

## **Session Format:**

- Panel

## **Session Track:**

- Coal, Industry, Labor, Railroads, Transportation
- Social Conditions, Social Life, and Customs

## **Title of Panel:**

- “The Clinchfield and Unicoi County: Documenting the Oral History and Traditions of a Railroad Community”

## **Abstract of Session Content and Objective:**

This session will highlight the oral history of the Clinchfield Railroad. Scholarship is based on the graduate course Documenting Community Traditions that is taught by Dr. Ronald Roach, in correlation with the Appalachian Teaching Project and the ARC, from East Tennessee State University.

The Carolina, Clinchfield, and Ohio Railroad was founded by George L. Carter and originally located in Johnson City, TN from a merger of multiple railroads in the region. The completed track ran from Elkhorn City, Kentucky to Spartanburg, South Carolina. Soon after the completion of the Clinchfield, Carter moved the headquarters to Erwin, TN where it stayed throughout the rest of the railroad’s colorful history. During the mid 1970’s the Clinchfield joined with many other small railroads of the region under the Family Lines Banner and in 1983 became a part of the CSX railway system maintaining a regional, and vital, stop for the CSX up to today.

This panel of four participants will include contributions from 3 students (Joshua Wayne Lester, Maria Lovelady, and Cathryn Washell) enrolled in the Documenting Community Traditions course. The panel will focus on the oral history and traditions of the Clinchfield from those that were there, as passengers, employees, landowners, and various other stakeholders of the railroad and Unicoi County. These stories are an integral part of not only the history of Erwin but for the region of Appalachia as well as the Nation.

## **Titles of Participant Presentation:**

- Christopher Sharpe: “The Clinchfield and Erwin: Documenting the Oral History and Traditions of a Railroad Community”

- Chad Bailey: “The Clinchfield and Erwin: Documenting the Oral History and Traditions of a Railroad Community”
- Emily Booker: “The Clinchfield and Erwin: Documenting the Oral History and Traditions of a Railroad Community”
- John Goad: “The Clinchfield and Erwin: Documenting the Oral History and Traditions of a Railroad Community”

### **Abstract of Participant Presentations:**

The participants will be presenting on the oral history of the Clinchfield Railroad from the voices of the people that were associated with it.

### **Contact Information:**

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### **Biographical Summary:**

- Christopher Sharpe
  - Christopher Sharpe is from New Marshfield, OH and holds a Bachelors degree in Linguistics from Ohio University. He is currently a graduate

assistant at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) pursuing a degree in Appalachian Studies.

- Chad Bailey
  - Chad Fred Bailey serves as a founding member, project leader and Webmaster of the Washington County, Tennessee Obituary Project. He is a graduate student at East Tennessee State University in the Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies program concentrating in Archival Studies.
  
- Emily Booker
  - Emily Booker is from Greeneville, TN and is a graduate student at East Tennessee State University studying regional and community studies. She has a bachelor's in communication/journalism from Tennessee Technological University.
  
- John Curtis Goad
  - John Goad is a graduate of the East Tennessee State University where he received two undergraduate degrees: Bluegrass, Old Time & Country Music Studies (BGOTCMS) and History. He is currently a graduate assistant at ETSU within BGOTCMS and is pursuing two master's degrees focusing in Regional and Appalachian Studies.