



CENTRAL CROSSINGS

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER OF THE
CENTRAL RAILWAY
 MODEL & HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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CHASING THE SWAMP RABBIT

Rob Seel (photo above) recently took his daughters on a bicycle ride from Travelers Rest to Greenville, SC on the Swamp Rabbit Trail, the former Greenville & Northern route. Read about this and see the photos in this month's issue!

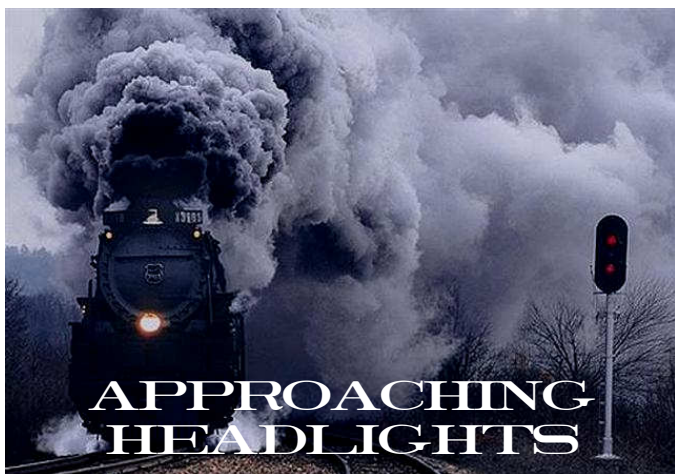
COMMEMORATIVE TOKENS



by Ralph Watson. These 2 tokens/medallions/coins related to EMD locomotive FT 103 were given to me by my wife's nephew who is an engineer at EMD (now part of Caterpillar) in LaGrange, Illinois. They are made of steel, are 42.7 cm diameter, 3.5 mm thick and weigh 29 grams each. I was not aware of such commemorative medallions and would like to find out more about them.

Is this a common thing for manufacturers to do, are there others depicting other locomotives? Here is a link to the information on F units in general: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EMD_FT and specifically EMD FT 103, notice the Southern Railway reference: <http://www.railroadforums.com/photos/showphoto.php/photo/50176>
 We may have found a new collectible! 

Next Meeting:
November 4,
2010
7:15 PM
Gearing Up
for the 2011
TRAIN
SHOW



Upcoming Events for the
Central Railway Model & Historical Association
 as well as Regional shows and events worth mentioning

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

November 4, 2010	Train Show 2011 Al Costa & Ette Ruppert
December 2, 2010	Christmas Dinner!
January 6, 2011	Amtrak to the West Coast Roger Smith
February 3, 2011	Revival of the Maine Two-footers Dale Reynolds
March 3, 2011	2010 National Narrow Gauge Convention, St. Louis Bruce Gathman

2ND SATURDAY
**MUSEUM OPEN TO
 THE PUBLIC**

NOVEMBER 13, 2010
DECEMBER 11, 2010
JANUARY 8, 2011

**SCHEDULED
 EVENTS & SHOWS**

November 6 - 7, 2010
ATLANTA, GA (Norcross)
Great Train Expo
 North Atlanta Trade Center
 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
 \$7.00, Children under 12 Free
www.greattrainexpo.com

November 6-7, 2010
RALEIGH, NC
26th Annual Model Train & Railroadiana Show
 Exposition Center at the NC State Fairgrounds
 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM both days
 \$6.00 w/ children 10 and under Free
www.nrvshow.org

November 13 - 14, 2010
NORTH CHARLESTON, SC
12TH Annual Best Friend Model Train Show
 Danny Jones Armory Park
 Times & Rates TBA



By Rob Seel. Does anyone know the story behind this converted baggage car, just off SC Hwy 14 north of Greer, SC near Henson's Mulch? The fellow who owns it must be a railfan, since he also has a wooden caboose further back close to his house.

OVER THE RIVER & THROUGH THE WOODS : THE SWAMP RABBIT TRAIL



Photos and text by Rob Seel

On Saturday, October 9, 2010 I took advantage of fabulous weather for a bicycle ride. I had wanted to ride the Swamp Rabbit Trail for some time and was excited when the entire length was opened to the public last spring.

The trail is part of the Greenville County Parks and Recreation District, and sponsored by the Greenville Hospital System. Originally built by the Carolina, Knoxville, and Western Railway in 1898, the route was operated by the Greenville & Northern Railway from 1920 to 1998. Greenville County purchased the line in 1999 from Railtex for a Rails-to-Trails project, which opened in spring 2010. The Greenville & Northern was nicknamed the "Swamp Rabbit" because of its alignment with the Reedy River and the various marshes it passed over, around, and through.

The multi-mode recreation trail currently runs from Greenville Tech, through Cleveland Park, downtown Greenville, Furman University, and up to just north of Travelers Rest. The trail is currently 13-1/2 miles long, with plans to extend the trail past Greenville Tech on down to Lake Conestee, as well as beyond Travelers Rest to the North Carolina state line. It is asphalt paved for a smooth ride, making it very popular for family outings. There are also some very interesting things to see along the way.

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Above: The trail begins across from the Greenville Hospital System's north campus and follows Hwy 276 through town, including the diagonal street crossing in the middle of the intersection at Sunrift Adventures' store. **Below:** Much of the path is shaded and passed through cuts and over fills, especially the northern half.





The former W.R Grace fertilizer plant site is the last section of the path to be paved. It is currently closed off between Roe Ford Road and the US Highway 25 overpass. Unfortunately, these buildings are in the process of being demolished, but concerns for safety and security are valid. The demolition is scheduled to be completed and the connecting link of the path paved by the end of the year. It is the only post-industrial scenery along the route, except for that which is seen from a distance.



The trail passes the lake at Furman University and you can get to it by a short side path. Further down, where the trail crosses Duncan Chapel Road, is ex-Southern 1046. Formerly used as a clubhouse for Boy Scout troupes, the car has recently been painted but remains unlettered.





Further down below Furman, at the Sulphur Springs Road crossing, is another rail car: ex-Southern (CNO&TP) RPO No. 960606. The car still sits aligned with the track centerline and the paved path passes by as if it were a siding. The car is open and empty, but most recently housed a steam boiler. A curious feature are the two porthole windows, one per side.



As one approaches downtown Greenville, the former Piedmont & Northern shops can be clearly seen to the north. This is also where the ride gets tricky, since this is the west end of River Junction. CSX tracks cross the trail at Bramlett Avenue, and they have a load transfer facility there. This portion of the path has been closed off at CSX's request after a cyclist was spotted trying to climb, with his bike, over the couplers between two cars. The City of Greenville and CSX hope to have a better arrangement in the works. Fortunately, on the day of our ride no train was present and we were able to ride through.



The trail passes through Riverplace and Falls Park, arguably the most popular and crowded area downtown. A new pedestrian bridge spans the Reedy River, but the concrete dam and piers remain where the tracks crossed over. The inset photo by Brian Scott is a view from the South Main Street bridge and dates back to 1970. The railroad bridge was removed in 1990, along with the Cleveland Park trestles.



Liberty Bridge in Falls Park (left) was built in 2004 to showcase the waterfalls that the Camperdown Way bridge had hidden for many decades. The catenary-stayed cable structure averages 66-feet above the ground, is 345-feet long, 12-feet wide, and curved at a 214 ft. radius. Falls Park is a wonderful place, with plenty of places to have lunch before the ride back to Travelers Rest. I highly recommend the Overlook Grill at the bridge’s west end.

Right: The Cleveland Street bridge passes over the path, just before arriving at Cleveland Park. This area has officially been designated (with signs in place) an “urban forest,” which, I believe, is eco-speak for “letting it go natural.” Still, it’s a pleasant ride though.



Our ride ended with a picnic lunch in Cleveland Park, on the banks of the Reedy. Actually, it was just Julie’s ride that ended. I was only half finished, since I would return to Travelers Rest with Elaine on the other bicycle. So, I had a 27-mile ride that day. I didn’t mind it in the least, since it was a beautiful day and the path was smooth and nearly level. A lot of other people felt the same way, as the trail had moderate traffic all of the way back, with folks of all ages and abilities. 🚲