

Next Stop Tri-Cities! ETSU Carter Railroad Museum brings it back home for June 24 Heritage Day event

Regional focus Tri-Cities Railroading will be on time, scheduled for the final Saturday of June

On June 24, the George L. Carter Railroad Museum, located in the Campus Center Building of East Tennessee State University, is hosting a heritage that will allow the facility's visitors to witness some of the railroad history of the area with Next Stop Tri-Cities, the sixth 2017 Heritage Day. Held on the Saturday of the month, this event has been expanded to a more overall focus from its former Southern Railway origins.

"With the variety of railroads operating throughout Northeast Tennessee, we determined the museum could give greater attention to them by making this Heritage Day more inclusive," notes Geoff Stunkard, the program's coordinator. "With our Tweetsie HO₃ scale layout growing and so much other new material on display, this made sense for 2017."

Two very important additions are now on exhibit. A custom to-scale model of the original Carnegie Furnace in Johnson City, which was donated by Sharon Waite in memory of her husband, the late John Waite, arrived during the last 60 days. This model of an actual steel mill from the early 20th century is of delicate and exacting construction, has been restored, and is now showcased in the Ken Marsh Hall, where the ET&WNC RR "Tweetsie" layout resides. In the main hall, a full-size locomotive bell has been added to the other artifacts there. Displayed in that same hall are now O scale versions of many locomotives that once ran through the Tri-Cities on the Southern and Clinchfield lines, while equipment from those will be operated by volunteers on the museum's world-class 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 Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad; this room, still under construction, again will be open for guided tours during event days.

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://johnsonsdepot.com/>' or '<http://www.stateoffranklin.net/johnsons/glcarter/cartermuseum.htm>'

Members of the George L. Carter Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders (MEMRR) club will 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 Alsop at 423-439-6838 or alsopf@mail.etsu.edu. For disability accommodations, call the ETSU Office of Disability Services at 423-439-8346.

CARTER MUSEUM HERITAGE DAYS 2017 – final Saturday each month

July: Western

August: Midwestern

September: Heritage paint schemes

October: Roanoke Rails

November: Clinchfield

December: Fallen Flags