

THE BRASS POUNDER

Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Division 12, Mid-Eastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association

Volume 11 Number 4

September 2011

Carolina Southern Division Events

Annual Division Picnic

Saturday, September 17

Jack Parker's

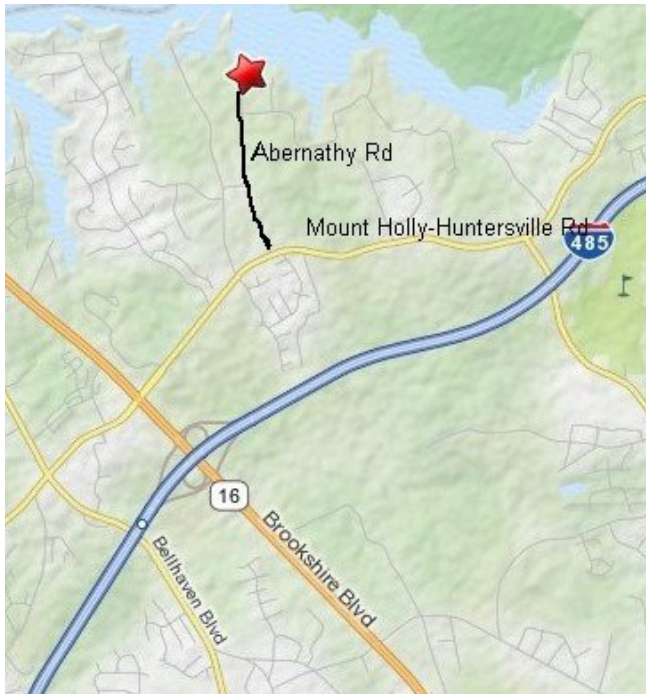
12012 Abernathy Rd

Charlotte, NC

1:00 Lunch with hot dogs & hamburgers
Followed by a clinic How to Make Trees from
Weeds, then operations on the layout.

**Please RSVP by 9pm Thursday Sep 15 to Jim
Rager at 704-929-1148 or email
jamesrrager@roadrunner.com, and tell him:**

- (1) that you will be attending and if you are bringing someone and
 - (2) What salad/dessert you will bring (also please bring bottle of soda/tea...)
- PLEASE BRING A LAWN CHAIR!**



Directions:

From I77 in Charlotte or I485 take NC 16,
Brookshire Blvd North.

Turn right on Mount Holly Huntersville Rd.

Turn left on Abernathy Rd, Go to end.

Division Meeting

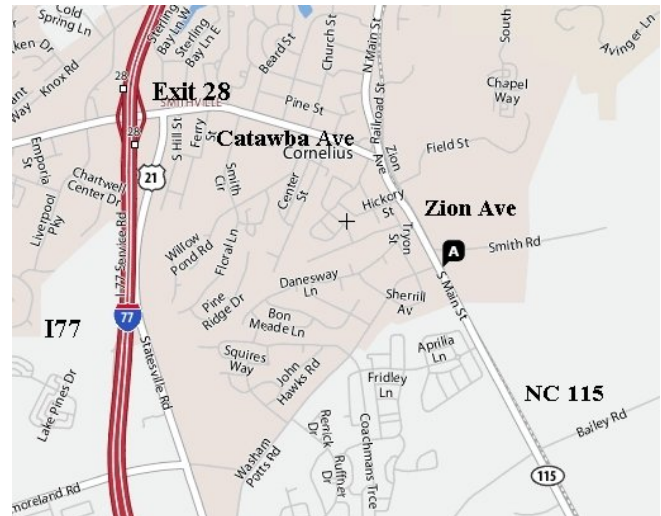
Thursday, October 6, 7:00 pm

Frank Binder, constructing wooden kit structures

Williams Lodge

19416 Zion Ave

Cornelius, NC



I77 North from Charlotte, Exit 28, Cornelius

Go East on E Catawba Ave.

Cross Rt 115 and RR tracks

Immediately, turn Right on Zion Ave.

Pass Mt Zion church and stop sign. Lodge on left

Open House & Division Meeting at Train Town, Brookford

Saturday, November 12

Division Business Meeting

Clinic in planning stage.

(continued on last page)

RailRun Fun!

By Bob Halsey

The RailRun weekend, from my perspective was a great success! We got to visit layouts that we don't normally get to see, meet fellow modelers, and had fun! Many of us have seen Rick Knight's KB&D and Jack Parker's P&W, but not as many have seen Neal Anderson's KK&L or David Ward's DB&W, both of which are very large and realistic, and still under construction.



David and Debbie Ward feed the crew to prepare for the operations session



Dave Draxler works a freight on Neal Anderson's layout.

A new layout this year was Chuck Batherson's Blue Ridge & White Mountain Railroad, which runs from coastal Maine through northern New Hampshire to St. Albans, Vermont. This HO layout is actually in Greensboro, so we did need an hour and a half to get there. It was the first BR&WM operating session, and although still under construction, the bench and trackwork is well done. Communications between dispatcher, engineers, and yardmasters is via hand-held radios, necessary because this section of northern New England takes up most of the basement!



Bob Halsey works industries at Freeport while Tim Rumpf runs a passenger train through Wiscasset on Chuck Batherson's layout set on the Maine Down East coast



Kenny Mann runs a train through Thompson's Creek on Jack Parker's Piedmont and Western layout

All of the layout owners were very hospitable hosts, and did an exceptional job of feeding their guest operators, which definitely made for enjoyable sessions!

Busy Times at Brookford

By Gil Brauch

Brookford Train Town Project Manager

Carolina Southern Division, MER

And

Operation Lifesaver Presenter #7612

Each year the Newton Community Schools offers a SummerKids program for children in grades K-8 in the Catawba County school system. This year the Program Coordinator contacted our Brookford Project Manager, Gil Brauch, to arrange for children in nine of the schools in the program to visit Wade's Train Town during the summer. Since Gil is also an Operation Lifesaver Presenter, he could not pass up the opportunity to turn these field trips into a rail safety learning experience for the children involved. Attendance at the seven sessions we hosted ranged from 25 to 70, with two of the sessions involving children from two schools. The total attendance was 294.

The children were simply awed by the scope of the layout. "WOW!!" and "AWESOME!!" were frequent phrases heard as they entered the room. "Look, a Burger King... and a Pizza Hut!!" "Look at the people in the swimming pool." "Dinosaur bones!!" Several of the children didn't want to leave when it was time to let another group have their turn at admiring the landscape.

You might expect that all this enthusiasm would lead to accidents, particularly with trains running so close to the edge of the layout. However, the children were very well behaved and responded well to the reminders of their teachers to "Look with our eyes, not with our hands."

Gil set up a small theater in the Brookford Community Center's lunchroom and after all the children had the opportunity to look at the layout, he 'treated' them to a short Operation Lifesaver class on safety around trains and tracks. The Newton Community Schools coordinator, Kim Cline, reported that the children universally reported that they had a good time and really liked the layout. Hopefully, some will come back with their parents during one of our monthly open houses.

Just a reminder to our members that we are still holding regular restoration working sessions on the second and fourth Thursday evenings (6:30 - ???). Our open houses are on the second Saturday of each month (10 am – 4 pm). We are about three fourths of the way done with our first pass at restoration and there's always something for a volunteer to do – no matter what your skill level or particular area of modeling interest. All are welcome and encouraged to join in.

NC Rail Run Weekend

By: Jack Haynes

September 1st through 3rd were the dates for the 2011 NC Rail Run weekend. Registration was full with thirty people registered for the event that had operating sessions on ten layouts over three days. We all appreciate the gracious layout owners who opened their homes and layouts to us: Neal Anderson, Chuck Batherson, Kevin Beck, Seth Gartner, Rick Knight, Marcus Neubacher, Jack Parker, Michael Pennie, Scott Teague, and David Ward. Thanks also go to Marcus Neubacher, David Ward, and Roy Becker for their extraordinary efforts in organizing the event and Gil Brauch for the web site support.



Steven Prevette works the Bethlehem Steel Mill on Michael Pennie's Penn Central Lehigh & Delaware Division



The group assembles for a photo run-by before the last session Sunday Afternoon at David Ward's

Although I signed up a little late, I was able to schedule myself into layouts for all six time slots. Two were ones where I had operated before or at least run a train, but the other four were completely new. Three were N-scale which I had never tried operating before. I was able to pair morning and afternoon sessions that were relatively close to each other or at least in the same general direction from my home in South Charlotte so I wouldn't have far to go between sessions. Unfortunately, the morning sessions were all the farthest away which meant an early start in the morning to get there by 8:30 or so to get some sense of the railroad before operations began.

Besides meeting some great people who share my hobby, the weekend provided an opportunity to expand my range of experience with this aspect of model railroading. The N-scale layouts were much easier to operate than I had anticipated. So much so that by Monday, I had trouble remembering which layouts were which scale there was so little difference from HO which has been my experience to date. There were three different waybill/car routing methods and every layout had a little different variation on the basic method. Several layouts had full or partial automatic detection and signalling systems. Every one had a different system for dispatching. Along the way I filled the jobs of Dispatcher (1), Yardmaster(2), and Engineer for both local(6) and through (2) freights. The layouts I worked on all used DCC, but there were two different systems.



Andrew Stitt and Tim Heckman work the WSS yard at Salisbury while Bob Johnson runs a freight on the Southern mainline on Kevin Beck's Central Carolina Southbound



*Jim Rager switches at Yarmouth while Chuck Batherson prepares a train in Portland staging on Chuck's **Blue Ridge & White Mountain***



*Donavan Lewis brings a train into the yard under direction of Yardmaster Larry Keller while Scott Teague stands by to help on Scott's **Norfolk Southern Pocahontas District***

This article is just a brief general description of the weekend. There isn't enough space in one article to say everything I would like about every railroad. I hope to have some followup articles with more details on some of them.

Join Your Fellow Model Railroaders.... at 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** is this year's annual convention for the Mid-Eastern Region (MER) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA). It will be held October 27 thru October 30 in Cary, NC, and we have a broad range of activities in the works for attendees.



Piedmont Crossing will include typical activities of the annual MER Convention, such as 40+ clinics, prototype rail & industrial tours, 30+ 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.

Check out all the details on the convention website 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.

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.

MER Convention Division Connection

By: Jack Haynes

This is about as close as the MER Regional Convention can get to us. I encourage Division members to try to get to this one. It is a great opportunity to get ideas for your own modeling from visiting layouts, attending clinics, or just getting acquainted with other modellers.

The Division will be represented among the clinic presenters by:

Dick Bronson Aspect Signalling with JMRI

Fred Miller Charlotte Trolleys
Light, Sound, & Motion Animation
Programming Digitrax Sound Decoders

Tony Sissons Turning an Athearn BlueBox SD50 into a Highly Detailed NS (ex-Conrail) model

My latest visit to the web site found over 50 clinics now scheduled (as of August 31). There should be something for everyone.

Division Meeting 9/1/11

By Jack Haynes, Clerk

There were some brief announcements Division meeting program. Bob Halsey noted upcoming Narrow Gauge Convention in Hickory, Division Picnic September 17, MER Convention in Cary in October, Division meetings Oct 6 and Nov 3 at Cornelius and the Brookford Open house Nov 12.

For Division Picnic, attendees should contact Jim Rager if they are attending so he can plan for the food. Also last chance to vote on new logo and return survey forms.

Positions up for Division elections in January include Superintendent, Asst Superintendent, Director, Paymaster, and Clerk. We also need a chair for the Program and Fun Committee (activity planning).

Joe Howard and Larry Paffrath will be conducting the annual audit of the division accounts.

Joe and Neal Anderson are working on the 501(c)3 application.

Dave Chance announced AP awards, Golden Spike for Joe Howard, Merit awards for Jack Parker from last years National Convention and Merit award to Dave Draxler for scenery.

Robin Frye presented a very interesting talk on the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey circus trains including a large display of his O-scale models representing different eras. He had great stories to tell from his years working for the circus and riding the trains .

More complete details of the meeting will be posted on the web site and in the next BP.

**The South Carolina Railroad Museum
is proud to offer you a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity...
*Be an Engineer !***

The *Engineer Experience* will be a unique opportunity to learn about and operate a full-size steam locomotive.

Participants will be instructed – on a one-on-one basis – in the basic, safe operation of a steam locomotive and will put those skills to use by operating the 126 Steam Engine under the supervision of the South Carolina Railroad Museum.

The dates are **October 8 and October 29**. Registration must be in advance, and a limited number of spaces are available. *All participants must become members of the South Carolina Railroad Museum.*

Participation is limited to 18 persons per day, with each hands-on operation lasting approximately 20 minutes with an operating distance of two miles. Scheduling is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Cost to participate is \$100.00 (\$75 registration fee, plus a minimum \$25 individual SCRM membership.)

Participants must be 21 years of age, in good health, physically able to enter and exit the locomotive cab, and willing to follow the instructions of the supervising steam locomotive engineer and/or fireman.

Proper clothing, shoes, and eye and head protection must be worn while operating the steam locomotive and while on the grounds of the South Carolina Railroad Museum. It will be a fun day – but remember – there will be smoke, cinders and soot!

To register, please refer to the South Carolina Railroad Museum website **www.scrm.org** or complete the attached application. Mail your application to:

SCRM, 110 Industrial Park Road, Winnsboro, SC 29180 by September 5, 2011

The program does NOT qualify the participant for unsupervised operation of trains or equipment of/or on the property of the South Carolina Rail Road Museum. The South Carolina Railroad Museum reserves the right to decline participation to ANYONE who displays indicators that they are incapable of operating the steam locomotive in a safe manner. Please refer to the South Carolina Railroad Museum website www.scrm.org to register or complete the attached application.

2011 Engineer Experience

***Calendar of Events
(continued)***

**MER Regional Convention 2011
Cary, NC**

October 27 - October 30
Embassy Suites Hotel, Cary, NC
<http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>

**Monthly Meetings at Williams Lodge,
Cornelius**

November 3 7:00 pm
December 1 7:00 pm

Railroad Modeling University

January 14, 2012

Save the date for this annual event, a full day of displays, classes, clinics, demonstrations for model railroaders of all ages and skill levels.

The Division Brass

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Division Website:

www.carolinasouthern.org

Submissions For Brass Pounder

Next Issue	Submission Date
Nov 2011	October 28, 2011

Articles are welcome on any railroad topic, model or prototype. Your editor is available to assist in preparing the materials.

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Official Publication of the Carolina Southern Div, MER, NMRA



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