



The

Relay

A publication of the Chesapeake Division of the Mid-Eastern Region of the NMRA

Volume 7 Issue 2

View From The Cupola

Spring 2017

By Bill Ataras



TWO UNDER MY BELT!

I've just completed my first two months as Division Super. It certainly is quite a job, and comes with about 145 bosses! We've held a board meeting, and just 2 weeks ago, held our first activity of the year, our open house. On March 25, Kurt Thompson will present his second Arduino clinic. It will be similar to last year's clinic, but will be focused on the NANO, a successor module for the UNO. I'll be there again this year.

I don't know about you, but I've always enjoyed layout tours. There's something to be learned at each stop. You'd think that, after nearly 7 decades in the hobby, anyone would have seen it all and done it all. No way! At least, not in my case.

Some of us practice the hobby at what I call "hobby pace." Railroading for us is an escape from the stresses and challenges of our regular lives. There are no Mach 2 trips between the layout room, the lumber yard, and the hobby shop. A hobby pace modeler typically accumulates a mountain of kits of all kinds, buying a shelf full of new kits for every one actually completed.

Please don't think I'm criticizing hobby pace modelers. If you could look up the term in a dictionary, expect to see my picture as the example. There's nothing wrong with this; it's what keeps us happy.

At the other extreme, we find the who do enjoy the hobby at Mach 2 pace. I recall seeing a video of a modeler who moved into a new home with unfinished basement and, 18 months later opened his nearly completed and fully scened layout to the attendees of his Regional Convention. That's definitely not me. In fact, I can't recall personally knowing anyone like this.

Again, there's no criticism intended. It's just the way he engaged in the hobby.

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Most hobbyists fall somewhere between these two extremes. Our four hosts for our layout tour fit this description. All have engaged in planning their layouts to varying extents; all have well-executed benchwork, trackwork, wiring and scenery. I enjoy the time I spent at each location, and left each home with some additional tidbits of information, technique, as well as pleasant time chatting with each modeler and gaining an appreciation for their own "hobby pace."

Bob Mohr



It is with a great deal of personal loss and sadness that I must announce to the Chesapeake Division the untimely passing of one of our colleagues, Robert (Bob) Mohr on February 8, 2017

I first met Bob when I joined the Greater Baltimore N Scale Associates in 1983, later becoming the Baltimore N Trak Club (BANTRAK). At that point, Bob was already a member of the NMRA. Bob was always friendly and outgoing, and anxious to share his abundant modeling talents with newbies like me. I will always remember Bob as a mentor who helped me grow into model railroading. He was always eager to help me with things that gave me the most trouble, especially in the field of electronics. An engineer by trade, he would often come over to my house after a long day at work, and help me correct another problem with my layout. He never talked down to anyone or made them feel foolish, although I am sure he bit his tongue more than a few times repeatedly answering rudimentary questions from me.

A few years ago, Bob was a well earned recipient of the Golden Spike Award from our Division, an honor that I know he prized greatly. He had a tremor in his hands that would have discouraged many a modeler, but he overcame that handicap to become one of the best model railroaders that I have ever known. It was my privilege to know and work with him.

John Darlington
Editor

Membership, Subscriptions and Article Submissions

To become a member of the Chesapeake Division of the NMRA, please contact any Board Member, fill out the form for a free Railpass (page 20) or join us at our next Divisional meeting on Sunday,

To receive electronic versions of The Relay, send an e-mail message to Russell Forte at Web.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com

If you would prefer to receive printed copies, please send a check for \$6 (payable to the Chesapeake Division, MER, NMRA)

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To submit an article for future publication in The Relay, please send it to the Newsletter Editor, John Darlington,

@

**jjdjr3@verizon.net
no later than**

Monday, June 19, 2017



A Layout Tour Reprise

By Bill Ataras

On Saturday, February 25th, members of the Chesapeake Division had the pleasure of touring four notable layouts as part of our semi-annual Division Layout Tour Program. These layouts belonged to Fred Sheer, Jack Keene, Jeff Mutter and Don Marvel. The following photographic presentation is just a small sample of what the Division attendees saw that day.



A visit to the home and layout of Fred Sheer.

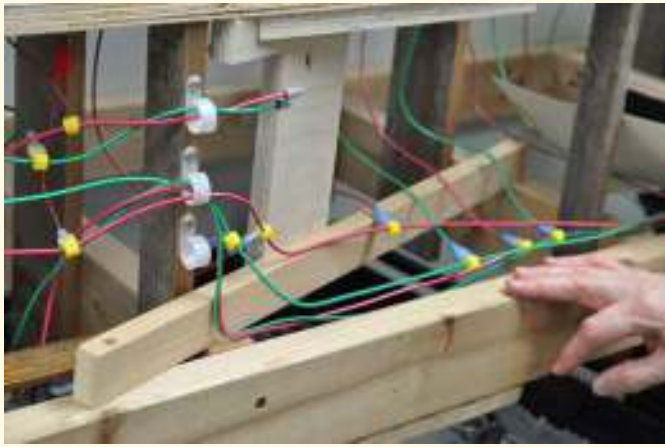
The moment you enter Fred's layout room, you can see that Fred is a building his layout very methodically. The layout room is completely prepared with floor, ceiling, lighting and backdrop. The benchwork appears complete and ready for roadbed, track and wiring. Notice that he has already installed tie-downs for the wiring. He also has an enviable collection of clamps! A close friend and fellow modelers once told me that "a real model railroader can never have enough clamps." Perhaps Fred overheard this comment. *(photo by David Arday)*

As we move to another section of Fred's layout, we see evidence of Fred's methodical progress. While scenery hasn't been added yet, the track is complete. Pictures of his planned background structures are present, even before enough scenery is present to allow basic mockups. *(photo by Bill Ataras)*



Here, Fred is describing the construction of this yard area. Most of the track is in-place and awaiting ballast. Pictures suggesting his planned background structures are right above the yard. Fred's the guy "hiding" behind me. I must have been pretty tightly focused on what Fred was saying; I didn't even realize the David was taking a picture. *(Photo by David Arday)*

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Fred is using readily available electrical tie-downs and a connector similar to a suitcase connector to keep control over his wiring. The connector he's using he found at Baynesville Electronics. It has the advantage that the branching wire can be plugged in and out as need. This will make some troubleshooting a lot easier than the suitcase connectors some of us use. I suspect that these connectors can be found at many of our other sources of electrical supply. (Photo by David Arday)

A visit to the home and layout of Jack Keene

Jack has an O-scale, 2 rail layout. How many of us have seen such a layout? Other than Kurt's newly started layout, it's been decades since I've seen O-scale, and it's a treat to see one in operation. Jack's layout is a 2-level layout that's clearly under construction. There are areas that don't even exist yet, and other scenes complete, scened, and operational. Equally impressive is the planning that's going into the layout. (Photo by Bill Ataras)



While the operational track appears to be only a few train lengths long, it does work. Basic scenery is in place, and it shows that Jack is on the right track (pun definitely intended). (Photo by David Arday)

Scenery has begun in this area of the upper level with operational, ballasted track and basic scenery. A couple of structures are positioned to give operators and spectators like me a good idea of things to come. By the way, track is hand-laid, code 148 (if I recall correctly) on real wooden ties. One of the tools I saw on his workbench was a rail bender. It can be set to bend rail to any desired radius. I regret not taking a couple of pictures to share with the Division. (Photo by Bill Ataras)



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Jack's planning is extensive and prototype based. Much of the track plan is taken from prototype data. Selective compression is definitely required in O-scale, but Jack has retained the authentic prototype flavor. At various places around the layout, he's posted pictures of the structures that will one day be added to the layout. (Photo by David Arday)

This is part of Jack's work area. It's on the lowest of three levels, with the upper two levels for the layout itself. Jack's using DCC, in this case a hybrid arrangement of various brands of equipment and devices. Don't you find it somehow curious that he's using an HO-scale table saw to construct his O-scale layout? (Photo by Bill Ataras)



Now let's drop in on Jeff Mutter and see what's happening



Jeff's layout is basically a two level layout with a third, un-sceniced level for staging yards. For an HO layout, this provides plenty of space for operations for a very interesting experience. Notice that plenty of light is provided for the lowest operations level (Photo by David Arday)

Managing a large volume of traffic requires a dispatcher to maintain order and schedules. This panel is tucked neatly into an area that otherwise would not be practical for use by train crews. It's clear that the operational portion of the layout is impressively large by simply counting the locations on the panel. (Photo by David Arday)



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This view shows both the upper and lower levels of the layout, and the dispatcher's panel as well. Upper level scenery is well under way here (Photo by David Arday)

It's always a big help to operators to have clear, easily under-



stood information about the locations and industries they will be switching. While the signals aren't at trackside, they are often better placed on the fascia as shown here. Notice also the pictures of the structures that will one day inhabit Moscow. While we wait for the actual structures to be constructed, layout context can easily be provided by photo, drawings or even sketches. (Photo by David Arday)

Our final stop was Don Marvel's layout.

Don's layout has progressed the furthest of the four layouts we saw. Perhaps that's due to the fact that his layout is a single level layout. And his scenery is exquisite. You'll find all of the detail you'd expect to see on a museum quality layout. (Photo by David Arday)



There's nothing like having a major metropolitan area with complete steam facilities just outside town. Don raised the level of the city scene, and this naturally tends to force the perspective of the entire scene. And the city is full of the traditional hustle and bustle of metropolitan areas. There's little room for people; industry and commerce dominate everything else. (Photo by Bill Ataras)

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This is typical of what you may see near a small town. There's a wide variety of small retail shops, as well as a couple of larger businesses. A mix of structures such as this adds interest and appeal to a layout scene. Note that the vehicles present help establish the date. (Photo by David Arday)

While not providing for any railroad traffic, this scene does recall the days when large companies, such as coal mining companies, provided identical housing for their employees. I've been told the employees were required to live in such housing, as well as shop in the stores available provided by the companies. How times have changed. (Photo by Bill Ataras)



But, alas, all is not done yet. Don has several structures already for installation in this scene. It's easy to see, even in a panoramic photo like this, that the structures are well detailed. (Photo by David Arday)

My wife and I really enjoyed the layout tour. Great layouts, cordial and accommodating hosts, and a fine way to enjoy a late winter afternoon of railroading. My thanks also to the hosts wives; when my wife reached her railroad viewing saturation point, she had time for pleasant conversation with other ladies who have to endure their husbands hobbies.

Bill



Assistant Director's Corner

By Rick Uskert

Thank you to Don, Fred, Jack, Jeff, Kurt and Travers and all others supporting those who opened their homes and layouts this past February 25th. The rain stayed away for the most part and I hope many had the opportunity to visit at least one of the four layouts. I have a feeling that many visitors gravitate towards layouts which are stated to be at least operational, if not mostly sceniced, to which I indicate they are missing much. Fred's layout under construction was a great example of bench work, neatness in wiring (I have visited only one other that was more organized than Fred's) and, in regards to organized, a model for kitting, carting and making ready many of the tools needed during construction.

Unfortunately it was decided not to participate in the inaugural B&O Museum's Railroad Society Days in March, but we will keep an eye out for other public social events to expose our Division to the community.

An equally great thank you goes out to Kurt for hosting the Arduino clinic. I plan to include a bit of the code developed for the crossing gate animation in the next Relay for those who did attend but want a copy and those who did not have the opportunity to join us but want to start dabbling. Arduinos, and all microcontrollers for that matter, can have a significant impact upon our layouts, if you choose, the way rotary switches and block control did once upon a time.

As we move to reformatting the Relay, we are interested in featuring Division member's photographs or artwork on the front and back covers. These images can be of anything railroad related, whether it be a photo of a prototype or model, work in progress, personal painting or other rendering. Each quarter the Board of Directors will select one image from those submitted for the front cover and one for the back, holding all others in reserve for the following issue. At the end of the year, we are contemplating running an extended issue with all submitted images being printed.

Start collecting your images and submit them to the Director's email box (directoratlg.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com) with a brief 2-3 sentence description (who, what, where, when, why) and your name.

All non-copyrighted (aka: your personal property) images of good taste will be considered. By submitting an image for consideration, the Board accepts your willingness to have the image published in an upcoming issue of the Relay without compensation other than the credit for having produced a great image.

To help you along, should your photographic cupboard be somewhat bare, we have the Railroad Photography Clinic rapidly approaching on April 29th. Have a look at our separate articles on the subject.

Our tour of the Canton Railroad is coming up next month. As I will be reaching out to the Railroad mid-April to finalize the plans, expect a quick survey to show up in your email box soon. This will give you the opportunity to throw in your two cents on what you would like to learn about their operations during the visit. Once things are set, an email will go out immediately after so everyone has the most time to plan.

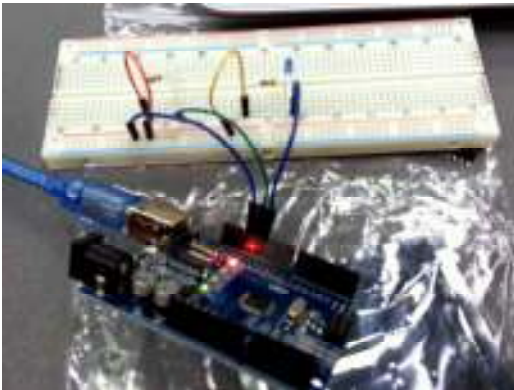
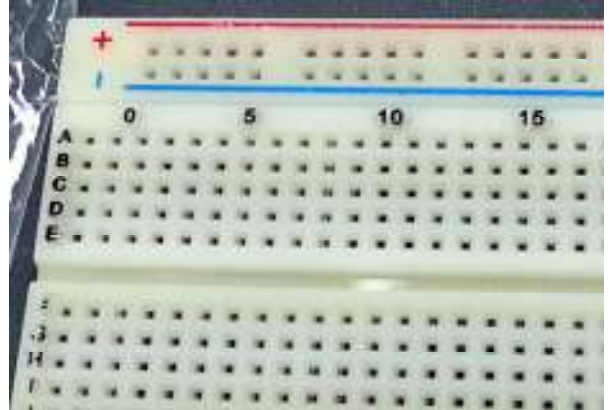
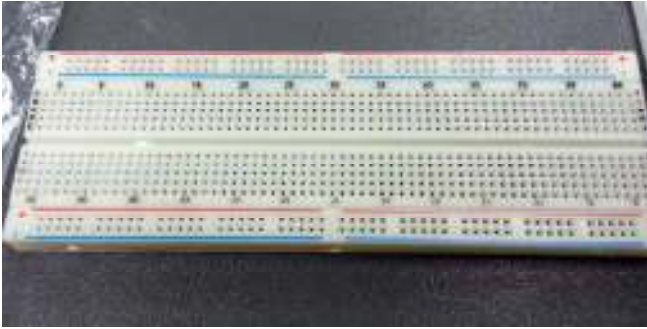
Rick



Chesapeake Division Arduino Clinic

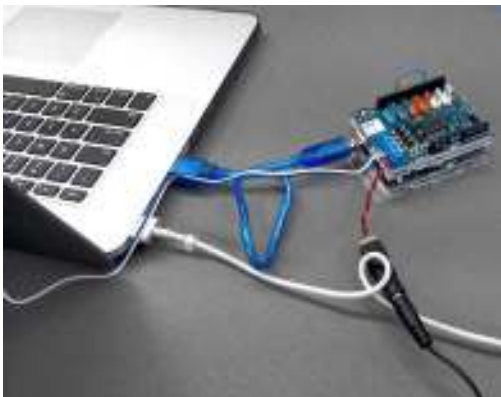
By Tom Casey

On Saturday, March 25th, Kurt Thompson presented an updated version of the Arduino Clinic he gave last year. We had a good turnout with 17 members present. Although the clinic was intended as a hands-on introduction to Arduino boards, a number of members brought example projects of theirs to show.



Arduino boards are small, very inexpensive, microprocessors that can be easily programmed to perform a variety of tasks on a model railroad ranging from turning lights on and off at prearranged intervals, controlling switches in a yard ladder, up to acting as a DCC command station. They can largely replace the circuits we have all constructed over the years from discrete electronic components.

The software, called sketches, is relatively straightforward. It is written on computer and then uploaded to the Arduino. Once loaded the Arduino may be disconnected from the computer and connected to a local power supply on the railroad. From that point on any time the board is powered up it will begin to run the software.



Each attendee received a small kit of parts that included an Arduino board and various accessories. The morning was spent with Kurt guiding us through the basics. Several of us had to work for a while to get our computers to successfully upload sketches to the Arduino boards but most of us succeeded in the end.

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GOOD NEWS!

While your Editor was busy collecting articles and photographs for this issue of *The Relay*, I received an e-mail message from one of our Division Members, and a personal friend of mine, Al DelGaudio, saying that he was about to undergo bypass surgery at St. Joseph's Hospital on Monday, March 27th. Having undergone that same procedure some years ago, I knew what tension Al was experiencing prior to his surgery.

I am happy to report that Al has come through his ordeal with flying colors. I spoke to his wife today (Thursday March 30th) and she was quite upbeat, and told me that Al was being discharged from the hospital as we spoke.

Al will probably be "under wraps" for a few weeks as he recovers his strength, but I am sure that there will be nothing to keep him away from his Train Room once he has permission to go up and down stairs.

Here is Al's address and phone number if you care to send Al a card or call him on the phone.

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✉aland2g@comcast.net



Alan DelGaudio

John Darlington, Editor

The Relay

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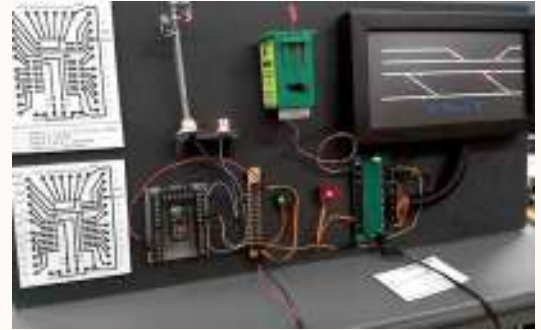
After a leisurely lunch, we saw a number of example projects including the DCC command station mentioned earlier and an integration of the Arduino board with Touch Toggles and signals to control routes and signaling. Rick Uskert presented a project he is working on to control the lights and gates at a grade crossing.



Rick Uskert explains his light and gate crossing project



Bill Wilson exhibits his switch ladder scheme



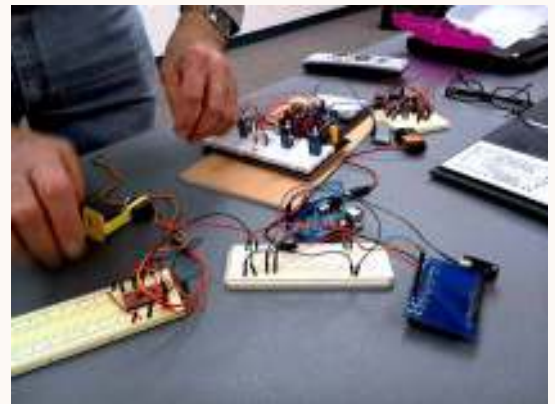
Bob Geldmacher demonstrates his switch ladder control project



An attentive classroom



"Mr. Arduino", Kurt Thompson makes his presentation



"Hands on" instruction is best

I had previously experimented a bit with an Arduino but came away more willing to try using these boards on my rail-road. All in all, a very interesting and fun day.

Tom



Ticket to Tehachapi

By David Arday

Although I spent most of my adolescence in Southern California, I left for college before I could do much railfanning on my own, and by the time I had graduated my parents were in the midst of moving back east. Therefore, I never had a chance to see the Tehachapi Loop until I attended my 40th high school reunion, in 2015. As part of that trip to CA, I planned a brief half-day side excursion up Hwy 58, which runs between Bakersfield and Barstow, via Tehachapi.

The Loop is considered an engineering marvel, and it is a favorite subject for many model railroaders' layouts. It was built by the Southern Pacific RR in the mid-1870s, about 18 miles below the summit of Tehachapi Pass, which lies at the southern end of the Sierra Nevada range. The loop allowed SP trains from California's Central Valley to reach the Mohave Desert plateau, after which they would head back down into the Los Angeles Basin via the Antelope Valley and mile-long San Fernando Tunnel under Newhall (Fremont) Pass. The most direct route south across the Transverse Ranges was too difficult to engineer in the 19th century, though I-5 today uses that most direct route between Bakersfield and Los Angeles. The Santa Fe later gained trackage rights to use the Loop, while giving the SP trackage rights to use the Cajon Pass, a slightly more eastern route through the Transverse Ranges. Today, the Loop is UP property, and the BNSF has trackage rights.

As I knew I would have less than two hours to spend at the Loop, I first visited Trainweb.org, to review some specific information on overlooks and other vantage points when visiting the site. This allowed me to pick the best vantage to head to, based on the time of day I would be visiting and what I most wanted to see. It was also obvious from my research that a bit of hiking would be required, as there is only one pull-off along Hwy 58, and it is below the loop and looking into the sun in the morning. Therefore, I decided to head to a site above the loop, a short hike off of Woodford Tehachapi Rd, that provided a good overview of the Loop looking West, down the valley, with the sun at my back. A further hike along the dirt trail leading from the road took me over a hillcrest, and gave a view of the tracks heading up the valley from above Tunnel #10.

I was fairly lucky on the morning of my visit, and in the space of less than an hour was able to view one UP eastbound (upgrade) and one BNSF westbound freight passing through the Loop. After that, I headed up the pass to the town of Tehachapi, and briefly visited the Tehachapi Depot RR Museum, which is located in a reconstruction of the original depot that was destroyed in a fire. The museum has a nice collection of RR signaling equipment, as well as a model of the loop itself and some aerial photos that help put the Loop's physical attributes into better perspective. If you ever travel to Southern California and have the time and inclination, both the Loop and the museum are worth a visit.



David

The lead end of a UP mixed freight headed upgrade (eastbound). The engines have already passed over the loop tunnel and are about ¾ of the way through the loop itself

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Lead engines are exiting the loop with the rest of the train still climbing the loop in the background



A more panoramic view showing the train wrapping around the hillock in the center of the loop and filling the entire loop. I have not yet hiked far enough from Woodford Tehachapi Rd to get a good overall view of the entire loop.



Three helpers have been cut into the middle of the train.



The tail of the train is now about 1/3 of the way up the loop, while most of the front half has exited already.



The tail end of the train is now about 2/3 of the way through the loop.



A BNSF intermodal unit train heading downgrade (westbound) into the loop. It's 11:13 a.m.



The intermodal's lead engines are now about 1/3 of the way into the loop.



From this higher vantage point, the lead engines can be seen passing over the loop tunnel while the rest of the train follows.





The tail end has not yet entered the loop, while the lead end is wrapped around the central hillock and approaching the loop tunnel



A wider angle view



The lead engines are entering the loop tunnel.



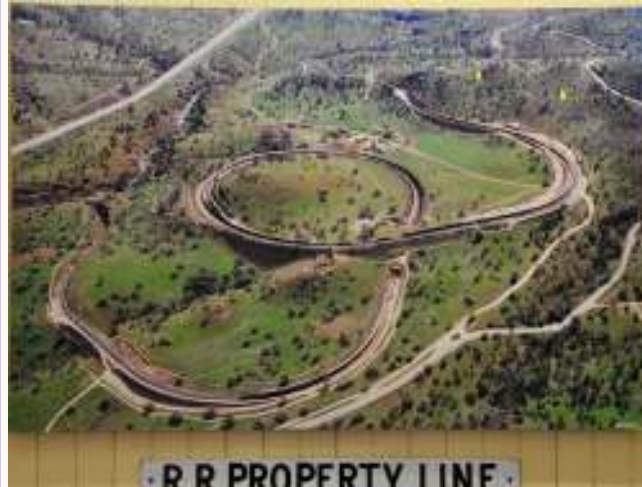
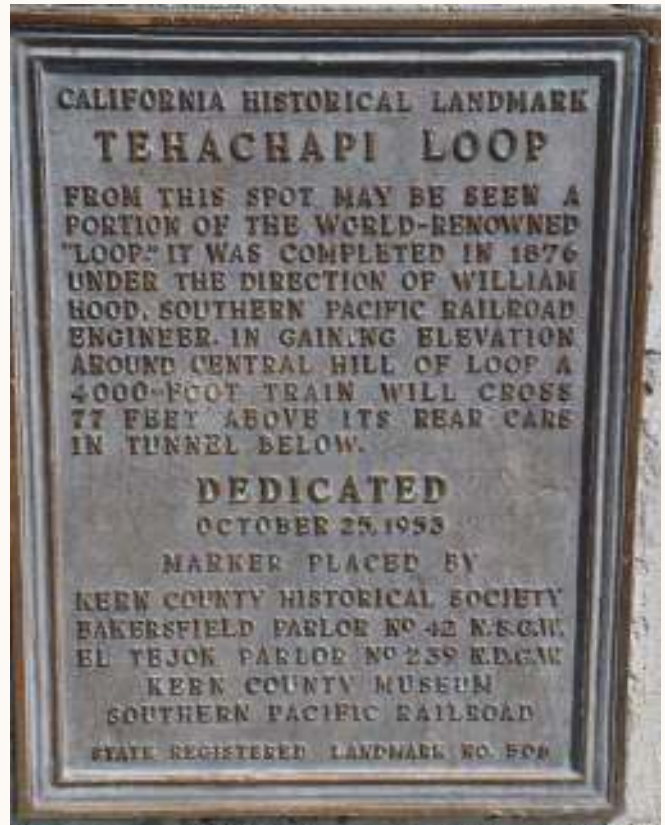
The main body of the train is seen wrapping through the loop. Looks like a double-stack will just barely clear the loop tunnel roof



:The tail end is now departing the loop at 11:19 a.m.



Historical marker near Woodford Tehachapi Rd.



Aerial photo of on display at the Tehachapi Depot RR Museum. I Photo shopped in the two yellow arrows to roughly indicate the spots from where I shot the above photos





Some of the signals on display outside the museum.



Station Agent's desk at the museum



Display of a section of melted rail caused by a malfunctioning traction motor on a diesel engine. One axle spun at high speed on an otherwise stationary engine. Friction caused the wheel to melt the underlying rail in less than a minute.



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

All information is current at the time of publication. Check the referenced web site prior to visiting for schedule changes or cancellations. Send event information to Rick Uskert for inclusion in the next issue of The Relay.

NMRA EVENTS

NATIONAL:

2017 National Convention

Orlando, FL

July 30 - August 6, 2017

<http://nmra2017orlando.org/>



REGIONAL:

2017 MER Convention

The Susquehannock

Harrisburg, PA

October 12 - 15, 2017

<http://www.mer2017.org/>



DIVISION:

South Mountain Division Mini-Convention

Blue Ridge Summit, PA

April 8, 2017

<http://www.smdnmra.org/>



Chesapeake Division Railroad Photography Clinic

April 29, 2017

From the basics to the technical, covering models through railfanning, using cell phones, point and shoot and SLRs; bring your own equipment for the hands-on segments.

Contact Rick Uskert (Asstsuper.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com) if you are interested in presenting during the clinic

Chesapeake Division Canton Railroad Company Operations Tour

May 2017

Final date will be set approximate one month in advance

Note that this may be a *weekday* event and active RR restrictions will apply

Register with & email Operations-related questions to Rick Uskert (Asstsuper.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com) to help direct the tour.

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Chesapeake Division Layout Construction Clinic - Infrastructure

September 2017

What goes in before the benchwork: Plan for your power needs by considering lighting and layout electrical; HVAC; Sound abatement; Emergencies

Chesapeake Division Annual Meeting

November 2017

Board of Directors, Paymaster Elections
History & Research Presentations



Bring a project you have been working on or completed this year to discuss with fellow modelers in a low-key environment

Chesapeake Division Operations Clinic

December 2017

MODEL RAILROAD OPEN HOUSES

Baltimore Society of Model Engineers

Apr 9, Jun 11, Jul 9, Aug 13, Sep 10, Oct 8, Nov 12, Dec 10, 2017

<http://www.modelengineers.com/home.html>



Potomac Division Open Houses - Prince William Double Header

Saturday, April 29th, 2017, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Marty McGuirk's Central Vermont Railway Roxbury Subdivision
Prince William Model Railroad Club



Potomac Division Open House

Saturday, May 6th, 2017, 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Bryan Kidd's Chesapeake and Ohio Railway - Allegheny Sub-Division, Nokesville, VA

MUSEUM & SOCIETY EVENTS & RIDES

Day Out With Thomas (2 Locations)

B&O Railroad Museum

April 28 - 30, 2017

May 5 - 7, 2017

<http://www.borail.org/April.aspx>

<http://www.borail.org/May.aspx>

Strasburg Railroad

June 17 - 25, 2017

September 16, - 24, 2017

November 17 - 19, 2017

<http://www.strasburgrailroad.com/train-schedule/events/>



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Easter Bunny Train

Strasburg Railroad
April 14 - 16, 2017
<http://www.strasburgrailroad.com/train-schedule/events/>



The Great Train Robbery

Strasburg Railroad
April 29, 2017
July 22, 2017
October 21, 2017
<http://www.strasburgrailroad.com/train-schedule/events/>

Railfest Hamburg

Reading Railroad Heritage Museum
August 11 - 13, 2017
<http://readingrailroad.org/events.shtml>



Restoration Facility Tour: The New, The Old, & The Restored!

B&O Railroad Museum
September 10, 2017
<http://www.borail.org/September.aspx>



RPM MEETS

Railroad Prototype Modelers - Valley Forge 2018

Valley Forge, PA
March 23 - 25, 2018
<http://www.rpmvalleyforge.com/Index.php>

SHOWS & SALES

Great Scale Model Train and Railroad Collectors Show & Railroad Marketplace

April 8-9, 2017, Cow Palace
June 17-18, 2017, Exhibition Hall
Oct 7 & 8, 2017, Cow Palace
<http://gsmts.com/>

Billy Budd Model Train Meet

York, PA
October 17 - 19, 2017
<http://trc.trains.com/events.aspx?page=info&eventid=20746>



Join us at April's Railroad Photography Clinic

By Rick Uskert

The Division will be hosting a multi-presenter clinic on the photography of railroad subjects, **April 29th** at the **Pikesville Library**. Note that this is one week later than published in the Winter Relay Event Calendar. Please update your home calendar accordingly.

The Pikesville library opens at 9:00a and, allowing for a half hour to check in and get everything set up, we will start at 9:30. The room has been reserved until 1:00p, so we will wrap up around 12:30 for cleanup and checkout. The facility, located near to the 795 interchange on the Northwest side of the 695 loop, has free parking and Wi-Fi for your use.

Railroad photography has many facets, stemming from personal interests in history, modeling and prototype, and each of these has similar fundamentals and some very different approaches. Our event will tap into each of these interests and address the differences through the eyes of multiple presenters.

The equipment necessary for photographing railroad subjects is minimal: a camera. The device can be an everyday cell phone, a small 110 film camera or a digital SLR with all the bells, whistles and price tags to accompany such things. We will start off with the usage of a cell phone and some really cool things that can be done with them and address their limitations. A few inexpensive ancillary items can make a world of difference when used correctly. All are welcome to bring along their own camera equipment and we will allow some time between the presentations to try photography techniques on the Division modules.

Always a fan of free software I will have a short session on using image editor GIMP to manipulate photos for use as background buildings, whether they will be pasted to foam board for a shallow 3D object or directly on the wall or divider. Similar to the camera practice time, if you wish to practice image manipulation, bring along a laptop with the aforementioned software pre-loaded. Snap a picture or two of a building side in the next few weeks, as straight-on as you can manage, for practice. If not, you can step out during one of the breaks and snap a few pics-- but don't forget your USB cord to transfer to your laptop on the fly.

We will have a couple of presentations on the railfanning side of the hobby, covering the do's and don'ts of being out in the real world, as compared to the miniature version.

Safety is an important aspect of being near any pair of rails, as is knowledge of trespassing. Everyone who ventures out to track side must be aware of the property owner's policy with regards to their private property. One may be left alone if you are innocuous or the authorities may be called and hit with a trespassing fine. With a bit of planning, any railfanning outing can be fun and safe. Know your railroad's rules, research your location, be aware of your surroundings especially when you are setting up and taking a shot and above all, be safe.

Past Superintendent Greg Kidwell will be one of our Railfan clinicians, and he has kindly created the following teaser article.

We look forward to seeing all of you on April 29th.

Rick



PHOTO SHOOT

By Greg Kidwell

In April, 2017, there will be a informal seminar on photographing trains, both real and models. I look forward to sharing some of my photos, both good and not-so-good, and discussing what I learned. As well as what I was trying to capture and either did or did not succeed.

I am hoping to both share what I know and pick up some pointers from the other presenters and the attendees. I believe that this will be a great opportunity for all and gives the presenters a chance to show off a bit! I am including some shots I have taken that will be part of my presentation.



Photo #1 is a streetcar taken on 2011, located in Kolkata, India.

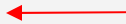
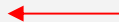


Photo #2 was taken at the train station in Kolkata, India. July 2011



Photo #3 is at Horseshoe Curve in September 2014



I look forward to seeing all of you there.

Greg



Keep the Train on the Track

by Rick Uskert and John Darlington



Our Division is in need of a few willing volunteers to fill positions on the Board of Directors and to bolster our communications team.

The **Director at Large** and **Clerk** seats on the BOD are to be filled, as is the **Editor of the Relay**, with John wishing to set his keyboard aside after decades of producing the BANTRAK Newsletter and our own **Relay**.

The **Director at Large** is the first step in a three-year cycle through the Board. This individual performs tasks assigned by the Division Super and Assistant Super, which has included scheduling event locations, establishing and/or maintaining relationships with local groups and Divisions. As an introductory role on the Board, it is low key and of minimal time expenditure.

The **Clerk** serves as the Division secretary, whose duties include taking minutes at all meetings, maintaining all records, including a roster of all members, and is one of only two Board members responsible for providing Division-wide communication via email or mailings. The Clerk shall serve for a two year term.

Both the **Director** and **Clerk** Board positions possess voting powers and give you a front row seat in guiding the future of our Division. Participation on the Board and/or production of **The Relay** will earn yourself points towards the "Association Volunteer" category.

ay earn yourself points towards the "Association Volunteer" category of the NMRA Achievement Program. Finally, the position as **Editor of The Relay** will come open this summer with the July issue. Unlike the Director at Large and Clerk positions, the Editor has only one real mission; produce the quarterly issue of **The Relay** on a calendar basis. It is really a fun job requiring relatively straightforward computer skills. If you want to know what is going on in the Division, this is the job for you. Not only do you keep up to date on "official business" as ex-officio of the BOD, but you get to help to develop the many interesting articles and photographs of various member activities. The computer program now being used to produce **The Relay** is MS Publisher which is fairly easy to learn. There is some talk about re-formatting **The Relay** incorporating alternative styles and ideas. The new Editor will be involved in putting his/her stylized stamp on the new design which would be an interesting and exciting project in its own right. In addition, I will gladly volunteer to help the new editor in getting started with the October issue.

Should you chose to volunteer, please submit yourself via email to Bill Ataras via the Superintendent email (super.chesdivmernmra@gmail.com) no later than **30 April** in order to induct all members to their new roles at the mid-year Board of Directors meeting. We encourage you to give strong consideration to participating at these levels and if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to any of the current or past Board members.

Regards,

Rick and John

e sign me up for a

The Relay

National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) Mid-Eastern Region Application for Free "Railpass" Trial Membership

YES, please sign me up for a free six-month Railpass Trial Membership in the NMRA, which includes membership in the Mid-Eastern Region and my local Division. During the six-month period, I understand that I may attend conventions, meets, and participate in contests. I will receive the NMRA Magazine, the monthly national publication, and The Local, the bi-monthly regional newsletter. I will not be eligible to vote, hold office or receive a New Member Pack.

I also understand that the \$9.95 cost of this six-month Railpass Trial Membership is being paid by the Mid-Eastern Region. (Note: Regardless of who pays, the six-month \$9.95 memberships are available only once to each person) At the end of the six month period, I may join the NMRA by paying the regular active member dues.

During the past thirty months, I have not been a member of the NMRA.

Name: _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

E-Mail: _____

Scale (s): _____

Signature of Applicant: _____

Signature of "Recruiter:" _____

(a Regional Officer or Board Member)

When this form is completed,

mail to:

Bob Price
MER Business Manager
801 S. Newton Lake Drive
Collingswood, NJ 08108

Please do not mail this form
Directly to the NMRA Headquarters
In Chattanooga, TN.

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