

The Local

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Locomotive Transportation and Storage Box

Article and photographs by George Downer
Tidewater Division/HO Scale

Ever break the connecting wire between your locomotive and tender? If you participate in module group setups or belong to a model railroad club, you may have experienced this problem while transporting locomotives from your home and back. The manufacturer's boxes are made to store the loco and tender separated, which means you have to connect everything together before the loco can be run and disconnect

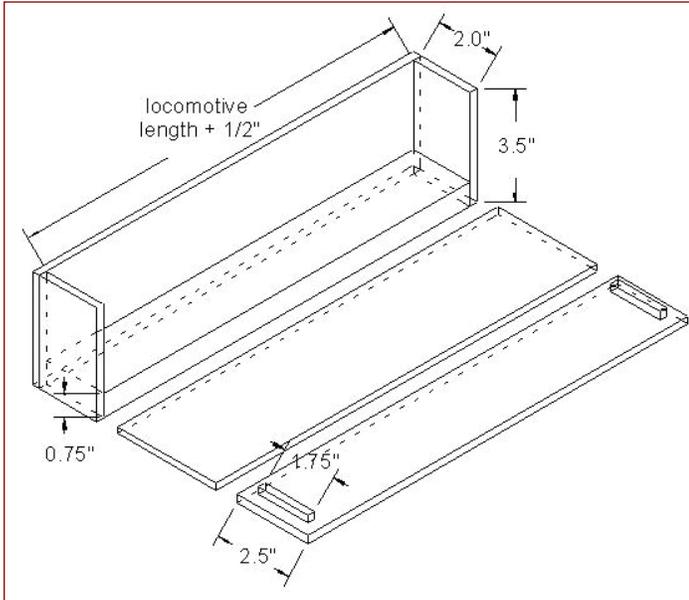


Figure 1: Drawing of the box.

them when you're done. I'm not sure how many times you can do this before a plug or wire breaks and I don't care to find out.

To keep from having to connect and disconnect the plugs when transporting steam locos, I started building wooden boxes to carry the loco and tender connected together. To make these boxes you need access to a table saw. The base is cut from a piece of 1"x 3" pine and the sides and top from 1/4" luan plywood. The height

and width dimensions in the drawings will work for all locomotives. Of course, the length is cut to fit the locomotive. In addition to the wood, foam insulation tape is added to the sides, ends and top to protect the loco in transit and pieces of cloth are used to make the hinges. See photo 1.

Start by ripping the 1"x 3" pine board into a 2" wide base. The length of the base is the length of the loco and tender fastened together measured from coupler to coupler plus 1/2". Next rip a 3 1/2" wide piece from the 1/4" luan. This will be used for the two sides and two end pieces and it should be long enough for these four pieces. The end pieces are 2" wide, same as the base. The sides are the same length as the base plus another 1/2". This extra 1/2" allows the sides to overlap the 1/4" thick end pieces. The top is also cut from the luan and is 2-1/2" wide and the same length as the side pieces. See figure 1.



Photo 1: The parts used to make the box.

To assemble the box, the two end pieces are glued to the base first. I stapled the ends in place to hold them while the glue dried. The sides are hinged to the base using a scrap of 1"x 6" cloth. The cloth is first glued to the outside of the base piece with a generous coat of carpenter's glue rubbed into the fabric. Once the glue is dry clamp the two side pieces in place and glue the cloth to the sides, again saturating the cloth with glue. Care should be taken to ensure glue doesn't get between the sides and the base.

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The Local

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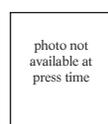
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All subscription information, advertising rates and publication deadlines are now located on page 16.

The MER website is <http://mer.nmra.org/>



From The Business Car

By John Janosko
MER President

ON APRIL 2ND, I attended the Potomac Division's Minicon. Marshall Abrams, the division Superintendent, had invited me back in March. It was the first time I had been to the Minicon and I really enjoyed myself. The Minicon is a one-day event that includes modular layouts, clinics, white elephant sale and a chance to meet with fellow model railroaders. The cost for the event is just \$10.00 and it lasts from 8:30 AM to 4 PM. One of the nice things that the division does is that anyone that signs up for the one day event that is not a member of the NMRA automatically gets a 6 month Rail Pass. I did not get a chance to ask, but it would be interesting to see how many new members we get from the Rail Pass at the Minicon. One of the other reasons for coming to the Minicon was to present the Master Model Railroaders plaque to Andrew Dodge who is MMR #453. Again Andrew congratulations, your most certainly earned it. If your Division has never done a Minicon you may want to consider it in the future.

In May I attended the SER convention in Macon, GA. I met with Joe Geimini who is the new SER President and we were able

to talk about some joint things our two regions might be able to do together. Hopefully, I will be able to fill you in with more specifics at our convention in October. One thing we did talk about was getting our convention information in **The Southerner**, which will appear in their summer issue. We are going to also give them some space in the January/February issue of **The Local** for their 2012 convention. Joe also gave me some time at their banquet on Saturday to talk about **Piedmont Crossing**. After the presentation, it looks as if we will have 10 to 12 people from the SER attend our convention. Part of the reason that we should get this number is that in 2005 the people who did attend **Rails to Raleigh** where very impressed that we went out of our way to welcome them. This just reminds me that you should always say hi to people that attend a convention for the first time, If they do not feel welcome, they will not come back for future meetings.

I hope everyone has a great summer. It is not too long until the convention in October. I hope to see many of our MER members in Cary, NC. 📍

Spike Magnet Car

Article and photographs by Ron Baile
New Jersey/HO Scale

HERE IS A LITTLE ITEM that I came up with many years ago. I have had this particular car since I was a teenager. It is a tool more than a freight car. Also notice in photo 2 that it has a horn hook coupler on one end and a Kadee on the other. This was one of my conversion cars when I first started to go to Kadee couplers.

All I did was to glue a Kadee magnet on the bottom of the fish belly underframe. I occasionally use a locomotive to push the car around the railroad but especially after doing track work. It will

pick up most anything made of ferris metal. It is amazing the things that find themselves onto the right of way.

If you build such a car make sure the magnet is high enough so it won't hit the rails. Any car could be used for this. If you don't have a car with a fish belly underframe just use something like styrene or Masonite to space the magnet down to where it will still have clearance but be effective. 📍

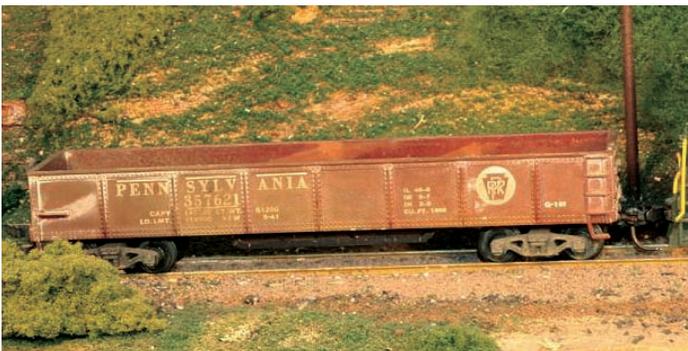


Photo 1: The "Spike Magnet Car" on the rails.



Photo 2: The underside of the "Spike Magnet Car."

Keeping In Touch...

By Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager

THE RECENT ARTICLE about the Boy Scout Railroading Merit Badge in the **NMRA Magazine** by our own Don Jennings again raised our long standing question: "How do we get the young folks interested in our hobby?" Don's considerable efforts, along with the work of many other modelers who volunteer their time to the Boy Scout Railroading Merit Badge program, go a long way to introducing the younger generation to the joys of our model-railroading hobby.

Many of us old timers look with disappointment as the average age of our modeling community continues to increase. I just took a look at the MER membership statistics (for members who registered their birth date) and found the average age to be 65 and only 1/2 of 1 percent of our membership is of an age 18 years or less.

We all know those competing attractions for the younger people. Vast numbers of kids are attracted to the very extensive electronic game world where their thumbs are used to create their

ethereal world, rather than the wood, plastic and glue of model railroaders.

Sure, some would say that model railroading is an expensive hobby that only attracts the older population with available funds and time. However, I would say that doesn't measure up to my experience where inexpensive kits and pieces of balsa and glue fueled my passion for modeling as a kid.

Others say that the younger folks are no longer exposed to the prototype railroads and therefore have no interest in modeling something out of their experience. Well again that doesn't connect with my experiences. I didn't have that much access to the real prototype as I was growing up. Sure I had lots of exposure to the published world of railroads and model railroading but those opportunities still exist. And those 100 car freights still go by my home on a regular basis.

So what do you think? Is it a problem or perhaps we should just relax with the old folks. Perhaps there are some younger modelers reading this article who could help us understand and even suggest ways of encouraging more participation in our "worlds greatest hobby."

As always *Keep in Touch* with any questions or changes in your subscriptions or addresses. A current address on file saves the MER some money. 📧

Loco Transportation and Storage Box continued from page 1

This isn't absolutely necessary, but by adding two 1 3/4" x 1/4" scraps of luan to the top 3/8" from the ends helps locate the top on the box.

Now that the box has been assembled, the interior padding needs to be added. Draw a line with a pencil 1 1/2" from the bottom of each side piece. Cut a piece of foam weather tape approximately one inch shorter than the interior length. Peel the backing

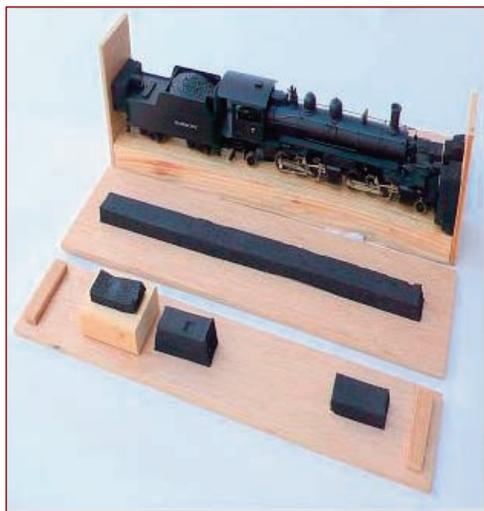


Photo 2: Open box with locomotive in place.

off the foam and fasten it with the bottom along this line. The foam for the ends and top is custom cut to fit each locomotive. For the ends, the foam should be fastened above the coupler. You want a sturdy part of the loco touching the foam, not a fragile detail part. I generally use two layers of foam on each end. Because the top of the tender is lower than the loco cab and stack, I often glue a scrap of wood to the top piece over the tender. Foam pieces are cut and fasten it to the top over the high points of the loco and tender. You may want to mark the top piece on the outside to show which end goes over the tender. See photo 2.

off the foam and fasten it with the bottom along this line. The foam for the ends and top is custom cut to fit each locomotive. For the ends, the foam should be fastened above the coupler. You want a sturdy part of the loco touching the foam, not a fragile detail part. I generally use two layers of foam on each end. Because the top of the tender is lower

The sides and top are held shut with rubber bands. By using a standard height and width dimension, you can easily store the boxes by stacking them on a shelf or in a box. I always keep mine upright using the foam only to absorb any movement when the locomotives are in transit. See photo 3.

The boxes have uses beyond steam locomotives. I have an F-7 A-B unit permanently wired together since the decoder and speaker are located in the B unit. I built a long box, using the same width and height dimensions for these units. I also made a short box for a Pennsy cabin car (caboose) that had a fragile trainline antenna on top. I fastened the foam to the lid so it didn't touch the antenna.

As you can see, it doesn't take any special skill to make these boxes. When you cut the wood, it's almost as easy to cut enough for several locomotives as one. Give it a try. 📧

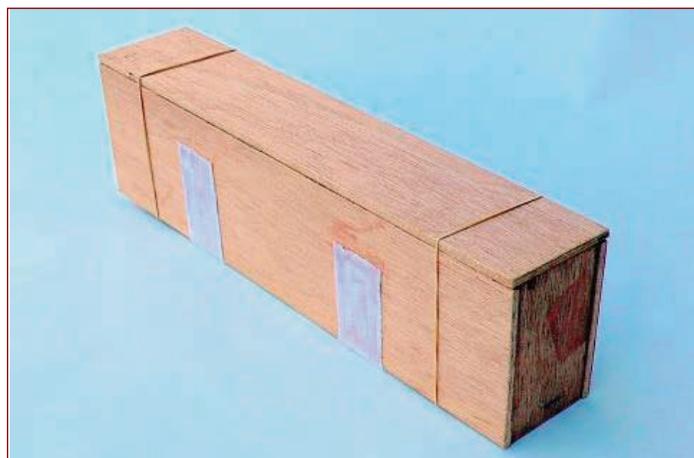


Photo 3: Finished product, closed box.

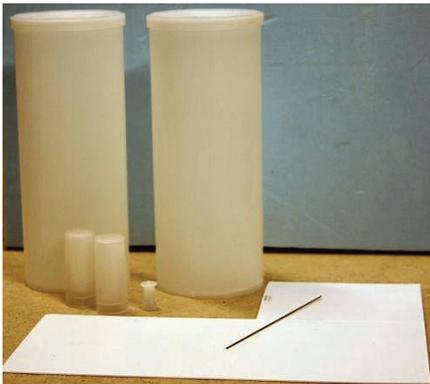
Something from Nothing: Building Southern States Auxiliary Silos Out of Crystal Light Containers

Article and photographs by James Allen.
Carolina Southern/HO Scale

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article was published on the author's website (<http://www.southernexchange.net/somethingfornothing.htm>) and is reprinted in **The Local** with his permission.

HOW DO YOU HELP a brother-in-law with his layout when you are four plus hours away? Well thank goodness for cell phone cameras, text messages, and e-mail.

My brother in law has been contemplating getting back into model railroading for the past couple of years. There had been a lot of planning and discussions, but the time had come and the



Some of the materials used.

actual work was beginning. One of the things that I knew I could do from afar was to build buildings. This by far is the most fun part of the hobby for me.

He resides in rural Virginia right smack in the New Market Valley with the Appalachian Mountains all around. It was decided that the layout would be early sixties in that same area. This meant that many of the industries would be smaller. Even today while the larger NS trains head to Harrisburg there are smaller local trains still push-



The finished product.

ing grain, fertilizer, feed, concrete etc.

It was also decided that this new layout would offer up operations versus simply running trains in circles. To help get operations up and running quickly I decided to pitch in and build a medium size Southern States facility that would be serviced by rail and truck. This facility in turn would push product out locally to the surrounding communities as well as the nearby cities.

Now I don't have a very large model railroad budget and I certainly couldn't jump right in and start spending my brother in laws money. Especially given the start up cost of a new railroad! I decided to build as much as I could using whatever I had laying around and leftover parts from other projects.

Materials list:

- 2 Crystal Light (CL) containers
- 2 zap and gap glue lids
- 2 small zap and gap glue plugs
- 1 small piece of brass rod
- 1 partial sheet of 020 white styrene
- 1 partial sheet of 040 white styrene
- 1 safety caged ladder from Walters (kit #933-3515)
- A few pieces from a Walters refinery piping (kit #933-3114)
- 2 small left over pieces from a Plastruct railing kit.

To begin simply position two of the CL containers onto the 040 thicker piece of sheet styrene, then trace them.

Cut out a small rectangle around the traced marks. This will be your concrete foundation. Glue these into position.

The top sections can be done the same way as the bottom except you cut out the circles leaving a walkway in between. Using the thinner styrene I was able to cut most of this pattern out with a pair of scissors.

Once the top and bottom have been glued into position you can paint to your liking. I chose model masters camouflage gray spray paint for the silos, and then hand painted the foundation with foundation paint. While this was drying, the cage ladder kit was assembled and painted grimy black, as were the handrails.

The piping pieces were measured; cut and then installed, along with the cage ladder, followed by the railings.

The small detail parts on top were painted separately and glued on last. The rod was predrilled then glued into place. See photo for finished product. 

MER Archivist Update

By Bob Price
Archivist and Director

Work continues on scanning **The Local** from the MER archive into pdf files. I was amazed by the number of e-mails I received on the scanning effort and thank everyone for their support and input. Progress has slowed as the time it takes to scan each year has increased. The number of pages in **The Local** increased each year in this time frame and therefore requires more effort to scan. Also, my employer required me to do some serious traveling since my last update. Still, I have completed scanning for the years 1963 to 1981 and hope to complete the scanning effort by the fall convention.

New Membership Recruitment Program

As an aid to membership recruitment, NMRA recently instituted a six month "Railpass" trial membership program which costs the applicant \$9.95. Building on this idea, the MER is instituting a program whereby it will pay the \$9.95 Railpass fee for interested applicants in the MER. In other words, we are making available FREE six month Railpass trial memberships to encourage recruitment of regular members.

What's covered?

Same as Railpass—receive six issues of **NMRA Magazine**, three issues of **The Local**, eligibility to attend conventions and meets, eligibility to participate in contests.

What's not covered?

Same as Railpass—applicants cannot vote or hold office, and will not receive the New Member Pak from national (it's rather expensive).

Who can be recruited?

Anyone living within the MER who has not been a member of NMRA during the past two years.

How will the recruitment process work?

(1) The prospective member fills out the MER trial membership application form which was sent to all division superintendents (not the standard NMRA Railpass form) (2) The "recruiter" should

also sign the form, and then forward it to: Fred Miller, MER Business Manager, 333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504, Charlotte, NC 28202-1961. (3) Fred will record the information he needs in his data base, and will forward the application to the MER Treasurer. (4) The Treasurer will add the necessary check and forward the application and check to the national headquarters in Chattanooga.

What happens after the member's six month trial period?

The Railpass trial member will receive a standard dues notice from national headquarters. We hope a substantial number of Railpass trial members will sign up to become regular members.

Are there limits on the program?

The MER initially allocated \$2,000 for this program. The Board recently allocated an additional \$1,000 to extend the program to the end of 2010, or when the funds are spent – whichever comes first. When and if we approach either limit, Division Superintendents and members of the MER Board of Directors will be notified. At that time, the program will be evaluated by the MER Board of Directors. If successful, we will try to continue it.

For questions?

Contact Fred Miller, MER Business Manager (mailing address is above, 704-332-1753, tractionfan@aol.com), or John Janosko, MER President (see contact information on page 2). 

National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Mid-Eastern Region Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

YES, please sign me up for a free six month Railpass trial membership in the NMRA—which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region, and in my local Division. During this six month period, I understand that I may attend conventions and meets, and participate in contests. I will receive **NMRA Magazine**, the monthly national magazine, and **The Local**, the bi-monthly regional newsletter. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office, or receive a New Member Pak.

I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six month Railpass trial membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Regardless of who pays, six month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person.)

At the end of the six months, I may join NMRA, paying the regular active member dues.

During the past two years, I have **not** been a member of NMRA.

=====
Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Scale(s): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____

Signature of Sponsor: _____ (Required)

(A Regional or Divisional officer or board member)

When this form is completed,
mail it to:

Fred Miller, MMR
MER Business Manager
333 W. Trade St, Unit #2504
Charlotte, NC 28202-1961

Do **not** mail it directly to MMRA
headquarters in Chattanooga, TN.

=====
Date of form: 1/31/07

Andrew Dodge, Potomac Division and MER's newest MMR #453

By Andrew R. Dodge

MODEL RAILROADING became a passion for me in my childhood. My father, Harry P. Dodge, built layouts in the basements of our homes beginning just after World War II through the end of his life in 1972 that were loosely based in the Southern Railroad. Unlike so many others in the hobby, I never had a Lionel set. I went directly from a wooden train to the wonders of HO with snap-track and plasticville buildings for Christmas in 1956. Working with my father, I built my first real layout in one corner of his large layout. It was a fictitious branch line logging operation in the Carolinas'.

However, my real love of railroading had already begun to be centered in Colorado. In 1953, the family took a trip out west, which included several days in Colorado. The real focus of that part of the trip was to take the Silverton Mixed from Durango to Silverton. My father was able to get us on the train, which in my case was a seat on a load of 2 x 4s stacked in the baggage car. What a thrill of a ride for a little boy to see the canyons and mountains of the San Juan. Since there were no reserved seats, after eating lunch at the Grand Imperial Hotel, my mother took my two brothers and me back to the train early, and we got seats in the cupola of one of the two cabooses hooked at the end of the train. This fascination with mountain railroading came to full fruition following several other trips to the state in the 1950's and introduction to two fabled roads in the Columbine State. The day after coming home from school for summer vacation in 1960 I discovered my father's book on the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad, and for my 18th birthday, he gave me a copy of a book on the Colorado Midland. During those years, I built my first layout based on a western, mountain railroading theme.

Like most first efforts at a layout, everything was not a total success, but it was a real learning experience. It was great running the layout and using my imagination to overlook the shortcomings. While building the layout, my father offered comments and suggestions that would improve my work, which were not always received with due appreciation, but other modelers who came over to the house were always interested and made positive remarks. This positive reinforcement gave me the support to realize that I was on the correct path and had achieved some level of success.

One of the most important gifts my father gave me was the ability to see and think about railroading in its natural environment. Beginning during the late 1950's and until my father's death filming some of Germany's last steam operations in the city of Trier, his real passion in railroading was to travel and record on 16mm film the railroads of the world. He always had the knack of finding some of the most scenic spots to take his shots while never forgetting what railroads do and how they work in all their various facets.

After building my own home, I began construction of my own HO/Hon3 layout based on the Denver & Rio Grande. Exuber-

ance in this case was fatal, and the layout was an example of the mistake many modelers make, a lack of attention to detail and how real railroads operate. However, it served as a lesson in how to create a proper layout: having a sense of what kind of layout you want and keeping your eye on the final objective, attention to detail, knowing your subject and applying that knowledge, avoid flights of fancy into the unrealistic, historical research through books and onsite visits, and applying your artistic talents to create the impression of reality in a medium that requires great compression and distortions due to limited space.

Upon my return from living in Germany during the mid-1980's, my interest in model railroading turned to building my dream layout of the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad in its early years. Realizing the shortcomings of earlier efforts, I focused on recreating a simulated prototype layout based on the year 1882. Fortunately, I had my father's book on the line plus several others collected in the 1970's and 1980's, which contained a rich collection of period photos. Relying on lessons learned, I decided to network with other modelers who worked in On3 since I had no previous experience in the scale nor knew what was available in parts or kits.

It became readily apparent that adhering to a set period and prototype requirements would demand a lot of scratch building, but parts were available from several suppliers.

In developing a track plan, many compromises would have to be made, but the one rule I wanted to maintain was the concept of "less is more." My Rio Grande layout had been a lot of track and little attention to quality scenery. This time I wanted a believable track plan that would come close to the prototype with lots of accurate scenery. To achieve that end, I took two trips to Colorado in the 1990's with the express purpose of collecting dirt and small stones to use as ground cover and also take extensive color photographs of each area to better replicate each scene on the layout. Keeping to my objective and constantly reminding myself of what had caused shortcomings in my earlier layouts paid-off.

In working for my Master Model Railroad certificate, I learned another important lesson. Even after years of holding open houses and operating sessions with other highly skilled modelers, I still had allowed a few things to remain uncompleted or not up to the highest quality. My friend Stan Knotts asked me to host the local NMRA group to an open house with the enticement of a six-month membership in the NMRA. I had been a previous member but let my membership lapse, and during that period I had become interested in the Achievement Program but failed to pursue it. This time, I decided not to let the opportunity slip away. The importance of the program to me was not only becoming more engaged with other modelers and sharing the lessons I



continued on page 10

Virginia Museum of Transportation

Part 2: The Vehicles

*Article and Photographs by Jack Dziadul
Carolina Piedmont Division / HO Scale*

IN PART 1 (May/June issue), I reviewed some of the locomotives and rolling stock on display at the Virginia Museum of Transportation. In this part, I am highlighting some of the non-rail transportation.

So often the difference between a very nice layout and a great layout is in the details. We are very fortunate to have so many vehicles and vehicle kits available commercially, especially in HO scale. But, often we see the same great Mini-Metal and other products on layouts and in the magazine articles. It is a pleasant change when we see some creativity with the familiar offerings such as various truck bed modifications, truck cargo loads, and unique and localized paint schemes and decaling. When I travel, I almost always have my camera ready to take some shots of vehicles that would be plausible with my transition era modeling. I include WW II era military vehicles as well. Many of the prototype photos can be found on the web, but you are lucky to get one good angle. That also assumes that you know what you are looking for. I generally take photographs from three or four angles, including close-ups of details.



We all need fire trucks, and who says that they have to be pretty?



Here is an example of a 1 1/2 ton Army truck built by Chevrolet. I had never seen this type of truck until I took a wrong turn trying to find a gas station in Virginia.



I then conducted some web research to find a “photo match” so that I could learn a bit about this vehicle. The picture above illustrates this point as it is clearly a match to what I had stumbled across in that Virginia backyard right down to the grill, wheels, mirror and windshield details. All that was missing was the stake bed with its interior wooden bench seats.



Is this a unique fire truck or what? It goes to prove that there is a prototype for everything.



Sometimes I just capture the details, such as lighting and brake connections between tractor and trailer.



I have been looking for a 1950s era New England Telephone truck. No, this isn't it though.



Here is a never or seldom modeled cargo back: heavy black canvas with chain.



I can't say that I have ever seen one of these pull up to my mailbox. But, it might work if you are building an urban mail sorting facility for your railroad.



Note the side door with stirrup. Wouldn't this look great with an open door showing some boxes inside in an action scene?

My Virginia Museum of Transportation tour could on. But, check it out for yourself the next time you happen to stumble through Roanoke. Better yet, set up an excursion for you club or Division. 🚚

learned, but also in sharpening my own attention and skills in order to present the best material in each of the nine modeling categories in the Achievement Program I chose to enter. Realizing

what the judges would review was of the utmost importance, which I am now keeping in mind as I begin my newest modeling effort, building a model of the Colorado Midland in 1897 with all scratch built engines in Proto 48 O gauge. 📧

Have You Ever Operated a Steam Locomotive?

Article and photographs by Steve August
MER Director, Superintendent, Photographer, Carolina Southern Division/HO Scale.

HAVE YOU EVER had the opportunity to take a trip back in time? All who are reading this article are railroad fans of some sort. Some worked on the railroads for many years and possibly can relate to this article. Back in the fall of 2010, I had the opportunity to get tickets to an event, which would allow all those who bought tickets to take the controls of a Steam Locomotive.



Carolina Southern Division member Rev. Harold Roth at the controls. CS Division member David Ward at the throttle.

Three members of the Carolina Southern Division took this opportunity at the North Carolina Transportation Museum and went back in time and were “At the Throttle” of a steam locomotive.

The tickets allowed the engineer to take the controls for 30 minutes of the Flagg 75, and no previous experience was necessary. After a short safety session, engineers were allowed to take the controls. We followed all the protocols by blowing the whistle each time the locomotive went forward or backward. Even though the locomotive was a small one used mainly in quarries and mines, it was still a blast.

The Flagg 75, was a coal engine built by Vulcan Iron Works in 1930. The small engine was used mainly in work at rock quarries in and around the New York and Pennsylvania areas. The locomotive specifications are:

Builder: Vulcan Iron Works – Wilkes Bare, PA.

Put In Service: December 1930.
Construction No.: 3972.

Operating weight is approximately 80,000 pounds. The boiler pressure is 150 pounds per square inch on cylinders that measure 14” x 22” generated by steam from a coal fired boiler. The engine was purchased from Vulcan Iron Works by the Flagg Coal Company of Avoca, PA. We have no knowledge of how it was used when it belonged to them. We can only assume that it was used for switching coal cars in preparation for shipment. In 1935, the engine was sold to the Solvay Process Co. in Jamesville, NY. There the number was changed to 75.

At the Solvay Process Quarry engine number 75 pushed cartloads of rock from the steam shovel to the rock crusher. Number 75 worked in this manner from 1935 until 1953 when the quarry converted to using only trucks.

In 1954, the engine was sold to Dr. Stanley Groman, along with 12 other locomotives. Dr Groman opened the first operating rail museum in the country; Rail City in Sandy Pond, NY. All of these locomotives were unloaded on a storage track in Sandy Pond where they were unfortunately fell victim to nature when the museum closed in 1974. The Flagg 75, rolling stock, railroad buildings and other engines deteriorated over the next 25 years.



The Flagg 75.

The museum is located in the former New York Central Railroad station from Deer River, NY. Built in 1873, it was one of many original railroad structures dismantled and reconstructed by Dr. Groman at the site of Rail City Museum. After 21 years of neglect following the closing of Rail City Museum in 1974, the former

Deer River Station was renovated in 1995 and re-opened as the Rail City Historical Museum in 1997.

The Flagg 75 was rescued from obscurity by the Grambling Locomotive Works in 1991, and was restored to its original condition. The engine travels to events across the country, having run in 15 states. The NC Transportation museum was asked to store the locomotive; in exchange for lower storage fees the owners are allowing the museum to use the locomotive. If you would be interested in operating a steam locomotive, there are more opportunities coming soon. Please contact the North Carolina Transportation Museum at www.nctrans.org. 📧

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ATTENTION ALL MER MEMBERS:

Do you have a wanted/trade/for sale item(s)? Looking for carpool options to an event or options for sharing a room? **The Local** publishes a FREE classified section for all MER members. Send your classified ad to the Editor at stevespressrr@yahoo.com, or see all the editor’s contact information on page 2. The ad must include full name and contact information and will be limited to one issue. Word count is also limited to seventy-five (75) words. Please include your NMRA number for verification purposes (number will not be published). 📧

Things Are Coming Together... For PIEDMONT CROSSING 2011?



By R. Stephen Milley

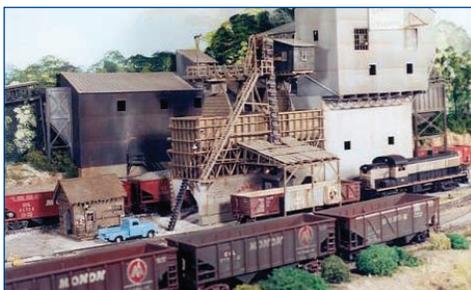
AS SPRING TURNS INTO SUMMER here in North Carolina, the days are getting longer and the temperatures are getting higher, and many of the details are coming together for the 2011 MER Convention. **Piedmont Crossing** will be held October 27th through October 30th in Cary, NC, and we have a broad range of activities in the works for attendees. Cary, NC, is located just to the Southwest of Raleigh, in the heart of North Carolina. We look forward to host our visitors from the Mid-Eastern Region and beyond. Read on for details of some of the activities planned for this year's convention.

Piedmont Crossing will include many of the activities that you would expect in the annual MER Convention, such as 40+ clinics, prototype rail & industrial tours, home & club layout tours, 10 layout operating sessions, model contests, dinner banquet with speaker, model displays, 5 "make-&-take" workshops, live auction, model train show, and modular layout displays. That's a full slate of activities for all to enjoy.

HOME LAYOUT TOURS

Piedmont Crossing will feature a variety of home and club layouts in all scales: N, HO, O, G, and even a Live Steam outdoor layout. We have identified over 30 layouts for the tour list throughout central North Carolina.

One example includes Jack Frame's *Monon Route* – which has had regular operating sessions for over 20 years. Jack's layout is based on the Monon Route from Chicago, IL, to Louisville, KY, with a large yard in Bloomington, IL, as the central point. This railroad is set in 1952 and hosts a variety of passenger service,



One of the many layouts tours available: Jack Frame's – Monon Route.

thru-freights, local freights, and interchanges. There is plenty of switching activity on this layout. The Monon Route fills an 825 square-foot building, includes over 450 feet of mainline track and sidings, 625 feet of yard and industrial sidings, and over 160 turnouts. Jack's layout will be open for tour on Friday afternoon, October 28th; you will really enjoy exploring this layout.

Another example includes Tony Sear's Live Steam outdoor empire. This railroad is a 1.5" scale railroad on 7.5" gauge track. There are over 2 miles of outdoor track plus another mile of track for yard, engine service, the roundhouse, and car barn. These engines and cars are actually large and powerful enough to ride

on!! Tony and his wife Judy host this club layout on their 50 acre farm, and they integrate their love of both model railroading and horticulture as the mainline runs through wooded areas and beau-



Come ride on Tony Sear's Live Steam outdoor empire!

tifully landscaped gardens. Tony's layout will be open for tour on Friday afternoon, October 28th; you will not want to miss the opportunity to see this fantastic attraction.

These are just two examples of home layout tours that visitors can see during **Piedmont Crossing**; there are many other layout tours open for visitation from Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon. See more tour details on the convention website.

CONVENTION CLINICS

Piedmont Crossing will feature a full slate of railroading clinics. These clinics will cover a large variety of topics and will be presented in several different manners including presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on practice. There will be over 60 hours of clinics to choose from – from as short as one hour to as long as an 8-hour hands-on session. The clinics are organized into different tracks such as scenery, technology, industries, operations, modeling, design & construction, prototype, NMRA activities, and a hands-on make-&-take track.

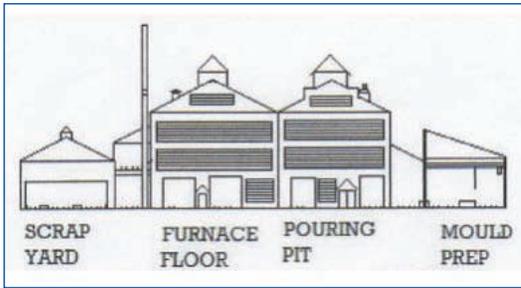
The **Scenery Track** includes topics such as Creating Backdrops and Making Trees, and some are in the **Make-&-Take Track** such as Making Telephone Poles.

The **Technology Track** includes interesting clinics about Adding Light, Sound, & Motion Animation to Your Layout and Programming Digitrax Sound Decoders.

The **Industries Track** provides clinics that explore details about rail-served industries that you may choose to model. A full day is allocated to Steel Industry Modeling and another entitled Railroad-Worthy Industries.

In the **Steel Industry Modeling** clinics, a group of gentlemen will give a series of clinics during a full day session on Friday, October 28th. The clinics include modeling a steel mill and its operations, steel industry layout considerations, industry buildings, railcars, industrial rail yards and switching, and steel mill rail operations. There will be several steel industry models, layouts, and dioramas on display in the clinic room, and convention attendees are invited to

continued on page 12



All day clinic! Learn how to model a steel mill and its operations, steel industry layout considerations, industry buildings, railcars, industrial rail yards and switching, and steel mill rail operations.

bring their own models for display in the clinic room. For the steel industry enthusiasts, Dick Buchan will host two operating sessions on his home steel mill layout – one on Thursday afternoon,

October 27th, and one on Sunday afternoon, October 30th. To sign up for the operating sessions, see details on the registration page of the convention website.

The **Operations Track** is for those who wish to see how fellow model railroaders mimic their favorite prototype as hosts to operating sessions. Clinics include Using Switch List Software, Using Car Cards and Waybills, Tips & Methods for Uncoupling, and Getting Started in Operations.

The **Modeling Track** will provide a variety of clinics to help modelers improve their skills – some will include the make-&-take feature. Examples include Adding Decals to Freight Cars & Engines, Hand-Laying Track, Weathering with Chalks, Creating Freight Car Loads, Building with Styrene, and Adding Detailed Brake Systems.

The **Layout Design & Construction Track** includes clinics that provide tips and guidance for constructing your own layout, such as Layout Design Considerations, Building Lightweight Modules, and Building a Raffle Layout.

In the **Building a Raffle Layout** clinic, Stephen Milley will give an overview of the design, build, and raffle of the 2010 CPD15 Raffle Layout. This layout was a huge fundraising success for the local division. You will see details of the unique layout design,



This 2010 raffle layout was a huge fundraising success for the Piedmont division. In the clinic you will learn details of the unique layout design, track plan, structures and scenery.

track plan, structures, and scenery. You will hear about the hard work members of the division put into the layout and some lessons learned along the way. You can take ideas home to your division for your own fundraising efforts.

The **Prototype Track** includes clinics focused on modeling of prototype railroads and equipment. Examples of clinics in this track include Modeling the Tweetsie Railroad, Southern Railroad

Freight and Passenger Cars, Modeling B&O Boxcars in the Steam Era, and Modeling Log Cars.

The **NMRA Activities Track** includes opportunities for you to learn how to get involved in more NMRA activities with clinics such as Contest Judging and AP Lessons Learned.

These are just a short overview of the clinics to be offered at this year's MER convention; certainly enough to keep you busy – learning new skills and enjoying our hobby.

THE TRAIN SHOW

In conjunction with the **Piedmont Crossing** convention, the Carolina Piedmont division will host a model railroading train show. Admission into the train show will be included as part of your convention fee, and it will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday for a fee of \$5.00 for adults. For convention attendees, there will be a private opening to the train show on Friday evening, October 28th.

The train show will include display tables from dealers and retailers from around the Southeast area, and often attendees can find special convention prices for sale items. The local division will also present this year's raffle layout at the train show. Be sure to pick up your raffle tickets – proceeds go to a great cause, as the division purchases and gives away train sets each Christmas to less-fortunate families in the Raleigh area. The raffle tickets are only \$1 per ticket, six for \$5.

The show will also include two large operating modular layouts set up for visitors to enjoy. Joining the convention from New Bern, NC, the Neuse River Lines presented by the Carolina Coastal Railroaders is an HO Scale modular layout. The Danville Railroad NTRAK layout presented by the Eastern N Lines Partnership is an N Scale modular layout. The Danville Railroad will host 3 operating sessions during the weekend as well, so keep your eyes on the convention registration information to get signed up.

As you can see, **Piedmont Crossing** will be full of fun activities to keep you busy. Check out all the details on the convention web site throughout the summer, as more information and activities are added. Don't forget to register early – to get the lower registration price and to get signed up for the activities that have a limited quantity of participants.

TRANSPORTATION

Consider a rail-fanning transportation method – Amtrak serves Cary, NC, with several trains each day.

HOTEL

The convention will be held at the Embassy Suites (Raleigh/Durham/Research Triangle) at 201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard, Cary, NC. The hotel rate is \$89/night (plus taxes) and includes a full cook-to-order breakfast each morning and an evening “manager's reception”.

REGISTRATION

NMRA members \$45; early registration \$40 (by September 15); non-members \$55/\$50.

There is an extra fare for the dinner banquet and the “make-&-take” workshops.

Complete information and registration information are located on the convention website www.mer2011.org. 

Mid-East Region - NMRA Convention Piedmont Crossing

October 27 – 30, 2011

REGISTRATION FORM (as of May 31, 2011)



Please enter (print legibly) all names as you wish them to appear on your registration badges: They will not be changed at the convention.

Primary Registrant's Name: _____

Significant Other (living at same address): _____

Children (under age 16 – List all): _____

Address: Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Email: _____ NMRA # _____

DESCRIPTION		COST	#	PAYING
Early Registration (until Sep. 15, 2011 then \$45 until October 22, 2011)		\$40		
Non-NMRA member (applied to Rail Pass Membership)		\$10		
Significant other		\$15		
Children (under 16)		\$10		
Banquet Saturday Night	401	\$45		
NC RR Passenger Yard Saturday (No cost but only 30 allowed)	201	0		
Scratch-building with Styrene Saturday 8am (15)	601	\$15		
Make & Take Clinic Bar Mills Kit Clinic Friday (all day)(12)	603	\$30		
Make & Take Steel Shed Friday 10pm (10)	604	\$12		
Make & Take Telephone Poles Thursday 7pm	605	0		
Make & Take Telephone Poles Friday 7pm	606	0		
Call Board Buchan Thursday 12pm (5)	801	\$5		
Call Board Faulkner Thursday 7pm (10)	802	\$5		
Call Board Huey Friday 9am (10)	811	\$5		
Call Board Dougherty Saturday 12pm (10)	821	\$5		
Call Board "N" Trak #1 Saturday 10am (10)	825	\$5		
Call Board "N" Trak #2 Saturday 12pm (10)	826	\$5		
Call Board Koss Sunday 9am (5)	831	\$5		
Call Board Benezra Sunday 10am (10)	832	\$5		
Call Board Buchan Sunday 1pm (5)	833	\$5		
Call Board "N" Trak #3 Sunday 10am (10)	835	\$5		

Payment must accompany registration.

Make checks payable to:
MER Fall Convention 2011

Send all registrations to:
**MER Fall Convention
P.O. Box 447
Swedesboro, NJ 08085**

For questions and / or additional information e-mail
MER-Registrar@comcast.net

CONVENTION HOTEL:

Embassy Suites
201 Harrison Oaks Boulevard
Cary, NC 27513

The convention rate is \$89.00 per room (plus taxes) per night. All hotel registrations must be made directly with the hotel at 919 677 1840. These rates are in effect until 9 September 2011. When registering, specify the **Piedmont Crossing MER Convention** to get these special rates.

TOTAL ADVANCE REGISTRATION PAID

Additional events will be added when their cost is known.

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CLINT HYDE

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CALLBOARD

Coming Events

June 11th. Wade's Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern Division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

July 3rd – 9th. EXTRA 2011 WEST. NMRA National Convention and Train Show in Sacramento, CA. For complete information visit www.x2011west.org.

July 10th. Wade's Train Town monthly open house. Operated by Carolina Southern Division members at the Brookford Town Center located at 1700 South Center St in Hickory, NC. 10 AM till 4 PM.

Divisions and Clubs tell MER members about your upcoming event!! Send your FREE event listings to the editor (contact information is listed on page 2.) Be sure to include all the specifics for the event: including the date/time, place, cost, a contact person, and a means of getting in touch with him/her (address, phone, e-mail, etc.), and if available a website for updates or to get more information. Please see the publication deadlines on page 16 to make sure your event is published on time. 📧

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

PJ Mattson – *Master Builder, Motive Power*

Division 2 – Potomac

Mathew A. Thompson – *Model Railroad Engineer, Civil*
Mathew A. Thomspson – *Model Railroad Engineer, Electrical*

Division 4 – Tidewater

George Downer – *Model Railroad Author*

Division 5 – James River

Robert G. Minnis – *Model Railroad Engineer, Civil*

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

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07/11

Mix-it Puzzles

By *Dr. Charles Wood*
Carolina Piedmont Division/HO Scale

These are puzzles of scrambled words. The letters on each line can be rearranged to form a word that relates to models or to prototype railroads. Answers below.

Puzzle #21:

- a. RSLEIAM
- b. RRNAUEEDFM
- c. YOMFID
- d. OOO LXTB
- e. PRMBEU

Puzzle #22:

- a. IILDAGT
- b. TLOEGG
- c. LMUGO
- d. YOORTPPT
- e. ERRCSTTU

Answer to puzzle #21:

- e. Bumper
- d. Toolbox
- c. Modify
- b. Underframe
- a. Realism

Answer to puzzle #22:

- e. Structure
- d. Prototype
- c. Mogul
- b. Toggle
- a. Digital

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<u>Publication Schedule:</u>	<u>Articles/Callboard items due to Editor by:</u>
Jan/Feb	December 1st of previous year
Mar/Apr	Feb 1st
May/June	Apr 1st
Jul/Aug	Jun 1st
Sept/Oct	Aug 1st
Nov/Dec	Oct 1st

If you are interested in advertising with the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association please contact the Editor, as listed on page 2. The current advertising rates for **The Local** are as follows and must include camera ready art (jpeg, pdf, bmp, tiff formats):

Callboard Ads (30-50 words) (Div. and Clubs Only)...Free	
Business Card size (6 issues)	\$60.00
Quarter Page ad (6 issues).....	\$125.00
Half Page ad (6 issues).....	\$225.00
Half page ad (per issue) (Div. Only)	\$25.00