



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB

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LOCATION

ETSU Campus
George L. Carter
Railroad Museum

HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:30 PM in:

Brown Hall, Room 223,
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 ??

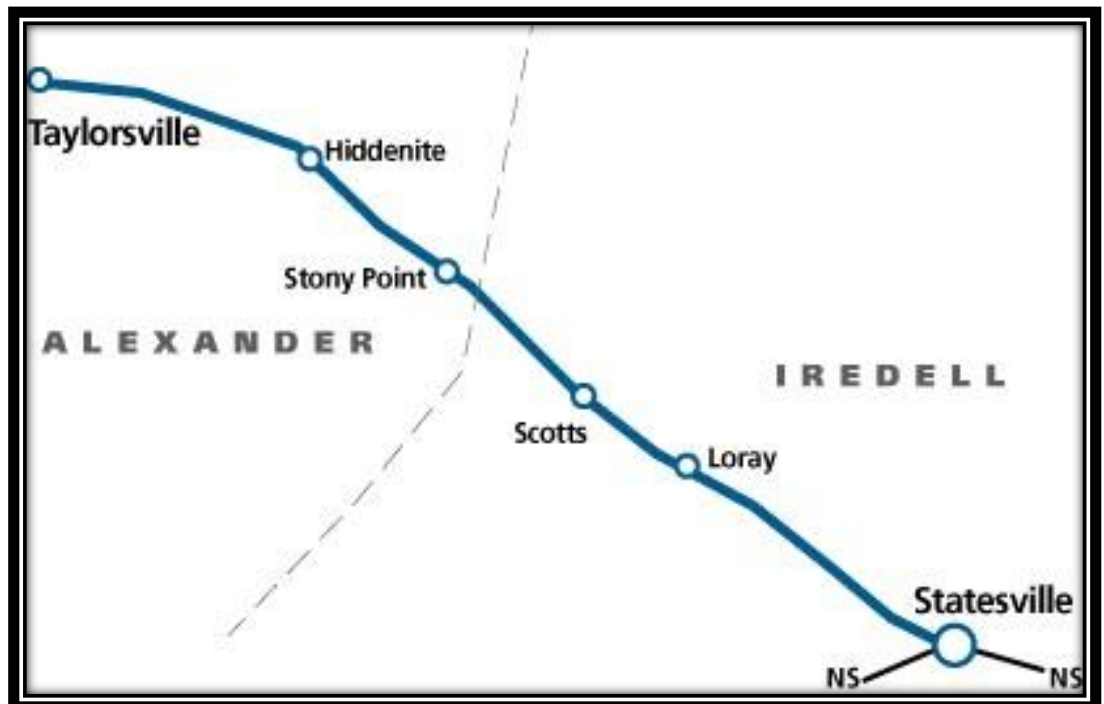
SPECIAL FOCUS THIS ISSUE

SOUTHERN SHORTLINES

IN THE DEEP SOUTH

Part 4 - ALEXANDER RAILROAD, NORTH CAROLINA

Information from WWW.ncrailways.org/railroads and from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



In this issue we take a break from describing Genesee and Wyoming rail holdings in the deep South for a look at a small independent in North Carolina, the Alexander Railroad

OVERVIEW

Alexander Railroad Co. operates between Statesville and Taylorsville in North Carolina's Western Piedmont, serving businesses in western Iredell and eastern Alexander counties.

The company was founded in 1945 by local interests to purchase the line from a predecessor of Norfolk Southern. Principal commodities carried by the railroad are grain, pulpboard, plastics, lumber products, and scrap paper.

Principal shippers are: Star Milling Company of Statesville – producer of feed for poultry; International Paper Company of Statesville – manufacturer of corrugated boxes; Deal-Rite Feeds of Statesville – manufacturer of animal feed; CommScope Inc. of Statesville – manufacturer of coaxial cable; Flexsol Packaging Corporation of Statesville – manufacturer of custom industrial film; Pratt Industries of Statesville – manufacturer of corrugated boxes; Paragon Films, Inc. of Taylorsville – manufacturer of stretch film; and Liberty Reload Services of Taylorsville – full service reload yard with storage availability.

The Alexander Railroad serves several available industrial properties with all utilities near I-40 in West Statesville and is developing the 160-acre Alexander Industrial Park near Taylorsville. A rail-truck transload facility is located at Alexander Industrial Park.

The Alexander has a connection with Norfolk Southern at Statesville with daily interchange.

Miles of track: 20

Employees: 7

Carloads: 2,500 per year – 200,000 tons

Customers served: 20

Equipment: 6 locomotives

HISTORY

The Alexander Railroad Company began service in 1946, when local businessmen and investors purchased an 18-mile branchline from the Southern Railway which had been slated for abandonment. Since that time, the railroad has continuously paid dividends to its shareholders and business continues to grow.

The railroad was built in 1887 as the "Statesville & Western", which was in reality an extension of the Atlantic, Tennessee & Ohio which ran between Charlotte and Statesville, North Carolina. Over the years, the line was operated by the Richmond & Danville, and later, the Southern Railway. The nickname of the railroad, "the Junebug Line" was born in the North Carolina state legislature during a debate between two senators.

Romulus Linney, the colorful and loquacious politician from Taylorsville, remarked something to the effect that the emeralds found in the nearby Hiddenite mine were so valuable that "a well-wintered Junebug could fly away with enough of the mineral tied to its hind leg to pay for the whole railroad!" When the vote for the railroad's charter came to be taken, the first senator polled announced that "he voted for the Junebug Road!" and the nickname was born.

Today, the line's management is led by Ben Zachary, a third-generation railroader of the same family which has guided the ARC since its inception in 1946. Ben's grandfather, Lawrence, was the line's first general manager, a post which he served from 1946 until 1952.

Ben's father, Sam Zachary, followed his father's footsteps into the role and led the railroad from 1952 until 1987.

Today, the Zachary family legacy is a strong, vibrant company that is considered a crown jewel in North Carolina's railroad industry.



Romulus Linney was Alexander County's most famous son and the leader of the effort to bring a railroad to Taylorsville.

As a side note, his great-grandson and namesake is one of the country's pre-eminent playwrights and his great-great-granddaughter, Laura Linney, is currently one of Hollywood's hottest female talents.

NRHS CHAPTER

The Alexander Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society was created under the sponsorship of the Alexander Railroad in 1979. Today, it boasts of more than 30 members and serves as the oldest railfan club in the area. Members hail from Catawba, Burke, Caldwell, Iredell and Alexander Counties.

The chapter holds its monthly meetings on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30pm in the restored Newton, NC depot. Meetings are always open to the public.

Over the years, the chapter has sponsored many railfan passenger excursions, both on the Alexander, Southern, and Norfolk Southern railroads.

From 1995 until 2005, the chapter participated in the acquisition, move, and restoration of the Newton depot (ex-Southern, ex-Carolina & Northwestern).

Currently, the club is working on the restoration of a 100-year old wooden narrow gauge boxcar from the Lawndale Railway & Industrial Company. Members are also building a large HO-scale layout of the four county area representing the Southern Railway, Carolina & North-Western Railway, and Alexander Railroad.



The Alexander Chapter-NRHS meets monthly at the Newton, NC depot located on US16 in North Newton. All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome.



ALL-TIME ROSTER

The Alexander Railroad began operations in January, 1946 with a steam locomotive rented from the Southern Railway. Within days, mechanical problems arose with this engine, and another steamer was brought in to handle traffic along the line. Unfortunately, this engine brought along its share of problems as well, and consequently, the railroad purchased its first diesel, a 45-ton GE centercab, shortly after operations of the railroad began. This seemingly simple move immediately rendered the Junebug Line as the first completely dieselized railroad in all of North Carolina.

Throughout the years, more diesels have come and gone off the roster, each meticulously maintained and rotated into operation that allows both crews and customers the maximum benefit of both safety and reliability.



The Alexander Railroad began operations in January, 1946 with a Southern Railway steam engine. Steam was used only for two weeks.



Number One was a 45-ton diesel that immediately made the ARC North Carolina's first dieselized railroad. She served the line until August, 1946.



Number Two was purchased in August 1946 and was a GE 44-tonner. She was the railroad's work-horse until 1972, when sold to Coors Brewery.



Number Three, another GE 44-tonner came to the railroad in 1961. She is still on the active roster today.



Number Four was an Alco S2 purchased in 1972. Due to her weight, she was sold less than a year later.



Number Five, an Alco S1 was purchased in 1973 to assist with growing traffic levels. She retired from the line in 1979.



Number Six is an Alco S3 which came to the line in 1976. She is still in active rotation along the line.



Number Seven is also an Alco S3, purchased in 1979 to replace Number Five. She is still in service on the roster today.



Number Eight is an EMD SW-9. She was purchased in 1990 and is the strongest engine on the company's roster.

No. 3 GETS A FACE LIFT



Fresh from the shop!

After about a six month hiatus from active duty, Alexander Railroad's GE 44-tonner #3, emerged from the shops with a fresh coat of paint and an entirely new paint scheme for the line on August 12, 2008. The striking "heritage" scheme is a mixture of previous schemes held by the railroad's locomotives. From the early black and white, to the Southern Railway green tuxedo, to the striped green scheme currently worn by other engines on the roster, Number Three honors the nearly seven decades of Alexander Railroad history

Alexander Railroad	
Reporting mark	ARC
Locale	North Carolina
Dates of operation	of 1946–Present
Predecessor	Southern Railway
Track gauge	4 ft 8 ½ in (1,435 mm) standard gauge
Length	18 miles (29 kilometers)
Headquarters	Taylorsville, North Carolina
Website	Alexander Railroad



Alexander Railroad headquarters located Taylorsville, NC.

The Alexander Railroad Company (reporting mark **ARC**) is a Class III shortline railroad operating in North Carolina. The

railroad has 18 miles (29 kilometers) of track that runs northwest from Statesville to Taylorsville, North Carolina. The **Alexander Railroad** began operations in 1946. The line was marked for abandonment by the Southern Railway, so local investors and businessmen stepped in, purchasing the 18-mile (29 km) branch line from Statesville to Taylorsville. The railroad is named after Alexander County, North Carolina, although it serves both Alexander & Iredell Counties.

The railroad was originally chartered and built in 1887 as the Statesville & Western, a subsidiary of Atlantic, Tennessee & Ohio which ran between Charlotte and Statesville North Carolina. The AT&O was purchased by the Richmond & Danville, and eventually came under the Southern Railway.

Operations



Alexander Railroad #7, Alco S-3, photographed March 11, 2004.

The Alexander Railroad serves 20 customers, handling approximately 2,500 carloads (200,000 tons) per year. Principal commodities carried by the railroad are grain, pulpboard, plastics, lumber products, and scrap paper. The ARC has one connection with Norfolk Southern at Statesville, NC, which sees daily interchange.

The ARC uses radio frequency 160.62000, under license KCP872 (AAR channel 34) for all of their operations.



VARIATIONS ON A THEME

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Wheels of Time Photo

Another joint General Motors-Southern Pacific automobile rail car was the Stac-Pac. It was designed to carry 12 high end Oldsmobile, Buick, and Cadillac models in four removable fully enclosed tri-level containers per 89-foot flat car. The first production Stac-Pac cars entered service in October, 1971. Beside SP and its Cotton Belt subsidiary (SSW), Stac-Pac flat cars were contributed to the pool by the Santa Fe and Trailer Train, with the containers being supplied by ATSF, BN, D&RGW, FEC, MILW, PC (MDT), RI, Southern, SP, SSW, UP, and by General Motors itself. All of the cars and containers were withdrawn from service at the end of the 1976 model year

In the 1970s, Stac-Pac containers were jointly developed by the Southern Pacific Railroad and General Motors to better handle their luxury brand cars such as Cadillac, Buick and others. These Stac-Pac containers were loaded on-board 89-ft flat cars by PC-90 Piggy-Packers.

As you may know, Wheels of Time makes this scale model of the PC-90s in HO and in N scales, while Trainworx has announced the Stac Pac in N-scale.

WHEELS OF TIME
 THE REAL THING IN HO SCALE

MSRP \$78.99

30002 CSX

30003 CP RAIL (action red)

30004 Burlington Northern

30005 Norfolk & Western

30016 FWD Wagner (leased unit to RRs)

30017 Western Pacific

30018 Chicago & North West

30019 Central RR Co

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30022 Demo Red

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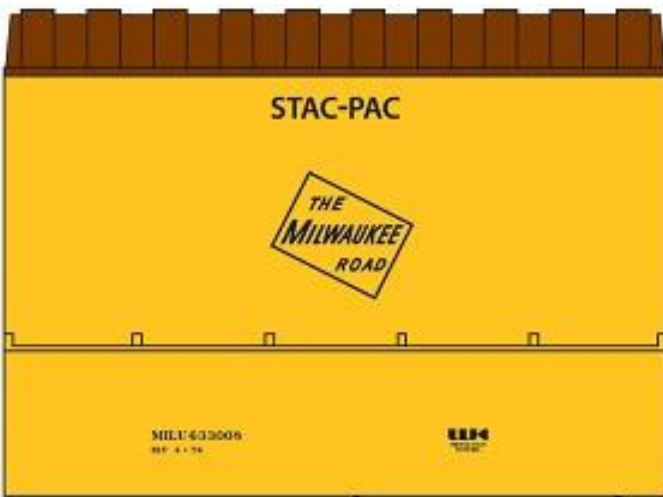
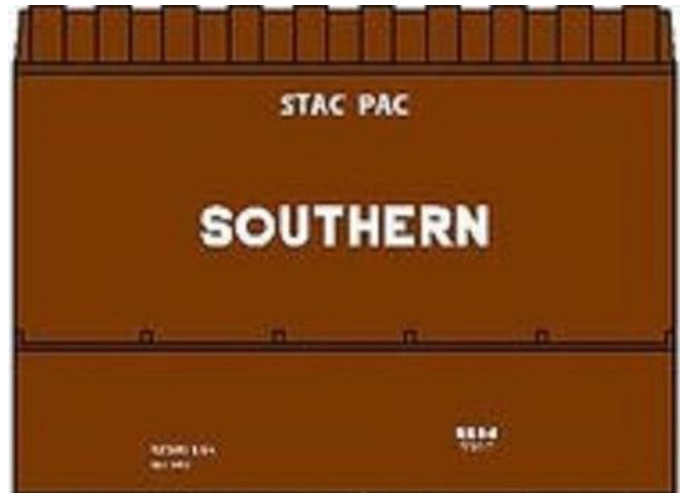
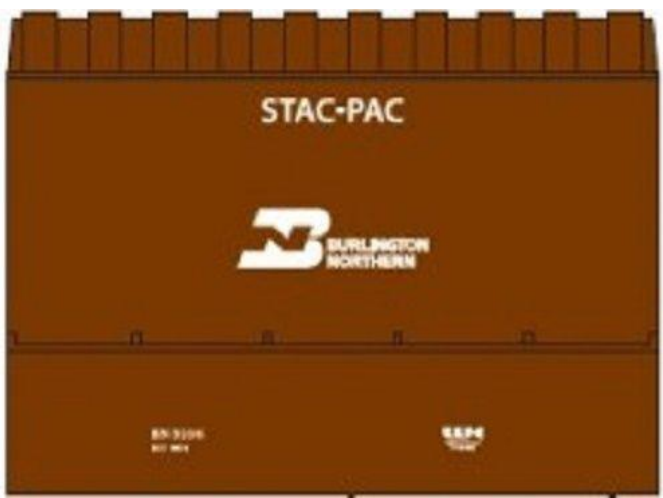
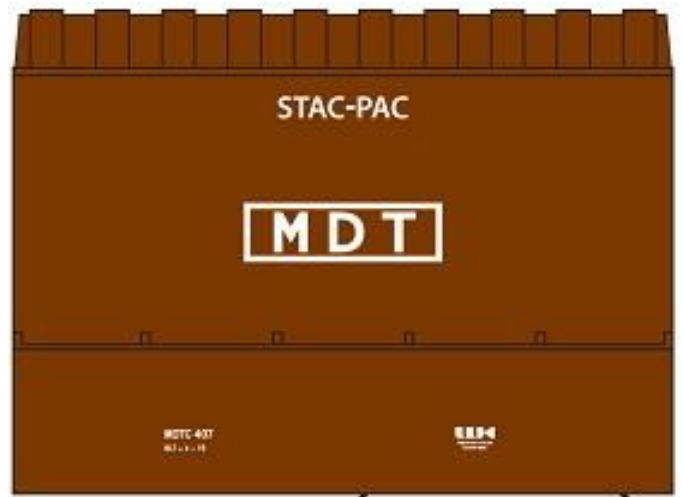
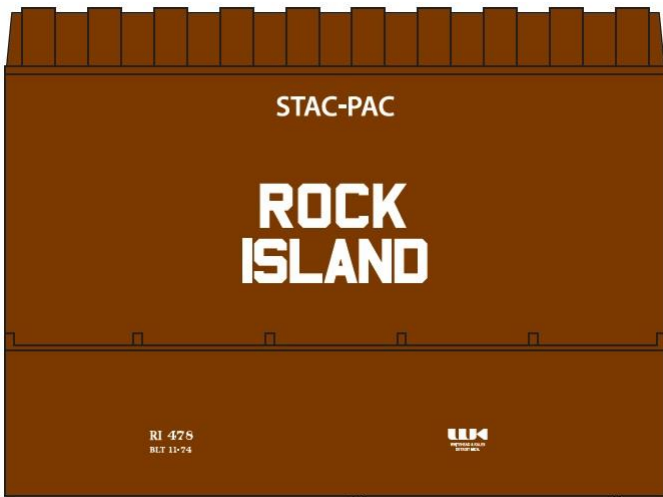
2ND RUN OF HO SCALE PC-90 PIGGY-PACKERS

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

The heat and long days of summer are here and students of all ages are out of school or attending summer sessions and lots of folks, including many of our members, are engaged in long-awaited summer vacations. Visitation has slowed over the past few weeks at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum but many folks are still coming by each Saturday to see the trains operating on our various layouts and we continue to have good member support with 20 or so MEMRR and/or Carter Chapter NRHS members in attendance each week. Thank you all for what you do for our clubs and for the Railroad Museum.

New Members:

The Mountain Empire Model Railroads welcome new members to the MEMRR. Joining recently are **Robert Tvedt**,

Danny Reed, Bryan Osborne, and Robert Helm. It is to be noted that Bob Helm is one of the founding members of the MEMRR some 25 years ago and served as the model railroad club' first president. Bob has built and reconfigured many HO scale model railroads in his homes and many of our club members have enjoyed operating sessions on his Clinchfield and other railroad layouts. We look forward to enjoying getting to know our new members and integrating them into our club and our railroad museum. Please introduce yourselves to them and help them find a new model railroad home for their talents and experience.



Bird Watching: Fred's gone international birding again!!! This time to Malaysia and Borneo, where he hopes to see about 300 new birds for his growing list of species, as well as numerous primate species, and some outstanding tropical jungles. **I will be leaving the States on Friday, 13 July and will be back in Johnson City on Tuesday, August 7th.** I have asked **Roger Teinert** and the Vice-Presidents of both our clubs, **John Carter**, MEMRR, and **Jim Pahrís**, Carter Chapter NRHS, to be your go-to-guys in my absence. We have no special events scheduled (after the two groups coming to the museum on Thursday, 12 July—see previous email announcements on these) and no birthday parties scheduled. So, things should run along as they normally do with everyone's help. **Vice-President Jim Pahrís** will preside over the scheduled Carter Chapter NRHS business meeting at 6:30 p.m. in ETSU Brown Hall room 223 on Monday, July 16th. **Vice-President John Carter** will preside over the scheduled MEMRR business meeting at 6:30 p.m. in ETSU Brown Hall room 223 on Tuesday, July 17th. Dinner for those who want to join the dining group will be at 5:00 p.m. each of these two nights at Portobello's Restaurant in the Kroger Shopping Center off State of Franklin Rd. near the ETSU campus. Thank you Roger, Jim and John for stepping up for our clubs and the museum, and for me in my absence.



Developments on Logan Heaton's Module

Sick Bay:

We have at least a couple of members on our "Get Well Soon" list. **Mike Buster** continues to have various health problems and we hope to have him back giving tours and running trains on the narrow-gauge side of the museum sometime very soon. **John Edwards** is recovering from major oral surgery that has placed a tremendous burden on the local tooth fairy because of the quantity of ivory the dentist extracted from his mouth. We hope to see him back in the museum at his familiar station working the laser knife to cut out more building parts for the structures we need for the Roan Mountain township section of the ET&WNC RR layout. If I have missed any one of our members who is also under the weather we send our best wishes to you for a speedy and full recovery and look forward to having you back with us at the G.L. Carter Railroad Museum very soon.



Another view of Logan Module

Labor Day Rail Excursions:

The Carter Chapter NRHS and the Carter RR Museum are co-hosting a huge weekend rail excursion over the Labor Day Weekend. A chartered bus will take our group to Elkins, WV where from Saturday through Monday we will have all meals provided (with the exception of lunch on the way to Elkins and lunch on the way back to Johnson City), nightly entertainment, rides on 3 trains with motive power including a Heisler, Shays, and early phase diesels, and with overnight lodging for two nights included in the package. If you like mountain scenery, riding vintage trains, good food, and lots of fun this has to be a weekend you will not want to miss out on. Seating is limited and all the information you need to get your tickets and your reservations made are on the MEMRR, Carter Chapter NRHS, and Carter RR Museum websites. Just look under "Events" and download all the information you need and get your reservations made. You can also pick up materials for the trip at the Carter Railroad Museum on Saturdays. The rooms can accommodate up to 4 guests and the more you have in your room to share the lodging the less your overall package costs. **Come on! Get on Board! This is going to be a rail-oriented event to remember for years!** **Deadline for registering for the trip is August 18th.**

Operating Sessions:

Remember, every first Monday of the month is the fun-filled operating session on the MEMRR HO-Scale layout. All members are welcome to join. We are currently using club/museum locomotives and rolling stock so you only have to bring yourself to join in the session and operate the layout like the prototype. Next Operation Session will be on Monday, August 6th, beginning around 5:30 p.m. Arrive about 30 minutes before train time to get your assignment and you train for the session that will last for approximately 2 hours. The MEMRR has been spending a lot of time working to improve the prototypical operations of our trains on the club layout by installing numerous turnouts and crossovers to make train movements more efficient and life-like. Our electrical guru, **Frank Fezzie**, has been diligently wiring and helping install the new trackage and its required electrical components and everyone is enjoying the much-improved running of trains on the layout. Club members have also been upgrading the scenery on several personal and club-owned modules to make them more interesting and pleasing to the eye as well. If you have never been to one of our monthly operating sessions don't be afraid to come and join us. Everyone is relatively new at the concept of operating the trains on schedule with preplanned times in route and the picking up and dropping off of specific cars at specific destinations. Don't let your lack of knowledge of joining in with other club members to do something new that you feel will be intimidating keep you from participating. You will add the necessary skills very quickly and all the club members attending these sessions are most willing to provide friendly assistance and advice to get your anxiety levels down and you feeling confident as the engineer of your train for the evening. **Come and join us! This is a really fun aspect of model railroading and puts the layout to work!**



Logan's Depot

Summer is here and being indoors pursuing our hobby in its many forms is a good way to escape the heat and humidity and to enjoy model railroading. There is always something happening at the Carter RR Museum and it is a great place to operate your trains (or our trains) and to use your modeling skills. There are always projects to engage our members in and you have access to the museum through the code to the lockbox on the outside door 24/7. We look forward to seeing you and seeing you often. 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*

CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM'S JULY 28 HERITAGE DAY IS THE WILD WEST!

EVENT SPECIALIZING IN WESTERN RAILROAD HISTORY PEAKS THE SUMMER SERIES AT ETSU MUSEUM

The expanses of the American west were bridged by rail, and the unique Carter Railroad Museum on the campus of East Tennessee State University with feature a day devoted to the trains west of the Mississippi. Each month for several years, the museum has devoted the final Saturday for a specific subject, called Heritage Days, and this July 28 edition focuses on some of the most spectacular technology to ever emerge in railroading history worldwide.

The same expanses that challenged the early settlers resulted in larger challenges for railroad builders. Large swaths of mountain, desert, and more resulted in massively-expensive undertakings for initial construction. Once complete, they defied imagination in some cases, carved into small shelves of rock, crossing rivers on massive steel viaducts, and miles-long tunnel work. Then the equipment showed up, and history was made.



Weathered water tank ready for Logan's module

Summer Picnic:

We are working on plans for our RR Museum's Annual Summer Picnic and when we have the details they will be distributed by our webmasters to all our members with the hope that you will mark the date on your calendar and plan to participate in this really nice annual social event for you and your spouse or significant other. Watch for details coming soon!



PHOTO – On the museum’s large 24x44 HO scale model display on the campus of East Tennessee State University, a group of Santa Fe Railroad diesels roll through a miniature coal mining display

”Challenger and Big Boy locomotives were used on the Union Pacific, and those names alone help us understand what was needed,” laughs Heritage Days coordinator Geoff Stunkard. He further noted, “The effort was big because the land was big, and we have a number of members here at the museum who enjoy that same equipment in miniature. If you want to see some of them running, this will be the day.”

In addition to the 25 Big Boys, which would be the largest steam engines ever constructed, the western lines featured advances in diesel technology, including early streamliners, experimental turbine designs, and early adaptations. For marketing to visit places like Yellowstone and the Grand Canyon, colorful paint and catchy slogans were used on passenger trains, while produce and natural products of the west moved ceaselessly to their final market destinations.

Thanks to members of the both the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club and the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, guests will enjoy an interpretive day of western railroading, though the ET&WNC layout will understandably remain in the Appalachian mountain. All four model railroad layouts will be operating for this event.



‘FALLEN FLAG INJC BY PAUL HAYNES’



READY FOR ROAN MOUNTAIN



SB WOOD STORE IN ROAN MOUNTAIN



PLOTS MARKED FOR ROAN MOUNTAIN BUILDINGS

