

**Mountain Empire Model Railroaders Club &
George L Carter Chapter of NRHS Newsletter**

THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

AND

THE COAL ROAD

Volume 27 – Issue 9 September 2020

LOSE TRACK OF TIME

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MULTI-TRACK DRIFTING



**JUST BECAUSE THE COOL KIDS DO IT,
DOESN'T MEAN YOU SHOULD**

The View from the Engineer's Side of the Cab & The Drawbar



Once again in this era of COVID-19 you are receiving a combined newsletter for the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and the George L. Carter Chapter NRHS. I hope this September edition of my column finds you safe and well. It has been great to see the Carter Railroad Museum come back to life after being closed to the public for more than 5 months. We had our official reopening to the public on Saturday, August 29, under very strict guidelines all based on the safety of our members and our guests. We limited the number of members in each large gallery to a

maximum of 5 at a time and the number of guests to 10 (university restrictions for now limit the number of people in any room in a campus building to 15). **Ben Merritt** set up a reservation system on our Facebook page and on the MEMRR homepage that allowed our visitors to pick a time slot and preregister for their museum visit. That has worked well to limit and spread out some of the visitor traffic and has doubled as another way to let folks know the museum is open. Additional measures that we have taken include directional decals on the floor with reminders to social-distance, plenty of antibacterial hand-scrub available, and we are now checking temperatures at the door. We had only 15 guests on the 29th, which was also a Railroad Heritage Day; 25 on September 5th, and up to 40+ on our third Saturday of being open on September 12. The 12th was also the first day we opened our Little Engineer's Room back up for children to visit. We are happy that our APS Student worker, **Lorelei Sexton**, is back with us for a second year and she will soon be joined by another APS student.

Newest Member: I want to welcome our newest member, **Rick Mulholland**, to the MEMRR. Rick has been a regular at the museum since joining in late August and has had experience with the organization of train shows with his former railroad clubs. We look forward to getting to know him better and enlisting his help and talents with our own Big Train Show. **Welcome Aboard Rick!!**

Fallen Flag: It is with a sad heart that I report to you the passing of **John Faucett**, the dear husband of **Lynn Carter**. John and Lynn have been MEMRR members for many years and before John's health prevented him from traveling much from their home in Limestone, TN, they both were regular visitors on Saturdays at the Carter Railroad Museum. John died on September 9th. A military graveside service will be held at 1 p.m. on Monday, September 21st, at Mountain Home National Cemetery. Condolences maybe shared with the family at www.doughty-stevens.com.

Additionally, we received word that Charlie, the beloved son of Sarah and Gary Emmert, passed away earlier this month. Charlie had suffered declining health for years following being struck by a hit-and-run driver while he was riding his motorcycle. The driver was never found or identified. The family was with Charlie in Texas when he died and will remain there for the burial services. I know that you will wish to offer your sympathy and condolences to Gary and Sarah. Their mailing address is: 625 Walkers Bend Road, Gray, TN 37615.

Sick Bay: Our member Ruth Berry is experiencing some health problems. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

September Meeting: On the evening of Tuesday, September 15th, we had an historic event for the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter NRHS. We successfully conducted a combined business meeting of the two organizations via Zoom. Webmaster, **Ben Merritt**, set up the meeting for us after he, and several other members, (continued on page 3)

The View from the Engineer's Side of the Cab & The Drawbar

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suggested that we try this technology in order to resume our business meeting agendas. We had the convenience of joining the meeting from the comfort of our homes via our computers, smart phones, or even on a landline phone. We had 13 participants for our inaugural meeting that lasted approximately 45 minutes. We discussed new and old business and our MEMRR secretary, *Mike Tarter*, took the minutes for the meeting that will be published in the September edition of our combined newsletters. We enjoyed the benefit of being able to discuss club and museum happenings, conduct important business and make announcements, while being protected from Covid in the safety of our homes. Now that we know we can meet successfully this way we will be conducting additional combined monthly meetings via this format for the near future. We have been unable to meet in university buildings because the current ETSU policy limits the number of folks in any room to 15 and our MEMRR meetings exceed that on most nights. We have also curtailed dining together prior to the meetings because of the danger of getting together for indoor dining as we had been doing for many years. We are also combining the MEMRR and the Carter Chapter NRHS into a single monthly meeting until such time as we can establish in-person meetings once more. **I encourage all of our members to plan to join us for a combined Zoom meeting on Tuesday, October 20th, for our regularly scheduled monthly meeting.**

G.L. Carter Railroad Museum Schedules:

- ◆ **The Public:** We are once again open to the public on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and we need for our members be present to operate the layouts and to meet our visitors. I would like to know if you plan to attend in the mornings or the afternoon so we can keep a balance of members to meet the needs of the museum and we can somewhat limit the number of members present at any one time to approximately 5 maximum in each of the two large galleries. **You can call or text me at 615/604-8759.** Maximum visitor capacity at any one time is 10 in each gallery, and you may have to keep folks moving if we begin to get larger numbers of visitors, or if a group gets stagnated in one place for too long.
- ◆ **Little Engineer's Room:** The Little Engineer's Room is now open for children and their parents/guardians, but is limited to 3 children at a time because of the small size of the room. Our APS student workers will supervise this room under the guidance of *Amy Merritt*, our Station Master.
- ◆ **Work Nights:** Many of you have begun to return to work in the museum on Thursday afternoons and evenings as we were doing prior to our lock-down in mid-March. I would encourage you to continue to do so as it will allow us to coordinate work efforts, particularly on museum and MEMRR projects. I will plan to be present from around 4:30 to 8+ p.m. on Thursdays as well. Of course, you have access to the museum 24/7 all year long. We have not changed the code in the key box from what is was prior to our March lock-down, so all members have access to the building.
- ◆ **Coordinators' Meetings:** I don't plan to hold monthly Coordinators' Meetings for a while because our meeting room is too small to do so and meet covid-guidelines, but please don't hesitate to let me know your needs as coordinators. If the unit you oversee needs supplies, equipment, or other wants; just let me know and I'll take care of them.

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The View from the Engineer's Side of the Cab & The Drawbar

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- ◆ **Birthdays Parties:** Because of the danger of COVID-19, and the university's current regulations on the number of people who can gather in a single room, *we will not be hosting any birthday parties until further notice.*

Museum Happenings: (Just a few that I have noticed. Forgive me if I overlooked something you are working on. My Bad!!)

- ◆ *Gary Gilliam* has been working on his corner module on the Club HO Layout and his new hill is taking shape.
- ◆ *Frank Fezzie* has continued to improve our wiring and electrical problems on both the MEMRR and the Tweetsie layout in addition to cleaning track and metal wheels, all things that greatly improve the performance of our locomotives.
- ◆ *Michael Sagers* is currently working on creating one of the most unique water stops to exist on any railroad. The ET&WNC had created a rock pool to catch runoff and spring water from a rock face near Hampton, TN that then fed water to locomotive's tenders via a pipe and hose arrangement. He has done a lot of field work to study the railroad's now abandoned tank, and is busy modeling it on our Tweetsie layout.
- ◆ *Logan Heaton* continues to add materials to our museum Facebook page.
- ◆ *John Edwards* is converting my drawings of the ET&WNC Johnson City yard buildings, the carpenter shop and the 3-stall car shop, to computer programs for the laser knife to cut the required pieces from so that assembly of those buildings can begin. They will be followed by the brick sand and oil house and the 3-stall engine house that will complete the structures on that part of the layout.
- ◆ *Fred Alsop* has finally finished the ET&WNC/Southern Railway depot in Johnson City and will be detailing the track and street areas around it.
- ◆ *Geoff Stunkard* is in the beginning stages of designing the museum's 2021 calendar and may be looking for photographs from all the layouts and prototype railroads to illustrate it. Be sure to show him some of your best photos for possible use.
- ◆ *Roger Teinert* has been busy with the beginning preparations for the 2021 Big Train Show. We are in the process of putting together new newsletters to all past and potential vendors to let them begin planning and marking their calendars for the June 4-5, 2021.

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- ◆ *Lisa Lyons* has traded us 10 large double tables on wheels for some of our round tables that we can use for the next train show. We are most happy to have gotten them added to our growing inventory of tables.
- ◆ *Roger Teinert, John Carter, Ken Harmon* and *Fred Alsop* moved the tables cited above from where Lisa had been storing them in Elizabethton, along with the shelving the museum had purchased last year that was also being stored there, to our storage space at ETSU's Valleybrook facility near Gray, TN on Sunday, September 12. Thank you guys for all your hard work.
- ◆ *White River Productions*, the publishers of the *HOn3 Annual*, have just contacted Geoff Stunkard and me asking if we can prepare an illustrated article for the 2020 edition of that publication. We thought we had been passed over this year as this was the first time we had heard from them and they normally give us a late September deadline. We are going to work very hard over the next few days on the newer areas of the Tweetsie layout to provide them some material for possible publication. If accepted, this will be the 7th consecutive year we will have had our ET&WNC HOn3 layout in their outstanding national and international journal.
- ◆ *Heritage Day Event for September*. Our September 26th Heritage Day is "**Appalachian Rail Fest**". Any railroads that ran locally, either currently or historically, are good to run on this day. So, bring your best L&N, Southern, N&W, Norfolk Southern, Clinchfield, Interstate, C&O, CSX, ET&WNC, etc., and let's show off Appalachian railroading for our guests.

We have had to miss a lot of our regular club meetings, rail excursions, the 5th Annual Big Train Show, and others due to the pandemic; but we are back with an open railroad museum and enjoying our hobby and each other's company. Life is good. Be safe and stay well. 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

Director, George L. Carter Railroad Museum, ETSU

President, Mountain Empire Model Railroaders

President, George L. Carter Chapter NRHS

Club News

MEMRR Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Things are looking a bit frosty in Little Cheyenne, where the hill is being built up with plaster and foam to make it even larger towering over the main line and service tracks. The scene for the new branch line is being improved as plans move forward on the new section of track.

Stay tuned for more updates and videos coming soon!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Johnson City is really taking shape around the station with a lot of detail work being put in that really brings the station to life from the road being cleaned up and the double yellow line put down along with a nice flower garden that divides the station from the main road to passengers along the platform and vehicles in the parking lot. We even see ET&WNC ten wheeler #11 pulling in at the platform while another freight train passes. You can even see a Southern Railway engine bringing in boxcars to unload from the siding to the freight house. All in all the area is really starting to come together with the scenery around the station.



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Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

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Club News

Heritage Day: Appalachian Rail Fest! Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

With another month coming to a close we bring this Heritage Day back from the far west of last month to something a little more closer to home as we celebrate this month's event which is Appalachian Rail Fest. Come on down this Saturday as we celebrate across our many layouts these amazing railroads that will be pulling everything from fast passenger trains to long coal drags featuring such railroads as the Norfolk and Western, Chesapeake and Ohio, Southern, CSX and even our own East Tennessee and Western North Carolina as or as many know as the Tweetsie along with many others which will be on full display across our many layouts and exhibits during our normal business hours of 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Be sure to get your reservations in now for the event but until then we will see you all next time on the railway!!



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Club News

Heritage Day: Appalachian Rail Fest! Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

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Club News

Heritage Day: Appalachian Rail Fest! Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

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LOSE TRACK OF TIME

Visit to Charleston, SC Train Club : article and photographs by Robert Sullivan

On my recent trip to Charleston SC, I was able to visit with the model train club. They are still shut down due to covid 19 regulations. They are currently remodeling and improving the location in the Mall. Here are some photos of the layouts. (First photo h.o. layout under cover due to painting the walls and electrical work), Second photo of the cabinets with trains for display. Third photo of the N scale layout. This club has an annual train show, too.



**Mountain Empire Model
Railroaders Club**

Location:



George L. Carter Railroad Museum
East Tennessee State University

Business Meetings

Held monthly on the
3rd Tuesday at 6:30pm.
*

Weekly Work Nights

Thursdays from 4pm until ?

MEMRR Club Officers

- **Club President & Director of George L Carter Railroad Museum, ETSU:** Fred Alsop
alsopf@mail.etsu.edu
- **Vice President:** John Carter
carterjohn92@gmail.com
- **Treasurer:** Gary Emmert
jbox1015@comcast.net
- **Secretary:** Mike Tarter
miketarter06@gmail.com
- **Webmasters:**
Logan Heaton
Ben Merritt
Bill Smith
memrrwebmaster@gmail.com
- **Newsletter Editor:**
Cathy Smith

George L. Carter

Chapter NRHS Officers:

- **President:** Dr. Fred J. Alsop
- **Vice Pres:** Jim Pahriss
- **Secretary:** Carl Hacker
- **Treasurer:** John W. Dodge
- **Historian:** Carolyn Gregg
- **National Representative to the NRHS:** Charlotte Pahriss

George L Carter Railroad Museum and MEMMR

The many colorful multiple railroads of the Midwest are featured at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum, located in the Campus Center Building of East Tennessee State University. The region encompassing Chicago, Detroit, Louisville, Milwaukee and St. Louis was the true epicenter of American commerce between east and west during the 20th century. Literally dozens of railroads large and small provided service throughout Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and the upper midwestern states, all service as links to the chain.

Between passenger and freight operations, the railroad were crucially important in the era before widespread air travel and interstate highways. This was especially true during the 1st & 2nd World Wars. Whether it was perishables like produce and livestock or raw commodities such as coal and ore, everything from store goods to Studebakers came from this region. Since so many models of these trains remain popular, icons of streamlining and strength, it is planned to have excellent Midwestern representations in operation by volunteers on the museum's 24x44 foot HO scale layout. The Carter Railroad Museum is open on Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and includes model railroad layouts, a special child's activity room, and ongoing programs. There is no admission fee but donations are welcome for its upkeep. The museum is also seeking artifacts for display, including the newest addition dedicated to the long-defunct, but well-remembered 'Tweetsie' line, the East

In addition to the displays, there is also a growing research library, and an oral history archive being established as part of the museum's programs. Info can be found online at '<http://etsu.edu/railroad/>' or '<http://johnsonsddepot.com/>' or '<http://www.stateoffranklin.net/johnsons/glcarter/cartermuseum.html>'

Members of the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) club coordinate the exhibits. Visit 'www.memrr.org/' to learn more about MEMRR, or visit '<http://glcarternrhs.com/>' to learn more about Carter Chapter, which helps demonstrate and maintain the model layouts, museum exhibits and other projects.

Membership opportunities are available to adults, and include special benefits and model railroading enjoyment.

The museum can be identified by a flashing railroad crossing signal at the back entrance to the Campus Center Building. Visitors should enter ETSU's campus from State of Franklin Road (at green light) onto Jack Vest Drive and continue east to North Dossett Drive (then left) to John Roberts Bell Drive at end, then right then left on Ross Drive(176) to end, adjacent to the flashing RR crossing sign.

- *For more information about Heritage Day, contact Fred Alsop at 423-439-6858 or asopf@mail.etsu.edu.*
- *For disability accommodations, call the ETSU Office of Disability Services at*