

WHEEL REPORT **SMD**

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

SPRING, 2009

SPRING MEETINGS

March – March 8, 2009, 2 to 5 pm, Richard Lind’s freelance B&O modules and 5x8 portable layout.

Address: 202 West College Terrace, Frederick MD 21701.

Directions: See attached map.

Clinic – Richard Lind on making Super Trees

April – April 19, 2009, 2 to 5 pm, Richard Benjamin

Address: 7124 Autumn Leaf Lane, Frederick MD 21702

Directions: See attached map

Clinic – to be determined.

May – May 10, 2009, 2 to 5 pm, Paul Rausch

Address: 3052 Oak Hill Road, Waynesboro PA 17268

Directions: See attached map.

Clinic – Dennis Masters on the railroads of Hagerstown.

NEW MODEL RAILROAD EZINE

A new quarterly model railroad magazine is on the Internet: *Model Railroad Hobbyist*. The first issue, dated January 2009 has 121 pages. You can download *Model Railroad Hobbyist* at <http://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/mrh2009-01/>.

MODELING NOTES

Ties and Rail by Pete Clarke

I was reading the January *Scale Rails* and the short article about storing a length of rail out along the main line on page 37 got me thinking. So I asked a couple of guys to comment on how their railroad handles putting out rail and ties for maintenance work. Rail wears out. Ties wear out. Wear is particularly faster on curves and grades (sliding or spinning wheels).

We’ve had an undefined track workers scene on our model EBT for some time. See picture 1. Recently



Picture 1

I had added a load of rail to the items that we pick up from the Pennsylvania Railroad at Mt. Union. So it seems I’ve been inching towards this topic anyway. Rather than just putting some rail and ties

at the work location, I thought I'd continue to inch my way along. So I made some ties and took 2 lengths of rail and had a crew load them on a flat car. See picture 2. Next time we run trains we'll



Picture 2

have a special, perhaps pulled by the M-1, run down and drop these off.

An Observation by Bob Proctor

I grew up about 1 block (short) from the Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Line, Philly to Atlantic City and other points. There were numerous pedestrian paths for crossing the tracks. I remember that the one nearest my street had a single rail up on 2 cinder blocks beside the tracks, between the tracks and the drainage ditch. It was there for at least 10 years. As to Pete's question about what you did with one rail, I don't know for when we moved to a new house, the rail was still there. I also don't recall any particular rail maintenance in that area either.

From Railway Track & Maintenance Cyclopedia

Rail defects were more of a problem before the advent of fissure detector cars in 1928. Before then, if a track crew spotted evidence of a fissure, especially a split web or a piped rail, the rail had to be replaced right away for safety. A piped rail is a rail with a hidden vertical fissure in the web. It's a manufacturing defect.

FROM THE DESK OF THE DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT:

At one point SMD had a website. Then it died and I didn't notice anyone crying about it. I'm guessing that is because we failed to update it. So, there was simply no reason to look at it.

But, if we had a good one. One that was kept up-to-date. One where you could look at the Wheel Report and remind yourself of when and where the next meeting is. One that had features on, and pictures of, the layouts in the division – including your own! One that had a list of hobby shops, lists of rail related activities, lists of local museums. One that has a list of operating sessions you could attend. I'm thinking that this sort of website would be worth saving on my "favorites" and that I'd take a look at it from time to time. If we had one like I hope WWW.SMDNMRA.ORG will grow to be, why then we'd have something.

Richard Benjamin, Richard Lind, James (Jim) Allen and I are working to create a useful, entertaining, and up-to-date website for SMD. Jim Allen is most likely not a name that sounds familiar to you. He lives way down near Charlotte N.C. and volunteered to help us. Next time you think the NMRA and MER don't do anything for us, well, stop yourself. That's how we got Jim. He introduces himself in another article in this issue. Richard is taking a class on websites and going to be learning from Jim. How's that for using SMD to expand your horizons?

I'd very much like it if I could begin to list more names as being involved with the website. So take a look at it and contact Richard Lind with your suggestions. His email is listed in this Wheel Report. Better yet, write up a contribution. We'd love to have a tour of your layout, complete with pictures. We'd love to have a write up of something you've built. Got a favorite rail-related place to visit? Write down why it is so good, and what you think is the best way to visit it and send it to Richard. If you have operating sessions, give

Division Superintendent message, continued

Richard the info so he can list it and help you fill out your crew.

We announced an attempt to start a modeling column in the last issue. Did you like the article? Would you like to see it continue? It's not hard to write things equal in quality to the junk I put out. You and I both know that you could do better than I did. Jot down some notes. Take a picture. Send them in to Richard – email or snail mail, he can work with both! You never know what will come of it. As I worked on that tank car article, I had asked around, "Once they took the tank top off, did they put on any other cover?" and couldn't get an answer. I assumed that they left it open (what, some cinder is going to hurt a load of asphalt?) But after the article was published, someone heard of it and told me that they once saw a picture of a tank with just a flat steel (?) sheet bolted down as a cover. So I had some fun and learned something.

We'll finish off this year with visits to Richard Lind (March), Richard Benjamin (April), and Paul Rausch (May). We have a talk lined up for each one. Have you been to an SMD meeting lately? There's so much in each one, and good cookies always!

We need you to volunteer to host a meeting next year.

We need you to volunteer to give a talk at one of the meetings.

We need you to submit items for the Wheel Report and website.

We need you.

Your action makes the SMD alive.

Your inaction...

It's not hard, contact Richard or **me**. Do it now, why wait?

Pete

A Note from Jim Allen, Our New Webmaster

Folks, first let me say thanks for giving me an opportunity to lend a hand. The main purpose of a website is to put information at your fingertips. Both Richard and Pete were well underway with this, which is going to make it easier to get this site up and running quickly.

I'd like to give you a little bit about myself, being that I am some 400 miles south of most of you; thus telecommuting to your Division, if you will.

I am a happily married 52 year old with 3 kids, my oldest being 23 and out on her own (mostly). We currently live in Huntersville NC, just north west of Charlotte. My job with IBM transferred us down here from Manassas VA in 1992. I spent most of my life in Northern VA.

So, why the volunteering? Well, I began working on getting my MMR two years ago after a club member suggested that I get some structures judged. To be honest, at that time I did not have a clue about the NMRA achievement program. After some coaxing from a few of the guys I decided to start the process. Three NMRA divisional judges came to the house and began judging my structures. That night five of my scratch built buildings scored high enough, with one falling slightly short. Three weeks later, the remaining structures, etc., were judged and the paperwork was submitted.

I began the scenic AP shortly there after. I already had enough scenery completed. It was just a matter of doing the paperwork, which for me is harder than the modeling.

I now have three AP certificates, with the fourth, "Chief Dispatcher" in the hands of the NMRA folks. I am currently working on four others, not intentionally, but it just is working out that way. I have documented much of my work on my web site, and some of this has been published. This goes towards the Author AP. For the past year I have been renovating structures for the Brookford Train

Jim Allen, continued

Museum in Hickory NC. This is a division project, so folks participating in the layout restoration get a half time unit per month. I am also in the process of registering as a Boy Scout Merit badge counselor. This way, I can help the boys get their railroad badges, while accumulating volunteer points. Not to mention, I am hoping that visits to my layout might get some of them excited with this wonderful hobby.

Well I have rambled on enough. I hope to meet many of you as I have family in the Northern VA area. Hopefully I can tour some of your layouts during one of my visits up north.

Jim

Ed. Note: To see some of Jim's work, go to www.southernexchange.net.

EVENTS AND TRAIN SHOWS

February 14, 2009. Winter Trainfest – Model Train Sale by the Hagerstown Model Railroad Museum, Inc. at the Washington County Ag Center, 7313 Sharpsburg Pike (6.5 mi. south on Maryland Route 65 from I-70 Exit 29, on the left), 9 AM to 3 PM. hmrmm@myactv.net or call (301) 824-2239 for info.

February 22, 2009. Cumberland Valley Model RR Club toy, doll and train show. Scotland Community Center, Main Street, Scotland PA. 9am to 2 pm. Directions: Take Exit 20 from I-81. Go north on PA 997. Turn left at M&T Bank. Community Center is on the right. Watch for show sign. . www.cvmrrc.com/events.htm

March 14, 2009. Winchester Model Railroad Club show and sale at the Friendship Fire Company meeting hall at 627 North Pleasant Valley Road, and open house at 430 North Cameron Street. The open house is from 9 am to 2 pm and is free. Admission for adults at the train show and sale is \$3.00. See www.wmrrc.org for info.

March 14, 2009. 23rd Annual Harrisburg Railroad Show and Collector's Market. I. W. Abel Union Hall, 200 Gibson Street, Steelton PA 17113. 9 am to 3 pm. \$5 donation at the door. See http://nrhs-hbg.pennsyr.com/Trainshow/2009_show.pdf

March 27-28, 2009. Railroad Prototype Modelers Seminar. Sheraton Four Points, Route 30 East, Greensburg PA. Seminar registration \$35. The seminar will be from 1 PM on Friday through 11 PM on Saturday, with a operating sessions on Thursday evening and layout tours on Sunday. Call the Four Points at 724-836-6060 and mention "Prototype Modelers Meet" to reserve a room at a rate of \$95 plus tax. For more information and registration form, go to www.keystonedivision.org.

March 28, 2009. Bunker Hill Train Club Show, Frederick County (VA) Fair Grounds, 160 Fair Grounds Road, Clearbrook VA. For more info, see www.bunkerhilltrainclub.org.

April 4-5, 2009. Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093 www.gsmts.com

April 30-May 3, 2009. The 21st Century Limited. Mid-Central Region Convention, Columbus OH

June 6,7, 2009 Opening weekend. East Broad Top Railroad, Rockhill Furnace (Orbisonia) PA.

June 27-28, 2009. Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093 www.gsmts.com

July ?, 2009. Cumberland Valley Model RR Club train and toy show, 440 Nelson St., Chambersburg PA. www.cvmrrc.com/events.htm

July 5-11, 2009 National Model Railroad Association Hartford National Convention, Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford CT.

July 10-12, 2009. National Train Show, Hartford CT

2009 – 2010 ELECTIONS

We will be electing new officers for the South Mountain Division in May. Therefore, nominations need to be made at the March meeting. To be an officer you must be a member of the NMRA in good standing.

Division officers earn one certified time unit (1 TU) per month toward an Association Volunteer AP Award. If you are interested in running for a position please let our Clerk know as soon ASAP.

HARRIS TOWER REOPENS

The Harris Tower at Seventh and Walnut streets in Harrisburg PA opened June 7, 2008.. It was open every Saturday through November 1. Admission is free. The Pennsylvania Railroad built the Harris Tower in 1930 to control all train movements in downtown Harrisburg. It controlled the routing of more than 100 passenger trains a day. The Penn Central and Amtrak used the tower until it was closed in 1991. The Harrisburg Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society bought it for \$1,000 and spent \$25,000 to restore it and create the museum. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Visitors can operate signal and switch levers on the tower's Interlocking Machine and Model Board, and view and photograph Norfolk Southern and Amtrak trains passing through.

Set in the year 1943, details of the tower include intercom boxes using the actual voices of former operators, a Teletype machine, a rotary dial phone, a station clock, typewriter and a trackside signal - all in working order.

To learn when Harris Tower reopens for the 2009 season or to plan group visits, contact the Harrisburg Chapter of the NRHS at (717) 232-6221 or by e-mail at HarrisTower@verizon.net

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