

# HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - Volume 21 Number 5, May-June 2005

<http://www.hubdiv.org>

## RAILFUN TIMETABLE

### WOOD AN' CHEAP A Hands-On Clinic

By Surprise Guest

8 p.m., Friday, May 20, 2005  
Cambridge School of Weston

**T**his hands-on clinic will focus on how to build wood fences. Fences protect, separate, keep things out or sometimes in; but mainly add interest to our urban and pastoral scenes. Once again we'll make use of a Bar Mills wooden fence kit product which Art Fahie showed could greatly enhance a diorama. One of our other regulars (but I won't mention the jovial fellow's name) has a fondness for making such things cheaply from other materials and we'll invite him to show us his secrets.

HUB Division will provide a section of fencing and a foam base for you to practice on. It is a good idea to bring a few tools such as a razor knife, some small paint brushes, a plastic water cup, cotton rag, sand paper, glue, news paper, wooden surface and dilute India ink or a wood stain.

A map to Cambridge School of Weston, where HUB Division Railfun meetings are held, is shown on page 8.

**Important Notice for Bar Mills Scale Models trip:** Amtrak recently revised its schedule. Train 681 leaves Woburn/Anderson at 10:03 AM. People should check the train schedule a few days before the tour and get to the station early.

### AMTRAK TRIP TO BAR MILLS SCALE MODEL WORKS Saturday, June 4, 2005

**O**ur regular Friday evening Railfun meeting scheduled for June 17, is cancelled and, in its place, Hub Division will ride Amtrak from Anderson Station in Woburn, north of Boston, to Saco, ME, to see Art Fahie, owner of Bar Mills Scale Model Works. The company specializes in highly-detailed, yet easily constructed, kits using laser-cut wood and castings. For a glimpse of their products in HO, O, S, and N scales, check <http://www.barmillsmodels.com>. **The trip on Amtrak requires advance registration and \$24.00 fare (limited to 50). Reservations must be received by Treasurer Gerry Covino before May 1 to take advantage of this bargain fare. The reservation form is included on page 9.** At Saco, we will board a chartered bus and travel to Bar Mills Scale Model Works nearby. The bus fare, still in the negotiation stage, is anticipated to be \$6 or less.

We will visit an exact replica, which Art recently completed, of Strong Station, which existed on the Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes, a 2-foot gauge railroad that existed in Maine until 1930. We will also view Art's highly detailed and delightful N-scale layout, the Niagara & Pearl Creek Railroad Co. Plan now to join the fun.

### TUNE UP NIGHT for the 2005-06 Season

By Mark and the "Car Knockers"  
8 p.m., Friday, Sept. 16, 2005  
Cambridge School of Weston

**M**ark Harlow and his trusty crew will present our first activity of the season, where we all get the chance to do those little badly needed maintenance chores in a fun setting before the season begins its full swing. We'll renew old friendships and greet new members. We haven't done this in several years so it is appropriate to cover the topic again for new members and forgetful old ones like me. It doesn't matter what gauge you model in, if you have equipment that you like to run, it should be routinely checked and maintained to make sure it conforms to the standards for continued trouble-free operation. You can fix that dragging coupler pin or re-gauge those boxcar wheels; whatever needs fixing and cleaning should be attended to. Bring your equipment, tool kit and standards gauges. The crew will review the check-up procedures and present lots of great tips for keeping all your equipment in tip-top running shape. There will be several work stations set up so you can focus on the area where you need help.

We will have a programming and test track set up for DCC so members can learn how to operate. Even if you are not a member, come see what we're all about; maybe even swap a story or two.

## TOOLS

Compiled by Rich Pitter  
with HUB Member Reports

**F**or modelers who enjoy building and maintaining their railroad, tools are an important consideration. Some of us begin model railroading with perhaps little more than a home tool box with a hammer, pliers, some screwdrivers, maybe a crescent wrench, a utility knife, and perhaps a saw. The home repair toolbox is helpful but often needs to be supplemented so we can work on our model railroad projects more effectively.

Before I joined the HUB Division, I had a pretty good rule. When I did something around the house, I included tool acquisition as one of the costs of the project.

I tried to continue that philosophy with model railroading, but got carried away. There are many tools for projects *that I am thinking of doing*, which are not used for many other types of projects. If I don't get around to that project for years, the tool sits idle, awaiting its first use. Readers should not run out and stock up on tools. Rather, decide on the projects you will start in the near future, then determine the tools you'll need to do that project. Go to a train show or to your hobby shop with a shopping list. Here is a list of some common tools. Readers who spot glaring omissions are welcome to contact me..

**Tool Box.** This can be a cardboard box, perhaps an old shoe box, where you keep tools. Eventually, you may want a convenient plastic or metal box to carry your tools and other common items. Some model railroaders use fishing tackle boxes, but recently I have seen a large variety of plastic home-use tool boxes. Figure out the

size that is right for you. It may be as small as an old metal cash box. Remember, for Railfun meetings, it's good for it to be light and small.

**Hobby Knife.** There are a variety of hobby knives and blades to choose from. I like the tools that have plastic covers that go over the blades when not in use. I like the #11 blade for most jobs, although it helps to have an assortment of blades to choose from. Hobby knives come with thin and thick handles. Thicker handles are necessary for heavy duty work but some people also find them more comfortable to use for detail work.

**Hobby Screwdrivers.** Sets of small flat blade and phillips screwdrivers can be found in hobby shops, hardware stores, and supermarkets. Small screwdrivers are needed if you will be assembling or maintaining rolling stock.

**Drill Bits and Pin Vise.** Projects often require drilling holes. A set of drill bits of sizes from #61 to #80 is often handy, but to use the bits you need a holder, called a pin vise. A variety of pin vises are on the market, so check out options. You want one that is easy to use and which holds the bits securely.

**Paint Brushes.** The model railroader may have a variety of paint brushes, from cheap, disposable 2-inch wide 'chip' brushes for spreading glue on plaster to flat and round long-wood handled brushes (the type used in kindergarten with poster paints), and so forth down to a variety of fine brushes for weathering and detailing purposes. I also have small brushes of sizes 3, 1, 0, 00, 3/0, 5/0, 10/0 and 20/0. They include flat, angled, round, liner and spotter brushes.

**Files.** Some projects require fine cleaning of cuts and shaping of materials. I got a set of hobby files years ago. Some jobs, such as brass

metalworking, require files that are not used for other purposes.

**Sandpaper and Emery Boards.** Many projects require some sanding. I've found that a variety of abrasives are helpful. Emery boards, used to smooth fingernails, are extremely useful for sanding wood and plastic pieces.

Some Hub Division members provide insight on tools necessary for various jobs that may be helpful to others in the group.

**Art Ellis** states, "I think that my most useful tool is the Kadee coupler pin bending pliers. On my layout over 90% of the derailments are due to dragging coupler pin, and I have probably used that tool on every car at least once."

**Skipper Farwell** recently presented a workshop on how to build scale model trees. He used a variety of twig and branch armatures, a variety of clump and leaf materials, and he produced many different types of trees. He concludes that making trees from scratch is really just a material project. The only real tool that he used was a small brush to paint black on a white base to represent birch tree bark.

**Dick Johannes** has presented workshops on track laying. His lists of tools also include some materials and detail items, but they are helpful.

### 1. Tools needed for laying track.

Yard stick  
NMRA "flat gauge"  
Spikes  
Roadbed (cork, homasote, foam, pine)  
Needle nose pliers or Micro-Mark spike insertion pliers  
Glue (Elmers, Plibond, Contact)  
NMRA turnout templates  
Rail joiners  
Insulated rail joiners or Evergreen strip styrene (better)

5 minute 2-part epoxy glue (if using Evergreen styrene for insulated joiners)  
 Small hammer  
 Small brads or nails  
 3 ft section of thin strapping for forming easements  
 drill and standard bits  
 paint (rail brown and rust) for rail  
 paint (rail brown, grimy black for ties if flex track used)  
 22-gauge single filament color coded wire  
 fine rosin core solder  
 25 watt soldering iron with a fine tip  
 Sharp marking pen  
 #2 lead pencil  
 Bright boy or other rail polishing tool  
 Sanding block  
 Fine (#150 or above) sandpaper  
 Swiss file set  
 Airbrush (not mandatory but helps especially for flex track)  
 Flush cutting rail nippers  
 Steel NMRA ruler  
 Dremel tool with cutting disks  
**2. If hand-laying, you will also need:**  
 Ties  
 Rail  
 Tie stain  
 Tie spacing jig  
 Three-point gauges (several)  
**3. For turnouts:**  
 turnout motors  
 hand throws  
 switch stands  
 dummy turnout motors  
**4. Details:**  
 bumpers  
 wheel stops  
 flangers  
 derails  
 grade crossings  
 signs (crossbucks, speed, whistle, mile markers)  
**5. Uncouplers:**  
 magnets (above or below rail)  
 electro-magnets

chisel  
 jigsaw

**James Van Bokkelen** also provides lists of tools for several tasks.

**1. My favorite track adjustment tools are:**

NMRA Gauge - Used to check track gauge, flangeway width and depth, back-to-back distance of guardrails, side and overhead clearances. Can also be used to scrape small amounts of solder, glue or ballast out of the path of wheels and flanges.

Needlenose pliers - Drive and remove spikes and track nails, bend points for better fit, bend ends of rails at curved rail joints for better alignment and gauge. Can also be used to tighten up and re-shape rail joiners for better alignment and conductivity.

4-inch knife file - Remove larger amounts of solder and/or glue from the path of wheels and flanges, sharpen points, adjust frogs and guardrails, smooth alignment of rail joints.

Spikes - small for normal rail fastening, larger for forcing the ends of curved rail joints into the right position, possibly prior to soldering the joints.

**2. My favorite kit-building tools are:**

Sprue nippers - removing parts from sprues, flush-cutting unwanted bits off plastic and wood parts.

X-Acto knife with #11 blade - cutting parts from sprues, shaving off parting lines, spin point in small holes to ease insertion of other parts, scribing lines for details.

Four-inch file - removing mold marks, smoothing sprue stubs,

tapering parts for easier insertion.

Eight-inch file - removing larger amounts of material, squaring and removing mold draft angle from parts.

Tweezers with fine point and locking button for holding and positioning small parts

Scale rule - measuring parts, used as a straightedge for marking and cutting

Methyl ethyl ketone in a small glass bottle with a brush attached to the underside of the lid - cementing styrene parts. *Note: methyl ethyl ketone is a solvent that should be handled carefully and used only with adequate ventilation. Its fumes can cause sinus irritation similar to, but more intense than, alcohol fumes.*

**3. Soldering track or brass models**

60/40 (tin/lead) rosin-core .032 wire solder

Tix low-melting-point solder and Tix liquid flux

Weller 100W soldering gun for heavy work (rail, etc.)

Triton resistance soldering tweezers  
 Asbestos/cement board to protect the workbench

Locking tweezers and alligator clips to position work

Small file, modeling knife, wire brush for cleanup

There are a variety of projects in model railroading. If you have the right tools available, the job will be faster and easier to do.



## Operation Lifesaver

Operation Lifesaver was established in 1972 when the Union Pacific Railroad joined forces with community leaders in Idaho to fight the increasing number of highway-railroad crossing accidents. The educational program lowered the crossing fatality rate in the state by 39% in two years. Other states, such as Nebraska, implemented the program and obtained a 46% reduction in fatalities at railroad crossings. Operation Lifesaver is organized by railroad companies, government agencies, businesses, and organizations who understand the need to educate children and motorists to exercise care near railroad crossings.

Last fall, a 14-year-old boy from Manchester-by-the-Sea was killed after riding his bicycle around a lowered crossing gate. He was struck by an MBTA commuter train at a crossing that had a whistle ban in effect. While crossing gates and whistles provide some safety, motorists, cyclists, and pedestrian greatly benefit from educational programs on railroad safety.

In December, HUB Division member and Manchester Police Officer Dick Towle made Operation Lifesaver presentations to Manchester students from Kindergarten through second grade. The program has been extended to other grades. The program includes a train ride from Manchester-by-the-Sea to Rockport, during which time Officer Towle presents Operation Lifesaver and school cafeteria workers provide the students with cookies and hot chocolate.

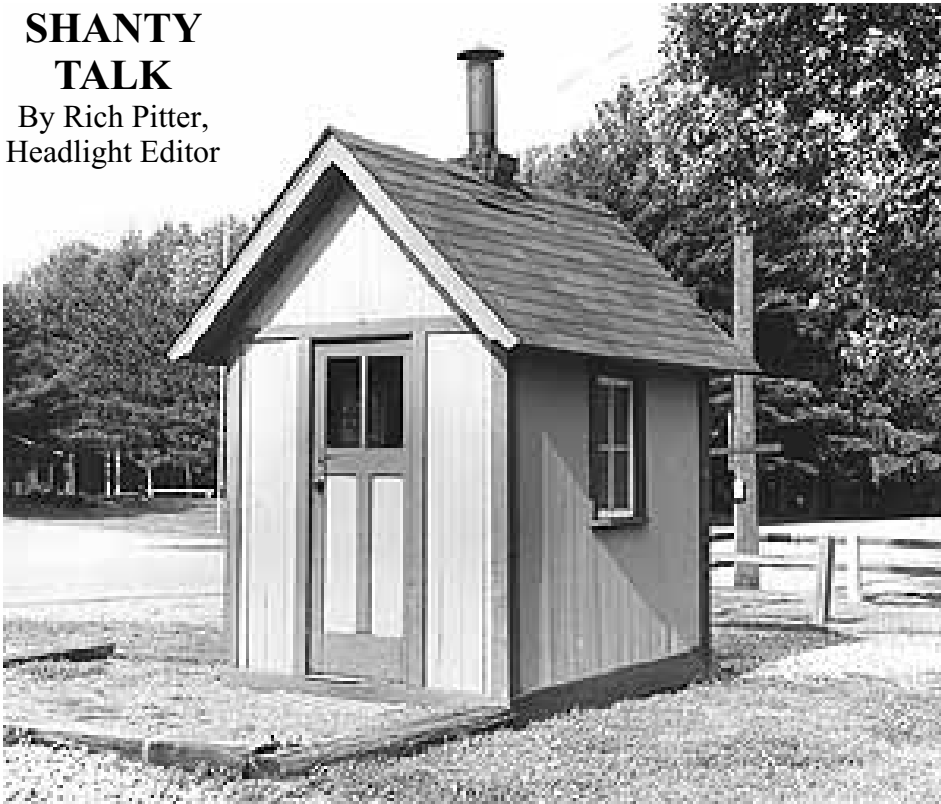
These photos are provided by courtesy of Patricia Slade, Editor and Photographer of the *Manchester Cricket*.





## SHANTY TALK

By Rich Pitter,  
Headlight Editor



Art Fahie has developed a high-quality product line of laser-cut wood structures. The HUB Division plans a field trip to tour his production facilities, his highly-detailed N-scale layout, and his exact replica of the Strong Station, which was located on the Sandy River and Rangeley Lake Railroad, which ceased operations 75 years ago. In May 2004, Art provided an exciting demonstration at Railfun, whipping up a diorama, which included his Bar Mills Scale Models Idaho Hotel, in about an hour. (See photograph at right.) The HUB Division has video tapes available of the presentation. Model railroaders may want to purchase the

video, not only for the speed with which Art puts together a diorama, but also for the numerous tips he provides along the way. After watching his demonstration, I felt that he could have done it in 30 minutes if he hadn't spent so much time explaining what he was doing!

The Amtrak reservations for our June 4 trip must be turned in immediately to lock in this excellent fare. If you haven't made your reservations yet, Send your check with the form on page 9 to HUB Division Treasurer Gerry Covino at once. Also send email to Gerry (his email address is found on page 8) to advise him that your check is in the mail, to be sure that your reservation is added to the list.

One of the strengths of the HUB Division is its high percentage of active participants. Rudy Slovacek has coordinated Railfun nights for several years, and it is time for someone else to step up and give Rudy a breather. The group has a strong supporting cast of willing presenters, so the job mostly involves balancing workshops and presentations while striving for a large audience of interest.

The *Headlight* welcomes photos of your layouts and model building projects. If you solve a problem and have a tip to share with us, send it in to me by email. If nobody has anything to share, this newsletter will get skinnier.

### WANTED

One creative person to become Assistant Railfun Coordinator. Help develop and recruit speakers for Railfun clinics and programs. No prior experience necessary--we will train you.  
Call Rudy at (508)-528-1011.



## LAYOUT DESIGN FOR OPERATION

John Barrington

I backed the HO-gauge Alco road switcher up and coupled to the (anachronistic) string of freight cars in Boston Yard. I leaned over with my uncoupling wand to separate the 1949 stock car, with roof walk, open door, sawdust on the floor, and steer gazing out the door, from the rest of the string--all 55-foot 3-bay center-flow covered hoppers. The father of a young spectator said to his son, "Watch what he's doing; he's fixing it." I uncoupled the cars and moved forward. The father said, "What is he going to do with it?" I moved the stock car past the switch, thru the switch, and backed the car onto a string of cars with roof walks. I attached a caboose and engine, and the way freight was ready to move the cars out around to the stock pen and other industries along the line.

### PLACES

A requirement for a layout with operation is that it have *places*. Switching modules are great, but they aren't layouts. What is a *place*? A *place* is a place for a train to stop and, for freights, to do some work. Examples of *places* are stations, industry siding(s) and yards, junctions, and division points.

What makes a *place*? Ideally, places are separated by a nice long scenic stretch of mainline or branch line. However, this is *not* an operation requirement! For a credible layout, though, separation of some kind is required. What are other kinds of separation? I can think of mountains, tunnels, aisles, rivers, and vertical separation. Two *places* can be on the same "board" right next to each other provided a

train must travel from one *place* around a loop, uphill or downhill, to the other *place*.

But the real point is that, for operation, *places* should be **planned for in the original design** of the layout!

### THE DIVISION POINT

A place on a railroad where there is lots of operation is the division point. Trains must stop and change crews, possibly engines, possibly take on coal and water for the steam engine, set out or pick up cars, or even re-classify the whole train. If you have any room on your railroad, model a division point!

### THE JUNCTION

Another place on a railroad where you can make lots of operation is where a branch line meets a mainline. The branch line may or may not be its own railroad, or may or may not have its own engine(s) and caboose(s). A good place for a branch to join the main is at a division point!

If the branch is its own railroad, the main road will set off and pick up cars for the branch via interchange tracks or an interchange yard. The branch may have trackage rights on the main road or vice versa. And of course if the branch is its own railroad, it needs engine facilities and railroad offices, which might be located at the junction.

### THE INTERCHANGE

Once you have loaded or emptied a car at one of the industries on your layout, where will the car go? It goes either: to another industry on your layout, or off your layout altogether. The latter requires hidden layover tracks, a hidden fiddle yard, and/or hidden

interchange tracks. My "waybills" normally send empty cars to the interchange, and get loaded cars to the interchange.

The interchange is switched "at night". The yard engine pulls from the yard the cars for the interchange, parks them, pulls the cars from the interchange tracks to the yard, and runs the parked cars to the interchange.

Once the cars are in the hidden, off-layout track(s), the waybills are updated. All this adds operation and adds purpose to moving the cars around.

### SUMMARY

Before you throw tracks on a 4x8 piece of plywood, consider that you will find model railroad life more interesting if you plan for operation. You can pick particular places to model and make them *places* on your layout. Then you can route cars from place to place, with trains to move the cars. Plan how to separate your *places*. Consider a division point for one *place*. Plan hidden trackage for cars to come from or go to when you have loaded them, and to come from or go to when emptied.

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**G**erry Covino submitted this late information on tools for ballasting your tracks.

Spray bottle 75% water 25% alcohol  
Index card or six-inch x 1.5-inch  
sheet plastic  
Masking tape (blue)  
1" foam brush  
Squeeze bottle 50% water 50%  
white glue (with some alcohol or  
liquid ivory to make contents  
wet)

The next issue of the *Headlight* will contain lists of other tools that members submit.

## The Lexington Branch Model Railroad Display

Friends of Bedford Depot Park

By Art Ellis

One day in 1994 I met some friends to discuss what might be done to preserve our Railroad heritage in Bedford. We agreed that we needed an organization. We held an election and I became Vice President. Formal incorporation commenced and the Friends of Bedford Depot Park (FBDP) was born.

After two terms as VP I stepped aside. As the group's model railroad "expert," I was asked on several occasions to look at a model railroad that some member wished to donate to the group. FBDP planned to renovate the former Freight House as a museum and sought a suitable model railroad exhibit. Usually I would look at the layout and suggest that we politely decline the offer.

One day I was asked to look at a layout belonging to a long-time resident who had died. I was struck by what I saw. This had to be saved. He had a professional model builder construct a model of the railroad station and town center. The quality of the buildings was the best I have seen. The area of the town of Bedford was near finished. The track going on down the branch to Lexington and on to Boston was on its bench-work and functional, albeit with no scenery. It was of course severely compressed for length.

The heirs wanted to donate the layout to us, but they also needed it out of the house as quickly as possible. I contacted the professional builder, Dave Maynard, and we discussed how we could cut the layout up. He had built it to fill the entire living room of the house with no thought of ever

getting it out the door. We took a circular saw and cut it up into moveable pieces to get it out of the house. It remains in storage until such time as the Freight House is renovated when it will be reassembled.

Our current expectation is that the Freight House renovations will be finished by late spring and that we then can then begin to reassemble the layout. I submitted a plan to the Directors regarding how it might be positioned in the Freight House. They expressed their desire for me to move ahead with the project. I will need help to rebuild this railroad. I have already received some offers, but I will call on members of Hub Division when the time comes, to see who is interested in offering assistance. There will be more to do than just to reassemble it. There will be some changes to the track alignment to make it more prototypical in the freight yard and town. I have plans to build a shelf along two walls, on which we will place the models of Lexington

Station and the freight yard. The layout will continue to Arlington Heights with a hidden turnaround. Much of this will be new construction, and will give us an opportunity for some creativity.

Right now there is a 4-inch wide shelf layout about 16 feet long along one wall of the Freight House. At one end is a crude cardboard mockup of Bedford Station. The other end disappears into a similar mockup of Lexington station. A model of RDC BM6211 shuttles back and forth along the single track when the Freight House is open. It is a huge hit with visitors, so we will rig the model railroad to allow a similar display

When the railroad is operable, we will have opportunities to meet and run operations on it, both for the public and for our own private meetings.

The Freight House is currently available for small groups of railroaders to meet. It will again be available after the rebuild is finished.

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### Tips From The Track Gang

By Rudy Slovacek

Today's tip is complimentary to the **Tools** article in this issue. In addition to the proper tools, I keep some disposable items handy for almost every task. The first is a **sticky note pad**. It is a palette for mixing paint for touch up, for mixing two-part adhesives, for catching filings for disposal when placed sticky side up or for saving such matter when creased and placed sticky side down. They can be used to mark small distances when a ruler doesn't fit, or provide thin spacing between moving parts during assembly.

**Wood toothpicks** are useful as paint stirring sticks but can also be used as paint brushes for very fine

applications, as glue dispensers, small wedges, shims and as scenery trash.

**Q-tips** are great brushes for weathering. They can be used to spread paints, ink washes, dry pigments, and chalks. They're the perfect tool to soften and blend colors and effects. They're also a great clean-up item when dipped in water or solvents to remove excess materials, including gunk from locomotive and rolling stock wheels.

**Paper towels** and napkins come in handy for decal blotting as well as their usual clean up. I also keep a small cotton rag nearby for wiping purposes.

Finally, a squirt bottle of **water** and a plastic bottle of **90% rubbing alcohol** are always kept handy.



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### Volume 21, Number 5, May-June 2005

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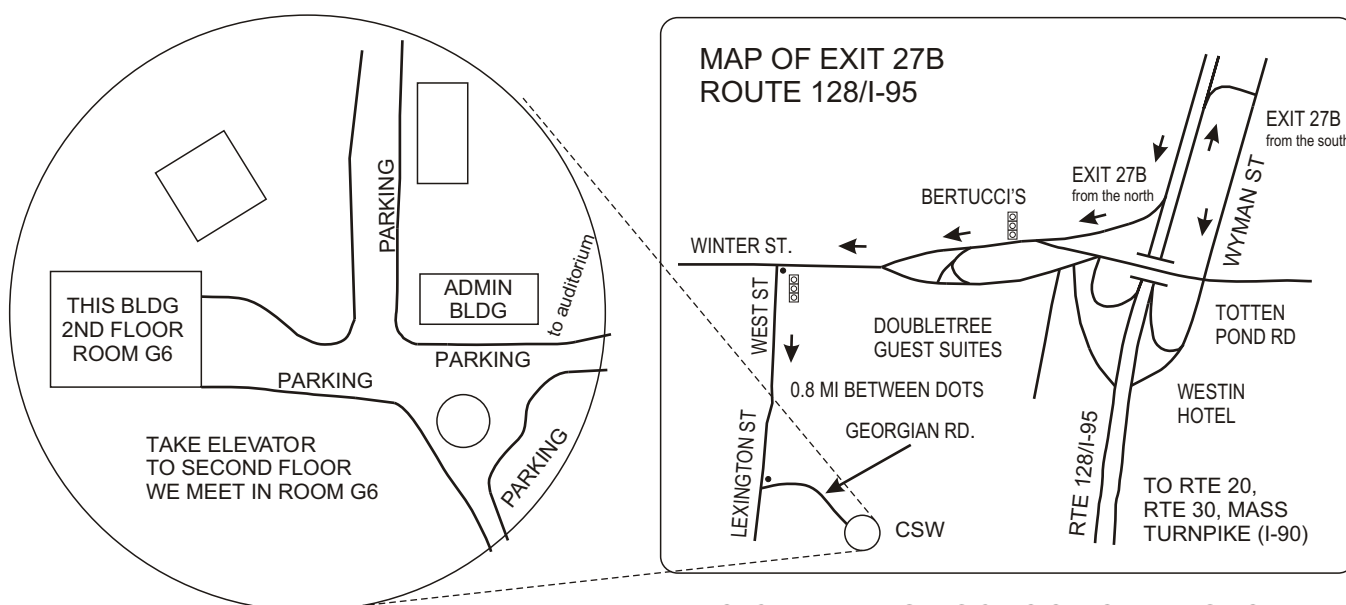
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## MAP TO RAILFUN MEETINGS



MAP TO CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON



## HUB Division Upcoming Events

May 13-15, 2005	<b>NER Spring Convention</b> , Nashua, NH
May 20, 2005	<b>RAILFUN</b> - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
June 4, 2005	<b>RAILFUN TRIP</b> - Amtrak trip to Art Fahie's Bar Mills Scale Model Works, Saco, ME
July 3-10, 2005	<b>NMRA National Convention</b> , Cincinnati, OH
Sept. 16, 2005	<b>RAILFUN</b> - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Oct. 7-9, 2005	<b>NER Fall Convention</b> , Stamford, CT
Oct. 21, 2005	<b>RAILFUN</b> - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Nov. 18, 2005	<b>RAILFUN</b> - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
November 2005	<b>HUB Modular Railroad</b> , Children's Hospital, Boston (date & time to be announced)
Dec. 3-4, 2005	<b>HUB Division's 'The Great Marlborough Train Show'</b> Royal Plaza Trade Center Marlborough, MA
Dec. 10-11, 2005	<b>HUB Modular Railroad</b> , National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA
Jan. 7, 2006	<b>HUB Holiday Party</b>

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Hub Division's annual picnic at Pete Watson's house will be scheduled between mid-August and early September. We cannot announce a date a publication time because the Greenburg Shows added a show on the weekend of August 27-28, 2005 in Wilmington, MA, and has asked the Division to participate in the show. The Hub Division's website at <http://www.hubdiv.org> will announce the picnic when the date is determined.

We hope you will be able to attend.

### REGISTRATION FORM

#### **Art Fahie's BAR MILLS MODELS Extravaganza** **Saturday, June 4, 2005, Train Trip/Bus From Saco Maine**

Amtrak DownEaster Train #681 from Woburn/Anderson RTC 10:03 AM arrive Saco, ME 11:51 AM  
Return Amtrak DownEaster Train #688 from Saco, ME 7:02 PM arrive Woburn/Anderson 8:51 PM.  
(Times are subject to change so check the Amtrak schedule a few days before the event.)

**Limit 50 Passengers.** Amtrak fare **\$24.00** round trip. There will be an additional fare for the bus.  
Registration Due **BEFORE May 1, 2005**; first come first served!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check Payable to: Hub Division, Inc.

Mail to:: PO Box 1154, Burlington, MA 01803-6154