

Susquehanna Sidetracks



Official Publication of the Susquehanna Division 11 of the Mid-Eastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association

<http://www.susquehannamra.org>

July 2011

Volume 19 Issue 3

2011 Division Events



Saturday, July 30, 2011. The division will visit Harris Interlocking Tower in Harrisburg, PA to view the restored tower, run their simulation (they have restored the original Harris 113-lever, 450 indicator lamp model board, interlocking machine to a computer simulation that is very much a “model railroad”...just with simulated trains), and railfan NS/Amtrak as they pass by the tower. More details can

be found on page 3. (Photo by Linda Warner)

Friday, Sept 30, 2011 and Saturday, October 1, 2011. LSOPS 3 will take place in the Harrisburg and Allentown areas. Registration is now open. More details can be found on page 4.

Saturday, October 22, 2011. The division will visit the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum and the Reading Society of Model Engineers.

Banner photo courtesy of Christopher Muller, SteamPhotos.com.

Susquehanna Sidetracks

<http://www.susquehannamra.org>

Superintendent/Editor/Webmaster

Jeff Warner
605 Hill Point Drive
Etters, PA 17319
(717) 932-9929
jwarner@susquehannamra.org

Assistant Superintendent

Wayne Betty
936 Wood Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552
(717) 653-9537
wbetty@susquehannamra.org

Chief Clerk

Paul Tice
6710 Moul Road
Thomasville, PA 17364
(717) 225-1688
ptice@susquehannamra.org

Director

John Frantz
1126 Hanover Road
York, PA 17408
(717) 324-9449
jfrantz@susquehannamra.org

Director

Robert Lyter
806 Mountain Road
Dauphin, PA 17018
(717) 921-8666
rllyter@susquehannamra.org

Director

Howard Oakes
301 Moulstown Road
Abbottstown, PA 17301
(717) 632-5990
hoakes@susquehannamra.org

Director

Ron Parisi
4313 Valley View Rd
Harrisburg, PA 17112
(646) 594-9649
rparisi@susquehannamra.org

Achievement Program chairman

Robert Charles, MMR
115 Winfield Drive
Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-1848
rcharles@susquehannamra.org

Division 11 Happenings

In a very close election, the division has elected the following as directors (in alphabetical order): John Frantz, Robert Lyter, Howard Oakes, and Ron Parisi. The proposed by-law changes were unanimously approved. This information is posted on the division website.

Alan Frame, long time director and AP chairman has stepped down from both positions. The division owes Alan a BIG THANK YOU for all his years of service. I have appointed Robert Charles, MMR to be the new Susquehanna Division 11 Achievement Program chairman. Please join me in welcoming Bob to the position. I encourage any of you with any interest (or curiosity) in the AP program to contact Bob. The AP program encompasses a wide variety of modeling skills and most anyone who has built a home layout, has helped the NMRA, or has written model railroading articles is eligible for some certificate. There's even a beginner's certificate (the Golden Spike Award) that I know a large portion of our membership easily qualifies for it. In general, the AP program has 11 categories and you receive a certificate for each category you qualify to receive. You do NOT need to have more than 1 category to receive well-deserved recognition. The categories are broken down into 4 groups. If you receive one certificate from each group and 7 total certificates, you qualify to be a "Master Model Railroader". However, there are many, many, many people who receive certificates in a few categories, but do not receive the MMR... But, that is fine. And it is still VERY impressive (from someone who has 6 certificates in 3 groups, I know <G>) to have a few of these certificates. More information on the AP program can be found on the National's website, or...just contact Bob!!!!!!

The final 2011 division event will be Saturday, October 22, 2011. We will visit the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum and the Reading Society of Model Engineers. More information will be available in a future newsletter.

Per our advertising policy, you will notice that there are two advertisements at the back of this newsletter. PLEASE let these people know you saw the ads here and that their money was well spent. Their support helps off-set the costs of printing and mailing the newsletter, with any surplus going into the general fund. Please support them as they are helping to support us.

Harris Tower Visit - Saturday, July 30, 2011

We will visit The National Railway Historical Society's Harris Interlocking Tower in Harrisburg, PA. We will view the restored tower, run their simulation (they have restored the original Harris 113-lever, 450 indicator lamp model board, interlocking machine), and railfan NS/Amtrak as they pass by the tower. Harris Tower will be open from 10 AM to 4 PM. They ask that we do NOT all arrive at once, as they simply do not have room to accommodate a group our size. Instead, they ask that we come in smaller groups (1 or 2 cars at a time) spread out over the day. They ask me to note the tower closes at 4 PM, so please arrive far enough in advance of that to complete your visit before the 4 PM closing. The last tour begins at 3 PM. This event is open to the public (so bring your friends) and there is no admission fee (donations are accepted). You do NOT need to RSVP for this event.

Here is an excerpt from their press release:

“What makes Harris Tower truly unique is that the entire Interlocking Machine and Model Board are operable! Visitors to Harris Railroad Switch Tower can actually operate the levers of the Interlocking Machine and see what happens by way of the lighted Model Board display, exactly as it was done decades ago. The Interlocking Machine and Model Board have been tied into a computer simulation system that is programmed with the actual Pennsylvania Railroad train schedules from the early 1940's. It was during this time - the War Years - that Harris Tower was busiest. As “virtual trains” arrive in the area they are displayed by way of the indicator lights on the Model Board. It is then up to the visitor to throw the proper levers to route the trains to their correct destinations. Rather than simply viewing a static display, visitors to Harris Tower can actually operate the equipment and experience for themselves what it was like to work for the Pennsylvania Railroad in its heyday. To the best of our knowledge, there is no other exhibit like Harris Railroad Switch Tower anywhere in the world.”

Harris Tower is located at 637 Walnut Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101-1924. From I-83 (North or South), take exit 43, 2nd Street. Follow 2nd Street toward the Capitol. Turn right onto Market Street. Turn Left onto N 5th Street (JUST BEFORE going under the AMTRAK overpass). Turn right onto Walnut Street. The street will divide with the left lane going over the State Street bridge and the right lane going to a parking lot UNDER the bridge. Stay to the right. Harris Tower is straight ahead. There will be construction and road closed signs for the right lane, but you can still get to Harris Tower and the parking lot. Park in the state parking lot (no charge) just past Harris Tower (the picture on page 1 was taken from this lot).

More information on Harris Tower can be found at <http://www.harristower.org> .

A note on the picture on page 1...that's Bennett Levin's restored PRR E-8's pulling a special west to Pittsburgh from Harrisburg Passenger Station on 6/26/11.

LSOPS 3 – Friday Sept 30, Saturday, Oct 1, 2011

LSOPS 3 (Lehigh/Susquehanna OPerationS weekend 3) will take place on Friday evening, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon. This is an operations event co-hosted by the division and the OP SIG (OPerations Special Interest Group). This event is an opportunity for both experienced and novice operators to operate up to 3 model railroads in either the Lehigh (Allentown) or the Susquehanna (Harrisburg/York) areas. The Lehigh area model railroads are Larry Reynolds' PRR Altoona Area, Gale Smith's Lehigh Valley, and Jim Hertzog's RDG Shamokin Division. The Susquehanna area model railroads are Bob Martin's Central Pennsylvania, Steven Mallery's PRR Buffalo Line, and Jeff Warner's PRR/RDG/WM South Central Region. Larry, Steven, and Jeff have working CTC signaling. Experienced operators can operate all 3 model railroads in one area, or novice operators can choose a single model railroad (no experience is necessary).

There are a limited number of slots available in both areas for both the 2 day (3 model railroad) positions and the 1 day (1 model railroad) positions, intended for division members. Guests are welcome (you do not need to be a member of either organization). You **MUST** sign up for this event by filling out the form on the LSOPS 3 website located at: <http://www.susquehannamra.org/lsops> and sending it back to me (Jeff Warner). Slots are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

More information is available on the LSOPS website:

<http://www.susquehannamra.org/lsops>

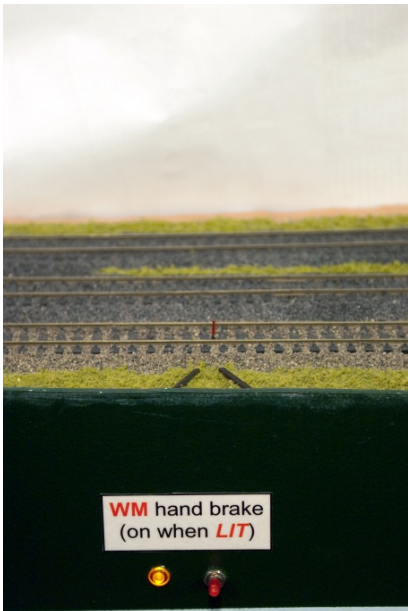
Tortoise Hill Holders

Article by Jeff Warner, Photos by Linda Warner



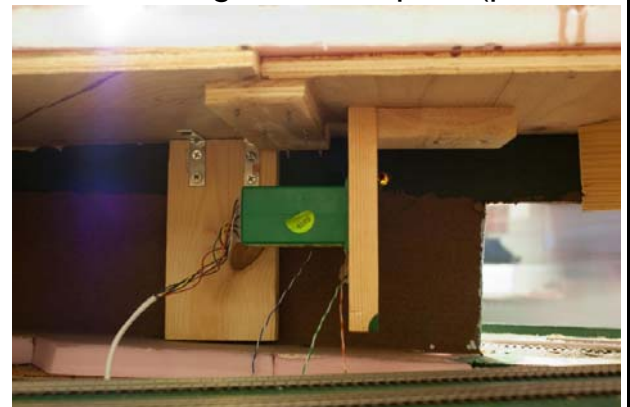
Did you ever want to stop a car on a grade (the pictured one is 2.1%) without having it roll back downhill? You can use a Tortoise switch machine to easily do this in only a few simple steps. You can even simply add an indicator LED. You will need access to the underneath side of the track – which should be in place and ballasted before starting to install your hill holder. Note that the location of the hill holder is marked with 2 ties in the photo.

On the top of the next page, you can see the hill holder (pin painted red) between the rails. To begin, drill a 3/16" hole between the ties. Cut a piece of 3/16" (K&S) brass tubing to be the same length as the thickness of your benchwork (including sub-



roadbed). File off any burrs. Carefully fit this into the hole (you may need to make the hole SLIGHTLY larger, but you want a TIGHT fit). Do NOT glue. This tubing will provide the path for the hill holder to move up and down. Next, build an L-shaped mount for the Tortoise out of scrap 1x3's (see picture middle this page). One side of the L is to mount to benchwork, the other to mount the Tortoise. The exact placement of the Tortoise on the longer side of the L is not important...you will get the same results with any placement, as long as the run is not so long the wire bends.

Next, wire the Tortoise. I connected all 8 wires, as I use both auxiliary contacts (one for my signal system, the other for the indicator LED). I attached a 16"-18" piece of CAT 5 cable (any wire will do) which goes to a European barrier strip for easy access. "Crosswire" a DPDT toggle switch to control the Tortoise. The center 2 pins will go to your input power supply. The outer pins need to be wired in an "X" with bottom left going to top right and bottom right to top left. These go to the inputs (pins 1 and 8) of the Tortoise. Use 1 SPDT aux contact of the Tortoise to drive an indicator LED. Use the common (pin 4) and either pin 2 or 3 depending on which way you mounted the Tortoise to complete a circuit with an LED and voltage dropping resistor. The other SPDT aux contact may be used to feed back to a signaling system or as needed.



Attach a piece of (K&S) 0.39" diameter music (steel) wire to the Tortoise, passing through the fulcrum and then bent 90 degrees up in the direction of the mount (see picture below). To begin with, this wire should be long enough to stick 4"-5" above track. Place music wire through the brass tubing and screw the wooden base into place, keeping the wire as STRAIGHT AS POSSIBLE to move up and down. The Tortoise's fulcrum will adjust the amount of movement in the wire. At this point, hook up the power and test the movement of the music wire. It



should move up and down freely. If not, check for binds. You want the hill holder to catch the axle of a car, without lifting it off the ground. It must recede down into the tube when released. Adjust the fulcrum to achieve these results. You may want to mark the wire as you test to get a better measurement. When you have the correct adjustment, cut the music wire (while extended upwards) to the proper length. I painted the top part of mine red for increased visibility.



The Station

213 Ninth Street
New Cumberland, PA
Phone: 717-774-7096

Please call for directions

Open Tuesday-Friday 10 AM to 5 PM
Saturday 10 AM to 2 PM
Extended Fall & Winter Hours (Sunday/Monday)

TRAINS EXCLUSIVELY
ALL GAUGES (G-O-027-HO-N-Z)
Sales & Service

This coupon good for \$5.00 off any purchase or order of \$50.00 or more.

Redeemable July 1st through August 31st, 2011

The Station, 213 Ninth Street, New Cumberland, PA – (717) 774-7096



White Rose Hobbies is located in York, Pa conveniently off Interstate 83. We specialize in HO and N Scale with an emphasis on DCC systems and accessories. We also stock many popular track and scenery lines. Most of our items are discounted 20% of List. We also honor all Walther's sale flyer pricing. Order all of your Walther's Catalog items with us for great prices!

White Rose Hobbies
1501 Mt. Rose Ave – Unit D-8
York, Pa 17403

Phone: 717-505-8676

Visit us on the web!

www.whiterosehobbies.com / www.dccinstalled.com

Hours of Operation:

Open Tuesday – Saturday 11am - 7pm
Closed Sundays and Mondays



Susquehanna Sidetracks

Official publication of the Susquehanna Division 11
of the National Model Railroad Association

605 Hill Point Drive
Etters, PA 17319-9025

Inside:

Harris Tower Visit
LSOPS 3
Tortoise Hill Holders

Name

Address

City

State & Zip Code

Telephone

NMRA #

Make checks payable to "Susquehanna Division 11"

If you wish to have the newsletter mailed to you, rather than having it sent via e-mail, you must subscribe.

The Susquehanna Division is located in the central portion of Pennsylvania. The Counties served are: Adams, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Carbon, Centre, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mifflin, Monroe, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Perry, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Union, Wayne, Wyoming, and York.

Number of Years

Change of Address

Total Amount Enclosed

\$6.00 per Year

Send form to: Paul Tice, 6710 Moul Road, Thomasville, PA 17364
Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.
Susquehanna Division #11 Newsletter MAIL Subscription Form