

The ET TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ET&WNC RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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It's Finally Fall!

We've made it to fall! As you'll see inside, there's a lot going on in the Society and with collateral activities. First up: our website - www.etwncrrhs.org - is coming together. Members have added some histories under said tab. Also included are links to just about everything that could be of interest to the ET&WNC-ophile. (Your newsletter editor will write and post a Society history once he gets motivated) The "About Us" tab has information on both how to join and how to renew (you know, like dues paying) and a form to print and mail.

This coming winter marks 100 years since the railroad reached Boone and the town is taking notice. There's now a marker downtown, about a block away from where the old depot stood.

The folks at Tweetsie Railroad get my "lemonade from lemons award" for handling unforeseen events around Railfan Weekend. They were nursing #190 along with leaky flues over the summer and running #12 more than usual. A few days before Railfan Weekend, number 12 went down with a firebox crack, and despite some overnight attempts to fix, she rested in the engine house during the weekend with coach 5 displayed outside. Chris Robbins had the shop open to the public and had a positive response from people who had the chance to climb on 12 and see in the cab, as well as see the shop, which is normally closed to the general public. Engine 190 wore her original 1960 Yukon Queen livery and made it through the weekend. If you want to see #12 running, now is the time, as she runs during weekend days. Number 190 comes out at night dressed

in Ghost Train garb.

Elsewhere, the Carter Railroad Museum has been busy and will make another magazine appearance, the Gorge will host a fall colors weekend and the Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum in Newton is readying to receive some Lawndale cars.

Finally, the Society is "officially" 30 years old now. This fall marks 30 years since John Waite published the first edition of "The Blue Ridge Stemwinder". It was dot-matrix printed and stapled. The Stemwinder would change for the better as Chris Ford would soon begin his 20-year collaboration with John that produced a really fine looking publication.

Curtis Brookshire



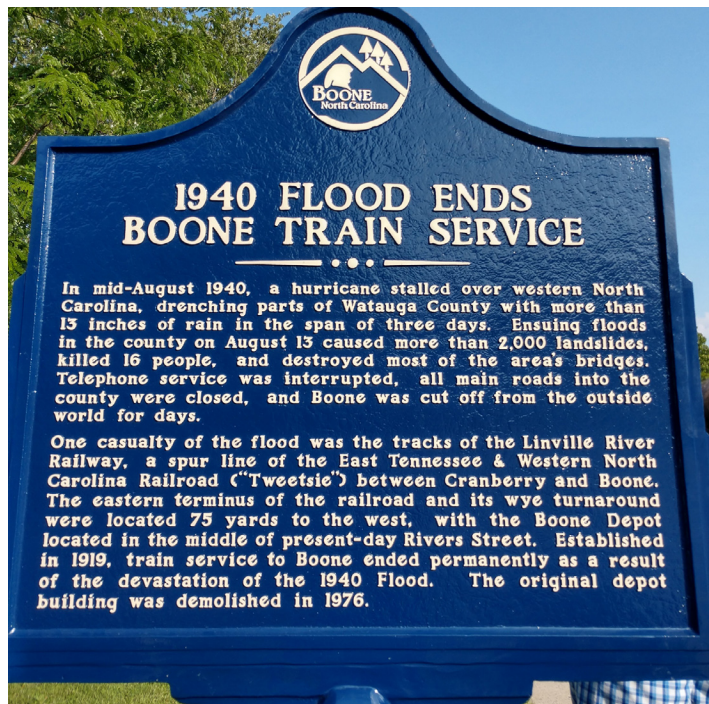
Tweetsie RR - Railroad Heritage Weekend - the original #12 number plate. Photo courtesy of Curtis Brookshire.

News From Around the ET&WNC Preservation Community

Boone Unveils 1940 Flood Historical Marker

By Jerry Turbyfill

We, Jerry and Doris Turbyfill and David Spiceland, attended the unveiling of the new sign commemorating the 1940 flood that ended the train coming to Boone. The Mayor of Boone spoke about the history and the impact that the railroad had on the town of Boone. The people that we met there were very interested in the history of the railroad. The folks heading up the Watauga County Historical Society, John and Betty Bond, are very interested in getting more information on the train's influence on Boone in the 1920-30s. They would like to add the story of the ET&WNC and the influence the railroad had on Boone's growth and development in the early years to their *Digital Watauga Project*. Even Appalachian college used the train. Students from out of the area such as Avery County would catch the train to ride to school in the morning and back home in the evening. Ball teams would travel to and from other areas to play football games. The train hauled coal to the college for heating their buildings. David Spiceland took the photo of the marker which is just one block from where the ET&WNC depot once stood. <https://digitalwatauga.org/>



Historical marker unveiling, August 13, 2018. Photo courtesy of David Spiceland.

George L. Carter Railroad Museum at ETSU

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

On the “Tweetsie” side of the museum almost all our collective efforts in the past few months have been focused on recreating the little town of Roan Mountain in the mid-1920s. We have now completed many of the structures that Civil War general John T. Wilder built in the town - five stores including the S.B. Wood pharmacy and the large Roan Mountain Inn. In addition, a hill-top house that is prominent in a 1909 photo taken from near the home and looking west over the town has been completed and sits atop its commanding perch. The materials for 5 additional buildings, including the Julian home, have been cut out and await assembly. The iconic Roan Mountain Inn is almost finished, only lacking the shingling of the roof with its 9 dormers and the installation of window panes.

For the fifth consecutive year we are going to have our layout, dedicated to the little narrow gauge mountain railroad, featured in White River Production's HOn3 Annual. We were able to meet George Riley's deadline on September 17 with Geoff Stunkard's final photoshoot and manuscript. Expect 8-10 pages, and rumor has it the little green ten-wheeler may make the cover as it exits tunnel #5 headed west towards Johnson City.

Our plans are to complete the Roan Mountain section and then to work on Elk Park and Crabtree. We also have lots of new ET&WNC car kits, including some from Western Rails that have been 3D printed,

to assemble and get into operation. Anyone with photos of structures anywhere along the mainline from Cranberry to track-end in Johnson City are encouraged to share them with us as we continue to recreate this historic 3-foot railroad as accurately as possible.

We are excited! Come visit the George L. Carter RR Museum on the campus of East Tennessee State University any Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm and see the layout. We also have a train library with more than 1,200 hard-bound catalogues, railroad-themed books, and many CD/DVDs. Visit our website: www.memrr.org 🚂



Downtown Roan Mountain circa 1925 as modeled on the Carter ET&WNC layout. Photo courtesy of Fred Alsop.

Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum

Matt Bumgarner has this news from Newton, NC –

We are preparing to transport three Lawndale Railroad boxcars from Waynesville to Newton. They're the last three Lawndale cars in the wild.

We have a big effort underway to paint former Virginia-Carolina #50 standard gauge 2-6-0.

We're also working on interior repairs to the Clinchfield caboose.

Last month we built a repair track for ET&WNC motor cars #1 and #2 so they can drop the transmission and Hobbs gearbox. Motorcar #2 was repaired in 2012, when a female sprocket had stripped out. It was repaired but has since worn out again. The new track will allow museum crew to better service the motor cars. We plan to work on motorcar #1 after the first of the year with the target of having it operational by the 41st National Narrow Gauge Convention in Hickory, NC in 2021. Visit our website at: www.newtondepot.com 🚂

News from the Historical Society Modeling Committee

A new offering of 33' flat/gondola/wood cars from Mt. Blue is available from Johnny Graybeal. Kit comes with enough material to make one car in five different versions. Cost is \$27 plus \$5 shipping. Decals are still available in HO and O, \$10 per sheet, \$2 shipping. Contact Johnny at johnnyg@boone.net or send check to Johnny Graybeal, 3978 Callie Court, Lenoir, NC 28645. The 37' gondola, 37' boxcar, and 33' boxcar are still available as well at \$35 each, plus \$5 shipping.

Western Rails (Shapeways) plans an October 2018 release of the big hopper #47-48 and a 37' box car. ET products are here: <https://western-rails.com/product-category/railroad/etwnc/>

Trout Creek Engineering at www.troutcreekeng.co/ offers several ET&WNC kits including a 32' boxcar, 32' and 38' gondola, hoppers 1-48 and 600 series tank cars plus decals for ET&WNC gondolas and hoppers.

The HON3 2-8-0 project is on hold due to a family illness with the importer. Johnny will let us know when they're ready to take reservations.

As mentioned elsewhere, White River Productions' 2018 HON3 Annual will feature the George L. Carter Museum ET&WNC layout for the fifth straight year. Reserve your copy now at: <https://shop.whiteriverproductions.com> 🚂

Linville Depot & Caboose 505 at the Avery County Museum

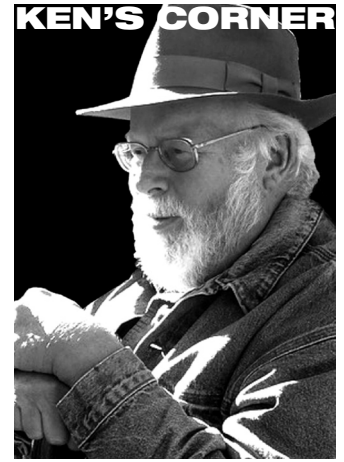
Society Vice-President Jerry Turbyfill and Tense Banks send the latest from Newland, NC –

As far as the 505 caboose goes, summer was hot and it rained a lot so I didn't work on the caboose. Now that fall is here hopefully the weather will cool down so I can put the new tin roof on. It was donated by Lyons Roofing in Piney Flats, Tenn. The owner's father had worked for a railroad so he had a soft spot in his heart for trains. I also want to get the windows in the

I went by to see my old boss today. This is my dear friend Spencer Robbins, the man who gave 18 year old me a job at Tweetsie Railroad. I graduated high school on a Friday and was going to work in the meat market of Wright's Supermarket on the next Monday. Saturday I went to Tweetsie for Old Timers Day. I took a bunch of old pictures I had for the display table and Spencer saw them. He had me paged to the office and talked to me awhile. Wound up giving me a job that day and I worked there all the time I was in college. Got to know Frank Coffey and learned things I still use today! Spencer changed my life that day.

He still works most every day in his office at Elk River Club, the nicest development in these mountains over at Banner Elk. He is 91 and still sharp as a razor. He is a great golfer and has been friends with Jack Nicolas and Arnold Palmer. He and his brother Harry ran Tweetsie for years after Grover died. It was just so great to get to see him today.

*Ken Riddle
September 2018*



Ken Riddle and Spencer Robbins share a moment. Photo courtesy of Ken Riddle.

caboose as soon as possible before the winter snow starts flying. Up here sometimes that starts in October.

Tense Banks says the Avery County Museum had increased traffic to the Linville Depot. They had an event honoring First Responders that brought a huge response from people who had never seen the museum and were not aware of the depot and caboose. Brownie Allison's daughter visited recently and brought some pen and ink drawings, three of which are now in the depot lobby near the big green safe. Visit the museum's new website: www.averycountyhistoricalmuseum.com 🚂

Doe River Gorge

Mark Millbourne reports from Hampton, TN –

The new coaches are working out well. We've been looking for sponsors to underwrite each car, not just the purchase and shipping, but needed modifications, sound system improvements and repainting. We have one sponsorship so far and now that the dust has settled from the summer, will be working internally and with the sponsor to develop a comprehensive plan (including steps) for the cars.

On the Crown (steam engine): Jerry Turbyfill completed the wood cab and it is of course VERY well done! The shell for the

new smokestack was also completed by our fabricator in Johnson City and test fit; internal baffles and related items come next. Cody Cagle and Phil Raynes were able to spend most of last week and weekend to complete much of the piping. The timing of some outsourced items is uncertain, but if they come together Cody still thinks it may be possible to have a test firing sometime this fall.

As of last year, the fall colors "day" is now both days of the weekend, so it is both Saturday and Sunday, Oct 20-21. We had begun to call it "Fall Family Fun Day" but with the two days it is now "Fall Family Fun Festival". Details and pre-orders for a train ride and meal at: www.doerivergorge.com/fffd.php 🚂

Tweetsie Railroad Happenings

Chris Robbins sends us this from Blowing Rock, NC –

We've had several random issues with the locomotives, being the finicky steam locomotives that they are. After dealing with a series of annoying leaks on the #190, we replaced the lower flue sheet and boiler tubes after we went back to weekend-only operation. The leak issue that kept #12 out of commission during Railroad Heritage Weekend was ultimately a pretty simple fix. It's running today, and will run daily until the end of the season.

We really didn't have any issues with Florence. Ironically, a few days prior to the hurricane we had a series of nighttime thunderstorms that were more intense, and triggered a minor landslide near the Locomotive Shop curve. No big deal. It's been a wet summer.

Ghost Train is underway, and advance ticket sales for this event and Tweetsie Christmas have – fortunately – been very strong. Visit the website: <https://tweetsie.com> 🚂



Number 12 in the shop and historic coach no. 5 at Tweetsie Railroad Heritage Weekend 2018. Photos courtesy of Curtis Brookshire.



Number 12 at Tweetsie in October of 2016. Photo courtesy of Benjamin Burton.