

WHEEL REPORT **SMD**

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

WINTER, 2008/2009

Winter Meetings

December – December 14, 2008, 2 to 5 pm, Jeff Grove's Pine Valley Timber Company. – HO scale.

Jeff's freelanced layout is approximately three years old, loosely based on Western Maryland/Norfolk & Western prototypes. His scenery is about 80 percent done. Jeff operates with DCC and a card system and he is currently getting schedules together, finishing the remaining scenery and completing proper backdating.

Address: 17138 Lappens Road, Hagerstown MD 21740-1337

Directions: From I-70, take Exit 28 and turn southwest onto MD-632/Downsville Pike. Go 2.9 miles, **Turn Left** at Lappens Road/MD-68 and go another 0.4 miles to 17138 Lappens Road. **Turn Left** through gate. House is on the left

Clinic – Jeff Grove on structures.

January – January 11, 2009, 2 to 5 pm, Don Florwick's Pittsburgh & South Penn – HO scale.

Address: 6388 Quail Circle, Fayetteville PA 17222

Directions: From the I-70/I-81 interchange at Hagerstown, go north on I-81 toward Harrisburg about 24 miles, crossing into Pennsylvania. Take the US-30 exit, Exit 16, toward Gettysburg. At the end of the off ramp, **turn right** (east) onto US-30. Go 6.3 miles and **turn right** (southwest) onto PA-997/Anthony Road. Go 2.6 miles to Pond Bank and **turn right** (northwest) onto Duffield Road. Go 0.6 miles and **turn left** (southwest) onto Greenbrier

Lane. Go less than 0.1 mile and **turn left** (southeast) onto Quail Circle. Go 0.1 mile and end at 6388 Quail Circle.

Clinic – Richard Lind on the West Virginia Northern Railroad – a short line coal hauler worth considering for layout design.

February – February 8, 2009, 2 to 5 pm, Bob Johnson's West Virginia Midland – HO scale. Address: 2193 Bellemonte Court, Jefferson MD 21755

Directions: From the I-70/I-81 interchange at Hagerstown, go east on I-70 16.2 miles to exit 42 (Myersville/Middletown). Go south on MD Route 17/Myersville Rd. for 5.5 miles to a traffic light at US-40A in Middletown. Continue straight on MD-17/Burkettsville Road 3.4 miles and **Turn left** (south) onto Route 383/Broad Run Rd. Go 1.1 miles and **Turn right** (west) onto Bellemonte Court. House is on the south side of the street.

Clinic – Bob Johnson on the prototype West Virginia Midland and how he designed his freelance West Virginia Midland.

From the Desk of the Division Superintendent:

Well, talk about your surprise. Here I thought we'd have a nice quiet year that I could just sneak through. Shortly before our first meeting, Jeff Groves' mother passed away. Jeff hosted our meeting, nevertheless. Then Clint Hyde of MER asks to speak at this meeting. Sure, no problem says I. He asks us to host the MER convention

scheduled for next fall. Well that sure stirs up lots of talk. After much discussion the group present decides that they might be willing to do it. Several folks volunteered to do some preliminary fact finding. And we agree that by the next meeting we'll have reached a "go" or "no go" decision. This takes so much time that I hardly had a chance to enjoy Jeff Grove's great layout. Oh, they tell me there was a pretty nice presentation on the EBT as well.

The next meeting starts with a crisis. The Winchester club lets us know on Wednesday that they'll not be able to host our meeting on Sunday. Thank goodness that Bob Van Zant stepped up and offered to host on very short notice. Richard Lind, Bob Johnson and Don Florwick also worked some extra time making sure this went as smoothly as possible. Bob's layout has expanded and he told a group of us some of the "why" and "how" of that change. I thought the way he did the manhole covers in his streets was great, easy, and cost effective. Then John King gave a great talk about B & O operations around Winchester. He had taken lots of pictures back when he was a kid; everyone enjoyed seeing these. Clint Hyde again came and we got down to making the convention decision. "Go", or "No go." It was clear that people wanted to give a "go" decision, but I wouldn't allow it until a convention committee chairman had volunteered. Jane offered to do it and all accepted this offer. So yes, SMD will host the MER convention in late October of next year. There will be more about that later.

Not the quiet meetings I was expecting when I took office. If you missed 'em, well, there's no TiVo, no DVR, so you cannot rewind and watch them later. They are gone. There's only one way to get the value from your SMD membership, and that's to attend the meetings. There's also only one way to be sure your opinion gets heard: attend the meetings.

I'm hoping that the next couple meetings will calm

down somewhat. In part, that's why we are going to go back to Jeff's in December. Although this Wheel Report will only tell you about the scheduled meetings through February, we actually have all our meetings scheduled through next summer. Starting at the November meeting, I'll be accepting offers to host in the following year. Think you might like to host? You need to speak up before everyone else takes all the dates.

We have a pretty good group of guys and gals in the SMD. If you've not been to a meeting, or not been in a while, you might want to stop in and be reminded of that.

Pete Clarke
Superintendent -- SMD

Announcing: The Western Maryland Transfer, 15-18 October 2009! by Jane Clarke

Once again our division will be hosting the MER convention! The location will be the Plaza Hotel in Hagerstown,
<http://www.plazahotelhagerstown.com>.

After a couple of pleas from Clint Hyde, the former president of the MER, at our last two SMD meetings, it seemed like we were pretty close to committing to this convention. All that was needed was a convention chairman. As I tend to do all too often, I raised my hand. I knew that I could count on the experience and diligence of other SMD members to help make this a success.

Dennis Masters checked out the prices and convention facilities at local hotels. Based on his assessments, we picked the Plaza at the October meeting at Bob van Zant's house. Clint and I will speak to the hotel representative in a couple of weeks to go over some details.

What convinced me and the others in attendance to host the convention was that the MER will do most of the annoying work: registration, bill paying,

banquet, contest judging, auction and raffle. We (SMD) will do fun stuff like lining up open houses, prototype tours, non-rail activities, and clinics. We will also handle advertising, web-page content, preparation of the program book, any convention specific swag, and supplying volunteers to staff the raffle and contest room, etc.

Bob Johnson will coordinate the layout tours and will prepare maps to each. This will be the bulk of the program book. Don Florwick volunteered to arrange prototype tours; plus Pete Clarke volunteered to lead a tour of the East Broad Top. If you have any ideas for prototype tours, please let Don know.

This is where YOU come in! Please consider opening your railroad for at least a few hours. Don't worry if it is not complete; very few layouts are. People are interested in seeing works in progress and they might want to see how you built your bench work. Committing to an open house is also a great incentive for working on your railroad.

We also need a full slate of clinics. Clint will reprise his build-it-and-take-it structure clinic from the Potomac Junction convention. There will be a time table/train order clinic by Steve (not Stephen) King. Pete may do a version of the EBT presentation he did at the September SMD meeting. If you have any talents, hidden or otherwise, please consider giving a clinic. They are usually one hour, but if you just want to do a short presentation, we could put two together. The building clinic may be up to 90 minutes. They can be hands-on workshops, PowerPoint or slide presentations, or multi-media presentations. They can be on modeling, a prototype railroad, your model RR, a recent railfan trip, you name it!

We need volunteers to form a convention committee, too. The committee will probably meet every 4-6 weeks at the beginning and more often as the convention nears. Please contact me at jane.clarke@bioreliance.com or 301-253-4913. I may be contacting folks for specific tasks and I

promise to keep us on track (pun intended). This may require extensive nagging, but Pete says I am up to the challenge. Thanks in advance for all your help!

Modeling Notes ... by Pete Clarke

Removable Top: Quick and Adds Operational Interest by Pete Clarke

So, the other day we were running trains. Jane was running the Shade Gap train and I noticed that she was not taking the asphalt car. Since it's a standard gauge car on narrow gauge trucks, I think of it as an interesting car. I asked why she wasn't taking it. "It's wrong, it's not supposed to have it's top" was her reply.

In the mid 1920's the EBT figured out that they could put the unused Timber Transfer to use by using it to lift up standard gauge cars so they could remove their trucks, then put modified narrow gauge trucks in place. They developed a drop in coupler conversion as well so the smaller couplers they used would mate with the full size couplers used by standard gauge lines. With these two changes, it seemed they could ship products in standard gauge cars to any point on the line. What a great cost and time savings! The first car to have this done was a tank car owned by Barber Asphalt. This car was sent out to a road paving site along the Shade Gap branch with no problem. The future looked bright.



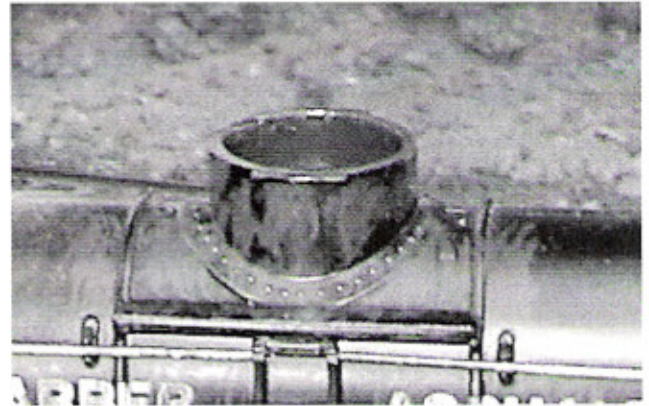
Alas, when they tried to send a car south on the main line they found (the hard way) that the tunnels

did not allow this higher car to pass. But it didn't miss by much. Someone had the idea that it would clear if only they would remove the cover on the cars dome. So the car was sent back to the car shops in Orbisonia and off with the top. Sure enough, the open topped car made it through the tunnels.

We had a model of that tank car, but its lid was always on. I found that it had a molded lip around the top, so I was able to use a razor saw to cut off the lid. No measuring needed, I just needed to keep the saw along the lip as I cut. Then to make the top able to go back on and stay in place, I cut a thick piece of styrene so that it would just press fit into the open top. To do this, remove the tank from the frame. Then hold the styrene against the open top and trace the inside dimension of the dome on the styrene. I used nippers to rough cut this circle out of the styrene. You don't need it perfectly round, just so some points touch enough to hold it in place. Once I was happy that I had a piece that would be a snug fit, I put the plug in place in the open dome. I put one drop of glue in the center, then I put the lid in place and pushed up on the styrene plug from the bottom. Bingo. In about 5 minutes worth of work I had a removable top for our tank car.



Now our car comes up from the Timber Transfer in Mt. Union. Makes a stop at the car shops in Orbisonia where the shop men remove the lid. Then in the next opps session it goes out on the line to it's destination. On return, it stops at the car



shops to have it's lid reattached, then moves back to the Timber Transfer in Mt. Union.

I can hear you saying, "Nice Pete, but I don't model the EBT." Well, you should. But until you change to it, remember that even today the tunnels in Baltimore limit the cars that can go through it (No double stacks I believe), and no domed passenger cars operate east of the Mississippi because of similar issues. So you could add something of this nature even to your fat gauge railroad.

Editor's Scribblings

Thanks to Pete and Jane Clarke, we have some articles to print this month. Pete's article initiates a new modeling column and of course, we're looking for your contributions. I just learned (maybe enough to be dangerous) to manipulate photos and insert them into a Word document. So please send in your articles and photos. Pete emailed the text as a Word file and the photos as separate JPG files. The computer did the rest. Isn't technology wonderful?

This month the list of events, open houses and train shows is quite long. Clubs have open houses during the holidays, tourist rides have their special events, so I split the list in two along those lines.

In the future, all of this information will be available from links on the new SMD website set up by Richard Benjamin. Stay tuned.

Open Houses and Train Shows:

November 21, 2008 through March 1, 2009. Trains of Christmas at the Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum, 300 South Burhans Boulevard (US-11), Hagerstown MD. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays 1-5 PM. Call (301) 739-4665 for info.

November 29. Fall 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.

December 6-7; January 3-4, 10-11 and 24-25. Winter Festival Open Houses from 1-5 PM. Waynesboro Model RR Club, Waynecastle Road, Zullinger PA. www.waynesborotoytrains.blogspot.com or 717-762-9579 for info

December 6-7. Greenberg's Train and Toy Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093 www.greenbergshows.com

December 13 & 14; Sundays: January 4, 11, 18, 25 and February 1, 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.

December 14, 21, 27 and January 3, 11 from noon to 5 PM. Xmas Open Houses, Cumberland Valley Model Railroad Club, 440 Nelson St., Chambersburg PA. www.cvmrrc.com/events.htm for info.

January 3-4. World's Greatest Hobby on Tour. Grater Philadelphia Expo Center, Oaks PA. <http://www.greatesthobby.com>

January 31-February 1. Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093 www.gsmts.com

Train Rides:

November 15 and 22 and December 20. Murder Mystery Trains, 6:00 PM. Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

November 15. Cumberland Goes to War! trains. Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. Ride with General Patton 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

November 16. End of daily train season on the Strasburg Railroad. Weekend service Nov. 22-23. Fri. Sat. Sun. service begins Nov. 28. <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com> for info.

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November 22 and 28. Ghost Trains, 7:00 PM Gettysburg Railroad. December 6: lunch and ride with Santa at noon, ride with Santa at 1:00 PM, and murder mystery at 5:00 PM. 106 North Washington St., Gettysburg PA 17325. info@gettysburgrail.com or (717) 334-6932 for info.

November 28-29; December 6-7, 13-14 and 20-21. Santa Express, 11:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

November 29-30; December 5-7, 12-14, and 19. North Pole Express, 6:00 to 9:30 PM. Western

Maryland Scenic Railroad. <http://www.wmsr.com> for info.

December 5-7. Day Out with Thomas. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA. <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com> for info.

December 12-14, 19-21. Santa's Paradise Express. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA. <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com> for info.

December 29-31. Strasburg Railroad. Last regular trains of the season. For info, see <http://www.strasburgrailroad.com>.

Merv Kershner Creativity Award

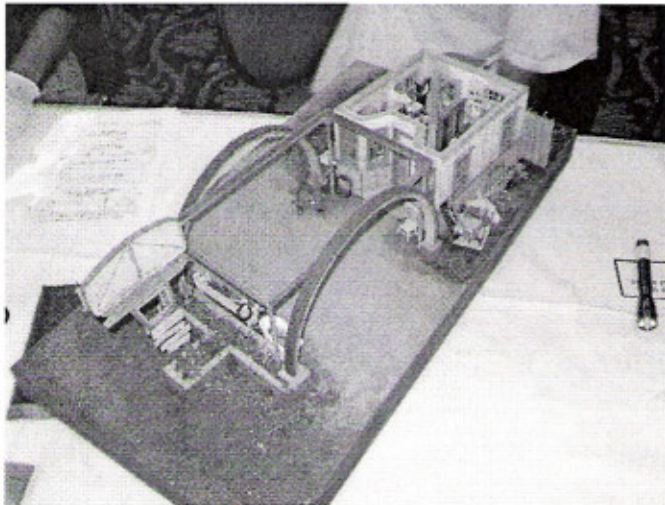


Photo by Harvey Heyser

The Merv Kershner Creativity Award was given this year at the Mid-Eastern Region NMRA Convention in Reston VA on October 18th. The winning model is large scale and represents an old motel office converted into a rummage shop. It has many small details, probably intended for miniature (doll house) modelers. The judges for SMD were Harvey Heyser, Ray Price and Richard Lind. Harvey was also impressed with the roof, which was modeled correctly. It was also best in show.

The award is named for former SMD member Marv Kershner, who encouraged creativity in modeling.

SMD Officers 08/09

Superintendent:

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

Assistant Superintendent:

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

Clerk/Wheel Report Editor:

Richard Lind
202 West College Terrace
Frederick, MD 21701-4844
(301) 694-9496
rclind202@verizon.net

Paymaster:

Ray Price
(301)845-6465
rayswesternmarylandrr@erols.com

Advisory Board:

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

Bill Reynolds
(717) 762-2986
Bill76@pa.net

Bob Proctor
(717) 264-0635
rlpx2@comcast.net