

Photo by David Heinsohn

THE BRASS POUNDER



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Kansas Central Division
Mid-Continent Region of the **National Model Railroad Association**

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Timetable

The next KCD meeting will
be at Abilene & Smoky
Valley Railroad August 5

Join the KCD on Facebook!

Kansas Central Division-NMRA has a Facebook page and is for NMRA members only. It is a place to share model railroading adventures, post pictures, tell tales of woe in building your empire, post obstacles you have overcome, and ask questions. Have fun. Simply enter Kansas Central Division - NMRA in the Facebook search block and select request to join. See you there.

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Join the KCD Yahoo Group!

Kansas Central Division has a Yahoo Group. To join the KCD Yahoo Group, send an email to KCD-NMRA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. You will be automatically subscribed to the group with the email address from which you sent the message. Or, go to groups.yahoo.com and enter KCD-NMRA in the search window to find the group and to join

<i>Call Board</i>	Director David Heinsohn Kd0r@fhrd.net	Superintendent John Snell jsnell@cox.net	Clerk Tom Katafiasz	Paymaster Larry Tiffany
	THE BRASS POUNDER Editor and Publisher Ray Brady	THE BRASS POUNDER Associate Editor Christine Heinsohn		

Minutes of Last KCD Meeting

June 10 2017

The June meeting of the Kansas Central Division was held at the home of Ray Brady's north of Brookville KS. Director David Heinsohn called the meeting to order at 1:05pm. Those in attendance were Alan Maxwell, David and Chris Heinsohn, Larry Shankles, and Ray Brady from the KCD. The Wichita area Chisholm Trail NMRA members were also invited, and John Craft, Phil Aylward, and Terry Ross attended. Mark Schubert was also present as a guest.

Program for the meeting was a "Free-OP" session on Ray Brady's N-scale layout. As it turned out six of the nine people at the meeting model N-scale, which is contrary to the usual demographic of N-scale being in the minority.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Katafiasz
Clerk, KCD





And it was not all running trains



Mark, Chris, and Larry Discussing Passenger Cars



Where is the Food?

Kansas Central División – **NMRA**
Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad

August 5, 2017 at 11☺)AM

Short Business Meeting

Followed by

**Lunch (\$), Engine House Tour (Free),
and Train Ride (\$15)**

Lunch will be at the Hitching Post Café in Abilene Old Town
(Next to the A&SV Depot)

**Directions to
Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad
200 SE 5th St, Abilene KS
785-263-0118**

**I-70 to Exit 275 (K-15 -Buckeye Ave)
South on Buckeye to 5th St (South end of Town Just Past 3rd Set of Tracks)
A&SV RR on Left**



Superintendent News

From the **KCDivision NMRA**

Greetings to all. Summer is upon us and along with it the chores that take us outside in the heat. Mowing, gardening, painting, repairing the things that need fixing before winter sets in. It seems that we have very little time for our hobbies. But, somehow, we sneak a few hours in each week to relax and play as a reward for our labors.

I hope you can take a few hours on August 5th to meet with us in Abilene at the Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad. Meeting time is a little earlier - 11:00 AM. We will meet at the Hitchin' Post Cafe in Abilene Old Town to conduct our meeting and have lunch. At noon we will re-convene at the engine house where we will meet with Joe Minnick, one of the two founders of the railroad and will learn how Santa Fe 3415 steam engine was moved from Eisenhower Park to the ASV railroad and restored to operating condition. Don't wear your finest clothes because the engine house is

not the cleanest building! After this tour we will head back to the ASV depot and tour the museum in the freight room. Lots of neat things to see, including a G scale layout!

At 2:00 pm the train leaves the station. This is an optional activity. Since there is a cost involved for the tickets we felt that this would not be required but would be a great way to end our time together. Tickets are \$15 for adults. No reservations are needed.

This meeting would be a great opportunity to involve your spouses. Or bring a guest. Fun and fellowship is guaranteed. Hope to see you there!

John Snell

PS. I almost forgot. There will be a drawing for two free tickets to ride the train. We will draw at lunchtime so be sure to make it!



Director News

From the NationalMRA

When I started thinking about what I'd write for this edition of the Brass Pounder, I didn't think I had done much in the way of model railroading. Then I realized, though I've not spend nearly enough time out in the Freight House building stuff, it's certainly not been model railroad free.

Most recently I've received and read two books, one very new, another older. The new one is A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations – From Design to Implementation-by the Operations Special Interest Group. If you have any interest in model railroad operations this is a worthwhile read. Even those with experience in ops will find material that's worth the read. If I get off this article soon enough I'll write a book review for the Caboose Kibitzer. Here's a look at the table of contents:

<http://www.opsig.org/Book2ContentsPage.pdf>

This book is not available from retailers. You must order it from the OpSig. Here's a link:
<http://www.opsig.org/OPSigBook2.pdf>

The second and older book, copyright 1985, was a Father's Day gift from Chris. It is Newton Kansas #1 Santa Fe Rail Hub 1871-1971, by L.M. "Mike" Hurley. Since the pike we're planning is the ATSF from Merrick just west of Emporia to just west of Sand Creek in Newton, with Newton being the focal point of the layout, this was an amazing resource. Mr. Hurley details seldom described aspects of operations in and around Newton. As an example the number of people (men) involved in even a brief passenger train stop. Another example, where did the Fred Harvey hand carts go between trains. If you're an ATSF modeler or just interested in everything that went on in a division point yard it's a worthwhile read. This is only available as a used book. Search several

sources before buying. I didn't ask Chris how much she paid, but I know it was enough that I never ordered it for myself. Thanks to CFO Chris for adding this book to our collection.

Also since the last meeting I attended the Mid Continent Region Convention. This was a combined convention with Thousand Lakes Region, held in Ames, IA. The convention of course included the Board of Directors meeting. Not much to report from that. The biggest portion of time was devoted to an open discussion about building and retaining memberships.

I got lucky and a place opened up at an operating session. (I'd been slow in applying for a slot at the ops session. They really do fill up. Make your requests as soon as they are announced!) The layout involved had had one previous ops session in seven years! That session was the night before. The owner was just getting things going again after several moves. At any rate when the call for job assignments went out I was asked to dispatch. WHAT? On a pike I've not even walked around yet? Well things worked out OK. So I got my first three hours of dispatching in toward Chief Dispatcher AP.

Speaking of operations, The Kansas City Area Mutual Aid N Society KCAMANS, announced an operations session that I could actually attend. Yea! This session was on the St. Louis Subdivision of the KATY, by Bret Overholtzer. I ran three through trains so it was pretty hard for me to screw things up too much. Nice layout and I hope to operate on it again.

One of the side benefits of this ops session was a long conversation with Stephen

Priest. The subject was the value of work groups on personal layouts. One of Stephen's contentions is that too often we form clubs to build a layout only to have the club fold due to loss of the space, members moving, etc. He sees the advantage of a work group on personal layouts as a win-win. Several folks get together regularly and work on each other's layouts. The people that are really good at some aspect are able to teach others, and everyone can do various things on each other's layouts. It also opens up an initial group for ops sessions as well. And rather than one club layout, the group ends up with several layouts to operate. This approach has certainly worked well in the KC area with its impressive assortment of large home layouts. If you'd like to be a part of, or host a work group let the division know of your interest. You can say something here in the newsletter, or via the yahoo group, or the Facebook group.

OH! Kansas City Area in KCAMANS,

means you're willing to drive to the KC metro area for stuff. If you're interested in N-scale and are willing to make the drive from time to time let Jon Percy know at jonsbpr@yahoo.com. There's also a FB group with the same name.

Next meeting. I'm excited about our next meeting! We'll be in Abilene at the Smokey Valley Railroad for an inside tour. Our own John Snell is an engineer on the road and will be leading the meeting and tour. PLEASE check the calendar and read John's Supervisor notes for more details. This'll be a good meeting to bring spouses, significant others, and friends to. As it is now planned we'll meet at a local restaurant at bit earlier than normal, do the tour, then those that wish can ride the afternoon train. Hope to see you there.

My few words have grown to many again. Hope to see you at our next meeting.
David Heinsohn

An Editors View



A VIEW LOOKING OUT

What connection do your ancestors have with Railroading?

Up until yesterday, July 23, I didn't have a clue as to what to put into the Brass Pounder for "The View Looking Out". In preparation for a family reunion, I have spent the last couple of months obsessing about genealogy data and a reconstructing the story about my grandfather Nelson and his sister immigrating to America when he was 16 and she was 14 – by themselves. I put together the pieces of how they left Östraby Sweden and emigrated to McPherson KS. The search led me to identify the ships they sailed on during their passage to this country. And I learned along the way that the railroads played an integral part of their journey. I neglected to give much thought to The Brass Pounder.

Grandpa left his home in Östraby and probably took the train to Malmö. The Malmö train station in 1890 is shown below.



Malmö Station - 1890

From Malmö, he took an 18-mile ferry to Copenhagen. From Copenhagen he took a train across the island of Seeland to another short ferry to the mainland of Denmark. Then onto another train to Esbjerg on the west coast of Denmark. Then, you guessed it: another ferry to either Harwich or Hull England and from

there another train ride to the train station in Liverpool as shown below.



Liverpool Station -- 1890

Fast forward (2 weeks @ 12 knots) as they sail across the Atlantic on the steamship *British Prince* and they arrive in Philadelphia to – you guessed it – another train ride to Chicago on the Pennsylvania Railway. The Figure below is the Immigrant Station in Philadelphia where they literally step off the ship at Pier 53 and onto the train.



Immigrant Station – Philadelphia
1892

My research also revealed that the American Lines owned the ship *British Prince* that carried Grandpa and Johanna across the

Atlantic. And guess who owned the American Lines? None other than the Pennsylvania Railway. It was also the case that their passage was a package deal – from Malmö to Chicago. The package deals we have today are not anything new. They had them in 1892 too.

Then, in Chicago, a transfer between train stations and another train ride to McPherson. The picture below is the Union Station, where the Pennsylvania Railway would have arrived.



In 1892, Chicago had 8 train stations, and they would have the option of 4 railroads coming into McPherson – Union Pacific, Santa Fe, Missouri Pacific, and Rock Island. The Santa Fe or the ROCK was



their probable choice coming into McPherson, as they could stay on one “road” for the trip from Chicago. Shown above is the Dearborn Station where the ATSF departed.

In all, Grandpa had 4 separate boat/ship experiences and 5 rail experiences covering approximately 5000 miles.

So, In the middle of my Genealogy presentation to my “cousins” yesterday, I had a “EUREKA” moment. This is the story so many of us have. Our ancestors, and maybe even some of you, are migrants to a “new land”, either from abroad or from other regions of the United States. From the Golden Spike in 1869, the most popular form of transportation for over 100 years to get people from one point to another on land (or land-sea) was the railroad. Grandpa’s story reflects that. Maybe that is why so many of us in the model railroad world are attracted to trains. It is part of our genes.

How many of you reading this article are products of a railroad migration? How many of you have stories to tell of your experiences or your ancestor’s experiences of travel by rail?

So that leads me to the question I asked at the beginning of this section of the Brass Pounder. **What connection do your ancestors have with Railroading?** The Brass Pounder welcomes your

KCD *Associates* in the NMRAssociation

Activities and Interests of the Division's Members

As a way of introducing each of us to each other, the **BRASS POUNDER** is talking to members of the Kansas Central Division about the exciting things that each is doing in the Model Railroad world that would be of interest to all the membership as a whole. We hope you enjoy reading about what other model railroaders are doing.

In this issue, The Brass Pounder talked to Alan Maxwell. What follows is his talking about his activities in Model Railroad.

BP: So what got you into model railroading?

Alan Maxwell: Actually, I am a second-generation model railroader. My dad was more a collector than he is a model railroader, but there have been trains around the house for as long as I can remember. He's got a basement full of Lionel.

BP: Same scale as you have here?

Alan: No, it is the Lionel scale – O-gage or 0-27. He got his first train probably when he was 8 years old. It was a Marx Train set. I still have that. It is still in the original box. He gave it to me for Christmas 4 or 5 years ago. So, I come by model railroading honestly.

BP: Did he have a layout?

Alan: Yes. He never got around to doing scenery, but he enjoyed putting the track down and he loved wiring. There weren't any of those AC motors that he did not tear down and fix. He spent his entire career working for Detroit Edison as a substation operator and supervisor so he is into the electronics. Once he got it wired, it was just something to use to run trains. It was a 10' by 12' board that also had some HO stuff on the inside. My brother and I goofed around on that over the years. I had my separate board that had the American Flyer and an HO scale loop on it, and had some buildings on it. It wouldn't be considered modeling by current standards, but when you are 8 or 10 years old, hey, you had some buildings and it allowed me to run trains. I spent hours playing with that train layout on that 4 X 8 sheet.

BP: Your brother played on the layout too?

Alan: Brother, cousins, kids in the neighborhood. My brother was 10 years younger so by the time he got old enough to handle the trains, I was in high school and college.

I got into N-scale in college. I had a fiberboard ceiling tile that I put some track down. It was easy to store, and I goofed around with that at college. I bought a couple of layouts from people that lived in the area. They had made layouts for their kids, and then they had decided that they would give them up. They were selling them for whatever they could get for it, and, since I was in college, they didn't get much, but I was happy to take it off their hands. I took all the track and accessories off them. There was a lot of it that was HO scale, but there was some N-scale layouts as well. So that is how I got started.

It has been only the last 10 years or so that I started to really get more serious about modeling. Before that I was more of an accumulator. I am now at the point where I would like to get the benchwork and track done and get it wired. The part I am really looking forward to is the scenery because I have never done it before. We'll see how it goes. I'm interested in learning. I've got a lot of ideas floating around in my head and it would be nice to try to put it into the layout.

Also, the American Flyer layout that I have up around the ceiling has taken a lot of my time. It

still is not completely debugged, but it is somewhat operational.

BP: And it is a different scale too.

Alan: I started with that because I didn't want to be messing around with that above the N-scale layout. I didn't want debris falling down on it. I started with that and put some of the lighting in for the N-scale layout. My main goal was to get it up, as my first train was the American Flyer.

BP: Plus the effect of that running around the ceiling.

Alan: That was what I was going for was to just go around the top of the valance above the N-scale layout.

BP: What has been your favorite aspect of the hobby so far?

Alan: I'm into the benchwork right now. I had started a layout before I moved here, and I built it in a modular fashion. Because the dimensions of the room here in this house were different, I had to modify that. I like working with wood so that part has been enjoyable.

From a modeling aspect, I have been in a model railroading environment for a long time, but as far as considering myself a modeler, I would consider myself relatively new because I have only built a couple of kits, and installed some DCC in my Berkshire. I wouldn't consider myself accomplished. There are a lot of different aspects and I have enjoyed all of them and looking forward to doing more of them.

BP: Sounds like you have had a evolution in model railroading.

Alan: Initially everything I had was DC. I wasn't even considering DCC. It wasn't until I joined the Topeka N-Trak club where they only have the outside loop that can be accommodate DC, with the rest dedicated to DCC. That is when I started putting DCC in the locos. That was my introduction to DCC, and I LIKE IT. I like it a lot better than DC. Initially I was starting to wire my layout for both because I still have DC locomotives. But because of the move, I may end up scrapping the DC. I still have it and it's still possible to run it on DC, but in the end, I'll get everything set up to run DCC.

BP: It is not only the economics. But do you really need the functionality? DCC is so easy.

Alan: That is what I am finding out. Once you have the decoders installed, you are there. My decision now is whether I convert the locomotives I have, or do I just buy new ones, whether it is by trade or sale...

BP: How many locomotives do you have?

Alan: DC, I've probably got a dozen, and 4 equipped with DCC. Most of the ones I have right now are not in the era I am modeling. A couple of steam that I have are in the era and they are the ones I am likely to convert, but the diesels are ones I will probably end up selling at some point. Most of the



diesels that I will probably keep are the ones that I had early on, for nostalgic reasons, i.e. the GP35's/38's that Grand Trunk Western would have had.

BP: So you are modeling a part of Michigan?

Alan: Yes. That is where I grew up. That is the area that I know best. A lot of the stuff I have accumulated over the years has been either Michigan or Indiana roads. Some are lot of eastern roads. Not a lot of the stuff west of the Mississippi. A lot of Pennsylvania, a lot of Conrail, a lot of NYC.

BP: So you are thrown in the thick of everybody out here that are UP, SF, RI, etc.

Alan: Yes. They can have their debate as to which is best. That is fine. I'll sit on the sideline and watch that play out. I'll run my eastern roads. I got a few looks as I rolled out the Pere Marquette at a show. Like: "What's that?" "Where did that come from?" Unless you know, Pere Marquette was bought out by C&O back in 1947. So if you are familiar with Michigan railroad history, you'd think someone just threw some French on the side of the tender. They would have been Grand Trunk Western's major competition back during the war. That is what got CSX their foothold in Michigan and the Detroit market – the C&O acquisition of the Pere Marquette back in the 40's.

BP: So the location of your layout is a part of the Pere Marquette?

Alan: Actually the Grand Trunk Western. I'll be able to do both. The locale I am planning to model is Port Huron, Michigan because it has both roads there. GTW had a very large yard. It is an international border crossing. They have the tunnel under the St. Clair River over to Ontario and the GTW parent company is the Canadian National and that was on their mainline for the Toronto to Chicago route. So Port Huron was the first station inside the US border.

BP: So you had Border customs occurring there?

Alan: Yes, on both sides. They had a single-track tunnel under the river. It was completed before 1900. It was in the late 1990's that they put in the second tunnel. Up until then, they had to run all the double stacks and auto-racks down south because of the height of the tunnel. And, it was a choke point for traffic. They had gotten rid of the car floats quite a while before too.

The primary reason I chose Port Huron is because both sets of my grandparents were from there and that is where my parents grew up. So, I always heard a bunch of stories about the railroad there. It is not only a railroad town but is where Lake Huron comes to an end and flows into the St. Clair River. So a heavy marine influence.

BP: So fresh water?

Alan: Absolutely! Unsalted and shark free. But watch out for the muskies.

BP: I've seen before that you have the track plans of the railroad. How closely are you going to follow the prototype on your layout?

Alan: I'm going to follow it as close as I can. I'm not going to get the entire yard. It was a yard of considerable girth – it was large. With the current space I have, there is no way I can get it all in. The main area I want to model is more of the industrial district. I'm modeling during the war years, and it is my understanding that my grandfather, who was a blacksmith and welder by trade, worked in a bridge and ironworks company. During the war they made tanks and it was serviced by the GTW. They had two different rail sidings coming into the property – right next to a paper mill – two paper mills on that spur.

BP: So you have a variety of industries that are different from what we have around here.

Alan: Absolutely! One of the things that pulled me in that direction is my grandfather. He died when my dad was 13. And I am particularly interested in the WWII era and it is kind of a way to connect in a

more personal way with the area. The bridge and iron works he worked at is not there anymore. Anyone without family ties to that business would never know it even existed.

BP: That will bring interesting loads onto the layout – both in and out. Tanks out. Paper out. And raw material coming in - whether it is metal or wood products.

Alan: During the 40's, I would say the timber products were not local. Michigan, back in the day, was very much a lumber producing state. It is still that way in the Upper Peninsula. From what I understand, a good portion of the RR ties to make the transcontinental railroad came from Michigan forests. They brought them by boat over to Chicago and then took them by flat cars to the end of the line.

BP: So you will have logs in – paper out?

Alan: It could be logs, or it could be pulpwood. Also the possibility because of the interchange in that area between ship and rail, it could have come in by ship. One of the things that I want to do is to have a huge lake freighter docked at the end of the layout. I know they are pricey, but I know that if I go to a show and see one, I'm coming home with it. It's going to be a good 3-4 feet in length, even in N-scale. They can be 900 feet long or more, but they are not very deep. That is why they would be excellent to put it on the model railroad. Just model the calm St. Clair River, and just set it on.

Some of the stories I've listened to from dad are related to these lake freighters. There were a number of city parks in Port Huron along the river and my parents would just go and watch the freighters go by, whether they would be going up river or down river. Most would go up river and go through the Sault Locks and go into Lake Superior and that was the regular path of the iron ore coming out of Minnesota for the return trip going down to the steel mills in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

BP: So a large variety in cargo?

Alan: Absolutely! In that whole spectrum, I am sure there were ships that came in carrying pulpwood. There was a paper mill right on the shores of Lake Huron. There was another one that is right next to the ironworks that my grandfather worked at, both located on a tributary river and there is a bascule drawbridge on that river.

BP: Aha, another structure.

Alan: Absolutely, but only if I can figure out how to model that. That was on that industrial spur. Both the ironworks and the paper mill were right on the shores of the Black River.

BP: Of course you are going to model it as an operating drawbridge?

Alan: We'll see how the skills develop. In a perfect world, sure! For the sake of this interview, sure. We'll see how it pans out.



BP: Clearly you are evolving. Are you learning as you go?

Alan: Right now I have some track on the board, and some wired. But where I had to separate the modules for the move, it has not been reconnected and there is a lot of redesign that still has to be done because of different dimensions in the house. I'd like to get it to the point where I am taking the next step. I've done track laying and track wiring. I'd like to get to the next step where I have a functioning layout so I can get into scenery. Building the structures and developing the scenery around so that I will have something realistic to look at.

BP: So do you look at this as a switching layout, or a continuous running layout?

Alan: I am going to put a connector across the doorway in so I can do some continuous running, but that is not going to be the primary focus of the layout. There are times that I enjoy coming down and turning the trains on, watching them run, and not have to do whole lot of thinking.

When I was growing up with trains, at Christmas, Dad would put the train around the tree. He'd turn the thing on and I would lay on the floor and just WATCH it go around. It is a sound I love to hear. There are some things you out grow, and there are some things that you don't. That is one of the things I enjoy – just put the train on and let it go. And, I don't necessarily have to be watching.

BP: And now that there is sound in locomotives, you get that too.

Alan: Absolutely! I get comments from my wife that she gets the sound of the American Flyer through the floor to the upstairs. It doesn't affect me because it is a sound I knew from as long as I can remember, but I don't know she can say the same. So, for her sake, I will be careful.

BP: So is she into the hobby?

Alan: She is supportive of the hobby, but I would not say she is into it. We have been married coming up on 10 years and this is really her first exposure to model railroading so I would not say it was on her radar. She has learned a few things. She knows the difference between some of the eras and when she is out and about and when she is talking to friends and family she is generally more knowledgeable than others in the conversation.

BP: Plus being close to Emporia, there are opportunities to see trains there.

Alan: She grew up in Michigan as well and the town she was in was right on the GTW main line heading for Chicago so there were trains coming through all the time. And there is still AMTRAK.

BP: Have you gone to conventions?

Alan: We have gone to shows, but I have not gone to any conventions. She does go to shows with me. She'll look for things she finds interesting but she will come back and find me usually before I am done. She focuses more on some of the collectible type things – some of the clothing items etc. The t-shirt I have on is one she got me. And, she will get something for the granddaughter.

BP: Are your children into model railroading?

Alan: My son was at one point. But now, he seems to be more into video games. He got his first Lionel when he was 6 months old at Christmas.

BP: You are in both the NMRA and the Topeka clubs. What would you see as advantages and disadvantages of each?

Alan: I joined the NMRA because I am a member of the Emporia Club – the HO club. When we moved here, they had their layout set up in the mall and that was the first one I came across. I had some HO stuff, but N was my primary interest. They were 100% NMRA so I had to join the NMRA to become a club member. I was keeping an eye out for opportunities in N-scale and went to a train show where the Topeka N-Trak club was set up. So I went over and started asking questions. I got some

information and started going to the club meetings and pretty soon I was in two train clubs. There are a number of the Topeka club members that are also NMRA members, although it is not a requirement.

BP: I have noticed that the Topeka club has a good attendance, but the KCD does not get that many out.

Alan: For me, it was the scale I chose to model, but they are also pretty active with any opportunity they can get in setting up the club layout at a show. They have enough options and they have the flexibility in the size of the layout. They can scale the exhibit size up and down. The draw to me was that I was at a point where I did not have a home layout or even the hope of a home layout. With the clubs, I had the opportunity to pull rolling stock and locomotives out of the boxes and run them. I enjoyed the opportunity with the Emporia club as well, but they did not have as many shows.

BP: Did they have home layouts?

Alan: Mostly we had meetings at the homes. I think it is good to have a chance to run trains. It doesn't have to be all the time, but it is good to have that opportunity. There is enough of a little boy in us that we like to play with our trains. And, for us to do it together, that is one of the big draws for me.

BP: We talked about your layout being primarily switching. The Topeka layout is set up for continuous running but they do have a yard on the layout that could be switched during a show. Would it appeal to you to have switching as part of a traveling layout?

Alan: Yes. I have two modules that I have started I am intending to set up with switching opportunities as well as the three required run through tracks. And, it will have some small radius curves so will not be appropriate for large locos.

One of the things I enjoyed at the Emporia club was that one of the members, Kim Wickham had modules that were set up with industries and a yard – and with its own DCC system that was independent of the rest of the layout. So he could then do his own switching while everyone else was running through trains. It was always interesting to watch him do that. And, it always drew a lot of attention during a show when he was doing operating on that part of the layout. He would draw a crowd. You would have the kids chasing trains around the layout, and you would have the parents just watching the switching.

BP: What do you think we could do as the NMRA group to be more enjoyable, attractive, etc.?

Alan: A good thing for me would be to get to know the people. I have been mostly involved with the two clubs, so I just need to get to know the others in the area. With the diversity of scales, it would be a bit difficult to have some operating sessions at the homes unless the host has enough equipment for everyone

BP: Interesting. When I joined the NMRA, everyone was HO. But now, there seems to be a majority of N-scale.

Alan: I think there has been a transformation. With the quality of equipment in N-scale, it has improved so dramatically that those that want to have a serious prototypical, well-functioning layout can now do it in N-scale. And the ability to condense the size of the electronics and still not generate the heat – there is just so much more out there. Just 10 years ago, getting sound would be unheard of, both figuratively and literally. It is just amazing what is happening.

BP: We also have seen a lot of people that have passed on. So that changes the mix too.

Alan: I think a focus on some aspects of the hobby that draw the scales together – doing things that are common between the scales. An example is the scenery techniques. I wasn't able to make it to the session at Alan Meinholdt's about tree making. But I know him from the Emporia club and have seen him making the trees. During one of the holiday seasons, he was making them for a brand new module

and I watched him use the furnace filters so I knew what he was doing. But that is something that is useable for N-scale or in HO. For me, those are the things that I find interesting.

BP: And DCC decoder installs too?

Alan: For me, that is an area I am just getting into. Have I gone beyond the factory defaults – No. But that is something that would interest me. I know there is a lot more functionality than I am using and I just haven't done the research or taken the time to explore that. Those are the things I would like to do. Sometimes doing your own research is OK, but being part of a group learning experience makes it a lot easier. All the CV values – I haven't gotten into. Some day....

BP: So what you are saying is that something universal across scales would be a good choice for programs. One of the things that we will be doing at this upcoming August meeting in Abilene will be to talk about next year's events.

Alan: With what you are doing with your layout [N-scale], you had enough trains on the layout that even the HO guys were able to participate using your equipment. They showed up and they were able to run. The throttles are the same, and the functions are the same, so they were not left out in the cold.

BP: What do you think about travel distance? Is that an issue?

Alan: Depends on what time of year it is. During the summer time, for me, travel distance is usually not an issue, especially on a weekend. With my work schedule, it does not matter whether it is in Emporia or whether it is at your place beyond Salina. I am not able to be as active in the hobby in my peak season at work, and my peak season is the middle of December to the middle of April – which is the prime model railroading months. But, clearly the weekend is preferable to evenings during the week.

BP: What would you think of having the group over to do a work session for you to help with construction?

Alan: Sure - and to be able to participate in a work session with someone else. To see how others do it and to learn from them would be good. To be able to participate; yes, I would be interested in that.

BP: What else do you do in your other life besides model trains?

Alan: Work, reading about history, travel to see friends and family. My wife went back to Michigan a couple of weeks ago, and I have my class reunion coming up in a couple of weeks. My wife has gotten into gardening and flowers, so I have the garden hose and the watering-can when she is away. Now that our water issue in the basement is a thing of the past and the rebuilding is done, it seems to open up more time for other projects around the house. Being in accounting and finance, I build a financial statement each month at work, but that is not something that is readily visible to most people in the organization. I enjoy doing things around the house for an opportunity to see something tangible that I have made.

BP: Anything else you would want to offer?

Alan: Being new to the area and not knowing "Kansas", I understand that the Santa Fe and the Union Pacific, and to some extent the Rock Island, are the prime roads people are interested in and that people are very loyal to those roads. It has been interesting moving out here – a completely different perspective. A different focus on the western roads and not the eastern roads.

BP: Do you find the culture different – the people that you interface with?

Alan: Sometimes. It depends on the area. People are similar but with different interests. Four wheelers are big here. Back where we were in Michigan, snowmobiling was the go-to activity. You get on the machine and ride. Same activity – different expression.

And, I grew up taking lakes for granted. Michigan has as many, if not more, lakes than Minnesota. It's just that Michigan doesn't need to advertise that because they have four of the five big ones. Here, you have a number of rivers, probably more than Michigan. But any of the lakes around here are manmade.

BP: Well, thank you Alan for spending time with me. This has been fun.

Alan: Thank you. Glad to do it.



KCD *Modeling* in the NModelRA

Our Member's Modeling Activities

Modeling Safety On Your Model Railroad

by John R. Snell

I'm sitting on my front porch as I write this article and watching my pot-holed asphalt street being replaced with a nice new concrete surface. As the Safety Officer for the Abilene & Smoky Valley Railroad I tend to see how the men are working and their attention to safety. A few are wearing hardhats; most are not. Some men are down in a hole while the backhoe is digging next to them. Safe practices? Perhaps - but maybe not. The railroads have a strict policy of safety for their workers. So much so that the slightest violation of the rules can get you fired.

On our model railroads it is sometimes difficult to convey these safety practices. On a recent structure addition to our layout at the McPherson Museum, an opportunity presented itself to model one structure that was designed specifically for the safety of the workers. We have added a representation of Certainteed plastic industry looking from the rail side of the building where cars of plastic pellets are unloaded. Along the siding is a structure (see Fig. 1) designed to keep workers from

falling off the tops of the railroad cars while they open the hatches and facilitate unloading of the plastic pellets. The men would don a special harness and attach a cable hanging from the rail above them. I was not able to find anyone who knew the exact name of this structure but the consensus seemed to be "Safety Rail". It now seems to be no longer used since the railroad cars are emptied from the bottom and there is no need for workers to be on top. I believe that I saw one of these Safety Rails installed at the new grain loading facility on US 56 near Canton, KS.



Figure 1

The Safety Rail is still standing and we felt it is an important and prominent feature to be modeled. As you can see in the photo, the structure looks relatively simple. It is just a vertical beam, an angle, and a horizontal beam perpendicular to the railroad track supporting a long horizontal track

that runs parallel to the railroad. The trick is to make exact duplicates of the vertical support structures. I have never done anything like this but I knew the way would be to make a jig so that all the parts would come out the same.

My first step was to scratch build one vertical support. I didn't have correct dimensions so I guesstimated using a covered hopper as a guide and the average height of a man atop the car. Using 1/8" square styrene strip my prototype looked reasonably accurate so I built my jig around it (Fig. 2). I just used

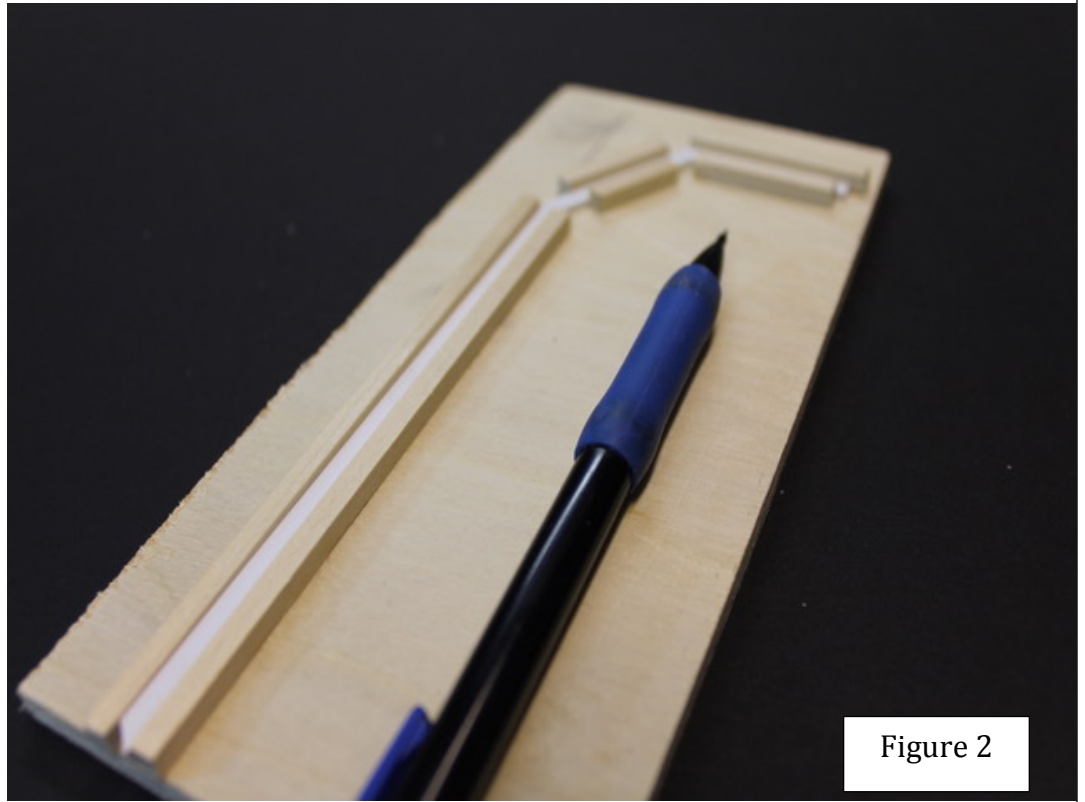


Figure 2

some scrap plywood and basswood strips to build this jig. Wood is the best material for the jig since your styrene pieces won't get glued to it during assembly.

Next step was to cut all the separate pieces for the vertical support. Only three pieces were required for each support. To ensure accuracy, I used my Northwest Shortline Chopper (Fig. 3) for this step. You can cut lots of parts and they will all be the same with this tool. I have found that it is very important to make sure you put a brand new blade in the tool before use. A dull blade tends to drift and will not make a square cut through thick styrene.

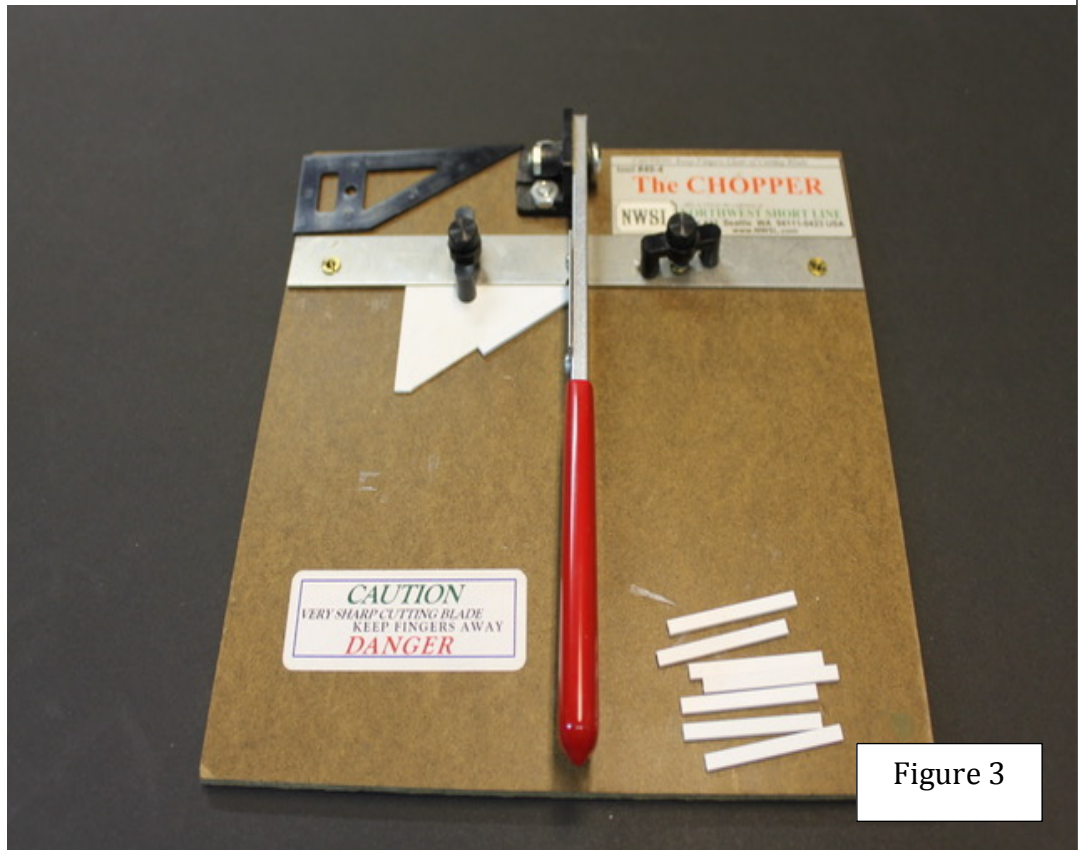


Figure 3

Assembly of the

three parts was quick and easy using MEK (see sidebar). Be sure to give the glued joints enough time to cure before trying to remove the support from the jig. On the prototype there are more than 20 of these

MEK or methyl ethyl ketone is a solvent used for many things but works very well for bonding styrene parts. In fact, it is the exact ingredient of Testors liquid styrene glue, only a LOT cheaper! You can find MEK (or MEK substitute) at Ace Hardware or any good paint supply store. A quart will last a long time.

upright vertical supports but we did not have the space for that many. Practicing selective compression I built only nine supports, enough to give the idea of the structure. I then made gussets from .010 styrene for extra strength at the joints and glued them on. After everything was well cured I painted the supports yellow to match the prototype.

Installing the supports on .060 X 1.25" styrene for the base, I had to carefully line them up plumb and even. Using styrene H-beam, I glued the rail to the bottom of each arm. Installation on site was then performed (Fig. 4). I have not yet found a proper detail part for the rolling device along the horizontal rail that holds the cable, but I am still searching.

I think this project turned out reasonably well and adds an easily recognizable feature to the industry. I like it when visitors say, "Oh, I drive by that every day!". It tells me I did my job well!

Using jigs to build multiple duplicate parts is not a new idea. It has been around for centuries. But it was my first attempt at this method and it worked well for me. If you've never done a particular modeling technique, don't be afraid to try it. Like they say, "If you want to learn to swim, you got to jump in the water!"



Figure 4

KCD *Modeling* in the NModelRA

Modelers from the Past

Modeling Stone Buildings with Stone*
(OK, so it's actually Hydrocal, that's pretty close.)

As found in the Caboose Kibitzer; Volume 40, No. 3 – September 1990

By Marty Vaughn

In the part of Kansas that I live in there are a number of older limestone buildings that would make great additions to a model layout. The problem in trying to model them is that none of the available commercial sidings match the general dimensions of the stone used around here. Rather than random stone or small rectangles or square blocks, the majority of the buildings use rectangle blocks that are 3 to 5 feet long, 12 to 18 inches in height and 6 to 12 inches thick. Although I've built some models with commercial siding, I just wasn't happy with the results, particularly in N scale.

This idea isn't original with me. I "borrowed" it from Richard Napper, a friend and fellow member of the Manhattan Area Rail Joiners. Richard was building some bridge piers in HO and was looking for a better and cheaper way to model three dimensional cut stone. I think that he found what he was looking for and has used it.

Actually this method is somewhat similar to the way limestone is actually cut for building stone. The basic method is to pour thin sheets of Hydrocal plaster, score the plaster before it sets hard, and then snap off the "Stone" after it sets. Just like the prototype, the visible surface of the stone is a rough surface as opposed to a smooth brick surface.

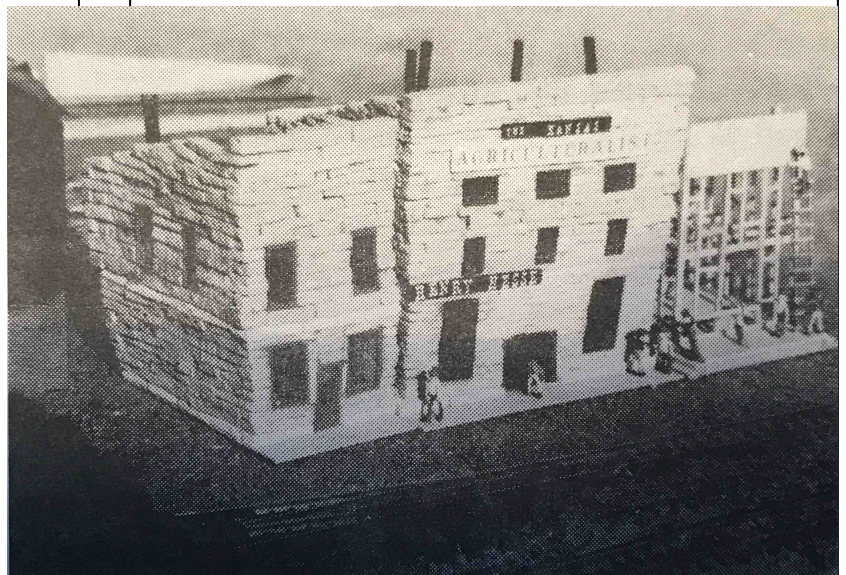
This is simply a scrap piece of board. On one surface I have laid out a square and framed it with Bass Wood. The bass wood height dimension should equal the scale height that you want for your finished stones. Three of the four

sides of this frame are permanently mounted to the board. The fourth side is removable and is held in place with pins. This makes it much easier to remove the plaster after it sets up. On the frame I have marked the scale length and width dimensions I want for the final stone.

The next step, after creating the mold, is mixing the plaster. You want to mix this to the consistency of pancake batter. It's not really critical but if too wet it takes longer to set and if not wet enough it will be harder to smooth and score. If you are using a wooden mold, I find it is easier to use a mold release before pouring in the plaster. You don't need anything fancy, I just use a little petroleum jelly, just enough to keep the wood from soaking up all the water.

Once you've poured the plaster you want to smooth the outside surface, especially if you are going to use the stoned for buildings. All you need to do is run a stick across the top of the mold and smooth out the plaster while it is still wet. After the plaster has set up a little, but before it dries hard, you need to score it. The best way I've found to tell when it is ready to score is to scratch the plaster with your fingernail. If the scratch fills in, it's not ready. But if the scratch remains it is good to go.

To score the plaster I sue a small plastic T-square and line it up with the dimension lines



that I previously marked on the mold frame, and just run a hobby knife with a very old blade down the square.

After the plaster is fully set, remove one leg of the frame and pop the plaster sheet out of the mold. You may have to run a putty knife under the plaster to release it from the mold. To get the individual stones, you simply snap the sheet down both the length and width. Normally you can do this with just your hand, but if you are working with very small sized stones it may help to have a pair of pliers handy to use to grasp the stones with.

There might be other brands of plaster that you can use for making these stones but I've found Hydrocal to be the best. Molding plasters are too soft. When I try to snap molding plaster it tends to crumble. It creates a nice effect for broken stones, but it's not much use for buildings.

Actual construction is simple. I just cut a piece of styrene to the dimensions I want for the building and start laying a course of stones, working my way up and overlapping the joints between stones between one course and the next. The only critical areas are around doors and windows where you want to place openings to fit whatever castings you are using. Depending upon the prototype building you are modeling, the doors and windows may either be flush with the interior or exterior of the walls. Both super glues and white glues work to hold the structures together, but white glue is cheaper and holds the stones just as strongly.

The doors and windows and roof are added last. The buildings in the photos have Grandt Line window and door castings and the roofs are sheet styrene cut to fit and painted. Chimney pipes are from cocktail straws and styrene tubes cut to fit.

I don't paint the structure. I color the plaster with plaster and cement pigments (just remember a little pigment goes a long way for this!) This way you don't have to worry about chipping a stone and trying to match the color later. As long as you measure the amount of pigment you add to a batch of plaster your stones will basically be the same color. Some shading differences occur naturally in the stone so it doesn't have to be an exact match. You can

get just as fancy with the stone work as you want, even casting different color of stone by adding different plaster pigments to the mix. Both of these buildings have a decorative course of lighter colored stone built into them. Some good examples of prototype buildings with different colored stonework are in Guthrie, OK.

Most stone buildings don't have signs painted directly on them, like brick buildings. This is in large part (I think) due to the courser surface of the stone building. All of the prototypes that I've seen have the sign painted on a board or metal surface which is bolted to the side of the building. I modeled this by lettering styrene "boards" that were glued to the buildings. As you can see from the photo, some of my letters floated when I was decaling. I got in a hurry to try and complete these for a module display. One of these days, when I have time, I'll repair the signs.

The last step, like in any modeling project, is adding the weathering effects. A lot of the early buildings around this area aren't quite as square as they were when built (and some others weren't built very square!) This allows water to collect in some of the surfaces and the dirt and minerals in the water can discolor the sides of the building. You can create this effect in several ways, but the easiest I found was to simply dip a paintbrush into some dirty turpentine and then touch the brush to the surface where I wanted to discolor the stone. The plaster soaks the turpentine out of the brush and leaves a nice stained effect.

Using this method to build structures is a snap especially in HO scale. Although this is more difficult to make the stones the proper scale size in N scale, as you can see in the photo it can be done. Besides being cheap and simple to make, it gives you a texture for stone buildings that I haven't found using any other method. Even if you're not into building structures, the stones make nice loads for flats and gondolas, or you can use them as an alternative for rock retaining walls, not to mention Richard's original bridge piers. Give this a try, and if you come up with ways to improve on this, share your ideas with all of us in the **Kibitzer**.

Timetable

A Look Down the Line beyond the August 2017 Meeting

Mark Your Calendars
October 7, 2017
1:00 PM



The August Meeting of the Kansas Central Division – NMRA

Hosted by
David and Chris Heinsohn

The KCD meetings for remainder of 2017

<i>October 7</i>	<i>David & Chris Heinsohn</i>	<i>Elmdale KS</i>
<i>December 2</i>	<i>John Snell</i>	<i>McPherson KS</i>