THE BRASS POUNDER*

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

Timetable

The next meeting is scheduled for

***June 6, 2020* at 1:00PM via ZOOM.**

A ZOOM Tryout meeting will be June 4, 2020 at 7:00PM

(See page 3 for details)

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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 Facebook search block and select request to join. See you there

Join the KCD Yahoo Group

Kansas Central Division has a Yahoo Group. To join the 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 join.

Superintendent News

By Ross Boelling

Well, I hope everyone's railroad is up and running and in tip top shape: all track problems corrected; all switches working flawlessly; all scenery is complete to the last detail; all building kits are finished, weathered, lighted and installed; no bad order cars are languishing on the bench or in the rip-track; the car fleet is operating at 100% efficiency; and your roundhouse is full of tested and ready to pull locomotives!! Oh, wait! April 1st was last month. For some reason I seem to have lost track of time.

To say things have been crazy is an understatement. We decided to cancel Herington Railroad Days due to the uncertainty about Covid-19. It was a difficult decision but, as things have played out, I believe it was the right one. All the other train show cancellations are depressing as well. I am sure the cancellation of the NMRA National Convention in St. Louis was a difficult decision, but I believe it was the right one. It is unfortunate and I am sure it will be costly to NMRA to cancel.

Since I tend to be optimistic, I have scheduled the **2021 Herington Railroad Days** for **May 1-2, 2021.** Setup will be on Friday, April 30. I am hopeful we will have returned to some sort of normalcy by then!

As the pandemic continues, I hope you and your families are practicing the recommended safety protocols. Many of us fall into the "at-risk" category by age or health history. We need to be extra careful during this time. My wife, Lynnette, is an RN and has been genuinely concerned about it, especially since folks can have Coronavirus and can spread it without showing any symptoms. We have a 43-year old family friend that spent 12 days in an induced coma and 28 days in the hospital after contracting the disease last month. He is just now returning to some sense of a normal life. The striking fact to me is that over the past two months, it has already claimed more lives than the Vietnam war and growing daily. It is not a virus to play Russian roulette with.

I do hope you have had time to escape to the train room to work on your layout and modeling skills. There are a lot of YouTube videos and other online resources to watch. One thing we need to remember to do is to continue to support our hobby shops and suppliers as the cancelation of many train shows has caused a huge dip in their sales.

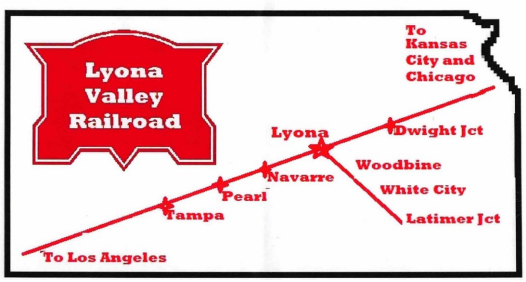
The NMRA held a video convention on April 24-25. I missed it but I hope you were able to watch it. Please let me know what you thought of it! I am sure there will be many more events like it.

Our two daughters are teachers in Abilene. They have had to adjust to hosting ZOOM meetings instead of their classrooms for the last part of their school year. I am planning to host a ZOOM meeting for our next meeting. Ray or I will be sending out additional information about that online meeting. I have used it a few times and find it fairly easy to navigate. Of course, the higher internet speed you have, the better it will be.

For me, it has been difficult to get in the train room since we are starting a new garden space and it requires a lot of extra work to put it all together. I am one that does not really like the heat and humidity of summer, so I hope to get some work done on the layout in the next few months.

Until next time, Be Safe and Railroad On!!

Ross Boelling, Superintendent



Minutes of the Last KCD Meeting

February 1, 2019

Note: The April 4, 2020 meeting at Ross' was cancelled because of Covid-19.

Kansas Central Division meeting came to order at 12:30pm February 1, 2020 at the Wichita Train Show. Members who attended were Alan Meinholdt, Larry Tiffany, Pat Boltz, and Roger Larmer.

With only a few members present, the minutes from the October 12, 2019 meeting were approved (no meeting in December 2019.)

The annual officer balloting from December and January passed. Ross Boelling was elected Superintendent, Tom Katafiasz was reelected Clerk. And the ballot for the updating of the Constitution and Bylaws was approved.

The paymaster report was approved.

We decided that the mini clinics at the Herington show will be set up and run all day based on interest of the public.

After all the business was talked about, the new business was about the train show and what everybody was looking for or had bought.

The meeting was adjourned, and back to the show for everyone.

Alan Meinholdt
Acting Clerk

Next Meeting

June 4, 7PM and June 6, 1PM

Because of the Covid-19 virus, KCD will be trying an alternate form of meeting on June 6 at 1:00PM. We will do a teleconference via zoom Video Communications

Ross will also host a "Test run" on June 4 at 7:00 pm. This will allow for you to check out our connections and to get familiar with ZOOM.

For those that have not used it, ZOOM uses the internet to allow us to see and talk to each other on a split screen. All that is needed is:

- A Mac or PC computer, an iPhone, or an Android phone.
- The Zoom Application on your device. (https://zoom.us/download)
- A highspeed internet connection.

Once you download the ZOOM Application, you are good to go. Ross will be hosting the session and will be sending out the internet connection via email. He will provide the Attendees (all of you) with a meeting ID and a pass code. The second level of security will be as follows: once you enter the passcode and press "join meeting" you will be placed into the waiting room. When he sees you in the waiting room, he will authorize your request to join the meeting, thus weeding out any unauthorized guests.

If you do not have an internet connection, talk to KCD members in your area about "carpooling" if you are comfortable with that much social distancing...

Modeling While Afloat

By Christine Heinsohn

David and I began "living aboard" our Grand Banks 49 Classic in September of 2019. We still maintain our Dirt Home in Kansas but have taken the opportunity to enjoy the yachting life. This is something we have dreamed about for most of the fifty years of our relationship.

But living aboard Mollie does not mean that we have left our love and fascination of all things railroad and model railroading behind. During our time afloat we have observed railroad bridge after railroad bridge. They are usually some of the lowest bridges along the waterways we have traveled. As Molly has an air-draught of 26 feet, we need to ensure that they are open before we go through them. This often involves conversing with an operator about raising the bridge and possibly even seeing a train cross the bridge while we wait for the lift. It is great fun to view a train from Mollie's flybridge.

Currently, we are tied up at Huckins Yacht Corporation's dock as we have been having some work conducted on Mollie. The benefit of this location is that we are about 100+ yards from a CSX bridge that crosses the Ortega River. The bridge is usually open. However, about five minutes before a train is due, the bridge closes. There are probably a couple dozen trains a day – six of them Amtrak! So, lots of train watching, listening, and feeling. Yeah, feeling. When one of those heavy coal trains goes past, the vibrations transfer to the bedrock, to the water, and then to Mollie! It is really an interesting experience.

"But, what about modeling?" you ask.

Our space is limited, so we don't have a layout onboard. But there are other things we can do, like reading or watching videos. David has a copy of AnyRail on his computer and has been having fun drawing up potential layouts for one of the rooms at home. He has created a way to extend our TimeNook layout without losing its modular nature.

When deciding what to bring to Mollie, we tried to bring things that would fit well in the spaces we have. Clutter on a boat is not a good idea. On a boat it is really important that everything have a secure place when we are underway. Sea conditions can toss things around if they are not securely stowed. But I know that I am not happy without some activities other than boating to spend some time on. So, I packed my watercolors and my pens along with papers and other supplies to go with that hobby. I get lots of joy from my "arting." The arting hobbies do not take up much room. Besides, I have been mailing many of my completed pieces to folks who have expressed an interest.

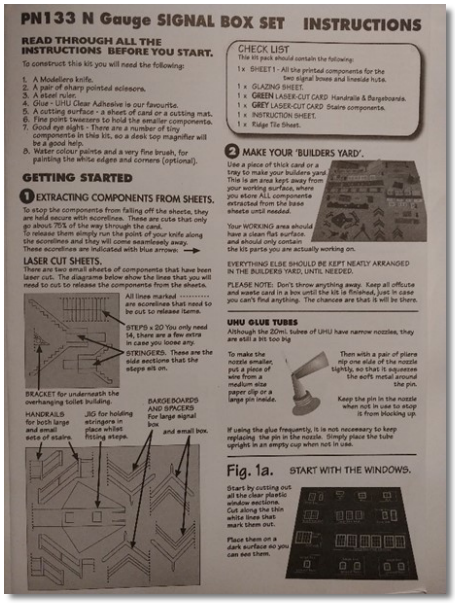
But why stop with just those hobbies? I haven't! I also packed my collection of Model Railroad kits from Metcalfe that I had purchased. I am constructing a T-Trak Module of the train station in Settle UK. The Metcalfe kits are paper, so are light weight and easy to store before constructing. As it turns out, my other arting supplies will turn out to be modeling supplies as well. They will be used to color the paper that is exposed when the card stock is folded.

This article will be the beginning of a series of articles about

my experience with building these kits while afloat. So, lets get started.

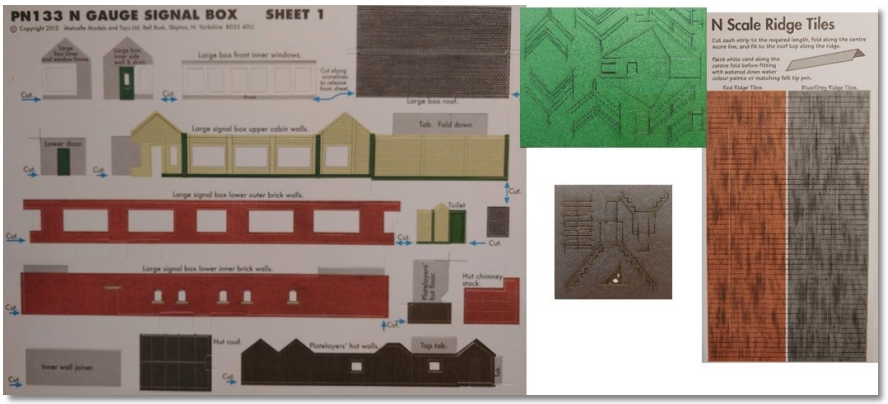
I have heard that no matter what size work table you select for modeling, you will always end up with a space about one foot by one foot to work within. Well, my space is not much larger than that. Mollie has a nice desk area that was built into the Aft Master Cabin. This is where I work (I do a bit of IT consulting for the time being), art, and model.

The picture on the previous page shows my desk with a cutting mat on the surface which, while good for cutting, also serves to protect the finish of the laminate from my watercolor pigments. The bookshelf circled on the right is where my arting supplies live. And the cardboard box on top of the supplies that looks like it is precariously tipped is the "yard" for all my Metcalfe kit stuff. (Hmmm…. That reminds me, I should put my hard work into zip lock bags before getting underway later this week. Little pieces of cardstock all over the stateroom floor would not be conducive to marital bliss…..)



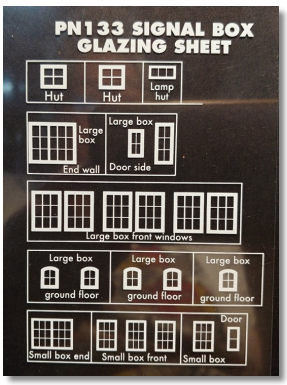
The first kit I am building is the N Scale Signal Box set. It contains a large and a small signal box as well as a couple of small sheds. All of the buildings have been mostly laser cut from the supporting stock so they are fairly easy to pop free of the support structure. An X-acto knife helps in the very rare situations where the pieces will not release.

Included in the envelope is an instruction set and an assortment of card stock sheets of building components. The user will have to provide a set of tweezers, an Xacto knife, glue that dries clear, and watercolors or markers to tint the paper edges that will happen at the folds.



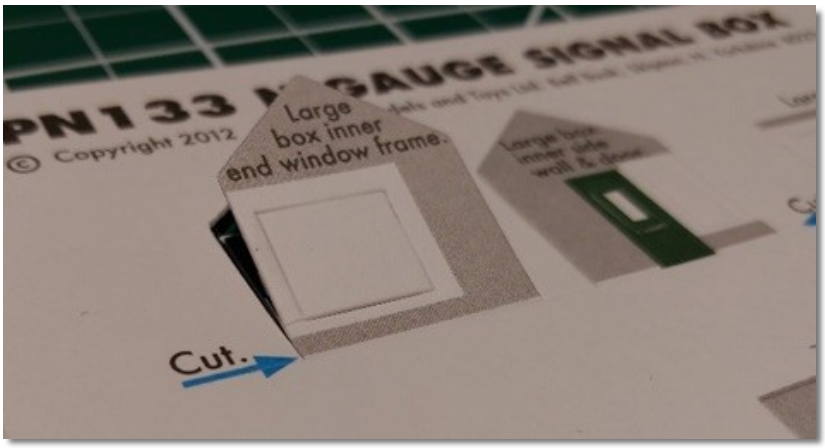
The instructions are in English and well-written and well-illustrated, but they are brief. I have found I have to study them carefully before proceeding to complete a construction step.

This kit had four sheets of cardstock from which parts are removed. There is also a sheet of glazing for the windows. The window sections will be cut to size along the cutting lines. It is important to trim on the lines so the pieces will fit onto the model.



The first thing I did was to inventory the kit to make sure all parts were present. Once that was done, I proceeded to read all the instructions. I learned this part of the process when building Heathkit electronics kits in my youth. I

have found this process serves me well to insure I have everything I need and that I understand the overall plan.



Metcalf recommends that you create a "yard" to corral your work. I selected a cardboard box that was large enough to hold the envelope. Additionally, I added a blue container that had previously held mushrooms (reusing is better than recycling!) which I found helped to corral the popped-out pieces.

The kit directs one to first pop out all the kit pieces and place them in the "yard." Note in the picture to the right that there is an instruction to cut along the line indicated. A light touch of the Xacto knife is all that is needed to remove the pieces.

I have to say I didn't follow this step exactly because the green sheet and the black sheet have all the tiny parts that would be released. I decided that they would be less likely to get lost aboard Mollie if they remained connected until needed.

Director News

By Ray Brady

As I write this, all of the Divisions in the Mid-Continent Region are struggling with how to continue in light of the Covid-19 shutdowns. The NMRA is a membership organization where fellowship is a very important ingredient, but face-to-face meetings have been cancelled so that we can limit our exposure to the virus. Some divisions are continuing their fellowship using virtual meetings. ZOOM, Skype, Facetime, etc. are just a few of the platforms being used. We, the Kansas Central Division, will be using ZOOM for our next meeting June 6 at 1:00PM (and a trial run June 4 at 7:00PM). Be sure to load the ZOOM App on your device so you can join the fellowship.

All of the Meets and Train Shows in the Region have been cancelled for the foreseeable future, including the NMRA National Convention in St. Louis in July Thus, our clinic learning and train purchasing is relegated to online.

But, in the middle of this, I see this as an opportunity for the KCD to try something new. We have always struggled with attendance issues. We talk about the fact that "the distances are too great." Well, let's try something different for the next meeting. Let's give ZOOM a try.

Ray Brady, Director

FIRE! The Unthinkable!

By Ross Boelling (Photos courtesy Sam Bailey)

As a model railroader, we must overcome a lot of obstacles and make some sacrifices to make our miniature world a reality. Hours and hours of planning, construction and implementation ARE followed by significant monetary outlay to purchase cars, locomotives, scenery, electronics (just to mention a few). And then there's that satisfaction when you see your premier train flawlessly traveling through your layout in front of a group of guest railroaders. What could be more satisfying than that? Ahhhh…

So, what's the worst thing that could happen now?

FIRE!!

I spent 12 years with the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office. For seven years I managed the Kansas Fire Information System which captured data from local Kansas Fire Departments about their activity. I also worked in the fire prevention division where we tried to keep facility occupants safe from fire. I also have some time as a volunteer firefighter. Through my 'Fire Phase' I saw lots of house fires on the reports that crossed my desk and in person.

This past month Sam Bailey, a retired engineer and former coworker, suffered a house fire at his home in Marceline MO. I do not know if you have personally suffered a fire in your home. We have been lucky and have not.

My friend's fire was as devastating as most. While there was not a lot of actual fire damage to his train room, his layout was damaged by heat, smoke, and water. Smoke is an insidious character. It sneaks into a lot of unexpected places and leaves its mark of ash and other products of combustion and can ruin many things. Heat, too, causes problems. Water, used to extinguish the fire, is applied in abundance as the Fire Department attempts to control and stop the spread of the fire. The damage caused by the fire, heat, smoke and water can render your home and your belongings unrecognizable (at best) or totally consumed (at worst).

Which brings me to the point of this story. Is **YOUR** railroad firesafe? Do you use NMRA's insurance policy to insure your collection? Could you replace your train collection in case disaster strikes?

While it's not something we modelers consider, at BNSF we had a safety briefing first thing at any meeting that pointed out exits, identified who is CPR qualified, who will do a head count, who will

call 911, etc. Would something like this during an operating session help educate your guests to know what to do and where to go?

When I was Chief of Fire Prevention, my staff developed an easy way to explain and enforce fire and life safety to just about anyone. We used the acronym **ENDSS**. **E**xiting, **N**otification, **D**etection, **S**eparation, and **S**uppression. They are in priority order and can be used for just about any building. The following is a quick evaluation of your train room.

Exiting

Are the exits from your train room easily identifiable and recognizable. This is more important if you have frequent visitors to your layout. "Exiting" includes the pathway, stairs, doors, etc. that take you from your layout room to the outdoors. As many layouts are in basements, can you see your exits if the lights went out? Emergency lighting is fairly inexpensive and can be found at most box stores for $20-50. When the power goes out, it provides lighting for a period of time so you can see to get out of the room. A simple "EXIT" sign (doesn't have to be illuminated) would help folks know which door or pathway will take them outside.

Notification and Detection

For our purposes, these two are lumped together. If a fire starts somewhere else in your home, is there a way for you to be notified? Is there a way for a fire to be detected? For us, in a home or small business space, there is no requirements for a fire alarm system. The next best thing is a smoke detector or better yet, interconnected detectors. Kansas DOES have a smoke detector law requiring an operable smoke detector outside each sleeping area. New construction needs to be electrically connected with battery backup. Existing homes can use a battery operated one. Can you hear your home's smoke detector in your train room? National recommendations are for a smoke detector on each level of your home. Smoke detectors can also be interconnected (they cost more) so if one sounds, they all sound.

Separation

The intent of "Separation" is to insure hazardous areas are separated from the occupants. It is typically targeted towards schools, businesses and healthcare facilities. BUT, I wanted to mention it as there are some things that can be

done with separation to minimize potential fire loss. A lot of us have used OSB or plywood as walls or ceilings in our layout room. We also tend to route our layouts through the furnace, laundry, and water heater areas which are some of the typically more hazardous areas of our homes. A good way to separate spaces is to use a sheetrock wall. Sheetrock provides a good barrier. The sheetrock needs to be facing the hazardous area; in other words, the furnace room is sheetrocked on the INSIDE of the wall as well as the outside. If you have a wall and door separating your train room from other spaces, it should be a sheetrock wall (both sides) and a solid core door (also called a 20 minute door). This will give your layout room some protection from an encroaching fire.

It may be worth considering a upgraded storage room (double sheetrock walls) or even a safe for storing your off-layout equipment.

Suppression

In a perfect world, you would have a residential fire sprinkler system in your home. This technology has been around for at least 20 years and helps minimize water damage from the fire department. Only the sprinkler heads in the area of the fire activate, and they shut off when the temperature goes down. Most of you probably believe (thanks to TV) that when one sprinkler head activates, every sprinkler head does too. False!! I'm not proposing that everyone install a residential sprinkler system in their train room. However, if you are building a new home, it is not that much more expensive to install one in your home during construction. They do not require an excessive amount of water; some need only a 50 gallon water-heater sized tank.

Do you have a fire extinguisher in your train room? Probably at least one 2A:10BC extinguisher would be adequate for your train room. (There are YouTube videos on how to properly use one).

SUMMARY

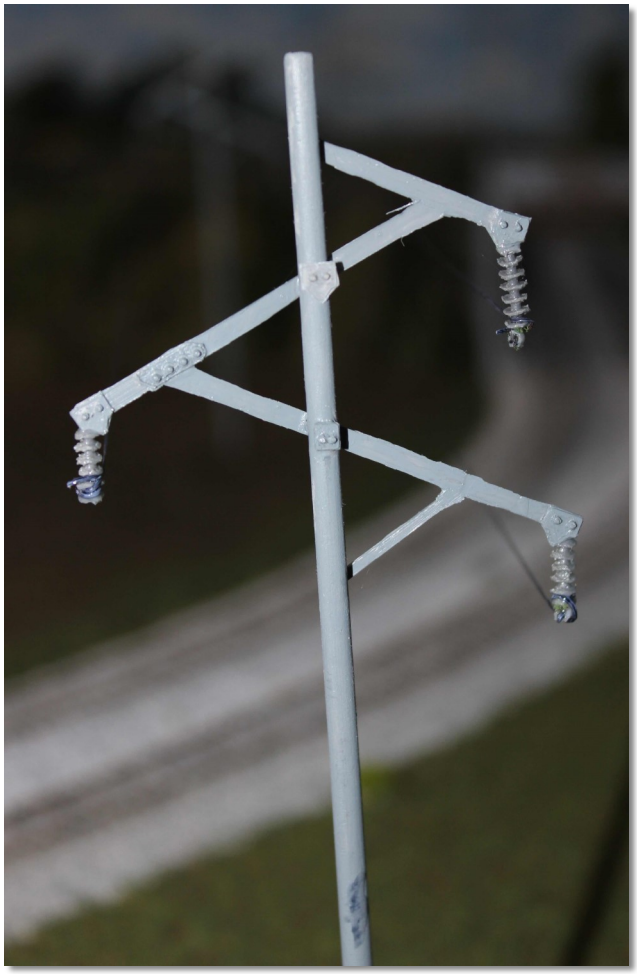
The purpose of this article is for you to consider how your layout would respond to a fire in your home. Is your model railroad collection adequately insured? My **ENDSS** suggestions are offered for your consideration.

Can everyone in your train room see their way to an exit? Can you be notified in your train room in case a fire starts in your home. Have you taken steps to separate your layout from fire risks? Do you have some sort of fire suppression available in your train room?

Do you have an accurate and current list of your equipment for insurance? Do you have it or a copy stored somewhere other than your home? Do you have adequate collection insurance, either as a rider on your home owners policy or from NMRA's plan.

Single Arm Wishbone High Voltage Power Pole

By Tom Katafiasz



On one my recent visits to Spring Creek Model Trains, I purchased a set of three (3) single arm wishbone high voltage power poles manufactured by Dimensional Modeling Concepts of Omaha NE. This is a 3D-printed product in silver ABS plastic. If any of you attended the 2018 NMRA Convention in Kansas City and had the opportunity to visit Stephen Priest's layout, you may have had the chance to see demonstrations of 3-D printing by DMC.

There are numerous small parts mainly consisting of gussets, and nut and bolt details in the kit. There is "flash" that needs to be removed and the small parts cleaned up. I found the instructions to be "semi-clear." There are photos depicting the construction of the arms and poles but I felt the instructions needed to be more specific as to the placement of the gussets on the poles. Several times I questioned the correct placement of the gussets but ultimately no matter where they were placed, they still looked good.

When it came time to string the poles, I questioned my sanity! There are three (3) poles to string with three (3) arms and an insulator on each arm with a small "O" ring thru which the wires pass thru on each pole. A total of nine (9) "O" rings to pass wire thru! I decided to use EZ Line by Berkshire Junction. This is a highly flexible elastic polymer line with 700% stretch! It is easy to work with, and was attached with CA glue.

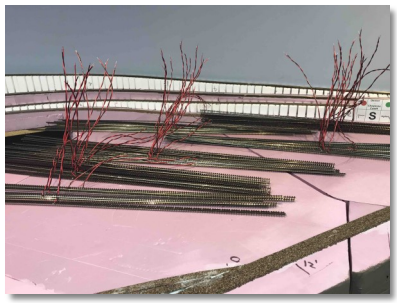
Overall, I think the kit adds a great deal of realism to any modern era layout.

Modeling-in-Place as I *Shelter-in-Place*

By Ray Brady

All of us have been finding ways to keep ourselves busy while we wait out the world's Shelter-in-Place. I have been staying off the streets by being busy in my Layout Room. While I had completed Topeka, Salina, and North Platte yards earlier (although Topeka needs some major modifications based on experience running trains), I had been putting off working on another of the Named yards on my layout. In the last three months, I have been working on the Cheyenne yard to get it up and running.

Thus far, my Cheyenne yard has consisted of two through-tracks that will become the through tracks for the switching yard – just so I could have train-running sessions throughout the layout, The remainder of the yard has been represented by paper printouts pinned on the layout showing the anticipated track plan. I had drawn, via 3rd Planit, the locations for the passenger tracks (3), the roundhouse and turntable, and the coaling station. I had not given much detailed thought to how to do the yard up to this point.



The first step for me back in March was to get the track and switches prepared for the track laying. My philosophy is that **EVERY** piece of track **SHALL** have feeders. By design, I do not rely on non-soldered joiners for electrical connections between pieces of track. I do not want corrosion or intermittent contact to enter the electrical equation in the future. That meant that I needed to solder feeders on about 150' of track and about 30 switches. Shown above is the stockpile of track and switches as I started the track laying process.

First up was laying the passenger tracks. I had designed three passenger tracks to pass in front of the future Cheyenne depot flat. I chose to install these tracks because of they were in the rear of the layout and represented the greatest "lean-over" reach. Those tracks went in, not without some back ache. I'm going to need a platform for operators to stand on to work the Cheyenne Yard.

Next was the 130' Turntable and 9-stall Roundhouse placement. I had purchased them 6 or 7 years ago for a very reasonable price from someone in Ottawa KS. They have been sitting, waiting for this day. Well, the day arrived. I cut the hole in the 2" foam, set the turntable in place, powered it up, and: Eureka!!! Magic Smoke!!! Something happened in the intervening years to cause a meltdown. So, an online search yielded a new turntable, and now have a new one on the premises waiting to be installed.

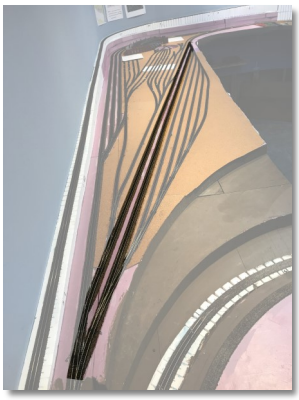
IHC Cheyenne 650 Ton Coal Bunker

While surfing the best price for the new 130' turntable, I encountered information about an N-scale 650 Ton coal bunker plastic kit by International Hobby Corporation produced back in the 1980's that was a very faithful replica of the Cheyenne coal bunker. YES!!! And surfing E-bay revealed that new kits were still available today, and for a VERY REASONABLE price.

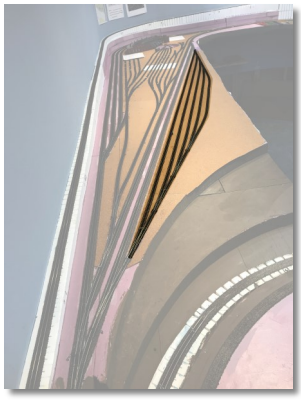
That set a new direction for the Cheyenne Yard. The single-track concrete coaling station that I originally planned

was no longer acceptable – a 650 Ton bunker kit is now on the property ready to be assembled. Of course, that meant other things needed to change. First, the single track allocated for coaling now became 6 tracks – which meant redesigning that part of the yard. And the stock Walthers generic Roundhouse would no longer do. I needed a prototypical Cheyenne design. And, with the Roundhouse comes the Backshop next to it. And space needed to be allocated to diesel and gas turbine servicing – they will be on the layout too. And, I needed to get serious about the very distinctive Cheyenne Depot.

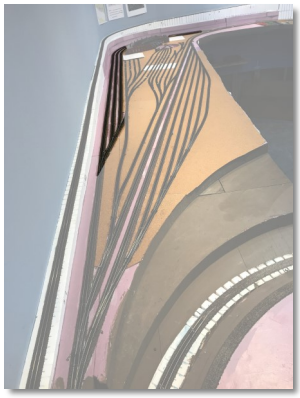
My activities now went in two different directions: **Track Layout**, and **Structures**. First, **Track Layout**: Building on my original design, I started fitting a new track arrangement around the 6-track coaling bunker and wound up with the result shown on to the right. This design has many of the attributes of the Cheyenne yard. In the images that follow, I have outlined the various parts of the Cheyenne complex that will provide the operators work on the layout.



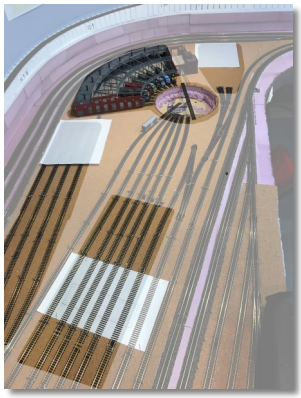
Through Freight Tracks:
These two tracks will allow freights to pass either direction as they come through town. These tracks are 10' long, consistent with the 13 passing sidings and 4 other yards on the layout. Hence, the engineers will be able to park trains that are a scale 1600' long, or approximately 20 N-scale cars.



Yard Switching:
Although not a large yard, this area will provide switching for freight that needs to change trains in Cheyenne. Five tracks are installed to handle the traffic. While no yard lead is included, that will extend the excitement as the switching will foul the Yard Mains at times. The Yardmaster will be able to control inbound and outbound trains at the Yard Limits. We'll see how that goes, or whether it becomes a bottleneck in the operations.



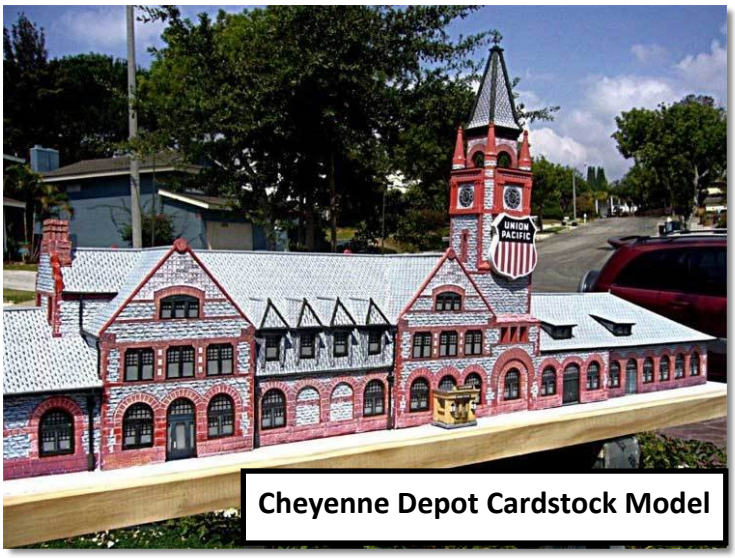
Passenger Train Tracks:
While I do not have a specific era locked in for my layout, there will be passenger traffic from Union Pacific (and other railroads). And the Cheyenne depot will be a flat up against the ramp on the left leading to the upper level. The passenger tracks curve around behind the Roundhouse and are over10' in length. Hence passenger trains up to 10' in length will be allowed consistent with the other yards and passing sidings on the layout.



Engine Service Facilities:
Four areas will be represented on the layout for engine servicing. In the foreground will be the 650 Ton coaling tower shown to the right (once I get it built). Between it and the passenger tracks will be the Diesel/Gas Turbine service area , behind that will be the Roundhouse and Turntable, and behind that will be the Backshop.

I have not been able to locate prototypical structures for any of the structures other than the Coal Bunker. I can always scratch building using traditional wood/plastic materials, but the time investment right now would divert me away from the task at hand – making the yard come alive.

In the process of searching for Cheyenne prototypical buildings models, I stumbled upon the picture of the model to the right. It is a *cardstock* model built by Doug Archer using Evan Designs ***Model Builder*** software. As you can see, the model is quite elaborate and is a faithful representation of the non-track side of the Cheyenne Depot. Wow!!



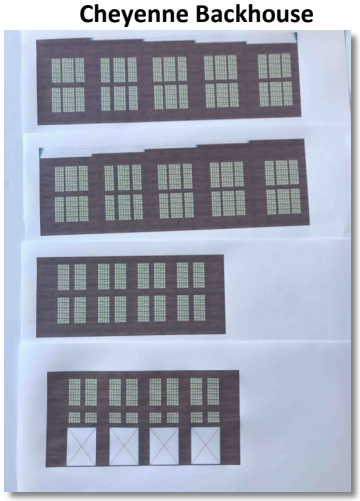
Cheyenne Depot Cardstock Model

So, now I am going down the path of making interim cardstock models using the computer. All I need is the façade of the Depot for my layout. Maybe I can do this, as well as the other three structures (Roundhouse, Backshop, and Diesel Engine House.) Thus far, I have side walls of the Roundhouse and a Backshop designed using *Model Builder* and they look pretty good (see below). More to come on this later.

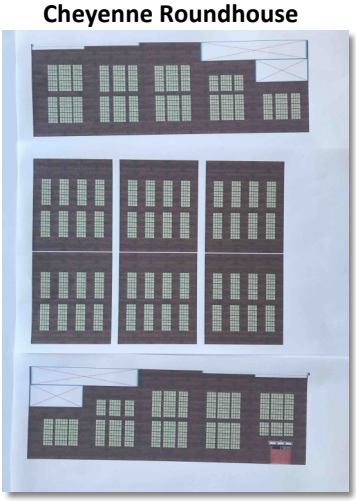
But, for now, the Cheyenne track and building locations have been pinned down. Onward to connecting the track feeders to the DCC buss, installing frog juicers, and getting the turntable to work without releasing more magic smoke. How much longer until there is a vaccine????

Tar Paper Roof

Cheyenne Backhouse



Cheyenne Roundhouse



Timetable

-Mark Your Calendar-

Future
Kansas Central Division NMRA Meetings

June 6, 2020	**1:00 PM ZOOM**
August 1, 2020	**Open**
October 3, 2020	**Ray Brady's**
December 5, 2020	**Open**