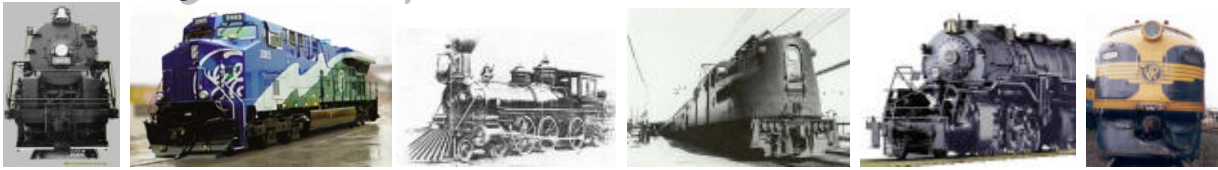


Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad



The News for: June, 2007

Ad Hoc Field Trip

On Saturday, June 9, M&P Club Member Jim Hodgdon and Clark Pritchett will be going to the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic. If any other Club members want to go, they should be at the parking lot by exit 82 off of I-395 (the place that we usually meet for trips to Selkirk, NY and Peabody, Mass.) by 9:30 AM. Then we will form a caravan as necessary. The museum opens at 10:00. If enough people show up we may be able to negotiate a Club discount.



Chaplin Station, FL-9 & Roundhouse at Museum

<http://www.cteastrrmuseum.org/index.htm>

Other Field Trips

Talk to Jim Delany, our field trip coordinator, (889-4029) or bring them up at the Club meetings.

Financial Committee Summary Report

The Finance Committee submitted its report to the club at the end of the meeting at the Bill Library on May 20, 2007. The report was emailed to all club members on the newsletter email list and hard copies were passed out at the meeting. If anyone did not receive a copy of the report and would like one, please contact Jim Spavins at jimspav@alum.rpi.edu. We encourage all members to come to the next few meetings to discuss these recommendations. The following is a summary of the report.

The Mohegan Pequot Model Railroad Club's Finance Committee (A. Ferguson, J. Spavins (Jr.), D. Alley and C. Pritchett) was charged with the task of evaluating future expenses of the club and determining new sources of revenue to meet

expenses. Assets in the club treasury have diminished from a high of approximately \$15,000 in the late 1990s to approximately \$5,000 today. The problem, if not addressed, will make operating the club in the current manner almost impossible within just a few short years. There are members of the club who would like to see this as a sustainable entity for the foreseeable future. Younger members that are in there 20s and 30s could potentially be a part of this organization for another 50 years so finding a sustainable operational model is a priority. This has precipitated the need to take a thorough review of the club's revenue streams and expenses.

We believe that it is important for the club to take action to remedy the current problem of expenses exceeding current income. This club has shown immense talent for problem solving with our recent module building sessions and we are confident we will be able to address this problem and move forward as a stronger organization.

The report explores a number of issues related to the club including: how it operates, what it spends money on, and how it generates revenue. In order to fully understand the club's revenue and expenses, we first explored the club's business model. (We have one of those?)

The club currently operates as modular railroad club. The majority of the cost burden to build, operate, and maintain modules is taken by individual members. Club operating costs are generally low. However, new construction projects and maintenance costs have put a drain on funds. This has caused a major problem as our current expenses now exceed the income the club generates.

Therefore, we needed to understand how the operational model might be evolving into the

Field Trips Anyone?

future and make sure that it is sustainable so the club can have many more years of enjoyment with the hobby of model railroading. We explored options ranging from continuing to use Larry Southwick's (Larry's) basement to leasing a storage unit to finding the club a permanent home.

We also took a look at the expenses that the club incurs. These include some fixed costs to the club like insurance, the newsletter, and transportation costs as well as some variable costs like module maintenance and new construction. The club's revenue streams, both passive and active, were also evaluated.

Recommendations

Having exhaustively explored many options for the club, we have arrived at a number of recommendations for the club to pursue. These are listed below with the brief explanations for the choices. *(For more detailed explanations please refer to the full report.)*

Operational Model-The club will continue to use Larry's basement with a mix of club owned and personal modules. However, the club should decide upon a list of what HO modules will be paid for from the club treasury, such as corners, spacers, or lift bridges.

Revenue Raisers

- Re-institute the After-Meeting Raffle
- Club Store Policy Eliminate all bulk purchases and Excess Inventory
- Table at BIG Railroad Hobby Show
- White Elephant Table at Train Shows

Creation of Emergency Fund-There are a number of events that could happen to the club that we are not financially prepared to handle. These would include the inability to use Larry's basement, inability to use Bob Macgregor's trailer Big Blue, loss of HO club owned modules, or an incident requiring legal representation. Any of these events would wipe out the balance in the treasury that we currently have. The total to insure against these events wiping out the club treasury at one time would be approximately \$12,800.

Identify Marketing and Sales Department Functionaries-New functionary positions would need to be created to be responsible for managing the club's inventory of items, selling and collecting money for items, determining new sources of revenue of the club, and implementing the projects and activities as approved by the club.

It is assumed that this one person would not be required to do this alone, but would have a team that is approved by the club. This individual should have the desire to want to sell for the club and also be capable of handling the public, being a good representative of the club, and providing reliable customer service.

Building of the Mohegan Pequot Brand-The current Mohegan Pequot brand is that of a large modular railroad club. By making our brand well known or associated with something that people value, our ability to sell merchandise with our brand will see an increase. How the club proceeds into the future will affect the brand.

Extracts: May Meeting Notes

(from John Waller's notes)

See Page 1.

Meetings, Schedule & Work Sessions

There will be two meetings this month. Sunday June 10 is an all-day working session at Larry's, starting as early as you like, followed by a meeting at 7:30 PM at Larry's. The second meeting of June will be held at the Bill Library at 7:30 PM on Sunday June 24.

Regular work sessions will be held at Larry Southwick's house on Wednesday nights, June, 6, 13, 20 and 27 beginning at 7:00 PM.

Movers and Shakers

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.

The President's Corner

Wake me when I'm supposed to do something.

Dan

The VP's Niche

See below.

John Waller's Column

This month I am devoting both my column and VP notes to responding to the Finance Committee Report of May 20, 2007.

Field Trips Anyone?

Jim Spavins presented the report at the May 20 meeting, so the ink was barely dry on the paper, so to speak. The presentation was excellent, heard without comment or question per Prez direction, and received formally by the members present.

The report is very comprehensive and well put together. The Committee is to be congratulated thereon. The report raises many matters concerning the future of the Club. In short, the Club has painted itself into a corner, and there are no magic bullets for getting out of it.

The very comprehensiveness of the report gives us plenty to think and write about. Club members may think some of the suggestions fanciful, but they are food for thought, and contain useful information. Even if we were to end up with a solution not mentioned therein, the report would have been the trigger in our line of thinking. In that light, criticism of the report should be well meaning.

Now to some specific issues:

Working Layouts. Section 6.1 on page 6 mentions the concern that some members would have nowhere to run trains if Club-sponsored modules were to disappear.

One of the agreements with Larry in the use of his basement is that a working layout would normally be set up there, outside of shows. If this goes away, there are already Club members who have offered use of their home layouts by others. This idea could be expanded.

And, surely, any Club layout set up for a show is open to all members to run trains on. At Essex, the layout is set up for some weeks, albeit in a less than ideal environment.

Passenger Station. In writing about the burden of Club-sponsored modules the passenger station, not surprisingly, is mentioned several times. Let's review some aspects of it.

Stu proposed the layout of the passenger station some time towards the end of the last Century. Already it is at the lower end of the life-span band, mentioned in the report, of some 10 to 15 years.

Stu described all the features which were to be incorporated into the station, and there was general agreement that these features were good things. But many of them have not been fitted, or have been installed and never set to work. Very likely they never will be. There has been very

little move for members to actually want to use them¹.

This is one aspect of components being bought by the Club and still sitting on the shelf (actually in a box mostly) many years on. Clearly this situation is not good

The passenger station took an enormous amount of effort to bring it to the state it is now in. But, it is proving to be quite reliable, considering its complexity. Problems are generally fixed at zero cost in components. In terms of some of the alternative strategies mentioned in the Report, maintenance has been less than \$10 per year.

But there are ongoing costs in installing new features, which should not be billed to maintenance. The current one is walk-round throttles. Parts have been purchased, some wiring has been installed, and I am part-way through fitting the first throttle. Should this now be abandoned? Again, this could leave components lying around, never to be used.

The above aside, there is still the problem of transporting and storing the station. It remains the Club showpiece, all said and done, and attracts much attention at shows, despite the low fraction of passenger trains which pass through it.

The report suggests the passenger station could be among the Club-sponsored modules sold. Who would buy it?

Finally, I suggest one of the problems with Club-sponsored modules is that they stand in danger of never being completed, assuming completion can even be defined. This is especially so where the incompleteness does not affect overall functionality.

Even now, the new transition and staging suite is incomplete, with work still to be done on the "F" module.

Minimum Suite of Club-Sponsored Modules. Section 6.2 on page 7 defines a minimum, or critical, number of modules. I haven't checked it out exactly, but it looks like the 15, or so, modules thus defined can be assembled into a

¹ I am sure older members will remember the Chrysler "Airflow". The car maker made a survey of what people wanted in a car. They designed and built a car that met those wants. It was actually quite a good car, but it did not sell!

viable, albeit small, working layout². Maybe, when Larry's basement is no longer available, the alternative storage required for the 15 modules should be large enough to set up the minimum layout. Thus members without their own modules will always have a place to run trains.

Incorporation under 501(c)(3). This is at section 6.8 on page 13. One attraction of this idea is that it could be implemented independently of other options mentioned in the report. But it does carry a burden in satisfying the IRS we are actually doing what we claim, as the report mentions. Having attempted to obtain grants for a local 501(c)(3) outfit, I have to report my success rate is very low.

Another aspect to be considered is whether we could claim the mileage deduction, currently \$0.14/mile, when attending shows, work sessions, or meetings in connection with the Club.

Club Store Inventory. This is at section 7.2 on page 14. One of the objectives of the Club store was to obtain economies of scale for the benefit of members. But it is a burden on the storekeeper, currently Larry, and stuff lingers there for many years.

As part of the minimum suite for shows, supplies of track and joiners will always be required.

An exception perhaps needs to be made for Club uniforms, which can only reasonably be bulk ordered, especially as we always try to encourage the wearing of uniforms.

The matter of obtaining electronic components, scenery, etc. for individual member's modules, and achieving economies of scale, should not involve the Club treasury.

Website Mail Orders. This is at section 8.2 on page 16. Since we claim increased use of the web for materiel purchases as the cause of decreased turnover for vendors, see below, and our website has attracted much attention, the proposal in the report should be considered. But it does require dedicated effort and keeping a stock of things to be sold, which may suffer the same languishing on the shelf as now.

Intellectual Property. This is at section 8.2 on page 16. For myself, I have much intellectual

² If it does not then maybe this should be a constraint on the Suite. Obviously the complete staging cannot be set up.

property to offer, some of which has appeared in the Newsletter³. I also have experience in book publishing now with one book published, one in the final throes with the printer, and two in the wings.

In "how to" matters, would we be competing with the NMRA?

Club Train Show. This is at section 8.2 on page 17. I was involved with the train shows at St. Bernard's School. Dan negotiated with the school⁴, Stu did layouts, and I solicited vendors. The reason we abandoned these shows is that the paying public stayed away in droves. I don't think it was due to the lack of a single person in charge, as the report asserts.

Sale of Club Newsletter. This is at section 8.2 on page 17, and is a good idea.

White Elephant Table. This is at section 8.2 on page 18. This has been tried before but I am unsure how successfully.

Table at BIG Railroad Hobby Shows. This is at section 8.2 on page 18. Our layouts at Springfield do attract attention. If the table(s) could be clearly seen as "belonging to our layouts", and not in a separate building, we could do well. But, this might not be possible.

John

Letters to the Editor

Enquiring minds want to know!



³ Clearly I am now too old to expect to benefit myself financially from any of my intellectual property, so I gladly assign it to the Club right now. Receiving royalties from magazine articles seems to have dried up.

⁴ That's a story in itself!

Real Railroads

Received from Jim Hodgdon

Here are some pictures of a washout in Fort Riley, Kansas in early May.



The Market Place

Club Member Ads

Advertise (free) here to reach more than fifty 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

Complete inventory of "stuff" to be done after the Springfield show. Well guys, how about doing the inventory during one of the Wednesday night work sessions? Repeat until it happens.

Commercial Corner

Nothing here.



The Technical Section

Received from Bob Applegate
From the NHRHTA Forum) -

June 23rd New Haven modelers meet - more info

I have booked a room at the Crown Plaza in Cromwell, CT (right off I-91 between Hartford and New Haven) for the June 23rd New Haven modelers gathering. The cost will be \$20 per person to cover the room and the projector. The agenda is roughly as follows:

- Begin at 9:00 AM
- Two clinics before lunch
- Two clinics after lunch
- There may be time for a slide show
- The lunch break will be one hour
- Things will end at 5:00 PM and anyone who wants can adjourn for a group dinner somewhere.

The tentative list of clinics is:

- Building Passenger Train Consists - Jim Fellows
- The New Haven Freight Car Fleet of the 1940s and 1950s - Prototypes and Models - Ted Culotta
- "New Havenizing" the Branchline Coach (particularly the underframe) - Ted Culotta
- Last clinic is still TBD

Bringing models for display and discussion is highly encouraged. The idea of this gathering is to promote ideas and modeling of the NH. Bob's Photo and Speedwitch Media (me) will be selling for anyone interested.

Regards,

Ted Culotta Speedwitch Media

645 Tanner Marsh Road, Guilford, CT 06437

culotta at speedwitch dot com

www.speedwitch.com (203) 747-0190

[culotj](#)

Member

(4/11/07 5:51 am)

[Reply](#)

Re: June 23rd New Haven modelers meet - more info

Just an update - the last clinic will be by John Pryke and will cover his 'bash of an IHC Mogul into a credible NH K-1b/d 2-6-0. For those traveling to the event, I will arrange for an informal dinner on Friday evening to chat, discuss NH stuff, etc.

Regards, Ted Culotta

Field Trips Anyone?

World Wide Web

Still NMRA's website of the month? A world record!

The Life Section

Post your correspondence with Pete Barrington here. Please forward any emails or other contact with Pete while he is in Iraq. He would certainly like to hear from Members of M&P. Pete's email is lordtracker@yahoo.com.

Railroad Calendar

This Slow Month in 2007

June 6, 13, 20 & 27, North Stonington CT.

Work sessions Wednesday nights at Larry Southwick's house starting at 7:00 PM.

June 9, Saturday; Willimantic, CT Ad Hoc field trip to Eastern CT RR Museum. Meet at parking lot at Exit 82 off of I-395 at 9:30 AM.

June 10, Sunday; North Stonington, CT All-day work session by consensus at Larry Southwick's house starting whenever. Check with Club Officers. Meeting at 7:30 PM.

June 24, Ledyard, CT M&P Club Meeting at the Bill Library at 7:30 PM. Discussion of Financial Committee report.

Next Month and Beyond

Getting slower and slower out there.

Ron Pothier's 2006 list of train shows is available from him at repth@snet.net.

The Lighter/Heavier Side

Lessons in Logic

If your father is a poor man, it is your fate but, if your father-in-law is a poor man, it's your stupidity.

I was born intelligent -education ruined me. Practice makes perfect. But nobody's perfect...so why practice?

If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?

Since light travels faster than sound, people appear bright until you hear them speak.

How come "abbreviated" is such a long word?

Money is not everything. There's Mastercard and Visa.

One should love animals. They are so tasty. Behind every successful man, there is a woman. And behind every unsuccessful man, there are two.

Every man should marry. After all, happiness is not the only thing in life.

The wise never marry and when they do marry they become otherwise.

Success is a relative term. It brings so many relatives.

Never put off the work until tomorrow what you can put off today.

"Your future depends on your dreams" So go to sleep

There should be a better way to start a day then waking up every morning

"Hard work never killed anybody" But why take the risk

"Work fascinates me" I can look at it for hours God made relatives; Thank God we can choose our friends.

The more you learn, the more you know, The more you know, the more you forget The more you forget, the less you know, so why learn.

A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. I have a work station. What more can I say?

Club Administration

M&PMRR Officers & Functionaries

The President	Dan DeLany	860 748-7581
Vice President	John Waller	564-3114
Treasurer	Don Counsellor	739-6381
Secretary	Robert Applegate	464-2118
Storekeeper	Larry Southwick	535-2996
Field Trips	Jim DeLany	889-4029
Newsletter	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
Webmaster	Jim Spavins	

jimspav@alum.rpi.edu

Prototype Questions

Dave at <http://www.davesrailpage.com/>

Field Trips Anyone?

<http://www.mpr.org>



Field Trips Anyone?