

THE SEMAPHORE

Newsletter of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum

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Townsend, Tennessee

March 2012

Annual Meeting

The Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum, Townsend, TN has set Saturday, April 21, 2012 for our Annual Meeting.

As we have had for the past five years, we have another really outstanding program for our Annual Meeting this year. Board of Directors member Neal Stone has created a program on the Knoxville and Augusta Railroad, which is the railroad that connected Little River Railroad with the rest of the country.

Neal Stone is a native of Blount County and a charter member of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum. He first became aware of the Knoxville and Augusta Railroad from his father, Dean Stone, showing him the former right-of-way along Tennessee State Highway 73 (now US Highway 321) near Walland when Neal was a child. Neal learned about the Little River Companies when he attended a *Whistle Over the Mountain* presentation by the late Bill Hooks.

Neal decided to research the railroads of Blount County for a senior English paper and quickly realized there was much more to the story than he expected. The English paper covered a different subject but the research continued on the Little River; Knoxville and Augusta; Tennessee, Carolina and Southern; Southern; and Louisville and Nashville Railroads as well as several others that were planned, chartered or contemplated in Blount County.

A father of six boys Neal often takes his sons on hikes in the mountains, seeking out the former railroad beds and remnants of the railroads. He continues his research and admits that a "finished" paper is a long way off. Neal is married and lives in Maryville with his wife Sandy.

In addition to a picnic lunch, we will also have motorized speeder and hand car rides (you provide the

power for the hand car) and tours of the museum and the new shop building.

Our schedule is:

Time	Activity	Presented By	Reservations
10:00 - Noon	Tour Museum Property	Museum Staff	No
Noon to 1:00	Lunch	Museum Staff	Yes
1:00 to 1:30	Business Meeting	Rick Turner	No
1:30 to 2:30	Knoxville & Augusta RR	Neal Stone	No

Please note that all activities are free of charge, but we are requiring reservations for the picnic lunch so we can get a head count and determine the amount of food we'll need. We will have donation containers at the picnic lunch for your convenience.

Please plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

To make your reservations, please call Rick Turner at 865-428-0099 or email him at

president@littleriverrailroad.org.

President's Message

by Rick Turner

For the past six years I have faithfully served as your President, and this has been a task I have very much enjoyed and cherished. But as they say "All good things must come to an end," and so, as my predecessor, Jim Thurston who also served as President for six years realized, the time has come to

pass the torch on to another. I have enjoyed being your President, and I look forward to continued involvement with the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum for a long time. I want to thank everyone and especially the Board of Directors for the support and confidence you have shown in me for the past six years. My successor will be announced at the Annual Meeting.

Annual Memberships and Donations

Each year we ask each of you to contribute the small amount \$21.47 for continued membership in the Museum. The benefits of membership have always included our annual newsletter, *The Semaphore*, and our grateful thanks for your support. Memberships are annual and run from the 1st of January to the 31st of December. Again this year we are continuing the benefit to membership in the Museum by giving all members a 10% discount on all items in the Gift Shop.

For those members who receive *The Semaphore* online, we now provide the ability to start or renew memberships on line through the Gift Shop. For all others a membership form is on the last page.

Our plans to further enhance and improve the Museum depend on your support. Your tax deductible donation and membership go a long way in that effort. We cannot do it without you.

Thank you for your continued support.

Little River Railroad's Ford Model T

Many have seen the picture (see below) of Little River's Ford motor car that ran on the rails. The following is a transcription of the article that appeared in the *Ford Times* issue from November 1912.

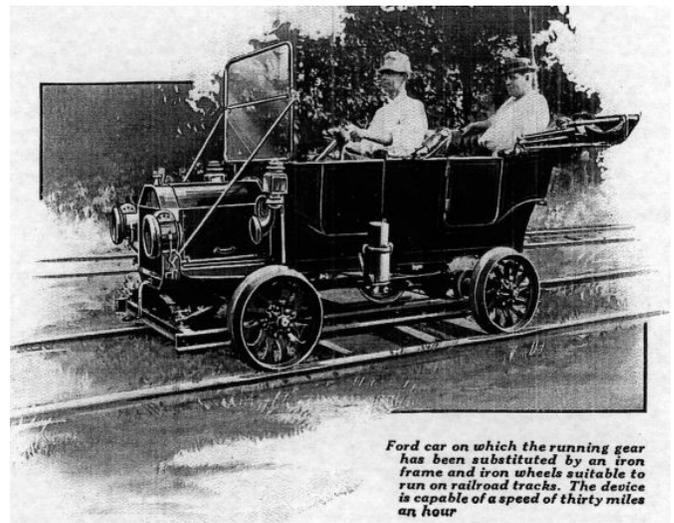
Nine years of life spent in railroading has brought to J. P. Murphy the many fascinating experiences and also the many inconveniences that are known only to the man who has spent many long years in the service of a railroad company.

Working his way through every available position known in the category of a railroad man's career, Mr. Murphy has pushed himself up the ladder round by round, until today he occupies the position of Superintendent of the Little River Railroad at Townsend, Tenn.

As Division Superintendent of the road, considerable travel from place to place is necessitated and Mr. Murphy has use of every means of travel from a railroad hand-car to a private Pullman. Quick service is the one requirement of a railroad superintendent in traveling from one town to another, checking the operations of railroad workers along the road, and Murphy from Townsend was one of those fellows who demanded immediate service when traveling was necessary.

The slowly propelled hand-car, the stuffy railroad caboose, and the untimely arrival of a private car or locomotive all proved inadequate to the to the mind of the Little River Railroad Superintendent and he set out to devise some new method of transportation whereby all delays could be dispensed with.

A Ford Model T Touring Car that could be set on railroad wheels and made to run on tracks appealed to Mr. Murphy as the most logical and speedy method of transportation. Consequently, with a few alterations in the running gear of a Ford car and the substitution of iron track wheels in place of the rubber-tired ones, Mr. Murphy soon had a private car of his own design – one that could travel over the railroad tracks wherever and whenever he pleased and at a speed that could easily be regulated to please the operator.



Ford car on which the running gear has been substituted by an iron frame and iron wheels suitable to run on railroad tracks. The device is capable of a speed of thirty miles an hour

The tracks of the Little River Railroad in the territory surrounding Townsend are laid over very hilly country and in order to find the most level ground for the laying of track, many turns and curves were necessitated in constructing the road. Over miles and miles of this course, the Ford car is driven daily by Mr. Murphy and no time is lost in idle waiting for some means of traveling to and fro. Mr. Murphy considers his Ford truck one of his most useful contrivances in railroad service and from the amount of time he is saving in travel and the economy in operation, we believe he is right, for after all, it's just another use for Ford service.

Clyde Lawson

Many of the Museum members have had the pleasure of meeting and listening to Clyde Lawson's fascinating stories of transporting Shay 2147 to Townsend in November of 1982. Last year Clyde was awarded the American Truck Historical Society's Golden Achievement Award for his 51 years in trucking. Congratulations Clyde!



The Museum Gift Shop

by Sandy Headrick

One of the important parts of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum is the Gift Shop. The gift shop was built around 1996 and has been in existence for 16 years supporting the operations of the Museum. The Gift Shop building itself was designed to replicate the Elkmont Post Office, and with its front porch create an atmosphere of times gone by, sitting on the porch looking over the railroad tracks toward

the Shay Locomotive that commandingly sits on the track near the water tank greeting visitors.

One can spend a wonderful afternoon on the porch of the gift shop listening to stories from the Attendant or learning from old timers dropping by to share their tales as well. Looking inside the Gift Shop there is a selected inventory to compliment the entire operation of the Museum, but, we'll talk more about that in a minute. The Gift Shop plays a major role in the Museum production. The Gift Shop plays the lead, offering the place for visitors to begin their journey through time when they arrive at the Museum. The Gift Shop Attendant for the day will greet visitors, exchange 'howdy' with them and have them register and make them feel right at home. Then the Gift Shop Attendant Greeter will become the Gift Shop Attendant Docent and begin the tour of the museum with his new friends offering interpretation of the exhibits and photos, as desired by the guests, including the outdoor exhibits at various locations throughout the property. The Gift Shop provides the central focus for visitors to come together with LRR&LC staff for a memorable visit.

Following an enlightening tour of the facilities, the Attendant Docent will transform to become the Attendant Gift Shop Salesperson, and that leads us back to the inside of the Gift Shop. From the inside of the Gift Shop is generated important financial support needed for the operation of the entire production. Many of the LRR&LC projects would be unfinished today because the dollars would not have been there for completion. Over the years the interior of the Gift Shop has changed to keep up with the demands of the Museum Gift Shopper. The inventory has expanded to include more items than ever to compliment the LRR&LC story.

As important as the Gift Shop is, the people that are employed by the LRR & LC bring it all together. Without the faithful, dedicated, intelligent Gift Shop Attendants, Docents, and Salesmen that give of their time to the organization there would barely be just a building on site. These folks do a tremendous job for the LRR & LC and they are appreciated very much. I encourage you to visit the Gift Shop, to enjoy the front porch, to be amazed by the tour, and to have a wonderful shopping experience inside the Gift Shop, helping to support the LRR & LC. We hope to see you in 2012.

Remembering Georgie Bradshaw

Georgie Bradshaw, beloved friend of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Company Museum passed away on Saturday, February 4, 2012. She was 98. Georgie was a member of Bethel Baptist Church in Townsend, TN, and she was a former teacher and librarian at the Townsend School. Many students remember Miss Georgie as having been their teacher and the one thing that they all thought of was the encouragement she always offered to her students.



Georgie was born in Elkmont, one of 11 children. Her father, James Homer worked for the LRR & LC. Georgie lived in and around the LRR & LC logging camps and communities for many of her early years, including several years at Tremont. She had a wealth of knowledge, memories, and stories about the LRR & LC days. She shared so much history with all of us and with the people that visited the Museum.



During the time the LRR & LC Museum was being organized, Miss Georgie worked tirelessly to help establish and continue the work of the Museum. Georgie worked many hours in the “rummage room” at the old Townsend High School and the old Townsend Post Office building as part of the Townsend Women’s Service League, raising money for the newly chartered LRR & LC Museum to pay for the property recently purchased where the museum is currently located. Had it not been for Miss Georgie, the story of the LRR & LC Museum would certainly have been recorded differently. We all will miss her very much.



THE LITTLE RIVER RAILROAD AND LUMBER COMPANY, INC.

PO Box 211, Townsend, Tennessee 37882

Membership Application/Renewal and Gift Form

This Company has been chartered by the state of Tennessee as a not-for-profit corporation.

The Company has established, and it maintains and operates, a museum for the purpose of preserving artifacts, papers, photographs and equipment of the Little River Railroad and Lumber Companies' operations, based in Townsend, Tennessee, and to exhibit same for the enlightenment of the general public.

We accept contributions of any articles pertaining to the history of these companies and the people of this community. No gift is too small. All gifts will be acknowledged.

I wish to join the Friends of the Museum
(Friends volunteer time to the Museum)

Membership Categories

Contributing Member
Individual with Spouse
and Minor Children
One Year: \$21.47

Life Member
Individual with Spouse
and Minor Children
Lifetime: \$200.00

Honored Employee
Original Employees
and Spouses
Lifetime: Free
Upon Application

I wish to contribute _____
(Amount or item – describe on back)

All gifts and membership dues
are tax-deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Date _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Email _____