



President - Mark Ferracane  
 Vice Pres - Dennis Yip  
 Treasurer - Chuck Tremblay  
 Editor - Roland Kelley

**JANUARY 2006  
 NEWSLETTER**

**President's  
 Message**



It is time to start getting ready for **Winterfest 2006**, get your modules, your prize winning models and pictures. This year we hope to have a better layout than last year. We will have a number of new modules ready for the show. They look like they will be prize winners. A number of members have been working on their modules at Dan Pawling's basement on Tuesday nights. The people who attend are new members and older members who are there to help out with track work and scenery. Remember anyone is welcome to the work nights, just let Dan know you are coming.

I wish to thank the members whom were at the Greenburg show on Saturday and Sunday. It was nice to see some of our senior members that have not been to many show attend this one. Thank You.

So in closing, things to do ASAP:

1. Make Hotel Reservations Before January 10th.
2. Contact John Dunne and tell him if you are bringing a module.
3. Fill out your registration form. Print and mail with your check.
4. Print out contest entry forms

Till next month  
 Mark

Northeast Ntrak, 41 Easy Street, Lowell, MA 01850-1731, Web Site - [www.northeastntrak.org](http://www.northeastntrak.org)

**Winterfest 2006**

Winterfest 2006 is here. If you have not registered or made your hotel reservation what is hold you back. It is getting late. Go to our web site today and register.

[www.northeastntrak.org](http://www.northeastntrak.org)

then go to Winterfest Information and register online.

For your convention hotel it will be the Hilton Garden Inn. Convention rate is \$79.00 per night plus tax (single or double). Reservations should be made before January 8th, 2006 by calling 413-886-8000 or 800-774-1500.

SEE YOU THERE.

**Trains along the Rhine River  
 by Roland Kelley**



As I sailed along the Rhine River this October I saw many trains on both sides of the river. If we were not passing a train on the right side of the boat we were passing one on the left. One thing I noticed was that there frieght trains ran often but averaged only 30 to 50 cars. Not like the 100 car trains you see in North America. These three pictures were taken in the wine country of Germany.



**Show Schedule for 2006**

**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 Great Train Expo**, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA  
 Set up Sat 7:30AM Show Sat 10AM to 4PM  
 Sun 10PM to 4PM  
 Coordinator: Dan Pawling - 617-244-5261

**April 23 Hooksett Lyons Club**, Hooksett Memorial School, Hooksett, NH  
 Set-up 8am Show 10am to 4pm  
 Coordinator: ?????

**May 11 Children's Hospital**, 300 Longwood Dr, Boston, MA  
 Set-up 7am Show 9am to 3pm  
 Coordinator: Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485

**Look for "Tracks Ahead"  
 on PBS**

The PBS program "Tracks Ahead" is starting its 6th season in January 2006. This is a 14 week series produced by Minnesota Public TV and underwritten by Kalmbach Publishing.. I guess that it will be scheduled locally..



## **My Lunch Time Walks Through Railroad History**

**By: Bruce Fottler**

I've worked in Billerica for over ten years now. During my lunch hour I usually try to get out for a walk to clear my head and get some exercise. When weather and time permits, I walk a special route that takes me on a long stroll through railroad history. This particular route takes me down what once was the Bedford & Billerica Railroad.

The B&B started operating in August of 1877 as the nation's first narrow gauge railroad. The brainchild of George E. Mansfield, the B&B spanned a little over eight and a half miles between Bedford station and North Billerica. Although it was a success in demonstrating the narrow gauge rail concept, it only lasted until early 1878 when it was forced into bankruptcy. The rail and equipment was sold to the Sandy River Railroad in Farmington Maine a year later, where it went on to prosper until ceasing operations the 1930's. Edaville Railroad eventually purchased the equipment for their rail attraction.

In 1885, the Boston & Lowell railroad took over the old B&B right of way and expanded it to accommodate standard gauge rail. It would serve as an extension of their Lexington branch for both freight and passenger service. The Boston and Maine then took over the B&L in 1887. Passenger service continued until 1931, and the line was kept open for freight service until it was abandoned in 1962.

When someone first suggested I try walking the route, I was a little skeptical about it. I had seen the entrance off Technology Park Drive which is unassumingly marked by two old rail ties standing on end. It didn't seem at the time like it would lead anywhere worthwhile, or could be easily traversed.

One day about ten years ago I got ambitious and gave it a try. What lies beyond those two unassuming rail ties is a narrow dirt path that ends at a private drive. At the time it didn't look too promising and hardly something I expected of an old right of way. I was tempted to end my journey there for fear of trespassing on private property, but a couple of joggers passed me from behind and continued up the narrow road. They seemed to have no issues with where they were going so I figured I had to be in the right place after all. The private road ends at Springs Road, and the trail picks up again across the road. At this point you can still see a few rotting rail ties & spikes still in the ground. One of five original B&B

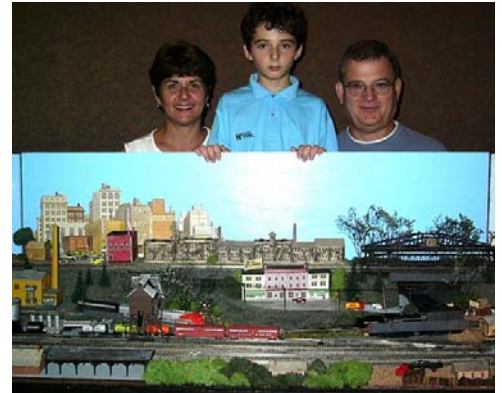
stations (South Billerica) was supposedly located in this area, and you can see an old concrete signpost with a rusted over diamond sign still attached nearby. The old ROW continues a bit further as a narrow sandy path until you reach the Bedford town line. Then it turns into a well maintained stone dust rail-trail that leads all the way into Depot Park near Bedford center, linking to the Minuteman Bikeway. I've never walked down that far as I usually turn around at Fawn Lake (1/3 of the way there).

The section of the trail I walk cuts through a beautiful stretch of dense woods. At certain points you can just see through to the back yards of newer neighborhoods, but for the most part it's still a secluded stretch. I've even encountered deer on some of my walks. If you look hard, you can still see several signs of the railroad. The rail ties were recycled as fence posts many years ago, and are rotting away at many points beside the trail barely supporting what's left of rusted wire fences. The trail crosses over several old culverts that are still in good condition. One source I found suggests they date back to the B&B, but I wonder if concrete blocks were used back then. And if you look up on a certain knoll, you can see a tall thin crumbling chimney overlooking the trail. If you hike up there, you will find the old foundation remains of a supposed residence that has almost been reclaimed by the woods. Although it's a little too close to the tracks for my liking, the people who lived there had a nice view of the trains that passed by.

If the railroad existed today, it would cut right through the middle of a parking near my workplace. But alas, there is no sign of it anywhere nearby. Development over the past forty years has completely erased it.

If you want to read more of the history of the B&B, you can visit "The Friends of the Depot Park" website at: <http://www.bedforddepot.org/index.html#directory>. There are a lot of very interesting pictures and articles to browse through.

If anyone is interested in walking or biking the trail, then I would recommend that you start at Depot Park in Bedford – which is at the end of the Minuteman Bikeway. For a nice stroll through the area I usually walk through, take Job Lane off of Route 4 in Bedford. Follow until you reach Fawn Lake. There is a small parking lot there that trail cuts right through. Foot and bike traffic are usually very light during the time I walk on weekdays.



## **It Takes a Village** **by John Consigli**

When Steven and I joined Northeast Ntrak in December of 2003, we were very fortunate that Club Members Ernie Poole, Ed Smith and Bob Pawlak had combined talents to offer Club members a choice of several different variations in train modules for sale.

After selecting a Mountain Division module, we set out to develop our ideas. Our close friend and neighbor Walt Unruh pitched in, as did close personal and family friend Ed Moran, Jr., to offer some suggestions. Pencil marks and drawings were the signs of our early progress.

Progress was also made in our conversations with Bob Pawlak, Dan Pawling and other members, to whom I apologize if I have unintentionally left off your name from this brief synopsis, in coming up with more ideas for the layout.

From here, we ventured over to Dan's house, where Dan, Mark Ferracane, Ron Wood and Dennis Yip rolled up their sleeves to glue down our three main lines and mountain route. This father and son were thrilled, having fun, working, and making progress.

It was about this time that Master Modeler Ed Moran, Jr. offered to take us under his wing. Ed worked with Steven and I as he jumped right in to show us how to proceed. He continued to demonstrate the model railroading techniques that he had learned from his late, dear friend, Chet Deagle.

Chet had been a Master Modeler who had perfected the art of building model train layouts. He was an accomplished draftsman who did not operate model trains. He and his wife Marge were members of the Newton, MA Hammond  
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Organ Society, of which Chet was the President. Chet's interest in model trains had always been in building railroad dioramas, which he used for photographic purposes. Utilizing paper and cardboard, he would build exact replicas of his favorite factories, saw mills, train stations and what have you. He would put these buildings onto beautifully built landscapes where colored sawdust, cardboard, plaster cloth, celuclay, toothpicks, white glue and just about anything else you can think of, were used in the construction of picture perfect scenery. With a special camera, he would zoom in on the N scale diorama to produce a photo that made the scene look like prototype.

Under Chet's tutelage, Ed learned model building techniques. Although Steven and I do not profess to know all that Ed has mastered through the years, we are working and learning. Along with Ed's help and guidance, we were able to build and exhibit our module at the Taunton Train Show.

Building this module has been a great learning experience for both Steven and I. I should add that without the support and interest from wife Betty, I don't think we would have had the good health or strength to have fun and complete this project.

This experience has been a blast. It has helped us to make new friends, bring old friends closer, have fun family ties and last but not least, have something to show for it.

## **Altoona, Horseshoe Curve** **by John Consigli**



***Steven at Galitzen Tunnel, PA in 2001***

If summer vacation time is not a problem, an interesting place to visit is the Horseshoe Curve in Altoona, PA. Located east of Pittsburgh, you could reach this area in about seven hours. Betty, Steven and I had a great visit with lot's to see and do.

Upon arriving in Altoona, you'll want to visit the Railroader's Memorial Museum. This unique place is located on the ground of the former locomotive engine shop of the Pennsylvania Rail-road. Loaded with historical artifacts, pictures and videos, this museum depicts life as it was in a corporate railroad town during the days of early railroad development. In the golden age of steam, Altoona was the Silicone Valley of it's day. Technological advancements such as the 2-8-0 Consolidation, the K4, as well as the electric GG-1 were products of this town's heritage. On the grounds, you will be able to view several vintage locomotives and rolling stock. The Museum is currently accepting donations for the restoration of the Pennsylvania Railroad's K4. The restoration has been underway for quite some time in Scranton, PA. When complete, the loco-motive is expected to be a masterpiece.



***Altoona's Horseshoe Curve, 2001***

After leaving the museum you'll want to drive a couple of miles to the Horseshoe Curve. Noted to rail fans everywhere, this sweeping curve is the perfect place to view long freight trains with up to six locomotives and over 100 freight cars chugging up grade. The sites and sounds are fantastic with four main tracks. Numerous locomotives, both freight as well as passenger, make the trek every few minutes. Admission to this area is around \$3.00 for adults and less for children. Remember to bring your camera as you will want to capture the event on film.

You should get our your map as you are about twenty minutes from the Galitzen Tunnel. Located on the main track heading out of the Horseshoe Curve, the tunnel is another great photo opportunity for exiting and entering freight traffic.

While in Altoona, we stayed at the always reasonable Hampton Inn. They

offer and all inclusive continental breakfast that is one of the best we have had. They serve everything from coffee, tea, hot chocolate and juice to waffles, bagels, cereal, fruit and yogurt, to name a few. The room are clean and they have a pool and a hot tub. These are a necessity when it's a family vacation.



***Horseshoe Curve, 2001***

We capped off our visit to Altoona with a day trip to the Lakemont Amusement Park. This family oriented area has retained a lot of the older, nostalgic amusement rides of bygone days. The wild mouse, buzz bomb, dodge-ems and the oldest wooden rooler coaster in teh United States. This park is well maintained and a bargain as compared to a lot of the newer, more modern amusement parks of today. If you are coaster fanatics like us, you'll want to check out the antique coaster. I guarantee you have never seen anything like it.



On our return trip home, we stopped by the Erie Lackawanna Railroad's enormous Tunkhannock Viaduct, located about 45 minutes west of Scranton in Nicholson, PA. Built when the E.L.R.R. was rerouting it's track plan in 1915, this viaduct spans the Tunkhannock Creek for a distance of 2,375 feet. It has double track main line and is still being used by the major railroad companies today. Steamtown has also been known to offer an excursion train that runs over this great structure, although you'll have to do some research to find out a date and time as to when.

From start to finish, whether you travel alone or with the family, you will have fun on this trip.



**Eastbound BNSF train at Kingman, Arizona, Oct 2005**

**Arizona Railfan Trip**

**By Ron Wood**

My wife Carolyn and I returned to Las Vegas this past October for a return visit after a few years. We saw a few shows and enjoyed the views from the Stratosphere tower at night with all the lights of Las Vegas lit up below. I also managed to take a day and do some railfanning in nearby Arizona. I headed south from Las Vegas, past Hoover Dam and headed to Kingman Arizona. I photographed several trains on the busy BNSF Seligman sub between Needles California and a town just east of Kingman called Hackberry, Arizona. This is on the BNSF's transcontinental mainline. While it was my intent to travel further east to Seligman, Arizona, getting a late start that day and getting caught behind a line painting crew after crossing Hoover Dam caused me to throw those plans aside. Still it was beautiful scenery and definitely worth a trip back! Here are some pictures.



**Eastbound BNSF train crossing the Colorado River at Topoc, Arizona. Oct 2005 (below) Westbound BNSF freight behind BNSF Warbonnet & leased Norfolk Southern engine, Kingman, AZ.**



**Vice Presidents Message**  
**Dennis Yip**

Hello everyone. As our club is in the transition of training the new generation of N-tracker's it is important that all of us know how to work a layouts at shows. This is why I want to encourage new members to ask more questions. All of us are very friendly and are willing to give you answers. Please don't be afraid to ask anything. Also observe what people do at shows to get everything up and running. Take notice at the process and organization of it all. By doing this everyone can learn more and in the future will become more productive.

In addition to this idea I want to emphasize the need for show coordinators. We need new people to coordinate shows. I don't want pressured people to feel the need to coordinate a show, but I want to encourage people to take on new obstacles to help the club. Members that have been with us for several years should be experienced enough to organize a show. If you're scared to do all the work by yourself I suggest maybe partnering up with some people. Other options: find a small show to coordinate yearly, or even help someone who is already coordinating a show this year. Show coordinators always need help. Small helpful offers such as saying, "do you need me to transport something to the show?" is always a nice a gesture. Everyone should take this considerations in to thought because if we don't the club is not going to move forward. I want to see improvement. Hope to see you many of you at the next train show and Happy New Year to everyone.

**Trains Magazine Article**

Trains magazine has a new feature on technology. The current issue discusses railroad crossties.. They report that Texas company has begun producing plastic ties, actually a composite of plastic, rubber from tires and a mixture of other stuff. Like wooden ties they weigh 200 pounds and are resistant to everything that wood is not and have no preservatives in or on them. Life expectancy - 50 years. UP is said to have contracted for a million over the next 6 years. Is this a case of prototype following modelry? Dan Pawling, Sr.

**Bangkok's Skytrain**  
**by Roland Kelley**



**Two of the trains at the station. They are very clean and quite.**

The Bangkok Mass Transit System (BTS) has become popular in the main business area and shopping centres in Bangkok. There are two lines: Sukhumvit and Silom. The interchange station is at Siam Square. The trains run daily from 6 a.m. to midnight and the fare ranges from 10 to 40 baht (.25 to 1.00 USD) depending on the length of your journey. You can also buy one or three day passes for 100 baht and 280 baht respectively. The trains come at intervals of 5 minutes or less. All of the trains are clean and air-conditioned. It is a comfortable and quick way to get around town though the lines are rather limited. There are plans to extend the routes in the future which will make it far more useful. Three of the stations connect with the Metro line which helps a bit and you can also catch express river boats from the Saphan Taksin station. There are also free shuttle bus services at many of the stations which help take you a bit further.



**Inside the Skytrain notice that between cars is open.**