

Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad



The News for: July 2004

Norwich Station Display Debrief

On Sunday June 27 we set up a layout at the train station in Norwich, CT. The Mystic Valley Railroad Association had a rail fan trip that day using Providence and Worcester passenger equipment and two of their GE engines, one at each end of the train. We were meant to add to the festivities for the passengers who were boarding the train at the Norwich station at noon.

We couldn't get into the station at the appointed time so we only had two hours to set up the layout. Originally we were going to set up a 16X16 layout but we found a way to shoehorn a full size 20X20 layout in the space available. Whether it was changing the layout plan, the time pressure or something else, we found a new way to introduce a problem to the layout. Somehow we "cross threaded" one of the mainlines with a siding, a new and unique experience. The owner of the module recognized the problem and we then ran flawlessly for the rest of the day, ending operations at 4:00 PM instead of the originally planned 5:00 PM.

Layout Visit at Member's House

Jim Spavins Jr. has invited the Club to visit his home layout at 58 Mystic Road in North Stonington, CT on Wednesday July 7 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Following the layout visit, club members can go to Larry's for the usual Wednesday night work session. The layout features scenes from Old Saybrook to Groton and includes two drawbridges, Providence and Worcester and New England Central freight operations, and a branch to Pfizer. Jim hopes to see you there.



Pictures of Jim's Layout at Home.

Go on the Big Railfanning Trip to Altoona, Pennsylvania and Western Ohio this Month. Call Jim Delany at 889-4029

Mohegan and Pequot Club Show

Dan Delany finally got a response from the administration at St. Bernard High School and they have agreed to rent their facilities to us again. So, there will be a Club show this year. It will be held on Sunday October 17. The rest of the details are yet to be worked out but it is clear that we have to do better than we did last year or there won't be any support for Club shows in the future.

Meetings, Work & Operating Sessions

Once again we have reached the doldrums of Club Meetings. We only meet once this month (and next). The only Club Meeting will be held on Sunday July 25 at the Bill Library in Ledyard, CT starting at 7:30 PM. Work sessions will be held on Wednesday nights in Larry Southwick's basement. but call Larry if you want to work at other times.

So nobody can say that they don't know how to get there, here are Larry's directions to his house. Take I-95 north to Exit 92. At the end of exit ramp, turn left onto route 2 west (actually north toward Foxwoods). About 1.5 miles you will come to traffic circle. Go straight thru following route 2. At the first traffic light after the traffic circle, turn right onto Rocky Hollow Road.. At the stop sign, go straight. You will pass the North Stonington Town Hall on your right. At the next intersection, go straight onto Wyassup Road. Follow Wyassup Road for about 1.5 miles until you get to number 200 (mailbox on left, house hidden on right). Turn right into the driveway thru the metal gates in the stone wall.

If a small layout is setup in Larry's basement we can operate trains on Wednesdays nights along with work sessions.

Extracts from Meeting Notes in June

[Only includes information relevant this month or not incorporated in other articles in the newsletter.]
(extracts from John Waller's notes)

"Work sessions are at Larry's Wednesday nights; the emphasis is on work and not play [doesn't that make Jack a dull boy?].

Henry's contribution, by allowing the Club to use his basement in the past, was again acknowledged.

Thanks were received from the Mystic Middle School.

A thank you letter was sent to Harry Leiser of Woodworkers Warehouse. He was pleased with the way the place was left and said he would be happy to accommodate the Club in any other vacant rental property he owns.

Club Annual Show: St. Bernard's is still not responding, as they are diverted by the sale of their property and setting up a new school elsewhere. Another venue, where interest in a train show has been expressed, is Waterford High School. There was a vote, by show of hands 8 to 7, to hold a Club Show this year. St. Bernard's only remains an option if a favorable response is received by the end of June. Nothing has really changed in our approach to the Club Show as a result of last year's flop (Harsh. Negative success.)

No payment has been made, or will be made, to the New London Mall. (Hardliners rule!)

Why has there been no Club raffle at recent meetings? It will be reinstated in the future.

The Club trailer has, in the past, simply been registered in the town in which the Treasurer resides. There may be cheaper options.

The single July meeting will be July 25 at the Bill Library."

M&P Club Field Trips

Jim Delany is our field trip coordinator. If you have any ideas or suggestions for places to go, bring them to Jim so he can make them happen.

Field Trip Debriefs

On June 19, 2004 a total of fourteen M&P Members and their families went to see George Sellios' fabulous Franklin and South Manchester layout in Peabody, MA. This overwhelming experience of model railroading Nirvana cannot be put into words. The mind was overwhelmed by all of the details (e.g. over 6,000 hand-painted human figures in exquisite detail) to the point that you had to look away from the surreal layout. In about two hours we were so saturated that we couldn't absorb anything else. Unfortunately no cameras or video cameras were allowed so if you didn't go you are just going to have to ask member s who were transformed by the religious experience of the Franklin and South

**Go on the Big Railfanning Trip to Altoona, Pennsylvania and
Western Ohio this Month. Call Jim Delany at 889-4029**

Manchester and the artistry of George Sellios. After we left we went to the train store down the street where most people satisfied their need to spend some money.

In the afternoon we went to North Shore Model Railroad Club (www.nsmrc.org) layout. It is in the basement of the Brothers restaurant in Wakefield, MA. We have been there before and each time there is more new stuff to see. The sheer size would lead you to believe that they had a lottery win, but no, just many years of dedicated work by their club members, 53 in all. Like all model railroads it will never be done but there is a tremendous amount of completed scenery and lighted buildings with interior detail, including a power plant and train station. There is already significant double decking but a whole new massive yard and new loops are going in over existing large yards and track. One M&P Club Member was heard to say that we should be embarrassed that we have not completed 42 feet of passenger module in the time that the NSMRC has almost doubled the size of their layout! (M&P work sessions are held on Wednesdays at Larry Southwick's house.)

The NSMRC pays the restaurant \$600 a month rent and has other monthly expenses that come to about \$300. Their member dues are \$20 a month. For <\$250 a year and a lot of dedication they get an exceptional model railroading experience, 365 days a year if they want it. This stems from a permanent location and a willingness to pay for it.

Scheduled Trips

Here is the latest information from Jim Delany about the big summer trip to Altoona Pennsylvania and Western Ohio. The annual club trip will take place from July 14 to July 18, 2004. At this point (6-30-04) we have 11 members going on the trip. We plan to leave Wed. AM, July 14 and travel to Altoona, PA, stopping at Grizleys, a power tool company, as it is on our way. Thursday we will leave Altoona and head west through Pittsburgh into Ohio, crossing most of the state to Dressler, Ohio, where there is a special location for railfanning. Other areas in mid and western Ohio will be explored, from western Ohio and heading east. This is based on a railfanning article in the March and April issues of

Railpace. This should be an enjoyable trip, covering an area we have not seen before.

Bob MacGregor is taking his van and a minivan will be rented for the trip. One other person may drive a car. Room cost will be no more than \$50 a night (double occupancy) The transportation cost will be averaged over all of the members who make the trip. Food is a variable that depends on your taste and pocketbook. All in all, the best estimate for the trip is around \$500+ per person. The meeting place will be the Dunkin' Donuts in Middletown, at 8:00 AM on Wednesday morning, July 14.

Possible/Probable Trips

The Providence Club layout on a Saturday morning. Northlandz in New Jersey. Troy, NY to see the RPI layout with a visit to the new Amtrak station and the yard at Selkirk. In late June we could visit New Haven station on a Saturday and take Metro North to Grand Central Terminal, to see this renovated gem of a station.

Excursions to the railroad museums in Willimantic and Danbury and the Essex Steam Train are also potential one-day trips that we might take this year.

We could go to Baltimore to check out the B & O Museum and the Amtrak mainline (the Northeast corridor). We can make side trips such as visiting Northlandz as we go west or return are also possible. This can be discussed further at Club meetings over the next few months.

Field Trip Logistics

We usually leave for day trips from the commuter lot in Norwich, located on the west side of I-395 at the Yantic/Norwichtown exit, EXIT 82, At the end of the exit ramp coming from the south, turn left and go under I-395. The lot is on the right just after the overpass. If you are coming from the north you can see the lot as you exit.



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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.

John Waller's Column

Also see **The Technical Section**

If you have not already done so, I recommend you go to our web site and to the "how to" section by Jim Spavins. His article *Modular Railroading 101* is under development, but well worth reading for what has been written so far.

I am particularly struck by Jim's approach on how to build a module, or modules, which the builder can move around with his own resources. Recognize that, for example, the new passenger station modules are Club modules, and are thus nearly always moved by a Club team. They are built accordingly. With private modules, it is a different matter.

The first section in Jim's article is *Planning*, which is what I am doing now for a DCC demonstration to follow on from what I have done so far. Planning is the operative word at this stage, because I am still committed to helping with the passenger station modules, and getting it all to work.

Why use Jim's approach? Are not there many sources of advice on building modules, such as the NMRA? Of course, I have seen Jim's work first hand, and that counts very highly.

Thanks to the kind forbearance of Grace and Henry Curtis, much of the work on the passenger modules was done in the Curtis basement. While I was involved in the electrical installation, I took a peek from time to time at the laying of track work, ballasting, and scenery. It is clear that there are many Club members, including Jim, who are skilled in these areas.

Anyone who has looked closely at my present module will shake their head. It sags. It also suffers from cramming too much into too little space. As Jim warns in his planning

section, what looks good on paper does not necessarily translate well into practice.

As already intimated in a previous column, my next module set will take the DCC-based techniques which I have already implemented to a higher level. I plan to include the following features:

- Automatic two-way control on a single line.
- Changes in track elevation by means of a helix and zigzag (switchback).
- A yard where the tracks are substantially straight, so's I can use a re-railer to put rolling stock on the track more easily than now¹.
- Scenery!!

Of course, nothing would be worse than a technical demonstration which is beggared by poor track construction. That, and scenery, are my weak points, and Jim's strong points.

A major decision is the overall length of the module set, and the individual module lengths. I have set a minimum of 16 feet. My initial thought was to build two 8 feet modules, but they would be beyond my capacity to move by myself, and would require jigs to be constructed.

For private modules, Jim advocates 4 feet in length. This gives great flexibility in the mode of transport, both by a person and by vehicle. The more I read and thought, I leaned ever closer to the 4 feet idea.

Sure there are more track joints with smaller module lengths. But, in email correspondence, Jim rightly points out that where existing modules have dedicated track joiners, there is little trouble. Furthermore, such modules are usually bolted together, simplifying the alignment problem.

I have done rough sketches of track layout. I have already constructed a helix and tested it. But things are tight within 16 feet. As Jim writes "As good as my drafting ability is, I still like to lay everything out in full size to make sure it will fit and it looks appealing." I plan to do that as much as possible.

¹ With aging eyesight, it is difficult to put a locomotive or car onto a curved track!

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One of the matters of concern, once a layout is embarked upon with different track elevations, is how to treat changes in gradient, such as the transition between horizontal track and track sloping up or down. Obviously a badly constructed vertical transition will give as much trouble as a badly constructed horizontal curve.

Jim tells me that, in prototype railroad practice, gradient change is in the form of a parabola, given by $y = a + b*x*x$, where x is horizontal distance, y is vertical distance, or elevation, and a and b are constants defining the parabola. Of course, students of differential calculus will know that the gradient or slope $dy/dx = 2*b*x$, which is clearly 0 when $x = 0$. Also, if $a = 0$, then $y = 0$ when $x = 0$.

A track thus starts with zero slope at the origin $x = y = 0$. The distance to the desired gradient, say 0.04, or 4%, is then given by the value of b . To comply with the parabola, the slope must be 0.02 at the half-way mark, and so on. On an early layout, I have taken thin plywood, about the width of the roadbed, constrained one end to be horizontal and the other end the desired slope. Jim says he has done something similar with satisfactory results.

This is one aspect where a simple drawing will underestimate the horizontal distance required to take a track from one level to another, if no allowance is made for the gradient transition.

Turning to another plane, in the past I have made curved joints in flexible track by starting with the tracks laid out straight, inserting the metal joiners, soldering them, and then bending the track to its final shape. I was always worried that this leaves a very short straight section at each joint, but have not devised anything better. Again Jim asserts he has had satisfactory results with the above method, even with a radius of 12 inches. So I have stopped worrying.

John

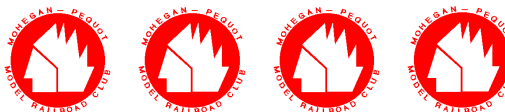
The President's Corner

(The Prez thinking about going to Altoona

Dan

Vice President's Niche

Overworked, underpaid and under appreciated.



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.)

Instant Modular Model Railroading: For Sale; two scenic HO four foot modules. Scenery features the CT shoreline. Includes transpiration rack. \$150. If interested contact Jim Spavins at spavij@rpi.edu.

The Club Store!!!!

The Storekeeper has metal wheels, both 33" and 36", and couplers and the usual model railroad stuff too. The new shirts are in too so if you ordered one or want one, see the Storekeeper, Larry Southwick. Oh yeah, Larry has some other model railroad supplies too.

The Commercial Corner

Just begging to be filled.

M&PMRR Officers & Functionaries

The President	Dan DeLany	860 643-9303
Vice President	John Waller	564-3114
Treasurer	Don Counsellor	739-6381
Secretary	Robert Applegate	464-2118
Club Webmaster	Jim Spavins	spavij@rpi.edu
Storekeeper	Larry Southwick	535-2996
Field Trips	Jim DeLany	889-4029
Newsletter Editor	Clark Pritchett	444-1884
Newsletter Mailing, Meeting Speakers and Bulk Purchases	Bill Evans	267-9482
New Pa\$\$enger Modules, Name Tags and Show Layouts	Stu Dom	536-7637

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Letters to the Editor

Vent your opinions here!

The Club is waiting to hear from you

Pictures of the Month

Just like the ones sent in last month, and the month before!

The Technical Section

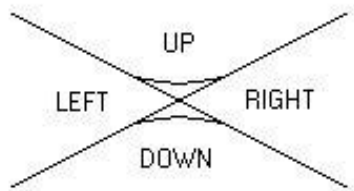
Contributions are welcome. You can write about anything from prototypes and history to model railroads. Scenery, electrical, bench work, model building and more are all of interest to the club members.

SWITCHING AND INDICATORS FOR DOUBLE-SLIP TURNOUTS

By John Waller

Double-slip turnout are very convenient in yard layouts, and the new passenger modules abound in them. The passenger modules control panel uses toggle switches and LED indicators to control and monitor both simple and double-slip turnout. The mimic lines on the control panel are either horizontal or at a small angle thereto. Turnout control switches are mounted where the mimic lines cross, and the toggle is moved towards the mimic line corresponding to the track where the train will come from or go to. The LED follows the toggle.

Unfortunately, and Stu and I should have realized this at the design stage, the logic for slip turnout is different to simple turnout. A mimic of a slip turnout is shown in the figure. There are, of course, two turnout motors, each moving a pair of blades on the left and right sides, respectively.



For convenience, consider the turnout mounted on a vertical wall. The following truth table applies. For example, the first row in the body of the table is for train movement

between the upper left track and the upper right track.

Track Selection !! Motor Position

Left	Right	!!	Left	Right
Up	Up	!!	Down	Down
Up	Down	!!	Up	Down
Down	Up	!!	Down	Up
Down	Down	!!	Up	Up

Inspection of the truth table shows that the right switch should control the left motor, and vice-versa, but in the opposite sense to a simple turnout. The fix for the control panel wiring is thus simple, and does not involve any additional components:

- Transpose the +ve and -ve supply wires and diodes to both switches.
- Wire the output of the left switch to the right motor, and the right switch to the left motor.
- Transpose both pairs of LEDs, that is, top and bottom within each pair.
-



World Wide Web

YOU send in your favorite railroad related websites and they will be published here so everybody can access them. Thank you Jim Spavins for last month's websites.

Baldwin and Lima are still live at <http://www.fortunecity.com/oasis/yellowstone/935/>

All of the big three steam engine builders can be found at <http://www.steamlocomotive.com/builders/>



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Model Railroad Calendar

This Month in 2004

July 7, 2004, North Stonington, CT Visit Jim Spavins' layout at 58 Mystic Road from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

July 7, 21 & 28 2004, North Stonington, CT Club work sessions in the basement of Larry Southwick's house beginning at 7:00 PM.

July 14 to 18*, 2004. The Annual Club Trip to visit Altoona (again) and this time we go as far as western Ohio to see trains on the former B & O main line. (*Wednesday-Sunday). Call Jim Delany (889-4029) if you want to go or to find out the latest schedule changes (if any).

July 25, 2004, Ledyard, CT The only Club meeting of the month will be held on Sunday at the Bill Library starting at 7:30 PM.

Next Month and Beyond

August 22, 2004, New Haven, CT: All Gauge Train Show, New Haven City-Wide Field House, 480 Sherman Parkway. 9:00 or 10 AM. to 3.00 PM.

October 17, 2004, Uncasville, CT: The Mohegan and Pequot Model Train Show .will be held at St. Bernard High School.

October 19, 2004, Orange, CT: Model Train Show. High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road (Route 152) For more information call (203) 932-0185/795-9466. (questionable date, not a weekend, will check)

December 11-12, 2004, Marlborough, MA: NMRA Hub Division Fall Train Show at the Royal Plaza Hotel from 10 AM to 4 PM. Call: (781) 862- 0388 or (508) 528-8587 or you can email them at info@hubdiv.org.

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

The Lighter Side

Har Dee Har Har

1. Two peanuts walk into a bar. One was assaulted.
2. A jumper cable walks into a bar. The barman says "I'll serve you, but don't start anything."
3. A sandwich walks into a bar. The barman says, "Sorry we don't serve food in here."

4. A dyslexic man walks into a bra.
5. A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says: "A beer for me please, and one for the road."
6. Two aerial antennas meet on a roof, fall in love get married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was brilliant.
7. Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"
8. "Doc, I can't stop singing 'The green, green grass of home.'" "That sounds like Tom Jones syndrome." "Is it common?" "It's not unusual."
9. Two cows standing next to each other in a field, Daisy says to Dolly "I was artificially inseminated this morning." "I don't believe you," said Dolly. "It's true, no bull!" exclaimed Daisy.
10. A guy walks into the psychiatrist's office wearing only Glad Wrap shorts. The shrink says, "Well, I can clearly see you're nuts."
11. Two hydrogen atoms walk into a bar. One says, "I've lost my electron." The other says, "Are you sure?" The first replies, "Yes, I'm positive."
12. Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bullshit before.
13. A man takes his Rottweiler to the vet and says, "My dog's cross-eyed is there anything you can do for him?" "Well," says the vet, "let's have a look at him. So he picks the dog up and examines his eyes, then checks his teeth. Finally, he says "I'm going to have to put him down" "What?, Because he's cross-eyed?" "No, because he's really heavy"
14. I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.
15. I went to a seafood disco rave last week and pulled a mussel.

They're Out There

(Attributed to Bill Watterson)

Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us.

Club Procedures

In this new standard section we will have things that we all need to know so the Club functions more smoothly.

Go on the Big Railfanning Trip to Altoona, Pennsylvania and Western Ohio this Month. Call Jim Delany at 889-4029

Membership, New and Renewals

Membership applications, how much, how to submit them, etc. (to be developed by the Club Secretary). The cost of putting an application form in every copy of the newsletter each month will be high due to the cost of printing and mailing. We might do this twice a year like before our Club Show and before Springfield. An application is on the Club Webpage but it needs to be updated with the new Secretary's mailing address.

Location for Permanent Layout

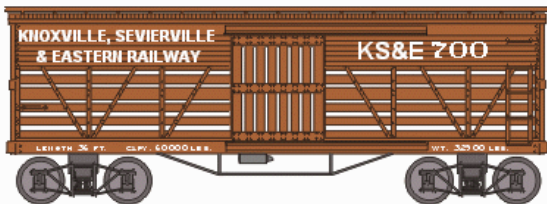
What members should do/can say to the owner etc. if they find a location that may be used for a permanent layout for the Club. (to be developed by the Club President)

Club Website

What members should do. if they have something for the Club Website. (to be developed by the Club Webmaster)

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: 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.



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