

HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - Volume 23 Number 3, Nov.-Dec. 2006
<http://www.hubdiv.org>

RAILFUN TIMETABLE

CHINESE STEAM IN 2005

James Van Bokkelen
8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 18, 2006
Cambridge School of Weston

James has made several trips to China, the last bastion of mainline steam locomotives. Several years ago he regaled us with tales of his 1995 adventure. That Railfun was a delightful evening for all.

He has now offered to update us with photos from his most recent trip in 2005. For those of you who did not catch his talk at the Spring Northeastern Region convention, we'll be giving you a chance to hear and see his talk. Highlights include the JiTong railway of Inner Mongolia and various standard and narrow gauge industrial lines in central China.

So come out to Railfun to hear James' tales of the fire breathing "Iron Horse" that still roams the rails in China, as well as to join in the friendship.

WEATHERING ROLLING STOCK WITH POWDERS

Curtis Nutt
8 p.m., Friday, Jan 19, 2007
Cambridge School of Weston

Curtis will present a "hands on" clinic covering the weathering of rolling stock with Bragdon Scenery Powders. The clinic will describe how to apply the powder, how to select the best tools to use, how to turn the weather powder into a wet solution, how to mix powders, and how to perform the final detailing.

This clinic will provide novices and old timers alike with a "hands-on" approach by stepping through each of the procedures to complete a fully weathered car. The clinic should interest those who have used sprays and paints in the past but who are not familiar with the Bragdon product materials. The list of tools that you are advised to bring is as follows: old toothbrushes, any old paintbrushes, a rolling stock car and used film canisters. Hope to see all of you there!

SETTING A PERIOD OR PLACE IN MODELING

Rudy Slovacek
8 p.m., Feb 16, 2007
Cambridge School of Weston

Since much of our modeling is inspired by a prototype, this clinic will show you a few simple tricks to help others recognize your efforts to capture those specific locations or a slice in time.

Just as one uses forced perspective to create an expansive space in a narrow two-foot depth, we can also use a few bits of information and appropriate visual clues such as signs to fool the viewer into thinking he is some place he is not.

Join us as we learn (1) where to look for and find the bits of information and (2) how to incorporate them into your modeling efforts.

You will benefit by bringing a few tools like a cutting block, razor knife, ruler, styrene glue, and white glue or a favorite for attaching paper to styrene. We'll supply the rest. So come join me as we try something new and a bit different but most of all a lot of fun!

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

new theme developed by our Show PR Director. Your help is appreciated.

FALL SHOW: Call for Volunteer Workers

The Hub Division's Fall Show, the New England Model Train Expo, is coming to Marlborough on the first weekend in December. We need help with the show at the door, the white elephant table, the membership table, and the

build-a-car kit table. People who volunteer to help for an hour or more get their price of admission waived.

If you are willing to help for one hour or more on December 2 or 3, please contact Mark Harlow at markpharlow@yahoo.com or call him at (508) 528-8587. Let him know the day and times you are available. **Special Note:** We also need a Santa Claus to spotlight the

SHANTY TALK

by Rudy Slovacek

Yes, it's that time of year again when we enjoy stepping inside the shack out of the chilling wind and the warmth of a stove radiates to meet us at the door. As we get older, life's simple pleasures take on new meaning and we cherish them all the more, like warmth, the smell of wood smoke from that first evening fire on a chilly night, the brilliant reds, oranges and yellows of fall, sipping a cup of fresh pressed sweet cider or hearing the voice of an old friend recount a funny event in our lives. It is also Model Railroading Month. Have you thought about what that means to you?

One thing is clear to me and you've probably heard my theme before, "Time marches on and the world around us changes." For some, it is the passing of a loved one or friend and the harsh reminder that our own time is finite; for others it is a change in a technology we've grown accustomed to or become so dependent on. In communications we now carry "Dick Tracy" style communicators around on our hip or in handbags and we don't write letters anymore; we write e-mails. In addition to quiet conversations or the rustling of newspaper pages during our commutes we can now be treated to all kinds of (music?) emanating from the earphones of individuals next to us or to the harsh jangle of chimes and blaring trumpets as one's cell phone goes off. Consequently, I now come to work very early when most of these folks are not yet awake. That is a deliberate change in my behavior. But seriously now, have you asked why is it that the number of model railroaders is on the decline according to the NMRA?



Even the hobby of Model Railroading has changed since I've been communicating with you readers. We no longer use simple AC or DC, but rather high frequency power pulses laden with information in the form of Digital Command Control for our locomotives. They too are no longer silent and instead spew forth sounds appropriate for a given class of steam or diesel model. These latter changes I actually find welcome to the realism so it is perplexing that our numbers continue to dwindle.

In the context of sharing in some of our hobby benefits, I set off for New Jersey to attend the Fall convention in Parsippany, prepared to operate and see some fine model railroads for a Region I had never visited. But I did neither of those things because life threw me a curveball by the way of a multi-car fender bender which Bill Barry and I experienced as we drove down Interstate 95 in Connecticut on a slick afternoon. (Neither of us or the

other drivers were actually hurt and my car received a dented fender.)

But it was my subsequent gun shyness, which propelled me in the opposite direction from NYC and the populous New Jersey areas housing the layouts, that was to provide a silver lining. Thus it happened that this mere "country boy" headed west to the woods and mountains of the "Delaware Water Gap" to see the "Pumpkin Train." (Note: the Pumpkin Train was canceled as an NER event because only 4 people signed up and it apparently was shunned by nearly everyone else!!!)

Well, for you steam aficionados it was the "142" in full steam pulling commuter bi-levels along the Delaware on a crisp and beautiful fall day. The location was Phillipsburg NJ, a railroad town through and through. It was located on the river and home to no less than five major railroads including the likes of the Lackawanna (Erie Lack), CNJ, PRR, Norfolk

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Southern, CR.. all of which operated yards and maintained 5 (count them 5) turntable facilities before crossing the river. Though the yards are long gone, the abandoned tower (an Atlas knockoff) still stands as a sentinel to the river crossing approach among a multiplicity of steel bridges, some used, some not. A long coaling dock rises out of the old Lackawanna yard, still firing the imagination, and stone viaducts with large arches are not uncommon. The primary station stands as a museum and there are other station structures scattered throughout the two sister towns of Phillipsburg, NJ and Easton PA.

While meandering through history, I managed to catch a CP general freight out of Allentown and a Norfolk Southern stack train headed in the same direction on Saturday. When I returned with Bill Barry in tow on Sunday, we caught

no less than four additional trains (NS, CP and CR/NS) in our two-hour return. While I knew Bill would find the bridge structures fascinating I was unaware he also liked steam. It was another "Rudy un-convention" where my inspiration and rejuvenation came from being trackside. Anyone up for rail-fanning? I know just the place.

You can participate in this hobby in many ways, and one of them is by volunteering. Our President has put out the call for volunteers for our annual show (see this issue). Sign up in advance to help. You'll enjoy being a part of the HUB Division and you'll get free admission to the show.

And try a hand at one of the appointed functions that serve model railroaders in our area, first learning, then doing service for either the division or the region,

which by the way, counts toward a master modeler. Your President, Editor, Membership Chairman and myself the Railfun Coordinator have all asked your assistance in the past but the response lately has been underwhelming. Maybe therein lies an answer as to why some members are dropping out. We should share these duties rather than set the table for participation burn out for a few whose burden of responsibilities leave them little time to become master modelers, build home layouts, or engage in the other interesting things this hobby promotes. This is Model Railroad Month and it should be fun for all. Do something to help make it so for others.

Well, gotta go. I'll shovel another scoop of coal into the stove so it'll be warm for the next member who comes along after me.

The Model RR Bug

By Chip Stevens

"You want HOW MUCH of the basement?" "That's ridiculous!" "Just where do you expect to store all of this stuff?"

Realize that, even after our move last year, "stuff" includes as an example, every paper our daughter wrote from first grade through her Masters degree. It's all in boxes and it's going into my empire room. And the Star Wars figures our grandchildren might play with someday, if we ever have grandchildren, whether or not they know about Star Wars.

Well, I bit my tongue and moved boxes. And boxes. And more boxes. Went to Lowes and bought those assemble them yourself shelf units to cover one wall of the storage room. Assemble them yourself IF you can lift them out of the back of the SUV. "Caution, requires two persons to

move." Yeah? Well, he won't come home from New York this weekend to move shelves, trust me.

Anyway, the shelves were wrestled to the basement and all the "stuff" was moved in and, guess what. There's room left over! Yup. I put the workbench where I want it, just short of where the new wall will be built to finish the storage area and there is room left over. Now all we (I) need is a contractor to install the wall, do the wiring and get the space really ready to go. Right after I convince the missus of the wisdom of this step.

The dilemma I face is, do you design the layout for the space you'll have or do you design the space to accommodate the layout. I figure I've got one shot to do this correctly. It's not like I'm trying to negotiate a nuclear arms treaty here, these decisions are far more important. And I'm way down here in the barrens in Plymouth where only one

guy I've never met knows anything about model railroading. I know because I ran an ad in our local village newspaper to find other train addicts to learn from and no one responded. I could learn more about the Masons here in town than can about properly designing and constructing a layout.

Oh. I neglected to mention that our daughter called last Sunday to tell us she is engaged. Fortunately, she is being married in a town with two of the best hobby shops I have ever been in. Unfortunately, I am father of the bride. At least I'll be able to browse in the shops when we visit. Fortunately, I (we) will be rid of the boxes of school work (read, more room!)

Chip Stevens is planning to model the B&O, Reading and Jersey Central on a free-lanced layout. Comments, suggestions, and help can be sent to him directly at cjvettelover@yahoo.com.

MODULE GROUP REPORT

By Jim Harter
Module Coordinator

The Module Group displayed again this year at Children's Hospital in Boston. It was a long but rewarding day. Those of you who were able to make it were a credit to the Hub Division.

We did some testing of (Hub Division owned) wireless operation via new telephones (5.8 GHz DSS) and XPA's. The Module Group now has two sets of equipment that worked without problems for most of the day. For those of you not familiar with the XPA/phone combination, it requires very little training.

Some of you may have already seen the additional web pages (about 20) dealing with most of the Hub

Division's modules and some member modules for which I had pictures. Additions will be made as pictures & information are provided. My goal is to have a page for every module within the Hub Module Group (even those under construction). Then after some discussion and further development of these pages they can be linked directly to the Hub Website and made available to the general public. Hopefully I will be able to develop similar picture and text based entries for the home layouts as well. Giving the general public some nice views of our railroads is one of the ways we can promote our hobby.

Our next event will be on November 18th & 19th, at Wilmington, where we have been asked to bring a large layout even though we requested space for a

mid-sized display. This means we have lots of space for modules (even those needing testing). Please send email to me at:

harter@newenglandcustomrail.com

and let me know who can bring modules and who can help with setup and tear down and running of trains.

Remember, you do not have to own a module to participate. As a matter of fact I would like to see more of the members without DCC and modules participating. The Module group has extra trains so you do not even have to bring one. Also, we have two volunteers that will be presenting seminars at this show. It will be a good one to attend.

I look forward to your replies.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Continuing with the success of last year's event, the Hub Division's annual Holiday Party will again be held in January. The party date this year is Saturday, January 6, 2007 at the same location, The Common Market Restaurant, 97 Willard Street in Quincy, telephone number (617) 773-9532. Happy Hour will begin at 6:30pm with dinner starting at 7:30pm.

This year, due to the higher costs quoted by the Restaurant, and in an attempt to keep your cost down, the Board of Directors voted to offer something different this year. Instead of the customary Banquet offering, it was decided to try a Buffet Style party instead. The Buffet Menu includes: Baked Stuffed Haddock; Chicken Marsala;

Sliced Roast Beef; Pasta Primavera; Rice Florentine; Vegetable of the Day; Tossed Salad; Rolls & Butter; Ice Cream Pie; Coffee & Tea. In addition, Hors d'oeuvres are included and will be provided during the Happy Hour.

Also to help keep the cost in line with economic pressures, the Board voted to encourage early reservations by offering a discount on the person price. Reservations with payment of \$27.00 per person **MUST** be received by **Monday, December 21, 2006**. Use the form included on page 9 of this newsletter, complete the information requested, include your check payable to The Hub Division, Inc. and mail it to our PO Box 1154; Burlington, MA 01803-6154. Reservations made after the cutoff date will be accepted at the rate of \$30.00 per person. Unfortunately we will not be able to accept walk-ins, so **PLEASE** take advantage of

the discount and mail your reservation with payment early. Reservations made without full payment shall not be accepted.

Dress will be semi-formal, as has been in previous years. We will again hold a "Yankee Swap" after dinner. To participate in the "Swap" please bring a wrapped gift having a value of at least Ten Dollars (\$10.00).

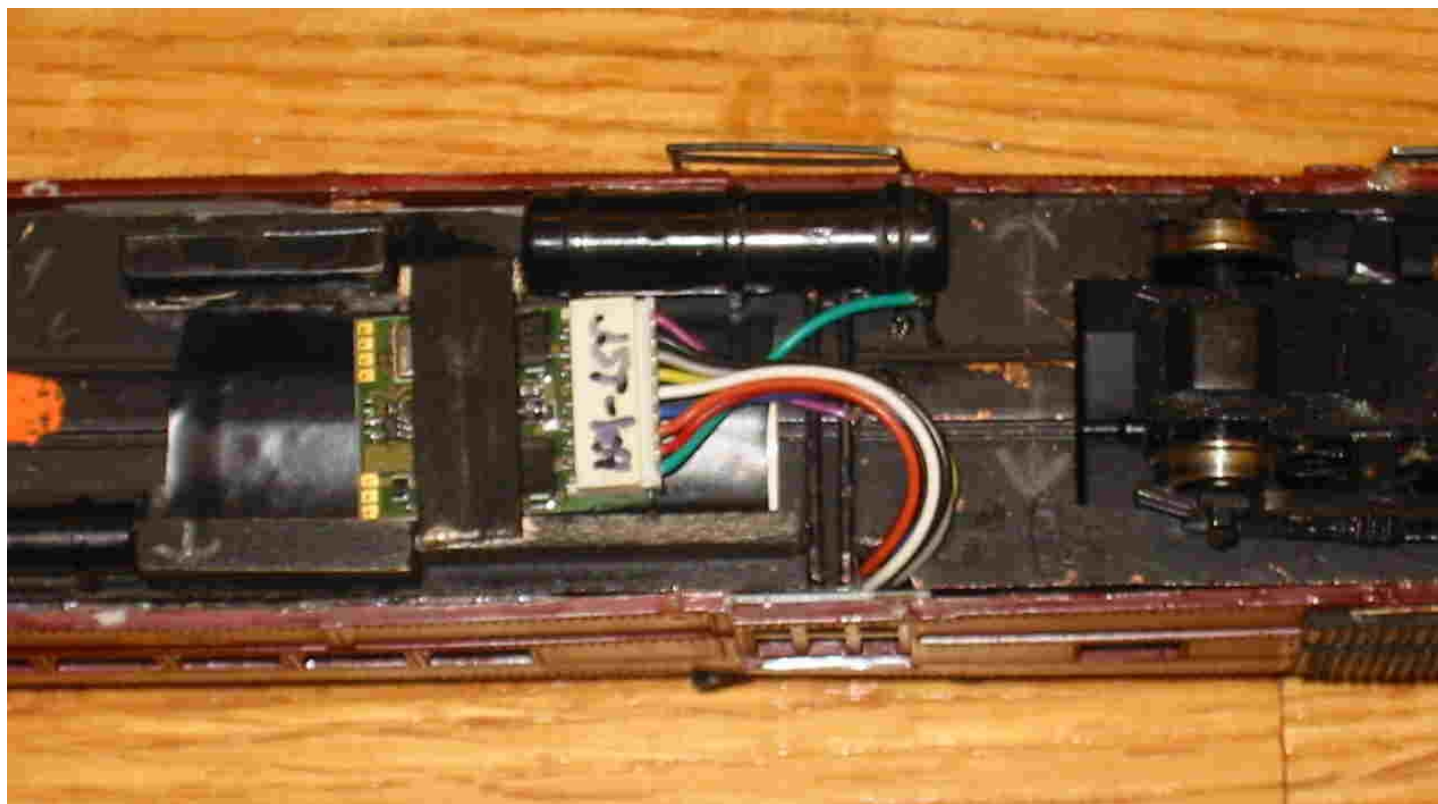
If you have any questions concerning the event please feel free to contact Ken Belovarac or Gerry Covino via e-mail, which addresses are located on our website: www.hubdiv.org.

The HUB Holiday Party is a great way for members and their significant others to enjoy the spirit of the holiday season. So come one and all and have a great time. We will be looking forward to seeing all of our fine friends.

Contributions From Our Members



Above: Train about to cross the Lobato trestle before heading up a 4% grade between Chama and Cumbres Pass on the Cumbres and Toltec narrow gauge railroad in Colorado. Photo by John Cipar, who visited the railroad in July.



Above: Art Ellis, a Mechanical Engineer, solved the problem of converting his stable of trains to DCC. Since his layout can only handle half a dozen at a time, he shunts the DCC decoders between locomotives. He builds a pocket for the decoders from stripwood and plastic on the underside of the unit, so he can plug in decoders and slide them into the pocket easily. It only takes a few seconds to swap decoders between engines, and no tools required.

Bar Mills BASICS

Product Review by Rich Pitter

Many of us participated in the rail trip to visit Bar Mills Scale Model Works in Maine in 2005. Art Fahie, owner of Bar Mills, uses new technology and innovation to develop easy-to-build wood kits. The line of Bar Mills BASICS includes eight structures and the kits are available in N through O scales. The HO scale BASICS kits retail from \$18 to \$23.

Over this past summer I built Magees Tire Repair. I spent two hours, about the time we'd spend in an evening of Railfun, and got it assembled and at partially painted, so that it is in layout-ready form. There are more things I want to do to it--detailing and signs--but it looks fine already. This compares to my spending 10 hours or more on a similar scratch-built wood structure. The assembly was simple and requires very few tools. I used an X-acto knife, sand paper, scissors, two paint brushes and a sprue cutter.

Why the ease? The nicely-detailed laser cut sides are ready to remove. They are held in by a few nearly invisible tabs that are easily cut with minimal chance of goofing up. I glued the four corner posts to the ends of two sides then trimmed the posts to size. Then I assembled the four walls using yellow carpenter's glue. The job was easy.

I usually paint wood pieces before assembly so glue smudges won't ruin a stain. If I wanted to stain the walls or paint the corner posts a different color that's how I would do it. This time, however, I assembled the walls before painting, as per instructions. I then sprayed on a light coat of Rustoleum gray primer and, when it dried, I brushed on a coat of Poly-S "SF Red" paint. When the red paint dried, I gently

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The four sides were very easily cleaned up and glued together. The assembly was spray painted gray, then brushed red. This photo was taken about 30 minutes after work began.



Less than two hours after starting, I had this "layout-ready" model. It still needs things like roof painting, stovepipe, signs, weathering, and other touches. This demonstrates how quickly a craftsman-like wood building can be assembled for your layout.

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sanded off some of the red paint so the primer showed through here and there.

The roof went on next. A laser-cut and scribed cardboard piece was provided. I bent it to shape and glued it in place. Getting roofs right during scratch-building takes a lot of time and fuss, but this was a cinch. This is one of the time-saving features of this model. The tar paper roofing material is an adhesive-backed paper label that has been laser cut into strips. The strips are easily applied and trimmed to the edges of the roof. I need to paint the roof, but that can wait.

I painted the plastic windows with Poly-S "SP Lettering Gray" so they wouldn't look too white and then press-fitted them in place in the model. This is another time-saving feature: the window openings are precisely the right size for those windows. The hexagonal window over the shop door, a nice detail, is

made from two pieces of adhesive-backed thin wood. I painted it gray and installed it easily. The workshop door is similarly designed. I brushed Hunterline Weathering Mix (which I picked up at a HUB train show) on before I installed it. Alternatively, I could have painted the door or brushed an India ink/alcohol solution on the pieces.

The outhouse provided with the kit is another nice detail. I put it together in five minutes. First, I brushed the weathering solution on it then I glued the sides together and attached the roof.

The nice thing about Bar Mills models is that they can be quickly assembled to layout-ready form then detailed over time as you please. Their BASICS structures are small, but they make a nice focus for a mini-scene. Modern era wood structures are often either small or old buildings. The BASICS kits

portray a variety of small buildings very well. Bar Mills also has larger structures that are similarly designed. They'll take proportionally more time to get to layout-ready form, but they go together much quicker than scratch building and they all offer distinct character in a building. The company also makes the "1-Kit" for custom-building projects. It is almost like scratch building because the modeler designs the building, but it is much faster and easier to build due to the laser cut guides for cutting out window and door openings in the walls and the window and door pieces included in the kit.

I built the tire repair shop. It would be at home on a 1930-40 era layout, but it could also serve in the modern era as a restored bicycle shop. I model the 1870's pioneering West, so I will detail it as wagon repair shop.

HUB Division Upcoming Events

Fri. Nov 17, 2006	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Nov. 18-19, 2006	HUB Modular RR Display - Great Train Expo, Shriner's Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
Dec. 2-3, 2006	HUB FALL SHOW - New England Model Train Expo, Marlborough, MA
Dec 9-10, 2006	HUB Model RR Display - National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA
Mon. Dec. 11, 2006	DEADLINE for submissions to Jan.-Feb. HUB Headlight
Sat. Jan 6, 2007	HUB Holiday Party - Common Market Restaurant, Quincy, MA
Fri. Jan 19, 2007	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Jan 27-28, 2007	HUB Model RR Display - Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show, Eastern States Exposition Grounds, West Springfield, MA
Mon. Feb 5, 2007	DEADLINE for submissions to Mar.-Apr. HUB Headlight
Fri. Feb 16, 2007	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Fri. Mar 16, 2007	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Sat. Apr. 7, 2007	HUB SPRING SHOW - SPRING Training - Woburn, MA
Mon. Apr. 16, 2007	DEADLINE for Submissions to May-June HUB Headlight
Fri. Apr. 20, 2007	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston

HUB Headlight

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HUB Division Board of Directors

President

Mark Harlow
president@hubdiv.org

Membership Chairman

Curtis Nutt
Membership.chairman@hubdiv.org

Bill Roach
HUBboard2@hubdiv.org

Vice President

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vp@hubdiv.org

Jack Alexander
HUBboard1@hubdiv.org

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treasurer@hubdiv.org

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Gerald L. Abegg
showmanager@hubdiv.org

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HUBboard5@hubdiv.org

Other HUB Division Leadership

Secretary

Ken Belovarac
Secretary@hubdiv.org

Office Manager

Pete Watson
officemanager@hubdiv.org
65 Branch Road
East Bridgewater, MA 02333-1601

Editor

Rich Pitter
editor@hubdiv.org

Railfun Coordinator, NER MA Rep.

Rudy Slovacek
rslovacek@comcast.net

Module Superintendent

Jim Harter
ModularRRSuperintendent@hubdiv.org

Director-Public Relations

Tim Garner
prdirector@hubdiv.org

Librarian

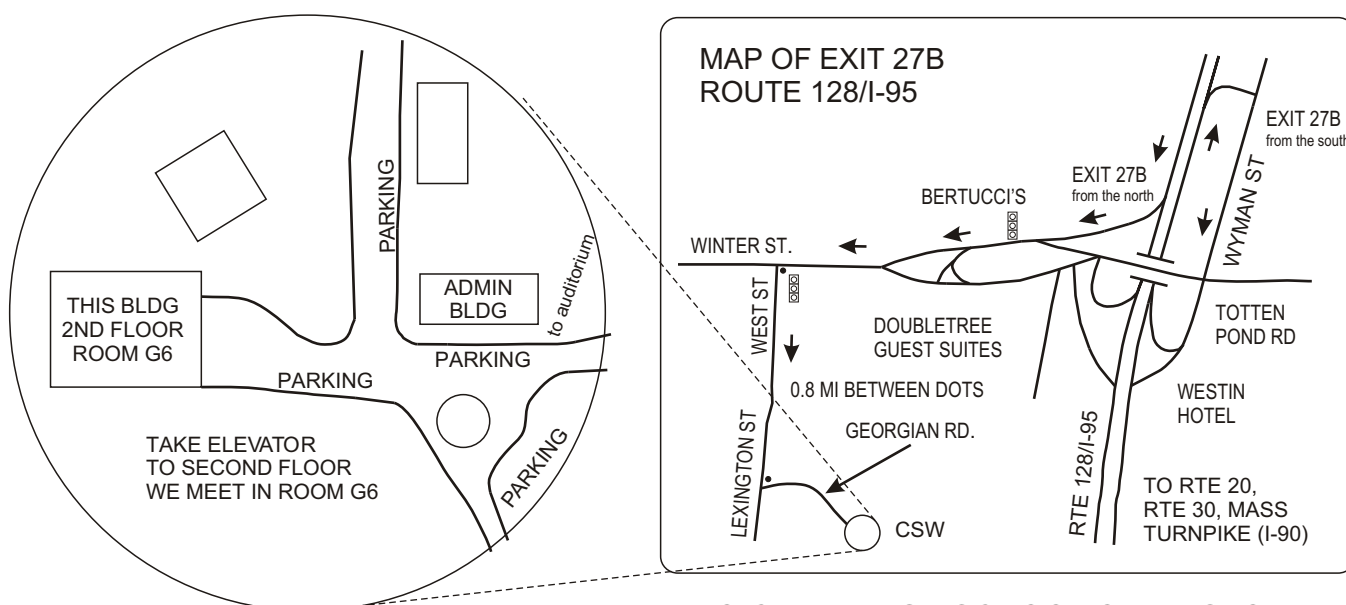
Harvey Humphrey

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Headlight Printers

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MAP TO RAILFUN MEETINGS



MAP TO CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON

Anyone who is interested in joining the Module Group may contact Jim Harter and arrange to help set up and tear down of the modular layout during shows and events. Then you can bring your HO trains, whether DC or (preferably) DCC, and obtain a time slot to run them on the layout during the event. Individuals who wish to purchase a module kit (instructions, wood and hardware included--you add track and scenery) should contact Mark Harlow. The Module Group is a tremendous opportunity for modelers build eye-catching modules and to operate their trains on a large layout, regardless of how much space they have available for trains where they live.

(Please Print Clearly)

NAME _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ **e-mail** _____

Number of Guests _____ **@\$27.00=\$** _____

Number of Guests _____ **@\$30.00=\$** _____

Buffet Includes: Baked Stuffed Haddock; Chicken Marsala; (617) 543-0298
Sliced Roast Beef; Pasta Primavera; Rice Florentine;
Vegetable of the Day; Tossed Salad; Rolls & Butter; Ice Cream Pie; Coffee & Tea

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PO Box 1154
Burlington, MA 01803-6154
(617) 543-0298