

The ET TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ET&WNC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Society Celebrates 30 Active Years At 30th Convention

Our Society is 30 years old! To mark the occasion we met for the 30th time. Johnson City and the Carnegie Hotel hosted our group with some things old and some things new. On Friday June 1st early visitors were treated to the third annual Train Show and Sale at ETSU's Mini-Dome. Dr. Fred Alsop III, ETSU professor and train show organizer, had the pleasant problem of having more vendors than expected – he had to borrow additional tables to meet the increased demand. Fred was also proud to show off the latest work over at the George L. Carter Museum's ET&WNC HO₃ layout (more about that in his column). At the business meeting, Chris Ford was re-elected (by acclamation) to another term as our Society president. The members also confirmed Sharon Stewart as secretary. Past-president Johnny Graybeal announced the donation of three narrow gauge boxcars that once ran on the Lawndale Railroad to the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum. A sum of \$5000.00 will get them moved to Newton. The Society itself pledged \$500.00 and another \$500.00 in individual donations came from a Challenge Pledge. After dinner, guest speaker Randy Johnson gave an exciting presentation about logging on Grandfather Mountain, its impact on the mountain's environment and construction of the Boone Fork Lumber Company. Lumber traffic from the Boone Fork at Shulls Mills brought the ET&WNC/Linville

River Ry into Watauga County.

Saturday gave conventioners another chance to visit the Train Show and see the layouts at ETSU. Randy Johnson began the day's activities with an 8:30 am kickoff lecture about his Boone Fork trail hike to be held later that day. We were working through a pause in a very rainy couple of weeks in the region. Traveling to the Boone Fork parking area on the Blue Ridge parkway, we detoured through Shulls Mills due to closed roads. When we finally got on the parkway, the rangers were just reopening the Linn Cove Viaduct. Randy engaged a friendly ranger (it sure helped that everyone knew him) to allow the group past barriers to access the trail for hiking. Water was everywhere and hikers moved cautiously. Thunder was rumbling as we reached the second location with a brief downpour following. A group of hardy members waited out the storm and enjoyed hiking on that portion of the old Boone Fork Lumber grade.

Next it was off to Tweetsie Railroad for our annual ride behind a green narrow gauge steam engine. Seventy-five-year-old birthday gal #190 did the honors, and the crew put on another fine show for photographers. Conventioners paid homage and respects to #12 chilling out in the shop. After a Dan'l Boone Inn catered dinner, Chris Ford treated the group to photos from the first convention in 1989. The editor will refrain from comments on how young certain people appeared.

Sunday included a trip *continued ...*



Time To Pay Your Dues!

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in the Doe River Gorge, this time riding DRG's recently acquired covered passenger cars. Once again the rains had their impact as the Doe River ran as high as anyone could remember. Benjamin Burton shot a group photo from his aerial drone – quite a different perspective from what one sees on the grade. Members met briefly after lunch at the new mini-

park off Highway 19E (Green Bridge Landing), the site of the ET&WNC through covered bridge and then proceeded to Newland for a story-telling in the Linville Depot. An overflow crowd showed up and the museum staff scrambled to find extra chairs to accommodate everyone.

Many thanks to all who made things possible this year. 🚩

News From Around the ET&WNC Preservation Community

George L. Carter Railroad Museum at ETSU

Fred J. Alsop III, Director of the museum, sends us this –

The George L. Carter Railroad Museum's ET&WNC Railroad HOn3 layout has continued to make progress since the last Historical Society Convention in 2017. Two areas have received the greatest amount of attention – the section of the Doe River Gorge between tunnels 4 and 5 and the start of the town of Roan Mountain. The section between those tunnels is now complete with the eroded western face of the sand tunnel and great columns of standing rock. Some of the trees in that section show the scars of timbering. Moving westward towards the thru-truss bridge one passes a tumbling mountain stream and pines give way to more lush forests of hardwoods on the steep slopes above the rails. The Doe River parallels the single track along this section and completes the Gorge from tunnel 3 to tunnel 5. During the recent Society 30th Annual Convention many of our members spent a good bit of time touring our 1,300 sq.ft. "Tweetsie" layout, and Curtis Brookshire brought his customized ET&WNC "Little 8" for its maiden run on the layout, the first #8 to grace our little 3 foot rails.



The "Little 8" quietly threads its way through downtown Shell Creek (above) as it heads west on its 3-hour journey from Cranberry. Below, the little engine eases its passenger consist across the deck bridge in the scenic Doe River Gorge, half way to its late afternoon destination of Johnson City. *Photos courtesy of Curtis Brookshire.*



Now, with the Doe River Gorge in good shape we are turning our attention to the creation of the town of Roan Mountain. The major buildings will be constructed of wood with a clapboard pattern and will represent the six stores built in the late 1800s. Two of the buildings still stand – the S.B. Wood Drug Store and one across the road. A third structure, built in 1882, was torn down this past May. I have made drawings of these structures erected by General Wilder to be converted into computer drawings for our Micro-Mark laser knife. We will also be making a model of the big Roan Mountain Inn that stood just south of the depot and hope to have the major part of the village completed by early September. George Riley of White River Productions photographed the layout in May and wants to publish the Doe River Gorge section and the town of Roan Mountain in the 2018 HOn3 Annual. We are excited at having a 5th consecutive article about our ET&WNC Railroad layout in the Annual. I have completed the model of the S.B. Wood drug store and hope to have some of its companion buildings on the layout in the next few months.

Our museum is open every Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm. We would especially like for members of the Historical Society to come and see our latest modeling of the railroad that we are all so fond of. Visit our website: www.memrr.org 🚩



S.B. Wood drug store was scratch-built for Roan Mountain. *Photo courtesy of Fred Alsop.*

Linville Depot & Caboose 505 at the Avery County Museum

Society Vice-President Jerry Turbyfill sends the latest from Newland –

Jerry reports that he's working on acquiring new tin for the caboose roof. Exhibits inside the depot continue to grow as new items come in by donation. Randy Johnson's fine book on Grandfather Mountain is available for purchase at the Avery County Museum gift shop. www.averymuseum.org 🚩

Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum

Matt Bumgarner has this news from Newton, NC –

Matt Bumgarner was pleased to announce the donation of the last three southeastern narrow gauge boxcars still “in the wild”. While all three ran on the ET’s “Carolina Cousin” the Lawndale Railroad, two were built by the Lawndale and one was constructed for the Chester and Lenoir, which later became the Carolina & North-Western, next to whose tracks the museum stands today. With C&N-W boxcar 401 already on display, the museum plans to letter the newly donated car Chester and Lenoir, thus honoring both historic names. The other two will represent the Lawndale. With \$1000.00 raised at the ET Historical Society convention, fund-raising continued at the Rail-Strava-Ganza in Gastonia the weekend of June 30 and July 1st. Matt extends his grateful thanks to the Society members for their generosity.

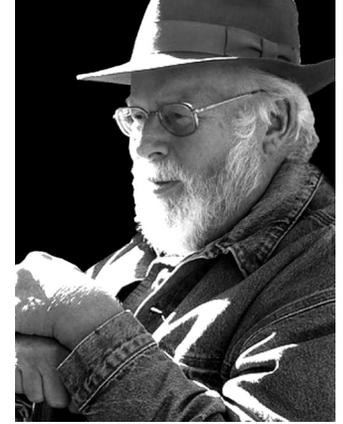
In other news, the museum hopes to have ET&WNC boxcar 434 back on narrow gauge trucks by September. Installation of grab irons and steps is waiting on special ordered hardware. Also in the works is the painting of standard gauge 2-6-0 #50 and construction of a track connection with the Norfolk Southern to enable delivery of an Alexander Railroad S3 sometime in the fall. This historic Alco has all original equipment and is painted in the June Bug Line’s green and yellow livery. www.newtondepot.com ■

News from the Historical Society Modeling Committee

David Kmecik at Shapeways continues to excite the ET modeling community with new 3D printed rolling stock. In fact a stock car is coming soon, along with a flat car and the larger hoppers #46 and 47. Look for these cars in both HO and O scale. Shapeways offers HO₃ passenger truck frames with freight car truck frames coming soon. They take Kadee wheels. We also have locomotive news! Train and Trooper will soon take reservations for HO₃ 2-8-os #4, 5 and 6. This is the first time these engines have been offered in any scale. Two versions are planned – an original with wooden cab, oil headlight, no rails on the smokebox and fancy ET&WNC lettering including a large number on the tender, and a modernized version with steel cab on the 5 and 6, turbo generator and electric headlight, handrails on the smokebox front and either ET&WNC or LRRy block lettering on the cab. Johnny Graybeal plans to have an order form ready for inclusion in the fall newsletter. Contact Johnny at johnnyg@boone.net for more information.

Fans of a different generation of railroading will find this interesting – Atlas is offering another run of Alco RS32s in their HO Trainman line. ET Ry’s numbers 211 and 212, a pair of RS32s, ran between 1983 and 1994 and were the last locomotives to wear ET&WNC lettering. Atlas is offering two versions – dynamic brake equipped and non-dynamic, and they’re available undecorated. 211 had dynamics and 212 was a non-dynamic brake model. According to the Southern Railway’s modeling email group, the upcoming Bowser Atlas RS3 is correct for Central of Georgia, two of which became numbers 209 and 210 (you know, the engines that vanquished steam on the ET&WNC). ■

KEN'S CORNER



We would like to wish a very happy retirement to Keith Holley and Darrell Edwards, the longtime crew of the East Tennessee Railway and the last two ET&WNC men to work on the railroad. Keith finished three weeks before Darrell. Keith’s Daddy was Clyde Holley and Darrell’s Dad was Clinton Edwards, both long time ET&WNC men going back to the narrow gauge days. When Keith hired on in 1976 there were at least two men still living who had worked in the 1890’s. That spans three centuries. Long time.

I sure hope both the boys have a great, long retirement. It is my honor to call them my friends.

*Ken Riddle
June 2018*



Darrell Edwards and Keith Holley, the crew of the ETRy. Photo courtesy of Chris Ford.

Combine 15 at Spencer Shops

Your newsletter editor was briefly granted access to the North Carolina Transportation Museum’s paint shop in May. Siding has been replaced on the RPO end and the left side. Work continues at a deliberate pace. We’re still quite a ways from seeing her displayed, but what’s being done is being done right. Visit their website: www.nctrans.org ■

Tweetsie Railroad Happenings

The park has extended hours on Saturdays in July, not closing until 9 pm. Visitors will get to see the park in evening twilight. They'll celebrate Independence Day in a big way with a huge fireworks extravaganza. Railfan weekend is scheduled for August 25th and 26th. Chris Robbins tells your editor that plans are still in the works for this event. Expect to mark another birthday landmark as former White Pass/US Army Transportation Corps engine 190, AKA the Yukon Queen, is 75 years old. She was one a group of 2-8-2s diverted from a larger order of meter gauge steamers constructed for the Army for use in Iran. Eleven units

were narrowed to 36" gauge and sent to the extremely power-short White Pass and Yukon in 1943 where they served briefly alongside former ET&WNC 4-6-os 10 and 14. Tweetsie Railroad founder Grover Robbins sent Frank Coffey to Alaska in 1959 to look for an engine to run with #12. He brought back two – 190 went to Tweetsie in Blowing Rock and sister 192 went to Gatlinburg, TN to run on Robbins new Rebel Railroad (later called Gold Rush Junction, now part of Dollywood). Engine 190 has always run in the shadow of the more famous Tweetsie #12, and this year she'll get some well-deserved recognition. Visit their website: <https://tweetsie.com> 🚩



Doe River Gorge

Mark Millbourne reports from Hampton, TN –

In May of 2018, the Doe River Gorge received their latest rolling stock acquisitions: two passenger cars. They came from Dry Gulch USA near Tulsa, OK. For those that did not see them first-hand at the convention, these are all-steel cars which should last a long time. We've had ongoing deterioration problems with the wood cars. These also have roofs which, while they block some of the view, are welcome shade from sun and rain. We've found they easily seat 60 each which is 50% more than the old cars. One is 38 feet long and the other 40 foot (old cars are 30 foot). While they have end platforms, they do not have steps. Hopefully we'll have figured out how to add some before the convention next year!

The Crown project has moved forward a bit already this

year. Cody Cagle is still the main volunteer working on this project as he has time. After some wrong part numbers and other delays, injectors have finally been acquired and plumbing work will probably begin soon. In the meantime, Jerry Turbyfill came by a few days ago and discussed plans to begin installing the wood cab over the week of July 4th. With this in mind, Phil Raynes, Montana Fay and Randy Holland spent time prepping and repainting the original steel frame that the cab will be assembled on. This painting work then was extended to other parts of the loco frame. While there are too many variables yet to predict any sort of date, Cody did comment the other day that a test firing may be possible by the end of the year. Stay tuned!

Summer camps are underway now, I should have the fall color date in the October newsletter. -ed.

Visit their website: www.doerivergorge.com 🚩

Photos from the 2018 Historical Society Convention



Group photo and 190 photo courtesy of Benjamin Burton.



DRG coaches photo and Randy Johnson trail photo courtesy of Curtis Brookshire.

