Caboose Kibitzer

2nd Quarter 2008 Volume 58, Issue 2

Memories of the Burlington "Zephyr"

The Courthouse as a Modeling Resource

Shabbona Railroad

Laying Streetcar Track - by Hand

Scratch-Building Truss Bridges

Heart of America Garden Railroad Show - June 20, 21, 22, 2008

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Overland Park, KS 66211

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CABOOSE KIBITZER

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Association

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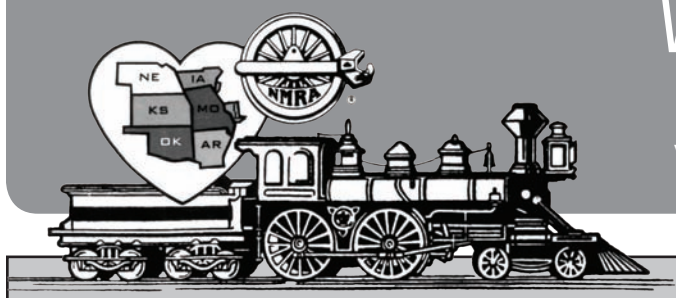

WAYBILL

Second Quarter 2008

Volume 58, Number 2

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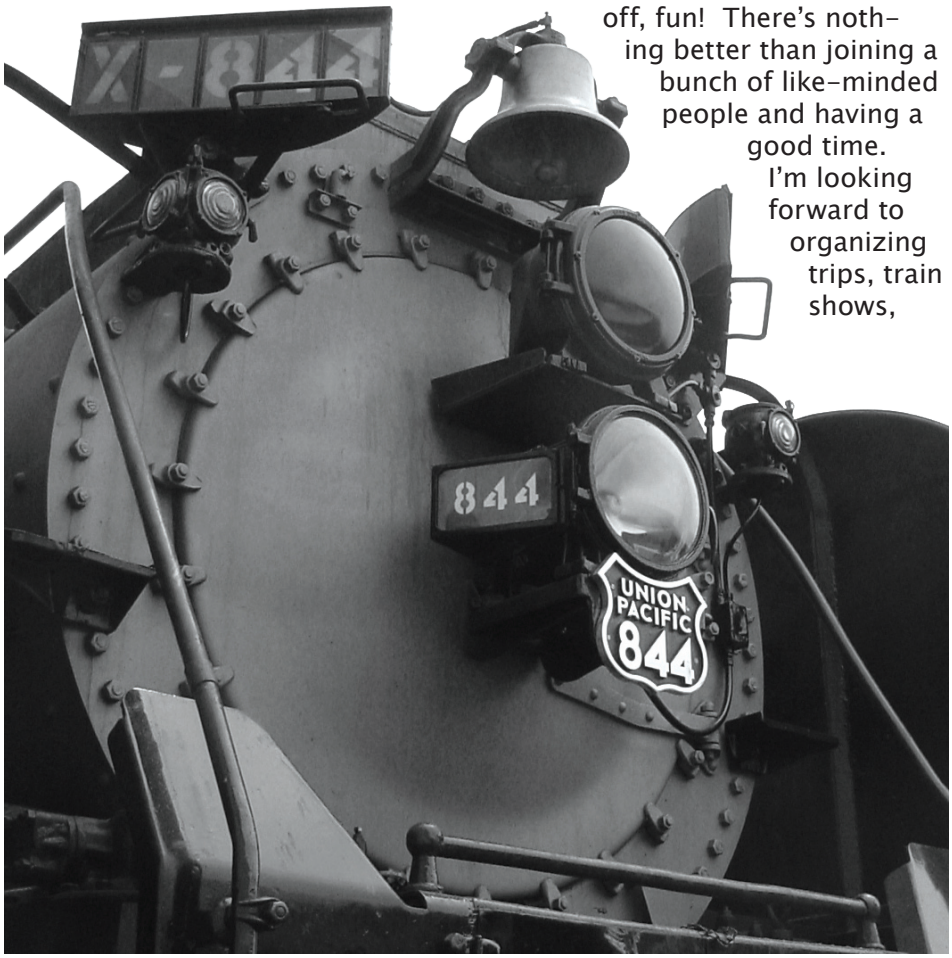
The Head End

by Larry Alfred, MMR
MCoR President

By the time this issue hits the streets, we will probably be looking at the Branson Convention in the rear view mirror. I know it will be a great event, and I can say that if you missed it, you will still be kicking yourself! However, it's still not too late to consider attending one or more of the many Division/Area Meets that are held around the Region each year. From my experiences of attending many of these, they are a great opportunity to meet and have fun with other modelers. A list of these (Gary's Switch List) is included in most Caboose Kibitzer issues and on the MCoR website.

In the past several issues I have focused on participation and involvement in the model railroading hobby and in the NMRA organization. During the past several months, I have been working with individuals to reactivate several of the MCoR divisions. A year or so ago Dennis Brandt was appointed as the Director of the (then) Salt Valley Central Area (portions of Eastern Nebraska). Since then, he has led a significant effort to revive interest, recruit others to fill Division positions, and develop a constitution and petition to present to the MCoR BOD from the (new) Cowboy Line Division. Way to go, Dennis!

More recently, Robert Simmons was appointed as the Director of the Western Kansas Division. This Division has been inactive for some time, but Robert is doing a great job of reviving interest. Robert sent me a draft letter that he intends to send out to many of the model railroaders in Western Kansas (most are past members of the NMRA). I was so taken with the way he described the benefits of becoming involved with others of like interests and the NMRA that I decided to include (with his permission) some of his thoughts here. After introducing himself and extending an invitation to rejoin the NMRA organization, Robert jumps to respond to the standard question "What's in it for me?" His response is "First off, fun! There's nothing better than joining a bunch of like-minded people and having a good time. I'm looking forward to organizing trips, train shows, operating sessions, work shops, and more." He then carefully lays out a plan to help create new interest and enthusiasm for those that have dropped out of the NMRA. His overall plan includes the availability of a Train Room in a downtown Garden City building with seven (yes, seven) separate layouts in HO and N scale. He also describes a newsletter, the possibility of operating sessions, plans for Train Shows, and a library of model railroad reference information. Robert wraps up his list of benefits by his view of the rewards: "There's nothing better than the feeling you get when you help someone achieve their desires. Many people have guided me and helped me over the years, and I have a deep desire to give back by helping others. I can help you, you can help me, and together we help others and the entire hobby." In my mind, Robert's view of the potential benefits provided by the NMRA, especially at the local levels, is right on point.



Many thanks to both Dennis and Robert, and to all others throughout the MCoR that promote the NMRA and what we are trying to do. There are good answers to the question, "What's in it for me?"

Until next time, Happy Railroading!

Larry

The Switching List

by Gary Hemmingway

The Switching List contains all known Mid-Continent Region, NMRA, train shows and Division meetings. It also lists all known club shows and swap meets in the Mid-Continent Region (IA, IL, MO, AR, NE, KS, OK). Sign up for the email List for the most up-to-date and complete listings.

DIVISION MEETINGS

KANSAS CENTRAL DIVISION meets the first Saturday of even-numbered months at various locations around the div. area. BOD meetings are usually at noon and general meetings are at 1 p.m. For the full schedule, check the MCoR website or email Gary Hemmingway (garyonho@cox.net).The next meeting is: June 7, 2008 Emporia City Library: 110 East 6th, Emporia, KS. Coming in on interstate turn East on Highway 50, go to Commercial Street (main street going North/South.) Continue east about one block, Library is on your left; the parking lot for library is behind the Museum. All are invited regardless of NMRA membership.

GATEWAY DIVISION (ST. LOUIS, MO) meets third Monday each month, 7:00 P.M. Odd numbered months: Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road at Woods Mill Rd (Hwy 141), Ballwin, MO; Even numbered months: VFW Hall, O'Fallon, IL http://www.gatewaynmra.org/division.htm

TURKEY CREEK DIVISION (KANSAS CITY, MO & KS) holds monthly meetings every fourth Tuesday, 7:00 P.M. Johnson County Courthouse, NE Branch, 6000 Lamar, Shawnee Mission, KS (DMV Building on SW corner of Lamar and Mastin)

WESTERN HERITAGE DIVISION (OMAHA, NE / COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA) meets second Saturday (except June and December) at noon. Sump Memorial Library, corner of Washington and Second Streets in Papillion (across from Runza). Visit www.whdnmra.org for more info and a map.

EASTERN IOWA DIVISION (DAVENPORT, IA) - Info: Rich Mahaney, Superintendent, (505) 640-5909 or hazmatrichm@aol.com, or visit our website at www.TheWigWag.org.

KATE SHELLEY DIVISION (AMES/DES MOINES, IA) meets monthly on the fourth Thursday of each month 7:00 p.m. Meeting location varies, call (515) 232-8689 or email rfolkmann@mchsi.com.

INDIAN NATIONS DIVISION (OKLAHOMA) meets at the New Hardesty Library at 8316 E 93rd St (just east of Memorial) in Tulsa, OK. The time is from 9:30am to 12:30pm Each meeting, we have various presentations from clinics to slide shows. After the meetings we have a layout tour at one of the members' layouts. Meeting dates are: May 31, Sept 20 and Nov 19. Contact Dave Salamon at drs_rr@yahoo.com for further information.

PLATTE VALLEY DIV. (HASTINGS, GRAND ISLAND, KEARNEY, NE) meets second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in members' homes on a rotating basis. Info: John O'Neill, Div. Dir., 308-384-5011 or jponeill@computerconcepts.com.

WESTERN KANSAS DIVISION (GARDEN CITY, KS) Meets every Monday evening from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. at 4091/2 N. Main St. (second floor above "Stage" department store) 7 layouts on display (2-HO, 5-N) Operating sessions available Info: Robert Simmons, Division Director (620) 521-3591 or ras@odsgc.net.

CLAREMORE & SOUTHERN RR OPERATING SESSION, Second Friday each month starting at 7:00PM and finishing by 10:00PM. 9372 E. Clover Creek Drive, Claremore, OK 74017-1487. Please send a confirming RSVP a week in advance if you are planning to join us. Info and RSVP: George F Maulsby, 918-341-9446 or www.csrailroad.com.

TRAIN SHOWS & MEETS

JUNE 15, 2008 — Pittsburg Model RR Club 30th Annual Train Meet, Meadow Brook Mall, Centennial & Broadway, Pittsburg, KS, Sat: 9 am – 9 pm, Sun: 1 pm – 4 pm, Adm: Free, 8' swap table operating fees $12.50 each, 6 or more $10 each, Advanced registration by 6-5-08, dealer setup Fri: at 8 pm or Sat at 8 am, Info: 620-231-9674 before 8pm, mail payments to: Pittsburg Model RR Club, c/o Bill Feagins, 508 N. Woodland, Pittsburg, KS 66762

JUNE 24 --25, 2008 – KATY Days, Parsons, KS

JULY 19—20, 2008 - Rails & Trail Days, Old Cowtown, 1871 W Sim Park Dr. Wichita, KS

JULY 23 – 26, 2008 – Union Pacific Historical Society Convention, Capital Plaza Hotel & Maner Conference Center, Topeka, KS, Info: Larry Tiffany ltiffany@cox.net, 2140 NW 53rd Terr., Topeka, KS 66618

AUGUST 2, 2008 – Turkey Creek Div Train Show, Lenexa Community Center, 13420 Oak, Lenexa (Pflumm & Santa Fe Dr), KS, 8:30 – 2:30, Clinics, Model & Photo Contests, Door Prizes, Display Layouts & Layout Tours, Swap Tables & Layout groups, Food & Refreshment, Info: Robert Hollowell, 2013 SE Stratford, Blue Springs, MO 64014-4047.

AUGUST 9, 2008 – Wichita Toy Train Club At Towne West Mall, Towne West Square, 4600 W. Kellogg, Wichita, KS 10am – 5 pm.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2008 – Boeing Employees Railroad Swap Meet. St. Louis, MO-More later.

SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2008 — North Platte Rail Fest, Info: Dave Harold 308-534-3648, railfest@nque.com, www.nprailfest.com

OCTOBER 26, 2008 – Wichita Toy Train Club Swap Meet, 4-H Building, 21st & Ridge Rd., Wichita, KS, 9 am – 3 pm

NOVEMBER 29—30, 2008 – Wichita Toy Train Club At Towne East Mall, Towne East Square, 7700 E. Kellogg, Wichita, KS, Sat: 10 am – 5 pm, Sun: Noon – 5 pm.

SUBMISSIONS

To list your event send it to: Gary Hemmingway, 3201 SW Stone Ave., Topeka, KS 66614, email garyonho@cox.net, Fax: 785-273-3350. To subscribe or unsubscribe to the electronic Switching List, send an email to the above link.

Division Directors, Train Show Chairs, or Club Show Chairs: ANY MORE EVENTS IN 2008? Get your information to Gary at any of the above addresses. Let's get the word out about your next event! This is a service of Mid-Continent Region, NMRA. Information provided is accurate at time of printing; contact sponsor to confirm.

Regional Web Directory

The Web is probably one of the easiest and least expensive ways to keep in contact with your membership. The Region offers space on their web-server for Divisions to use – contact Webmaster John A. Shaw for more details.

I'm only including websites that are active and updated since the last issue of the CK.

MID-CONTINENT REGION

www.mcor-nmra.org

INDIAN NATIONS DIVISION

www.tulsanmra.org

TURKEY CREEK DIVISION

www.tc-nmra.org

KATE SHELLEY DIVISION

www.mcor-nmra.org/Divisions/Kateshelley

EASTERN IOWA DIVISION

www.thewigwag.org

WESTERN HERITAGE DIVISION

www.whdnmra.org

KANSAS CENTRAL DIVISION

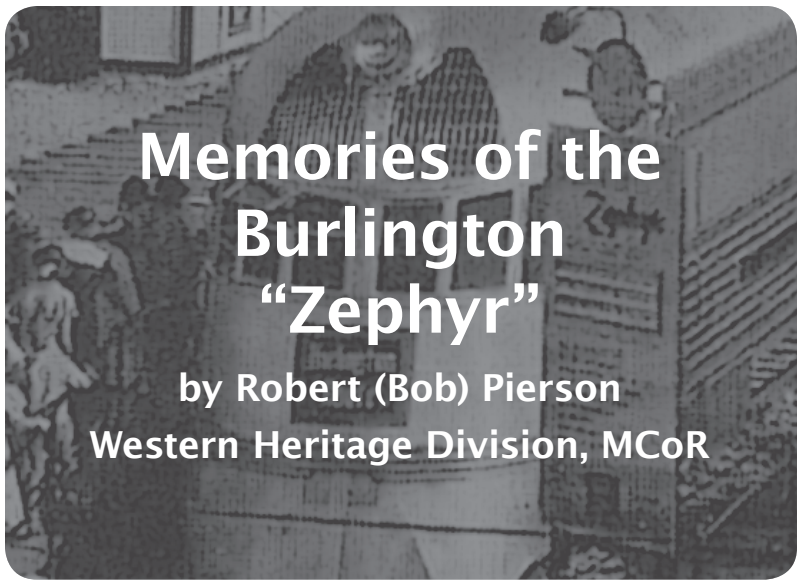
www.mcor-nmra.org/Divisions/KansasCentral

GATEWAY DIVISION

www.gatewaynmra.org

OKLAHOMA SOUTHWESTERN AREA

http://oktrains.com/



Memories of the Burlington "Zephyr"

by Robert (Bob) Pierson
Western Heritage Division, MCoR

The time is Spring 1934. The place is the southwest side of Chicago specifically the C B & Q RR mainline into Chicago.

For months we had been hearing about the new "Streamliner" that the "Q" was building. This modern marvel was completely different from any of the motive power then in use on the railroads. We only knew steam locomotives; those marvelously stinking, snorting, smoking, almost-alive machines whose whistles we heard moaning through the night.

I grew up in Chicago just a half city block from the "Q" tracks and the trains that ran over them were a daily (largely ignored) part of my life. We were very familiar with the tracks because over them was our shortcut to a favorite playground on the opposite side.

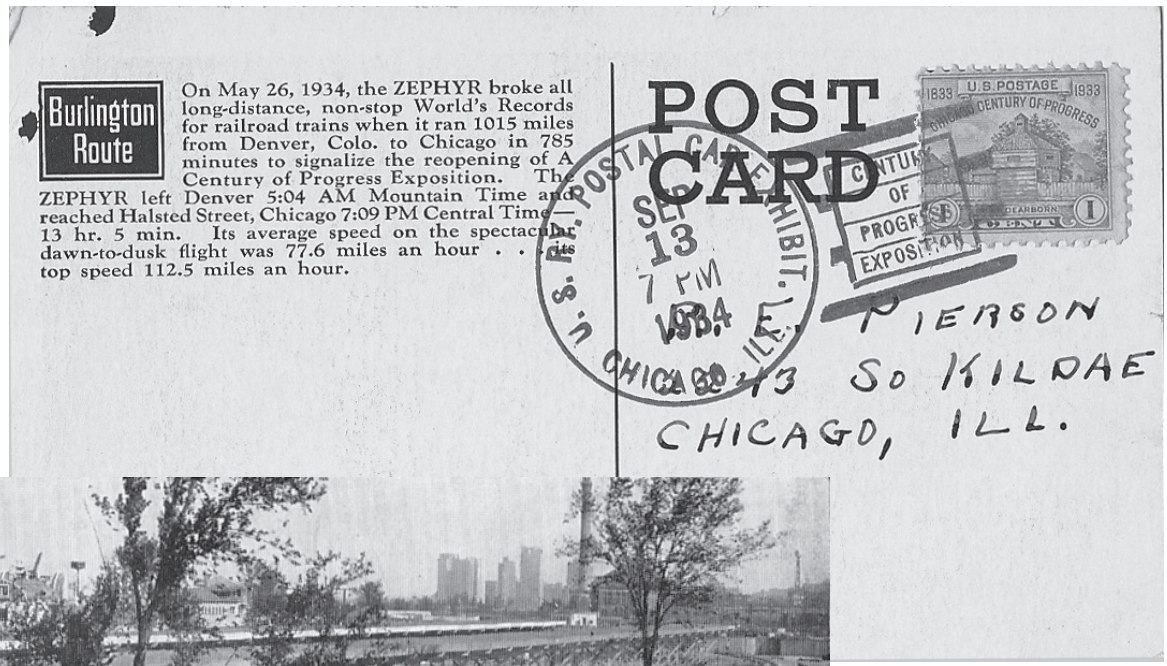
The tracks were elevated on an embankment and there were at least five tracks on top of the bank, all of which had to be crossed to get to the other side. This was a very busy train route and the railroad was obviously concerned about a bunch of kids scrambling over this busy trackage.

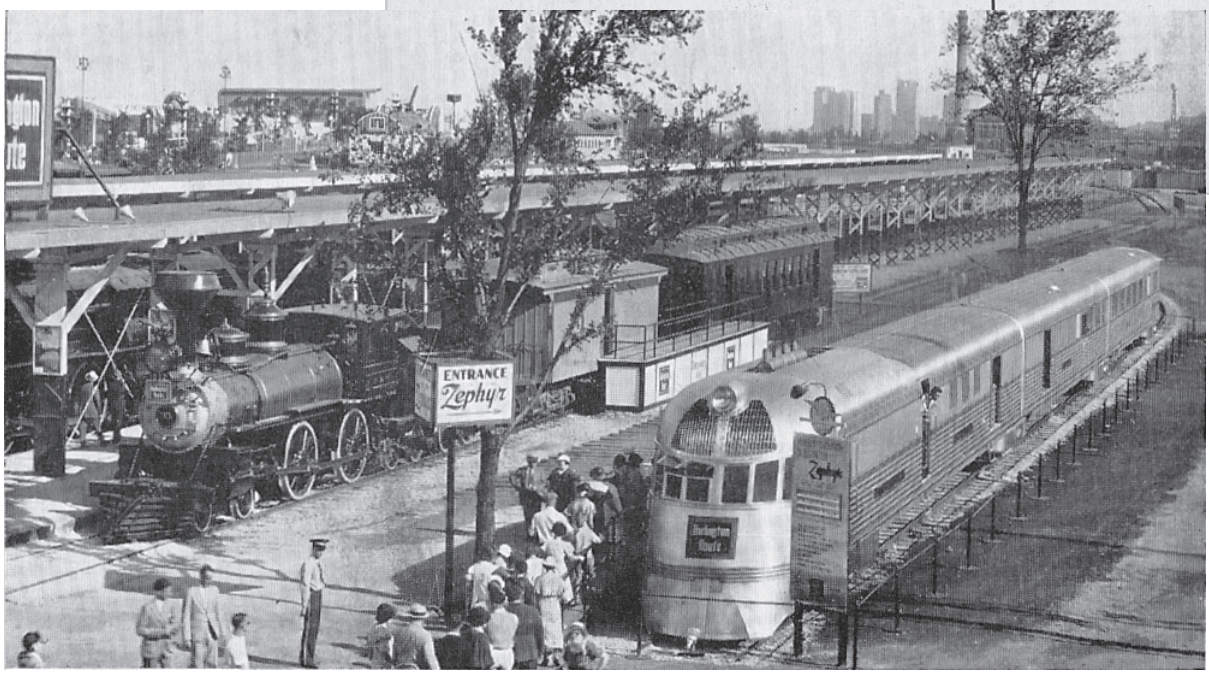
The railroad patrolled the tracks very diligently with railroad "Dicks" These were railroad employees who were charged with keeping law and order on the line in accordance with the road's rules and a very tough group they were! We kids made a game of it to outwit the Dicks, but if they caught us we usually got roughed up a bit and told in no uncertain terms what would happen if they caught us again.

All of this is background to the big event.

The Burlington announced that their new streamliner, named the "Zephyr", would make its inaugural run from Denver, Colorado. to Chicago, Illinois and would attempt a new speed record. Now this train was so different from anything seen up to then that just about everybody wanted to see it. It was made from stainless steel. It was powered by an internal combustion engine and the whole train was a unit. It was articulated (didn't really know what that meant) and was the very latest in technology.

A detailed schedule was published in the local newspapers letting everyone know just when this marvel would be passing through their area. The really unique feature of this event was the public was invited up on the right-of-way to get a close view of the train as it roared by.





You can imagine how excited we kids were about seeing this train, but also to be allowed up on the tracks without fear of getting our butts whipped by the Dicks. The Dicks were every where that day making sure that someone didn't step onto a track that a train was using.

As I remember it the Zephyr was due at our street at about five or six o'clock in the evening. Of course we were all up there long before that time to see this Silver Bullet rush by.

Well we waited and we waited and no Zephyr. No one knew why, but it was several hours past due. Then suddenly out of the west came this flashing light and bright shiny thing roared down the tracks. With a whoosh it went past us and disappeared. Even though we had stayed up there for almost three hours, we all agreed it was worth it. What a sight; no one had ever seen anything like that before.

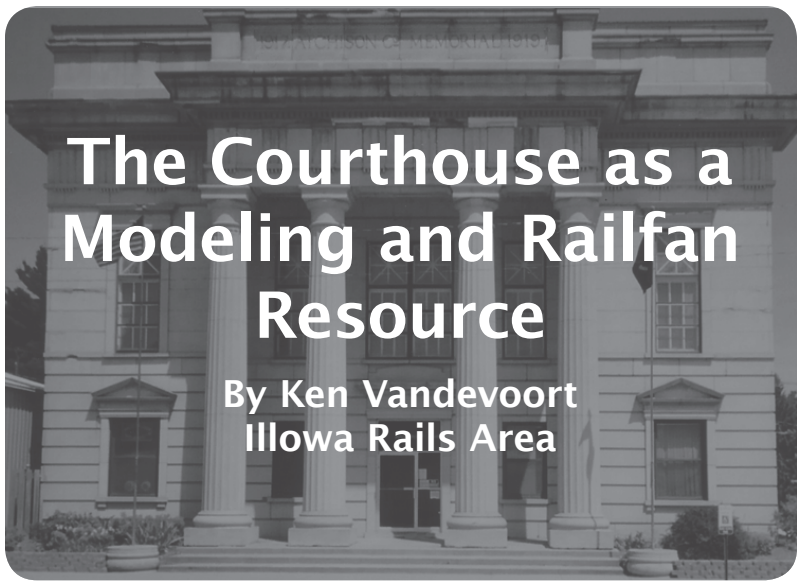
We learned later that the train had suffered some electrical difficulties in McCook, Nebraska and had been delayed almost three hours while repairs were made. In spite of this hitch the train set a new world wide record, traveling the 1,015 miles between Denver, Colorado and Chicago, Illinois in thirteen hours and five minutes at an average speed of 77.6 MPH. I read somewhere that the fuel cost for the run was under $20!

After this run the "Zephyr" went on display at "The Century of Progress", the Chicago World's Fair, where it became one of the top attractions during the second year of the fair, 1934.

The post card of the Zephyr is from that exhibit. It was sent from the Railway Post Office (RPO) on the Zephyr to my home as witnessed by the postmark.

The envelope with imprint is a "first day cover" commemorating the inaugural run. The stamp was canceled on the Zephyr's RPO. The signature on the back of the envelope is believed to be that of the Superintendent of the division where the Zephyr ran. Many stamp collectors make these a part of their collections.

After the Fair closed in the fall of 1934, the Zephyr was placed into regular service between Lincoln, Nebraska, and Kansas City, Kansas via Omaha and Council Bluffs.



The Courthouse as a Modeling and Railfan Resource

By Ken Vandevoort
Illowa Rails Area

Have you ever thought about your county courthouse as a source of information for modeling and railfanning? You would be surprised at what you can find there. It is all public information and is available for your use.

I will use Des Moines County Courthouse as an example because I know where everything is in that building. The county offices that I name may or may not have the same name in other states, but you should be able to find an office with the equivalent documents. Many courthouses now have electronic filing or scan their documents. The information we are going to discuss is so old that you will find it is probably not scanned. Get ready for some heavy books!

What can a railfan or modeler find at the courthouse? Plenty! Here are a few examples:

Railroads filed Articles of Incorporation when they were formed. Until very recently in Iowa, they were filed in the Recorder's Office as well as with the Secretary of State. Every Recorder's Office has an index that will refer you to a book and page in Articles of Incorporation. There are a few exceptions. Some Articles of Incorporation were filed in mortgage books. For example, not only does our courthouse have the articles for the Burlington and Missouri Railroad, but also for other lines under other names the Burlington built across Iowa.

Model railroaders really have it easy. They lay track wherever their heart desires. You just do it, no problem. The prototype never had this luxury. When a railroad was built, it needed to obtain a right of way. They received a deed which was usually a quit claim deed with a reversion clause. This clause stated that if the property was no longer used for railroad purposes, it would revert back to the property from where it came. Iowa is one of those states where the eastern portion of a railroad started with quit claim deeds and the western portion of the railroad may have been land grants.

After the deed was granted, it was recorded and transcribed into a deed book in the Recorder's Office. What you see in the book is not the actual deed, but usually it actually was transcribed the year the deed was filed. (Penmanship varies from county to county and year to year. Don't forget, the fountain pen, ballpoint pens, and typewriters were not invented when most railroads were built.) These deeds will tell you exactly where the railroad ran. This is very helpful if the railroad no longer exists. How can you find these deeds? There are Grantor and Grantee books. You will want to check the Grantee books for the period you think or know the railroad would have been built. Look for the name of the railroad as the grantee. Once you find an entry, make note of the book and page for the deed. Find the corresponding deed book, turn to the page number, and there is your railroad. Mergers are not a reason to file a new deed, but selling the railroad is. Don't be surprised if you see the current BNSF filed as Great Northern.

Either obtain a copy of the document or make a note of the legal description. This is how you can find your railroad if it is gone. You may also need this later in another office. If the railroad was built in a town, the legal description may be by lot and block or it could be metes and bounds. The legal descriptions outside of town are usually (but not always) in metes and bounds. That involves sections, townships, and ranges. Everything can be found with a section, township, and range description. Even lots and blocks originally came from a metes and bounds description. In Iowa and many parts of MCoR, you will also find reference to a "prime meridian", which literally is located in a swamp in Arkansas. This is all pre-GPS yet it is very accurate.

Major railroad construction may occupy several consecutive pages in a deed book or in some cases, an entire book. An example in our courthouse is one book which contains all the deeds in our county for the Burlington and Northwestern Narrow Gauge Railroad and also the Burlington and Minnesota. The entire Burlington and Northwestern became standard gauge on one Sunday. It eventually became the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Parts were sold to the Minneapolis & St. Louis and those parts were abandoned by the Chicago and Northwestern. The Burlington and Northwestern eventually became the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern and then the Rock Island. A small piece on the very south end that still exists is now the Burlington Junction.

Railroads also need to be financed. Documents may be found in the form of indentures and supplemental indentures. These are found in the mortgage books. Once again we have Grantor and Grantee books. Check the Grantor Book first. These indentures can run for years. A lot of former railroad company names will also appear on these documents. The transcribed copy in the mortgage book can be found using the book and page from the index.

Now that you are well-armed with legal descriptions from deeds, it is time to visit the County Auditor. This is where you will find the plat books for the county, usually divided by township. One caution is that the plat books exist for taxation purposes, not an exact location of properties. The exact location is on your deed.

How do you find the location of an abandoned railroad? Somebody has to own the land today. This information is listed in the transfer book. There are separate transfer books for lots and blocks and also for metes and bounds. You can find your railroad in an old transfer book under the specific legal location and then follow the location forward to the current owner. The current owner can then be located on the plat book. Some current county plat books may now be electronic and available online.

Believe it or not, a lot of current properties still include abandoned railroads in their legal description. However, current plat maps may not show them. A lot of counties use plat maps drawn by the Sidwell Company, which may leave off the old right of ways, even though they are still used in the legal description. Your county auditor probably has an older set of plats that may show the old right of ways. Just ask!

Other items of interest may also show up in the Auditor's Office. The Rock Island pulled out of Des Moines County except for a short segment of track that became the Burlington Junction. There was a flurry of deeds and old maps from the railroad's engineering department that were filed by Hawkeye Land Company on behalf of the railroad. These maps show all the sidings, water tanks, stock pens, team tracks, etc. We have a whole tube of them from Hawkeye Land Company in our Auditor's Office.

Do you remember the Articles of Incorporation Index in the Recorder's Office? Here is the list of companies that once existed down by the tracks. Many of them manufactured products that have long disappeared. These are the names you can use on your factories, warehouses, and buildings. At least you will know what types of industries were around back then. Here are the beginnings of your local switch list.

Take some time to visit your courthouse and discover the wealth of information stored there!

Conductor's Call

by Wendy Harlow
Editor

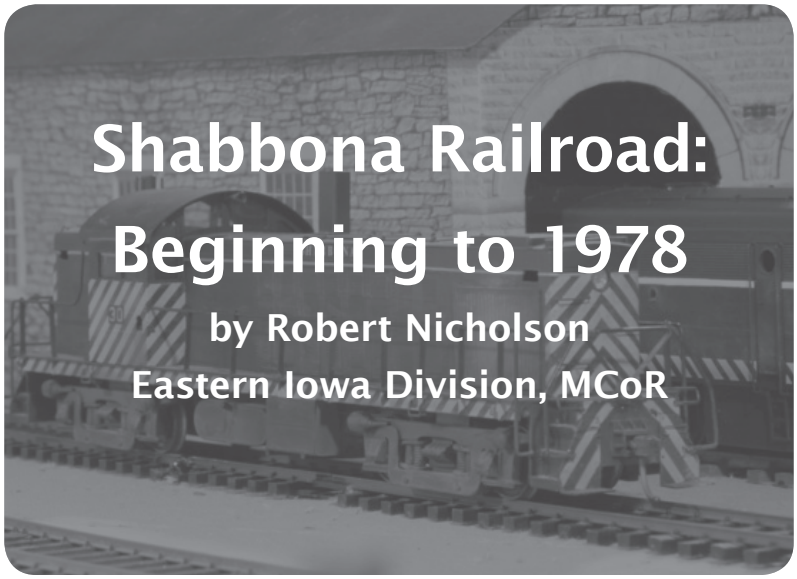
Many of you wrote and emailed me to ask who took the photo that was used for the cover on the last issue of the Kibitzer. When I need images, I turn to the Stock Xchng – a stock photography website that allows ordinary people to upload their photos to be used by other folks. It's easy to find an image that'll fit the need, and you can't beat the price – free, most of the time. The photo I used was taken by Jennifer Workman, and the bridge itself is in Augusta, Georgia. The link to the image is http://www.sxc.hu/photo/591224. Unfortunately, there isn't any more information available about it.

I was overwhelmed this quarter by the number and quality of submissions for publication. Thank you. Please continue to send us stuff!

Louis Seibel has been doing a fabulous job of finding advertisers. It's not easy, since the Kibitzer is such a specialized and small-spread magazine. Most potential advertisers want to reach audiences far larger than ours. That said, the Kibitzer is perfect for small hobby shops and home-based model railroad businesses to consider, since the entry cost is relatively low and the audience is very interested in your product.

Remember that we'll run NMRA division show ads for free, too! Send a copy to either me or Louis.

Thank you for your continued support. It is GREATLY appreciated.



Shabbona Railroad: Beginning to 1978

by Robert Nicholson
Eastern Iowa Division, MCoR

IN THE BEGINNING...

..was a void – an emptiness of gloom and despair. Oh, sure, there had been the obligatory American Flyer train set, and before that, Marx, but by 1964, that was all gone. Wreckage of failed attempts to meld a random, oddball cumulus of HO into a credible operation littered a barren model railroad landscape. No real direction or purpose threatened to extinguish the last flickering coals of a once-healthy passion for trains and railroads.

Then, one those remaining coals flickered to life briefly, in the form of a special trip to the old All-Nation hobby shop in Chicago to inspect an S "Gauge" (as was the general term in those days) wood craftsman stock car kit. It followed me home, complete with a pair of Northeastern trucks. Still unbuilt when I hired out on Santa Fe a short time later and moved several times, it eventually sank out of sight in the quagmire of HO stuff in cardboard boxes that pursued me wherever I roamed.

It happened one day in early 1972, after I finally had some roots in my own little piece of terra firma, and had reassumed some model railroading activity, where my search for "S"atisfaction had led me into Hon3. Then, one morning as I was complacently scratchbuilding an HOn3 boxcar at my workbench, with no premonition or forewarning, one of those old Northeastern trucks surfaced on my workbench, and sat there in plain sight. To this day I do not remember how it got there, much less from whence it came. After about a week of sitting there it still hadn't gone away, sort of like a cat that, although it doesn't talk, it does make its point. I felt an irresistable urge to acquire a sample copy of the old S Gauge Herald from an ad in Model Railroader.

Subsequently, I ordered a Milwaukee Road composite gondola wood craftsman kit from Bob Ristow's Wisconsin Central Supply, and also acquired a copy of S Gaugian. I built the gondola and read the magazines, which set the hook properly. Next came a Rex 0-6-0 kit from Wisconsin Central Supply, which I built and numbered #51. I was still in a quandry over a name for the railroad when the local newspaper ran a series of articles about an old Indian chief from pioneer days in the area, Chief Shabbona.

Chief Shabbona, in the days before Native Americans were discovered to be members of the human race had demonstrated an overwhelming degree of honesty, self-control, decency, and common sense and other rare human attributes among early-day pioneer and self-proclaimed "human" adversaries who exhibited virtually none in return. In a brief moment of (mostly) feigned remorse (after all, they stole almost everything he had and weren't about to give it back), they named a town after him, calling it "SHĂ'-buh-näw". Credit for using the name for the railroad, however, goes to a non-resident of the area who pronounced it, "Shŭh-BŌN'-ŭh".

Thus, Shabbona ("Shŭh-BŌN'-ŭh") RR came into being, mostly as a non-existent "paper" fabrication at that point, and has been known as such ever since.

THE EARLY '70'S, 1972 THROUGH 1974...

...were years of learning and gaining experience in the world of S, and shaking off the plentiful, inexpensive "shake-the-box" mentality of HO. S gauge was a world of limited availability that required time and skill just to amass even a small roster of rolling stock.

In that context, I decided to focus a short line with one or two small steam locomotives and a minimum of rolling stock. Fair enough, but somewhere along the way that old "scattergun approach" to acquiring stuff reared its ugly head and I acquired an A-B-A set of AF PA's with the idea of painting them up in Rock Island passenger colors. Then I found out "The Rock" never had PA's. Prototype fidelity is a great way to shoot down a good idea; I still wonder what they would have looked like. I later sold them.

I scratch built a Columbus & Greenville caboose from plans in Model Rairoader. With sliding side doors and three pairs of windows in the long end behind the cupola, it had appropriate mixed train overtones. Shabbona RR now had a locomotive and four pieces of rolling stock, but with no right of way acquisition or track construction in progress, either, it was a long way from running its first train.

In early 1973, friend and fellow hobbyist Steve Rippeteau and I photographed the 0-6-0, by now a 2-6-0, a Kinsman reefer and the C&G caboose in an outdoor setting. A couple of months later, I showed the photo to Don Heimburger at a Chicagoland S meet. I explained that Shabbona RR was a short line bridge route between the Lehigh & New England and New York, Ontario & Western, doomed forever to hauling the car back and forth between them because they were defunct and there was no way to interchange the car. I don't think he believed me, but

he ran the photo on the cover of the March, 1974, S Gaugian.

1973 was also when I first got to see the result of my efforts run on a layout for the first time, on Hans Krause's layout when the Chicagoland group met in his basement. Ol' #51 with a four car revenue train and the C&G caboose tagging the rear made an impressive showing, at least in my eyes. Yes, indeedy, Shabbona RR was going to be a "mighty fine line". I went home that night with dreams of my own layout dancing in my head. Little did I know how far off that was!

I purchased another 0-6-0 and converted it to a 2-6-0, and it became Shabbona RR #52. Both engines also acquired Rex road tenders at this time. #52 is still on the Shabbona engine roster to this day, still seviceable for special occasions (although down with a broken eccentric rod as this is written).

In June, 1974, Steve and I headed for Montana to see the last day of MILW's electrified operations. Seeing those big MILW electric locomotives gave me a fleeting idea to electrify Shabbona with AF New Haven EP-5's painted Milwaukee Road orange and black. I say "fleeting", because that ol' prototype fidelity thing reared its head again, and another good idea went down in flames. However, while driving an "all-nighter" across Wyoming, I kept myself awake trying to figure out a way to make a "freelance" 2-6-6-0 articulated locomotive from two Rex 2-6-0 chassis'.

I decided the 2-6-6-0 was not feasible, but the fact that the cab deck on a Rex 2-6-0, et.al., is about 1\8" higher than the tender deck bothered me. Prodded again by prototype fidelity, I decided to lower the locomotive cab and boiler 1\8" on the frame by cutting 1\8" out of the cylinder saddle and the cab support on #52. The operation was a success, but proved there are all kinds of ways to procrastinate on layout construction - all you have to do is look! Rebuilding the tender deck to raise it 1/8", or possibly electrifying with a couple of EP-5's, would have been a lot easier.

1975 THROUGH 1977. . .

...were years of maturing and accommodating, and seeing how others accommodated, the relative paucity of commercial products in S scale. In retrospect, the early-day creativity, ingenuity and camaraderie that arose in the face of this so-called "adversity" made it almost a blessing in disguise. Maybe the models were not always as refined as the rivet-perfect commercial offerings today, but they seemed to embody a lot more contentment and satisfying sense of personal accomplishment, not only in S scale, but model railroading as a whole.

The 1975 NASG convention at Elk Grove Village (near Chicago) was the first model railroad convention of any sort that I ever attended. Of course, Shabbona RR was well represented with #51, three or four freight cars, and the C&G caboose "stretching their legs" on the scale display layout. My reputation as a modeler and builder in S, for better or worse, was becoming more recognized from my articles and product reviews in S Gaugian and I was chosen as a judge for the model contest.

One highlight of the convention, though, was when some guy showed up at the layout and asked if he could run some of his models. The guy was [now] well-known S scale modeler Ed Loizeaux, and his models were a beautifully done rendition of a New York Central passenger train made from American Flyer conversions. I had already seen them in the contest room and made a mental note of where they would no doubt end up in the contest ratings. Now, here they were, gliding around the layout as effortlessly as a shark in an aquarium. American Flyer never looked so good! A. C. Gilbert would have been proud!

Another highlight was an Alco RS-1 built from a Locomotive Workshop brass kit (I don't remember whose it was, so if you're reading this, stand up and identify yourself) showed up at the layout. I had seen these RS-1 kits advertised in the magazines, but felt their craftsman construction from brass etchings was out of my league. Actually seeing that someone assembled one running it on the layout was the beginning, though imperceptible at that moment, of Shabbona RR's transmogrification from a 1930's-era steam-powered short line to a 1950's-era diesel-powered secondary main line operation.

Later on that year, Don Heimburger, asked me to write a column on the ubiquitou"S", on-going (forever, it "S"eems) "S"ubject of "What We Need in S". That RS-1 was still on my mind, so my contribution was that "what S needed" was a group effort to create RS-1's by assigning individuals to assemble designated components from Locomotive Workshop kits for final assembly into complete locomotives, much like an assembly line.

After that column appeared in the November, 1975, S Gaugian, I got the feeling some might interpret my comments as a confession that I couldn't build one for myself. There was only one way to dispel that notion. I commissioned an RS-1 kit from Locomotive Workshop, and a power unit from Jon Beveridge, via U.S. mail. In December, 1976, Shabbona RR #30, an Alco RS-1 (boiler-equipped for passenger duty) joined the roster. I had also acquired a pair of Miller Alco switch engines as Shabbona RR's # 27 and # 28 (I think - anybody seen them, lately?) thanks to AF collector Ken Heine's skill with an airbrush. My short line pretense was stretched to the limit.

After cutting my teeth on the RS-1, I decided I couldn't quit there and next tackled a set of Alco FA/FB-2 brass kits from Locomotive Workshop. They debuted, in running but not finished condition, on

the Chicagoland "S" Fest display layout in 1977. Now, things were beginning to get serious – Alco cab units were not exactly common fodder on short lines! The time had come to rethink my priorities.

1978...

... began with problems in Joyland. The Shabbona RR engine roster had mushroomed by two unpainted Alco switch engines and three brass Alco [erected kit] locomotives, two of which (the FA/FB set), were definitely not short line material. None were painted because I was still deliberating over a paint scheme for Shabbona.

My friend, Steve Rippeteau, thought GM&O maroon and red would really accent the RS-1. I thought Erie-Lackawanna would be nice, especially on the FA/FB set. I finally chose the psuedo-Santa Fe black with white zebra stripes that graces Shabbona locomotives to this day. The Miller S-4's went to Ken Heine, while RS-1 #30 went to Bob Ernst, who then lived in Knoxville, IL, and emerged in the new paint scheme. That left the Alco FA/FB scheme temporarily undecided, because no way was it going to get a pseudo warbonnet anything, red and silver, black and white, or anything else. That would have been blasphemy – BLASPHEMY, I tell you!

In July, 1977, I had gone into Santa Fe engine service, and my new home terminal was Ft. Madison, Iowa, but my home was still in Lacon. Thus, I kept myself awake for many a midnight mile in my 1978 Mazda pick-up truck (capable of 34MPG on unleaded gas without "hybrid technology", Al Gore, or even a catalytic convertor, for that matter) deliberating over smaller, but larger than a shortline, railroads or Class I branch lines that might serve as a prototype example for Shabbona. Aberdeen & Rockfish was a strong contender, as was Santa Fe's Pekin District, but both came up short.

I also pored over model railroad plans and plan books, too, but they all seemed to have a synthetic, shiny plastic "model railroad" sheen to them. Their chimerical premise for existence was just too obvious or shaky, plus, a lot of them reflected a "9-to-5" ambiance in their design and operation. For Shabbona to acquire, in a freelance context, the authenticity I envisioned, it had to do better, especially the operating department.

In November, 1978, my engine roster increased by one when I won an EMD SW-1 brass switch engine kit from Locomotive Workshop. at the "S" Fest in Waukesha, Wisconsin. It came with a lot of potent suggestions that it sure would look good on the scale display layout at the 1979 "S" Fest (it did, in all its bare brass glory). So, now, EMD had rooted itself in Shabbona's Alco patch! It became #22 under Bob Ernst's expertise with an airbrush.

Then, one cold winter night, I was taking a train across the frozen tundra-like Illinois landscape under a full moon. The head brakeman was telling me about the abandoned M&StL line that extended from Oskaloosa, Iowa, to Peoria, Illinois, where he once worked. As we went by Nemo, where it used to pass under Santa Fe, it hit me like a speeding slushball to the side of my head in a schoolyard snowball combat zone. M&StL's Peoria District was Perfect, Baby Bear's Porridge, if you will, for Shabbona purposes. It was a seondary Class I route, non-signalled, and had only a few daily movements. Shabbona's current locomotive roster was already more than adequate. A rolling stock inventory could be built up in a reasonable period of time (for S scale) from kits and AF conversions.

The frosting on the cake was that the M&StL (Minneapolis & St. Louis) was once called Iowa Central, the name of my adopted state (the idea that Iowa is flat is a myth promulgated by people who don't live here – but secretly wish they did!). Well now – this was the closest I ever came to renaming Shabbona.

Everything began to fall into place, including a unique black with white zebra stripe scheme for Shabbona cab units that complemented the switch engines and road switchers. Shabbona RR had entered a new phase. All it needed now was a suitable trackplan – and a place to put it. I was on a roll, at last!

Steel in the Streets: Laying Tracks for Streetcars by Hand

by John Carty
Gateway Division, MCoR

I have learned two key lessons through model railroading. First: never say never. Secondly: crow is not too bad with enough ketchup or chili powder. When I returned to the hobby about ten years ago, I swore that I would never lay track by hand. Since you are reading this article, you must realize that I have consumed at least one fowl serving.

I originally ran flex track down the middle of the street on my layout, after which I realized that maintaining the flange way while paving the street would be problematic at best. Of course the flex track also resembled socks on a rooster. I then found the article "Single Point Switch Construction for Street Track" on Trolleyville.com where David Gairo describes constructing a single point turnout using code 100 and code 70 rails. Building off this information, I proceeded to lay some 20 linear feet of rail upon which my streetcars operate reliably. Upon paving, the hand laid rail truly resembles girder rail in the street.

PREPARATION

The first step is to collect the listed supplies and tools. Stage these goodies where you can access them easily, without constantly bumping, knocking, or tripping over them. I tried to make the lists exhaustive, and actually feel quite tired just looking at them.

Begin by surveying and marking your route. Use the metal straight edges to draw your tangent (straight) track. Avoid using wooden rulers, as they tend to warp, which you will not discover until something simple becomes a nightmare, like paving the street. Do not set any curves just yet. You should end up with a series of connected straight lines running from point A to point B. Any sidetracks will simply branch from the main track at an angle. Take the time now to create some templates for curves. I made mine from corrugated cardboard in radii of 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 inches. I drew the curves by marking a center point and then measuring and dotting the desired distance, after which I connected the dots. Cut the templates out and keep in a handy location.

At this point plan the location of your passing tracks. These should be at regular intervals. Remember, streetcar traffic tends to be dense with cars running as often as every ten minutes. On most single-track streetcar lines, wye turnouts at each end of a passing section divert traffic to the right allowing cars to pass one another. The clearance between the two passing tracks received the name "Devil's Strip" and could be a narrow as 3 inches. On my layout, I managed a Devil's strip measuring a scale 6 inches. This is an element where you can elicit a few "oos" and "ahs" as the cars just miss each other. The tangent portion of the passing tracks must at least equal the longest wheelbase in your fleet. If you plan to operate coupled streetcars, then this length must

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

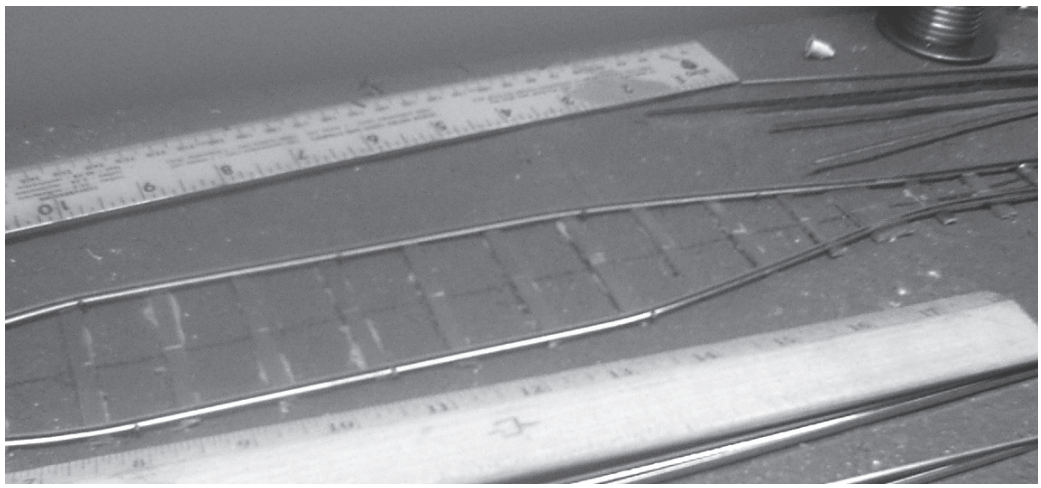
- Code 100 rail (I stripped mine from Atlas flex track)
- Code 70 rail (I stripped mine from Micro Engineering flex track)
- 0.032" brass stock
- 0.005" brass stock
- 1/16" brass tubing
- 3/32" brass tubing
- 0.028" brass wire
- 0.020-0.028" music wire
- PC Board ties or PC Board stock
- Construction adhesive such as Liquid Nails
- Fine rosin core solder
- Wire for track leads
- 0.030" styrene strip
- Zap a Gap or other ACC

TOOLS REQUIRED:

- Metal straight edges (yardstick and 1 foot rule)
- Motor tool with cutoff wheels and cutters
- Razor saw and old razor saw blade
- Track nails
- Triangular, flat, and needle files
- Pin vise and wire drills
- Utility knife
- Hobby knife with #11 blade
- 40-watt soldering iron
- Soldering pencil
- 2 3-point track gages
- NMRA gage (not required, but very helpful)
- Dial caliper (not required, but very helpful)
- Fine pointed permanent marker such as a Sharpie (black is best)

at least equal the distance from the front truck of the first car to the rear truck of the second car.

Carefully measure the width of all of your streetcars using a dial caliper if you have one. Make sure you write down the measurements to avoid confusing yourself. Add an additional 3 to 12 scale inches (2–3.5 mm or 0.069–0.148") to the widest width measured (on my layout this resulted in the outside rails of the passing section being right at 2 inches apart, but we will get to that later). Measure half of your calculated figure on either side of the centerline you already drew on the layout and mark this as well and then draw lines parallel to the centerline denoting the centerlines of the passing tracks. Mark off the ends of the tangent portion of the passing tracks. Using the templates you made earlier, connect the passing centerlines to the track centerline. This will result in "S" curves at each end of the passing tracks.



Connect sidetracks to the main track as well as curves in the main track using templates in the same manner. Where possible avoid using the minimum radius by using the broadest radius practical just like the prototype streetcar lines, although curves of 35–40' (5–6") radius were the norm when turning corners on the prototype. On my layout, I used 8–10" (60–75') radius curves at the passing tracks. If you plan to build a reversing loop, such as at the town square, the loop will necessitate a 40' (6") radius.

MAKING AND LAYING TIES

Begin construction by preparing your ties. If you are using PC board, you will need to cut it into strips 1/8" wide. If you are using commercial PC board ties material, this will not be necessary. On the layout make a mark across your centerline approximately ever inch with the magic marker. I found it easiest to count the number of ties of each length I need. For single-track areas, cut each tie to 1 1/8" to 1 ¼" long. For the passing areas and turnouts, cut the ties 1 1/8 to 1 ¼" longer than the distance between centers. Scribe a line at the center of each tie and a second line where one rail will be located (8 mm or 0.325" in HO), making certain with ties for passing areas that you are locating an outside rail.

Using construction adhesive, glue ties with the center mark on the centerline perpendicular to the centerline. Try to put the second mark on the same side of the centerline for each tie. Since it is flammable while wet, give the glue at least a day to dry. Now you are ready to embark on the great adventure: laying rail.

LAYING STRAIGHT TRACK

Pick a place to start. Avoid starting on a curve, loop, or passing area if at all possible. Although I laid the rail in pieces 3 feet long, lengths of 12–18 inches certainly eases the task. Align a piece of code 100 rail along the second mark on the ties and place a rail joiner on one end. Secure it to the roadbed with track nails, ensuring that the rail is straight. Do not be afraid to utilize your metal straight edges. Using a soldering iron affix the rail to every other tie using rosin core solder. When you reach the end, start back at the beginning and solder to the ties that you skipped on the first pass. Soldering in this manner allows heat to dissipate preventing rail and ties from overheating and becoming unsoldered. Put a rail joiner on another piece of code 100 rail and, using two 3-point track gages, locate and secure this piece with track nails to the opposite side of the ties from the first, staggering the ends. Secure the second rail in the same manner as the first. Remove the nails from the inside of the rails only.

Cut two pieces of code 70 rail a little shorter than the pieces of code 100 rail already attached to the ties. Place the head of the code 70 rails into the web of the code 100 rail on the inside of the track. Hold the code 70 rails in place against the code 100 running rails using track nails. Using the soldering iron and rosin core solder, affix the guardrail to the running rail. If needed, use the soldering pencil on one side of the assembly and the heavier soldering iron on the other. Make one continuous joint on each side. When both sides have been soldered, remove all of the track nails except at the end where you will be continuing to add rail.

Proceed with the next pieces of rail in the same manner, taking care to stagger the joints between code 100 and code 70 rails in order to improve durability. Also, solder the butt joints where two rails meet. Try to avoid locating joints over ties, as the joiner will create a hump in the rail. Every so often, if

you plan to use 2-rail operation, take a cutoff wheel in a motor tool or a razor saw and cut the copper cladding on the ties between the rails. If you are using overhead to power your trains, omit this step.

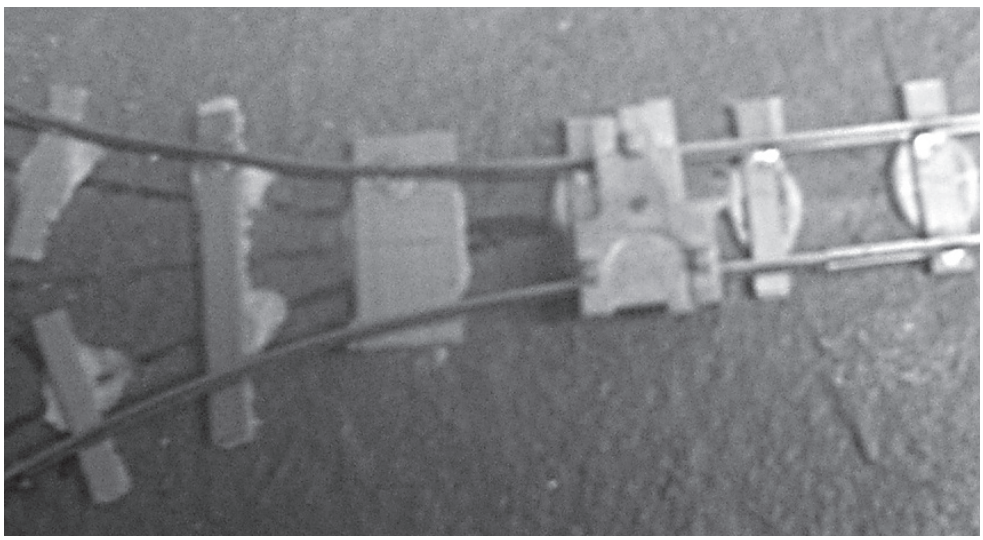
Every so often clean the excess solder off the rails and out of the flange way and recheck the gauge using the NMRA gage and track gages. Additionally, run or push a car through and see if passes cleanly. If it does, you are in good shape. If it does not, check to make certain everything is clean and in gauge. If the track work is clean and in gauge you may need to add a high guard. A high guard is simply a piece of 0.005" brass cut to length with a height of 1/8" soldered to the guard of the flange way. I used several of these when I laid my own track and they cure a multitude of evils.

Solder power leads at regular intervals to the top of the ties outside of the rails. I put my leads no more than a foot apart. Use your own judgment regarding how often you need to install leads.

I know that all of this sounds a bit daunting. In practice, however, this works quite easily by taking this one step at a time.

LAYING CURVES

Now that you are an expert regarding the laying of straight track, I offer you a chance to broaden your horizons. Curves in the track really present no more difficulties than do tangents; they just curve. Begin by bending a piece of code 100 rail to the desired curvature. A rail bender like the one sold by Micro Mark would prove pretty handy, but a pair of pliers will suffice. Be patient, a mauled rail has no value beyond scrap or as a detail on a work flat. When you have the rail bent to the proper curvature, tack it in place with track nails and solder it to the ties and the previous piece of rail. Bend, secure, and solder the opposite rail in a like manner, checking the gauge with your 3-point gages. Do not rely on an NMRA gage, as the tight curves will require track that is out of gauge in order to function.



Bend the code 70 rail in a like manner, being careful to bend against the web of the rail. Once again, secure and solder just like with the straight track. Once again, patience will reward you by making the job much smoother. Remember, while you are bending rail: Model Railroading is fun!

SIMPLE SINGLE-POINT TURNOUTS

Now we come the really nifty part. Although, in truth, this is no more difficult than what you already have built. The results, however, will certainly elicit "oohs" and "ahs" from your fellow model railroaders. Even those in the know will give you at least an "attaboy." Before I begin, please note that much of this section recapitulates the aforementioned article "Single Point Switch Construction for Street Track" by David Gairo on Trolleyville.com.

Turnouts in the street typically used single-point switches, as traffic abused any equipment in or on the pavement. The point will move on tope of the flange way, as opposed to conventional turnouts where the points are pieces of rail. The method here will produce left-hand, right-hand, and wye turnouts equally well.

The first step requires you to determine which line will be the main route and which will be the diverging route. After deciding this, bend a piece of code 100 rail to match the geometry of the outside rail of the main route. Although on branches this is obvious, passing areas require some planning in regards to how your cars will operate: right-hand or left-hand running. On the passing areas of my layout, I prefer to lay a single piece of rail all the way from the near turnout through the far turnout. Although this produces a nice, solid assembly, it is not necessary. Next, bend a second piece of code 100 rail to match the geometry of the outside rail of the diverging route putting a slight kink in the rail at the beginning of the curve, where the point will meet the rail. Secure both pieces in place with track nails. If this is a passing area, use a couple of pieces of spare rail and two streetcars to ensure that the cars will not touch each other when passing one another on the parallel passing tracks. Measure three times and solder once or else you will solder and curse a minimum of three times. When all is according to Hoyle, solder the rails in place and write down the measurements for later reference when building additional turnouts.

Next bend a piece of code 100 rail to form the other rail for the diverging route. File a taper on the curved end where it will meet the rail for the main route.

This will form the mate to the switch (the part lacking the moving point. Using a small piece of code 70 rail as a spacer between the rail for the main route and this rail for the diverging route, position the rail with track gages and secure in place with track nails. Solder in place and remove the nails from the guard side. To this assembly bend a piece of code 70 rail to run along the diverging rail just soldered from the main route to at least past the location of the frog. Put a slight kink in the guardrail to form the beginning of the curve at the mate area. Secure to the running rails with track nails then solder.

Cut a piece of code 100 rail to fit between the point and frog. This rail should fit flush against the curved rail and be cut square at the point end. Allow ¾" to 1" for the point. Position using track gages and tack with track nails. Solder in place and remove the nails on the inside of the rail. Cut a piece of code 70 rail to fit against the rail just installed from the frog past the point area. Before soldering, position this piece and mark the point area. Remove the guard (base of the rail) through the entire point area using a file. Reposition, hold in place with track nails, and solder away.

Cut and fit a piece of code 100 rail and code 70 rail to form the running and guard rails of the main route past the point. Once again, tack in place with track nails and solder in place. Using a cutoff wheel in your motor tool cut the flange way through the rail of the diverging route. Do not cut below the web of the code 70 rail flange way. Dress with a piece of hacksaw or razor saw blade.

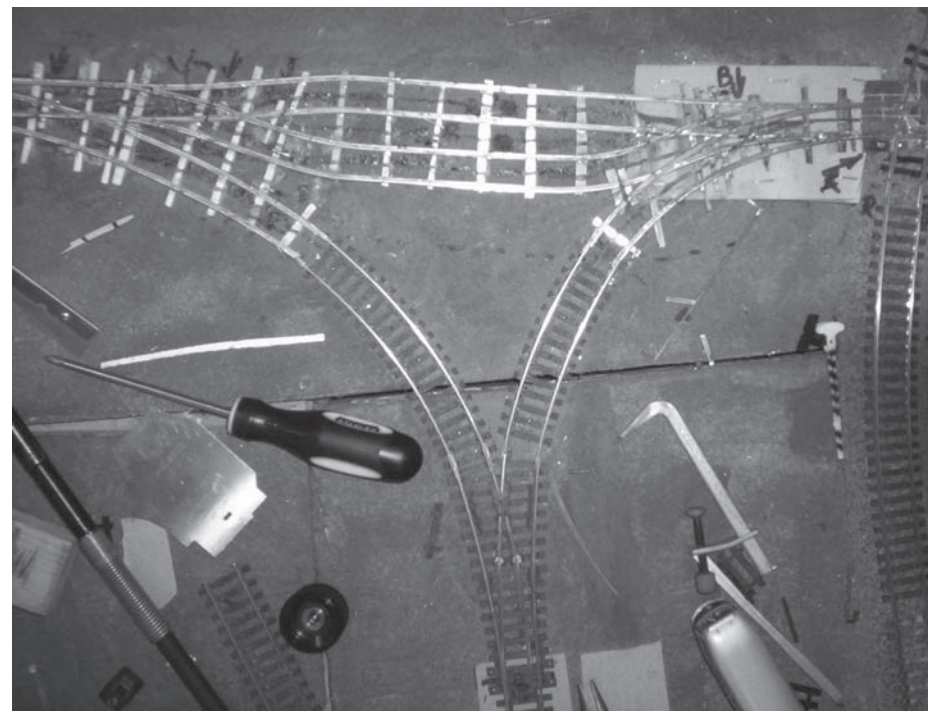
Cut a strip of 0.005" brass 1/8 inch wide. Next, cut two pieces long enough to run along the point area and along the inside of the curve forming the high guard. You may wish to bend a small pocket in the high guard at the frog to receive the point when it is thrown for the diverging route. Position the high guards and solder in place. Do not overdo the solder or else you will be scraping it away to clear the flanges of the wheels. The material is thin and attaches quite easily. Using your motor tool, razor saw, and files, smooth the flange ways through the point and mate areas. The point will function only as smoothly as you make the point area.

If you will be operating via 2-rail, you will need to isolate the frog and rails. I do not power my frogs but you can use any circuit to do so if you wish. I try to keep the frog as short as reasonably possible. Determine where you wish to cut and sever the rails with a cutoff disk in you motor tool. Take your time, since if you overheat the rails, you will melt the solder. The resulting repair is a real stinker. Also at this time sever the copper cladding on the ties between rails of different polarity. After isolating the frog and rails, insert small pieces of 0.030" styrene in the gaps and secure with ACC. File the styrene to match the profile of the tracks after installation.

Lay out a point onto a piece of 0.032" brass. The heel should be 1/16 inch wide and should taper to a theoretical point at the tip. Drill a #67 hole in the heel. Cut out your point. Insert a piece of 0.028" wire through the hole in the heel and slide a piece of 1/16" brass tubing over the wire which is long enough to pass through the track base clearing it by at least a half inch. Solder the assembly together and trim the wire above the heel. Near the bottom of the assembly, drill another #67 hole through the tubing parallel to the point.

Drill a hole through the rail and track base to accept a length of 3/32" tubing. The tubing should reach from the flange way all the way through the track base providing a bushing for the pivot but still shorter than the pivot. Solder the bushing to the track. Once again smooth the area. Insert the point assembly through the bushing to check the fit and file the point as necessary. When you are satisfied with the fit, insert into the bushing and slip a length of music wire through the hole in the bottom of the point assembly and secure it with a drop of ACC.

If the switch is to be a spring switch like those used for a passing area, put a drywall screw partway into the track base from below to hold the point in the proper position. Test the point to make certain that it springs back when a wheel pushes it out of the way.



If you plan to use a switch machine, the mounting is little more interesting and will require another article.

CONSTRUCTING REVERSING LOOPS

A reversing loop merely consists of a wye turnout where the two ends of the loop meet the main track. On my layout I maintain right-hand running, so the right-hand route is the main route. Begin by marking the circle for the loop using either a trammel or your templates. Try to center the loop onto the centerline of your main track. Next, draw curves from the centerline of the main track to meet with the loop. Mark around the circle and connections every inch. Lay ties perpendicular to the track center of the loop and at the turnout area perpendicular to the centerline of the main track. Cut ties of the appropriate length and secure them with construction adhesive.

Assemble the turnout per the above instructions for construction of turnouts. Although it is very tempting, do not try to bend a single piece of rail around the loop. For starters a three-foot length of rail will come up short around both the inner or outer side of a 6" radius loop, and doing so deprives you of room to fudge. Fudge room is good. While building the turnout, do not complete the outer rail of the loop. Instead construct the inner rail first and locate the outer rail from the inner using three-point gages. When you are finished, the loop will be considerably out of gage when compared to the NMRA gauge. This is correct, so do not worry. If you do manage to put the loop right in gage, cars will derail per the ten commandments of traction. In order to accommodate the wheelbases of the locomotives and rolling stock, per Railway Track and Maintenance, the track must be out of gauge.

The last step, if you plan to operate by two-rail, requires you to isolate the rails. The frog needs only to be isolated on the point end from the outside rails, therefore you may leave it attached to the inner rail of the loop. The outside rails must be isolated from both the frog and the loop. You will need to wire the loop using either a double-pole-double-throw switch or with a reversing circuit such as those sold by Digitax or Model Rectifier Corporation (MRC). Since I use digital command control on my layout, I opted for the simpler reversing circuit method and have used both of the aforementioned products, which work quite nicely.

BUILDING DIAMONDS

Street track crossing any track at grade results in what railroaders call diamonds (sorry to disappoint any wives out there). I have built four of these assemblies all of which cross standard (as opposed to girder) rails, although little difference exists between this type of diamond and one allowing girder rails to cross each other.

Begin by cutting a square of printed circuit board approximately 1 ¼" to 1 ½" on each side for a base. Glue the base to the roadbed at the location of the crossing. Cut a piece of running rail (code 100) to stretch from the main line to the opposite rail of the crossing track and solder in place just as in the previous assemblies. If you are crossing street track allow room for the guardrail. After it is soldered in place, install the guardrail. Now install the running rail for the crossing route so that it stretched across the intersection and meets the rail already installed. Next, install a second running rail for the main route in gauge to the first and reaching the near rail of the crossing route, which you just installed. Install the guardrails (code 70) for this running rail as well.

Continue in this fashion forming a pinwheel. Make sure that the routes are properly aligned and install guardrails as you progress.

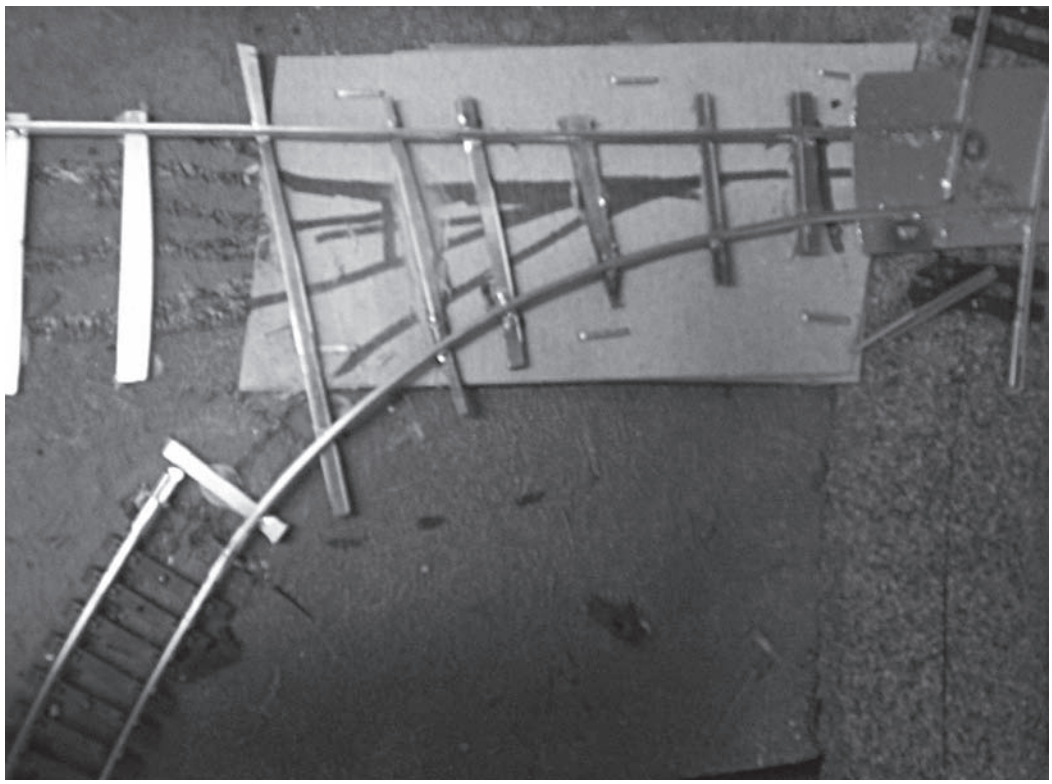
After installing all of the rails and guardrails required, cut the flange ways to the web of the guardrail using a cut off wheel in a motor tool. Clean the flange ways using a razor saw or hacksaw blade and finish with files. If you operate using two-rail, isolate rails of opposite polarity. You should be able to leave two frogs attached to their respective rails. Be careful here and cut a little at a time so that the heat does not unsolder rails. Also, this is an area where little bits of uncut rail and copper cladding can hide, creating shorts and driving you out of your mind. Please do not ask how I know this. After determining that no short circuits exist in the assembly, insert styrene into the gaps, securing with ACC, and shape the pieces to match the contour of the rails.

THREE-WAY TURNOUTS

The idea of constructing three-way turnouts sounds like a topic for the old TV series "Boris Karloff Presents," but in practice few difficulties. First two differences between a simple turnout (2-way) and a three-way turnout should be noted. A simple turnout has a single frog located where the routes diverge, while a 3-way turnout has three frogs: one for each diverging route and a third where the routes cross each other, called the "crotch" frog. The three-way turnout also requires two points, one for each diverging route, instead of just one in the simple turnout. Additionally, although most people picture a three-way turnout with both diverging routes branching from a single point, no rule exists requiring you to build it that way. In fact, Railway Track and Maintenance advises trackmen to stagger the points even though this locates the crotch frog off-center when compared to the rails. This being noted, you can now begin construction.

Start by determining the routes and marking the centerlines with a marker. Mark the lines every inch to designate the locations for ties. Cut the ties long enough to reach about a quarter of an inch past the

outside rails on each side. Glue ties in place using construction adhesive and allow the glue to dry.



Bend a piece of running rail to follow one route on the outside of the turnout, putting in a slight kink at the beginning of the curve if this will be a diverging route. Spike and solder in place. Next do the same with another rail following the far route on the outside of the turnout, once again putting in a slight kink at the beginning of the curve if this will also be a diverging route. These two rails form the exterior of the turnout.

Next, bend a piece of running rail for the other rail of the first diverging route. File a taper on the curved end where it meets the other exterior rail. Using a small piece of guardrail as a spacer between these rails, position the diverging rail with track gages and solder after spiking in place. Now add a piece of guardrail to follow from the exterior rail onto this diverging rail, putting a slight kink in the rail to form the beginning of the curve at the mate area. Secure with nails and solder in place. Next add the second rail and guardrail of the other diverging route from the first exterior rail to the rail just installed. After this rail assembly is soldered add the rails and guard to extend past the first diverging route.

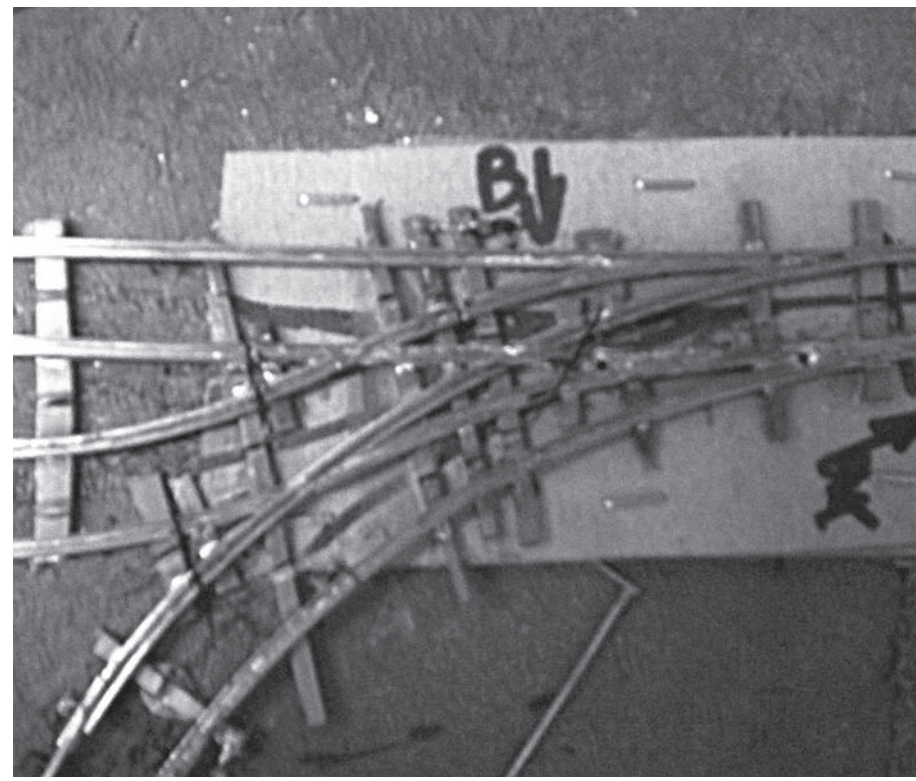
You have now completed the crotch frog, less flange ways.

To the above assembly, add the rails for the center route. Allow for the points for each route as you do so, just like when constructing a simple switch. After you add each rail, go ahead and install the portion located past the rails connected to the crotch frog. Remember to remove the portion of the guardrail at the points a la simple turnout construction. Install the bushings, high guard, and points in the same manner as before.

Using a motor tool and files cut and dress the flange ways through each frog. If you are using two-rail operation, isolate the frogs with great care and sever the copper cladding of the printed circuit board as well. Glue styrene into the gaps around the frogs and shape as before.

CONCLUSION

Now that you have completed this primer on street track, the population on your layout can ride the trolleys of your system to wherever your fancy takes them. Obviously pavement, line poles, and overhead wire will be needed, but run for a while on just the rails to make certain everything works. I will address these areas in later installments.



Scratch Building Truss Bridges

by Ryan Moats
Western Heritage Division, MCoR

My basement layout models an HOn3 mining/logging road, based on my travels to Colorado. As such, the bridges for this layout need to be wooden rather than steel. After much searching for kits that looked good, I decided to try my hand at scratch building with the "Truss Bridge Kit" in HO scale available from Black Bear Construction Company (www.blackbearcc.com).

This kit comes in different forms: just the jig and instructions, just a materials pack, or the jig and materials pack combined. For ease in getting started, I bought the jig and materials pack. The instructions include a table for determining the size lumber for various scales so that one can buy lumber at your local hobby store. If you buy the materials pack, the quality of the supplied scale lumber compares favorably to that available from Northeastern Scale Lumber (www.northeasternscalelumber.com). In addition, the materials pack includes piano wire for tension rods and Grandt line NBWs (Nut Bolt Washer) for detailed assembly.

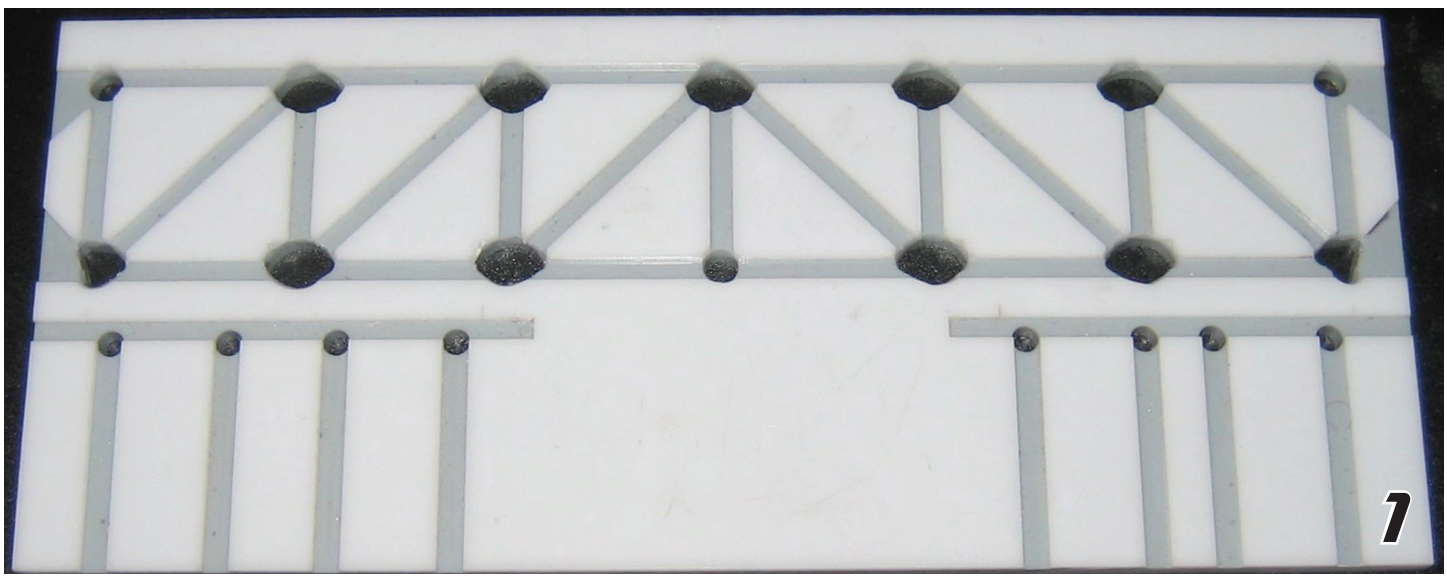
The jig [picture #1] is made out of acrylic - using a cyanoacrylate adhesive (Superglue) is not a good idea, plain old white glue works just fine. The open ends of the jig allow for modular building of larger bridges. Further, the jig also supports constructing pier braces. These also double for spacing track stringers on the bridge bed itself (both standard and narrow guage spacing is covered). In addition, the jig comes with two pages of plans that aid with spacing of deck beams as well as the different possible tension rod arrangements.

Before beginning assembly, you need to know how long the bridge will be and if you want to weather the wood before or after bridge construction. After some experimentation, pre-weathering is definitely a good idea. My preference for this is either A-West's Weather-It for Wood and Plaster or a mixture of india ink and rubbing alcohol.

Directions for construction are reasonably clear and the following review presents a condensed version so that readers can judge the complexity for themselves. Building a bridge consists of first building the side plates, then adding floor beams, details and stringers.

Bridge side panels are built in the jig, These panels consist of 12"x12" chords, pots, and braces. When starting out, the bottom chord is left long so that it may be trimmed to the correct size during detailing. The vertical posts for the end points of the plate are added along with the top chord. Once in place, cut and glue in the remaining vertical posts.

The next step is to add the diagonal braces. With an even number of panels, this assembly is straightforward. With an odd number of panels, the middle panel has two diagonal braces that are joined with a lap joint in the middle of the panel. After this, allow the glue to set up and remove the side panel from the jig. Repeat these steps until you have the number of side panels needed for your bridge.



Truss Bridges (con't)

For spacing and alignment of the side panels, a page of graph paper works best. Set up the side panels with 15' to 16' inside clearance between them and square.. Floor beams are cut from 8"x12" stock and the first two go outside the end-most vertical posts. Since these hold the diagonal tension rods, holes should be drilled at a 45 degree angle (a pin vise works best for this). After gluing these two beams in place, set the assembly aside to dry thoroughly. Once dry, the other beams that are next to the vertical posts are added and once again, the assembly is allowed to dry thoroughly. This ensures enough strength for handling during the remaining steps.

Notch and add the floor beams that fit next to the diagonal braces next, with the remaining full length floor beams evenly spaced out and added (the short beams that go between the vertical posts of the side panel are added a little later). At this point, trim the bottom chords of the side panels to the bridge's final length (be sure to leave room for support for the bridge).

Detailing starts with two additional bottom chords are cut from 12"x12" stock and glued to the underside of the bridge, using the pier jig to space these chords correctly - under the stringers that will hold the rails and ties. Cut diagonal stops from 6"x12" stock and glued to the bottom chords. Notch both ends of the floor beams that rest on these stops and glued over the top of the stops. Each of the bottom chords on the underside of the bridge also have an 8"x12" 'shoe' glued in place. These shoes have a 30 degree angle cut on the inside edge of them. Add the short floor beams that go between the vertical posts and cut and glue the last wooden pieces (the two 8"x8" stringers for the rails and ties) on top of the bridge, using the bottom chords as spacing guides.

Use a pin vise and small drill bit to drill holes for the tension rods and NBWs. Slide the rod through these holes and glue into the bottom holes, then glue the covering NBW in place. Instead of painting the NBWs and tension rods before construction, painting afterwards allows rust stains on the wood surfaces around the rods and NBWs to be modeled. Floquil's rust paint (from Testors) and a 3/0 brush works well.

The following four bridges show examples of the possibilities of this jig: a 34' Queen's Post truss bridge [picture #2 of bridge in layout], a 54' Howe truss bridge [picture #3 of bridge in layout], a 74' Howe truss bridge [picture #4 of bridge], and an 84' Howe truss bridge [picture #5].

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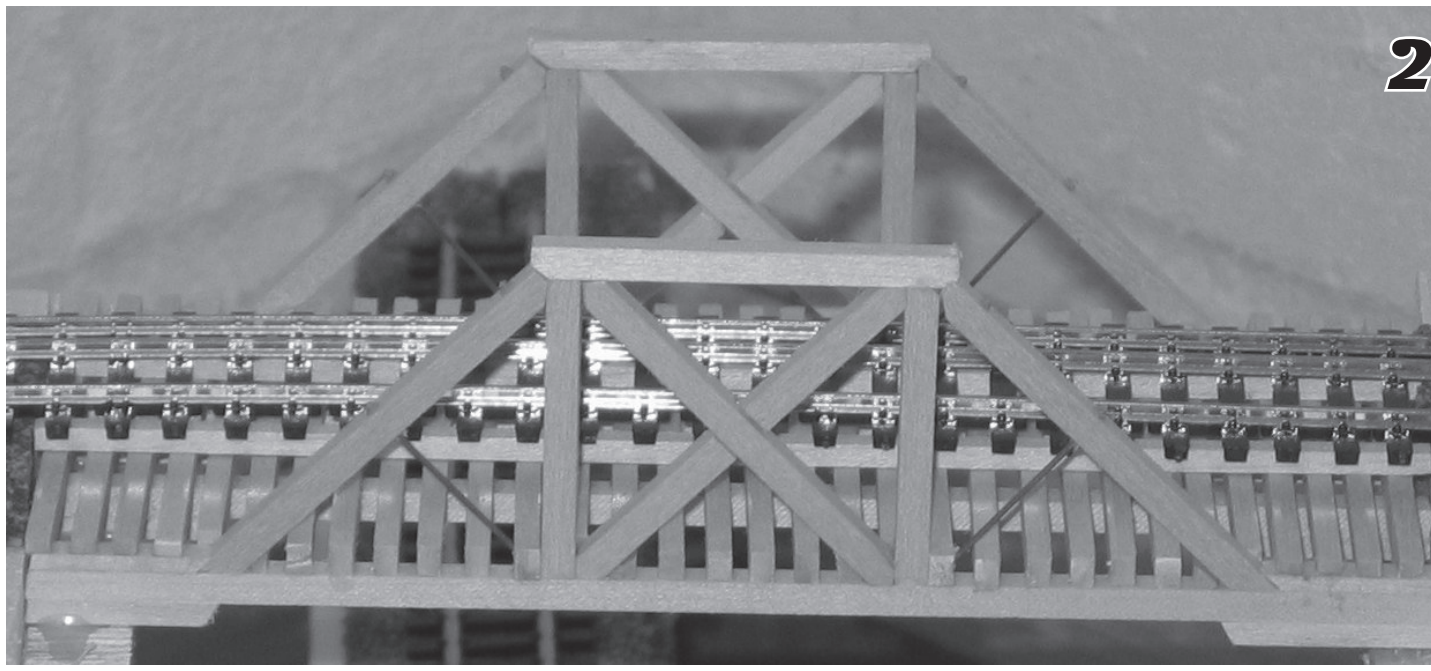

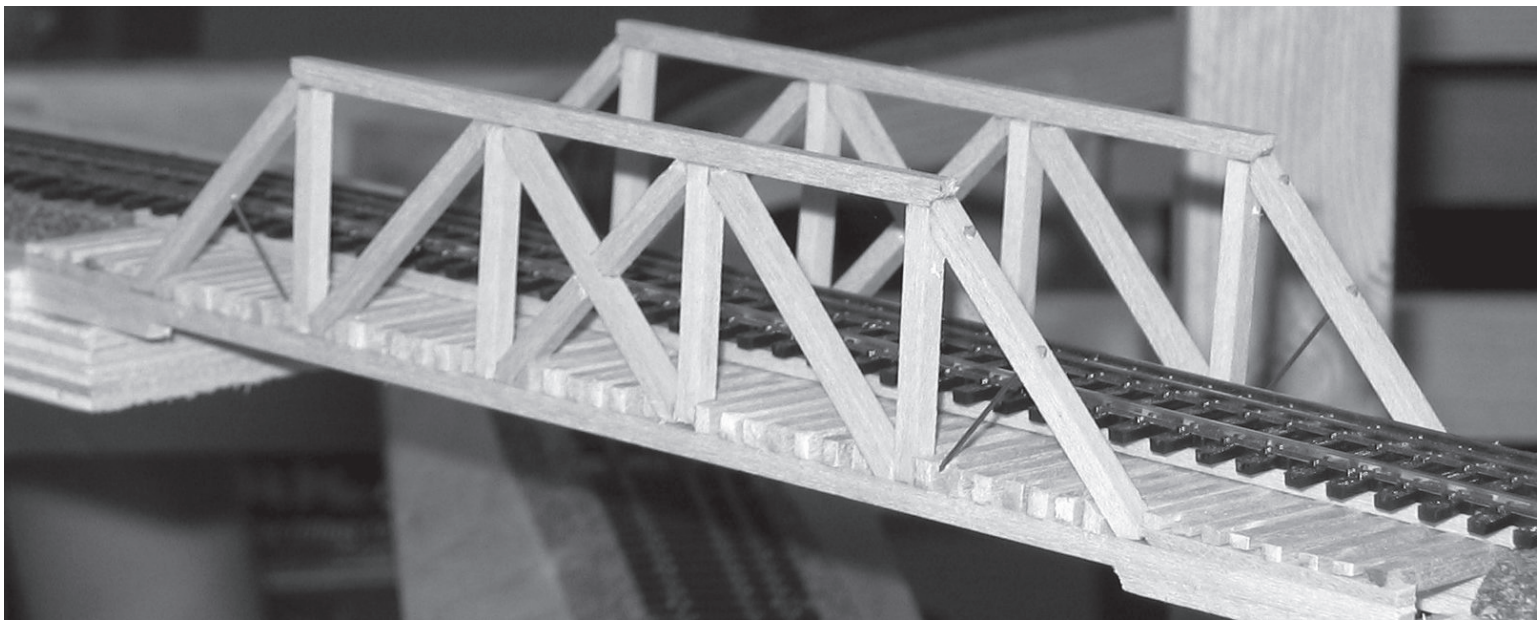

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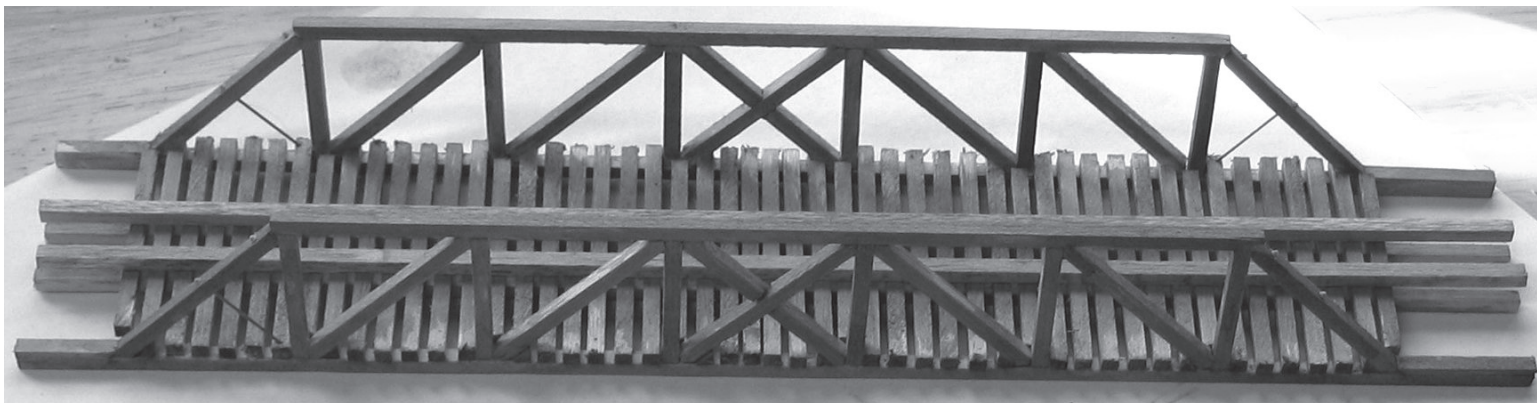

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Region Club Roster

This roster was created for the benefit of members of the Mid-Continent Region. It identifies those clubs that are presently active in MCoR. Any group that wishes to be included in the listing should send the club's name, contact address and scale interest to Louis Seibel (his info is inside the front cover). Listings in this section are free of charge.
A more complete list can be found at http://mcor-nmra.org/MCoR_Clubs.html

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Webster Groves, MO 63119
(O)

Capital City Model Railroaders
PO Box 243
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(HO)

Claremore & Southern
3049 Clover Creek Dr
Claremore, OK 74017
(HO)

Columbia Model Railroaders
410 Camelot Dr
Collinsville, IL 62234
(HO)

Crooked Rails Mod. HO Club
PO Box 7612
Little Rock, AR 72217
David Ware, Corr. Secretary
W: 501-683-3187
H: 501-664-1923

East Jackson City Mainliners
807 W Main St Ste A
Blue Springs, MO 64015-3757

Greater Kansas City Model Railroad Club
60th & NW Waukomis Dr
Kansas City, MO
816-746-5663

Greater Omaha Soc. of Model Engineers
Post Office Box 67
Council Bluffs, IA 51502
402-895-0296 or 402-491-3692
GOSOME@TheHistoricalSociety.org

Green Valley Baptist Model RR
11993 County Rd 162
Savannah, MO 64485
Contact: Nancy Adams
nadaams@bi-vetmedica.com
816-262-0304

Kansas Area N-Trak
2046 S Elizabeth #1306
Wichita, KS 67213
(N)

Kansas Central Model Railroad Club
530 E Third St
Hutchinson, KS 67501
(HO)

Kansas City Garden RR Society
David Roberts
24595 Hedge
Paola, KS 66071
GScaleisfun@hotmail.com
913-406-3400

Kansas City O-Scale Modulars
10334 Ash
Overland Park, KS 66207
(O)

Kansas City Soc. of Model Engineers
Doug Wood, President 2007
13817 Bradshaw
Overland Park, KS
913-402-7210
dougcwood@kc.rr.com

The Kansas City T-Nuts
c/o Marc Jacobs
PO Box 2334
Olathe, KS 66061
913-787-3413
n_gineer@sbcglobal.net

Lincoln Area Model Railroad Club
PO Box 811440
Lincoln, NE 68501
http://www.lamrcandm.org/

Manhattan Area Rail Joiners
1223 Pierre St
Manhattan, KS 66502-4331
Contact: Don Clagett
dclagett@ksu.eda
785-587-9075

Mississippi Valley N Scalers
20 Apostle Ct
Fenton, MO 63026
http://mvns.railfan.net
mvns@railfan.net
(N)

Missouri Northern Railroad Society Inc.
PO Box 12591
North Kansas City, MO 64116
(HO)

Modular HO Narrow Gauge Society
914 Summer Leaf Ct
Saint Peters, MO 63376
(HO)

Mo-Kan Railjoiners Inc. (all)
1069 N Logan
Olathe, KS 66061-6321
Louis Seibel
913-393-3495
L-seibel@comcast.net

Nebraska-Iowa Railroaders
Dave Hector
402-933-7334
dbask1@cox.net
http://www.ne-ia-railroaders.com
(Lionel)

Nishna Valley Railroad Society
1303 Eighth St
Harlan, IA 51537
(HO)

Northeast Kansas Garden Railway Society (NEKAN-GRS)
1308 SW Caldon
Topeka, KS 66611-2412

North East Kansas Railroaders, Inc.
1440 North 6th
Atchison, KS 66002
Steve Sschaefer
NEKR@yahoo.com
(HO)

Northwest Kansas Model Railroad Club
603 S Smokyhill
Oakley, KS 67748-2321

Omaha N-Trak
omahantrak@cox.net
http://www.omahantrak.org/
(N)

Ozark Model Railroad Association
424 W Commercial
Springfield, MO 65803
(all)

Parsons Model Railroad Engineers
Cherryvale Depot
Cherryvale, KS 68335
(HO)

Southern Illinois Train Club
PO Box 1633
Mrion, IL 62959-7833
(HO, N, G)

Southwest Independent Modular Railroaders
3107 W Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72209
(HO)

The Sugar Creek Model Railroad & Historical Society Inc. (all)
PO Box 5452
Bella Vista, AR 72714
Maida & John Bennett
479-855-1113, sloopjb@cox.net

Tri-City Model Railroad Association
607 S Shore Dr
Hastings, NE 68901
(HO, N)

Tri-State Model Railroaders
Ned Mayes
1217 E Sunset Dr
Oronogo, MO 64855
417-673-1491
slimned@msn.com

Union Station Kansas City Model Railroad Society
Ted Tschirhart, President
816-861-3449
tedtschi@kc.rr.com

The Weekend 'N Gineers
PO Box 414209
Kansas City, MO 64141-0209

Wichita Model Railroad Club
PO Box 48082
Wichita, KS 67201

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, INC.

4121 Cromwell Road
Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119
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Email: nmrahq@aol.com Website: www.nmra.org

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Prototypes

Ed Bommer caught these pictures of a Kansas City Southern passenger train.