

The CRM&HA Newsletter

March/April 2003

Dennis Moriarty/Editor

Volume 12 Number 1

Meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the 1st Thursday of the month at the Central SC Library

Editorial

By Dennis Moriarty

The 2003 train show is past history. It was a success and many thanks to all those who helped with the show. The Club's newest interest and the first "T-Trak" layout was assembled at the show. See the information about T-Trak in the newsletter so that you can join in the fun. The modules are so small that anyone can assemble one on their kitchen table.

This is the last newsletter being sent out per the 2002 mailing list. Please be sure your dues are in ASAP so that your address will be on the new 2003 mailing list. The list of 2003 members who have paid their dues so far appears at the end of the newsletter.

Please support the newsletter by submitting articles, news and or information. If you don't wish to write please give me a phone call. E-Mail, copy on disk and written contributions are most appreciated. My address is Dennis Moriarty, 519 Beacon Shores Drive, Seneca, SC 29672. Phone 864-888-2332. E-Mail MQK @ carol.net.

If you received a snail mail issue of the newsletter and have an E-Mail address, please send your E-Mail address to me.

Thank you! Bob Folsom, Don Rumer, Rodney Cowen, Michael Childress and Rob Seel for your newsletter contributions this month.

And thank you to Richard Nichols for printing and mailing out the snail mail newsletters.

CEO's Corner PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Bob Folsom (also HO Division Super)

I am responsible for delaying publication of the newsletter in order to report on the Annual Train Show. It is only Sunday, but the show seems like a long time ago already. I tend to think about it in the same way I always did when I was involved in music performances. There was a lot of preparation that went into it (just like sports, except that you weren't worried about "winning"). As I reflect today, my first thought is that it was a great performance. It was great because of you, the club members, rising to the occasion. As the CEO, the buck stops here; and the only glitch I have any regrets about is when I ran the truck aground trying to get into the Armory! What is even better is that you the members waited patiently to get the truck extricated and then still set up the HO layout in record time.

All across the board, every aspect of the show was handled in a professional manner - arranging for the site and tables, contacting the dealers and organizing their locations at the show, putting out publicity, making and installing directional signs, manning the show entrance, operating the HO layout, conceiving of the T-Track layout and actually completing it right before the very eyes of the public, and manning the Company Store, cleaning up after the show, and helping to deliver the HO layout to Rail 'N' Spike. I feel honored to have been a part of this endeavor.

I should also mention that this is not the first time I have seen exemplary cooperation from a military unit. The National Guard went beyond the call of duty in making their facility available to us in the present world situation, and especially with regards to helping us get our truck unstuck. I want to

comment that the South Carolina State Guard acts similarly, which is even more commendable since they are all volunteers and do not get paid.

As far as "winning" goes, we were definitely winners once again. Our "score" may not have been as much as other times (we will have a report at our next meeting), but the outcome was very much worth the effort that went into it.

The programs that have been presented at our club meetings continue to be exciting. Again, thanks to you, the membership, for sharing your interests with us. One advantage we could have if we had our own meeting place would be that we wouldn't have the time constraint that we currently have. I don't think that we can shorten the business meeting - what we discuss is important. If any of our presenters gets cut too short, please arrange to have an encore at another meeting!

We have several potential home layouts to visit. I will make the commitment in this article to provide transportation to some who might not want to drive themselves to some distant site in an evening. Having said that, I recommend that we set up some field trips to see layouts or other interesting things.

To conclude the CEO report, I want to express one more time my gratitude to all of you for making our yearly big event a success, and to Michael Lutman, the new owner of Rail 'N' Spike for agreeing to host the HO layout. Michael also indicated that he would be glad to let us hold a meeting there if we needed to.

I will be meeting with some people in Central in the near future who are very interested in our club, and bringing back the Central Railroad Festival. As we have discussed at meetings, we have an opportunity to do a hands-on project of building a display layout for the Central Museum. The theme will probably be the town of Central as it looked forty years ago or earlier. This might be done in the T-Track format. All of this makes me look forward to being a part of the future of CRM&HA.

HO DIVISION REPORT

By Bob Folsom

The HO layout went into storage last year and was subjected to temperatures that ranged from over 100 degrees to below freezing! Other than a few wires that came loose, it went together in record time and operated well. Again, let me thank all those who participated in setting it up, running it, and helping to move it to its new location.

I was proud of the layout. Not having seen it for three-fourths of a year, I think I had a more fresh perspective of it. I am usually a person who is not satisfied no matter what, but I felt impressed by this layout. One really good test of it was when Rob Seel ran his PRR Bowser (Penn Line) T-1

4-4-4 flawlessly on it. I also ran a long wheel base steam loco on the inside track without any problems. I was amused when I saw a boy (age 7 or younger) squinting at one corner of the layout to see a train coming around the curve. He was certainly having a remarkable experience train-watching. We were a little short of operating personnel this year due to various circumstances, but I want to emphasize that switching activities in the coal yard or marshaling yard definitely peaks the interest of viewers. It is awesome to them that those tracks are not just there for show, trains can actually operate on them. I also think that it is impressive when trains operate at scale speeds, especially very slowly.

The big news of course is that the layout is now at Rail 'N' Spike. The transition of the business from one owner to the next was not simple, and at one point, the sale of the display layouts was imperative. That created the opportunity for the club layout to be set up in a great environment, and again I want to thank Michael Lutman for providing us this opportunity. I promised Michael that we would help him move shelving if necessary to make space available for the layout. I will be contacting club members in the near future to help in that capacity and to set up the layout.

I would say that the opportunity to hold work sessions on Saturdays is a distinct possibility. There are some really neat things we can do. One is to add walk-around control capability. In fact, the club already voted approval to spend money for that purpose. We should also address the problem of some loose connections, work on the backdrop by the yard, add to club rolling stock, and my personal pet project would be to install signals.

It has been a pleasure to make this report after months of "no report!" Incidentally, the HO layout is made up of fairly large modules which at this point will need to be worked on at the hobby shop. If any of you HO gaugers want to do something different at home, you might consider doing a T-Track N scale module just for fun. Of course everything we do at CRM&HA is just for fun!

Feb Treasurer's report

Beginning balance	1/1/03	10,015.50
Out lays	Storage space rent Jan/Feb	100.00
	Show Flyers	12.86
Income	2003 Dues	200.00
	Show Table Rent	195.00
	N-Scale Layout	250.00
Balance on hand	2/6/03	10,547.64

Submitted 02/12/03 By Howard Garner

**CRM&HA Minutes
January 2, 2003**

This meeting was called to order by CEO Bob Folsom at 7:30 PM. Fourteen members were in attendance.

Minutes - December minutes were read and approved.

Treasurers Report - Balance in account including recent transactions is \$10015.50

Newsletter deadline - February 12

NOTE: Dues are due now.

Business in Progress

1. Upcoming programs: February - Rob Seel; March - Dennis Moriarty; April - Pete DeLorme; May - Don Rumer

2. February 15 train show - Six vendors have signed up so far; show is still scheduled at Seneca armory; Bob Hanson will look into possible alternate sights just in case National Guard is activated.

3. Club Headquarters - The old school house, originally considered, would not have sufficient room for the club's needs. The Club will consider a potential site on the East side of Seneca off of route 130. We need approximately 7000 square feet of space.

4. Steve's open house is scheduled for February 16.

5. The Club's N gauge layout was sold for \$250.

New Business

Bob Hanson and Don Rumer have volunteered to be on an Audit Committee to review the Club's financial report.

Division Reports

HO Division - The next SER - NMRA conference will be in Chattanooga, TN from May 16 through May 18. The Club will need volunteers to setup and operate our HO layout. Contact Bob Folsom if you are interested.

N Division - Rob Seel, Bob Presley, Pete DeLorme, Michael Childress and Don Rumer have expressed an interest in the Central Museum model railroad project.

Railfan reports

Bob Folsom reminded members about the Fair of the Iron Horse coming up this summer in Baltimore. Mac McMillin mention about work going on with the Duke Power spur. He also mentioned that West Union is competing with a town in Iowa for the Johnson Controls Battery plant expansion. The deciding factor may be the availability of a railroad siding which West Union already has. Also, several members have seen ballast trains with other than NS markings on NS tracks.

Don Rumer mentioned that China is now operating the first maglev train in the world. The train, built by Germans, travels the 19 miles between downtown Shanghai and its airport in 14 minutes.

Dennis received the Microsoft Train Simulator and Bob Preston received a Lionel based simulator package for Christmas. Both are learning how difficult it is to keep a train running safely!

The Club will review possibly providing financial assistance to the SC Railroad Museum. Their insurance costs have risen significantly.

Mac McMillin mentioned that the NARCOA (rail car operators association) has been hit hard by increased insurance costs due to vehicular accidents. Automobile drivers continue to ignore flag warnings.

A 5 minute video showing the manufacture of new Lionel model railroad equipment was presented.

The business part of the meeting ended at approximately 8:20 PM. After a short break, Richard Nichols presented a video on the Pikes Peak cog wheel train.

Next Meeting - February 6 at Central Library

Respectfully, Don Rumer Stationmaster

CRM&HA Minutes

February 6, 2003

This meeting was called to order by CEO Bob Folsom at 7:32 PM. Eleven members were in attendance.

Minutes - January minutes were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report - No report. However, storage rent space has been paid for month.

Newsletter deadline - February 12.

NOTE: Dues are due now.

Business in Progress

1. Upcoming programs: March - Dennis Moriarty; April - Pete Delorme; May - Don Rumer; June - Michael Childress

2. February 15 train show - Some modules for the T-Trak display planned for the show were set up at the meeting for display and interconnection; eighteen tables have been reserved; we are hurting for dealers as many have other commitments; the truck is reserved from Freedom GMC; flyers have been distributed; past members have been contacted about show by CEO; Richard will make signage for event; Bob Folsom distributed sign-up sheet.

3. Club Headquarters - Nothing new

4. Layout Visits - Steve's open house has been canceled for the time being; Chuck indicated that he would be willing to open his layout for display.

5. Audit Committee Report- No report; committee has not yet met.

New Business

CEO Bob Folsom sees a need for forms to document merchandise placed on consignment for sale at train shows. Pete will work on updating membership application form. Bob Presley mentioned that the Keowee Key community has a local TV channel for local event notification. The Club might be able to place announcements on this channel.

Division Reports

HO Division - Bob has decided that the Club will not take our HO layout to Chattanooga for the SER-NMRA meeting in May. Bob stated that we need to consider what to do with layout as its storage is a significant financial drain. Chuck will discuss with new owner of Rail & Spike the display of layout in store.

N Division - The Club is considering building a layout for the Central Museum utilizing T-Trak type modules.

Railfan reports

Bob Folsom reminded members about the Fair of the Iron Horse coming up this summer in Baltimore. Amtrak fares between Clemson and Baltimore are around \$195. To commemorate this event, a special steam train will run from Milwaukee to Baltimore. Rob Seel saw the circus train in town. Pulled by 3 NS diesels, it consisted of 33 passenger cars and 20 85' flat cars. Rob also mentioned that he saw an NS GP-38-2 that had the new NS logo. Several members have seen BNSF and UP locomotives pulling trains on NS tracks. Mac McMillin will be running his motorcar down in Georgia.

Adjournment - Business part of meeting ended at 8:37 PM. Bob Seel then showed a video on steam operation by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Next Meeting - March 6 at Central Library

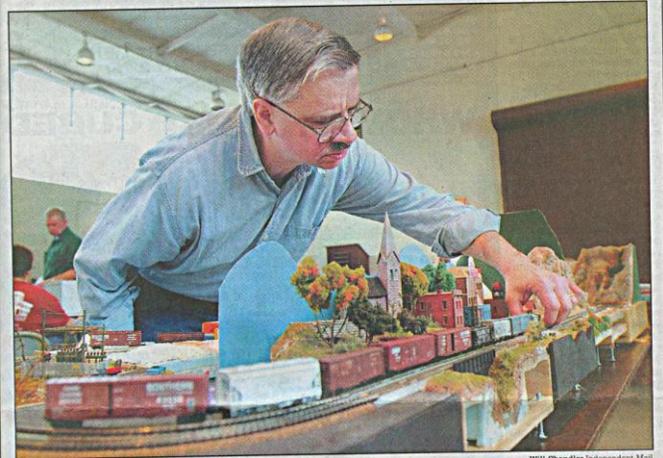
Respectfully, Don Rumer Stationmaster

CMR&HA New Interest T-Trak

By Dennis Moriarty

Don Rumer's picture appeared on the first page of section B (Local) in Sunday's (2-16-03) Anderson Independent Mall Newspaper. This was good publicity for the club. Shown in the picture is the club's new T-Trak layout made up of small N gauge modules each about the size of a piece of notebook paper. Pete Delorme started the club's interest in T-Trak during his meeting program a few month's ago. Now that most of us has seen T-Trak in action and working for the first time as a unit at the show, I asked Don to send me some information on the T-Trak system for this newsletter. It is hoped that it will stir interest in T-Trak by CMR&HA members and that more people will make a T-Trak square. They are so small that they can be brought to the monthly meetings and set up on the front table. It is interesting to see how each person models his square. Below is the newspaper article and more information about T-Trak from Don.

Model train show



Will Chandler/Independent Mall
Don Rumer of Walhalla adjusts the engine of a N scale model train during the Central Railway Model and Historical Association's seventh annual train show at the National Guard Armory in Seneca on Saturday. Organizers said hundreds of people attended the show which featured model train dealers from both Carolinas and Georgia and a "super sized" HO model railway.

T-Trak

By Don Rumer

The whole T-Trak thing began in Japan. It was initially for modeling tram and trolley lines, I think, but modified using larger radius track for railroad freight trains. The radius is still tight (8 1/2") so long locomotives and most passenger cars won't make it. Standard specifications are:

Regular straight module: 8 1/4" x 12 1/8"

Regular corner module: 12 1/4" square

Height adjustable from 3 3/4" to 4 1/4"

Kato Unitrack is typically used because it easily snaps together. Flextrack can be used with Kato Unitrack adapters at the ends. Rob used Flextrack with adapters. I used all Unitrack. Pete did a combination.

The critical thing is really the spacing between the two tracks. With Unitrack you just butt the ballast together. Rob used one large oversize full corner module to model a canyon and river. Pete used four regular straight modules to model the various scenes. I modeled the substation and tower on a standard corner module. The other straight modules Pete is working on are, I think, somewhat oversized to accommodate the bend in the track. The other corner module was put together at the last minute.

I think I'm giving you accurate information but maybe not. You can also get info on T-Trak, according to Pete, on www.ttrak.org. They have a brief history of the idea and also have suggestions for using larger modules if someone wants to use 11" track. This will allow a greater variety of locos and rolling stock to be run.

Web Site www.ttrak.org

By Dennis Moriarty

After reading Don's article I went to the web site and as he stated all the information is there. I have included text and some drawings from the web site here for those of you without computers to help you understand what Don explained about the modules.

T-TRAK Construction

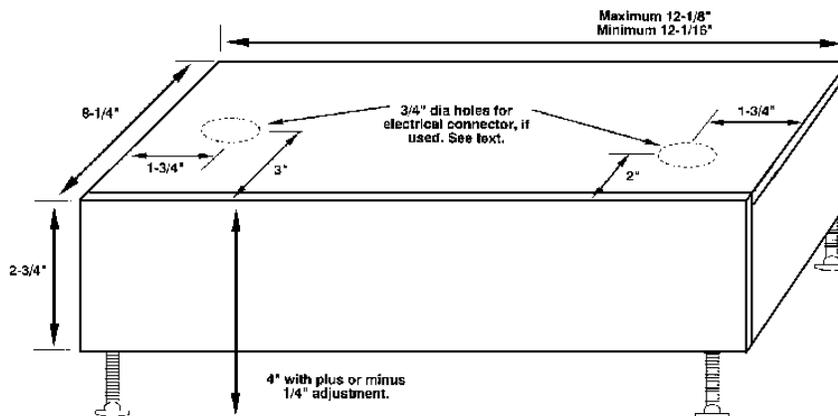
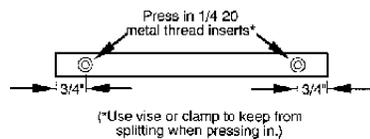
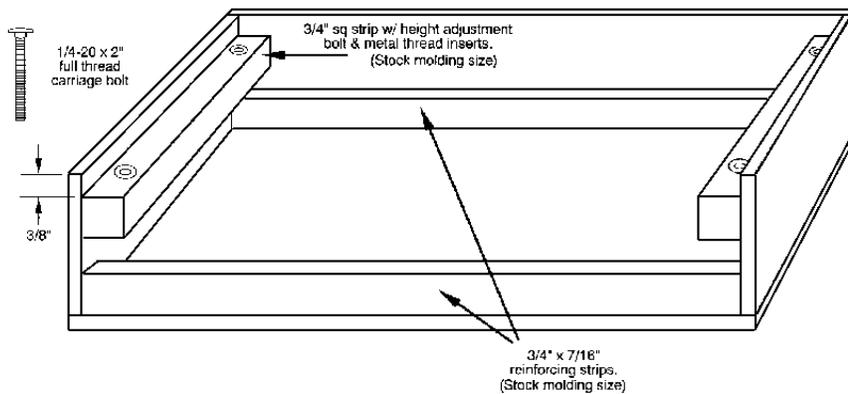
The T-TRAK bases are a simple construction project, since they are only 8-1/4" x 12-1/8" in size. Some 1/4" plywood and some 3/4" thick boards, or molding available at home centers, takes care of the wood parts. The overall height is 4" with a plus or minus 1/4" adjustment. The bases are glued together and held with small nails while the glue sets up.

Kato Unitrack® is used for the two mainlines.

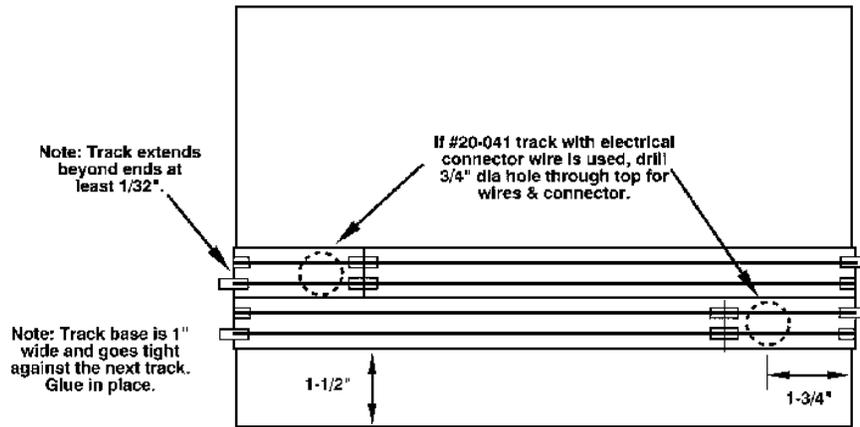
The locking rail joiners hold the modules together on a table top. No clamps are needed and the track power is furnished through track sections with a feeder wire. At least one of your modules should have track power feeders. The track sections with out the feeder wires are less expensive.

The combination of a 9-3/4" long straight (20-000) and a 2-7/16" (20-040 or 041) straight is used for each of the two main tracks. These will hang over about 1/32" at each end. This allows the joiners to fully engage. If the base is too long or the ends not square, there could be trouble keeping the modules together.

Bottom view, T-TRAK base box.

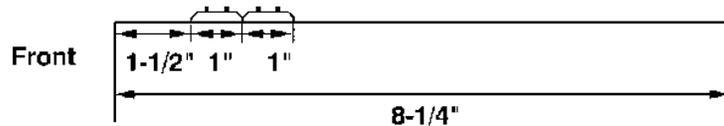


T-TRAK Unitrack locations.
 2 each #20-000 9-3/4" straight
 2 each #20-041 feeder track
 or, #20-040 straight 2-7/16"



Note: If flextrack is used, use 1" track centers and the front track centered 2" from front.

T-TRAK Drawing #3



T-TRAK layout on a 30" x 6" table.



T-TRAK layout on a 30" x 8" table.

Straight Module
 6-1/4" x 12-1/8"
 Corner Module
 12-1/4" square

Lesson No. 47?

By Rodney Cowen

I am calling it lesson No 47, although it was probably nearer lesson No 147 as it was four years after I learned my first RR Lesson at Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts back in 1939. It was now 1943 and I was a yard foreman with the 730th R.O.B. in Tehran, Iran.

After I had switched out and reset the oil plant, my next move was to place a car on the Small Goods Track and then return to the crossovers there by the oil plant. The Small Goods Track was some distance away and it was slightly down grade to the switch, then up a sharp incline into the track. To save time, I decided to kick the car down there. I had sent a man down to line the switch and protect the move while we spotted the tank cars for unloading. We kicked the car and I rode it. Everything went according to plan.

The car rolled down and coasted safely up the incline into the Small Goods Track. But that isn't the end of the story. When I dropped off to set the hand brake, I found that I didn't have any. Those GI boxcar brake staffs ran horizontally across the end sill with a brake wheel on each end and could only be set by a man standing or running along side of the car. I dropped off and started to wind and wound and wound. Then it dawned on me, that brake chain wasn't connected to anything. Just then my car gently touched another car standing on the track and started to roll the other way. I glanced up and to my horror I saw a double-headed freight just starting to pull out of the depot. I thought my car was going to hit that train right smack in its middle. So I tried to derail the car. Fortunately for me, the freight had hold off only seven cars as they were throwing out a cripple. When the engineers saw my predicament, they both latched out their throttles and cleared the switch. The car rolled down the incline and was safely caught by the road crew who then shoved it along with their cripple, back into the track where it belonged. That's how I learned another lesson. That is, to never depend on a hand brake to stop or hold a car until you have first tested the brake.

The Great Train Story
Museum of Science and Industry,
Chicago

Presented by Dennis Moriarty

When I was a boy in early elementary school I was living near Chicago. Our school would have class

trips to the Museum of Science and Industry and I marveled at the O gauge layout that took up most of the lobby. I think that is one of the reasons I am interested in model trains it this late age. The O gauge layout was new then but like me it hasn't been able to age well. I can't be replaced but the old layout has been. The following is from the Museum of Science and Industry newsletter and website. **The Great Train Story** replaces the Museum's 60-year-old model railroad exhibit and boasts a 3,500 square foot layout, which depicts the railroad's winding journey between Chicago and Seattle, passing through the Midwest, the Plains States, the Rockies, the Cascades, and into the Pacific Northwest. Along the way, trains are involved in industries as diverse as grain commodities, raw materials for manufacturing, consumer goods for import and export, lumber, apples, and tourism.

What our customers say about The Great Train Story...

"A really cool train layout"

"It is awesome!"

"You've got to see this"

Museum guests are marveling at our newest permanent exhibit—**The Great Train Story**. Mark your calendar for a visit to this popular exhibit that illustrates modern railroad operation. The display features 34 trains racing along 1,400 feet of track on a cross-country trip between Chicago and Seattle. Not your average train set, The Great Train Story boasts realistic terrain and 500 scale structures, including a replica of the Sears Tower that rises nearly 14 feet! Visitors can harvest timber in the Cascade Range and participate in other hands-on activities that illustrate how trains impact travel and industry.

NJ rail trip Part II

By Rob Seel

10:20 PM, Sunday, March 17, 2002

Here comes the train – right on time, more or less. Many times, I've stood outside in the dark at the Clemson station just to see a passenger train on a "nuthin' but business" freight railroad. Train headlights never seem so bright as they are unless you stand track side after dark; all anyone can perceive is a loud, rumbling monster hiding behind a blinding light with steel flanges squealing on the rails. The appearance of the locomotives is the first clue as to how Amtrak has been cutting back on expenses: they look like they had not been cleaned since before last September. The extra-fare Viewliner sleepers breezed past (no one in Clemson on an expense account tonight!), and the train stopped with an open door to coach car 25071. My "stationmaster" friend Jack Olker requested the trainman show me to a window seat, but I had no trouble finding one on my own. So, with my window seat against the side of the car, my personal travel pillow, and a government-

issue Amtrak "pillow," I was all set for another cozy, common-class slumber. The seat was just as comfortable as it was on my last trip, so I was again very thankful for the back-to-back spacing of the seats. At least you could really put your feet up. I pulled out the latest issue of "Model Railroader" magazine, lifted the footrest, and twisted open the 12oz water bottle I'd brought along with me. What was IN the water bottle, though, was actually two glasses of chardonnay that I'd poured at home. Who says one can't have a touch of First Class for standard coach fare?

No sooner had I gotten settled than a man in his middle 40s sat down next to me. He said nothing at all, but immediately dialed his cell phone as we pulled out of Clemson, gathering speed toward Central. I'll call him Jack. We never did share names, and I think that may have been a bit too personal for him. "Jack" wore a Baltimore Orioles ball cap, a crumpled jacket, a three-day beard, and his cell phone. (In my humble, unsolicited opinion, lack of cell phone etiquette is our new Public Nuisance #1, replacing that annoying person's wrist watch beeper that goes off at 12:00 to tell the preacher that his time is up.) From the time we left Clemson until we got to Greenville, "Jack" was on the phone with who, I guess, was his wife. He lost his call and redialed her three or four times because cell towers are built along highways, not railroad tracks. Meanwhile, I sat there next to him, shoulder to shoulder, wondering if I should pretend not to listen or to simply turn toward him in my seat and share openly in his conversation. Jack eventually ended his phone call, making sure she would be there to meet him in Alexandria. Nice guy – he didn't even say "I love you." He slid his phone into its holster, pulled his headphones over his ears, and opened his McPaper (USA Today). Fortunately, I had the latest issues of "World" and "Model Railroader" magazines to read until I cashed-in my chips on the other side of Spartanburg.

Monday, March 18, 2002

We were rolling through Virginia somewhere south of Charlottesville when I woke up to the sound of rain and thunder. Or was it the generic rumble of welded rail? It was till too dark outside to determine which it was. But as the sunrise grew, I could see signs of winter hanging on in central Virginia. The trees were still brown and bare, the kudzu had not leafed-out yet, and the fields were barren and gray. Among all of this bleak, yet somehow still lush landscape were scattered various, ramshackle houses of weathered wood and rusting, corrugated metal – all of it very wet. I turned toward "Jack," caught his eye, and gave him a smile. "Good morning!"
"It's morning, all right." His droll answer told me that this guy could probably benefit from a cup of coffee and a swift kick in the butt. Gee, whiz!

By 7:30 I could anticipate no longer and made bold strides (you can't walk through a moving train any other way) toward the dining car and breakfast. Along the way, though, it struck me how technology has enabled us toward loneliness. Not only did Jack withdraw into his headphones, but so many other folks on the train did the same also. I passed by people alone in a crowd of headphones and laptop/notebook computers – Nobody speaking to anyone, except of course on cell phones.

I made my way through three coaches and the same seedy, plastic-coated café car from my last trip. I passed the kitchen and turned the corner only to see an empty dining car. Actually, there were four older ladies laughing together at one table, and two other ladies at another table. No train staff in sight. I stood around trying to make myself conspicuous to anyone on the staff who might accidentally notice me standing there. After a few minutes, I waved-down the dining car crew chief who, in a “matter-of-fact-so-just-deal-with-it” greeting told me that there would be “No breakfast. Mechanical problems.” It was then apparent to me that the smell coming from the kitchen was not burnt pancakes. I was going to have to support the café car if I was to have “breakfast.”

If one could consider the décor of the café car to be appealing, one would think even less so of the “menu.” Everything costs at least \$3, unless it's coffee, which is \$1.50 in a 12oz. paper cup with a lid. But, hey, this is still America – the sugar and creamers are free with the coffee. I really did not feel like having a hermetically-sealed bagel or a handful of corn flakes, or a microwaved egg and cheese on a roll. I just bought my coffee and gave a cheery thank you to the clerk, a middle-aged woman who also seemed to have a “problem” with the sun coming up. (I got the impression that enduring Hell must be better than working for Amtrak.)

When I got back to my seat, Jack was still working on getting his second eye opened to the morning. I was getting restless being the only person who seemed to be enjoying this mode of transportation, so I decided to annoy Jack by asking him about his occupation. He told me that he lives in Maryland and is a civil engineer. Now as an architect, I need to know a little bit about a lot of things, which helps me to understand the occupations of different people and challenges they work through. Jack's specialty is refurbishing underground sanitary sewer pipe. Ah! I see the personality goes along with the job description! Still, as an architect who sometimes works with old buildings and infrastructure, I found the matter interesting. He described a process of installing new linings inside of existing pipes that are leaking as well as the testing procedures they use to inspect finished work that is virtually inaccessible. I told him of the methods with which I was familiar, and he seemed rather amused by the “primitive ways” of

the south. Sheesh! Northern snob. I did not remind him that the reason for his being in Clempkins, South Cack-o-lackee was to attend a continuing education seminar! Jack got off the train in Alexandria. We then proceeded past the Society of Old Crows building to the right and on into DC's Union Station. We sat there, still, in the rain for thirty minutes with the power off. The train attendant told us that we could step out onto the platform to smoke, but strictly warned us NOT to go up into the building unless we wanted to be left behind. Even so, I still don't know why it takes that long a time to NOT change the locomotives. Washington is the southern end of the Pennsylvania Railroad's electrification, and it used to be where the Crescent swapped its F40PH diesels for GG-1 or E60 electrics for the haul to New York City. But, this is 2002, and we stayed coupled to our pair of AMD 103 P40 diesels. Suddenly, after a half hour and without warning, we were rolling again. I went upstream for a second cup of coffee.

As I made my way back up to the café car, I noticed that the train was practically empty. After the stop in DC, Amtrak could easily move everyone into one car, but we still had the whole train with us. We made every stop on schedule but seemed to pick up no one. The station in Baltimore seemed especially dismal and even a bit spooky, below street level in what had to be a very bad part of town (by Baltimore standards) with nothing to be seen but trash, and utility lines strapped to the stone retaining walls – all coated with years of grime and neglect. I figured out that Washington – well, Manassas, really – is the end of the scenic ride and the beginning of urban decay as can only be seen from a train window. It is no wonder that the only profitable section of the Crescent's route is between Atlanta and DC.

Wilmington, Delaware was our next stop, and I could tell there was something of a struggling effort to revitalize the city. The passenger station was designed by Frank Furness in 1908; if one looks carefully one can still see the cream-colored accent brick striped across the dark red and stone structure with a handsome clock tower on one corner. The cast iron shelter supports are still there too, but decades of Delaware grime have concealed much of this architectural gem. Where it's been cleaned, though, the gem really does sparkle.

What really caught my attention, though, was Amtrak's electric locomotive service facility just north of Wilmington. The Pennsy built this facility for their electric fleet, and now it continues to operate under new management. I almost spilled my coffee when I saw five Metroliner cars stored in the yard – it was kind of like seeing a real, live dinosaur after having been convinced that they had all died out. I was also very pleased to see two 1930's PCC trolley cars being stored there: the same ones restored and operated by the Wilmington Chapter of the National Railway

Historical Society – one red, and the other green and white. PCC is the abbreviation for Presidents Conference Committee, in which the heads of numerous urban, electric transit companies convened in 1928 to develop the “ideal” streetcar to compete against cars and buses. The result was a “streamlined” trolley car with large windows and rounded corners, looking very much like a bus on two sets of four wheels. More than 5000 such trolley cars were produced in the United States alone, and a few have been preserved such as these in Wilmington. Some PCC cars are still in regular transit service, like in Boston.

In almost no time later, we were coasting into 30th Street Station in Philadelphia. Veteran’s Stadium (I think that’s what they still call it, unless the name has been bought by some big-dollar, corporate sponsor) loomed high to the left, behind the Pennsy’s steel-supported “High Line” elevated track. It is a strange feeling to actually see a place that you’ve only seen before in so many photographs – it’s almost unreal, in a way, yet very familiar. That vista didn’t last long, as we were soon plunged beneath the station building where we sat once again, in the dark, for thirty minutes.

This layover in Philly was different than the one in DC. At Union Station, there was daylight and a lot of activity about with commuter and intercity trains coming and going everywhere. Here beneath 30th Street, it was gloomy and deserted. There was nothing to look at but badly-lit concrete platforms under fluorescent glow. A Southeast Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) train pulled away on the track next to us, but I don’t recall seeing anybody actually “on” the train. I tried to get some more reading done, using what little light I could angle onto my page from the platform. The overhead reading light was of no use because all the power on board was cut off until our diesel locomotives were swapped for a battered, old E60 electric. An E60?! I remember when Amtrak bought a fleet of these unreliable rail-pounders in the 1970’s to replace their venerable GG-1s – and here in 2002, I am riding behind one of six still remaining! Let’s hope we make it to Trenton . . .

Future Meeting Programs

March: Dennis Moriarty

April: Pete Delorme

May: Don Rumor

June: Michael Childress

Pictures

By Michael Childress

Here's some pictures I took of Howard Garner's Cascade Western Railroad during his recent open

house.



2003 members Updated 02/13/03

The following have paid dues for the 2003 year
Adams, Maurice; Childress, Michael; Cowen, Rodney; Cranford, Jesse; Ehmann, Curt; Folsom, Bob; Garner, Howard; Moriarty, Dennis; Presley, Robert; Rumer, Don; Sheriff, Pete; Zonay, Steve.

**Central Railway Model & Historical Association
 Membership Application**

Name: _____ Member # _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

1. Declared Interest Group: HO N General (Circle one)
2, Other Railroad Interests: Modeling Collecting Railfanning History
Other? _____

3. Modeling Scale: Z N HO S SN3 O G (Circle yours)

4 Railroad Memberships: NMRA NRHS Other? _____

5. Do you have a home lay-out? Y N Open to Visitors? Y N

6. I can help the Association by:

- Working on one of the modular projects
- Helping with set-up and operation of lay-outs at shows.
- Organizing an excursion to a show or museum.
- Serving on a committee (i.e. Audit, Publicity, etc.)
- Serving as Officer or Director.
- Preparing a short program for monthly meeting.
- Other: _____

7. Please record my membership in the Association for 2000. Enclosed is my (check) or (cash) in the amount of \$20.00, Send to: CRM&HA, PO Box 128, Central, SC 29630-0128. Phone (864) 261- 3496

Signature _____

C.R.M.&H.A.
Richard Nichols
301 Kingston Way
Anderson, SC 29626

FIRST CLASS MAIL

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

