



Volume 29

SUSQUEHANNA SIDETRACKS



An Official Publication of the Susquehanna Division 11,
Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA

Number 3



This issue spotlights Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad in On3 scale. Above is pictured a replica of the Durango Station and below is a Sunset Brass Import replica Baldwin class 60 locomotive built in 1882. Frank installed a Tsunami decoder, painted and weathered #271. See page 21 for the full article and photos.



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Illinois Central Bridge collapse November 1911 near Clinton, IL. File photo from the Herald & Review newspaper.

From the Superintendent's Desk

We are coming up to May ready for this year. Even with all the Covid-19 restrictions time is flying by. May 1st will be the Columbia Railroad Day. This is the first event we will be holding in over a year. I for one am looking forward to it. Please see the article on page 9.

May is also election time for the Division. This year we will be electing our four Directors. I feel we have an outstanding slate of candidates for this year. Unfortunately, they are all running unopposed. Please see the article on page 6 for the details of the election and voting process.

Our second event that we will be having this year will take place on July 10th. This will be a trip to Orbisonia, PA to the East Broad Top Railroad and the Rockhill Trolley Museum. The Bricktown Model Railroad Association in nearby Mt. Union will also be open for visitation. Lee Rainey has put together an excellent program for the day. Please see the article on page 11. Be aware that space is limited so you will want to get you reservations in early.

Not only am I looking forward to both of these events but also the opportunity to get out and do some other activities. About a month ago Brian's Trains in Myerstown had a street/sidewalk show. It was good to get out and actually look at some train items, not that I needed to buy anything, but it was nice to have a chance to look at some stuff. Yes, I did buy something else I didn't need!

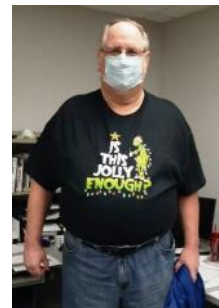
We are still working on updating the Division web site. The "fellow modelers" page is the one that will be the hardest. The key part is to ascertain which model railroads still exist and which still want to be featured. Also, if there are any new models railroads out there to add.

- 1) Name of Railroad
- 2) Name of Owner
- 3) Website (if applicable).
- 4) Location
- 5) A paragraph or two about the railroad and how to contact the owner.
- 6) 1-2 photos to highlight the railroad.

It would also be nice if you could write an article for Sidetracks about your model railroad. Rich Wurst, our Sidetracks editor, is always looking for printed material to include in Sidetracks. After all we are a model rail road group and too many of our issues of Sidetracks are lacking on articles about modeling projects or even prototype railroad articles.

As I stated earlier, I am looking forward to meeting again in person. I realize that the past year has been difficult for all of us. I guess I just miss seeing some of my friends. So, for now I have had my first vaccine shot and by the time you are reading this I will have had my second shot. Time to decide which of the many projects I have planned to start on next.

Tim Himmelberger



Second Section

Susquehanna Sidetracks

Official Newsletter of the Susquehanna Division
Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA
5 Hardy Court, Lancaster, PA 17602

Contributing to Susquehanna Sidetracks:

Sidetracks welcomes contributions from the Division membership. Letters, articles, photos and other items may be sent to the Editor at the e-mail address listed below or the street address above. Deadline for submission for the next issue is June 15, 2021.

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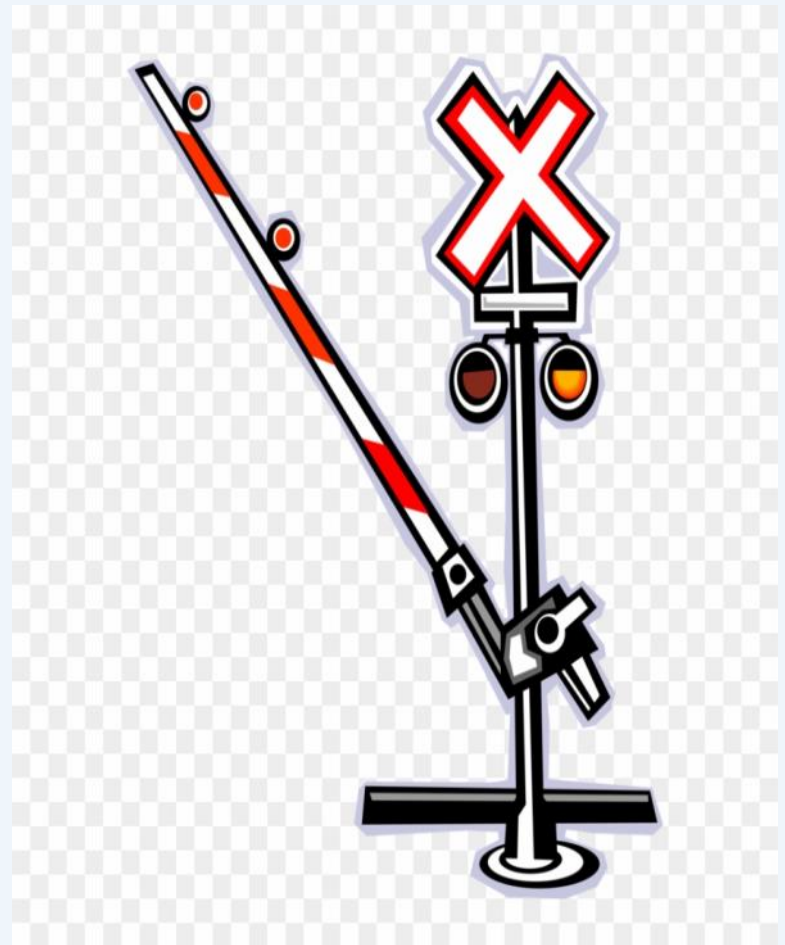
www.mer-nmra.com

National Model Railroad Association

8414 Gulf View Drive, Suite A & B

Soddy Daisy, TN 37379-2200

www.nmra.org



Welcome New Member!

Jeffrey Kornbau

Lititz, PA

2021 Division Events

~~April~~ – ~~New Holland~~ – ~~Pat Mulrooney and Jeff Thompson~~ – **Canceled**

May 1st – Columbia Railroad Day – Bill Lesjak and Barry Schmitt

~~June~~ – ~~New Oxford~~ – ~~Phil Peters and Howard Oakes~~ – **Canceled**

July 10th – East Broad Top Railroad and Bricktown Model Railroaders Association –

Lee Rainey

October – LSOP – Wayne Betty

October 21st – 24th, Hunt Valley, MD, MER Convention, Chesapeake Division

November – Division-wide Open House Tour



Baldwin-built engine #7 is a 4-4-0 locomotive owned by the Detroit & Lima Northern Railway. This restored engine is on display at the Greenfield Village, Dearborn, MI.

Division Director Election

It's May which means it's time to elect four Division Board of Directors (BOD) members for the next two years: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023. Our Division by-laws establish a seven member BOD - three elected Officers (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Chief Clerk), and four at-large Directors. At-Large Directors are elected to a two-year term in odd-numbered years and hold office from July 1 of that year to June 30 of the following second year. The three BOD Officers are elected to two-year terms in even numbered years with our current officers serving the term July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022.

The four Director candidates and their bio-sketches are presented below in alphabetical order. Their email addresses are provided if you would like to contact them.

Restating the ballot guidance: **you can only vote for four candidates.**

Director Candidate Bio-Sketches (in alphabetical order)

Pat Mulrooney (padywgn@comcast.net)

My name is Pat Mulrooney and I am currently serving as a Board Member for the Susquehanna Div. I would like to have your support to continue in that position as I feel I can contribute to the Div. and I enjoy working with the members and helping the Div. grow. I started in model railroad-ing around 1950, after my brother returned from WWII. He had been in HO modeling before going to war and after returning home and marrying he needed an excuse to get back into the hobby and apparently, I was it. He started me off with a roll of fiber ties, a bundle of brass rail, some spikes and a track gauge. Needless to say, derailments were many and successful loops with the Varney Dockside were few and even fewer with the NYC Hudson. I continued on until High School days when I discovered cars and females.

After getting married and starting a family my wife bought me a little camel back switcher of dubious origin one Christmas and we proceeded to have a loop around the tree at Christmastime. That continued until I was in my 40's, the kids were older and I started to get more serious about modeling. I really love the hobby and while I'm far from a MMR I enjoy my time in the basement, working on scenery, lighting, and trying to build a railroad that is operations friendly even though I have a long way to go before I reach that point. I'd appreciate your vote as I have enjoyed serving in this capacity this past term. Thank you.

Division Director Election

Lee Rainey (leerainey@aol.com)

I would welcome the opportunity to again serve the Susquehanna Division as a director. A member of the NMRA since 1989, I have been a frequent clinician at division, regional, and national NMRA events. I served as the chairman of the 2016 National Narrow Gauge Convention, and as president of the Friends of the East Broad Top, an NMRA SIG. I model the PRR and EBT in S scale.

Ken Roth (Ken.Roth@itt.com)

Hello, my name is Ken Roth.

Thank you for the opportunity of being a Director of the Susquehanna Division of the NMRA. I have been in the lifestyle of model railroading since 1964 starting with the destruction of my Dad's American Flyer, playing with it without track. Later we had HO in a basement 60'x 25' which was mostly Athearn diesels.

Then I started my own HO scale layout.

I love Pennsy, Reading steam and logging engines. My favorite engine is a camelback. I am currently working on a 12'x 18' basement layout with 28" radius helixes at both ends.

I worked with open houses with Tim Himmelberger and visited many more. I also worked with the last NMRA convention in Harrisburg, patch designer. Also attended the convention itself. Also served on the nomination and voting committee.

Looking forward to working with you all.

Sincerely,

Kenneth S, Roth

Jeff Thompson (thompson.jeff@frontier.com)

It seems that COVID has taken a chunk out of everyone's life and left us with a big hole known as 2020. As a result I never got the chance beyond one Susquehanna meeting during the term that was to be my directorship to do anything. But, I'm still here and willing to give it another shot. So if you think that's reasonable then check the box next to JEFF THOMPSON and let's see if we can get back to enjoying model railroading in the company of each other rather than going it solo in the dark reaches of the basement and wondering "is anyone out there"?

Jeff Thompson
717-803-9702

Division Director Election

NMRA SUSQUEHANNA DIVISION 11 (MER) 2019 DIRECTOR BALLOT

Your BOD has approved electronic (email) voting for this election cycle in addition to traditional USPS ballot mailing. You do not have to use the below ballot form – use whatever format works best for you. Send your ballot to Bill Lesjak, at wclesjak2@comcast.net or Bill Lesjak, c/o NMRA, 4448 Webster Drive N, York, PA 17402-3337. Bill will confirm every received ballot with either an email or post card response based on your delivery mode. Deadline for *receipt* by either delivery method is May 31, 2021. Results will be presented in the July Sidetracks.

ONLY VOTE FOR FOUR (4) CANDIDATES

_____ **Pat Mulrooney**
_____ **Lee Rainey**
_____ **Ken Roth**
_____ **Jeff Thompson**

Below Only To Notify Of Ballot Receipt

Your Name (print): _____

Email Address: _____

Home Address (if sent by USPS): _____

(Questions – call Tim Himmelberger at 717-454-8033)



NMRA Event– Columbia Railroad Day

On Saturday, May 1, 2021, the second annual Columbia Railroad Day will take place in Columbia, Pennsylvania from 9 AM-4 PM. The first Columbia Railroad Day was such a success that organizers/sponsors have banded together for an even better program and expanded facilities!

The event locations will include the Columbia Crossings Trail Center (41 Walnut Street) and Columbia Historical Preservation Society (21 North 2nd Street). Since both locations are not adjacent to each other, a shuttle trolley will be available for transportation (\$5 all day hop-on-hop-off) between sites. In addition, the trolley experience will include a narrated, sight-seeing tour of the city.



The Columbia Crossings Trail Center will host fascinating lectures. The presentations will include:

Scott Mingus **“Civil War Railroads to Gettysburg”**

10 AM -10:45 AM

Joel Moore **“Combining Model Railroading and Story Telling”**

11:15 AM-12:00 PM

Bernard Kempinski, MMR **“Railroads of the Civil War”**

12:30 PM- 1:15 PM

Bernard Kempinski, MMR **“Civil War Model Railroading”**

1:45 PM – 2:30 PM

Chris Vera **“Rails to Freedom in Columbia”**

3:15 PM – 4:00 PM



The park adjacent to the Columbia Crossings Trail Center will host the Lancaster Fencibles Civil War Encampment, the Invalid Corps Civil War Encampment, the 30th PA Civil War Encampment and the 45th PA Civil War Encampment. Food vendors will also be present including Rose’s Deli (home of the Columbia Shifter Sandwich) at the Crossing Trail Center and Kristen’s Catering. At the Columbia Historical Preservation Society

NMRA Event– Columbia Railroad Day

The Columbia Historical Preservation Society will host the Columbia & Susquehanna (HO gauge) Model Railroad, the Lower Susquehanna (O gauge) Model Railroad and NMRA Model Railroad Displays. Especially noteworthy is the scratchbuilt town of Columbia (Columbia & Susquehanna Model Railroad) which depicts scenes during the PRR's prominence in the city. This feature is well worth the visit to the second floor of the Historical Society.



Columbia & Susquehanna Model Railroad



Columbia Historical Preservation Society

Mark your calendars for this very special event sponsored by the Columbia Historical Preservation Society, The Susquehanna Division of the NMRA, and the National Railroad Historical Society (Lancaster Chapter).



Parking locations are denoted by 'P'.

NMRA Event– East Broad Top Railroad

Reborn East Broad Top to Host Susquehanna Division

Plan now to join us on Saturday, July 10, 2021 for a behind-the-scenes, inside look at the amazing rebirth of the East Broad Top Railroad.

The EBT, the adjacent Rockhill Trolley Museum, and the Bricktown Model Railroaders Club in nearby Mount Union will be hosting Susquehanna Division members for a day of special events. Advance registration and payment are required, and seats are limited due to COVID.

Schedule of Activities for Saturday, July 10, 2021

9:00AM-10:00AM **Open House at Bricktown Model Railroaders Association**

Located in nearby Mount Union at 300 W. Small St., Mount Union, PA 17066. Since our last visit, the club has completed the renovation of their 50'x100' building and begun construction on a very large HO/HOn3 layout. Arrive, visit, and depart at your own pace.

10:30AM **Arrive at EBT and park**

Attendees are asked to arrive at the EBT depot at 421 Meadow Street, Rockhill Furnace, PA 17249 by 10:30 to allow for check-in and distribution of tickets. Parking is behind the depot off of Iron St.

11:00AM - 12:00PM **Scenic Train Excursion**

Depart from the historic Orbisonia Station for a one-hour, diesel- powered excursion along the reconditioned track through the scenic Aughwick Valley. Ride aboard open-air cars featuring bench-style seats that face outward, allowing for unobstructed views of rolling hills and lush farmland.

12:00PM - 12:30PM **Detrain and 30 minutes for Lunch**

Our recommendation is to bring a sack lunch. Alternatively, several sandwich shops are available in Orbisonia (adjacent to Rockhill Furnace).

12:30PM - 1:30PM **1/2 Group Trolley Ride, 1/2 Group Shop Tour**

1:30PM - 2:00PM **Break**

2:00PM - 3:00PM **1/2 Group Trolley Ride, 1/2 Group Shop Tour**

Trolley Ride at the Rockhill Trolley MUSEUM

Enjoy a nostalgic tour aboard a vintage electric streetcar past historic industrial ruins and steep mountain narrows alongside the picturesque Blacklog Creek.

HISTORIC Shop Complex Tour

Take a guided tour of the East Broad Top Railroad's historic machine shop complex. See a live demonstration of the stationary steam engine that powers the shop machinery through an overhead system of line shafts and belts. You'll also see work underway now on two of the railroad's six Baldwin steam locomotives and repairs to 19th-century passenger equipment. Note: shop tours are limited to 20 visitors per guide.

NMRA Event– East Broad Top Railroad

3:30PM-4:30PM

Open House at Bricktown Model Railroaders Association.

Located in nearby Mount Union, at 300 W. Small St., Mount Union, PA 17066. Since our last visit, the club have completed the renovation of their building and begun construction on a very large HO/HOn3 layout. Arrive, visit, and depart at your own pace.

Advance Registration Required

The fare is \$40.00 per adult or \$34.00 per child under 12. **Your registration must be received (not just post-marked) by June 20. No walk-ons can be accepted. Tickets are not refundable.**

Susquehanna NMRA at the East Broad Top, Rockhill Trolley, and Bricktown Club

Saturday, July 10, 2021 -- Advance Registration Required

*Your registration must be **received** by June 20, 2021! Seats are limited!*

Number of adult tickets @ \$40 _____ x \$40 = _____ price

Number of child's tickets @ \$34 _____ x \$34 = _____ price

Total enclosed _____

List names of all attendees _____

Best contact method to send you any updates:

Email _____ Phone _____

**Send your completed form and check payable to "Susquehanna Division NMRA" to
Tim Himmelberger, 19 Penny Lane, Lebanon, PA 17046**

No walk-ons accepted. Tickets are not refundable.

About Your Visit

What to Wear

The East Broad Top Railroad trains will be open-air. It is important for all participants to come prepared for the weather and temperature. We recommend dressing in layers. Sturdy, close-toed walking shoes are important for the shop tour portion of the day. Try and minimize the amount of handheld items needed for the shop tour. Tripods are NOT permitted in the shop complex.

Parking at Bricktown Model Railroaders Association

Park in the gravel lot adjacent to the one-story brick building at 300 W. Small St., Mount Union, PA 17066.

NMRA Event– East Broad Top Railroad

Arrival, Parking, and Bathrooms at the EBT

Guests are encouraged to arrive at LEAST half an hour before the train's scheduled departure time. Parking for this event is located on Iron Street, just to the north of the Orbisonia Station. Drive past the station on Meadow Street and make the first right. Proceed down the road and make the first right into the gravel parking lot. The station's address is 421 Meadow Street, Rockhill Furnace, PA.

Public restrooms are located in the parking lot area, and at the Rockhill Trolley Museum. There are NO RESTROOMS inside the shop complex or onboard trains or trolleys.

Ticketing and Boarding

Only the NMRA group leader will pick up tickets at the ticket window inside the Orbisonia Station. This representative will receive all group tickets at once, and it will be their responsibility to distribute them to the group. Passengers will disembark from the train in the immediate area of the Rockhill Trolley Museum. Shop Tours will begin and end at the Freight Office, also close to the train's deboarding location.

Accessibility at East Broad Top Railroad and Rockhill Trolley Museum

The East Broad Top Railroad and Rockhill Trolley Museum strive to be an accessible experience for all visitors where possible. East Broad Top Railroad trains can accommodate wheelchairs of standard size in an open-air car. Please let the railroad know if anyone in your group will require this. The Rockhill Trolley Museum requires advance notice for wheelchair accessibility, and space and availability are limited. The East Broad Top Railroad Shop Complex tours are **NOT** wheelchair accessible due to the historic nature of the structures, and are ADA exempt.

Accessibility at Bricktown Model Railroaders Association

The Bricktown Model Railroaders Association building is accessible with appropriate entrance ramp and aisles.

Health and Safety at All Venues

COVID-19 protocols will be in place. Guests are required to wear masks or facial coverings. Train and trolley capacities have been limited to 50% to allow for proper social distancing. We ask all who attend to self-evaluate for symptoms before arriving on railroad property. Please ask those who are sick not to attend.

Equipment and schedules are subject to change at the East Broad Top Railroad or Rockhill Trolley Museum's discretion.



Our ride on the EBT will be in historic open cars, behind GE 44 ton diesel M-7.

(Matthew Malkiewicz photo)

NMRA Event– East Broad Top Railroad



The Rockhill Trolley Museum operates classic streetcars over a scenic portion of former EBT trackage. (EBT photo)

The shop tour will include the locomotive shop, where Mikado #14 (a 1912 Baldwin) is undergoing a complete restoration. (Matthew Malkiewicz photo)



What Has Been Happening at the East Broad Top

On February 14, 2020, it was announced that the newly-formed East Broad Top Foundation (eastbroadtop.com) had acquired the track and equipment of the East Broad Top Railroad from the Kovalchick family, which had preserved it since 1956. New General Manager Brad Esposito and the Foundation team immediately set out to restore the railroad to operation after an idleness of nine years. The progress since then in just over a year has been amazing.

Mikado locomotives 14 and 16 have been identified as the units in the best condition for an early return to service. Work to restore them is underway on many fronts. Cabs, dome covers, etc. have been sand-blasted and primed. Old tubes (and on 16, the superheater apparatus) have been pulled and the boilers have been prepared for ultrasound testing. A new tender tank has been constructed for 16. The 14's drivers have been dropped at the locomotive shop pit, and have been sent to the Strasburg railroad to be fitted with new centers and reprofiled tires. This work is under the leadership of the new EBT Chief Mechanical Office, Dave Domitrovich.

Cars have not been overlooked. Coach 8 has received extensive frame work with the guidance of retired Strasburg CMO Linn Moedinger. A short train of EBT-built steel hoppers has been reconditioned and is used regularly in ballast service.

Track has been a major focus this year. Reconstruction has used authentically-sized ties and limestone ballast – the latter a luxury that was rare before 1956. A program to rebuild all the turnouts in the Rockhill yard is wrapping up and much of the yard track required for operation has been renewed. A few long-out-of-service tracks, such as the pin mill track, have also been reactivated, so the yard now offers more operating room than at any time since 1956. Credit goes to both the EBT's professional employees and the Friends of the EBT (febt.org) volunteer track crews led by Gene Tucker.

On the main line, operable track now extends to the big fill, 2.5 miles north of the Orbisonia depot. A new access road to Colgate's Grove has allowed brush clearing operations to begin from the north end as well.

South of Orbisonia, a recent project was the cutting of brush and trees around the 200-foot Pogue steel truss bridge. It is understood that this is a prelude to stabilization of that structure.

Building restoration contractors were engaged to lift, straighten, and level a series of post-and-beam buildings: the machine shop, the locomotive shop, part of the car shop, and the carpenter shop. The process involves jacking the building frame up to level, and then building stout footers under the original posts.

The Friends of the EBT enabled this work by moving machines and clutter away from the work areas, taking up the original floor as needed, and then reinstalling the floor afterwards. The Friends also have taken ownership of repairing the walls that now no longer reach down to the ground on the lifted, straightened buildings! This work is complete on the machine shop and underway elsewhere.

East Broad Top Railroad Update

With the buildings level, it is now possible to again use the overhead shaft and belt system driven by the shop engine. For example, with the shaft turning, the huge punch in the metal shop was activated to punch siding repair parts for a hopper car, using the original patterns that still hung on the wall. The new parts were then hot-riveted onto the car to return it to ballast service.

Meanwhile, work has continued to reestablish the EBT presence in coal-mining town of Robertsdale. Brush was cleared from the right of way between the depot and the site of the first coal mine. Then a substantial section of the original scale track in front of the depot was renewed with fresh ties and stone ballast.

Three EBT hoppers from the storage tracks in Rockhill were then trucked up to the former coal town and placed on exhibit on the new track. They are the first EBT hoppers to arrive in Robertsdale since 1956!

In preparation for the installation of a new depot roof this season, the FEBT displays and artifacts were moved from the Robertsdale station and are now ready for visitors in the FEBT-owned, now-completely-renovated Old Post Office (a former Rockhill Coal & Iron Co. building.) The Old Post Office now also houses the FEBT Museum Store.

With so much work complete, the railroad has held a series of soft-launch, socially-distanced events. These have included a celebration in August of the 60th anniversary of tourist service, a series of “Christmas in Coal Country” trains, and a recent Winter Spectacular, and an Easter event featuring the unique, EBT-built, gas-electric M-1.

The East Broad Top is back!

To volunteer at the railroad, or to make a financial donation to its restoration, visit www.feht.org.

Lee Rainey



East Broad Top Railroad Update



One of many projects undertaken by the Friends of the East Broad Top (febt.org) in support of the reopening is the rescue of the Rockhill freight office. It has stood in the Rockhill yard since 1884, and was in a very endangered condition. (Jim Bacon photo)



FEBT volunteers lifted, leveled, and extensively repaired the building. (It is shown here ready for the final step – the installation of new window sash.) The restored building is now used as a visitor center and houses rotating displays. Our shop tour will depart and end at this building. (Jim Bacon photo)

Bricktown Model Railroaders Association

The Bricktown Model Railroaders Assoc. is constructing an expansive club layout in a 50 x 100-foot, brick, former warehouse building, located at 300 W. Small St., Mount Union, PA 17066. The building includes a spacious basement, main floor, and attic – and even its own (derelict) railroad siding!. Built in 1916, the warehouse was the headquarters of the E. A. Beaver Co., a wholesale grocer that was a frequent shipper on the East Broad Top Railroad.

Since acquiring the building, the club has carried out a major renovation, with new insulated walls, a drop ceiling with lighting, year-round HVAC, and much more. The club also added complete handicap access to support public events. They are now underway with work on their layout, which will represent the PRR and East Broad Top in HO/HOn3.



Visitors to the club first pass through a lobby area with historical displays. The entrance to the layout area is through this replica of a PRR stone tunnel portal.

(All Bricktown photos by George Sarra.)

Bricktown Model Railroaders Association



Insulated, sky-blue walls and ample lighting were a priority to transform the former industrial building into a layout-friendly setting.



Benchwork is well along, and track-laying is underway. This photo shows a section of four-track PRR main line. The lower level to the right will be a staging yard.

Bricktown Model Railroaders Association

This return loop marks one end of the modeled portion of the PRR main.



This area of the layout will portray the narrow gauge East Broad Top. Blue tape was installed to mark the future layout fascia, according to the club's agreed-upon track plan. This makes it easy to verify aisle widths and clearances.

Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

1. What is the name of your layout?

Denver and Rio Grande Western (prototype freelance).

2. What scale is your layout?

O scale narrow gauge On3 (3 feet between the rails).

3. Does your layout have a specific era and/or location?

Colorado with 3 towns and 3 eras 1930's, 1920's and 1900's

4. What are the overall dimensions of your layout?

The layout room 16' x 28' and around the walls with a large peninsula



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

5. **By what means and brand of equipment do you control your layout?**

Layout control is DCC by Digi-trax.

6. **When did you first begin construction of your layout?**

Construction began in 2000.

7. **Do you sponsor Operating Sessions on your layout?**

Yes and the layout can have up to 3 operators at a time.

8. **Do you have a track plan diagram for your layout (i.e. JPEG or PDF format)?**

I have no formal track plan.



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

9. What type of track (sectional, flex track or hand laid) and switches are on your layout and what is its code?

All track is code 83 Precision Scale flex track with hand made turnouts by different sources.

10. If you were to brag about your layout what would you describe as its outstanding feature(s).

Probably the hand built rolling stock and craftsman kits painted and weathered.



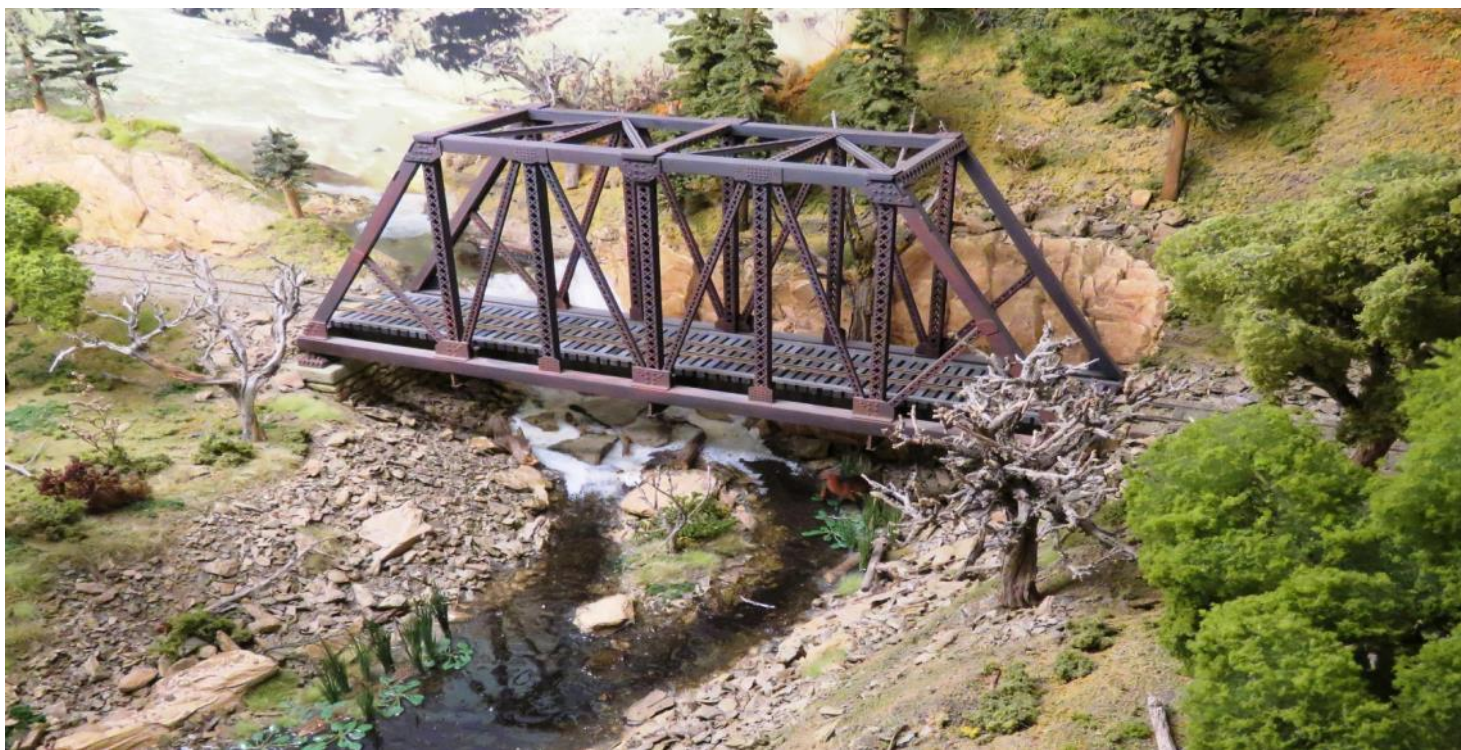
Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

11. Approximately, how many engines and rolling stock is in your collection? Also, what brand of engines do you run on your layout?

There are 21 brass steam engines from PSC, Overland and Sunset and about 60 passenger and freight cars all built from kits.



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

Editor's Note: Frank has supplied an additional narrative that provides more detailed information. His You Tube site has phenomenal videos showing his trains in operation.

My layout is On3. This prototype scale is 1:48. It is based on the Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge having three towns (Durango 1930's era, Delores 1920's era and Ridgeway early 1900's). The Ridgeway Station has yet to be built.

The layout is in a basement room measuring 16' x 28'. The tracks follow the room dimensions along the walls with a large peninsula in the middle. There is a lift up section to allow access into the room.

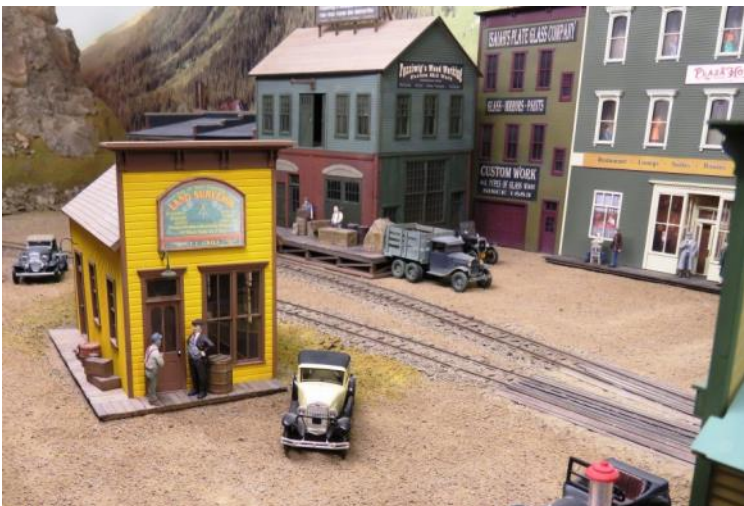
All rolling stock is hand-built from craftsman kits with complete underbody details, painted, decaled and weathered. All locomotives have Tsunami sound and are weathered in varying degrees. The structures are a mix of wood craftsman kits, scratchbuilt and kitbashed to fit a specific area on the layout.

There are two bridges. One is a combination through truss and trestle bent which is 5' long. The other is a kit bashed steel through truss.

The track is flex and every single tie was individually hand painted to simulate wood and the rails were rusted. All turnouts, except two, are operated with Tortoise switch machines controlled by toggles on the fascia adjacent to each turnout. Digitrax DCC is my operating system.

The layout track work is complete as is most of the scenery. Still, I have a lot to do in detailing individual scenes and adding more structures. Vehicles and wagons are built from kits and painted and weathered. I operate the railroad using the JMRI operation module. Below is a link to videos on my YouTube channel. Since taking those videos I have updated and added to scenes but it will give you a good idea of the layout. There are no videos of the peninsula at this time.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4K44wBi3TMA7akLuhrQd8YUg660ECvQE>



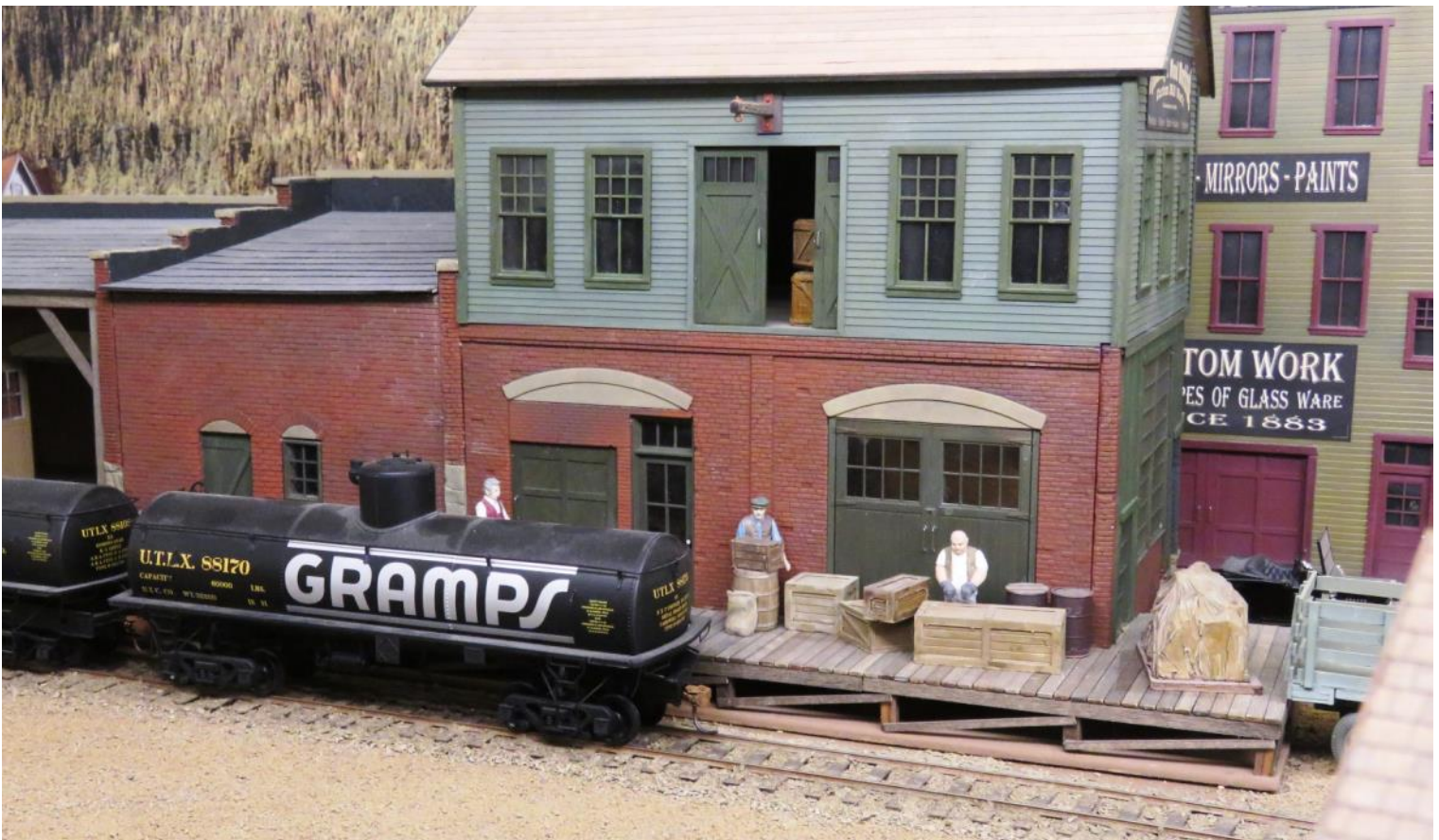
Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad



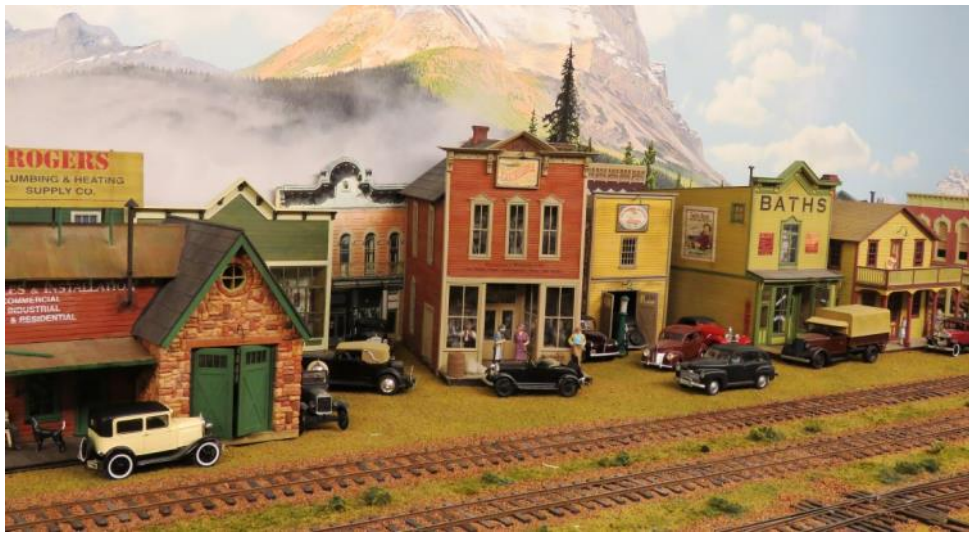
Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad



Frank Grill's Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad



Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

Updating Athearn Fairbanks-Morse Train Masters to Represent Jersey Central Locomotives

I bought a couple of Athearn blue box Fairbanks-Morse Train Masters a long time ago with the thought of painting them in the Central Railroad of New Jersey's green with yellow stripes paint scheme. Some time later Atlas came out with Train Masters already painted for the CNJ. Being on a rather limited model railroad budget, I didn't buy any of them. Then in January 2017 *Railroad Model Craftsman* published an article by Tom Brennon on improving Athearn Train Masters. He used parts from Atlas, namely the fan housing, fan blades, fan covers, and fan screens. With some additional details, I chose to do the same.

The one thing you need to know about the Jersey Central's Train Masters is that they came in two orders – Nos. 2401-2407 arrived in May of 1954; Nos. 2408-2413 arrived in March of 1956. Neither group was equipped with dynamic brakes, but there were differences in the long hood louver arrangements on the different orders.



CNJ 2403



CNJ 2413

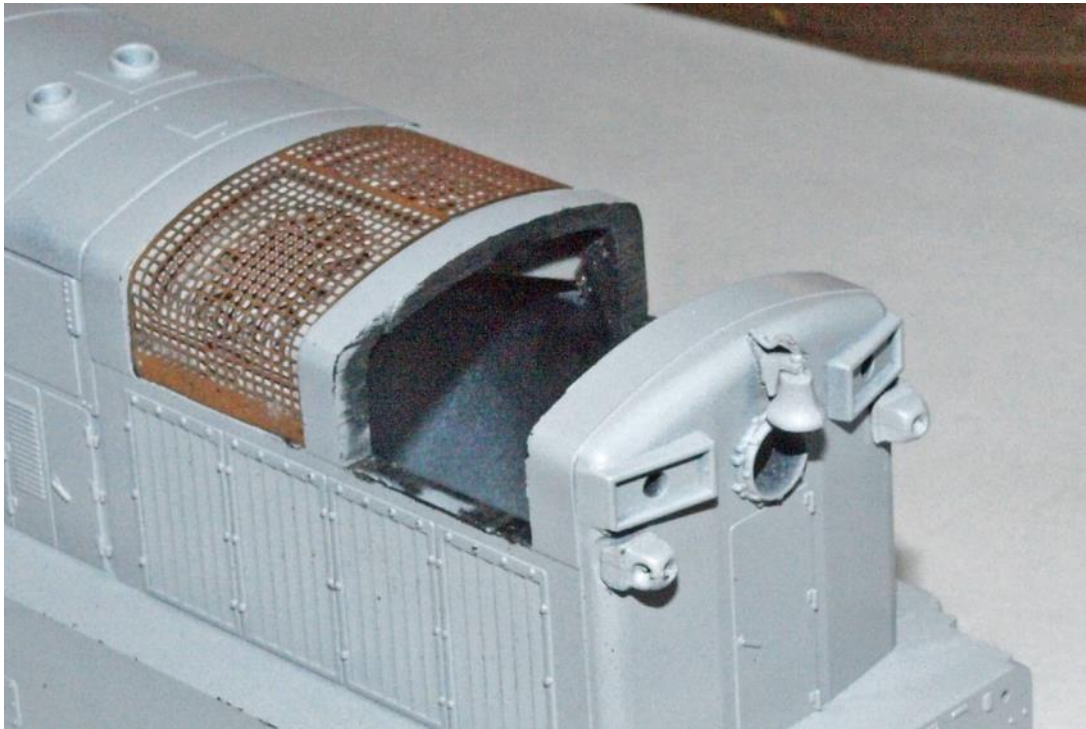
Notice that No. 2403 has two rows of thin louvers on the panel between where the dynamic brake inlet screen would be and three pairs plus one row of louvers beyond that. On No. 2413 that same panel has one pair plus one row of louvers and only one pair of louvers nearest the cooling fan screens. Another difference is the amount of space between those cooling fan screens. The earlier version engine has space between the pairs of screens – the same spacing as on the Athearn models. That was the deciding factor in my choosing to model the earlier engines.

Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

BODY MODIFICATIONS

Following the *RMC* article, I cut out the molded fan screens using a Micro-Mark ultra-fine saw blade (part number 85853 in their No. 86084 handle). The Athearn shell is woefully thick, so it took some time to make the vertical cuts. For the horizontal cuts, I first drilled a series of holes near the bottom of the molded screens. Then I used a Micro-Mark saw blade that goes in an Xacto No. 1 handle (no. 14346x2) to cut through the holes, finishing up all the cuts with flat files until the Atlas fan housings fit.

After assembling the Atlas parts, I glued them into the Athearn shell. Notice in the photos that I have added a Details West BE-129 bell. I also filed off the class marker lights and fitted CNJ style replacements. They are modified Cal-Scale #190-433 Erie Lackawanna RS Marker Lights.

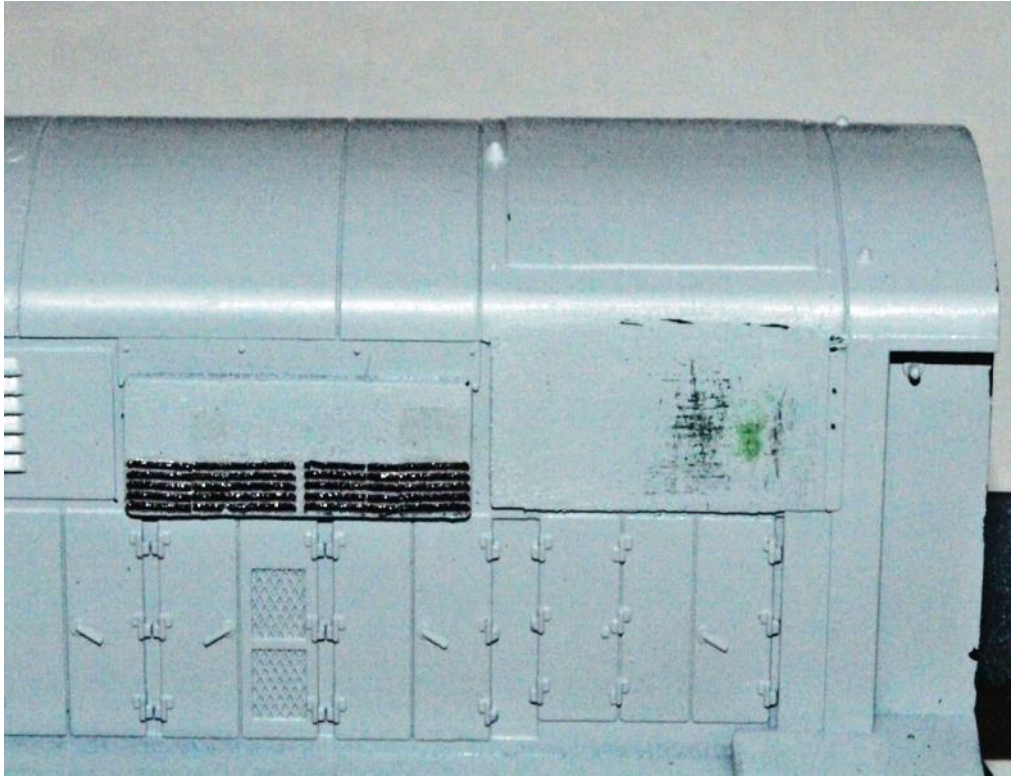


Cut out Athearn molded screens

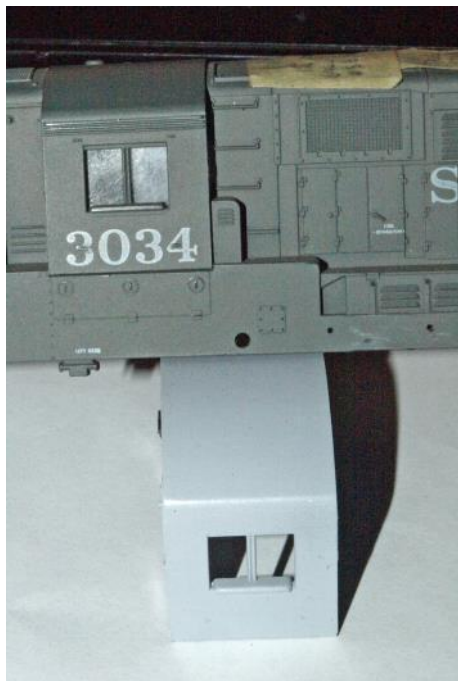
I filed and sanded off the dynamic brake screens. I probably should have also filed off the panel that is on top of the hood, but it seemed like too much work. After filing and sanding off the intake screens, I had to use a bit of Squadron Green putty to smooth the areas. After filing off the louvers on the raised panel and spraying the body shell with Tru-Color TCP-007 primer, I cut Archer short louver decals and pieced them together to form the two rows of narrow louvers.

Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

To complete the modifications, I filed the off drip strip above the cab windows. I also opened up the number boards and exhaust vents on the top of the short hood. And while this photo shows the grabirons on the long hood next to the cab, the early CNJ Train Masters didn't have them, so I carved them off.



Replace molded louvers with Archer louver decals



Remove drip strip from above the cab window

Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

PAINTING AND LETTERING

I airbrushed the body shells with Tru-Color TCP-233 CNJ Deep Sea Green. While I had my airbrush limbered up, I sprayed the frames and truck sideframes with Tru-Color TCP-010 black. After the paint had thoroughly dried, I applied stripes from an old set of Gingerbread Stop CNJ decals. The color matches Tru-Color's TCP-089 Lt. Imitation Gold. That is the advantage to using these old, no longer available, decals. Their drawback is that the stripes on the decal sheet aren't 11-1/2" apart. An alternative would have been to use Raritan Bay Hobbies CNJ-4 road switcher decals. Their stripes are the proper distance apart for ease of application, but I think the color is not quite correct. The decals needed repeated applications of Microscale Micro Sol decal setting solution to get them to conform to the contours of the Athearn shells. I still needed to do some touch-up with Tru-Color light imitation gold paint. I also painted the ends of the handrails with Tru-Color TCP-311 safety yellow.

On other CNJ engines that I've built, after priming the body shells, I sprayed the areas where the stripes would be with Tru-Color light imitation gold and then masked the stripes with thin strips of masking tape, followed by the CNJ Deep Sea Green paint. The masking tape curves easily for the converging yellow nose stripes; decal stripes have to be nudged carefully to shape while they are wet with decal setting solution. Once I had completed applying decals, I glazed the cab end windows with clear styrene.

REPOWERING, ADDING SOUND, AND LIGHTING

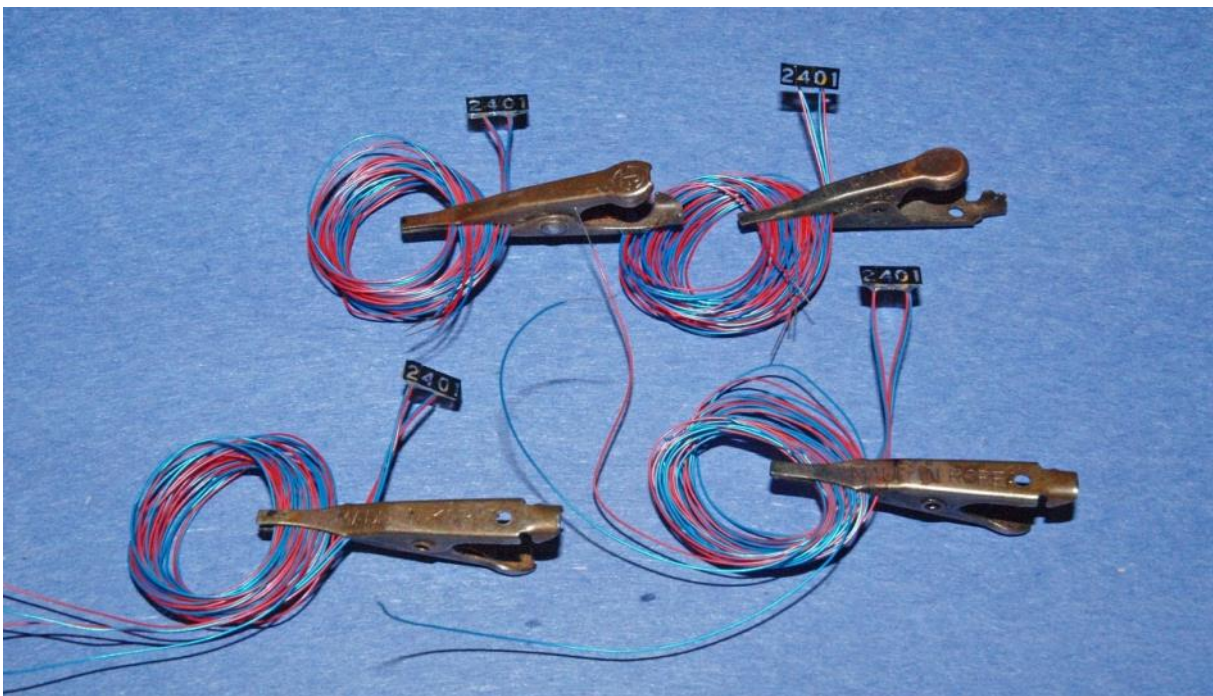
Both Train Masters came with the old black motors and what appeared to be cast iron flywheels. To give you an idea how old these models were, when I originally decided to repower them I bought a Helix Humper motor with turned brass flywheels. (Unfortunately, I didn't buy two of them, so for the second engine I bought a more modern Athearn flat can motor with brass flywheels that slipped perfectly into the Athearn frame.)

I also bought two Soundtraxx Tsunami 2 TSU-PNP digital sound decoders (No. 885016 for Baldwin and other diesel models) and simply followed the manufacturer's instructions for installing them and programming them for Fairbanks-Morse sounds. I like the idea of being able to unplug wires if it becomes necessary to remove the body shell. For this I use Micro-Mark No. 86559 micro connectors. Each engine uses an iPhone 4 speaker that I get from <http://tomstrains.com/>. For headlights I used the original Athearn clear lenses and backed them up with warm white LEDs. For lighting the number boards, I used pre-wired 0402 3-volt LEDs that I found on eBay. They are available directly from <https://www.funtrying.com/>. I painted the clear numberboards with white paint and then decaled them with Microscale No. 87-205 lightable numberboard decals. I then glued the LEDs to the back of the plastic numberboards using Pacer Technology's ZAPIT. I used a small torch to burn the insulation off the very fine wires of the LEDs, scraped them clean with the edge of a No. 11 blade and then soldered the pairs of red and blue wires together. After completing that, I used canopy cement to attach the numberboards in their openings. The numberboard LEDs are then soldered to miniature plugs. I then soldered 1K ohm resistors to connectors and in turn wired them to the decoder headlight terminals so the numberboards would light when the forward or reverse lights would be on.

Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master



Glue the LEDs in place with ZAPIT



I first applied decals to the clear number boards, then removed the decals, painted the numberboards white, and reapplied the decals.

Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

To finish up, I gave them a shot of Testor's Dullcote and added Kadee No. 58 scale couplers. I also added MV Products Nos. 300 and 301 clear and red lenses to the marker light housings.



Completed CNJ Fairbanks-Morse H24-66 Train Masters #2401 and #2405



Updating Athearn HO Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

Bill of Materials

Archer

AR88038 14-inch louvers

Athearn

Fairbanks-Morse Train Master

Atlas

780240 Grille

780241 Fan cover

780242 Fan blade

780243 Fan housing

Detail Associates

1608 Leslie A200 air horns

2712 Exhaust vent & intake grilles -- FM

Details West

BE-129 bell

Cal-Scale

190-433 Erie Lackawanna RS marker lights

Kadee

#58 Kadee couplers

Microscale

87-205 Number boards steam or diesel
lightable

Micro-Mark

86559 Micro connectors

MV Products

300 052" dia. clear lenses

301 052" dia. red lenses

Soundtraxx

885016 Tsunami 2 sound decoder for
Baldwin and other diesel models

Tru-Color Paint

TCP-007 Primer

TCP-010 Black

TCP-089 Lt. Imitation Gold

TCP-233 CNJ Deep Sea Green

TCP-311 Safety Yellow

models and photos by Alan Mende

Train Safe Storage System

Train Safes

Columbia & Susquehanna Model Railroad Columbia, PA

Model railroaders typically spend a lot of money on locomotives and rolling stock, and then store and transport their prized possessions wrapped in paper or bubble wrap, then placed in cardboard boxes! Or, worse yet, we leave them sit out where they gather dust and can be damaged. To set a train up, a long process of unpacking and “railing” has to take place. To take your train to another platform for an operating session, everything has to be packed up, unpacked & railed when you get there, and then packed up again to return home and then unpacked at home.

Few model railroaders seem to know there’s another way! Manufactured in Germany, by **Train Safe** Corporation, are several versions of their main products called, not surprisingly, *Train Safes*! These cases not only allow for the safe display, storage and transport of trains, but most are electrified and can be connected directly to a train layout to allow the train to be driven out of (and then back into) the *Train Safe*, eliminating handling! Click on this link https://youtu.be/2z3I3_9Q3ss to watch a video of how these work! Safes are available in O, HO, N and Z Scale.

The C&S MR was recently given quite a number of these by the son of a former US distributor of Train Safes who passed away almost 10 years ago. Most of the Train Safes we have are the Acrylic Clear (TSV) version in lengths from around one foot to ten feet. Lengths available vary between the scales. There are a limited number of the HO Scale (only) white acrylic Travel Safes (TST) that are foam-lined with magnetic closure that protect trains while they are being shipped or packed for a move, mostly of the longer variety.

Furthermore, there are wall-mounts (and some table mounts) for TSVs available that allow the trains to be displayed and stored, while protected from UV light, dust and handling damage, at your home layout!

These items were all stored outside in bubble wrap, under tarps for years. Mice and squirrels got to some of them, and they all needed to be cleaned, which members of our club have done. The majority of the cases and display racks are in like-new condition. Some have minor scratches, discoloration or breaks that have been repaired.

Since they’re not new and carry no warranty, we’re selling the ones in like- new condition for approximately 1/3 the cost of a new one from **Train Safe**, and the ones that have defects but are still functional will be less.

Train Safe Storage System

These cases and display units will be available for sale beginning on Columbia Railroad Day, May 1st of this year. We'll have a table next to the Columbia Historic Preservation Society (CHPS), at Columbia Crossings where the event displays are located, and the cases and display units will be available for inspection, purchase and pick up at the C&S MR platform on the 2nd floor of the CHPS building at 21 North 2nd Street in Columbia. We will accept cash or check, and are also working to be able to accept credit cards.

If you aren't coming to Columbia Railroad Day, you can email Rick Christopher at rchristopher25@comcast.net. Let us know what Scale you're interested in and we'll let you know what sizes are still available and how much they cost. Train Safes will be available for pick up at the Columbia Historic Preservation Society, normally on Sunday afternoons, local delivery is available within 15 miles of Columbia, shipping is not available. After May 1, we will be posting images of these products on our Facebook page and website!



Reference Section

Robert Getty has built a web application that indexes every segment of Ken Paterson's "What's Neat" YouTube show for Model Railroad Hobbyist Magazine. It's free to use and member's might find it quite useful: <https://wnindex.theconsist.com>

Sample screen shot below:

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'What's Neat Index' website. At the top left is a circular logo featuring a train. To its right is a navigation menu with links for 'Search', 'Presenters', 'Videos', 'Categories', 'FAQ', 'Tip Jar', and 'Contact'. On the far right of the top bar, a yellow circle contains the number '369' followed by the text 'segments currently indexed'. The main content area has a large title 'What's Neat Index' and a subtitle 'When Daniel Coombs isn't around to help find that segment!'. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Segment / Presenter Search' and a 'Search' button. To the right of the search bar is a small icon of a die. The background of the page is a faded image of a model train. At the bottom left, there are two logos: a circular one with a person's face and the letters 'MRH', and a rectangular one with 'MRH' in large red letters and 'MODEL RAILROAD HOBBYIST' in smaller text below. To the right of these logos is a vertical line, followed by the text 'What's Neat with Ken Patterson is produced for Model Railroad Hobbyist Magazine'.

Susquehanna Sidetracks

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5 Hardy Court, Lancaster, PA 17602



Strasburg Railroad's #10 Diesel Rail Car built by the Sanderson Machine Shop in 1915 for the Lancaster Oxford & Southern Railroad.