

HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - Volume 25 Number 1, Sept.-Oct., 2008
<http://www.hubdiv.org>

RAILFUN TIMETABLE

TUNE-UP FOR THE SEASON

by Mark Harlow and
"The Car Knockers"

8 p.m., Friday September 19, 2008
Cambridge School of Weston

JACK O' LANTERNS or LIGHTING TO DIE FOR

by Rudy Slovacek

8 p.m., Friday October 17, 2008
Cambridge School of Weston

WOOD STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION BAZAAR

by Rich Pitter

8 p.m., November 21, 2008
Cambridge School of Weston

Mark Harlow and his crew will help us do those little maintenance chores in a fun setting before the season gets into full swing. We haven't done this in awhile, so it is appropriate we cover the topic again for new members and forgetful old ones like me. It doesn't matter what scale or 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. It is the creation of standards which made our hobby what it is today. Fix that dragging coupler pin or re-gauge those boxcar wheels; whatever needs fixing and cleaning should be attended to; so bring along your equipment, your tool kit, and standards gauges. The maintenance crew will review the check up procedures and present some tips for keeping all your equipment in tip top running shape throughout the year. There will be multiple work stations so you can focus on the area you need the most help in.

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

Everyone will learn how to construct simple lighting systems to take advantage of the 14-18 Volt AC power supplies on the market for lighting both LEDs and incandescent lamps, so that you can literally put that warm glow in your model buildings. You are encouraged to bring a soldering gun or pencil, an old discarded circuit board from a Proto 2000 locomotive unit (if you have one) and some small gauge electrical wire. You'll learn the basics of soldering and how make some cool lighting circuits. If you've seen Rudy's Schenectady or Ballston modules, you know the types of lighting effects we are referring to.

Rudy will share his bag of tricks and supply the participants with both incandescent and LED samples which he finds most useful for lighting effects on modules and layouts.

A map to Cambridge School of Weston, where Railfun meetings are held, is provided on page 10.

Do you want some one-of-a-kind structures on your layout or module that you cannot buy in kit form? Are you unsure how to design and build a structure or wood trestle from scratch? Would you like to see demonstrated, and try your hand at doing, a variety of techniques that apply to construction of wood models?

Our *Headlight* Editor Rich will demonstrate techniques for constructing and detailing buildings, whether they are scratch built, kit bashed, or craftsman kits. He'll also show how to design and build wood trestles, including a small gully-hopping bridge that adds lots of character to a layout. He'll demonstrate the construction and use of jigs, templates, and other assembly methods. He will present tools, techniques, tips, and tricks that you can use for plastic DPM kits, wood craftsman kits, or your own scratch built structures and trestles. Attendees will be invited to learn new techniques at a dozen different stations and will receive a handout and other goodies.

Come ready to ask questions and to share your techniques with others. To avoid a wait at some stations, bring a cutting board, scissors, hobby knife, opti-visor, scale ruler, and glue if you have them.

SHANTY TALK

By Rudy Slovacek

It's early August as I enter the shack for a cool drink. The days are still warm and humid but the nights are beginning to show a cooler nip making for some decent sleeping. The leaves are also beginning to curl with age and the white mildew is showing on the lilac leaves as a result of the long damp summer we've had. It's time to think about that last summer vacation opportunity and with fuel prices rising maybe a little train trip is in order. My wife just booked a trip from Albany to Boston (Framingham) for \$28, which is less than a tank of gas! Our infatuation with the automobile seems to be waning with each nickel rise at the gas pump. Maybe one day in the not so distant future we'll return to vacations in the mountainous regions where the air is much cooler than in the cities and the train trip is a vacation in an of itself. In New York I hear the train between North Creek, at the base of Gore Mountain, already makes it down to Corinth and will shortly make connections in Saratoga, possibly with Amtrak. The old Adirondack vacation by train could become a reality sooner than we think. And what was it I heard about rider-ship north out of Boston, that the number of passengers headed toward Maine has greatly increased? A number of our fallen flags (NYC, D&H, Rutland, B&M etc) did a booming business with vacationers both in summer and winter. When you hit the dealers selling those old-time passenger pamphlets at Springfield, stop, look and think about how relaxing it would be in the woodlands drifting on a lake surrounded by pines and only the sounds of birds and crickets;



B&M's Ipswich, MA Section House, photo by James B. Van Bokkelen.

no cell phones. Peaceful! Relaxing! Isn't that what vacations were supposed to be?

Aahhh but I digress for in a just a few short weeks we hit the 08-09 model railroad season with the NER regional convention in Syracuse on Sept 11-14 and our own HUB railroad display in Norwood on Sept 13. Our Railfun nights begin the 19th with a welcome back Maintenance clinic but I won't be there. My son is getting married out in California.

Time marches on in a bittersweet manner. This year it will march with a few less friends as **Ron Noret's** wife **Anne** (often by his side at events and a pleasant change from our usual scruffy railroad crowd) has left us. Also, our beloved Captain **Reuben Baker** will no longer brave the cold of winters to join our module setup and dinners at Springfield. He will be sorely missed.

My own summer has been devoted to a job search but I did take time to be a part of our HUB display at Hildene in Manchester, VT and to substantially complete a new stand alone module which shall appear at HUB events as well as serving as the lead track to my Saratoga Yard. Oh yes, and there was my Saturday spent photographing the tie replacement project at Norfolk station. I hope your summer was relaxing and perhaps a little railroading crept into the picture.

Check out our website at HUBdiv.org where the new webmaster **Dan Fretz** is doing a great job of keeping you up to date with the latest in HUB events.

Well time to go as I've still got several hours of work on my shift before I can rest. You're up next so please do your part to keep the trains moving. Volunteer, participate, and make this coming year another banner one for the HUB division.

President's Car By Dick Johannes

Well, another year for the HUB Division has begun. I know this because this past weekend we kicked off first event of the New Year with the Annual Picnic held at Peter Watson's home in East Bridgewater. As always, this was a great event. Many of our regulars were there to describe their summer exploits in model railroading. This year several new faces and some youth members attended the picnic.

This year we'll see if we can continue our growth in the New England Model Train Expo. The show will be on Saturday and Sunday December 6 and 7. This will be quite a year for shows as next

summer the NMRA National Convention will be in our neighborhood in nearby Hartford, CT.

The Modular Group has already had an unplanned display at Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home in Manchester, VT. It proved to be a very interesting event and according to Jeff Gerow, we're very likely to be invited back next summer.

In case any of you missed hearing about it, the HUB Division is featured in photo essay in this month's Model Railroader. Nice going, guys! You know what, Springfield will be on us before you can blink.

Rudy Slovacek has already got about half the Friday night Railfun Events lined up and the first one is on Friday September 19 and will be

the annual tune-up session. The finale last spring was super. It was great to see the results of the year's work on the dioramas. Even better, some of the most impressive were first efforts! This is a great way to introduce the hobby.

Keep browsing our web site as Dan Fretz keeps bringing new innovations and design changes to the site. We're in the process of exploring doing true e-business from the web sites for HUB items and memberships.

There are so many things to talk about this year as it seems the run of new ideas and products flowing into the hobby continues to increase. I can't wait to see where we are at this time next year.

Keep'em rollin'



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European Trip for NMRA's HUB Division Module Group

By Rudy Slovacek

This is the first segment of an article that Rudy wrote on the Hub Division's first overseas experience at Rail 2000 in the Netherlands. For newer members, it shows how far our modular group has come in recent years. For all of us, it serves as a reminder that great things can happen with dedication and cooperation. Ed.

In this day of rapid international telecommunications it is appropriate that this story began with an email instead of a visit to a favorite prototype railroad or an inspirational model layout. It was an email to NMRA president Alan Pollak from Don Korthout who had a dream and a vision to recruit an American type layout for a major European Model Railroad event "Rail 2000." It was to be held at S'Hertogenbosch in the Netherlands and scheduled for early October of 2000. One of our HUB members forwarded me the first message sometime in the fall of 1999 (the HUB Division is the local Boston area group of the NMRA Northeastern Region). Like one of the many small detail parts on my workbench it got buried and eventually lost. During the excitement of a model railroad show at Springfield MA in early 2000, conversation turned to this email and, as the module superintendent then, I was thoroughly chastised by fellow members of the HO Modular group for not following up. "It was after all a once in a lifetime opportunity that one just should not pass up" they argued. Well I finally did retrieve the electronic thread with Don's address and, being a lazy sort, I'd like to say the "rest is history." However, someone has to tell this story and once again you can

guess who was elected; though I believe the proper terminology in this case is I was "railroaded" into it.

First a little history is in order. The HUB modular layout group, which has been active for over 15 years, presently has about 36 members and participants, 24 of them having one or more working modules in HO scale. They come from all over the area, even from Rhode Island and New Hampshire. Unlike many clubs with a big layout, the module group does not have a home of it's own. Instead, members set up train displays for the public at a HUB Division train show held each fall and sometimes in spring. Otherwise they participate as guests at local area club shows and events which promote the hobby of model railroading. They may be found bringing their enthusiasm for the hobby to adults and children alike in some unlikely places such as Boston's Symphony Hall, the Museum of Science, and Boston Children's Hospital.

Members rely on a common set of general standards developed for HO scale modules and adapted by the NMRA in 'Module Standards Standard Gauges MA 1.0.' which can be found on the NMRA website (www.nmra.org). Additional details of implementation may be found in the Recommended Practices section. Thanks to the efforts of Larry Madson, the HUB Division now has posted accurate drawings of these standard modules on their website (www.hubdiv.org). The HUB has chosen to use a basic 2 ft. wide by 4 ft. long module with an 18 and 3/4 inch high backboard and the two mainline tracks on the 5 inch and 7 inch centers from the front of the modules. A threaded bolt or similar form of height adjustment is



The Ames' module is carefully packed by Mark Harlow as Bob Blick looks on.

called for in the legs to permit track mating at the specified rail height. Two prong "Cinch Jones" type connectors are used with # 18 AWG wire to provide the electrical bus connections (ed. note this has since been upgraded to Anderson Power pole connectors). Other than the basic design concepts to facilitate interchangeability and transport, some clubs use different electrical connections and a different specification for both the actual module widths (30 inches as opposed to 24 inches) and lengths (6 ft. as opposed to 4 ft.) along with the placement of ancillary trackage. Thus to begin, we had one major advantage over some other non-module clubs: our layout was designed and constructed to be portable.

Normally, the HUB Division supplies a set of corner modules with a standard 33-inch minimum radius to construct a rectangular layout with two parallel mainlines

running in a large oval. The large radius permits prototypically close-coupled passenger cars with diaphragms as well as most large articulated steam locomotives. In addition to the corners, the HUB Division also owns an inside fiddle yard, to set up or receive trains, and a 16-ft. long outside yard in which we display active train make-up operations. The overall layout dimensions are usually determined by the sponsoring organization's spatial requirements and in part by the number of members who are available to participate in a show. A display as small as 12 ft. by 12. ft has been set up but it is crowded for the operators huddled inside so layout size usually ranges from 16 ft. by 24 ft. up to 28 ft. by 44 ft. However, shipment and set up in Europe of a layout this large would have taxed the organization beyond measure. A simple plan was needed to make it work.

About 10 years ago, after first viewing a concept used in N-scale, I developed an end loop design using two modules of standard dimensions which bolted together to form a 4 ft by 4 ft. platform. The loop in concert with a module containing some transition trackage simply connects the two mainline tracks of standard modules thereby reducing them to a single main in the shape of a dog-bone. I wanted to get more use from my own modules in a home layout and to start a small local module based club. The idea was quickly adapted and further refined by the "Coastal Mountain Railroad" since it permits a flexible linear arrangement. The HUB Division has also begun to utilize this layout form for smaller set-ups where the standard rectangular layout is not practical, so it became a natural choice for our Rail 2000 display. The radius on the end loop is 22 inches,



Wethersfield station is the subject of Jeff Turner's module. The original is still standing along the old New Haven line just south of Hartford Connecticut.

somewhat smaller than the NMRA standard, although it handles large six-axle diesels and even most long freight and passenger equipment reasonably well. A Life-Like Proto 2000 articulated 2-8-8-2 has no problem pulling a long string of hopper cars through the curves. With careful locomotive power management one can run in excess of 100 car freight trains over this system that we have come to label 'The Branch-Line.' The biggest advantage though is that no individual module is larger than the 2 ft. by 4 ft. standard so it is all easily transported in manageable units. This was a prime factor in planning the Rail 2000 show because all the shipping crates could be made identically to a single standard size instead of the expense and time associated with custom building different sizes of crates. It wasn't long before HUB President Mark Harlow came up with a simple standard crate design which safely housed the module and all the necessary parts like legs, clamps,

crowd barrier poles, and drapes for the front.

The HUB module group was in the process of switching over to Digital Command Control (DCC) for display operations as more than 92% of it's members had installed decoders into their favorite locomotives when this opportunity arose. However some members still liked the option to run DC on one of the two electrically isolated mainlines used in the normal club operations. With the single loop design we had to make a decision; was it to be DC or DCC?

The story continues in the next issue with more photos, along with how the HUB Division resolved the issue of DC versus DCC for Rail 2000. With the successful management of the logistics involves and with the crowd appeal that the HUB Division's modular layout attracted in The Netherlands, our hearty group of railroad ambassadors laid the foundations for more to come. Climb onboard and enjoy the ride.

Notes from the 2008 Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society, July 8-13

By Gerald Abegg

When I received the information for this Riverside, CA convention I couldn't resist the opportunity to participate in the schedule of field trips and clinics so I did an early registration and booked a flight.

The meeting began with an overview presentation on the third track project at Cajon Pass. BNSF is nearing completion of a 25 mile section of third track from Keenbrook through the Cajon Pass at Summit. This section of track goes from about 500 ft. elevation to the pass at 2600 ft. in a distance of 30 miles. Climbing a grade of 2.2% requires many curves so it has become necessary to add a third track to accommodate the heavy traffic.

After an introduction by the BNSF Project Supervisor, we boarded buses and visited the construction sites where we saw crews adding a grade crossing and then the rail laying machine working its way up the grade. It can lay 4000 ft. of cement ties and rail a day. We then drove up to the summit where the third track is completed and railfanned while having a box lunch. What a spectacular spot to rail fan!!

On our way back to the hotel we stopped at a GATX repair facility and had a complete tour of repairing and refitting tank cars. This GATX facility is one of three in the country and can hold 240 tank cars in various stages of repair.

On Wednesday we went to the Intermodal Facility at Hobart Yard. Because of the intense activity of the yard and the size of our group we toured the yard from the buses. This facility is the largest in the US. The two mile long yard has at least three tracks that are approximately 7,000 ft. long so that BNSF can make up and load trains of that length. The highly mechanized yard can unload and reload a 7,000 ft. double stack train in about 6 hours. When we were there we observed the last containers removed from a train that had arrived at 8 AM and the reload began. The train was scheduled

to leave at 5PM! Since they schedule such a quick turn around they maintain air pressure in the train during the entire time because it would take too long to do an air brake test if they shut it down to unload. The manager who led the tour said that they process more than 100,000 containers per month with about half of the containers from overseas via the port at Long Beach. Trains leave daily for Chicago, New York, Houston, and Atlanta with some stops along the way. After lunch we toured the design, testing, repair and limited assembly facilities of Athearn Trains at Carson, CA.

The main convention began on Thursday with 250 registrants boarding buses for a visit to the Orange Empire Rail Museum in Perris, CA. This outdoor railroad museum included a one hour train ride in coaches pulled by a Santa Fe



FP45. The museum grounds include many restored trolley, passenger and freight cars in regular and narrow gauge. After a picnic lunch we returned to Riverside where we visited the Blue Bonnet Packing Company and observed the cleaning, sorting, packing and shipping of grapefruit. We then visited the California Citrus Heritage Museum where we viewed the history of the citrus industry and the planting, cultivation and watering techniques utilized in the groves. The

weather was sunny as expected each day but a bit too hot (95-98).

Friday and Saturday we moved indoors at the convention for clinics, exhibits and a modest show that included all sorts of Santa Fe memorabilia and some model equipment. The most interesting clinics were surveys of HO Scale Santa Fe Refrigerator Models, Santa Fe Ice Plants, Santa Fe F Units, and HO Models. We had evening slide talks on Santa Fe heavyweight business cars,

and Southern California packing houses. The convention ended with a Sunday morning breakfast/business meetings and layout tours. I was invited to the Pasadena Club layout that is the largest layout in the country (25+ scale miles). It takes at least an hour to run a train from one terminal yard to the yard at the other end. I was given an operator's chair and spent three hours as an engineer. What a way to conclude a really great experience and convention!



Photo on previous page shows a 100 car container train climbing up the grade to the summit. This page shows the train passing through the summit, headed east. The new third track is the one with the lighter colored concrete ties. Photos by Gerald Abegg.



John Cipar provides two photos from a recent trip to the New York City area.

Above is an Amtrak train headed northbound on the Hudson line (formerly New York Central mainline), approaching a tunnel at Breakneck Ridge. Photo was taken on July 3, 2008.

At right, an eastbound commuter train on the New Haven line approaches New Rochelle, NY station. Photo was taken on July 3, 2008.





Donna Mitchelson is a railroad photographer. She took this photo of Engine #4 on July 4, 2008 at the Main Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum in Portland, ME. Donna, a CDIA student at Boston University, will graduate in September. You can view her track work photos of the museum at their website, <http://www.mnrr.org>. She is preparing a photographic story of the museum's restoration of Engine #7.

HUB Division Upcoming Events

Sat., Sept. 13	Module Group - Norwood Day, Norwood Masonic Hall, Norwood, MA
Fri., Sept. 19	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Wed., Oct. 1	Deadline for November-December <i>Headlight</i> articles and photos
Oct. 11-13	Module Group - Cranberry Days at Edaville Railroad, South Carver, MA
Fri., Oct. 17	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Oct. 25-26	Module Group - St. Brigid, Lexington, MA
Thurs., Nov. 13	Module Group - Children's Hospital, Boston, MA
Fri., Nov. 21	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Nov. 22-23	Module Group - Greenberg's Show, Wilmington, MA
Mon., Dec. 1	Deadline for January-February <i>Headlight</i> articles and photos
Dec. 6-7	HUB Fall Show , Marlborough, MA
Dec. 13-14	Module Group - National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA
Fri., Jan. 16	RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston
Sat., Jan 3	HUB Holiday Party
Jan. 24-25	Module Group - Big E, Springfield, MA

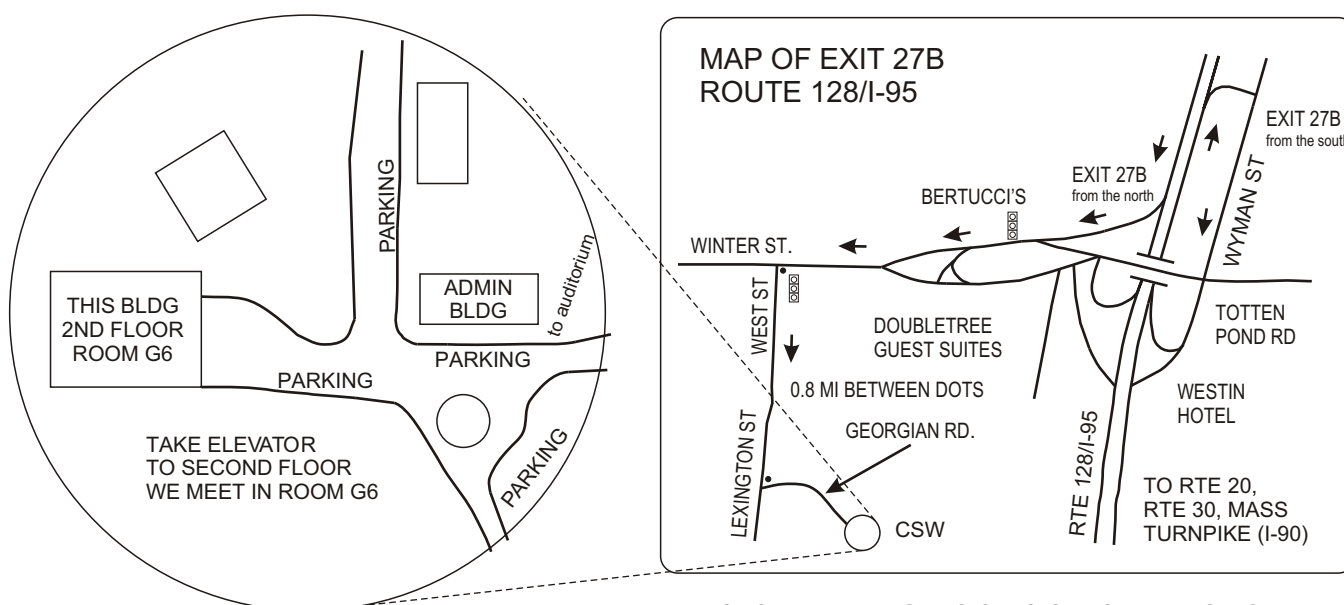
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MAP TO RAILFUN MEETINGS



MAP TO CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON

