

Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad



The News for: October 2004

M&P 2004 Club Show is Canceled!

Due to poor vendor response and the general decline in train shows, the M&P membership decided at the September 12 meeting to cancel the Club show this year. The checks of vendors who applied for tables were sent back and cancellation notices were generated for clubs, hobby shops and any other place where we might have put up notices. Thank everybody for supporting us in the past and apologize for any inconvenience that we may have caused them by canceling the show this year.

M&P at Essex Thomas the Tank Show

The Club will be at the Thomas the Tank engine show at the Essex Steam Train facility on the first two weekends in November. Dates and times for setting up and which layouts and modules will be part of our display will be worked out in October. With our show closing, the raffles that we hold there will be our only real money maker for the year. Let's all support it.

2004 Club Picnic Goes Well

This year the Club Picnic was held at the home of Henry and Grace Curtis in Waterford, CT. All reports say that a good time was had by all (who attended).

Meetings, Work & Operating Sessions

The meetings in October will be back at the Bill Library in Ledyard, CT starting at 7:30 PM. On the 10th we will have a show of M&P field trip pictures and on the 24th there will be a business meeting.

It has been decided to have work sessions on both Wednesday and Thursday nights. But, as

always, call Larry if you have some free time, and see if it is convenient to go and work in his basement.

Extracts from Meeting Notes in September

[Only includes information relevant this month or not incorporated in other articles in the newsletter.]

(Extracts from John Waller's September 12 notes.)

Meeting Held at Gales ferry Library)

Membership

The members welcomed Joseph Pendleton, a former member from the 1980's. Joseph gave a brief talk on how he started in model trains.

Work Sessions

Once again t these have turned again into operating sessions. Stu will prepare a "honey-do" list. Henry will bring the gray paint from his place. [I plan to start at 5 PM on Wednesdays, rather than go two nights; JW]. Directions to Larry's house have already been put in the Newsletter.

Larry's driveway is overgrown with flora near the turning circles. A "gardening" session was scheduled for noon on Saturday 25 September.

Annual Train Show

Only 11 tables have been sold, and the last letter of application was received nearly one month ago. A motion to cancel the show was moved, seconded, and carried on the hands without need to count. JW will return the four checks so far received to the drafters (the checks were never presented), and notify all known vendor candidates of the cancellation (done). Jim Spavins should be asked to put a notice on the web site. It is too late to withdraw notices in magazines.

The Club Show started as a business venture, but has now clearly failed as such. We now need to consider by what means the

Mohegan and Pequot Club Show Canceled this year.

Club will make money. The dearth of young people taking up model trains as a hobby was noted.

Dan proposes we do more to promote the Club at train shows, and showed a picture of a three-fold display screen, which will give any display a professional touch. A motion to purchase such, with cost not to exceed \$350, was passed by acclamation.

Thomas the Tank Engine

Although no official notification has been received, the scheduled dates are the first two weekends in November. Bill Paradis has talked with them. The President asserted we must endure those little fingers, and not have any expensive stock within their potential grasp. Thomas runs the show here, not Essex.

Insurance

Does the Club carry enough insurance? The issue was left unresolved for future discussion.

Springfield

Again, we face some uncertainty about transport of modules. Either we rent something, or accept a smaller HO layout with whatever can be fitted into the three trailers, plus members own vehicles.

Train Trip

The Willimantic (Columbia Junction) Museum is sponsoring a train ride on Saturday October 2. Board the train at Norwich at 9:45, but it may be better to board at Plainfield at 8:30, at the site of the former RR station on Route 14A, Railroad Avenue. Take I-395 to exit 87, left at bottom of ramp, right onto Route 12 north, then left onto Route 14A west at the fifth set of traffic signals¹ (including the signals at the bottom of the exit ramp). The RR crossing is visible as soon as you turn.



¹ I bet you didn't think Plainfield had so many traffic signals!!

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

Scheduled Trips

None scheduled for this month. When then?

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. 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 part of a planned trip. 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.



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.

Marlene Ferguson

I thought the members of the club would want to know that on Tuesday the 14th of September my wife Marlene lost her two-year battle with cancer. We are planning a Memorial Service for her on October 14 at the Swan Funeral Home in Old Saybrook. Calling hours will be from 1:00 to 2:00 PM with the service at 2:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to any of the following:

Newington Children's Hospital,
181 Cedar St., Newington, CT. 06111,
Essex Ambulance Association,
PO Box 233, Ivoryton, CT. 06442,
Visiting Nurses of the Lower Valley,
PO Box 366, 61 Main St.
Centerbrook, CT. 06409

Thanking all for their concern.

Art

John Waller's Column

Is bigger always better? I don't think so. Trains columnist Ed King writes about the topic in the September 2004 issue².

Manpower has always been a factor for railroads³. To cut down on staff an obvious move is to combine two locomotives into one, thinking which gave rise to the mallet and garret articulated configurations of steam locomotive.

One advantage, perhaps, of these configurations is that steam locomotives require considerable driving skills, and so the best team could be reserved for these giants. Without remote control, coordinating two steam locomotives might not always be easy. Even handling two sets of largely independent

driving wheels can be tricky; I have seen pictures of a garret with one set slipping and the other not!

Some railroads were unhappy with articulated locomotives, and demanded more power from just two cylinders, giving rise to the 2-10-4. According to King, balancing problems required larger-diameter driving wheels with this configuration⁴, so the low-speed pull for freight trains was not realized. In Russia, I seem to recall, a 2-14-4 was built, but was not successful.

Nevertheless, there were 2-10-4 locos built with small wheels. One such, quoted by King, was the Texas & Pacific using disc driving wheels and alloy rods. Once the wrinkles were ironed out, not only did these locos have good pull, they could run fast without damage to themselves or the track.

And adding to the problems is the ever-increasing size of the firebox and the cylinders, whose weight was taken by trucks which contributed nothing to drawbar pull. I did read somewhere that some attempts were made to power the trucks with electric motors, supplied by a steam turbine generator, but perhaps the expense was too great.

Again, according to King, the three main Steam loco manufacturers, Lima, Alco, and Baldwin, were in a very competitive market, and were scrambling for business with their super locomotives, so cost was a big factor. King suggests that locomotives were sold on them being huge and beautiful, rather than how they performed. (à la Detroit. Editor)

Something that has always worried me, and perhaps someone can disabuse me, is that actual fuel consumption seems to be seldom mentioned. I know there are people who will buy a motor vehicle because of its carrying capacity and beauty, but many will also pay close attention to its expected fuel consumption.

For example, compound locomotives are supposed to be more efficient than simple locomotives because better use is made of the

² Page 26.

³ And much more recently womanpower too.

⁴ Connecting rods carry greater stress with larger cylinders; they need to be larger and stronger, and there is less room for counter weights for a given wheel diameter.

steam. Has anyone ever seen any fuel consumption comparisons? Again, the French National Railways (SNCF) are credited with improving steam locomotive efficiency by paying careful attention to steam passages. But what improvement was actually achieved?

If the French approach was successful, then the articulated locomotive would be at a disadvantage. In a non-articulated locomotive, the cylinders are directly beneath the smoke box, and exhaust steam pipes are short. In neither type of articulated loco is this possible.

In the mallet, the front cylinders are near the smoke box, but the exhaust steam must be taken through flexible pipes and/or rotary joints. It is worse in the garret configuration, as both sets of cylinders are remote from the smoke box, and both exhausts take tortuous routes to get there.

Has this tendency of big and beautiful, as opposed to performance attributes, been carried forward to the diesel locomotive era? King claims it is so. Consider the new AC traction freight locomotives, with all the advantages of smart control over torque⁵, with outstanding pull from zero speed up, limited only by inverter and traction motor cooling.

The larger 6000 BHP AC locos were touted as the ultimate, with two locos doing the same work as three 4000 BHP locos. But the latter has outsold the former by a big factor. Was it just the cost? Are the larger locos too complex and reliability has suffered? In order to fit the diesel engine into the space, high-speed diesel types, à la Europe, are used. Are these the problem?

John

Editor's Note/Reply

We will probably never know what the fuel consumption on these locomotives could be today. The design and analysis of their real world performance came to a halt in the 1940's. I have heard various efficiency numbers for steam locomotives, in the single digits. When compared to diesels they are very

⁵ The best adhesion ever achieved is claimed for these locos, as much as 45%, compared with 30% for earlier diesel-electric, and 25% for steam locos.

low. The Ultimate Steam Page describes the requirements to build an efficient steam engine today.

<http://www.trainweb.org/tusp/philosophy.html>

Since railroads and every other business were, and still are, run by business types and not engineers, cost and profit will always be the driving forces in making decisions. Steam engines were not only more labor intensive to operate because they could not be "MUed", but they were more expensive to maintain than diesels or electrics. Although beautiful to rail fans, the pollution from a steam engine was not appreciated by the public. In addition, they required water stops which slowed down the schedule. Some railroads solved this problem with auxiliary tenders and water scoops between the tracks. All in all the steam engine was doomed because it could not compete with the diesel. Long live steam!

The President's Corner

Still in the mail somewhere.



Vice President's Niche

. There was an accident on the layout at Larry's which zapped my railpower controller. The layout had been operating with mixed DC and DCC tracks. The zapping of my controller illustrates the caution which must be exercised with this mixture. Both DC and DCC power packs are really audio amplifiers in disguise, and hence have output stages with power

transistors. Such things are very reliable (my controller had been in use for 15 years), but susceptible to power impressed on their output which the original designers had not allowed for. I can only assume the DCC output was inadvertently impressed on the output of my controller to damage it; Larry thinks this occurred when a loco passed over one of the double-slip turnouts on Module C of the new passenger station. I have disconnected all railpower controllers from the track at Larry's, and substituted toy train type rheostats⁶, which have no electronics, for DC control. Even this might not be safe enough for the DCC controllers.

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.)

The Club Store!!!!

The Storekeeper, Larry Southwick, has stuff..

Letters to the Editor

Vent your opinions here!

Well, what are you waiting for???

Picture(s) of the Month

Every picture sent in by the membership in September is shown right here.

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.

Word Old English Font Needed

When the newsletter editor's computer crashed last month the Old English font for Microsoft Word, among many other things,

disappeared forever. An Old English font is needed for Word operating in the Windows XP environment. If you can help call Clark at 860-444-1884 or email him at modlrrnews@aol.com.

World Wide Web

YOU send in your favorite railroad related websites and they will be published here so everybody can access them.

Union Pacific's website <http://www.up.com/>

Model Railroad Calendar

This Month in 2004

October 10, 2004, Orange, CT: Model Train Show. High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road (Route 152) For more information call (203) 932-0185 or 795-9466.

October 17, 2004, Uncasville, CT: The Mohegan and Pequot Model Train Show .has been **canceled**

October 23-24, 2004, Wakefield, MA: The North Shore Model Railroad Club holds their annual open house and train show at the Americal Civic Center, 465 Main St. Call 781-245-4742 or www.nsmrc.org on the web.

Next Month and Beyond

November 6/7 & 13/14 2004, Essex, CT: Thomas the Tank Engine Gala. M&P sets up (TBD) and holds two raffles, one each weekend.

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.

⁶ A "rheostat" is not a general name for any device turned by a knob to control some output in an electrical controller. It is specifically a variable resistor capable of dissipating relatively large amounts of heat.



Club Administration

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

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 Passenger Modules, Name Tags and Show Layouts	Stu Dom	536-7637

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 once a year like before Springfield. An application is on the Club Webpage.

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, jpeg and bitmap pictures 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.

The Lighter Side

Animosity

Two Arabs boarded a flight out of London. One took a window seat and the other sat next to him in the middle seat. Just before take off, an American sat down in the aisle seat. After takeoff, the American kicked his shoes off, wiggled his toes and was settling in when the Arab in the window seat said, "I need to get up and get a coke.

"Don't get up," said the American, "I'm in the aisle seat. I'll get it for you." As soon as he left, one of the Arabs picked up the American's shoe and spat in it. When he returned with the coke, the other Arab said, "That looks good. I'd really like one, too." Again, the American obligingly went to fetch it. While he was gone the other Arab picked up his other shoe and spat in it. When the American returned, they all sat back and enjoyed the flight.

As the plane was landing, the American slipped his feet into his shoes and knew immediately what had happened. "Why does it have to be this way?" he asked. How long must this go on? This fighting between our nations? This hatred? This animosity? This spitting in shoes and peeing in cokes?"

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<http://www.mpr.org>



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