

NER COUPLER

NORTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

Summer '80



See pages 6 and 7 for reports on the Plymouth Convention May 16-18.

ALL ABOARD!
THE
**Steam Train
and
Riverboat**
1980

the Valley Railroad
ESSEX, CONN. 06426 (203) 767-0103



See page 5 for advance information on the Wethersfield Convention October 17-19.

Brochure cover © Clifford Scofield Color Productions, Cheshire, Connecticut



NER BRASS



President: Fred Driscoll, 15 Cushing Street, Dover NH 03829

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Secretary: Douglas Handy, P. O. Box 798, Springfield, VT 05156

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Achievement Program: Harry J. Wagner, 70-25 67th Place, Glendale, NY 11227

Permanent Convention Chairman: Jack Alexander, 111 South Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333

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Canada: Denis Fortier, 380 Chemin St-Louis, App 1703, Quebec, P.O. GIS 4M1

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Northern New England: Doug Handy, P. O. Box 798, Springfield, VT 05156

Past President: Graham K. Harvey, 2473 South Seaman's Neck Road, Seaford, NY 11783

NER COUPLER
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A. Murray Goodwin, Editor
57 West Point Terrace
West Hartford, CT 06107
(203) 521-2677

Address changes should be sent to the Office Manager. All other material (including advertisements) should be sent to the Editor.

CORRECTION

Please note that the correct Zip Code of the Office Manager is 01701. It was listed incorrectly in the last issue.

RAILFUN

--Tom Shaffer



ALOUETTE DIVISION

The three organizers for the Mini-Convention Quebec on April 26-27 for Division Alouette Quebec would like to thank all participants who attended the Convention.

It was quite a success, with an average of 100 people at all 7 layouts to be visited and not far from 2000 people who attended the Convention itself. Thanks to all.

+++

Les trois organisateurs du Mini-Congrès Québec, les 26-27 avril 1980, pour la Division Alouette Quebec, aimeraient remercier tous les participants qui ont assisté au congrès.

Ce fut tout un succès, avec une moyenne de près de 100 personnes pour les 7 réseaux visités et pas loin de 2000 personnes qui ont assisté au congrès même. Merci à tous.

--Denis Fortier

MARITIME DIVISION

The Maritime Division of the NER completed their 4th annual convention in Dartmouth, NS. with the election of officers and a railway show including modules from participating Maritime clubs.

--Bob Pearce

SOOT & CINDERS

by RICHARD M. HANSCHKA

For those fans with very limited space, the old trolley car may be the answer. They ran via cables in the street, a third rail like a Lionel train, on batteries, and at first were pulled by horses or mules.

Not all cars were for passengers as seen here. They delivered newspapers and freight l. c. l. and might even pull a freight car along too.

The freight motor often was converted to work service such as sweeping streets, putting sand on snow and ice, grinding the rails, or moving company supplies.

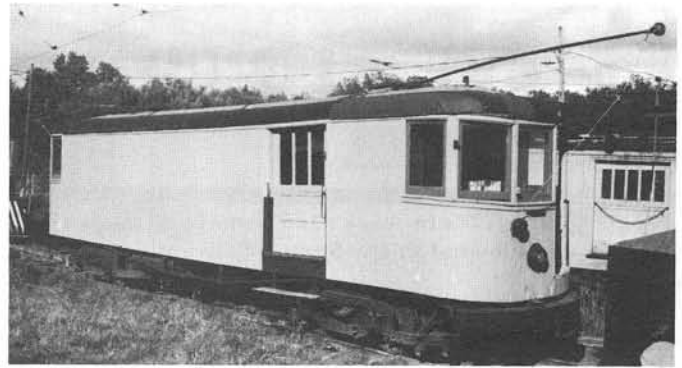
The name trolley come from troller or the pole and wheel assembly which ran along the wires. Some of this type car had a gasoline generator installed, and it could run poles down to switch freight and hence not need overhead to do its work. Many of us like that idea (or the battery car) to avoid the overhead design and construction.

Those of us who remember trolleys think of Yale football (and baseball) crowds. Trains ran from the New Haven station to Yale Bowl. Baseball crowds were never as large as football crowds. Often people hung all over the sides so that the car could not be seen for the people. This sure beats standing in gasoline fumes and a traffic jam that never seems to end. Open cars are still tourist favorites at Warehouse Point and East Haven, Connecticut, and Kennebunkport, Maine, museums. Each has a car of this type in operation.

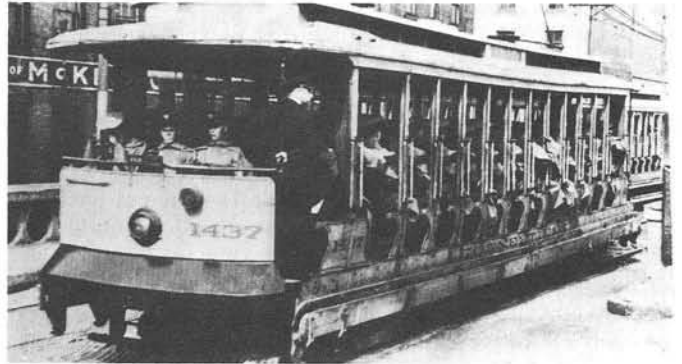
One convention used the Connecticut Electric Railway museum line for its fan trip years ago. The museum uses ex-Hartford & Springfield Street Railway right of way, and so car #25 was selected as representing the route which ran over to Broad Brook and to Rockville. There were connections with New Haven trains then.

Street cars in the city literally turned corners that no modeler would dare use. Of course on open ground regular railroad curves were used to save on wheel flanges and permit high speed. On city streets a youngster often would roller skate or pedal a bicycle alongside, but once making an inter-urban run even old city cars would open up to 40 mph and high speed cars ran literally a mile a minute.

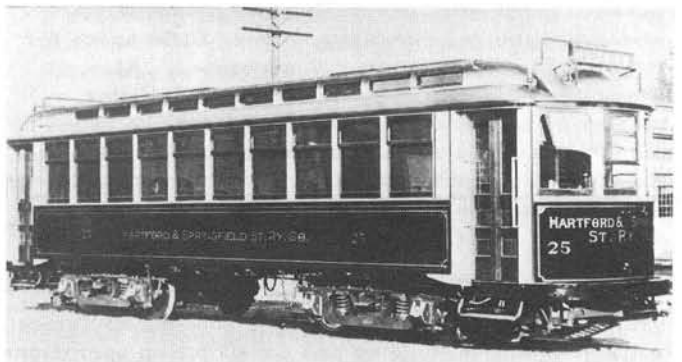
I remember the open cars which were fine as there was little in the way of exhaust fumes to require airconditioning. There was no fear of accident as a taxi, auto, etc. tangling with a trolley was sure to lose out. Every station was marked by painting the electric pole and/or a small sign. Trains were met regularly at the railroad station, and one could make a good background scene as the train could be below ground so as not to be seen but possibly be heard via sound effects (Off edge of table?).



Connecticut Company work car (ex-freight motor car), August, 1972



Connecticut Company car 1437 with West Point cadets on board, New Haven



Hartford & Springfield Street Railway car 25, November, 1968, Somers, CT

PIKES

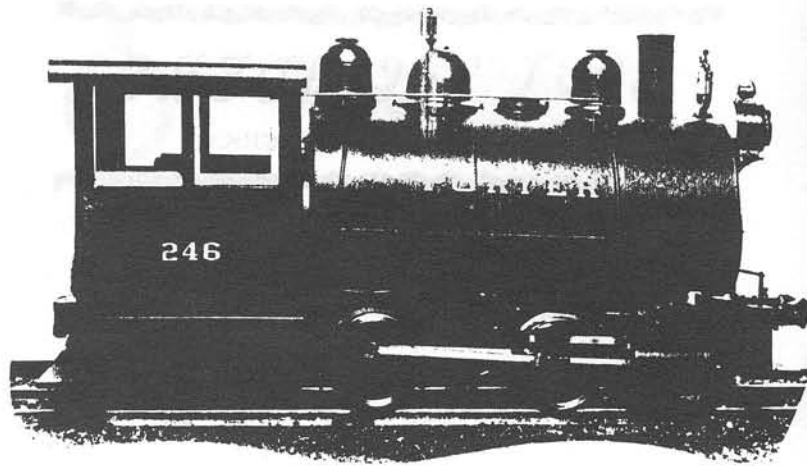
CONNECTICUT & OHIO RAILROAD: "O" Scale
George L. Muller
74 Virginia Drive
Middletown, Connecticut 06457
(203) 347-3020

Pike ads are 5 typewritten lines and cost \$12 for one year (4 issues). Copy should be sent to the Editor.

Clinic Summaries

Here is a sampling of material presented at the dozen "live" clinics (There were also numerous tape-slide clinics and movies) at the Spring Convention in Plymouth.

PORTER 0-4-0
A tram loco in
On3 kit form
by Grandt



TRAMS, TRIM AND TANTALIZING - George Konrad,
MMR

A tram is "any conveyance that follows a set path by means of direct mechanical support and regulation". While we can define any railroad as a tram, this clinic (which included approximately 40 tram slides, both prototype and model, and a question and answer period) concentrated on narrow gauges of several variations. Model trams were on display.

Why should I consider adding a tram? Well, a tram can be an interesting addition to an existing standard or narrow layout. It can be easily and convincingly added to the layout, generally is an inexpensive modeling venture, and takes up very little space for the good amount of interest it generates. Also, it offers some intriguing operational possibilities, creates an interesting interchange from one gauge to another, can be a reason for some fancy track work, and offers an opportunity to do some scratchbuilding. A tram is not limited to any era or locale, and the components are readily available for any scale preference.

Trams were used in metal mines, coal mines, steel mills, plantations, logging and construction operations, and for tie treatment, among other uses. Gauges ranged from 18" up. Locomotives were powered in all sorts of ways, including steam, electricity, man and animal, cable, compressed air, internal combustion, and battery power.

For tram cars, use a prototype that appeals to you, or freelance your own cars. Any car style built of any material that makes sense (and some that do not) is acceptable. Generally cars are 4-wheeled, but some larger types have 2 small 4-wheel trucks. Couplers varied from hooks and links to small MCB versions; coupler heights were not to any standard.

Trackage varied from as good as a Class 1 road to a few degrees poorer than the Toonerville Trolley. A rule of thumb is: For prototype, if it runs at all, fine; for models, you better do your best or those little trams will be more trouble than fun!

REPOWERING OF LOCOMOTIVES WITH CAN MOTORS
AND MICRO MOTORS - Peter S. Barney, Editor,
PROTOTYPE MODELER

This clinic began with a discussion of the differences between open frame motors, can motors, micro motors, and the various gearhead combinations necessary for use with micro-motors. Motors from Northwest Short Line, Westside Model Company, Nickel Plate Products, Grandt Line, and the Little Depot were used to show the types and sources of these motors.

The second half of the clinic concentrated on the installation of can motors and micro motors in scale locomotives, with HO, HO_{n3}, HO_{n2½}, and On2 models shown in the slide presentation. The commentary with the slides also pointed out some of the pitfalls with micro motors installed with wrong gearheads.

The clinic (which ran on Friday evening and again on Saturday morning) concluded with numerous questions from the audience concerning the maintenance of the motors, prices, and availability.

TREES AND SCENERY - Jean Sanger

Here was a helpful survey and review of basic techniques for scenicing. It covered:

Planning the track on the layout - Lay ties; ballast the tracks using a mixture of 1 part powdered glue to 7 parts sand; spray with water, wetting thoroughly; while ballast is damp, run a pair of trucks over the rail to push sand from the rail; dry rails to remove water and sand.

Dirt roads - Use same sand as for ballast; spray with water; while damp, run Match Box type car through to give ruts in dirt effect.

Hills - Styrofoam glued in layers or styrofoam meat trays (bottom up) will work; rough up smooth surface with knife; paint and apply underbrush.

Underbrush - Glue small pieces of lichen on hills and other places where brush is needed.

Grass - Use Elmer's glue directly on layout; sprinkle D&H grass, foam grass, dirt, etc. over.

Trees - Lichen trees can be made using forked pieces of branches of blueberry bushes cut to HO heights desired (40-100 scale feet); place pieces of lichen over fork of branch; drill $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep hole to fit tree; glue tree in hole; earth color foam used at base of tree will covers mistakes in drilling (grass can be used).

BRASS LOCO MAINTENANCE and PLASTIC LOCO MAINTENANCE - Jim Giblin

After surveying tools, soldering, aides to vision, and third hands, the clinic looked at trouble-shooting: inspection and price (indicates trouble sometimes); analyzing assembly (quartering, binding); locating key screws (00-90, 0-80, 2-56); and disassembly and placement.

For assembly and tuning of steam locos, Jim covered alignment of leading and trailing trucks (gauge), main drivers and gear case (quartering, bearings), valve gear (binding, rivets, screws, hanger), tender frame and trucks (level, insulation), and electrical contact (loco to tender, loco).

For diesels, he looked at drive angle, gear tower angle and misalignment, the breakin period, truck pickup, and insulation, among other things.

ATTENTION: PROTOTYPE OR MODEL WRITERS

Peter S. Barney, Editor of PROTOTYPE MODELER, writes: "We at PM are continually looking for articles, and we would like to feature something on the New Haven. So if you know of anyone who would like to write an article for submission, please encourage them to write to me. (Not just New Haven, but any model or prototype subject!)

Address: 567 Rockdale Avenue, New Bedford, MA 02740.

NEED HELP WITH POWER SUPPLIES OR COMPUTER LOGIC PROBLEMS ?

The Northeastern Region is fortunate to have a new member who is unselfish and willing to become involved with his fellow NMRA members.

Mr. William C. Parrish of 127 Winfield Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07305 has written to me and offered to assist anyone with power supply or computer logic problems. Mr. Parrish is a member of the 650 Technical Committee (Electrical) of the NMRA, a computer systems specialist, and the President of Parrish Power Products, designers of power supplies for utility companies.

This is a very generous offer by Mr. Parrish, and the Northeastern Region greatly appreciates his offer of help in the electrical-computer logic field.

--Fred Driscoll

Planning Begins For Fall Convention in Connecticut !

Tom Hayes, chairman for the Fall NER convention in Wethersfield, CT, announces the following tentative schedule for October 17-19.

Friday

- Module layouts assembled in Ramada Inn (HO and N)
- Ted Bossert's complete slide program on model railroads throughout the New England area
- Hospitality Room and early registration from 2 p. m. onward
- Choice layouts open
- Bingo for those who want it

Saturday

- Clinics, contests
- FAN TRIP: STEAM!! And for us only! The first use of steam from Essex to Old Saybrook on the Connecticut shore in over 35 years!
- A fantastic boat cruise and refreshments on our beautiful river
- Valley Railroad yards and shops open for those on fan trip only
- Banquet and extra attractions (Bingo again, anybody?)

Sunday

Layout visits, breakfast accomodations, and tours all over the area

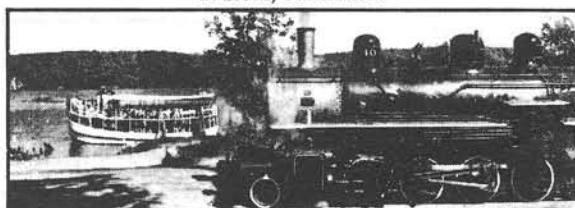
Tom notes that the convention committee includes 5 previous convention chairman.

The location is within 5 minutes' walk of a large shopping center, a dozen restaurants, and plenty of gas stations.

There are plenty of tour opportunities, including the Mark Twain House, Gillette Castle, Dinosaur Park, Scenic National Riverway, parks, historic homes, and 2 operating river ferries. Plus the new buildings and shops, which are an easy expressway drive away in Hartford. "The best of the old, and the excitement of the new".

Details and registration form in the next Coupler!

The STEAM TRAIN & RIVERBOAT at Essex, Connecticut



Travel back in time aboard the Valley Railroad's authentic steam train. The sturdy locomotive winds its way through meadows and woodlands to the water's edge where a riverboat waits to take passengers on a leisurely cruise through the unspoiled Connecticut River Valley



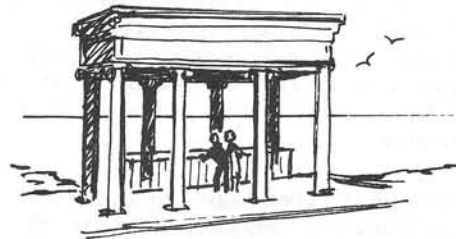
35 people spent the afternoon on the Plymouth Historical Tour while 138 others rode the special mixed train (which made two photo run-by's) at the Edaville Railroad.

161 persons enjoyed the banquet at the Governor Carver Motor Inn on Saturday evening.

We had 225 people participate in some or all of the convention. They came from:

Connecticut	34
Maine	13
Massachusetts	88
New Hampshire	13
New Jersey	9
New York	37
Pennsylvania	4
Rhode Island	6
Vermont	9
Virginia	3
Canada	9
	<u>225</u>

--Irwin F. B. Lloyd



We regret that photos of the contest winners and activities at the Plymouth Convention were not available in time to meet the printer's deadline for this issue. We will hope to include them in the next issue.

CONTEST WINNERS

MOTIVE POWER - STEAM

1st C	Robert D. Thompson	N.H. 4-6-0
2nd C	Robert D. Thompson	N.H. 4-6-2
3rd C	Robert D. Thompson	N.H. 4-8-2
1st M	Eric Green	La Strada 2-8-0

MOTIVE POWER - OTHER

3rd M	Andre Giroux	M 420 TR #27
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FREIGHT CARS

2nd C	Peter S. Barney	S.R. & R.L. Stock Car
3rd C	Joan Barney	S.R. & R.L. Flat Car
HM C	Bradley A. Libby	B&A 40' wood chip box car
2nd M	Eric Green	D.R. 40' wood box car
3rd M	Peter A. Watson	S.R. & R.L. Box Car
HM M	Mark D. Hall	S.R. Flat #8

PASSENGER CARS

HM C	Alan N. Houghton	Sandy River coach
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NON-REVENUE CARS

2nd M	Don Howd	G.T.W. Caboose #75919
3rd C	Allan N. Houghton	Phillips & Rangeley plow

STRUCTURES

1st C	Peter A. Watson	S.R. & R.L. Turntable
HM C	Peter J. Eaton	Vermont Paper Eng. Hs.
1st M	John MacGown	Murray's Ice House
3rd M	Jean LeBlanc	Freelance Turntable

PHOTOGRAPHS

Model B&W	Glenn Moody
	Street Scene
Model Color	James Densmore
	Cess Pool Shop
Prototype B&W	John Prestopino
	E.B.T. Winter Scene
Prototype Color	James Hoffman
	B&M Freight

BALDWIN TROPHY (Best In Show)

Robert D. Thompson, N.H. 4-6-0 #846

HUB DIVISION AWARD (Second Highest)

Eric Green, La Strada #1 N.G. 2-8-0

SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION AWARD (New Modeler)

Robert D. Thompson, N.H. 4-6-0 #846

M= Master C= Craftsman HM= Honorable Mention

Judges: Walter J. Rogers, Brian C. Whiton, Dave Messer, Harold L. Fossum



Convention Art Work by Don Brebner



DREW, SIS AND DAD RAILROAD

A. Murray Goodwin
57 West Point Terrace
West Hartford, CT 06107

Send your request for Pass Exchange listing to Jack Neary, 1900 58th Ave., N., Apt. S-27, St. Petersburg, FL 33714. All requests must be accompanied by a pass made out to Jack and a 3x5 card showing your railroad name, your name, and your address PRINTED or TYPED.



Railroadiana



THE LEGEND OF JOHN HENRY

The "John Henry" story is connected with the building of the Big Bend Tunnel on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad near Talcott, Summers County, West Virginia, high up in the Allegheny Mountains. At this point the Greenbrier River makes a large bend to find its way around the end of a high mountain called Big Bend Mountain. It was natural that the tunnel should take the same name. It is one and a quarter miles in length and straight as a die.

The work was started in 1870, shortly after the close of the Civil War. Over a thousand men labored for over 3 years on the job. Because of the high death rate, no accurate personnel records were kept.

One of the chief killers was "tunnel sickness" due to heat and foul air. Today we would call it "silicosis". To try to eliminate this sickness several air shafts were drilled down from the top of the mountain to roadbed level so as to force fresh air into the workings. These shafts were numbered from the eastern portal, and the final breakthrough came when the rock between shafts #1 and #2 was penetrated.

The second killer was explosives, from which there seemed to be little protection. Modern methods of control had not yet been invented, and many lives were lost from this cause. The third killer was from falls of rock. One fall reported on June 1, 1872, was estimated to be 8,000 cubic yards. No mention was made of the number of lives lost from this fall, or any of the others for that matter. The victims were buried in mass graves, secretly, and no markers set up. The company did not want the laborers, who were mostly former slaves from Virginia, to know about deaths on the job. They were very superstitious and it was difficult to get them to return to work for fear of the dead.

The laborers lived in wooden shanties along the right of way. Every morning a "boss" would gather them together and herd them to work at gun point, like cattle. When they became too sick to report for work, they were thrown off the property to make room for fresh recruits. The shifts were 12 hours a day, and any trouble makers were harshly dealt with. If a man could stand up, he worked; and if he could no longer stand up, he was fired.

A newspaper account of May 16, 1872, reads: "Big Bend Tunnel caved in the other day. No deaths were reported. The obstruction was removed and work goes on. Foul air gives much trouble and there is a good deal of sickness among the employees, Capt.

Johnson the contractor informs us that there remains only 100 feet of heading, and that daylight will appear through the tunnel in May, and it should be ready for track in July."

On June 6, 1872, the same paper reported: "On Friday last between 10 and 11 o'clock the headings between shaft #1 and shaft #2 were driven together, and a current of fresh air now passes through the mountain. Capt. Johnson was the first to pass through. After the ceremonies of knocking a hole through the mountain were over, all parties repaired to headquarters where a barrel of Old Bourbon was rolled out and general jollification ensued. All work was suspended for the day. There were some disorders but we have no casualties to report. The order was better than usual upon such occasions."

By September 26th the tracks has been laid through the tunnel and on to the mouth of the Greenbrier River. However, slides continued to plague the workers. On September 28th John Robinson's circus was prevented from reaching White Sulphur by a slide on the C & O tracks. "A large crowd had gathered and there was a rough time generally" stated the paper.

Through train service began on February 10, 1873. The first train consisted of a car loaded with superior bark for tanning purposes, originating at Louisa Court House and destined for Cincinnati. Also 4 cars of railroad wheels from the Tredegar Works at Richmond, destined for Huntington, and one passenger car. "Eleven hours to Huntington" exulted the newspaper, extolling the rapidity of travel along the new road.

There was a single track through the tunnel, so some means of traffic control had to be devised. This was solved by the installation of the English "staff" system. By this absolute block, the holder of a metal staff handed to the engineer by the block operator at one end of the tunnel gave him full protected right to the single track until the staff was delivered to another block operator at the other end of the tunnel and placed in the machine there so as to clear the signals. This was the first installation of the staff system in this country, and although it would today be regarded as a clumsy device, it gave positive protection in front and rear of all moving trains, since nothing could enter the tunnel so long as the staff was out of the machine. It caused much favorable newspaper comment at the time.

The contractor for the tunnel was W. C. Johnson, and among his engineers was Claiborn Rice Mason, who drove the last spike in completion of the C & O at Hawks Nest on March 22, 1873. It was he who turned the first shovel full of dirt on the little Louisa Railroad in Virginia many years previously, which was destined to become the very first link in the great C & O.

At first the tunnel was lined with wood. As it rotted, the wood had to be removed, resulting in the same problems as had plagued the railroad at the beginning: fallen rock that blocked the track for more than 24 hours at a time. The work of relining required 10

years to complete, as only one section could be done at a time, and the work of removing the debris was "tremendous".

Although a double track through the tunnel was proposed, it was never installed. In 1934 a parallel tunnel was built to the south, with modern machinery and equipment which enabled the work to be done in only a fraction of the time. The offset when the diggers met was exactly the same as in the first tunnel so laboriously dug 62 years earlier - 6 inches!

The big problem was the fact that the mountain is composed of red shale which crumbles easily when disturbed. This is what gave rise to the story of the race between John Henry, a steel driver, and the steam drill. Historically speaking, it was not a race at all, but a test to determine whether it would be feasible to use a newly developed steam drill on this job. It had operated very successfully on other tunnels where the drilling had been through solid limestone rock, but had not yet been tried on loose shale. The first must have taken place early in 1870, although the exact date cannot be determined.

The steam drill was not satisfactory. The bit kept choking up and had to be removed for cleaning every 4 or 5 inches. In the meanwhile, John Henry's hand drill kept digging down, giving a clear demonstration that this method was more suitable on this particular job.

Someone got wind of the story, and the popular ballad ensued. Johnny Cash, the popular country and western singer, discussed the legend on two of his television programs and later donated \$500 toward the construction of a statue of John Henry on C & O property near the tunnel.

--Stan Bradley

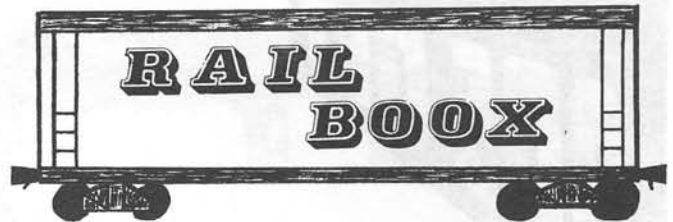
DEADLINES

#125	Fall '80	August 1*
#126	Winter '80	November 14
#127	Spring '81	March 13
#128	Summer '81	May 29**

Issue will be mailed approximately one month after deadline listed.

* Earlier, if at all possible, please.

** One week later than comparable dates in 1980. Still may have to be re-adjusted depending on date of 1981 Spring Convention.



MODEL RAILROADER CYCLOPEDIA - Volume 2:
DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES. Compiled by Bob Hayden.
1980. Kalmbach Publishing Co., Milwaukee. \$22.

It had been a hot and humid Saturday, and I had spent most of it taking a chain saw to trees and hedges. I didn't see the mail until late afternoon, and then most of it was junk or (even worse) bills. But there was a package from Kalmbach. Strange, I thought, since they usually mail review copies in large white envelopes. I opened the package, and there it was: surely one of the most valuable resources for the diesel modeler that I have seen.

11 x 14" large and 160 pages thick, and filled with superb photos and HO scale drawings of 70 locomotives, "a reference manual of diesel locomotives built and used in North America."

"While the history and development of the diesel locomotive are covered in detail, the primary emphasis is on presenting high-quality reference data for model-building", and they sure do!

First-rate! Now where did I put that Athearn GP35 shell and the package of details that I couldn't figure out where to place on the shell? Help is at hand!

--Murray Goodwin

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (NER)

Please fill out and return to:

R. Roderick Brown, Office Manager
79 Hemenway Road
Framingham, MA 01701

NAME

STREET & NUMBER

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Amount enclosed: _____

\$ 5.00 for a 2 year membership

\$10.00 for a 5 year membership

Main railroad interest?

Scale/gauge?

Layout?

Size?

How long in hobby?

ADS GET RESULTS

DISPLAY ADS: The prices below are for one year (4 issues) and include typesetting by our printer of a typical ad. Prices of ads with special requirements (such as photos) will be somewhat higher.

Column inches	Rate
1	\$21
2	\$33
3	\$45
4	\$57
5 (1/4 page)	\$66
10 (1/2 page)	\$120
20 (full page)	\$225

O-MEN

Come out of your Caves!
Join the rest of the
Model Railroaders at your
Local Hobby Shop.

READ

O Scale News, 48/Ft.
the O Scale Newsletter which
is now available at . . .

Tucker's Hardware

Warren, MA

Bedford Train Shop

Bedford, MA

Bay State Models

Groveland, MA

The Green Caboose

Medway, MA

Custom Trains

Bath, NH

Sal Marino

Staten Island, NY

Willis Hobbies & Crafts

Mineola, LI, NY

Hojack Hobbies

Liverpool, NY

Farmer's Model

Train Shop

Horseheads, NY

Da-Laur Models

Brookline, MA

New England Hobby Supply

Manchester, CT

O Scale News, 48/Ft.
6514 N. 11th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19126



ON THE SCHEDULE

NATIONAL

August 11-16, Orlando, FL: NMRA SUNSHINE SPECIAL '80 (Sy Aufseher, P.O. Box 695, Orlando, FL 32802).

NORTHEASTERN REGION

October 17-19, Ramada Inn, Wethersfield, CT: NER FALL CONVENTION (Tom Hayes, 10 Wilcox, Wethersfield, CT 06109. 203-529-7986).

NER DIVISIONS

Saturday, September 27, SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION MODEL RAILROAD MEET, St. David's Church, Massapequa, NY, 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Live clinics, slides, models, photos, contests, and a special switching contest (Albert Waltien, 38-23 212th Street, Bayside, NY 11360. 212-423-6036, after 6:00 p.m.).

Sunday, November 16, NUTMEG DIVISION RAILROAD SHOW, place and hours t-b-a (Ted Ritter, 42 Sunset Terrace, Vernon, CT 06066. 203-872-0331).

OTHER

Saturday, July 19, EASTERN O SCALERS MEET, Ramada Inn, Route 6 & 11, Clarks Summit, PA, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. "A full day of display and trading for those whose interest is in O scale"; prizes for best rolling stock and power; diorama display; switching contest. Tables \$5; registration \$3 (under 12 free). (Bob Salerno, 10 Garber Street, Old Forge, PA 18518. 717-562-2397).

Friday-Sunday, August 22-24, OCON-HBG-80, Sheraton Inn, Harrisburg, PA. Pike visits, clinics, trading, traction seminar, prototype photo trips. Regular registration \$10 (wife and children included); banquet \$10. (Jon Winder, P.O. Box, Cheltenham, PA 19102, or Phil Thompson, 7565 Morningstar Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17112).

Saturday, November 1, MONCTON NB & TRURO NS MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATIONS EXHIBITION, Keddy's Brunswick Hotel, corner Highfield and Main Streets, Moncton, NB. Entries 7:30 - 10:00 a.m. Public 12 noon - 5:00 p.m.; fare \$1, children 50¢, under 8 free. (Bob Pearce, 66 Mt. Pleasant Blvd, Truro, NS B2N 3N7. 902-895-8406).



SCRATCHBUILDER'S SOURCE

by DAVE MESSER

THE SCRAP BOX

An inevitable result of scratchbuilding, kitbashing, or just plain kitbuilding is an accumulation of extra parts, often ranging from small detail castings to complete carbodies or structure components. Assuming these are not to be discarded (and I am proposing that they not be), the problem is what to do with it all. The common answer is the scrapbox (sometimes called a junkbox) where everything is tossed. The problem then becomes how to find a particular item later on and how to avoid damaging others in the process.

The obvious solution is to organize the parts, grouping like or related items, and to separate them into convenient containers. These need not be elaborate or expensive, but the best system from the standpoint of convenience, accessibility, and the protection of small parts is some form of parts cabinet. These are readily available, and usually are made up of clear plastic drawers with movable partitions and space for labeling, enclosed in a metal or plastic cabinet.

Having a well-organized parts cabinet is an invaluable asset to the serious modeler, and setting one up by sorting out the contents of the scrapbox can be a revelation in itself.

EVERYDAY MATERIALS

Having established an organized parts system, I suppose one can then justify expending some effort in finding things to put in it. Establishing a basic modelbuilding materials and parts inventory will be covered later, but the concept I wish to get across here is that of training oneself to look at everyday items as potential modeling material.

The list is virtually endless, so I won't attempt to elaborate except to give a few examples: Old greeting cards (particularly Christmas) provide a variety of colored cardstock, foil, and plastic sheet ideally suited for interior detailing of cars and structures. Magazines yield a collection of pictures and advertising logos for model billboards and signs. Fabric and notion counters offer ribbon and roll lace for rugs and curtains, and pins for doorknobs and lightbulbs (use the teardrop head variety). Old stand-bys are soda straws for culverts, tin cans and paper towel rolls for fuel oil tanks, matchsticks for pulpwood car loads. One could go on ad infinitum.


Anyone who has seen Bob Aaberg's exquisitely detailed passenger cars can testify that much (even most) of the detailing materials originated from non-model sources: gold filigree lace ceiling trim, sequin wall mirrors, craft jewelry components for light

fixtures and dishes, wood cigar wrapper wall paneling, colored beads for fruit, carpeting from velvet ribbon and rug catalog cutouts, even living air fern in the planters.

The above may be an extreme to which many do not wish to go, but the point is that many everyday items, which are either inexpensive or would otherwise be discarded, can find a use in modeling, and - like so many other areas of the hobby - this is limited only by the imagination and resourcefulness of the modeler.

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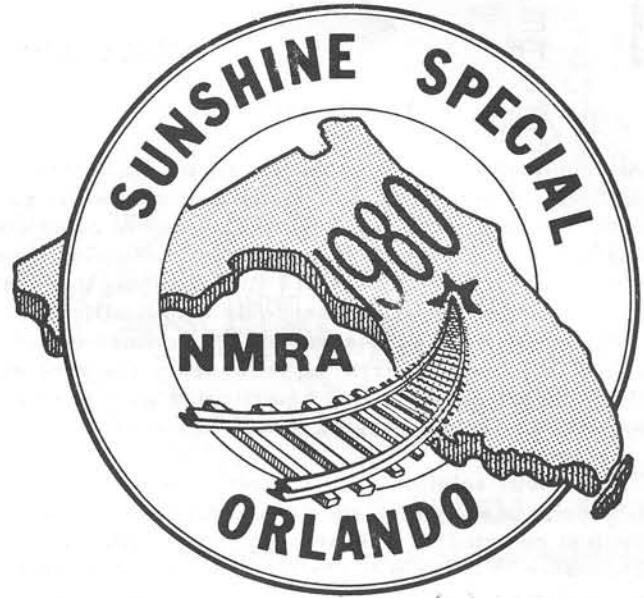
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