

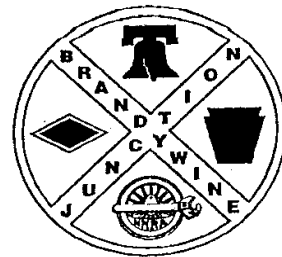
The Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA Fall 1997 Convention

BRANDYWINE JUNCTION 97

THE MAINLINE TO PHILADELPHIA

November 7, 8, & 9, 1997

HOSTED BY THE PHILADELPHIA DIVISION



- Join Dean Freytag and 20 Other Clinicians
- See over 40 Home Layouts
- Ride on the Brandywine Scenic Railroad
- Tour Lukens Steel Mill, SEPTA's Frazer Maintenance Shops and more
- Tour Longwood Gardens, Brandywine River Museum

Chadds Ford Ramada Inn
Routes 202 and 1, 1110 Baltimore Pike
Glen Mills, PA 19342

20 minutes SW of the Philadelphia International Airport; 10 minutes North of Wilmington. Accessible from I-95 and Exit 23 of the PA Turnpike

For information and registration, contact:

John Nawn
P.O. Box 741
Paoli, PA 19301

Phone: 610461-8644

CALLBOARD

Coming Events

Notices must be typed and have complete addresses. Use the style shown below and be brief as possible. Be sure to include a contact telephone number. Send items for CALLBOARD to Ron Baile, 24 Hampton Rd, Westmont, NJ 08108-2202. E-Mail to rbaile@aol.com

CARLSTADT, NJ: **71st Anniversary Model RR Show.** New York Society of Model Engineers (Oldest model RR club in USA) **March 5 through 23.** Adults \$4, Children 5-12, \$1. Two large operating railroads, HO and O gauge, plus exhibits and souvenir shop. Wed. - Fri., 7-10 pm, Sat & Sun, 1-6 pm, 341 Hoboken Rd. CaLL 201-939-9212.

Ft. Washington, PA: **The Great Scale Model Train Show, April 12-13,** 9 am to 4 pm, Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm, Sunday at the Expo Center. \$5, Children 6-12, \$1, Family \$10, return Sunday free. Call Howard Zane, 410-730-1036.

Wilmington, Del.: Saturday, **May 19.** The ninth annual **Delaware Transportation Festival,** Wilmington AMTRAK station, 10 am - 4 pm, admission free. Locomotives and rolling stock on display, vintage to newest. Operation Lifesaver and model railroads. Call Julie Theyerl, 302-577-3278 ext 3405.

ASHEVILLE, NC: **Mid Eastern & Southeastern Convention, May 23, 24 & 25.** See Ad, page 7

Volume 52

March - April 1997

Number 2

Race Trains made tracks to the track

by Ron Baile

Many railroads, particularly here in the East have or had spurs going to popular horse racing tracks. In the old days (prior to the 1960s) these spurs provided the railroad with double duty. First, the horses were actually transported by rail between the major tracks and training centers. This was done using cars that were built like passenger cars and would actually be moved in passenger trains. Second, special trains were run to the race tracks during racing season to transport the betting public.

Here in Southern New Jersey we had the spur to Atlantic City Racetrack (which was about 15 miles out of its namesake town), and the Garden State Park race track in Cherry Hill. Where their spurs branched off the mainline there was a block station which would be manned only during racing season. Garden State's was RACE and Atlantic City's was GATE. It was 3.2 miles of single track to get to the Atlantic City Race Track so another block station was established at the far end which was called TURF. There was a runaround track here as well as the two storage tracks. If your train was diesel powered, the locos simply ran around

Continued on page 5

Plaster Bandage: Just what the doctor ordered for scenery

by Bob Hubbard

How many of you have had a broken bone? Any skiers? Well, generally after the doctor sets the bone, the arm or leg needs to be immobilized in a cast of a plaster gauze bandage material that sets up into a very rugged device. I remember several of these casts from my younger days.

I model in HO scale and the setting of the railroad is in mountainous terrain. The railroad also has operating catenary. For you diesel or steam nuts, that is the wire over the track that provides electrical power to the electric type engines. I suppose the operating catenary is what introduced me to plaster gauze bandage scenery.

The catenary support poles are constructed of brass rods or brass shapes. These poles are mounted by bolting through the wooden subbase and then the catenary is constructed over the track. When all is complete, the track and catenary are tested for proper operation.

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Coming Next Issue:

A New Column: Operator's Corner • Ballot for Board of Directors

“When two trains approach each other at a crossing, they shall both come to a full stop and neither shall start up until the other has gone.”

—A Kansas law

Taken from a calendar, “The 365 Stupidest Things Ever Said,” © Workman Publishing

Brandywine Junction '97

The Fall 1997 Mid-Eastern Regional Convention will be held November 7, 8, 9 in the beautiful and historic Brandywine Valley of Pennsylvania. In addition to traditional contests, a Train Show, and national-caliber clinicians such as Dean Freytag, Bill Schamberg, Bob Charles, Mike Rabbitt, Jim Hertzog, Ken McCorry, Dave Messer, and John Teichmoeller, Brandywine Junction '97 will feature a number of special events: activities of the Layout design SIG and Railroad Industry SIG, an “Operations Call Board,” a switching contest, and an “Operations Layout for Younger Rails.”

A number of quality layouts will be included in the Home Layout Tours, including those belonging to Dave Messer (featured in recent issues of RMC) and Paul Backenstose (depicted in the '97 Walthers catalog.) A special attempt has been made to include small as well as large home layouts on the tour.

Continued on page 6

MER LOCAL

Official Publication of the
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
A Tax-Exempt Organization

The MER LOCAL is published six times a year. The opinions expressed in the LOCAL do not necessarily reflect those of MER elected officials or the editorial staff. Commercial suppliers, supplies and materials addressed in the LOCAL in noway constitute an endorsement by the MER. Copyright material that appears in the LOCAL is used for educational and historical benefit only, and does not constitute infringement of the copyright holder.

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The MER LOCAL welcomes articles, photographs, artwork, cartoons and model railroad related material as contributions to the mutual enjoyment of the hobby for the membership. Materials should have a wide appeal. Editors will exercise all due care of submissions, but contributors should not send originals without having back-up copies of both articles and photographs. Materials will be returned only when a self-addressed, stamped envelope of ample size is included with submission. Editors, by definition, reserve the right—and have the responsibility—to make corrections, deletions and changes to accommodate space. Aware of how much enjoyment readers get by discovering someone else's mistakes, the editors will include at least one in each issue!

DUES: \$8 per year; \$16 - 2 years

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Life Membership in the MER is ONLY available to NMRA Life Members. For quotation, apply to the Business Manager with your date of birth.

Send all dues and membership inquiries to:
Nelson D. Garber, Business Manager
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
13212 Bellevue Street
Silver Spring, MD 20904-1703

Presidential Pennings

Come share the fun of modeling

by Bill Gruber, President

Have you ever been “thrown off” railroad or industry property while pursuing your favorite hobby? Although much of my railfanning has been curtailed in recent years, I have never wandered into heavily populated railroad yards and industries or challenged them with arrogance of any nature. Sure, I've been asked what my intentions were by certain railroad “officials” while viewing from the sidelines and have even photographed certain steel mill scenes from afar. I even remember that one time, after the train had passed, I turned around only to see a railroad policeman heading towards me. Expecting the worse, I was sort of shocked when he told me he hadn't been able to get to this spot on time to make his daily inspection of the passed train and would therefore rely on my observations for his report! So you can understand my bewilderment when one night I received a call from a well known “civil engineer” telling me in no uncertain terms that my presence on or near his property would not be tolerated for the time being!

It seems a local corporation served by the Reading Lines had contracted with Robert D. Hubbard Consulting Engineers to “rebuild” their facilities along the railroad. After finding out that I was an avid railfan, the boss himself notified me to stay clear until the project was completed. Now this intrigued me even more so. Just what was going on behind those walls? Through various sources over the past several months I was able to put together bits and pieces of the project and visualize it in my mind's eye. On occasion I was even able to get a glimpse of some of the pre-fabbed materials that would eventually make their way into the complete project.

At least twice, detailed blue prints were within arms' reach and hand drawings were sent to me as a “teaser.” Okay! Okay! By now you probably figured out that Bob is constructing a building for my railroad. Even so, the details I've mentioned are all true, in a sense. I am forbidden to see the project until he shows up on the front steps with the completed model.

About a year ago I asked Bob to build me a simplified run down steel mill based on the one found on the real Reading in the town of Birdsboro. He penciled me in for the project and assured me it would be started once other customers were duly satisfied.

Now the construction has begun, and I can't wait to see the final results! Bob seems to get just as much pleasure in keeping this project from my view as he does in building it! Others who have seen the various stages of construction have passed some of the details on and assured me the project will be “awesome.” I can hardly wait as a new siding is being construction next to an existing one just for the structure.

I have just touched on some of the fun model railroaders can have when they associate themselves with others in the name of the hobby. This is but one short story in the South Jersey area, and I'm sure there are others in the many round-robin type groups and clubs throughout the Region. Others I am aware of have included HO scale lawsuits, interchange shipments with various fictitious railroads and other conflicts between the various railroad managements!

In case you haven't realized it, all the inter-activity within a group of model railroaders share an additional common thread. FUN! Why not loosen up and try it?

Oh, yes, Bob has agreed to share the project in a future issue of the LOCAL. Why not share some of your experiences, anecdotes and projects with us also? After all, getting published in the LOCAL is perhaps the easiest route towards an AP certificate!

On a more serious note, five of our members have submitted their resumes and photos for Director this year. They are Jim Atkinson, Eric Dervinis, Nick Kalis, William Terry Nesbit and Paul Rivers. Watch the next issue of the LOCAL for information about the candidates and a ballot. Since we have only openings for three Directors, please take the time to read about the candidates and make informed choices!

Land O' Sky Railfest '97
ASHEVILLE, NC, MAY 23-25, 1997



**Make Tracks to Asheville for the
Joint Mideastern & Southeastern
Region Spring Convention**

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Clinics by John Armstrong, Randy Lee & Allen McClelland, and lots more
- Layouts include The HO Apple Valley Railroad, The Southern Depot at Hendersonville & Dennis Mueller's Burlington Northern.
- One of the largest Train Shows in the Southeast
- Sunday Morning Breakfast Seminar: “Model Railroading: Beyond 2000”
- A Fan Trip to the Great Smokey Mountain Railroad, scene of the train wreck in “The Fugitive”
- A Visit to the Biltmore Estate, former home of John Vanderbilt

Convention Headquarters is the Ashville Radisson Hotel
(Mention South Eastern Region Model Train Convention for Special Rates)

For Convention Information, call 1-800-333-3333

Register Below! See You There!



'97 Railfest Short Form Registration, Asheville, NC, May 23-25, 1997

Full Registration: NMRA# _____ \$60x _____ = _____
 Spouse (name) _____ \$40x _____ = _____
 Youth Under 18 (name) _____ \$35x _____ = _____
 Total: _____

Registration includes unlimited entry to the Train Show entrance to all Clinics, Awards Banquet on Saturday night and the Convention Breakfast on Sunday.

Name _____ MER# _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone () _____ Evening Phone: () _____

Mail to: Railfest '97, PO Box 91, Moore, SC 29369

For information, call Henry Danis (864) 576-2614

Send us your stuff!!

The LOCAL editorial board (several guys sitting around my dining room table) has decided that we would like to expand the LOCAL to a 16- or 20-page quarterly format. We realize this will probably cost most money, so we have already started to take advertisements. The smallest size ad will be the business card size. Many modelers have business cards or passes for their railroads, so send them in and we will run them for all to see.

If you have a model railroad oriented business and would like to advertise here we would love to have you. The final rates are still under consideration. Once approved, the rate schedule will be published here. In the meanwhile, call, write or email for current rates.

We realize that we can't do this alone. Dick and I are only bridge tenders. That is to say, we are just bridging the gap between Chuck Lind and the new editor. We need contributions from the membership to keep things going. We are looking for short articles of general interest. Modeling tips, personal experience in building a particular model, experiences working on your model railroad or articles about your model railroad.

We want to publish good model photos. Save the prototype stuff. This is a modeling organization, not the NRHS. This is your magazine. Your suggestions are always welcome. Your articles and hints are more than welcome. You don't have to be a writer to do this. Just tell it as if you were telling a friend. It's easier than ever to contact us. Let us hear from you.

— Ron Baile, Interim co-editor

The Lake Junction



1997 NMRA National Convention • Madison, Wisconsin • July 28-August 2

Brandywine Junction '97

Prototype tours will include visits to SEPTA's Frazer shops, Lukens Steel at Coatesville, and PECO's coal-fired generating facility at Eddystone.

Fan trips will feature the Reading FP-7s on the Brandywine Scenic (ex Wilmington and Northern) and a rare opportunity to ride the Pennsy Doodlebug #4662 on the Delaware Valley RR (ex PRE Octorora Valley Branch).

Rather than a traditional banquet as we've come to know them, BJ'97's banquet will be a come when you want, with whom you want, and eat all you can eat "The Taste of PHILLY" buffet—Featuring REAL Philadelphia cheesesteaks.

Exciting Off-Line activities are planned including visits to the world famous Longwood Gardens, the Brandywine River Museum (featuring works of the Wyeth

continued from page 1

family and Howard Pyle), and the Philadelphia Division's speciality—the Kidz Corner.

Finally, Brandywine Junction '97 is being held in conjunction with "Plug-N-Play" the Eastern Regional N-Trak Convention located at a nearby hotel; a shuttle will provide convenient transit between the two convention sites.

Brandywine Junction '97 is hosted by the Chadds Ford Ramada Inn at the intersection of Routes S 1 and S 202—an easy ten minute ride north on 202 from I-95.

For BJ'97 registration information, contact Brandywine Junction '97, P. O. Box 741, Paoli, PA 19301-0741.

For hotel reservation information, contact: Chadds Ford Ramada Inn at (610) 461-8644. Ask for NMRA Convention Rates (\$75, double; \$85, mini-suite.

Around the Divisions

Compiled by Laura Hughes

NEW JERSEY DIVISION* (1)

March 15, 1997: Delran, NJ - Delran Municipal Hall - 9 Chester Ave. Clinics 9am - 12pm, Contest - Rolling Stock (Master & Popular Vote classes), Layout Tour 1pm-4pm.

May 17, 1997: Winslow Junction, NJ - SRR of NJ Yards. Ride aboard the Southern RR of New Jersey! Annual Business Meeting of the New Jersey Division

June 1997 TBA: Outdoor Garden Layout Tour. Travel across southern NJ on a self-guided tour of the area's finest outdoor layouts. Fun for the whole family!

POTOMAC DIVISION (2)

The Potomac Division's annual March Mini-Convention, originally scheduled for March 1 in Upper Marlboro, MD, suffered a setback when the train show they were tired to was canceled. Arrangements have since been made to replace the Mini-Convention with a model Layout Open House at the home a Division member; at that time the annual Division Membership Meeting will be held. This will allow time for the Division to reschedule their Mini-Convention at a later date and at a different venue. In the meantime, several other Home Layout Tours are scheduled for the Spring quarter, showing off Division members; layouts of various scales and dimensions. The NVNTrak group, who hosted the highly successful N Scale East Convention in Alexandria

last summer will be displaying some of their modules in two places on the same day: half at Springfield Mall in Virginia, and half at the Great Scale Train Show at Timonium, Maryland, on March 23-24.

PHILADELPHIA DIVISION* (3)

March 15, 1997: Division Meet at St. Alban's Church, Route 3, West Chester Pike, Newtown Square PA

May 1997: Family Day at a prototype location TBA

September 1997: Fall Division Meet, location TBA

November 7-9: Fall MER convention at Chadd's Ford, PA

TIDEWATER DIVISION* (4)

The Division has over 300 members and sponsors four different modular groups in N-scale, HO-scale, O-scale (tinplate), and G-scale (on the floor). Meetings are held 8 times a year and we are the sponsor of the Tidewater Model Train show and sale. We also have an annual auction at our meeting January. Dues are \$5 per year, and include a subscription to the CALLBOARD, the Division newsletter, mailed before each meet.

JAMES RIVER DIVISION (5)

The JRD Board of Directors met February 9 in Lynchburg, VA at a local hobby shop. The "full membership" status of our Division was one of the topics discussed. The NMRA and MER will soon be requiring this for all Division members and it may have a major impact on our membership. A committee was finally set up to study the membership and

determine how many members currently have "full membership" and determine how much work we have in front of us. Winter Meet will be held March 15 in Danville, VA; Spring Meet in Fredericksburg, VA on June 7; Summer Meet in Lynchburg, VA on September 13. Clinics for the Winter Meet were finalized with one on the Achievement program and another on freight care detailing. Model contest will be "Lineside Structure," excluding stations and depots. To help build continuing interest in attending Division meets as well as spurring interest in participating in the modeling contest, the next meet's modeling contest will be based on a clinic held at the preceding meeting. Therefore, the modeling contest for the Spring meet will be "freight cars" that YOU built, painted, and decaled.

PIEDMONT CRESCENT DIVISION (7)
No information submitted/available.

MOUNT CLARE DIVISION (9)
Will be putting out the *Old Main* sometime in the next two weeks. We are planning an overnight trip to visit Steamtown in Mid to Late Spring. A possible Fall visit to the East Broad Top is also in the works. If anyone would like to join us please send me E-mail at fredv™digtech.com, or give me a call at 410-667-3650.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION* (10)
The South Mountain Division, Division 10, successfully petitioned the Mid Eastern Region of the NMRA to permit the annexation of Somerset, Bedford and Fulton Counties in Pennsylvania and Garret and Allegheny counties in Western Maryland. Welcome aboard!

SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION (11)
No information submitted/available.

CAROLINA SOUTHERN DIVISION* (12)
The Carolina Southern division is primarily based in the Charlotte-Concord area of North Carolina, and serves the following counties: Cabarrus, Catawba, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly, Union.

* Information compiled from this Division's home page on the World Wide Web

Laura Hughes is editor of The Potomac Division's *Potomac Flyer*. Send Division news to her at 13416 Spring Haven Drive, Fairfax, VA 22033-1228. Fax to (703) 742-6076. E-mail to merpotomac@aol.com

The Local Needs an Editor

WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

- Writing & Editing skills
- Ability to produce camera-ready copy

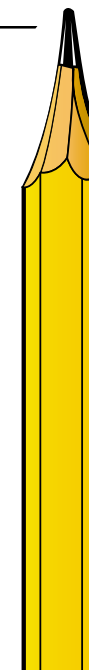
CAN YOU?

- Shake news out of Divisions & Clubs
- Cajole articles from bashful modelers
- Meet deadlines

... and make the LOCAL
the best-read publication in the entire NMRA!!

THIS JOB'S FOR YOU!!

Contact: Ron Baile, Interim Co-Editor
24 Hampton Road
Westmont, NJ 08108-2202 Phone: (609) 858-6644



The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA Business Manager 13212 Bellevue Street Silver Spring MD 20904-1703		MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	
Name _____		YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION TO BE A MEMBER OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION	
Address _____		Remittance Enclosed for: National Dues: q New q Renewal _____ q 1 year: \$30.00 q 2 years: \$60.00 \$ _____ Life membership cost is based on your age. Send your Birth Date to the NMRA for a quotation.	
City _____ State _____ Zip _____		Region Dues: q New q Renewal _____ q 1 year: \$8.00 q 2 years: \$16.00 \$ _____ Life membership cost is based on your age. Send your Birth Date to the MER for a quotation.	
NMRA # _____ Expire Date _____		Lapel Pin/Tie Tack @ \$6 each _____ \$ _____	
MER # _____ Expire Date _____		Region Cloth Patch @ \$3 each _____ \$ _____	
Scale _____ Birthday _____ Tel # _____		Donation _____ \$ _____	
Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region		TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____	

PLASTER BANDAGE

continued from page 1

In the "old" days, I stapled wire screen into position on the wooden subbase and added plaster over the screen. The major problem I had was that the screening was always tangling with the catenary poles or the catenary itself. On one occasion I installed a section of screening, added the plaster, painted and had everything ready when I found out that somewhere under the plaster the wire screening was in contact with a brass catenary pole, caused a short circuit! After this experience, and after tearing up the completed scenery, another method had to be found.

Next, model railroad friends showed up and said, "Use Hydrocal." Again I built the subbase. I used rolled up newspaper with drafting tape to hold it in position. These same friends came over and we dipped paper towels in a soupy mix of Hydrocal and applied it. Just as it says in the various magazine articles on how to do scenery. Well, after they left the system of scenery building was okay but the mess was something else. Have you ever tried to removed hardened Hydrocal from catenary wire or for that matter, from the track underneath the catenary wire?

I decided to try some plaster gauze bandage material. I had a friend whose father was a doctor and asked him to obtain a box of the material for me. When the doctor's colleagues questioned him about what possible use he could have for the plaster gauze in his practice of obstetrics and gynecology, he mumbled something about model railroading.

In one area I wanted the scenery to be relatively light in weight. I tried the rolled up paper to support the gauze but I wasn't satisfied with this, so I tried once more. To provide a base for the gauze, I took old corrugated boxes and cut them into approximately 1" wide strips. I sort of wove a network of cardboard strips into a shape that I wanted. To hold the cardboard in position, I used a hot glue gun. I found this system very fast and neat. Caution with the hot glue gun, though: any hot glue on your fingers can smart. After completion of this framework, I am



now ready for the plaster gauze.

I purchased the fast reaction type plaster gauze in 4" widths. Next, cut the gauze into approximately 8" long segments. Dip into water and make sure it all becomes wet. Shake off excess water and lay the gaze strips on the cardboard frame. As you install the first layer of gauze I find it is best to overlap to the previous gauze strip by about 2".

After the gauze is in position, rub it lightly with your fingers. I find a soft water wet paint brush does the trick. The object here is to make sure the plaster is interlocking with the gauze. It is just like reinforced concrete: the plaster is the concrete and the gauze is the reinforcing rod. Since the material sets up rapidly, a second layer can be installed directly over the first layer. I use three layers of gauze to build the base for the scenery.

After completing the base, next a layer of plaster can be applied. I use Sculptamold rather than plaster.



In a recent issue of Meat & Poultry magazine, the editors quoted the following from Feathers, the publication of the California Poultry Industry Federation. Dave Frary, Trakside Modeler/Blue Ribbon Model, sent it to the LOCAL.

It seems the US Federal Aviation Administration has a unique device to test the strength of airplanes windshields: a gun that launches a dead chicken at a plane's windshield at approximately the speed the plane flies.

The theory is that if the windshield doesn't crack from the carcass impact, it will survive a real collision with a bird during flight. The British were very interested in this and wanted to test a windshield on a brand new, speedy locomotive they were developing.

They borrowed the FAA chicken launcher, loaded the chicken and fired. The ballistic chicken shattered the windshield, went through the engineer's chair, broke an instrument panel and embedded itself in the back wall of the engine cab. The British were stunned and asked the FAA to recheck the test to see if everything was done correctly.

The FAA reviewed the test thoroughly and had one recommendation: "Use a thawed chicken."



Sculptamold is a paper maché material like cellulose which is light in weight and does not shrink. It can be obtained at an art store.

For an easy, fast method of installing scenery try plaster gauze bandage scenery.F

Bob Hubbard is the owner/operator of the Bangor & Navesink in Haddonfield, NJ, and he occasionally shows up for work at Robert D. Hubbard Consulting Engineers.

RACE TRAINS

continued from page 1

the train and re-coupled, but, if your train was steam powered (K-4s powered these trains until 1957) the steam engines would be coupled together and run light to Atlantic City for turning and servicing then run back to pick up their trains.

To many railroaders, getting an assignment on a race train was considered good duty. They got to hang out at the track while they were on the clock. The employee's timetables usually specified that they had to be back on their train before the start of the last race. I remember hanging out at OD tower back in the Summer of 1967. If visions of a glorious interlocking tower dance in your head at the mention of this structure, you haven't seen it. It could best be described as a steel hut on cinder blocks. The operator bid on this job because there was very little actual work to do there.

There were, as best I can recall, two race trains that originated in New York on the PRR. The interlocking plant was quite simple. The track diagram consisted of the Northbound track and the Southbound track. It was an all-electric machine, meaning all one had to do was flip a few levers and electronics and electric mothers did all the work. There was a crossover between the two tracks and the Oceanport secondary branching off toward Monmouth Park Racetrack. There was also a drawbridge, but it hadn't been opened in quite a while.

The switches were spiked in their normal positions until a general order from the Supt. declared OD tower in service. Track men came out and pulled the spikes. OD tower was now in service. This was before radios, so the dispatcher rang the operator on the block line and read off the train order: "Nineteen, copy 2," and the contents of the order. This would usually tell the crew what they already knew, but it made it official. About 20 minutes after this, the operator would get a call from BANK tower up in Red Bank, telling him the race train was on its way. He then threw the switch to the branch and set the signals. When the train was in sight, he then went out and "hooped

up the orders" to the engineman in the back-to-back F-7s and to the conductor hanging out the door of one of the P-70 coaches. A while later, another train would repeat the same scenario.

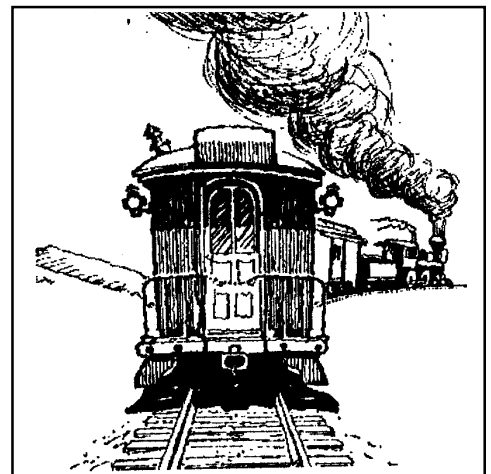
The operator could relax for the next few hours and the train crew got to play the horses. Departing trains created a bit more work for the operator. He had to reverse the crossover, after setting all the signals to Stop. He then reversed the switch to the branch and gave the signal to the departing train. When the last train left, he locked up the "Tower" and was done for the day!

If you have the space for a track or two, you could simulate a race track spur. The actually race track could be painted on the backdrop or just over the next hill. You could run horse cars in there as well as passenger extras. When it isn't racing season, you could park MOW equipment there.

Ron Baile has been active in the MER for 20 years, including stints as New Jersey Division Superintendent, MRR Director, authoring articles, and judging contests. He even had time to win a first place at the Columbus National in the Freight Car Contest.

FOR SALE

Atlas PS-2 Covered Hopper
 Lettered for Jersey Central Sand
 Service Circa 1956
 Send \$17.50 to:
 Jersey Limited
 PO Box 457
 Swedesboro, NJ 08085



"As a general rule . . . I like to arrive in new places by train. There is something about literally crossing borders, traversing frontiers, watching the countrywide hurtle by the window and becoming exurban, and then the gradual diminution of speed as the train approaches a city, that allows one to arrive with an experience of place that flying disallows."

—from *Andorra*
 by Peter Cameron,
 Farrar Strouse, 1997

MER COLLECTIBLES

50TH ANNIVERSARY WHITE GOLF SHIRT.....\$13.00 each
 Red, gold, and blue embroidered 50th Anniversary
 Sizes: XL, L, M, and S (includes postage)
 MULTI-COLOR MER 50TH ANNIVERSARY PATCH..... \$ 2.00 each
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 Sizes: 2XL, XL, L, and M (includes postage)
 REGION LAPEL PIN.....\$ 6.00 each
 REGION CLOTH PATCH.....\$ 3.00 each

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone () _____
 Item _____ Size _____ Quantity _____
 _____ Size _____ Quantity _____

Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region and send to:
 MER Business Manager, 13212 Bellevue Street, Silver Spring, MD 20904-1703.