

THE

Oil Can

June, 2011



Volume V Issue 6



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The Editor's Corner

Don Phillips

Well, John and Merlyn did it again, another great trip with something for everyone. You may not be aware, but both Amtrak's Beech Grove facility and the Irwin Inn allow very few visitors yet alone tours. Somehow, we wound up with escorted tours at both. Throw in some great layouts, a visit to John's favorite ice cream store (they didn't have "Moose Tracks") and it made for quite a trip. The icing on the cake for me however, was a chance to see Ron Lane's "Mann's Creek Railway" again. I've had the great pleasure of being invited several times in the past but each time is like the first one all over again. You only have to walk in and glance around to understand why he gets to put those MMR initials behind his name. As some layouts go it's not all that big but what it lacks in size, it more than makes up for in detail and character.

Ron spent something like 20 years researching, photographing, measuring, and getting to know the people in the area. From what I've been able to determine, not only are most if not all the buildings on his layout a model replica of the original, but Ron can even tell you the names of the occupants and everything about them probably down to the name of their dog. The result was a very popular book and a great layout.

Of course, the fact that it's narrow gauge just makes it that much greater.

The Oil Can is a publication of Cincinnati Division 7, Mid Central Region, NMRA, Inc. Opinions expressed herein are the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Division 7, the MCR, the NMRA, it's officers, or it's members.

Space permitting, The Oil Can welcomes news items, articles and letters on Model Railroading and related topics. Deadline for submissions is generally the fifteenth of the month preceding the next meeting.

The Cover:

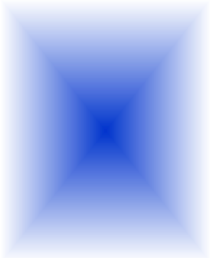
It's Monday afternoon, August 1, 1928 in West Virginia's New River Gorge, and Cooper's Mill is temporarily quiet with the millwheel water diverted. Old Mr. Cooper himself sits on the steps waiting for Milton Lawrence to get there with his usual Monday pickup load of buckwheat to grind. The flour is destined for those scrumptious pancakes his wife Gertrude whips up for their large family in Clifftop.

This scene is just one of the many vignettes of "real" life on Ron Lane's highly detailed depiction of the Mann's Creek Railway territory, based on photographs in his book - - -

"West Virginia Narrow Gauge—Mann's Creek Railway"

The HO scale model of the mill was built over 50 years ago, in April 1961, from an article in Model Trains by E.L.Moore.

Editor's note: Regretfully, Ron's Mann's Creek book is out of print.



HEADLIGHTS

Randy Kerka
Superintendent

Miss a little... miss a lot!

If you chose not to join us on the recent Beech Grove Express Bus trip...you sadly missed, in my humble opinion, the undisputed **BEST** prototype tour of a lifetime! I know Bruce Knapp will likely expand on our experiences but suffice it to say it was a first class trip. A new and heightened appreciation of the Amtrak System was agreed on by all the fortunate attendees. We will be talking about this trip for a long, long time. I can't wait to see what the team of John Burchnall and Merlyn Jarman will come up with in 2012 to top this!

The excitement builds as we near Summer.

You know me... I get excited about most things. But I am excited to be returning on June (5th) to the Hyde Park Community Methodist Church for a clinic from one of the truly exceptional modelers in our Division, Bob Bartizek. And then in July we will be hosted in Tower A at CUT with a presentation by our friends at the Cincinnati Railroad Club. Check out the next several months elsewhere in this Oil Can or on the information boards at the next meeting.

We are looking for your input

We need some help here. As you have probably noted, the monthly Modeling Contest has suffered from lack of participation as of late. Two, one or even NO entries in a contest makes it... well, not a contest. The Modeling Contest is a Division 7 "tradition" that must not be allowed to wither away. I applaud Jack Laubisch's determination to "Hang in there" as he implores membership each month to enter the contests. But for some reason... most of you are just not entering! Why is that? We really want to know?

Any ideas from the membership would be appreciated and considered with the goal being to encourage general participation. Bring 'N' Brag seems popular, but would interest remain as high if it became an every month thing? AP Judging has been suggested, but that would be possible only once or twice a year and depends largely on the availability of qualified NMRA Judges. Another suggestion has been "Open Category Month"; where entrants bring in ANY model they want to go head-to-head with everyone else.

I challenge each of you to think about this and then not hesitate to email me at rkerka001@gmail.com with any and all suggestions and any ideas you may have.

The MCR Regional Convention

A few weeks ago, the Rails of Ages Regional Convention held at Geneva-On-The-Lake was the place to be. A fair number of our Division members made the five hour trip east of Cleveland for a fun few days of model railroading. If you have never been to a "Regional", plan on attending the 2012 "Highline to Pittsburgh" convention in Pittsburgh, PA on April 26-29. The Regional "experience" is way cheaper than a "National" but just as much fun! More info at <http://www.highlinetopittsburgh.org/>

There is an abundance of rail lines leading into Pittsburgh; the Norfolk Southern, CSX, Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad, Union Railroad, Pittsburgh & Ohio Central Railroad, Turtle Creek Railroad, Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway, Allegheny Valley Railroad, and the Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad. Pittsburgh also has a rich history of smoke, steel, coal, freight, and passenger service.

See you soon,

Randy

SECOND SECTION

Bob Shreve
Asst. Super

About 45 people rode the Beech Grove Express to Indianapolis on May 14th, John Burchnall and Merlyn Jarman did an excellent job planning the day's activities. They even managed to schedule the rain showers to occur during the time we were on the bus between stops. Congratulations John and Merlyn on a job well done

I have been able to attend several of the Lebanon Sub meetings recently. The meetings are usually the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Resurrection Lutheran Church on North Broadway. The models the attendees have been bringing in for the show and tell are quite impressive. At the May meeting, Doug Campbell gave an overview of his scratch building techniques using paper cardstock and other forms of cardboard. I am hoping to get Doug to give a clinic at one of our full meetings next year.

Remember the June meeting at Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church has been moved up 1 week to June 5th. This change is noted on all of the published schedules. Bob Bartizek will present a clinic entitled "Designing Interesting Layout Operations". Bob's presentation shows various layouts where he has operated and details some of the switching operations found. This clinic was very well received when presented at the 2009 Division 2 Jamboree in Pittsburgh. After the meeting, Pat Homan and Sam Swanson will have their layouts open for visitors.

In July, we will switch our attention to prototype railroads. The Cincinnati Railroad Club has offered us the opportunity to hold a meeting in Tower A in Cincinnati Union Terminal. The CRRC members will give a presentation on the history of Tower A. Please note that there is one stairway you will need to climb to reach Tower A. This stairway and limited space in Tower A will probably force a limited presence by the Division 7 company store at this meeting. **Note the July meeting is 1 week later (July 17th) than our usual 2nd Sunday schedule due to the National Convention from July 3rd through the 9th.**

In August, we will be in Kenwood at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Ed Swain will present a clinic on Background Buildings.

That's it for this month. See you on **June 5th**.

Bob

CINCINNATI MODEL RAILROAD CLUB Operating Session Open to NMRA Members

by Frank Koch

The Cincinnati Model Railroad Club (Harmony Lodge in Spring Grove Village) will host the first of several periodic open operating sessions on Thursday, June 16 from 7-10 pm. This operating session is open to any NMRA member. We will have an orientation session from 6:30-7:00 pm and will start operating at 7 pm. We can handle 10-12 operators as yardmasters, engineers of freight, locals and passenger trains, and a dispatcher (if you want the challenge!) Our members will be there to provide encouragement and assistance. We have an NCE system (radio and plug-in), so bring a throttle if you feel more comfortable with your own but it is not necessary. We also have FRS/GMRS radios for communication, bring your own if you wish. We would like to get an idea of how many operators will be present, so sign-up with Frank Koch at fjkoch@hotmail.com to indicate your intent to participate. This operating session is in addition to our regular first Thursday operating sessions that run 2-5 pm and are also open to visiting operators.

Using Aluminum Foil as a Modeling Medium

By Georgia W. Dahlberg, P.E.

In 2009, I was privileged to attend a Pacific Southwest Regional clinic put on by Bob Mitchell in Las Vegas. Although the clinic was about the use of mirrors on the model railroad, some of the clinic centered around using aluminum foil in various aspects. Bob showed how he made tunnel liners out of crumpled aluminum foil formed over a foam mold in the shape of the inside of a tunnel. The outside of the aluminum is then covered with a thin layer of resin for stiffness. I use Alumilite super plastic resin mix spread thinly on the outside of mine. The inside is sprayed with primer and a bit of black to represent smoke on the roof of the tunnel. The nice thing on this method is that the liner is light enough to be easily removed for track maintenance and can be anchored down simply with duct or masking tape. It looks as good as plaster tunnel inserts but is quickly made and can be modified to be used in circular tunnel trackage. It can be cut in half lengthwise and one half permanently anchored and the removable side attached by tape along the top and the bottom edge.

A trick I use to keep things clean on my layout involves aluminum foil also. I had made a mountain shape by tying lath pieces together at the top of my helix to form an umbrella shape for my mountaintop. I applied cardboard strips over the lath and used sheets of cheap light aluminum foil on top of that to protect the rug on my layout floor from drips when applying Woodland Scenics Plaster cloth as the mountain surface. This also helps spread what light there is inside the helix mountain. The foil can also be used as a cheap masking barrier when painting the backdrop or plastering the scenery right near your backdrop.

I did have a disagreement with Bob on the use of crumpled aluminum foil as a mold for rock castings. I think I have used the method successfully. I do mix in plaster rock castings for interest. I have also used this method to reinforce foam profile boards around the edge of my layout. The key ingredient is the type of plaster. I found you can buy Hydrocal and Hydrostone at Star Building Materials on Symmes road just off Route 4 north of Jungle Jims. The price is about the same.... \$16 for 50 lb of Hydrocal and \$32 for 100 lb of Hydrostone. The difference is in the strength. Hydrocal crushes at 5000 psi where Hydrostone crushes at 10,000 psi. That's about 1/3 the strength of low-grade structural steel! I'm on my second bag of Hydrostone. Mix the plaster in small batches and use a relatively stiff mix. Plop into a crumpled piece of foil and press on several layers of previously set up and dried plaster cloth. Apply in separate areas and eventually apply between the stripped plaster castings. Always wait 10 minutes and until you can feel the heat of hydration before stripping off the foil. Sometimes the foil will peel off with ease but it depends on how acutely you crumpled the foil. I tend to crumple the foil in a semi parallel manner. Foil that doesn't tear off can be quickly removed with a steel brush. Sets of 3 large and 3 small steel, brass and bristle brushes can be had at Harbor Freight for several dollars. If you get to the casting before it really sets hard, you can carve parallel lines using the large steel or brass bristle brush.

Another foil use I found was in making trees. Although this is mostly for larger scales, I have a few gigantic 6-foot diameter Sequoia tree stumps on my HO layout. I discovered this method by managing to kill a potted Rubber tree plant with too much care. After pulling the stems out to clear the pot for a cactus garden, I noticed the fine bark patterns on the dead stems when poised over the wastebasket. I, of course, put them away for later use. I later wrapped a base of the stem with thin foil and rubbed it with my thumb to get the pattern into the foil. After some experimentation, I found using 2" squares of foil worked well for stump forms. I wrap the foil around the stem and when the pattern is formed, gently unwrap and set the foil aside. When you have a dozen or so, mix a small batch of Hydrostone. Fill the wrap with plaster, roll it closed and plant root side down on the workbench to dry. The foil can be glued at the edges and spray with primer and brown paint. Thin tree pieces with no natural root structure can be inserted in a hole made in your scenery and a small puddle of plaster used to make the roots. I've also used Woodland Scenics tree armatures to make a root system spreading thru the plaster base out from the stump. A bit of excess foil at the broken end of the stump also makes a good representation of bark left over from a rotted fallen tree.

Beech Grove Express
May 14th, 2011



The Beech Grove Group



The very latest in paper towel dispensers

Photo by Burton Meyer

Beech Grove Express

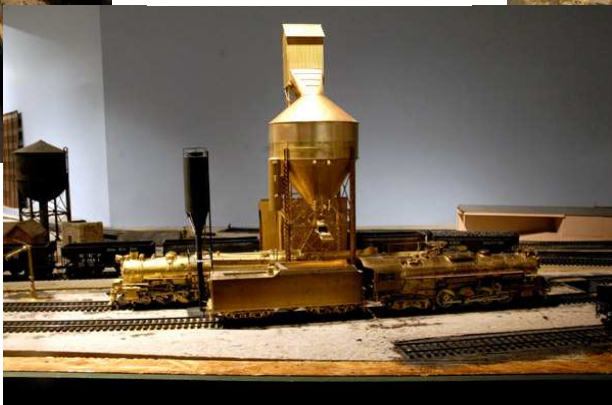
BEECH GROVE SHOPS
AMTRAK
SERVING AMERICA
FOR OVER 100
YEARS



**Amtrak
Beech
Grove
Maint.
Facility**



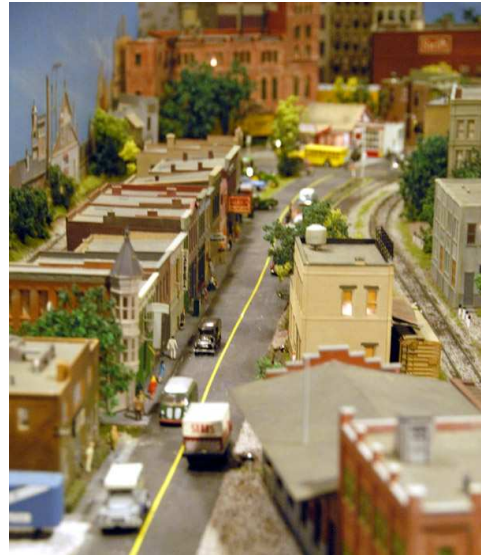
**Jim Canter's
Proto-48 O Layout**



Beech Grove Express



Jack Simpson's
HO
Layout

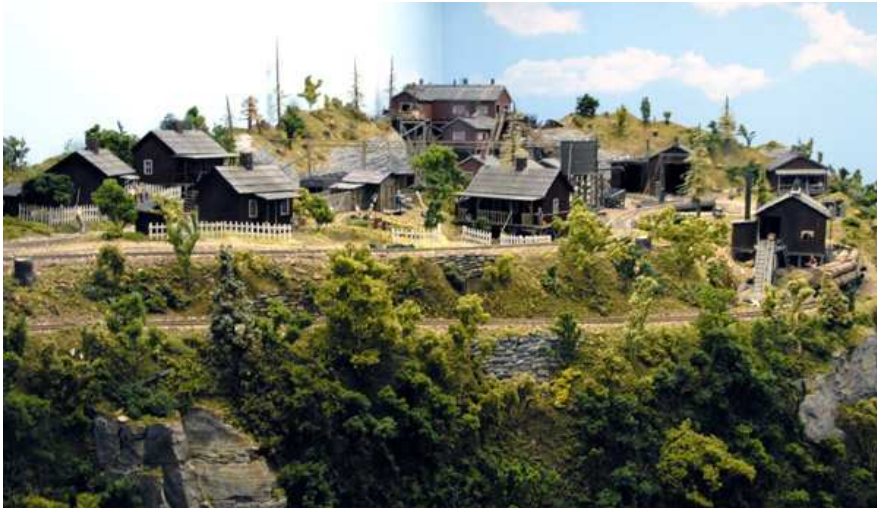


IRWIN
INN



Beech Grove Express

Ron Lane's Mann's Creek Railway



Warther Museum

Many of you are familiar with the Warther Museum in Dover, Ohio which features hand carved trains made in ivory and ebony. Each year the Museum's Travel Club features a "Signature Tour". This year the tour consists of two separate nine-day sections and features the **Trains of Colorado**. Each fully escorted tour features trains such as the **Durango Silverton** and the **Cumbres Toltec** among others. The tour also features quality places to stay such as the "Cliff House" at Pikes Peak and the "Wine Country Inn" at Grand Junction. Each tour sells for \$1995 per person double plus airfare. This year's dates are August 6th through the 14th for tour one and August 20th through the 28th for tour two. Mark Warther, President of the Museum, advises that the museum will pay Division 7 **\$100.00 commission** for each member that travels with them. If you would like more information about the tours go to www.warthertravel.com

If you do go on the tour, when you make your reservations, be sure to let them know you're from Division 7, MCR, NMRA.

May 2011 Car Project Report

Jim MacKnight

The final 39 Virginian & Ohio 70-ton hoppers were sold during April and the first week of May, bringing the total sold to 307 kits. Sales totaled \$5,212, with a net income of \$2,028. The return on investment was 75% for this relatively small car project. Our inventory turn over was just under 7 months.

Thirty-one Allegheny Midland hoppers were sold during April and the first week of May, bringing the total sold to 497, with sales of \$8,217 and generating a net income of \$2,427. We have 10 AM kits remaining in inventory plus 90 AM car bodies (kits were converted to V&O kits and sold). We can continue to sell AM kits to customers who buy our other kits, as most AM hopper kits sold since October were to customers who had also purchased V&O hopper kits.

The Board of Directors is expected to select a new car project for 2011 during the June meeting.

Clinics at Tim's Trains

Tim Cook advises that the clinics at Tim's Trains and Hobbies that were cancelled because of the railroad construction in the area will be starting up again now that the construction is winding up. The clinics will start in mid to late June. The topics will include DCC, decoder installation, kit bashing and weathering. For dates and times, go to www.timstrainsandhobbies@fuse.net or call the store.

KNAPP'S NOTES

Bruce Knapp

What Write About?

I am faced with a major case of writer's block; my muse hasn't sent any of its usual "celestial inspirations. I could do a humorous article poking fun at some of my associates; problem is; they tend to poke back. In fact, Pat Homan sounds a little like the Godfather. I could do another trip down memory lane, but my memory isn't quite what it used to be. I could report on the progress of my Raton Pass layout, if there was any. So here I sit with a blank screen on my computer.

New Products

I see that Walther's latest passenger train offering will be the Santa Fe, double-deck El Capitan. Like all Walther's latest passenger trains, the cars look great and have exceptional detail, Mike has offered to start reserving the cars as they are issued; the temptation is almost too much to pass up. The main problem for me is that this train wasn't introduced until the mid 1950's, so is too contemporary for my 1951 era Raton Pass layout. I may still order the set and put them on display. According to the model railroad press, Atlas, Kato, and Bachmann are issuing some really nice items in N scale. N scale has blossomed since the early Rapido sets of the 1960's. The detail and operational capabilities of the latest products are equal in every way to the larger scales. N scale certainly has a lot to offer the modeler of the current railroad scene. Now you ask, "Why don't you switch"? I have a 50+ year collection of Santa Fe HO, but I can still enjoy looking.

Our Beechgrove Express

A tip of the hat to John Burchnall and Merlyn Jarman for another wonderful trip. Our visit to Amtrak's Beechgrove Shops was one of my most memorable prototype experiences. Our guides were outstanding and we got an in-depth look at Amtrak's maintenance operations. I walked away with a new appreciation of Amtrak. I also had my appreciation for my colleagues in Division 7 reinforced. I was proud to be a part of ours, as the participants were an outstanding representation of NMRA and Cincinnati Division 7. John Burchnall and I went on some tours at Anaheim where the participants were an embarrassment. You all were fantastic! Thanks John and Merlyn for another outstanding tour; I can't wait to see how you will top this year.

Keep 'em rolling!

Bruce A. Knapp

Lebanon Subdivision Report

Bob Chapman

The May Lebanon Subdivision meeting was attended by 10 model rails. Four current and finished modeling efforts were presented from layout progress on a new On30 pike to a series of kitbashed passenger cars. Rev Doug Campbell, interim Pastor of the church, presented a mini-clinic on scratch building using card stock and common household items. The common comment heard from the group was, "I could do that!" The normal cookies, coffee, and fruit punch was supplemented with fine lasagna, which was a hit with those who hadn't had a chance to eat dinner before the meeting.

The June meeting will be held on the third Thursday of the month at Resurrection Lutheran Church on North Broadway, starting at 7:30 pm. All are encouraged to bring a modeling project in work or finished to share with the group. Plans will also be presented for the Gorre & Daphetid layout tribute to be built over the summer and early fall, to debut at the Cincinnati Model RR Show in October. Come join the group for a good time. Who knows...someone just may present the solution to a modeling problem that has been slowing down your efforts.

Next Regular Meeting

2 PM Sunday June 5

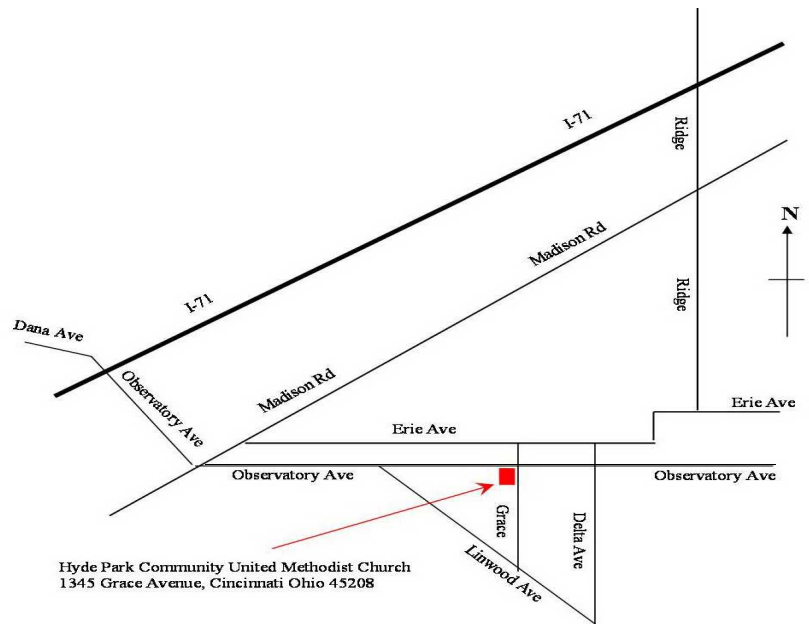
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**Hyde Park Community
United Methodist Church
1345 Grace Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45208**

Directions

From I-71 South take Ridge Rd. south to Erie Ave. Turn right and go west to Grace Ave. Turn left and go south to 1345 on your right.

From I-71 North take Observatory Ave. east to Grace Ave. Turn right and go south to 1345 on your right/



Coming Down the Line

Cincinnati Division 7, MCR, NMRA 2011 Schedule

NOTE: ALL REGULAR MEETINGS START AT 2 PM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Program/Speaker</u>	<u>Layout Visit</u>	<u>Contest Topic</u>
June 5	Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church	Bob Bartizek "Designing interesting Layout Operations"	Pat Homan Sam Swanson	<u>Models:</u> On-line Dioramas <u>Photos:</u> Rolling Stock w/Graffiti
June 16	Resurrection Church Lebanon, OH	Div. 7 Sub Meeting	None	Show & Tell
July 3	Sacramento, CA	Extra 2011 West NMRA National Convention	Convention Layouts	Convention Competition
July 17	Cincinnati Union Terminal	"History of Tower A" CRRC	TBD	<u>Models:</u> Flat Cars or Gons. <u>Photos:</u> Servicing Facilities

Around the Region

6/18	Bradford Train Show	Bradford, OH
6/25-26	Railfest	Dayton, OH
8/13	Summerfest CUT	Cincinnati, OH
9/18	All Trains Flea Mrkt.	Greenville, OH
10/02	Model RR Show & Swap	Troy, OH
11/5-6	Dayton Train Show	Dayton, OH
11/13	Train & Toy Show	Dalton, OH

National

6/21-25	National Garden RR Conv.	Overland Park, KS
6/22-24	National N Gauge Conv.	Hershey, PA
7/3-9	National NMRA Conv.	Sacramento, CA
7/3-9	National S Gauge Conv.	Sacramento, CA
9/7-10	National Narrow Gauge	Hickory, NC
9/21-24	National O Scale Conv.	Indianapolis, IN

Modeling Problems ? Member Aid Committee

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Bruce Knapp (513) 941-2713

Div. 7 Hot Line (513) 662-RAIL

Div. 7 Web Site www.cincy-div7.org

MCR Web Site www.midcentral-region-nmra.org