

HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - www.hubdiv.org
Volume 36, Number 3, January - February, 2020

RAILFUN TIMETABLE

Hands-On: Mini-Scene Project – Scenery

By Andy Reynolds

10 AM Saturday, January 11, 2020

First Lutheran Church, 1663 Main Street, West Barnstable

This hands-on session is the next phase of our mini-scene project. We will be using items from the outdoors and static and mixed-use grasses to create scenery and trees, and talk about water-effect techniques. We'll also discuss how this scenery work ties into the NMRA Achievement Program.

We will have a limited quantity of 12"x12" bases for people to use. Please email Andy at railfun.coordinator@hubdiv.org so that he brings enough materials. We also encourage you to bring along something you are working on, along with any paints, glues, brushes, static grass applicators, scenery materials or scenic supplies you may need. We will also have some on hand.

After we finish, Randy Child's home layout in Centerville will be open for viewing. This is an excellent operations-focused layout.

Hands-On: Rolling Stock Tune-Up

By Ron Noret; Mike Tylick, MMR; and Peter Watson, MMR

8 PM Friday, January 17, 2020, Cambridge School of Weston

This meeting falls one week before our HUB Modular Display in Amherst on Saturday, January 25th to Sunday, January 26th. In an effort to hop onboard and make the Big E Show a trouble-free exhibition, we are encouraging our members to bring their rolling stock in for our annual tune-up event. We will be on-hand to demonstrate the proper way to fix dragging coupler pins, re-gauge rolling stock, and top the cars off with a little weight. There will be an ample supply of weights so that your rolling stock will meet the NMRA standards. So, bring along your rolling stock, tool kits, standard gauges, new wheel sets and a portable post office scale if you have one. We will also explain when and why the modular group uses wheel resistors for our signaling system and will have them for sale at the meeting. Visit: www.nmra.org/beginner/knuckle-couplers and www.nmra.org/car-weight for info.

Lessons Learned Presentations

Benchwork Construction with Superstrut

by Dan Fretz

Touch Toggles

By Jim Kerkam

8 PM Friday, February 21, 2020, Cambridge School of Weston

We plan on emphasizing layout construction in 2020 because many members are planning layouts and some are looking at the requirements of the Civil Engineering AP Certificate. Dan will bring along his 3D mock-up of his layout, and present some of the techniques he has used along the way. Superstrut is a readily-available steel framing product often used in office and industrial buildings, with a variety of heavy-duty applications such as overhead support systems for wire runs, sprinkler systems and lighting, catwalks & roof walks, and raised floors.

RAILFUN Timetable Continued on Page 2

Journey to Promontory

By Jeff Gerow



Locomotives 119 and 60 face off at Promontory Point during a golden spike reenactment.

One hundred and fifty years ago in May, the Golden Spike signifying the completion of the first transcontinental railway was driven in Promontory, Utah. It only made sense for the NMRA to have the National Convention in Salt Lake City this year – including daily tours to the golden spike ceremony, but more about that later.

It was a bit further than I wanted to drive and I was able to convince my friend, Jim Jordan, from New Hampshire to join me. A very well-run convention, indeed – they even included a temporary pass for their local "T" -- Trax. It was an easy walk from the terminal to the end of the Trax Green Line, which conveniently also passed a block from the Little America convention hotel. It would have been useful to know that I was supposed to check in with my card electronically on the little pedestal at either end of the station – but I wasn't confronted for an inactive card and I did catch on pretty quickly.

(Continued on Page 8)

Also Inside This Issue

Page 2.....The President's Car

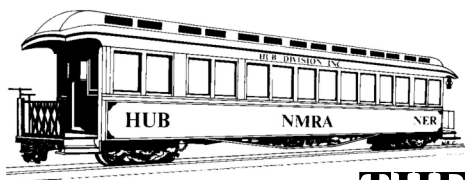
Page 3.....Shanty Talk

Page 4.....Calendar of Events, Photos

Page 5.....Stanley Stove & Boiler Company

Page 6.....Erich's Electronics Notebook

Page 11...Map to Cambridge School of Weston and HUB leadership



THE PRESIDENT'S CAR

By James VanBokkelen

Hello, members of the HUB Division and readers outside our group. I'm writing this looking out at a snow-covered lawn (but mostly melted since that first big storm). Seashore's Track Work Season ended definitively when the ground froze, so I've been getting a lot of modeling done. I've also volunteered at our Museum of Science exhibit, including the day of the big storm (commuter rail was a bit late, but it worked).

You probably won't see this until about the time of our Holiday party January 4. This year's is at the Common Market Restaurant in Quincy. If you would like to suggest a different location for a future party, please get in touch with Barbara Hoblit, Ken Belovarac or Mike Tylick.

The next HUB Module Group event will be January 18-20 at the Wenham Museum. We'll have a fairly large oval layout and expect lots of families in the audience. Those who come to help can also get a look at several permanent layouts set up at the Museum, plus their extensive doll and toy collections.

Then, the Module Group heads for West Springfield for the Amherst Club's enormous train show at the Big E. We'll be joined by our friends from Ohio to set up our biggest oval/branch layout Friday afternoon. Until take-down Sunday evening, there will be lots of opportunities to run trains, meet friends and browse the show floor.

The Module Group will take a break in February before our last setup of the season at Greenberg's Wilmington show March 28-29.

There's one thing missing from the HUB's 2020 calendar: We aren't doing Spring TRAINing in 2020. Our show organizing

resources are needed to prepare for Mill City 2020 in October. The Annual Meeting will be held during the April 17 RAILFUN, starting promptly at 8 PM to leave plenty of time for the evening's presentation. Please arrive early to check in with the clerk and receive your ballot.

It's time to plan for NMRA national in St. Louis July 12-19. July seems like a long way away, but attending a national convention is best with some planning, particularly if you want to be part of a modular layout there. St. Louis is four hours past Indianapolis, where several of us brought modules, and four hours closer than Kansas City, where Gerry and I brought modules in 2018. This won't be a full HUB Modular Layout event, but if our friends from Ohio are selected to bring a layout, they're receptive to including HUB modules.

I'm planning to attend, and will probably drive whether I'm exhibiting modules or not, so my family can go sightseeing on the way. If anyone else is thinking about a HUB presence at the National Train Show, please let me know.

Of course you should save the dates of October 9-12 (Columbus Day Weekend) for our Mill City 2020 NER convention in Westford, MA. We've been talking to layout owners about tours and operating sessions, but if we don't know about your layout, it can't be part of the Convention. Please let us know if you want to show your layout, or help out otherwise.

Speaking of Volunteers, the HUB needs 'em. The Board needs a Recording Secretary, there's room for more Board Member candidates for the 2020 election, and we have some vacant show management positions. Talk to me or another Board Member/Officer to get involved!

Also, if you want to earn the Association Official AP certificate, I'll designate you the HUB's NER Director. Participating in their quarterly conference call meetings will qualify you in three years.

If there's something on your mind about the HUB or its activities, email me at president@hubdiv.org, call me at (603) 394-7832 or catch me at a HUB event.

Until next time, High Green!

New Members

The HUB Division welcomes the following new members

- Amelia Jamieson, East Bridgewater
- Robert Grey, West Bridgewater
- Theodore Standish, Clinton
- Jim Mahoney, Ipswich
- Bryan Miller, Braintree
- Joe Broadbine, West Chesterfield
- Steven Mills, Willmington
- Joseph Ferlazzo, Waltham
- Missimo Ferlazzo, Waltham

Student Members

- Connor O'Leary, Medford
- Johannes Meyer, Wellesley
- Sam Waxman, Wellesley

RAILFUN: Presentation: Lessons Learned Unistrut Benchwork Construction and Touch Toggles

(Continued from Page 1)

So, what about using Superstrut for model railroad benchwork? Dan was unable to find any online examples or advice for using Superstrut for this purpose, but decided to push forward with the idea anyway. This presentation will cover the results. He will explain and have photos of what he did, and why. He will cover what he found to be the pros and cons of building with Superstrut vs. traditional lumber, and provide some recommendations should you want to give it a try.

Complementing the clinic, our recent AP Award recipient, Jim Kerkam will show how he used Touch Toggles on his recently completed layout. These are not your typical toggle switch, so Jim will bring along a working test strip and answer questions on how the system can move your turnouts.

We welcome members to bring along their plans, their 3D mock-ups, or pictures of their progress. We want to hear where people are, and we'll encourage the membership to get started or complete their layouts.



Shanty Talk: Winter 2019

By Rudy Slovacek

Well it's now official, I reworked my passenger cars as per the Syracuse judge's suggestions, and I had them re-judged to get at least 87-1/2 points for merit awards. The one I built from wood is in Figure 1 and the one I built from styrene is in Figure 2. I used the wooden one to qualify as the passenger car for my application for the rolling stock Achievement Award. In the process I learned there is even more I can do to raise the scores further for possible re-entry into a contest. I received several additional great suggestions from Malcolm Houck, Peter Watson and Mike Tylick.

As I mentioned earlier, once I had the drawing it was a challenge to make two cars, one of wood and one in styrene. By doing those two cars I thought I could get a better feel for the differences and advantages of working in one medium or the other. For example, I found wood to be a better approach to the celestial roof since I could use a pre-milled wood strip, angle saw the roof ends and patch the form with plastic wood before filing and sanding it to a final shape. Now I feel more equipped to make choices on modeling projects in the future.

On to the next project; or should I say achievement category? Years ago at the Hartford convention, I received a merit award for my D&H RS3 locomotive. Later, in Albany, I had my Taconic Lumber Co. 2-6-2 logging engine evaluated toward the achievement award in Locomotive Power. Now I have to come up with one scratch-built unit to complete the requirements for that category. At the moment, I'm investigating the possibility for a scratch-built early ALCO diesel switcher.



Figure 1 Oxide Red Wood Combine



Figure 2 Green Styrene Combine

It also turns out that I have completed some requirements for the electrical and scenery category, so I will want to try and spend some time this winter tying up loose ends and providing the documentation as needed in these areas. I will let you know how this all works out, perhaps later this spring.

Right now, I'm preparing to spend time with family and friends for the holidays, but first I just want to recap some other highlights of my fall season. During a Coastal Mountain Display at a retirement community, I ran my war train and received some interesting commentary from several residents. At such times, I explain that I write for our HUB publication and ask if they would mind if I shared some of our conversations and attribute their names. I've yet to have anyone decline. So here goes. Mary Loew said she grew up in Chester, New York along the Erie railroad. This area lies in the foothills of the Catskills along the route to the Hudson River and ultimately the New York City area. It was a manicured main serving the route of heavy steam locomotives and those black and yellow diesels. Then there is Dan Byers who grew up in

Marion, Ohio near the AC crossing. There he saw Pennsy coal headed to the lake and the C&O going east and west. Occasionally, he saw an Erie passenger train in Toledo. His father transferred to the Port Jervis stores warehouse as a chief clerk. In Port Jervis he watched the troop trains and occasionally brought beer as a runner for the soldiers confined aboard those trains. From there he moved to Dunmore where he could see the smoke rising from the culm piles in Scranton.

December brought our annual train show in Marlboro and a highly successful sale of donated items. It took most of the two days to unpack, price and sell the large treasure of items Dan collected. Our take was in the thousands, but I'm sure you'll hear more from Dan and Gerry on the numbers. On a somber note, the show began on Pearl Harbor day when many young men died and would never get to enjoy their favorite hobby like model trains. It is my Christmas wish that we can soon bring our troops home and there will be "Peace on Earth."

HUB Division Calendar of Events (Subject to Change)

2020

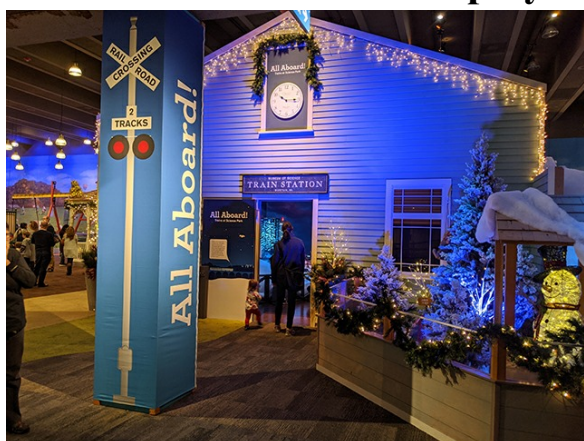
Jan 4 (Sat)	HUB Holiday Party at the Common Market, Quincy, MA
Jan 11 (Sat)	HUB Cape RAILFUN Meeting, 10AM, First Lutheran Church, West Barnstable, MA
Jan 17 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
Jan 18-20 (Sat-Mon)	HUB Modular Railroad display at the Wenham Museum, Wenham, MA
Jan 25-26 (Sat-Sun)	HUB Modular Railroad display at the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show, Big E Fairgrounds, West Springfield, MA
Feb 1 (Sat)	Submissions deadline for the HUB <i>Headlight</i> Mar-Apr issue
Feb 21 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
Mar 20 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
Mar 28-29 (Sat-Sun)	HUB Modular Railroad display at the Greenberg's Toy & Train Show, Shriner's Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
Apr 1 (Wed)	Submissions deadline for the HUB <i>Headlight</i> May-Jun issue
Apr 17 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting - Including Annual Meeting and Election, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
May 9 (Sat)	HUB Cape RAILFUN Meeting, 10AM, First Lutheran Church, West Barnstable, MA
May 15 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
Jun 13 (Sat)	Conway Scenic Railroad Murder Mystery Dinner Train sponsored by the HUB Division
Jun 19 (Fri)	HUB RAILFUN Meeting, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA
Jul 12-19 (Sun-Sun)	2020 NMRA National Convention, St. Louis, MO, www.gateway2020.org
Jul TBA (Sun)	HUB Summer Picnic, Waushakum Live Steamers, Holliston, MA
Oct 9-12 (Fri-Mon)	HUB Sponsored NER Convention, Mill City 2020, Westford, MA, www.millcity2020.org

Cape Layout Tour Photos



Visitors to Russ Norris' layout following the October 10, 2019 RAILFUN on Cape Cod. Photograph by Russ Norris

Museum of Science Display



Achievement Earned



Dave Trimble (right) being awarded his AP Certificate for Chief Dispatcher by Peter Watson, MMR (left). The presentation was at Randy Child's layout during an operating session.

Photograph by Doug Scott

Left: The entrance to this year's Museum of Science exhibit.
Photograph by Stan Ames

The Chronicle Segment that featured the exhibit can be found at:
<https://www.wcvb.com/article/all-aboard-these-model-trains/30213581>

Stanley Stove and Boiler Company

By Mike Dolan

In pursuit of my AP – Structures certificate, I constructed this model to bring to Syracuse for the Region contest judging.

I had already won a Merit award for my construction of Elijah Roth and Sons, so I was gaining confidence that I could build more models of that caliber. Syracuse was another learning experience. The included photos show the finished building as presented. I thought I had added enough detail but the judges felt differently. I received six of a possible 20 points for Detail and only four of a possible 15 points for Scratch-built items.

When I began construction, I wanted an interior because this structure is at the edge of my layout. I built the interior to replicate a workshop area with activities taking place. I also added a second-floor office. Figures, benches, desks and other items were added to the interior. I still don't have an understanding of what was needed to increase the two low scores the structure received but because the judges did write comments, I was able to make some changes to the structure.

Unfortunately, the support structure under the staircase was damaged on the trip up to Syracuse and I needed to perform a quick fix on Friday when I set the building for judging. Some points were deducted for that but I have since removed the supports and repaired what I couldn't fix up there. A second issue was with the front doors. I decided that because I



Here's a close-up of the front of the building. The hinged doors have been installed in place of the original sliding door.

wanted the interior to show, I made the door a slider with a beam above it. One of the judges made a comment that the kit pictures showed the door as hinged and I'm sure points for conformity were deducted. When I returned home, I carefully removed the door and beam and cut the doors along the hinge lines. The door is now hinged and open enough to allow the interior to be viewed.

The interior has Just Plug lights from Woodland Scenics. These are nice lights that are easy to use. The control box and battery power are in the kit box. I was very happy with the amount of light that these generated but that may be a topic for another time.

I have made most of the corrections suggested by the judges and will be updating the Model Description Forms with more photos before I present the model for additional evaluation. I was surprised that the display only received 66 points. The section numbers were disappointing and I'm not certain what needs to be done to improve. As part of the AP process you are required to build 12 structures, of which six can be kits. I received low marks for Conformity, 17 points out of 25 possible; Detail, six out of a possible 20; and Scratch-built yielded only four points of a possible 15. Methods to improve these scores weren't outlined by the judges and I'm hopeful I get some feedback from others who have seen this type of results.



The left side showing the deck area.



The right side after I repaired the stair supports.

It was fun to build this structure. Bar Mills does a great job with their kits. Instructions are clear and easy to follow. I have more kits to build and a few more scratch-built items to complete.

I hope this doesn't deter others from working toward their AP. I'm finding it is more difficult than I first thought. Region contests are great fun and a good learning experience.

Erich's Electronics Notebook

By Erich Whitney

Wiring Hygiene

I've been working on a new edition of the HUB Module Handbook that incorporates new drawings and updates about the wiring harness. I've also been working on a new HUB Module Signaling Testbed so that we have a way to test and debug signaling issues more effectively. While I'm doing this, I'm reflecting on my experience this summer at the NMRA 2019 Salt Lake City National Convention (July 7-14, 2019) and the term "Wiring Hygiene" that Seth Neumann used during his clinic, "Using CMRI and JMRI to Drive a US&S-type 506 CTC Machine." So, this has rattled around in my head for a while and now it's a topic for an article! Photo 1 is from Seth's clinic:

What is wiring hygiene? A simple definition is, "the practice of neatly wiring electrical connections." I'm going to talk about this in the context of HUB modules, but it really applies universally to any wiring project and certainly should be an important consideration for your home layout. Before you dismiss this idea as an attempt to be judgmental about the neatness of your work, there are some very good technical reasons for the practice that will actually avoid problems such as miswiring, bad connections, interference, noise, flaky operation, and all manner of problems typically attributed to gremlins and the mythical "magic smoke."

I'm going to guess that for most modelers, wiring is a necessary hassle. The faster the wiring is done, the sooner the trains can run. Personally, I enjoy wiring. There's something quite therapeutic about doing a really neat wiring job, but I can accept that I'm strange. The problem with rushing through your wiring is that you can overlook minor mistakes that can end up becoming big problems down the road. Unfortunately, some wiring mistakes can

be so subtle that the module will work but in some odd circumstance you end up with flaky behavior that isn't always obvious, and of course this happens at the last possible moment before the show.

Good wiring practice doesn't necessarily take more time, but it does take discipline. Here are some guidelines for you to keep in mind on your next wiring exercise. You will get better with practice:

1. **Plan:** Start with a list of what major pieces of the project need wiring. Examine the HUB Module Handbook and understand what circuits you need to connect to the main wiring harness. There are four main DCC busses: Outer Main, Inner Main, Local Track, Accessory, and there's now the additional block connections. There are the module throttle network and C/MRI network connections, and there's an accessory DC power connection. You don't need fancy CAD tools but draw a schematic diagram that clearly documents what you need to connect. This diagram will serve as a reminder when you go back to change something, or you need to fix a problem.
2. **Prepare:** Make sure you have the supplies you need to install the wiring. Properly sized wire of several different colors is handy. All connectors, components, and tools should be laid out, so you have what you need when you need it. Add things like zip-ties, heat-shrink tubing, labels, a permanent marker, and some tape that will all come in handy. Break the installation up into stages, or layers. Consider which wires have to be installed first before they get covered up or made difficult to reach by components installed later on. Things like track feeders, switch machines, block detectors, power supplies, cpNodes or

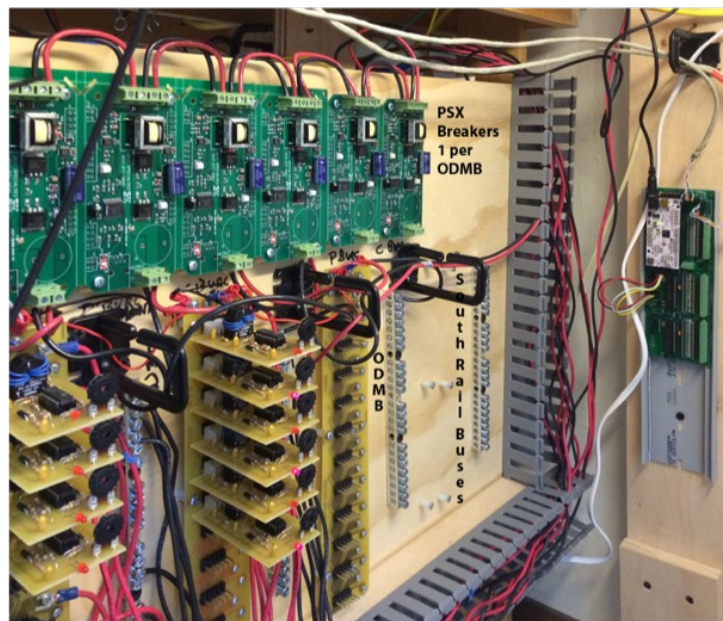


Photo 1 Example of Wiring Hygiene (photo used by permission of Seth Neumann)

SMINIs all need to have a place to go. Start with track feeders and switch machines since they tend to compete for the same space. Plan to run main DCC wires under each track so the feeders can be kept short (2 or 3 inches).

3. **Execute:** Work diligently and don't rush! Use a checklist if keeping things straight in your head is challenging. Don't work when you are tired, mistakes are easier to make than they are to find. Keep a copy of your wiring diagram handy and annotate any changes as you go. Use a marker or label-maker to mark connections. Put labels on terminal blocks before you run wires, and place them where the wires won't cover over the label. Solder and insulate connections that might be under stress. Don't solder your track feeders until you have verified all of your connections — use a wire nut initially to make it easier to isolate shorts. You can go back later and make the connections more permanent after verification. Use some kind of wire management system such as nylon eyes, split-loom tubing, wire ties, self-adhesive wire bundle anchors, etc. Don't pull your wires extremely tight — especially with modules! Tight wires can chafe or break with movement and stress. Leave 1/2 to 1-inch of wire to allow for a little movement in transport. Be careful to

(Continued on Page 7)

Erich's Electronic Notebook

(Continued from Page 6)

check for nicks in the insulation or stripping the wire too far back that might cause shorts in the future.

4. Verify: You should verify connections as you work — don't wait to the end to start debugging. At the very least, test connections with an ohmmeter or continuity tester. Bringing a newly wired module to a train show isn't a good test strategy. I have been working on a HUB Module Tester that connects an isolated module just like it will be connected in a layout so that all of the edge connections can be checked. It checks the DCC signals, the signaling network and the throttle network, and it measures the amount of DC accessory current the module draws. This is actually harder than it sounds but stay tuned...

Photo 2 is the bottom side of one of the HUB modules I had built. This was my first attempt at a module of this complexity and the wiring is ok, but it could have been done better. Note that I painted the entire underside white for better contrast while working on the module — especially if you have to look under there during a show. I used a Sharpie to write directly on the module. Try to keep connections running in a grid-like system. Like-wires run together horizontally and vertically. Try to keep the DCC wires away from the C/MRI and Throttle bus wires — DCC can couple electrical noise to other data lines. Think about where the wires are when the module is packed up — anything too close to the edge and sticking out might get pulled or cut in transport. I used Velcro and split-loom tubing (available on Amazon) to tie up the module wiring harnesses between shows. If you really want to protect the underside of your module, you can cut a piece of 1/8" hard board (Masonite) and fit it to your module for more protection of your wiring and switch machines during transport.

I built this module before I designed the new HUB module power supply that I wrote about a few months back, but you can see the small DC-DC power regulators

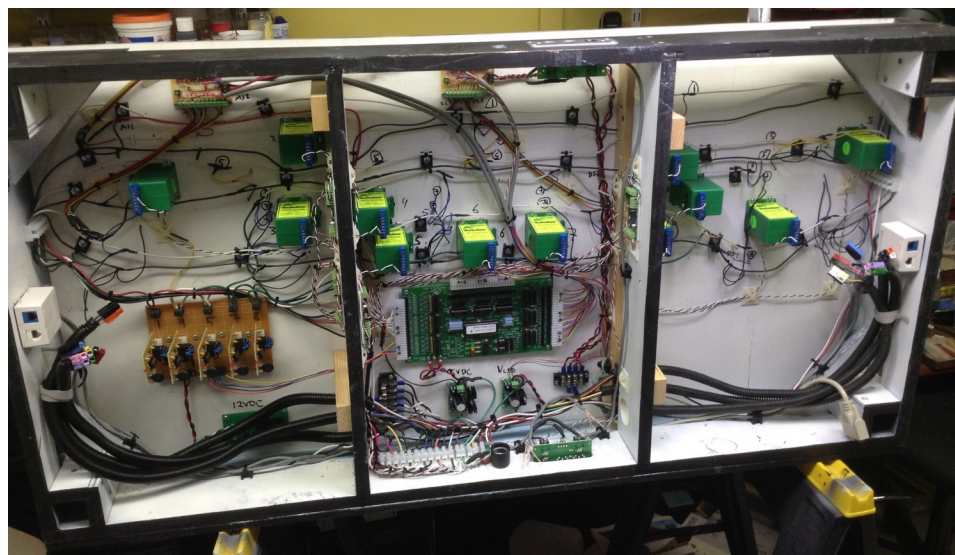


Photo 2: Under side of a module (photo by author)

screwed to the plywood in the lower middle section. Since this module has signals and a lot of turnouts, I made small boards with screw terminals to make the wiring a bit easier to keep organized, and it helps if I have to change anything in the future. If you look closely at the pairs of black and white wires that run horizontally across the module, there's a black rectangle screwed to the plywood — these are used to secure the DCC main bus wires that attach to the track feeders. I think I found these at Home Depot. You don't want to use the 20 or 22 AWG track feeder wires to run all the way down to the terminal block. It's best to keep these feeders to only a couple of inches and use a larger 12 to 14 AWG wire as your main DCC wiring.

In Photo 2, you'll probably recognize the SMINI that's in the middle section. I've switched to using the MRCS cpNodes now because they're much smaller and cheaper. This module uses the DCCOD block detectors which are mounted to a breadboard that I made to hold them, in the lower left section. Chubb makes a DCCOD motherboard (that I didn't know about when I made this one) and MRCS has a similar board that will host either DCCODs or their cpOD block detectors, which I find to be about the best block detector you can buy. Yes, I'm biased. I'll go into the details of block detection in another article but in case you're curious, the cpOD is just a miniaturized and slightly updated version of Chubb's DCCOD design.

Before I wired this module, I studied the slides that Dick Johannes had done on wiring an active module for signaling. These slides are available on the HUB website and I've also presented versions of this in my signaling clinics at the Kansas City NMRA National and the Salt Lake City NMRA National conventions. In addition to the DCC wiring diagram, I used an Excel spreadsheet to manage the connections between the SMINI, the signals, block detectors, and DCC Specialties Wabbit stationary decoders. I will make this spreadsheet available to members at some point in the future when I find the time to document it. I found that by using a spreadsheet, I could keep track of every connection in an ordered list and I kept my computer near my workbench so making changes and corrections was very easy.

I hope this article has given you some food for thought before you tackle your next wiring project. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. Until next time, keep those questions coming!



Seacoast Division Activities Derry Model Railroad Fun Night

January 10, 2020: Topic: Making and using mock-ups

February 14, 2020: Topic: TBA

Meetings are Friday nights at 7 PM in the Marion Gerrish Community Center, 39 West Broadway, Derry, NH.

Visit www.seacoastnmra.org for more info.

Journey to Promontory

(Continued from Page 1)

Our first scheduled activity was a Sunday morning visit to the broadcast of “Music and the Spoken Word” with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. We were lucky that the end of a Barbershop Quartet Convention at our hotel extended to a choral group from Texas that accompanied the Choir that Sunday. They use a huge auditorium for this during the summer and it was very impressive. I'd share the photos I took but they don't allow cameras, so clearly they don't want me to publish pictures.... It was a beautiful presentation – we saw the end of the dress rehearsal and the actual broadcast performance. It was especially interesting for me to see the camera people setting up their shots before the director takes them, onto program displays on the walls – and the music wasn't too bad either. This was also an easy Trax ride from the hotel.

After the show, we toured some parts of the Temple Square – we were directed to the garden on the top of the building by one of the volunteers there to help us poor tourists find our way around. One of the views from there was the Salt Lake Temple building – our hotel was on the other side of that wall of buildings.



Salt Lake Temple.



Gary Gutierrez explains operations on his layout.

Later that day, we had an operating session at Gary Gutierrez's house. The Operations Special Interest Group (OPSIG) arranges for groups of model railroaders to descend upon local layouts and enjoy operating trains. This was available every night during the convention, but I only took advantage of it twice – as there are many other things available to do. Gary has an operations-orientated two level, around-the-walls, N-scale layout with a third, lower level for staging. Operating his layout was a lot of fun, but what I most remember was his view of the Great Salt Lake.



Gary Gutierrez's view of Great Salt Lake.

Each day I try to schedule one major activity – that is, one requiring commitment that often costs money – and then do other convention activities, like clinics, around that. Monday was a scheduled layout tour day. Way back in the winter, I very carefully read all the documentation on the website for all the layouts on tour and figured out what I wanted to see and what would fit around other activities, like one-day only “must do” tours (more on that “tomorrow”). Articles in Scale Rails about the open layouts also helped. In retrospect, I did very well, the layouts we visited were superb. Monday's layout tour started at Ron Udy's HO-Scale Rocky Gulch & Uintah RR, set in the 1800's. It included a narrow-gauge section serving several mines and those mine buildings have fantastic interior detail. His mountain scenery and backdrops really put viewers in the Western landscape. Unfor-



One of Ron Udy's detailed interiors.

tunately, his track lighting created pools of light making photography difficult and a bit more dramatic than necessary.

Our next stop was at Lee Witten's beautiful Union Pacific-themed HO layout. His father was a UP Conductor and the connection was evident. His downtown modeling and waterfront dock scene are wonderful. Last stop on Monday's tour was Steven Blodgett's HO-Scale Bear River RR. His beautiful scenery and fantastic buildings were a treat (even after the two preceding, awesome layouts); especially for me as his layout features only steam, set in the 1880's.



A scene on Lee Whitten's layout.



Steven Blodgett 1880's themed layout.

The rest of my Monday was spent in clinics – learning about using Raspberry Pi to run DCC and new tools available. The most fun was Doug Geiger, MMR's talk on the background of the Transcontinental Railroad story – including all the graft and personalities that made it happen. It is valuable background information helping to understand the “whole story.”

Tuesday was the day of one of the “must do” tours that only happen once. We took a bus south through Provo and followed the train tracks up over Soldier Summit and down to the Skyline Coal Mine. This is in Carbon County, Utah and Skyline is one of the last four coal mines operating in the county – from more than 100 just a

(Continued on Page 9)

Journey to Promontory

(Continued from Page 8)

few years back. We weren't able to go down into the mine but we could see all the conveyors and process buildings, as well as the tunnels that the workers use to enter the mine. They showed video of the coal mining process and answered our questions, so we had a clue what was going on in there. Interestingly, most of this coal is loaded onto a conveyor belt that we followed for over a mile, ending at storage elevators next to the railroad tracks and road. The conveyor belt is flat when loading and unloading, but is curled up into a cylinder for the, over a mile-long, ride.



Buildings and conveyors at the Skyline Coal Mine.

We headed back north and stopped in Helper, UT – where the trains, guess what? – yep, put on helpers to get over Soldier Summit. It was ultimately the division point for the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad between Ogden, UT, and Grand Junction, Colorado. A train arrived soon after we did, and some from the bus went to see the helpers being attached – the rest of us explored Helper. Main Street was right along the tracks and included a historic Conoco station among other preserved buildings and signage. A major attraction was the Western Mining and Railroad Museum with great exhibits about the railroad and coal mining.



Preserved Conoco Station in Helper.



Some of the nice old style signage in Helper.

Back over Soldier Summit and heading to the hotel, we decided to forgo dinner at a fast food restaurant so that we could get back a bit earlier. This was good, as our hotel was a couple of blocks from a downtown shopping area with several restaurant options, all better than road food. I was able to return in time to catch one of the LCC guru's clinics, keeping up with this evolving networked wonderfulness as much as possible.

Wednesday was our day to visit Promontory, which was an afternoon trip, so I had the morning free to discover the Dunkin Donuts about three blocks away to get some iced tea. I hadn't realized that many of the locals don't "do" coffee, but the lack of Starbucks should have tipped me off. I think I met the DD guy for Salt Lake – he said he had a store 20 minutes away in any direction - and that was probably all the coffee stores. On the way there and back, I had to pass a very majestic City and County Building, like everything else in Salt Lake City, clean and well maintained, including beautiful, working fountains.



The majestic City and County Building

On the way to Promontory, we heard more of the story and could see the abandoned rail bed on the side of the road where the tracklayers passed each other 150 years ago. At the Golden Spike site there is a visitors center and beautiful, working replicas of the two engines that were there for the original ceremony. I especially like

the paintings on the rear of UP 119 depicting landscapes in the East and West. I had heard that they used volunteers to reenact the Golden Spike Ceremony so I made sure to be there when the costumes came out. I got to be the doctor who narrated the ceremony and had a wonderful time.

After the reenactment, the engines moved out and returned to their engine house – to everyone's delight.



Rear of UP 119



Jeff narrates a reenactment at Promontory Point.

Thursday was a morning layout tour followed by my second Op session – so a day of beautiful layouts and trains, some I got to play with – not a bad day! The three layouts were somewhat close by, so the bus was divided into thirds. For those of us in the back of the bus the first stop was Jim Winlass, who is connecting his individual MMR projects together into a layout, now that he has a room in the basement. So, some very beautiful, detailed structures with pink foam in-



A highly detailed building interior on Jim Winlass's layout.

(Continued on Page 10)

Journey to Promontory

(Continued from Page 9)

between; and trains running. His train collection also includes a 7.5-inch gauge railroad in the yard, which is a big draw in the neighborhood at Halloween.



Jeff and Jim Jordan take a ride on Jim Winlass's large scale railroad.

The bus next shuttled our third of the group to Ted York's AT&SF RR with it's fabulous depiction of Cajon Pass in the transition era. The detail and authenticity are superb – I'm sure that people familiar with the actual Cajon Pass would recognize the scenery (with hand carved rock formations) and buildings (mostly scratch-built). His operating sessions apparently closely model the actual traffic through the Pass.



A scene on Ted York's transition era layout.

The final stop was Gil Bennett's Lost Creek Branch (Sn3) – a truly beautiful depiction of railroading in the coal country of Utah. For me, the big (S Gauge), detailed (probably brass), well-weathered steam engines traveling through really authentic Utah scenery, with hand-painted backgrounds, was the hit of the tour.



Gil Bennett's steam engine in authentic scenery..

We returned to the hotel with enough time to get lunch and relax a bit before the “cattle call” for our OP session that night. On the afternoon before an evening OP session, operators for each layout meet at the OPSIG area in the Sig Room. The SIG Room also includes LDSIG (Layout Design) as well as an “LCC Corner” where the demo LCC layout is set up and the LCC experts are often found. At the four o'clock cattle call, the operators meet each other and can negotiate rides. It seems there's always just enough spaces for everyone to get there, although for our first half-hour we were wondering... But then someone contacted someone, and spaces magically appeared; and we all made it to Bob Gerald's layout.



Bob Gerald's nice N-Scale layout.

Bob and Karin Gerald have made the Milwaukee Road's mainline through northern Idaho in a multilevel N-scale layout. It is a beautiful layout and it's especially well set up for operation with appropriate runarounds and well-labeled industries. It was especially wonderful for me as my first train was the Hiawatha, which runs over the whole layout (with a couple of photo “run-by's in my case). A few years back, I was able to bicycle down seven miles of the Hiawatha route in Idaho, from the Idaho-Montana border (the border is in a tunnel); so I do have a personal connection to this beautiful passenger train.

Friday was the start of the National Train Show. For convention attendees, admission was free and Friday morning was just for us – the public wasn't allowed in until noon. We got there soon after it opened – another Trax ride down to the Convention Center – and shopped until feet said “no more.” The National is always a good show but this year's was particularly wonderful as they had more than half the show area covered in layouts. It's also neat to be able to see and meet the manufacturers and publishers in our industry – and to be able to see samples of new products. But, of course, shopping is important, and they had many quality vendors with lots to sell.



A module at the train show with a cut-away showing the interior of a gold mine

Friday evening was the LCC Users Group meeting (actually it's the Open LCB group that writes the software that LCC uses). We got to see where the developers are going (using words instead of Hex digits, hopefully) and what new products are coming. I saw a very exciting new LCC board from RR Circuits that monitors eight channels of DCC for occupancy (including circuit breakers); and one can even run a reversing track. This was a machine-loaded board that will certainly be a product as soon as the software is finished. There were several mentions and clinics about the new TCS Wi/Fi command station that bridges WiFi, DCC, and LCC and includes a connection for the NCE throttle bus – coming this fall.

I'm not all that into banquets so Jim and I planned to leave on Saturday – another Trax ride to the airport; and all that “flying” entails these days – like my forgetting that liquid weathering materials must be in checked luggage – and Delta charges \$30 for checking said bag, so TSA gets my Hunterline Dark Brown. But really, that was the worst that this trip had to offer, I have no complaints.

HUB Headlight

Volume 36, Number 3
January - February, 2020

HUB Headlight, published by The HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, is issued in January, March, May, September and November. Contributions may be sent by email to the Editor or by mail to the Office Manager.

Editor Bill Barry - Editor@hubdiv.org

Chief Grammarian - Jay Stradal

HUB Division Board of Directors

President James VanBokkelen - President@hubdiv.org
(603) 394-7832

Vice President David "Shack" Haralambou - VP@hubdiv.org

John Doehring - HUBboard6@hubdiv.org

Donations Chairman Dan Fretz - Donations@hubdiv.org

Membership Chairman Peter Higgins -
Membership.chairman@hubdiv.org

Mal Houck - HUBboard9@hubdiv.org

RAILFUN Coordinator Andy Reynolds -
Railfun.coordinator@hubdiv.org

Mike Tylick, MMR - HUBboard8@hubdiv.org

Office Manager Pete Watson, MMR -

Officemanager@hubdiv.org

65 Branch Road, East Bridgewater, MA 02333-1601

Other HUB Division Leadership

Treasurer Gerry Covino - Treasurer@hubdiv.org

Secretary Mike Dolan - Secretary@hubdiv.org

Module Coordinator Ron Noret - ModCoordinator@hubdiv.org

Webmaster Dave Insley - Webmaster@hubdiv.org

Librarian Ken Belovarac - Librarian@hubdiv.org

Model Train Expo Show Director

Bill Harley - NEMTE.Director@hubdiv.org

Model Train Expo Business Manager

Mark Harlow - NEMTE@hubdiv.org

Public Relations Director Barbara Hoblit -

PRDirector@hubdiv.org

NMRA North Eastern Region - Eastern At-large Director

Barbara Hoblit - MA.NERdirector@hubdiv.org

NMRA Achievement Program Chairman

Peter Watson, MMR - HUB.AP.Chair@hubdiv.org

Membership: National Model Railroad Association members residing within the boundaries of The HUB Division: zip codes 01400 through 02699. (Barnstable, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Middlesex, Nantucket, Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, and Worcester counties of Massachusetts.)

Headlight Printers

Versatile Printing Services, LLC, Burlington, MA

Directions to RAILFUN Meetings

RAILFUN is usually held at the Cambridge School of Weston (CSW) in Classroom G6 on the second floor of the George Cohan Building. The school is located at 45 Georgian Road, Weston, MA 02493.

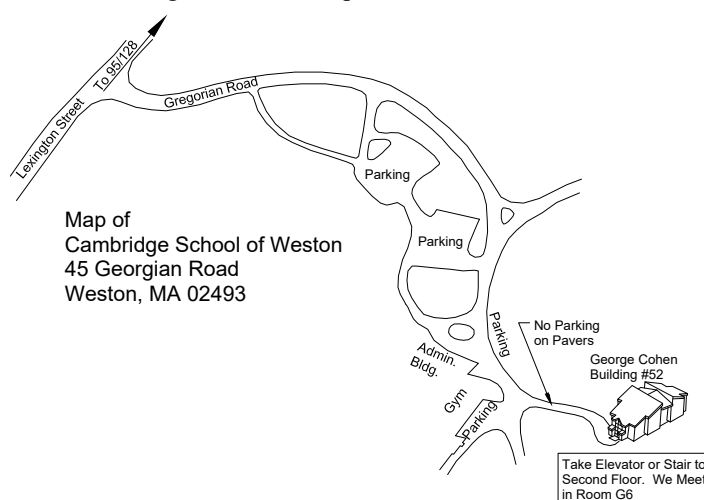
From Route 128 / Interstate 95:

From the North, take Exit 27B towards Winter Street.

From the South, take Exit 27A-B for Third Avenue toward Totten Pond Road/Waltham. Take Exit 27B towards "Winter Street" Bear right onto Wyman Street and continue to the traffic light. Take a right onto Winter Street at the light.

Continue on Winter Street to the second traffic light. Turn left on West Street, which becomes Lexington Street as you cross the Weston town line. At the crest of a small hill is Georgian Road and the CSW school sign; turn left on Georgian Road into the CSW campus.

Follow Georgian Road. There is a parking lot on your right, or you can park along the left side of the road and down the hill by the gymnasium. Please do not park on the stone pavers leading to the Cohen Building. See detail map below.



RAILFUN Weather / School Closure Note:

If the school is closed, we will NOT have RAILFUN that evening. School closings are broadcast over the radio at **WRKO 680AM** and **WBZ 1030AM**, and on **TV Channels 4, 5 and 7**. The Cambridge School of Weston recording is at **781-642-8600**. Check the radio or TV stations early **on the morning of RAILFUN!** You can also check www.hubdiv.org and we plan to post notices on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

HUB Division Nametag, Headlight Subscription and Donation Forms and Module Kit Information

Please see the September-October 2019 Headlight for all order forms and module kit information. Please see Page 10 of the November-December 2019 Headlight for information on the new online HUB Branded Merchandise store.