

Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING

?????????

6:30 p.m.

**Have a story
you want to
share?**

**Send it to the
Editor today
and you may
be published!**

*Bring a friend to our
next meeting.*

DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

Attendance & 50/50 prizes are drawn at every Meeting, on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

**YOU HAVE TO BE
PRESENT TO WIN!**

DONATIONS

Bottles for Basics:

- ◆ 2020- \$249.00
- ◆ April— \$00.00
- ◆ May-\$45.00

PRINTER

CARTRIDGES:

2019: \$547.00

YTD: \$20.00

May: 0.00

MEMBERSHIP:

132

THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 24. ISSUE 6

JUNE 2020

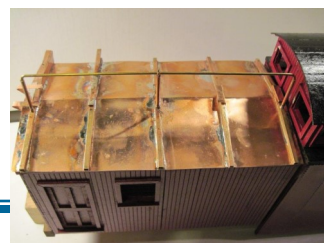
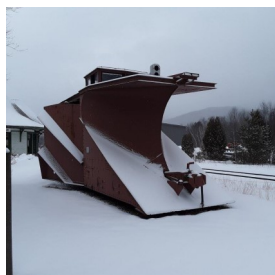
BUILDING A SNOWPLOW

By Ken Nettleship

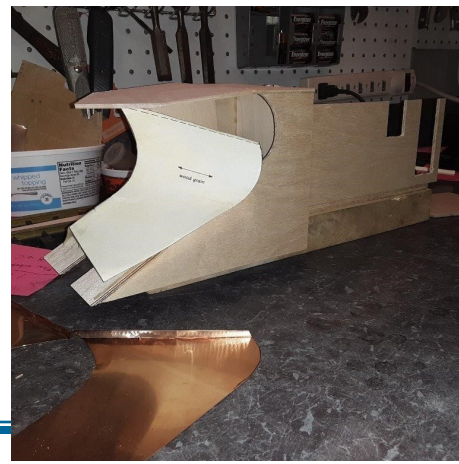
This past winter I built a "Russell snow plow" similar to the one found in downtown Gorham, New Hampshire. In an old *Garden Railways* magazine I found plans that were drawn by Ted Stimson. The plow blade called for using Strathmore board or thin plywood. Because I intend to use this plow to extend the running season on my outdoor layout, I used thin phosphor-bronze sheeting that I found at Hobby Lobby. All of the blade parts were soldered together, which was a bit of a challenge since compound curves were involved.

I wanted to put a headlight on the top of the plow but could not find one in my "Paul Lodge" box (things that never get thrown away). I explained my situation to fellow "G-Gauge Division" Ray Parent and within a week he had designed and printed a wonderful headlight for my project, thank you Ray! Both the headlight and the interior of the plow are illuminated by a 9 volt battery, an LED driver (which Kent Waterson had ordered for me several years ago) and 2 LEDs.

To be sure the unit would stay on the tracks when I was actually using it to move snow, I added lead wherever I could. I detailed the inside making benches, tanks and a coal stove, all of which were filled with lead washers. The finished product contains a little over a pound of lead. My first test of the new plow came with the wet snow we received on May 10, and I am very pleased to say that it cleared the



snow on my Kokomo RR wonderfully and without a single derailment!



TRAIN SHOW THOUGHTS

By Owen Buck

Members of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club should be thinking ahead about our next steps with the "new normal" created by the coronavirus. We should be OK to have club members going into the club as individuals, but we probably shouldn't have any formally scheduled meetings or other events for some time to come. This includes canceling this year's Train Fest, which was originally scheduled for August 15.

Thoughts about Topsham in the new normal should be considered. Model train shows as we have known them might become a thing of the past, at least until a vaccine is widely available. It's a real question as to whether mega-gatherings like the Topsham show will be allowed by November 7 and, if permitted, what the restrictions might be. Mike Meserve has pointed out that this also depends if Mt. Ararat High School is even willing to host the event. A second wave of coronavirus has been predicted for the fall, and November would coincide with the influenza season. Vendors in the high-risk age demographic might decide that the time has come to hang it up. It is probable that lingering contagion fears will reduce the public's willingness to attend large-scale events. We will be making the decision in August as to whether to hold the fall Topsham show. The School Administrative District will, of course, have the final say about the use of their facilities.

When we host a show at Topsham, it's a great social event for the hobby. We do well financially, but there are costs for (1) renting the Mt. Ararat gym, (2) renting the vendor tables, (3) renting a truck and filling it with gas. Volunteer manpower to set up and take down tables has been falling off, and we had been planning to make a donation to the Sports Boosters to get some help. At the Topsham Show in November 2019, we had about \$1,500 income from renting tables to vendors. We had to pay One Stop about \$1,000 to rent the tables and the school \$500 for use of the gym. Those three items are a wash. Our two profit centers at the Topsham shows are door admission (about \$1,500 for the November 2019 show) and Surplus Asset sales (about \$2,200).

Perhaps we should consider possible alternatives to the Topsham November 2020 show, the prospects for which are already sketchy. This could be a window of opportunity to try an experiment. We might, for example, have a monthly Surplus Asset sale at the clubhouse open to the public, alternating HO/N sales one month and O/S sales the next. I would assume that most buyers are interested in only their own scale; if that is true, then there is no financial advantage to having them all at the same time. Alternating scales would be a better use of display space and of the personnel running the tables. ("O" for O-scale during the odd-numbered months would make it easy to remember which scale was scheduled). We could station someone outside with a counter to ensure that occupancy restrictions were being observed, and masks would likely still be required.

Mike Meserve has agreed to the idea of hosting monthly surplus sales at the club. In addition to following state protocols about masks, he suggests having everyone enter at the main entrance and having a person guide them out the library exit in order to keep the distancing guidelines. He also recommends providing cleaning supplies, hand sanitizers and Clorox wipes so club members and guests can have their mind at ease while shopping for their favorite hobby. He advises blocking off the G-scale and N-scale rooms and not allowing anyone downstairs during the sales.

We could charge \$5 admission at the door. If we were able to generate an average of \$400-\$500 (sales + door) for six months at these proposed clubhouse events, we would come close to what we clear at a Topsham show. The wear and tear on aging muscles would certainly be less. And if the whole thing was a bust, we could resume Topsham for spring 2021.

Please share any thoughts or ideas you may have to help the club navigate through the uncertain times ahead. Email your comments to Paul Lodge paul lodge@gwi.net and he will forward them to the Executive Committee. They will help to compile the results so they can be shared with the club membership and included in the next newsletter.



SEACOAST DIVISION MEETING

By TAGE ERICKSON

NOTE: *Tage Erickson, NMRA Seacoast Division President, recently sent the following email message to the Executive Committee of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club:*

The Seacoast Division Board of Directors met via a Zoom meeting and decided to cancel our Summer Event which was to be held at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on July 25, 2020. The Directors felt that it was too soon to be having a gathering such as ours. There are still way too many unknowns about this virus, and the procedures for having groups of elderly people get together are not quite conducive to the type of meeting that we have. I also doubt that many of our members would want to participate.

The Seacoast Division Board will refocus their energy on trying to conduct the Fall Event which is scheduled to take place in Stratham, NH on October 24, 2020. Hopefully, the pandemic situation will be better by then and the State laws and rules will be better understood.

All of our Seacoast Division members are very appreciative of being able to have one of our quarterly events at your club house. This has been happening for many years and we are very thankful for your hospitality. Let's hope that we can do this again next year under much better circumstances.

I hope all of your members stay healthy through all this.

THANK YOU, NEW AUTHORS

This issue of *The Signal* again contains articles from some of our members about their own model railroads and projects they are working on. Last month we had pictures of Dick Clark's layout during an April snowstorm; this month both Dick Clark and Ken Nettleship sent photos of their layouts during a May snowstorm.

Thank you to everyone who sent articles and photos for the June newsletter. In future issues we hope to see many more articles and pictures from club members about your current projects, your personal layouts, and products of interest to other modelers. Please email your articles and photos to Paul Lodge, paul lodge@gwi.net and help us share your ideas.

TRAIN FEST 2020 CANCELED

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Fest, which is usually held during the August weekend of the Lewiston-Auburn Balloon Festival, is being canceled for 2020. In May the Balloon Festival committee announced they were canceling their event this year because of the coronavirus pandemic. With the special requirements for social distancing, limiting the number of people in the building at one time, wearing masks, and frequent sanitizing of all surfaces, the GFMRRC Executive Committee has decided that the 2020 Train Fest should be canceled as well.

NEW BUILDINGS AT CLARK'S

By Dick Clark

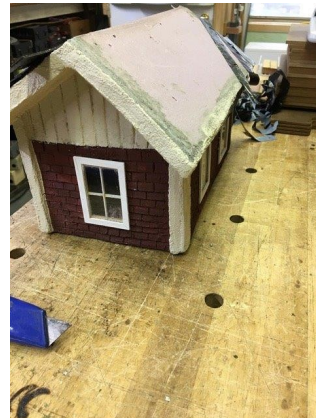
I recently added two new buildings at the Toot 'n Chug garden railroad location. There are two photos of the garage under construction and one of the finished garage. The next two pictures show the garage with a new home located on the upper loop. The local folks are getting a look at the new addition.

The overhead door of the garage was made from remnants of another project. I used the rounded sides of strapping that was ripped off. I then cleaned it and cut it to length. Placing it face down, I taped the back side to hold all in place until ready to glue onto the opening of the garage. In the process of making the house and garage, Sharon did the painting of windows and doors and frames before assembling the buildings. Before installing the parts she would paint the main part of the buildings. What you now see is the end result of building construction.

The last two pictures show the local freight that is bringing more supplies to the folks at the village of Blue Berry Hill.

Sharing the pictures with members of the GFMRRRC G-Gauge Crew by email brought some favorable reviews. Ed Leslie wrote, "Very nice. I see curtains in the window even. Well done, Dick."

Ray Parent commented, "Fantastic! This 'Shelter in Place' seems to really be agreeing with you. The upper scene sort of reminds me of the old Fats Domino 1956 hit 'Blueberry Hill'. Maybe you can set it up to play every time a train goes by."



EMC RR (part 1) EASTERN MOUNTAIN COASTLINE RAILROAD

By James Long

The Eastern Mountain Coastline Railroad (EMC) is the fictitious railroad that my son Darin, my brother Bob, and I work on as time provides. During the winter of 2001, Darin and I designed the plan on stormy days when the weather prevented us from working on the job. We gave it a lot of deep thought, which has resulted in a really well-designed layout. Darin has done all the wiring with DCC and has laid a lot of track. He and Bob have added many good ideas.

The Eastern Mountain Coastline Railroad is a bridge line between CSX and Norfolk Southern (coming from the southeast) and Canadian National and Canadian Pacific to the north. Trains come into the huge Selkirk Yard, then pass freight to Jersey Central and peddle freight on their way north. EMC owns and operates the Selkirk Yard and the full servicing facility. Freight received is broken up in the yard and sorted out for delivery by EMC to Jersey Central. Additional freight continues north up a 2.3% grade to Canadian National and Canadian Pacific.

EMC delivers to customers along the route to Jersey Central, ending in Chicago. It delivers freight via a mountain line with 1.7 % grade to Lindenmeyer Yard. One of its most important customers, the Linden Meyer Munroe Paper Company, is the major industry in the town of Linden. EMC ships in Blue Diamond Coal to a plant that makes coke from the coal, producing manufactured gas for the paper company boilers. From a paper mill along its route, EMC hauls in wood chips and sawdust for the paper digester. It also delivers tank cars of various chemicals and clay slurry to support the paper-making process of finished paper for magazines. Box cars take the finished paper from the paper company. Located next to the coke and gas plants in Linden is an iron ore mine. Ore cars are taken to and from the mine for steel mills on the route north to CN and CP.

Next on the main line is Jersey Central, which peddles freight around the Hudson River and to an exhausted rock quarry that serves a concrete plant. Large rocks come into a small yard to be delivered to the rock-crushing plant. The old quarry has run dry, but it served the concrete-mixing plant for 70 years. A railroad barge moves cars down the Hudson River.

The railroad serves a furniture factory as well as Blackwell Inks and "A High Density Wood Panels Company" for the furniture making. Hardwood and exotic woods are received by rail, and the furniture is sent out by rail. The local lumber mill receives logs by train, dumping logs into a pond that goes up into the sawmill. The mill saws, planes and produces dimension lumber for the local home-building industry. The wood chips and sawdust from the mill are shipped to the paper company in Linden.

There are various industries on the west side of town that need rail service on the route to Chicago. The Ford Motor Company plant in Chicago needs tire black from Blackwell Inks and produces the best cars and trucks of all sizes. The ore cars from Linden return from the steel mills and roll-

ing mill as coil stock for stamping into Ford vehicles. This trackage is served by EMC, which controls most of the railroad roadbed in this area, a real "Vanderbilt Giant" type of business. The "Vanderbilt Type" of railroad means that EMC owns the yard and trackage and the resurrected Jersey Central pays for trackage rights to them.



PENNSYLVANIA & NEW ENGLAND

by Charles Kadyk

[Editor's Note: Charles Kadyk has been a member of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club since 1993, when the club was modular only and used to meet in Paul Lodge's classroom at Edward Little High School in Auburn. He lived in Maine from 1992 to 2005, teaching in Skowhegan and Bangor. When he went back to his home state of Pennsylvania, he kept his membership in GFMRRRC. Charles retired from 34 years of teaching in June 2019. His personal layout is called the Pennsylvania & New England Railroad.]

The Pennsylvania & New England Railroad is a tri-level layout set in the early 1950's, running northeast from Rockville, PA with connection to the PRR to Boston, MA with connections to the B&M. Although based on an early predecessor of the L&NE, my railroad survived the panics of the 19th century intact. It has four freight yards and a passenger terminal. I run road and local freight, long distance and local passenger trains, with steam, diesel and electric. I use NCE DCC with JMRI so Smartphone Throttles can be used.

The layout runs around the walls of my 3/4 finished basement with a peninsula up the middle. No section of the layout is more than an arm's reach away. The main layout levels are at 30, 48 and 55 inches in height. There are no duck-unders and very little hidden trackage. I'm nearly 6 foot 5 and do not have to duck anywhere in the layout room. Aisle spacing is minimum, with only 3 foot clearance. Trains make their way completely around the room and then spiral around the room again, climbing to the next level. A main line run, with yard work on the way or switching, can take about an hour to get around the layout.

The layout is mostly modular type construction. 1x4 framework hanging from brackets on the walls, with a few posts as needed, with 1/4 or 1/2 inch plywood with homasote sub roadbed. Most track is laid directly on the homasote. By converting a closet into layout space to remove some bad curvature in this corner of the layout, I went from having some S curves with less than 24 inches of curvature inside the closet to a minimum of 36 inch with some tracks nearly 46 inch radii and visible.

I haven't had an open ops session since making some major renovation over this past year. Retirement has given me the time to really work on this. When operating monthly, I like to run with 8 to 12 people. Positions are usually Dispatcher, 3 to 4 yardmasters, Passenger Terminal Supervisor, and the remainder on Road Crews.

The photos are some projects I'm either proud of or am currently working on: two scenic areas of Port Diane (named for my wife); the Charlestown Passenger Terminal; and the newest area of the layout, Rockville Engine Terminal.

Website for the railroad is <http://www.pamodelrailroads.com/ckadyk/> and Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/119032054779790/>



MAY SNOWSTORM AT CLARK'S

By Dick Clark

On May 8, 2020, the Toot "n Chug Rail Lines in Greene made preparations for the predicted May snowstorm. The next morning we discovered that being prepared paid off. The crew got together and, after some discussion, decided to fire up the equipment and go to work on the line. The snow was not too deep, but we had some fun working. By the way, the crew wore their masks.



As you can see, we have a lot of articles, but little text. We could easily use more articles. How about an article about a friend's layout? We have Owen Buck's article about how shows may evolve, what are your thoughts? We have a retaining wall by our parking lot that could be repainted with a mural, which would make a great article. I know that we have members that have the talent to get this done. How about it?



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Upcoming Events



Recurrent Activities

Please check web site or Facebook page.

The club
house is
closed
until
further
notice.

Operating Sessions

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Regular Monthly Meeting

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Spikey's Station

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Work Session

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE