

THE POTOMAC FLYER



Issue Highlights

Issue Highlights:

Surratt House Report p. 5

Building A Trackside Structure p. 10

Crafting A Gondola Load p. 14

Scratchbuilding Supplies p. 15

And:

AP News, Business Car and More...

All Inside!

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic and concerns over the health and safety of all our members has led the Potomac Division to postpone the annual Minicon, planned for April 4th, Operations Saturday, scheduled for May 16, and the layout tour planned for April 11.

From the Business Car—Another Fine Mess

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR, Division
Superintendent

Bill of Lading

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Potomac Flyer

The Potomac Division's Bi-monthly Newsletter

Submission Deadlines—Issue

Dec 15—February-March	Feb 15—April-May
Apr 15—June-July	June 15—Aug-September
Aug 15—Oct-Nov	Oct 15—Dec-Jan

Cover photo by Dean Ripple of his brass Oriental Limited P-1d Pacific that was acquired professionally painted by Jeffrey H. Lemke. (<https://www.jefflemketrains.com/>). Dean added a sound cam, an ESU LokSound decoder, and auxiliary electrical pickups. The tell-tale is from Tichy. The plaster portal was modified by cutting out some stones to narrow it, and weathered brick sheet was installed as a tunnel liner.

Two weeks ago I was considering what I was going to write about and didn't have much beyond a brief re-cap of the Surratt House meet on March 7th and some promotional bits for the April 4th MiniCon. That's pretty much been supplanted by cancellations of events not only within the Division, but across the entire country, and a complete change in our lives for the foreseeable future, thanks to Covid-19.

So, to recap. We did have a good turnout at the Surratt House, lots of good interactions, conversation, socializing, some technical difficulties, an absent clinician, some creative fill-in, and a good time was had by all! The two afternoon open houses were very well attended as well. [Ed: See the following article.] Maybe there was an underlying bit of foreboding that this might be the last time we all enjoy a model railroad outing for a while, and so we made the very best of it all.

The MiniCon has since been canceled as just about everything else in the area has been restricted by size of gathering for good reasons. I tried to delay that decision despite several concerned calls and e-mails, but we finally reached a point where we really had no choice. We also canceled out the open house that was scheduled in April. So, April is a bit of lost month now. It's unclear what May might bring. We'll make decisions as they get closer on the calendar.

Will we re-schedule the MiniCon? I don't

know - almost everything we do is dependent upon the availability of the venue, and then whether all of the presenters are available at that later date. We'll almost certainly reschedule any cancelled open houses. The MiniCon also is when the Division usually holds its Annual Members Meeting. That will have to be re-scheduled sometime later in 2020.

However, the election of new officers to the Board has gone ahead. Fortunately, there is adequate provision for mailed ballots within the Bylaws so at no cost to the Division I arranged for every member of the Division on the roster as of March 2020 to be mailed a ballot. All the members needed to do was check off 2 choices—we had 3 candidates!!!—and mail their ballot back to the address that was provided to them. As long as the USPS continues to function, I suspect we'll be fine.

What is missing from that ballot is the approval of new Bylaws. We'll come back to this issue once we find a time and place for the Annual Members Meeting.

We also have a tentative clinics program meet scheduled in June in Vienna. We'll keep you posted on that too. Our plan was to have scheduled events advertised and in place six month in advance. The best laid plans of mice....

And yes, the Division's Yahoo Group has gone the way of all old and tired electrons. It's been replaced with a groups.io site: <https://groups.io/g/PD2MERNMRA> and every member on the roster was sent an invitation to join it. If you did not get one, check your spam folders and filters. If you can't find your invite and want to join the new group contact the Senior Assistant Superintendent. We will be using this site for additional communications whenever possible. I think it might be very useful for "Modelers in Need" (MIN) or various supplies that someone else in our Division might be able to supply.

So, now as I write this column, we're all in something of a "lock down" or at least restricted movements and access status due to Covid-19. As the Division straddles Virginia, Maryland, and the District, there are variations as to what that means. Panera was open for takeout orders and Costco was open with a line that was not too far removed from being at a Disney park. In any case, it's not entirely clear where this is going, how long it will last, what will be next, how this might change our lives, etc. So, everyone just has to take care of themselves and be as safe as possible, so we all come out on the other end.

In the meantime, we'll miss meetings and events, train shows and sales, and those precious acquisitions ("prizes"). We'll all get over it. I missed out on the Chicago March Meet for O scale, and after seeing O'Hare airport on the news, felt far better about having just stayed home. There's very little that I really need anyway other than small detail bits most of which that I can order on-line.

The Division Crew

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Click on address to send email.

The Potomac Division, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association includes the District of Columbia; Calvert, Charles, Montgomery, Prince George's and St Mary's Counties in Maryland; Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Rappahannock Counties in Virginia, as well as all area independent cities.

Now, what to do in the meantime... Hey! Maybe having a hobby is a solution! Outside of spending time in the home office working my two Editor jobs, I've managed to spend some seriously focused time in my workshop. I've got an old IMP boxcab that I've been beating into shape installing a Weaver drive into and then there's the LWS MP54 kit that I started into a kitbash into a combine. It's been on the back of the bench roughly three-quarters done for more than a decade. I stalled out and every time I approached it, peals of derisive demonic laughter would issue forth from the pile of parts to torment my soul, but it should be done later this week.

So, I see this as an opportunity to get some model building done, build some of those 30 years' worth of kits on the shelf, work on the layout, and maybe have something ready for judging or showing off at the next available Division meet or the MER convention in the Fall.

Be careful out there and take care of yourself and your health! ☒

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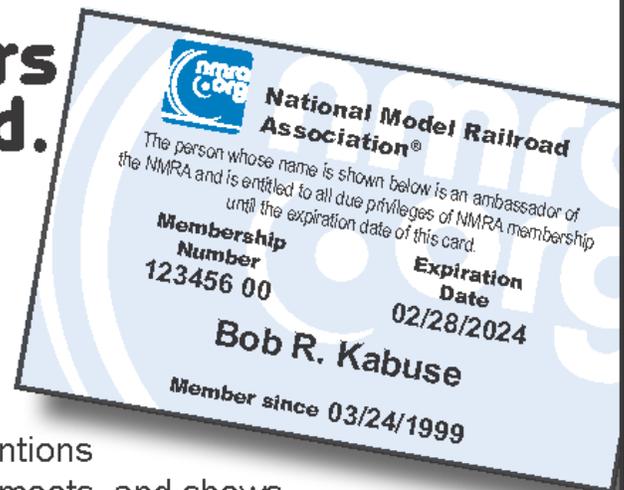
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Potomac Division Outreach Program Report

By Andrew Dodge, MMR Photos by Alex Belida, Flyer Editor

On Saturday, March 7, 2020, the Potomac Division met at the Mary Surratt House and Museum at 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton, MD 20735 from 9:30 to 12:00 PM with two dozen members attending. This was a brand new venue for the Division, and one we hope to access in the future so we can better serve our members in the southern Maryland region. Martin Brechbiel brought along donuts and coffee to sustain us through the morning until lunch. We started on time and held a short meeting. The two Board members present covered the [now canceled] MiniCon, and our newest Outreach Program just announced to be held on Sunday, June 14 at the Northern Virginia

Model Railroaders Club at 231 Dominion Road NE in Vienna, VA, between 2:00 and 4:00 PM. Martin and Andrew stressed the importance of the upcoming MiniCon because the Division will be electing two members to the Board and will be voting on a new set of Bylaws that will bring our Division into conformity with NMRA and MER governance.



Dale Latham

Dale Latham and Glenn Paulson kicked-off the day's program with an overview of their layouts that would be open in the afternoon. Presenting a fabulous group of photos displaying his work, Dale shared with us a number of trains and scratchbuilt structures, but the real highlight was his fabulous tree-making skills. He also got the widest chuckles from the audience when he showed a slide of one of his structures bearing the sign "**Hot Beer, Lousy Food, Bad Service.**" Glenn chose to spend his time before our meeting to prep his layout, but he relayed enough to the attendees to pique our interest.

Whenever possible, we will encourage future open house hosts to present a brief introduction or overview of their layouts to promote the layout experience. Following this intensive activity, we retired to have more donuts and coffee. Once we reassembled, Andrew and Martin shared stories about their waycars, a caboose by any other name. Included in the session was a selection of photos and an overview of the history of the South Park and Colorado Midland's waycar and a drover car/caboose that Martin constructed. And since this was a model railroad meeting and all the rolling stock was scratchbuilt or heavily kitbashed, a number of important construction techniques were shared with the attendees.



Glenn Paulson

Concluding the morning's program, Bernie Kempinski provided a *tour de force* look at his Civil War layout and a number of issues facing modelers of 19th century railroads. While being a challenge compared to the popular transition era, Bernie was able to purchase his locomotives and a number of other *accoutrements*. He also shared information concerning differing commercial-sized figures and how to



Martin Brechbiel's drover car



Bernie Kempinski

display them effectively. One of the most interesting aspects of the hobby Bernie imparted were the various high-tech tools and techniques he employs to allow him to recreate artillery, ship, and railroad pieces that add a high level of realism to his layout.

As a wrap-up, a good time was had by all, and the Division would like to thank the staff at the Mary Surratt House and Museum for offering us the space for the meeting.

This historic property was where John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of President Abraham Lincoln, stopped for weapons and supplies. Owner Mary Surratt had rented out the house but was tried, convicted and executed for conspiracy in the murder, the first woman executed by the U.S. government. (We didn't actually meet in the old house but rather in an outbuilding used for research and functions.)

If you have not attended one of our Outreach Programs, please consider coming. It is a great way to share and be inspired to do some great work on your own layout.

After a break for lunch, members dispersed to visit Dale's HO scale Piedmont Southern and Glenn's HO scale Conrail Allegheny Division. 2018 Photos of their layouts can be seen on the PD's website:

Latham: <http://potomac-nmra.org/Pdnewsite/LayoutTours Prior/DaleLatham2018/album/album/index.html>

Paulson: <http://potomac-nmra.org/Pdnewsite/LayoutTours Prior/GlennPaulson2018/album/album/index.html> 

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Upcoming Layout Open House Tours

[Editors Note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic this event might be canceled. Please watch for updates via email or on the PD website]

Brad Trenkamp's State Line Feed Co.

When: Saturday, May 30, 2020, 1 - 4 PM

Where: Addresses are not published for host's protection.

Access: Access to the layout is down steps to a basement.

A proto-freelance of a Cargill feed mill on State Line Rd in the West Bottoms of Kansas City.

This is a small HO scale model railroad, built on two hollow core doors, measuring just 18" by 180" overall. It depicts a proto-freelanced modern-day scene inspired by a feed mill located in the industrial West Bottoms of Kansas City. The Union Pacific serves this lone industry, swapping out a handful of covered hoppers at a time.

The motivation for building this layout was simple; to have something to work on while developing plans for a larger layout. Brad says he wanted something manageable in scope that he could use to develop modeling skills, try new techniques, and stay engaged with modeling while figuring out the bigger picture.

The layout operates using DCC fed through handlaid code 70 trackwork. There are three handlaid #9 turnouts on the layout controlled by Tortoise switch machines. The structures are either scratchbuilt or heavily kitbashed using commercially available parts.

This is our first visit to this railroad. ☒

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Layout Visit Report

Dean Ripple's B&O Monongah Branch

Article and Photos By Bob Shepard

By the early 1950s the B&O's Monongah Branch was already a tired line. A conglomeration of smaller lines weaved together by the B&O, the branch had worn track, old bridges, and generally tattered infrastructure. But the region it ran in, just south of Morgantown, West Virginia, had coal and lumber; so despite the



antique infrastructure, the branch boasted a lively, regular schedule of train traffic, with coal and some lumber moving outbound and merchandise for the towns along the route incoming.

While these elements may have made life trying for the workers on the railroad, they are the stuff of model railroading, and Dean Ripple's B&O Monongah Branch preserves a 1950s West Virginia moment in a 12' X 16' HO scale layout, which features part of the run from the B&O's mainline at Grafton, WV, to Charleston, with a major central engine house and yard in the middle at Buckhannon, and a connection with the Western Maryland in Elkins.

All of the B&O trains are led by brass locomotives, mainly Mikados and other smaller engines. The level of detail and weathering on the engines is stunning. Perhaps even more impressive is what is on the inside, as Dean has ripped the innards out of these older engines and fitted them with new motors, DCC sound decoders (Tsunamis), and extra electrical pickups. His most perilous surgery involved fitting a decoder into a brass Vanderbilt tender, as it necessitated cutting through the metal directly. The patient survived and today runs perfectly and looks great.

Track and turnouts are mainly Peco 100, resting on cork roadbed. By painting the rail the same color as the ties and adding realistic ballasting (from the Arizona Rock and Mineral Co.), the use of bigger rail is hardly evident.

Operating sessions are held every two months using train orders and sequential timetables. In addition to coal, trains move lumber and merchandise to and from a variety of industries, including

a feed mill, a freight station, lumber mill, tannery, and supply warehouse. All represent real industries on the branch, albeit the structures are freelanced. A limited number of passenger trains serve the communities along the way.

The railroad is also operated by Dean's son Joseph, who's been running trains for 14 of his 18 years. Joseph has his own collection of Pennsy motive power that regularly infiltrates the B&O territory.



The only remaining piece waiting to be finished is a coal mine and some nearby worker housing. Further expansion? Maybe—but another possibility is a G Scale shelf layout running around the remaining wall space in the basement.

For more on the layout, as well as some railfanning photos, see Dean's website at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/monongahdiv/> 

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Prototype Modeling an Old Trackside Structure: N.Z. Cramer's Hardware, Woodsboro MD

Article and Photos by Alex Belida, *Flyer* Editor

For the past several months I've been working on a diorama centered on the old Woodsboro, MD depot, which was the first structure I scratchbuilt for this project. [See the MER's "The Local," Nov.-Dec. 2019 issue.] With that finished, I decided to expand to adjacent structures — one of which is the N.Z. Cramer hardware store just across the tracks.

Since I'm making the diorama replicate the way the area looked around 1900, I could not use the store's present-day appearance as a model. Fortunately, I did find an 1874 photo of the way it looked shortly after it was built and when it was known as the Dorcus and Shank warehouse. ① It was taken over by Cramer in 1890.

I used scribed styrene sheeting for the walls, with Tichy windows and doors ② (except for the freight door ③), which was scratchbuilt from stripwood with a metal handle constructed from a



Photo courtesy of the Woodsboro Historical Society



portion of an old metal ladder (origin unknown).

Support for the structure was made from stripwood, which was also used to buttress the base for the building as well as the attached front porch and loading dock platform along the side. The platform and porch were made from scribed styrene sheets. ④

I attached simulated stone (styrene) as the base for the building, as seen in ⑤. I cut and used pieces of Sculptamold I had cast in a small rectangular plastic container to scratchbuild the stone support pillars for the porch and platform as seen in the 1874 photo of the structure. The pillars are visible in ③ and ⑦.

I scratchbuilt from stripwood steps for the front porch as well for the side and rear entrances to the building. ⑥

I added two signs “N.Z. Cramer & Son”—using paper imprinted with lettering from a font duplicating Cramer’s original sign. These were attached to scraps of styrene for installation on the building, one on the front and the other over the loading dock.

I made the porch roof out of styrene and attached stripwood support posts. I even duplicated the birdhouse seen in the prototype photo using a scrap of stripwood and some paper. ⑦

I found old tool signs on the internet, dated from the 1890s, downloaded these, resized them, printed them and attached them to the building for additional color.



The roofing was made from Granite Gray Shake Shingles from Wild West Scale Models. The chimney is a Tichy product.

As a final detail, I cut gutters (from Evergreen styrene I-beams with the bottom edge sanded), painted them flat black and attached them along the roof edge with tacky glue and a dab of superglue.



I then cut and shaped brass rods and painted them flat black to create the downspouts seen in the archival photo. I attached them to the building with the tacky-superglue combination and linked them to the gutters. ⑧, ⑨

I then lightly weathered the structure with a mixture of Doc O'Brien's powders and Pan Pastels and added a few details on the loading platform such as crates, pallets and hay bales.



For illumination, I inserted two Evans Designs LEDs powered by a 3V watch battery inside the building. ⑩ The on-off switch is hidden under a bush at the rear of the structure.

Since building Cramer's, I've added to the diorama a scratchbuilt model of the Glade Valley Mill, the other major structure across from the Woodsboro train station. I also added a couple of private houses seen in archival photos dating back to 1900.

With all of those in place, I took the diorama up to the Woodsboro depot late last year to display it at one of the monthly open houses hosted there by the Woodsboro Historical Society (2nd Saturday of every month, 1-4 PM). ⑪



Trees and ground cover, ballast and dirt roads have also been added, along with track, some wagons, and figures. The diorama is built on a two-by-three-foot piece of ½ inch plywood onto which I glued one inch pink foam insulation. I added some additional carved pieces of the foam to fashion the rise in terrain behind the depot.

Now that I have all that done, I've decided to finish up the requirements for the NMRA Achievement Program Certificate for Master Builder-Prototype Models. To do that, I will have to add rolling stock and a locomotive suitable for the era on what was a Pennsylvania Railroad subsidiary. It's a lot of work, to be sure, but, as they say, ***"model railroading is fun!"*** ☒



Alex Belida, a retired journalist, is Editor of the *Potomac Flyer*. He lives in Rockville, MD where his HO scale Eureka and South Pass RR models a mining town in Nevada in the late 1800s.

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A Load for the O Scale 36' Gondola

By Martin Brechbiel, MMR

[Editor's Note: This is a followup to his article on building the gondola in the Flyer Feb.-Mar. issue]

Building this Simpson kit was good fun and high play value. It is rather liberating not having to actually follow a set of demanding instructions at times and just build a car. However, this car was effectively just wood. The added details and other bits simply do not give it enough weight on the track, certainly not anywhere close to NMRA recommendations. There is no discrete way to add weight. So, the solution to this is to add a creatively weighted load to get it to stay on the track.

The first step for this project was to find something of reasonable weight. I remembered that I had a bit of 2 mm lead sheet rolled up under my bench. After retrieving that (with only minor blows to the head and a lung full of dust) I managed to cut a rectangle slightly smaller than the interior of the gondola using a utility knife. It took several passes with the utility knife to get this done neatly and without bloodshed. This material is rather floppy, so keeping it on a good, flat surface is important to success.

I found a block of scrap blue high-density extruded foam stashed under the layout, left over from scenery work. I shaped it roughly into what I wanted the load to look like using my band saw (again, no bloodshed) as this is very fast and clean. (I also used my band saw to shape all of the blue foam under the scenery on the layout.) Once I had this foam shaped, I hot glued it to the lead sheet (Photo 1).



I painted the entire surface with Carpenter's glue and then covered that

with something that might pass for small-sized bituminous coal. After letting the glue dry thoroughly, I added another layer of "coal" and then—using a transfer pipette—saturated the surface with matte medium (Woodland Scenics) and let that dry. That step was repeated two more times. These little projects do not take up a lot of room and only a few minutes per day, so there is plenty of time to work on everything else instead of watching the glue dry.

After I was satisfied with the overall appearance, I tried to place the load into the gondola, and it did not quite fit. Over time, it seems that there was a little "flow" of the coal with the matte



medium, which expanded coverage beyond the dimensions of the car interior. This was easily countered with application of a pair of nippers around the perimeter. After that, the load fit right in and the overall weight of the car was now acceptable (Photo 2). 

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Martin is a long-time O scale model railroader who models the South Mountain Branch of the Cumberland Valley Railroad. He also has a strong interest in traction and trolley modeling that freely adopts the Chambersburg, Greencastle & Waynesboro Rwy. He earned his Master Model Railroader (MMR) certificate #629 in 2019 and is currently the Superintendent of the Potomac Division, Secretary of the Mid-Eastern Region, and also the Editor of *O Scale Trains* magazine. His goal is to make the Potomac Division a thriving environment for all aspects of model railroading while promoting the values of NMRA membership.

Finding Scratchbuilding Supplies in the Potomac Division

Piedmont Plastics and Brainstorm Comics

By Nicholas Kalis

Don't be misled by the suite number for Piedmont Plastics—this business is in a ground level warehouse (25,000 square feet with 12 employees). Best to visit from the rear entrance at Dock 22. This



business stocks all matter of plastics in sheet, rod, tube, film and related products. As model railroaders we are probably most interested in their four-foot by eight-foot sheet styrene, which they have available in various thicknesses. Modelers who want styrene for their backgrounds will be pleased to learn that they even stock four-foot by ten-foot sheets — but in only one thickness.

Before visiting, be aware the shop workers can be out to lunch in the middle of the day; so it is best to call first. You may also need to make advance arrangements if you wish for them to cut any styrene to length for you. Another pleasant surprise at Piedmont is that they can roll—using cardboard—your sheet styrene so that it fits into an empty trunk or back seat of your automobile.

To learn more about the countless products they stock, visit www.piedmontplastics.com. If their Maryland location does not suit you, they have location at 5050 Commerce Road, Richmond, Virginia 23234, though I have never visited it.

Piedmont Plastics, 7045 Troy Hill Drive Suite 450, Elkridge MD 21075

301 881-7900 Toll Free 800 638-6651

Fax 301 881-0419

Operating Hours are not listed on their website, so it is best to make a telephone call first. Your author can confidently write that they are not open on Sundays — probably not open on Saturdays either per his recollection.

Brainstorm Comics & Gaming

The published list of storefronts where a Potomac Division member can find some modeling supplies continues to grow. Brainstorm Comics & Gaming stocks a large variety of model paints (both in bottles and spray cans) for a model railroader who needs some paint fast. Your reporter, Nick Kalis, visited their Frederick MD shop on November 2, 2019 and found a helpful staff. They carry the Citadel line of paints made by Games Workshop. Citadel paints come in a large variety of colors and are sold in 12 ml bottles.

Some limited varieties of landscaping materials and paint brushes are also in stock. Their shop is located in downtown Frederick, Maryland which is well served by a number of public parking garages. Brainstorm has a second location at 25 Maple Avenue in Walkersville, Maryland.

This shop is no substitute for a well-stocked model railroad shop or even a generic hobby shop. For Potomac Division members residing in Maryland, it could serve as an emergency source of paint combined perhaps with a visit to some of the great dining opportunities offered in downtown Frederick.



117 N. Market St., Frederick, MD 21701

301 360-5843 Store Hours Sun-Tue: 11-8 PM Wed: 10-8 PM Thurs-Sat: 11-8 PM
and

25 Maple Ave, Walkersville, MD 21793

301 304-2407 Store Hours Sun-Sat: 11-8 PM

www.brainstormcomics.com

Editor's Note: We're calling on all Potomac Flyer readers to send us their tips about similar sources for modeling supplies. Write to: Potomac-Flyer@potomac-nmra.org 

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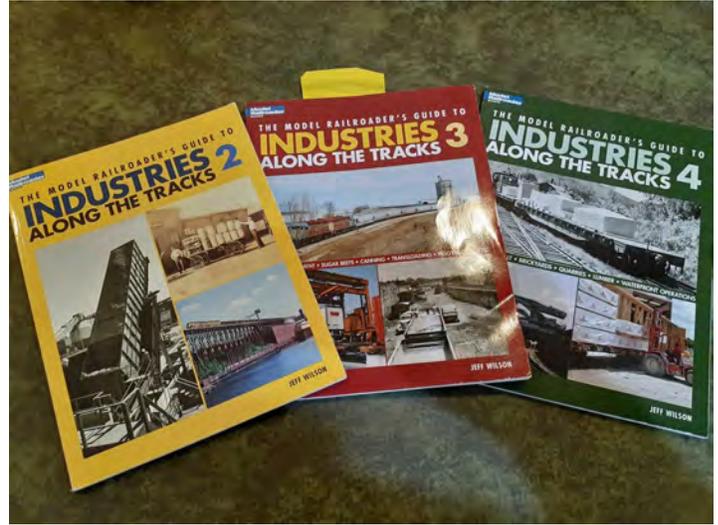
Nick Kalis writes: Seeing them on television sparked my love of model trains. That led to the proverbial Lionel set under the Christmas Tree at about the age of eight or nine. My adult layout experience has been a never-completed HO Sunnyside Yard, then on to my Lower Montauk Branch LIRR featured on an RMC cover. My current Oahu Sugar Company in Fn3 graced the cover of *Narrow Gauge Downunder* Issue 70 (July 2018) and was its feature story. Those interested in plantation-themed layouts and or indoor large scale are welcome to follow <http://oahusugarcaneFn3.blogspot.com/>

Book Review: Jeff Wilson Industry Guides

By Mat Thompson, MMR

With our efforts to model layout industries realistically, Tony Koester has written that model railroaders are today's industrial archaeologists. If so, the prolific Kalmbach author Jeff Wilson is our Indiana Jones.

In 2004, Kalmbach published Wilson's book *The Model Railroader's Guide to Industries Along the Tracks*. Additional volumes were released in 2006, 2008, and 2010. Each volume covers six industries, with each industry described in ten to twelve pages. Most chapters include a schematic or track plan suggesting how to incorporate the industry on a layout. As always with Kalmbach books, photos are plentiful, on-topic, and clearly reproduced.



The four books and their chapters are as shown:

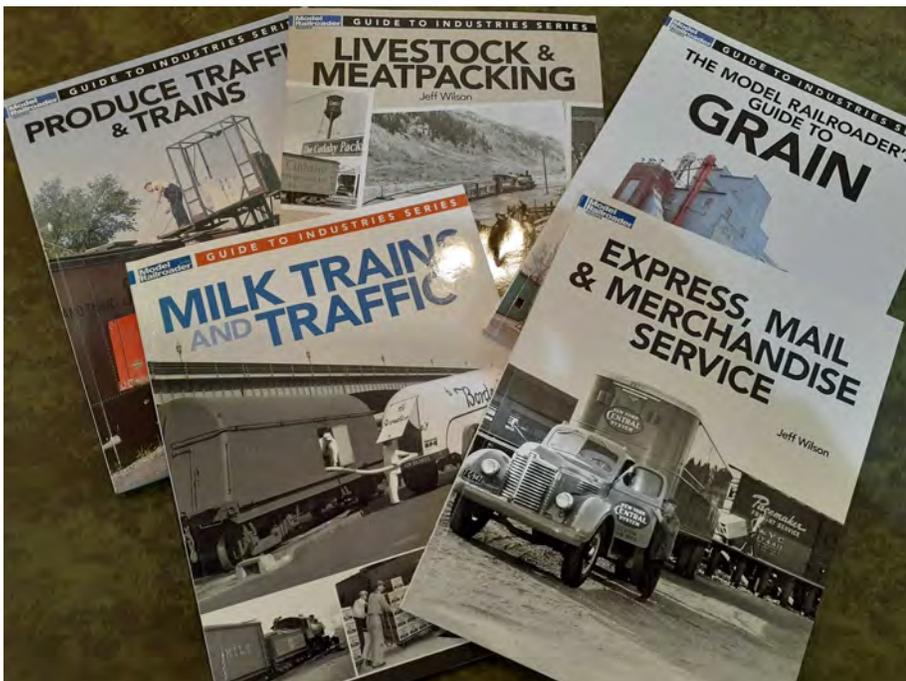
- Vol 1: **Grain, coal, oil/gas, produce, automobile manufacture, and meat-packing industries**
- Vol 2: Coal customers, **milk and dairy traffic**, breweries, paper, iron ore, and **package and LCL (less than carload) traffic**
- Vol 3: Ethanol, cement, sugar beets, canning, transloading, and **piggyback traffic**
- Vol 4: Coal gas, salt, brickyards, quarries, lumber, and waterfront operations

All but the first book are still available from Kalmbach and hobby shops.

Now Wilson is devoting whole volumes to single industries. The subjects receiving single volume treatment to date are listed in bold above. In some cases the titles are slightly different to cover an expanded subject. For instance, Volume 2's chapter, milk and dairy traffic, is now a book, *Milk*

Trains and Traffic. Volume 3's chapter, piggyback traffic, is now a book, *Piggyback and Container Traffic*.

The organization of each book is similar. They start with a history of the industry and its connection to railroads. Then plants and other facilities are discussed. If appropriate, the facilities are discussed over time, as in the book *The Model Railroader's Guide to Grain*, which has a chapter on classic grain elevators and another on modern grain elevators.



The next subject is cars serving the industry. As appropriate, there may be multiple chapters, as in *Livestock and Packing* which has one chapter for stock cars and another for reefers. Both chapters cover the evolution of the cars over their history serving the industries. The books finish with one or more chapters on the rail operations and traffic of the industry.

Wilson's text and picture captions are clear and to the point. Typical of Kalmbach books, the prototype photos alone are worth the price of the books. Armchair modelers and detail-obsessed modelers can both be entertained for hours pouring over them. Books also have maps, charts, and tables showing the concentration of industry locations and volume of industry traffic for various railroads, and similar information. The prototype modeler can use this information to determine which cars may be correct for their layout's traffic even if the industry is not on their railroad.

Modelers may also find useful information in these books for industries other than the one named in the title. Pictures of storage tanks, above-ground piping, and trackside loading and unloading facilities in the ethanol chapter in Vol 3 of the *Trackside Industry Guides* can be applied to replicating almost any liquid-based chemical facility. The building and rail operations explained in *Railroading and the Automotive Industry* would be similar for other large manufacturing industries such as farm equipment, appliances, and machinery, among others. 

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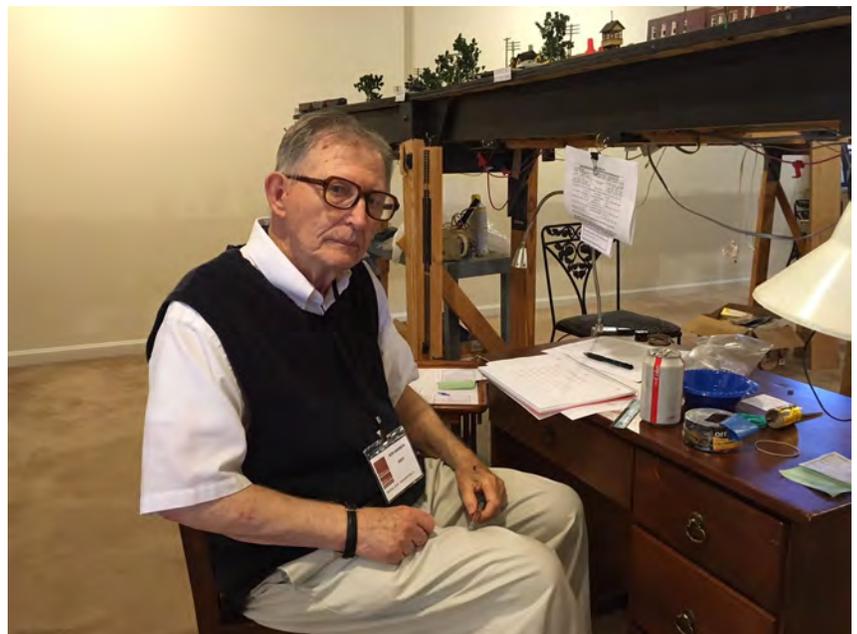
Mat Thompson's Oregon Coast Railroad was featured in *Great Model Railroads 2014*. Building structures and scenery are his favorite modeling activities. He is also an avid model railroad operator and regularly attends operating sessions.

Mark Me Up: Robert L. Warren 1932-2020

By Mat Thompson, MMR

Model railroad operators in the Potomac Division have lost a great friend and teacher with the passing of Robert L. Warren. Bob had a hobby-wide impact with his operations articles in *Model Railroader*, *The Dispatcher's Office*, and *Mainline Modeler*. His special interest was track planning and modifying John Armstrong designs so operators could walk with their trains.

He counted among his friends John Allen, Andy Sperandio, Tony Koester, Steve King, Paul Dolkos, and many other prominent members of the hobby's operator community. They, and



those of us less well known, relied on *Bob Warren dispatching his Winchester, Frederick & Petersburg Railroad*.

Bob for his extensive prototype knowledge and skill in distilling that knowledge into useable nuggets for running our train room empires.

Bob loved to tell the story of his introduction to railroad operations. As a young teen living in Ferguson, MO, just after World War II, he was a junior member of a live steam club. Club members built their own railroad. He rode along when they took breaks from the work to use their automobiles as trains and run over the ground's dirt roads following Timetable and Train Orders rules.



Bob's WF&P was built on a series of high tables like module layouts. The terrain was flat, scenery was simple, model buildings were modest, and aisles were wide. It ran flawlessly and was a perfect learning grounds for Timetable and Train Order operations.

In 1962, Bob, an Annapolis graduate and career Navy officer, was transferred to Monterey, CA. There he met John Allen and became a regular at John's Wednesday evening operating sessions. Bob's job was as the Port Yardmaster. He told that story in the October 2018 issue of *Model Railroader*.

Locally he hosted sessions for many years on his Winchester, Fredericksburg and Petersburg Railroad. The first WF&P was a typical HO scale operations-based layout occupying a modest sized room in his Springfield, VA, home.

When he moved to Dumfries, VA, his new WF&P was quickly built using the domino building concept advocated by David Barrow (*Model Railroader* August 2009). Within two years he had completed a basement-sized railroad designed to support Timetable and Train Order operations.

Bob believed in simple. He used Digitrax DCC to allow walking with trains, but that was all the fancy electronics. Track was Atlas code 100 with hand throws on turnouts. Modeling was minimal, just enough so operators would know where they were. Bob often said our hobby has modelers and operators and some who are both but not him. He was an operator.

On both layouts, trains were short so they wouldn't overlap towns or otherwise interfere with other trains. The intent of his operating sessions was to duplicate prototype operating procedures, not showcase models. He believed if equipment worked, keep it. Passenger trains were pulled by a pair of Globe Models F3s Bob bought and spray-painted gray in the 50's. He later added decoders and that was good enough.

I first met Bob in 2004. The late George Hughes invited me to go with him to Bob's for an operating session. It was my first ops session. A few sessions later I mentioned I was starting to plan a new railroad but didn't understand the track configuration of yards and other rail facilities. Bob told me he loved doing track plans and offered to develop one for me. After only a few ops sessions I had learned how knowledgeable Bob was. I quickly accepted his offer.

That started a series of letters I still have and read again from time to time. Bob wrote me

letters—not e-mails—as we worked together to design my Oregon Coast Railroad. And what letters they are. Bob didn't just draw a track plan, he wrote stories about how the railroad would operate, the type of customers it would have, cars needed, and a schedule.

Once I began operations, Bob was the yardmaster at Hoyt Street, the railroad's main yard. Years later he moved to dispatcher because, as he said, the job came with a chair. Before each session Bob and I would review the schedule and the operator workload. Afterwards we would review how things went and how we might make improvements. I



Bob yardmastering at Hoyt Street on my Oregon Coast Railroad. Besides keeping the yard running, this position gave him the perfect spot to observe how the railroad worked and make suggestions to improve it. Pete LaGuardia is running the yard engine. Notice the New York Yankees logo on Pete's shirt. Both Bob and Pete were serious baseball fans. If things were slow at Hoyt Street, they talked ball.

loved the conversations because Bob was knowledgeable and patient. Now, fifteen years into running the layout, I see Bob's contributions everywhere I look.

One of the great things about operations is the friendships that come with it. While Bob and I enjoyed trains, we often discussed the Navy (his career) and the Army (my career), bird watching, favorite books and movies, and just life in general. He had similar friendships with many others.

I am not the only layout owner in the area to have benefited from Bob's friendship and knowledge. Paul Dolkos, Pete LaGuardia, Bryan Kidd, Rich Steinmann, John Swanson, and Chris Atale have all told me about suggestions, track plans, and conversations with Bob that have improved their railroads.

We would all say we weren't train buddies; we were friends. ☒

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April 2020 Achievement Program News

by Mat Thompson, MMR

Well folks, it feels a bit like being the Maytag repairman in Achievement Program Land the last few months.

It is not quite that lonely. I have talked with several people who are working on different projects, so things will improve. The Potomac Division should have at least one more Master Model Railroader this year.

Unfortunately, our Minicon has been postponed indefinitely, so we will be unable to judge finished models as we had planned.

So until further notice, hold on to those projects. If you have a work-in-progress and want some feedback, contact me and we'll see what we can work out. ☒

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Fritz Dahlin brought these models to the Minicon last year just to share. We look forward to seeing yours when we next get together!

Mid-Eastern Region 2020 Convention



LOOK SOUTH IN 2020

MID-EASTERN REGION 2020 CONVENTION
CAROLINA SPECIAL
OCTOBER 15TH - 18TH 2020
Crowne Plaza Charlotte, Executive Park
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

The Carolina Southern Division is proud to be hosting the MER 2020 Convention.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN.

Convention activities will include:

- A wide selection of model railroading clinics, including some by nationally recognized names in the hobby
- Tour of the North Carolina Transportation Museum backshop and other non-public areas
- Tour of the Southeastern Narrow Gauge and Shortline Museum
- Tour of Wade's Train World in Brookford, a layout maintained by the CSD
- HO, S, and N scale operating layouts in the Convention Hotel
- Home layout tours in the area, to include The Piedmont & Western and NYC Piney Fork Branch, which were both cover stories in Model Railroader
- Operating Sessions

START THE REGISTRATION PROCESS AT THIS LINK:

<http://carolinasouthern.org>

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Call for Clinicians—2021 MER Convention

We've got the place, the date and the logo, but we need you and your Division.

The 2021 Local Convention Committee is charging forward with planning of the Mount Clare Junction convention, to be held 21-24 October, 2021 at the Delta Hotels Baltimore Hunt Valley in scenic Hunt Valley, MD.

We are looking for clinicians, with a preference towards attendee participation hands-on projects, and those willing to offer "on the way home" layout tours. In the interest of providing ease of access and

greater likelihood of visitors, we encourage those within a reasonable distance of the major interstates (I-95, I-70, I-83) to participate in the layout tour.

An online form has been created to indicate your interest in participating, and it's easy to use; just click on the word "[JotForm](#)" to be taken there. Should you prefer a more traditional form, we can provide a fillable PDF upon email request. Rick Uskert 2021 Local Convention Committee Chair 2021 Mid-Eastern Region Convention 2021lcc.chair@chesdiv-nmra.org 



MOUNT CLARE JUNCTION
MER 2021 - BALTIMORE, MD

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Note from the Flyer Editor:

We're all getting lots of messages from various sources advising us how they are coping with the Covid-19 or Coronavirus pandemic and what impact that might have on you. One came in recently from Kalmbach Media, publisher of Model Railroader and other train magazines. It was typical:

"We've implemented work-from-home policies, social distancing practices and preventative actions and measures to enhance cleaning practices at our office. Currently, we don't anticipate any immediate service delays or disruptions. If the situation changes, we'll be sure to let you know."

We here at the Flyer have always worked from home, except when we go out to cover Division events. And we aren't anticipating any delays or disruptions in our publishing schedule because of the pandemic, as long as you keep supplying us with stories and photos.

But we do want to remind all members and readers to be particularly cautious at this time. Why?

Well, you probably already know. Most of us are in that age bracket considered most at risk.

To underscore that point, let me share an e-mail exchange I had with an Associate Editor at Model Railroader two years ago. It involved MR's use of social media and my suggestion that they should use Twitter in addition to Facebook (which I don't use.)

The MR fellow said it wasn't considered because of the average age of the magazine's readers.

"But I'm 69," I protested. (Remember this was two years ago.)

His answer: "Then you, sir, are actually on the low side of our subscriber age range."

So stay safe, stay healthy and work on your modeling! 

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[Editors Note: Due to the Covid-19 pandemic any event might be canceled. Please watch for updates via email or on the PD website]

Potomac Division Events Calendar

Potomac Division Events Calendar				
Open House Schedule 2020				
May 30	Brad Trenkamp	State Line Feed Co.	HO	Vienna, VA
June 21	Alex Belida	Eureka and South Pass Railroad	HO	Rockville, MD
July 25	Bernie Kempinski	USMRR Aquia-Fredericksburg Line	O	Alexandria, VA
Aug. 15	John Swanson	Cresson Branch PRR	HO	Gainesville, VA
Sept. 5	Brian Sheron	LIRR Port Jefferson Branch	HO	Poolesville, MD
Sept. 5	Brian Benoit	Seneca Junction	HO	Poolesville, MD
Nov. 14	George Meyrick	The Tri-State Line	HO	Manassas, VA
Dec. 12	Todd Hermann	Lehigh & New England Railroad's Catasauqua Branch	HO	Falls Church, VA

Potomac Division Events Calendar			
Outreach Program 2020			
June 14	Vienna, VA (NVMR)		
Sept. tbd			
Nov. tbd			

Potomac Division Events Calendar			
MER Conventions			
2020, Oct. 15 - 18	<u>Crowne Plaza Charlotte Executive Park, Charlotte, NC</u>		Carolina South. Div.
2021, Oct. 21 - 24	Marriott Hunt Valley Inn, Hunt Valley, MD		Chesapeake Div.
2022, tbd	tbd		James River Div.
2023, tbd	tbd		Susquehanna Div.
2024, tbd	tbd		New Jersey Div.
National Conventions			
July 12-18, 2020	<u>St. Louis, MO</u>		
July 4-10, 2021	<u>Santa Clara, CA</u>		
August 14-21, 2022	<u>Birmingham UK</u>		

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NMRA 2020 St. Louis

When: July 12 - July 18, 2020

Website: <https://www.gateway2020.org>

With the spread of the COVID-19 virus, many model railroaders are wondering if the annual National Convention in St. Louis will be or has been cancelled. The answer is: at present, we are still planning to hold both the convention and National Train Show. Much can happen between now and July (perhaps good, perhaps bad), so the NMRA Leadership Team will wait and see how events pan-out and follow national guidelines. Stay safe, and continue to check back for updates.

