

THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 18 Number 9

November 2018

Division Coming Events

(See CSD Website for
further details)

**CSD November
Monthly Meeting
And SWAP MEET
Saturday Nov 10th
10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**At Wade's Train
World
Brookford Community
Center
1700 South Center
Street, Hickory, NC**

Superintendent's Corner

By Alan Hardee

It's hard to believe that it's November already. Let's take a look back at Division 12 activities for October. Jack Parker, MMR, once again hosted the annual picnic at his home on Mountain Island Lake. This was a month later than usual due to the cancellation in September for Hurricane Florence. Mother Nature again tried to put a damper on things with morning rain. I furnished a 20'x20' canopy that provided dry space till the sun made his showing. Division members enjoyed great food and fellowship and even got to meet some of our newest members. Thanks to Jack's son Steven for helping cook the "Original Hardee" hot dogs and burgers and to Henry Reeves for the deep frying the fries. Congratulations to Gil Brauch. During the picnic, he had a model judged for his final Motive Power Achievement Award which he needed for Master Model Railroader. Gil is MMR #623.

The other big event was the Mid Eastern Regional Convention hosted by the Potomac Division in Rockville, Md. on October 4th -7th. The convention had something for everyone; contest room, silent action room, clinics, layout tours and operation sessions. We had 11 members from Div. 12 attending, including Neal Anderson, Dick Bronson, Dave Chance, Michele Chance, Ed Gumphrey, Bob Halsey, Alan Hardee, Fred Miller, Jack Monette, Tim Rumph, and Dave Thrans. I hope I didn't miss anyone.

November is National Model Railroad Month. Div.12 will honor the month with a swap meet and meeting at Brookford Community Center in Hickory on November 10th. We will not meet in December. RMU will be January 19th, check the division website for the latest details.

November and December also bring a lot of holiday train displays to our area. Metrolina Model Railroaders will have their HO scale French Broad and Catawba modular layout on display at the 51st Annual Southern Christmas Show in Charlotte at The Park Expo on Independence Blvd. The 11 day show opens on Nov. 8th and runs through the 18th. Metrolina can use your help manning the layout for the long schedule. Slots are still available if you would like to volunteer for a few shifts. Contact me at alanhardee@att.net to sign up. Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens in Belmont

offers a fantastic holiday light display from Thanksgiving through Jan 6th. Several different trains, including a smaller Metrolina layout, are on display at DSBG during this time. The Holidays and model railroading share a magical bond. As you enjoy the Holidays, be sure to include some model railroading to keep those holiday memories alive. Happy Holidays from my family to yours

Editor's Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

UPCOMING AREA TRAIN EVENTS

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

**[5th Annual Rail Fan
Day](#)**

**November 3rd
9:00am – 2:00pm
12 W Main Street
Thomasville NC**

**[Metrolina Model
Railroaders](#)**

**Modular Layout Display
November 8-18
Daniel Stowe Botanical
Gardens 6500 South New
Hope Road, Belmont, NC
28012**

**[Central Carolina N
Scalers T-TRACK](#)**

**Tabletop Display
Saturday, November 10th
10:00am – 2:00pm
At CSD's Meeting in
Brookford**

October was an eventful month for CSD. As Alan mentioned, 11 members traveled to Rockville, MD for the MER 2018 Convention. Our thanks to the Potomac Division members for their hard work behind the scenes to conduct a successful and memorable event. It was especially helpful for those of us who will be involved in planning for the 2020 convention that CSD will host.

The various stories of getting there could make for an article by itself. One member flew up, one rode Amtrak, some carpooled, and some drove solo. Driving allowed Bob Halsey and Neal Anderson to include a visit to the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke on the return trip. The convention was a new experience for me, as I had never attended an NMRA convention at any level. It won't be my last, that's for sure.

We finally got to have our annual picnic, and I hope you enjoy the photos from that event. Thanks again to Jack Parker, MMR, for hosting this enjoyable day.

This edition features lots of convention coverage, both past and future. Don't miss Tim Rumph's call for layout tours in 2020. Also, plan ahead for RMU in January. There will be more in next month's newsletter. You'll also enjoy a great article from Ed Smith about his first scratchbuilding project.

Finally, I'll add my congratulations to Gil Brauch for attaining the coveted title of Master Model Railroader.

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

As Alan mentioned in *Superintendent's Corner*, the big news for the region was the MER Annual Convention held in Rockville, Maryland October 4th - 7th. With 11 CSD members there, we enjoyed a lot of camaraderie and a wide variety of events. There's more detail in a couple of articles below. During the banquet, a spokesman for the Philadelphia Division gave a brief presentation about the 2019 MER Convention which they are hosting in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania October 10th – 13th of next year. Chip Stevens of the Philadelphia Division also provided me with their first public information release which is included in this edition starting on page 22. An important aspect of this convention was that our members were able to see firsthand what works well and what doesn't. Our experience should help us as we make decisions about our hosting of the 2020 MER Convention.



That's a segue into our status for planning. Neal Anderson is getting ready to start looking at various potential venues and is looking for some help in possibly touring some areas, looking at hotel facilities, etc. Please contact [Neal](#) to offer your assistance.

So, on to the picnic. Mother nature threatened in the early afternoon with some light drizzling rain, but by the time our bellies were full, the sun was shining. See the *Meeting Notes* section for some information about a brief impromptu meeting before the picnic crowd started running trains.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, here's a few thousand words about the picnic.



Even overcast skies and occasional drizzling rain couldn't detract from the beauty of the picnic setting. Our thanks to Jack Parker, MMR, for hosting the picnic again this year.



Getting a second canopy set up.



All set up and ready for some fun.



Henry Reeves provided REAL French fries.



There were lots of conversations before the crowd got quiet. How do you quiet them down? With FOOD.



Alan had to brag about sucking in his gut. LOL.



As lunch settles, the conversations pick up again.

Meeting Notes

By Ed Gumphrey

After everybody had eaten lunch and were continuing conversations at the picnic, Superintendent Alan Hardee called a brief meeting.

AP Chairman Neal Anderson announced that he had become the sole AP Chairman. Previous co-chairman Dave Chance is now the AP Manager for the MER, so Neal has picked up all the duties for the AP program in CSD. Neal's AP updates are in the AP section below.

Doug Algire announced that CSD's signature event, Railroad Modeling University (RMU) for 2019 will be held on January 19th, 2019 (The snow date is January 26th). Like last year, the event will be held at Christ the King Church in Charlotte. Doug is still finalizing the clinic schedule, and he pointed out that he has a few more class spaces available for those willing to present clinics. Please contact Doug at RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org to volunteer. There will be more details as the schedule is finalized, CSD web page updated, and enrollment links posted. In the meantime, plan ahead to be able to help out with the setup the night before RMU.

Gil Brauch, MMR, provided more information about our November meeting. Instead of the third Saturday, it will be held on the second Saturday, November 10th. As previously mentioned it will be held at the Community Center in Brookford. Details are provided in Gil's article starting on the next page.

Achievement Program Update

Neal announced that Michele Chance had earned her AP Certificate for Association Official, having served on MER's Board of Directors for three years.

Gil Brauch had his last scratchbuilt motive power evaluated by the judges at the CSD picnic. It received 105 points. That means that he has finished the AP Master Builder – Motive Power requirements. This completed his seventh AP. Gil's Statements of Qualification have been approved by National Headquarters, and Gil has earned the title of Master Model Railroader. Congratulations to Gil on becoming MMR #623.

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

apchair@carolinasouthern.org 704-775-2830



Gil Brauch and his final scratchbuilt motive power. Congratulations to Gil on becoming MMR #623.

CSD Celebrates National Model Railroading Month at Train Town

by Gil Brauch, MMR, Brookford Project Manager

CSD will celebrate National Model Railroading Month at Wade's Train Town with an Open House and our Annual Swap Meet on November 10th from 10 am until 2 pm. This year we will be joined by the [Central Carolina N Scalpers](http://carolinasouthern.org), who will be bringing their new T-TRAK table top N Scale layout. The event is open to the public and will be the Division's monthly gathering for November.

As in past years, Swap Meet tables will be available free to NMRA members. There will be no commercial dealers. If you would like to reserve a table, please use the form on the Division's website: <http://carolinasouthern.org/TrainShowTable.htm> . This will guarantee you a table. Otherwise it will be 'space available'. We all have some items that were a great idea when we acquired them, but no longer meet our modeling needs. This is an opportunity to let someone else enjoy them so you can acquire something else that you 'really need' now (insert your own smiley face here...)

This gathering not only allows us to show off our "World's Greatest Hobby" to members of the public, but having a layout or two right there along with our fellow ferroequinologists gives us a great opportunity to share ideas, tips, and tricks among us. We won't have formal clinics, but there will be ample time to swap not only equipment and supplies, but our experience with others.

Since the event is the day before Veteran's Day, members are encouraged to bring some military-themed trains to run on the HO Train Town layout. Motive power should be analog (DC) only, but we have locomotives that can power some separate cars and consists if you don't have a DC locomotive handy. This gives us an opportunity to recognize those among us as well as those in the general public for their service to flag and county.

So, come on out and support our Division and our hobby. It is important that we all support this project of the Division which showcases some of the best modeling around.



An overview of the front side of the layout at Wade's Train Town in Brookford.

Wade's Train Town is located in the Brookford Community Center, 1700 South Center Street, Hickory, NC. You can get a Google Map on the Division's website: <http://carolinasouthern.org/Calendar.htm#novmtg> .

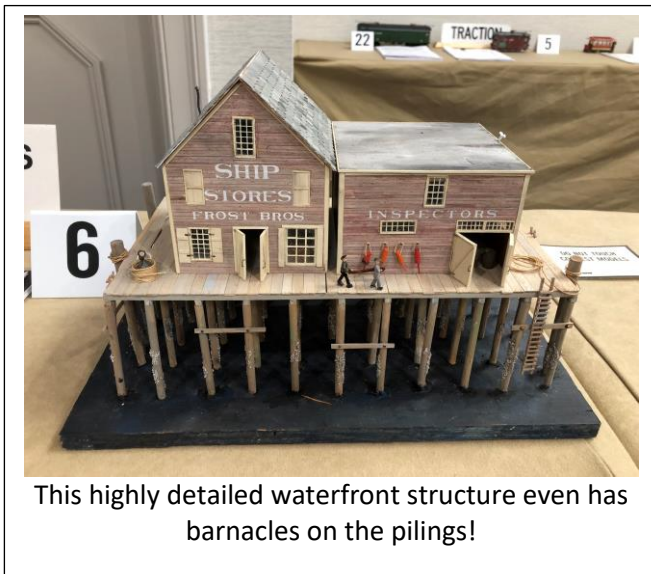
We Went to the MER Convention!

by Bob Halsey



About a dozen CSD members went to the Mideast Region Convention in Rockville, MD, the first weekend in October, and enjoyed the clinics and some Potomac Division member layout tours. Some of our members presented clinics: Dick Bronson, Fred Miller, and Neal Anderson, but there were also excellent ones given by other MER members (see forthcoming article in the Local).

Five of us from CSD served as judges/"apprentice" judges. We apprentice judges learned a lot about what makes a good model, whether it is a locomotive, freight/passenger/MoW car, or a structure (either stand-alone or as part of a diorama). Most of the models submitted were truly works of art, obviously having taken many hours to complete! But one area we noticed that some modelers need to put more effort into is documenting of the work completed, methods and materials used, and showing the source plans/photos/articles the model was based on. Although most of the supporting documentation was very satisfactory, about a third were somewhat deficient, which often leaves the judges guessing as to the amount of scratchbuilding, accuracy of following the prototype, etc, which could result in lower points assigned. The best documentation included photos of the model during construction, and listed the details that were added. The photos below show a sampling of the fine models submitted at the convention.



This highly detailed waterfront structure even has barnacles on the pilings!



A detailed diorama featuring the seedy side of town abounded in details.



Another contest diorama showed superb detail and finishing.



An entry from CSD's own Jack Monette, MMR, showing part of his favorite train entry.



This beautiful scratchbuilt Jordan Spreader was one of the contest winners.



Martin Brechbiehl's scratchbuilt O scale self-propelled freight car.

To become a fully qualified judge, an apprentice has to serve as member of a team evaluating each of the five categories: construction, detail, conformity, finish/lettering, and scratchbuilding. So it could take as long as five years, or less if there are more events where judging takes place. We definitely learned a lot about what goes into making a good model. We enjoyed doing this, and are looking forward to doing it again!

The Saturday evening banquet included the presentation of awards, and was followed by Lou Sassi's description of how he developed his career photographing and writing about different outstanding model railroad layouts. This year he reported on the excellent and very detailed layouts of CSD members Jack Parker, MMR; Seth Gartner; and Fred Miller, MMR, with cover photos and feature articles on each of them in *Model Railroader* magazine issues.

On Sunday, Neal Anderson and I proceeded down I-81, and decided to make a brief stop at the [Virginia Museum of Transportation](http://www.vtmuseum.org/) in Roanoke, former main base of the Norfolk & Western Railway. There we saw some very impressive locomotives and rolling stock! But first we viewed the model ship section, including an outstanding large model of the WWII

light cruiser USS Roanoke (CL-145). We then examined the aviation section, again with many models, from the earliest Wright Flyer to the latest civilian and military jets (emphasis on Piedmont Airlines).

The automotive section had a '46 Ford sedan, '50 and '55 Studebakers, a '41 Packard sedan, and many others, including fire engines outside parked in with the locomotives. It was those locos that really got our attention! The N&W 611 had just been moved to the front that morning after returning from its most recent maintenance period in the Spencer shops, and it was in between the big steamers – N&W 1218 and the Y6b Mallet. Close behind 611 was the Wabash E8A, a Virginian GP-9 (the sign describes the Virginian as “Virginia’s Other Railroad”. The 611’s water tender, several other diesel and steam locomotives, RPO and other types of cars, and an oddity – a Panama Canal towing “mule”! A very pleasant surprise was a Pennsylvania Railroad GG-1 electric locomotive (#4919) that a rail-minded couple had donated to the Museum! The Museum is going to paint it in authentic PRR tuscan color and markings from its current unmarked all-black paint job. That will make it really spectacular in its position alongside the 1218, 611, and Y6b! We also looked at the very detailed medium-sized HO layout inside, and of course spent a few minutes in the gift shop. Enjoy the photos of some of the displays.



A beautiful model of the WWII light cruiser USS Roanoke (CL-145) brought a big smile to this Navy veteran.



Sleek N&W #611 at rest among other steam giants at the Virginia Museum of Transportation.



N&W #1218, a Class A 2-6-6-4



N&W #2156, a Class Y6b 2-8-8-2.



Wabash E-8 #1009



N&W RPO sometimes travels in the consists being pulled by famous #611 during excursions.



DC Transit Company PCC Streetcar #1470 was built by the St Louis Car Company in 1945.



A well-worn Roanoke Southern light crane on display.



A surprise was seeing this "mule" from the Panama Canal, where it helped tow ships through the locks.



This PRR GG-1 electric locomotive will soon be resplendent in its original Tuscan and gold stripes .

We could easily have spent a couple more hours there, but wanted to get home at a fairly reasonable time. Our museum visit was a great finale to a fun convention weekend, and we learned some things that we can apply to planning for our 2020 effort!

SCRATCH BUILDING...A FIRST-TIME PROJECT

By Ed Smith

There are many facets to model railroading. Some are more enticing than others. As I build my layout, I've been able to experience many of them. I've discovered that the areas I enjoy the most have an artistic edge to them. I get a sense of fulfillment when I complete a scene on the railroad. But, more enjoyable is the time spent creating the project. There are also some areas, though not boorish, I find taxing and hard to get totally involved in. One is the electrical aspect. Being a retired electrician with over 35 years of experience, I understand the technical facets. But for some reason I can't get motivated enough to immerse myself in these projects. That said, my latest venture and this month's article is about scratch building.

Over the years I have built many types of kits. From card stock, plastic, to craftsman kits; but never have I attempted to build something from scratch. My layout will have specific structures that will help create visible images of locale, era, and prototype. Most of these will be scratch built. I didn't want to begin my scratch building career with one of these signature pieces. I've selected something that will help me to improve my skills, but also pay homage to a good friend. I decided to build my neighbor's woodworking business. I used his shop to cut all the wood and other materials used in the building of my layout. With his help, this job was accomplished quickly. So, at the very least, building his shop and placing it on the layout is a fitting way to commemorate his help and friendship.

After explaining my goal and receiving his permission, I took pictures of the structures; 1 main building, 3 add-ons, and a dog kennel. I also took interior pictures. (photos 1-6) Also, I wrote down vital dimensional measurements. I made rudimentary sketches and notes and then transferred all this info to paper on my drawing table. Although fairly accurate, it still was only a basic drawing for reference. The entire footprint is approximately 10 1/2" x 12", so I cut a piece of gator board 11" x 18" for the base.





My scale is HO, so I had to accumulate the proper building materials in this scale. I purchased most of the dimensional wood, clapboard siding, shingles, corrugated roofing, and lamp fixtures from [Northeastern Scale Lumber](#). Since this was a block by block, stick by stick build, I needed something more sturdy than HO scale 2x4 studs. If you have ever used HO scale 2x4's, you know how water thin they are. I found a wood product at Hobby Lobby called Woodpile. The bag of 500 sticks closely resembles 4x4's, but more importantly, adds the strength needed in stud walls. [Shapeways Products](#) provided me with HO masonry blocks for the foundation. I purchased 450 blocks made of resin. These come on a sprue, 15 to a sprue. These are a wonderful product, but after cutting them off the sprue and sanding the lot, they are so miniscule that I almost went blind. Finally, what details I didn't have, I purchased from Woodland Scenics, Faller, Prieser, Tichy, and Pikestuff. A consideration here was, the original shop was built in the 1980's, and my modeling era is circa 1946. So, vehicles, light fixtures, machinery, heating equipment, and many small details had to be rolled back to the 1940's.

While waiting for the supplies to arrive, I built styrene frames $\frac{1}{4}$ " high for the concrete floors. One, a scale 50' x 60', and the other, 12' x 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ '. I used plaster to pour the floor. After the plaster cured, I laid the resin masonry blocks 2 tiers high, allowing for 3 openings; 2 doors and a sliding shop door. I'm not going to go into depth on dimensions, but will try to hit the highlights. After the block had set up I used the Hobby Lobby wood to frame the studded walls.

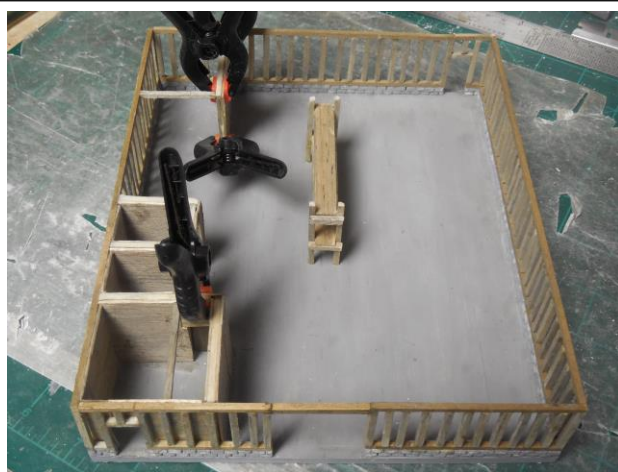


Simulated concrete floor was poured with plaster.



Main structure foundation with concrete blocks.

With the studs, plate, and block installed, I had a scale 11' interior wall. Also added was the walls and plywood siding for the office, 2 storerooms, and spray booth. The main saw structure was built in the center of the room, prototypical, but it created support for the ceiling.



Wall studs in place on the foundation.



Main saw structure in center of room.



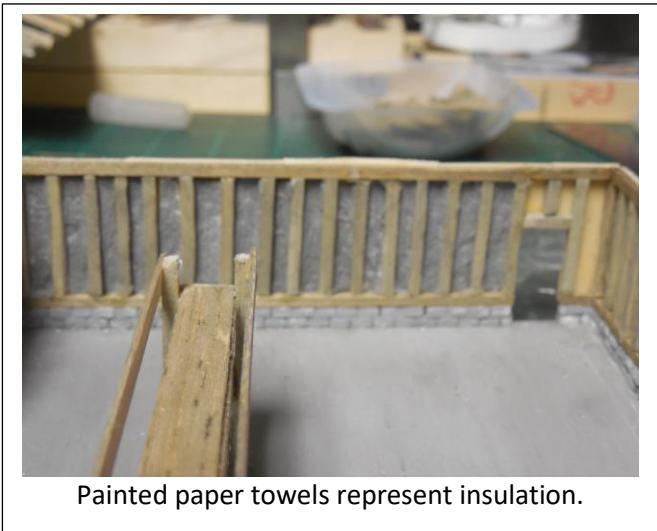
Roof joists of scale 2x12s in place.



Clapboard siding installed on wall framing.

After the Northeastern wood arrived, I pre-stained the wood using a wash of India ink and 90% isopropyl alcohol. I have several strengths and I used the light stain. I use a higher percentage of alcohol in the ink, 90% compared to 70%. I believe this helps prevent warpage due to water content. Next, I built the roof joists, using scale 2 x 12's (non-stained), cut and glued the clapboard siding on the frame, and added scale 6 x 6 supports for the side shelter.

Inside the shop, I installed insulation between the studs. I used heavy duty paper towels, painted silver, and cut to fit between the studs. I finished the side shelter using scale wood, clapboard siding, and Tichy windows. Ceiling joists were built using 2 x 12's again. Finally the small additions and dog kennel were built. One addition has the 2nd poured floor. Studs and clapboard were used for both additions. The kennel used 4 x 4 x 8 studs, fencing by Prieser, and 2 x 12 joists. [Editor's note: See the Post Script about the kennel at the end of Ed's article.]



Painted paper towels represent insulation.



Side shelter with joists, siding and Tichy windows.



Another poured floor for the second addition.

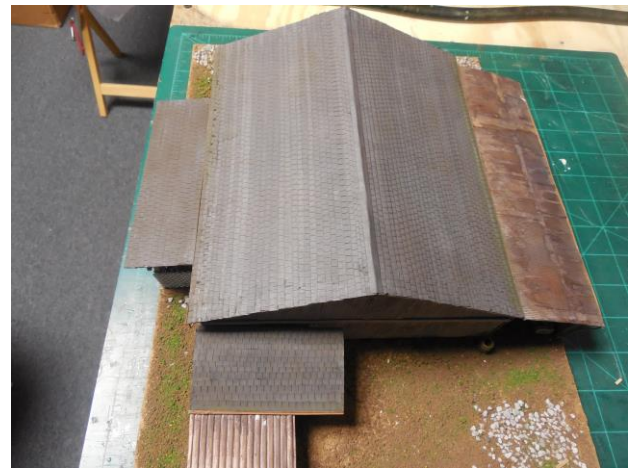


Construction of the dog kennel in progress.

Individual charcoal shingle strips were used on the main roof, secondary building, and dog kennel. The roofs on the long side shelter and small add-on are 2 different sizes of corrugated metal roofing, all from Northeastern. The shingles were weathered with assorted pan pastels and the metal roofing by washes of India ink, pan pastels, and acrylic paint – rust color.

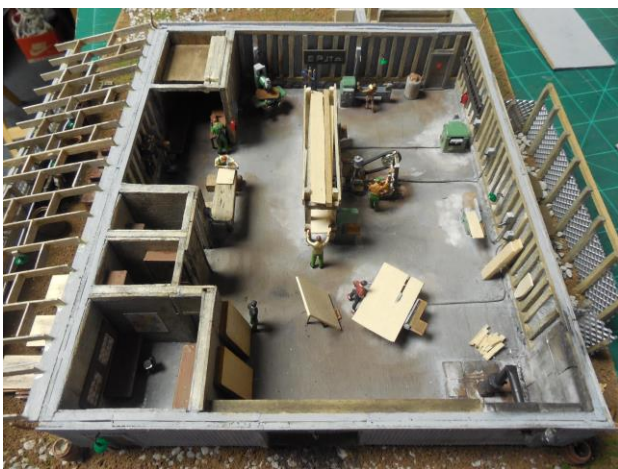


The various additions to the building have different sizes of corrugated roofing.



Roofing was weathered with india ink washes, pan pastels and acrylic paint..

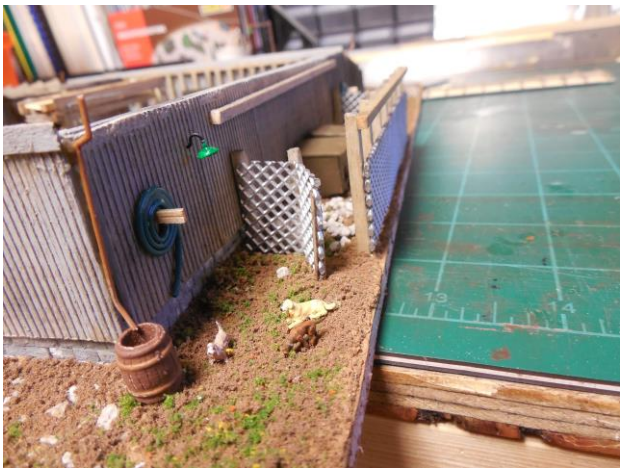
The clapboard siding was stained with India ink solution, dry brushed with diluted grey acrylic paint, and weathered with pan pastels. The interior details are from various manufacturers and my inventory. The windows and doors are Tichy. The figures, furniture, machinery, and most other details are Woodland Scenics, Faller, and Prieser. The pot belly stove is resin with Dr. Ben's granite blocks used for wall insulation. The interior is weathered with pan pastels. Downspouts and gutters are Pikestuff. Vehicles are resin or 3-D printed. Most details reflect the 1940's era.



Interior details are from a variety of manufacturers.



A view from the opposite end showing details.



Details being added around the kennel.



Peering through joists to see shed interior.



Table saw in use and a pot-bellied stove in the corner for cold days..



Details being added around the kennel.

The last pictures on the next page show the finished product. The project took around a month and a half. Although time consuming, I found it very enjoyable. Craftsman kits can be expensive, but scratch building can be costly also. It all depends on how far you want to take it. But it's money well spent. My only problem now is finding the right location in my layout to put this structure. It's fairly large for a small business, so finding the right area for realism and visibility is vital. After finishing, I've decided to submit it for A.P. judging, if I can figure out the appropriate paperwork.



Ed Smith calls our AP Chairman, **Neal Anderson** for advice on paperwork for AP judging.



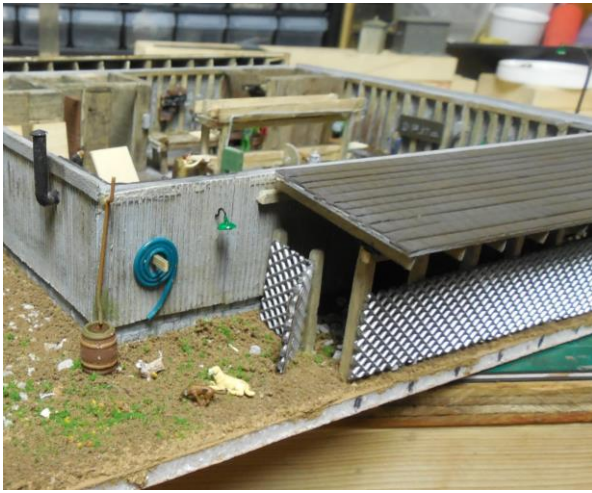
Overview photos showing the finished structure.

Well, I've bored you long enough. It's time to get back to the train room and attack that electrical demon. It needs to be finished for the Golden Spike Award.

Post Script

After I submitted this article to the editor, he sent me an email with a bit of constructive criticism. He recommended that I replace the Preiser styrene fence material with bridal veil material (tulle). I decided to make some changes, including the gate. I purchased 3/64" brass tubing and rod from Hobby Lobby, to construct the gate. I could have used this to build the fence line, but decided to use the existing wood supports. I purchased the Tulle (pronounced tool) from Joann Fabrics. It is generally used in wedding veils and came in a 3" x 25 yard roll. I have enough to last forever. The Tulle was cut a scale 7' wide and long enough to stretch over the wood supports. I made 3 cuts, one for the gate, one for the small section, and the long section and adjoining right angle wall. I lightly painted the fabric with acrylic grey paint. While drying, I constructed the gate by cutting the brass tubing, approximately scale 6' x 2 1/2' and a cross support. These were soldered together and filed smooth, then painted grey. The fabric was

stretched over the gate and short wall and using CA adhesive, I attached the pieces. The same was done on the long wall. I haven't decided to weather it or not. This is a much better replica of a fence than the fence I used originally. I would like to thank Ed Gumphrey for the heads-up on this type of construction. Once again ,thanks for the info, it really improves the build.



Original kennel fencing using Preiser plastic fence.



Re-worked kennel fencing using brass tube for the gate and tulle for chain link material.

Until next time.....

And now, back to the subject of conventions....



LOOK SOUTH IN 2020

CSD LAYOUT TOURS PLANNING FOR THE 2020 MER CONVENTION

By Tim Rumph

"My layout's too small."

"My layout's not done."

"My scenery isn't finished."

"I don't have any scenery."

"I'm too far away."

"Nobody would be interested in my layout."

These are excuses, and I'm not going to take them. People enjoy and learn from all sorts of layouts, and sometimes can learn more from a layout under construction than one that's "finished". They realize, "I can do that," and get up out of the arm chair, or "That sized layout will fit my space." Sometimes it's, "This is nice, I can do this to make my layout better."

People will be coming in from all over, probably including quite a few from the SER. If you are far away, perhaps your schedule will allow you to have some visitors on Thursday coming to our convention or Sunday on the way home.

I'll need some basic information about your layout, and a couple of pictures. I'll come out and take pictures if you want. Will you be busy working at the convention? We can work around your schedule. Know someone who has a nice layout but isn't a member of the NMRA? They're welcome too, and our insurance coverage also covers them since this is an NMRA event. Have them give me a call.

Contact Tim Rumph at:

phone: 910-318-2676

e-mail: tarumph@gmail.com

If you host regular operating sessions, I'm looking for operating sessions hosts as well.

Give me a call or send me an e-mail and let us help you share your layout with our visitors.

Thank you.



MER 2018 CONVENTION LAYOUT TOUR #1

DEAN RIPPLE'S MONONGAH DIVISION OF THE BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD

By Ed Gumphrey

As I noted in *Editor's Comments*, the MER 2018 Convention in Rockville, MD was the first time I had ever attended a convention. I had meticulously planned which clinics I wanted to attend, worked in time for a visit to a real brick-and-mortar hobby shop, and, most eagerly awaited, a series of layout tours. This is the first of several tour write-ups I'll provide over the next several editions of *The Brass Pounder*.

As a big fan of the B&O, I was looking forward to seeing Dean Ripple's Monongah Division layout. Joined by Alan Hardee, Tim Rumph and Dave Thrans, we headed to Dean's house for the tour at what I thought was the scheduled time. I had misread the schedule, and we arrived a half hour early. Thankfully, Dean graciously invited us in and down to the basement. While Dean discussed layout features and satisfied my pent up need to "speak B&O", his son

Joseph expertly ran a couple of trains. I was particularly pleased to see Joseph's enthusiasm for the hobby, especially since so many model railroaders lament that the hobby is "dying." Joseph regularly participates in operating sessions both at home and on other layouts with his father, and has his own model railroad in his bedroom upstairs. He has been an avid model railroader since the tender age of 4. Also noteworthy was that the trains Joseph was running during our visit operated flawlessly.



An overview of Dean Ripple's B&O Monongah Division Layout from Dean's website.

Now roughly 12' x 16', the layout started as a 4' x 6' cookie-cutter designed to fit under a double bed in an apartment. It was then expanded into a basement of a townhouse and finally, thanks to modular construction, easily made a final move to its current location. Dean allowed me to use the above photo from his [website](#) to provide a better overview than I was able to capture during my visit. I encourage you to browse his site for more information about the layout and some excellent pictures.

Dean has very artfully captured the feel of B&O's lines south of Grafton, WV. Without trying to precisely capture the prototype, the layout conveys the essence of railroading in this area with its tight curves and light rail, linking small industries to larger Division Points. Well balanced track density combines with the scenery, structures and details to present a very realistic appearance. Recognizable kit structures are finished with a personal touch, and several scratchbuilt industries further set the scene. Our thanks to Dean Ripple for his hospitality and sharing his impressive model railroad with us. I'll let the pictures and captions tell the rest of the story.



A B&O class E-27ca consolidation pulls a mixed freight along the single track mainline. Dean Ripple converted the 70s vintage PFM brass loco to DCC/sound and painted and weathered it for a well-used appearance.



Main street faces the yard. Recognizable kits were artfully constructed.



Engine servicing facilities provide for turning locomotives and fueling transition-era diesels.



A wye at one end of the railroad facilitates turning engines and access to small industries.



A scratchbuilt warehouse captures the feel of many small industries in B&O WV country.



A wye at one end of the railroad facilitates turning engines and access to small industries.



Small industries are the order of the day near Buckhannon WV, south of Grafton.



Compact trackwork and well-integrated scenery capture the backwoods feel.



Smooth trackwork, blended stratified rock and realistic scenery don't try to overpower the scene, but enhance the feel of the prototype.



Liberty Bell Special
2019 MER Convention Sponsored by The
Philadelphia Division – NMRA
October 10-13, 2019
Come celebrate trains in the cradle of liberty!
Information provided by Chip Stevens of Philadelphia Division

The Philadelphia Division, NMRA welcomes you and yours to Liberty Bell Special 2019! The next Convention will be October 10 through October 13, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in

King of Prussia, PA. After much deliberation, our committee chose the name Liberty Bell over such other favorites as Cheese Steak Special and some lesser titles. For those of you not familiar with King of Prussia, it is located 20 miles northwest of downtown Philadelphia adjacent to the Pennsylvania Turnpike and many nearby highways. In southeast Pennsylvania, all highways lead to Valley Forge.

Since Monday, October 14 is a Federal Holiday, the hotel has agreed to extend the room rates for the convention for an additional 3 days before and into the week following the convention. The hotel is in walking distance to the second largest shopping mall in the United States with shops and dining to meet any tastes. Also, in driving distance are the Valley Forge National Park whose accommodations during the winters of the American Revolution were not as luxurious as our hotel, Longwood Gardens, the gardens of the Dupont family and many more places of interest. More about the area can be found on the hotel's website, www.cpvalleyforge.com. For those of you who collect hotel stay points, Crowne Plaza is a part of the IHG hotel group. Registration forms for the Convention and hotel reservation information will be published soon. At this time, we have one prototype tour on the Colebrookdale Railroad. The Colebrookdale is part of the former Reading Barto branch in nearby Boyertown PA that is a short 50-minute drive from the hotel. In addition to the autumn foliage that occurs in early October, there will be the train ride, lunch, and a tour of the railroad's shops. The committee is working hard on additional tours and will announce them through the Region and Division newsletters as well as on the website <http://www.phillynmra.org/>

Currently we have the first four layout tours scheduled, three HO layouts and a traction layout. Efforts are under way to add to the list both with individual and club layouts. We are attempting to keep all tours and open houses to drives of 30 minutes or less. We would also like to hear from owners and superintendents who are willing to open their layouts to those making the trip to Valley Forge, keeping in mind again that Monday, October 14th is a holiday. Those willing should notify Bill Fagan (bfagan777@hotmail.com) of ability to host. Remember, those Open Houses count toward AP Volunteer points.

Liberty Bell Special will begin on Thursday night with clinics which will continue through Sunday morning. We have one tentative, hands-on clinic planned with a noted presenter, as well as many more sessions tentatively planned. Again, check the website for additional or new clinics. If you want to present a clinic, please email John Seibert (johnhseibert@comcast.net) with your topic.

As usual, Saturday will include the Contest Room. Plan now to bring your latest modeling efforts for sharing with other MER members. More AP credits may be available for your efforts. Sprinkled among all these activities will be opportunities to operate on some truly spectacular individual and club layouts. We're keeping those AP Dispatcher ours in mind.

All roads lead to King of Prussia, PA. We hope you and yours will take advantage of this opportunity to visit the convention for a truly memorable experience.

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

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
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