

Historic Site in south Johnson City and she wanted to talk to the club about the possibility of using some display space she had available. Fred met with her the next day and besides finding we had some mutual friends in common, her son-in-law, Keith, was a former biology student of Fred's, we decided that both sides would like to give it a test run for a few months to see what kind of neighbors we would be as she had a large vacant display space and we had a railroad without a home that might fill it. Additionally, she had Fred appointed to the Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site's Board of Trustees.

That board, with Penny's urging quickly approved our request of almost unlimited access to the site and the purchase of the protective lexan panels to protect and beautify our layout in return for a regular public running schedule, specials runs and open house participation for Tipton-Haynes special events, and the conduction of some educational workshops. We moved in the late summer of 2005 and Tipton-Haynes became our new temporary home. We had found a home that was better than the one we had been asked to vacate and a new special hostess who would also become our special friend in Penny McLaughlin.

In March of 2007 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ETSU and MEMRR was signed by all parties and final preparations for our occupation of the new museum site on the university campus were completed. On Saturday, April 7, 2007, the club moved all its property from Tipton-Haynes to ETSU, vacuumed the floors, turned off the lights, expressed our personal gratitude to Penny, and turned in our keys. It was a sad day for all of us to leave a place we had been so welcomed to occupy for more than 20 months and our friend, Penny; and yet one filled with promise for a new more permanent home.

Now we are extremely busy making plans for the new ETSU museum, rebuilding the donated Bankus N-scale layout the university accepted, and continuing to build our own HO-scale layout. Life for the club has become a little more complicated. But, in looking forward, it is most appropriate that we pause and look at our most recent past and try to find the words to express our most sincere gratitude to our friend, life-time member, and "hostess-with-the-mostess", Penny McLaughlin, Director of the Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site. Penny, to a person in the MEMRR we love you. We know we had to leave sometime and that in our absence you are going to get the state funds you have been waiting so long for to make the Tipton-Haynes Visitors' Center the kind of site that records the contributions of those historic families to Johnson City that you have long dreamed about being able to do. But we will miss you and hope you will find the time to come to some of our club meetings and check out our new facilities as well. We cannot thank you enough for taking us in as an extended part of your family, for the publicity and support you gave us, for your cheery disposition and friendship. You provided us with so much more than the space we did not have, you made it a real home for us and gave us the almost unlimited access we needed to build the layout and operate our railroad. I know you are aware of the major changes you saw in our modular layout between the time we first set it up in your visitors' center in 2005 and when we took it down for the last time there a few weeks ago. Most of that progress could not have been accomplished without the long period of time we had to access our layout and get the work done. Thank you. The big bonus for us was getting to know you. You did treat us as neighbors and family. We got to know a lot about you and your dreams for the visitors' center and you got to know a lot about us, and probably a lot more than you may have wanted to know in some cases. It was a great run for us and we hope in some small way we were able to contribute to your state historic site and to bring a little fun to you personally. Thanks for everything, but especially thanks for the memories, they are all great, warm and comfortable ones.

With affection and gratitude from all the members of the Mountain Empire Modular Railroaders, and their President.
Fred J. Alsop III

TREASURER'S REPORT		
As reported at November's meeting:		
02/01/07	Balance on Hand	\$ 1,208.97
	Income	\$ 62.05
	Expenses	\$ 40.50
02/28/07	Ending Balance	\$ 1,230.52
	March Obligations	\$ 40.13
	Balance Available	\$ 1,190.39

Next Meeting: April 17th, 2007
Location: ETSU, Brown Hall Science Building, room 31
Time: 7:00 PM
Dinner: 5:45 PM Ruby Tuesdays
 Across from ETSU on State of Franklin
Program: "Weathering With Acrylics"