

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

THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

AND

THE COAL ROAD

Volume 28 – Issue 6 June 2021

Cover photograph of Norfolk & Western 611 – by Paul Haynes

Lose Track of Time!

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| Club News | 6–18, 24 |
| President's Msg | 2–5 |
| Lose Track of Time | 1 |
| Meeting Minutes | 25–29 |
| Heritage Days | 19–23 |
| Club Information | 30 |

**IT TAKES FIVE OF
YOU TO PULL A HEAVY LOAD?**



THAT'S CUTE

Many Thanks to our "Roving Reporter" Logan Heaton for all of his work keeping us up to date on the museum and club happenings! His wonderful photographs and articles are a huge part of making this newsletter a success! Logan you are the best!

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



Summer is upon us and things seem to slowly be getting back to normal. The number of visitors at the Carter Railroad Museum has been steadily increasing on Saturdays, especially rainy ones, and we are all being able to do more social outings than we could even a few weeks ago. Tennessee is one of those southern states that is lagging behind most others in the percentage of vaccinated people who have gotten the covid vaccines, and that continues to provide a risk to them, and others who are also unvaccinated, especially with the new Delta strain of the virus appearing in the United States. I urge any of our members who still have not gotten their covid shots to please do so; for you and for us. We will continue to take everyone's temperatures at the door on Saturdays, and the university policy on mask wearing by folks who remain unvaccinated is still in place and we will continue to enforce that policy. It is great to have so many of our members coming back to the museum on a regular basis and to continue to get new members joining our clubs. Please welcome each of them and get them involved in our club and museum activities so they feel part of our fine organizations.

To any of our members who are in "sick bay" and/or who are recovering from illness or surgery, we miss you and wish you a full and speedy recovery with hopes of seeing you at the railroad museum and at our club meetings very soon.

June marked two in-person events that are also steps to get our lives back to normal for the MEMRR, the Carter Chapter NRHS, and the Carter Railroad Museum. **Live Business Meeting:** We had our first live, in-person combined business meetings of our two organizations on Tuesday, June 15th. It was good to be back together in our former meeting room, 223 Brown Hall on the ETSU campus. We conducted this first in-person meeting as a "hybrid" meeting with some members coming to the meeting and some attending via Zoom. We did not have many members present, only 5 in-person and 4 on Zoom, but we did discuss topics of interest, have officer reports, and a program. It was a very small step, but an important one and I hope we have much greater attendance for the next scheduled meeting in June. We will continue this "hybrid" format for at least the foreseeable future providing the opportunity for members to meet together or to join the group electronically.

The second event was created on rather short notice, but had all the trappings of a two-day educational event with a train ride on an historic railroad bed to cap it off. We decided that with the inability to have our Annual Big Train Show in the ETSU Mini-Dome (serious remodeling inside that building taking place this summer) we would attempt to fill the gap with a **Tweetsie Time Celebration**. We got a lot of media attention including regular spots on WETS public radio, the newspapers, Facebook and other social media, as well as information to the ET&WNC RR Historical Society and their chat groups. I had 3 quality speakers lined up for Friday, operation sessions for attendees on our "Tweetsie" layout and a hike on the Tweetsie Trail. Saturday was filled with

(continued on page 3)

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

(continued from page 2)

modeling clinics, talks, and other activities. Sunday morning, we scheduled a train ride in the Doe River Gorge. We cancelled all but the train ride the week prior to the event because it was evident we were not getting sufficient registration to make it worth while for the time and energy we were, and would be, putting into it. But the train ride was still on! We had 31 participants ranging in age from 3 to 80 who joined us at the Doe River Gorge for a great train adventure over historic rails on a wonderfully sunny and warm morning. The group spent 3 hours riding the train and the speeders through tunnels 2 & 3, to Pardee Point, and beyond. Some took hikes on the tracks to get a better feel of the rushing Doe River in the canyon below and the towering rock walls the railroad workers bored their way through, foot-by-foot, using picks, shovels, and black power in the early 1880s. Members and former members, Ben Merritt, Joe Roberts and Don Ramey, drove the speeders as volunteers or salaried workers in the Doe River Gorge. Everyone had a great time and most said we should do the train ride again. If there is enough club interest in doing this as a group I can try to schedule a Sunday morning ride. Let me hear from you!

Moving the Carter Railroad Museum: I have had a number of meetings over the past month with ETSU university administrators and with Johnson City councilmen and leaders all focused on the prospect of locating a new and larger location for the Carter Railroad Museum. As you are aware, the proposed building to replace the current university building we are housed in was approved by Governor Bill Lee in his annual budget this spring. With that approval the clock is now ticking on the time we will have to move into some other space. The timeline, based on my most recent conversation with ETSU President, Brian Noland, is approximately 18 months. To help me facilitate any proposal the museum can make for a new location I have been fortunate to put together a great Museum Advisory Board of really talented people that represent the Carter Railroad Museum, the university, and the city. They are now working with me to develop a solid proposal for a business plan, necessary operating space, outreach programs, and all the other amenities such a modern museum should have. I am looking for their advice to fill perhaps one more seat on this new board. The board as it currently stands includes Carter RR Museum members Fred Alsop, Roger Teinert, Geoff Stunkard; ETSU members Vice-President Jeremy Ross, and Endowed Chair David Golden; Johnson City former mayor and City Councilman, Jenny Brock. I will keep our members and the university president updated on any progress we make on relocating our museum in a larger space on, or near, the university.

Fall Rail Excursion? COVID-19 quickly put an end to all social gatherings early in 2020, and that included the 2-3 annual rail excursions that were co-hosted by the G.L. Carter Chapter NRHS and the Carter RR Museum. With more people having been vaccinated I would like to once again provide this educational outreach service to our members and the general public. We had been hosting trips in the spring, fall and over the Labor Day weekend pre-pandemic. I would like to get member feedback on our jointly putting together an October rail excursion at one of the

(continued on page 4)

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

(continued from page 3)

the following rail venues: 3-Rivers Rambler RR combined with a luncheon cruise in Knoxville, TN; or Smoky Mt. Railways in Bryson City, NC with a visit to the Lionel Train Museum; or Big South Fork Scenic Railways in Stearns, KY with a visit to the NPS Blue Heron Mine. Let me know what you think as we should be making our reservations for such an adventure very soon.

Annual Fall Museum Picnic: Hosts Kim and Tom McKee have indicated they would be happy to once more host our annual fall picnic at their lakeside home if we wish to resume this popular social event. What says yea?? Tom also has a G-Scale garden railway in his yard that will be running and that he invites use to operate. The picnic will probably be scheduled in late August or early September, and as in the past, we will limit participation to members and their spouses or significant-others; no children. Details will follow as I work things out with the McKees. This is always a fun-time social event.

Coordinators' Meeting: For the first time since February, 2020, we held a museum coordinators' meeting on June 17, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. in room 235, ETSU Campus Center Building with 5 members in attendance. These monthly meetings were for years, pre-pandemic, an important means of getting the group leaders in the various departments of the museum together around the same table to discuss progress in their areas, or needs, or plans for change, etc. They are a great tool for staying current on all aspects of the museum, the layouts, the children's playroom, the library, as well as any problems that need to be discussed. I am happy that they have been reinstated as a regular feature of what we do in our planning processes for the museum and its exhibits. A brief summery of the reports from those coordinators who were present follows: ***Library, Gary Emmert--*** Wallace Shealey has almost completed his integration of all existing hardback volumes onto the shelves and we are looking for a few "missing" books. Wallace, and his wife, Catherine, have done a great deal of work over the past few months and have been cataloging these new additions as they have been added to the permanent collection. The library will remain somewhat restricted to members' use for the next several months until all of the cataloging is completed. Thanks for your patience. ***MEMRR HO-Scale Layout, John Carter--*** Work is continuing on the club modules on both side of the lift bridge that involves the area around the depot and the mountain-logging scenes. Frank Fezzie is going to place heavy-duty track bumpers with red warning lights on the ends of each of the staging yard tracks. Rick Mulholland, Gregg Williams, and Paul Haynes begin work on extending the former "Don Ramey Modules" forward several inches to better match the extension on the sister module to the left of the draw bridge and, more importantly, to provide some much-needed real estate for expanding the planned logging operation and connecting tracks. ***Locomotive Repair, Gary Gilliam***—Gary is requesting that we ask if we have other members who can take over some of the locomotive

(continued on page 5)

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

(continued from page 4)

repairs he is currently doing. He is experiencing more difficulty in seeing and handling the smaller parts that have to be removed and secured in the repair and maintenance of our small HO-scale locomotives. He is happy to work with any member who wishes to begin to take this important activity on. Volunteers???

General Discussion---1) There was some discussion about the plans for the former "Joe Roberts Modules" that are now club owned. It was pointed out that Frank Fezzie had created several possible plans for changes on those modules and he should be encouraged to share those again with members to see if one, or a combination of several of them, could be adapted and work could begin on them to better tie them into the operations on that section of the layout. 2) Fred should contact the member who owns the mine layout to see if he is interested in selling that to the club in light of his not being a active member at the museum. Fred agreed to do so. Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. Next scheduled meeting July 15.

National Model Railroad Association Chapter? Several of our members are members of the NMRA. The closest chapter to Johnson City meets on Thursday nights in the *Bass ProShop* off exit 402, Sevierville exit of I-40. Not convenient for us in many ways. One of our new members, *Gregg Williams*, is a long-standing member and is seeking interest from our other members regarding any desire we may have to start a local chapter of NRHS. Think about it and talk to Gregg to learn what a chapter may do, and what advantages it may bring to current, and potential members, and give us some feedback.

June Heritage Day: Our June 26 Heritage Day features headlines the railroads of the mid-western states. So, dust off your locomotives and rolling stock, both freight and passenger and help us celebrate "*Mid-Western Memories*". Lots of railroads ran out of Chicago, St. Lewis, Omaha and other major cities of the region. Let's show what we have to promote them for our visitors who will read the press releases and come to our museum on the 26th.

As always, there are lots of things going on in our clubs and at the Carter Railroad Museum. We are still a wonderful attraction for visitors from near and far. We represent a lot of the history of Johnson City and the region with our operational model railroads, and we provide great model railroad, and prototype railroad experiences. Welcome to our newest members and we look forward to making you part of our "family". This is an active place and summer is upon us. Listen to 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

Tweetsie Layout Update – 3 Stall Engine House: Article & Photographs by Logan Heaton

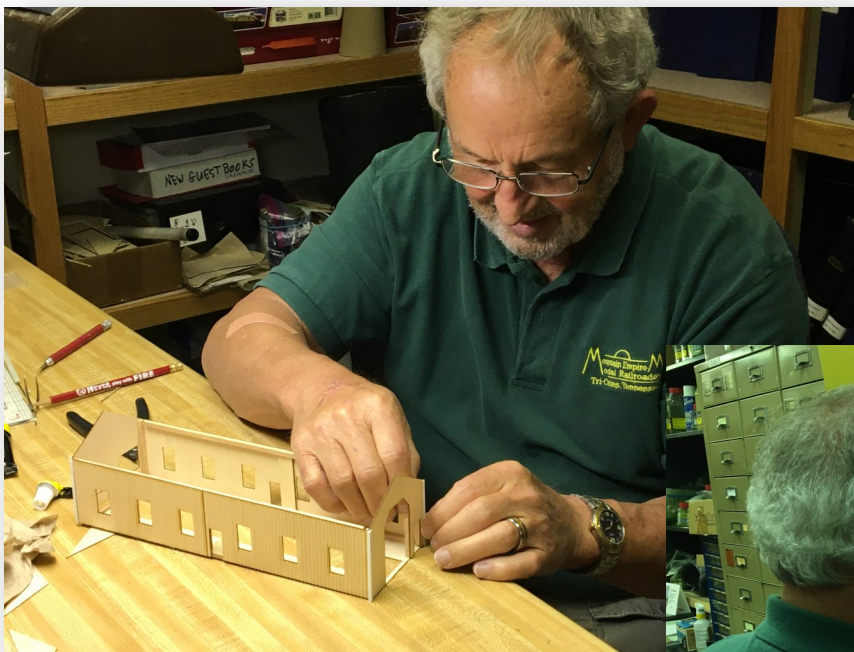
The 3 stall engine house for Johnson City is complete!! After the final pieces for the chimneys and doors were installed the building was ready for installation. Before placing the building down some of the track had to be adjusted to both match up with the stalls and also make it look that much closer to the original ET&WNC trackage. With the engine house completed this now leaves one final building left for the yard to be built before beginning on landscaping the area. Stay tuned for more updates!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update – Mystery Car Shed: Article and Photographs by Logan Heaton

Work is continuing on Johnson City with the final building for the ET&WNC yard now being constructed. If you recall from a previous post we found an aerial view of the yard and one point of interest was a building marked "mystery car shed" which up to that point we had no record of such a structure was there. Although not much is known about the building we do have enough for its construction for the layout. Already Dr. Fred Alsop has begun putting the pieces together with the shed quickly taking shape. From there what has been built so far is put in the paint booth where it is sprayed with primer. The layout has also been marked with a footprint over the siding where the shed will sit once it is done. Stay tuned for more updates!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update – Mystery Car Shed: Article and Photographs by Logan Heaton

Progress continues on the mystery shed with the main structure now painted in the ET&WNC green that was used for many of the wood buildings on the railroad. We see Dr. Fred Alsop also fixing up the roof pieces to make sure they are at the right length and braced together before fitting it to the building and putting on the metal roofing. The windows, doors and door frames have also been painted in red drying before being installed on the building which will put the structure that much closer to completion. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update – Mystery Car Shed: Article and Photographs by Logan Heaton

The last structure for the Johnson City yard has been completed. The mystery car shed is now fully assembled, painted, weathered and now put in place on the layout in front of the three stall engine house and behind the sand and oil building. This now completes the final structure for the yard. There will be some smaller pieces put in such as the coal bunker and water column along with landscaping the area but it is really coming along now. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!!



Club News

New Members for 2021!

During 2020 we were fortunate to have people from all over our area join the club. In 2021 we will provide monthly updates and stories on new members as they occur.

*Hongbo Zhu- an engineer at Eastman

*Greg William- a member of the NMRA

We would love to know more about you!

If you would like to share your story with fellow club members in a future newsletter, please send via email to our editor at cathysmithmemrr@yahoo.com.

Many thanks to the following members for all the help they gave sorting the books at Valleybrook.

- James and Carolyn Gregg.
- Mike Tarter
- Rich Romanski
- Mike Baker
- Paul Hynes

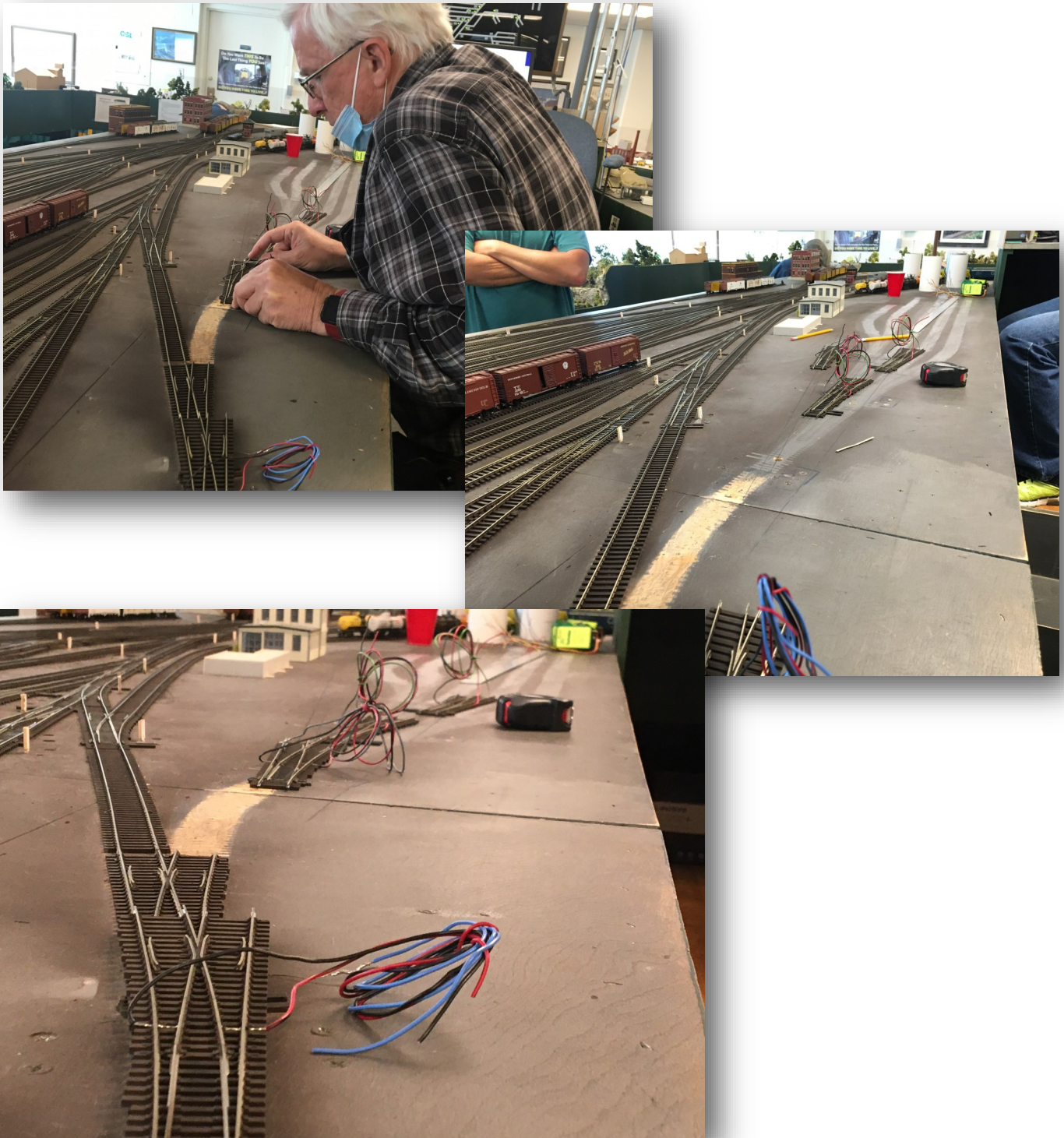
Without their help I would be still sorting books. A special thanks to Wallace Shealy. With out his abilities we would not have been able to up date all the new books.

Gary Emmert, MEMRR Treasurer

Club News

MEMRR Layout Update– Main Yard: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Changes are coming to the main yard near the back end where a freight house is about to be installed. To accompany the new industry part of the yard had to be shifted which also straightened out some of the tighter curves which will make switching the industry much easier and less risk of derailing the freight cars being moved between the sidings. Stay tuned for more updates!



Club News

MEMRR Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

One thing to learn in modeling is that nothing is ever really done and in some cases even have to step back and start over with a fresh approach. In a previous update you may recall for this area of Johnson City was going for a different design with a small downtown area mounted on a cork bed after a board was placed over the hole where the old control panels were before. Unfortunately though the board was not holding well as originally thought which caused a dip in the cork including the attempted road. Also some issues with the cork itself ultimately resulted in the cork being taken up putting it back to the bare wood of the table. This however does not spell doom for this area as a fresh start has taken place downtown. The first of which is taking out the wood board and in its place a foam block is put in to fill the hole. The block does stick out a little at this time but will eventually be sanded down to be level with the rest of the table. With this a new approach is being taken on the downtown area using smaller buildings to give an unobstructed view of the yard and diesel shops as part of a point of interest when viewing this area along with additional shops and facilities to fill out the town. We hope everyone will enjoy this new look of the area and continue to follow us as we work to bring this area together. Stay tuned for more updates!



Club News

MEMRR Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Some great progress has been made across the Johnson City and mountain modules seen when entering the museum. Starting in Johnson City at the new industry an interior is starting to take shape with machinery and supplies lining the floor with a forklift to move things down to the loading bays to put in the boxcars. Moving towards the downtown area between the diesel facilities and the main line, the town is cleared to level the foam block for the table for an even surface, even taking the chance to get ideas for a park. Last and certainly not least things are moving along with the logging area with some of the old and new foam also being leveled out for the camp area and for new tracks leading into the area. Stay tuned for more updates!!!



Club News

Museum Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Last week we had three incredible pieces donated for our gallery showcasing both the Clinchfield and Johnson city. The first is an amazing piece of art with a Clinchfield #800 sitting side by side with Clinchfield 1. The second piece is a poster of the Clinchfield Autumn Special being led by Clinchfield 1. Last but certainly not least is an amazing aerial view of Johnson City that is determined to be sometime after 1950. These great additions can be seen in the display cabinets of the Alsop Gallery.



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update—Elizabethton Coal Chute: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

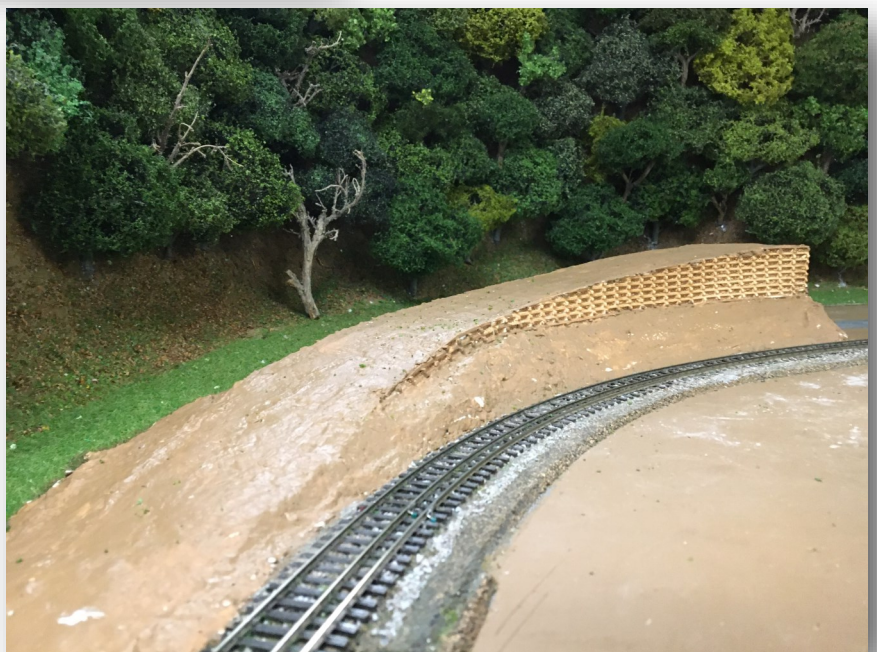
With the structures in Johnson City done focus is revisited on an old site. Progress now picks up on the coal chute for Elizabethton with the final touches being put on while the layout is being prepared. With additional figures added the cits are busy with activity while Dr. Fred Alsop puts on wooden walkways following the track over the chute. The ties have also been removed to make openings for the coal to empty below. At the end of the track wheel stops have been put in and painted to help prevent rolling stock and the occasional locomotive from going over the edge. The last bit being added during this last work session were ladders that will be put in to allow crews access up to the walkways which are currently being painted. Stay tuned for more updates.



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update—Elizabethton Coal Chute: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

While the coal chute itself is being made ready in the office out on the layout preparations have also been started. The ramp that we saw in a previous post has been built up and even had scenery added including a retaining wall that will lead up to the chute once that is installed. Around the area where the chute will sit has also seen a lot of change with trees lining the sides of the hills and grass below. The start of a road has also been mapped which will also serve as an access road to the chutes once it is put in place. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update—Elizabethton Coal Chute: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

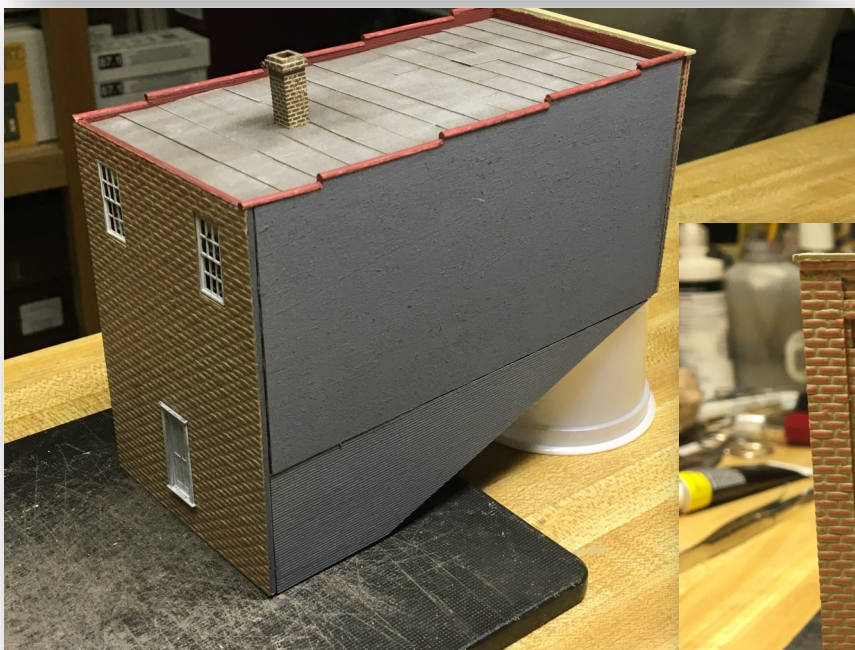
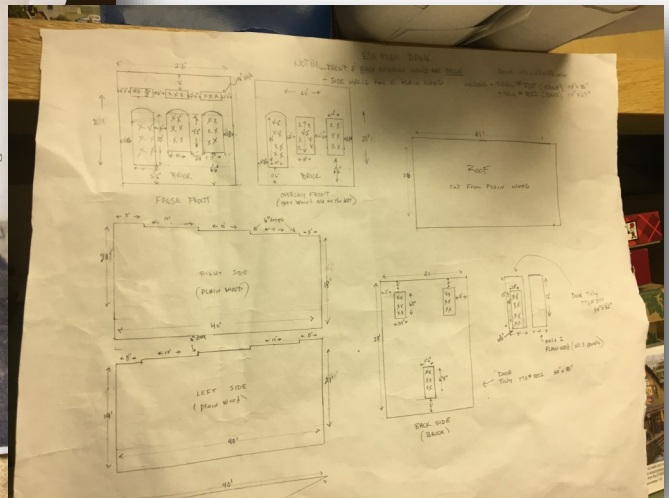
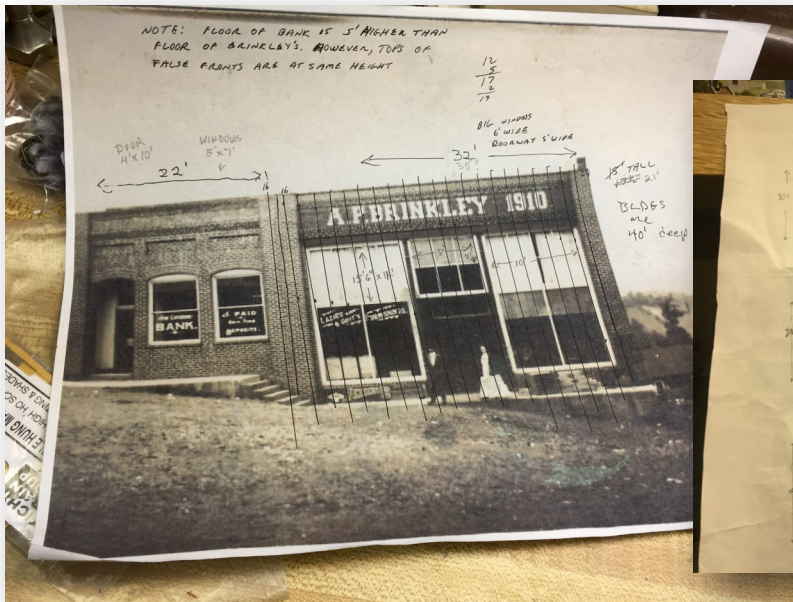
The coal chute has now been installed on the layout at the edge of Elizabethton! After the arrival of the hand built turnout the remaining track work began leading up the ramp to the chute. The chute itself has also received some additional work with it not only being positioned perfectly to where coal loads would be loaded into the locomotives and hoppers but the walkways installed previously have also been weathered adding a more worn look. The ladders that were being painted before have also been put in leading up to the walkway. There is still a bit more to do but for now everything is set and the tracks are functional so the rest will be doing the final stretch of landscaping including putting in the last few ties at the switch and putting in ballast. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!!



Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update-Elk Park Bank, NC: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Elk Park, North Carolina has been started!! While waiting on some final pieces to do the coal chute work has started on Elk Park with the first building quickly taking shape. The bank that will be one of the buildings in a row behind the station has quickly taken shape with it being a small structure and has been assembled in no time compared to prior projects. The next step will be some detail work left to do including some changes to the front windows but this is already a great start. Stay tuned for more updates coming soon!!



Club News

Horsepower Heritage Day: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

We had a great display of modern motive power during our Heritage Day event for Horsepower 2021 with many railroads and different trains out on display while keeping the MEMRR on the move. We caught many scenes of these engines action on different parts of the layout. We hope you enjoy!!



(continued on page 20)

Heritage Days!

Horsepower Heritage Day: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

(continued from page 19)



(continued on page 21)

Heritage Days!

Horsepower Heritage Day: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

(continued from page 20)



(continued on page 22)

Heritage Days!

Horsepower Heritage Day: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

(continued from page 21)



(continued on page 23)

Heritage Days!

Horsepower Heritage Day: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

(continued from page 22)



The 2020 Hon3 Annual **and** **2021 All Aboard Calendars** **are Available Now!**

Our new beautiful *All Aboard 2021* calendars remain available. Get yours soon so that your discounted price gets its full benefit of all 12 months of events and reminders. Remember too, that we have a limited supply of the recent *2020 Hon3 Annual* published by White River Productions. This issue bears a color-illustrated 8-page feature of our ET&WNC RR layout. This marks the 7th consecutive year our Tweetsie layout has been featured in this collector's magazine; an outstanding accomplishment and a tribute to the quality of work to be found throughout our railroad museum. Be sure to get your souvenir copy while we still have some in stock. A few editions for the previous year's *Hon3 Annual* remain available at our sales table.



Meeting Minutes

MEMRR & George L. Carter Chapter of NRHS Monthly Business Meeting Minutes- 5/18/21

Note: Meeting was conducted via Zoom

Meeting called to order at 6:40 PM by President Fred Alsop.

Members Present (on call): Fred Alsop, Logan Heaton, Mike Tarter, John Dodge, Robert Sullivan, Bill Smith, Geoff Stunkard, Gary Emmert, Rick Romanski

President Fred Alsop reminded the group that this is a joint meeting of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

Fred shared with us that, per CDC guidelines, ETSU has dropped the requirement for wearing masks on campus if a person has been inoculated for Covid-19. YAY!

After initial remarks, Fred called for Officer Reports.

V.P. report, John Carter: not able to be on the Zoom meeting

Secretary's report: The club Secretary, Mike Tarter, noted that the April meeting minutes were taken by Bill Smith (thank you, sir!) and will be included in the May Signal Bridge and Coal Road. Any corrections or additions to the meeting notes are always invited - please discuss any during our next business meeting.

Treasurers' reports: Gary Emmert gave us an update on some recent deposits and payments. The MEMRR and the Carter Museum have money and are solvent. John Dodge reports for the Carter Chapter of NRHS Treasury; there is little change since last month - this group also has a sound financial position.

RR Museum Librarian, Gary Emmert: no report. Per Fred, the project of new (donated) books that were in temporary storage at ValleyBrook are being cataloged and integrated into the library by Gary and Wallace Sheeley. A barcode catalog system is being implemented. As before, duplicates are being separated for later possible sale, and any signed books are noted and retained. Fred mentions that Dean Small will assume the function of Librarian.

Webmaster reports, Ben Merritt: not on the Zoom call, no report.

Membership report, Robert Sullivan: Robert was logged into the Zoom meeting, but had no update to report.

Fred noted the other Carter Chapter officers and historian are not logged into the Zoom meeting.

Presidents report:

The renovation of adjacent Lamb Hall IS funded (\$23 M) and is being emptied; it will take about 2 years. As previously discussed, this will make parking a challenge and thus certainly affect our public attendance. In the 18 to 24 months timeframe, our club and museum will be displaced, making way for the demolition of our present building. (The planned replacement may be a 3 story structure.)

(continued on page 26)

Meeting Minutes

MEMRR & George L. Carter Chapter of NRHS Monthly Business Meeting Minutes- 5/18/21

(continued from page 25)

Fred discussed some meetings regarding the future relocation of the museum and Club. Many options are being considered, including ETSU, Johnson City, Elizabethton, Kingsport, and Erwin. All have historical connections to the Clinchfield. Fred may have an update for the next Signal Bridge.

Our membership monthly meetings have been held via Zoom since last March. With the lifting of Covid restrictions at ETSU, we can resume in person meetings on campus, at Brown Hall (room #223) for the June 15th meeting. Some discussion ensued, and it was agreed to continue to Zoom along with the in person meeting- a 'hybrid' approach.

And, social events are now possible to resume - a Fall picnic, perhaps??

Old Business:

Planning for The Big Train Show for June 2022 is ongoing. We are staying in contact with various vendors and people who have expressed interest.

Fred reminded us that this year's annual NHRS Rail Camp is cancelled due to the Covid virus pandemic.

New Business:

Fred has noticed progress on some areas of the HO corner layout. Rick said he is seeking some track, switches and switch machines. Logan reported that the depot and Johnson City overpass area is getting done.

Mike Tarter reported that renovation on a section of the N scale layout is continuing (slowly). Rock work is done and painted, trees made by Ken are being installed, Roger has been ballasting track. Upgrading the appearance of vehicles is ongoing. Notably, one of the 'trolley car' routes has been restored to operation, with assistance from Frank and a new trolley obtained at a train show by Gary.

Mike mentioned the G scale layout is running reliably. Visitors enjoy the sound effects, too.

Progress on the Tweetsie layout; Fred reports the engine house is done and the car shed is in progress. Bill and Ben have been taking drawings to the laser cutter.

The weekend of the 29th is Heritage Day - this days emphasis is on Big Diesels. (So I guess N scale doesn't qualify)

Coordinators meeting: no meeting was held in May. Fred reminded again that we should let him know of any Club or museum needs.

Fred and Geoff discussed the Tweetsie Time celebrations on June 4-6. The museum will be open to the public both Friday and Saturday June 4-5. Full details are available on the MEMRR website. The train ride in the gorge to tunnel #4 and the seminars on the history, photography, archeology, rock making, etc. sound terrific!

Logan has a program prepared pertaining to the AMTRAK development of Acela to share with the members.

The Secretary, Mike Tarter, had to drop off at 7:30 to join a separate conference call (Porsche Club Race).

The meeting was adjourned at some time after that.

Respectfully submitted; Mike Tarter, Secretary

Meeting Minutes

MEMRR & George L. Carter Chapter of NRHS Monthly Business Meeting Minutes- 6/15/21

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President Fred Alsop in room 223, Brown Hall, on the East Tennessee State University Campus. This was the first in-person meeting for the two clubs since March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was a “hybrid” formatted meeting with 5 members meeting in person and 4 members attending via Zoom. It was the unanimous consensus that this format was a success and that future meeting should be conducted with the same hybrid format.

Officer’s Reports are as follows: No **Secretary’s** report (secretary is in Arizona). **Treasurers’** report for MEMRR not presented (treasurer had injured himself and was not in attendance); Carter Chapter, John Dodge reported no change in the fund balance since the May report, and that the efforts to get deposit money back from planned rail excursion in Chattanooga area for Labor Day 2020 that was cancelled because of covid from the vendor who has filed for bankruptcy are ongoing. No **Newsletter Editor’s** report (editor is on vacation). No **Web-Masters’** report (one is on vacation and the other is working in a church camp for the summer). **Librarian’s** report given by Wallace Shealy states that almost all the hardback volumes in the library have been catalogued. Search is on for a few missing volumes and for any that may remain in storage at Valleybrook. Carter Chapter **Historian’s** report will be forthcoming. Carter Chapter **Director-at-Large**, Paul Haynes, had no news to report. **MEMRR Vice-President**, John Carter, reported the following progress on the club’s HO layout: Searching for track and structures for the new “mountain logging” club corner. Work will begin soon on the outward extension for that corner module. Lift bridge into the layout is still a problem and needs repair or replacement. Work is also continuing on the passenger station side club module and on several cut-away buildings that are getting detailed interiors. Meeting programs for the near future will continue to be via video. No **Carter Chapter VP** report (VP was out of town). **President’s** report. Fred reported that there was no progress to report on securing a new location for the Carter RR Museum, but that he had assembled an Advisory Board of directors who are currently working on this as a team. The board is composed of two club members, two ETSU administrators, one Johnson City Council person with recommendations being followed up on seating one more person from the city. The board will be meeting to attempt to find all the necessary solutions to securing a new location, creating a business plan, and promoting the museum as primary goals. Fred is being very proactive in trying to find us a larger, one-story venue for the museum to move to. The ETSU adjacent Lamb Hall renovation will begin soon as most of the interior furnishings have been moved and placed in storage. The adjacent parking lot will be used for construction staging and will be unavailable for the next 2 years.

(continued on page 28)

Meeting Minutes

MEMRR & George L. Carter Chapter of NRHS Monthly Business Meeting Minutes- 6/15/21

(continued from page 27)

Old Business:

Fred asked the members attending to consider resuming the club **Operating Sessions** on the 1st Monday of each month and to discuss this with other members to see if, and when, they would like for these to resume. It was noted that the operations plans we had been using needed to be tweaked to make them more fun and more efficient for operators.

Tweetsie Time Celebration was canceled for lack of registered participants for the Friday and Saturday event, but the Sunday morning ride on the rails on the old ET&WNC RR in the Doe River Gorge was conducted. 31 people participated and spent almost 3 hours riding the train and the speeders pulling open-air cars traversing via rail and by foot the approximately 3 miles of track in the most spectacular part of the gorge. Everyone had a great time!

Annual Big Train Show Committee reported that the June 2022 show flyers were being distributed to participants and potential vendors are regional train shows. Plans are for the committee to begin regular meetings in early fall to plan the event and to contact vendors.

Annual Summer Picnic. Picnic hosts Kim and Tom McGee have invited the clubs to once more come to their lake-side property and enjoy this family social event. Details will be forthcoming for a picnic in August or September.

National Narrow-Gauge Convention. The national convention will be held in Hickory, NC on September 2-4, 2021. Details are on their website and some of our members are planning to attend. Reservations can be made for lodging and for some of the activities for the convention and should be made early. The convention is planning to transport via bus(es) some of the participants to visit the Carter Railroad Museum on Saturday, Sept. 4.

North Carolina Railroad Museum is requesting that we send them some of our museum rack card brochures and some of our Big Train Show flyers.

New Business:

Railroad Heritage Day. The June 26th Heritage Day Event theme is "*Mid-Western Memories*". We need lots of HO scale locomotives and rolling stock on the MEMRR layout and the N-scale layout for this popular Saturday event. Please bring whatever you have that ran in this part of the country for operation on our layouts for the public to see and ask you about. Please be faithful to the theme for the Heritage Day Event and run only locomotives, passenger cars and cabooses that represent these railroads.

(continued on page 29)

Meeting Minutes

MEMRR & George L. Carter Chapter of NRHS Monthly Business Meeting Minutes- 6/15/21

(continued from page 28)

October Rail Excursion? Now that we are slowly moving back towards “normal” is it time for the Carter Chapter to plan a public rail excursion, perhaps in October? Destinations to consider may be the Big South Fork Scenic Railroad in Stearns, KY; the Smoky Mt. RR in Bryson City, NC; or the 3-Rivers Rambler in Knoxville combined with a luncheon cruise on the Tennessee River aboard the *Star of Knoxville*. We need to be making reservations soon if we want to do this.

Coordinators Meeting: We have not had a Coordinators Meeting in many months. Let’s plan to meet at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, June 17, in Room 235 in ETSU’s Campus Center Building.

“Skirts” in the “Tweetsie” Room? There is a need to cover up the bare legs of much of the benchwork supporting the ET&WNC RR layout and all of the building materials stored beneath it. Let’s begin to make plans to purchase the necessary cloth needed to do this and to fine some club members who will take this on as a project. Covering up everything that is now stored in plain view beneath those sections of the layout, and the wiring that is exposed at the operations control modules, will make it all look more pleasing and perhaps keep some little hands from pulling on the pretty wires.

No Volunteer List. It was the consensus that with the 20+ members who have been present on Saturdays since the museum reopened in late 2020, that we really did not need to get volunteers for our public Saturday operation sessions. Therefore, for the foreseeable future we will dispense with this traditional practice.

Program. Logan Heaton, keeping with the June Heritage Day theme of “Mid-Western Memories” presented a video featuring the streamlined passenger train of the 1930s. The Milwaukie Road’s 4-4-0, 6-coach train, the *Hiawatha*. Logan plans to bring his HO model of this sleek orange and silver locomotive and consist to run for this June 26th event.

July Meeting: The combined clubs **July 20th** meeting will be held at **6:30 p.m. in 223 Brown Hall** on the ETSU campus as a “hybrid” meeting in-person and via Zoom. Your attendance is highly encouraged and most welcome. No pre-meeting dinner social is currently planned. We really need your voices at our business meetings so please mark your calendars and plan to attend in-person or electronically.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m. by motion and vote.

Minutes compiled and submitted by “interim acting secretary”, President Fred Alsop, who is hereby assuming full responsibility for any mistakes or omissions.

**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:** Roger Teinert
- **Secretary:** Mike Tarter
- **Treasurer:** John W. Dodge,
econguy2000@hotmail.com
- **Historian:** Carolyn Greg
- **National Representative to the NRHS:** Charlotte Pahrts

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://johnsonspot.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 423-439-8346*