

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

THE SIGNAL BRIDGE

AND

THE COAL ROAD

Volume 30 – Issue 1 January 2023

Cover photograph by Paul Haynes

Lose Track of Time!

Inside this issue:

This is Punxsutawney Phil's ex-wife, Phyllis, who now lives in Florida and said that Phil is a compulsive liar.



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



Welcome to a combined President's column for December 2022 and January 2023. We all took a well-deserved break over the Christmas Holiday Season including closing the G.L. Carter Railroad Museum on December 24th, to be with family and friends on Christmas Eve. I hope Santa brought everyone all they desired including some new train "stuff" that is always needed by members of our club, chapter, and museum. *Happy New Year 2023!!* We had a great crowd with over 100 visitors on New Year's Eve at the museum and were busy running trains and answering questions the entire day.

Dues, Renewals, and New Members: Please welcome our new members as you have the opportunity to meet them. We are blessed with gaining some new folks with a real interest in model railroading and a desire to help us any way they can as they learn our operating procedures. Please extend a warm handshake and help them become involved in our clubs and our railroad museum.

Dues and Renewals: We have a long window for renewing our dues to the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders and to the G.L. Carter Chapter NRHS stretching from November to January 31. Hopefully, everyone who wants to remain a member of either, or both, organizations have paid the piper/treasurer (**Mike Tarter=MEMRR; John Dodge=Carter Chapter NRHS**). Our dues have not been raised in many years. The NRHS dues are higher because members pay both local dues as well as national dues; but both are most reasonable for the materials and privileges on gains by membership. *We will be changing the lockbox code at the end of the month of January as we do annually, and only paid-up members will be given the new code. You will not have access to the museum with member privileges if we don't have you as a paid-up member.*

2023 Officers: All the previous officers who served us so well in 2022 were reelected to their previous positions unanimously during our November elections. Congratulations to our officers and our sincere appreciation is extended to you for all you do for our clubs and for the G.L. Carter Railroad Museum. Your election to posts to lead us is a strong confirmation from our voting members in your ability to perform your duties in a responsible manner for the betterment of all. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

MEMRR your officers are: *President, Fred Alsop; Vice-President, John Carter; Secretary, Mike Tarter; Treasurer, Mike Tarter.*

G.L. Carter Chapter officers are: *President, Fred Alsop; Vice-President, Roger Teinert; Secretary, Mike Tarter; Treasurer, John Dodge.*

Appointed Officers for both clubs and the Carter Railroad Museum: *Editor, Cathy Smith; Webmasters, Ben Merritt and Bill Smith; Librarian, Dean Small.*

2022 Special Honorees: *Congratulations fellow members!!*

Member of the Year -Logan Heaton (2nd consecutive year to receive this honor from his fellow members.

Officer of the Year –Mike Tarter (2nd consecutive year to receive this honor from his fellow members.

Director's Special Service Award – Wallace Shealy for outstanding work in the museum library.

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

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Publications:

The new **2023 Carter RR Museum Calendar** is available at the museum sales desk and reduced to **\$5.00** for members. *Geoff Stunkard* and *Logan Heaton* have contributed great photographs to illustrate it and its pages contain all of the club/chapter meeting dates for the year. It will look great in your home or office and is a great reminder of the hobby you are an active part of. They make great, inexpensive gifts for friends and family members as well. Additionally, they are terrific way to promote your club and your museum. Pick up a copy or more today!

The **2022 edition** of the *HOn3 Annual* arrived in early January and is now available at the Carter RR Museum. Our ET&WNC RR "Tweetsie" layout is featured for the 9th consecutive year in this national/international publication by White River Productions. We have 8 color pages featuring the Elk Park, NC section of the layout, the most recent section of the big 1,300 sq.ft. historic railroad to be completed. Text and photos by *Geoff Stunkard*, *Logan Heaton*, and *Fred Alsop*. The retail price increased by **\$5** this year to **\$29.95**, but the price to members remains at **\$22**. Get your copy while the limited supply lasts. Most model railroad layouts never get published, some may be published once or twice in a monthly model railroad magazine. *We now have been published 9 times in a collector's edition that is only published once each year!! WOW!!*

Christmas Holiday Party: More than 30 members, spouses, and significant-others gathered on December 14 at the Black Olive Restaurant in Elizabethton, TN for our annual museum holiday party. It was a wonderful social event with good food, comradery, festivities, and a special visit from "Dirty Santa". It was a great way to end a very good year for the Carter Railroad Museum, the MEMRR, and the Carter Chapter NRHS among good friends. We missed those who could not be with us and look forward to having them back in our company as soon as possible. 2022 has been another difficult year for many of us with the COVID pandemic still in our midst, and a tougher-than-normal flu season at hand. The economy has not been a friend as well and we all all hope for better things to come in the new year of 2023.

January is "Planning Month": The Carter Chapter NRHS and the MEMRR members discussed the planning of the following social events at their respective January business meetings:

Rail Excursions for 2023. *The Carter Chapter NRHS is planning for 3 rail excursions this year.*

A One in April or May to Knoxville on the 3-Rivers Rambler Railroad with as luncheon cruise on the Tennessee River aboard *The Star of Knoxville*. This has been as very popular 1-day outing for several years with the mix of bus, train, and boat transportation.

A Labor Day weekend multiple-rail excursion package out of Chattanooga to cover railroads in Tennessee and nearby north Georgia, overnight lodgings and some meals, plus other events.

A fall color rail excursion in October on the Smoky Mt. Railroad as a one-day event with a visit the Lionel Train Museum in Bryson City, NC

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

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Social Events for 2023.

Spring Fling in late March for members, spouses, and/or significant others at the Black Olive Restaurant, Elizabethton, TN.

August Sunday luncheon meeting under the big tent at the Hampton Christian Ministry Camp along the Doe River. Lunch followed by a presentation from the camp administrators focused on their new railroad expansion project. Capped by a train and speeder ride on the old ET&WNC RR right-of-way up the Doe River Gorge to Pardee Point and beyond to the bridge just west of tunnel #4.

Annual museum Holiday Party on Thursday, December 14, at the Black Olive Restaurant, Elizabethton, TN. Christmas season cheer and comradery with a visit by Dirty Santa.

Museum Library Update: *Dean Small* and *Wallace Shealy* have put hundreds of man-hours into reorganizing our Carter RR Museum Library during 2022. While our work there is not yet complete we now are better organized than ever and are ready to resume lending our books to our members (after we relocate our museum to a new home we will be lending our book, CDs, and other materials to the general public). All of our book holdings are now Library of Congress (LC) catalogued and ready for circulation. The temporary solution for checking out books will be based on barcodes on members name tags (*Bill Smith* will work on this with our librarians). A more permanent solution will be the use of something similar to the ETSU I.D. plastic cards. We need to construct some locked cases for the storage and security of some of our reference books and rarer volumes that require restricted, or none, circulation. *Paul Haynes* will be enlisted to help with this project with his carpenter skills. Some pamphlets have stick-on labels that need to be removed.

Annual Big Train Show: Roger *Teinert's* train show committee is moving ahead with plans for this June 2-3, 2023 event. Meetings are at 5:00 PM at Portobellos Restaurant in the Kroger Shopping Center on West State of Franklin the 3rd Tuesday of the month. This is a dinner/planning meeting and all interested members are invited to come and join us for the meal and the discussions. We ask that any members planning to attend a train show please take a supply of our Big Train Show flyers (available in the workroom at the museum) with you to pass out to vendors and at the show's information tables.

Museum Goings-On:

The N-Scale layout continues to get its landscaping upgraded and refreshed under the guise of *Mike Tarter*, our N-Scale layout coordinator, and *James Gorny*, with assistant from other members.

The electrical systems throughout the museum's various layouts continue to be in the capable hands of *Frank Fezzie*.

The MEMRR HO-Scale layout continues to be upgraded with the efforts of members who own personal modules and by other members who continue to upgrade the club-owned modules. The latter under the direction of our new MEMRR HO Layout coordinator, *Bob Grygotis*. The old Ramey modules on the corner next to our gallery entrance door in being developed into a mountain hosting a timbering operation by *John Carter*, *Rick Mulholland*, and other helpers. Work needs to be restarted on the opposite corner module with the depot and other freight/warehouse structures.

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

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The G-Scale layout under the direction of coordinator, *Ron Green*, is having work done to upgrade the turnouts that are badly worn, or to replace them altogether. The layout now has a new 2-6-0 D&RG locomotive in bright yellow and black paint as its motive power.

The Tweetsie layout will turn to landscaping the yard around the Johnson City engine facilities as the next area for improvement. Drawings for the footprints for the two major industries that occupied that area near the 3-stall engine house, Exum Furniture Co. and Sells Lumber and Manufacturing Co. have been drawn to scale, but are much too large to occupy the current space that would be their proper placement on the layout.

Our Last Year in the ETSU Campus Center Building: The university plans to begin the demolition of the very old building on campus that has been our home for the past 15 years in August or September of this year. Your museum director continues to work with university administrators and Johnson City commissioners and city leaders to find us a new brick-and-mortar home. As *Logan Heaton*, our roving reporter signs off in many of his contributed pieces to our newsletter, "Stay tuned".

The new year of 2023 is off and running. We are continuing to work at the museum to improve it as well as all of our exhibits. Our organizations are doing well and morale is high. We maintain the passion we have for our hobby and remain its ambassadors to the many folks that visit us on Saturdays. 2023 may be our best year ever. Please renew your membership soon so you will not miss out on any of the excitement we plan for the coming months.

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

MEMRR and/or George L Carter Chapter of NRHS

Your 2022 Membership Expired Jan 31st!

The code on the exterior door lockbox will be changed on January 31st and the new code will only be provided to current paid up members as is our policy

MEMRR member dues:

\$30 00 Full Membership + \$6 for each additional family member

\$18 Student; \$12 Youth; \$12 Distant Remote

***Dues Need to be paid to Mike Tarter, Treasurer**

or mailed to

Make checks payable to **MEMRR**, and mail to
MEMRR, P.O. Box 70697, ETSU , Johnson City, TN 37614

Carter Chapter of NRHS member dues:

\$60 - Individual (\$50 national + \$10 chapter)

\$69 – Family (\$57 national + \$12 chapter)

***Dues Need to be paid to John Dodge, Treasurer**

Make checks payable to **George L Carter Chapter/NRHS**, and mail to John at:

121 Main Street, Bristol TN 37620

Annual dues are required by January 31st, 2023

Club News

Christmas Party 2022: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Our annual Christmas party was a big success with many of our members in attendance to eat, chat, and overall have a merry time together just before the holidays. Many of our members were also honored for their skills and contributions to the museum and continuing to make it better with all that everyone does. Of course cannot forget the fun of Dirty Santa and exchanging gifts. Such a fun time and even with many wondering of our new location and the future of our museum at this moment we are just happy to get to enjoy this time with our friends and loved ones. Stay tuned for more updates and videos coming soon!!



Club News

Christmas Party continued:



Club News

Nighttime Photo Session: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

Ever wondered what the railroad looks like at night? After our Fallen Flags event a few volunteers stayed after hours to try out some "nighttime photography". Certainly a different and more unique look to the layout. The roundhouse and yard glowing with light buzzing with activity. Same at the station where the Polar Express waits to depart as the Coca-Cola Company Express passes on the main line giving those on the platform a chance to catch both of our holiday themed trains in action. Not sure if this will be a regular thing but who knows. Maybe the museum layouts need a day and night cycle sometime in the future but either way a fun opportunity for something different.



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Club News

Nighttime Photo Session: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

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Club News

Tweetsie Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

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Club News

N Scale Layout Update: Article and photographs by Logan Heaton

A follow up on our last update with the layout being updated and refurbished with new scenery as the hill outside the city is now being painted and detailed. Museum members Mike Tarter and Jim Gorny have been hard at work finishing up this part of the layout as we see Mr. Gorny going in with watered down black paint which adds shadows and a bit more depth to the rock work along with a little bit of weathering. With this complete this area is nearing completion before moving onto the next project on the layout.



Club News

Members! Please welcome our new members as you have the opportunity to meet them. We are blessed with gaining some new folks with a real interest in model railroading and a desire to help us any way they can as they learn our operating procedures. Please extend a warm handshake and help them become involved in our clubs and our railroad museum!

We would love to know more about you!

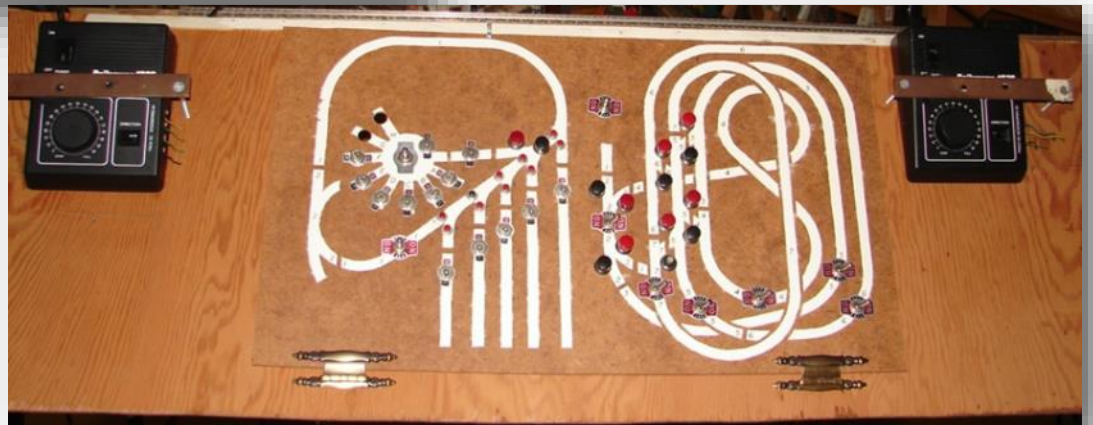


**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE YOUR STORY
WITH FELLOW CLUB MEMBERS IN A FUTURE NEWSLETTER,
PLEASE SEND VIA EMAIL TO OUR EDITOR AT
cathysmithmemrr@gmail.com**

Lose Track of Time!

My Home Layout – Submitted by Bob Jones

This is my layout: three (3) levels, five loops around the 4x8 board, with two DC controllers. Loop four shares 22" with loop five. Each control can run a train twice around the board without interfering with the other train, (that's two loops per controller). All of the many blocks have a three positing switch (center off) or right or left control. All of the switches have buttons; blue for strait or red for turn. I started this layout in 1978 @ forty years old, finished in 1984 and then stored for 20 years. I reopened it in 2004 and it's still working with the loss of one control. We need a new home, at 84 I cannot take care of it. Let me know if we can find a new home!



Heritage Days!

Clinchfield! - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

It was certainly looking like Clinchfield country this past Saturday with many different trains showcasing the different locomotives and services that once were a common sight on what is now the CSX main line. We caught a few scenes on the different trains seen during the event which we hope you all enjoy.



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Heritage Days!

Clinchfield! - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

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Heritage Days!

Clinchfield! - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

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Heritage Days!

Clinchfield! - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

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from page 17)*



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Heritage Days!

Fallen Flags - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

Over the years so many railroads have come and gone either by merging into what would become today's modern railroads or to be closed entirely and rails ripped leaving only remnants behind such as retired locomotives and rolling stock. Sometimes all that remains are the stories from locals who remember these railroads during their operations. In either case these railroads will continue to be remembered and live on as we did this month with our Fallen Flags event. So many railroads in action throughout the day handling trains like they did in their prime and we would like to thank everyone who came out to see the day's operations. We caught a few snapshots throughout the day that we hope everyone will enjoy.



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Heritage Days!

Fallen Flags - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

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Heritage Days!

Fallen Flags - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton



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Heritage Days!

Fallen Flags - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

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Club News!

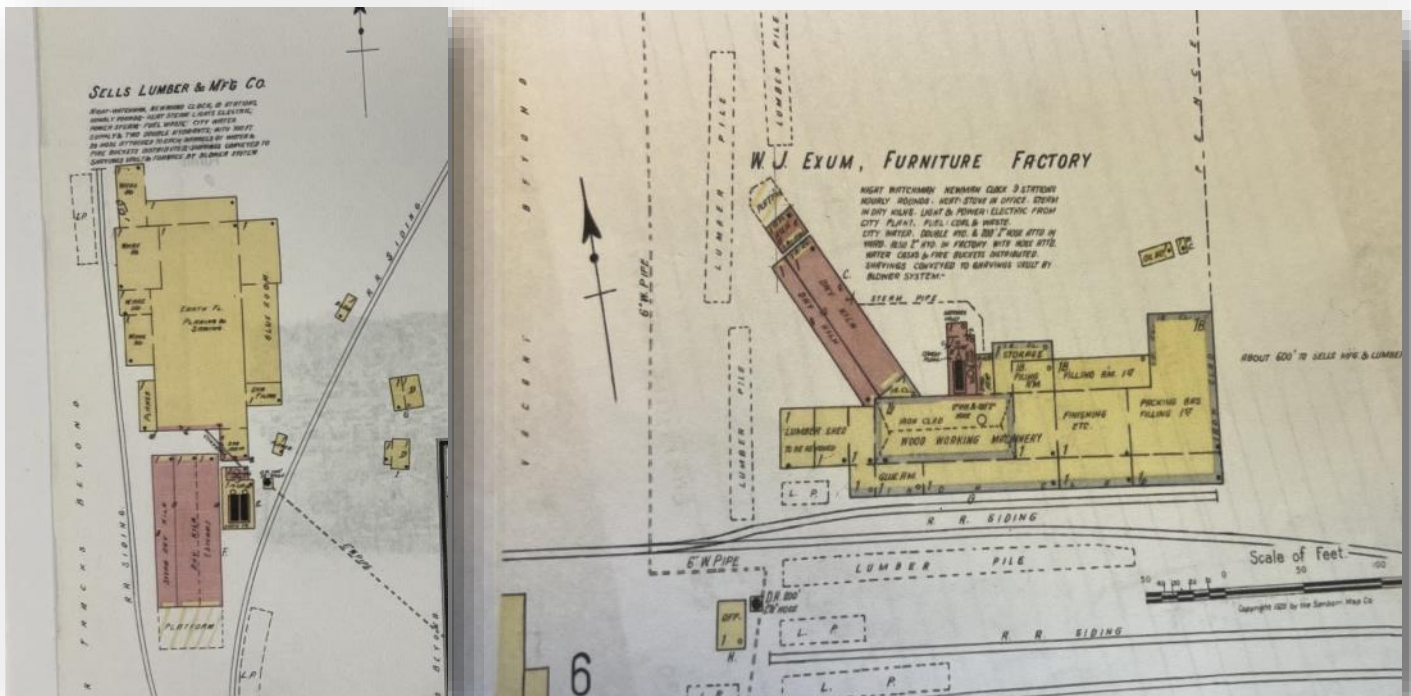
Tweetsie Layout Update – Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

Big things are coming to the Tweetsie Layout and we do mean BIG!! During our last running session our museum director Dr. Fred Alsop along with two of our members, Benjamin Merritt and Gregg Mundkowsky, got together to draw up plans for what will be two of the biggest facilities seen on the layout. During the era we are modeling for the ET&WNC there were many industries and businesses around the railroad especially over in Johnson City. Two of these businesses were the W.J. Exum Furniture Factory and the Sell's Lumber & Manufacturing Company which were both located behind the three stall engine house. The reference photos show these were huge facilities which shows even more by the size of the poster boards used to design the foot-



print of the buildings. Now many of you may be wondering where these buildings will go given our current area for Johnson City on the layout would not be big enough to hold these structures where they would have sat during the time the railroad was in operation. Well the answer to that is for now they will not be on the layout. As many of you know the building the museum is in now will be coming down this year which means we will have to move and with this move we are looking at bigger locations and with a bigger location comes with new exhibits and expanding our layouts such as our HO layout but especially the Tweetsie Layout. The plan is to go ahead and while waiting for our move the buildings can be designed and constructed and once we get to our new location and expand the

layout the buildings will then be put into place. While we wait work will continue on this and other builds while also preparing the museum for future events such as the train show and the upcoming move.



Club News!

MEMRR Layout Update - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

The Holiday Season has wound down and work has picked up again on the logging extension. The decision was made to rework the grade for the switchback including ideas for extending the bridge but first thing is first and that meant pulling up the old rails that run from the main line to the loop. Another thing discussed was the gap beside the yard where the idea of a pond or ice dock could be put in that could have logs going into it for a sawmill but this is not finalized so we shall see. For now progress continues on this section of the layout as it develops for the new logging area.



Club News!

Thursday Work Nights - Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

Thursday Work Nights are when we all get together to clean up and perform general maintenance on the layouts and exhibits. In a prior work session John Tarter can be seen vacuuming up N scale layout clearing off the dust and cleaning up the layout while over on HO scale layout Dr. Fred Alsop performs some repairs on the lift bridge to go into the layout from where supports have snapped from general wear and tear. These and other tasks are some of the many things done to prepare the museum for our running sessions.



Club News!

Tweetsie Layout Update – Article and Photos by Logan Heaton

Taking a break on designing the industries for Johnson City we have some new information on some infrastructure located at the mines in Cranberry. A new photo has surfaced showing another chute located behind the mines where instead of emptying ore into the cars below, ashes would be stored to be moved by rail. Once a gondola or hopper is moved under the chute the ashes are then loaded into the chutes and down into the car below. Dr. Alsop has already made great headway on this newest structure with assembly and has also started on weathering the structure. Not long now and it will be added with the rest of the mining operation.



Club News

The new 2023 calendars are available!!

Just arrived!! Our new 2023 calendar is now available for purchase at the gift table!

This year's calendar features event dates from our Heritage Days to our Big Train Show and also operating dates for the museum. It is also be themed around local railroads both past and present and featuring photos of the real railroads along with scenes from our layouts. Calendars will be available for \$8.00 to purchase.

For members of the museum the cost will be \$5.00 per calendar.

Be sure to grab a copy!



Club News!

Big Train Show!!!

It's the new year and you know what that means!! Time to mark your calendar for our upcoming Big Train Show!! In about 5 months on Friday, June 2nd and Saturday, June 3rd. The ETSU Mini-Dome will be host to many model railroad and railroad memorabilia vendors along with operating layouts for all to enjoy. Last year we had an incredible turnout for both guests and vendors for our return after two years away and we hope to make this one even better. Admission for the event will be \$8.00 per day with children under the age of 12 will get in free.

For vendors there is still time to register. For those interested or for more information on the event please contact Roger Teinert at 423-791-4937 or Bill Smith at 423-491-0623.

We look forward to seeing you all in June and we will keep you all up to date with any updates or changes taking place for the show!!



MEMRR Monthly Business Meeting – 10/22 thru 1/23

Check back next month

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Carter Railroad Museum Coordinators Meeting – 11/22 thru 1/23

Check back next month

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**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@etsu.edu
- **Vice President:** John Carter
carterjohn92@gmail.com
- **Secretary:** Mike Tarter
miketarter06@gmail.com
- **Secretary:** Mike Tarter
miketarter06@gmail.com
- **Webmasters:**
Logan Heaton
Ben Merritt
Bill Smith
memrrwebmaster@gmail.com
- **Newsletter Editor:**
cathysmithmemrr@gmail.com

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 Pahr

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 423-439-6838 or alsopf@etsu.edu*

**For disability accommodations, call the
ETSU Office of Disability Services at 423-439-8346*