



DISPATCH



The "New" Monon

**Kitbashed
Bus Station**

**Steamtown
Schedule**



WHAT'S NEW?



An upcoming steam locomotive offering by Bill's Train Shop is the 1905 Ma & Pa Baldwin 2-8-0. This loco was scratchbuilt by the late Bill Daiker. The similar B.T.S. steamer will be available in 3 versions: Kit \$560.00, Semi-kit \$695.00 and RTR \$950.00. The parts are cast and brass.

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The entire line may be viewed in color on our website.

Latest kit releases:

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Deco-style Roadside Billboards; \$9.95

ADDITIONAL NEW FLATCARS

65 FY & PRR Cannon car, with cannon; \$49.95

66 and 67 FY & PRR Cannon cars, with cannon; \$99

24574 USAF Rocket Fuel car, with load; \$49.95

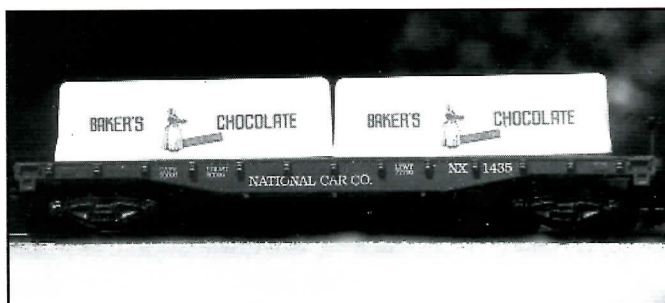
US Army flatcar with howitzer load; \$49.95

Track Cleaner flatcar; \$74.95 - It Works!

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BAKER'S CHOCOLATE FLATCAR!!

Modeled after the prototype; available with 2 different prototype numbers. Highrail only; operating KC trucks. \$49.95 each.



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Over 2000 different quality items in stock!

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**VIEW MANY OF OUR PRODUCTS ON
THIS PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE,
IN COLOR!**

NASG DISPATCH
Official Publication of the
National Association of S Gaugers

The NASG **DISPATCH** welcomes art, photographs, letters, articles and other S gauge/scale related materials contributed by the membership. Send all such materials to the editor.

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NASG membership runs from July through June, including all **Dispatch** issues for the membership year, irrespective of enrollment date. All applications, renewals and membership questions should be directed to:

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COVER: Roger Nulton's new interim Monon layout features this quarry scene saved from the old layout. Photo by Roger. Reefer is NASG convention car and Gulf tank is NASG Lionel/Flyer annual car.

ORDER BOARD

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April, 2001



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President's Message ...

Some Don't See Us As Others Do.....

I met a fellow from New York at S Fest last fall who was full of enthusiasm about S. He was asking many questions regarding AF repairs and items for sale by various dealers. He spent more than half an hour asking my opinion of current track and rolling stock equipment. At the conclusion of our discussion, I referred him to the NASG table, which was conveniently opposite my table. As the show progressed, I continued to see him on the show floor, in one of the restaurants, and in my motel lobby.

Four months later he called me to see if I still had a particular item and to discuss a repair problem which continued to haunt him. I referred him to an old S Gauge Herald article which he recognized. He went on to describe his layout, which was .148 rail from a current manufacturer. Then suddenly he stopped and said "aren't you the president of some S organization?". I answered yes - NASG, describing the benefits of membership. His reply was "send me an application" which I did and by now he is a new member.

Let's all remember there are potential new members all around us and keep talking to everyone about NASG.

Paul Stevens
President, NASG

WATCH OUT!

**For your NASG membership renewal!
See the inserted form in this issue!
DO IT TODAY!**

**Your trains should make laps.
Don't lapse your NASG membership!**

DUES, DUE! Don't forget to send you dues in. They are \$20.00 a year. Add \$10.00 if you have a booster ad. Manufacturers can send \$25.00 for their business card. And here's your chance to state your wants. Fill in the enclosed survey and mail back to Secretary Glenn Ritter.

NASG NEWS

Good News, Bad News.

Good News: There will be an NASG Lionel AF car this year again. The NASG has again contracted with Lionel Trains to produce a limited run AF car. The 2001 car is the 20th in a series (some years more than one was produced) since 1988. This year the car will be a single-dome Gulf tank car, blue with white print, and multi-colored logo. The tank car will have the chemical platform, ladders, diecast trucks and operating knuckle couplers. It will be available only to current or new NASG members for \$49.00 each ppd. The maximum order is 2 cars. See cover photo and insert this issue.

Bad News: Front Runner Canceled. After pursuing all avenues to maintain the S scale Front Runner car project by the Freight Car Committee, we have to cancel it. Jettie Padgett from SouthWind called me last week with the news. Although from the organization's standpoint we did not receive as many reservations as we would have liked, the main problem was that the builder skipped town along with the corrected pilot model Jettie mailed to him. Jettie was in Korea and personally walked the streets looking for the builder. He looked in the factory of the builder hoping he'd see something, but "only dust on the floor." In addition to the lost efforts of Lee Johnson, Randy Lee, Stan Stokrocki and others who viewed the pilot, Jettie lost about \$5,000.00 in drawings and research on other projects that this builder was working on.

The agreement with Jettie was that all deposits would be retained by the NASG until the pilot model was approved and actual construction of the model began. So John Foley has sent copies of all receipts to Treasurer Bill Moore who will be returning deposits to all members who supported this project.

From my perspective, I really wanted to have our committee sponsor a scale-only car to answer some NASG members' comments that we provide cars only to the hi-rail/AF group. Lee Johnson, John Foley and I did the best we could to convince the NASG BOT for the first time to approve this idea. We did receive flak from NASG members who, as hi-railers, wondered why the car wasn't going to be offered to them. That was one hurdle.

The second big hurdle was one member's comments about the pilot model's drawbacks that killed any further deposits being received. As I mentioned in a letter in the *Dispatch* regarding pilot models, there are generally modifications necessary to a pilot model. Apparently this member and everyone else thought this was the actual final product.

Compared with the four other freight car projects this

continued on page 30

RAIL MAIL

Shake, Rattle and Roll - S survives Seattle Quake:

Ross Roberts, Dick Karnes, Keith Thompson and others reported no serious personal or layout damages due to the Feb. 28 quake in the Seattle area. Here are some excerpts of e-mail quotes. From Dick Karnes:

"Several of you expressed concern about the earthquake here. My household (people, house, contents) is OK. 200,000 people are without power, but - as you can see - we have power (the e-mail got through). I was replacing a pair of trucks on my 0-6-0 camelback, off in the corner of my basement, when the quake hit. I knew immediately what it was and moved to a door frame (as you're supposed to do) to wait it out. My wife dove under the dining-room table. Our house

continued on page 30

Jeff's Junction



To be, or not, to be.?

Lately there have been several rolling stock projects being promoted by various individuals and interested parties, including our own NASG. Some of these are ongoing, and some didn't quite make it. The NASG front runner project, unfortunately, has been canceled for various complicated and unforeseen reasons, and an earlier modern brass gondola effort over the internet failed to win enough subscribers. Jettie of SouthWind, on his own, cancelled the Trackmobile for lack of interest.

Ongoing projects being promoted by private parties hoping to stimulate production include the CZ long Budd passenger car set (American Models), the ore cars (SHS) and the heavyweight long Pullmans (American Models). Note that the first were brass projects and the latter 3 are injected molded plastic. The CZ car project has just been put on hold by AM, but not canceled.

Take note also that we are not talking paint schemes on existing tooling for two of the plastic projects. We are actually talking all new tooling for the Budd and Ore cars and re-running long dormant dies for the heavyweight Pullmans.

The manufacturers understandably want a bit of a guarantee for the much larger capital investment needed to undertake new tooling. I'm sure AM and SHS appreciate this type of group feedback, but still need to insist on some minimums before proceeding.

Most of the time, whether brass or plastic, if enough seed money is sent to a manufacturer or an intermediary, the project will fly. The SHS billboard reefers started out this way. Individuals, clubs or organizations can stimulate production of items already on the manufacturer's back burner by reserving runs

ahead of time with special paint jobs.

In my mind, the 3 plastic rolling stock projects which are currently being networked should be worthy of following through on. Here they are in more detail:

1. Long heavyweight re-run. The tooling is already in place. These should sell to match AM passenger sets already out there. This might even be an opportunity to produce upgraded versions with better trucks, interiors and lighting.

2. CZ long Budd cars. Again, this should eventually be successful if enough seed money is invested. The project might open the door for other accurate full-length passenger cars. Postponed for now (see Railmail).

3. The ore cars should also succeed, even beyond initial orders. This project is a natural for both hi-rail and scale S gaugers because the cars are short. The attempt is to do minimums of 6 packs for each road name.

Now, are there other worthy pet projects out there in brass or plastic that could use some stimulation? Sure, if enough interest and money can be drummed up. Campaigning also helps our manufacturers prioritize some production already in mind. Maybe the NASG Freight Car Committee can step in to help a slow moving project too, such as the modern box by Des Plaines and the SD60 by AM.

Beyond these, I'll list some plastic projects, rolling stock or otherwise, I consider possible worthy projects for some of you to get on the bandwagon for.

1. Number 6 or 8 turnouts in code 100, 148 and 126 (both open and closed frogs) by AM and SHS.
2. A northeast or C&O steel steam-era caboose by SHS.
3. A few other long heavyweight style passenger cars such as a true diner, observation and paired window coach.
4. A wood 50' express reefer.
5. A 40' gondola - SHS

continued on page 31

NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

By Jeff Madden

AMERICAN MODELS (10087 Colonial Industrial Dr., South Lyon, MI 48178). The shorty Budd cars should be out in a month or two, and Ron confirmed the postponement of the long CZ cars. Also coming will be warbonnet FP7-F7B sets in either AB or ABB combos. B units can be sound or powered. Hi-rail AC units can be painted chrome and scale painted silver. AC AB combos are \$359.95, ABB \$479.95. DC sets are \$50 less each.

New freight car paint schemes (4 numbers each): St. Louis SW 40' box with blue lightning bolt, EL 40' box, (gray w/maroon lettering), MP 2-bay offset hoppers, Peabody 4-bay offset hoppers, B&O 2-bay offset hoppers (capitol herald), Erie 2-bay hoppers.

BANTA MODELWORKS (411 Hopkins Rd., Dummerston, VT 05301 0 www.divisionpoint.com) has laser cut wood cabs in S to fit the Bachmann HO Shay. They're \$12.95. Banta also has other Tomalco loco parts to help with this conversion.

BIG BOYS' GOLDEN TOYS (Model RR Warehouse, Box 411, Roanoke, IN 46783) is going to attempt to do some limited edition photoengraved brass and laser cut wood kits of some unusual cars, mostly originally offered by Red Ball in HO. You'll need to send an SSAE for list, and if enough (no obligation) orders are received for a particular item, it will be produced. Some sample cars and price: WWII troop sleeper (open window), \$95; B&M express (4 door), \$115; PRR semi-well flat, \$95; Virginian caboose, \$125. Some unpowered electric locos and doodlebugs are listed too. Also some detail parts such as crossbucks and whistleposts are on the

list. The e-mail is: mrrwarehouse@yahoo.com.

DALEE ELECTRONICS, INC. (246 W. Main St., Leola, PA 17540 - www.dalee.com) has just announced a LocoMatic TM Sound and Control system for O and S gauge operators. This is a new, smaller version which is 1.25" x 4.5" x 0.8"H. It contains all motor power and control with sound on one main board with remote board for volume and option selection. You can choose from various diesel prime mover sounds and horns, electrics, or steam locomotive (main line or yard sounds) with various whistles. Unit will work with permag and series motors up to 3 amps. It can be used with AC or DC track power. The controller (item #755) is \$74.95. Sound/Control (3 amp) is \$119.95. Sound/Control 4 amp is \$139.95.

DIECAST CARS & TRUCKS (discount stores). A couple of new American Muscle Cars have been spotted - a 1961 Chevy Impala (3 colors) and a 1958 Plymouth Fury (3 colors). Also listed, but not seen is a 1962 Pontiac. Price range is \$4-5. Johnny Lightning continues to pour forth usable S stuff. Coming are 2-car diorama sets which include a couple of figures. Ones listed on website are "The Point" (cop car and bad guy car) and "Mearle's Drive-in" (Corvette and hot rod roadster. In a Buffy the Vampire series there is a 1959 DeSoto listed. Check website at: www.playingmantis.com. Diecast Direct at www.diecastdirect.com lists two 1/64 Matchbox '50s Chevy trucks - a fire pumper and a dump truck.

GREAT DECALS (2813 Hogan Ct., Falls Church, VA 22043 - www.greatdecals.com) has PRR

decals for the X29 boxcars. Lettering is white with circle herald. Set is based on Champ decal OB-303 artwork. \$9.49 ppd each set. Also available is a dulux gold set for the Washington & Old Dominion. The set can do boxcars, a GE 44 ton diesel, hoppers or a doodlebug. \$3.49 per set ppd. A 3rd new set from Bill Mosteller is the Southern Ry caboose set which includes both modern and old style lettering with heralds in white. Cost is \$3.49 per set ppd.

KALMBACH PUBLISHING (21027 Crossroads Circle, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187) has a 2nd edition out of Tips and Tricks for Toy Train Operators. This book has 144 helpful tips that will improve the performance and appearance of your toy trains. The 96-page, 8-1/4" x 10-3/4" softcover book includes 130 b&w photos and 36 illustrations. Price is \$17.95. Looks like its aimed at the 3-rail crowd, but there might be some universal tips included.

MTH (hobby shops) has a 2nd set of painted figures out which work for S. These include sitting and standing figures for about \$20. Also listed as separate figures are: standing woman, painted lady, man w/lawnmower, walking engineer, climbing engineer, brakeman, kissing couple, man w/clipboard and maybe more. These are \$4.99 each except for the kissing couple and the man with lawnmower which are \$6.00 each.

PACIFIC RAIL SHOPS (P.O. Box 867, Coos Bay, OR 97420) has a NEW e-mail: gabbysuz@hotmail.com. New models since December include SF Grand Canyon reefer, WM 40' double door box, and a small run of the SF Texas Chief (Ship & Travel) reefer. UP and Chicago

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THE PLASTIC VILLAGE GAZETTE (Pinenickel Publications, P.O. Box 590602, Houston, TX 77259) has a 2001

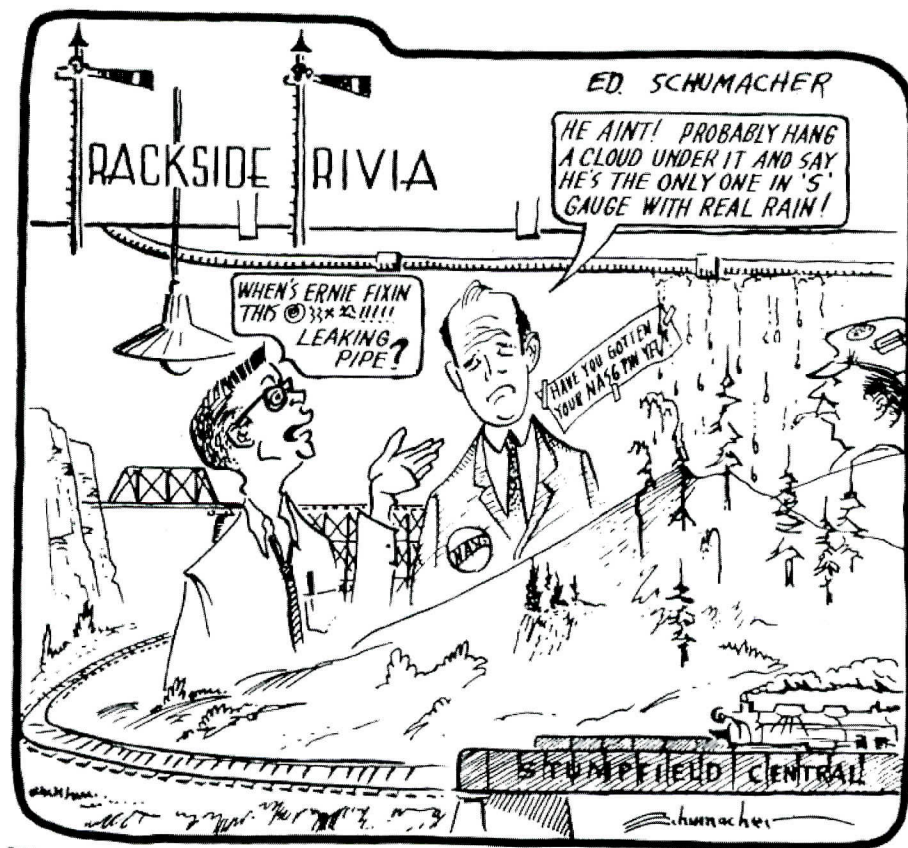
Pocket Price Guide available which covers plastic "toy train" type companies including Plasticville, Littletown, Marxville, Skyline, K-Line, Ideal, etc. It is 98 pages plus covers. Inside is all b&w with rough line art showing each item. Mike Cedro is the author. Price is \$12.95.

S SCALE LOCO & SUPPLY (Address correction from last time: P.O. Box 550, Richlandtown, PA 18955). Fred wanted to update last issue's mention of new products. The CN 2-6-0 is also an engine located at Strasburg. It is #89. Take a look at the website at www.sscaleloco.com.

TCA (National Toy Train Museum) is doing a 7-car work train series in S by Lionel AF which is available to TCA members only. The first car is a yellow chemical tank car. Following this car will come in order: a flat, gon, box, combine, idler caboose and crane. Price for the tank car is \$52.95 plus \$6.00 S&H.

UNKNOWN (unknown). This outfit is rumored to making some plastic injection molded locomotives in S. The choices are rather eclectic. Both hi-rail and scale versions will be offered. Diesels: Baldwin Centipede (min. radius 52"), McKen Car (that knife pointed motor car), CF7 (for the modern folks). Steam: Virginian 2-10-10-2 (minimum radius 62") - a drawback, but think of the attention it will draw; a D&H 4-4-0 camelback; a PRR 6-8-6 steam turbine (Bill Lane will love it) with all drivers blind and lettered for Lionel so collectors will crave it. These will mostly be in the under \$400 range. Once successful with these, the unknown company will then make more popular locomotives. If you haven't gotten the hint yet - April Fools, Jeff.

WESTERN CAR SHOPS (2837 Olive Dr., Cheyenne, WY 82001) is in the early stages of planning the following brass project: Pullman-Standard 60' auto parts



TIRED WHEELS

By Ted Larson

One of the frequent comments regarding S scale trucks is that of the size of the cabs; "Pickup cabs and the cabs of larger trucks from the same manufacturer, same year, have the same styling, but the large truck cabs look larger. Are they the same size or different?" You can look at the large 1948 Ford from Hartoy and compare to the RC Mint Edition pickup as an example. Thanks to Keith Thompson (Seattle) for providing some information on this question. Check out this website: www.sweptline.com/hist/bigtrucks.html.

"In order to allow the proper proportioning for the aesthetics of medium duty D-series trucks, filler panels, a different bumper, larger fenders and running boards were added to cover the exposed frame and make the trucks look larger. Vehicles D-300 and up were built on straight frames leaving the engine lower in its compartment. Big D-series truck cabs were identical to Sweptline Era pickup cabs but were set up differently to accommodate the heater, accessories and chassis wiring."

Observations of small and medium size trucks of various years and from various manufacturers leads me to conclude that the above is probably true for the truck industry in general; the main cabs were the same, parts attached to the cabs were larger for large trucks. It appears to me that some large trucks also have different grills than the corresponding pickups.

Also note that the website that Keith found provides much information about the Matchbox Kings Dodge trucks shown in the December, 2000, *Dispatch*. Also note that Johnny Lightning recently produced a Dodge pickup of very similar design, one of the few JL vehicles that does not appear to be undersize for S scale.

Pickup Size: By Ted Larson

There are many pickups from Matchbox, Hot Wheels, Racing Champions, Ertl, Johnny Lightning, etc., that are obviously close to 1/64th scale, but they are not all the same size. A recurring question on the e-mail lists and in club meetings is regarding which of these pickups, if any, are really 1/64th scale.

The accompanying photos show the size similarities and differences of several common models. Although I have not had an opportunity to measure the prototypes for all of these, I did have the opportunity to measure a '56 Ford pickup and a '53 Chevy pickup. The following is a table of the prototype measurements and the corresponding measurements of the Matchbox '56 Ford and the Ertl and Racing Champions '50 Chevy pickup.

'56 Ford	Actual	Model
Height	6'	6'4"
	proto height may vary with tire size.	
Width	6'3"	6'5"
	width at running boards	
Length	15'5"	15'1"
	bumper to back of tailgate	
Box length	6'8"	6'6"
	back of cab to back of tailgate	
Box width	4'10"	4'10"
	outside box width	

While the proportions of this model are off by a small amount, overall it is very close to 1/64th scale. The Hot Wheels '56 Ford is therefore clearly undersize. The Tootsietoy '56 Ford tank truck appears undersize. (The similar '53 Ford pickup by Racing Champions is probably oversize -ed).

'50 Chevy	Actual	RC	Ertl
Height	6'1"	6'2"	5'9"
	tires may vary height		
Width	6'	6'	5'6"
	at front fenders		
Length	5'8"	15'9"	16'
	bumper to back of tailgate		

Box Length 6'9" 6'9" 6'10"
back of cab to back of tailgate
Width 5'1" 5'2" 4'10"
Outside of box

The size of the RC (Mint Editions) '50 Chevy pickup is nearly dead-on 1/64th scale. Most dimensions of the Ertl model are undersize. The longer box of this model may be based on a truck with a longer box (3/4 ton). The height and width of the Johnny Lightning '56 Chevy are the same as the RC '50 Chevy, so this model is 1/64th or very close to it.

The RC mid-'30s Ford pickup scales out to 6'6" wide. The prototype is about 5'6" wide, so sadly, this model is oversize. The RC 1940 pickup scales out to 6'4" wide. This is probably oversize too. The JL 1940 pickup scales out to 5'11" wide, 6'2" high and 16'8" long. This seems likely to be very close to correct S scale. The Matchbox late-'30s Chevy sedan delivery scales out to 6'6" wide. This is oversize.

I do not have an RC '48 Ford pickup, but it larger than the other pickups, so is also clearly oversize. It's 6'-6" wide as compared to the similar year JL model which is only 5'8" wide and closer to scale - ed. The Matchbox '56 Chevy is larger than the others, so is oversize. There may be use for this cab though. Since many pickups are styled the same as their larger "brothers", the pickup box could be removed from this truck and a freight or farm body substituted. The model won't be perfect, but it could be used to create an acceptable stand-in. Unfortunately, the RC '53 Ford pickup is also oversize. It measures 6'9" wide and over 17' long. A boxed Hot Wheels '58 Chevy Fleetline pickup with Hot Rod wheels also appears a bit oversize at 6'3" wide, but a little better than the '56 Chevy from Matchbox. It looks like Johnny Lightning pickups and the RC '50 Chevy take the prizes for being the closest to 1/64.

Addendum by Jeff Madden:

While we're at it, Mac McGrath, who provided the comprehensive Hartoy/AHL truck listing in the Feb. 1999 *Dispatch*, has some updates and corrections. On page 18 in the first grouping, L52203 should be spelled Southern Pacific. Not listed at all was the North American Van Lines series of 4 trucks. These include:

L01019 (Mack BM) box van
L051112 (Mack BM) 22' bullnose trailer
L55406 (Ford F-7) 32' van trailer
L56403 (Ford C series) 32' van trailer

Also, 4 more trucks can be listed under Other Promotionals:

L51111 Kroger (Mack BM) 22' bullnose trailer
L57403 Bandag (Ford C-series) 32' van trailer

#? Holland Motor Freight (Mack CJ) 32' van trailer

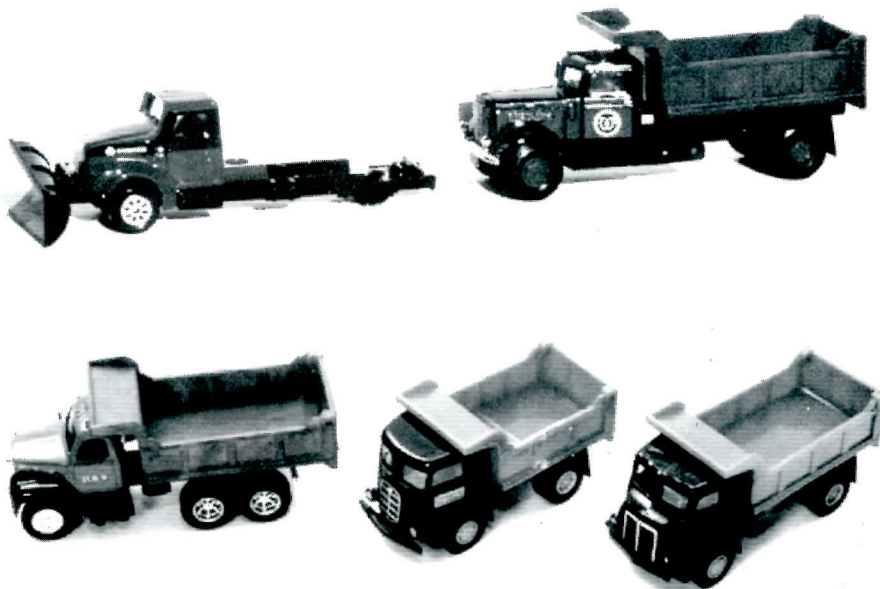
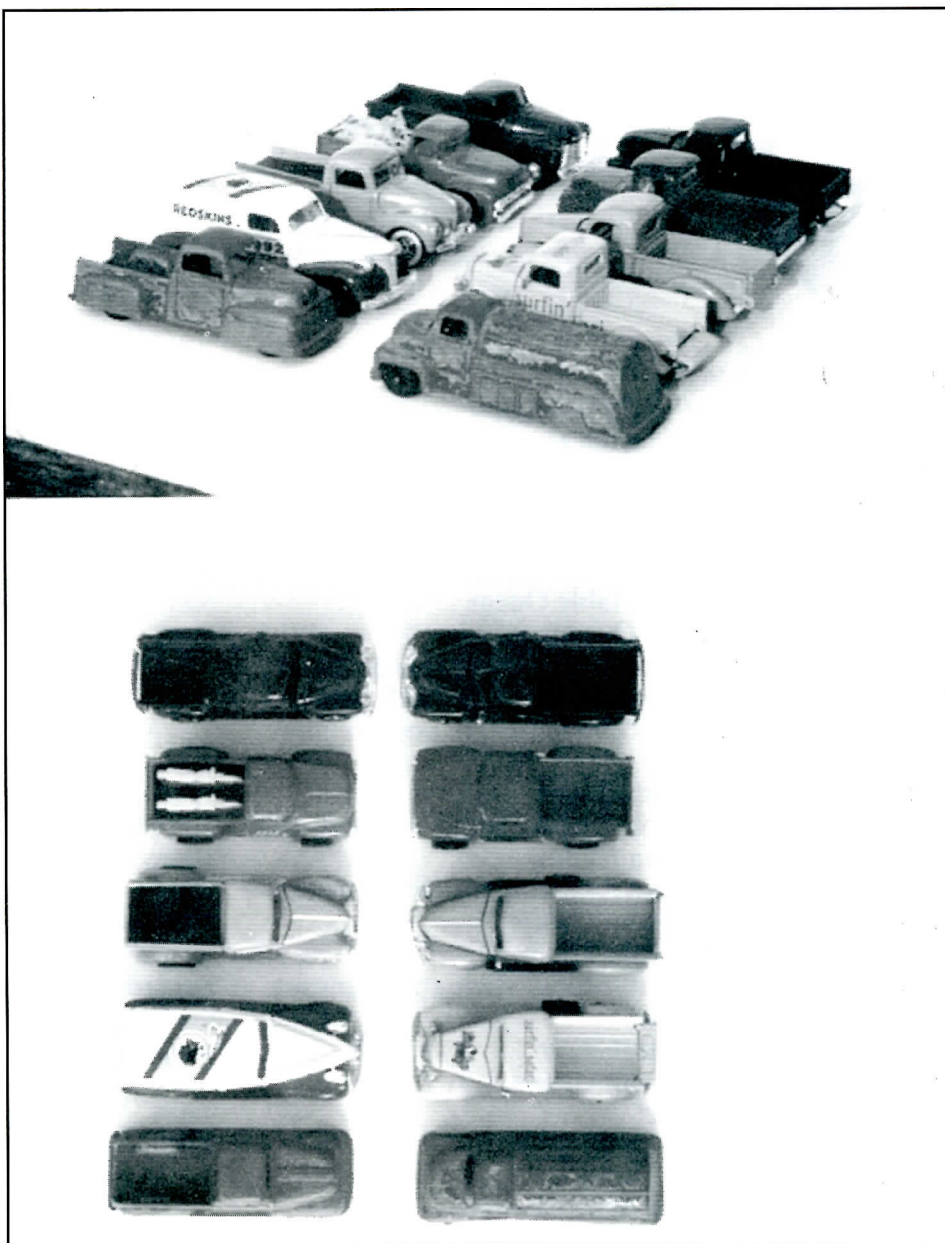
#? Holland Motor Freight (Ford F-5) van body

Mac (of Mac's Trains and Trucks) can be reached at 238 Lincolnshire Drive, Crystal Lake, Illinois 60014.

At right are angle and overhead views of the vehicles described in this month's *Tired Wheels*.

At the right is a little dump truck kitbashing I did. The modern cab with the snowplow from Road Champs is where you get the dump body. Two screws loosen the frame, moveable hydraulic and dump body. The Peterbuilt Hartoy (top right) is the easiest conversion. Just drill out the rivets on the Hartoy to remove the body and use two screws to attach the new dump frame back on. The Dump bed just sort of snaps on. With a little fiddling you can attach the hydraulic lift so it works. At the bottom right is an Ertl Mack B tractor and two Hartoy cab over short trucks. The center cab over has a shortened body, and I had to whack a little off the frame.

Jeff Madden

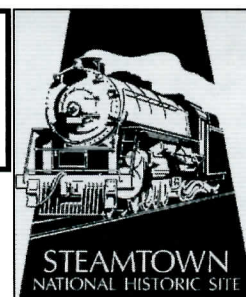




NASG CONVENTION UPDATE

STEAMTOWN 2001

NASG ANNUAL CONVENTION STEAMTOWN USA SCHEDULE JULY 24-28, 2001



Tuesday July 24th

- 10am Registration Table Opens
- 2pm Early bird layout tour 1 leaves
- 2pm Early bird layout tour 2 leaves
- Please come to departure point fi hour early

Wednesday July 25th

- 8:30am Registration Table Opens
- 9am Steamtown Open 9am-5pm
- 9am Trade Room Available for Dealer Setup
- 10am Trip # 3 Leaves Should be back between 4-5pm Please come to departure point fi hour early
- 2pm Trade Room Opens
- 2pm Contest room opens. Bring your entries.
- 5pm Trade Room Closes
- 5pm Trade Room Available for Dealer Setup
- 5pm Contest Room Closes
- 7pm Reopen Trade Room
- 7pm Reopen Contest Room. Bring your entries.
- 7pm Clinics Start
- 10pm Trade Room Closes
- 10pm Contest Room Opens
- 10pm Clinics End

Thursday July 26th

- 7am Registration Table Opens
- 7:30am Trip # 5 leaves. Strasburg Train Special. leaves Please come to departure point fi early
- 10am Trip # 4 leaves. Ladies Shopping Trip Please come to departure point fi early
- 2pm Trade Room Opens
- 2pm Contest Room Opens. Bring your entries
- 5pm Trade Room Closes
- 5pm Contest Room Closes.
- 7pm Trade Room Reopens
- 7pm Contest Room Reopens
- 7pm Clinics Start
- 10pm Trade Room Closes
- 10pm Contest Room Closes
- 10pm Clinics End

Friday July 26th

- 9am Registration Table Opens
- 9am Trading Room Opens
- 9am Contest Room Opens. Bring your entries
- 10am Clinics Start
- 12pm Trading Room Closes

- 12pm Contest Room Closes
- 12pm Clinics end
- 2pm Steamtown Train Ride leaves from Convention Hotel

Departs from rear of Radisson Hotel

Please Come To Departure point fi hour early

- 5pm Layout Room Opens for the OPEN HOUSE
- 5pm Trade Room Opens for the OPEN HOUSE
- 5pm Contest Room Opens. Last Chance to enter contests. We are having this event to spread the news about S Gauge Model Railroading to the general public. The trade room and layout room will be available.

- 5:30pm BOT Meeting Closed to members

- 10pm Layout Room Closes
- 10pm Trading Room Closes
- 10pm Clinics end

Saturday July 28th

- 8:30am Open Registration Table
- 9am Trip # 6 Houdini Magic Show leaves back about 12pm
- 9am Open Trade Room
- 9am CONTEST ROOM CLOSED FOR JUDGING WILL REOPEN AFTER BANQUET FOR VEIWINING AND CONTEST ENTRY PICKUP.
- 10am Business meeting for the membership.
- 1pm Clinics Start
- 1pm Trade Room Closes for tear down. WE MUST BE OUT BY 4PM
- 2pm Trip # 7 Everhart Museum Leaves Back about 4pm
- 5-7pm Happy Hour In the lobby
- 7pm-? Banquet
- 11 pm Auction. AUCTION MAY START EARLIER DEPENDING ON LENGTH OF BANQUET

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FRIDAYS STEAM TRAIN RIDE

Is a two hour (approximate), 26-mile round-trip excursions on the former Pocono mainline of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad between Scranton and Moscow (PA) allow a glimpse back into the heyday of steam passenger railroading!

STEAMTOWN AND THE ELECTRIC CITY TROLLEY MUSEUMS...

Both are open 9am-5pm. Both are a 5-minute walk from hotel. Transport is available at hotel. Steamtown offers a verity of tours.

The **Rangers Choice Tours** are both historical and technological based. The Locomotive shop and Machine shop tours are also available. Also if you're at Steamtown between 9am-10pm you can watch the engine crew prep their loco for the day's assignment. All tours are run everyday at different times. Entry to Steamtown with tours and the Trolley Museum are included with your Convention registration fees. **BRING THOSE CAMERAS!!**

MODEL AND PHOTO CONTESTS.

You may enter your models or photos in the contests any of the hours the Contest Room is open except Saturday. Our contest chairman has some great things in store for this years contests. So bring those photos and models.

CLINICS:

As you can see the clinics are planned when there isn't a lot going on. Clinics will be on the following:

DCC: Michael Greene, DCC NMRA working group
NASG Webmaster

Del-Aire: Air instead of electric switch motors-
Gregg Spence, Del-Aire

Basic American Flyer Repair: Dan Emick,
Scranton area AF repairmen

Freight Car Building: A Bill Fraley hands-on clinic. Cost \$10.00 which will include a wood and metal Perma-Bilt kit with glue. You'll get started and then you can take it home.

Modeling in Sn3: Dave Heine, narrow gauge writer for the NASG *Dispatch*

S Trains on the Internet: Paul Yorke, the curator of the Internet *S Trains Digest*.

Getting A Scale Project Started: Jim Kindraka, owner of River Raisin Models

Modifying S Cars With Loads and Paint: Gil Hulin, NASG Western VP

Photography: Bill Buck, Ritz Camera of Scranton.

Build A Trolley layout: Tom Dougherty, Pennsylvania Heritage Models

Driving Modern Diesels: Lee Schultze, former Penn

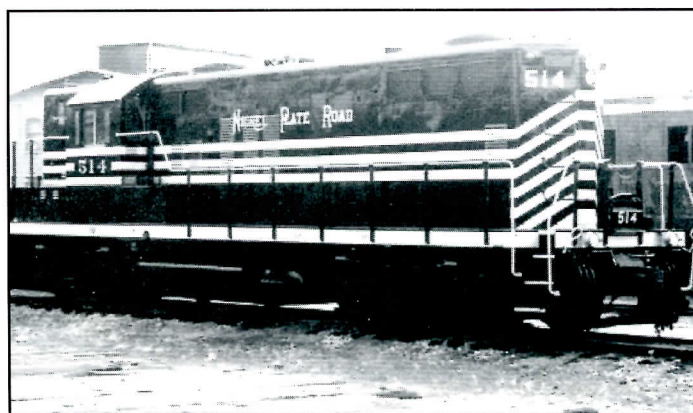
Central and Conrail engineer

A Little History:

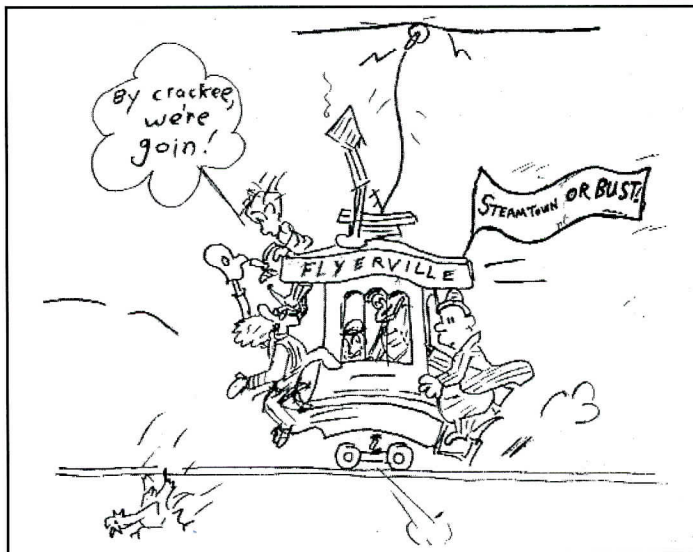
Steamtown National Historic Site was created by an act of Congress in 1986 to preserve and interpret the history of steam railroading. The National Park Service tells the story of railroading through living history programs, interpretive programs, a working locomotive shop and roundhouse, educational outreach programs, short tours of the yard by train, seasonal excursions to Moscow, Pennsylvania, and occasional special excursions.



See the turntable work.



Terry Harrison will love it.



LAYOUT HOSTS...

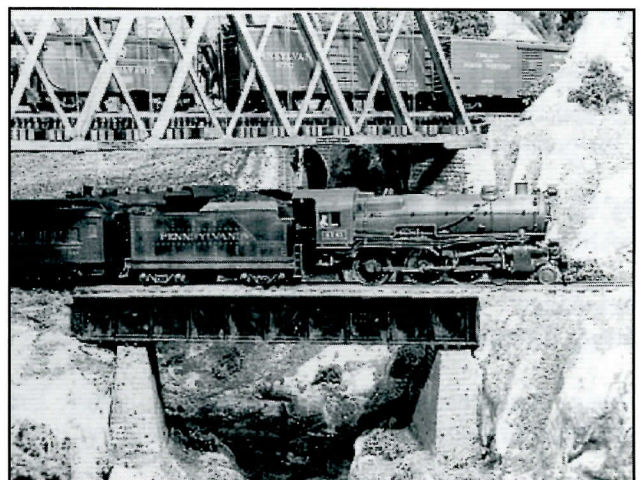


Frank Titman's Spiral Hill layout will be a featured layout on EarlyBird Tour #1. Left Alan Evans, right Bill Lane



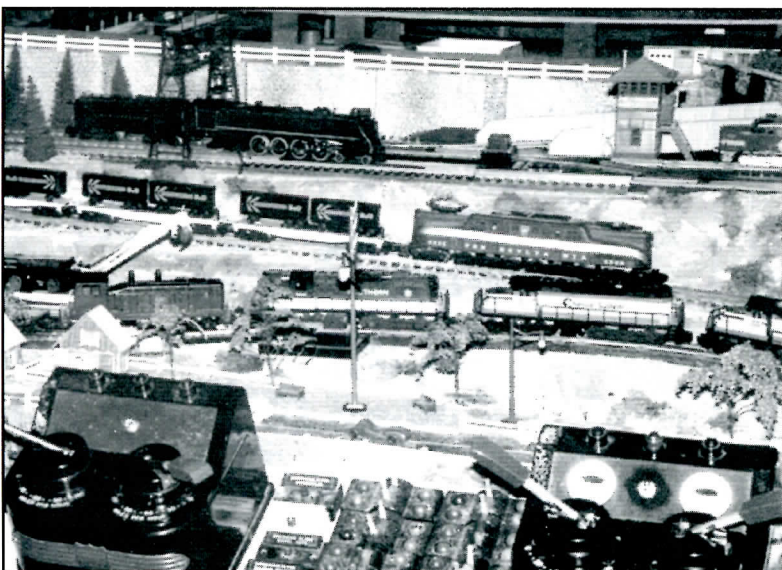
Trains on Bill Fraley's Jefferson Central are waiting clearance in the staging yard.

Bill Fraley photo



Left is a scene on Fred Riccupero's American Flyer layout. He also has an extensive Flyer collection. Above are two photos of Jack Kennedy's Mt. Holly & Mechanicsburg Railroad - obvious Pennsy influence. Just don't tell Bill Lane it's HO. The Jefferson Central, Fred's Flyer layout and Jack's layout will be on tour #2.

Bottom 4 photos by Bill Fraley



NEWS FLASH: PENN CREEK VALLEY GOES DOWN TO CORPORATE TAKEOVER BID BY WASHINGTON AND OLD DOMINION RR.

While this deal had been in the works for several years, it can finally be announced that the ICC has given the green light for the completion of the deal that gives the Washington & Old Dominion RR control over the majority of the Penn Creek Valley's real estate holdings and rights-of-way. While the details are yet to be completely hammered out by corporate officials, it is clear this transaction will give the W&OD entrance into and access to much of Pittsburgh's heavy industry along the Menongahella River.

When former CEO and President Sam Powell was contacted for questioning about the sale, he said, "We hadn't made any real money with the PCV for years, and we just weren't enjoying ourselves like we once did. When this railroad was planned, it seemed to make a lot of sense, but as time passed, standard railroad practice grew away from what the PCV was able to do within its corporate and capital structure, so we thought it best to liquidate while we could still minimize our losses." When asked what he planned to do in the future Powell responded, "I'm not dead yet, so I expect to be back in railroading at some point again. Where and how I'm not sure, but once this stuff gets in your blood you can't quit forever. I'll take a few years off and see how I feel. Look what happened to Dick Vermiel, you never

can tell what might happen down the road."

When W&OD President and CEO Dick Cataldi was contacted for comment his response included the following: "We are not actually sure how we are going to incorporate the PCV into the structure of the W&OD yet, but this represents a nice piece of railroad real estate which will add immensely to our capabilities as a transportation link in the Northeastern United States. We can now have rail links all the way into Pittsburgh. This will seriously improve our industrial connections, and avoid big per diem charges that used to kill us."

One detail of the transaction that is clear, is that while the PCV is signing off on all its real estate, the name Penn Creek Valley was not for sale, and was not included as a

can be made.

When local Pittsburgh businessmen were questioned about the deal, most seemed to express regret that the PCV name was going. The Fellsburg Steel plant manager Jerry Smith was quoted as saying, "This all looks good on paper, but my question is: will the W&OD really keep our service up, or will they drop us like a hot ingot after a few years. And what about prices? It seems to me this just eliminates one more competitor from the transportation field"

When B&O official Dan Vandermause was contacted for comment, his response was, "I think this obviously opens the door for change and will improve our position somewhat. I think it is just about time for our branch of the B&O to start coming on strong"



Western Maryland official Bill Oertly is quoted as saying, "While we will obviously miss the PCV in this area, I don't think its demise will effect what we are doing one way or the other. Our division of the Western Maryland is emphasising a modular corporate structure, and we are on track to turn the corner

part of the package. Neither was the W&OD interested in the rolling stock of the PCV. Cataldi stated that this was never considered as the cost of the total package which would have outweighed any advantages the reduced per diems and new markets offered. While a few individual pieces have been sold to other railroads, the bulk of the PCV equipment is all going into either a lease pool, or storage until further arrangements

here soon."

So a venerable old transportation name goes down to the merger mania that swept the corporate world for the entire decade of the 1990s. Will Powell get back into railroading? Will Cataldi come up with a plan for the former PCV? Keep watching these pages for further developments.

Story and photo: Sam Powell

THE S SCALE MONON MOVES - AND WILL MOVE AGAIN

By Roger Nulton (photos by the author)

Enclosed are some photos of my new (second) Monon layout. As some of your readers may remember, my old layout was located in the attic of my 1888 Victorian home in downtown San Diego. Almost five years ago, Jami and I sold that house and bought a newer house (1928) about two miles away in a '20s suburb of San Diego. The "new" house was built on a slope and had a partial basement, which is rare in this area. The basement contained the laundry facilities and a workshop.

To make a home for my trains, I hired a couple laborers to help me dig out an adjacent "crawl space" to a seven foot depth and lower the existing basement floor accordingly. We moved the laundry appliances upstairs into a new shed on the new 900 SF deck that I built, and poured about 300 sacks of ready mix for the new basement walls and floor. The hard part was unwiring and unplumbing the existing lines and moving them up into the ceiling joists to create more headroom. Following that, I installed drywall on the ceiling and walls with masonite for the curved backdrop corners. All exposed concrete was painted with waterproof paint and Jami and I painted the backdrop to resemble sky. The result is about 600 square feet of useable layout space, only a bit more than I had in the attic, but a definite improvement over the attic's sloping backdrop walls.

This work, along with some remodeling upstairs, installation of a pool and hot tub and construction of the deck with a workshop underneath, took about three years. So construction of the new Monon layout began in January of 1998.

By this time, we had decided to retire to Washington state in the year 2002. That left me with a maximum of four years to use my new basement before the whole thing would be torn down again!



We had moved most of the old layout, including the lumber. With another move relatively imminent, I decided to use a lot of it again. This is a decision I grew to regret. It resulted in a poor trackplan, sub-standard operating, and a lot more work to piece things together. The

new sections I constructed work almost flawlessly, and went up very quickly.

I built the new sections so they could be moved more easily, gaining from experience, I hope. I used blue foam for the surface supported by a sturdy but lightweight frame of 1x4's. My mainline track is still code 125 on Ace ties with closed frog turnouts from BK and Eschelman, so I can run hirail and scale equipment. Neither work to my satisfaction, and I plan on changing to scale only next time. The roadbed is painted "Homabed" glued directly to the painted foam surface with spray glue. Track is secured with white glue initially and then ballasted in the conventional manner. It is surprising how quickly this all went together, how solid it is and how well it performs.

Since I am modeling Indiana, there are no cliffs or tunnels, but as the photos show, some portions are quite hilly with fairly deep ravines and rock cuts. The foam lends itself well to this as I simply stack it up or cut it out as necessary to achieve the look I want. I have used no plaster this time. Usually I just paint the foam with latex tex-



Monon K-6 #450 passing Ellettsville and Jack's Defeat Creek before pulling up to the station with S Helper heavyweights. The three structures on the left are kitbashed DPM, and the other two are scratchbuilt.



Monon K-6 #450 has just crossed the Nickel Plate diamond at Linden and is headed north to Lafayette, Indiana.



ture paint and apply ground foam, ballast or dirt directly on top and secure them with white glue or matte medium. Sometimes I use a "goop" consisting of vermiculite, paper mache, latex paint and white glue to model stream beds or other final texturing.

The beauty of the foam is that trees can be planted directly in it and hold immediately. Jami planted most of the perimeter of the layout (about 150') in just three days and as you can see, they are arranged quite artistically. Saplings, bushes and foreground foliage can be planted easily as well, a great time saver. The background portion of the layout is already completed. My plan is to chop out forest sections "en masse" and replant them on the next layout. Instant forest! Of course, my next layout will be twice the size, so I will have a lot more to create. Oh well, it's fun.

We have purchased our retirement house in Washington and have it rented out. It is a 1500 square foot basement with a house on top of it! Jami will enjoy the views of Puget Sound shipping while I slave away in the basement. Since we are moving, I have been concentrating on building locomotives, structures and rolling stock. I do, however, have a gorge built that will have finished scenery after the River Raisin truss bridge arrives. In all, I hope to have 80% of the current layout completed before we move. All of the old layout plus some of the current one will go in the dumpster. Chalk it up to (mostly enjoyable) experience.

Middle photo shows Ellettsville station which is kitbashed from an LVM kit and has a complete lighted interior. Monon K-6 #450 is an AM Pacific with lots of S Scale Loco & Supply detail parts hung on it. Bottom - A PRS reefer block is stalling traffic at the crossing. This scene represents a street next to the Monon's Lafayette Shops. Houses and cafe are DSL Shops. Crossing gate is NJI and elevated tower is LVM.



Above is the Gosport station which was a landmark on the old Monon. Freight cars were actually unloaded inside from the through siding. Roger scratchbuilt the station which has a complete interior. Below is another scene of the quarry which was saved from the old layout but extensively rehabbed. Now it is 6' closer to the viewer, and you can see the bottom. Before it served as an access hole. The limestone blocks are tinted hydrocal. The RS-2 is an Alco Models brass import that Roger custom painted. The Monon "stone gondolas" are kitbashed from Central Hobby Supply resin kits.



KITBASHING A BACHMANN HO BUS STATION TO S

By Tom Robinson

When I saw the new Bachmann HO bus station in our local model railroad shop, I immediately purchased one to use on my This is S Gauge portable layout. I planned to add the usual 1/4 inch foundation, change the doors and convert the colors from Greyhound motif to Trailways. This kit is in Bachmann's Spectrum Cityscenes series. They are not cheap, with the usual retail price being around \$40.00 or so.

Upon evaluating the parts and assembly instructions I was disappointed to find that the assembly method precluded simply adding a wooden or styrene foundation. The wall parts are to be glued to a molded floor and include many curved sections with cast-in blocks and bricks. I did not think I could duplicate these and make a first class conversion. The building was very low and even appeared a little low for HO. Rather than the usual 1/4 inch, it appeared that an additional 1/2 inch of height was necessary for conversion to S. All other dimensions appeared satisfactory to me. I then decided that if I purchased a second kit I could cut the needed wall extensions off the wall parts and add them to the bottoms of the wall parts of the first kit.

I went back to the local Trainmaster store, and my good friend Charles Britton agreed to sell me a second kit at a nice discount. The total cost of the two kits ended up being around \$60.00, not cheap, but not too bad if you really want a nice bus station on your S gauge layout. Including paint and glue the total cost of the completed structure came to approximately \$75.00 or around the price of comparable S kits. Here's how I did it:

1. Modifications: I decided which parts to cut to add the necessary height to all wall pieces. Using a Zona saw I carefully cut a two block section (app. 1/2 inch) from the following parts of the **second** kit. Use the saw horizontally and cut the entire piece at the same time, keeping the saw in the groove between the blocks or bricks to assure a square cut. Before gluing to the corresponding part in the first kit, test fit each part and trim and/or sand for a good square fit. I used Testor's liquid plastic cement to glue all wall parts together.

A. Main walls 3 and 4: On wall 4 I cut the three block section off the top at the groove for the side trim. I then cut the one block section off the top leaving a two block section to glue on the bottom of the uncut wall. I trimmed the assembly tab so that its distance from the bottom was the same as the one on the original piece. On wall 3, I cut one three block section of the top of the elevated part, cut one block section off its top and then cut the end containing the curved section off. This left me with a two block section 5-7/8 inch or 24 blocks long. I then cut the bottom two block section from below the right side of the window to the end of the wall (app. 2/16 inches long or 9 blocks). You cannot simply use the sections below the windows because they do not contain two full block rows and contain parts of the window frame. When cutting wall 3 you must be careful and utilize all of the straight rows of blocks as indicated above, because there are just enough in the two sections to complete the entire wall. Glue the two pieces you cut from wall 3 to the bottom of wall 3 and to each other. Glue the piece from wall 4 to the bottom of wall 4.

B. Curved wall pieces 5 and 6: I cut the two block section off the bottom of each piece. Glue the pieces cut from 5 and 6 to the bottoms of the same uncut walls of the first kit.

C. Curved wall pieces 8: Carefully measure the exact height of the wall pieces you have previously cut and cut the same height from the bottom of these two pieces (app. 1/2 inch). Glue these to the bottom of the uncut pieces from the first kit.

D. Back walls 13, 14, 15 and 16: Cut a piece off the bottom of each of these making sure that you cut the exact height as you cut from the front walls. You will have two pieces from wall 14 to allow for the door. glue each piece you cut to the bottom of the corresponding part from the first kit. Make sure that the beveled edges are located properly before you glue.

E. Roof support beams 17: Cut a piece from the bottom of the three beams the exact height (app. 1/2 inch) as the wall pieces you previously cut. Do not include the tabs in your measurement, but be sure to leave them attached. Cut the locating tabs from the bottom of the support beams from the first kit (uncut beams) and glue the 1/2 inch beams you cut to them, leaving locator tabs at both ends of the completed beam. If you cannot get a good strong joint when joining the beams, you can add a thin piece of styrene for reinforcement on the inside of the H girders. I did not find this necessary, but I did let some gap-filling CA cement flow into the joint before painting.

F. Doors: The doors are probably the most difficult part of the conversion. Cut the complete door all the way across the exact height above the bottom as the height of the wall sections previously cut (app. 1/2 inch). Using the door from the first kit, carefully cut out the inner section only of the bottom door panels, leaving the center

section and both sides intact all the way to the bottom. Carefully fit and glue the bottom 1/2 inch section to the bottom of the full door. You may need to cut out one thin crosspiece of the bottom section and trim the interior panels of the door for the best appearance. If you are fussy, you may want to use some modeling putty to fill the joints where the two doors were joined. Carefully test fit the clear plastic door glass provided to cover the **lower** panes in the door. Cut a piece of the clear plastic from the second kit to cover the transom. If you fit these carefully, the joint will be covered by the separation from the door and the transom. **Do not** glue the glass to the door frame until you have painted the frame. When glued, this will reinforce the door at the joint.

Make one final check to make sure that you have added the same amount of height to each wall and roof support beam. Correct any minor errors with trimming or sanding. This completes the changes necessary to convert the kit to S.

2. Painting: Whether you intend to change the colors or not, I suggest that you paint the parts at this time before beginning assembly. As I was converting my station to represent a Trailways station, I used the following spray paints: Walls 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and roof support beams 17 were sprayed with Floquil Earth. The sign halves 7A and 7B; main entrance roof 9; trim 10 and 11; back walls 13, 14, 15 and 16; window frames 19, 21 and 23; and door frames 18 were painted with Floquil Caboose Red. The floor 1 and roof 12 were sprayed with Krylon gray primer. The dark curved walls 8 were sprayed

with Testor's Gloss Coat. I used a brush to paint the wall vents 22 and 23 with Testor's gloss silver enamel. I applied the Bus decals and parking arrow from the decal sheet provided. I oversprayed the decals with Testor's Gloss Coat. Your model is now ready to assemble.

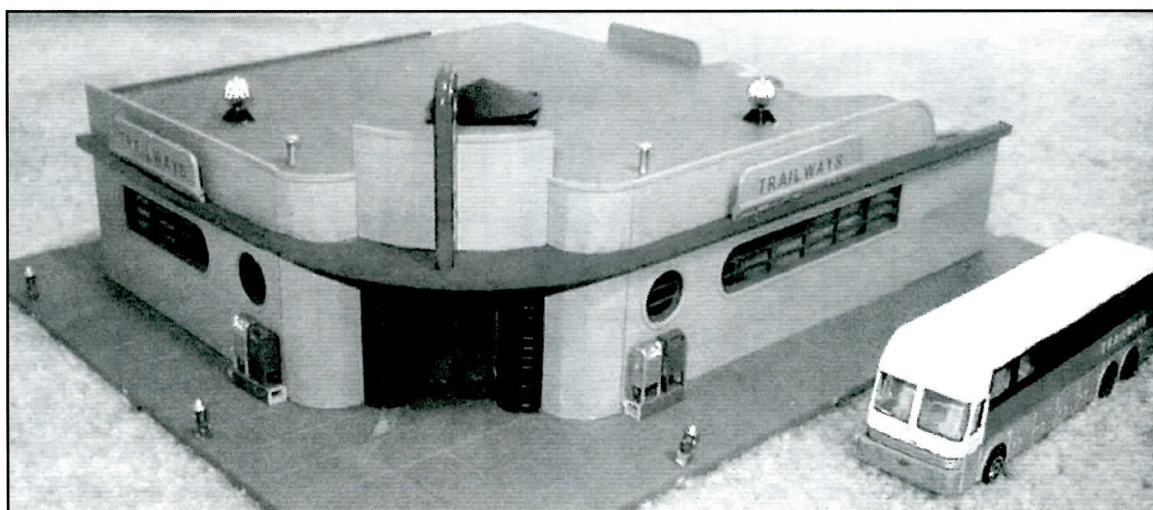
3. Assembly: From this point you may follow the assembly instructions exactly as provided with the kit. I used gap-filling CA glue for the final assembly. As the parts were now painted the CA worked better than the liquid plastic cement. Test each part for fit and apply glue evenly and sparingly. I tried to keep it off areas that would show as much as possible. The assembly instructions indicated that the three roof support beams 17 should be glued into the locator holes on the base first. I found them easier to install if glued into the roof first and then fitted into the base locator holes and glued.

4. Details: This kit provides turbine exhaust fans, roof vents, mail boxes and fire hydrants and an entire sprue of additional detail parts which may be utilized if desired. As I had two kits, I had many such parts available. I chose to paint four of the mailboxes old style U.S. Mail olive green and four of them silver to serve as trash receptacles. I painted the fire hydrants red and silver. I cut pieces of Plastruct to add approximately 1/4 inch of height to the hydrants

and mail boxes, and I mounted them on the sidewalk provided with the kit.

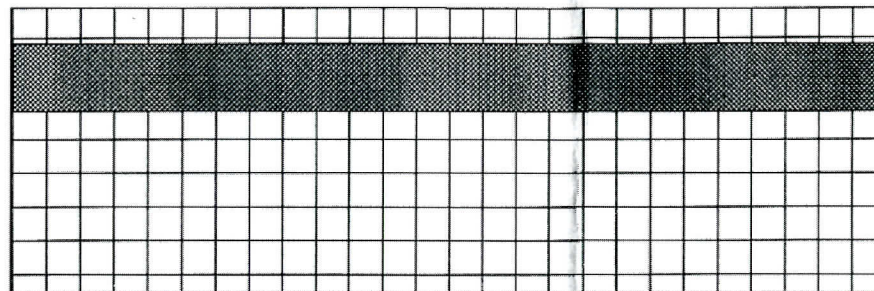
I painted the roof turbines, vents and stand pipes with Testor's silver and installed them on the roof using CA cement. I used the extra sidewalk material provided to construct a parking lot beside the station. I sprayed the sidewalks with Krylon gray primer before assembling them. I fabricated three signboards from the leftover station sides of the second kit, sprayed them with Floquil Earth and applied red decal letters to form Trailways. I sprayed these signs with Testor's Gloss Coat to protect the decals. Two of these were installed above the trim 10 and 11 on the front walls of the station. The third was glued to the rim of the roof above the bus lanes at the rear.

5. Results: I am pleased. The finished station fits in well with both the modified HO kits and the LVM, DSL and Twin Whistle kits on my portable layout. The dimensions of the completed structure are 40 by 57 by 16 S scale feet high at the main walls. At the top of the sign it is 21 scale feet high. The doors, not counting the transom, are approximately 8 scale feet high. It works particularly well with the Eagle coach models from Road Champs which I have painted in Trailways livery. Of course, I would love to find more appropriate era buses in 1/64.

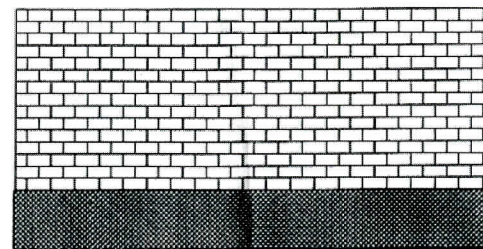


Parts From Second Kit to be Cut in Shaded Areas

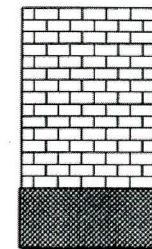
(After cutting the shaded area is to be glued to the bottom of the corresponding part of the first kit)



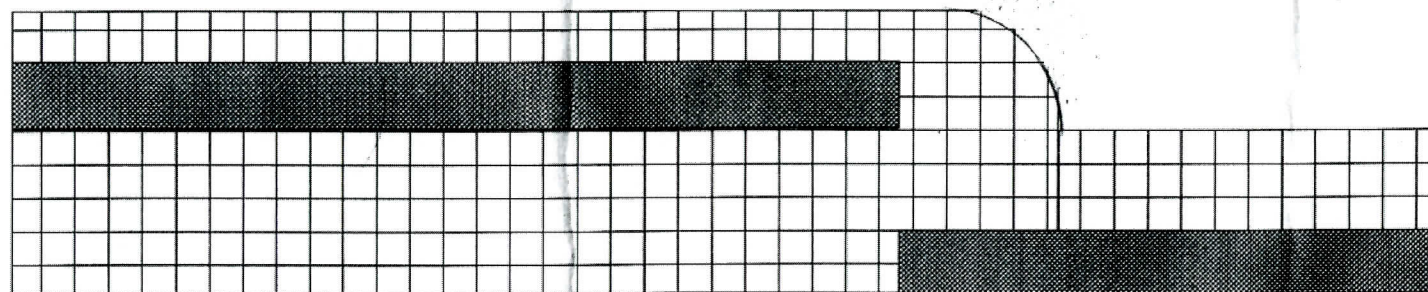
Part 4



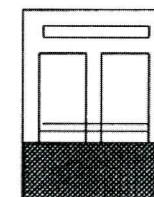
Part 15



Part 16



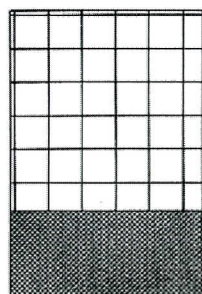
Part 3



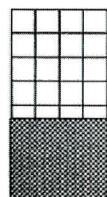
Door 18 (2)



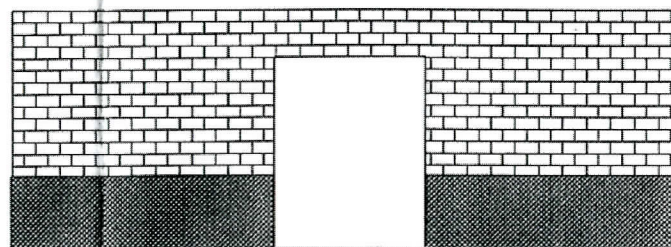
17 (3)



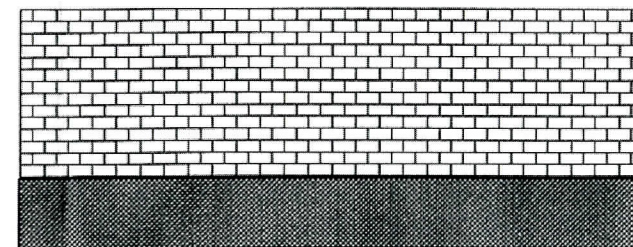
arts 5 & 6



Part 8 (2)



Part 14



Part 13

Bachman Spectrum Bus Station

DISPLAYING S GAUGE

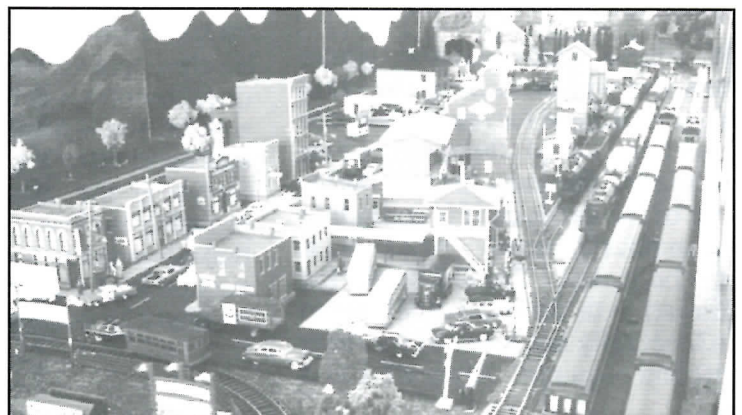
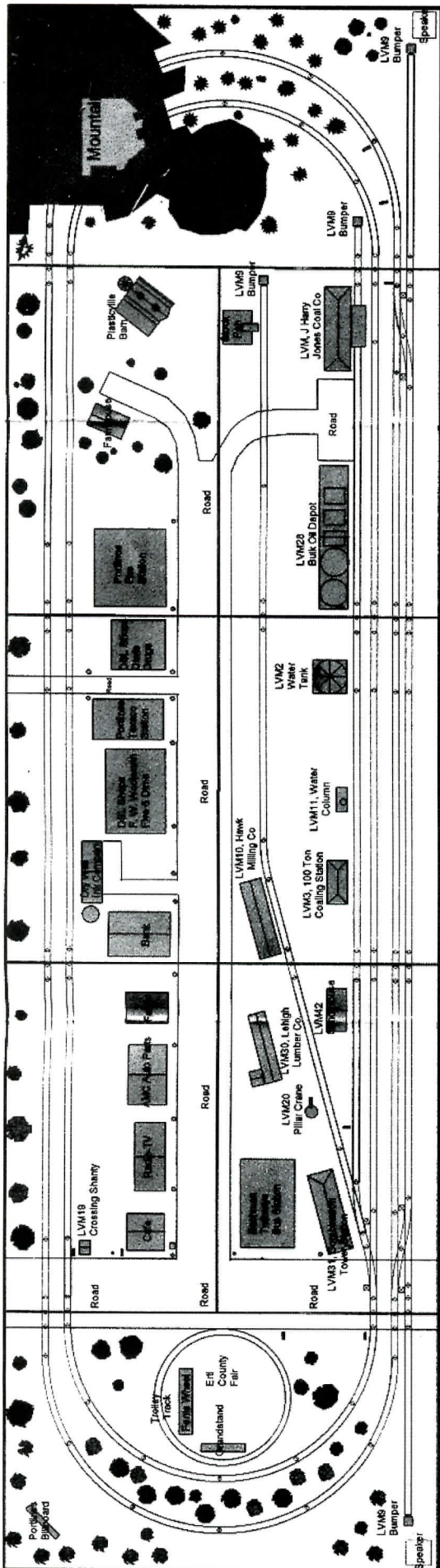
Tom Robinson's This is S Gauge portable layout will be present at the NMRA National Convention in St. Louis this summer. This is his latest version.

The layout at the left is Tom's expanded version of the compact modular layout that he has had published previously in the *Dispatch*. This layout which will be traveling to St. Louis this summer is 5' x 18' using 6 30" x 4' modules in the center and two 5' x 3' end caps. Tom is one of Promotions co-chairmen, and this layout is certainly filling the bill. That is Tom's whole purpose for the layout and its travels. The original 5' x 10' layout was in the June, 1996, *Dispatch*.

He tries to vary the operating equipment displayed on the layout every two hours. He runs both A.C. Gilbert trains and currently produced ones which includes equipment from Lionel LLC, SHS, AM, Putt Trains, Pacific Rail Shops, Downs (now Manheim), Crown and others. All locos, rolling stock and track are hi-rail. Track and turnouts are all American Models laid on Vinylbed roadbed. There is even a small tight radius circle of track with a Putt Trains trolley running on it. Tom usually runs one AF train on the inside main loop and newer products by other manufacturers on the out loop which has a wider radius.

The layout represents the rail yards and main street of a small town of the 1940s to late 1950s era. Structures include items from City Classics (HO), DPM, DSL, Ertl, Plasticville, Lehigh Valley Models and Portlines. Figures and details come from Artista, Ertl, Railmaster, Scenery Unlimited, Ye Old Huff and Puff, Royal Train Equipment, Woodland Scenics and Moondog Express (streets). Power supplies are MRC and A.C. Gilbert original.

If you are in the St. Louis area, check out the National Train Show on the weekend of July 13, 14, 15, and see this layout plus the scale layout from the Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers which will be near the NASG booth and several S manufacturers.



The Straight & Narrow

By David L. Heine

News and Reviews on the Narrow Gauge Front

Odds and Ends

This time we will cover some odds and ends, including lettering and some possible kit bashes.

Lettering -

Why not keep it simple?

Your railroad is an intrastate narrow gauge short line, which interchanges only with a standard gauge railroad, thus all your rolling stock is always on-line and there are no foreign railroad cars on the railroad. Whether or not the railroad is making money, management does not want to spend any more than possible and your shop forces are limited.

The above was the case for many narrow gauge railroads. One item this must have affected is the lettering on railroad cars. One thing I have noticed over the years of looking at pictures of narrow gauge rolling stock is that in many cases the lettering on the rolling stock is minimal. I have seen more than one narrow gauge railroad in which the lettering consisted of the road name or initials and the car number. In some cases it was just the number, which is very minimal. Since the rolling stock remains on the home road, all the weight and size data is not really needed.

Of course most narrow gauge modelers will letter a car the same as the prototype for the era they are modeling. And there are those who letter the cars for the prototype of the car even if it is running on another railroad. After all, it may be leased. The D&RGW, the railroad with the most available in Sn3, actually has some of the most lettering required. After all it was

part of an interstate railroad so there were extra rules.

But what about the rolling stock built by the freelance modelers? This is the case in which I fit. I am somewhat lazy or use the excuse I have better things to do. In my case most of rolling stock just has the road name, reporting marks, and the car number. I usually duplicate the car numbers on the ends, at least on boxcars. On some cars, such as flatcars, the road name is usually eliminated. I am somewhat of a prototype freelancer and a narrow gauge purist, so almost all the cars are lettered for my railroad, even if it really is the model of a D&RGW boxcar. The exceptions are a few reefers and tank cars, which are owned by the shippers. So on my layout you will normally only see 3' gauge cars lettered for my railroad, the Lehigh & Western Railroad or my Hemm-Locke Lumber Co., which has trackage rights and owns some of its own branches.

The Bachmann HO Shay - Another possible kitbash?

I was recently taking a look at the new Bachmann HO Shay with thoughts of it being kitbash fodder for an Sn3 Shay. The cylinders are much larger than the MDC Shay, so it would be a larger model. It is advertised as an 80-ton Shay in HO, so I would guess that it would be close to a 40 ton Shay in S. The question is if it is big enough to be a three truck Shay in S. I know that there were 3' gauge three truck Shays in the 50-ton class, so it probably is close. There is a rumor that someone is working on a conversion kit for an On30 version, so it should be even more suitable for S.

At this time I do not know what is involved with regauging this Shay to Sn3, but I would not be surprised if I have first hand experience with it sometime in the future. As far as other changes, I think one could get by with a minimal amount. It definitely needs a larger cab. Actually most of the details seem usable at first look other than the steam powered electric generator and the air pump. The steam dome is about the same size as the replacement one that V&T provides with their conversion kit that uses the standard MDC boiler, so it and the sand dome should be usable as is. The stack also appears usable.

If anyone is working on converting one of these, please send in some pictures to Jeff and let the rest of us see it. Maybe we will be lucky and one of our manufacturers will make a conversion kit.

Bachmann On30 Equipment:

It has been suggested to me to look into the Bachmann On30 equipment, with intentions of using it in a narrow gauge context. With one exception, it is more suitable for S standard gauge. Of course it could be used at a standard gauge interchange, especially for someone modeling in one of the earlier eras.

The exception is the Porter locomotive, which could be used for a low cost industrial or plant locomotive. I think the one thing, other than regauging, that it needs a smaller cab. The main problem is the height. It could be left the same width and length. In fact, if someone wanted a plantation locomotive with an open cab, this would be a relatively easy scratch building project. In looking at this model, the hardest part seems to be taking it apart.

Again, if anyone is working on converting one of these, please send in some pictures to Jeff. As always, please write if the mood strikes.

THE CLUB SANDWICH

By Dave Pool

The **Bristol S Gauge Railroaders (BSGR)** have installed a video camera in one of their operating locomotives, so that an S scale engineer's view can be made from the operating train. The image is projected from a TV screen for the entertainment of visitors at shows at which the club displays their layout. Tom Robichaud is the new president for the coming year.

The **Connecticut S Gaugers (CSG)** met at the home of Jeff Mills in Enfield, CT. in February. Jeff has been busy building a layout in his garage, and visiting members had the fun of operating the layout. Jeff has some craftsman type buildings that he built to scenic the layout along with AF circus pieces. Jeff also has other circus equipment that compliments the scenery on the layout. Members of the **CSG** were saddened by the passing of member Stan Stokrocki's father on February 26. Stan's father had helped Stan host the club in past years. The club set up their modular layout at the Cheshire High School Band Train Show on March 4. This is the location of the club's first set up and operation of their layout, approximately 14 years ago. The modular layout was set up and operated at the Housatonic RR Club Show, in Fairfield, CT. on March 11. Past problems with the wiring and mysterious short circuits have led to a plan for revision of the wiring to simplify the circuitry and make the wiring more reliable.

Bill Fuhrman is President of the **CSG** and has been busy organizing the upcoming NASG convention car orders.

The **CSG** is considering the purchase of a small video camera sim-

ilar to that used by the BSGR at shows. The camera is distributed by M & S Communications, Providence, RI. and can broadcast live color TV to any TV or VCR, within 100 feet. The package is designed into a small unit that can be installed in many N, HO, S, G and larger gauge model locomotives. The miniature camera comes with a wireless video receiver, that is connected to the TV or VCR unit (with a cable) that is to receive the signal from the camera. Signals from the camera to the wireless receiver can be made within 100 feet, even through walls of the building. The cost of the camera and receiver is under \$ 400. including ground UPS shipping costs. Information on the camera can be obtained from modelvideocam.com on the internet.

The **South Jersey S Gaugers (SJSG)** meets at the Bellmawr, N.J., Fire Department Hall. Meetings draw typically 17 to 20 or more members, and "show and tell" sessions or clinics are an important part of the meetings. The club has many committees that perform the tasks of the club, with some members serving on more than one committee. The committee structure is a very good one because it gets the various members involved in the club activities, and several members (usually the officers) are not left with the responsibility of carrying out all the functions of the club. The **SJSG** displayed their layout at the Greenberg Train Show, on March 3/4 at the Pennsauken, NJ Expo Center, Pennsauken, NJ. On April 1, the club held their own train show at the Bellmawr, NJ Fire House, and the layout was displayed.

A recent issue of *The Waybill*

included a reprint of a portion of *Inside Railroading*, published some years ago by the Assoc. of American Railroads. This article included a description of the operation of the CTC Control room of a prototype railroad. CTC is Centralized Traffic Control, used to control signals and operate interlocking systems for train control. In the same issue, an article covers the NMRA layout tour field trip made by several **SJSG** members in January. The trip included visits to the layouts of Dr. Patti, who models in On3; and Mert Gardner who has a detailed and large operating HO layout. Dr. Patti's layout includes super detailed scenery with custom scratch built structures. Digital camera photos taken by Dan DeSantis and Joe Balcer (black & white) grace the pages of the newsletter.

In addition to the regular monthly meetings of the **SJSG**, other get-togethers are scheduled, including field trips and visits to the various members home layouts. In March the Club made a field trip to Flyertown, in South Jersey, operated by Joe and Flo Jones. Flyertown is a display layout open to the public which includes AF trains and an operating layout. **SJSG** member Mike McConnell edited an article incorporating information obtained from the world wide web for the recent issue of *The Waybill* describing AF steam locomotive smoke unit operation.

The **Lehigh Valley S Gaugers (LVSG)**: A recent issue of the club's newsletter, *Roundtable*, edited by Bill Fraley, included an article documenting the 1991 picnic and meeting of the club at the home of Cy and Jay Behrens, in Jim Thorpe, PA. The hosts had the original Frank Titman S Hi-rail layout in their basement, rebuilt there along with what appears to be an outdoor 1.5 inch scale railroad, with live steam engine and ride-on cars.

At their November meeting, the **LVSG** members met at the home of John Oross and helped construct benchwork for a new layout using steel wall frame materials. This type of steel framing is commonly used in partitions in commercial buildings because of strength and cost considerations. In the visit of the club, a substantial portion of the new layout benchwork was constructed. Member Gregg Spence hosted the group in February, and member Tom Maurer was the host in March, 2001. The recent newsletter included an article describing member Fred Rouse's S Scale & Locomotive Supply business and a new CNR 2-6-0 Mogul which should be ready for the upcoming NASG convention.

And, of course, no issue of the **LVSG Roundtable** newsletter would be complete without a column from the club's most outstanding columnist, Lottie Steamchester. In her most recent column, Lottie answers the question presented by Mikey involving AMTRAK and their new ACELA high speed train. Member Bill Fraley is hosting NASG members attending the annual convention on a layout tour being organized for the convention. Bill is also busy writing a column for the NMRA Mid-Eastern Region *Local* section called *S Scale Modeling*. That's how we let folks know about S.

The North Penn S Gaugers (NPSG) brought and set up their layout to the Family Heritage Train Show in late January. The club's layout was the featured one in the center of the restaurant banquet room. S gauge trains were kept running during the time of the show to keep the visitors interest. Several modules were updated recently and a corner was set up with a sign: "What size is your train". A display answered the age old question of why "S" is better than any of the other popular gauges used in model RR. **NPSG** members attending the set up and

display included Mike Berus, Joe Bolsar, Matt Lacko, Alex Larkin, Norm Lepping, Mike Pragheimer, Ray Nase, Glenn Ritter, Barry Simpson, John Sinn, and Phil Williams.

In February the **NPSG** set up and displayed their layout at the Greenberg Fort Washington, PA. Show held at the Ft. Washington Expo Center. Member John Sinn has access to a cottage in the area of the forthcoming NASG Convention, and a group of the club members may avail themselves of the low cost accommodations. The Club is planning to bring their layout to the convention, for other S gaugers to enjoy and learn from.

The Western NY S Scale Assoc. (WNYSSA) was hosted by Gregg Mummert in Cowlesville, N.Y. in December for the TTOS Layout Tour. Ray Abbott, John Faron and Mike Barren attended, and had fellowship in S gauge. John Faron brought a AF 21160 (Reading Atlantic 4-4-2) which needs restoration, and the source of parts and needed repairs were discussed. On January 21, the Club met on the Amtrak Lakeshore Limited to travel from Depew, NY, to the TTCS Train Show at the Utica, N.Y. train station. The train was about 45 minutes late, and the members attending arrived at about 11 a.m.. Some of the members enjoyed breakfast aboard the dining car on the train. The return trip was to be on the 11:37 Westbound train, which was late and left at 1 p.m.. This was a blessing as it gave the club members more time at the train show.

Member and coordinator Gregg Mummert hosted the **WNYSSA** in February and attendees brought AF and Hi-rail trains to operate on Gregg's Christmas layout which he left up. The club is planning a possible excursion train ride from Gowanda, N.Y. in the Spring. Ron Kemp is investigating and coordinating the event. The Club

newsletter is edited by Gregg Mummert, and the group has been active in promoting S gauge and attending events.

The Susquehanna S Gaugers (SSG) were hosted by Fred Cupp in Williamsport, PA. Fred helped write the instruction manual for Digital Command Control (DCC) as made by North Coast Engr., and presented a seminar on the use and operation of DCC. Fred had members of the club operate his HO layout using the DCC, to demonstrate the features and capability of the control system. James M. Ingram coordinates the **SSG** and edits the newsletter. The club was hosted by member Don Mengle, in Pennsylvania Furnace, PA. in early April. Don has a large operating AF layout which was enjoyed by those members attending the meeting. In Sept. last year the **SSG** was hosted by a member Milton Sholley of Selinsgrove, PA, whose home and layout are likely in the path of a planned State highway. The location of the highway is under dispute, and the final path of the new highway is not fixed as yet. If the layout has to be moved, the **SSG** would pitch in as a club project to help move the layout. The club welcomed a new member, Don Johnson from Elysburg, PA, in December.

Being new and with members in a spread out area, the **SSG** faces the challenge of bringing members together as a group and planning activities that will be popular and well attended.

Member Monte Heppe hosted the **Baltimore Area AF Club (BAAFC)** in January, in Pasadena, MD. Approx. 28 members attended and enjoyed operation on the host's AF layout. The layout includes four operating loops on three different levels, and a spectacular operating rolling lift bridge. It also has an O gauge loop (heavens-?) on which pre-WW-II O gauge AF trains are operated. A

recent insert to the club newsletter included an article entitled: Introduction to Relay Control, edited by Monte Heppe. The club was hosted by Ken Schnepf in February. In May member Lee Scott will host the club.

The **BAAFC** brought their layout to three train shows in December, in the Baltimore area. In March the club set up and displayed their layout at the Timonium, MD Greenberg Show, Earleigh Heights TTOS Swap Meet and the Train & Toy Meet, Hartly, DE. The club is planning to have a web site, and is constructing a small operating layout that can be set up in hospital rooms, when the club makes such visits. There are one or more club car projects underway, including an aquarium car and a custom Saval reefer car. Member Dave Blum is coordinating the reefer project which needs more subscriptions before the car can be ordered. Ron Kolb coordinates the club and edits the newsletter issues.

The Suncoast AF Enthusiasts (SAFE) held a post holiday fling in January at the home of their president, Louis Blithe. The **SAFE** received a prize for their layout display including 32 modules for an operating layout at the GATS Show in Tampa, FL., last December. At the two day show the club had at least 16 to 18 members present on any one day to help with the operation and display of the layout. Under the direction of their "chief engineer" Fred Rhyne, the club is working on ways to streamline the assembly and set up/ take down of their layout. The club newsletter is *The Flyer* and it is ably edited by Anna Spinella, Secretary of the club.

The Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers (CASG) is planning the 2002 Fall S Fest which they are hosting. They are planning home layout tours, a dinner speaker, and displays for the main hall, including the possibility of

joining several different club layout modules together. This was done at one time with the BSG and SLSCG club layout modules. If the modules are truly modules and adhere to some standard such as the NASG modular standards, the interconnection should be workable. Differences in rail height might be a problem, if different clubs used different rail heights or different code rails. Adapters would be required to interconnect the modules of the clubs with differing rail. Club member Art Doty is taking charge of the **CASG** archives. Dave Wise and Mike Krope are working on a project to help the Boy Scouts of the St Pauls Church earn their RR merit badge.

The Southeastern Michigan S Gaugers (SMSG) were hosted in January by member Tom Hesse, in Northville, MI. Tom built his home five years ago, and it incorporates a large hobby and train room in the basement. Tom's collection of AF and other brass S trains were enjoyed by the members attending the meeting. Member Dale Baker is coordinating a possible set-up of the **SMSG** layout at the Huckleberry Railroad for an event in August. This could be tied into the club's picnic in the summer. Terry Dwyer has been talking to Ron Bashista of American Models regarding having Ron host the club at a meeting. The December meeting of the club was held at the Saginaw Railway Museum, Saginaw, MI. Eleven members and one guest attended. There is an HO layout in the basement that was operational for the meeting visit. Gaylord Gill as president; and Dale Baker and Sig Fleischmann as members-at-large were all unanimously elected at the meeting.

The club was formed 23 years ago, and still has three charter members including Sig Fleischmann, Tom Hawley, and Bob Stelmach. Current membership is 45. Gaylord offered some goals to the membership in his message,

including: promote S gauge through module displays, recruit new members, plan clinics at the meetings, and support the proposed purchase of new modules and a trailer. The club is considering displaying their layout at the Railroad Days, Durand, MI. on May 18-20.

The Northern Ohio Scalers (NOSS) were hosted by Ed Kirstatter, in Cuyahoga Falls, OH. for their January meeting. Ed has a 13 ft. x 18 ft. HO layout operating with ninety percent completed scenery and track work. Ed offered a clinic on gauging S gauge wheels to the NASG standards, using the gauge. Gary Ippolito coordinates the club activities, and edits the newsletters. The club has approx. 40 members. Gary Ippolito hosted the **NOSS** in February, in Bay Village, OH. Luanne Merner "graciously agreed to make lasagna for the event". A clinic was given on track planning, because the club is interested in building a modular layout, with various modules.

The Central Ohio S Gaugers (COSG) were hosted by John and Sue Gafney at their home in Dublin, OH. in January. John has hosted the club since 1992, when he asked members for suggestions on building his AF layout. The layout has progressed since that time with new items added over the years. John can operate with AC or DC supply power, and members brought their trains to operate on the layout. The club set up their layout at the GATS Train Show, on February 24-25. The show was at the Ohio State Fairgrounds in the Lausche Building. The Miami Valley S Gaugers (MVSG) also had their layout at the show. The **COSG** recently established a web page for general information about the club, info. on the upcoming S Spree, and a meeting page where minutes of the meetings can be posted for members that could not attend the meetings. Their address is:

www.cosg.freehomepage.com Alan Evans edits the club newsletter. The big event in the lives of the **COSG** members and officers is the upcoming S Spree, to be held on May 18, 19, & 20 at the Holiday Inn East, Columbus, OH. It is billed as the 14th annual all S gauge Midwest gathering for scale, Hi-rail S, Sn3, and AF. The club's web site has more detailed information and registration details. The club layout will be operating at the S Spree, and member Bob Carruth has been installing crossing lights to help animate the layout for visitors.

The Lakeshore Special is the newsletter of the **Cuyahoga Valley S Gaugers (CVSG)**. Lee McCarty is president, and a recent issue included his column for the new year. The club had a display layout at the City Hall Train Show for eight days. The layout ran just about perfect according to the newsletter report. Member Max Gruber worked on the electrical system and no major problems were encountered. Jim Sima hosted the club in January, where a comparison of AF No. 272 newsstands was made. It appears that these accessories were made with some variation at the Mini-craft factory. The **CVSG** has been invited to bring their scale S-Mod layout to the S Spree 2001 in Columbus, OH. They also were invited to bring the same layout to the NMRA National Train Show, in July 13-15, in St. Louis, MO. Josh Seltzer is coordinating this and he also edits the club newsletter.

At a recent meeting of the **CVSG** three new members were present, including: Bob Lowery and his son, Ed Allard and his son, and Bill Fairbanks. Ed brought his new-in-the-box magnetic crane and it was opened for the first time at the club meeting. Wayne Schultz hosted the group in North Ridgeville, OH, in February. Phil Beyer hosted the club members in March in Middleburg Heights. The club

brought their tinplate layout and scale layout to the Railfest 01, held at the Lakeland Community College, Kirtland, OH, on March 17-18. President Lee McCarty made the basement of a building that he has access to for the **CVSG** to set up their hi-rail layout and work on it to prepare the layout for shows in the future. The club has trailers that are used to transport the layouts (three) that they have to locations of display. The club is in the process of electing new officers for the forthcoming year.

The State Line S Gaugers (SLSG) had their annual Christmas meeting and banquet at the Faculty Dining Room of Burpee Center at the Rockford College, in December. Dave Pippett and Terry Dyer and their wives hosted and planned the event. On Jan. 6-7, the club's modular layout was on display at the 22nd Annual Model RR Show and Swap Meet in Monroe, WI. Member Art Doty displayed some interesting A. C. Gilbert products and memorabilia at the show. Terry Dyer displayed some hard to find AF Winter All Aboard panels. Gene & Janet Kujawa hosted the club in January in Poplar Grove, IL. Jim and his son, Andrew hosted the **SLSG** in February, in Roscoe, IL. The patch for the Fall S Fest, was selected, and the club is planning the event which they will host, to be held on Nov. 16-18, 2001, in South Beloit. Member Vera Geerts hosted the club in March, in Rockton, IL. The club displayed their layout at the Rock River Valley Show, in Rockford, IL, in April.

Bob Bretch of the **AF S Gaugers of the St. Louis Area (AFSGSLA)** had a six page spread describing his layout and AF collection in a recent issue of the *Classic Toy Trains* magazine. The club was hosted by Marc Brabb in Florissant, MO, in February. Marc has provided storage space for the club layout in the past. John Nosari hosted the club

in March, in Springfield, IL. John's layouts and collection of trains were enjoyed by the club members attending the meeting. John is planning on a move and will have to dismantle the layouts for the move to a new home. Scott Pilarski hosted the **AFSGSLA** in April, in his West St. Louis County home, Wildwood, MO. Gary Mueller edits the club newsletter, and oe Berk is the club coordinator.

The Badgerland S Gaugers (BSG) club members were hosted by Gary Children in January. Gary is a converted HO modeler who is in the process of building an S scale layout. He has about 300 feet of track work including 12 turnouts installed. Sounds like he is on the right track. He was also recently awarded the "Region Volunteer of the Year" by the NMRA. In late February the **BSG** took their modular layout to the NMRA Train Show in Madison, WI. The show was a two day event and there were estimated to be over 10,000 attendees on Saturday alone. The club ran a diesel locomotive with a surveillance camera inside, which was connected to a monitor that the crowd could watch. Member Don Goeke provided the setup. The **BSG** is trying to locate a member who will serve as a Public Relations Director who would act as publicity coordinator for local newspapers and model magazines. Recently elected new officers include: Dave Smukowski, Pres.; Jeff Madden, V-P.; Jeffrey Young, Treasurer; and Ron Schlicht, Sect'y./Newsletter Editor.

The Inland Empire S-Gaugers Assoc. of the Pacific Northwest (IESGAPN) set up their newly-formulated modular layout at the February train show held at the Spokane Community College by the River City Modelers. Cliff Baxter coordinated this event. Ernie (deceased) and Harriet Horr's son Bob is selling some structures, locomotives,

rolling stock, kits, and other parts from the S gauge model RR that his late father, Ernie had. The club welcomed a new member, Bill Cleveland, from Rathdrum, ID.

The Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers (RMHR) met at Sam Rapp's shop in Boise, ID on February 9. The club is working on their layout for an upcoming display at the train show at the Boise Depot for a celebration commemorating the 76 th anniversary of the depot. The City of Boise purchased the depot for public use, but trains no longer stop at the depot. The celebration is a two-day event and the layout called the Lookout Junction will be displayed and operated for the two day event. The club is purchasing several AF accessories for use on the layout at shows, including the soon-to-be-produced Seaboard Coaler, Sawmill, and Gabe the Lamplighter by Lionel. New members Lela, Christopher, and Paul Schneider were welcomed recently. They became aware of the **RMHR** at a train show where the club displayed their layout. The layout will soon have Greg Lewer's scratch built roundhouse and turntable as an operating feature of great interest to viewers. The club plans to get together on May 18 at Sam's shop after the show display at the Boise Depot, to begin to prepare the Lookout Junction layout for it's next outing in November. The club is tentatively planning to exhibit the layout at the Boise Toy Show on Nov. 10 -11.

A recent issue of The *S Say* newsletter of the **RMHR** included an article describing the NASG Students' Circle, a kitbuilding course designed to encourage model railroaders to become active in S gauge, by building a wooden frame freight car kit. Several members of the "Old Timers Circuit" of the NASG have gotten together to promote S gauge with the construction of a freight car kit. Some old Perma Bilt S gauge

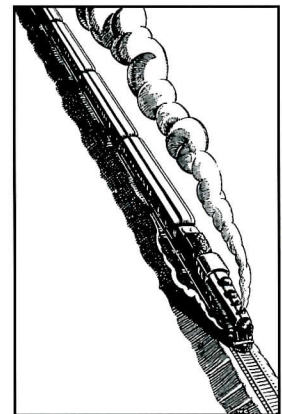
freight car kits were made available to provide interest in the project and hopefully get some new modelers involved in the NASG and S gauge. Some members of the **RMHR** have become involved in the program and are planning to have meetings when the construction of the car kits can be undertaken, so that sharing of ideas and procedures can be made.

The Golden Spike AF Club (GSAFC) was hosted by member Scott Leonard in February, in Murray UT. The club has a modular hi-rail layout comprised of individual modules owned by the members. Some members own one unit and others own up to three modules, according to Al Rawdon, club newsletter editor. The modular layout was recently filmed by Steve Blackburn of the **RMHR** at a GATS train show in Salt Lake City, UT. The layout won second place at the GATS Show, will be included in a video that Steve is making as a sequel to another one that he made last year. Member Fred Alles hosted the **GSAFC** in March for their monthly meeting. Gene Dovenbarger is scheduled to host the club at their meeting in April. Elections held for the new year included the election of the following officers: Eddie Strong, Pres.; Richard Meyer, V-P.; Scott Leonard, Treasurer; and Al Rawdon, Newsletter Editor. In a recent newsletter issue, the new president thanked Gene Dovenbarger past president and founder of the **GSAFC** for his past almost eight years of service and hard work to build the club into what it is today. Gene was credited with founding the club.

Member Joe Visintine hosted the **Bay Area S Scalpers (BASS)** at his home in Salinas, CA. in March. The meeting included viewing and operating Joe's HO, and two S scale layouts. In addition, Joe has a scanner that can receive the messages from the UP Dispatcher. Joe made arrangement to have Allen Fenton bring a

John Allen time saver switching layout for operation at the meeting. Bill Roberts is the club module organizer. The club is planning on attending and bringing their layout modules to the NMRA Pacific Coast Region's convention to be held on May 4-6, of this year. The convention will include a train show, and will be at San Luis Obispo, CA. The modular layout will be set up on Friday morning and be operating from Noon till 5:00 PM. on that day. Further operation will be on the following Saturday and Sunday for the convention attendees. The **BASS** recently welcomed three new members to the club, including: Bruce Hanson of San Jose; and Chris and Spencer Noe, also from San Jose, CA. Bruce is a member of the NMRA and became aware of the club from a display of their module layout and a column written by Lee Johnson, club coordinator. Don has been enlisted to complete two modules and install track and structures/scenery for use with the club's module set ups in the future. Spencer Noe is a friend of Greg Reiter, a member of the club. The *Bass Waybill* newsletter of the **BASS** is published and distributed by Barney Daehler on a bi-monthly basis.

Your column editor wishes to thank those clubs and individuals who send information on their activities as used in this column. Please send your club newsletter or information to: Dave Pool, 11 Bittersweet Trail, Wilton, CT., 06897-3902



EXTRA BOARD

WAR OF THE GABES

Very interesting - the war of the Gabes! That makes three different repros - Triple S, MTH and Lionel? To heck with collecting trains, just collect Gabes.

- Tom Jarcho *For you scalers, Tom is referring to the Gabe the Lamplighter metal tower, an accessory put out by American Flyer originally.* - ed.

CARRY THAT S SCALE RULER

Terry Harrison found the MTH painted figure set #2 at the hobby shop works for S. He measured a male at 6'3" and a female at 5'5". There are both standing and sitting figures for a total of 12. (See New Products). At around \$20.00 he felt this wasn't a bad price - it's less than \$2.00 a figure. He also found a Life Like crossing gate signal which measures 14' high, with the lights about 7'6" from the ground and crossbucks at 4 feet. It is #1207 and sells for around \$8-9. Terry says, "The guys in the hobby shop don't bother me when I come in and pull out my S rule and start to measure things. Matter of fact, they shake their heads and mutter to themselves, smile and wave. It's the price we pay for being a minority scale."

You are so right. I do it all the time. One of the first things I learned about S from Alan Evans was to keep about a 3" piece of S ruler in my wallet. It is used just such as Terry mentions in hobby shops, but it garners even stranger looks when in the toy departments of the discount stores. - Jeff

MORE S VIDEOS

I was wondering if I could get you to give the S gauge video I produced last fall a plug in the next *Dispatch*. A couple of people who offer testimonials are David Dewey and Bob Werre. They each bought one from me over the Internet S-Digest blurb that I put

on there. Both of their reports to me were favorable. It is an inexpensive tape and covers American Flyer, Hi-rail and Scale. Featured on Volume I are the Rocky Mountain Hi-Railers, Jess Bennett's Great Northern Pacific and the late Ernie Horr's Tinplate Road. Volume II is being worked on. Each is \$13.00 ppd.

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INDUSTRIAL RAIL

Industrial Rail is in the process of changing ownership. The product line is promised to continue, but the details are not available at this time. We are very interested in this line since the trolley which was just released looks real good with an Eagle 1 chassis and our MCB sideframes. The box calls it out at 1:55 scale, so we are getting closer! This unit comes complete with an electronic reverse unit and operating bumpers. Retail was \$59.95.

- Tom D., Penn. Heritage Models.

LAST RUN - VIRGIL CROSBY

The Greater Seattle S Gaugers have lost one of its founding members. Virgil W. Crosby died in January, 2001, from complications of congestive heart failure. He was 89. Virgil and three others, Bob Barr, Hank Hurley and myself (Dick Karnes) started the rotating-visiting club in 1970. Initially, the four and their spouses met monthly for dinner at each other's homes. but soon the wives decided to omit dinner and themselves, so the club adopted the more typical weekday-evening, once-a-month format.

Virgil took his turn hosting a meeting each year, for which his gracious wife Francis always prepared excellent German chocolate cake. Virgil's layout was simple. His layout had three concentric ovals of brass track laid on Miller tie strip. There were crossovers between each oval, but these were never activated. Later, Virgil added

an inside loop for trolley cars.

Virgil's mechanical mind soon earned him a reputation as a good AF repairman. This talent led him into a business arrangement with well-known AF collector Dan Olson. Dan would pay Virgil to repair traded-in AF equipment for resale. Often Virgil would take parts and equipment in lieu of payment. This gave him a vast store of common AF stuff to hack up and kitbash. One of Virgil's more off-beat conversions was the removal of everything above the belt rail 50 AF Reading cabooses. These he christened "ore cars." Virgil was putting together AF sets for local kids' Christmas presents, and he included three ore cars, a plastic Atlantic and a caboose in each set.

Virgil served in the U.S. Navy in the Aleutians during WWII. He returned to Seattle, discovered he didn't much like the real estate business, and became a bus driver for Seattle Transit (which became King county Metro Transit). In 1977 he retired with the highest seniority and devoted his time to his family, his home and model railroading. Virgil outlived both his wife and son.

Dispatch readers have not seen any blurbs about the GSSG, simply because the club has no officers, no dues, no special projects - and thus, no editor. The club's only special project was construction and display of a layout for the 1972 NMRA National convention in Seattle. Manufacturers were solicited for display items and trackage for the layout, and club members staffed the display throughout the convention. Theat activity taught the membership to never again get involved with a project. The members continue to enjoy a low-key informal format.

- Dick Karnes

S IN NON-S PUBLICATIONS

-March 2001 *Mainline Modeler* has an extensive article by about

the construction of Ed Loizeaux's big steel cantilever bridge shown on last October's cover.

-4th Quarter 2000, *The Sentinel* (B&O RR Historical Soc. publication) has the first reference I can remember on S in their modeling section. They mention a depot by Eagle Mountain and a rumor of a B&O 2-8-0/0-8-0 by S Helper Service. My heart be still.

-March 2001 *Classic Toy Trains* has a 1-page article by Joe Deger on AF's motorized track maintenance car.

-May 2001 *Classic Toy Trains* has part I of a 2 part series by Roger Carlson about constructing a compact 46" x 66" AF layout.

ADVENTURES IN ALLENTOWN

The NASG had a table at this show back in Feb., and I signed up new members and sold some of our NASG cars. I was pleased to meet Marlin Becker, the new owner of the Downs Model Railroad products. The name of his business is Manheim Machine & Tool Co. (MM&T). Marlin had some new paint schemes on his tank cars and code 125, 100 and hi-rail wheelsets for sale. His address is MM&T, 139 Nevin St., Lancaster, PA 17603. I also met Al Moyer of Coventry Trains. They will be the exclusive dealers for the PHM Trainmaster painted and lettered for Reading and PRR. They also rebuild AF smoke units. You can contact them at their website: www.coventrytrains.com. Other S dealers there included: PHM, Bill Parr, Fred's Train Parts, Funaro & Camerlengo (some scale kits in S), and Walt Danylak. Many of these will be at the NASG convention in Scranton this summer.

- John Foley

REX GONDOLA

The Rex Gondola's prototype (Putt Trains) is not the Southern gons pictured in the 1940 and 1943 CBC, as those cars (55000-55-960 had 10 panels. The correct car series is Southern 55961-56560, built in 1947 by Pressed Steel Car

and shown in the 1949 CBC with 12 panels. As such, it is a very accurate model, although the hi-rail version has a simplified and incorrect underframe molded in. I understand the scale version has a far more detailed underframe, but I have no idea how correct it is. *Yes, the hi-rail version has a single centersill beam and plans for the scale one shows double plus more cross bracing - ed.* I reviewed the Rex (Putt Trains) flat car several years ago. It seems to be a reasonable facsimile of the USRA-design 42' flat cars that were built by many railroads in the 1920s. N&W and Virginian had similar cars.

- Earl Tuson

AM SWITCHES

The American Models switches work great with all hi-rail equipment; just a problem with scale smaller flanged wheels. For the magnetic "drag shoe" of the AF style coupler, you must adjust the arm from the truck center using small pliers to correct height. I run hi-rail wheels but am in the middle of refitting all stuff with Kadee #802 couplers - they look so much better, and the cars mate much closer together. As to diesel power pickup, I've never had a problem.

- Howell Jobbins



Marlin Becker of Manheim Machine & Tool Co. displays the former Downs line at Allentown.

John Foley photo.

S-CALENDAR

May 18-20, 2001: Spring S Spree, Holiday Inn East, 170 East and Hamilton Rd., Columbus, OH. Info: John Gaffney (614) 764-3925. Regis. after Jan. 1, 2001. jgaffney@columbus.rr.com

July 8-15, 2001: Gateway 2001 NMRA National Convention, St. Louis, MO. The NASG will be there. www.gatewaynmra.org

July 14, 2001: Sherman Hill Model RR Club swap meet and railfan combo. Cheyenne, WY, old UP Depot, 121 W. 15th St.. 9 a.m. Adults \$3.50, Children \$1.50, Families \$7.00. Robert Sherwood, 2837 Olive Dr., Cheyenne, WY 8200. (307) 638-8535, email: softmoods@vcn.com.

July 24-28, 2001: NASG Annual Convention - Steamtown Historic Site - Scranton, PA, Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel. Hotel phone: 570-342-8300 direct or 800-333-3333 (mention NASG convention). Info: John Foley - 570-622-3413 or e-mail: foley164@ptd.net or check the web: www.trainweb.org/steamtown2001.

Sept. 28-30, 2001: Jersey Get-Together, South Amboy, NJ. Don Thompson robin@showcase.com - 908-545-9306.

Nov. 16-18, 2001: Fall S Fest, South Beloit, IL. Holiday Inn. Dave Pippitt, 1608 Benton St., Rockford, IL 61107 - 815-963-8773 eves.

Summer 2002: NASG Annual Convention - Cleveland, Ohio. Details TBA.

Bids Open for NASG Annual Conventions -- 2003 and beyond. Contact Lee Johnson, 2472 Lariat Ln., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6635 - 925-943-1590 - e-mail: leemax@jps.net

Railmail cont. from page 5

made a LOT of noise as it shook. But it's wood frame construction, so all is OK. The sensation was quite interesting - like being on a barge in a stormy sea.

Three pieces of my railroad equipment were damaged. One was a Jim Beam "Jupiter" bottle whose stack burst as it hit the floor. I think I can glue the pieces together. My SouthWind Pacemaker ("Swallowtail") observation car hit the carpeted floor, landing on its rear coupler. The coupler broke off, and the steam line is severely twisted, but the car itself is unscathed. The last item that fell was a scratchbuilt Niagara boiler, and it lost its sand dome. A few cars were hanging off their shelves, but did not fall. Stuff on the track remained on the track and did not derail. But some moved a fair distance down the tracks."

From Ross Roberts: "We lost some lamps and ceramic things. In my train room a framed AF ad came off the wall and knocked over my AF 772D Checkerboard water tower. Approximately fifteen flat buildings and trees fell from my suspended railway onto the layout below. A Plasticville School suffered a broken roof, and a ceramic house was destroyed. Coincidentally, the Port Lines billboard remained intact except that every supporting member was sheared off the back. My S Helper engine remained on the tracks as did 18 of the 20 cars behind it. ... In my office I have 4 tiers of Railrax covered with engines and cars. Five of six cars on the top tier fell, but everything else held fast. I experienced some loss, and I'll have to spend a lot of time getting everything back into place."

Reportedly, no major damage reported by others such as Eric Reis, Keith Thompson (Seattle) and Bob Christopherson (layout recently in MR).

CZ Project on hold: A note to

Wayne Hills - "Not enough (orders) have come in, and I think we will have to put this on hold for this year for the following reasons: 1. Luke warm response to off to make scale cars. 2. Two Budd sets at the same time causes confusion and complaints from people that it's too much to ask to buy another set of Budd cars at the same time as the ones already almost here. 3. The economy is in a downward phase and has increased the risk of cost recovery. Best regards, Ron Bashista." Wayne agrees with Ron since only about 80 orders came in. On another note, Wayne says he is suspending Marker Light Productions car sides until further notice so he can care for his ailing father. Wayne thanks all who reserved CZ car sets, but did feel it got AM's attention.

A Day to Remember: I had a big thrill at the East Coast Hobby Show on March 24. I met Paul Culp. I looked at his badge and saw his name while he was looking at our layout, and I could not believe my eyes. He started to go on about S being the perfect size, and how he could never understand why it had not taken off. I realized I was in the shadow of a great S scale figure. You see, Paul and his brothers made all of the tooling for Rex and Nixon in the early '50s. We talked for a few minutes, and I told him of all the stuff that was now available in brass and RTR plastic. He truly seemed surprised at the variety of our stuff running on the layout. I gave him a catalog, and he confided in me that he still had his original AF boxed away. Truly a day to remember for me.

- Don Thompson

Sn3 Growth: I can comment on the growth of Sn3 as the moderator of the Sn3 list. The Sn3 list has grown over 100% from just over 200 members to well over 450 members in the past 12-15 months. I know from the posts on the net that a lot of these new members are also new to Sn3. The Sn3 list has

been around for many years in one form or another, so it is not just people finding the list for the first time.

As for Sn3ers and hy they do or do not consider themselves S scalers. I think as the trend in S has been more towards "scale" of recent, you will find that more and more Sn3ers now consider themselves S scalers. I am sure the Dispatch has had some to do with this as have other mags., but more so is the number of good scale products on the market today. The only real differences between Sn3 and S (standard) is the trains and the gauge of track. The autos, structures, scenery, people, etc., are all the same. For the above reasons I consider myself an S scaler with narrow track! Scale is scale whether it is narrow gauge or wide gauge.

- Pat Turner

NASG News cont. from page 4

committee has spear-headed, the Front Runner was the first started completely from scratch. The others were just different loads added or a new/unique paint scheme. This was our first testing of the waters in the area a "scratch" project. So it's back to the drawing board to determine another freight car to be offered this year. Our committee is always open to suggestions from the membership, so let's hear and see (actual prototype photos) what you want. We'll entertain all members' input.

Dave Bailey's recent posting about frustration with no modern scale equipment being offered rings true for this project. But it's not a death knell - there will be other freight car and engine possibilities - NASG members and scalers (some are one and the same, you know) will need to back them!

Thanks to Jettie, Lee Johnson, Randy Lee, Stan Stokrocki and John Foley for their efforts in this project.

- Alan Evans, chairman
- NASG Freight Car Committee

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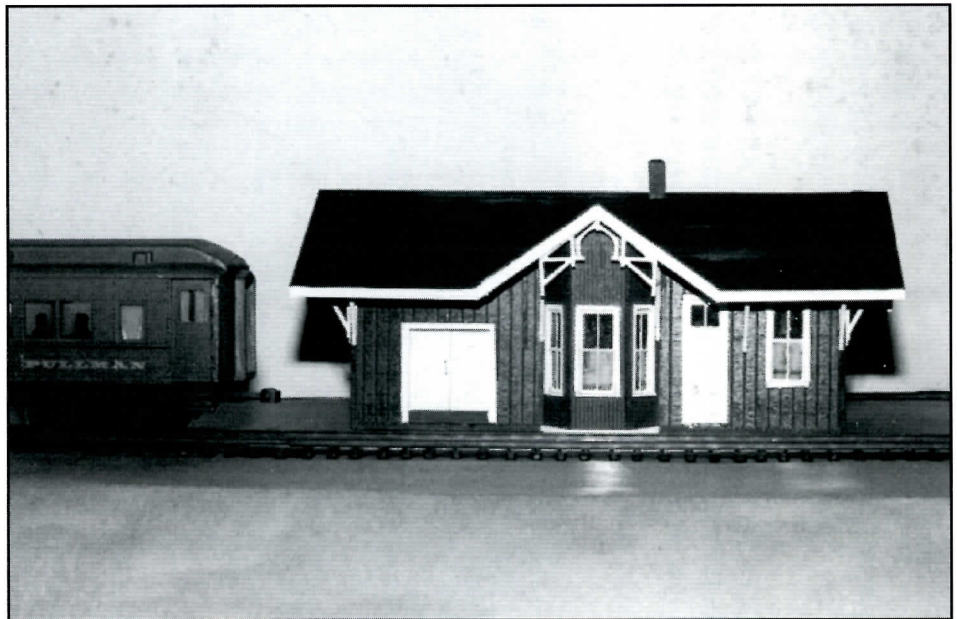
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5. Send your request to NASG Copy Service, c/o Kent Singer, 6516 Georgian Way, Columbus, GA 31909.

Our *Club Sandwich* column editor, Dave Pool, has built this craftsman kit station. It is Model Tech kit of the Akron, Canton & Youngstown Depot at New London, Ohio. Look to a future article in the *S Gaugian* on this. I assume this is a review type article. *Photo by Dave Pool*



Jeff's Jct. from page 5

6. 8000 gallon tank cars by SHS - like the W.A. Drake series (after brass ones gone).
7. X29 boxcars (after Bill sells his).
8. A plastic kit or RTR single track through truss bridge.
9. A U23B
10. A two truck Brill trolley (not resin). PHM could probably provide the power.
11. A gas electric - maybe worked from AM passenger car dies??
12. A RTR Shay.
13. Some basic railroad structures in plastic like a depot, tower, hand-car shed and water tank.

As to brass, I think the best candidates here are steam locos, caboose and maybe some specialized structures like certain bridges, etc. Ordinary freight cars I'm leery of. My thoughts:

1. PRR 2-8-0/4-6-0/4-4-2
2. PRR 0-6-0 B6sb
3. B&O Q4b 2-8-2
4. N&W J 4-8-4 or the K 4-8-2 (streamlined)
5. A crane car
6. Various caboose - B&O, CB&Q, Milwaukee Road, etc.
7. C&O 2-6-6-2

And who are candidates for providing the campaign impetus and

some seed money? Individuals, clubs, organizations, publishers and dealers are those. Finally, if you want to initiate a project, be practical and reasonable with your choice. Do some brainstorming and networking. If you are working the internet or talking among friends and something seems to create a lot of positive buzz, then begin approaching organizations and manufacturers with a solid proposal.

Then it's put-up or shut-up time, and the seed money and/or definite orders are finally needed to get the project going.



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