

Southside – West - Chesapeake, VA
Layout #10

2026 MER Convention – Tracks to Tidewater
Layout Tour Book & Operating Sessions Guide

Virginian Railway – New River Division <i>Set in the late 1950s-era</i>			<i>Open for Viewing (free)</i>		<i>Operating Sessions (\$10.00 charge)</i>	
Owner: <i>Bob Cook</i>			<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Time(s)</i>	<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Time(s)</i>
HO	14.8'x 34'	>90% complete.	Friday	1p.m.– 4p.m.	Thursday	7p.m.– 10p.m.
Accessibility: Eight steps to enter the house and 15 steps to the train room. Aisles in the layout have a minimum width of 22".			Sunday	12p.m.– 3p.m.		
			10 Guests at a time around layout		6 Guests at a time around layout	

Description: The layout depicts the Virginian Railway in the late 1950s from Roanoke, VA to Clarks Gap, West Virginia. The Virginian Railway was primarily a coal carrier, transporting coal from the West Virginia coal fields to Norfolk, VA, as well as other coal destinations. While the Virginian was electrified in this area, the layout doesn't have catenary. A standard gauge logging railroad, W.M. Ritter is also modeled. The layout includes a large yard in Roanoke and a smaller yard in Princeton, WV, as well as a staging yard that represents Norfolk on the east and Elmore on the West. The mainline is 174' with four passing sidings. The mainline increases in elevation at a 2% grade to Princeton, then levels out and enters a helix that



depicts Clarks Gap and descends to either Roanoke or staging (Norfolk/Elmore). Traffic is controlled by Timetable and Train order, using switch lists and car cards. There are four, dispatcher controlled, train order signals on the layout. A dispatcher's table is located behind a barrier. JRMI Panel Pro provides train location. Engineers and the dispatcher communicate using a phone system. Digtrax is used to operate (duplex throttles) and detect trains. Most engines are sound equipped.

In an operating session, two locals (one east, one west), two timed freights (one east, one west) operate on a schedule, plus four coal extras (two east, two west). A mine run, interchange train with the N&W and/or passenger train can be added as time allows.