

President's Message



We are off to a very busy year. We have some new members in our club and new modules in the works. It will take everyone getting involved to make this year and our club successful. Would like to see everyone make an effort this year to do their part. We need people to become show coordinators.

A big part of getting involved is attending the Tuesday Night work sessions at Dan Pawlings. Thank you Dan for hosting them.

Dan Pawling's Tuesday night

At Dan Pawling's Tuesday Night is set aside to fix up, build new & run trains Ntrak social club meeting 7:00pm to 10:30+pm

List of projects:

1. **Paper mill** end loop to be completed (Needs wood chip vacuum system to get chips into the manufacturing plant).
2. **Ron Wood** is working on a plan housing community.
3. **Dan & Mark** are working on a change in track plan & wiring (Scenery will be completed as we go) There is room for help here.

D Pawling's 3' corner and 4' straight
Ferricane's 3' corner and three 4'straights
Please call before you come Thanks 781 801 6480.

Week end work sessions to be planed

Doug Lawson's 8' module needs scenery
John & Steve Consigli are just about finished and need a boost

Peter Mathews is looking for a 3' corner
(Come on Down!!!)
Please call to schedule.

If you are building something come prepared with the parts or make arrangements for the parts that you will need. There will be some weekend help session planed in the near future to help member complete their modules or get started. Please help out. Hope to see some new & old faces. Have a great 05/06 season.

Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, Web Site - www.northeastntrak.org

Grafton & Upton Railroad Story & Pics by John Consigli



It began in late Spring of this year with a phone call from Ernie, Locomotive Engineer & Maintenance Supervisor for the **Grafton & Upton Railroad**. Our conversation centered around litter bugs and the inordinate amount of trash they are dumping on the unused portion of the G&U rail bed. After a while, the talk turned to a more personal nature. Ernie's authority allowed him to invite my son Steven and I for a ride in the Alco S2 Diesel Locomotive on one of its freight runs.

This particular Railroad is one of the oldest family owned short lines in the area. When I was just a small boy many years ago, the Grafton & Upton would haul freight from the Boston & Albany main track in North Grafton to meet the New Haven connector track in Milford, MA. Seeing the black and yellow S1 Alco and or the GE 44 Ton Switcher on a daily basis, sparked my life long interest in trains. My old friend and neighbor Eddie Aslanian worked the G&U in those days as a sort of **Jack of All Trades**, as he would put it. He did everything from operating the locomotive to loading freight and cutting brush along the tracks.

The morning of our journey in June was of perfect weather. Steven & I arrived early to meet Ernie in North Grafton at the rail yard. Ernie's mission was to haul freight cars about a mile up the track and after switching cars around, haul a few cars back to the plant.

After uncovering the engine vents, which were covered by tarps, Ernie fired up the big diesel locomotive. The sound

was beautiful as it is a well maintained locomotive. It is obvious that Ernie is quite proud of this operation and is very particular on keeping everything up to snuff.



Steven & I were invited to hop aboard. Although the operational part of this track is only in North Grafton at this time, the company has future plans to reopen its trackage through Upton and into Hopedale. The ultimate would be to extend the operational part of the track into Milford as it was many years ago. There are Federal Grants available to do this and it is being looked into now by the G&U's parent company.

Our trip lasted about an hour. We had great fun and a few good laughs with our friend Ernie. We invited him to go for coffee, but with his cell phone ringing, he said he'd take a rain check. Steven & I topped our day off with a good breakfast at an authentic Worcester Dining Car in Milbury. **The Central Diner** has been located in the downtown area for years and is noted for their delicious diner style breakfasts. We had a great day.



HELL GATE BRIDGE
Story & Pix by D. Pawling, Sr.

The Hell Gate Bridge has fascinated me since my first sight of it on a Lionel "O" gauge layout in the '30's. My interest in the Bridge and it's environs has grown with each of many trips over it. There is much to be experienced both on the trains and on the ground.

On the train, the excitement begins when the cars clatter across the old 4-track NH shoreline south of the New Rochelle station onto the NY Connecting RR tracks which lead to the Hell Gate Bridge. The two Amtrak tracks have electrical catenary, but the tracks for the freights omit the electrical. There are about 10 miles of non-stop running through a bit of Westchester County and then into Bronx County (a Borough of NYC). From the left side of the train we begin to see the arch of the bridge and the long viaduct leading to it. A glance to the left shows Long Island and the Sound, LaGuardia Airport and a massive sewage treatment plant. But the eye is drawn back to the rising curve of the viaduct and the engine of our train pulling us steadily towards the portal of the north tower of the bridge. Soon we are on the bridge and quickly check out the rails and solid deck below, the steel work above and the views to the right and left.

Too quick!! We are off the bridge and on the descending viaduct, but still high above the neighboring built-up areas. The pictures give a sense of how the bridge and its viaduct fit into the community.

span is 977 ft., 6" long; the clearance above mean high water is 135 ft., and the total length of bridge and viaduct is 16,900 feet.



Turning 180 degrees to the southeast shows how the viaduct fits into the residential area of Astoria with the columns towering over the buildings. (Above Photo)



In the above picture we are up on the Ditmars Blvd. NYC Transit's elevated subway terminal in Astoria, looking southwest....An Amtrak "Regional," led by an AEM-1, heads north on the viaduct towards the Hell Gate Bridge.



Here's how the Hell Gate Bridge viaduct, the NYC Transit elevated subway terminal, 31st Street and the residential Neighborhood fit together in Astoria, Queens County, NY. The elevated subway runs above 31st Street for several miles.



New York skyline from Amtrak train #83



Hell Gate Bridge (above) crosses the Hell Gate portion of the East River into Astoria Park, Astoria, Queens County, NY. Note the hallmark steel arch, the massive towers with tall portals, the piers supporting the viaduct and the catenary towers (Guys -- Forget the sunbathers -- this is a family newsletter). The arch



Looking northwest (above Photo) from the platform of the NYC Transit's elevated subway platform at 31st Street & Ditmars Blvd., Astoria, Queens County, NY. The catenary-topped Hells Gate viaduct looms over the residential neighborhood. The Hell Gate Bridge is at the far end of the viaduct.

Once past the bridge and looking out the right side of the train we can see the Manhattan skyline -- most impressive at all times and in all weather conditions. A mile south of the bridge the freight line continues south into Brooklyn, while Amtrak curves to the west. In less than another mile we will see on the right the famous Sunnyside Yard, usually packed with Amtrak and NJ Transit trains. Also on the right, a bit further along, lies an abandoned Long Island freight yard, its tracks pulled (but, in memory is the scene of a Buffalo Creek box car leaking grain and being honored by a flock of pigeons). Suddenly, the grade dips and we are in the tunnel to Penn Station. (continued on Page 3)



We are now on a part of the viaduct shared with the Long Island Railroad overlooking Sunnyside Yard.



Part of New Jersey Transit equipment, some MU cars and some of there collection of headend power sitting in Sunnyside Yard.



It seems that the RR and the community tolerate, perhaps ignore, one another. There is much, much more to the Hell Gate story -- if you are interested, I suggest that you search the net for real good stuff.



Taken at the Greenberg Show in August 2005. Members (l to r) Steve, Dennis, Scott, Peter, and Roland

The Greenburg Train Show by Dan Pawling

Show Coordinator Report:

Shiners auditorium in Wilmington, MA Coordinators N E Ntrak: Dan Pawling JR Mark Ferricane. The lay out was an End loop operation end to end in the shape of a strange J, with a total of 7 modules.

Participants & equipment handlers:

R. Hoven - 12' Corner module w/mountain
B. Pawlak - 12' straight w/mountain
D. Yip - 4' straight w/mountain
S & L Capers - 4' straight w/mountain
D Pawling JR - 4' straight w/mountain , 2 end-loop 6', Corner w/ mountain 3' (Ferricane's), Yard at 16' Club boxes, DCC equipment.

Participants Operations, Tower, Set up & Pack up

Set up helpers, Tower Operators, Yard Master, and Pack Up.
 Steve & John Consigli Set up help, Tower time & Running time
 Roland Kelley (set-up help)
 Peter Mathews (break down at the end of the show Thanks)
 Mike Walker (break down at the end of the show Thanks)

Thanks to the participants that helped set up & take down the modules. Your help is very important to the people that bring equipment and modules because there are not enough of us so a few of us end up doing a lot.

Running time only

Scott Cayborne & Dad, Doug Lawson, Hans Swendsboe

Visitors:

Frank Dignan, Neal Carnaby, Tom Farrel

Notes:

I was really surprised to see the amount of club members that showed up to an August show. It was nice to see you all. The show was not well attended probably because a lot of folks were still on vacation or just enjoying the last summer days out doors. Venders seemed disappointed. There was a smaller amount of clubs displaying. The space was excellent near the front doors and there seems to be more room for expansion. I will be requesting that space for the December 17 18th show. I will need some more participation because the goal is to do a standard lay out. I will be calling you to see if you can help out.



More of the group at the Greenberg Show. Bob, Doug, Rand and Dan Jr. (l to r)

Show Schedule for 2005 – 2006

September 25 Pepperell Siding Show, Vernum Brook Middle School, 10 Hollis St, Pepperell, MA
WWW.PSMRC.ORG for directions
 Set-up 7AM Show 10AM to 4PM
 Coordinator: Ron Wood - 603-889-0741

November 6 Wells Maine Show, Wells Elementary School, Rt. 109 Wells Maine (Main TPK exit 19 on RT 95, Left off ramp about 1mi on right)
 Set-up 8AM Show 10AM to 4PM
 Coordinator: Chris Spaminato – 207 646 6728
 Breakfast meeting @ Laura's Kitchen across street 7AM
 Endloop show please call to sign up ASAP

November 6 Bedford Boomers, McKelvie Middle School, Liberty Hill Rd/ Gault Rd, Bedford, NH
 Set-up 7am Show 10am to 4pm
 Coordinator: Ron Wood - 603-889-0741
 Ron is still trying to do this show please call

December 17 & 18 Greenberg Show Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
 Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM
 Sun 10PM to 4PM
 Coordinator: Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261
 Need five corners one inside corner and lots of straight modules. We will be by the front door lets put on a great show. Mountain not necessary
 Dust off some of those old modules

January 27 to 29 WINTERFEST 2006 Big "E" Exposition Center, W.Springfield, MA
 Set-up Fri noon to 5pm and Sat 7am
 Show Sat & Sun 10am to 5pm
 Coordinator: John Dunne - 508-697-7635
 Winterfest Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485
 All clubs invited to help make the show a success

February 18 & 19 Museum of Our National Heritage, Lexington, MA
 Set-up Sat 8am Show 10am to 5pm
 Sun noon to 5pm
 Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

February 26 Mystic Valley Show, Christina's Function Facility, Rte 1, Foxboro, MA
 Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm
 Coordinator: Ron Wood - 603-889-0741

April 1 & 2 Greenberg Show, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA
 Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM
 Sun 10PM to 4PM
 Coordinator: Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261

**Our Railroading
Vacation**
*Article & pictures by John
Consigli*



**John & son Steven in front of
Western Maryland Station**

If you haven't been to the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad in Cumberland Maryland, it is definitely worth the journey. My wife Betty, our son Steven and I stayed at the Holiday Inn in historic downtown Cumberland. Located right outside our window, we had a busy railroad yard with all sorts of freight and passenger trains coming and going. It was not uncommon to see a train with four to six locomotives and over 100 freight cars. The views from the hotel alone would leave many breathless.



Steven in the railyard, Cumberland, MD

Cumberland was also known for Fort Cumberland during the French & Indian War with a young Lieutenant George Washington stationed there while working his way through the ranks. The Baltimore and Ohio, of Railroad fame, had a huge 175 mile canal that started in Georgetown and ended in Cumberland. The Baltimore & Ohio, before train travel, would haul

via ozen & barge along the canal back and forth between the two locations. Cumberland was also a focal point for the Underground Railroad as it was close to the West Virginia and Pennsylvania boarders.

If you haven't ridden the Western Maryland Railroad, do not hesitate to do so. **Mountain thunder, a 1916 Baldwin 2-8-0**, makes the run from Cumberland through the scenic Maryland Allegheny hillside in about one hour to Frostburg Depot. Ther, the train is turned around on a turntable and pointed back to Cumberland. The hour



Frostburg, MD Depot Turntable.

& fifteen minute layour in Frostburg gives you more than enough time to grab a bite to eat or take in a historic collection of old



**Steven standing behind the tender in
the headend coach on the way back to
Cumberland.**

horse drawn coaches located at a museum in town. I say do not hesitate, as ther is talk of disbanding this scenic railroad line in favor of a biking and hiking trail located alongside of the tracks in some sections. The Western Maryland was a viable railroad which hauled passengers, coal and freight from the western Maryland countryside to Baltimore in the early 1900's through the late 1960's.



**Shea locomotive at the B&O Railroad
Museum in Baltimore, with Steven**

The next part of our trip took us to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum in scenic Inner Harbor Maryland. There we viewed a beautiful collection of vintage locomotives, which included an exact reproduction of the **John Bull** as well as the B&O **George Washington** Hudson. Since the B&O was the first railroad in the country, we got to take a ride on the first mile and a half of laid track in the US at the musuem.

Although we took in other sights along the way, we ended our last day at the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum in Strasburg, PA. This is a beautiful collection of vintage locomotives which operated in Pennsylvania during the Golden Age of Rail Travel. They also have a collection of rail related photography, artwork and memorabilia. The do give AAA discounts. Located across the street is the Strasburg Scenic Railroad and if you had the time, you could take a scenic steam train ride. They also have tours of the operational rail yard.

While in Strasburg, don't forget to visit the TCCA model train museum followed by a ride to the Choo Choo Barn to view the operational O Gauge train layout. We had a nice trip.