

WHEEL REPORT

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA



smdnmra.org

WINTER 2013-2014



RENEW ONLINE

You can renew your NMRA membership easily on line at <http://www.nmra.org/nmrastore/index.html>. There's a box in the upper right hand corner of this screen called "U. S. Membership". Click on the appropriate category and away you go.

FALL MEETINGS

December – Sunday, December 8, 2013, 2 to 5 pm. Bill Reynolds' HO scale Denver & Rio Grande Western. Bill models the line from Alamosa to Silverton in the 1957 – 58 era. D&RGW once intended to standard gauge these lines and Bill models it that way. Bill uses NCE DCC equipment and hosts operating sessions. He's starting the scenery of the high line in the coke ovens area.

Clinic: Richard Lind will bring two different static grass applicators and static grass aterials for everyone to try.

January – Sunday, January 12, 2014, 2 to 5 pm. Richard Nemchik, HO scale Tugfork & Eastern. Rich's model railroad is very loosely based on the WM and the B&O. Much of the mainline is in and some scenery. Eventually a port and logging area will be included. Most trains will be extras and most of the railroad's operations will be switching with short 8-10 car trains.

Clinic: TBD

February – Sunday, February 9, 2014, 2 to 5 pm. Don Florwick's Pittsburgh & South Penn – HO scale. Don's railroad represents Vanderbilt's South Pennsylvania Railroad as if it had been completed. The P&SP has staging at Pittsburgh to Harrisburg, and focuses on the Youngwood/New Stanton portion of the line, with PRR, B&O, and P&WV interchanges. The layout fills an 1100 sq. ft. space.

Clinic: TBD

2014 MER CONVENTION UPDATE

By Grant Berry

Things are moving forward for next year's MER convention. The dates have been set, and the contracts with the hotel have been signed. We will be at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Hagerstown from October 16 – 19. This is actually the same hotel as 2009, but it is now being managed by Ramada. The room rate will be \$89/night and you will be allowed to use any Wyndham rewards you may have. At the last Division meeting, a discussion was held and we decided to go with just dessert and beverages for the Saturday night speaker and awards presentations. This should keep the total registration fee a little lower. We will have a large number of rooms available for clinics, white elephant, contest and meetings. We will have the space and we've had some preliminary discussion about using one of the rooms for a Free-mo Group demonstration and also possibly a hands-on module-building clinic. The hotel does have an on-site restaurant and lounge and also provides free breakfast to all registered hotel guests.

The decision to use this hotel was not made quickly. We were originally hoping to have the convention in the Chambersburg area, but were unable to find a facility there that could provide the required number of clinic/meeting rooms and an on-site restaurant or lounge. We then looked at two other hotels in Hagerstown area that had the necessary space but one did not have a restaurant or lounge and the other was undergoing renovations, with a possible completion date of early spring, and we could not wait that late to make a decision.

I already contacted the NMRA and the convention information will begin to appear on their website and also in the monthly magazine.

I have a meeting scheduled this week with Bill Day, who has compiled an extensive marketing and advertising guidebook. Following these procedures

the 2013 MER Convention had a registered attendance of over 320 people. In comparison the last five MER conventions had an average attendance of less than 200, so we are hoping we can put these same techniques to work for us so we can expose as many people as possible to all the aspects of the hobby we all enjoy so much.

Richard Benjamin and I are looking forward to working with all of you on this project. In the near future, we will be putting out the call for volunteers for all of the any positions that need to be filled so we can make this convention as successful as possible.

Richard Benjamin and Grant Berry
2014 MER Convention Co-chairmen

OCTOBER 13TH MEETING

David Moltrup hosted the October 13th SMD meeting. Dave's HO scale Beaver Falls & Shenango Railroad is a model of a shortline serving the steel industry. Dave was one of 14 presenters at the NMRA Steel Modelers SIG meet in Pittsburgh last Labor Day weekend, and he gave the group a clinic on modeling the steel industry.



Dave Moltrup (left) talks about his blast furnaces

Bob Proctor chaired the meeting. After he opened the meeting, he asked for a motion to adjourn and he got one.

October 13th meeting, continued

After the meeting, they operated Dave's Beaver Falls & Shanango. While they were operating, Dave talked about steel mill operations which was a whole nuther clinic.



Blower buildings with stockpile and furnaces behind



Dave Moltrup's electric furnace



A rolling mill



Dave Moltrup's basic oxygen furnace

NOVEMBER 10TH MEETING



Roy Hoffman's Philadelphia 30th Street Station

November 10th meeting, continued

Roy Hoffman hosted the November 10th SMD meeting. Roy's S/Sn3 Penn Western represents a regional railroad that runs from Philadelphia to Harrisburg with carferry connections to Camden New Jersey and a commuter line from its 30th Street Station in Philadelphia to Allentown. Roy is a model builder and his layout contains a good representation of the building kits that have been available in S scale over the years. Roy is also a scratch builder and he's built many buildings in S scale using construction articles in *Model Railroader* and *Railroad Model Craftsman*. Roy added the East Broad Top to his layout as a tourist attraction.

About ten members attended including Grant Berry, our 2014 MER convention co-chair. Grant gave a presentation on the ongoing effort to secure a site for the 2014 MER convention.

After the meeting, Roy gave us a Power Point presentation about the 30th Street Station in Philadelphia: where he described the building, gave its history, and talked about the selective compression he had to do to effectively model this structure for his Penn Western. He gave us a handout showing the dimensions of the prototype and his model for comparison



Thirtieth Street with the Penn Western tracks below



Inside the station's waiting room (photo from smdmra.org)



Philadelphia The two truss bridges carry PW suburban line into the upper level of the 30th Street Station



Pier head house and float bridge on the Delaware River

November 10th meeting, continued



Roy Hoffman Jim Fisher and Don Florwick



Dorothy Caldwell Ron Poloeni Bob Proctor Don Florwick and Grant Berry

Tour Roy's layout on www.smdnmra.org .

MAINLINE HOBBY PRESENTS: THE SECOND ANNUAL SMD SPRING MINI-CONVENTION

By Pete Clarke

Join us on Saturday April 5th in Blue Ridge Summit!

Who? Our April meeting will be a joint event with Mainline Hobby Supply. We hope every member will stop by. There will be lots to see. Come see the great things we have planned, then walk over and browse in the store. This event will be open to the public. SMD will use it to spread the word about membership in the NMRA.

Where? Mainline intends to again rent the hall at the fire station that's directly across the street from the hobby shop. Blue Ridge Mountain Fire Co. 13063 Monterey Lane, Blue Ridge Summit, PA. 17214. Parking at the shop is limited but there's plenty of parking at the fire station.

When? Saturday, April 5th, from 10 AM to 3:30 PM.

What? Starting at 10 AM we'll have clinics going on constantly. We are working to bring you standard clinics on: Painting without Floquil, and entering models for judging.

We again hope to have some "Make it and take it" clinics. One of them will allow you to make a static grass applicator for less than five dollars' worth of parts.

We hope to offer a chance for a limited number of people to sign up to attend an operating session at a local model railroad after the mini-con is over. So, here's your chance to really get into model railroad operations.

We will again have SMD members giving informal clinics all day. Last year we had the following: making trees, using Fast Tracks to lay your own

Mini-con, continued

turnouts, how to tune your freight cars, and how to cast walls. We'll also have members ready to discuss: layout design, the NMRA's achievement program, and the benefits of joining NMRA. We hope to have these, and more this year.

All those who gave "informal clinics" at last year's mini-con reported that they had a great time and enjoyed the event. Wouldn't you like to demonstrate some aspect of the hobby you enjoy? You don't have to sweat over a power point presentation; you don't have to write a script. You could do something as simple as bring a model that you are working on with you and work on it. Then, just talk with anyone who stops by to look at what you are doing. Or, got something to say? (For example, The EBT is the perfect railroad to model!) Here's a chance to say it. Contact Pete to get on the list. His contact info is in this Wheel Report.

Got some stuff you'd like to sell? For a \$10 charge you can have a table and sell your stuff. Note that SMD will not "man" the table for you. That will be up to you. Yes, you and friends could combine and share a table.

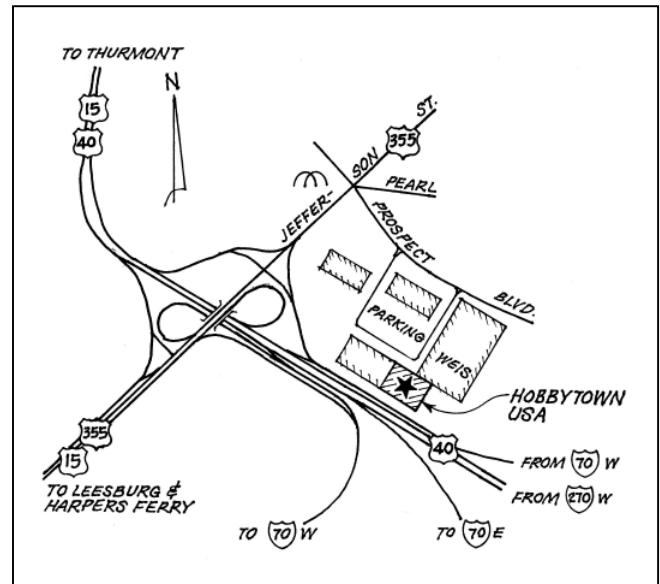
Rather just watch trains? Got you covered. Brian Wolfe is talking with several modular groups. We expect to have least one or more, modular railroads set up in the hall as well.

Want to run a train? Still got you! We hope to have the "time saver" layout. This is a classic switching challenge that's fun for all ages and abilities.

So much to do! Oh, and don't forget to go over to Mainline and shop!

So, tell everyone you meet, we want members and non-members to attend. Anyone interested in model railroading is welcome.

HOBBYTOWN USA MOVES



Recently, member Richard Benjamin moved Hobby Town USA to the Festival of Frederick shopping center at 454 Prospect Boulevard in Frederick. The new location is at the intersection of major highways and there's much more parking for patrons. Besides models, the store stocks Boy Scout uniforms, books and patches. The store is locally owned and operated with a Hobbytown USA franchise.

SPRING OPERATING SESSIONS

by Don Florwick

Each spring the South Mountain Division has been sponsoring operating sessions on interesting layouts outside of our area. So far, nothing is set up – so stay tuned. I suspect Dave Baker is good for a session and Steve King probably is good for one also. I also want to get one with John King.

So watch for a notice in our Spring *Wheel Report*.

AN UNRECOGNIZED BLESSING

Potomac Division member Sam Powell helped Don Florwick create the illusion of depth in a two-inch deep backdrop by layering extruded polystyrene insulation board profiles. After cutting out the profiles Sam textures and rounds them quickly with a crosscut saw. Read what happened next in Don's words:



“Just got home from Pittsburgh 2 hours ago and had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Went up on Wednesday and as we traveled up PA Route 75 from Fort Laudon to the turnpike around noon time I just marveled at the mountains on both sides of the valley. You see I had just mounted the backdrop foam sections that Sam Powell taught me about. I painted them and highlighted them even though I did not know what I was doing and have no artistic talent. However since I did that, I started noticing colors, land forms, and lighting and shading on the mountains that I had seen before but had never really ever seen. It was fantastic! In addition, the weather was getting worse and we could see the freeze line on the mountains as we traveled up the valley. It looked like a high water line on the mountains. On the way back today we got off at Breezewood and coming east on US Route 30 over the first mountain all the trees were covered with ice and on one section the trees provide a canopy over the roadway. We must have hit that section at

the most perfect moment as the sun shown down through the canopy. It was just like driving through a light tunnel! It was the most beautiful scene Betty and I have ever seen....”

Don's message strongly reminded me of Henry David Thoreau's observations about the way we see in his book *Walden*. Thoreau wrote that we see but since we're preoccupied with what we're doing or will do next we don't really observe and consequently miss the beauty of nature before us.

Our hobby forces us to slow down and look closely at natural and built environments so we can model them. Our hobby can give us visual acuity. We take this gift for granted but it is a blessing that enhances the quality of our lives. Don's email message clearly shows this.

FROM THE SUPER'S DESK

by Richard Lind

Shortly before the 2013 MER convention, I signed and returned a letter to MER, committing SMD to host the 2014 MER convention. Ideally that commitment should have been made a year earlier. I felt I could sign because we had a pair of co-chairmen working on finding a convention site. They've finished that job, and now we have some catching up to do. MER is chopping at the bit to publicize our convention.

So we need to get our convention committee up and running immediately to deal with questions MER finds urgent. We need to finalize the name of the convention and design a logo, set fees so MER can design a registration form. We need to determine the content of the convention page on the MER website and we need to assign committee members to interface with MER convention committee members. So please volunteer and please make your commitment soon.

PREPARE FOR ELECTIONS

Time to start thinking about serving as an officer or to start thinking about your choices for division officers for the 2014-2015 year. Elections will be at the April 5th spring mini-con, and nominations must be in by Thursday, March 6th. A committee of three will be appointed to place a nominations.

OPEN HOUSES AND TRAIN SHOWS

Sunday, November 30, 2013. "Open House and Operating Train Displays" by the Hagerstown Model Railroad Museum, Inc. at Antietam Station, 7230 Shepherdstown Pike, Sharpsburg MD 21782, 9 AM to 2 PM. Adults: \$4 donation <http://www.antietamstation.com> or call (301) 824-2239 for info.

Fridays Saturdays and Sundays through February 23, 2014 plus December 26th and January 2nd. "The Trains of Christmas". Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum, 300 S. Burhans Blvd (US Route 11), Hagerstown MD 21741, Hours:1 –5 PM. <http://www.roundhouse.org/Events.html> or call (301) 739-4665 for info

Sunday, December 15, 2013; January 5, 12, 19 and 26 2014; and February 2 2014: 1 – 4 PM. Frederick County Soc. of Model Engineers Open House. In C&O horse car behind 423 East Patrick Street, Frederick MD 21701 www.fcsme.com or (301) 668-6371 for info.

February 1-2, 2014. Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093. Sat \$9: 9 AM to 4 PM; Sun \$8 10 AM to 4 PM. www.gsmts.com

Sunday, February 8, 2014. "Open House and Operating Train Displays" by the Hagerstown Model Railroad Museum, Inc. at Antietam Station, 7230 Shepherdstown Pike, Sharpsburg MD 21782, 9 AM to 2 PM. Adults: \$4 donation.

<http://www.antietamstation.com> or call (301) 824-2239 for info.

March 8, 2014, "Late-Winter Hobby Show, Sale and Open House" sponsored by the Winchester Model Railroad Club. Free open house at the club building at 430 N. Commerce Street, Winchester from 9 AM to 2 PM. Show and sale at Friendship Fire Company's meeting hall at 627 North Pleasant Valley Road, Winchester VA. <http://wmrrc.org/>

March 28 – 30, 2014. Railroad Prototype Modelers Valley Forge. Desmond Great Valley Hotel and Conference Center, 1 Liberty Boulevard, Malvern PA. Clinics on prototype models and operations, model displays, Sunday home layout tours, operating sessions, and vendors' room. Registration \$30. The meet will be from 5:30 PM on Friday through noon on Sunday, with a operating sessions on Thursday evening and Friday from 10 until 2. Layout tours on Sunday. Call Desmond Great Valley Hotel and Conference Center at 800-575-1776 and mention "Prototype Modelers Meet" to reserve a room at a rate of \$114 plus tax. For more information and registration form, go to <http://www.phillynmra.org/RPMMeet.html>.

TRAIN RIDES

November 29, 2013. Fri. Sat. Sun. service begins on the Strasburg Railroad. Last day of Fri. Sat, Sun. service on December 22nd. <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com> for info.

November 30 – December 1, 7-8, 14-15. 21-22; "Santa's Paradise Express". Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA. <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com> for info.

December 3-4, 10-11 and 17-18. "Santa Express", 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

December 2-4, 9-11, 16 and 18. "North Pole Express", 6:00 to 9:30 PM. Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

Train rides , continued

December 17. Murder Mystery Trains, 6:00 PM.
Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.
<http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

December 26-31. Strasburg Railroad. Last regular trains of the season. For info, see
<http://www.strasburgrailroad.com>

FUTURE SMD MEETINGS

- December 8th – Bill Reynolds
- January 12th – Rich Nemchik
- February 9th – Don Florwick
- March 9th – Frank Benenati
- April 5th – Mini-con at Blue Ridge Summit
- May 18th – Joe Albert
- October 16 – 19 MER Convention -- Hagerstown

No meetings in June, July and August, but we will ride the train at New Freedom PA in June 2014.



SMD OFFICERS 2013/14

Superintendent:

Richard Lind
(240) 454-2749
Email: rlind202@verizon.net

Assistant Superintendent:

Pete Clarke
(301) 253-4913
Email: ebtmx5@aol.com

Clerk:

Jim Fisher
(717) 762-7787
Email: aliceandjimf@cermak.com

Wheel Report Editor:

Richard Lind
202 West College Terrace
Frederick, MD 21701-4844
(301) 694-9496

Paymaster:

Ray Price
(301) 845-6465
wmmryar1904@gmail.com

smdnmra.org Webmaster:

Roy Hoffman
(717) 530-7977
Email: royhoffman@yahoo.com

Division Achievement Coordinator:

Jane Clarke
(301) 253-4913
Email: Jane.Clarke@BioReliance.com

Division Education and Training Coordinator:

C. Brian Greenawalt
(240) 381-3486
Email: cbgreenawalt@embarqmail.com

Advisory Committee:

Pete and Jane Clarke
(301) 482-1136 Email: ebtmx5@aol.com

Donald (Don) Florwick (717) 352-8759
Email: DJFlorwick@comcast.net

Bob Johnson
(301) 371-9129
Email: rcyrlj@aol.com

Mike Shockey
Email: SHOgone@aol.com

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Richard Lind, -- Editor, 202 West College Terrace, Frederick MD



O-Scale Little Joes perform on Rich Randall's Milwaukee Road, Avery Division