



THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
SEPTEMBER 2018 - MEMBERS EDITION

Volume 25 – 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 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

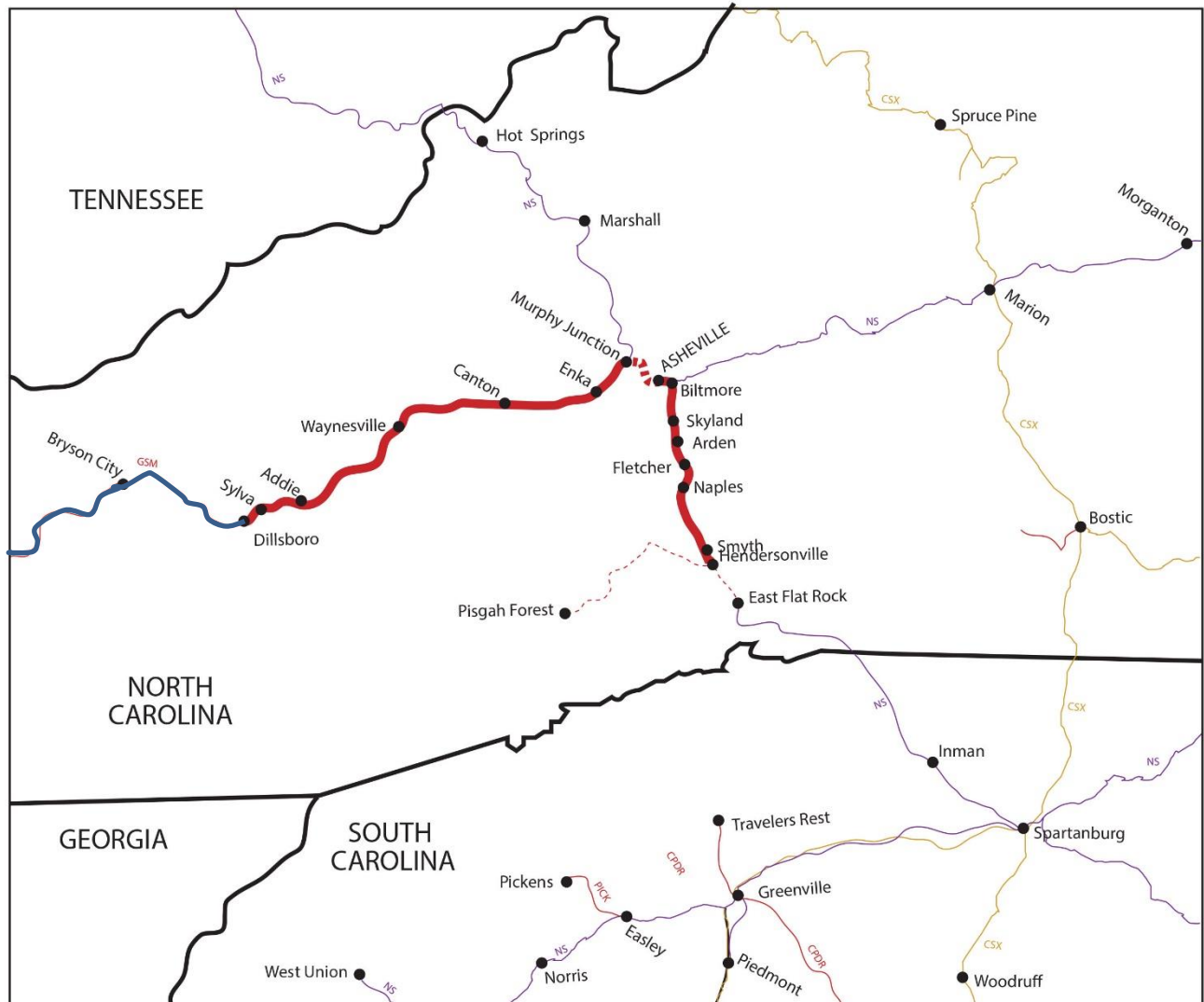
Part 7 – GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD
AND THE BLUE RIDGE SOUTHERN RAILROAD

Information from WWW.GREATSMOKYMOUNTAINSRAILROAD.COM 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 pair of independents in Western North Carolina,

THE MURPHY BRANCH SOUTHERN BY THE BLUE RIDGE SOUTHERN RAILROAD GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD



LEGEND:	
Blue Ridge Southern RR (BLU) -	286,000 lbs.
Blue Ridge Southern RR (BLU) Trackage Rights -	286,000 lbs.
Out of Service Track	
Track miles - 92	
Interchanges	
GSM - Dillsboro	
NS - Asheville	



MURPHY BRANCH FROM WIKIPEDIA, THE FREE ENCYCLOPEDIA

A Norfolk Southern Railway General Electric Dash-8 diesel-electric locomotive assisted by an EMD GP50 crosses North Fork Creek between Willits-Ochre Hill and Addie on the Murphy Branch. (2002)

The historically important Murphy Branch is the westernmost part of what was the Western North Carolina Railroad, later the Richmond and Danville, Southern Railway, the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) and today the Blue Ridge Southern

Railroad. The branch runs between Asheville, North Carolina in the east and Murphy in the west. It roughly follows I-40 from Asheville to Canton and US Route 74, also known as the Great Smoky Mountains Expressway, from Canton to Murphy.

Grades on the Murphy Branch exceed 4.0% in two places.^[1]

HISTORY

Constructed with convict labor between 1881 and 1894 under the charter of the Western North Carolina Railroad.^[2] The Murphy Branch would be important to the development of southwestern North Carolina in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It opened up the isolated and rural mountains west of Asheville to the outside world, allowing easy travel and improved commerce. It can easily be said with confidence that these tracks made Western North Carolina what it is today.



The Waynesville Train Depot sometime in the 1890s

In the 1980s, Norfolk Southern decided to close the Murphy Branch west of Sylva because of declining freight traffic. The NCDOT purchased the branch west of Dillsboro in 1988, the first purchase under NCDOT's program to preserve rail corridors, and granted trackage rights between Dillsboro and Andrews to the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (GSMR), a tourist excursion railroad that also provides freight service. In 1996, the NCDOT sold the Dillsboro-Andrews portion of the Murphy Branch to the GSMR.

In April, 2014 it was announced that Norfolk Southern would be selling the Asheville-Dillsboro leg of the Murphy Branch to Watco, a short line railroad headquartered in Pittsburg, Kansas. A new North Carolina Limited Liability Company was established and named the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad. The deal closed and operations began on 26 July 2014.

The GSMR continues to own the Dillsboro to Andrews leg and operates all but the westernmost portion between Hewitt and Andrews. The NCDOT continues to own the tracks between Andrews and Murphy which has been out of service continuously since 1985. CSX abandoned and removed its connecting line from Murphy southwestward into Georgia, formerly a line of the Louisville and Nashville, in 1986.

Towns, cities and communities along the route.

TOWNS SERVED

- Asheville (Beginning point)
- Murphy Junction
- Emma
- Enka
- Hominy
- Candler
- Coburn
- Canton
- Clyde
- Waynesville
- Hazelwood
- Saunook
- Balsam Gap (junction of US 74 and the Blue Ridge Parkway)
- Balsam
- Willits-Ochre Hill
- Addie
- Beta
- Sylva
- Dillsboro
- Wilmot
- Whittier
- Ela
- Bryson City
- Almond
- Wesser
- Hewitt
- Nantahala (end point today for the GSMR)
- Topton (near the junction with the former Graham County Railroad,
- Andrews (end point of the GSMR until 2010)
- Marble
- Murphy

COMMODITIES SHIPPED/RECEIVED

The Murphy Branch still plays a vital role in the industrial economy of western North Carolina. The rail line serves two paper mills: Evergreen Packaging in Canton and Jackson Paper Manufacturing Company in Sylva. Chemicals used in the making of epsom salt are delivered to Giles Chemical in Waynesville and there are a number of small concrete mixing facilities that receive sand. Woodchips are loaded at T&S Hardwoods in Addie, about 4 miles east Sylva. Liquefied petroleum gas is delivered to a transfer facility a few miles outside of Sylva in the community of Beta. See also[edit]

THE BLUE RIDGE SOUTHERN RAILROAD

(The Eastern End of the Murphy Branch)

HISTORY

The Murphy Branch of the Western North Carolina Railroad delivered thousands of mountaineers from the wilderness of their landlocked hills. A year after iron rails reached Asheville in 1880, workers scattered to the west of the city, digging, filling, and blasting an extension of the line that stretched 116 miles to Murphy, providing thousands with a path to reach the outside world.



The iron horse beat riding a wagon, but in many ways the young railroad was still primitive. In 1892, a visitor from Chicago described it as "little more than two streaks of rust and a right-of-way." With tongue in cheek, he told the Chicago Tribune, "when the wind is just right, the fastest train on the line, the 'Asheville Cannon Ball,' can make 10 miles an hour."



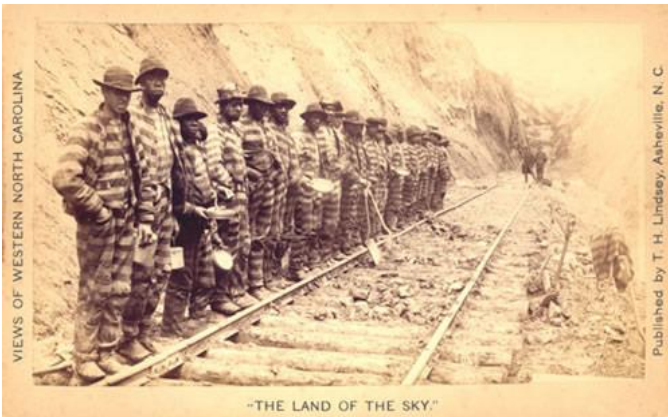
Rails changed the way of life for Western North Carolina residents. Mercantile business was commodities for a few of the bare necessities. Conveniences and luxuries were not even dreamed of and cash was hard to come by. The iron rails brought a flood of salesmen who peddled oil lamps that superceded tallow candles and New England "factory cloth" to replace scratchy, uncomfortable homespun. From door to door they sold books, pump organs, enlarged pictures, jewelry, lightning rods, baubles and doodads.

Passenger business was so good by the turn of the 20th century that six passenger trains ran every day between Asheville and Lake Junaluska and four daily between Asheville and Murphy. It was not easy to cut this branch line through the mountains. If it had not been for the practical, self-educated engineer Capt. J. W. Wilson, a rigidly honest and industrious man, it might not have been accomplished for years. One of Capt. Wilson's most challenging tasks was the grade on the west side of the Balsams that was steep and curvy, with gaping ravines. His second obstacle was the 836-foot Cowee Tunnel through a shaky mountain west of Dillsboro. High iron topped the Balsam Mountains at 3,100 feet, at the time the highest elevation of any railroad in the Eastern United States.

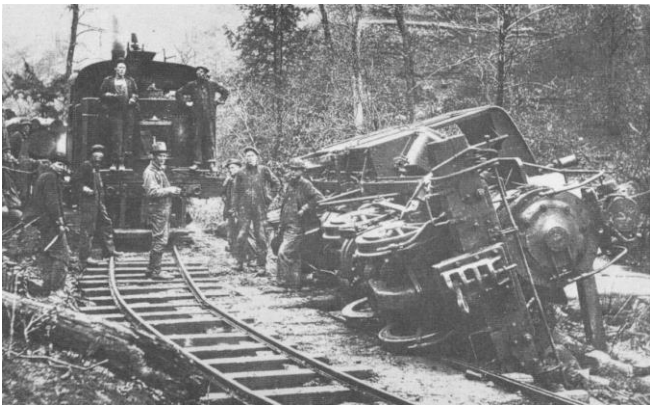


The railroad was built by convicts working under the gun. In one of the most chilling accidents during construction, 19 inmates drowned in the Tuckasegee River at the mouth of the tunnel. Crossing the river to work, the raft carrying the iron-shackled convicts capsized and all aboard, except for guard Fleet Foster and convict Anderson Drake, died in the waters. Foster was rescued by Drake, who stole the guard's wallet while pulling him to shore. When the wallet was found in Drake's duffel, he was whipped and put to work in the tunnel at hard labor instead of receiving a hero's honor. Those who died were buried in unmarked graves on top of a small hill near the mouth of the tunnel.

In the early years of the 20th century, there were a number of runaways on Balsam Mountain and a couple of wrecks inside Cowee Tunnel and in the river, but loss of life was small. As improvements were made to the railroad, accidents declined.



The Murphy Branch experienced its heaviest use during wartime, in the early 1940s when the massive Fontana Dam was constructed. Thousands of carloads of cement, equipment, and other materials reached the construction site by rail on a spur line built from Bushnell to Fontana. Huge shipments of copper ore from mines in the western end of North Carolina and Copperhill, Tennessee, increased the line's tonnage. In the 1920s, ribbons of concrete crawled through the mountains, linking towns together



THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD

(The Western End of the Murphy Branch)

BACKGROUND

The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad (formerly Railway) owns 53 miles (85 kilometers) of the *Murphy Branch*, a former branch line of the Southern Railway between Dillsboro and Andrews. The line was completed to Dillsboro in 1883 and reached Andrews in 1890. GSMR, which began operations in 1988, uses a route which passes through "fertile valleys, a tunnel, and across river gorges" in the Great Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina. Several miles of the line near Andrews are currently out of service; excursions currently utilize the line between Bryson City and Nantahala (22 miles or 35 km in length), and the line between Bryson City and Dillsboro (16 miles or 26 km in length).

In addition to running tourist excursions year-round, the railroad has also moved freight via an interchange with the Blue Ridge Southern Railroad in Sylva near Jackson Paper Manufacturing. GSMR runs nearly 1,000 excursions each year.

ROSTER

The railroad has seven diesel locomotives, GP9's #711, #777, #1751, & #1755, GP30's #2467 & 536, and U18B #1901. #1901 and #536 were used in the filming of *The Fugitive*, and are non-operational (having been wrecked in the film); tourists can view the scene of the wreck while passing by on the Tuckasegee/ Dillsboro excursion.



GSMR locomotive #1751 at Bryson City.

In addition, GSMR owns two steam locomotives: S160 2-8-0 Consolidation #1702, acquired ca. 1994, and former Southern Railway 2-8-0 #722. The 722 never operated on the GSMR, it was formerly owned by the Southern Railway, which operated the locomotive for use in their steam program from 1966 to 1994 until it was being purchased in December 2000. #722 is currently awaiting restoration.



The GSMR had purchased a third steam locomotive, a former Swedish State Railways 4-6-0 #1149, in 2010 from the defunct Belfast and Moosehead Lake Railroad. This engine was originally slated to be moved to the GSMR in spring 2011. However, the engine continued to remain on the B&ML for two more years. Ultimately, the GSMR deemed the engine's move too costly and instead sold the engine to the Discovery Park of America, in Union City, Tennessee.



Consolidation steam locomotive #1702, built by Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1942 for the U.S. Army during World War II, was acquired by GSMR around 1994. #1702 was taken out of service at the end of the 2004 season. It was hoped that the engine would be restored and returned to service, although no definite plans were set. In October 2013 an "historic agreement" was reached between GSMR and Swain County (NC) to begin restoration of #1702. A new shop, especially built for the restoration, was completed the following year. In addition to that, a new turntable was built at Dillsboro for #1702 to turn around for the return trip to Bryson City during the Tuckasegee River excursion. In March 2016 it was announced that #1702 would return to service that summer, which coincided with the construction and usage of a new turn-table for the locomotive near the depot in Bryson City. Special events and a unique "Return of Steam in 2016" lapel pin were incorporated to celebrate the return of #1702





TOWNS AND ATTRACTIONS SERVED

- Dillsboro
- Bryson City
- Whittier
- Fontana Lake
- The Nantahala Outdoor Center

SMOKY MOUNTAIN TRAINS MUSEUM

The railroad operates the Smoky Mountain Trains Museum in Bryson City, North Carolina, adjacent to the historic Bryson City depot (where GSMR excursions depart). The museum features a collection of over 7000 Lionel model engines,

cars and accessories, a large model train layout, a children's activity center, and a gift shop.

POPULAR CULTURE

The famous train wreck scene in the 1993 Warner Brothers blockbuster movie *The Fugitive* starring Harrison Ford and Tommy Lee Jones was filmed in Dillsboro along the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad. The wreckage set can still be viewed on eastbound Tuckasegee River Excursions departing from Bryson City.

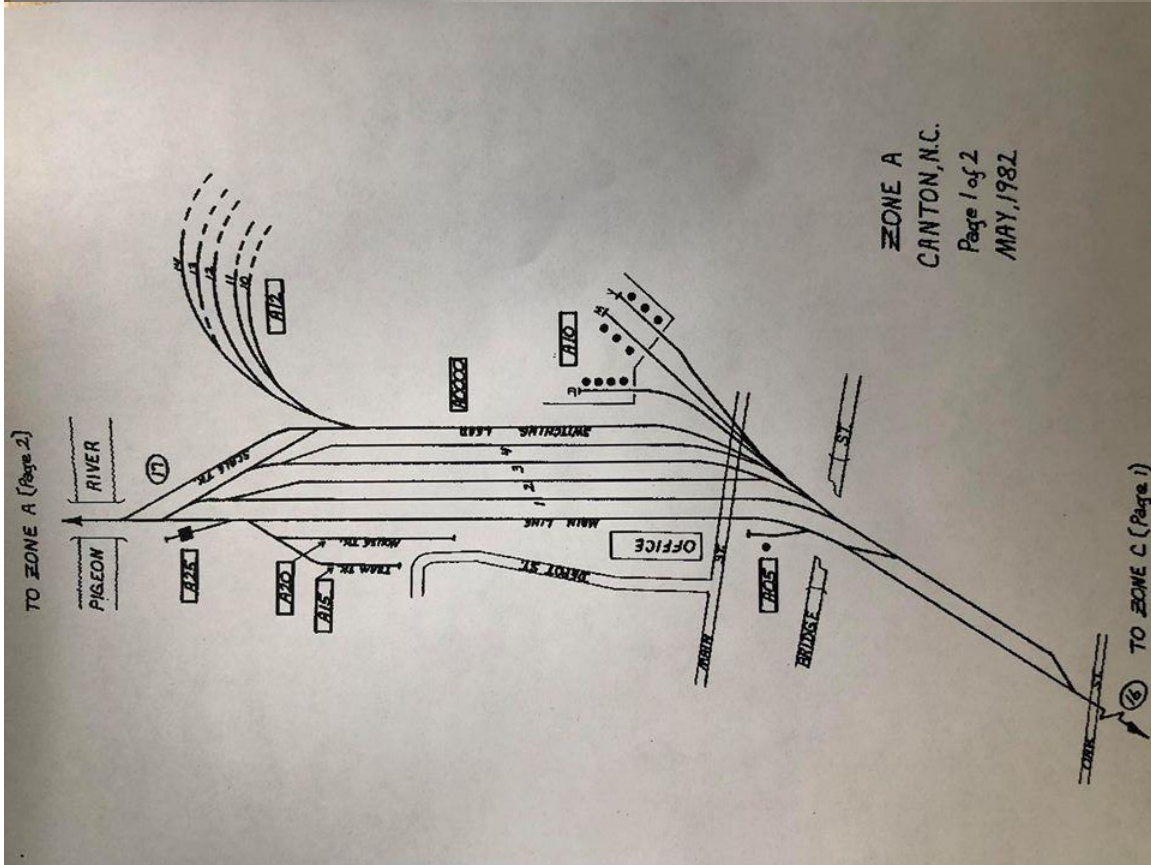
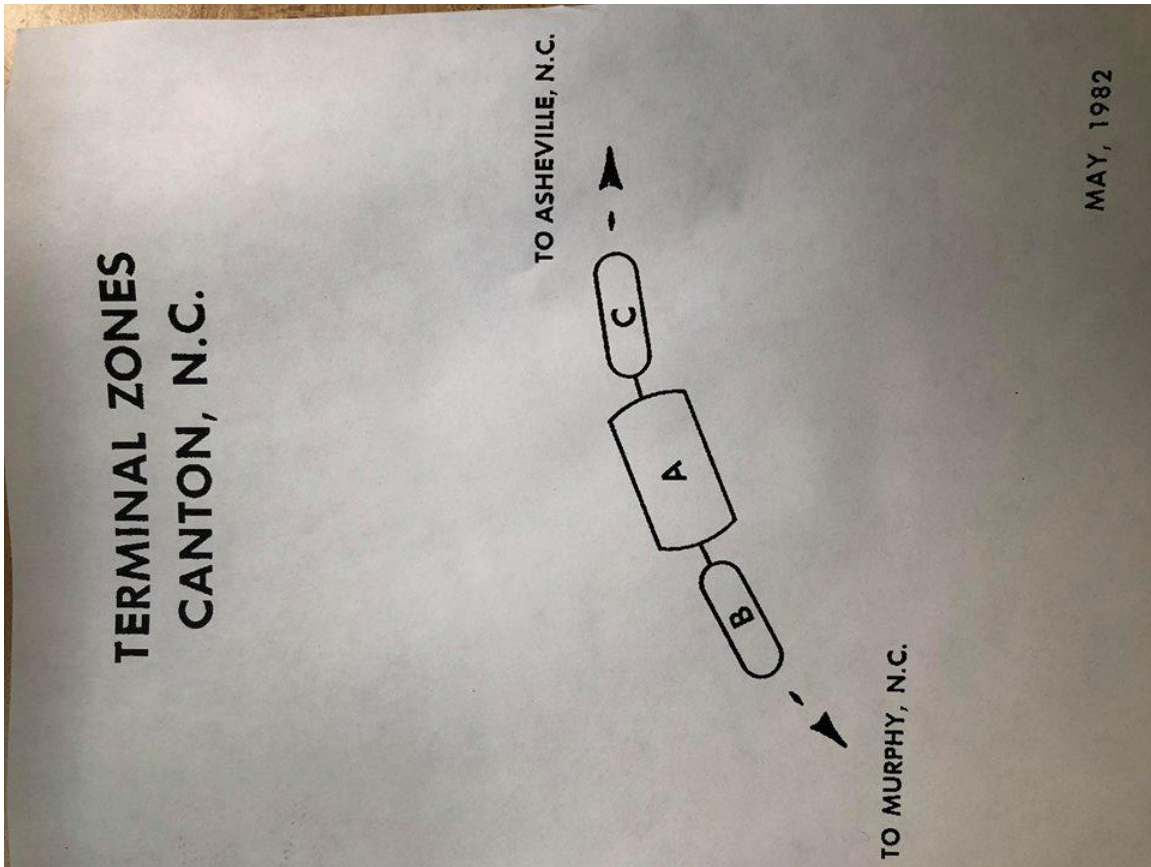
The Great Smoky Mountains Railroad was also used in the filming of 1996 Warner Brothers comedy *My Fellow Americans* starring Jack Lemmon and James Garner when they stumble on to a charter train full of UNC-Chapel Hill fans headed for the NCAA Final Four.

1

Train scenes in the 1999 DreamWorks SKG film *Forces of Nature* starring Ben Affleck and Sandra Bullock were also filmed on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad.

GSMR's 2-8-0 steam locomotive #1702 (formerly of the U.S. Army) was featured in the 1966 film, "This Property is Condemned," starring Natalie Wood, Robert Redford, and Charles Bronson.

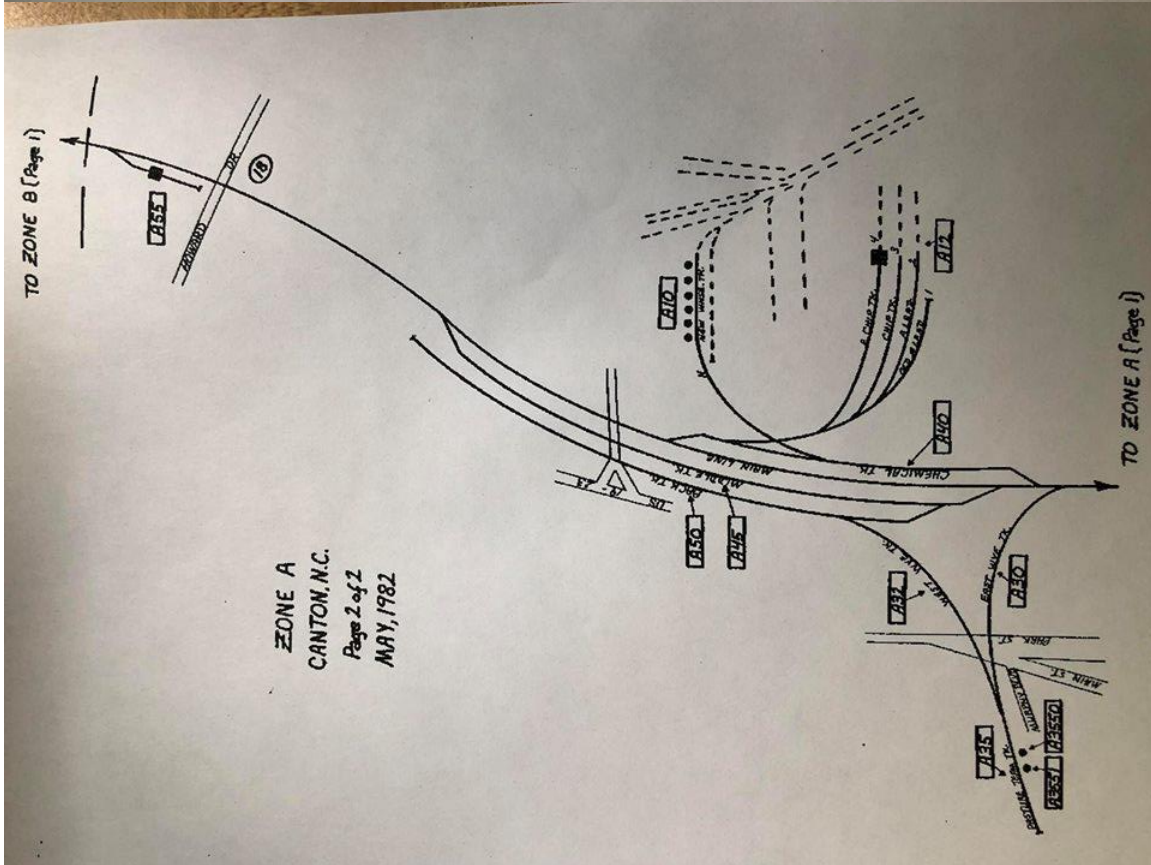


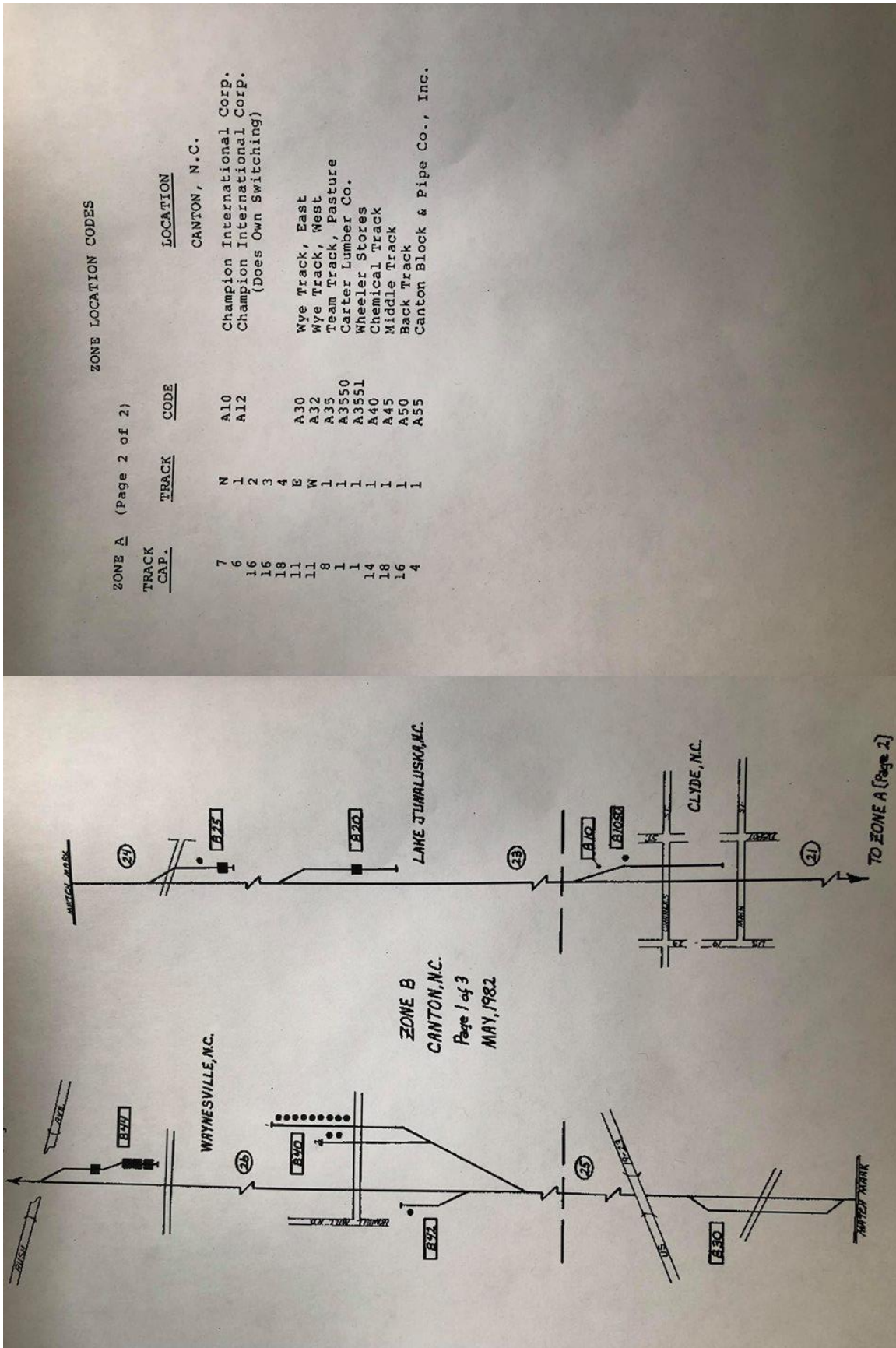


ZONE LOCATION CODES

ZONE A (Page 1 of 2)

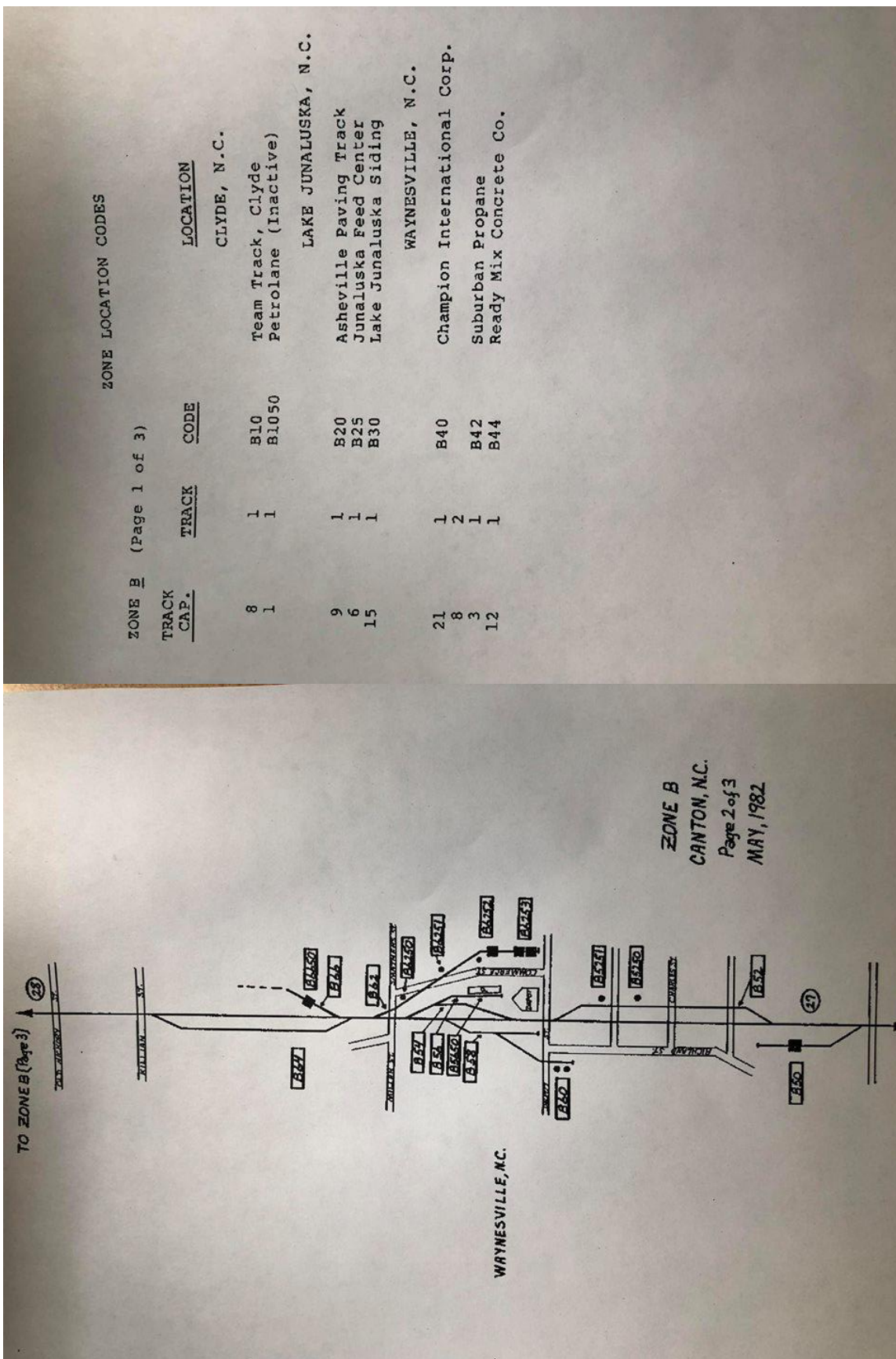
TRACK CAP.	TRACK	CODE	LOCATION
			CANTON, N.C.
18	1	A000	Canton Yard
16	2		
16	3		
16	4		
1	1	A05	Industrial Distributors, Inc.
4	D	A10	Champion International Corp.
3	M		
3	Y		
8	10	(Pwood) A12	Champion International Corp. (Does Own Switching)
8	11	(Hwood)	
8	12	(Misc)	
8	13	(Tank)	
8	14	(O/B)	
6	1	A15	Team Track, Canton
10	1	A20	House Track, Canton
2	1	A25	Canton Ice & Coal Co.





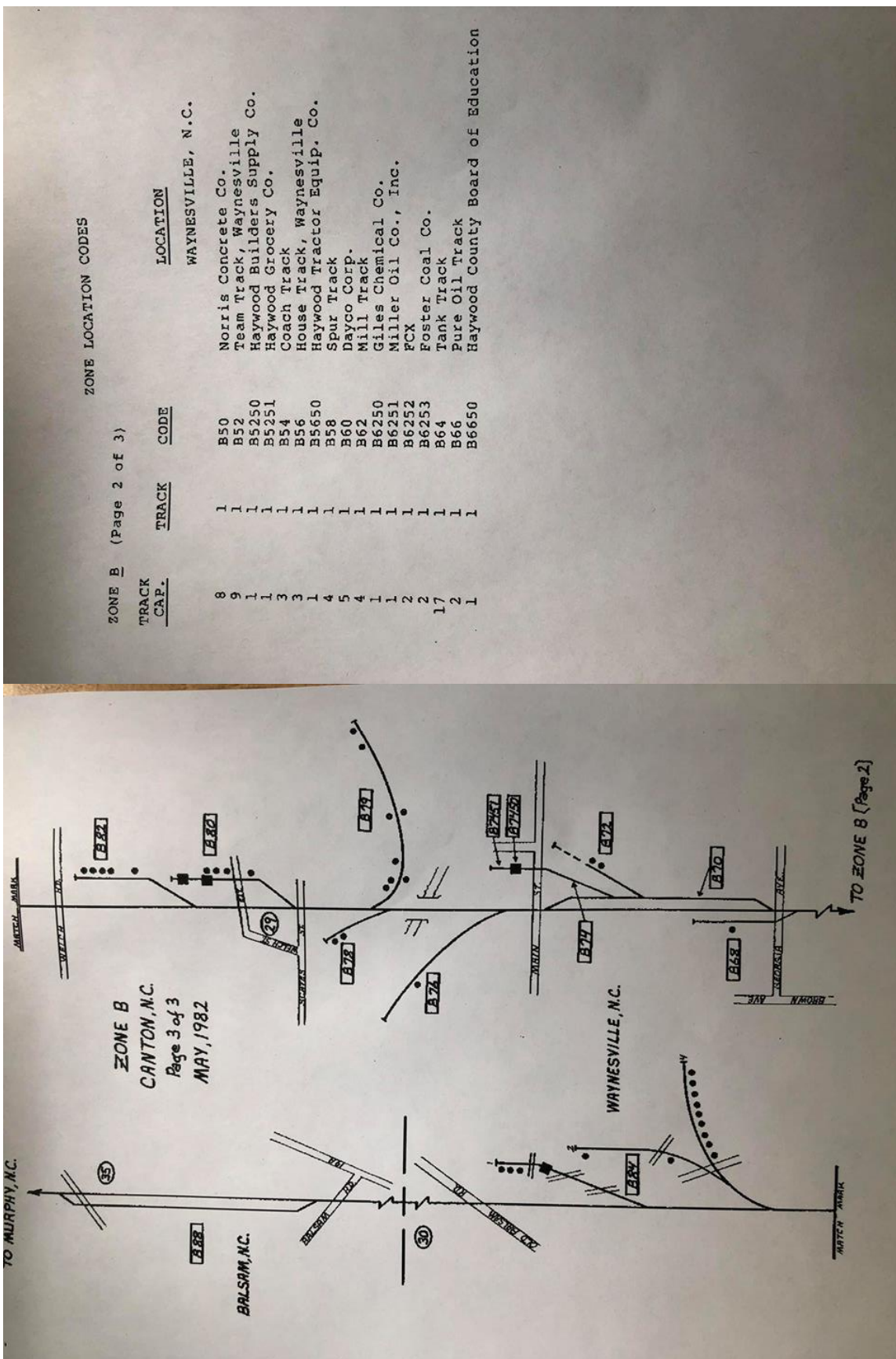
ZONE LOCATION CODES

TRACK CAP.	TRACK	CODE	LOCATION
7	N	A10	CANTON, N.C.
16	1	A12	Champion International Corp.
16	2		Champion International Corp.
18	3		(Does Own Switching)
11	4	A30	Wye Track, East
11	E	A32	Wye Track, West
8	W	A35	Team Track, Pasture
1	1	A3550	Carter Lumber Co.
1	1	A3551	Wheeler Stores
14	1	A40	Chemical Track
18	1	A45	Middle Track
16	1	A50	Back Track
4	1	A55	Canton Block & Pipe Co., Inc.



ZONE LOCATION CODES

TRACK CAP.	TRACK	CODE	LOCATION
8	1	B10	CLYDE, N.C. Team Track, Clyde Petrolane (Inactive)
1	1	B1050	
9	1	B20	LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. Asheville Paving Track Junaluska Feed Center Lake Junaluska Siding
6	1	B25	
15	1	B30	
21	1	B40	WAYNESVILLE, N.C. Champion International Corp. Suburban Propane Ready Mix Concrete Co.
8	2	B42	
3	1	B44	
12	1	B44	



ZONE LOCATION CODES

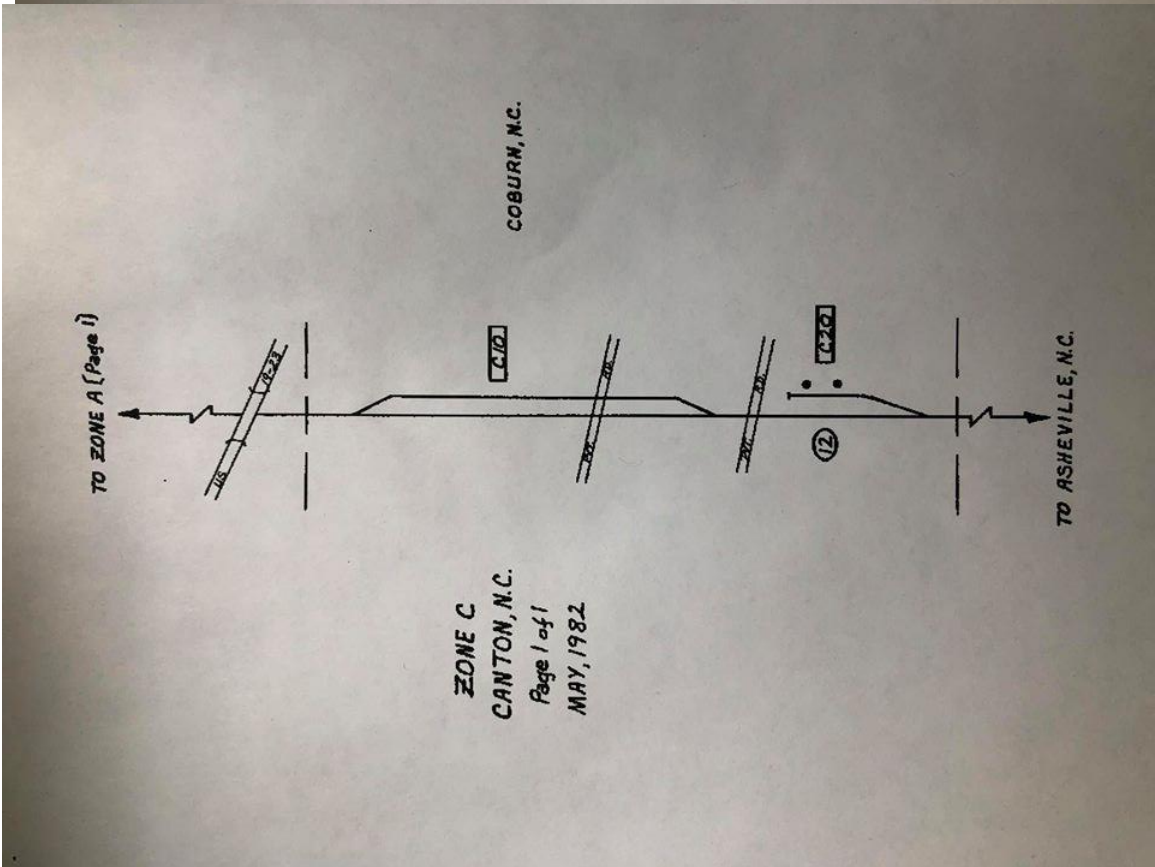
TRACK CAP.	TRACK	CODE	LOCATION
8	1	B50	Norris Concrete Co.
9	1	B52	Team Track, Waynesville
1	1	B5250	Haywood Builders Supply Co.
1	1	B5251	Haywood Grocery Co.
3	1	B54	Coach Track
3	1	B56	House Track, Waynesville
1	1	B5650	Haywood Tractor Equip. Co.
4	1	B58	Spur Track
5	1	B60	Dayco Corp.
4	1	B62	Mill Track
1	1	B6250	Giles Chemical Co.
1	1	B6251	Miller Oil Co., Inc.
2	1	B6252	FCX
2	1	B6253	Foster Coal Co.
17	1	B64	Tank Track
2	1	B66	Pure Oil Track
1	1	B6650	Waywood County Board of Education

ZONE B
CANTON, N.C.
Page 3 of 3
MAY, 1982

ZONE LOCATION CODES

ZONE B (Page 3 of 3)

TRACK CAP.	TRACK	CODE	LOCATION
7	1	B68	Waynesville, N.C.
10	1	B70	Wellco Enterprises
4	1	B72	Hazelwood Pass Track
5	1	B74	Lowe's
1	1	B7450	House Track, Hazelwood
1	1	B7451	Francis Farm Mill
14	1	B76	Ferguson Implement Co.
4	1	B78	Benfield Industries, Inc.
15	1	B79	Champion International Corp.
8	1	B80	Lawrence, A.C., Leather Co., Inc.
8	1	B82	Kaiser Agricultural Chemicals
6	1	B84	Lea Industries, Inc.
9	2		Dayco Corp.
11	4		
30	1	B88	Balsam, N.C.
			Balsam Siding



ZONE LOCATION CODES

ZONE C (Page 1 of 1)

<u>TRACK CAP.</u>	<u>TRACK</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
26	1	C10	Coburn Siding
4	1	C20	Harris Pine Mills
			COBURN, N.C.

FACTORY CLOSURE IMPACTS SEVERAL MODEL RAILROAD MANUFACTURERS AFFA TECHNOLOGY LTD.'S SUDDEN SHUTDOWN HAS SOME MODEL TRAIN COMPANIES LOOKING FOR OTHER OPTIONS

PUBLISHED: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2018

In late July Affa Technology Ltd., a Hong Kong-based manufacturer of model trains, radio-controlled toys, scale cars, and other items, announced it had closed. Some of the model railroad manufacturers impacted by this news include American Z Line, Atlas Model Railroad Co., Bowser, ExactRail, Fox Valley Models, InterMountain Railway Co., Trainworx, and Wheels of Time. Several firms shared the news through e-mail, websites, and social media.

“Yes, we have projects at this factory and Trainworx production will be affected,” said Pat Sanders via e-mail. “We are researching our options at this time and hope to get rolling again soon.”

In a blog post, Atlas Model Railroad Co. noted the factory was one of its locomotive and rolling stock suppliers, but the company’s track and accessories were not impacted by the closure. “Atlas is currently working with our network of suppliers to transfer the projects to others for completion,” the blog post continued. “This will cause a delay in some previously ordered products.”

In addition to adjusting production schedules, some firms have finished projects waiting to be shipped. Chris Brimley, vice president of product for ExactRail, wrote in a blog on the firm’s website, “The N scale AutoFlood II hopper is on hold as we move that project to a new factory. We have been told that the HO scale GSI bulkhead flatcar production was actually finished last week but is still sitting at the now-closed factory. We expect these to be on our way to us soon.”

Frank Angstead of InterMountain noted that though there will be a delay in new product releases, the company is already looking for new manufacturing options. “Our expectation is that we will begin shipping a selection of new product within four months,” wrote Angstead in a letter posted online. “Purchase orders with alternate vendors are already being arranged so we anticipate production to resume very soon.”

One theme shared by the manufacturers impacted by Affa’s sudden closing is this will take time to sort out. On the Fox Valley Models Facebook page, company president Matt

Gaudynski wrote, "If projects can be moved, it will take a number of months to do so, and then get a new factory up to speed on our projects will take even more time...[We] greatly

appreciate your patience and understanding as we move forward through this unexpected interruption."

CROSSROADS OF COMMERCE **AT THE CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM ON AUGUST 25** *ETSU'S SPECIAL MUSEUM HOSTING HERITAGE DAY ON FINDS* *MIDWESTERN RAIL HISTORY*



Detroit, Chicago, St Louis, Kansas City. Big cities that had one thing in common; railroads galore. On August 25, the Carter Railroad Museum on the campus of East Tennessee State University brings some of the history of these cities to the Tri-Cities. Crossroads of Commerce reflects how many of America's railroads met with one another, sometimes at huge terminals and sometimes in small towns. This was the original 'web,' long before the digital versions entered our lexicons.

At least as their railroad history is concerned, the East and West truly met here, with both local and large operations focused on the transportation needs of the nation. Thousands of trains, tens of thousands of passengers and

huge quantities of freights traveled this way in the era before jets and highways. Color, speed, and reputation all played into the competitive nature of the business, the so-called 'metropolitan corridor' that brought modern technology to so many rural areas.

"There were more railroad miles in the Midwest than anyplace else, which in turn was the result of easy access to raw materials for industry and ample opportunities for employment," states Geoff Stunkard, the museum's coordinator for the Heritage Days program. "I think these lines are favorites because they were part of the heartland of the nation, and some were the fastest-timed runs in America during their heyday."

The Midwest had its own major carriers as well, like the Rock Island, Nickel Plate, and Milwaukee Road, all which had Chicago in their legal names. Others were isolated to a given city as a 'belt line,' or could be a shorter-distance carrier who actually deliberately avoided some of the congestion of the larger cities.

The Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club and the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society serve as hosts during the museum's operating hours, and some will be showing off personal midwestern-themed equipment on the museum massive 24x44-foot HO scale model display. Midwestern railroading themed films will be on the video monitoring systems as well.

Interesting Car Loads and Graffiti for Modeling **Screenshots from Mbmars01 on Youtube** **CSX TILFORD and NS Inman Yard, Atlanta GA**





GRAFFITI OF THE MONTH

MODERN RAILROAD'S TRAVELNG "ART SHOW"

Photos by Jeffrey Bonhart and Paul Haynes as noted

Jeff Bonhart



Paul Haynes



C&E 1609 With The Hummingbird and The Georgian Chicago, IL 3/31/1964
Courtesy of Chris Stivers -The ORIGINAL Fallen Flags

PAUL'S PICS
PHOTOS BY PAUL HAYNES
DWARF SIGNAL PRODUCTIONS





MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS

MINUTES FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING

AUGUST 21, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

The August Business Meeting of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders was called to order at 6:37 PM by the club president, Fred Alsop in room 223 Brown Hall, ETSU.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS AND NEW MEMBERS

There were 11 members present. There were no visitors or new members present.

OFFICER REPOPRTS:

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The Secretary's report was deferred since no minutes were taken at the meeting in July. There was no Coordinator's meeting held in July.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT:

The August issue was described as a "lite" version of only 16 pages. The lead article was on the South Carolina shortline and museum, the Lester and Chester RR.

The September issue is expected to return to 20+ pages. The lead article will feature the Murphy Branch under the operation of the Southern Railway, Great Smoky Mountains Railroad and the Blue Ridge Western.

The Newsletter Editor reported that the August issue has been released to the membership. Problems with distribution were reported with the Communications officer contact and arrangements made to a second release on August 22nd.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported income and expenditures for July and August with a positive balance in each of these months. It was reported that there were 126 paid up members on the current roster.

WEBMASTER'S REPORT:

Bob Jones, representing the current Webmaster s (Logan Heaton and Ben Merritt), reported that the contract with SITE5 has been renewed for the year. He also reported that the domain name has been registered for another two years. It was reported that contact with SITE5 leadership has been spotty and difficult. Bob reported that he has done some research in finding a server stateside. A local server was contacted but proved to be much more expensive making his costs prohibitive at this time.

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

There have been no offered offers to provide clinics for the next three meetings, Sept...Oct...Nov. Members were encouraged to step forward to share their talents and special interests.

PRESIDENTS REPORTS' REPORTS:

1. JULY BUSINESS MEETING & ACTIVITIES

The president complemented club membership for carrying on the operations of the museum and club while he was abroad. He indicated his confidence in the ability of the members and leadership has grown as the club and museum has matured into a fine organization.

2. START OF FALL SEMESTER:

The start of the new school year is this week with returning students moving in to dorm rooms in buildings adjacent to the museum parking lot the week of the of the 21st. Classes start Monday the 27th. Expect limited parking availability.

3. ETSU CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

There will be ongoing construction into the Fall Semester. The one project that will most effect the museum will be the renovations of Lamb Hall which shares the parking lot with the museum. The work is scheduled to start in the spring of 2019. The replacement of the Campus Center building will next be considered in 2020. The president is planning on lobbying for space in downtown Johnson City sooner rather than later since the ongoing and projected construction projects will directly affect our members and visitors by making parking less available.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. OPERATING SESSSIONS:

An informal Operators' Night was proposed for September 3rd (Monday - Labor Day) due to the absence of the evening's coordinators. Members interested in operating should be at the club by 5:30 - 6:00 PM.

2. VOLUNTEER PARKING PASSES

Volunteer parking passes have been issued and are available at the dispatcher's desk at the club. Each member should take only one to register even multiple vehicles. They are valid until December 31st of this year.

3. RAIL EXCURSION

The rail excursion scheduled for the Labor Day weekend still has spaces available although limited. The excursion will feature rides on West Virginia mountain railroads.

4. COMPUTER WI-FI

The club has received a replacement computer (used) from ETSU. Frank Fezzie has transferred the JMRI and related programs to the newly acquired cpu. He recommends the purchase of a router for approximately \$90.

MOTION: That the club authorize the purchase of a router for the new computer. Emmert/Jones. **PASSED.**

5. TRAIN SHOW 2019

Roger Tienert reported that the Train Show committee has started to focus on the show for next year. The show is to be tied into the Johnson City 150th anniversary theme of the role of railroads and industry in the founding of the city.

6. DEPOT/WYE TRACKAGE

Ted Bleck-Doran and Gary Gilliam presented proposed alterations for the club module that contains the yard wye and the depot. There was extensive discussion about the merits and shortcomings of the plans.

MOTION: That the club proceed with the additional trackage using the plan with the run around siding and a connection back to the mainline near the life section bridge was made by Emmert/Gilliam. **PASSED.**

NEW BUSINESS:

1. RAILROAD HERITAGE DAYS

Geoff Stunkard has released the press release for the August 25th Heritage Day with the theme of “Vintage Mid-Western: IC, WAB, NNKP, etc.” There was some discussion regarding the availability of locomotive and rolling stock since few members model mid-western lines.

2. AUGUST COORDINATORS MEETING

The George L Carter Railroad Museum Coordinator’s meeting was held on August 16th with minutes to appear in the September issue of the **Signal Bridge**.

3. WEBMASTER RETIREMENT PLANS

Webmaster Bob Jones announced his attention to retire from his position at the end of the membership year. A replacement for BOB will need to be added to the list of nominations.

4. ANNUAL PICNIC

It was announced that the McKee’s have once again invited the club to hold its annual picnic. Additional information will be forwarded. Jim Parish will be approached to coordinate attendance for both MEMRR and GLC Chapter-NRHS groups.

5. HO LAYOUT COLLECTION PURCHASE

Member David Finger’s family is interested in selling off a portion of his HO train collection left at the museum. This collection contains over 150+ cars, a number of DCC equipped locomotives and several DC/dummy locomotives, and a metal tool card used to store this collection. Gary Emmert and Geoff Stunkard have established an approximate value and have approached the family with a fair price offer in behalf of the club. There followed extensive discussion on the purpose of the purchase and distribution of the locomotives and equipment. It was noted that David collect “top-of-the-line” equipment.

MOTION: That the club purchase the onsite portion of David Fingers’ HO collection and that a committee be formed to

present a plan for selecting representative pieces from the collection for the club to retain and a plan to resell/recoup a significant portion of club funds expended. Emmert/Tienert. **PASSED.**

A committee consisting of Emmert/Gilliam/Heaton/Stunkard was appointed by the president.

6. TRACK UPGRADE PROPOSAL

John Carter reported that the club is nearing completion of the crossovers on the mainline and is preparing to begin the work on the wye/depot module and the front corner module. He requested funding to purchase needed track and electrical components estimated at \$850. Gary Emmert reminded the club that the previously authorized funding to track modification has exceeded budget by \$50 which needed to be credited back to the treasury.

MOTION: that the club authorize \$900 for the proposed module alterations with a credit of \$50 to be transferred to the club treasury. Gilliam/Haynes. **PASSED.**

John Carter agreed to seek two bids; one to include the Hobbytown store in Johnson City.

7. WEBMASTER REIMBURSEMENT

Webmaster requested reimbursement for renewal of server and domain registration. **MOTION:** Club to remit fund equal to expenditure incurred by webmaster by Bleck-Doran/Haynes. **PASSED.**

8. MODULE SALE PROPOSAL

John Carter placed his module (the Dairy near the baseball diorama) up for sale. He desires to retain the buildings, trees, and figures for his home layout. Track, electrical and scenery base will remain. **MOTION:** Club to purchase for \$21.83/sq ft was made by Bleck-Doran/Tienert. **PASSED**

SATURDAY OPENHOUSE VOLUNTEER SIGNUP:

A call for volunteers was made to those attending.

NOTE” members are reminded of the expectation of volunteering at least 1 Saturday a month (or two half days) in order to remain in good standing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next George L Carter Railroad Museum Coordinators’ meeting will be held September 13, 2018 at 6:00 PM in room 235 Campus Center building ETSU campus.

PROGRAM:

Program was provided by Jacob Nance describing his experience at the NRHS Rail Camp 2018 East. The program was well presented with slides and narration, Jacob’s enthusiasm from his camp experience was evident throughout his presentation.

INFORMATION ON RAILCAMP

Fred provided some background information on the NRHS's Rail Camp indicating that two camps EAST and WEST are open to boys (and girls in 2019). Youth must be at least 15 years old and have an active interest in career fields related to railroading. Funding for travel, the camp and lodging is provided by NRHS member chapters. Some chapters like the GLC chapter choose to sponsor participants. The ESAT RAIL CAMP has an AMTRAK centered focus.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders will be September 18, 2018 at 6:30 PM in room223 Brown Hall ETSU Campus.

*Respectfully submitted,
Ted Bleck-Doran,
Acting Secretary, MEMRR*

ADJOURNMENT:



NS Engines 3544 and 6651 pass the old Clinton depot, Clinton Tennessee. 08-14-18 Greg MorganEast Tennessee Rail Group

THE DAVID FINGER COLLECTION
ROLLING STOCK

Mountain Empire Model Railroaders club agreed to purchase a portion of David Finger's HO collection (see Business Meeting Minutes above). The club would like to retain as representative portion of the collection in appreciation for David's years of membership and his contributions to the club. Gary Emmert is heading up a committee to make selections for what to retain. The following photos show the selection of rolling stock available. A similar listing will be made available for locomotive in the collection. Gary would appreciate your feedback. You can email him or catch him most Saturdays in the Museum Library.

The committee has been instructed to select cars and locomotive to retain, a process to offer the remaining rolling stock for sale to membership (e.g., - silent auction, sale night, etc.), a minimum pricing plan. Rolling stock not sold to the membership or retained by the club will be sold at the next train show in 2019. It is anticipated that the club will return a substantial portion of the purchase cost back to the club treasury.



Set 1



Set 4



Set 2



Set 5



Set 3



Set 6



Set 7



Set 10



Set 8



Set 11



Set 9



Set 12



Set 13



Set 16



Set 14



Set 17



Set 15



Set 18

John Carter inspects Fred Alsop latest building set to be placed in the village of Roan Mountain of the Museum HOn3 layout.

DISPATCHER'S CORNER KNOWING THE RULES

From The 2015 Norfolk Southern
T&E Employees Operating Exam

The headlight facing the direction of movement on every train and engine must be displayed brightly by day and night. How may the train proceed if all headlight bulbs fail en route? (Note: these restrictions do not apply when the train has operable auxiliary lights.)

- Ring the bell continuously and sounding thorn frequently.
- Approaching all public crossings prepared to stop and not exceeding 20 MPH over crossing (head end only).
- Reducing speed at other locations as conditions warrant, not exceeding 50 MPH at night.
- All the above.



Set 19



GEORGE L. CARTER RAILROAD MUSEUM COORDINATOR'S MEETING AUGUST 16, 2018.

CAMPUS CENTER BUILDING, ROOM 235, ETSU

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

Coordinators' reports follow:

GENERAL INFORMATION: FRED ALSOP—

ETSU's Fall Semester begins August 27 with classes starting. Volunteer Parking passes for the Fall Semester only are now available at the RR Museum. One per volunteer only please. A computer with windows 10 has been obtained for use in the Alsop gallery to operate DCC equipped trains by the use of smart phones with the proper app installed instead of using a hand-held throttle.

LIBRARIAN: GARY EMMERT—

3 of the 8 drawers needed for the storage of DVDs/CDs have been constructed by Gary and Paul Haynes. The remainder will soon follow. Work is continuing on the Ken Marsh books that were donated to the Museum earlier this year; but will be halted temporarily in October when Gary when he has plans for a trip to Texas.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: TED BLECK-DORAN—

Ted announced a "Lite" edition for August containing only 14 pages; but back to "normal" in September.

WHITE RIVER PRODUCTIONS: GEOFF STUNKARD—

We were reminded of a magazine deadline of around September 1, for the submission of photos and manuscript for the sections of the ET&WNC layout depicting the Doe River Gorge between tunnels 4 and 5 and the town of Roan Mountain. That section of the Gorge has been completed and progress is being made on the Roan Mt. township section of the layout; but the town is taking some time to produce because of the number of unique buildings required that are being scratch-built.

Memrr Ho Layout: John Carter—

Frank Fezzie is working on layout track. The club corner that was formerly owned by Don Ramey needs new track. Needed track in other places includes crossover on the flat by the Roger Teinert module; double slip has been removed at the wye on the mainline and a new turnout has been installed. A motion will be made at the August meeting for

the authority to purchase any additional track needs. If the motion is approved bids will be asked for from JC HobbytownUSA and West Virginia Hobbies. John Carter also announced he wishes to sell his 4 foot module.

LOCOMOTIVE REPAIR: GARY GILLIAM—

The decoder needed for the Tweetsie Hon3 brass locomotive is still on backorder. The Hon3 brass Shay is still disassembled. The Kato N-scale engines that need new brushes will have those ordered (need 6 sets).

N-SCALE LAYOUT: JESSE KITTLE—

Need to replace many couplers. The micro-train couplers are being placed on “hybrid” cars with different couplers on each end to act as transition cars. Truck kingpin problem is being addressed (manufacturers don't have a standard kingpin for their rolling stock and this creates problems when you need to replace trucks and don't have their designated truck). Some with couplers mounted on the truck create problems causing derailments. Would like to have approximately 60-80 pairs of Atlas trucks with couplers to replace some of the defective trucks and “standardize” the wheelsets on the rolling stock.

LARGE SCALE: MIKE BAKER—

The locomotives and rolling stock are in good shape. Needs 3 new turnouts for the Troke layout.

MEMBER DAVID FINGER'S HO SCALE EQUIPMENT-

Gary Emmert led a discussion at the request of David Finger's relatives to see if the club would like to purchase some of David's HO locomotives and rolling stock now stored in the Carter RR Museum. This request is based on David's recent medical condition that will prevent him from pursuing his hobby of model railroading. The inventory consists of approximately 15 DCC locomotives and 18 storage flats containing 10 cars each; and one DC powered locomotive and one dummy locomotive. It was decided to present the request to the MEMRR at the August business meeting to purchase this lot at a price between \$3,000-\$4,000

Meeting was adjourned at 7:19.

Respectfully submitted
Fred Alsop.
GLC Museum Coordinator

VIEW FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB. THE MEMRR CLUB PRESIDENT'S OBERVATIONS

We are only a couple of weeks' shy of Fall but it still seems like summer with multiple days of 90 degree+ temperatures. Football is in the air and baseball is winding down; so Fall must soon be here. ETSU had its first football game of the year on Saturday, September 1st and once again, we found all the roads leading across the campus to the railroad museum had been barricaded by Axis, the sub-contractor for traffic control employed by the university for these events. I was on the road in a bus heading to West Virginia with 27 other folks going to ride the trains at Cass, Durbin and Elkins as the Carter Chapter's Labor Day Rail Excursion when the phone calls began coming to tell me that the ETSU campus was shut down. It took a series of texts between President Noland and me to get traffic flowing to the museum again. Hopefully, this will be only a first game problem, a repeat of last year's first home game, and we will be available to the public who come despite the barriers to see our railroad museum. Thank you all for handling the operation of the Carter RR Museum in my absence and with this disruption to traffic flow. Football and Fall (almost Fall) are here again!

We had a little hitch in the distribution of the August Newsletter, but Ted and Ben got things worked out after it was discovered that *The Signal Bridge* had not made it to most of our members. Please don't hesitate to let us know if your newsletter does not arrive by middle of each month because our Editor uses the 8th of each month as his deadline to contributors and he



gets the newsletter out in only a few days after that. When we have a glitch; please let us know and we will attempt to correct it as soon as possible.

**RUSTY RAILS Castings painted by Ted, Rick, Cchris
and Mike**

Our museum librarian and MEMRR treasurer, **Gary Emmert**, had a problem with his hitting the bottom step on the basement stairway on September 4th and in the fall that resulted managed to break bones in his ankle and foot in at least 3 places. The extent of the damage is still unknown at this writing; nor is the nature of the surgery that will be done to repair the breaks and the time it will take for him to recover to the point he can walk on it. Please, as some of you already have, give Gary your best wishes for his speedy recovery and we will look forward to having him back in the museum and at our club meetings. Gary does a lot of work for the club and the museum on a weekly basis and I will greatly miss his help to me that I have become so accustomed to having. Get well soon Gary!



At the August meeting the MEMRR approved the purchase for approximately \$3,000 for approximately 15 DCC locomotives, 108 pieces of rolling stock and the tool box left at the museum by member David Finger. David has been stricken with a medical condition that will prevent him from continuing to pursue his hobby of model railroading with us and his relatives have made these items available for sale to the club. The items have been inventoried by Gary Emmert and other members and will be made available as follows: 1) The club selected a group of MEMRR members, including some officers, to review the items and select those that will stay as club property and be available for operation on the club layout. 2) The items not so selected by the committee for the club will be made available to be purchased by MEMRR members in order for the club to regain some of the club monies paid for the collection. 3) Any items not purchased by members prior to the Big Train Show in June 2019 will be placed in that show for sale with all sale proceeds going back into the club treasury. With Gary Emmert's recent accident the timing of all of the above may be temporarily delayed.

The Annual Carter RR Museum Picnic is scheduled for 4 p.m. this Saturday, September 15th. Details for signup have been published and reminders have been distributed to all members as well as having been posted on our website. I hope you will attend because this is an outstanding outdoor social event hosted by Kim and Tom McKee and a lot of fun

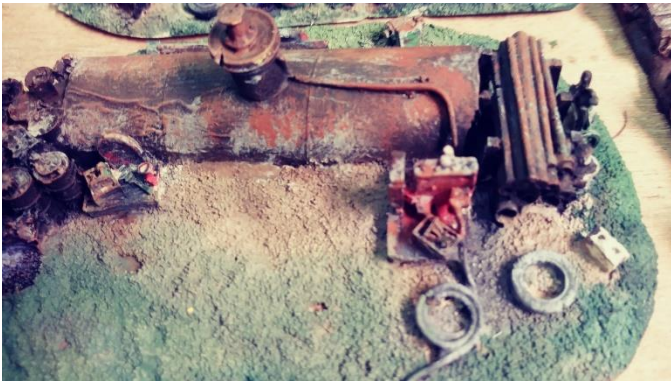
Hon3 Annual will carry numerous pages on our "Tweetsie" Hon3 layout in its forthcoming 2018 edition. This will be the 5th consecutive year the national/international magazine has chosen our museum's layout to publish for its subscribers. **Geoff Stunkard** has created the text for the layout and is supplying many of the photographs to illustrate our work on the layout. The Assistant Editor, George Riley, has asked that we feature the section of the Doe River Gorge between tunnels 4 and 5 that was completed this summer. In addition, the magazine wants to feature the little mountain town of Roan Mountain. This part of the project required the obtaining of any photographs of the town in the early twentieth century and that became a problem that a new resident of the town, **Pamela Balwin**, was a tremendous help to us in solving. She talked to many long-time residents of the town and found most of the "missing" structure photographs we needed. At this writing we will not have all of the town completed by our September 15th deadline, but it is well on its way.



The structures completed include 5 of the local businesses with the iconic S.B. Wood drug store that is still standing, one home (the house on the hill in the 1909 photo) and the large wooden Roan Mountain Inn. **Rich Gallaher** has completed the Roan Mt. depot and **Mike Sager** has been working on the landscaping for the town and has completed the tall maple trees that lined the picket fence in front of the inn. **John Edwards** has been hard at work converting my scale drawings of the structures into the software programs that make our laser knife work to cut out the wooden

pieces needed for the scale buildings. **Ben Merritt** and **Bill Smith** have assisted John with some of the tasks associated with the computer work for the laser knife. Thank you everyone! When the little village is completed the ET&WNC RR will once again make stops at Roan Mountain and the Roan Mt. Inn will come alive (well, you know what I mean).

Heritage Day Event for September: September 29: Appalachian Rails (L&N, N&W, C&O, IRR, AO, DGVR, WVC, ELKR, etc.) This should be a well-attended event for us as these railroads have great local interest and should attract a lot of visitors. Additionally, we all have some of these locomotives and rolling stock, both freight and passenger, and this is a terrific opportunity to bring in your favorites and run them for the public and for your fellow club members to see. Mark your calendar and come to the museum and bring your Appalachian trains. See you there?



Labor Day Rail Trip: The Carter Chapter NRHS and the Carter RR Museum co-hosted a trip to Elkins, WV over the Labor Day weekend. Twenty-eight of us made the trip including members **Jim & Charlotte Pahris**, **John Dodge**, and yours truly. The weather was great, the company was most enjoyable and the train rides were terrific. We road on 3 railroads; Cass Scenic, Cheat Mountain Salamander, and Durbin Rocket. We had live musical entertainment on Saturday and Sunday nights and good food to eat. It was a great trip and we will plan another one for Labor Day 2019, possibly to the Chattanooga area.

October Rail Trip: The Carter Chapter NRHS and the Carter RR Museum will co-hosted a one-day rail trip to the **Big South Fork Scenic Railroad** on Saturday, October 27. Information is on the club and museum website and hardcopy information is available in the Carter RR Museum. This is a great trip on the old KY and TN railroad that descends 600 feet into the gorge of Big South Fork River and visits the National Park

Interpretative display of the Blue Heron coal mine. There should be the addition of good Fall color along the route and a visit to the town museum at Stearns is included in the price of the trip. It is not too late to sign up for this outstanding trip and the price is very reasonable. Come and join us and bring a friend or two (or more). Don't miss out on this the last rail trip we will sponsor for 2018.



Lots of things are happening and we have several events scheduled in the coming weeks. Come be a part of the activities in the museum and outside of it. There are plenty to choose from. If you have not been to a club meeting in a while, operated on the club layout on a Saturday or at the monthly operating sessions, or just visited the Carter Railroad Museum to see the

changes we have made since your last visit; pick a Saturday, or a Thursday evening work night; **What Are You Waiting For???** Come join your fellow club members and join the fun. Lend us your talents, your experience and your knowledge of model railroading.

Hear 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



THE MAKING OF A SCENE

LOGAN HEATON'S DULE BLOG

FROM LOGAN'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Logan Heaton has been busy over the past month making significant improvements to his module. The latest has been to shape and mold the parking and roadways on his module. He has posted the steps and progress on his Facebook page as a blog. If you haven't friended take time to do so and send him a "like."



After marking everything off just pour the mixture and smooth it out with the spreader



Started from the tunnel and the station parking lot and worked towards the trucking terminal



After it sits long enough it is time to pull the tape as chunks off the tape did fly off but none of the main project came off



An overview of the station side



After some slight cuts to make sure the buildings fit they were put back in place



A little further into the process but this is what the area first looked like when it was being marked off for the Smooth It



Now just to clean up the pieces that came off

**CASSONS GO ROLLING ON
UP UNITS LEAD THE PARADE ON NS
TRACK
AUGUST MILITARY MOVES PASS THROUGH THE
NORTHEAST TENNESSEE**



