership

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## LOCATION

ETSU Campus  
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Railroad Museum

## HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

**RAILFAN OUTINGS FOR THE SUMMER, Pt. 3**  
**PLANNING SUMMER OUTINGS WITH A RAILROAD THEME**



Nashville Chattanooga & St Louis GE 70 Ton locomotive No. 100 can be found at the Cowen Tennessee Railroad Museum



Nashville Chattanooga & St Louis RY GP7 No. 710 caught at the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum

## NORFOLK SOUTHERN'S LATEST REPAINT

NS #4004 GE AC44CM  
"DC TO AC" Special Paint Units



BEFORE CONVERSION IN 2012 - PHOTO BY TOMMY PARKER



AFTER CONVERSION IN 2016 – PHOTO COURTESY OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP.



TWO VIEWS OF THE NEWEST “DC-TO-AC” SPECIAL PAINT UNITS, AC44C6M’S #4002 AND #4004  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF NORFOLK SOUTHERN CORP.



## GOLDEN SPIKE MODULAR STANDARDS

### STUDYING FREEMO

Gregg Mundkowsky



Over the next couple of issues of the newsletter I will present suggestions for standards for the Golden Spike modular layout that I have proposed. I would like to get this going if we decide to, and debut the layout at our next train show in June I have looked at several different systems and will show them here.

First is the Free-mo system, it is designed to represent modern day railroading covering anything from class 1 down to a branch line. As you will see in the following information all modules are generic for the first and last six inches which means that any module can fit either way with another. In the case of this system the club would provide two reversing loops and members would build the modules that go in between. What is different about this system is that you can build what style of module that you like, straight, curve, or an interchange with three or more modules connecting to the one. Another plus is that we do not need equal length modules because we just have the one row of modules which are viewed from both sides, this means that if all you can fit in your vehicle is 2 2x3½ foot units you can do that or if you can do 4 2x4 foot units that is also OK. The photo above shows how one group set up their modules. It can be as

simple as a few modules between the reversing loops or as large as multiple clubs joining together. This is my favorite system because it gives us the freedom to build as large or as small as we see fit. There is also a set on standards for Free-mo in N Scale.

One suggestion I have for any standard we use is that when a member constructs a module they also make a small model of it showing the track plan that we can use in deciding what the show set up would look like, this could be as simple as a piece of foamboard cut to the shape with the track plan drawn in. the scale could be 1" =1'

If anyone has any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact me. Ph 423-273-1024

Freemo website: <http://www.free-mo.org/about>

### What is Free-mo?

The latest in HO scale modular model railroading

**The Free-mo Concept:** San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Club at San Rafael, CA in February 1996 at the Pacific Coast

Region Convention.

## 1.0 Introduction

Free-mo was developed with the idea that a set of standards focusing mainly on module endplates would enable faithful modeling of prototype trackplans and operations in a modular environment. The length and track configuration of a Free-mo module or module set is up to the modeler. Free-mo takes the boredom out of running trains monotonously around a double or even a triple track mainline. With Free-mo, less is more.

Free-mo operates like a permanent or sectional layout but still retains its modularity (Free-mo is actually more modular than existing double track modules). Free-mo layouts are operated with a single track mainline in a point to loop, loop to loop, or point to point. Layout sizes can vary to any size conceivable.

The Free-mo mainline is centered on a two foot end so modules can be inverted 180 degrees and still mate up to the adjacent module without modification to wiring or track. The Free-mo mainline also takes advantage of stronger industry support of code 83 rail.

Free-mo was developed with the idea that a set of standards focusing mainly on module endplates would enable faithful modeling of prototype trackplans and operations in a modular environment. The standards just mandate the ends where modules connect together, leaving the length and track configuration up to the modeler. This in turn yields extremely flexible standards that work! For example, if you want to build a module that is 5 feet 7 and 3/4 inches long with an angle of 19 degrees and a 2% grade, you can do it with Free-mo!

Free-mo enables the modeler's creativity to shine through their modules. No longer are modelers confined to fixed-length modules of 4, 6, or 8 feet long. They may build a module to their own needs and dreams.

### The following is the introduction and standard for the frame, legs, and track

S1.1 The objective of the Free-mo Standard is to provide a platform for prototype modeling in a flexible, modular environment. Free-mo modules not only provide track to operate realistic models, but also emphasize realistic, plausible scenery; realistic, reliable trackwork; and

## 2.0 Frame and Legs

S2.1 Endplates shall be 3/4" plywood or equivalent (birch plywood works well) to provide sufficient strength for clamping to adjacent modules. (FAQ S2.1, RP2.1.1)

operations. Free-mo was designed to and continues to push the envelope of modular model railroading to new heights. It goes beyond the traditional closed-loop set-up in creating a truly universal "free-form" modular design that is operations oriented and heavily influenced by prototype railroading.

S1.2 Interoperability: The Free-mo Standard is a collection of requirements for building scale model railroad modules that can work together with little effort, even when they have never been assembled together before. The beauty of the Free-mo standard is that it allows builders to replicate any freelance or prototype trackplan within your modules boundaries, yet can be combined for maximal interoperability with other Free-mo modules. (FAQ S1.1 )

S1.3 A Free-mo module is a free-form module that conforms to the Free-mo Standard as outlined below. (FAQ S1.3)

S1.3.1A Free-mo module can be any length and the endplates can be at any angle to each other.

S1.3.2A Free-mo module can be one section or a set of two or more sections that form a module.

S1.4 The Free-mo Standard governs the ends of the module and basic track requirements. Most Free-mo modules have two ends, but modules can have one, two, three, or more ends. (FAQ S1.4)

S1.5 Free-mo modules fall into three basic categories:

S1.5.1 Mainline - Mainline modules represent Mainline rights-of-way. Mainline modules are designed with large radius curves and minimal grades.

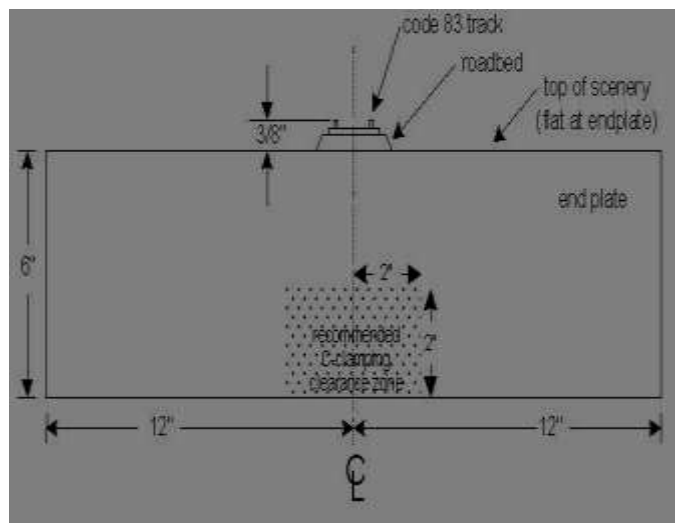
S1.5.2 Branchline - . Branchline modules represent Branchline rights-of-way. Branchline modules can have smaller radius curves and steeper grades than Mainline modules. See <http://free-mo.org/branchline> for more details.

S1.5.3 Mini-mo - Mini-modules (mini-mos) have endplates that are narrower than the standard width endplate. With this in mind, a mini-mo can be Mainline or Branchline module, single-track or double-track. (FAQ S1.6) Mini-mo supplement

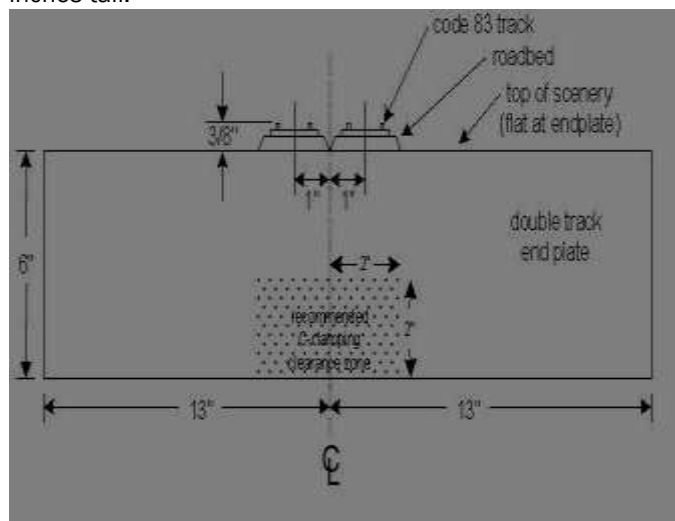
S1.6 Mini-mo type modules are intended to be a Free-mo subset and not replace or exclude an equivalent length standard module. Full width modules are generally more stable and should be used wherever possible.

RP2.1.1 Avoid Dimensional Pine Lumber for your frame work. It has a tendency to warp and "cup" with age, throwing off track alignment. It has also been found that plywood (birch plywood works well) warps and twists less than dimension lumber (3/4 inch pine boards). (FAQ S2.1)

S2.2 Single-track endplates shall be 24 inches wide by 6 inches tall.



S2.3 Double-track endplates shall be 26 inches wide by 6 inches tall.



S2.4 Roadbed shall be 1/4 inch cork or equivalent on 1/2 inch plywood or equivalent. Foam tops are acceptable if braced to prevent sagging or flexing.

S2.5 The nominal and minimum height of the railhead, at the end plate, is 50 inches from the floor. (FAQ S2.5)

S2.6 On modules with grades, the elevation of the high end shall be some multiple of 3/4 inch above low end. (FAQ S2.6)

S2.7 The maximum height of railhead, at the end plate, is 62 inches from the floor. (FAQ S2.7)

S2.8 The module (set) shall have at least four legs and stand on its own.

S2.9 Legs shall have continuous adjustment of plus or minus 1 inch (screw type foot).

S2.10 The bottoms of the legs shall have rubber tip or equivalent floor protection.

S2.11 Modules may be used with operators and spectators on either or both sides. (FAQ S2.11)

### 3.0 Track

S3.1 Modules shall use flex or hand-laid track.

S3.2 The centerline of the all tracks shall be 4 inches or more from the sides of the module at all times. (FAQ S3.2)

S3.3 On a Single-track module, the through track shall be centered on the 24-inch endplate.(see S2.2)

S3.4 On Double-track modules, the two through track centerlines shall be spaced precisely 2 inches apart and centered on the 26-inch endplate.(see S2.3)

S3.5 Track on the through route must be perpendicular to the endplate for 6 inches from each end of the module.

S3.6 Track on the through route must be straight and level for 6 inches from each end of the module.

RP3.6.1 The points of a turnout should not be within 6" of the end of a module.

S3.7 Rail shall be cut off 1 inch away from module end; ties and ballast shall be continued to the module end for good appearance and matching with the adjacent module. Ties shall be notched under the ends of the rails and to the module end, to clear bridge rail joiners and provide freedom of adjustment for bridge rails. (FAQ S3.7)

RP3.7.1 To enable DCC power districts, your module must be able to accommodate insulated rail joiners at each Free-mo endplate.

RP3.7.2 Free-mo printed circuit board tie plates are recommended for ends. (FAQ RP3.7.2)

RP3.7.3 Tie plates where the fitter rails go over should be excavated slightly to permit fitter rails to accommodate any vertical irregularity in track alignment between adjacent modules.

S3.8 Turnouts shall be at least #6.

RP3.8.1 Turnouts on the module through route should be #8 or larger.

S3.9 There shall be a minimum of 12 inches of straight track between reverse curves.

S3.10 Track on the through route of a Mainline module must ALL be Code 83 nickel-silver rail without exception.

S3.11 Sidings, spurs and other tracks of a Mainline module may be Code 83 or smaller, but shall be no less than Code 40.

S3.12 The minimum permitted curve radius on a through route of a Mainline Module is 42 inches. This includes through track sidings and other tracks where through traffic will run.

RP3.12.1 While the minimum permitted radius of curves on the through route of a Mainline module is 42 inches, 48 inch

and larger curves are preferred.

S3.13 Spacing between tracks on curves of a Mainline module shall allow for long cars to operate without fouling each other; observe NMRA Standards S-8 Track Centers for "Class Ia" equipment.

S3.14 Mainline maximum permitted grade on the through route of a Mainline module is 2.0 percent (approximately 1/4 inch per foot).(FAQ S3.14)

S3.15 Curves on the through route of a Mainline module shall be appropriate for Mainline operation of contemporary long cars, see Standard S-7 Clearances and the NMRA Gage, and NMRA Recommended Practices RP-11 Curvature and Rolling Stock

## **NASHVILLE ORGANIZATION GRANTED LEASE TO OVERHAUL CENTENNIAL PARK LOCOMOTIVE NC&STL RY 4-8-4 DIXIE CLASS J #576 MAY STEAM ONCE AGAIN**

**NASHVILLE, TENN. August 17, 2016** • The not-for-profit Nashville Steam Preservation Society (NSPS) and Metro Nashville have reached an agreement to permit the relocation and restoration of steam locomotive No. 576, a 74-year old steam locomotive displayed in Centennial Park since 1953. As part of the 23-year lease, No. 576 will be returned to operating condition and placed in service as a tourist attraction on the Nashville & Eastern Railroad to operate excursion trains out of downtown Nashville.



"Operating steam locomotives are rare, thus the ones that are restored to operate in exhibition service attract incredible crowds wherever they go," explained NSPS President Shane Meador. "An investment in this effort ultimately means an investment in Metro Nashville - past, present and future."

"This ordinance presents a really interesting opportunity for Nashville; and it's an exciting one," Metro Council Member

Angie Henderson explained to the entire Metro Council. "Steam locomotive 576, which has been sitting in Centennial Park for many years, now has the opportunity to be restored to active use for our community and for visitors, and so this [lease] gets the ball rolling."

The lease approval follows months of mechanical inspections, community meetings, and research, as the preservation society consulted with the local business leaders, expert mechanical contractors and others.

With significant monetary pledges made already, the organization must raise \$3 million in order for No. 576 to operate again. The exacting rebuild process will see the locomotive disassembled and reduced to its frame, boiler and driving wheels where it'll be thoroughly inspected and re-machined as necessary. The rebuilding will take place just a few miles from downtown Nashville. The organization is also seeking an additional \$2 million to construct a permanent, visitor-friendly home and facility for the locomotive that will allow for its continued maintenance as well as to provide an interactive educational environment.

Retired in 1952, No. 576 was one of 20 class J3 steam locomotives built for the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway. Recognizable by their characteristic streamlining and yellow striping, No. 576 and other J3-class engines earned reputations as mechanical marvels, capable of speeds over 100MPH.

"We are optimistic that we will have the funds to relocate No. 576 either late this year or early next year," said NSPS Director Alex Joyce. "Once at its Nashville restoration facility, we expect the project to take 3 to 4 years to fully restore the locomotive to an operational historic icon for Nashville."

NSPS must raise an initial capital goal of \$500,000 before relocating No. 576 to its restoration site.

Those interested in learning more and/or supporting this exciting unique project, please visit our website at [www.nashvillesteam.org](http://www.nashvillesteam.org), on Facebook at "Nashville Steam," or contact us at [info@nashvillesteam.org](mailto:info@nashvillesteam.org).

## R AILFANNING TENNESSEE THE COWEN RAILROAD MUSEUM



The museum currently exhibits approximately 1000 interesting, valuable and historic railroad and city of Cowan artifacts, pertaining to railroading mainly in and around Cowan. In many ways there has been a re-creation of a moment in history in the vignettes of various displays. There are displays of figures in period costumes, photographs, tools, documents, old maps and out-of-print railroad books. This collection is always growing and there will be special visits of interesting displays from time to time. There is also a small gift shop where you can purchase engineers caps, railroad oriented t-shirts, stickers, buttons, collectible RR patches, books and much more. See the artifacts page for some pictures and descriptions.

One special artifact has been donated to The Museum and is on display in the waiting-room: a large upright antique hand-made oak "cabinet of drawers" used to store large railroad maps dating back to circa 1890-1910. It is highly prized and quite handsome as well as an example of local craftsmanship from days gone by.



The Cowen Railroad Museum is located about 45 minutes northwest of Chattanooga TN alongside the CSX mainline between Nashville TN and Atlanta GA. This is the former mainline for the Nashville Chattanooga and St Louis RY and the start of the helper district leading up to the Cumberland Mountain Tunnel

There are model trains of all types on display including a marvelous hand-made model Live Steam locomotive (4-4-0) in 1" to the foot scale. It burns alcohol and runs on steam like the real thing. This was built by a local craftsman about 1920. There also is a HO scale Model Railroads set up and in operation, representation of the Cowan and tunnel area. A prized collection of authentic NC&StL scale models are on display, including many built-from-scratch models by a master builder from Tennessee.

Outside in a wonderfully landscaped park setting is a complete full-size train headed up by a 1920 Porter steam locomotive of the rare "Columbia" wheel arrangement (2-4-2), a flat car and an authentic for the area wooden NC&StL bay window caboose. On a separate track is a full sized General Electric (GE 44 ton) Diesel switch engine, formerly owned by the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway, and an original NC&StL boxcar. There is also a pair of Fairmont "motor cars" restored to operation on display. Often called "putt-putts" because of the noise they make when running, these were used by right-of way repair people. New attractions are in the "works". Read on!



The Museum consists of the NC&StL RY Cowen TN depot filled with artifacts and memorabilia from "The Dixie Line"; on static display the following: a steam locomotive, flat car, NC&StL box



car, caboose and 70-ton GE Switcher, a couple of speeder cars; and assorted signal heads and interpretive signs.



The depot once sat on the other side of the tracks but was moved to its present site in its entirety as seen in the photo above.

There is always a steady parade of heavy freight trains passing by outside the doors of the depot. One can now climb into the Depot's observation tower and while away the afternoon watching current day operations of big-time railroading complete with monster Diesel pusher engines working southbound on about half the trains as they attack the grade approaching the distant tunnel. On a cool day, you can hear the engines as they work echo off the face of the mountain two miles distant and more than 200 feet higher up. It is AWESOME to even the most casual observer!

The museum hopes to host a number of its own activities as attractions to the Cowan area in addition to the frequent regularly scheduled events the town hosts.



The museum recently acquired the former NC&STL RY CTC control tower from CSX. There are plans to restore the tower to its CTC operating days.



CXS still maintains signal equipment on site

The museum is totally operated by its members who are volunteers and is recognized by IRS as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. This allows donations with a tax-deduction benefit to you should you be interested in contributing to the effort here. It is a labor of Love! Love of the City, love of the railroad and love of each other, typical of small town, USA. As the Pusher crews used to say on their radios to each other as they worked the mountain, "c'mon down, c'mon down to Cowan.



The showcase piece of rolling stock is switcher #100



NC&STL RY XM box car #22524 is also a rare find



NC&StL Caboose #153 is a unique piece of rolling stock. It has a steel frame, wood sheath sides, and metal bay windows added

## RAILFANNING COLORADO

### THE DURANGO & SILVERTON RAILROAD

Text from Wikipedia,.com



D&S RR #482 rounds the point in the high gorge along the San Juan River

Photo by Ted Bleck-Doran

#### OPERATING PRACTICE AND ROUTE DESCRIPTION

The railroad runs 45 miles (72 km) from the Durango yard to Silverton, crossing the Animas River five times throughout the trip. Once trains reach Silverton and unload passengers, the train is turned on the wye, backs uptown to pick up returning passengers, and makes the trip back to Durango. One way scheduled trains take 3½ hours to run the 45 miles (72 km) each way, with a 2¼ hour layover in Silverton.

A train departing Durango generally takes about one hour between the crew arriving and the train departing. Brakemen inspect the train for cleanliness and required tools for the day, including a flagging kit and marker lamps for the rear of the train. The conductor will sign in his crew and obtain passenger lists and track reports to deliver to his crew. The engineer and fireman will inspect the locomotive and prepare it for the day's trip, making sure all machinery is lubricated and in proper condition, and no last minute

repairs are needed. The fireman will ensure proper coal and water is in the tender, and make sure lubricating oil is on supply and that automatic lubrication is working properly; he will also clean the cab and hose off the engine and tender of ash and dust.

Once the engine is ready, the locomotive will be pulled onto the mainline, and backed up, working the engine against the brakes to check braking capability, and also to clean the smokebox and cylinders of condensation, and work the cylinders to warm them up for lubrication. The head brakeman will hook the locomotive up to the train, and the car shop will then assist the crew by performing brake tests with the engineer.

Scheduled trains on the Durango & Silverton operate on authority by timetable, though on occasion may be annulled for special trains or other circumstances. A train leaving Durango will depart at 5 mph (8 km/h) until the train is off the platform, then advance to 10 mph (16 km/h) until leaving yard limits, where track speed is 15 mph (24 km/h). The 15th Street bridge is just east of the Durango yard limits, and maintenance-of-way crews also have a storage area here, where track patrolmen will inspect the train rolling by. The grade is fairly flat until 32nd Street, where a small hill will have the engine work a little until 36th Street. The train will then roll downgrade about ¼ mile (0.40 km) and use that to accelerate to 20 mph (32 km/h), which is the track speed between 36th St. and Hermosa. Home Ranch is the first siding past Durango. A new wye has recently been built just east of here to turn trains for the Polar Express and other event trains. As the train runs through the valley, it is traveling on the longest tangent on the railroad, since most of the railroad meanders through the canyon following the river. Motorists can drive alongside the train through here and watch the engine work harder and harder as it starts to climb towards Hermosa. Passing Trimble Lane, the engine will start to pick up some work as the grade stiffens. A scheduled train takes 40 minutes to reach Hermosa from Durango.

Hermosa has a small maintenance-of-way yard and siding, as well as the first water tank to fill the engine's tender. Doubleheaded trains will often be put together here, with the helper running light to Hermosa ahead of the train, take on water, and then await the arrival of the train with the road engine spotting itself at the tank and taking on water. After a brake test, the train will then take on the 30 minute, 2.5% climb between Hermosa and Rockwood. As the train climbs away from the valley, passengers will notice the locomotives working hard to pull the train through the many curves that now define the railroad. An hour after leaving Durango the train passes under US Highway 550 and slows to 10 mph (16 km/h) to traverse the "mini-highline", a rock shelf where the track follows the edge of a small cliff, and then picks up speed again through the meadow at Shalona. This is the last grade crossing the railroad encounters until Silverton. Slowing again after the crossing, the train winds around another rock face above Shalona Lake, with Rockwood being just around the next curve. Rockwood has a short wye and siding, and is also the first flagstop on the line. Being an hour and ten minutes by rail from Durango, some passengers lodging nearby opt to board the train here instead of driving all the way to town. The grade tops off for a while and the helper engine on doubleheaded trains will be cut off here and run ahead light to Tank Creek.



**D&S RR #482 heading back to Durango CO after rounding the point overlooking the San Juan River gorge**  
Photo by Ted Bleck-Doran

As the train enters the narrow rock cut, it becomes the only ground transportation into the Animas Canyon. Passengers immediately notice the slow pace of the train as it winds onto the "highline", a famous section of the railroad where the train crawls along the face of high cliffs. The engine crew will usually blow down the engine on the bridge at MP 471.2 to clean sediment from the boiler and the fireman will look back on his side of the train for a highball from the rear brakeman, indicating the rear of the train has cleared the bridge and the engineer can pick up speed to 15 mph (24 km/h), the track speed the rest of the way to Silverton. The roadbed closely follows the Animas River from now on, and the grade

fluctuates quite a bit between here and Cascade Canyon. Tacoma is the next flagstop and the railroad has another siding here. At MP 474.5 is the Tank Creek water tank, and engines will stop here for water. The fireman will top off the tender, taking about 4,000 US gallons (3,331 imp gal; 15,142 l), while the engineer oils around the engine and inspects machinery and bearings. On doubleheaded trains, the helper locomotive will then rejoin the train and perform another brake test.

From Tank Creek, trains only travel about 1 mile (1.6 km) before reaching Tall Timber Resort. Another mile and the train is traveling on a very narrow rock wall before rounding the curve and climbing into Cascade. Cascade is two hours and 26 miles (42 km) by rail from Durango, and in the winter trains are turned here on the wye due to avalanche chutes further up the railroad. After crossing the Animas a third time, the railroad curves to the east and heads towards Needleton. The grade through here tends to stairstep between short steep 3% grades and longer gradual 2-2.5% while winding through many reverse curves. Unlike the mainline that was constructed by the D&RG before arriving in Durango, the Silverton branch was laid without compensated curves, and the trains can really drag into some of the reverse curves against the engine. A 10 mph (16 km/h) speed restriction covers a sharp curve above a rock face at MP 481.5.



**D&S RR #482 running alongside of the upper reaches of the San Juan River as it nears Silverton CO**  
Photo by Ted Bleck-Doran

Needleton flag stop is roughly  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile (0.80 km) from the Needleton siding, and another  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile (0.40 km) beyond that to the Needleton water tank. Trains stopping at Needleton flag stop are for backpackers usually hiking up to the Chicago Basin, as well as occasional homesteaders who have cabins in the forest. Locomotives have a hard time starting the trains from a stop here as well as leaving from the tank stop, indicated by the layer of sand on the tracks and the frequency of the valves centering up, forcing the engineer to back the locomotive up a foot or so before trying to start forward again. On the westbound trains, the tender

only needs about 1,000 US gallons (833 imp gal; 3,785 l) to be topped off before proceeding to Silverton, however, the steepest grade lies ahead. The track out of Needleton is around 2.5%, with a little ease around MP 486, but then quickly steepens again, topping off 4% at MP 488. From MP 488 to Elk Park the fireman finally gets a break on the wider, sweeping curves and flatter grade.

Elk Park is the last siding, wye, and flagstop before Silverton. Not as popular as Needleton for hikers, Elk Park is where the railroad crosses the Colorado Trail and it often serves as a hunting camp in season. Also past Elk Park, the railroad is among some of the highest concentration of avalanche chutes in the state. The Snowshed Slide once had a snowshed, until burning and leaving behind remnants of what once gave the slide its name. The grade has one decent pull approaching Snowshed, but afterwards is pretty easy the rest of the way to Silverton, and also has longer, sweeping, slightly elevated curves which allow for smooth running. The engineer will blow a warning whistle approaching the sharp curve at Cataract, the narrowest section of the entire canyon, before opening up to the valley that holds Silverton.

The railroad crosses the Animas one last time before entering yard limits. The train slows to 10 mph (16 km/h) and blows a long station call on the whistle before passing the depot. After the train arrives, passengers disembark the train and the crew backs the train down to the wye for servicing. An ashpit was recently constructed for use and to aid in heavier repairs if needed, which do happen on occasion. After shoving the train uptown for boarding passengers, the engineer will oil and inspect the engine once again and the crew will perform another brake test for the return trip to Durango.

Trains will almost always use straight air unless conditions or equipment don't allow. The engineer won't need to use steam for power to move the train until just east of Tacoma, and after climbing to Rockwood, can drift again all the way to Trimble Lane in the valley near Durango. As far as water, trains coming from Silverton will top off again at Needleton on the return, and Cascade trains won't need water for the return.

Steam locomotives after arrival in Durango are cut from the trains for immediate servicing, which can make the shop crew pretty busy in the summer with four or five locomotives being tended. Servicing includes coaling up the tender, adding wood pellets for fuel for overnight stoking, refilling the sand supply, cleaning or dropping the fire depending on the schedule for the locomotive, and then spotting the engine in the roundhouse to apply grease, shoot bearings, refill oilers, and replenish water. Running 90-mile (140 km) trips each day in the summer with the heavy trains will also cause

damage to the running gear and require heavier repairs at times, which the roundhouse is capable of doing.

The railroad uses a couple of small diesel switching locomotives for work trains and everyday yard switching to allow the steam locomotives to enter the shop areas sooner. The use of wood pellets for overnight fuel, as well as diesel switchers are a result of constant complaints from local citizens regarding the fly ash from the coal-fired engines. Though the railroad has been present in the town since its founding, the D&SNG has tried its best to appease the locals.

## RAILFANNING COLORADO THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD

Text from Wikipedia.com



**C&TSRR #489 gets ready at Chama NM for its run to Antonito CO the classic and often modeled coaling tower and water tower are visible in the distance**  
Photo by Paul Haynes

### TOURIST TRAIN RIDE

Trains depart each morning from both Chama, New Mexico and Antonito, Colorado. In peak season there are trains every day of the week in either direction. They meet at Osier, the midpoint of the line where lunch is provided. Passengers may continue on their train to the other end or switch trains to return to their original terminal. Through riders have the option of a motor coach return to their original terminal. All seats are reserved. Seats are sometimes available to walk-ups, but this is rare in peak season.

The railroad provides standard seats in coaches, or first class seats in a parlor car. A gondola with no seats is usually provided for standard or first class riders who prefer to ride in the open air after their ticket is taken. A concession car with snacks and gifts is on each train and bathrooms are available on the train.

All passenger trains are pulled by historic steam locomotives that originally worked on this line and others of the Denver

and Rio Grande Western. Heavy trains out of Chama may have two locomotives as far as Cumbres Pass. East bound from Chama is the steepest portion so the steam engines tend to work hard and give off an acoustic and visual show. The remaining 3/4 of the eastbound trip is downgrade and the locomotives are fairly quiet. Westbound from Antonito, the grade is much less but the locomotives periodically work harder, especially on the last couple miles to Cumbres Pass. The line passes through Rio Grande and Carson National Forests. Most of the line is bordered by rocky ledges, cliffs and formations of varying types. The train passes along the rim of Toltec Gorge, a spectacular, though brief highlight. Conifer and aspen trees dominate with periodic mountain meadows. The aspen trees turn a brilliant yellow in the fall making those trips popular. The easternmost quarter shifts to scrubby and arid rolling hills. There are numerous restored historic structures along the line, including two tunnels, bridges, section houses and water tanks

Car and train charters are available. Extensive historic equipment is available for chartering.

There are typically four full-length excursion options:

- Antonito to Chama by bus; return by train
- Antonito to Chama by train; return by bus
- Chama to Antonito by bus; return by train
- Chama to Antonito by train; return by bus

and two reduced-length excursion options:

- Antonito to Osier by train; return by train
- Chama to Osier by train; return by train



**C&TSRR loco #489 beginning to ease back to couple up with # 487 which formed the double header last Saturday before departing Chama for Antonito.**

**Photo by Paul Haynes.**

## CHAMA TO OSIER

Beginning in Chama (Milepost 344.12), the railroad makes a nearly straight shot northeast after leaving the yard and crossing the Rio Chama. About a mile later begins a 4% grade which is nearly constant from there to Cumbres. with the exception of a stretch at Coxo. The first siding on the line is located at Lobato (MP: 339.99), located here are the

remnants of a stock pen, and a water tank made for a movie in the 1970s. The tank was used later in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. The water tank was knocked over in 2006, due to age and high winds. Just under a quarter of a mile away, is Lobato Trestle, the second highest trestle on the line, built in 1883. Due to weight restrictions, only one locomotive at a time is allowed to cross; therefore, all double-headers must separate, and rejoin on the other side. On June 23, 2010, a big fire of unknown origin burned the Lobato Trestle destroying the wooden deck and railroad crossties. This fire also caused irreparable damage to the bridge's steel spans, requiring their replacement. Trains departed Cumbres instead of Chama for the rest of the 2010 season. Work to replace the bridge spans began in March 2011 and was finished in June 2011. The first passenger train over the bridge occurred on the morning on June 18, 2011.



**C&TS #487 in the Chama Yard – photo from Wikipedia.com**

From here to Cumbres, the railroad operates on the north side of Wolf Creek. On the journey to the top at Cumbres, the train passes Cresco Siding and water tank (MP 335.10) and navigates a small canyon past Hamilton's Point. Exiting the canyon, the track makes a turn to the northwest and up the Wolf Creek drainage through Coxo. At a narrow point of the valley, the track makes a horseshoe turn up to Windy Point, which the train rounds to enter Cumbres Pass.

At Cumbres (MP 330.48), elevation 10,015 ft (3,053 m), is the Car Inspector's House, Water Standpipe, remnants of the extensive snow shed, and the Section House, which replaced the original depot after it was demolished in the 1950s. Cumbres is the highest point on the railroad. From here east, the track heads down at 2.5%, and descends the Cumbres Loop, more commonly refer to as "Tanglefoot Curve". After exiting the loop, the track follows a general easterly direction until Milepost 327.6, where they turn north up the Los Pinos Valley.

Heading north, the track loses elevation, while the valley slopes up, with the track and valley floor finally meeting at Mile 325, where the track once again changes direction, heading south on the other side of the valley, following the

Rio de Los Pinos toward Osier. After Mile 323, the track again leaves the valley, on a much steeper grade, while the track clings to the valley created by the river. Along the way, the track crosses Cascade Trestle (MP 319.95), taller than the Lobato Trestle, at 137 ft (42 m). Approximately a mile and a half later, the track enters Osier, Colorado, the midpoint of the railroad where the two trains meet for lunch. Here, riders may switch trains and return to their point of origin, or ride to the opposing terminus.

## ANTONITO TO OSIER



**C&TS steam locomotive #484 – photo from Wikipedia.com**

This section covers the eastern portion of the line from the small cattle and junction town of Antonito to Osier, the midpoint of the line.

Antonito (MP 280.70) is a small company town of the former railroad main line. It is home to the C&TS car shop, a water tank, and other relics. Most of the facilities were built by the Cumbres & Toltec, as the original rail yard, wye, and station were not sold to the states of Colorado and New Mexico.



**C&TSRR #489 on the point of a doubleheader near Osier NM**  
Photo by Paul Haynes

Shortly after leaving the station, the train heads straight for 3 miles (4.8 km), until coming into some hills. Shortly thereafter, the train crosses Ferguson's Trestle (MP 285.87), named for a man who was hung from a locomotive there. The

original trestle was featured in the 1988 TV movie *Where The Hell's That Gold?* Starring Willie Nelson and Delta Burke. In filming, a planned explosion ended up getting out of hand and the bridge was burned down. Traffic was halted for a week while the C&TS built a temporary bridge; the following winter it rebuilt the trestle to match the original. About three miles (5 km) later, the train makes the first of 11 crossings into New Mexico, and climbs a ledge up to a lava mesa. Lava (291.55) has the old water tank from Antonito which was moved here in 1971. The track goes around a horseshoe curve which is also used as a reversing loop to turn the rotary snow plow trains from Chama. The Cumbres and Toltec has two rotary snowplows, Rotary OM and Rotary OY.



**This is just a sampling of what, and where I have been in the last 2 and ½ weeks. My wife said I was like a kid at Christmas. Photo by Paul Haynes**

Heading west, the track rounds Whiplash Curve, a double horseshoe curve. About a mile from Whiplash Curve lie the sidings and wye at Big Horn. Past Big Horn the train loops around the sides of mountains going through horseshoe curves before reaching the first water stop at Sublette.

Sublette is an abandoned railroad section camp, consisting of a log bunk house, a section house, a siding, and other buildings. There used to be a water tank at the western end of the siding, but today, in its place, is a standpipe. After filling the tender with water, the engine and the train slowly creep into lush aspen groves.



**C&TSRR #487 assisting the run to Antonito CO**  
Photo by Paul Haynes

After departing Sublette comes Toltec Siding, which in the 50's was the meeting place of long oil well pipe trains moving between Chama and Farmington to Alamosa. Shortly afterwards, trains pass through Mud Tunnel, which is unique because it is lined with wooden pillars since it is bored through soft volcanic ash. When the beams in the tunnel collapsed, the D&RGW made a "shoo fly" around the tunnel to allow passengers and small cars to be moved around the tunnel to an awaiting train. After passing through this, trains pass around Phantom Curve and through Calico Cut, and then the trains slow down as they enter the longer Rock Tunnel. Trains exit the tunnel, entering the Toltec Gorge, where the track is 600 ft (180 m) above the river. The line follows the river the remainder of the distance to Osier.

## RAILFANNING VIRGINIA

### VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF TRANSPORTATION

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

Text from Wikipedia.com

Photos by Ted Bleck-Doran

#### History

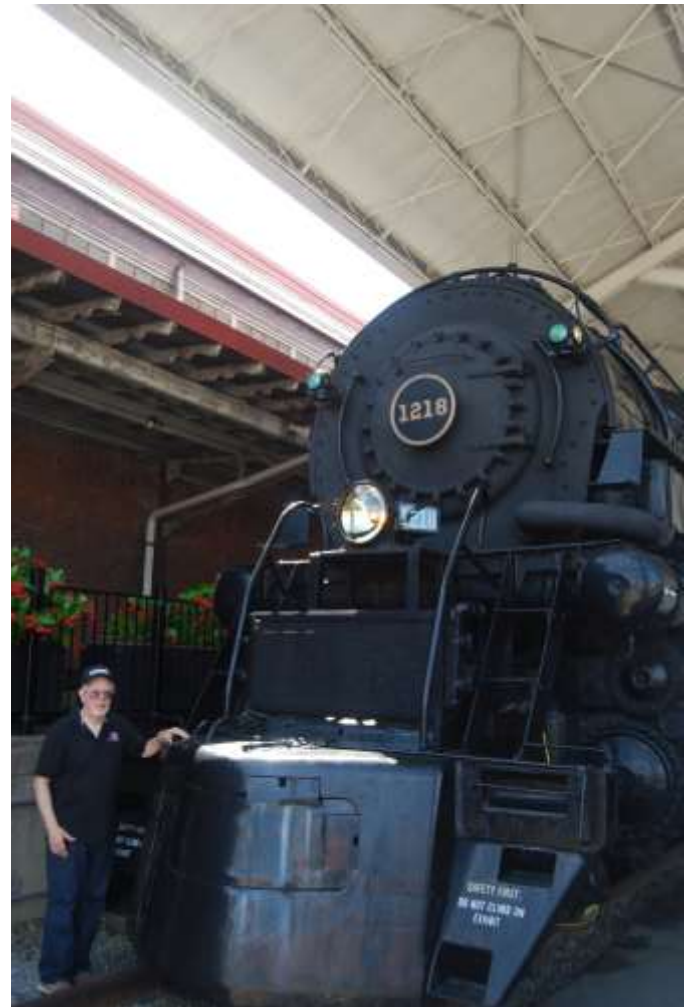
The Virginia Museum of Transportation began its life in 1963 as the Roanoke Transportation Museum located in Wasena Park in Roanoke, Virginia. The museum at that time was housed in an old Norfolk & Western Railway freight depot on the banks of the Roanoke River. The earliest components of the museum's collection included a United States Army Jupiter rocket and the famous N&W J Class Locomotive #611, donated by Norfolk & Western Railway to the city of Roanoke where many of its engines were constructed. The museum expanded its collection to include other pieces of rail equipment such as a former DC Transit PCC streetcar, and a number of horse-drawn vehicles including a hearse, a covered wagon, and a Studebaker wagon.



VA Transportation Museum's latest acquisition is a N&W Y6A#2156 on loan from the National Railroad Museum in St. Louis, MO.

In November 1985, a flood nearly destroyed the museum, and much of its collection. It forced the shutdown of the facility and the refurbishment of #611. In April 1986, the museum re-opened in **Norfolk and Western Railway Freight Station** in downtown Roanoke as the Virginia Museum of Transportation. The museum has earned that title, being recognized by the General Assembly of Virginia as the Commonwealth's official transportation museum.

The locomotives Norfolk & Western 611 and Norfolk & Western 1218 were originally property of The City of Roanoke due to the museum's original charter. On the April 2, 2012, VMT's 50 Birthday, the city officially gifted the locomotive titles to the museum.



The Museum also has N&W Class A #1218 on display

The Norfolk and Western Railway Freight Station was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012.<sup>[4]</sup> The station consists of two clearly identifiable sections, both of which were completed in 1918. They are the two-story, fifty-bay-long Freight Station proper which was built parallel to the

railroad tracks and now is oriented south, and the one-story-with-basement brick Annex that formerly housed the offices of the Shenandoah and Radford divisions of the Norfolk and Western. The building closed for railroad freight business in 1964.



Virginian Electric Motor #135

### Railroad exhibits

Five on-going exhibits cover sundry aspects of railroad life in America, especially Virginia. In addition to these on-going exhibits, the museum maintains an O-Gauge train layout modeled after Roanoke, Salem, and Lynchburg, Virginia.



The pride of the Museum's collection is the fully restored N&W J #611... on the day of our visit one could blow the whistle and ring the bell from inside the cab

### "Working the High Iron - A pictorial history of the N & W Railway"

This exhibit features many photos of the men and women who worked for Norfolk & Western throughout the years.

### "The Claytor Brothers - Virginians Building America's Railroad"

Detailing the lives of Graham and Robert Claytor, this exhibit explores their past and their relationship that led to the merger of the Norfolk & Western and Southern Railways.



Wabash 1009 and N&W A 1218

### "African American Heritage on the Norfolk and Western Railroad - 1930-1970"

This exhibit is the result of an oral history project sponsored in part by Roanoke area businesses and individuals to document the often-ignored roles played by African-Americans on the rails. The exhibit includes pictures, artifacts, and recorded interviews with African-Americans who worked for the railroad.

### "Big Lick"

This exhibit reproduces a 1930s rural train depot, featuring freight scales, a telegrapher's office, time tables, and a velocipede hand car used for servicing track



Roads absorbed by the N&W/Southern mergers are represented in the collection... here's Wabash #1009



**NORFOLK SOUTHERN'S COVERED LO CLASS COVERED HOPPERS**  
**"BUT THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME"**  
**A CASE FOR WEATHERING FREIGHT CAR MODELS**

By Ted Bleck-Doran



Even though Southern RY #88274 (LO Covered Hopper) is weathered its reporting marks and road name can be clearly seen.



Southern RY #88195 (LO Covered Hopper) has its original lettering obscured, requiring a patch paint job on sides and ends to properly identify the car's identity.



Southern RY #88200 (LO Covered Hopper) lettering is faint but legible... note that the car numbering has a blank space making it read 88 200.



Norfolk Western #178880 looks almost new despite years of service out on the road... the car carries a large block letter NW herald top left side and Norfolk and Western spelled out in the lower right



Weathering on Southern RY #88093 (LO Covered Hopper) has all but obscured the car's road name lettering.



Even with an attempt to refresh the reporting marks Norfolk and Western #177314's identity is all but obscured



Norfolk and Western #176207 carries an earlier version N&W paint scheme with "NORFOLK AND WESTERN" centered and spelled out across the top side



Norfolk Southern #253078 shows only slight weathering save for the obscured reporting marks on the top end panel... yellow safety reflector stripes have been applied



Norfolk and Western #178345 displays a faded NW block letter herald and "Norfolk and Western" spelled out on the lower right side... it has reflector tapes applies but no updated repair blocks



Norfolk Southern #176059 shows a speed stripe NS herald on the side but still carries NW reporting marks on the top end panels



Norfolk Southern #255122 has its faded NW heritage peeking through the grime while sporting NS reporting marks on top of a partial paint job.



One can just make out the "...minal" for the Illinois Terminal identification for ITC #1851... NS became the new owner following merger with the ITRR, but the car retained ITC reporting marks



Here is another example of a partial repaint job... Norfolk Southern #255124 has lost its "speed stripe" NS herald



The heritage of ITC #1968 is slightly more evident with the full Illinois Terminal identification peeking through the dirt and grime

**NOTES:**

1. Southern Railway cars 88093, 88195, 88200, and 88274 are 100-ton LO, 4750 cuft, cars built by Pullman Standard as PS-2CD covered hoppers, circa 1980
2. Norfolk & Western car 176207, and Norfolk Southern car 176059, are series HC70's built by Pullman standard in 1970. It originally carried a circled N&W herald in the upper left corner with a centered 'NORFOLK AND WESTERN' identification in the upper side panel and a "N&W in larger block lettering beneath the corporate name.
3. Norfolk & Western cars 177314, 178880, and 178345 were built by Pullman Standard as part of a 2000 car order by NW (1000 in 1973/74; 500 in 1979; and, 500 in 1980. The first 1500 cars were listed as HC71 series while the 1980 batch were listed a HC79 series. All wore the block style NW in the upper left side of the car and "Norfolk and Western "spelled out in the lower right side panel.
4. Norfolk Southern cars 253078, 255722, and 255624 were renumbered N&W HC-70 series hoppers in the 176XXX number series.
5. Illinois Terminal Corporation cars 1851 and 1968 were built by Pullman Standard in 1973 for the ITRR as 100-ton 3 bay covered hoppers.
6. A great source for photos of rolling stock and locomotives is [WWW.RRPICTUREARCHIVES.NET](http://WWW.RRPICTUREARCHIVES.NET). The site carries 4.1 million photos: 982K rolling stock, 158K locomotives, 29K locations. The site is easy to access and search

## AROUND THE GEORGE L CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM

### MEMRR MEMBER ACTIVITIES AND NEWS BRIEFS

#### PARKING PERMITS FOR 2016-17 ARE AVAILABLE

You have been notified that the new Carter RR Museum Volunteer Parking Permits are available for you to sign out from the museum. They are in a manila envelope near the Yard Master's desk by the computers in the big Alsop Gallery. Remember to supply the contact information and record the identification number on the permit before checking it out and to take only one permit per member (not one for every vehicle you may own). This second reminder about the permits is to also inform you that the ETSU Parking Enforcement Officers are now on extended hours. Parking in the past on weekdays has been monitored in the student, staff and faculty parking lots from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and not on weekends. You only need to display your parking permit in your vehicle during hours when the officers monitor the lots, **but beginning this semester, as of now, their monitoring/ticketing hours have been extended. They will now ticket from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, so put your permit on the dashboard when you come to work sessions on Thursday nights to avoid any possible tickets.**

*Fred Alsop*

#### IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that I report that Rich Gallaher's Mother, the wonderful lady that would come to the museum with Rich on many occasions has had a heart attack this past week end and did not survive. She would stop by my work room often and chat with me. She will be missed by all.

*John Edwards*

#### MEET OUR MEMBERS MIKE BAKER



Mike Baker is a native of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan area having move to the Tri-Cities region by way of Florida. Mike and his wife, Linda, were career civil servant with the Florida State Department of Corrections. Mike's career path took him through working as a probations officer, fraud investigator, and welfare caseworker.

Mike, the G-Gauge Coordinator, can be found in the club rooms Thursday night getting the G-Gauge layout for Saturday open houses. Saturdays he is usually running trains with a lower-Michigan flavor since his first love are the railroads of childhood memory.

Stop by and thank Mike for his hard work maintaining the large scale layout for the GL Carter RR Museum.

## REPAIR IN PLACE REPLACING TRUCK MOUNTED COUPLERS

By Jim Hoit



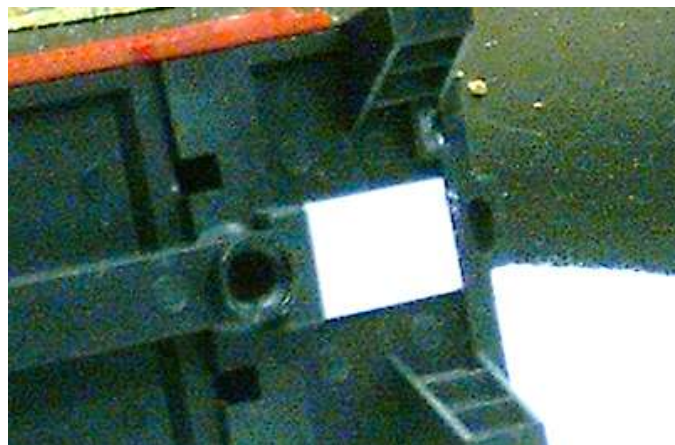
In the case where the knuckle box is attached to the truck, in which this can cause derailments in curves due to the fact that the truck is being pushed sideways instead of pushing the car body.



With that being said the box should be removed from the truck or replace both trucks with new ones



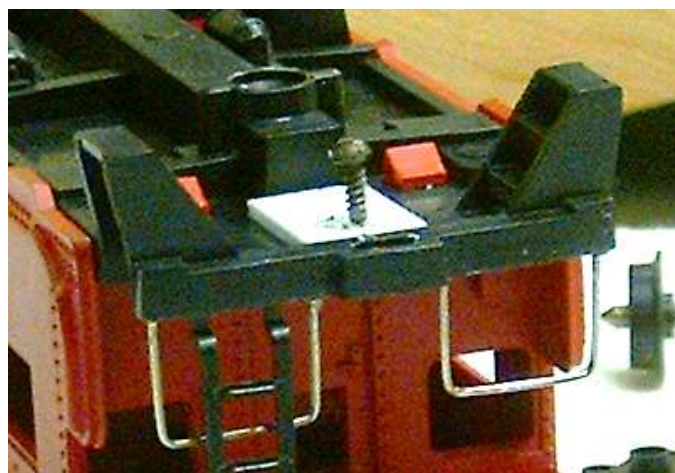
Install a new 2 piece knuckle box to the bottom of the car.



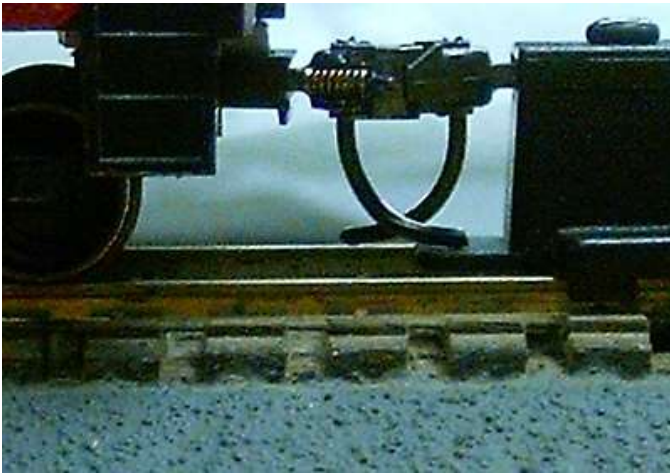
You may need to add a piece of styrene to the space between the box & the car body to help adjust the height of the knuckle, if not needed just remove this piece



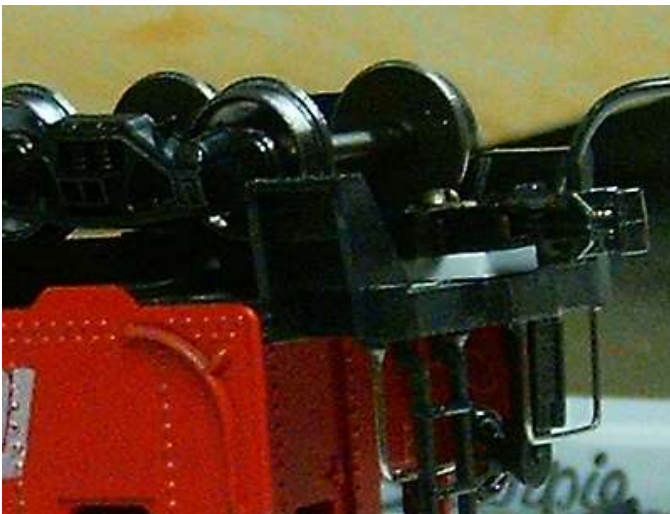
To temporarily attach the box to the car body, simply align the box & styrene to the center position on the end of the car and drill a small hole for a 0-48 screw.



Then using a 0-48 screw & the box with knuckle and spring.



Attach in place and then check the knuckle height using a height gauge on a piece of track.



if knuckle is too low then remove the styrene and check again, if this is OK @ this point then glue the box to the car body and continue to the other end.

*Jim Hoit*

## GEORGE L CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM COORDINATORS' MEETING MINUTES FOR AUGUST 11, 2016

11 August, 2016, Rm 235 Campus Center Building, ETSU  
Attendees: Fred Alsop, Gary Emmert, Gary Gilliam, Ted Bleck-Doran, Mike Baker, Robert Sullivan, Dean Smith, Roger Teinert, Jim Hoit, and Amy Merritt.

Meeting called to order by Fred at 6:05 p.m.

**John Edwards, Webmaster:** (Report was given by Fred in John's absence). Website is up and running. He has

MEMRR membership cards available. Let him know if you need anything posted on the web. Website is paid up for the coming year. There has been a problem opening PDF files by some members trying to open the club newsletter, *the Signal Bridge*. Let him know if you are experiencing such a problem.

**Fred Alsop, Museum Director:** He has requested a new room, 101, in the Campus Center Building that has been used to store Campus Security crime evidence. That room is being vacated. Possible use would be to house the museum library that has outgrown its space. Gary Emmert asked Fred to look at the print rack at Nelson's Fine Art Gallery to see if we might get something similar to store the donated prints we have been receiving at the museum. Fred will be absent from the RR Museum this Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, as he has to attend a BOD meeting of the ET&WNC RR Historical Society in Newland, NC.

**Gary Gilliam, Locomotive Repairs:** Bachman HO-scale locomotive back with new (replaced) locomotive, but old tender with sound system in it. Cost \$35 + S&H. Couple of N-Scale locomotives have been repaired and are running again. Metal wheels placed on the N-Scale rolling stock are causing the cars to derail. Checking the problem but putting plastic wheels back on the cars seems to be working better. A G-Gauge Locomotive with front pilot wheel missing and tender have been donated by Gregg Mundkowsky. New gears have been installed in the club's N&W Y6B.

**Gary Emmert, Library:** 53 books are ready to shelve that Bob Jones has been working on. We have received 8 new hardback books and 60 Dream/Plan/Build DVDs. He is doing the paperwork on these donations.

**Ted Bleck-Doran, Newsletter Editor:** The newsletter theme for September will be train related activities, i.e., recreational, museum, excursions, etc. Articles from members about their experiences are solicited. Heritage Day Event for August is "Coal, Coke and Commerce—Appalachian Carriers".

**Mike Baker, Large Scale Layouts:** Everything running alright. Continues regular track cleaning. We sold all the surplus G-Gauge straight pieces of track and two #6 left-hand turnouts at the museum on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> to a visitor. Robert Sullivan volunteered to assist Mike with the maintenance of the G-Gauge layouts in the Alsop Gallery and the Little Engineers Room.

**Roger Teinert, HO Museum:** Train show and museum flyers are in and have been placed at local welcome centers. Flyers are in the drawer (last on the right in corner). The drawer may be used for materials received from vendors and the public. Thank you letters have been sent out. Some vendors have expressed interest already for next year. The museum will purchase banners for next year. The flyers from

last year will be included in the scrapbook. Track will be painted soon with Frank Fezzie's help. All is in good shape.

Dean Small reported that **Cope layout** is in storage. Engines are stored in boxes in the work room and the rest of the layout will be moved to storage. Dean will help Mike with cleaning the layout since his custodial duties will be taken over by the regular cleaning staff. We appreciate all the Dean has done to clean up the work room and organize to open more space in the museum.

**Robert Sullivan, LEGO Coordinator:** We have the potential to have the LEGO Corporation to conduct up to three children's workshops per year. Things to consider: space requirement and security needs. The June train show and November museum anniversary dates were suggested as possibilities. Robert will be in touch with LEGO to work out the details.

**Other items of business:** Ted Bleck-Doran suggested that we appoint coordinators that are representatives from other historical societies to our monthly meetings. This idea was voted on and agreed upon by all coordinators. This request will be put on other societies' meeting agendas soon.

*Respectfully Submitted*  
*Amy Merritt, Acting MEMRR Secretary*

## MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS MINUTES FOR AUGUST 16 2016 BUSINESS MEETING

The August 16, 2016 MEMRR meeting was called to order by President Fred Alsop at 6:46 with 19 members in attendance. No guests or new members were present.

### Officer's Reports:

#### Secretary's Report:

Motion was made by President Alsop and was seconded for approval of the July meeting minutes. No additions or corrections were suggested.

#### Newsletter Editor's Report:

President Alsop conveyed Ted Bleck-Doran's sincere appreciation of contributions made by members for special articles and regular newsletter features. Additionally, President Alsop expressed deep gratitude for Ted's ongoing and faithful oversight of the newsletter, and praised the quality of the newsletter, for it is truly an outstanding production!

#### Treasurer's Report:

In the absence of Treasurer Gary Emmert, President Alsop reported the July expenses, income, and account balances.

If coordinators need to make purchases, they are encouraged to do so prior to the end of the fiscal year.

#### Webmaster's Report:

John Edwards reported that renewal fees of \$214.00 and \$19.95 domain for a total of \$234.75 have been paid for annual certification.

#### Vice President's Report:

Vice President John Carter welcomed ideas and suggestions for the September program. Please notify John with any possibilities.

#### President's Report:

Additional museum space has been secured in Room 101. In the near future, the room will be cleaned and prepared, with the library to reside in Room 101 and the current library space to be used for magazines, etc.

#### Old Business:

#### Morsette Layout:

Progress report was given regarding Pete Morsette's layout and other railroad materials from his house in Kinsport. Currently his widow Joyce is out of town, and we are still searching for a qualified individual to perform a valuation on the layout. Once an estimate has been secured, the layout will be able to be moved.

#### Labor Day Rail Excursion Package:

The trip to Cass, West Virginia will a big train fan event. The three day, two night package, which includes three different train rides, meals and lodging provided, is a great value for the price. Please see the newsletter for details, and Charlene McCloud may be contacted for registration and payment. August 19th has been set for registration deadline, with cost of the trip being \$450 per person double occupancy.

**New parking passes** for the upcoming year will be available this coming Thursday, August 18th during work night. Registration is required. Come by and get your pass!

#### June 2017 Train Show:

All thank you letters have been sent to vendors and reservations for tables are being taken. LGB Tours will be at next year's show. Robert Sullivan discussed the possibility of the LEGO Corporation sending representatives to do a kid's workshop during the train show. 200+ children are needed for the event, but addition of this workshop will be a big draw for kids and families.

#### New Business:

**Railroad Heritage Day** August 27th will be "Coal, Coke and Commerce: The Appalachian Carriers".

**President Alsop** announced that the First Baptist Kingsport Seniors group would like to visit the museum on Friday, August 26th, and requested that any available members be present to serve as tour guides.

#### **Coordinator's Meeting:**

Details and minutes of the Coordinator's meeting will be available in the September newsletter, but all-in-all, things are running smoothly.

#### **Tweetsie Layout:**

Trains are currently running, but we have 90+ rolling stock kits which need to be assembled. Any member who is interested in building a kit is welcome to pick one up and Thursday nights are a great time to work together to get these assembled.

#### **Annual Picnic:**

The annual picnic has been set for Sunday, September 18th at Kim and Tom McKee's home. The McKee's will provide the meat and space for the event, with membership providing potluck side dishes and desserts. Please contact Jim Parish with what dish you will provide. A spreadsheet will be kept and available on the MEMRR website. NRHS will also participate with us, as this is a museum event.

**Volunteers for Saturday Operating Sessions:** Volunteers for August 20th - September 17th were taken.

#### **Announcements:**

The next coordinator's meeting will be September 15th, 6:00 pm, Campus Center Building, room 235.

**The next September meeting** will be held on September 20th, ETSU Brown Hall, Room 312, 6:30 pm. Dinner and social hour for those who would like to join us at 5:00 pm at the newly remodeled ETSU cafeteria in the Culp Center.

The meeting was concluded at 7:56 with a program entitled "**Then we got a Lazer Printer**", presented by Fred Alsop and John Edwards following.

*Respectfully Submitted*  
*Amy Merritt, Acting MEMRR Secretary*

## **THE VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB**

### **THE MEMRR PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

The school bells have begun to ring across the region and the fall semester is well under way at East Tennessee State University. Summer is coming to an end and the parking situation around the Carter Railroad Museum has become tight again during week days. As we have learned the best

window to hit to find a parking place on Thursday afternoon/evening work days is around 4:30 p.m. when a lot of the faculty and staff are leaving from their day's work. Remember to display your volunteer parking stickers if you arrive before 4:30 p.m. Monday through Fridays as the university parking staff has extended their ticketing hours until at least 4:30 and some may receive tickets for parking in the wrong places up to 7:00 p.m., and some parking spots like service vehicle, handicapped and fire lanes, are monitored most of the time. But your volunteer parking passes are your free ticket to park in all faculty-staff and/or student designated parking spots. If you need a permit and the initial supply has been exhausted please let me know and I will get additional ones.

A big "THANK YOU" to **Jim Pahr**, **Mike Baker**, **Logan Heaton** and **Alf Peoples** for hosting the senior citizens of the Kingsport First Baptist Church at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum on Friday August 26<sup>th</sup>. The group had a great tour and they were very complimentary of their hosts and of our museum.



**Jim Hoit** has updated the park scene and converted it to a rustic walking path

Our **Heritage Day Event for September 30<sup>th</sup>** is a club favorite so bring out your shiny varnish and clear the freight trains off the layouts as we will be featuring "**Streamliners in Action**". We will be bringing back vintage passenger trains along with modern Amtrak consists to highlight the high-water mark for many railroads when one of the most luxurious ways to travel was by rail. So, bring out your favorite livery from any railroad in any part of the country for the period of the fast, sleek streamlined trains and we will invite the public to revisit a bygone era in American railroading with us.

**Jim** and **Charlotte Pahrís**, **Bill Hensley** and I were joined by emeritus members, **Harriet** and **Duane Swank**, and 27 other rail enthusiasts for a Labor Day weekend of riding trains in the heart of mountainous West Virginia. We had a great time riding 3 trains powered by two shay locomotives on the Cass Scenic Railroad, a BL2 and F7 on the Cheat Mountain Salamander, and a Heisler pulling the Durbin Rocket. The 3 day/2 night trip was co-sponsored by the G.L. Carter Chapter NRHS and the George L. Carter Railroad Museum was the first rail excursion we have attempted that was an overnight trip. The weather was terrific; the group had a great time and we are already considering running this trip again on Labor Day in 2017. Mark it on your calendar as a possible rail adventure that yo



Fred Alsop completed building the tunnel portal and lining for tunnel 4 on the ET&WNC layout.

**Gregg Mundkowsky** has been discussing the possibility of working towards a Golden Spike Award for modelers in the club who want to pursue that modeling achievement by working in a group to construct an HO (or perhaps other scale) modular layout that could travel to train shows, festivals and other organized public activities (see his article in the August 2016 issue of *The Signal Bridge* for more information) and he has several members interested in the project. It's not too late to get on board and become a member of this group of modelers. Please contact Gregg at [fleetsailor1981@yahoo.com](mailto:fleetsailor1981@yahoo.com) publication late this month or early October of the 2016 edition of the *HOn3 Annual* that will be carrying a 9 page article on our ET&WNC RR (Tweetsie) layout for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year. MEMRR member **Geoff Stunkard** has written another great article

about this Carter Railroad Museum layout, a work in progress, and combined it with photos of the narrow gauge layout. The museum has ordered a supply of the magazine from the publisher for sale to our members and to the public. Be sure to watch for our announcements of its availability in the coming weeks and get your copy early before our supplies run out.



A coal dock has been added to the yard at Cranberry NC on the ET&WNC layout

The **Annual Carter Railroad Museum Picnic** has been scheduled and it is coming up soon. **Jim Pahrís** has been in touch with **Kim** and **Tom McKee** and they have once more invited us to come to their home on Boone Lake to host this yearly outdoor dinner that has become one of our social highlights for the year. The McKees have a lovely home on the lake shore and Tom has long been into G-Scale trains and has several garden layouts on the property that we can enjoy. They will once more furnish the meats and we will be responsible for bringing all the other "fixins" for the feast. **Jim Pahrís** will coordinate the event and he will need a head count (remember adults only; but including Ben, Alex and Willie) and what you will be bringing. If there are expenses for tableware, plates, cups, etc., the the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter will split the costs 70/30 as we have in the past. So, put **Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, with a starting time of 4:00 p.m. on your social calendars and we will enjoy your company at the picnic!** Location maps and other details will be made available later.

The Carter Railroad Museum and the George L. Carter Chapter are planning their last rail excursion trip for the 2016 year. Details are not all available yet but the trip will be on the Smoky Mountain Railroad with the group riding behind the newly refurbished 2-8-0 Consolidation through the Southern Appalachian mountains and valleys. The day trip will originate at ETSU aboard modern Premier Coach Line buses and we will board the train in Bryson City, NC. The run will be behind steam on **November 12<sup>th</sup>** with the fall leaves off the trees and a more open view of the scenery through the bare branches of the woodlands. This will be a fun trip and we ask you to mark your calendars and plan to join us and bring a friend or two to enjoy the excitement of the sound of a steam whistle and the chuffing belches of a coal-fed iron



horse. This will be the last chance to join us on a train trip this year and this late season trip should be very special. Your ticket will include a visit to the large O-gauge collection of Lionel trains and accessories housed in the museum adjacent to the tracks in Bryson City.

A special tip of the hat is due to **Gary Emmert** and **Dean Small** who have taken the lead in cleaning up our big workroom at the Carter RR Museum. Some of the accumulated "stuff" has been tossed, but everything of value has either been stored in room 336 upstairs or transported for storage to our recently acquired space at ETSU's Valleybrook facility off the Eastern Star exit on I-26 north of Gray, TN. The work room looks much neater and it is actually possible to use it for its intended purpose as a space to do model railroading work in. Thank you gentlemen and thanks to our other members who have given them a helping hand in this project.



One of the new yard structure in the Cranberry yard on the ET&WNC layout

The Railroad Museum has officially acquired room 101 (there is no number above the door, but it is the room between the ladies' restroom and the stairwell outside of the Marsh Gallery) as additional space. I have had a group from ETSU Facilities Management meet with me to discuss the necessary clean-up that will be the first step in getting the room ready for us to occupy that will include removal of the old carpet to be replaced with tile, removal of several wall attachments and mounting brackets, repair of the HVAC system, repair of some of the wall tiles and other things that will be the basis for us to officially move in. I have discussed the potential best use of the space with several of our members, including some of our officers, and with our Museum Librarian, **Gary Emmert**. All agree with me that this space will best serve the museum and our club/chapter members as the new home for our rapidly expanding library. When the room preparation is completed I will begin the process of obtaining proper shelving for it to house the approximately 1,000 hardback volumes of railroad books we currently have in our collection, some of the paperbacks and the DVDs. There should also be enough space for some reading tables, several comfortable chairs for library users and for our computer and printer. It may take a few months for all of this to happen but we will eventually have a much

improved library facility. If you have not reviewed our current library collection you are missing a wonderful opportunity to read some outstanding railroad books that most likely include volumes on your favorite library. See **Gary Emmert** or **Bob Jones** to get a tour of our holdings and take advantage of this important resource.



Our Railroad Museum continues to be an attractive place for the citizens of our area and we are using it to promote our hobby in many ways. There is a lot of modeling activity going on, especially on Thursday evenings (work night) and sometimes during the week and on Sundays as some of our members get away from home to work on exhibits. Some members take advantage of Sunday afternoons to come and run their trains on the layouts when the public is not present and they can do more individual and personal operations with trains on the layouts. All full MEMRR members have 24-7 access to the museum and many of you take advantage of the opportunity the layouts in several scales offer to you. It is great to see so many of you on Thursday evenings for work on exhibits, track cleaning, modeling or just setting up a train for the next public session. On Saturdays we operate for the visiting public, wear our green, yellow or gray shirts to display our club/chapter/museum colors and enjoy the day and each other's' company. The museum is always humming with energy and friendships are formed and strengthened. If you are not coming on a regular basis, or even just-now-and-then, you are missing some great times with some great members. There are numerous opportunities to learn new skills and to share some of your own. We have HO<sub>n</sub>3 kits to build for the Tweetsie, trees to make for our landscapes, additions and details to add to the HO club yard, and much, much more. Come and take advantage of your membership to its fullest and join us for some model railroading fun including long discussions about prototype railroading and the big 1-1 scale trains. This is a cool place to spend some time each week, and certainly each month. 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*

**PAUL'S PICS PAGE**  
**PHOTOS FROM THE LENS OF PAUL HAYNES**  
**DWARF SIGNAL PRODUCTIONS**



Clinchfield Steam on Heritage Day



Getting ready or the day's work in Colorado