

Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad

<http://www.mpr.org>



The News for: January 2004

DUES ARE DUE!

Happy New Year! Club dues for 2004 are due by January 11th. Payments should be mailed to, or handed to, the Club Secretary George Harran. George's mailing address is: 17 Robin Hill Road, Waterford, CT 06385. Please make checks payable to the "M-P Model Railroad Club". For family members to receive benefits, all family members must be listed.

New Draconian Policy on Dues

Members wanting (free) passes to the Amherst Show at Springfield must have their dues paid by January 11, 2004, the 1st meeting in January. If you pay after that, you will still be an M&P Club Member for the year but your name will not be on the list that will be submitted to the Amherst Show officials to get vendor passes for the weekend. If you miss the deadline, you'll have to pay to get in. There will be no exceptions! This means YOU!

Maybe it's hard to understand but there is actually a very good reason for this policy. Last year George Harran spent hours running to the show office to add people to the Club list. The Amherst people were not happy with us having 100 names on the list anyway, and then adding another 20 the day before the show only increased their consternation. You know that they are a rather anal group with very rigid procedures for issuing credentials. We came across to them like we were running a scam. Pay your dues by January the 11th and let George enjoy the show.

S P R I N G F I E L D ! ! ! !

The annual Amherst Railway Society (<http://www.amherstrail.org/>) show will be held on Saturday and Sunday, February 7 and 8 at the Eastern States Exposition (The Big E) at West Springfield, Massachusetts. It's probably too late to make motel reservations now so, as has been said before, make a friend. [Remember, you can never bring too much money to the show and what happens in Springfield stays in Springfield.] We set up the HO, O_n30, G and N scale layouts on Friday the 6th beginning at 9:00 A.M. in the Young Building. If you want to be "comped" with passes for the weekend, you must have paid your dues by January 11 (See New Draconian Policy on Dues).

There are **no free parking passes for the show this year**. We fought that battle last year and won but it looks like we lost the war. Passes can be purchased on Friday or Saturday for 2 days so you don't have to buy them individually by the day. We might want to figure out on Friday how to carpool to save money on parking for the weekend.

The details about loading are as usual, open to last minute changes due to inclement weather and truck availability. Come to the January 25 meeting or check with any Club officer or functionary for the latest schedule. As of the last meeting in December, we will load at the New London Mall on Wednesday Feb. 4 in the evening around 6:00 PM. Right now it looks like we can keep the modules in the store until then. If not we will probably load at the North Stonington Town Hall in the same time

frame. The unloading date will be determined at the Springfield show. We need as much help as possible for the loading, setup, show operations and unloading. This is your Club and we all need your support, etc. (Enough scolding)

Willimantic Show Canceled

The show at Willimantic on, December 7, 2003 was canceled by the big snowstorm that weekend. The show chairman, Joe Sokol, says that it will not be rescheduled.

Holiday Display at New London

We have been operating in the store next to Strawberry's at the New London Mall since December 11. The store 16' x 100' but the HO layout was shoehorned into it by putting one side against the wall. The single aisle still meets the restrictions of the Fire Marshall. The passenger module control panel has also been set up in the store so it can be worked on while we are there. Wolf Schubler brought in a Lionel layout that has been set up against the back wall. We will operate the HO layout all four Sundays in January, the 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th. The times are the same for all days, from 10:00 AM-to 4:00 PM.

We have tried to get the interest of the kids by letting them operate the trains. Some of them were very enthused. If you think about it objectively, they probably do as well as we do because they are paying attention while we are generally running our mouth and not listening to some annoying voice saying "Down on the inside!"

The **President** wants everyone to support the show since it's such a big commitment on our part. The New London Mall is close to home for most of the membership (except for the VP and the Prez, who have to drive over an hour to get there). There is no reason we should struggle to staff this display. Hopefully we can leave our modules there until we are ready to load for Springfield.



Meeting Dates

Both January meetings will be held at the New London Mall after the operating session for the public ends at 4:00 PM. Dan Delany will give his twice delayed clinic on weathering on January 11. At the business meeting on January 25 we will make the final plans for Springfield. Be there.

Clark Pritchett Returns as Editor

The year of the kinder and gentler newsletter with John Waller as the editor has come to an end. Beginning with this issue, Clark Pritchett again assumes the role of editor. Please send any contributions to him at modlrrnews@aol.com. Anything that you may have already sent to John will be forwarded to Clark. Bill Evans says that the Newsletter is getting "heavier" and more expensive to mail. **We need to send the Newsletter electronically to every member who has an e-mail address.** Send your e-mail address to Clark to be added to the list.

Meeting Notes for December 28, 2003

(Provided by John Waller)

There was no Secretary's, Treasurer's or Storekeeper's report. The President reminded everyone that dues are due, and the cut-off for free passes to Springfield is dues paid on or before January 11, whence the final list will be mailed off.

The Weathering Clinic, postponed because of the weather, will be held January 11. The January meetings of 11 and 25 will be at New London 4 PM. The New London display will now be opened to the public January 18 and 25 10 AM to 4 PM, in addition to 4 and 11.

Springfield

The footprint available at Springfield is unchanged from last year. To include the O_{n30} layout, the HO layout will be "L" shaped and not "U" shaped. The HO barrier will also embrace the O_{n30} layout, with bland HO modules placed in those parts where public viewing is inhibited by the O_{n30} layout. Stu will do a layout plan.

Vic Clark has been asked to provide his rig as before, but no decision has been

reached yet. The alternative plan will use the red, white, and blue trailers. Wolf Schubler will probably pull the blue trailer, which will need to be carefully and densely packed in all three axes. G-scale stuff will go in the red trailer and Bob's van. Jonathon will probably pull the red trailer and Bob the white one. There are enough large vans available in case of overflow.

There will be no free parking passes; a single pass can be purchased to cover the whole show.

White Trailer Fittings

A motion to pay Bob MacGregor \$300 for fittings in the white trailer was passed by acclamation.

Treasurer

Gary Domer will be moving out of state soon. Anyone interested in taking over the treasurer's position could do so forthwith. A turnover period is desirable.

Club Name and Color Changes

There was an informal discussion about changing the Club name but little consensus. More discussion with input from more Club members is required.

New London Mall

The Club will be able to stay at least until the end of January, and hopefully for a few days thereafter. The Mall seems to be satisfied with simply having an otherwise empty store occupied? The site has been good, and we would hope to return next year.

Club Show

We now know that the poor outcome of this year's Show was much better, from the vendors' point of view, than their four subsequent shows, if that is any comfort. Dan will approach St. Bernard's again to try and get a commitment before Springfield, so we can distribute flyers there. The discussion included the relationship of the Show to other activities including Thomas and the New London Mall.

Club Needs New Treasurer

Our Club treasurer, Gary Domer, is going to retire in a year or so and move out of Connecticut. We will need a new treasurer to take his place. Dan wants us to have a

smooth transition from Gary to his replacement. Although Gary's term runs until September, he would be glad to hand over the reigns earlier than that and help train the new person. Please make your desire to serve as Club Treasurer known to Dan or Gary (See M&P Officer List). It's not rocket science you know.

Pa\$enger Module\$ Statu\$

Work on the modules has been suspended for three months after Springfield show to take a break and reinvigorate our workers. The control panel has been set up in the store at the New London Mall so we (basically John Waller) can work on it while we are there.

Digital Command and Control (DCC)

Some members of the Club have been talking about using DCC for the layouts for some time. [Several of our members actually practice DCC in the privacy of their own home.] The big issues are how to simultaneously combine DCC and normal DC operations on the layout and the cost of retrofitting DC locomotives. We all know that DCC is a better way to control locomotives but almost everybody already has a large investment in DC locomotives. The two systems are not compatible but can be made to work together by isolating the DC and DCC parts of the track on the layout. The problem is that a new electrical isolation plan will be required every time the modules are assembled in a different order. We already have enough trouble just troubleshooting the HO layout now.

Another approach that has been discussed is having a separate set of modules that are strictly DCC. They might only have a single track and be smaller and lighter than our present eight-foot modules, something along the line of the On3 modules that the N-Scalers have. A small DCC layout could be set up almost anywhere and might attract some younger people to join the Club. If you are interested in a Club DCC layout, send an e-mail to Clark to get some of the ideas that have been put down on paper so far.

Field Trips

Jim Delany is hard at work coming up with new ideas for field trips for the Club in the future. He needs your suggestions.

Member News

Here is where we actually try to communicate with our fellow Club members and those who might want to join us. Do you need some help with a model railroading problem, have expertise to share or just want to get out in the world more? Then let it be known in the Club newsletter.

New Members

Two new JUNIOR members have joined the Club after running the trains at the New London Mall Christmas display. They are Jeffery Turner from New London, CT and Joe Allyn from West Mystic, CT. Welcome aboard gentlemen!

Member Needs a Place to Stay

Timothy Reed is looking for a room to rent or to share a room with some other members at Springfield on Friday and Saturday nights. If you want to cut the cost of your room e-mail Tim at CAPT4X4@aol.com (Subject Line "Timothy") or call him at 860-535-3050.



John Waller's Column

Not all railroads are good. Recently Public Television aired a segment on the infamous Thailand-Burma Railway from World War II. Some of the material here is taken from www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/case_kwai/.

Construction began on September 16, 1942 at two existing terminals, one at Thanbyuzayat, Burma (now Myanmar), and one at Nong Pladuk, Thailand.

The railway was considered strategically necessary, particularly after the Battle of Midway, when the Imperial Japanese Navy suffered huge losses to their carrier fleet (a blow they had hoped to inflict on the US Navy at Pearl Harbor) and lost control at sea. The Japanese realized building the 257 mile long railway was extremely challenging and, under normal

circumstances, would take 5 years to build, time the Japanese knew they did not have.

Perhaps the best known aspect of the railway was the movie "Bridge on the River Kwai", where a British Army engineer is depicted as supervising the building of the bridge and then is faced with the agonizing decision of having to condone destruction of his "baby".

The Japanese started building the railway at several points and employed POW's and local labor under the most brutal conditions. Most of the POW's were British, Australian, and Dutch, but PBS mentions 700 American "soldiers". I don't think this is correct; I think they were sailors from the USS Houston, sunk at the Battle of Sunda Strait, March 1, 1942. About half the crew survived the battle, and the ship's complement was 1400. All survivors were taken prisoner.

I have met people who worked on the railway, and who somehow picked up the threads of a normal life after such a terrible ordeal. Not many care to say much about it. The American survivors are trying to have pressure put on the Japanese Government for payment to be made to them and their families.

Although records are incomplete, from a little over 50,000 POW's, 16,000 died and from 200,000 Asians, 80,000 died. Certainly, building railways in the 19th Century was hazardous, before the days of modern machines. People and horse power bore the brunt of the load, sometimes with assistance from steam power. Death rates were high, but nothing like those on the Burma-Thailand Railway.

We modelers might build a stream in a few days, whereas nature can take hundreds of thousands of years to do so. We might build a mountain out of Styrofoam then make a tunnel through it with a knife. Do we pause to think how much effort and danger is involved in tunneling through granite using hand labor, and black powder or dynamite?

I used to commute by train in Sydney. Where the train stopped at North Sydney

station, about to cross the Harbour Bridge¹, the rock face opposite platform 4 clearly shows where the rock was drilled before blasting. Admittedly the rock is Triassic sandstone and not granite, but I was always fascinated by it.

Is building a railroad an aspect of modeling which has been neglected? Many mouth-watering layouts appear in the pages of *Scale Rails*, but none that I recall models a railroad under construction. It need not be a wholly static display; it might show a branch being built from an existing operating main line.

John



Bourne Vertical Lift Railroad Bridge

The President's Corner

Last month's column was monumental, but that was last month! The Membership wants raw meat every month!

Vice President's Niche

With reference to our Club Show for next year, you might be interested in the following report in the Four County Catholic for December 2003:

A committee is being formed to review proposals regarding the future of St. Bernard High School, including its possible relocation, Bishop Michael R. Cote announced recently.

"As we face the future, I will not place any restrictions on the work of this committee except to state unequivocally that closing Saint Bernard's is not an option, " the

bishop said during a Nov. 2 open house at St. Bernard's. "The agenda of this committee will be to explore the best possible use of the present facilities and land and, at the same time, to look at possible alternate sites for St. Bernard," the bishop said. "I reemphasize closing St. Bernard's is not an option."

The high school is located on a rapidly developing stretch of Route 32, south of the Mohegan Sun casino. A large area of property adjacent to the school was recently purchased by a California developer, according to a story in the Nov. 5 edition of the *New London Day*. About 340 students attend St. Bernard's High School. An additional 145 students attend St. Bernard Academy, a middle school with grades six through eight which is located in the same building.

Bishop Cote said the committee will also study improvements and enhancements to the present building and grounds and possible funding sources. The bishop said he would announce the committee's chair and membership list soon.

St. Bernard High School was formed in 1972, when the all-girls school of St. Bernard in New London and the all-girls Notre Dame in Norwich merged with St. Bernard Boys High School in New London. St. Bernard Academy was founded in 1997 and enrollment has been growing ever since, according to Dr. Howard Bennett, Norwich Diocesan Superintendent of Schools.

Enrollment at St. Bernard High School peaked about 24 years ago when 1,349 students attended. After a decrease in enrollment the number of students has been static, Dr. Bennett said.'

The Market Place

Club Member Ads

Advertise (free) here to reach more than seventy model railroaders eagerly waiting to buy your wonderful stuff. (Editor's Note: Let me know when your item sells or when you want to stop running the advertisement.)

¹ Derisively referred to as the "coat hanger" by Melbournians.

The Club Store

We have the usual model railroad stuff, you know wheels and couplers, etc. To find out what else is in the Club Store see the Storekeeper, Larry Southwick. If you want to order Club apparel, call Jim Delany at 889-4029 before January 25. We have Club red hats with Club patch and/or Club red polo shirt with pocket. The available shirt sizes are medium, large, x-large, 3x, and 5x.

In The World

A Proto 2000 New Haven DL-109 in Cranberry livery, new in the box, recently sold on E-Bay, with only 5 bids for, are you ready for this? \$280! That's some appreciation for what was selling for only \$75. less than a year ago. Invest heavily! (Received from John Waller and Art Ferguson.)

M&PMRR Officers & Functionaries

The President	Dan DeLany	860 643-9303
Vice President	John Waller	564-3114
TreaSurer	Gary Domer	446-2113
Secretary	George Harran	443-0707
Storekeeper	Larry Southwick	535-2996
Bulk Purchases	Bill Evans	267-9482
Meeting Speakers	Bill Evans	267-9482
Layouts/Name Tags	Stu Dom	536-7637
New Passenger Module	Stu Dom	536-7637
Field Trips	Jim DeLany	889-4029
Newsletter	Clark Pritchett	444-1884
Club WebPage	Jim Spavins	spavij@rpi.edu



Pennsylvania RR S-2 Steam Turbine



The Face of Steam.

Letters to the Editor

Vent your opinions here!

And in Response

We are very lucky to have Dan Delany as the President of the Club in these difficult times for model railroading. He has taken up the challenge of putting new life back into the Club after our disastrous Show at St. Bernard High School. In last month's Newsletter Dan made a number of great points in the **President's Corner**.

Changing the meeting format to have clinics or interesting presentations for one of the two monthly meetings is long overdue. If this is really going to work we all have to be willing to get up and make a presentation or hold a clinic, or find somebody who will. You can talk about the history of your favorite railroad, bridge, station or maintenance facility; discuss railfan trips you have taken or good train watching locations or show us the pictures that you have taken; tell how you made that neat scenery or kitbashed a model with little or no investment. Maybe we could even do a

field trip on a Sunday. Anything at all would be far better than a business meeting.

But I don't agree with all of them. Do we really need to change the name of the Club? There is nothing inherently wrong with the Mohegan and Pequot names. They are not degrading to either one of the two Indian Tribes. No Native American group has said that they find the name offensive like the Washington Redskins. We do not use a logo that people object to like the smiling Cleveland Indian. If either Tribe says that they are offended then we should consider a name change, but not until then.

Sure there is a downside to the name because some people are turned off by the perceived association with casinos, but I think that the name recognition far outweighs this. The dollar-cost of changing the name is small compared to losing the name recognition that we have built up over more than twenty years. The cost of new hats, shirts and banners can easily be borne by a Club that hoists its mugs and says "Another round of new passenger modules for my friends!"

Tradition for tradition's sake is not a good reason to keep doing what we have always done but neither is changing for change's sake a reason to do something very different. Our Club historian, Jan Luth, can tell the story of how the Club was named in 1980. Do we want to lose that too? A regional name would make us just another ho hum model railroad club. If we do change the name, something more exciting and dynamic would be good for interest and curiosity of the public. How about The Hard Core Train Club or The We've Changed Our Train Club Name, Again Club? If we want to be politically correct, then why not change the Club name to three random letters like the CSX Railroad. These letters don't offend anybody nor do they say anything other than paint an impersonal corporate face on the organization.

Clark Pritchett



The Technical Section

Contributions are welcome. You can write about anything from prototype to model railroads. Scenery, electrical, bench work, model building and more are all of interest to the club members.

Crossing Signals

These signals are used at grade crossings to warn automobiles and pedestrians of passing trains. Earlier signals use standard 8 3/8 inch diameter lenses. More modern signals use a larger, more visible, 12 inch diameter lenses.

Each light unit has a background and visor assembly that is hinged at the bottom and tilts down to allow access to the lens, bulb and mirrored reflector. This assembly is held upright by a single bolt located on the front directly above the lens visor. Each unit also has a small window on each side commonly referred to as a "side light" which indicates to the crew on an approaching train that the crossing signal system has been activated.

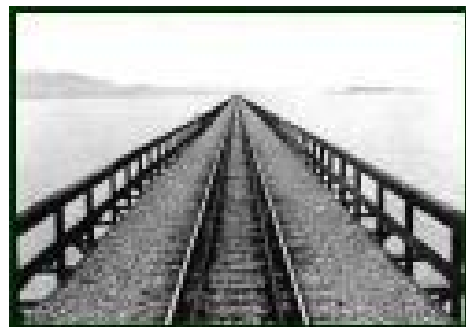
Light units usually are found in groups of four - two facing forward and two facing to the rear - to enable warning of traffic approaching in each direction.

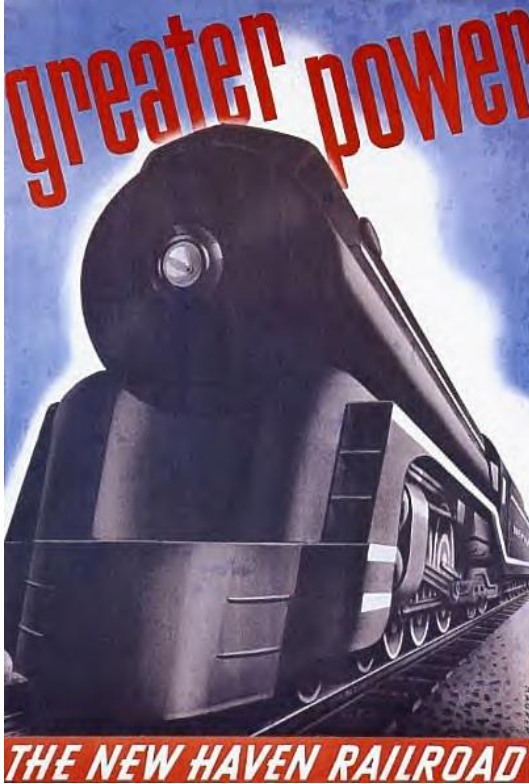
The mast holding the light units usually has two "Railroad Crossing" cross bucks (one for each side) as well as a top mounted crossing bell.

From: <http://www.trainweb.org/signals/>

World Wide Web

Send in your favorite model railroad related websites and they will be published here so everybody can access them. Let's start with everybody's favorite, the M&P Club's site WWW.MPRR.ORG.





Model Railroad Calendar

This Month in 2004

until January 11, Essex, CT Connecticut River Museum 10th Anniversary Holiday Model Railroad Show; Main Street 10 AM to 5 PM.

January 4 & 11, New London, CT - The Club will run trains in the Mall store from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Sundays.

January 11, New London, CT - The Fun Club meeting will be held at the end of the session at the Mall at ~4:00 PM. Dan Delany will do a clinic on weathering. (This was originally scheduled in December but the first meeting was snowed out.)

January 25, Ledyard, CT - The Club business meeting (Final Springfield plans) will be held at the Bill Library starting at 7:30 PM.

Next Month and Beyond

February 6, 7 & 8, West Springfield, MA
The Amherst Club Show will be held on Saturday and Sunday at the Big E. M&P sets up HO, O_n30, G and N scale on Friday.

Loading will tentatively be at 6:00 PM on Wednesday February 4. Final arrangements will be made at the January 25 meeting.

March 6 or 13 (TBD) Mystic, CT Mystic Middle School. M&P displays. See Ed Bradbury for updates.

Ron Pothier's list of train shows for the year is available from him at repth@snet.net.

The Lighter/Serious Side



Submitting Newsletter Items

Electronic versions are preferred so retyping is not necessary. E-mail enclosures in Microsoft Word and other compatible word processing programs can usually be opened. Send items to be published by E-mailing them to Clark at home at: modlrnews@aol.com, or snail-mail them to 23 Beacon Hill Dr. Waterford, CT 06385. If you do e-mail something, it is a good idea to phone (860 444-1884) and say that you sent it so it doesn't mistakenly get deleted as spam. Put M&P Newsletter Article in the subject line. You can also put the items on a floppy disk in Microsoft Word and give it to me or mail it. The deadline for submissions is one week before the end of the month.