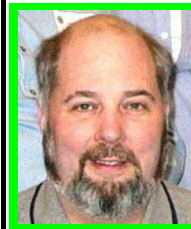


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President's Message Mark Ferracane

Well, the Lexington Show was a great success. Thanks to Bob Pawlak who is the Coordinator for this show. Well done Bob! We had a few new members at the show and I want to thank the Members who showed them the Ropes. Luckley we did not have any damage to any of the Modules. Thank God! Bob's Bridges and Canyon Module was a great hit as always. The crowd was well behaved for this show. There are always a few children who want to TOUCH! The attendance each day was OVER 850 Adults and 375 Children. WOW! We put out flyers for Our Club and two other Shows. We had a lot of people asking about our Club and wanted more information on us.

By the time you will be reading this we will have completed the Wilmington Show at the Shriners Auditorium. It was held on the 17th and 18th of March. And our final Show will be in Rochester, NH on April 15th. This show is for the Rochester Boy Scout Troop 357. The money raised for this show will benefit the programs for the Scouts. Please attend this show. We might be the only layout there so let's give them a Great Show. Next year this Show will NOT conflict with the Hooksett Show. The Hooksett show changed their show date this year. It used to be in May, so next year Rochester will be later. Till Next Month Mark

National Train Day Event South Station Boston Saturday, May 12, 2012

Amtrak will be celebrating the 5th Annual National Train Day on Saturday, May 12, 2012 at South Station, Boston. National Train Day is for people who relish the journey - not just the destination! Displays, games, children's activities, train tours, operating layouts etc., are part of the celebration. Mystic Valley Railway Society (MVRS) will be a participant in this year's South Station event. Stay tuned to www.nationaltrainday.com, local newspapers, TV news and www.mysticvalleyrs.org for further information.

National Heritage Museum Show Wrap Up by Bob Pawlak

Mark Ferracane, Bob Fallier and Bob Pawlak set up their modules and others (the yard and Oliver Fetter's module) Friday afternoon, February 17, with the help of Ron Cavanaugh and new member Rick Corkey. That made it possible for these same people to help others set up on Saturday morning. Toshi Abe, Frank Dignan, Garry Keil, Roland Kelley, and Peter Mathews were there with their modules promptly at 7:30 A.M. on Saturday for set up. Mike Walker, Geof Smith, and new member Zachary Miller were much appreciated extra hands for set up. The four-wheel cart, provided by the museum, was also very helpful. As a result, test trains had run, the tracks were clean, the curtains and yellow rope were up, step stools were in place and complete trains were running when the first guests arrived in the room at 10:00 A.M.

The layout this year consisted of a 27' x 27' square (two 3' corners and two 4' corners) which almost filled the room. (In the past, we have usually had a rectangle, junction module, peninsula, and end loop layout design at this show.) Another pair of 4' straight modules would have resulted in the maximum size layout with minimum size aisles all the way around the layout. Most of the time the Red Line was DCC and the Yellow and Blue lines were DC using one throttle per line. We also had 20' of Mountain Division track plus a reversing loop on the "Black Hole Mining Company" 4' corner to have another train moving and to help keep operators busy.

We ran long coal drags, fully lighted classic passenger trains such as the Burlington California Zephyr and the Southern Pacific Daylight, unit auto rack trains, mixed freights, a tank car train, a long string of mechanical reefers, a variety of bullet trains, an assortment of interesting European trains, and everything in between. What seemed to get the most squeals from the youngest visitors, however, was Thomas the train or his friends intermixed with the other trains. You could hear the commotion slowly circle the room as the children recognized Thomas making his way around the layout.

On Sunday new member Zachary Miller was back again, Brian and Chelsey Mathews were there with their parents, new member Ben Rosen came with his dad, Jack Brown came with his dad, and two others added up
(continued page 4)

Putting the
Intermountain 4750 Cubic Foot 3 Bay Covered Hopper
Into regular service
By Ernie Poole



This Intermountain hopper in 'N' scale has been around for a few years, but the new image BNSF 'swoosh' version recently caught my eye. I wanted a pair of unit grain trains for my layout, and I wanted them to be visually different from each other. I decided to paint and decal a 15 car train in Montana Rail Link colors, and to set it off from the other train, I went with the BNSF cars. I thought you might be interested in my experience putting these Intermountain cars into service.

The cars are very popular, and it took nearly a year to collect all 15 of them, including a BLW reservation that was 8 months in the making. The cars are a nice addition to the railroad, but needed some repairs and adjustments to look right and operate well, and that is what I wanted to share.

The hopper bodies are a typical one piece molding, with a separate roof molding. The ladders and end detail are two more separate pieces that are glued on after painting, and that is a bit of a problem since the glue often shows. Same for the roofwalk pieces that are rather fine brass etchings. When perfectly assembled, all of the fits are quite good, but perfect is not what happens all the time. Close to half of my cars needed repairs. Here is what I found.



A number of the glue joints had come loose in transit, and the assembly overall is not as carefully done as you would hope for in the first place. Cautious, one at a time attention,



allowed me to reattach the loose parts. I also noticed that the 'not so careful' assembly leaves the parts stressed, and 'trying' to pop apart in some cases. A similar situation exists on the roof assembly. Here the problem is that the roofwalks try to bulge up and break loose from their mounting points. I would guess that the dissimilar materials heating and cooling cause this malady. I found that I had to very carefully pop loose the rest of attachment points to the closet end, and then reattach with small amounts of CA. Watch out during this repair, as the see through brass etchings readily show up the glue joints.

So to summarize, the cars are now in regular service on the MRL, and they make a nice unit train. Are they in the same class with the 'best of the best'? No. Are they reasonably close? Yes, with some work. I'm glad to have them, and the unit cost is reasonable by current standards. The paint is good, the lettering is crisp, and they have Micro-Trains truck mounted couplers. Be sure to check the trip pin height, (many of mine were to low) and I think you will enjoy putting these cars into Ntrak service.

Nobody asked, it's just my opinion!

**2011-2012 NENtrak SHOW PARTICIPATION
SCHEDULE**

**April 15, 2012 Rochester Community Center, 150
Wakefield St., Rochester, NH**

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

Coordinator: Dick Brotherton - 603-767-3449
Mark Ferracane - 978-587-3669

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.

Air Ballooning Module by Toshi Abe



At Winterfest 2012 Toshi displayed his new module of hot air balloons. The balloon on the left is from the Breitling Orbiter 3 kit and the history of it is below. The other four and a half balloons are scratch built by Toshi. The module was quite popular at the show. It also has working crossing lights and bell.

Breitling Orbiter 3

Breitling Orbiter was the name of three different Rozière balloons made by Cameron Balloons to circumnavigate the globe, named after the sponsor Breitling. The first two balloons never completed the circumnavigation, while the third made a successful attempt in March 1999 thereby reaching the milestone of the first nonstop flight around the world by balloon.

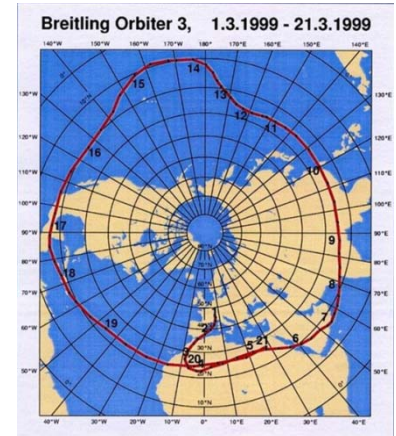
Breitling Orbiter 3 It was the first balloon to fly around the world non-stop, piloted by Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones. Designed and built by Cameron Balloons, of Bristol, England, Breitling Orbiter 3 stood 55 m (180 ft) tall when fully inflated. The propane gas that fueled the six burners was contained in 28 titanium cylinders mounted in two rows along the sides of the gondola. Concerned about fuel consumption, the team added four additional propane containers prior to take-off; these additional four tanks were needed to complete the trip.

The gondola is located at the National Air and Space Museum, on display in the Milestones of Flight Gallery, while the envelope was displayed at the Gasometer Oberhausen from 2004-2006.

Model Kit

This is plastic model kit by Heller. Scale is 1/144.

The trip Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones took off from the Swiss Alpine village of Château-d'Oex at 8:05, GMT, March 1, 1999. They landed in the Egyptian desert 19 days, 21 hours, and 55 minutes later on March 21, 1999, having traveled a distance of 40,814 km (25,361 mi). During the course of the trip, the balloon had climbed to altitudes of up to 11,373 m (37,313 ft), and achieved a maximum speed of 161 knots.



Frank Dignan's new email address:

digsx90245@gmail.com

Welcome a New Member

Zachary Miller
 176 Russell Street
 Littleton, MA 01460
trina.miller@gmail.com
 978-952-2928
 Student
 Teenager

His dad has an HO layout at home and he has run on the Amherst Belt Lines at the West Springfield show but he prefers N scale.



Video From Athearn from Winterfest2012

From Athearn. NE NTRAK appears briefly in one of the videos -- Toshi's balloons and Bob Faller (?). suggest that you click on all spots because there is a link to the Amherst Society pages and another video.

http://www.horizonhobbytrains.com/article/2354-2012-railroad-hobby-show-overview?cm_sp=RRHS2012Video_-_Homepage_-_GlamourOverlay1

(continued page 1) to a total of seven exuberant youngsters operating trains on the layout. I am sure that many of the young visitors and their parents realized how much fun it would be for them to participate in the same way.

With everyone helping until everyone else was ready to leave, we were all out and gone at about 5:10 P.M. Sunday although three modules and the club boxes had to be left in storage at the museum for pick-up later.

Attendance for the show on Saturday from 10 AM to 4:30 P.M. and on Sunday from noon to 4 P.M. was a total of about 1,800 for the two days. Last year the corresponding total was 1,595. On average there were about 2 children for every 3 adults. We seemed busier on Sunday than on Saturday with people two or three deep all around the layout. There were lots of happy faces everywhere and I even recognized some families that were there both days.

I apologize if I forgot someone in the listings of participants and helpers mentioned above.



(correction of names from the March issue) The Parade of Trains Jude's. (l to r) Matt Keiser, Frank Dignan, & John Bingel.



Correction of names from the March Issue. (l to r) John Bingel, wife Kelley-Ann. Picture on right is Sandy Ward. Sorry for the mix-up.