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President's Message Dan Pawling

The Layout for the Amherst Railway Society Show is set to go providing that we don't get even a threat of a winter storm anywhere in the NE. This Year will be an interesting year because there will be a lot of new modules to see. There will also be more modules at the layout than I have seen before. If you are coming from a club outside NE Ntrak please remember to bring curtains, adapters for Cinch Jones to Power pole, patience for setup and a good sense of humor. It will be a real trick to keep everyone happy before & during set up with all the special requests. We will try.

NE Ntrak Club members if you are at the set up with your hands in your pockets and running your jaw off you will be tarred & feathered on site. Austin Plyem will be bringing the tar & Mark Ferracane will bring the feathers. There's much more to do than just setting up your modules. So try to anticipate what needs to be done next or just ask someone in the know. Even better hang out with someone that is working on something that you want to learn more about & help them. Remember there are a lot of clubs traveling far to get here and they will need help on both ends of the show. It would be really appreciated if we could give our guests assistance at the end of the show. Most of them have a lot further to go than we do. Next show is at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington please remember to call the show coordinator, Bob Pawlak and let him know what you would like to bring. See you all in W. Springfield.

Royal American Shows Module

The Carnival module by Roland Kelley and Peter Wisniewski was very popular at the Show in Syracuse, NY. From that show it will be covered in two articles in the "Carnival Midway". of the Carnival Historical & Model Builders Society of America. The first article will cover the module history. The second article in the March-April issue will cover the work Peter did on the electrical and lighting.

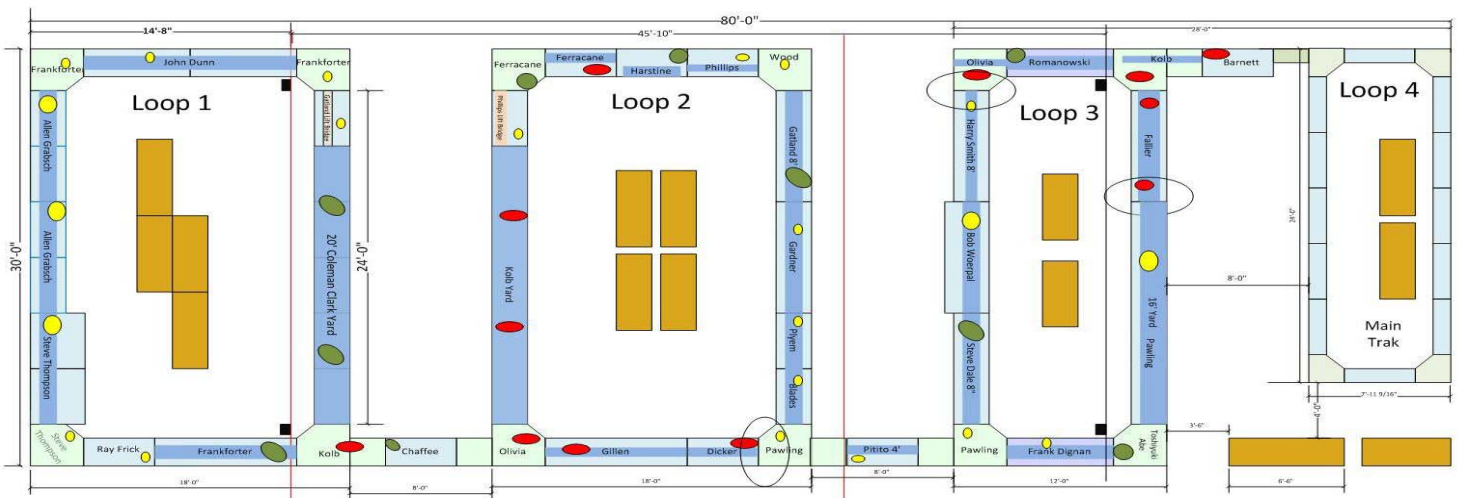
Here is a comment made by Gary E. Thomson in "From The Editor" section of the January-February issue.

"When I attended the Syracuse Train Fair in November 2010, we were in the Toyota Building which is one of the two buildings housing the show. Several CH&MBS members returned from the other building saying that everyone had to go over and see the n-scale module with a display of the Royal American Shows including a lot and yard display. Once there I had a discussion with Roland Kelley, who along with Peter Wisniewski put this amazing display together. According to a couple of our RAS specialists the trailers and wagons are "right on prototype" which really amazed everyone. It has the latest fiber optics and all the rides were running when I was there."

Go to this web site to see a vedio Peter made of the carnival after relighting it. It was taken to show the lights, and make believe it was night time.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUII6C91odw>

Winterfest 2011 Layout Drawing.



2010-2011 NENtrak SHOW PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE

Jan 28-30, 2011 Winterfest, Springfield, MA Amherst

Railway Society - Big Railroad Hobby Show

Big "E" Exposition Center, West Springfield, MA

Set-up Fri noon to 5pm & Sat 7am

Show Sat 9am to 5pm - Sun 10am to 5pm

Layout Coordinator: **Dan Pawling Jr., 617-244-5261**

Winterfest Coordinator: **Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485**

Feb 19-20, 2011 National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30am - Show Sat 10am to 5am - Sun noon to 5pm

Coordinator: **Bob Pawlak - 781-862-2485**

March 26-27, 2011 Great Train Expo, Shriners Auditorium, Wilmington, MA

Set up Sat 7:30am - Show Sat 10am to 4pm - Sun 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: **Fay Chin 978-657-7913**

Web Site: www.GreenbertShows.com

May 8, 2011 Hooksett Lions Club, Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

Set-up 8am - Show 10am to 4pm

Coordinator: **Tim Putman - 603-835-6952**

Show Dates **Subject to Change**...Check Newsletters for Updates. Please check schedule for errors and send up dates to Roland at: northeastntrak@msn.com Thanks for your help.

Review of the Bachmann 44 tonner by Mark Ferracane



Well, Bachmann got Lucky again. The GE 44 Tonner is Suburb. The Painting of the Body Shell is Great and the new Couplers are great. The First Run had Dummy Couplers. The unit features DCC On Board (NO need to install a Decoder). I wish more Companies made their units DCC without having to pay extra to get it. This is a great little switcher. The First run only had Three Road Names and Three colors available, Black, Red and Yellow and Yellow. The New run has a number of Prototype road names. The Boston & Maine unit is well done. The unit is NOT made for Fast Main Line Running. It would be fine switching a Factory or Small Industrial Area. The unit can pull about 10 cars on level track. All wheels pick up power and the motor is powerful. Bachmann has hit it out of the Park. They now are making a 70 Tonner that is available in 3 colors. And if it is as good as the 44 Tonner they will have another Great Locomotive! www.bachmanntrains.com The First runs Road names are: New Haven, Baltimore & Ohio, Pennsylvania, Red & Yellow, & Yellow. Second Run Road Names are: Boston & Maine, US Army, Denver & Rio Grande Western. Manufacturers List Price is \$105.00

A Western Railfan Adventure by Chuck Tremblay

For those of you who know me, I am a rabid Santa Fe Railroad fan. Living in New England, I have limited opportunities to visit my favorite prototype (or its remnants). My trips out west are generally tied to business, and the last two serious trips were in April and October of 1995.

For Christmas in 2008 my wife Sue gave me a new digital SLR and a trip out west to, as I put it, chase trains around the desert. As things would have it the trip was delayed until December of 2009 when I was able to grab my remaining vacation time, a couple free airline tickets (thanks to my frequent business travel), my new camera and headed to northern Arizona for 5 days.

Preparation:

Between work and the holidays, I had only 3 real Railfan days, plus one day out and one back. In order to make the best of my time, planning was a must. Based on earlier trips I felt that in addition to my camera, I needed extra memory cards, my laptop, scanner, and GPS. Later I (fortunately) added blank CD's to the list

I had decided that I wanted to visit as much railroad as I could from the Colorado River crossing at Topock, AZ working my way east as far as I could go in the time I had. Some Google searches led me to a number of sites maintained by people who have already explored the area. I downloaded and printed as much info as I could, especially sites with directions to get to some of the more out of the way places I wanted to visit. (Lesson 1 – don't re-invent the wheel.)

Two things that I learned were that I should get copies of the SPV Railroad Atlas and the DeLorme Atlas and Gazetteer for the area to be visited. Between the two, and the GPS, you can pretty much identify the nearest roads (including dirt) to the tracks. (Lesson 2 – Be Prepared)

Day One - Thursday

I left the morning of Thursday December 3rd for Phoenix AZ. I was going to spend the first night there with my In-laws in Sun City West and head north first thing the next morning. I had reserved a 4WD SUV and upon arrival found I had an SUV, but 4WD was unavailable. My planning told me this wasn't a problem, just a possible inconvenience. I also learned that the Flagstaff area was due for a major snowstorm the following Sunday, so I reversed my route, starting east of Flagstaff and working west. Because I had no hotel reservations this wasn't an issue (Lesson 3 – maintain flexibility)

Day 2 - Friday

After an early breakfast I was on my way north on I-17 towards Flagstaff. As you head north, you rapidly gain altitude. The saguaro cactus disappears and the landscape looks more like some of Clint Eastwood's movies set in the high desert. 2 ½ hours later, I headed east on I-40. My objective was Canyon Diablo, 4 miles cross country from Two Guns. Two Guns, is one exit east of Twin Arrows (you can't make this stuff up). Its claim to fame is that it existed once. When you get off I-40, cross over the highway and follow the road. After about ½ mile it turns to dirt, then rocks. Extra road clearance is needed but not 4WD. You can see trains in the distance, as well as the telephone poles that mark the location of the Canyon Diablo Bridge. The land is flat, if you go at night there is a distinct possibility you would drive into the canyon before you saw it.

The bridge and most of the track in this area are on the Navajo Indian Reservation. After driving around the many dirt "roads" in the area, I had given up finding the bridge. On the way out, I saw the dust of an approaching vehicle. My first thought was first day out I was in trouble with the BIA, BNSF, Homeland Security, or the local residents. Turns out it was a hunter going out to thin the elk in the area (but off the Reservation). After we talked a few minutes he said he'd lead me to the bridge, but had no more luck than I did finding it. He finally took me cross-country to a "road" that would lead me to the bridge. Turns out when I left it came out where I saw my first train!



Eastbound Near Canyon Diablo.

My first train arrived as I arrived at the fence identifying railroad property. You are immediately impressed with the length of trains out there. You just don't see trains that long here in the east.



Canyon Diablo Bridge



Eastbound Intermodal at Canyon Diablo

After a couple of trains came through I waited a while for trains that never arrived. The scanner provided 2 key pieces of information. The second train I saw earlier had broken apart about 6 miles west of the canyon, on Main1 the north track. Main 2 was out of service for track work for 2 ½ hours. Trains would be intermittent so it was time to move on. (Lesson 4 – make the best use of your time.)



Westbound Intermodal, Canyon Diablo

I headed west towards Flagstaff (and to find a place for lunch). When I got off I-40 I made a wrong turn and ended up on a dirt road that was next to the tracks. I decided to wait awhile as the scanner was picking up the beeps of an EOT device. In a few minutes the second train I saw that day came through, back together and on the move.



Westbound Near Flagstaff

After lunch, I headed into town. I spent some time in the ATSF depot which is being used as a visitor center / gift shop / Amtrak station. No trains appeared and there was no action on the scanner, so I headed for a place mentioned on one of the web sites as having a good view of the tracks and the City. It is on the road to the Lowell Observatory, although you will only notice it on the way down.



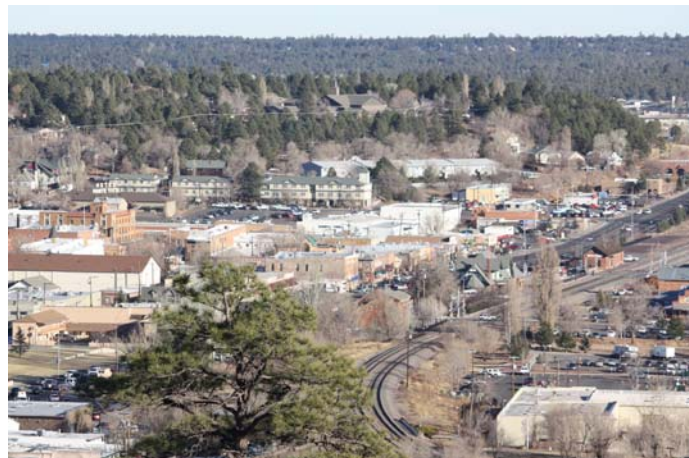
Flagstaff Station



Williams Station



GCR Facilities and Grand Canyon Hotel, Williams, AZ



Flagstaff from Mars Hill

Still lacking trains and planning to get to Williams for the night, I jumped back on I-40. Williams is the HQ for the Grand Canyon Railroad and is on the old mainline (prior to completion of the Crookton Cutoff in 1960) It is an interesting old railroad town, and has the appearance of a double track mainline town, although one track now belongs to the GCR and ends just past the station. The second track is the BNSF line to Phoenix, using the old alignment to Ash Fork.

I had wanted to stay near the tracks, but the hotels there were booked due to the GCR running their version of the Polar Express. It was interesting around the station seeing hundreds of people, adults as well as children, waiting to ride the train wearing their pajamas in the 17 degree weather!

There are still a number of bridges along the route painted for the AT&SF. This one hasn't been repainted since the 60's and when Amtrak took over passenger service "its fun to ride" was painted over. After all, it was no longer fun to ride the Santa Fe. There are also many signs along the way still identifying the property as belonging to the "AT&SF RY. CO.", 15 years after the merger with the BN



AT&SF Bridge East of Williams on Rt. 66

Day 3 - Saturday

Saturday morning was spent in Williams, but it being Saturday there was little activity on the "Peavine" to Phoenix. I took several pictures around town and moved on east. I arrived in Ash Fork and grabbed a couple pictures of some of the old ATSF facilities. In its heyday Ash Fork was a maintenance facility as well as the junction between the Transcon and the line to Phoenix.



Some Things Never Change...

There was an interesting piece of MOW equipment at Williams, a Georgetown Rail Equipment SPS, GREX 5250. It is a self propelled, articulated train of endless gondolas with an onboard track hoe. According to their web site, it can be used for ditching and handling used ties or other debris along the right of way.

<http://www.georgetownrail.com/materialHandling/sps.php>



GREX 5250



Ash Fork Water Tower



Abandoned Tank at Ash Fork

Today this is an economically depressed area, an example of what can happen to a place when the main industry leaves town. Ash Fork's current claim to fame is as the capital of flagstone production in the United States.



Ash Fork Freight House / MOW Building, Flagstone

Part of the trip was to follow old Route 66 as much as possible. Much of its route across northern Arizona was used when I-40 was constructed. Following I40 west from Ash Fork towards Seligman the old ATSF roadbed is still visible just north of the highway. The Crookton Cutoff that replaced this alignment is in an isolated area, and my research told me many of the roads were closed off in the last few years so I elected to press on westward without a visit



Rt66 Overpass



Westbound Intermodal Near Seligman, AZ

Seligman is another town that has seen better days. It is the home of the Route 66 Historical society, and the main industry seems to be catering to the tourists who follow the Mother Road.



Abandoned AT&SF Roadbed Beside I-40

On the way to Seligman, Route 66 crosses and then parallels the Mainline. There were a number of trains along the way to Seligman, this one I followed most of the way to town.



**Downtown Seligman...
(Continued next month)**