

The Local

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Tough Rock Walls

Article and Photographs by Dave Lynam, MMR

WHILE I WAS GROWING UP, I'd see photos of layouts that had rock walls to the floor. I thought that was really cool to walk into the canyon to run the trains. Now that I have had an opportunity to build my layout, I wanted to do the same. The only problem was I couldn't find an article to tell me how to do it.

There were numerous captions on the photos commenting on the awesome effect, but not the construction direction I was looking for. What's worse, it seemed the only way to do it was with plaster rock castings. I wanted a wall that wouldn't constantly be chipping and breaking when operators or open house guests bumped into it. And you know they will! Besides the thought of mixing that much plaster was not appealing, neither was the prospect of repainting all those little chip spots that would occur.

I thought about the poly foam rocks that you can get, but being of Scotch-Irish lineage, I wasn't going to spend that kind of money. I experimented for a month trying to make my own foam rocks but failed to get one descent looking rock. The following is how I conquered the problem.

Borrowing some ideas from Dave Frarry's latest scenery book, I

made some plywood profile boards to give me the general shape of the mountain. In this case I was working on a peninsula. Next, I stapled on some plastic chicken wire fencing. Then I applied some spray-n-set foam insulation. I just started at the bottom and went back and forth building up the layers, and then I let it cure

overnight. The foam will expand a bit into the chicken wire locking in place. I remembered a very old, "poor man's rock wall" article in a 1950's Model Railroader using crumpled up brown paper bags. I had a roll of builder's brown paper I had picked up at the home improvement store and it was of similar weight and density as a paper bag. Besides, all our grocery bags were plastic!

I crumpled up a piece and pondered how to attach it to the foam. I "borrowed" a hot glue gun and commandeered the entire supply of glue sticks

only to discover that the glue wouldn't stick to the foam! Not to be defeated this close to success; I used a sure form tool to scrape off the glossy coating on the foam where I wanted to glue. Suc-

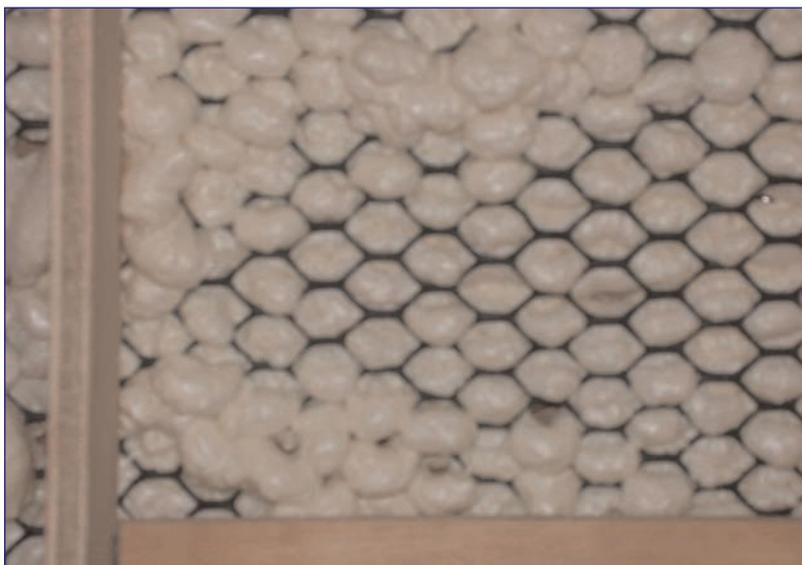


Photo 1: The plywood formers and plastic chicken wire support as the spray foam expands.

continued on page 4

Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager

The MER Officers and staff would like to *Keep in Touch* with you. We maintain a membership database somewhat matched to the National Headquarters membership roster. Our database is used for many tasks including: mailing labels for **The Local**; email lists to distribute the **eLocal**; annual voting eligibility and Ballot mailing labels; updated membership information for the Division officers; and to satisfy a number of information requests about our membership including possible new Divisions or Division extensions.

However, in order to satisfy all of those *Keep in Touch* requirements, we need your help in keeping our information about you up to date. Of particular importance is letting us know when you move. Mail returned by the Post Office means unnecessary additional MER funds are needed for return fees and re-mailing postage. So please remember to email, call or send a letter to let us know of your changes. Use the information to the right of this column for my contact numbers addresses. By the way, if you would like, I can forward your changes on to National Headquarters so one notification will cover both needs. Just let me know.

And speaking about mailing labels, you, along with 2256 other NMRA/MER members, will have recently received the Annual MER Ballot. This year the Board elected to put a bit more information in the ballot mailing because it is the only mailing we have to all those NMRA members living in the MER territory but not receiving **The Local**. That accounts for nearly 1400 members who have not been *in Touch*. If you know of any such members from your Division, club or other associations, why not clue them into the benefits of receiving **The Local**, either paper or electronic.

As always *Keep in Touch* with any questions or changes in your subscriptions or addresses. 

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.

The MER website is www.mer-nmra.org

Looking for something to do in the Virginia Area on September 23 and 24, 2006? Why not visit:

Danville's Old 97 Rail Days

Danville Science Center
Old Pepsi Building
The Crossing at the Dan
677 Craghead Street, Danville, VA 24541
Phone: (434) 791-5160, Website: www.dsc.smv.org.

Hours:

Saturday, September 23: 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM
Sunday, September 24: 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM

The show will feature an operating NTRAK layout and a display of railroad-related items and other model railroad exhibits. This event is sponsored by the Danville Science Center with the participation of Richmond Area NTRAK, Lynchburg Area N-Scalers, North Raleigh Model Railroad Club, New Jersey Southern and South Hampton Roads NTRAK. 

Positions Available

- **Official Photographer**
(primarily you shoot model contest photos)

Please contact Clint Hyde to apply, chyde@cox.net. 

HEY MEMBERS, are you too busy modeling, operating, scratch building and even kit bashing railroads to print and then whittle away precious minutes filling out the Achievement Program forms??? Simplify your life with the batch of zip files MER Business Manager Fred Miller has put together. Simply download, unzip and use MSWord to fill them out. Visit <http://www.olimpia.com/mer/AP.htm> and look for the link.

CALLING ALL READERS: We need to show our support for the NMRA and specifically the MER by producing the best and most informative newsletter possible, to do that I need your help. Our newsletter is called **The Local**, because local people benefit from reading it every time. Please write and submit any articles (with or without photos) to the editor via e-mail: stevespressrr@yahoo.com or via the snail mail address listed on page 2. Don't pass up this great opportunity to help out and earn AP points at the same time!!

President's Column

By Clint Hyde

LAST TIME I ANNOUNCED the challenge model for 2007 is to make a plausible articulated freight car, a la the "Cement-tipede". I might even make an attempt myself. I think an articulated traction loco, like the green-line subway cars from Boston's T, would be funky. We don't seem to get much traction stuff entered in conventions, nationally or locally. Of course, this lets Fred Miller sweep things uncontested.

The MER Business Meeting for 2006 is set for Saturday, October 28. It will be held following the first day of the Tidewater Train show and a pizza dinner. Looks like a room will cost \$49 or \$69, thereabouts. The MER website will have a link to the schedule as I get it finalized, but don't expect too much change from below:

The train show starts at 10 AM.

MER Board meeting 1 - 4 PM.

Two layout tours in the afternoon.

Private time at the show. (Post-closing to the public, I hope.)

Pizza dinner around 5 PM.

MER Business Meeting 5:30-6 PM.

Layout tours 7 - 9 PM. (Another two, I hope.)

At the Philadelphia NMRA National Convention, the Board voted to add New Castle County, Delaware, to the Philadelphia Division. Congratulations! There will be a joint meet between Philadelphia and New Jersey Divisions in Wilmington, DE, on November 4th. Noll and I are planning to go. If you know of any other gatherings that we ought to go to, let me know.

On a more serious note; MER Member Pete Shatswell died at the end of July. He was very active in the James River Division, and was an avid photographer. He put in a huge effort in the organizing of the 2002 Richmond Rails convention. Pete was one of the very first people I met in MER outside the Potomac Division. Sorry to see him pass.

Looks like the MER history I was hoping for will be in my hands by the time you read this. If you know any details about when all the various MER Divisions were chartered, including those now inactive, I'd like to know. 

Visit Our Website

Visit the MER's website for all the latest information, contacts and archives: www.mer-nmra.org.

cess! The hot glue sunk into the pores of the foam and the paper making a great bond! Other tricks I discovered were to crumple the paper in three directions; north to south, east to west and



Photo 2: Foaming is completed.

diagonally. This made the paper soft enough to conform to the undulations of the foam. The next trick was to tear a ragged edge on the paper to hide the seams between sheets. Be sure to use a flat stick like a paint stirrer to smooth the hot glue seams, as the hot glue will burn the tar out of you!!

Now that the paper is applied it's time for paint!! My buddy



Photo 3: Hot glueing paper to the foam.

Don Bullock, suggested I use the drywall primer paint since I was going to be painting raw paper. So I picked up a gallon and had it tinted to my basic rock color. Next, I added some acrylic craft colors to add variations in the rocks, followed by some black wash and I was done. The result was a nearly indestructible rock wall.



Photo 4: Paper is finished being applied, now has the base coat of paint.

I have actually kicked it with no damage!! My new puppy demonstrated the edges near the floor are susceptible to tearing. However, a simple paper patch and paint touch up fixed that in a jiffy! I've even made an out cropping for a future tree ledge by gluing on a "bump" of paper, paint it in, etc. I'm very pleased with this easy to do rock-work and it's very easy maintenance! If you have a spot on your layout for some drama give this a try!

DAVE LYNAM, MMR, lives in the Carolina Piedmont Division 13 and has been modeling since grade school. He models HO and HO_{N3} scales. 🏠

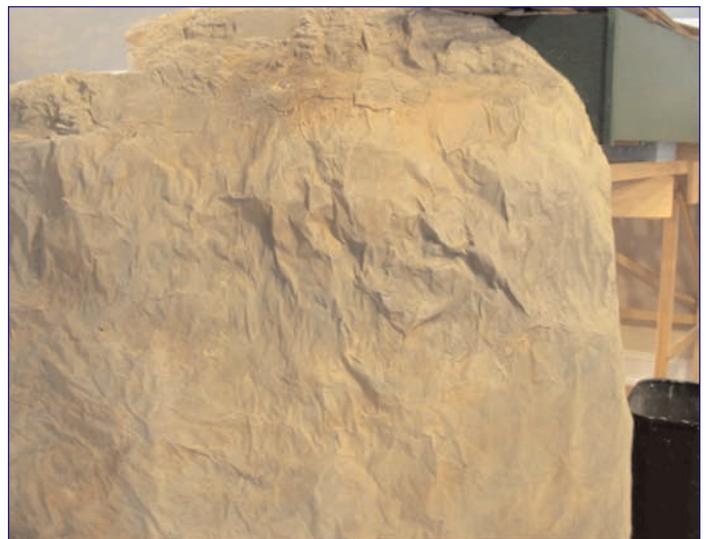


Photo 5: Finished rock walls with weathering.

How to Make Cable Reels

Article and Photographs By Larry Lambertson

SINCE YOU CAN EASILY buy cable reels of various sizes, why would you want to make your own? For me it's simple. I cannot make items cast in white metal, plastic, resin, etc. look like unpainted wood. I've tried off and on for years; following a myriad of magazine articles on the subject. Oh, they look all right at a distance; but no good up close and personal. So the answer was to make my own out of real wood.

Looking at a prototype cable reel reveals a simplistic construction. A cylindrical core made up of wood slats faced with laminated, circular plate on each end, and held together by four or more bolts.

I started with scale 1" x 4" lumber that I pre-weathered. Pre-weathering is important unless you want the reel to look new. Glue oozing between the boards during assembly will not take weathering after construction. The reel I made is a little less than 4 scale feet in diameter.

1. Begin by cutting the pre-weathered 1" x 4"s into a bunch of pieces somewhat over the desired diameter.

2. Lay sufficient boards side-by-side in a squaring jig until the desired diameter is slightly exceeded, and weight the outer end to hold them together snugly.



Figure 2:

3. Coat one side with a thin layer of white glue and place on top of the first layer, perpendicular to them; press into place. See figure 1.

4. Continue step 3 until the desired diameter is slightly exceeded. Weight the finished laminated plate until dry (overnight).

5. Make an additional plate following steps 1 through 4, above.



Figure 1:

6. Using a simple student's compass, scribe a circle the diameter of the desired reel on each of the faceplates.

7. Drill out the indentation left by the compass needlepoint. Whatever size drill bit looks appropriate.

8. Use a hobby knife and whittle away the lumber outside the inscribed circle. See figure 2.

9. Cut a piece of dowel rod for the center core. I used 1/4". Mark the center of the end and, using the same size drill used for the faceplates, drill a hole completely through the axis of the core. See figure 3.



Figure 3:

10. Using a small nail or a piece of wire through the holes of all three pieces for alignment, glue the faceplates to the core.

11. Wrap with a few layers of sewing thread, model ship rigging, or small wire then glue in place and you are done. See figure 4.

EDITORS NOTE: This article appeared in *The Callboard* newsletter in May 2006 and is reprinted with permission from the author. *The Callboard* is the official publication of the Tidewater Division 4.

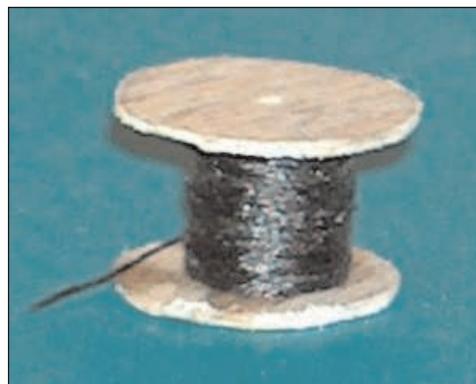


Figure 4:

LARRY LAMBERTSON lives in the Tidewater Division 4 and has been active off and on for a long time but recently has become more active since his interest in modeling structures.

Larry models HO scale.. 

Painting Your Own Backdrops

Article and photos by Al Bigelow

Many of us would like to paint our own backdrops because we can illustrate the scene to meet our needs.

I actually started by taking two printed backdrops separated by about eight feet of backdrop someone else had painted. I found that I could fill in the space by trying to match this scene on both sides. Then by painting on both scenes I could blend them into what I was painting.

Starting from scratch, armed only with some photos and an idea of what you are trying to end up with, try a small area about 4-8 feet. Paint this area a sky blue. I used Slate Blue available at most stores, and plain white for mixing. Start with blue at the top and go down about halfway to your imaginary horizon.

Then, while the paint is still wet, add white at your horizon line. Then with a dry flat brush blend the white in upwards towards the blue. After this is dry you can sketch in hills with pencil or chalk. Don't use markers or pens as they will bleed through. Once these hills are sketched in you can begin painting them. I use inexpensive acrylic craft paint available at a craft store, i.e. Hobby Lobby. Using medium green with a flat brush about one-

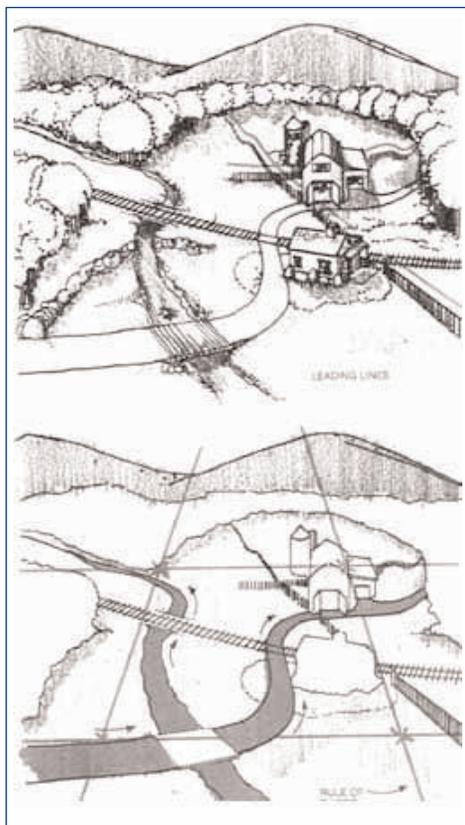


Figure 2: Try to place roads and rivers at angles to avoid making it appear you are running into a dead end.



Figure 1: The road continues on and blends into the background.

half to one inch wide, lightly fill in the top of the hills with a scrubbing motion, moving down about half the length of the hills and allowing the brush to run out of paint towards the bottom. Don't try to cover the area completely or go down to the bottom where the backdrop meets the layout. Then with a darker green and the same brush, repeat the process below the first set of hills again allowing the brush to run out of paint, leaving a lighter area. This gives the perspective of different heights of hills and distance.

In Figure 1, a road on the layout needed to disappear into the hills behind. I mixed a black and white until it matched the layout road surface. When sketching your scene try to place roads and rivers at angles to avoid making it appear you are running into a dead end. See Figure 2. The paint will usually dry to about the

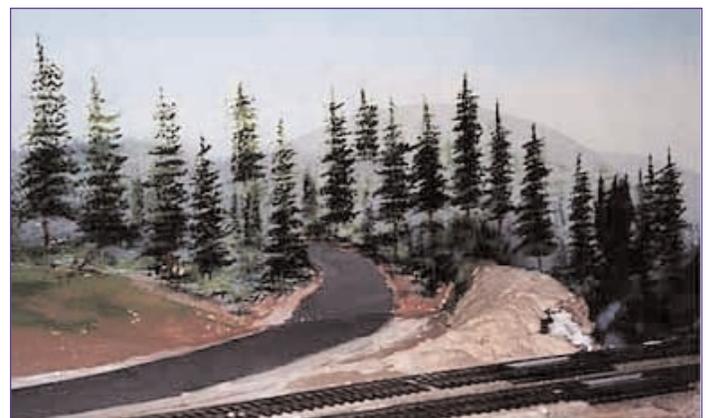


Figure 3: When painting the backdrop, be sure to match the paint colors to the scenery in front.

same color as it is when wet. I made an "S" shape road starting slightly smaller than the foreground and narrowing the farther back I went, allowing the brush to fade to lighter gray as it runs out of paint. This gives the appearance of distance.

Then I painted a culvert under the road with guard posts, placed a small stream running through the culvert, getting wider towards the foreground. Then I painted in a few pine trees and bushes to complete the scene using appropriate colors.

Once done, I lightly over-sprayed the tops of the hills with white acrylic spray paint to create a misty, hazy look. Figure 3

illustrates an example of the same effect. Using the same paint from the backdrop, be sure to blend it into the foreground.

EDITORS NOTE: This appeared in the Fall 2005 issue of **The Hotbox**, and is reprinted with the author's permission. **The Hotbox** is the publication of the North Central Region. 

You're Invited

ON FRIDAY and Saturday, October 13 and 14, 2006 you're invited to gather at Silvermont Mansion in Brevard, North Carolina for Narrow Trak 06. This annual convention will feature camaraderie, seminars, manufacturer displays, operating modules, popular-vote model contest and Saturday night entertainment. Narrow Trak 06 will be held on Friday, October 13, 2006, from 2 PM to 10 PM and Saturday, October 14, 2006 from 8:30 AM to 10 PM.

Seminars, as usual will feature a mix of prototype and modeling. On Saturday night, performing exclusively for us will be Roy Chapman and his group, True Blue Grass (with special guest, Clarence Brown).

Some of our presenters and the subject include:

- Jerry Ledford, Champion Paper Co., Robbinsville, N.C.
- Ben Bartlett, Scratch building a SR&RL bridge.
- Noll Horan, MMR, Scratch building trees

The popular-vote model contest will consist of:

- Motive power
- Rolling stock
- Structure
- Diorama
- The coveted Beloved Founder Award

For further information or if you wish to receive a registration form (specify individual, modules or manufacturer), send an SASE to:

Narrow Trak 06
1004 Old Hendersonville Hwy., Ste 104
Brevard, NC 28712-3120

FINE PRINT NOTICE: There will not be individual selling of any products, goods or services at Silvermont Mansion to include the interior, exterior or grounds. There will be a literature table for non-commercial use.

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 1 – New Jersey

John Rahenkamp – *Chief Dispatcher*

John Rahenkamp – *Author*

Division 13 - Carolina Piedmont

John Wallis – *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**. 

Train Humor

A passenger train is creeping along, slowly. Finally it creaks to a halt. A passenger sees a conductor walking by outside.

"What's going on?" she yells out the window.

"Cow on the track!" replies the conductor.

Ten minutes later, the train resumes its slow pace.

Within five minutes, however, it stops again. The woman sees the same conductor walk again.

She leans out the window and yells, "What happened? Did we catch up with the cow again?" 



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MADE IN THE USA

A Series of Articles: Modeling on the Cheap

Article and Photographs by Rick Knight

BOTH OF MY MATERNAL grandparents were born in Scotland, so my thriftiness is well settled. My Knight Bros. & Dad Railroad occupies a 24 foot by 24 foot garage and has (currently) about twelve hundred feet of

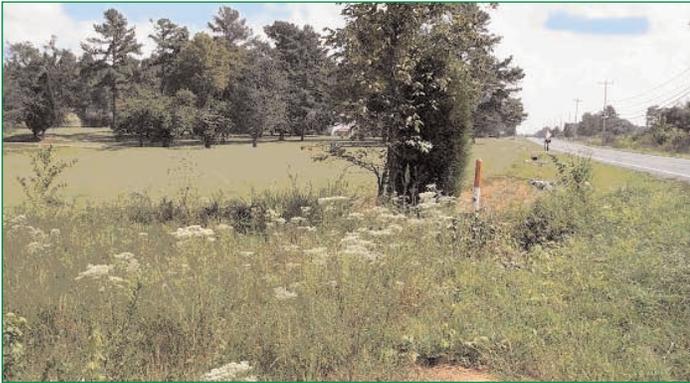


Photo 1: Nirvana! An ideal crop of 'trees' waiting for the picking.

track on three levels—so I've had some room to practice what I preach. Let me share with you a couple of things I've done to save money.

First: TREES

The KBDRR models the Norfolk Southern "S" Line—which runs from Salisbury to Asheville. Taking full measure of our "artistic license" privileges, mine runs from Spencer to Asheville. The line covers a lot of rural ground, much of it heavily wooded. The cover story of current issue of **TRAINS** magazine is about part of the "S" Line and accurately illustrates the terrain. So I needed a LOT of trees! For selected spots, I've used some Woodland Scenics trees and several bags of "Super Trees" from the Scenic Express folks. But, for the bulk of the forested areas, I've turned to weeds. I don't know the exact name of the particular weed that I use, despite questioning a lot of sources. What I do know is that it is prolific in our area—I live just north of Charlotte, North Carolina. The weed grows to a height of three to four feet and begins to bloom at Labor Day. See photo 1.

I've scoped out the local area and found several places where I can gather a huge amount of weeds with little trou-

ble—places that have a spot nearby to pull the car off the road. One of my "finds" is a stretch along the Norfolk Southern line running parallel to NC Highway 115. There's a strip of land running between the rail bed and the roadway that seems to be an ideal breeding ground for the weed. Starting in mid-August, I make a run or two up and down this stretch of road every couple of days, checking the progress of the weeds. See photo 2. And it's just a coincidence that the time of day that I select for this "chore" is about noontime, when the local is working the sidings in Huntersville and Cornelius.

The ideal harvest time seems to be about Labor Day weekend—just before the tops of the weeds burst into a crown of white flowers. I wear a decent pair of hiking boots and long pants and a long sleeved shirt—there's no telling what else is sharing space with my weeds. A pair of decent work gloves and a sharp knife (I'm partial to the one in my Leatherman, which fits on my belt.) rounds out the equipment.

I'll cut the weeds about six to eight inches up from the

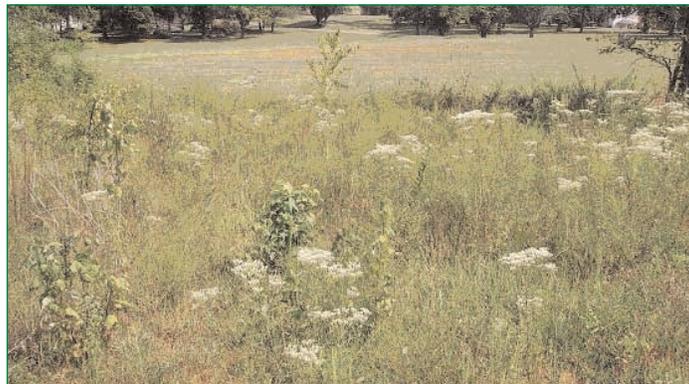


Photo 2: Yes, it looks like "Queen Anne's Lace," but it's not.

ground, so I get a good long stem to work with until I get to the end product. See photo 3. When the trunk (and sometimes the back seat, too) of my car is full, I'll head home. With a spool of floral wire in hand, I start working the crop. I'll take six or eight stems and wind a piece of wire around them, leaving a short "tail" of wire which I then staple to one of the crossbars on the fence in my back yard. I'll leave the weeds to dry for several days,

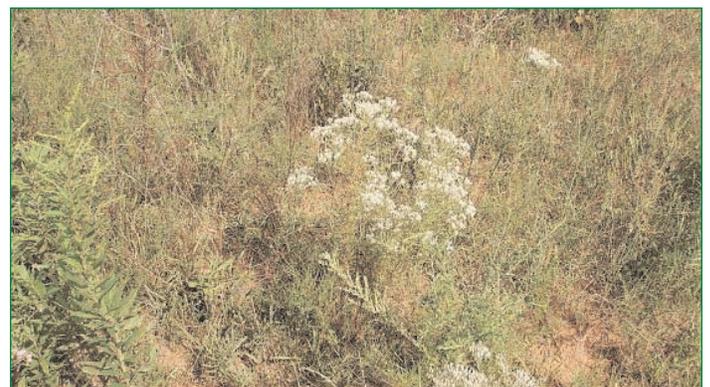


Photo 3: Who says long weeds aren't useful?



Photo 4: A bumper crop drying on the fence.

maybe even a week, depending on the weather. See photo 4.

Meanwhile, I've made a run to the Wal-Mart for a couple of boxes of cans of spray paint. They have a very inexpensive line that goes for \$.94 per can. I usually get a case of green and a case of brown with maybe a can or two of a yellow or tan.

Now it's time to seal the weeds. Assuming the weather's

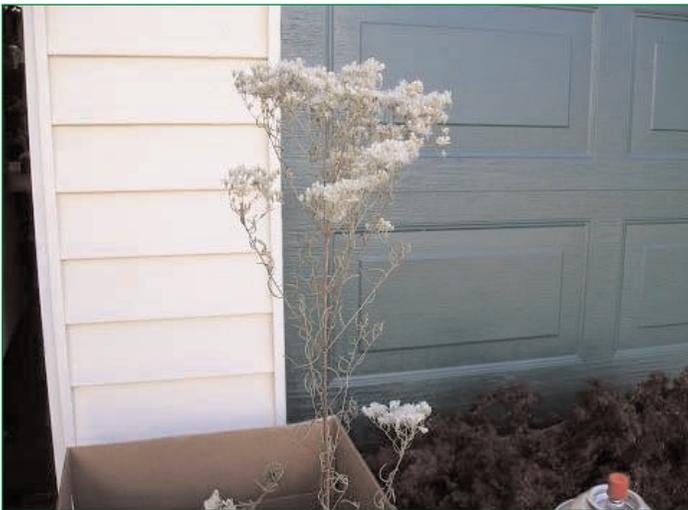


Photo 5: A weed before I've started the "cleaning" process. There are a lot of leaves on the stems that need to be removed.

perfect—plenty of sun and just a little breeze—I work outside. I spread out a large drop cloth and bring out the supplies: spray paint, a comfortable chair, a radio—tuned to the NASCAR race, facemask and food service gloves (or, if you don't have a friend with a restaurant, rubber gloves).

I grab a bunch of weeds off the fence and separate the stems. I start by "cleaning" each stem. With these weeds, there are a bunch of short leaves that come off easily with just a pinch. See photo 5. You don't need to get each weed into "perfect" condition—that will come later. All I am look-

ing to do at this point is get the weed into a state that I can work with later on. See photo 6.

When I'm satisfied with the weed, I spray every surface of it with one (or more) of the spray paints. At this point I usually stick to one color per weed. The idea is to seal the weed to stop any further deterioration. I toss the weed into one of the large cardboard boxes I keep just for this purpose—and it's on to the next stalk. See photo 7.

That's the start—next issue we'll move on to transforming



Photo 6: The same weed cleaned and ready for painting.

these painted weeds into "real" trees for the layout.

RICK KNIGHT lives in the Carolina Southern Division 12 and has been interested in trains and modeling for most of his life. He models HO scale and is the current Superintendent. 🚂



Photo 7: My very elaborate and high tech spray booth, with "finished weeds" drying on top.

The Editors' Meeting at the National Convention 2006.

By Gerry Leone, MMR

Deputy Chair, NMRA Membership Services & Promotion Dept.

A NEW TRADITION, sharing and information session was started this year at the National Convention. Editors' from various regions and divisions gathered together on Friday, July 7th. Some members present were: Bruce Hanrahan, Karl Kobel, Kurt Kramke, Barb Rothwell, Jack Dziadul, Tim Fisher, Wayne Karns, Paul Voelker, and Bob Gangwish (SSR editor and NMRA Secretary). Invited "special guests" included Dave Liesse (NMRA VP), Jan Wescott (Chair, Membership Services), Mike Brestel (NMRA Pres.), Tony Koester (NMRA Director and MR columnist), Chuck Diljak, Jim Zinser (**Scale Rails** columnist), Larry DeYoung (**Scale Rails** Publisher), and Stephen Priest (**Scale Rails** editor).

Editors were first asked what they would like to receive in the future from the Membership Services Department. Some said they'd like meeting and event notices; others wanted publicity about what the NMRA is doing. Several also mentioned modeling tips or short articles including a photo.

The subject of the possibility of publishing "articles" from the convention clinic books was discussed. The NMRA has a one-time publishing agreement with the clinicians, so editors need to contact the clinician directly for approval before publishing.

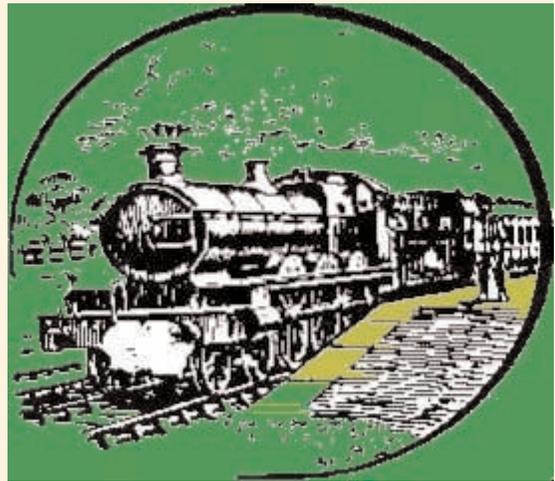
Touched upon was the subject of a policy for reproduction of articles from one newsletter in another. As far as getting new articles, Tony Koester mentioned that sometimes it's easier for the editor to simply interview an individual with the intent of turning the interview into an article. That way, the individual doesn't feel pressured to actually write the article (chances are that person will never get around to it), and the information will still get published.

Discussion quickly turned to the subject of **Scale Rails**, and the main reason for the meeting. New editor Stephen Priest was present, and while he didn't bring along samples of the reformatted magazine, everyone who's seen pre-production copies of it has said it'll be very impressive. (OK, he did let me sneak a peek, and it looks great!) When asked how he sees the magazine being different from the newsstand publications, he answered that he wants to change the image of **Scale Rails** from being a "5-minute magazine."

Because the NMRA is an organization of people, not objects, he plans to focus on model railroading and peoples' relationships to it—why people do what they do in our hobby. Plans also include more Recommended Practices in the magazine and will report on how well new products meet existing NMRA RPs. This will help give "teeth" to the RP program once again.

Publisher Larry De Young emphasized that the magazine will run negative product reviews if the product warrants it, even at the risk of losing an advertiser. In addition, Priest said that the new **Scale Rails** will definitely spin away from being "Model Railroader-like." Everything the magazine does will be relevant to NMRA membership, he said. Since MR and RMC do little to publicize our convention, the contests, models and activities, more of that will appear in **Scale Rails**.

Future information will be coming from the Membership Services & Promotion Department. But the bottom line is that it was great to have so many important guests present at what started out as, a "meeting without an agenda." It shows that the NMRA respects and values its Regions' and Divisions' newsletters, and its editors. 📧



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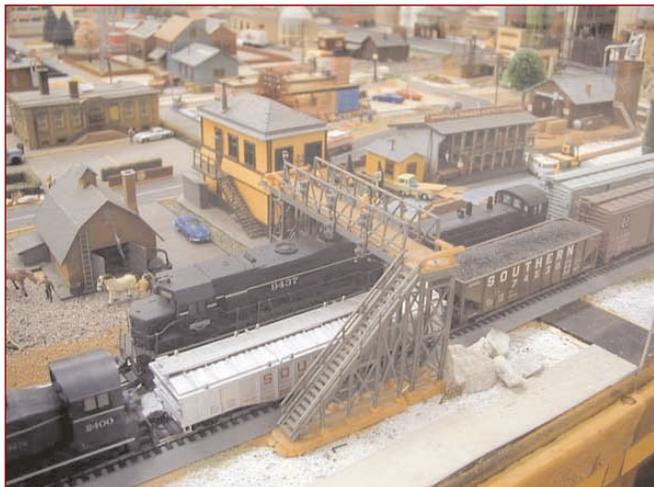
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The Carolina Southern Division: Wade's Train Town

By Steve Kindig with all information and photographs provided by Rick Knight

LAST TIME I INTRODUCED a project in the early stages that was being taken on by the Carolina Southern Division 12. A group of volunteers was starting rehabilitation on an abandoned model railroad. Wade's Train Town (previously referred to as The Brookford Project) is the life's work of Wade Warren, who died in 1995. It had been abandoned for months

some general cleaning was done. A few were drop-in guests from the karate class next door who were interested in what was happening. The turnout wasn't any better on June 29th with only four folks showing up, two of them were not Division members. However, we have been able to meet our modest June goal of cleaning up and "dejunking" the room.



As work sessions on the layout continue. July 2006.



and the Town of Brookford (located just south of Hickory, NC for those out of state or just can't remember) was considering having it dismantled and removed. The town was willing to allow the layout to stay if a group would take up the care and maintenance.

Since the last issue of **The Local**, work sessions have begun. Only three folks showed up for the first session on June 22nd, but

The latest work session has completed July's goal of inventorying the layout, equipment and beginning track restoration. On the 14th, the inventory of the layout itself was completed. On July 20th buildings and the loose scenery materials were removed in preparation for more permanent scenery and trackwork rehabilitation. This is a really big job and we need more help if we are

going to meet our ultimate goal of opening for the public during Model Railroad Month. Thanks to Rick Knight, Chris Christenbury, and Gil Brauch for their work to this point.

The two main lines that circle the layout are operational and there is a fairly large supply of locomotives and rolling stock. The layout is complete and has some scenery with dozens of structures, most with operating lights and other features. The room also has tools, equipment, and supplies normally found in a model railroader's shop inventory.

However, there is plenty of work that needs to be done before the public viewing. Help is needed to clean, repair and restore the layout and clean up the room and equipment. In particular, there is a need for somebody who would like to work with upgrading the wiring of the many lights and other electrical items on the layout.

Anyone who wants to participate and all sorts of skills are valuable—even so called “beginner skills” for those interested in exploring the hobby and trying it out before making the “plunge” with their own layout. The restoration program work remaining includes the following major activities:

August – October:

- Cataloging and documenting the condition of the electrical system (left over from July).
- Reconditioning and restoring trackwork (left over from July).
- Cleaning and restoring the existing layout structures grid-by-grid.
- Restoring and repairing the electrical system.
- Cataloging, repairing, and restoring locomotives and rolling stock.

The layout is open for restoration sessions every Thursday evening between 6 PM and 10 PM. The goal of the restoration program is to have the layout ready to begin regular monthly open houses by November 2006 – which is also National Model Railroad Month. Additional restoration sessions can be scheduled based on the desires of those working on the layout and will be addressed on an as-needed basis in the future.

If you are in the area and interested in joining this group, contact Carolina Southern Division Superintendent, Rick Knight at rgkh3@energyunited.net. Continue reading **The Local** or visit <http://www.bytedesign.com/CSDiv/brookford.htm> for updates. 

A Letter From The Editor

By Steve Kindig

I ONLY HAVE A FEW THINGS to say this month (Yes, I know that's not normal for me, but don't pass out from shock yet, as I do have a few requests.)

Now is the time to think about seriously writing an article for **The Local**. Many model railroaders attended the National convention in July and the notes on the tours, clinics and layouts are still decipherable and in a handy location. From personal experience I know I am still busy organizing my photographs and adding notes and captions while placing them into their respective folders (layout tours, prototype tours, clinics, etc) while at the same time I am preparing this edition, so things may have a tendency to get “misplaced.” Don't let that happen to you!! If you want to write or even co-write an article with a significant other or fellow traveler and send it to me now I will save and back it up on a separate drive until I have the space to publish it. If you choose to wait, I take no responsibility for “fact-checking” or “a lost train-of-thought”.... hahaha.

On a similar topic, there are many upcoming Division meets. Members that cannot attend or are in a different Division but want to stay current can always use a good update and it makes a great article. I am also looking for people to write summaries of these meets.

Finally, I finish with a more personal comment and reflection section of my column. I recently received a gift of a hand painted and custom decaled G-scale boxcar for being a groomsman in my college friend and roommate's wedding. So I would be **VERY** interested in any experiences and tips from the G-scale perspective to publish. I know it was a dirty trick to get us involved in a new scale. Only one other member of the wedding party was currently in G-scale. The rest, including the father of the bride, are HO modelers. (PS...the bride helped paint the handrails, how cool is that!?) But I did congratulate him on his brilliance, and of course, his marriage.

As always, drop me any suggestions, comments, corrections, ideas for future columns, Division news and activities, articles, Callboard notices and artistic items for publication at stevesxpressrr@yahoo.com or by checking out the contact information on page 2.

Have a safe and uneventful Friday the 13th. See you at the Tidewater show! Happy modeling!! 

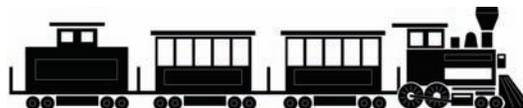


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Independence Junction: One Experience

By Vic Bitleris



JACK DZIADUL AND I were companions on this trip to the NMRA Convention. We shared companionship as well as hotel expenses. The trip did not seem to start out on a good note, since our train, No. 92; The Silver Star left the Raleigh Depot after 11:00 AM. It was scheduled to depart at 5:40 AM. Jack and I remained calm and cool headed as we were switched into the passing sidings for all other trains, passenger and freight, to be herded through ahead of us. It almost became demoralizing when we saw a Waste Management train come through while we patiently waited. Not only did we miss the 4:00 PM reception, we got in at 11:45 PM and missed the registration. I had to get up early and register prior to getting started on my first layout tour that was scheduled to leave at 8:30 AM. Later on Monday morning, on a layout tour, Dick Buchan told me that the Silver Star always runs late and we should have booked the Carolinian. The Carolinian did indeed come in about 5 hours earlier than we did. Live and learn I always say.

Once Monday got started and we were all registered and settled, the convention itself was great! We did need to plan our times very carefully to ensure that we would get to go to all of the clinics we did not want to miss and still fit in the pre-scheduled (and pre-paid) events. Tuesday morning started early for me since I had a clinic on building white metal kits at 7:30 AM. I was able to build a very complex GHQ 1940's bulldozer, paint and weather it all by noon. My wife said it takes me 10 times as long to build something like that at home. I guess I need to become more disciplined. Haha. The MMR giving the seminar was very adamant that this was NOT one of the Peoria born Caterpillar Bulldozers, but everyone that saw it said it was unmistakably a Caterpillar. If anyone knows for sure which manufacturer made the D8 8R Bulldozer, it may be fun to find out. It doesn't matter much to me, but I love the way it looks.

The clinics kept us very busy from 7:30 AM until about 10:30 PM. This was a very full week of very full 18-hour days. But it was a LOT of fun! We got a lot of freebies, software, boxcar kits, handouts, you name it. We also learned a LOT of tips and tricks on modeling, electronics, animation, and layout planning. I was able to attend some historical clinics on Pennsylvania railroads, and most did not include the Pennsy. I met a lot of really nice people, Mike Tylick, Tony Koester, David Popp, Andy Sperandeo, Al West-erfield, and others too numerous to mention. The camaraderie is one of the reasons to go to a National Convention. We had a very good turnout from CPD13. Counting the wives that attended, I believe we had nine people representing CPD13 in Philadelphia.

The model contest had a lot of beautiful entries and I had to take a lot of pictures of my favorites. I did not count the entries here and at our Rails to Raleigh convention, but it was mentioned

by several people that we had more entries in Cary. If true, we have a proper reason to be proud of our effort for Rails to Raleigh. I am sure you will be reading about the modeling contest in **Scale Rails** as well as MRR and RMC.

There was a silent auction as part of the Convention features. Let's just say I made out pretty good, but could not spend TOO much at the train show as a result. Although, regarding the train show, I do have to say BRING MONEY. There are so many kits for structures and rolling stock, that it makes choosing very difficult. You just want to buy all of it! I did end up finding items I have been looking years to find. I found a place that had HO scale beavers for my beaver dams and ponds. As Dave Lynam told me once, the company name that sells these is Rustic Rails, but I did not see these on the web site. During my last circuit of the train show Friday, I found a dealer selling Rustic Rails detail items. I found my beavers and bought quite a few additional details at this dealer. Not only was the selection good, but also the prices were right. I visited the Funaro & Camerlengo display and bought a couple of kits, they were selling those 2 for the price of one.

I did notice that on ALL of the layout tours, the trick du jour is very obviously SOUND! All of the layouts had sound locomotives. Most have put sound decoders in all locos running on their layouts. Some, were still in the process of installing sound decoders, but had their main locos making all sorts of sounds. I saw more double headed Pennsy steamers making more noise than I thought possible. I wonder if the Pennsy steamers had a distinct sound. The train show was certainly a cacophony of sounds of all kinds. There were a lot of mallets, articulated, and double-headed steamers showing off their sounds. Someone in Raleigh had asked me to forward a request to Soundtraxx that the diesel guys wanted more sound decoders, so I did. The Soundtraxx people noted that and said they had lots of requests for this.

By the final day I was quite tired and ready to end the convention, but we had one more important event, the banquet. The food was good as was the guest speaker. I have never heard of Bennett Levin previously, but was very impressed with his work. He found some old E8's and "kit bashed" them into Pennsy E-8's. He also bought and restored some older passenger cars and used his new "toy trains" for raising money for charities. His most impressive achievement was getting injured soldiers from Bethesda Hospital to the Army/Navy game via the train. All expenses and gifts were provided to these vets by Bennett and quite a few corporate sponsors, banks, retail outlets, like WalMart, etc. One notable furniture outlet, Ikea, refused to participate. Bennett wanted as many people as possible to be aware of this. The project was a great success and we were all moved by this.

Jack and I were very apprehensive about our train ride home.



**Erie Lackawanna
Steam Engine**
by Donald Adams.

*If you would like to showcase
an original drawing,
photograph or painting,
please submit them to the editor.*

Independence Junction: continued from page 14

We left Philadelphia on an electric locomotive that sped us toward Washington DC at about 110 mph. It was a very nice and smooth ride. The tracks were all new high-speed welded steel on concrete ties. When we hit Washington, we were hooked to a diesel engine and the speeds were a little slower. I do believe we hit speeds up to 70 mph. At least it seemed that we were going that fast. On the way home, it seemed that all of the other trains were on passing sidings waiting for us heading south. Maybe it is kind of a North/South thing? It was a very pleasant ride and we were only 15 minutes late arriving in Raleigh. I also had no damages to my

“treasures” that I had in my checked luggage. I was very pleased. I am looking forward to using all of these new gained knowledge and ambition to build all of this kits I acquired.

EDITORS NOTE: *This appeared in the July 2006 newsletter of The Herald, and is reprinted with the author's permission. The Herald is the publication of the Carolina Piedmont Division in the Mid-Eastern Region.*

VIC BITLERIS *lives in the Carolina Piedmont Division 13 and has been interested in railroads and modeling for 50 years. He models HO scale and is the current CPD15 AP chair.* 🚂

Durham & Southern Railroad Hopper

Carolina Piedmont Division 13 presents its 2005 Limited Run Model HO scale Durham & Southern Railroad 70-Ton, 3-Bay, 14-Panel Hopper cars, series 6000-6049 for sale. These kits were offered to attendees of the MER-NMRA Rails to Raleigh Convention in Cary, NC in October 2005.

Produced by Stewart (Bowser), the car is finished in black with white lettering. Six car numbers are available, they are: 6004, 6007, 6009, 6014, 6017, 6019 with a build date of 05-1959. There are a limited number of kits left in stock. These kits are priced at \$15 each plus \$5 for shipping & handling per order. If you would like to order these car kits, please mail a check or money order to:

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Payments must be in U.S. dollars and made payable to CPD13. Be certain to include your mailing address as we ship via U.S. Postal Service. Enclosed with each order will be a data sheet from The Official Railway Equipment Register, January 1973.



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 Coming Events**

September 16th 2006, Doors open at 9 AM, Philadelphia Division Meet, Fairview Village Church of the Nazarene, 3060 Germantown Pike Clinics, contest, layout tours. Contact: Steve Salotti (610) 489-1940.

September 23, 2006, Clinics and Meeting: 9 AM to 12 PM, Layout Tours: 1 PM to 4 PM. New Jersey Division Meet, Richland Fire Hall in Richland, NJ. Contact: Mike McNamara (856) 824-0879.

October 13, 2 PM –10 PM and October 14th – 8:30 AM – 10 PM. Narrow Trak 06. Silvermont Mansion in Brevard, North Carolina. Email: narrowtrak@mac.com.

October 28–29, 2006, 10 AM–4 PM. Tidewater Annual Show, Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach, VA. Admission: \$7.00 for adults, \$1.00 from every paid admission goes to Toys for Tots. Contact: Steve Prescott, nawneycreek@msn.com or call (757) 426-2811.