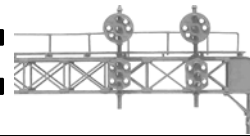


THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Volume 14

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODULAR RAILROADERS CLUB

Number 2

January 2007 ISSUE

CLUB OFFICERS

President:
Fred Alsop

Vice-President:
John Carter

Secretary:
Mary Doran-Bleck

Treasurer:
Duane Swank

Newsletter Editor:
Ted Bleck-Doran

Webmaster:
John Edwards

LOCATION

Tipton-Haynes State
Historic Site , South Roan
Street, Johnson City, TN
(across from Cherokee
United Methodist Church).

HOURS

- Business Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 7:00 PM at the Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site, South Roan Street, Johnson City, TN.

- A social gathering is held prior to the business meeting at RUBY TUESDAYS on State of Franklin across from ETSU starting at 6:00 PM. Visitors and those interested in joining MEMRR are invited to attend.

- Work nights are held weekly on Thursday evenings starting at 5:00 PM and lasting until ???

- Open viewing and operating layout is available every Saturday from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

- Operation Sessions are in the planning stages with dates TBA.

SIGNAL BRIDGE MEMBER-OF-THE-MONTH

Hobie Hyder

Email: wbej@planet.com Home Layout: No
Occupation: Sales MEMRR Module: Yes

Favorite Railroad(s):

Clinchfield, C&O, ICRR

Favorite Aspect of the Hobby:

Modeling Scenery

Least Favorite Aspect of the Hobby:

Benchwork

How Did You Get Started In the Hobby:

Born Loving Trains

How Long Have You Been a Member of MEMRR:

5 Years

What Got You Started with MEMRR:

I Wanted to Learn More about how to Model

What Dreams Do You Have for Your Layout of Module:

1. I want to built a home layout
2. The next module will be a steel mill

What Other Model Railroad or Railfan Activities Do You Participate In:

I like riding passenger trains and railfanning

What One Thing Would Improve MEMRR:

More hands on opportunities among members - "how-to" sessions

TREASURER'S REPORT

As reported at November's meeting:

11/01/06	Balance on Hand	\$776.10
	Income	\$ 77.80
	Expenses	\$ 54.21
11/30/06	Ending Balance	\$799.69
	December Obligations	\$ 54.21
	Balance Available	\$734.27

Duane reminds members that dues are now coming due.

Members categories are:

Full Member (Running Rights & Vote)	\$ 30.00
Family Member (each)	\$ 5.00
Associate Member (Running Rights)	\$ 12.00

Youth are free but must have an adult sponsor.

There is a three month window for renewals, January thru March.

Don't let your running rights lapse.

Mountain Empire Modular Railroaders Minutes of the Club Meeting 19 December 2006

The meeting for December was called to order by Vice-President John Cater at 6:30 PM, President Fred Alsop being absent due to Holiday travel. An invocation was offered by Ted Bleck-Doran and a holiday meal was shared by at the direction of Mike Buster.

The Business Meeting was convened at 7:30 PM. Minutes from the November 21st meeting were approved as printed in the December issue of the *Signal Bridge*.

Officer Reports followed:

President's Report - deferred to January 16th meeting due to President's absence.

Vice-President's Report - John Carter requested program ideas for the next three meetings with the following topics/presenters responding:

- January: Mike Buster - Prototype "The Most Beautiful Railroad in the World - The Southern Pacific."
- February: Don Ramey - Prototype slide show of railroading 20-30 years ago.
- March: Ted Bleck-Doran - Modeling "Weathering with Acrylics"

Treasurer's Report: Duane Swank reported a balance of \$799.69 with expenditures of \$54.21 (see report adjacent column). Members were reminded that annual dues are due payable the first three months of 2007.

Secretary's Report: Mary Doran-Bleck stated that she was glad to assume the responsibilities as club secretary and that aside from last months minutes and *Signal Bridge* mailing there had been no official correspondence.

Webmaster's Report: John Edwards reminded new members that the club maintains a website of Yahoo.com/Groups. This is a closed group so those interested in joining must send an email to John requesting access. John will send a reply with instructions. The website has a club calendar, photo postings, newsletter and clinic files, and other items of interest.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Ted Bleck-Doran reported that the December issue of the *Signal-Bridge* had been sent out with members already having received a copy. The newsletter has a new

.....Continued Page 4, Column 1

IN THIS ISSUE:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Road Signs | pg. 3 | 5. Progress on the MEMRR..... | pg. 4 |
| 2. Officers' Reports | pg. 1 | 6. Product Review | pg. 3 |
| 3. Upcoming Events | pg. 3 | 7. From The Conductor's Desk..... | pg. 2 |
| 4. Member of the Month .. | pg. 1 | | |

From the Conductor's Desk:

For model railroaders and railfans, museums are a standard fare for vacation travel. One of the nation's leading railroad museums is the historic Steamtown museum located just off Route I-81 in downtown Scranton PA. The collection of steam locomotives and cars was first started by F. Nelson Blount in the 1950's as the major railroads in the country switched from steam to diesel. Blount first "housed" his collection in Upstate New York near Watertown. The collection was moved to Bellows Falls VT where Steamtown became a Mecca for model railroader and railfan alike. Following Blount's death the Steamtown Foundation began a search for new quarters to house the deteriorating collection. In a partnership with the city of Scranton, National Parks Service and the Foundation the collection was relocated to Pennsylvania and placed on display in the former shop facilities of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad.



In addition to static equipment displays, historical memorabilia and a working restoration shop, Steamtown runs an excursion train behind Canadian National 3254 (a 2-8-2). The collection houses examples of steam locomotives from the diminutive 0-4-0 and 0-6-0 saddle tankers to a Union Pacific Big Boy and Reading Northern 4-8-4. Adjacent to the site is a Trolley Museum housing a small but interesting collection.





**Road & Street Signs for the Layout
(Part 2)**

Last month we left off our discussion of preparing road signs for our layout highways with a listing of what's available in HO scale and a parts list to make our own signs from scratch. A copy of last month's **SIGNAL BRIDGE** can be found on the MEMRR website.

Anyone with a home computer and good inkjet color printer can make up a batch of road and street signs. I "GOOGLED" "road signs" "highway signs" and "street signs" and came up with several manufacturers who posted descriptions of their products online. Several useful sites were <http://www.esignshop.net/> and <http://www.safetysign.com/>. Both have posted extensive catalogues of their products with descriptions and sizes listed. With the size of the sign(s) known it's an easy task of highlighting the picture of the sign while in your web browser, copying the image and then pasting the image in a word document. From there the picture can be resized to HO scale.

If your word processing or photo editing program can be set to metric the resizing is fairly straight forward. HO scale is 3 mm to the foot so...

12"	equals	3 mm
18"	equals	4.5 mm
24"	equals	6 mm
30"	equals	7.5 mm
36"	equals	9 mm
48"	equals	12 mm

Conversion to fractional inches is a bit trickier but the ratios are approximately ...

12"	equals	0.185 inch
18"	equals	0.245 inch
24"	equals	0.31 inch
30"	equals	0.36 inch
36"	equals	0.425 inch
48"	equals	0.55 inch

Here's how a copied image pastes into a word document -



The manufacturer states the sign comes in 24"x24" and 30"x30" sizes Resized the image would look like this:



To build a library of images continue to copy and paste clips from the website into the Word document. Then resized the images and formatted the picture layouts so that they would nestle together in groups. When a page was filled load glossy photographic quality paper in the printer, set the printer properties to "High Quality: print for the best resolution and printed out a test page.

Preparing the Sign:

1. Using a fresh knife blade carefully cut the desired signs from the page. Use light strokes and a straight edge to insure a clean edge.
2. Thin the paper by lightly sanding the back side with very fine grit sandpaper. Sand until the sign is the desired thickness.

3. This technique is useful for other paper signs and billboards you want to form to the texture of other sorts of building materials such as brick and wood siding. Care should be taken to work gradually so that the edges of the sign do not deform.
4. The sign can be mounted directly to the post (upright), but the paper can curl with time. This is not necessarily a bad thing if the desire is for a battered, weathered sign that been around for a while. If the desire is for a newly installed or well maintained sign, the paper needs to be backed with thin sheet styrene.
5. Modern signs are mounted on winged "U" channel. The channel stock provides some added support and stiffness. Older installations use a variety of poles including tubing and hollow square poles.
6. Most supports are galvanized steel or aluminum, though road signs can be posted on telephone and power poles, buildings, lamp posts, etc.

Next month we will cover those temporary fabric construction signs and how to locate road, street and highway signs allow a layout byway.

Road & Street Signs: (Continued in next month's **Signal Bridge**)

Next Meeting: January 16th, 2007
Location: TIPTON-HAYNES Historic Site
Time: 7:00 PM
Social Gathering: 5:30 PM Ruby Tuesdays
Across from ETSU on State of Franklin
Program: Mike Buster
"The Most Beautiful RR in The World - The Southern Pacific"

PRODUCT REVIEW
Dream-Plan-Build Video Series, Vol. 7

Coming fast on the heels of the Real Rail Edition - Big Power, Kalmbach Publishing Co.'s has released the 7th volume in the Dream-Plan-Build Video Series. This DVD contains the blend of modeling, rail history, layout tours and tourist segments in a format similar to that of the other DVDs in the series. Of interest, the DVD contains segments on:

Model Railroad Techniques

- Adding Sound to the Layout
- Hand Laying Track
- Weathering Wood with sandpaper and India Ink
- Using foam as a scenery base
- Detailing Structure Interiors
- Making Ground Cover with Real Leaves

Model Railroad Layouts

- Lou Ullian's On3 Logging Layout
- The Great Fall Club Layout
- 4-Season Modeling on the Spears Garden Railroad
- Ken McCorry's World Record HO Layout
- Jerry Strangarity's Structure Modeling in HO Scale
- Cincinnati's Railroad History in O and S gauge

Prototype

- St. Louis Car Company
- Mexico's Copper Canyon
- Steam & Diesel at the North Carolina RR Museum

Looking for vacation ideas - check out the Copper Canyon segment!

Cost: \$24.90 (S&H Included)

Progress on the MEMRR
Layout Enhancements

Minutes 19 December Meeting
Continued from Page 1, Column 3...

4-page format. A color version is available in .pdf file format on the web site. A new feature will be added – “Member-of-the-Month. All members present were asked to complete an information sheet. Members were also asked to assist with articles and other material for the newsletter. A survey of topics for the newsletter has been posted to the website as well.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Update on Letter of Agreement:** Fred Alsop has been meeting with ETSU officials during November and early December to clarify terms of our use of space at the university. Maintenance has cleared the room and should make the alteration (painting, lighting, electrical runs) starting work during the holiday break. Occupancy is expected February or March.
2. **Sage Brush:** Fred Alsop has received another shipment of sage brush for use by club members. Cost is \$0.50 per armature to defray postage.
3. **Calling Chain:** The need for a calling chain was discussed but tabled for action to the next meeting. A volunteer is being sought to create the call list.
4. **Digital Scale:** John Edwards reported that the digital scale had been purchased by the club to insure club and member cars are properly weighted. Light cars can cause unwanted derailments.
5. **Club Trip to Knoxville Model Railroad Club:** John Carter will provide details concerning a club outing to Knoxville to view the Knoxville Club layout and visit the Hobbytown store to view Ed Lockett’s handiwork on the new store layout.
6. **Weekend Run Schedule:** 6 January: Paul AM & PM; 13 January Duane/Larry AM & PM; 20 January: Ted/John Edwards AM & PM; 27 January: Hobie AM & John Carter PM. Members were reminded that part of membership responsibilities involve staffing the weekend run schedule.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **N&W Caboose:** a motion was made/seconded and passed to purchase a N&W caboose to operate with the Geeps on the layout. Hobie offered to donate one to the club.
2. **Tea Lights:** John Edwards demonstrated a pair of battery operated “tea lights” he found at Walgreen’s for \$3.00. The lights have built-in circuitry which creates a flicker light that can be used to simulate a fire or arch welder.
3. **NEW MEMBERS:** Gary and Lois Woods were welcomed as the club’s newest members.
4. **“Dirty Santa” Gift Exchange:** The remainder of the meeting was spent in socializing and an active “Dirty Santa” gift exchange hosted by Mike Buster.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 PM

Submitted: Mary Doran-Bleck, Secretary



Fred demonstrates how to set rock castings into a hill side on Joe Roberts’ module during a work night in December. Fred uses both manufactured and home-made rock castings. The castings are allowed to partially set in the molds (approximately 20-30 minutes) when they are separated from the molds, trimmed to fit and set in place. There they are allowed to cure,



At right Paul installs a line of fence posts on his module. The posts are fabricated from sage brush armatures and have the appearance of cedar. We are all waiting to see what he uses for the barbed wire. Rumors abound that he plans to electrify the top strand of wire!

Hobie looks for an easy way to install a *Tortoise* to power up the switches on the Elkhorn Mine Module. John Carter was lending a hand that night as well as providing some sage advice.

JOIN THE FUN
THURSDAYS ARE WORK NIGHTS
THE CREW GATHERS BEGINNING AT 5:30 OF SO
THERE’S ALWAYS SOMETHING TO
LEARN – SEE – OR - DO

