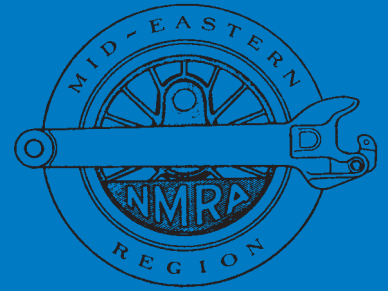


# The Local

A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-EASTERN REGION OF THE NMRA



Volume 60

SEPTEMBER — OCTOBER 2005

Number 5

## 570 Feet - A Steep Challenge

By Mike Maloney

LIVING IN NORCROSS, GEORGIA has required the townspeople to make frequent trips across the raised tracks at the center of our small town. The Richmond and Danville Railroad (absorbed by the Southern Railroad) built the track which provided passage for a number of daily trips past the town depot between Atlanta (15 miles south of Norcross) to other points northeast and beyond. It was intriguing to watch the big old steam engines and then diesels hauling such heavy loads, knowing they were on their way over many rivers, ravines and—of course—MOUNTAINS. Looking at the map, it appears that this track crossed every mountain in the Appalachian! So when I first built my layout, one of the major objectives was to build track and scenery on a variety of inclines and put bridges in conspicuous view reflecting this terrain.

Bridges have captured my interest from an engineering point of view because of their efficient strength, while visually seeming to look frail. This visual characteristic of bridges actually resolved a major layout dilemma. I wanted to make the background beyond the tracks and in the ravines visible from most points of the layout. Since mountains would obscure the view, the plans for a long, inclined bridge took shape.

### Getting Started

Beginning with an existing HO scale track layout, this new bridge

was constructed to present a clear view of the backside of the layout while being eye-catching in itself. Before actually building the new bridge, I connected the main line to my elevated Coal Mine yard up a 2.5% grade using standard 1/2" plywood in cookie cutter style described by Linn Westcott<sup>1</sup>. Figure 1 shows the bare bones of the spur line to the mine as it rises and crosses back over itself and climbs about 20 feet. The overall climb on the mountain and bridges is about 50 feet from the first deck bridge, built some time



Figure 1 Cookie Cutter View

ago, over the new spur to the coal mine (out of view to the right of the photo).

### What are bridges and viaducts?

These terms confused me in the beginning, but there seems to be a lot of room for interpretation. In general, a bridge provides an opening permitting a road, track or waterway to pass under<sup>2</sup>. A

viaduct is a long bridge built in one or more styles of bridges

mixed together to support the track, or a road of any kind.

My bridge is a bit unusual because it is inclined at a 2.5 % grade. The bridge includes both a flat deck bridge and two Pratt through truss bridges.

*Bridge Construction Footnote:* To facilitate all the new bridge building, I elected to build a base on which to place the bridge work and do the work almost completely at my bench. The base

continued on page 4

# Keeping In Touch...


By Fred Miller, MMR  
MER Business Manager

THIS SEPTEMBER we have entered into a new NMRA and MER membership arrangement. All active NMRA members who live in the territory defined as the Mid-Eastern Region are now members of the MER. As such they are entitled to take advantage of all the Region has to offer including meetings and voting rights. The dues paid to the NMRA negate the need to pay Region or Division membership dues. That's right – you no longer need to pay MER membership dues. Some services may have a price such as receiving a printed copy of **The Local** at \$6 per year. The electronic version is free.

Don't forget to keep your NMRA membership current. If that membership lapses, so does your MER membership.

Since the MER will no longer be benefiting from region membership dues, we will not have the funds to provide certain services, such as personalized renewal notices. So all you existing and new MER members will have to take the initiative to report changes in your mailing address or email address for the paper or electronic distribution of **The Local**.

If you are receiving a printed copy of **The Local**, check your mailing label. The first line will be your *ONLY* notice of subscription expiration dates. Those receiving the electronic version of **The Local**, or wish to be added to the list, please keep us informed of your current email address. You will have to initiate the information exchange.

If at some time you stop receiving the newsletter and feel you still should, please contact me at the e-mail or mailing address shown in this publication. We can resolve the problem. I trust all of our existing members and those new members joining us can fit into this new way of *keeping in touch*. 

## The Local

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A Tax-Exempt Organization

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**The Local** welcomes articles, photographs and model railroad related material as contributions to members' mutual enjoyment of the hobby. 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. Editors, by definition, reserve the right—and have the responsibility—to make corrections, deletions and changes to accommodate space.

MER web page URL is <http://members.cox.net/chyde/MER/MER.html>

# President's Column

By Clint Hyde


**T**WO OF OUR MEMBERS, Noll Horan and John Griffith, took first place in their categories for models at the NMRA National Convention this year; wish I could have gone. Remember that next year the National Convention is in Philadelphia, plan on going, and make sure to volunteer some time. Also make sure to build a model to enter in the model contest. I'm reliably told that MER's modelers are as good or better as any in the other regions. We should be able to clean up! Now's your chance; Philly is not nearly so far away. I'll be going this time. There's even some slight chance I'll be able to make time for a model to take along (don't hold your breath).

The Philadelphia convention has some advertising space in **The Local** each issue. I'm sure they could use onsite help during the show, and other help like giving a clinic or something.

At the beginning of September, MER experienced probably the greatest transition in its history—new bylaws took effect—and all the NMRA members within our territory have become MER members. We sent all the formerly non-MER folks an issue of **The Local** earlier this year, some signed up at that point (which was primarily a formality to receive **The Local**). Welcome aboard to all! Please sign up to receive **The Local**, either electronically or via the dead-tree/USPO method. It's the best way to find out about doings across the region. Most of you reside within the boundaries of one or another division, which is your local group—you should sign up for their newsletter also. Most all are available electronically, keeping your cost zero. They all have fun activities and gatherings on various occasions; I've been to one or more in very nearly every division.

October 28-31, 2005, is the Mid-Eastern Region annual convention in Raleigh, NC. Should be a good time; please register and go. Hotel rooms are going quick. If you're going to any of the open houses during the convention, **The Local** needs stories about them with photos; same for the proto tours. Next year, because of the national convention in the summer, we won't try to hold a standard MER convention. Instead, because the bylaws do require us to have an annual meeting, we'll hold that in conjunction with the Tidewater division's annual train show in September. You remember how the annual meeting goes at the conventions; that and the installation of new officers are the required activities. We may try to cook up a little bit more than just the train show; that hasn't been decided yet. We'll probably have a guest speaker named John Roberts (NMRA President, if you've forgotten), who will be living in Williamsburg at that point.

We have a good group of candidates for Director this year. You should have received and sent in your ballot by the time you're reading this. We will have a new person taking over the editor job for **The Local** in 2006, and someone else new taking over the website. There are division-level and region-level jobs open regularly, and they're an excellent way to be involved in your area or farther afield. You get AP points for Volunteer or Official—two certificates not requiring any modeling work—and you get to meet other people. In general, **The Local** will mention open MER jobs, your division newsletter the other ones. I recommend getting involved like this; I've found it very enjoyable over the years.

Hope I see you in Raleigh! 

---

## Rail Pass Program Extended


*Jan Wescott, Manager  
Member Services Department*

**T**HE NEW Board of Trustees approved an extension to the **Rail Pass Program** to September 2007. The program criteria are as follows:

- Must be a new NMRA member or not been an NMRA member for over 24 months.
- Cost for this trial period is \$9.95 for 6 months.
- Rail Pass member receives FULL regular membership including 6 issues of **Scale Rails** and all other benefits of NMRA membership.
- Exception to benefits: A Rail Pass member cannot hold office but is entitled to vote.

- The Rail Pass is not renewable but at the end of the trial period, it can be converted to regular membership.

Rail Pass membership application cards are easily available by writing to NMRA HQ office. NMRA Admin reported at the last BOT meeting that the renewal scenario is quite good on our RP program.

All Region membership chairs or the designated Region contact as appointed by their Region receives a roster of newly listed members each and every month. RP is the designation on that roster. Regions and Divisions are encouraged to welcome the RP member and/or send a copy of their newsletter. 

was leveled in all directions. This saved a lot of time and made all my tools more easily available. The resulting "module" was transferred to the layout as a unit later.



**Figure 2.**  
**Inclined**  
**sets of footings**

**Producing the Incline**

Figure 2 shows the tower concrete footings constructed in such a way so there was a 2.5% grade from one set of footings to the next. It shows the vertically staggered footings attached to the base. Tapering at the base prevented

me from having to do any fancy work on the towers with only a little leveling needed at the bridge shoes.

**Concrete Towers and Abutments**

Both ends of the bridge are supported by scratchbuilt concrete abutments and towers. The towers support the points where the deck bridge joined the Pratt truss bridges. Figure 3 shows the scrap pieces of cedar shingle glued together and primed with wood sealer for the towers and the abutments.



**Figure 3.** A concrete tower

**The Deck Bridge**

The deck bridge was constructed from Micro Engineering steel towers and trusses (Micro Engineering calls their product a viaduct). Figure 4 shows the assembled 50 X 6 ft. and 30 X 4 ft. truss sections.

Figure 5 shows the three 50 X 6 ft. girders and four 30 X 4 ft. truss sections butted together to form the continuous deck span. Small scraps of .040" styrene sheet reinforce the butt joints. Later the styrene will be painted black.

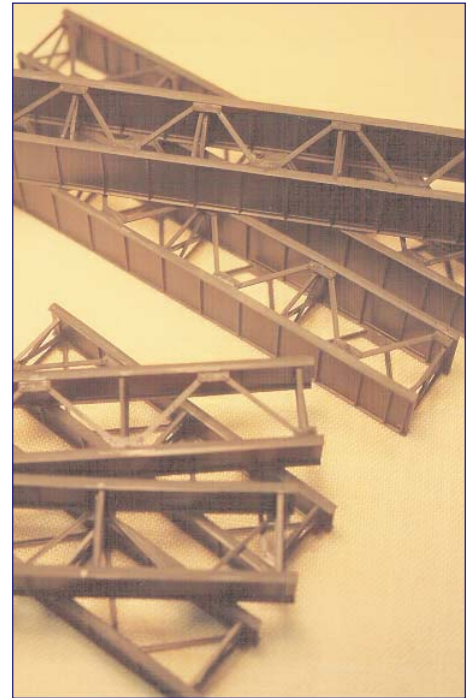
Figure 6 shows one of the six steel towers constructed and topped off with bridge shoes. Scrap styrene squares were glued to the

base of the tower to permit nails to fasten the towers to the concrete footings.

**Tower Alignment**

The towers were aligned on top of the concrete footings using a nylon string and a torpedo level. See Figure 7. After shimming with scrap styrene to keep the parts level to facilitate holding the tower to the footings, the module is ready for installation on the layout.

To complete the deck bridge, the butted trusses were attached to the top of the towers. See Figure 8.



**Figure 4.** Truss sections

**Pratt Through Truss Bridge**

To allow space between the bridge and the tracks it crossed over, I placed two identical Pratt through truss bridges from Central Valley on each end of the deck bridge. This gave variety to the bridge. Figure 9 shows the bed of the truss topped with Walthers bridge track. The bridge track is a little too short for the Central Valley bridge, so I had to extend each with pieces of bridge track.

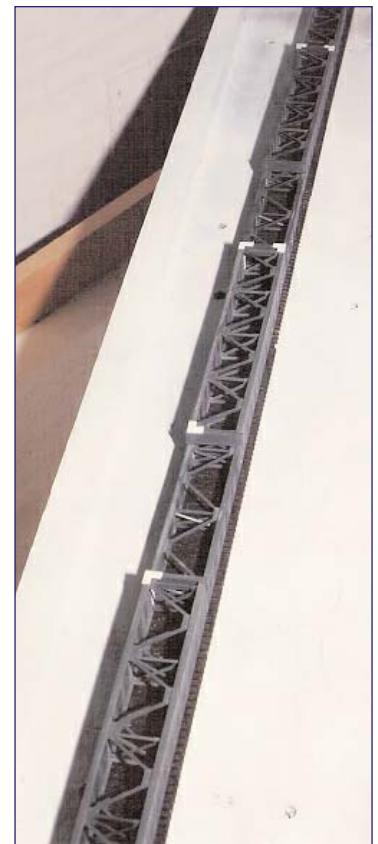
Figure 10 shows the completed Pratt bridge.

**The final steps were to:**

- Place the base module on the layout;
- Place the deck bridge on the concrete piers;
- Place the two Pratt bridges on each end of the deck;
- Attach the track on the layout to the track on the bridges; and
- Do a little touch-up painting here and there.

**Completed Bridge**

See Figure 11.



**Figure 5.** The continuous deck span

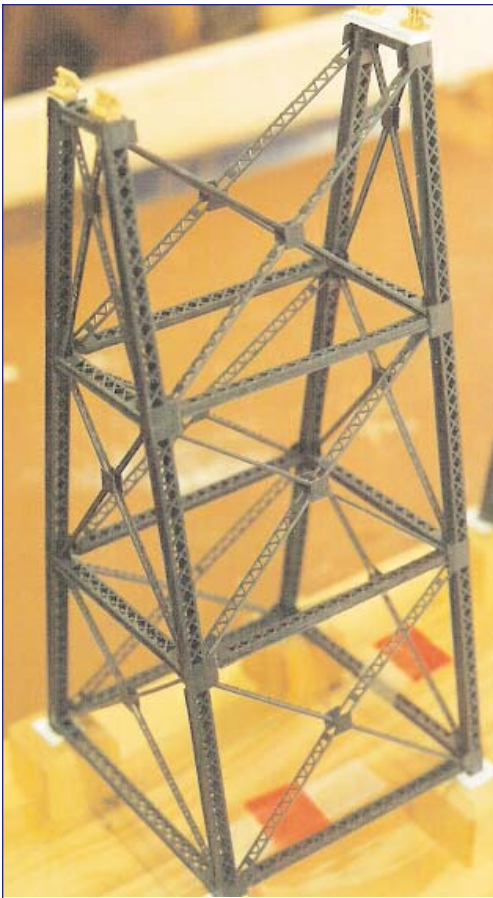


Figure 6. Steel Tower for Deck Bridge

**Materials:**

Paints, Adhesives and Fillers:

- Accuflex** – concrete gray, weathered black, grimy black
- Fxweathering** – dark rust, light rust
- Polly S** – flat aluminum
- Elmer's** carpenters glue
- Elmer's** white glue
- Testors** plastic cement
- Insta-Cure** gap filling CA
- Pliobond** contact cement
- sanding sealer
- wood filler

Kits and Parts:

**Micro Engineering**

- One 150 ft. viaduct kit
- One tall viaduct tower
- Three 50 ft. Code 83 deck sections

Walther's Cat. No.

- 255-75514
- 255-80169
- 255-75503

**Central Valley**

- Two 150 ft. rigid truss bridges
- One bridge tie section
- One box girder section

- 210-1902
- 210-190210
- 210-19025

**Walther's**

- Two bridge track sections

- 948-899



Figure 8. Completed Deck Bridge



Figure 7: Tower alignment

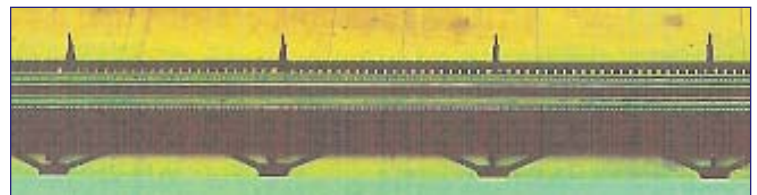


Figure 9. The deck of the Pratt Truss

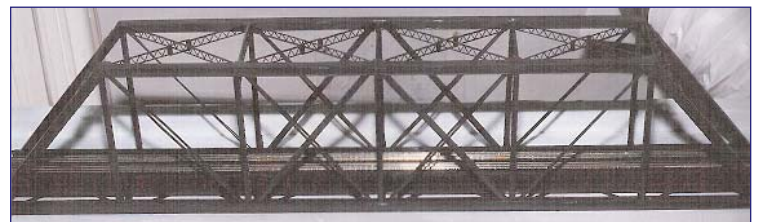


Figure 10. Completed Pratt Truss Bridge

continued on page 6

### Precision Scale

Twenty bridge shoes

595-32024

### Miscellaneous

Code 83 track

1" x 4" pine boards

1/2" plywood sheets

Cedar shingles

### Footnotes:

(1) **Scenery for Model Railroads** by Bill McClananan

(2) **Bridge and Trestle Handbook** by Paul Mallery 

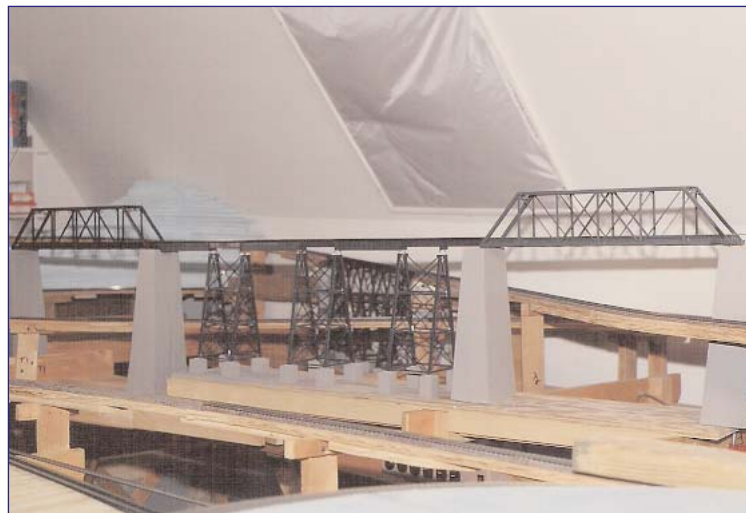


Figure 11. Completed Bridges

# The Cincinnati Contests

By Ray Bilodeau, MER General Contest Chairman

SEVERAL MODELERS from the MER took part in the national model contest held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in early July. Some of our MER judging crew also attended and helped judge the model and module contests. We also inaugurated the James L. Teese Memorial New Modeler Award in Cincinnati. The James Teese Award was given to first time modeler Dennis Murphy. Dennis is from Girdwood, Alaska. He brought a locomotive, the *Burlington Pioneer Zephyr*, to our national contest. Mr. Murphy's entry scored highest in the judged model contest among several other first time modelers. The MER congratulates Dennis and hopes he will continue developing his modeling skills besides telling other novice modelers not to fear entering the national model contest.

Two MER modelers won special awards in Cincinnati. John Johnson, MMR, from Franklin, Virginia won the AP Kitbashing Award for freight cars with his model of a *PRR H21D*. Noll Horan, MMR, from Annandale, Virginia won the National Contest Chairman's Award, for his *20' Wood Ore Car*. In the model contest categories, a first place and merit award was given to Bob Malberti of Wayne, NJ for his diesel locomotives—*PRR F3 A & B units*. John Griffith of Lorton, Virginia won first place and a merit award in off-line structures for his *Steam Powered Saw Mill*. Noll Horan, MMR, won second place and a merit award in off-line structures for his model of a *Saw Filers Shack*. In the category of off-line display (diorama), Douglas Kirkpatrick of Falls Church, Virginia earned a merit award for his model of a scene depicting a *1930's Gas Station*. Congratulations to all of our members who took part in the national contests. Photographs of


these models (all, some, or maybe none) will appear in the August issue of **Scale Rails**, and sometime down the line on the NMRA website.

Dave Messer, MMR, and Rich Newmiller from the Philadelphia division helped judge the model contest; and John Johnson led a team with Noll Horan assisting in judging the modules at the National Train Show. Thanks to all of you.

The National and MER contest staffs are always looking for modelers who might like to try their hand at judging a model contest. As of January 2005, the MER allows modelers to both enter and judge this contest. Judges, however, must excuse themselves from examining the category in which they have entered a model. If anyone wants to become an apprentice judge at the fall convention in Raleigh, please contact me. I will not be giving a clinic on judging, but Dick Landt, our model contest chairman, and I can explain the basics if you drop by the contest room on Friday. If you are interested, we will pair you with an experienced judge on Saturday.

I'd like our experienced judges to think about helping judge the national model contest next year in Philadelphia. If you can set aside the morning and early afternoon Wednesday of convention week and would like to help us, please e-mail or call. Or we can talk in Raleigh.

Have I forgotten someone who entered and won an award or helped judge a contest in Cincinnati? Let me know...I will let our MER members know who you are.

Please write or call if you have any questions or comments: (302) 636-0888; [RaymondBilodeau@aol.com](mailto:RaymondBilodeau@aol.com). 

# Modeling What You Love

By Dr. John O. Pursell

**T**HE GENERAL DECLINING MEMBERSHIP of the NMRA and the “graying” of our hobby has been a topic of conversation among model railroaders for some time now. To most hobbyists, it is apparent that this trend must be reversed if our hobby is to survive. I’m 52, and at many meets I seem to be the youngest guy there! Yet, I can’t help thinking that many of the initiatives and ideas for bringing in younger hobbyists are, to put it bluntly, barking up the wrong tree.

I love trains. And because I love trains, I build train models. Now, one of my good friends loves airplanes, so he builds model airplanes. In other words, I build models of something that I know and love in the real world, as does he. If you love cars or military vehicles or ships, you build models of cars or...well, you get the point. But the downside here is this: most young people today simply know nothing about *railroads*! So why should they build models of something they don’t know? Why should they try to recreate in miniature something that has no relevance to their lives?

When I was growing up in the ‘60s, within an hour of my home I could see trains of the Pennsy, Lehigh Valley, Jersey Central, Reading electric, and a myriad of different types of equipment. I grew quickly to enjoy the variety of cars and engines that I could see close up. Today, in the same area I can see Norfolk Southern and a whole lot of containers. Yards that used to be open for prowling are now, understandably, closed to the public for security and safety reasons. And most young people’s idea of passenger trains is limited to 2-mile tourist railroads with obligatory Santa Claus, Easter Bunny or train robbers. Tourist railroads are fine, but they are in effect a type of museum. And who wants to model a museum?

Few people under 50 years of age have ever seen steam in revenue operation (at least in the U.S.), yet hobby manufacturers continue to turn out train sets with “steam” engines included. Most people under 40 have never seen the vast majority of road names and paint schemes offered in model equipment.

So why should young hobbyists model what they don’t know?

My point is this: instead of trying to attract new model railroaders, perhaps we should be first trying to develop rail fans. Grow a *rail fan* and he or she will, in all likelihood, develop into a *model* railroader as well.

Well, that’s easy to say, but how do we do that? I don’t discount the value of some activities that we now engage in. Setting up a modular railroad at the local shopping mall to attract young people is fine. But watching trains go round and round quickly gets boring and youngsters don’t understand operation. Buying easy-to-build kits for boys and girls clubs is also fine, but do they realize the significance of the miniature they are holding and how it relates to the world at large?

Probably the best thing we can do for younger people is to try to engage them in more prototype activities. In other words, take your kids or grandchildren on a train trip. Sure, it’s slower than flying and probably more expensive, but we all know there’s no

comparison. If commuting to work by train is an option, why not try it once in a while? Let the youngsters in your family see how *prototype* trains are a part of your life.

Naturally, we should support the work of the National Railroad Historical Society and all the other prototype groups. For my part, I’m in the planning stages of a course that I hope to put into the curriculum of our local community college. While it doesn’t have a title yet, it will be something similar to John Armstrong’s “The Railroad: What It Is, What It Does.”

And yes, visit those tourist railroads. But take the time to learn beforehand how and why that line came into being, and then explain it to the youngsters—why it’s there, what it did, and why it was important to that town or city. Don’t rely on the personnel working the train; they’re probably too busy and may not know as much as you!

And most important, be receptive to younger people. Of course they don’t know a Mikado from a feedwater heater. And they won’t if you don’t tell them.

I love trains. I’m not sure why. But I do, and if all of us who love trains try to help younger people understand and love *real* trains, then our train *hobby* will continue to be just fine for many years to come. 📧

## Letters

AFTER 60 YEARS in the hobby (the last ten inactive), I’m afraid that I must, by some means, dispose of The Old Southport Terminal Railroad, a 13 by 17 ft HO layout. In 1982 I had ten busloads (about 400 fans) come to see it from the DC NMRA convention. The whole thing unbolts easily into 2-foot-wide sections. It has over 40 turnouts, about 40 structures and 18 bridges, including a 7-foot-long, 3-track cantilever. No rolling stock is left. Its various pieces traveled all over the country with me as I was transferred from hither to yon and had it under construction for 15 years before the last piece was put in place and the first train ran. I put a classified about this in the NMRA Bulletin and can be contacted at 301-292-3741 or [kgwiman@erols.com](mailto:kgwiman@erols.com).

I hope you can find room for a note about this in **The Local**, or put a note in the MER website.

Thanks,

Ken Wiman, Fort Washington, MD

Paul Hutchins is interested in starting a model railroad club in the Waldorf, Maryland area. Please contact Paul directly at [ff3hutch@aol.com](mailto:ff3hutch@aol.com) or at his address: 11547 Terrace Drive, Waldorf, MD 20602-2742. Initially, Paul would like to form a round robin group to work on different members’ layouts. He works in HO-scale and models CONRAIL/CSX presently. 📧

# Kalmbach Memorial Library – A Primer

By Thomas Mossbeck,  
Research Associate

**T**HIS ARTICLE WILL INTRODUCE the reader to the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) and its resources. After reading this you should have a basic understanding of the library, its contents and services, and how they can be utilized. If you need additional information about the library, or have comments, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Welcome to your Kalmbach Memorial Library, the research library of the National Model Railroad Association. The library houses a unique collection of railroad material, which is used by model railroaders and historians to gain further knowledge of the many facets of the hobby.

There are two basic ways that the library can be used; in person or long distance. You can either come to the library to do the research yourself, or you can have the staff do the work and mail the material to you. To submit a research or photocopy request you can call, write, fax or email, or you can use the online fill-in form on the library's website [www.nmra.org/library](http://www.nmra.org/library). Other contact information is listed at the end of this article.

Requests come in many forms. They can be as simple as a copy of a certain article that you may have heard of or seen a reference to, or they can be as complex as finding out the type of water column used on the Reading, the number of different manufacturers who have produced models of Big Boys, or information on how to scratchbuild live catenary systems. Frequently, questions also involve plans of locomotives and rolling stock, as well as information about a specific location, such as a yard or passenger station.

In order to answer these questions, the staff has a variety of source material from which to get information. I will begin by listing some of the collections and resources available at the library then briefly discuss each one and explain their uses to the modeler.

John Kentlein – H.K. Porter Collection  
Bruce Meyer – EMD Collection  
Photo collection  
Periodical collection  
Car and Locomotive Builder's Cyclopedias  
Official Guide of the Railways  
Official Railway Equipment Registers  
Poor's Manual of Railroads and Moody's Railroads  
Book collection  
Historical society, club, museum and SIG publications  
Video collection

## **JOHN KENTLEIN – H.K. PORTER COLLECTION**

This collection has over 780 builder's photos, catalogs, blueprints and other data chronicling the history of the premier industrial

locomotive manufacturer. If you are interested in Porter locomotives, we have published a reprint of the 13th catalog Porter Steam Locomotives, Light and Heavy, which is available for sale at the library. The book also contains a roster of Porter locomotives including indication of the photos in the collection.

## **BRUCE MEYER – EMD COLLECTION**

If you are looking for paint diagrams of locomotives from GM's Electro-Motive Division, then the Bruce Meyer collection is for you. With over 1,400 EMD paint scheme drawings from various railroads, operation manuals and other diesel locomotive items, this collection is a valuable tool to the model railroader wishing to paint and letter EMD equipment. A complete listing of available diagrams can be found on the library website under "Our Collection", or you may call us and we will be glad to check on the availability of any drawing which may be of interest to you.

## **PHOTO COLLECTION**

There are approximately 100,000 prints, slides and negatives in the library's photo collection, with approximately 25 % currently cataloged. Notable is the Miller Negative Collection, which includes 4,347 images representing 110 railroads. Developed by Harold B. "Dusty" Miller, it covers the years 1934-41 and therefore documents the peak of steam power development. All views are static, and in some cases show the locomotive in stored or partially dismantled condition. The bulk of the images are of western roads, with particular emphasis on the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe and Western Pacific. Some of these photographs were highlighted in the book **Steam on the Feather River Route**, which is still available for sale at the library. We can offer prints of any photo, slide or negative in our collection. If you are interested in finding out if we have the pictures you are interested in, all you have to do is contact us and we will gladly do a search and mail you a list of relevant images for your review.

## **PERIODICAL COLLECTION**

Over 50,000 modeling, prototype and historical society magazines, as well as vintage Railway Age, Railroad Gazette and Railway Review publications make up the Kalmbach Memorial Library's periodical collection. Most are indexed so the material is easy to locate. The periodicals can be used for copying specific articles or as sources for answering research questions. If you would like articles on handlaying turnouts we will be glad to mail you two or three examples, or if you are looking for original primary material about the electrification of the Pennsy, we can look up information in vintage publications describing the efforts to carry out this huge task.



### **CAR AND LOCOMOTIVE BUILDER'S CYCLOPEDIAS**

These are great for finding information about freight and passenger cars, locomotives, and all their components. Information including drawings and photos of brake systems, underframes, boilers, wheels, and everything else that make up the finished products. We have cyclopedias from the 1880s to 1997, so all eras are well represented.

### **OFFICIAL GUIDES OF THE RAILWAYS**

If you are in need of passenger train schedules then this is the publication for you. Our website lists all the years in the collection so you can request specific copies. The publication lists all passenger train stations in North America, and has schedules for all trains serving those stations, sorted by railroad. Many also have maps of their lines.

### **OFFICIAL RAILWAY EQUIPMENT REGISTERS (ORERS)**

Published quarterly, the ORER is a complete listing of freight cars owned by the railroads and private car companies. Cars are sorted by railroad and listed according to their numbers. The following information is provided for each listing: AAR mechanical designation, markings and type of car, numbers, inside and outside dimensions, door dimensions, capacity, and the number of cars in each series. Freight connections and junction points are also listed, as well as a recapitulation of all the freight car equipment for an easy overview of the total number of cars sorted by mechanical designation. The website lists all the ORERs in the library's collection. Again, it is just a matter of contacting us and letting us know which railroad(s) and year(s) you would like copies of, and we will mail them to you. This information is useful when trying to accurately number your freight cars, finding out which cars were owned by a given railroad, and for putting together a prototypically accurate freight car mix on your layout.

### **POOR'S MANUAL OF RAILROADS AND MOODY'S RAILROADS**

These publications have great information on the railroads' finances, track mileage, equipment holdings, traffic, histories and comments on operations and finances. The amount of information varies with the size of the railroad, but everyone should be able to find useful data in these publications.

### **BOOK COLLECTION**

The library is home to more than 7,000 books and manuals, spanning all areas of model and prototype railroading. The books are classified according to the Drury system, a railroad-specific classification system named after former Kalmbach Publishing librarian George Drury. Books can then be categorized by such subject matters as Cars, Engineering, Locomotives, Model Railroading and Model Building, General Railroading, Specific Railroads, Traction, and Foreign (non-North American), just to name a few. We rely heavily on the book collection, as well as the periodical collection when conducting research. The collection is constantly growing due to the generosity of members who donate books they no longer have a use for, and from families who are looking to dispose of a material following a member's passing. We are also

receiving a fair amount of newly published books from publishers who in return get their books announced in the monthly Library Car column in Scale Rails.

### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY, CLUB, MUSEUM AND SIG PUBLICATIONS**


We have more than 275 different publications from railroad historical societies, clubs, museums and NMRA SIGs (special interest groups). We also have an extensive collection of NMRA region and division newsletters. The historical society and SIG publications are great sources for in-depth articles on narrow subject matters. Chances are if an article on a particular subject has appeared in one of these publications, this will be the single best source of information on that subject, excluding books.

### **VIDEO COLLECTION**

Over 500 videos make up the library's video collection. They are divided into three categories: Modeling, Prototype, and Clinics. Just like photos, videos are a great source of inspiration and prototype information to the modeler. Whether you are looking for videos on railroading in general, railroad- or area-specific videos, or modeling and how-to clinics, chances are the video collection has something for you. The best part is that they are all available for rent. The price for members in the United States is \$5.00 per tape, postage paid (note that some titles have two or more tapes, in which cases the price is multiplied accordingly). You can find a complete listing on our website, or we will be glad to mail you a printout if you do not have Internet access. For members outside of the U.S., please contact your local A/V Dispatcher for price and availability.

I hope this article has provided you with insight into the library, its collections and how to use them. In coming issues of this newsletter I will go deeper into these resources with examples of modeling and research applications. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me any time.

#### **Contact information:**

Thomas Mossbeck, Research Associate  
Kalmbach Memorial Library  
4121 Cromwell Road  
Chattanooga, TN 37421  
Phone: 423-894-8144  
Fax: 423-899-4869  
Web: [www.nmra.org/library](http://www.nmra.org/library)  
Email: [kalmibresearch@aol.com](mailto:kalmibresearch@aol.com) 



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MADE IN THE USA

# Pre-dating Neon Signs

By Fred Miller, MMR

**W**E MODELERS ARE GRACED with a wonderful variety of simulated neon advertising signs distributed under the trade name *Light Works USA*® by Miller Engineering LLC out of New Canaan, CT. The company offers signs in many sizes and shapes promoting a variety of businesses and products. Some of the original products, such as the HOTEL sign I have on one of my traction modules, have sequential lighting. The most recent *Light Works USA*® signs have intriguing, multi-color animation.

Some of us, however, model our railroad empires to represent the days before neon was widely used for commonplace advertising. Although Georges Claude and his French company Claude Neon, first introduced neon gas signs to the United States in 1923, selling two signs to a Packard car dealership in Los Angeles, it wasn't until the middle of the next decade that neon signs punctuated the streets in all large cities and bustling towns.

Since my traction modeling focuses on the heyday of trolleys, circa 1925, I had to find a way to pre-date those wonderful neon signs back to the era of incandescent lamp illuminated signs. This article describes how I modified one of my neon signs. The technique is pretty simple and my approach might be of use to other modelers interested in pre-dating some of their signs, or perhaps just creating further variety.

Figure 1 shows a photo of a vertical HOTEL neon sign before I started my project. I experimented by making a grid of clear circles on a black background, using a graphics program on my computer. The circles, of course, were to represent incandescent lamps. I printed the grid on clear film sheets normally used for preparing overhead presentations. Figure 2 shows a sample of that grid. I tried various size clear circles to best represent what would be the

bulb illumination in a sign, by holding the printed film up to the sign. The graphics program enabled me to print the grid at various sizes. I made sure that I settled on a size that simulated rows of lamps that would fit on the letters of the sign.

When I thought I had a good sizing, I printed the grid on clear blank decal paper available from Micro-Mark and other sources. These sheets are made for both ink jet and laser printers. I found I had the best success with a Laser printer but careful use of the ink jet coating spray, also available from Micro-Mark, can make



Figure 1 Original

those printers useful as well. It should be noted that a laser printer can also be used with the ink jet sheets while an ink jet printer cannot be used with the laser sheets. A copy machine could also be used to copy a printed grid onto the decal sheets. Figure 3 shows my printed results.

After my decals were printed, I then applied the decals directly to the sign, cutting out an appropriately sized piece, and using

the usual decal setting solutions.

My approach is to wet the sign with Microscale's *MicroSet*® and then drop the decal film (after sliding off it's wetted backing paper) onto the sign. After positioning the decal I applied

Microscale's *MicroSol*®. When thoroughly dry, I used a sharp No. 11 blade to carefully cut off the excess decal material around the letters of the sign. Although the instructions provided with the neon signs cautions about paint getting on the edges of the sign material, I did not experience any problems. The sign lit up and performed perfectly.

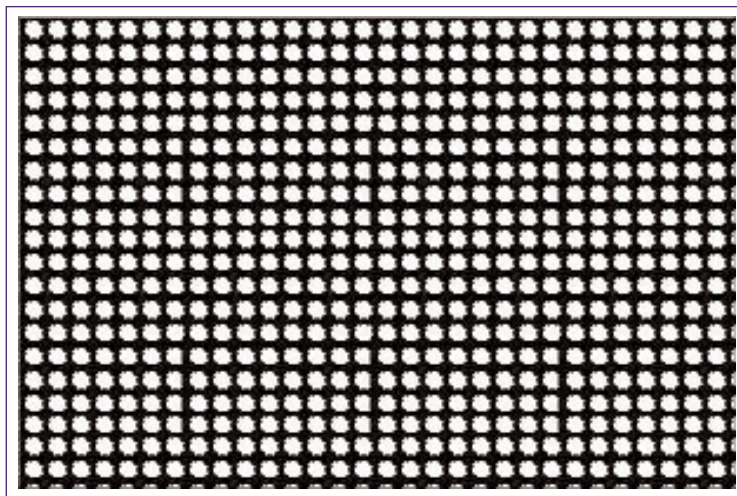


Figure 2 - Lamp Grid

After positioning the decal I applied Microscale's *MicroSol*®. When thoroughly dry, I used a sharp No. 11 blade to carefully cut off the excess decal material around the letters of the sign. Although the instructions provided with the neon signs cautions about paint getting on the edges of the sign material, I did not experience any problems. The sign lit up and performed perfectly.

Figure 4 shows the results after applying the decals to the letters of my HOTEL sign. When the sign is turned on, the light glows through the clear circles and looks great. Now my

1925 signs can make use of Thomas Edison's incandescent lamps, rather than Georges Claude's neon.

Those of you attending the Rails to Raleigh convention this fall can check out how great this hotel sign looks after the decal modification. I hope to have the Gotham City module on display and

will probably talk about it at my Clinic: Light and Sound Animation for Model Railroads. 📄

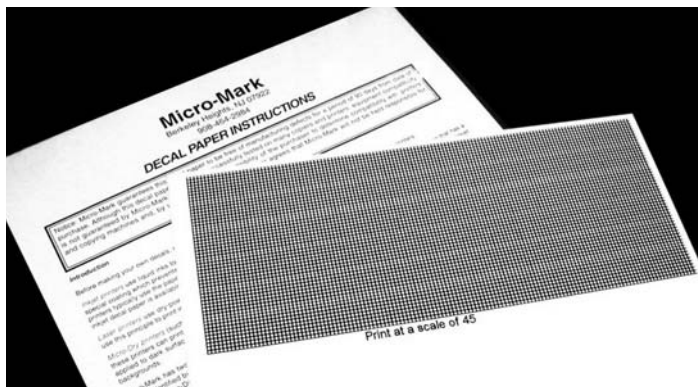


Figure 3 – Printed Decals

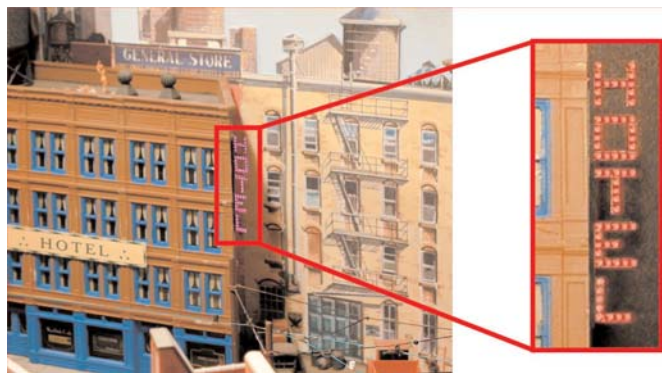


Figure 4 – Modified

# Independence Junction Update

**T**HE PHILADELPHIA DIVISION'S planning for the 2006 National Convention in Philadelphia (July 2 through July 9) is proceeding. Currently the Committee is hard at work planning and coordinating the prototype tours, layout tours, and fan trips. The Prototype Tour team is targeting several tour sites. These are scheduled to include ISG (former Bethlehem – Lukens Steel Mill), Carpenter Steel, PATCO river line & shops, Amtrak (CETEC Northeast Control Center, Bear & Wilmington shops), SEPTA (Frazier, Overbrook & Wayne Junctions Shops, Reading Tech. Society (including the Reading & Northern RR), and the Lehigh Cement Plant.

Our fan trips will include the Strasburg Railroad and the Pennsylvania State Railroad Museum in nearby Lancaster County. Lancaster County is home to the world famous Amish country. There will be more than 30 local layouts open along with Operations Callboard, which allows modelers to sign up to operate a variety of layouts.

## Philadelphia, an Exciting Place to Visit

The convention will highlight the prototype railroading around the Philadelphia area. Philadelphia was most recently home to Conrail and is still central to the Conrail Shared Assets Operation. Both Norfolk Southern (East – West routes) and CSX (North – South routes) serve the city. Both railroads also operate major classification yards in the region.

Passenger rail service is alive and well in the Philadelphia Region. The nation's fourth largest city is home to SEPTA, the nation's third largest passenger rail system. SEPTA operates a



variety of light rail and heavy rail lines, including eight commuter lines all radiating out of Center City. Five traditional trolley routes and two suburban trolley routes along with the subway and elevated system highlight the variety of the area. Amtrak also calls the region home to the Northeast Corridor operations. The CETC Northeast Corridor Control Center is one of the prototype tours included during the week of Independence Junction.

The convention also takes place at the same time as Philadelphia's Welcome America festivities for the Fourth of July holiday. There will be hundreds of free events including fireworks and an old fashioned parade that will pass right in front of the convention hotel. Other local attractions include the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Franklin Institute Science Museum, the Philadelphia Zoo, the Camden Aquarium, and the Battleship New Jersey.

With all the rail and non-rail related activities Independence Junction will be fun for the whole family! Make your plans now to attend! You won't want to miss it!

Registration information should be sent to:  
Independence Junction 2006  
514 Dover Place  
St. Louis, MO 63111-2338  
[www.ij2006.org](http://www.ij2006.org) 📄

**Embassy Suites Hotel  
Raleigh–Durham Research Triangle East  
201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard  
Cary, North Carolina  
October 27 – 30, 2005**



THE CONVENTION REGISTRATION DESK opens at 6:00 PM on Thursday, October 27, with activities (operations call board, clinics and home layout tours) scheduled to start at 6:30 PM, and it runs until 1:00 PM on Sunday, October 30.

Come early for a fun filled weekend! The Raleigh – Cary area is easily accessible from Interstates 40, 85 and 95. RDU International Airport is minutes from the hotel. Amtrak serves both Cary and Raleigh with several daily trains.

Convention activities include model railroading clinics, prototype tours, home and club layout tours, extra fare “hands-on” workshops, layout “operations call board” and modular layout displays.

Model train show on Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Join us for the Saturday evening banquet featuring Steve Barry, Managing Editor of **Railfan & Railroad Magazine** (Carstens Publications), as the guest speaker.

Plus there’s more – Live auction, white elephant sale, NMRA sanctioned model contests, company store and non-rail activities.

Call the Embassy Suites NOW at 1-800-362-2779 to reserve your room. The rate is \$ 89 for one or two people, \$ 119 for three in a room (plus 13% state and local taxes) and includes a full breakfast for each room guest. Convention rate is booking code MID and the reservation deadline for the special rate is September 27th.

**Scheduled Clinics:**

- Making an Urban Backdrop Using the Internet
- Rock Faces from Ceiling Tile
- Submitting Articles to Carstens Publications
- Structure Lighting
- Red Iron – Using Structural Steel to Create Industries and Scenes
- A Railroad You Can Model
- Designing the CSXT Shenandoah Division
- The Cass Scenic Railroad
- Introduction to Resin Casting
- Weathering Techniques with Grits
- Airbrushing Techniques
- How to Weather Wood      • Kits versus Kit Bashing
- Rocks Made Easy – Working with Rock Molds and Coloring with Dyes
- Hand Laying Track      • Weathering
- Making Pine Trees      • Cloud Backdrops
- Light and Sound Animation for Model Railroads
- Scratch Building a Prototype Structure – Yard Office of the East Broad Top RR
- Using Maps to Plan Layouts
- Digital Command Control (DCC) Decoder Installation Basics
- Building Mountains
- Introduction to Freight Car Forwarding Systems
- DCC Design for Modular Layouts
- Layout Wiring

**More clinics coming!**

Extra Fare – Prototype Tours:

- NC DOT Rail Yard, Raleigh
- New Hope Valley Railroad, Bonsal
- NC Transportation Museum, Spencer (includes a round trip ride on Amtrak’s Piedmont)

Extra Fare – Model Railroading:

- Operations Call Board – choice of 4 layouts
- Truss Bridge Building      • Building Tobacco Barns
- Making Trees
- Scratch Building with Wood – O Scale
- Fine Scale Animation for Operation

Extra Fare – Non-Rail:

- Silk Floral Arrangements      • Creative Memories (Scrapbook)

**Special Modeling Contests:**

- “Anything But A Station” – using an Atlas passenger station kit (N, HO or O), build something “other” than a station – contest and award sponsored by the Carolina Piedmont Division
- “Barn” – best judged barn wins the “Pride of Dixie” award presented by the James River Division

Model train show on Saturday and Sunday at the Embassy Suites!  
Show is open to the public.

**Layout Tours:**

More than 25 home and club layouts – N, HO, O, Garden Railway and Live Steam are on the schedule for self-guided tours (various times from Thursday evening – Sunday afternoon).


**For more information:** Visit the web site: [www.trainweb.org/cpd13/mer05](http://www.trainweb.org/cpd13/mer05).

**Contact the registrar:** P.J. Mattson at 856-467-0421 or [pjmattson@comcast.net](mailto:pjmattson@comcast.net). 

**\*\*\* RAILS TO RALEIGH CONVENTION NOTICE \*\*\***

As of August 25, the Embassy Suites Hotel, home to the Rails to Raleigh Convention, is sold out for Thursday night, October 27, 2005. There are still plenty of rooms available at the Embassy Suites for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights.

For Thursday night, October 27, please consider one of the other hotels close to the Embassy Suites listed on the "Hotel" page of the Rails to Raleigh web site at <http://www.trainweb.org/cpd13/mer05/hotel.html>

*John Wallis, Chairman, Rails to Raleigh* 

**National Model Railroad Association  
Mid-Eastern Region  
2005 Annual Convention  
October 27 – 30, 2005**

**REGISTRATION FORM**

New registration? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Updated registration? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

If updated, enter registration number: \_\_\_\_\_

Names to appear on registration badges:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of primary registrant: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, ZIP Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
NMRA Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_ MER Number: \_\_\_\_\_

	Quantity	Fee	Total Cost
Full Registration, NMRA Member	_____	\$ 50.00	_____
Full Registration, NMRA Member, paid by September 15th	_____	\$ 45.00	_____
Full Registration, Non-NMRA Member	_____	\$ 60.00	_____
Spouse Registration	_____	\$ 15.00	_____
Child (Ages 6 – 16) registration, Per Child	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
Single Day Registration, Per Day, NMRA Member	_____	\$ 30.00	_____
Single Day Registration, Per Day, Non-NMRA Member	_____	\$ 35.00	_____

Extra Fare Selections:

<b>101</b> Operations Call Board (Enter preferred time slots below)	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>201</b> NCDOT Rail Yard Tour	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>202</b> New Hope Valley Railroad Tour	_____	\$ 10.00	_____
<b>301</b> NC Transportation Museum Tour (Spencer) with Amtrak round trip	_____	\$ 48.00	_____
<b>401</b> Banquet – Saturday evening (per person)	_____	\$ 40.00	_____
<b>501</b> Company Store - HO Scale “Durham & Southern” Stewart 70-ton, 14-panel, 3-bay hopper (6 numbers available)	_____	\$ 15.00	_____
<b>502</b> Company Store – Shipping for Durham & Southern hopper cars (If not picked up at the convention)	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>601</b> Extra Fare Clinic: Scratch Building with Wood	_____	\$ 7.50	_____
<b>602</b> Extra Fare Clinic: Truss Bridge Building	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>603</b> Extra Fare Clinic: Building Tobacco Barns	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>604</b> Extra Fare Clinic: Making Trees	_____	\$ 6.00	_____
<b>605</b> Extra Fare Clinic: (Non-Rail): Silk Floral Arrangements	_____	\$ 20.00	_____
<b>606</b> Extra Fare Clinic: Fine Scale Animation for Operation	_____	\$ 5.00	_____
<b>607</b> Extra Fare Clinic: (Non-Rail): Creative Memories (Scrap Book)	_____	\$ 5.00	_____

Operations Call Board Time Preference: Rank 1 to 5, with 1 being the most and 5 the least preferred times

\_\_\_\_ Thursday 7–10 PM \_\_\_\_ Friday 9–10 AM \_\_\_\_ Friday 2–5 PM \_\_\_\_ Friday 7–10 PM \_\_\_\_ Saturday 2–5 PM

**Mail the completed registration form with a check or money order payable to “Rails to Raleigh ’05” to:**

**Rails to Raleigh  
P.O. Box 447  
Swedesboro, NJ 08085**

- **Payment must accompany registration form.** Credit cards are not accepted, only a check or a money order. Returned checks will not be run through a second time. Follow up payment must be a money order or a cashier’s check or payment in cash at the convention.
- **DO NOT** enclose hotel registration requests. Contact the Embassy Suites directly at 800-362-2779 to reserve your accommodations. The hotel booking code is “MID” for the \$ 89 rate.
- If you pre-register and need to cancel later, a full refund will be given only if your request is received in writing by October 15, 2005. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks to process your refund request.
- **DO NOT** mail a registration form after October 15, 2005. Please register at the door.
- **DO NOT** staple your check or money order to your registration form.
- **Call** 856-467-3385 for a recorded message of current changes and updates. All activities are subject to change, substitution, addition or cancellation.

**OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Registration #: \_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation Sent: \_\_\_\_\_

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These 40' Western Maryland N-Scale box cars are Micro-Train bodies custom painted by The Freight Yard. They are box car red with prominent white "speed lettering".



P.L. MATISON (C)



These 40' RF&P PS-1 HO-Scale box cars are Accurail bodies, custom painted by Accurail. They are blue with aluminum-colored doors, and feature prominent white lettering.



This HO-scale building kit is designed around E.L. Moore's "Bunn's Seed & Feed" building which appeared in the 8/73 issue of Model Railroader. The kit features laser cut wood components as well as other parts and castings.

WESTERN MD. N-SCALE CARS	QUANTITY	MEMBER PRICE*	NON-MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
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#29299	_____	\$19.95	\$23.95	\$_____
Shipping \$2.50 for first car, + \$1.50 for each additional car				\$_____

RF&P HO-SCALE CARS	QUANTITY	MEMBER PRICE*	NON-MEMBER PRICE	TOTAL
#2836	_____	\$11.95	\$14.95	\$_____
#2874	_____	\$11.95	\$14.95	\$_____
Shipping: \$2.00 for each car (not for each order)				\$_____

\* Please list your MER Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

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**MER HO-SCALE STRUCTURE KIT\*\***  
("Bunn's Seed & Feed") QUANTITY \_\_\_\_\_ \$75.00 postpaid \$\_\_\_\_\_

**THE LOCALS\*\*** —  
(all issues 1997-2004) on CD QUANTITY \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 postpaid \$\_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Only available to MER members.

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9 Roosevelt Avenue  
Wilmington, DE 19804-3044

# Achievement Program Update

By *Charlie Flichman*  
MER AP Manager

Since the last report in **The Local**, the following Achievement Program certificates were earned and awarded:

## Division 2 - Potomac

David R. Arday – Gold Spike  
Glenn C. Paulson – Gold Spike  
Charles W. Day – Scenery  
Douglas Kirkpatrick – Dispatcher  
William R. Roman – Association Volunteer

## Division 3 - Philadelphia

David S. Bucher – Dispatcher

## Division 11 – Susquehanna

Robert O. Blecher – Scenery  
Robert W. Charles – Scenery  
Robert W. Charles – MMR #355

## Division 12 – Carolina Southern

Rick Knight, III – Association Volunteer

## Division 13 – Carolina Piedmont

David Derway – Author

In a perfect world, this information will appear soon in **Scale Rails**. This should not deter you from giving recognition locally. Normally you will be able to recognize AP accomplishments long before the names appear in **Scale Rails**.

**Bravo, Bravo, Congratulations  
to the MER's newest MMR,  
Robert W. Charles**

On June 9, three MMRs traveled to the home of Bob Charles to judge the scenery on his layout. For his work, Bob was awarded his seventh AP Certificate and also qualified for Master Model Railroader #355. Bob's other certificates are Master Builder – Cars, Model Railroad Engineer – Civil, Chief Dispatcher, Association Official, Association Volunteer and Model Railroad Author. As I am sure you all know Bob is a Past President of the NMRA. Bob's achievements were recognized at the national convention in Cincinnati in July, but the presentation of his MMR Certificate and Wall Plaque will be at the MER Fall Convention banquet in Cary, NC. I know the news is out, but please offer Bob your congratulations. 📧

# Share Your Expertise

(and earn some AP Points at the same time!)

## Present a Clinic

**P**LAN AHEAD and share your knowledge in an area you enjoy. We need your expertise in supporting our upcoming Mid-Eastern Regional Convention to be held October 27–30, 2005 in Cary, North Carolina. Clinic times are wide open and preferences will be given on a first come, first serve basis. Presentations will be a minimum of one hour and can be longer depending on the subject and presentation format. A handout is required providing a clinic outline and important points. Certificates of Appreciation will be presented to clinicians at the conclusion of their clinics.

Interested in the NMRA Author Achievement Certificate? You can receive four (4) points for your Clinic. A handout must be a part of the presentation and must be included in the certificate application. If you can present your clinic a second time or more, you can receive two (2) points each time towards the Association Volunteer Certificate.

Please feel free to call or e-mail me about presenting your clinic at the “Rails to Raleigh” Convention. Be a participant and help make our convention a rousing success. My e-mail address is [g249sing@hotmail.com](mailto:g249sing@hotmail.com), or call me at (919)-931-0946.

Thanks.

Gene Sing 📧

**2006 NMRA National  
Convention  
July 2-9, 2006**



Clinics, model contests, auctions, tours, non-rail activities, train & trade show, many local activities

**[www.ij2006.org](http://www.ij2006.org) for info**

The Mid-Eastern Region Inc., NMRA  
 An IRS Tax Exempt Organization  
 Business Manager  
 8960 Challis Hill Lane  
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**Make checks payable to the Mid-Eastern Region**

## \*CALLBOARD

### Coming Events

**October 29-30, 2005, 10 AM to 4 PM both days.** Tidewater Division, MER, NMRA 15th annual show and sale. Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. Admission: adults \$5.00, children under 12 w/adult free. Scouts in uniform with leaders—free. One dollar from every paid admission will go to *Toys for Tots*. Operating trains in N, HO, S, O, & G gauges, plus Lego trains, train doctor, test tracks, and Operation Lifesaver. Vendors with over 175 tables. Scouts can work on model railroading merit badge. Info: call Steve Prescott 757-426-2811 or email at [nawneycreek@msn.com](mailto:nawneycreek@msn.com).

**November 26-27, 2005, 12 Noon to 4 PM both days.** Cheltenham Model Railroad Club open house. 8000 Old York Road (at railroad bridge), adjacent to Elkins Park Square, Elkins Park, PA 19027. Admission free, but donations gratefully accepted. For more information, call (215)-635-9747, go to our web site: <http://www.cheltenhammrrc.org>. Or contact Bruce Binder at (215)-722-4542.

**January 7-8 and 14-15, 2006, 12 Noon to 4 PM all days.** (Snow dates: January 21-22, 2006). Cheltenham Model Railroad Club open house. 8000 Old York Road (at railroad bridge), adjacent to Elkins Park Square, Elkins Park, PA 19027. Admission free, but donations gratefully accepted. For more information, call (215)-635-9747, go to our web site: <http://www.cheltenhammrrc.org>. Or contact Bruce Binder at (215)-722-4542.