



The Switch Tower

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Seacoast Division NMRA www.seacoastnmra.org



Seacoast Spring Event Saturday, April 15, 2023

James Foley Memorial Community Center

150 Wakefield Street

Rochester, New Hampshire 03867

New Division Media site available

The division now has 3 videos up on YouTube. Search for Seacoast Division and they will come right up. You can now view the Fall and Winter meetings and the Layout tour of Victor Hand. If you have something to share with the division contact Dave Delorey at dave@delorey.com. Layout tours and clinics are welcome. Hope you can add to the growing list.

Seacoast Convention 2025 Update

The Seacoast Division 2025 NER Convention Exploratory Committee continues to investigate the possibility of the Seacoast Division hosting the 2025 NER Convention. Earlier, while waiting for another Division's plans to firm up, we were considering either 2024 or 2025, but the Lake Shores Division has recently committed to host the convention in Rochester NY in 2024. At this time we have located one feasible venue in Concord NH and we are continuing to look at other options. Each of the four major committees (Overall Convention, Inside Activities, Outside Activities, and Publicity) will be co-chaired in order to share the workload. At this time two Seacoast members have volunteered to be a co-chairman for the Inside Activities Committee and the Publicity Committee. We are still in need of at least one volunteer for each the co-chair positions in the Overall Convention Committee and Outside Activities Committee before we can commit to hosting the 2025 NER Convention. Please think about stepping up and becoming a Committee Co-chairman.

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Seacoast Division 2023 Winter Event Report

The Seacoast Division of the NMRA held its Winter Event on January 7, 2023 at 10 am at the Westbrook Community Center in Westbrook Maine. Approximately 25 Seacoast members attended in person and another six participated through Zoom.

The Division Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the Event. Our President, Glenn Mitchell conducted the brief meeting where the Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted by a quorum of members present. President Mitchell also announced the election of Tom Oxnard, Jay Ehlen and Guy Mason as Directors. There was no new business. After the Event concluded, The Board re-elected Glenn Mitchell as President and Jay Ehlen as Vice President.

In his opening remarks, President Mitchell discussed tentative plans for the Division to host the 2025 Northeastern Regional convention. He stressed the need for member volunteers to fill key Convention management positions. Additionally, he noted that Division membership had declined from 174 members this time last year to a recent tally of 157 present members.

Our first clinic presentation was "Operations 101", a complete introduction to effective operating sessions presented by Bruce Robinson. This well received power point clinic was prepared for the NER Mill City Convention and described the process and paperwork for use on his VJRR.

The second clinic, "Modeling Realistic Brick and Concrete" was presented by Dan Pugatch. Through slides and actual examples he demonstrated techniques to add mortar to brickwork and create weathered concrete finishes. Several attendees offered their own experiences to a well delivered clinic.

Given time constraints, the lunch break was combined with a hands-on operating session conducted by members of the Southern Model Railroad Club. Several Club members set-up modular units and demonstrated switching techniques.

The final session was a panel presentation chaired by Glenn Mitchell. Matt Keiser, John Newick and Bruce Robinson also participated. The panel reviewed the different approaches to operating sessions employed on Matt's, John's, and Dick Fralick's layouts. Slides showed features of each layout and the participants discussed the differences in operations on the different layouts.

After the Event concluded, Rob Selberg hosted a tour of his 8 x 12 N scale layout that was built for small trains with plenty of action. Thanks Rob!!

Despite some minor technical glitches, the Event was a success thanks to the presenters and all attendees. We are planning a great Spring Event in April and hope to see as many members as possible. Going forward we are always seeking clinic topics and/or presentation ideas. Please do not hesitate to contact me (jayehlen@gmail.com)

Respectfully Submitted,
Jay Ehlen, Event Coordinator.

The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

These remarks are edited from Glenn's full winter message which can be seen on the division website .

Here's the 2023 Seacoast Division Leadership Team:

· Jay Ehlen, Director, Vice President and Activities Coordinator, Dave Kotsonis, Director and Treasurer, Nelsen LeMay, Secretary, Geoff Anthony, Director and The Switch Tower Editor, Dave Delorey, Webmaster, Tom Oxnard, MMR, Director, AP Chairman and NER Northern Area Director, Peter McKenney, AP Associate Chairman, Ralph Brown, Director, Jack Lutz, Director & Clinic Historian, Jim Seroskie, Director and NER Webmaster, Guy Mason, Director, Bruce Campbell, Membership Chairman, Tage Erickson, Faulter Fund Chairman, Steve Russo, The Switch Tower Assistant Editor.

· Financially, the Seacoast Division had a good year. The 2022 beginning balance was \$5,878.83 and the ending balance was \$6,529.34. The major source of income was the sale of donated items at the Silent Auction in April and at the "for sale" table in July.

The Faulter Fund made a major donation (\$1,000.00) to the First Baptist Church of Shapleigh Train Club. Several teens are building a modular layout and the Seacoast Division is happy to support them. If you know any young modelers who could use some financial help, have them take a look at our website where an application form is available to download.

2022 was not a great year for increasing the Division's membership. Membership dropped from 174 to 157. We lost 20 members and gained only 3. If you know anyone who dropped out, please contact them and encourage them to rejoin, or at least ask the reason why they left.

The Achievement Program gave out only one AP Certificate for the year. Hopefully we'll see an increase in 2023.

Dave Delorey continues to do a great job with our website at <http://www.seacoastnmra.org>. The website has an incredible number of resource documents and clinics linked to it. Please take a look when you can.

Besides losing Bob Kotsonis as a Director, he also stepped down as the Audio/Video coordinator for the events which included broadcasting them on Zoom. Tage and I tried to get everything working at the event, but we were only partially successful. Our A/V skills need improving and we are looking for a member to step up and take Bob's place as the A/V coordinator. If you have computer skills, please consider volunteering.

The Southern Maine Model Railroad Club is hosting its 3rd Train Show at the Westbrook Community Center, 426 Bridge St., Westbrook, Maine, on April 22, 2023. Details for the show are available at <http://southernmainemrc.wordpress.com>. The Seacoast Division needs a few members to man a Membership Recruitment table at the event. Chuck Hastings is also looking for clinicians to give presentations during the show. Please contact me if you can work the table or give a clinic at the show. I hope many of you will attend the show and support the SMMRC.

The Great Falls Model RR Club show will be held at the Mt. Ararat High School, 68 Eagles Way, Topsham ME on April 29, 2023. Details for the show are available at <http://www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org/train-shows/great-falls-spring-train-show-saturday-april-29/>.

NMRA SEACOAST DIVISION SPRING 2023 EVENT**WE WILL BE IN PERSON AS WELL AS ON-LINE WITH ZOOM**

The Seacoast division Spring 2023 Event will be held in person and also on-line with ZOOM in Conference Room 1 of the James Foley Memorial Community Center, 150 Wakefield Street, Rochester, New Hampshire starting at 10:00 am. There is ample parking available on-site.

THE AGENDA**SCRATCH BUILDING A THROUGH-PLATE GIRDER BRIDGE**

Need a bridge for your layout and want to try your hand at scratch-building? John McHugh shows how he built an HO scale 79 foot through-plate girder bridge to earn a Merit Award. The entire process will be explained and illustrated from researching the bridge, making a scale drawing, building the structure from start to weathering. John will explain how the Merit scoring process influenced his construction decisions. If you are contemplating starting the AP Structure Certificate, this a good model to build.

DOES YOUR LAYOUT TELL A STORY

Jim Gore believes that a majority of visitors to our layouts are not necessarily model railroaders, but rather people who want the layout to tell them a story about how and why the railroad exists. Therefore, it is important that people understand the purpose of our layouts. In this clinic, Jim will discuss some of that detail that tells the story to the visitor.

You do not need to be the Franklin & South Manchester, but should not be the Plywood Central either. Finishing the back side of buildings and alleys, the purpose and placement of figures, as well as vehicles, all create an atmosphere that tells a story to the viewer and establishes the setting and why and where our railroads travel.

TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE HO SCALE 1909 BOSTON & MAINE LAYOUT AT THE HERITAGE PARK RAILROAD MUSEUM

Rich Breton will cover the background and a brief history of this museum quality operating model railroad. The clinic will include layout design criteria, construction and materials used, and how the layout evolved over the past ten years. Also included will be modeling tips and techniques which can be applied to any model railroad project, whether large or small. The current status of the layout, future plans, needs and opportunities will be discussed. The layout will be open to visitors immediately after the conclusion of the Event, using "Train Controller", which permits five individual trains to be running simultaneously.

NMRA SEACOAST DIVISION SPRING 2023 EVENT

LAYOUT TOURS -

HERITAGE PARK RAILROAD MUSEUM - 1909 B & M LAYOUT

See the 1909 B&M layout in operation.

Located in the Freight House at The Heritage Park Railroad Museum,
1 Chapel Street, Union , New Hampshire 03887

CHRIS OLIVER'S DONNER PASS HO LAYOUT

Check out progress on Chris's 3000 ft mainline multi-tiered layout

190 Dry Hill Road, Rochester, NH

(704) 778 - 5346 Directions available at Event

**PLEASE PLAN TO BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH
SHARE THE FUN OF MODEL RAILROADING
SEE YOU AT THE EVENT**

Zoom is one of several video conferencing applications available for use on your computer that is connected to the internet. For several years, lap top computers have been equipped with a camera that faces the user, a microphone, and speakers. The computer with the camera/microphone /speaker combination lets the user take advantage of the full capability of Zoom. If you don't have a computer with the camera/microphone /speaker you can still use your computer to view the event and you can communicate with everyone using a phone. Finally, a smart-phone can also be used to participate in a Zoom video conference.

New users will have to go to zoom.us and then download "Zoom Client for Meetings" if you use a computer, or download the Zoom Mobile apps for iPhone or Android from the APP store. You will not have to register for an account. The host of the Zoom Meeting, in our case Seacoast President Tage Erickson, will send out an email with a meeting invitation which includes a link to the meeting. The non-host attendees will click on the link a few minutes prior to the meeting to get connected to the Zoom meeting. The host will then accept you into the meeting and you will be able to see all the attendees that have cameras and you will be able to hear all the attendees that have microphones or have called in on the telephone

Turning an Atlas Turntable into Something Prototypical

By Will Everitt

I am working on a roundhouse inspired by New York Susquehanna and Western's Little Ferry Shops and needed a turntable. The Susquehanna roundhouse operated from the turn of the century until 1992, when the facility was torn down in favor of an intermodal facility.

I thought about scratch-building a turntable, but that seemed a little beyond my current skills. But then some really nice, prototypical looking store-bought turntables were a little beyond my budget.

Enter the Atlas Turntable. Whether you are an N-scaler or an HO modeler, you've probably seen this cheap-looking locomotive-turner. Then you probably quickly looked away! The Atlas turntable is made to sit at track level. It has a plastic deck that is not trying very hard to look like it's made out of wood. There's nothing prototypical about it unless you are modeling a post-Civil War era railroad or perhaps the San Francisco cable car line.

But the Atlas turntable has a lot going for it. First, it is cheap. It can be operated by hand (it comes with a small crank) or you can remove the crank and install an inexpensive motor. It's DCC friendly. It's rugged. It's reliable. If you find one made in the 1970s at a garage sale, ten to one it still works.

And did I mention that this is probably the cheapest turntable on the market? Being patient and frugal, I found a used one with a motor on eBay for \$20.

The problem was, like most golden-era steam turntables, the Susquehanna one I wanted to model had a bridge, pit, and pit rail — three things the Atlas turntable does not have.

But one last thing the Atlas product has going for it is that it is easy to "hide" its ugliness and turn it into something prototypical. The process I outline below was done in N scale, but the HO and O scale Atlas turntables are extremely similar, so the steps would be the same for them.

Turning an Atlas Turntable into Something Prototypical

By Will Everitt

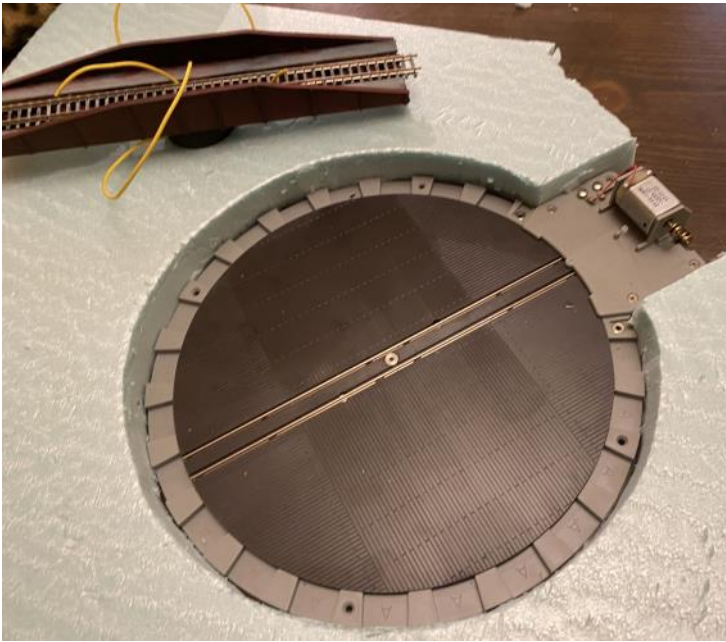


Photo 1: My n-scale layout is built on blue 1-inch insulation foam. Rather than placing the turntable at rail-level, I traced its outline on the foam. I cut this foam out and dropped the turntable an inch below the top of the layout. Later I lined the cut with styrene and painted it a concrete color.



Photo 2: I then scratch built a bridge using styrene, balsa wood, and two Atlas pier girders I had left over from another project. I made the bridge the exact diameter of the turntable (in N scale it is 9"). I then needed to figure out a way to make this bridge sit slightly less than an inch above the Atlas tracks. I thought about cutting out several pieces of styrene and gluing them together until they were almost an inch tall. Then it hit me; *I am building a turntable*. I cannibalized the 45

adaptor from an old Sony record player I had. [For people younger than me, a 45 is a type of vinyl record that, unlike LPs, have a big hole in the middle — they need an adaptor to fill the hold so they can be played on a record player.] A part from my old hi-fi turntable is now a part of my model railroad turntable!

Turning an Atlas Turntable into Something Prototypical

By Will Everitt

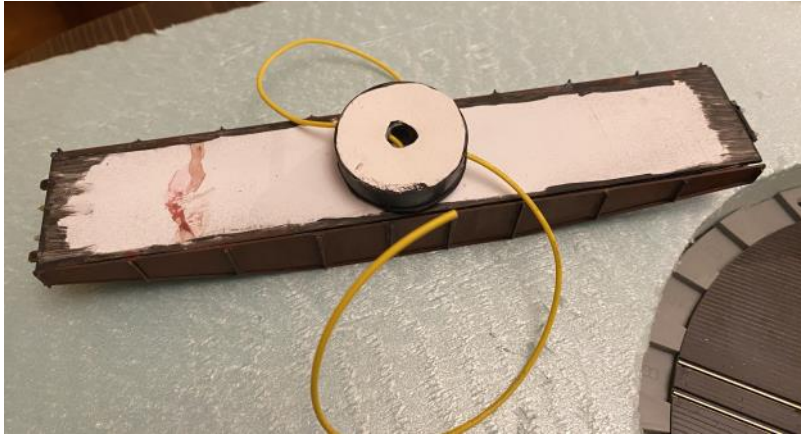
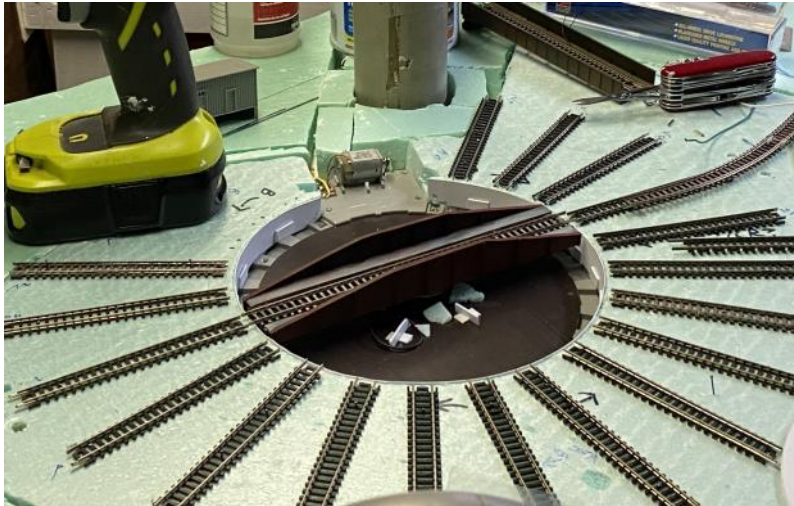


Photo 3: I drilled holes in the 45 adaptor, slipped 22 gauge wire through it, then connected the bridge tracks to the tracks in the turntable via the wire, soldering all four ends.

Next came the hard part: making the bridge sit exactly in the middle *and* parallel to the turntable's actual tracks. This was tricky for me. On my first two tries, it was slightly off center as the track indexing was off. I initially glued the adapter to the turntable using CA ("Super") glue but that was not strong or flexible enough for daily operation. Ultimately, I used epoxy.



At this stage, I had a bridge that could spin and serve 21 tracks around the pit. But that ugly-fake-wood plastic deck was still visible.

Photo 4: I glued a series of 1/4" styrene spacers to the deck. The spacers held up two half-circles of styrene I cut to fit under the bridge.



Photos 5 and 6: I painted the half-circles concrete-gray and added pit tracks and weeds made of static grass and flock. I also added a control booth and "gallows" to the bridge. Now, when that ugly, brown Atlas deck turns, it's hidden beneath a realistic-looking bridge and a more prototypical looking pit-floor.

Turning an Atlas Turntable into Something Prototypical

By Will Everitt



This project was a good example of how you can take a cheap non-prototypical product and turn it into something useful.

By: Will Everitt

N Scaler, member of Maine Track

Portland, Maine

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Caption for the Atlas Turntable Box photo:

Most serious modelers do not give the Atlas turntable a second look. But this inexpensive product has a lot going for it, especially when you “hide” all of its non-prototypical elements.

What Should Go Here?

by Jack Lutz

Working with a prototype location makes it relatively easy to decide what the scenery on the layout should look like. Building a freelance layout gives you more flexibility in building scenes, but you then have to decide what those scenes will be.

Just as you enter my office you see the end of one loop of the *Coos Bay and Coos County*. The loop has a 30-inch radius, which leaves a large triangle (with a curved hypotenuse) right at the door.

I have been working on scenery for this area because it is the first part of the layout encountered. The track enters through the backdrop and I'm looking for ways to block the view of that hole without using a tunnel—there just aren't any tunnels on the prototype lines where the CBCC runs.

The original plan was to have the track disappear into the woods and I started on a temporary forest to do just that (Figure 1). The temporary forest is made of ground foam and other scenic materials glued down to a thin foam board. That forest has looked like this for several years and the plan was to fill the area with trees. During this process I discovered that using water-based paints and water-diluted white glue on foam board leads to the foam board warping. And it was difficult to glue the trees to the litter-covered foamboard.

Figure 1



What Should Go Here? by Jack Lutz

I recently tried a tree-covered hill to the left of the opening (Figure 2). This hill is a chunk of Styrofoam from some package that arrived in the mail, shaped to fit the area, painted green and then covered with ground foam and other scenic materials.



Figure 2



It became apparent that this arrangement was not going to be effective in hiding the opening in the backdrop. So, I removed the temporary forest and began to think about turning the area into a hayfield or pasture (Figure 3). But that does not help hide the back-drop opening.

Figure 3

What Should Go Here?

by Jack Lutz



Plan B is to look at a bridge to hide the opening. A cardboard template was made to see what that might look like (Figure 4). It needs to not interfere with the nearby thermostat. The forest on the Styrofoam hill will need to be taller so that the road can disappear into the trees. The bridge can't be any lower if double-stack containers are going to clear the bottom of it.

Figure 4

The right-hand end of the bridge will also need something to disappear behind, but it will also need a taller forest than the one on the Styrofoam hill (Figure 5). There is still plenty of room for a hayfield or pasture. A hayfield wouldn't need to be fenced, but would need a static grass application (and I don't have the equipment for that). A pasture would require cows or horses (and I have

both), but would need to be fenced. I have some 55-year-old rail fence in my scenery parts box, but it would probably be more prototypical to have a barbed wire fence, which would require developing some skills I don't yet have to make it look good.



Figure 5

A.P. Report Tom Oxnard Ap Chair
Peter McKenney Associate Chair

Timetable

Will Everitt has earned his Golden Spike Award. Congratulations Will .
There must be others that can get their Golden Spike award?

ME April 22 Westbrook Southern Me Model RR club show Westbrook Community Center . 9-2

ME April 29 Great Falls Model RR club show Topsham MT Ararat High School 10-3

MA April 15 Hub division Spring Training, American Legion Hall Manchester By the Sea 9—4

NH April 15 Seacoast Division Spring Event , James Foley Community Cente , Rochester NH . 10– 2

NB CA May 26-28 Fundy Railfest Best Western Plus St John New Brunswick

MA June 16-18 New England Railroad Prototype Modelers, La Quinta Springfield MA

Editor’s Ramblings

As spring comes to the coast of Maine and the geese start flying north there are still a couple of train shows that I want to attend. The one in Westbrook which I attended last year and the Great Falls show in Topsham which I will not be at because of family obligations. I hope the members get out and support both shows. I hope to go to St John at the end of may and attend the convention there. Some great modeling in eastern Canada, you should check it out. I am also thinking of going to the New England prototype meet in Springfield Ma in June. Something I have never done but hope to. New experiences help keep modeling fresh. Both meets would be less expensive than going to a national convention and possibly have as much fun and education. Will let you know how it turns out in July.

Always looking for new material for the switch tower. Does not have to be fancy or polished . Some shots of what's on your work bench would be just fine. Till the next time stay calm and train on

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