



SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS

An Official Publication of the Susquehanna Division,
Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA
Vol 23 No. 1



Fred Phillips receives the Best-in-Show award from Martin Brechbiel at the 2014 MER Convention in Hagerstown. Congratulations Fred!

Happy 2015 to All!

Now that the holidays are behind us and many cold and dreary days lie ahead we have the perfect excuse to hunker down and devote serious time to our model railroading projects. For me, that means finishing hand-laying our HOn30 logging line track and completing several associated scenery enhancements at the Ephrata Short Line Model Railroad Club. It also entails developing a major new coal mine scene on our Masonic Village Club O-Scale layout. And with some luck I might even be able to squeeze out some time to finish designing my first N-Scale module for a small bedroom layout in our new home. So from my perspective I say, "Bring on the winter – the more you dish out the more modeling time available!" Sounds like a great plan - almost like a New Year's resolution. Now that I've committed it to writing it looks like I have no choice but to get moving. I'll even go one step further – I'll provide some progress pictures in a short March Sidetracks article. Now that's definitely sticking my neck out but why not? So there is my winter plan – what's yours? All it takes is a few hours or an evening to lay out some attainable goals, get to work, document your progress, and then share them with us in a future Sidetracks article or two. Seriously, I and many other members will look forward to reading about and seeing your accomplishments. So let's collectively "get'er" done!

We had another great LSOP6 event in October as reported in Wayne Betty's article on page 4. If you haven't participated in an LSOP weekend operations-till-you-drop event you have missed out on a lot of fun and an opportunity to work with modelers from not only our Division but also from all over the Eastern US. Already many of the LSOP7 slots are filling up so I recommend you make the commitment now to attend. Please visit the website and register at: <http://www.susquehannamra.org/LSOP/LSOP7/default.htm>.

Over three weekends in November we held our second annual Division-wide Grand Tour that featured 34 layouts divided among our three Sub Divisions: 12 layouts in our Southern Sub, 12 layouts open in our Mountain Sub, and 10 layouts on display in our Eastern Sub. That was an increase of ten layouts over 2013. Many thanks go to all the layout owners and club members who participated in this large event in support of National Model Railroad Month. Also, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to those members who were responsible for managing this ever-growing annual program. They are Lee Rainey and Forrest Lucas who lead our Mountain Sub program, Charles Kayak who leads our Eastern program, Jerry Britton who manages our Southern Sub, and Scott Seders who developed the extensive handout programs for our Mountain and Eastern Subs. Our primary focus for our November 2015 Grand Tour program will be adding more layouts and expanding our marketing program to better spread the word throughout our large Division area. If you would like to help with that project please contact me.

Our 2015 event program has just been finalized and is presented in a separate article starting on page 7. Please carefully review each of these major projects and place them on your calendar now. Several events will require pre-registration and advanced fee payment. The registration and pricing details of all such events will be presented in our March Sidetracks. Planning these eight events required a great deal of effort by several project officers and they are commended for their extra effort in building our 2015 program. Those members are Ron Smith, Dan Horting, John Wissinger (MMR), Fred Kurtz, Rich Wurst, Wayne Betty, and Lee Rainey – many thanks gents for your hard work!

I look forward to seeing you at our first event on February 7 in Mechanicsburg. To allow all attendees to better see detailed clinic activities we plan to purchase and use at that event a new video camera that will allow close-in viewing of detailed clinician activities and projecting them on a large screen. That new system will then allow all attendees in the room to have a virtual front row seat. We plan to use the new camera system at all future events that include clinics.

I wish you and your families a great 2015 and look forward to seeing you at all our many 2015 programs!



Susquehanna Sidetracks

Official Newsletter of the Susquehanna Division
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
138 Old School House Lane
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Contributing to Susquehanna Sidetracks

Sidetracks welcomes contributions from the Division membership. Letters, articles, photos and other items may be sent to the Editor at the e-mail address listed below or the street address above. Deadline for submission for the next issue is February 22, 2015.

Board of Directors 2014-2015

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Barry Schmitt
bschmitt@susquehannanmra.org

Asst. Superintendent

Wayne Betty
wsb@susquehannanmra.org

Chief Clerk

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ptice@susquehannanmra.org

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lrainey@susquehannanmra.org

Director

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dcollison@susquehannanmra.org

Director

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rparisi@susquehannanmra.org

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hoakes@susquehannanmra.org

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amende@susquehannanmra.org

Model Showcase Program Chairman

John Wissinger, MMR
jwissinger@susquehannanmra.org

Sidetracks Editor

Ron Smith
rsmith@susquehannanmra.org

Membership Information

Susquehanna Division website:
www.susquehannanmra.org

Mid-Eastern Region website:
www.mer.nmra.org

National Model Railroad Association
8414 Gulf View Drive, Suite A & B
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379-2200
www.nmra.org

Second Section

Happy New Year everyone!

I hope you had an enjoyable Holiday, and that the Fat Cat in the Red Suit brought some of those much-needed model railroading goodies.

As is obvious by now, we're trying a new format for Sidetracks. The two primary motivations for the change are (1) to make the printed newsletter easier to read, without severely impacting the electronic versions' "read-ability" on a computer monitor, and (2) to create an easier-to-use template for me (and for the next Editor, whenever that may be). We are always looking for feedback on how to improve Sidetracks, so let us know if this is a positive change, or if you prefer the "landscape" version we've used the last couple of years.

Another new feature for 2015 is the "Pike Ads" that we are using as a fund-raiser to offset the printing costs of *Sidetracks*. The first two ads appear elsewhere in this issue; we encourage you to participate. You can send your ad copy to me at the address at the top left of this page. The fee is \$10 for one year (6 issues), with checks made payable to "Susquehanna Division NMRA".

Finally, we'd love to publish your articles and photos. With the re-arrangement of our format, we can more easily publish a large photo on page 1; we'd like to use this space to feature examples of some of the fine modeling that we know exists in our Division. Photos can be of finished scenes, finished models, or work-in-progress photos. Heck, we'll even consider using an interesting railfan photo (if appropriate to our geographic area and would make for an interesting model), but we can't publish what isn't submitted to us. Help make this your newsletter!

On that note, enjoy the features that follow and I hope Mother Nature provides you the opportunity to get some quality modeling time in this winter. We look forward to seeing you at one or more of the many events that are lined up for 2015.

Happy modeling!

Ron

Lehigh, Susquehanna Operation # Six or LSOP6 was held over the first weekend in October of 2014. The LSOP is designed to give operators of all skill levels, from all over, the opportunity to experience operating layouts in the two areas outlined in our name. In the Lehigh area our host layouts are: Larry Reynold's **PRR Altoona Area**, Gale Smith's **Lehigh Valley** and Jim Hertzog's **Reading Shamokin Division**. In the Susquehanna area the three layouts are: Mike Hartlett's **Central Pennsylvania Railroad**, Wayne Betty's **Lancaster & Atlantic Rail Road** and Steven Mallery's **PRR Buffalo Line**.

In the Lehigh area:



Operations commenced at Larry Reynold's home on Friday afternoon and trains starting moving on time at 1730 local time. That was an accomplishment, as the company photographer had some issues getting everybody into the picture...



Larry (in the foreground) looks over Altoona yard, while the yard crew plans their next moves.

For all of you that think that dispatching is so hard –



Notice the comfy chairs and the relaxed positions of Steven and Gale at Larry's dispatching console.

The adventure continued in the Lehigh area the following day as the crew visited Gale's and Jim's layout. In total, the 13 operators did over 148 combined hours of operation on the three layouts.

In the Susquehanna area, operations started at Mike Hartlett's layout on Friday afternoon with 10 operators plus 6 from the local operator's pool. The next morning, bright and early they gathered in Wayne's basement for the start day two.



The crew gathers for a class shot just before the session greeting and information briefing begins.



Just a note for those of you planning a layout: if you have a narrow aisle – everyone will want to be in it.

Three and three quarter hours later, the Susquehanna crew adjourns for lunch at Gus's (within sight of the Amtrak Harrisburg Line) then it was off to Steven Mallery's session.



Lots of action on Steven's layout – a mine run picks up loads from Doan mine while a freight takes on the hill.

I would like to thank Larry, Gale, Jim, Mike and Steven for opening their layouts for these sessions. Without their generosity this weekend would not work. Hats off too, to all those that participated, some of you drove many miles to participate.

LSOP7 is already scheduled and the website is up and running. To register for this event, please visit <http://www.susquehannamra.org/LSOP/LSOP7/default.htm> . There is no fee to participate, no experience necessary and you do not need to belong to the OP SIG. There are a limited number of positions available for both sessions. I would encourage any of you wishing to try operating or that want to know what operating is all about to contact me. The LSOP is not just for the out-of-town folks, it is a great way for Susquehanna Division 11 members to get into operation. Six division members participated in LSOP6.

2015 is shaping up to be a busy year for the Susquehanna division! The next pages describe some of the activities planned for this year. Please mark your calendars now, and take note of which events require pre-registration.

Susquehanna Division 11 2015 Event Program

Event 1: February 7 – Mechanicsburg PA

Event Title: Winter Meeting

Event Project Officer: Ron Smith rsmith@susquehannanmra.org

Location: Grace United Methodist Church, 216 South Market St, Mechanicsburg PA.

Schedule:

9:00 - 9:15: Meet and Greet with coffee and donuts.

9:15 - 9:30: Welcome and info for the good of the group.

9:30 - 10:20: Clinic 1 - The Danish State Railways – Clinician: Jan Hagen-Frederiksen.

10:20 - 10:30: Break

10:30 - 11:20: Clinic 2 – Model Weathering – Clinician: Jodi Gontero.

11:20 - 11:30: Break

11:30 - 12:15: Clinic 3: Model Showcase – Facilitator: John Wissinger (MMR).

12:15 - 12:30: Closing, handout afternoon layout visit maps.

12:30 - 1:00: Lunch on your own – list of nearby eateries will be provided.

1:00 - 3:30: Layout Visits – all in Mechanicsburg: Jan Hagen-Frederiksen’s European HO Layout; Ron Smith’s Erie / E-L N scale layout; and the Keystone Model Railroad Club HO Layout.

Comments: All attendees are requested to bring a model for the Model Showcase Clinic. It can be any kind of model in any kind of shape – still in the box, under construction, semi-finished, or finished. It can be a locomotive, a freight or passenger car, a structure, a vehicle, a piece of scenery under construction, a special electronics gadget you’re working on – in short, anything related to some facet of your model railroading activity and that will fit through the entry door. All will be displayed and each attendee will be provided up to 5-minutes to discuss anything about your model. Also, as a special treat several members of a unique near-by modeling club will display and discuss their highly detailed and operational non-railroad models. So be sure to attend and enjoy this unique modeling surprise presentation and be impressed with their exceptional craftsmanship.

Event 2: May 9 – Shermansdale and Ickesburg PA

Event Title: Live Steam Day in Perry County.

Event Project Officer: Dan Horting (k4builder@comcast.net)

Location: Wayne Godshall’s Machine Shop in Shermansdale PA and Don Sweger’s Tuscarora Valley Railroad in Ickesburg PA – detailed driving maps will be provided to registered attendees.

Schedule:

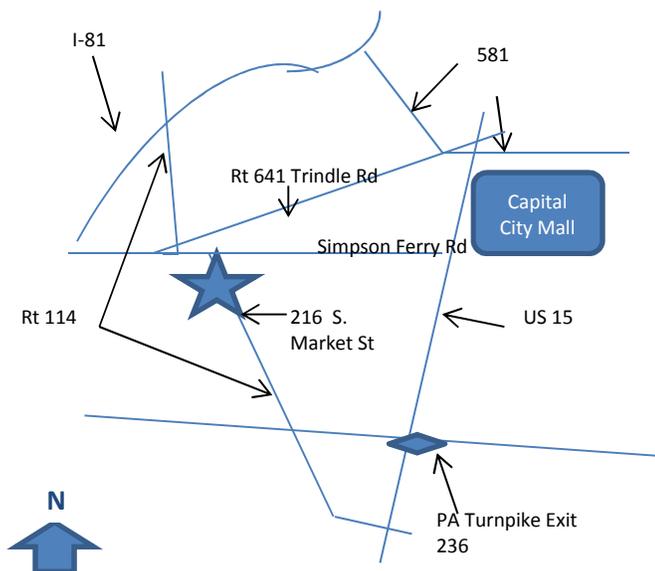
9:00 – 9:15AM: Meet and greet.

9:15 – 11:00: Tour Wayne Godshall’s extensive 5000 sq ft Machine Shop where he builds and overhauls scale steam locomotives. Attendees can expect to see over a dozen locomotives in various stages of construction to include a Big Boy. Wayne will provide an overview of his shop and future plans.

11:00 – 1:00PM: Travel to Ickesburg PA and grab lunch enroute. One suggested eatery is the Bear’s Den Pizza Shop on the outskirts of Ickesburg.

1:00 – 4:00PM: Don Sweger will provide an overview of his expansive 1.5” scale live steam Tuscarora Valley Railroad which is located on 10 acres and has approximate 2 miles of mainline track. Attendees will have the opportunity to ride on several operating trains. Don hopes to have six or more 1.5” inch scale steam locomotives in operation.

Comments: See page 11 for more details. Attendance at the event will be by pre-registration only. Registration instructions will be presented in the March 2015 Sidetracks. Cost is \$2 for NMRA members and \$4 for non-NMRA members. This will be a rain or shine event.



Map for 2/7/15 Event in Mechanicsburg

Event 3: June 27 – Scranton & Ashland PA

Event Title: Electric City Trolley Museum and Coal Mine Tours.

Event Project Officer: John Wissinger (MMR)

jwisinger@susquehannanmra.org

Location: Electric City Trolley Museum in Scranton PA, Lackawanna County Coal Mine in Scranton PA, and Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine in Ashland PA – detailed driving maps will be provided to registered attendees.

Schedule: This event is located in the very northern part of our Susquehanna Division and is divided into 3 event tour options to accommodate attendee travel issues.

1. **Tour Option 1:** Visit the Electric City Trolley Museum and the Lackawanna County Coal Mine – both located in Scranton. All times are estimates.
 - a. 10:00AM: Meet in the Electric City Trolley Museum parking lot.
 - b. 10:15 - 12:30PM: Take the 1-hour interurban/trolley 10-mile roundtrip ride on the former Laurel Line Electric Interurban Railroad which is on the former Erie Railroad. That ride ends at the museum trolley restoration shop. Tour the shop and then return to the museum and view the many historic artifacts.
 - c. 12:30 – 2:00PM: Lunch on your own. There is a food court in the Steamtown Mall, a small lunch counter and seating area available at the coal mine museum, or you are welcome to brown-bag-it in the park near the coal mine.
 - d. 2:00 – 3:30PM: Meet at the Lackawanna County Coal Mine Tour and take the 1hr- 30min tour that includes a 15-minute descent via a mine train and walking tour of the mine. Your tour guide will point out various coal seams and explain how coal was mined.
 - e. 3:30 – 4:45PM: Tour the on-site Anthracite Heritage Museum which is located where the coal mine tour begins. This is a separate guided tour that includes a 1-hour tour and 15-minute film on Anthracite coal mining and a description of life in the old mining towns.
 - f. Tour Option 1 complete.
 - g. Comments:
 - i. This option designed for a full day of Division planned activities and those traveling from locations near or north of I-80 and near or west of I-99.

2. **Tour Option 2:** Visit the Electric City Trolley Museum in Scranton, travel to Ashland, and visit the Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine. All times are estimates.
 - a. 10:00 – 12:30PM: Same as Item a and b in Option 1 above.
 - b. 12:30 – 3:30PM: Lunch on your own and travel to the Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine in Ashland PA - approximately 75 miles south of Scranton and about a 1hr- 30-min drive.
 - c. 3:30 – 4:05PM: Meet at the Pioneer Tunnel Coal Mine – a horizontal drift mine that goes 1800' into the mountain. The tour is conducted in mine cars that are pulled by a battery powered mine “motor.” The tour also includes a walking tour inside the mine where the various coal seams are pointed out by the guide who will also explain how the coal was mined.
 - d. 4:05 – 4:45PM: Ride a steam powered 0-4-0T Narrow Gauge engine that pulls several converted mine cars around the mountain to a strip mine where the tour guide will describe the strip mining process. Note: across the valley is Centralia PA where an underground fire has been burning continuously since 1962.
 - e. Tour Option 2 complete.
 - f. Comments:
 - i. This option designed for a full day of Division planned activities and those traveling from locations near or south of I-80 and east of I-99.

3. **Tour Option 3:** All times are estimates.
 - a. 10:00AM – 12:30PM: Same as item a and b in Option 1 above.
 - b. 12:30PM - ? : Attendees free to do as you please.
 - c. Tour Option 3 complete.
 - d. Comments:
 - i. This option is designed for those wanting to only attend the Electric City Trolley Museum segment and then be free for the remainder of the day. A visit to Steamtown, which is within walking distance from the Trolley Museum, is available; however, they do not offer NMRA discounts or group rates and group tours are not available. The lists of Steamtown entry fees can be found on the internet. Also within walking distance are the large indoor Steamtown Mall and the former Lackawanna Train Station which is now a Ramada Inn.

Attendance for this event will be by pre-registration only. How to register and costs will be presented in both the March and May 2015 Sidetracks.

Event 4: July 25 – Hamburg & Kempton PA

Event Title: Museum Tour and Train Ride in Berks County.

Event Project Officer: Fred Kurtz (fkurtz@fredbkurtz.com).

Location: Reading Railroad Heritage Museum in Hamburg PA and the Wanamaker, Kempton & Southern Railroad in Kempton PA. Registered attendees will be provided detailed driving maps.

Schedule:

10:00 – 10:15AM: Meet and attend facility orientation in the Museum conference room.

10:15 – 12:30: Tour the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum.

12:30 – 2:00PM: Travel to Kempton PA, which is about a 30-minute drive, and grab lunch enroute.

2:00 – 4:00PM: Receive an introduction about the Wanamaker, Kempton & Southern Railroad (WK&S) and then ride the special charter excursion that lasts approximately 1-hour. The visit will finish with a tour of the railroad equipment. The railroad is also known throughout the area as the Hawk Mountain Line.

Comments: These two locations are mostly outside so dress accordingly. Attendance at the event will be by pre-registration only. Registration instructions will be presented in both the March and May Sidetracks. Costs are still under development and will be presented in both Sidetracks articles.

Event 5: September? - Lancaster PA

Event Project Officer: Richard Wurst (rjwurst@comcast.net).

Location: Grandview United Methodist Church, 888 Pleasure Road, Lancaster PA.

Schedule:Saturday:

9:00 - 9:30: Meet, Greet, Welcome, and Program Review with coffee and donuts.

9:30 - 10:00: Model Showcase.

10:00 - 10:10: Break.

10:10 - 11:00: Clinic 1 Series.

11:00 - 11:10: Break.

11:10 - 12:00: Clinic 2 Series.

12:00 – 1:30: Lunch:

1:30 – 2:20: Clinic 3 Series.

2:20 – 2:30: Break.

2:30 – 3:20: Clinic 5 Series.

3:20 – 4:00: Wrap-up and Review Evening Operating Plan.

4:00 – 6:30: Dinner. Maps to area eateries will be provided.

6:30 – 9:30: Operating Session at near-by layout.

Sunday: Area layout visits.

Comments:

The specific dates are still being determined. Our goal is to announce the dates, specific clinics, and clinicians in our March Sidetracks.

The Saturday segment of the event will begin with a series of clinics - some traditional single subject-single clinic presentations and others will be a series of same subject clinics with increasing levels of detail – much like college 101-201-301 level classes. At this time we are developing two main multi-clinic focus subjects - Operations and DCC Throttle Operations. These two expanded clinic subjects will take the attendee from initial introduction to advanced levels. One or two other multi-clinic topics are also being explored.

The evening 6:30 – 9:30PM period is where attendees will have the opportunity to apply what they learned during their earlier clinics at a nearby home and/or club layout. Both basic and advanced operations and throttle utilization methods and procedures will be used; e.g.; basic through advanced Digitrax throttle use as well as using JMRI. Other multiple clinic subjects presented earlier in the day may also offer hands-on activities during the evening session.

We are also working on having several area model railroads open for visits on Sunday. Our goal is to offer all scales - from N-Scale up to and including outside garden layouts. As the plans develop for the Sunday layout visits the details will be presented in future Sidetracks articles.

All attendees are requested to bring a model for the morning Model Showcase segment. It can be any kind of model in any kind of shape –anything related to some facet of your model railroading activity so long as it will fit through the entry door. All will be displayed and each model owner will be provided up to 5-minutes to discuss anything about their model.

**Event 6: September 19-20 –
Blue Ridge Summit PA**

Event Title: Mainline Hobby Supply Weekend Layout Open Houses in southern PA and northern MD.

Event Project Officer: Ron Smith
rsmith@susquehannanmra.org

Location: Mainline Hobby Supply in Blue Ridge Summit PA.

Schedule:

Sep 19 – 9:00AM – 4:00PM: Visit hobby shop, register for program, and pick-up maps to layouts.

Sep 20 – 11:00AM – 4:00PM: Visit hobby shop, register for program, and pick-up maps to layouts.

Comments:

Our Division has supported this annual event for many years and became an official co-sponsor in 2013. While Mainline Hobby Supply is not physically in our assigned Division area, they are just across the Adams County line. More importantly they have always provided excellent support to members throughout our Division and particularly those residing in our southern counties. In 2014 ten of the 25 total participating layouts were located within our Susquehanna Division.

Sometime in May we will contact those layout owners who participated in the 2014 open house program and request their continued support for the 2015 project. If you would like to open your layout for the 2015 event kindly contact our project officer Ron Smith at
rsmith@susquehannanmra.org

**Event 7: October 2-3 – Central
Susquehanna Valley and
Allentown/Lehigh Valley Areas**

Event Title: LSOP7.

Event Project Officer: Wayne Betty
wsb@susquehannanmra.org

Location: Three layouts in the Greater Lancaster-Harrisburg area and three layouts in the Greater Allentown / Lehigh Valley area.

Schedule:

Lancaster/Harrisburg Area:

October 2 and 3: Three operational layouts – one on Friday evening, October 2, and two Saturday, October 3 – one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Layout Owners: Mike Hartlett, Wayne Betty, and Steven Mallery.

Operating Schedule – see comments below.

Allentown/Lehigh Valley:

October 2 and 3: Three operational layouts – one on Friday evening, October 2, and two on Saturday, October 3 – one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Layout Owners: Jim Hertzog, Larry Reynolds, and Gale Smith.

Operating Schedule – see comments below.

Comments: For helpful information about this great annual operations event, schedules for all six layouts, registration procedures, and the registration form kindly review the event website/link at:

<http://www.susquehannanmra.org/LSOP/LSOP7/default.htm>.

**Event 8: Nov 7-21 – Division
Grand Tour Layout Open
Houses In Support of National
Model Railroad Month**

Event Title: Division-Wide Grand Tour Layout Open Houses.

Event Project Officer: Lee Rainey
lrainey@susquehannanmra.org

Location: Division-Wide.

Planned Open House Schedule:

Southern Sub – November 7-8.
Mountain Sub – November 14-15.
Eastern Sub – November 21-22.

Comments:

Once again the Susquehanna Division Grand Tour will cover all 32 counties within our territory. To help you develop more efficient visitation schedules we will again divide our Division into three Sub Divisions, each hosting open houses over designated Saturdays and Sundays. For 2015 the Grand Tour, with associated PA counties, is:

November 7 and 8 – Southern Sub Division: Adams, Cumberland, Perry, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, and York counties.

November 14-15 - Mountain Sub Division: Blair, Cambria, Centre, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, Snyder, Union, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming counties.

November 21-22 – Eastern Sub Division: Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Monroe, Pike, Northampton, and Schuylkill counties.

In May, we will contact those layout owners and clubs who graciously opened their layouts during our 2014 program and request their continued participation in the 2015 project. If you did not open your layout in 2014 but would like to do so for our 2015 Division Grand Tour program please contact Lee Rainey.

lrainey@susquehannanmra.org

This is an event that will introduce you to all facets of ride-on outdoor steam railroading. Please annotate your spring schedule now and plan to attend an event that will provide an in depth introduction to this unique hobby.

The day begins at 10 a.m. with a visit to Wayne Godshall's 5000 square foot custom machine shop located in Shermans Dale, PA. Godshall's Custom Machining is a full-service machine shop that specializes in both general machine services and the Live Steam hobby. One of Wayne's major projects is the offering of an almost ready to run kit for a 1.6" scale PRR H-10 live steam locomotive. You will see several of the H-10 projects during a tour of his shop as well as a Big Boy under construction.

After lunch we will reassemble at 1 p.m. at Don Sweger's Tuscarora Valley Railroad (TVR) in Ickesburg, PA. Don built and operates a 1.5" scale railroad consisting of a yard, engine steam up facilities, and approximately 6200 feet of mainline track. He and a friend built and operate a 1.5" scale PRR K-4 and matching passenger cars. A large portion of visiting equipment is steam operated and there have been as many as 6 different classes of Pennsy steam in operation at the same time. If you want to see and hear PRR steam in operation, this is the place to visit. Following an introduction to the railroad by Don, train rides will be given. We are hoping to have several steam locomotives (PRR or other roads) in operation for the event. A picture of a typical operating day on Don's Tuscarora Valley Railroad is at the end of this article.

The address for Godshall's Custom Machining is 4614 Valley Road, Shermans Dale, PA. Valley Road is the same as Route 850 that runs between Marysville and Shermans Dale. Don's Tuscarora Railroad is located in Ickesburg, next to the firehouse, on Route 17. The firehouse is located just north of the intersection on Routes 17 and 74. Turning west onto Railroad Lane off of route 17 brings you right to the railroad. Maps to each location will be provided to all registered attendees.

For lunch there is the Bear's Den Pizza Shop on the outskirts of Ickesburg. Also, for those who wish to picnic, there is the Little Buffalo Park just outside of Newport. There is railroad history associated with the park as the Newport and Sherman's Valley Railroad passed through this area in the early 1900's. The railroad ran from New Germantown to Newport where it connected with the PRR. The park is also home to an operational water powered mill. There are picnic tables and a short walking trail on the old Newport and Sherman's Valley rail bed. See their website for more details.

This event is mostly outside so dress accordingly. Attendance at the event will be by pre-registration only. Registration instructions will be presented in the March *Sidetracks*. Cost is \$2 for NMRA members and \$4 for non-NMRA members. This event will be held rain or shine, although some of the outdoor activities may be limited due to weather conditions.

Dan Horting

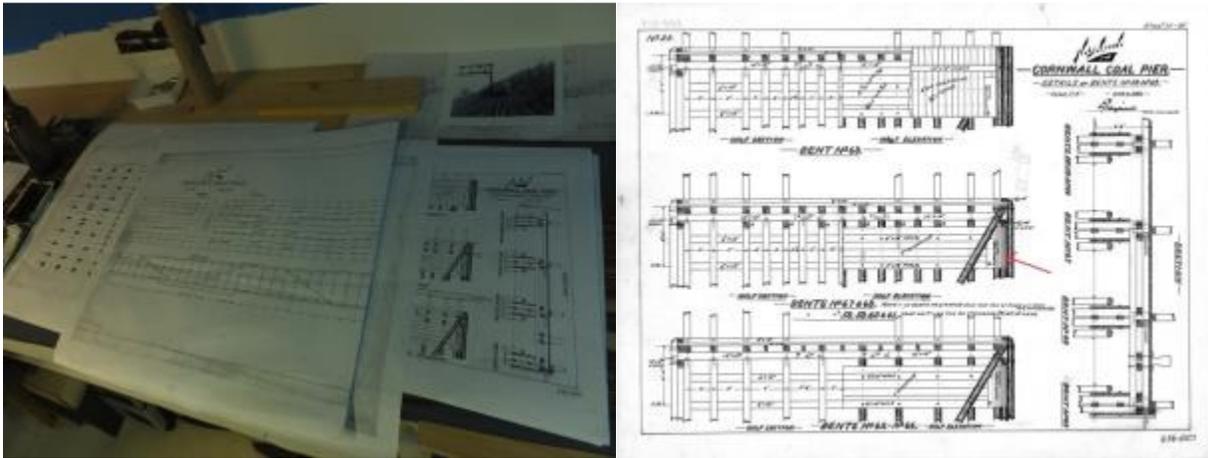


Don Sweger's Tuscarora Valley Railroad

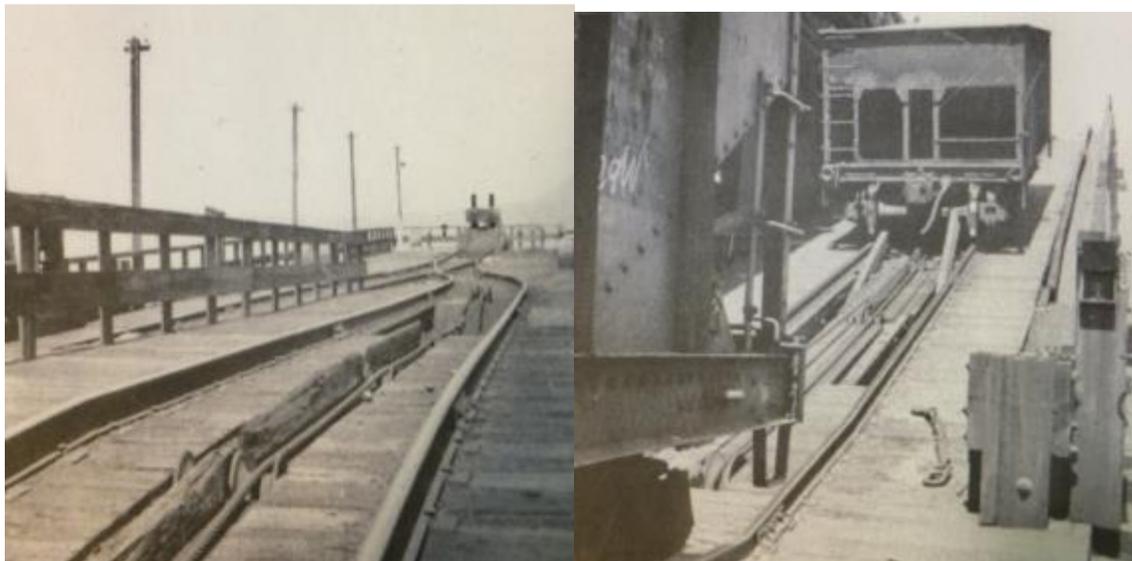
Welcome to the latest installment of our O & W series. We've ventured along the NY Central a bit to the beginnings of Newburgh, but unfortunately I've had some breaks in the modeling and Newburgh remains sans track for now.

I decided that getting a start on some scenery at Cornwall would be good. One of the operational features of Cornwall, besides being an interchange between the NY Central and the NY Ontario and Western, is the busy coal pier there. The O&W brought anthracite to tidewater here in large quantities from 1893 to the late 1930s.

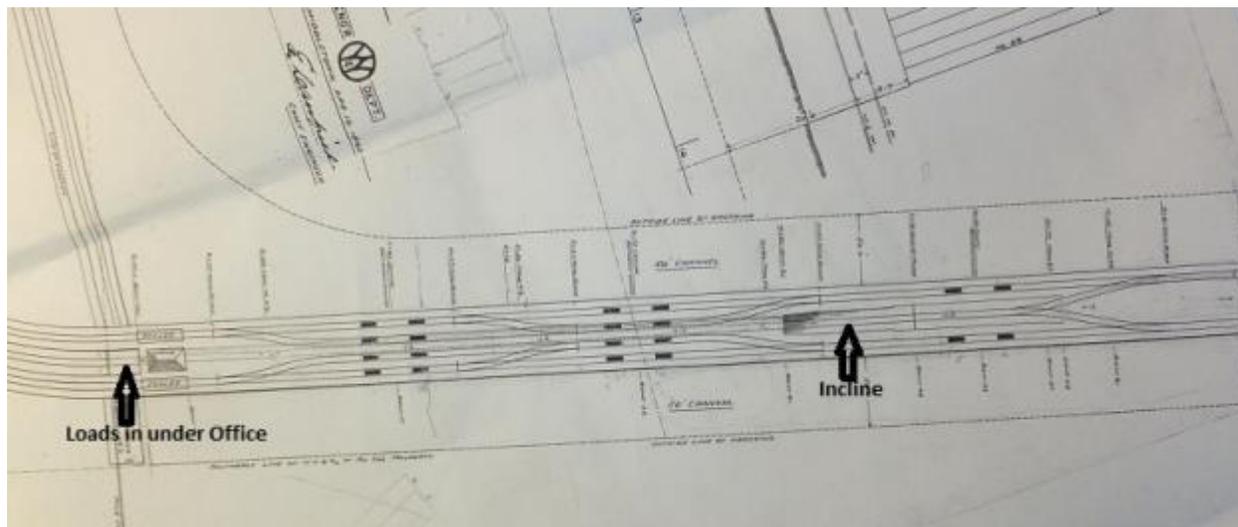
The pier was a multi-levelled affair with gravity operation throughout so that locomotives did not need to enter upon the pier. All the information needed to faithfully model the pier and the operation is from the NYO&W Historical Society Archives located in Middletown, NY. I purchased copies of all the original 1892 plans for the pier in 1/4" to the foot scale. The Archives will reduce the plans to any scale needed for an additional fee. I should have taken advantage of this service, not only for ease of scale work, but so that the plans would be a bit smaller. As it is I have to find room to spread out lots of 2 foot by 5 foot plans.



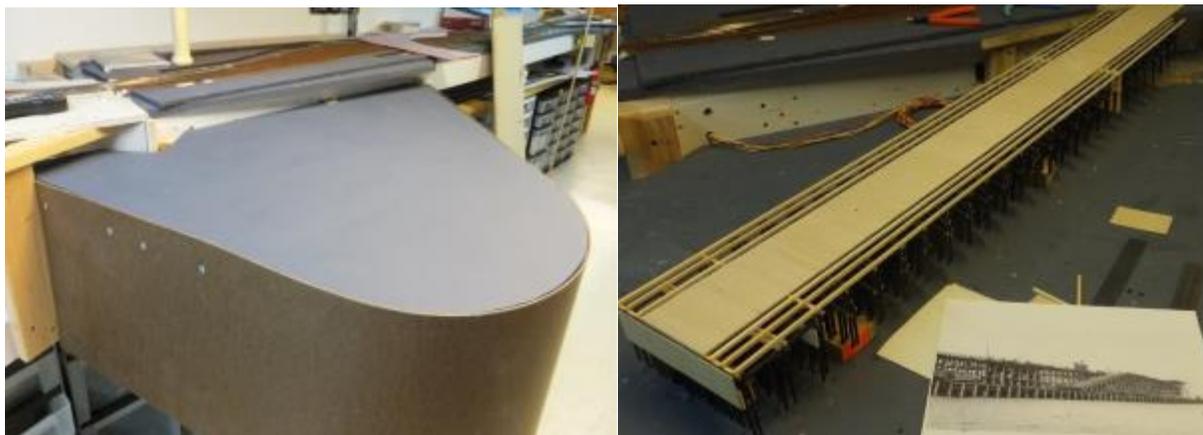
The loads arrived on the center track which had a downward grade of 1 inch every 12 feet. At the base of the grade, the loaded cars were (one at a time) shoved up an incline of 2.5 feet every 12 feet by bars pulled by a continuous cable that engaged the axles.



At the apex of the incline the cars rolled through spring switches to a sharp incline which “kicked” them back down the upper level grade of 1.5 inch per 12 feet, to the coal pockets, where a brakeman, riding the car would “spot” it. After unloading the car would be allowed to roll unattended to the yard.



My model needed a harbor to sit in, so some additional benchwork was built in front of the lift-up section of Cornwall which was shown in previous articles.



The lower deck of the pier and the pilings were built inverted with 1/8" plywood in place of 8 of the center stringers which the prototype had. Once the decking is added nitpickers won't see it. Don't tell the AP Judges, you know how they love "Conformity". This was done to ensure strength and to achieve an even deck which was flipped upright and set in jigs to hold the deck at the correct grade while Envirotex[®] will be poured in the harbor. The harbor will be sealed with caulking and yellow water based glue before the pour.

In my next installment, I'll pour the "water" and install the track on the approach to the incline.

The HO Scale operation will use a Kadee[®] permanent magnet uncoupling ramp at the base of the incline to separate the (one at a time) cars for the push up the ramp. Some desktop experimenting was needed to establish the actual grade which I used and it is close to the prototype.

In 1938, the O&W removed the tracks and trestlework on the south side of the pier and installed a track on deck-level for receiving scrap metal from ships which were being salvaged in the river. This left only the north side of the pier for coal operations.



In modeling the pier, this change is welcome in that it allows access to the inbound track and the base of the incline. Murphy's Law certainly would have brought problems (derailments and mechanical glitches) if I had built the pier totally to original prototype. Also, to keep the operation simple and in consideration of space, I shortened the pier about 50% and only built one track on the upper level.

Until next time,

Tom

**Jan 3-4, 1 PM – 4 PM each day
Columbia PA**

**Columbia Model RR Club Open
House**

19-21 North Second Street
Columbia PA 17512

<http://www.tonysegro.com/cola.html>

**Jan 3-4; 1 PM – 4 PM each day
Coopersburg PA**

Coopersburg Area Society of Model
Engineers Open House
Basement of Borough Building
5 N. Main Street, Coopersburg PA

www.casme.org

Admission: Free, Donations welcome

Jan 3-4 & Jan 17-18 2015

12-4 PM each day

Elkins Park PA

Cheltenham Model RR Club Open House
8000 Old York Rd

For more details see the ad on p. 50
of the Jan '15 NMRA Magazine or

www.cheltenhammrrc.org

**Jan 3-4 2015, 12–5 PM each day
New Eagle PA**

**Mid-Mon Valley Model RR Club
Open House**

159 Main Street

2nd floor of Borough office bldg
(not handicap accessible)

www.mmvmrrc.org

Jan 10-11 2015, York PA

Greenburg's Great Train Show

York Expo Center

10 AM – 4 PM each day

**Jan 24-25 2015 W. Springfield MA
Railroad Hobby Show**

Eastern States Exposition Center
W. Springfield MA

Advanced purchase is \$14 each day or
\$25 for both days. See:

www.railroadhobbyshow.com

*(Admittedly a day's drive from most of
our members, but one of the largest
shows on the East Coast. – Ed.)*

Jan 31 – Feb 1 2015

Timonium MD

Scale Model Train Show

Maryland State Fairgrounds

2200 York Rd, Timonium MD

9-4 Sat (\$9); 10-4 Sun (\$8)

www.gsmts.com

**Saturday February 7, 2015, 9 AM
Mechanicsburg PA**

Susquehanna Division Meet

Grace United Methodist Church

216 S. Market Street

Mechanicsburg PA

**Saturday April 18, 2015, 9 AM – 3 PM
SMD Mini-Con**

Blue Ridge Summit, PA

13063 Monterey Lane

Mini-Convention hosted by the South

Mountain Division and Mainline

Hobby Supply at the Blue Ridge

Mountain Fire Co. (across the street

from Mainline Hobby Supply).

Saturday April 25, 2015

Pittsburg PA

MCR Keystone Division 2

2015 Jamboree

www.keystonedivision.org

Saturday May 9, 2015, 10 AM – 4 PM

Shermansdale & Ickesburg, PA

Live Steam Day in Perry County

See feature info on page 11.

May 15-17 2015

Philadelphia PA

22nd National Trolley Meet

Pennsylvania Convention Center

www.eastpenn.org

Sunday June 7th, New Freedom, PA

Steam Into History

Train ride being organized by our
neighbors in the South Mountain
Division. See the sidebar in the next
column.

August 23-29 2015

Portland OR

NMRA National Convention

www.nmra2015portland.org

Steam Train Ride!

The South Mountain Division (SMD) is organizing a train trip for all who are interested (including spouses) on Sunday June 7th. They are planning a group train ride on the "Steam Into History" steam train which runs from New Freedom, Pa. to Hanover Junction. The cost of the trip is \$28 and it runs for 2 1/2 hours (leaving New Freedom at 2:30pm). If they end up with a group of 20 or more they will get a 10% discount. Our division members are welcome to join them:

"The plan is to have a picnic near New Freedom (potentially in a nearby town called Railroad but this will be confirmed at a later date). We would bring a pot luck lunch. Then we would proceed to the train at New Freedom. This is a very picturesque and scenic ride. In addition to the small towns we would travel through, we would stop at Hanover Junction where there is a museum about Lincoln and his stop there.

If you are not familiar with this train, I would suggest you visit their website www.steamintohistory.com

The engine is a reproduction of an 1860's 4-4-0. The cars are also replicas.

As we get closer we will communicate more information. We'll also point out opportunities to carpool. Those interested could also drive to the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore (38 miles from this train) early that morning and then meet us in Railroad (or wherever we end up picnicking). You may also bring bikes as there is a nice trail that runs alongside the tracks."

Any questions or suggestions feel free to email Stefanie Boss, sboss49@att.net who is organizing this for SMD. Please copy Ron Smith rsmith@susquehannanmra.org also.

Over the last couple of years we have had very few Susquehanna Division members taking advantage of the NMRA's Achievement Program. There has been discussion regarding why this is the case, and one possibility is that many of us think that the AP is for the guys building huge model empires. That thought was emphasized recently when an article by Greg Meeks, Chesapeake Division AP coordinator was brought to my attention. I think Greg's thoughts are worth repeating here, so the following is his article:

There are two types of model railroaders: modelers with operating layouts and "armchair" modelers. The Achievement Program can work for either type of modeler. This article will show you how.

If you have an operating layout, even a basic 4' X 8', you are well on your way to your first PA certificate. You are running trains and having fun. You've built benchwork and laid track (Civil), wired the layout (Electrical) and put down scenery (Scenery) and buildings (Structures). You may have built some cars (Cars) and maybe a locomotive (Motive Power). Finally, you may have created a timetable and run some operations (Dispatcher). You've met the minimum of seven categories of the AP program just by doing what you were going to do anyway. Yes, you need one of the seven to be in service to the hobby. Volunteer or Author is a great way to share your experience and is very important as you will see later.

So, why fill out paperwork??? YOUR AP will be about polishing your already-proven modeling skills. Maybe you've freelanced your railroad and need a signature locomotive not available in the mass market. Maybe you want to build that special passenger station you visited last summer. You don't need the AP to do these things, but the AP criteria help you determine how well you want to do those things. Once you've done some documentation, your local AP coordinator and/or several other modelers can verify your achievements on your layout. We'd like to see what you've done anyway and this hobby is a lot more fun when shared. *(Bob's note: Just ask someone like Jim Long or Jerry Britton)*

Which brings us back to why the Volunteer and author categories are so important. Sharing your knowledge and experiences are important to the hobby and all model railroaders. You've spent time, effort, and probably more than a few dollars on your hobby – don't keep it all to yourself. One of the little-mentioned facts about the AP program is that there is an expectation of certificate holders and especially Master Model Railroaders (MMRs) to help out other modelers – within reason, of course.

That brings us to armchair modelers. In my experience less than half of model railroaders have operating layouts at home. Some participate in modular groups or club layouts. Some help out friends or operate on others layouts. YOUR AP will be about motivation and planning on how to enjoy the hobby more. Do you want an operating layout, but just haven't gotten around to it? Use the AP criteria to take that first step. You can start out small – a 4' X 8' layout is enough. If your living arrangements don't permit a home layout, perhaps four 2' X 4' modules are possible. That's still 32 square feet either way and in the latter case, you get to make some new friends with a local modular group. Or, concentrate on building cars or structures now for a future layout. YOUR AP program doesn't have to happen all at once. It's YOURS. Take your time, but stick with it if you need some additional encouragement.

Exactly how can you use the AP criteria to help motivate you? Well, in Structures you need to build 12 buildings. How many will be on your layout? Including sheds, detached garages, and crossing guard huts, 12 buildings is not really a lot for a layout. The AP program encourages (and sometimes requires) diversity in modeling. So, perhaps one or two of those structures may be cardstock instead of styrene. Not only do you broaden your horizons and skills, cardstock is a relatively cheap and easy medium to work with.

And, there are others out there to help! Yes, six of those buildings must meet Merit award criteria, but because you can have the buildings judged on the layout instead of in a contest room, the judges can and should give you pointers on how to improve any building that doesn't meet the AP standard.

In many cases that advice, if implemented decently, will ensure the model will meet the AP level. Truthfully, many modelers are surprised by how well they do in the AP program and often can enlighten others on details about a specific prototype.

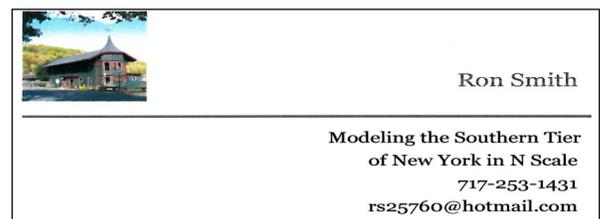
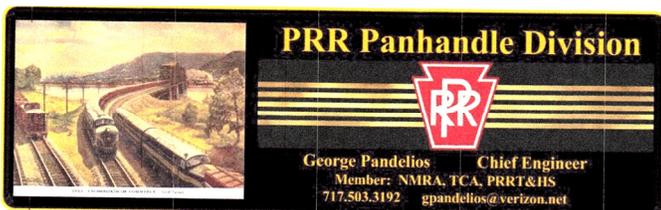
So, YOUR Achievement Program is really about what YOU want to do in the hobby. Make it fit with your plans, ideas, and timelines. Let it encourage experimentation and trying new things. Document what you've done and share your knowledge and experience with others, just as they have shared with you. You'll be surprised how the AP and your hobby complement one another. And, most of all have fun with model railroading.

Thanks, Greg, for sharing your thoughts with us and allowing us to reprint in Susquehanna Sidetracks.

You know, Greg makes a great point. It doesn't take a huge empire. It doesn't even take a layout to develop your modeling skills. All it takes is an interest in growing within your hobby. The Achievement Program was designed to motivate and recognize growth in the hobby on an individual basis. The AP is for all of us, not just the "super modeler." It provides a way for each of us to get the support we need to grow our skills and create the models we really want to do.

Bob

NEW!! PIKE ADS!!



To display your home or club layout ad here, please contact the editor.

Our next Model Showcase presentation will be at the February meeting. The first two Model Showcase features were successful in that we had some very nice models displayed, but only a few people participated. This activity is meant to have everyone participate, not just the top modelers in the group. We want to have this as a learning experience where we can learn from each other.

As I mentioned in the July Sidetracks, I have been a member of several other divisions before coming to the Susquehanna Division. I still get some of those divisions newsletters. In the December issue of the NCR Division 5 (Lansing MI), Andy Keeney, Division 5 Superintendent, wrote about their November “show and tell” as they call it. At their meetings, almost all attendees bring something to talk about which is usually a theme of some sort, cars, locos, structures etc. The following are part of Andy’s comments which I have edited:

“This month I would like to discuss sharing. Interesting that this subject comes up during the holiday season known for sharing but I’m speaking of sharing at the model railroad hobby level and no, I’m not asking for donations here!! Each month we share with other members during our “show and tell.” Sometimes it is an item that relates to the “show and tell” subject for that month or it may be something that we are working on. Then there are those little surprises that we come up with that just might interest some of our fellow members, so we bring it along.

Bob Stevens had an “ah-ha” moment at Lowes a couple of months ago and luckily for me, once he played around with it and thought it was worthwhile, he brought it to the November “show and tell” and shared it with the group. At the same time and for the last few years since I started working with the basic scenery on (his model railroad), I spent many an hour contemplating on how I was going to be able to duplicate the sedimentary rock formations found in central Kentucky/Tennessee where my railroad is located... (He had tried many things to model rocks)...Enter Bob Stevens and his “show and tell” subject for November. Like many of us, Bob likes to browse anywhere where we just may find that perfect item to use on the railroad. As many of us know, some of the best items come from places far away from a hobby shop. But we have a way of looking past that and seeing the item for what it was really is; Model Railroad material!! Thank goodness Bob knew what he had when he came upon expansion joint boards in the building department with all the concrete supplies. What a visionary model railroader, Bob is!! Bob took a 5’ expansion board home, broke off some pieces, glued them in a stack like bricks and played with them to get them looking like you would find in a railroad cut of sedimentary horizontal rock. For “show and tell,” Bob explained what he found and what he did with it and passed it around for us to see...”

This is typical of other division’s model displays. Everyone brings in something to display; a loco, a car, a structure and sometimes something the modeler has “discovered” like the above. I would like our Model Showcase to have more participants so each of us can learn from each other, so each of you bring in a model to talk about, a favorite loco, a new car, a kit you are about to build, a current project, a problem you have encountered and need help on. The list is endless. I am not necessarily looking for the next greatest scenery discovery, but some item that you can show and perhaps talk about that may inspire a thought from another modeler. What may seem ordinary to you might be an “ah ha” moment to someone else. After all, that is one of the advantages of being an NMRA member, being able to learn from your fellow modelers. See you in February with your model.

John

National Model Railroad Association (NMRA)
Mid-Eastern Region
Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

Yes, please sign me up for a free six-month Railpass trial membership in the NMRA – which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region and in my local Division. During this six month period, I understand that I may attend conventions and meets, and participate in contests. I will receive **NMRA Magazine**, the national monthly magazine, and **The eLocal**, the bi-monthly regional newsletter if an e-mail address is provided. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office, or receive a New Member Pack.

I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six month Railpass trial membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Regardless of who pays, six month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person.) At the end of the six months, I may join the NMRA, paying the regular active member dues.

During the past two years, I have **not** been a member of the NMRA or a prior Rail Pass member.

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