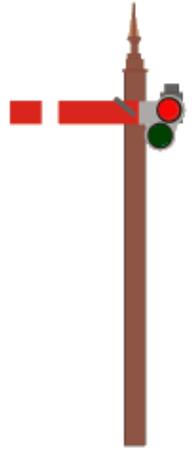


The Semaphore



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
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A 100% NMRA CLUB



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July 2011

VOLUME 41 NUMBER 1

Our next meeting is on July 7th at 7 PM.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to [editor](#).

Please keep us informed of changes in your address, phone number or email address.



GUEST SPEAKER STEVE LITTLE AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING,



NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS

OUR NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be starting at 7 PM on Thursday July 7nd.

Clinic: Our Annual Picnic

Synopsis: Food and drinks, a brief meeting then the picnic. Please RSVP to Fred or Dave with number attending along salad, appaterizer, dessert, or drinks you will bring.. **See you there!**

REPORT ON THE LAST MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Superintendent **Fred Coleman**.

The modules will be at the Metrolina Expo Trade Center on June 25, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Set up will be on Friday, June 24th, if you can help out contact [Fred](#).

Upcoming events are July 3 -9. NMRA National Convention Sacramento, CA (www.nmra.org), and Narrow Gauge Convention in September.

Dave Anderson presented a list of nominations for Director. They were **Penn Bullock**, **Troy Carroll**, and **Clinton Smoke**. No political speeches were offered. In spite of this (or maybe because of this) they were elected. Welcome Troy!

Charlie Krug talked about our involvement with the *Boy Scout Railroading merit badge* program. (See a related article in the recent Model Railroader.) He will want some assistance.

Penn Bullock reported that we continue to help the *Eliada Youth Program* with their modeling efforts. This is a very rewarding opportunity (for both them and us). But we should be more involved. If you can help just a little on a Wednesday afternoon, contact **Penn Bullock**.

After a short break, our speaker **Steve Little** gave a very nice presentation of the building of the railroad to Asheville from Old Fort. It was a well done presentation done from the perspective of a convict working on this section of the railroad. It is amazing that this section got built with as a little real assets other than manpower mostly from the prison for a further discussion see below.

Building the railroad that could not be built!

By Clinton Smoke

"The only thing I remember is that the judge said, 'Five years! Five years in the state pen.'

"When I got there it wasn't so bad. In fact, it was the nicest place I had ever been. But I was not to stay there long. Within days, I heard works from a 'boss man' that gathered us together, marched us through town, and herded us into a box car for an overnight train ride, headed west to Henry's Station, on the railroad that they were building up and over and through the mountains.

"We were going to work on that railroad, help make it go up and through the mountains. Here the conditions were anything but nice. It was hot all summer and cold much of the winter. The food was meager and the work was hard, very hard. We were aroused when there was just enough light to see, and

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worked until it was almost dark. We had few tools. Most of the dirt was cut and carried by hand. Same for the rocks". Many were hurt. A few died.

So was the life of a young black man, a former slave, in 1877. Steve Little, our guest at our meeting on June 2, described this character in the first person. He described, with words, photographs, and actions, the details of the life of a convict who helped build the Mountain Division of the Western North Carolina Railroad from what is today known as Old Fort to Asheville and beyond.

The Civil War had been concluded about ten years earlier. The south was in sad financial and physical condition. The economy was at a standstill. One way to get things moving again would be to get the railroad into operation. This would provide work for some, and eventually a means to move goods to new markets. The state saw the economic benefits of this undertaking, but had no money to back the project. And a project of this magnitude needed money, lots of money, but wouldn't draw private money from up north— there were better opportunities elsewhere.

So the state "hired out" the convicts to the railroad as a cheap source of labor. This was a good deal for the state and the railroad. It wasn't such a good deal for the convicts. For several years they cut a path up and through the mountains. Because trains are severely limited by grade and track curvature, the route took a circuitous path up the mountain to maintain a minimum grade. On the map the distance from Old Fort to Ridgecrest is just over three miles. By rail it is over nine miles.

Steve Little is the author of *Tunnels, Nitro, and Convicts*, a provocative title. But it is eye catching and invitational. The contents provide an interesting account of the work it took to make the railroad happen. They were in a remote environment with challenging terrain. Six tunnels were dug through solid rock. The story is well told.

In spite of the challenges, the railroad was built and for 130 years trains have operated over those tracks. Those tracks are still in service. Norfolk Southern Corporation runs about 20 trains a day over this route, connecting Asheville with Linwood Yard, just north of Spencer.

ELIADA KID MODULE UPDATE



Sunset Valley by Zach



Sugar Loaf Elementary
by Alden



Alden House by Alden

These are some of the modules made in the last few months. Come down and join the fun. No experience required, just some problem solving. Learn from helping them get to the finish!



What type of railcar does a Podcast go into?

By Dave Anderson

For the unknowing, a Podcast is a broadcast designed for the internet. There are quite a few relating to model railroading.

To hear a podcast you need to do the following:

1. Find the show from either your favorite web search or iTunes.
2. Open up the weblink to hear it now or download it to hear it later.
3. Many of the website allows you to subscribe to and RSS feed to have an automatic download. (RSS allows you to easily stay informed by retrieving the latest content from the sites you are interested in. You save time by not needing to visit each site individually. You ensure your privacy, by not needing to join each site's email newsletter.)

[iTunes](#) allows you to subscribe to the podcast. Every time you open iTunes, it will download the latest episode with the option to download older broadcasts. It has a little blurb about each episode. (search for model railroading to start your listening)

Here is a listing of available podcast. Underlined titles I have listened to:

The Scotty Mason Show – (<http://www.themodelrailroadpodcast.com/index.html> or iTunes) a show of two or three hours that covers a wide variety of topics. Show usually interviews some manufacturer or notable model railroader. The main panelists are Scotty Mason, Dave Frary, Mike Rose, and Jimmy Simmons.



The Model Railcast Show – (<http://www.modelrailcast.com/> or iTunes) Ryan Anderson discusses various items of his interest in an hour and half to two hours. It is generally interesting and very current on topics.

The Model Rail Radio – (<http://www.modelrailradio.com/> or iTunes) This is a live call in show, generally at 4PM PST every other Saturday. You need to look at the website for the time and date. The discussions are generally two to three hours long. There is an emphasis on N scale since Tom Barbalet is an N scale modeler.

The Model Railroad Hobbyist – (<http://ax.itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/model-railroad-hobbyist/id375253882> or iTunes) Model Railroad and Model Trains Talk, News and Reviews, How tos, and much more. Join Hosts Ryan Andersen (same guy who hosts The Model Railcast Show) and Paul Gillette as they discuss the many fascinating aspects of the greatest hobby in the world, known as Model Railroading.

The Kit Cast – (<http://www.thekitcast.com/> or iTunes) This is hosted by Doug Foscale of FOS scale Models discusses design, building, and enjoying the hobby of structure kit modeling.

The RIP Track – (<http://riptrack.net/podcast> or iTunes) The Rip Track Podcast is an audio show that includes segments on railroad history, news, model railroad tips, reviews and almost anything else that has to do with prototype and/or model railroading.

The Model Railway Show – (<http://www.themodelrailwayshow.com/index.php> or iTunes) We broadcast topical, lively and fast-paced podcasts dealing with topics of interest to the model railway community at large. These are professionally produced, well researched shows, featuring as our guests some of the hobby's best-known names, along with the hard workers and innovators who keep the exciting hobby of model railroading moving ahead.

The Rail Channel – (<http://therailchannel.com/index.htm> or iTunes) Their tag line is 'The premier place to watch trains on the web'. The content is updated every Sunday night at 11PM according to their website.

Train Talk.tv – (<http://www.traintalk.tv/> or iTunes) This is a video podcast about all things railroad. From real rails to hobby scales we cover trains for everyone. Tourists, engineers, and kids can all get on board.

The TSG Podcast – (<http://tsgmultimedia.podomatic.com/> or iTunes) Video producers John Abatecola and Dan Cortopassi discuss train, model trains, and their experiences of making documentaries about railroads. Topics range from railroading to video production and some guest interviews.

Lets Talk Trains – (<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/letstalktrains> or iTunes) As long as it is rail or train related it can be discussed. It is live every Saturday, 10am Pacific Time. Join in the conversation. That's why we are here. All Aboard!! Check out the website for updates on the current topics up for discussion.

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Track Warrants – (<http://trackwarrants.blogspot.com/> or iTunes) The Video Blog Of Western Railroading - This is my train vlog. All videos posted here I have created. The videos posted here are all in Apple QuickTime format.

This is not a full listing but gives you a good starting basis. The ones I have listened to have a good variety of topics discussed and points of view during the discussion. I have learned some new ways of doing things or looking at our hobby. So to answer the title question: None (unless it part of a sound decoder Just Kidding)

Fire up your browser and check them out. It makes great background music (noise?) when you are in the train room. You can use your computer or mp3 player of your choice of player (iPod, iTouch, iPod-Nano, Zune, etc.) to listen to these podcasts. They are also good to listen to when you are on the road in your summer travels, around town or in the train room. It does expose you to different ideas of modeling, techniques.

Listen and enjoy!

MODEL DISPLAYED AT OUR LAST MEETING



These are some of the latest from Jack Mer-shon. Bring your latest modeling examples to our meetings. THANKS!



**CONGRATULATIONS TO CLINT SMOKE ON THE
AWARDING THE GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD**