

THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 18 Number 8

October 2018

CSD Annual Picnic Saturday Oct 20th 1:00pm

We rescheduled this members only event (family welcome) due to the threat of hurricane Florence last month.

We will gather for food and fellowship at the home of Jack Parker MMR. CSD will provide the protein and drinks. Members are asked to bring side dishes and desserts to share.

Please RSVP at this link or on the CSD Website.

Contact Alan Hardee to volunteer to help with the grilling.

Superintendent's Corner

By Alan Hardee

Annual Division Picnic, Take Two.

Mother Nature decided to spoil our weekend with the arrival of Hurricane Florence. Hopefully no one experienced any major issues. The rescheduled annual division picnic will once again be at Jack Parkers on October 20, starting at 1PM. This is for members and their families. We will provide the authentic Hardee Burgers, Dogs (pun intended) and drinks and you bring the sides. Please use the RSVP form on carolinasouthern.org so we know how many people will be coming and what sides you will bring. After great food and fellowship, we will get to operate on Jack's Piedmont and Western that was recently in the May 2018 *Model Railroader*.

The 2018 MER Convention will be hosted by the Potomac Division on October 4-7 in Rockville Md. There is still time to register for this great event. Go to Potomac-nmra.org for the latest information and the Hilton Hotel and convention registration pages. Ed and I had requested some info from the convention registrar so we had an idea for our own planning. As of now, Division 12 has at least 11 members registered. I hope to see you there.

Division Coming Events

(See CSD Website for further details)

**CSD September Monthly Meeting and Annual Picnic
Saturday Oct 20th
1:00pm - ??**

**At the home of Jack Parker MMR
12012 Abernathy Road, Charlotte, NC**

For planning purposes, please RSVP if you didn't register last month.

We are working on logos for our 2020 convention. I came up with a concept for one. **Carolina Special – Look South in 2020** and based on an old Southern Logo. Thanks to Gil for the rough draft and Morgan for the cleaned up version. See below for the designs. Let us know what you think and also give us your ideas at the picnic, or email [Neal Anderson](mailto:Neal.Anderson).



LOOK SOUTH IN 2020

Logo #1 based on Southern RR logo, without map outline.



LOOK SOUTH IN 2020

Logo #2 based on Southern RR logo, with a map outline of the states in the MER.

***Superintendent
Alan Hardee received the sad news
from Larry Paffrath that Rick
Knight passed away in hospice on
August 29th***

Rick had served the CSD in various roles, including as the Division's Superintendent from January 2005 to November 2008, and was active in operations. His legacy in CSD also includes establishment of Railroad Modeling University (RMU). I regret that I did not receive information about Rick's passing in time to promulgate information to the membership regarding funeral arrangements.

Editor

Editor's Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

I usually use this space to say a few words about the current issue, to echo points made by our Superintendent, or provide a preview of upcoming articles. This time, I am unashamedly using my editor's pulpit to dedicate this issue to the memory of my granddaughter, Holly Kathryn Page. Holly fought bravely for life since experiencing a cerebral hemorrhage the day of her birth over 14 years ago. Although severely handicapped, she was always joyful, even in the face of over 50 neurosurgical procedures and countless hospital stays. It is not all sadness, however. Holly was an organ donor, and in the first 48 hours after her passing she touched five other lives, saving three of them. Our family takes pride and joy that she lives on in the lives of others. My sincere thanks for the many words of comfort and reassurance from fellow CSD members who previously learned of Holly's passing.

UPCOMING AREA TRAIN EVENTS

**Autumn Rails 2018
Model RR Show
October 5-6, 2018
NC Agriculture Center
Expo Building
785 Boylston Hwy.
(NC 280), Gate 5
[Fletcher, NC](#)**

**Columbia Model Train
Show
October 13, 2018
[Columbia, SC](#)**

**Neuse River Valley
Model Railroad Club
Train Show
November 3-4, 2018
[Raleigh, NC](#)**



*Holly Kathryn Page
May 9, 2004 - September 16, 2018
Photo by Patrick Ramsey*

I had expected to have an article about the annual picnic, but thanks to the threat of hurricane Florence, that will have to wait. Please enjoy a layout update from Tim Rumph and two layout feature articles from some of my layout visits. As always, if you'd like to feature your layout or some of your work in our newsletter, let me know.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

**I target the 1st of each month for publication.
Please submit articles for publication by the
27th of each month.**

**The preferred format is MS Word, but I can
convert most other formats.**

**For questions and help, email me at
editor@carolinasouthern.org**

DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey



MID EAST REGION CONVENTION

Rockville, MD
October 4-7, 2018

INFORMATION

10 CSD Members are already registered.
Hope to see you there.

First off, I hope you noticed the email I send to members asking for help this coming Saturday October 13th at Wade's Train Town in Brookford. If you brushed it off, please reconsider and contact Gil Brauch at WadesTrainTown@carolinasouthern.org to volunteer some time.

As Alan Hardee mentioned in *Superintendent's Corner*, CSD's October monthly meeting will also be our rescheduled annual picnic. For members, spouses and family members, the picnic will be held at the home of Master Model Railroader Jack Parker on Saturday, October 20th at 1:00pm. The address and RSVP link is in the banner on page 1. If you already registered for the September event and still plan to come, you don't have to register again. However, please let us know by email to the superintendent ([Click here email the Superintendent](#)) if you have previously registered, but are unable to make the new date. Don't miss out on this chance for good food and fellowship as well as the opportunity to run a train on Jack's Piedmont and Western, which was featured on the cover of the May 2018 issue of *Model Railroader*. Please bring a side dish or dessert. Hope to see you there.

Meeting Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

Since our September meeting had to be rescheduled, there's no new meeting information to share. However, I am repeating the chart of CSD's 2020 MER Convention Organizing Committee that was in the last issue. Those of you with a sharp eye will notice that I have corrected a typographical error in one of the names and email addresses. (There will be a quiz at the picnic). As you can see from the chart, we still need to fill a few more positions. Please let our Superintendent Alan Hardee or the Committee Chairman Neal Anderson know how you can help out.

**Carolina Southern Division
2020 MER Convention Organizing Committee**

Position	Name	Email
General Chair	Neal Anderson	apchair@carolinasouthern.org
Clinics	Doug Algire	MUchair@carolinasouthern.org
Layout Tours and Operating Session Callboard	Tim Rumph	Since tarumph@gmail.com
Tours Director		
Modular Setup		
Publicity		
Publisher	Ed Gumphrey	editor@carolinasouthern.org
Webmaster	Gil Brauch	webmaster@carolinasouthern.org
White Elephant Sale	Bob Halsey	xnavman65@gmail.com
Raffle		
Audio –Visual	Andrew T Sadler	sadlerandrew1@gmail.com
Time-Saver Switching Layout		
Convention Staff Director		
Local Arrangments, Floor Manager	Dave Thrams	thrams.dave50@gmail.com
MER Executive Convention Chair	Eric Dervinis	eric.dervinis@gmail.com

Achievement Program Update

There were no new presentations since our July meeting, but Neal Anderson reports that Gil Brauch has completed his Motive Power and is waiting to show it off at the picnic. If you've seen some of Gil's other amazing N scale work, it's sure to be a treat. Also, Neal has a couple of cars ready for the paint shop.

Please let Neal know what AP goals you are working toward. Send him an email or give him a call.

kklrailroad@yahoo.com 704-775-2830



Neal's cars ready for the paint shop

LEARNING FROM A MASTER

By Ed Gumphrey

A little over a year ago, Superintendent Alan Hardee received approval from NMRA Headquarters to expand the Carolina Southern Division to include, among others, Cleveland County. That gave me an escape from the limbo of being in the Mid Eastern Region but not in any division. My first CSD event was last year's picnic, which was a whirlwind of new faces and names. The following month I attended my first monthly meeting, and was treated to a clinic given by Master Model Railroader Fred Miller. That was my first lesson from the Master and it had my mind instantly contemplating circuits for signal activation. I knew then that I wanted to get to know Fred better. In another short month, I went to CSD's meeting and swap meet at Brookford. Lo and behold, I was treated to my first view of Fred's outstanding traction models with the small but highly detailed and automated diorama. Lesson #2 was in the bag. The third occurred in January of this year when I was elected as Clerk and assumed Fred's duties as editor of *The Brass Pounder*. Fred's turnover of files and templates was instructive and provided me with a life preserver as I jumped into the deep end, so to speak. The key lesson was organization and I confess I'm still struggling. As I started setting up tours of other layouts in CSD, it naturally followed that I would want to include Fred's work for a feature. That opportunity came in July, and I was amazed on several levels.

The first impression of Fred's layout when entering his office is one of refinement. The shelf layouts (1 in HO scale topped by 1 in O scale) are integrated into the room's cabinetry with a furniture-like quality. Every detail, from the fascia to the simulated trolley throttle and controls, displays careful attention to its integration with the overall look. Likewise, the supporting structure is tied into the cabinets above. The overall effect is very pleasing, and provides a lesson as to how much impact your choices in finishing off basic layout structure can have.

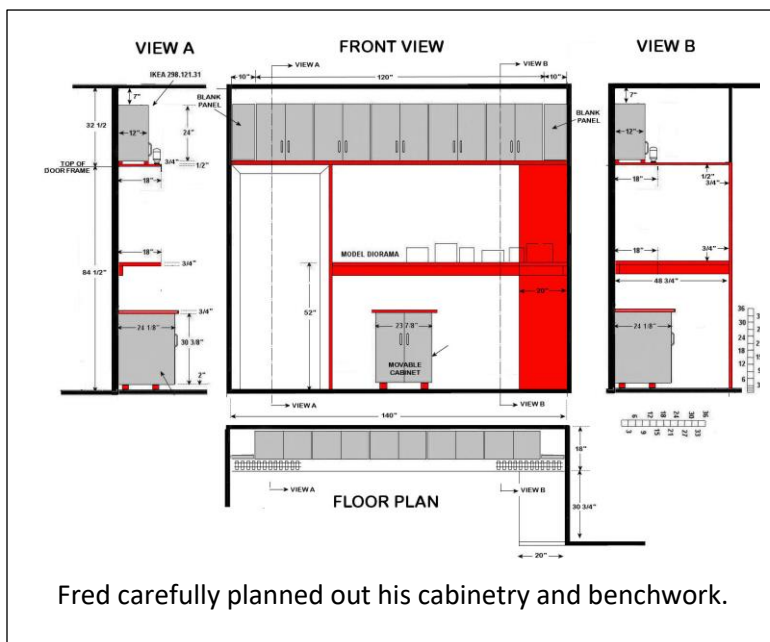
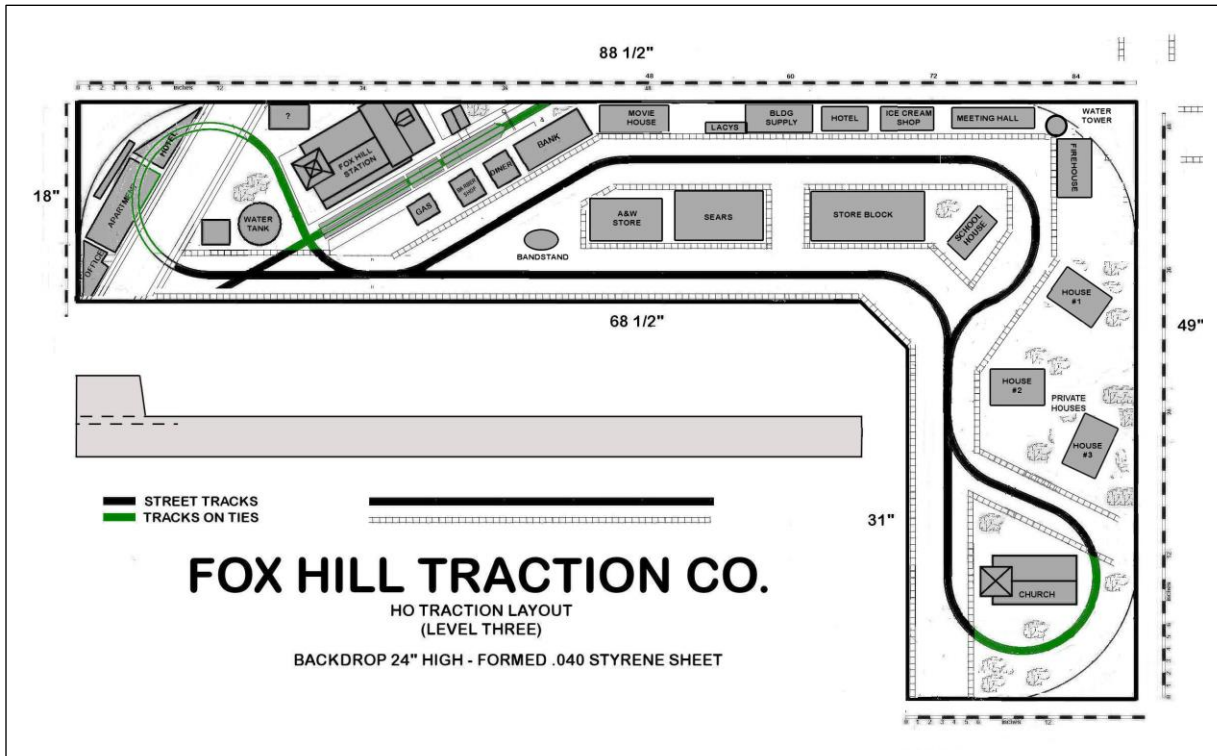


The finished appearance of Fred's shelf layouts has a furniture-like quality.



The trolley throttle and both operational mode and turnout controls are neatly integrated into the fascia.

The overall impression of an integrated structure didn't happen accidentally. Fred provided me with the next three photos that show the detail of his advance planning. The layout of the Fox Hill Traction Company's track plan illustrates how he planned to integrate existing structures into the given space while also providing the desired operating opportunities. Similarly, both the plans and mockup of benchwork and cabinetry show meticulous planning. Clearly, a lot of thought went into how Fred wanted to create his latest version. Fred used structures from previous iterations of his traction scenes. In addition to this article, I encourage you to review an earlier version on Fred's [website](#). Doing so provides another lesson from the master in seeing how his earlier work evolved to the present day.



Fred carefully planned out his cabinetry and benchwork.



I spent several minutes just taking in the layouts before starting to take pictures. The task of photographing Fred's work is akin to being the proverbial kid in a candy store. The level of detail is intense and each portion tells a story. At one end, 1925 era equipment works to improve infrastructure in front of the Salvation Army apartment building. At the other end, the pastor of a small church interacts with his congregation. In between, there's a group of people eagerly working their way across a small stage to look at the newfangled bus that may soon challenge the trolley line for its business. There's also the children gleefully enjoying a brief recess at the schoolhouse.



Repair work proceeds in earnest on the elevated roadway in front of the Salvation Army apartment building. I sure hope nobody's trying to get some sleep before the night shift at work!



The pastor seems content as his parishioners leave the church after some mid-day activities.



The banner announces the imminent arrival of modern bus service, and interested townspeople await their turn to walk across the platform for a closer look. It won't be long before a serious challenge to the trolley line.



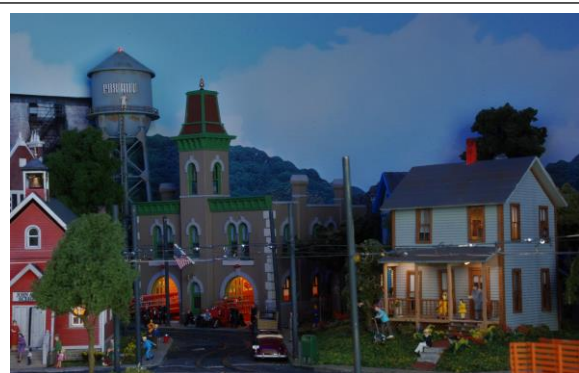
Children enjoy recess at the John Adam School while some of the faculty take a rest on the front steps. The local patrolman takes a break from his beat to watch the scene while the new school bus waits for the end of the day.

Throughout the railroad, the trolley tracks are imbedded into the streets in prototypical fashion. Fred uses girder rail in the streets. Turnouts are single point and use cast frogs. Trolleys are operated by DCC, and electronic sound effects abound. Looking back at the track plan above, you'll notice three different reverse loops. With the overhead wire feeding one side of the operating current, reverse loops are not of any concern. In fact, for improved pickup, Fred electrically ties all the rails together. Streets are done with casting plaster and brick inlays. Finished street surfaces are slightly below the railhead so that track cleaning chores don't damage them. Fred shares my lament that Holgate & Reynolds is no longer in business.



Handlaid track is imbedded in the streets. Turnouts are single point style and use cast frogs.

Fred configured his layout with a number of electronic animations. He can even put two trolleys on "autopilot" and let them run. Block detection interfaces with the DCC system to prevent collisions. There's a flickering campfire (see Fred's article in the [July 2018](#) issue of *The Brass Pounder*). He also has the layout lighting configured for transition from daylight to night viewing.



The lighting changes between daylight and night viewing are very effective.

And that's just a look at the HO scale portion. Over the years Fred has modeled in virtually every scale (and gauge) available. He still has a display of boxcars from past clinics that illustrate the difference in various model railroad scales. The O scale portion is positioned above the HO, and is best viewed on a small stepstool. That presented a challenge for me getting photographs because my tripod wouldn't extend high enough, so I had to hand-hold. That translates to less depth of field, but I think the pictures still capture the similar levels of detail and the stories that the scenes tell. On the O scale layout, it's in the 1940s, as shown by later model cars and *Casablanca* playing in the local theater. Similarly constructed trackwork, albeit with a simpler back-and-forth operating scheme, join a mixture of scratchbuilt and kitbashed structures to capture a time of simpler urban life. In addition to the features of the streetside scenes, interior details abound.



In addition to taking in the details and photographing the layouts, I enjoyed seeing trolleys run and listening to his various sound effects. The streetcar throttle stand that he built could be the subject of an article all its own. Remember what I said in the opening paragraph about lesson #1 – organization? It couldn't be more evident than in a glance at Fred's modeling desk inside a small closet. It's a far cry from my disheveled mess of a horizontal surface. I also spent a good deal of time talking with Fred about his many years of model railroading. The conversation focused on his journey to becoming a Master Model Railroader, which will be the subject of a future article in *The Brass Pounder*. My final lesson of the day at the master's house? Thanks to the hospitality of Fred's wife Barbara, I learned that she makes the best cup of cappuccino I've had since I was in Europe back in my navy days.



An overview of the O scale layout above the HO layout. Notice the G scale trolley on the shelf above.



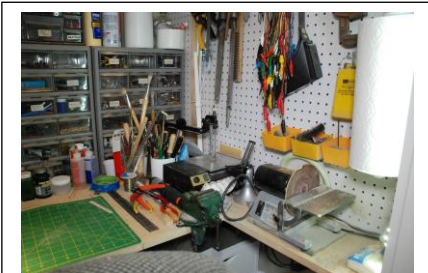
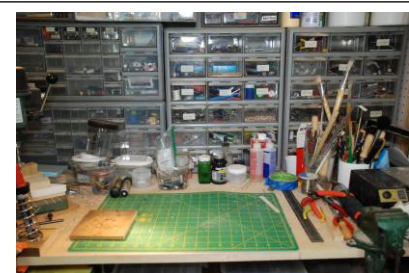
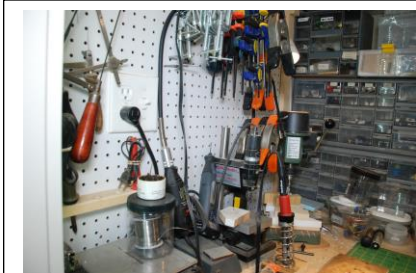
Casablanca is playing – it must be about 1942.



O scale lets details the really shine.



Interior details, including occupants really set off the O scale scenes.



A well-organized work area – a subset of Lesson #1.



My Southern S-line Part 6

By Tim Rumph

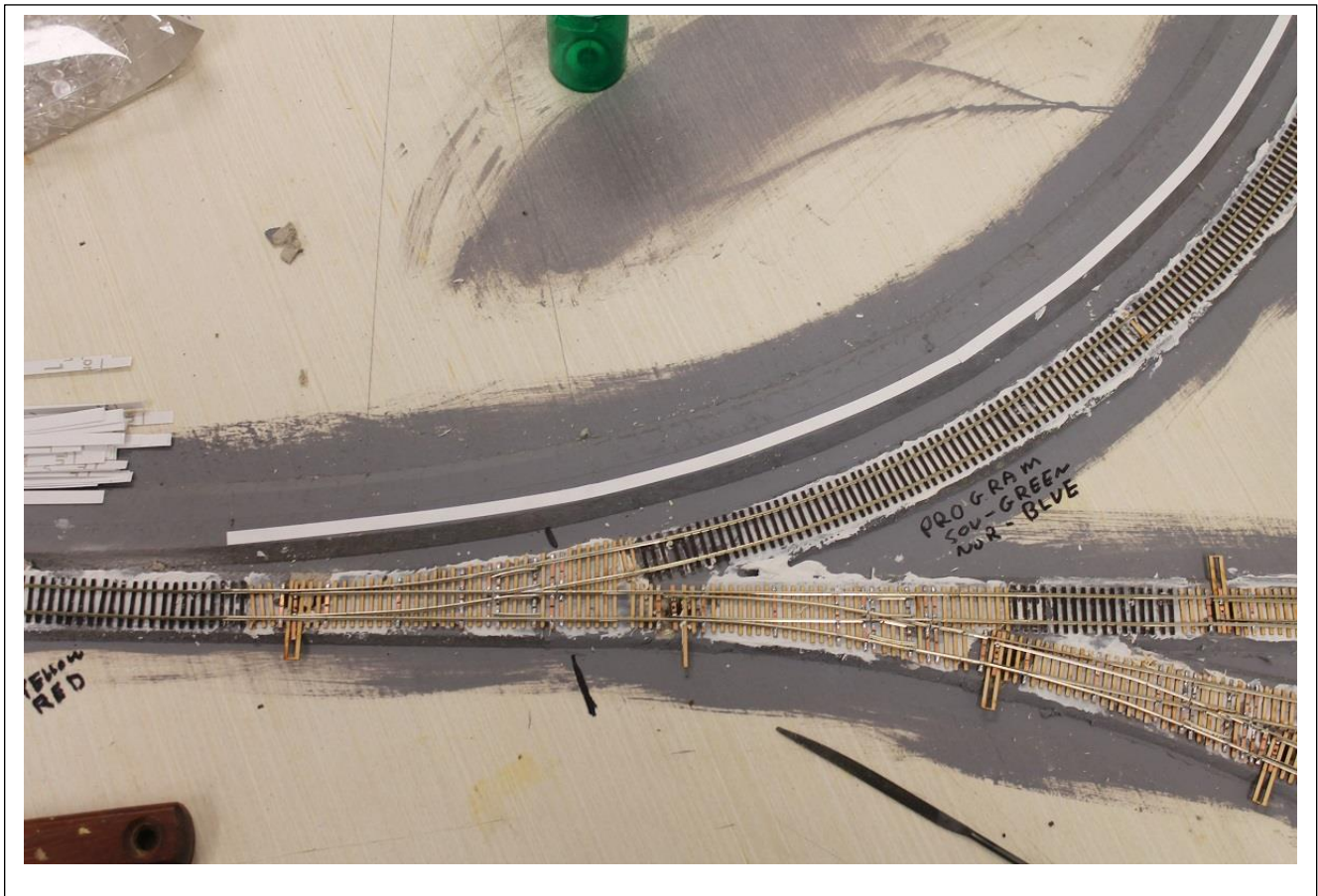


Superelevation of the main line is evident as No 165 rounds the curve in Newton.

It's been a busy summer, and when you get this I'll be off to Rockville, MD, for the MER Convention. I've got two operating sessions scheduled and all of the usual stuff that goes on at conventions. I recently hosted the Piedmont Central Model Railroad Club and was happy to share my layout with some friends.

In the picture above, No 165, a westbound freight train, rounds the curve in Newton, passing some off-spot cars standing on the siding track, which introduces this month's subject. In the last two issues I've described laying out curves and now it's time to install the track. No 165 is on the main track, which is superelevated, or banked. This is fairly subtle in N scale, but I think it does add to the scene. To achieve this, I built up the outside of the roadbed. I used the Avery 5265 full sheet adhesive label, which is one label that covers the whole 8.5 x 11 sheet. I used a paper cutter to slice this into strips 3/16" wide. Four layers of this material is about .025" thick, or about 4" in N-scale. I staggered the ends, so that it had four layers where the curve radius started,

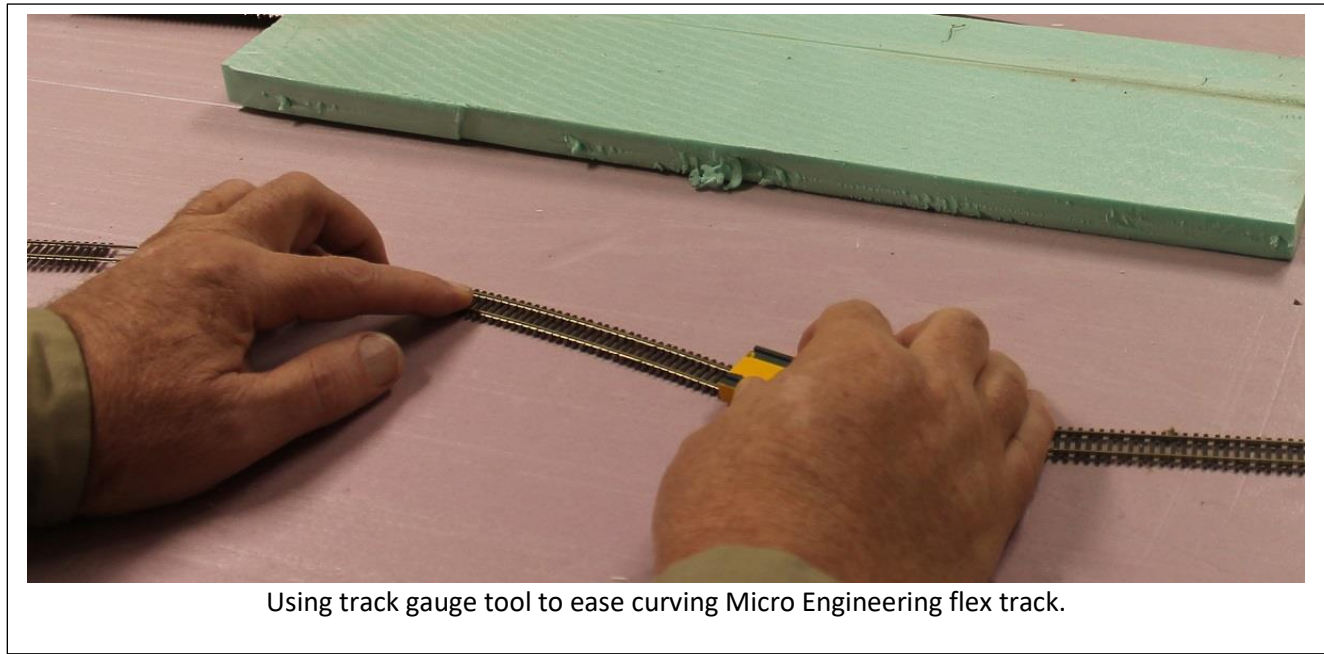
and the ends of the lower layers were about 2.5" apart, so the first one started 7.5" from the start of the radius, in the easement. See the picture below.



You can see the strip of label material along the outside of the roadbed on the main line curve, and some of the cut strips to the left. The track in the front is the Newton siding and the beginning of the C&NW main line going south towards Gastonia and York.

I prefer to use [Micro Engineering](#) code 55 flex track for my layouts. I have heard people complain that calling Micro Engineering "flexible" is not quite accurate, and I can't honestly argue with this. Perhaps "bendable" might be a better description. That's one of the reasons I like it. Once you do get it bent into the curve you want, it stays there. There is a trick to make this easier.

Since this is a long curve, more than 180°, I first connected two pieces of straight track and soldered the rail joiners. This prevents kinks at the joint and is about the only place where I solder joints. The picture on the next page shows my technique. I start out on a large, flat surface, holding the track down in my left hand. In my right hand is a track gauge from MLR Manufacturing I got this tip from a [YouTube video by Charlie Comstock](#). Twist the gauge a little as you push it along the track, and it will produce a nice, smooth curve. Build up the curve gradually rather than trying to do it all at once. This gauge has slots for N-scale on one side and HO scale on the other. I put yellow stripes on mine to make it easier to find this dark grey tool in the bottom of my tool box. *[editor's note: MLR Manufacturing is no longer in business and I was unable to find their tool in stock at about a dozen online hobby sources. [MircoMark](#) has a similar tool as part of its #84114 Deluxe Track Laying Set for HO scale, but I did not determine if this is still a stocked item.]*

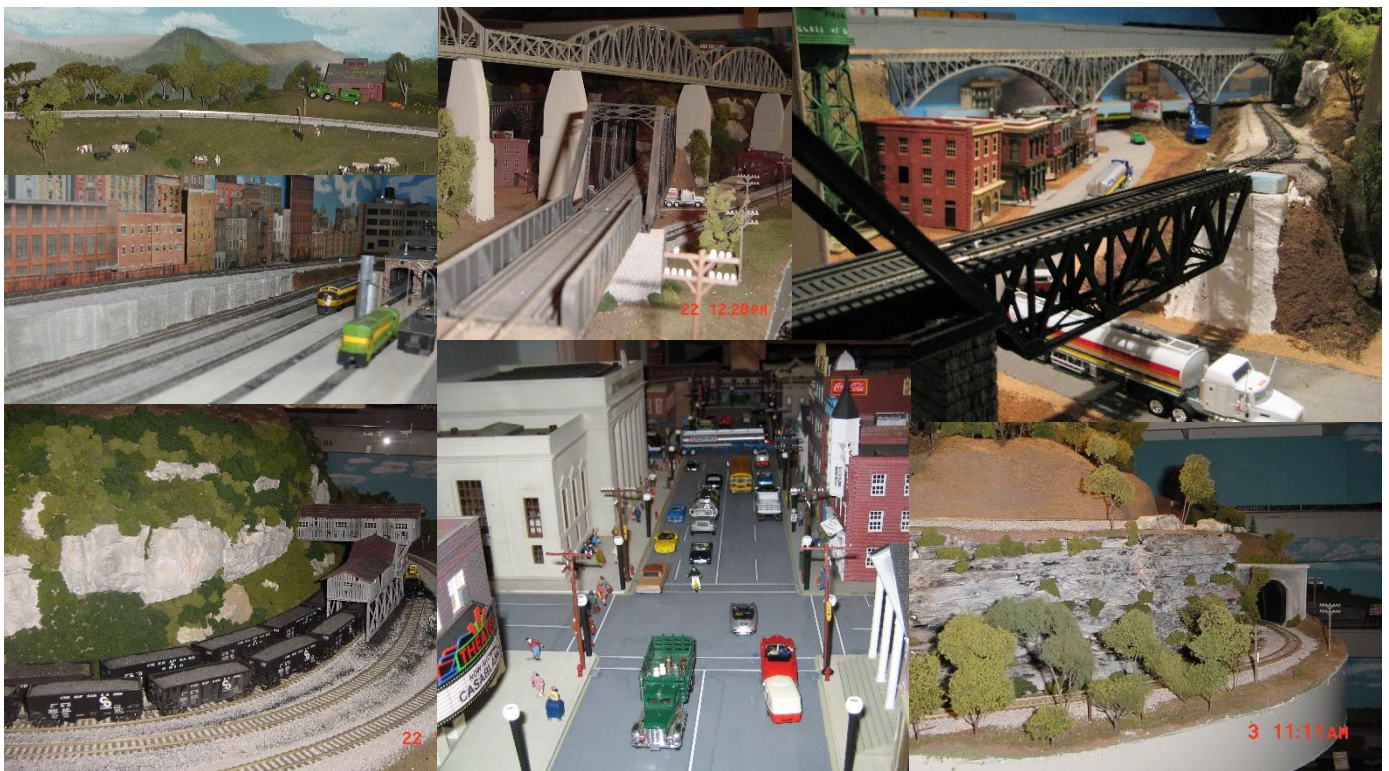


Using track gauge tool to ease curving Micro Engineering flex track.



Anthony Perkins Started Over

By Ed Gumphrey



As the previous photo collage shows, Anthony Perkins had a robust, fully operational model railroad, complete with scenery and details. It was built in a dedicated 16' x 24' building behind his house. What would make a model railroader take all of that down and start over? For a number of reasons, Anthony chose to do just that. He salvaged structures, bridges, a great deal of track, and even some of his helix benchwork, but he fearlessly embarked on tearing it all down and starting over. His rebuild project is inspired by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, set in the early 1960s. He models 1st generation and 2nd generation diesels along with a few holdout steam locomotives in his roster.

Back in January, our Superintendent, Alan Hardee, invited me to join in for a meeting of the [Metrolina Model Railroaders](#) at Anthony's home. I was still pretty new to CSD, but had already expressed an interest in meeting more of that 100% NMRA club's members. I eagerly accepted the invitation to see Anthony's fictional Appalachian Division of the Seaboard Air Line in HO scale. Seeing this multi-level railroad under construction would also spark the idea of developing a series of articles for *The Brass Pounder* to showcase layouts of CSD members. With about 8 or 10 members in attendance, things were too crowded for me to do any photography, and I didn't want to capture all of Anthony's time asking questions. At the end of the evening, we agreed that I would come back another time for a dedicated session to work up an article. Time has a way of slipping away, and it wasn't until six months later that I finally got a chance to schedule a meeting.

Entering the dedicated railroad building, you are flanked by two oval helices of the multi-level benchwork. The entrance is free of any duckunder or liftout section, one of the key factors in Anthony's decision to rebuild. His previous layout had both features. It's also immediately evident that Anthony exercised great care in construction methods. One of the things I noticed right away was how he had joined sections of the sub-roadbed. When I asked about it, he explained how he uses a biscuit joiner on the ends of each section to ensure a smooth, level joint. He also used 7 ply cabinet grade lumber to reduce warping and the effects of changes in humidity. Using portions of his previous layout's helices, Anthony made the new ones oval in shape. This departure from the usual practice allows for a more gentle grade along with the added bonus of having areas at the top level of a helix to feature a waypoint destination for the railroad.



Helices for the multi-level benchwork flank the entrance to the layout.



Making the helices oval allows for a more gentle grade along with providing a waypoint destination along the mainline.

Anthony's fictional Appalachian Division connects from Atlanta, Georgia (Southern end Staging) to Richmond Virginia. A "T" schematic also provides a connection to Charleston, South Carolina. Besides eliminating barriers to easy entry, realistic operation was a driving factor in Anthony's decision to start over. His 12 years in the Metrolina Club and 10 years working on the first layout had cemented his emphasis on Operations. Thus, the new four level layout with two peninsulas is designed to enhance operations from his previous creation, and provides about 420 feet of mainline. Operations will use a Timetable and Train Order approach along with car cards and waybills. Minimum radius is 24" on the mainline, but most curves are even more gentle. Trackplan details and industries are not set in stone, but are evolving as Anthony makes progress. As you can see from various photos, Anthony incorporated ribbon lighting between levels. The installation provides a comfortable level of light to enable operations. Anthony started construction on the new layout two years ago this month. He credits the lifestyle of retirement with enabling him to spend full "work days" on the railroad.

Back to my first visit, a short story illustrates another point about a detail that caught my eye. While running a train that night, the Metrolina crew encountered a shutdown of the DCC system at one point entering a helix where two power zones met. I had noticed Anthony's neat layout of electronics under his benchwork. That neatness paid off that night in troubleshooting and locating the cause.

I'll let pictures and captions tell the rest of the story. In summary, Anthony's decision to start over is already paying dividends in a very satisfying model railroad.



Neat electronics installation can pay off when troubleshooting a problem.
Photo by Anthony Perkins



An overview of the railroad shows the multi-level benchwork wrapping around the perimeter of the building with two peninsulas. Narrow shelves and generous spacing between levels help provide easy access for operations.



Another overview looking in the opposite direction. This will feature a river scene and adjacent power plant. From the roller pan you can see that Anthony was painting fascia on the day I was there. I only bumped into his wet paint once!



The location of engine servicing facilities has been roughed in. The motive power roster is a blend of first generation and early second generation diesels, highlighted by a holdout from the steam era.



Looking in the opposite direction along the back wall shows how the multi-level benchwork provides for nice long sidings, easy access to turnouts, and a realistic feel to the layout of yard trackage. Also, notice the installation of ribbon lighting between levels



Some industries have been roughly located on the railroad. The precise configurations for various industries is still evolving as work progresses. Anthony was able to recycle structures, track and other equipment from his first layout.



Like on his first layout, Anthony plans to include a number of different industry types to provide destinations for all types of freight cars. Here a roughed-in lumber yard is ready for setouts, while a tank car can be seen in the background for delivery to a chemical facility.

I hope you've enjoyed this issue of *The Brass Pounder*. I'm repeating the banner from the *Editor's Notes* section here to hopefully catch your attention. When I first started as editor, I received a healthy influx of contributions. Unfortunately, my backlog of material is dwindling. Please let me know about what you're working on. I'll be happy to work with you to develop either a "how to" or layout feature article. You'll find it satisfying to share your work with other CSD members.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

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