

HUB Headlight

HUB Division Inc., Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association - Volume 25 Number 2, Nov-Dec. 2008
<http://www.hubdiv.org>

RAILFUN TIMETABLE

WOOD STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION BAZAAR

by Rich Pitter

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

A NIGHT FOR SWAPPING TALES AND SHARING TIPS

by HUB Members

8 p.m. January 16, 2009
Cambridge School of Weston

Do you want some one-of-a-kind structures on your layout 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?

Rich, our *Headlight* Editor, 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.

From time to time we do things differently, like encouraging new clinicians in a relaxed, non-pressured way. Several people have suggested a number of ten- to fifteen-minute clinics or demonstrations on things like using a new product to help make turnouts. (Thank you, Ken Belovarac, for that suggestion.) This is not a hands-on clinic where you'll be supplied material or a full-blown presentation; rather it is an opportunity to share information through short demonstrations by modelers for other modelers.

So, bring your demonstration and we'll give you 10-15 minutes to do your thing. If you have 35 mm slides, we'll supply a projector. If you have a PowerPoint presentation, we'll supply the projector. If you need a table for display, we'll supply the table. Whatever you want to show or tell others about, we'll provide you with the opportunity. Who knows, maybe we'll get some great ideas for more comprehensive clinics.

We'll also provide the coffee room for swapping stories and railroading tails. So come and join us for an enjoyable winter's eve when we gather in a nice warm place and share the hobby with other modelers.

NEW ENGLAND MODEL TRAIN EXPO

The Holiday Season's Largest Train Show

Dec. 6, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Dec. 7, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Best Western Royal Plaza Trade
Center, Marlborough, MA

Our HUB Division hosts the New England Model Train EXPO, which is the largest local train show of the holiday season. The HUB Division needs people to work both days.

Mark Harlow, at (508) 528-8587 or pennsy1954@yahoo.com, is putting together the work assignments for the show. Give him a call or email and let him know which day (preferably both days) you are available.

He is filling out assignments for the white elephant table, membership table, build-a-car kit area, and the door.

The show promises to be highly successful, based on our recent turnouts and the large number of tables full of hobby items and ideas for modelers. The last ingredient for success is our membership's participation in the show.

Sign up for the positions you want while they are still available. Everyone who signs up in advance to work at the show will get free admission to the show. See our website for assignments.

Reminder: January 3, 2009 - Holiday Party at Common Market Restaurant. Registration form is available at www.hubdiv.org.

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

SHANTY TALK

By Rudy Slovacek

As I step into the shanty, after a run of incredibly damp rainy weather, the sun is peeking out and illuminating some of those beautiful fall colors which Jack Frost has started to paint. Fall is a season New Englanders enjoy immensely as it seems to bring to fruition the time we spent toiling under the summer sun in the garden. As for myself, I've taken a new job, after a summer of searching, so my shelter (shanty) from the weather will also be changing like the leaves. But enough about me. This hobby is about you the model railroaders.

By the time you read this the leaves will have turned and likely fallen; a great metaphor for our hobby. Beautiful layouts like John Allen's or more recently Lou Sassi's eventually come down when their creators move on or pass from this world. Will the next model photographer spring up from one of our own like Bill Barry? Where will the next great model builder or story teller come from? If you remember anything of my previous columns, you know I welcome the process of change. Like nature, we are vividly reminded at this time of year that change is inevitable. While we cannot always control our environments (high fuel prices and a faltering Wall Street) we can control and change the way we respond to those things happening around us. We can certainly find a sense of fulfillment and relaxed enjoyment in our hobby of model railroading. I know that's what keeps me here.

Those great looking and performing locomotives didn't just occur. They were the work product of interested and dedicated people. Unlike the crickets who die off each

year, the squirrel industriously stores his needs for the winter and lives to survive and thrive another year. November, which is Model Railroading month, needs our attention to also survive and thrive for another year. It won't happen without your help. Whether you chose to make a tax deductible donation to the HUB, volunteer your time to assist at our fall show or give a clinic, the time is now to give something back to the hobby. So go out, become involved with your fellow model railroaders. If the truth be known, railroading itself is not an individual profession practiced in isolation; rather it is a team of people working together to provide a service for others. So join the HUB team this fall and help make model railroading more



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

enjoyable for all involved.

Well, got to go now, work is calling. I hope to see a number of you working out on the line in the next couple months before the cold winds of winter blow through the region.

Keep 'em rolling.

HUB Division Upcoming Events

Check <http://www.hubdiv.org> for more details about events
2008

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Nov. 1-2 | Module Group - St. Brigid's Church, 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 |
| Dec. 6-7 | HUB Fall Show , New England Model Train Expo, Marlborough, MA |
| Dec. 13-14 | Module Group - National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA |

2009

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|---------------|---|
| Sat., Jan. 3 | HUB Holiday Party , Common Market Restaurant, Quincy, MA |
| Fri., Jan. 16 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| Jan. 24-25 | Module Group - Amherst Railway Society's Big Railroad Hobby Show, West Springfield, MA |
| Sun, Feb. 1 | Deadline for March-April <i>Headlight</i> articles |
| Fri., Feb. 20 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| Fri., Mar. 20 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| Wed., Apr. 1 | Deadline for May-June <i>Headlight</i> articles and photos |
| Fri., Apr. 17 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| Fri., May 15 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| Fri., June 19 | RAILFUN - 8:00 PM - Cambridge School of Weston |
| July 5-12 | NMRA National Convention and National Train Show , Hartford, CT |

President's Car

By Dick Johannes

This should be a memorable year for model railroaders in our region. The final entry in this year's Calendar of Events is the NMRA National Convention in Hartford, CT on July 5 - 12, 2009. The HUB Division Modular group will be one of the railroads on display at the convention. In addition, Bill Barry, who is our current NER Representative, informed me that the show is seeking volunteer help. Prospective helpers are requested to contact Convention Chairman Vin Gallogly at railvin@charter.net.

I noticed some information in recent issues of MR, MRC and Scale rails. Each year a couple of new or interesting product offerings always seem to grab me. This year I found four. One is Hi-Tech, two are Hi-Tech and track, and last one is just track.

First, a technology called the Railroad Positioning System was displayed at the National Train Show. The developers include PhDs and solid state physicists from UC Berkeley. These are the folks who developed the OpenSource JMRI (Java Model Railroad Interface) that I saw in operation at Arthur Tammavo's Groton Central Railroad during Tour de Chooch. This is rocket science! Basically, this system uses three ultrasonic ceiling-mounted sensors that triangulate locomotive position much as a GPS system would in your car. Go to the web site (rps-mrr.com) and click on the "clinic presentation" choice. You might want to be seated!

The second item is that some manufacturers have gone the step of including a DCC accessory decoder as a built-in part of a commercial turnout. Bachmann and Cypress Engineering have done this. There's

a nice full-page add describing this enhancement to E-Z Track on the back of the October Scale Rails. Cypress has a combined accessory decoder and switch motor called the "Flea" that is small enough to fit in the space formed by cutting out some standard cork roadbed and can be attached to Peco, Atlas, Shinorhara and Walthers turnouts. Both of these products allow DCC control of turnouts without having to do anything from the underside of the layout. The Cypress web site is cypress-engineering.com.

The recent Scale Rails also was where I ran across something called SmartSwitch from ANE Model (www.anemodel.com). I was taken to this because I've always believed that either reading or doing a project in another non-railroad realm of modeling can be very fruitful. If you do this you often find tools and techniques applicable to model railroading that you otherwise would never encounter; a sort of hobbyist cross pollination. It looks to me (just a guess) like these folks have borrowed servos from the R/C aircraft world and employed them as DCC controlled turnout motors. They are small and very powerful. I'm likely to try a couple and I may try to fashion some of my own. I found that simple servos are pretty inexpensive. There is a bewildering array of R/C web sites to search for servos on the web.

Lastly, Ken Belovarac and I did a clinic at RailFun last year on Fast Tracks turnout assemblies for handlaying track. Tim Warris has created a remarkable set of tools for the track builder and he appears to have taken another leap. Fast Tracks already made something called Twist-Ties which are bendable tie strips to support construction of curved turnouts of any radius for given frog numbers.

These are laser cut and pre-drilled for spiking to ensure flawless construction. I acquired a few for my home railroad layout and sent him an email suggesting he consider this idea for just plain straight or curved trackage. Well I must not have been alone in my suggestion as this is exactly what he's done. He calls this new effort the "Infinite Track System" and their website www-handlaidtrack.com has a video on these from the National Train Show. These strips come in three different tie spacings for use on the mainline, a branchline or sidings. Also Fast Tracks has a clever tool for drawing the outer edges of roadbed. This has always driven me to distraction with the asymmetric nature of the two halves (used advisedly) when laying cork roadbed sections.

By the time you read this we'll likely have Edaville and the St. Brigits events behind us and will be heading into the Children's Hospital Display, which means that our major show, the New England Model Train Expo in Marlborough, is just around the corner. The time from Labor Day to the holidays always seems to go fast as we have a lot of activities scheduled. Stay tuned and keep checking the HUB Division web site, where, under Dan Fretz' capable direction, we're developing an on-line store for ordering tickets for our fall show and internet ordering of HUB Division items, such as our 50th anniversary boxcar.

I'm excited about this year in the HUB.

Finally, no matter what your personal viewpoint, be sure to get out and exercise your right to vote on November 4.

Keep'em rollin'

European Trip for NMRA's HUB Division Module Group

By Rudy Slovacsek

This is the second of a series on the HUB Module Group's participation at a train show in The Netherlands.

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

We chose DCC because we wanted prototype action involving multiple trains on a single main; also, Debbie Ames (the US distributor for Lenz products and one of our sponsors) was one of the display crew attending the show. In addition to bringing the Ames' award-winning module from a recent NMRA competition, Debbie made sure we had the latest and best of what the manufacturer had to offer. She even installed beta version software, including multiple unit consisting, on our set before it was generally available to the American or European public. In a sense you might compare our DCC testing activities to the little brother taste tester in the Life Cereal's "Mikey" commercials of the 1970's: "We liked it!" Other members who attended Rail 2000 added Soundtraxx™ decoders to their units, and those were a real big hit with both the spectators and operating crews.

By late spring we had a solid contact in Don, a loose plan to supply a 52-foot linear layout display, and eight to ten eager recruits, but that was about it. We needed to nail down two other crucial items: a

shipping plan and the means to finance it. There was some early debate for containerized freight versus airfreight, so the question to Jeff Turner, our new module group superintendent, incidentally worked for a company which arranges freight trans-shipments, so he was a natural to lead the shipping plan. Although his company had not handled this type of freight before (very few people have), they had all the contacts to find out who, what, when, where, and how much to put a plan in place. Along the way we learned there was only a slightly greater charge for shipping by air freight as opposed to a container ship. Given the container ship requirements to have our shipment boxed and ready over a month in advance, with no guarantee on the arrival date, we felt uncomfortable committing to show dates with so little control over our shipment. It would have involved storage in a

warehouse to await sharing a container with other goods, a barge ride from Boston to New York, and probably shipment topside as a light container during the rough winter storm season in the North Atlantic. The time element works against you on both ends, and since most of us are also active participants in many of the HUB fall show activities, we felt tying our equipment up for perhaps three months was not a viable option. Once the flight plan was chosen we weighed one module boxed in the prototype container (approximately 110 pounds), multiplied by 15, and got our price quotations while Jeff began making arrangements for the "Carnet." The Carnet is a shipping document, which travels with the freight and must be signed at each step of the way. We were lucky that our host Don had a contact, Ad van Genderen, within the trucking industry in the Netherlands, who handled all the arrangements between Amsterdam and the show in S'Hertogenbosh. Otherwise there



The Ames' award winning Brockwayville module depicts a small town and the station that connects it to the rest of the country by rail. The water tower appears on Lyle Sorenson's Brockway Mills module.

could have been more work and expenses on our part. As it was, we needed only to show up at a Freight Forwarders shipping dock in Boston and drop off our crated modules a week and a half before the show date. Likewise we picked them up at the same location several days after they arrived back in the US thanks to no small effort on Jeff's part.

We agreed that we wanted to make this event happen, so rather than burdening any sponsor to the point of non-participation, each member of the display team was responsible for his or her own transportation, food and lodging for the trip. Remember, they said it was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Here we acknowledge our generous hosts who provided sustenance and came up with a place for us to stay during the Rail 2000 event. The financial requirement was then clearly defined by the module shipping costs, so when we obtained an accurate estimate for shipping we had our monetary target. Numerous sponsors helped us out. First, we obtained a sponsorship from the Dutch Magazine *Rail Hobby* and provided the editor Hans Reints with some photos and publication content to promote the event. Second, we secured a major US sponsor when Andy Spornado went to bat for us at *Model Railroader* and agreed to help support our cause. Andy himself could not participate as his time was already committed to a major joint regional convention held on the same dates in the US. To further defray expenses, we sold advertising space on our front drapes, where smaller supporters could place a banner or poster content identifying themselves and their products. Finally, and no less important, we were given donations in the form of shipping materials, merchandise from manufactures which we raffled

off for cash, and outright cash donations from other clubs and individuals.

With all the major elements in place, work for the display crew was just beginning. First we had to build 14 additional shipping crates and during the lumber cutting phase we probably generated enough sawdust to fulfill the lifetime needs of modelers with lumber mills. Several weekends were spent just in the construction tasks. An assembly line was created to cut, staple, drill, and sub-assemble the parts. Henry Ford would have been proud of us for our assembly line. In the few remaining months, the show members began scurrying about adding last minute details, tuning up their track-work and getting ready for a final test assembly before crating up the modules for shipment. It was now clear to everyone this was going to happen soon.

The final tune-up came in mid September when we completely put together the entire display in a local town hall secured by member James Van Bokkelen. After the layout was broken down the following day, the

modules and their accompanying component hardware were packed directly into the crates and the lids screwed down tight before loading them into a trailer. The modules were delivered to the freight dock in Boston the following weekend. It would be the last any member would see his or her prized display again before arriving at the show in The Netherlands.

With reservations in hand, the participants Stan and Debbie Ames, Bob Blick, Mark Harlow, Doug MacDonald, Jeff Turner, James Van Bokkelen and myself, along with a few spouses and family members, boarded several planes six days before the show in great anticipation of meeting with our fellow train enthusiasts. It would be a first in the annals of the NMRA and for the European Model Railroaders but more importantly for us, it would become "the experience of a lifetime".

The story continues in the next issue, describing the excitement of the show and the audience responses received by the HUB Division's



Mark Harlow's Warren Siding, based on a prototype siding in Maine, provides operation interest. The string of gondolas is set out for loading.

Empire Junction - NER Convention in Syracuse, NY

By William Barry

The Northeastern Region (NER) of the NMRA held its annual convention at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool, NY on Sept. 11-14, 2008. The Central New York Division hosted the event.

A variety of clinics were offered, with most clinics given twice. Forty-nine layouts were available for viewing, with many open every day of the convention. Two bus tours were offered. In addition, there was a non-rail slate for significant others of the attending model railroaders.

A special opportunity, "Modeling with the Masters," was hosted by Bill Brown, MMR and Brian Curry, MMR on Thursday evening and Friday morning. Each participant constructed a diorama that included a Bar Mills shed kit. All of the dioramas were then put on display for attendees to view. HUB Division's David Insley said it was like a fast-tracked version of the Railfun diorama series.

We visited Hanson's Jamesville, NY limestone quarry on Friday morning. Gary Eno, superintendent of operations, led the tour. The company produces aggregates for asphalt and concrete, along with various limestone-based products. The quarry originally provided limestone for making soda ash. In the early 20th century, steam locomotives moved the materials out of the quarry to the huge crusher which is still in use today. One 0-4-0 saddle tank steam engine, some side dump cars and an electric shovel are on display at the office. We visited three plants that produce crushed materials. Also on site was a Barrett Paving asphalt batch plant. The tour visited the rail area where they ship products to Binghamton.

We also toured the Finger Lakes Railway (FLR). The tour, led by Bruce Habberfield, followed the railway's line from Solvay to Geneva. Bruce identified industries along the line, starting at the east end with Solvay Paper (now owned by RockTenn) and ending along the west branch at the Hanson Quarry in Oaks Corners, NY. The oldest part of the railway, dating to 1835, was originally New York Central's Auburn Road. The FLR was formed in 1995 when the trackage known as the Geneva Cluster was purchased from Conrail. At the time, speed was restricted to 10 MPH, but they have made improvements and now run at 25 MPH. They started operations with three EMD GP9's and have added eight GE B23-7 and one U23B. Some of the GE's were acquired from the Providence and Worcester and still sport P&W colors with the letters painted out and the FLR logo painted on. The railway also has passenger trains using four former VIA cars painted in New York Central colors. Along the way we were also shown areas of the NYS&W including former areas of Susquehanna trackage and the Susquehanna passenger station in

Geneva, NY.

The model contest results were presented at the banquet. The 23 entries were the most in some time. The HUB Division Award for the second highest scoring model in the contest was presented to Thomas Griffiths from New Jersey for his HO Scale Passenger Terminal, which earned 116 of 125 possible points. Rich Walz of Northampton, MA won the Baldwin trophy for his diorama of a roundhouse.

The photo contest results were highlighted by some familiar HUB Division members. Rudy Slovacek took 2nd place in the Prototype Color Print contest with his shot of the Battenkill Railroad in Sushan, NY. Bill Barry, entering his first photo contest, took 1st and 3rd place in Prototype Color Print, 2nd place in Prototype Black and White Print, and 2nd and 3rd place in Model Color Print. His artistic color print of an abandoned railroad bridge and its reflection in the Lehigh River taken in Easton Pennsylvania also took best in show out of 15 entries. Finally, Bill's photos were selected in the popular vote contest for all three photography categories.



Jack Alexander receives the Spate Award at the Syracuse Convention from Larry Cannon of the award's sponsor, the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. Photo by Pete Watson.

A New Engine Terminal

By Jack Alexander MMR

(First of a 2-part series)

My new town is on a layout extension running through the wall of the main railroad room into my workshop area and includes a five-track staging yard plus nine new industries. It is called Cooke City, Montana. This town is much more prosperous than the real one, located just northeast of Yellowstone National Park. I felt the need to create a new engine terminal. Like many of us, I have loads of locomotives and need space to display them. I started the project with a 100 foot Heljan turntable that would handle the length of my many 2-6-6-2 mallets. This unit was built up pretty much per the plans, but I added a pair of air tanks to the sides of the bridge and placed a control house by one end of it.

I didn't want a roundhouse for the engines. They take up so much room. I kit-bashed a pair of Walthers 2-stall engine houses into a 5-stall building by constructing a flat roofed fifth stall between these two units. I had some old Revell engine house doors and an archway that worked for the center track. A piece of 0.020 styrene sheet was used for the roof. In order to provide good interior views, I used partial walls outside and used some surplus wall stock to fill in the back of the middle stall. I ran tracks 2 and 4 through the back wall, since the kit provided some extra doors. In addition to a dozen workmen inside, I added two jib cranes, a lathe, drill presses, generator, welding tanks, a pair of step ladders, and lots of barrels. The floor was painted concrete color and weathered with real coal dust. Since the scene is 55 inches above the floor and near the layout edge, it offers great views to the inside.



The Cooke City cooling tower and engine house dominate the scene of Jack's engine terminal.

Before construction, I coated the brick walls with a thin wash of powdered tile grout mixed with water. After drying overnight, the surplus grout was wiped off with a dry cloth to leave nice grouted joints. During construction I added weathering to the walls with Bragdon Enterprises grimy gray chalk. This gave the structure a nice aged look. I numbered each stall and sooted up the area over each door. Floquil grimy black was

applied to the roof. Doors and windows are roof brown color. The Walthers kit provided two types of roof vents. I used the square style, painted them silver and then weathered them with a wash of lampblack. A few Master Creations birds were glued at the front of the roof ridge, and railroad signs were applied to the long ridge vents, reading "Intermountain Pacific Railroad, Cooke City, Montana Shops."



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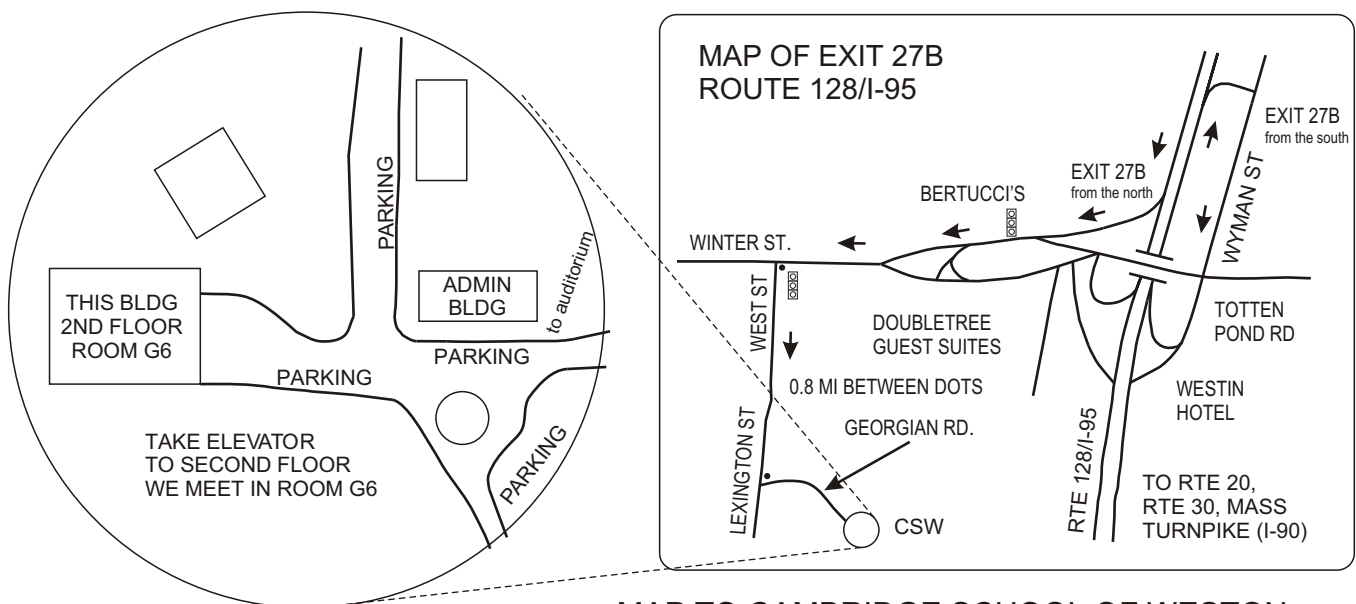
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MAP TO RAILFUN MEETINGS



MAP TO CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF WESTON

