



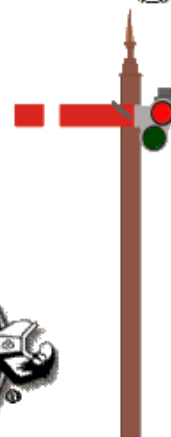
The Semaphore, The Official Publication of Land-O-Sky, Division 15, Southeastern Region, NMRA



The Semaphore

LAND-O-SKY
DIVISION 15, SOUTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION
AND
WNC MODEL RAILROADERS, INC.

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ROBERT BELL, ASST. SUPERINTENDENT
BILL SIBERT, COMPANY CLERK
PENN BULLOCK, BARNMASTER
JIM FIQUA, PAYMASTER
DAVE ANDERSON, WEBMASTER



May 2007

Our next membership meeting is on Thursday, May 3 at 7:00 p.m.

Send comments about and contributions to this newsletter to chsmoke@bellsouth.net.
Please keep us informed of changes in your address, phone number or email address.

TRAX TO THE MAX



SER/NMRA CONVENTION
CARTERSVILLE, GA
MAY 18-20, 2007

PIEDMONT DIVISION



Convention Host

See pages 6 and 7 for more information



The Fireman's Seat

By Robert Bell, Division 15 Assistant Superintendent



Greetings!

I recently tried my hand building my first resin kits. Both were from *Funarro and Camerlingo*, both are HO_n3, and both are models of East Broad Top (EBT) freight cars. Neither came with trucks or couplers.

I had never built a resin freight car kit before, but I have been to several clinics and have read a few articles on the subject. The following are some of my observations and experiences.

First, some things to know: A BIG reason for building a resin kit might be that a model for a specific prototype may only be available in resin. Resin kits are produced in RTV (room temperature vulcanizing) rubber molds from styrene or wood masters. Then a two-part resin, usually a polyurethane resin is poured into the RTV mold. The RTV molds have a limited life, from what I understand, usually around 15-25 uses. Hence, the cost of a resin kit is a bit more than the usual freight car kit. (About the same cost as some of the recent well detailed RTR stuff.) Some resin kits are remarkably simple to build, having as few as three main parts, others have many, many castings. The two I built were somewhere in the middle.

The first kit, I started with was a two-bay hopper for the EBT in Pennsylvania. The kit consisted of castings for two sides, a frame, two ends and two slope sheets. Also included in the kit, was some wire grab-irons, wire, a set of brake details (for this car, incorrect), and of course, instructions. Following these instructions, I used ACC (superglue) to assemble the kit. All went fairly well except one or two of my grab-iron holes came out crooked and hence so did a grab or two, but once the hopper is painted black, I don't think they will be all that noticeable. Right now the hopper is on hold pending my ordering some specific brass details (brake parts and cut levers) to complete the car.

The other car is a EBT steel boxcar. This kit had a few more parts such as a roof and a roof-walk, and various details for the doors. This time, however, there were no pre-bent grabs. (The EBT had some very unusual grabs on their boxcars.) I tried the wire included with the kit, but, in my eyes, it was too large in diameter, so I substituted .010" music wire, and made a jig for bending it. Steven Funarro told me about a trick to help position certain parts. First, glue a scrap piece of strip styrene to the inside of the resin part with liquid plastic cement. The plastic cement will allow you to position the scrap in place. Note: the plastic cement does NOT "attack" the resin, but it will soften the scrap plastic enough that it becomes "sticky" and will stay in place for a short time. Then secure the scrap with ACC. This really worked well for fitting the frame/floor in place. The instructions for the boxcar were not as "detailed" as I would like, so now I need to order a particular book covering some of the details of these cars and I need some of the same details as for the hopper.

In the end, I will have two very unique pieces of rolling stock that will be well detailed. It took about an hour almost every night over the course of three weeks or so to get both cars to the point where I am with them. Don't get one and expect it painted, weathered and in revenue service on your layout in two hours time. Resin kits are not for the faint of heart, but neither are they just for the "experts". In this day of "ready-to-run, I don't even have to add the handrails, super priced models", resin kits offer a chance for a bit of "quality time" with our trains. Try one and see.

In the June *Fireman's Seat*, we'll talk about some cool tools useful in modeling. **Until then, remember: It's your club - get involved! LET'S PLAY TRAINS!**



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

We really do appreciate all of the donations of cars for the operating sessions and for the layout shows.

For those of you that have not been to any of the operating sessions, you have missed a great experience in several different ways. By using the layout for operations, there have been some changes made that do make it more feasible for running a railroad. We could really use some of your expertise in helping with minor repair or maintenance of the cars, scenery, buildings and adding more people to the layout. We also have several kits (cars) that have been donated that do need to be assembled and weathered for those of you that might be interested.

This year's SER convention, Trax to the Max, looks like a great event. I encourage all who can to attend. Next year, we will host the SER convention.: We should be supporting this year's convention and looking for ideas to have a great show here next year.

The modules will be going to the Heritage Festival in Bryson City on May 26 which will be a nice outing, if the weather co-operates.

Again thanks for the donations and help with the modules, which are becoming more of an asset for our outreach to the public as well as members.

Operating Sessions

This month's Op session went very smooth. Most everyone got there at 1:00 pm, and shortly thereafter operations got underway. Eight operators ran 17 trains with 106 cars that moved 9984 tons!

We need to have some scenic repairs/additions made on the layout. Every time the layout is moved for showings, scenery is damaged to some degree. Since the last scenic improvement or repairs, the layout has been to two shows along with changes to the track work for improved operations. This has left the need for scenery repair. If anyone can come on our workday (Tuesday afternoons at present), the following areas need attention:

- Track Ballasting
- Industry Signs put in place
- Trees planted or replanted
- Buildings repaired/glued down
- Other???



One note of importance concerning the next Op session: The next session will be held on the fifth Sunday this month instead of the fourth. So, our next session will be April 29th at 2:00 p.m.

In May, we will have a session on May 12.

Because of our activities at Bryson City, we will not have a session on the 4th weekend.



Want to Narrow Your Horizons?

By Robert Bell

"And now, for something completely different." – Monty Python

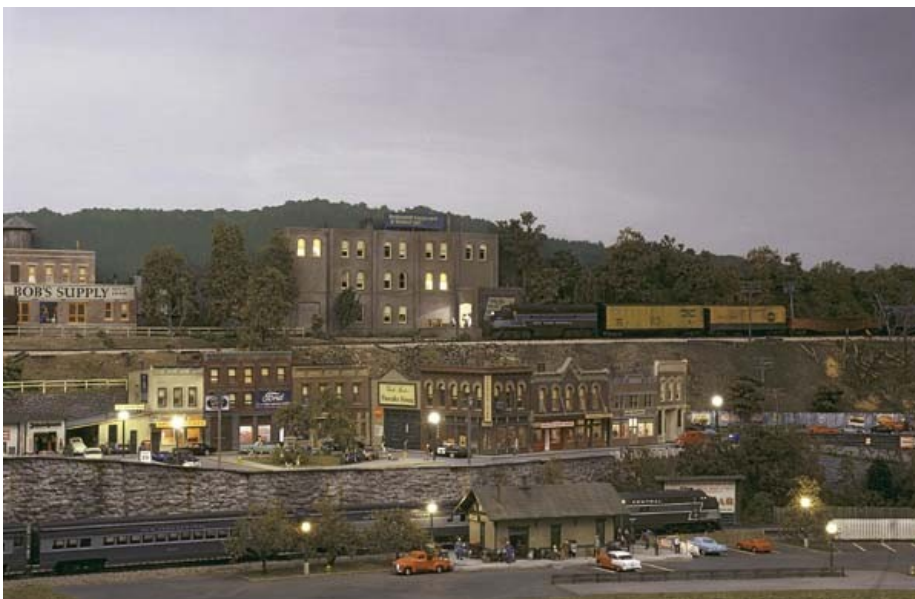
Thinking about doing something different in model railroading?? Feel stuck in a rut with your layout or modeling?? Try your hand at HO-scale narrow gauge modeling with Bill Seibert, Jim King, and myself as we start a new narrow gauge modular layout for the club.

What is HO narrow gauge? It is HO-scale with the rails spaced something less than the usual 4'8 1/2" apart. In our case: a scale three feet apart, representing various railroads including the famed Denver & Rio Grande, the East Broad Top, the Ohio River & Western, many, many logging, mining and industrial railroads, as well as the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina that once ran from Johnson City, TN to Boone, NC, not all that far from our home here in the mountains.

Don't worry about space for the modules; we are "doing our own thing" and probably going with 24x24", single-track HOn3 modules. Don't worry about motive power or rolling stock either, yet. We are still in the planning stages; so if you are even mildly interested, please contact either Bill Seibert or myself, our phone numbers are listed in elsewhere in this *Semaphore*. We hope to have our first informal "meeting of the minds" soon, maybe before this is printed, but don't let that stop you if you want to try something different and become "narrow-minded". But, I'll warn you now; narrow gauge modeling can be "terminal".

Add lights to your structures

By John Underhill



As twilight fades into darkness, the realism of John Underhill's HO layout is enhanced by the structure lighting effects that illuminate store display windows, apartment interiors, and other centers of activity.

Interior lighting adds another level of realism to the buildings on a layout. The effect of interior lighting is magical in a darkened train room when the only visible light comes from the windows and doorways of town buildings and rural structures. The effect becomes even more exciting as the headlight of a

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speeding locomotive flashes past in the darkness

To capture this realism, it's important to think about a prototype building's appearance at night - a large office building might have lights on only in the lobby and one occupied office. A house might have a light on in only one bedroom. On the other hand, a large industrial plant that operates 24 hours a day will be fully illuminated. However, if the plant has only a day shift, its lights will be off at night except for the loading dock.

Once you've figured out what activities need to continue through the night, you can determine the number of light bulbs you'll need to install.

Intensity makes a difference

Exterior lighting shouldn't overpower the interior illumination, or the viewers won't notice or be able to see into the various lighted rooms. Close observation of buildings at night reveals that the rooms display different levels of light. You can easily alter the brightness of the lamps by operating 12-, 14-, or 16-volt bulbs with a 12-volt power supply. The different lamp ratings mean they'll deliver varying intensities of light.

You can also control the intensity of the light by placing bulbs at varying distances from the windows, using different sizes of bulbs, and making rooms of varying sizes. Adding white styrene or painting the walls white behind the bulb, as shown in or installing a white ceiling reflects more light and raises the intensity of light in a room.

From the *MR Magazine* website. To be continued.

TRAX TO THE MAX



SER/NMRA CONVENTION
CARTERSVILLE, GA
MAY 18-20, 2007

PIEDMONT DIVISION



Convention Host



REGISTRATION FEES: Regular Attendee (must be NMRA member) - \$45 Non-Rail (Spouse) - \$35 Kids Under 12 – FREE. NMRA Member Day Fee; Sat. Only, WITH BANQUET - \$25 NMRA Member Day Fee; Sat. Only, NO BANQUET - \$20

Local Hotels

Cartersville has a variety of great hotels and motels in a range of prices. For a list of hotel choices, please check the Cartersville Visitor Bureau Motel List. We recommend the Cartersville Holiday Inn. The lobby bar and cafe is suggested as the local "gathering place". The Holiday Inn is offering a special rate of \$65/night. Please use the code "*SER RR Convention*" when making reservations. Location: I-75 & US 411, Exit 293 Cartersville, Georgia 30120. Website: <http://www.holiday-inn.com/cartersville> Hotel Reservations: 1 888 HOLIDAY (888 465 4329) Hotel Front Desk: 1-770-386-0830

Convention Schedule

Friday May 18, 2007

9:00 am	Registration opens, Layout Tours
11:00 am	Contest registration opens
1:00 pm	Clinic - "Backwards Engineering" as a Layout Design Tool (Tony Koester)
	Clinic - Stoney Creek Railroad (Ron Patzer)
	Clinic - Building the L & N Western Virginia Division (John Wilkes, MMR)
1:30 pm	SER Board of Directors Meeting
2:00 pm	Tour - Anheuser-Busch Cartersville Brewery
	Tour - Non-Rail
2:30 pm	Clinic - "Real" Model RRs Don't Fear Hidden Track (Bob Jans)
	Clinic - Weathering Clinic (Paul Locher)
	Clinic - What's New on the Virginian & Ohio (Allen McClelland, MMR)
3:00 pm	Non-Rail - Antique Collectibles
4:00 pm	Clinic - Tips, Tricks for Scratchbuilding and Kitbashing (Leslie Eaton)
	Clinic - O Scale C&O Newport News, Virginia (John Roberts)
	Clinic - The Joy of Scratchbuilding (Mike Tylick)
5:00 pm	Train Show opens
7:00 pm	Registration closes, Non-Rail - YoYo Crafts
8:00 pm	Contest room closes

Saturday May 19, 2007

8:00 am	Registration opens, Contest Room opens
	Tour - Georgia Power - Plant Bowen (Departs Komatsu)
8:30 am	Tour - Trinity Rail (Departs Holiday Inn)
9:00 am	Train Show opens, Contest registration closes
	Clinic - Weathering Clinic (Paul Locher)
	Clinic - O Scale C&O Newport News, Virginia (John Roberts)
	Clinic - How DCC works -- Command Stations (Loy Spurlock)
	Non-Rail - Rediscovering the Gourd
10:30 am	Clinic - Stoney Creek Railroad (Ron Patzer)
	Clinic - The Joy of Scratchbuilding (Mike Tylick)
	Clinic - Appalachian Coal Tipples (John Wilkes, MMR)
12:00 pm	Non-Rail - Luncheon
1:00 pm	Registration closes
	Clinic - Strobe Clinic Workshop - \$10 Extra Fare (Leslie Eaton)

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- Clinic - Digitrax Sound Decoders (A.J. Ireland)
- Clinic - "Real" Model RRs Don't Fear Hidden Track (Bob Jans)
- Tour - Non-Rail
- 2:30 pm Clinic - Strobe Clinic Workshop - \$10 Extra Fare (Leslie Eaton)
- Clinic - Digitrax Sound Decoders (A.J. Ireland)
- Clinic - "Backwards Engineering" as a Layout Design Tool (Tony Koester)
- 4:00 pm Train Show closes
- Clinic - What's New on the Virginian & Ohio (Allen McClelland, MMR)
- Clinic - How DCC works -- Decoders (Loy Spurlock)
- Clinic - Scenery in Tight Places (Mike Tylick)
- 5:00 pm Contest Room closes
- 6:00 pm President's Reception (Cartersville Depot)
- 7:00 pm Awards Banquet (Cartersville Depot)
- 10:00 pm Auction, Non-Rail - Auction

Sunday May 20, 2007

- 8:00 am Breakfast (Cartersville Depot)
- 9:30 am SER Annual Meeting (Cartersville Depot)
- 1:00 pm Layout Tours

DOOR PRIZES

Thanks to the many generous donations from vendors and manufacturers, we will have a variety of attractive door prizes for convention attendees. So as to not needlessly extend the Saturday banquet, door prizes can be retrieved at the Komatsu Center any time the Registration desk is open. Numbers will be chosen at random from the list of registered attendees and posted near the registration desk. If your number is on the list, you've won a door prize!

COMPANY STORE

Do you have items you no longer need or want? Don't want to waste time or money renting a table at the Trainshow? The Convention will feature a company store as a convenient way to assist you in transferring your treasures. It will be open all hours the Trainshow is open. All items are sold on a consignment basis and those not sold can be entered in the live auction. Forms will be available at the Registration desk and at the Company Store tables at the Trainshow. Please note that all unsold items must be picked up by the end of the Trainshow Saturday afternoon or they will be brought to the live auction for sale.

For more information go to <http://www.piedmont-div.org/ser2007>

To register online go to <http://www.piedmont-div.org/ser2007>

