

THE SEMAPHORE

President's Report

In each edition of *The Semaphore*, our president presents his report on our museum. It is intended to keep you informed about all that has happened, as well as about all that is coming up. It's important to us to keep you up to date so that you'll know how to best help us keep history alive. [See page 2](#)

Logging Our Blogging

Railroaded By Progress is a blog from our website's Logging Our Blogging Page. It tells the story of how progress finally came to the Smokies riding on the rails of logging railroads like Little River. It came, however, with an exorbitant price tag. It cost the mountaineer everything. His whole way of life was waylaid. Life, as he had always known it, was swiftly swept away by steam engines and speculators. [See pages 3-5](#)

Membership

A great way to help our museum is by becoming an annual or lifetime member. You can also purchase a commemorative brick to be laid in our historic walkway. [see page 6.](#)



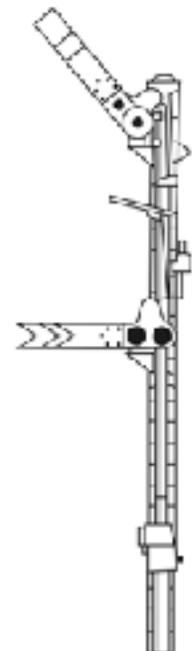
Happy New Year from all of us at the Little River Railroad & Lumber Company Museum. As we embark on this new year we realize that time is for us, as it once was for the trains on the Little River Railroad, of the essence. Whereas trains have to run on time, we must make the most of time, since it is the

precious commodity of life. Time squandered is time lost and lost time is lost forever. We hope to make the most of our time in 2019, and hope you will do the same with your new year.

GOD'S MINUTE

By: *Benjamin Mays*

I HAVE ONLY JUST A MINUTE,
ONLY SIXTY SECONDS IN IT.
FORCED UPON ME, CAN'T REFUSE IT.
DIDN'T SEEK IT, DIDN'T CHOOSE IT.
BUT IT'S UP TO ME TO USE IT.
I MUST SUFFER IF I LOSE IT.
GIVE ACCOUNT IF I ABUSE IT.
JUST A TINY LITTLE MINUTE,
BUT ETERNITY IS IN IT.



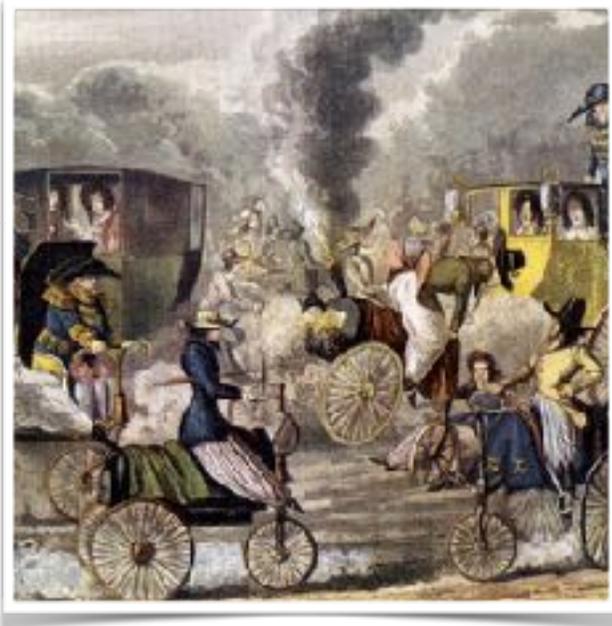
PRESIDENT'S REPORT

EMAILS FROM OUR GUESTS

- "My wife and I very much enjoyed our visit with you. The 'private' tour and your wealth of information was fascinating."
- "My husband and I enjoyed taking the self-guided tour and it was a pleasure meeting and chatting with you. We will definitely stop in and say hello on our next visit to Townsend."
- "The girls are still talking about the train that was so old. We all enjoyed it very much. Thanks for all ya'll do."
- "It was a nice visit with my grandsons and real refreshing to visit a place without being bombarded with the feeling I had to make a purchase. I thank you very much and I did learn a lot."
- "We were extremely interested in the history of Townsend once we entered the Depot. Our guide was wonderful. She is extremely knowledgeable with regard to history and nature. We enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. We hope to return to Townsend. Great museum. Thanks for the wonderful exhibits. It's a wonderful wealth of information!"
- "The whole family loved visiting the museum. Our boys want to know when we'll going back."

We had almost 4,000 registered guests to visit our museum in 2018. Many others visited without signing our Guest Book. Still, those who did came from forty of our fifty states and from several foreign countries. For instance, we had visitors from Australia, England, Ireland, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Russia, Poland, India, Holland, Jamaica, Mexico, and Canada. In addition, we conducted a number of group tours. There were school groups from preschoolers, to elementary schools, to middle schools, to high schools, to colleges, as well as multiple tourist groups. All told, it was a good year at the Little River Railroad & Lumber Company Museum, which was all made possible by friends like you who support our work to keep history alive for future generations.





Railroaded By Progress

Progress had taken America by the turn of the 20th century, thanks to the Industrial Revolution. America's railroads had carried it everywhere, changing America into a country of commerce and the average American into a consumer. In 1894, Richard Sears pioneered the concept of mail order

merchandise with his Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalog, which could be considered the forerunner of today's Amazon.com. So popular was the Sears catalog that it caused a midwesterner considerable embarrassment when the local parson paid a visit. You can imagine the man's mortification when his boy brought in the Sears and Roebuck Catalog rather than the Bible after being asked to go fetch for the parson "the old book that the whole family loved so well."

Unlike the rest of the country, the Smokies, isolated as they were from the stampede of progress brought elsewhere by the iron horse, remained pristine and primitive. These mountains were, as it was quipped, "A place forgotten by time." As a result, the self-sufficient southern highlander became characterized in a most cartoonish manner by progressive Americans who neither knew nor understood him. For instance, his language, often ridiculed as backwoodsy, was actually more Chaucerian than that of the blue bloods of Boston. Still, as is often the case, ignorance gave rise to ridicule and the highlanders of the Smokies became the butt of jokes in America's emerging high society.

When progress finally came to the Smokies riding on the rails of logging railroads like Little River, it came with an exorbitant price tag. It cost the mountaineer everything. His whole way of life was waylaid. Life, as he had always known it, was

swiftly swept away by steam engines and speculators. No longer would he live in the solitude of the Smokies as a self-sufficient hardscrabble farmer, but with coworkers in sawmill towns, logging camp communities, and setoff houses—small shacks set along railroad tracks in what were called string



towns. Homemade was replaced with store-bought. No longer did the mountaineer barter for basics at the country store, but bought most everything with his hard-earned company script at the company-owned mercantile. The Smokies highlanders, like the coalminers Tennessee Ernie Ford sang about in his hit song *Sixteen Tons*, sold their souls to the company store.

The “Helots,” as the Colonel warned Beany about in Frank Capri’s film, *Meet John Doe*, had come to the Smokies. “A whole lot of heels” crept up on the mountaineer and got a stranglehold on him by selling him things. The next thing the mountaineer knew his whole life was messed up by things that he owned. As one old mountaineer put it: “When I was a young man the traders never thought of bringing meal in here. If a man run out of meal, why he was out, and he had to live on ‘taters or somethin’ else. Nowadays we dress better, and live better, but some feller always has his hand in our pockets.”

Perhaps, no one better articulated the alteration of life brought by the iron horse to these Appalachian mountains than Horace Kephart. In his classic book, *Our Southern Highlanders*, Kephart wrote:

“Commercialism has discovered the mountains at last, and no sentiment, however honest, however hallowed, can keep it out. The transformation is swift. Suddenly the mountaineer is awakened from his eighteenth-century bed by the blare of steam whistles and the boom of dynamite. He sees his forests leveled and whisked away; his rivers dammed by concrete walls and shot into turbines that outpower all the horses in Appalachia. He is dazed by electric lights, nonplussed by speaking wires, awed by vast transfers of property, incensed by rude demands. Aroused, now, and wide-eyed, he realizes with sinking heart that here is a sudden end of that Old Dispensation under which he and his ancestors were born, the beginning of a New Order that heeds him and his neighbors not a whit.

All this insults his conservatism. The old way was the established order of the universe: to change it is fairly impious. What is the good of all this fuss and fury. That fifty-story building they tell about, in their big city—what is it but another Tower of Babel? And these silly stuck-up strangers who brag and brag about ‘modern improvements’—what are they, under their fine manners and fine clothes? Hirelings all. Shrewdly he observes them in their relations to each other. Each man is some man’s servant; every soul is by some other’s presence quite discrowned.

Proudly he contrast his ragged-self: he who never has acknowledged a superior, never has taken an order from living man, save as a patriot in time of war. And he turns up his heels.



Yet, before he can fairly credit it as a reality, the lands around his own home are bought up by corporations. All about him, slash, crash, go the devastating forces. His old neighbors vanish. New and unwelcome ones swarm in. He is crowded, but ignored. His hard-earned patrimony is robbed of all that made it precious: its home-like seclusion, independence, dignity. He sells out, and moves away to some uninvaded place where he [hopes] not be bothered.”

MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

As a nonprofit organization we are dependent upon donations for our financial survivor. One of the ways you can donate is by becoming a member of our museum. An annual membership is \$21.47, a figure derived from the number of our museum's Shay locomotive--2147. Our other membership option is a Lifetime Membership. To become a lifetime member requires a onetime donation of \$200.00. All members enjoy certain benefits, like a 10% discount in our Gift Shop and an invitation to our annual meeting.

If you would like to join, cut out and fill out the form below and mail it, along with your check to:

LRR MUSEUM

P. O. BOX 211

TOWNSEND, TN 37882

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS

Another way you can donate to our museum and help us fund our restoration and development efforts, as well as the daily operation of our museum, is by purchasing a commemorative brick. Your commemorative brick will be laid in our Historical Walkway and engraved with your personal inscription. You can inscribe your brick paver with your name or the name of someone you want to commemorate or honor. Our engraved bricks come in three sizes.

- 1. For a donation of \$75.00 you get a 4x8 brick with a maximum of 3 lines of 13 letters
- 2. For a donation of \$150.00 you get a 8x8 brick with a maximum of 5 lines of 13 letters
- 3. For a donation of \$250.00 you get a 12x12 brick with a maximum of 7 lines of 19 letters

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL OUR MUSEUM AT (865) 661-0170 OR EMAIL US AT: littleliverailroadmuseum@gmail.com

