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# BANTRAK

# Newsletter



## *N-Scale – Realism in Miniature*



### *The Engineer's Cab*

by Mark Bandy, President

### **Rail...Road Trip**

Last weekend my brothers and I met in Ocean City, New Jersey for our annual get-together for fun, reminiscing, laughs and just catching up with things. This year, the trip was especially interesting for me. At the last train show, I purchased a book called, "The Reading Seashore Lines", by William J. Coxey & James E. Kranefeld, for my oldest brother who likes transportation history, and has a home at the "Jersey shore". Since we were in the area, I thought it might be neat if we had the chance, to search for old remnants of that railroad era. I thought this could be a challenge since the city has grown three to five times the size since the early 1960s.

The book illustrates the branch routes, towns and stations along the way from Camden, New Jersey on the west side, to the shore towns in the east on the ocean side. Also, the book explains how the Pennsylvania railroad entered into a joint venture with the Reading Railroad rather than competing with each other. There are track diagrams of important junctions and sidings which spur off of the line toward the resort towns. Atlantic City was the writer's main focus in the book, and trains still go there today.

So, I lucked out, the weather cooperated by being unruly, and my suggestion to do a little railroad searching seemed to be the best idea at the time. As the women in the club would agree, had the wives been along, we would have spent the day window shopping. We decided to venture out to find some of the railroad remnants depicted in the Reading sea shore book.

The railroad crossed over marsh lands and creeks from the west inlet side, and approached Ocean City from the south. The first station in the City was at 51<sup>st</sup> street. We stayed at 59<sup>th</sup> Street which was not far. A dirt road adjacent to cypress trees and bushes was reminiscent of a railroad line, but there were no buildings. We found railroad ties and a signal mast from an old semaphore signal. We followed the dirt road toward the marsh and the creeks to the west for some distance stopping along the way for pictures. The track road bed was still there; basically the railroad just took the rails up and left the ties. We turned around to follow the dirt road north toward the center of town to find other stations which we discovered were removed to allow for new condo building construction. The dirt road became an asphalt road around 30<sup>th</sup>



Ocean City-10th Street Station

*(Continued on page 3)*

### **NEXT UP!**

### **THE B&O/THOMAS TRAIN SHOW**

**May 2-4**

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## RIP TRACK

## INVENTION!

By Phil Peters

**W**e have all heard the old adage that necessity is the mother of invention. However, I feel undo credit is given to sheer laziness. So this month I would like to give laziness its due and credit it with solving one problem.

PLASTER! Call it Hydrocal, Sculptamold, patching plaster, Spackle, whatever you wish. We modelers all use it by the bucketful. I have visited layouts where the owner has mentioned that he has nearly a thousand pounds on the layout. Of course we put it on, shape it, carve it, smooth it. Then we paint it. As time and wear and tear take their toll, that glaring white plaster color starts to make its appearance here and there. More and more of these spots show up. More and more railroad grade crossings and road surfaces get this unsightly blotch. Finally the area needs a real renovation. Mother Nature never designed things that way.

**WE HAVE ALL HEARD THE OLD ADAGE THAT NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION. HOWEVER, I FEEL UNDO CREDIT IS GIVEN TO SHEER LAZINESS**

The best way to avoid the problem is to color the plaster base to begin with. I have used RIT clothes dyes and powdered tempera paint colors to create a plaster that has an earthen color throughout. These have been reasonably successful and gouges or dings have not been so glaring. But it seems I either forget to add the dyes or I don't have the right color, or, in the case of the powdered tempera paint additive, I have run out and can't find it any more.

The other day while I was working on the layout in preparation for an operating session, I was painting some spots with a water-thinned mix of acrylic paint. I was using a light, sort of earthen tan color. With the painting finished, I set the Styrofoam plastic cereal bowl I had the paint in down. I noticed I still had some area where I was putting in a new building that needed some plaster backfill to work the addition into the terrain.

As I measured out the plaster I wondered if I couldn't just put it in with the acrylic paint mixture to save a bowl and use the remaining liquid. Why go to the trouble of digging out a new bowl?

The result was fantastic. The material colored up exactly the same color as the acrylic paint; it penetrated the Sculptamold-like product thoroughly; and, it cost me virtually nothing! With the color of the paint on the cap of the bottle I knew exactly what color I was going to get; no guessing, as with the dye additives. And the material dried the color I wanted.

The acrylics in question are those small bottled paint products you can purchase for, in my case, \$.44 at Wal-Mart. The paints are liquid and are available in an incredible array of colors. When painting, you can either use them straight from the bottle, squirting out little dollops on a palette, or you can thin them with water and create more of a stain that penetrates plaster.

Begin by mixing up a small amount of the acrylic paint with enough water to thin it. Add the plaster mix you intend to use and mix everything together adding more water to get the texture you are looking for. If you need to add more paint it is easy to do at any time during the process.

**PLASTER! CALL IT HYDROCAL, SCULPTAMOLD, PATCHING PLASTER, SPACKLE, WHATEVER YOU WISH. WE MODELERS ALL USE IT BY THE BUCKETFUL.**



**Our Next Meeting**



Our next BANTRAK Club meeting will be held on

June 15th

Site to be determined

(Continued from page 1)

Street. We followed this road to about 10<sup>th</sup> Street and found the only remaining station, appropriately named, yes you guessed it, the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Station. Today it's being used as a bus terminal. The book provided many pictures of this station showing its transformation over the years. It shows a Victorian design with turret. It stands today with turret removed, and interestingly enough, with most of its original windows and siding detail still remaining.

Had the city not left the railroads right of way, we probably never would have found the station.

On the way home, we stopped at Tuckahoe, (also mentioned in the book), which is still being used as a division point and station for the Norfolk and Southern (Conrail), and a Historical Railroad Society excursion ride. Years ago this was the junction branch line toward O.C. and the main line toward other southern shore resort towns such as Wildwood and Cape May. The station and the signal tower have been well maintained in their original design and are still being used today. The station is a museum for visitors and the tower is used for controlling the switches for the junction. The Society appears to have accumulated an interesting variety of motive and passenger equipment.

It is always pretty neat if you are familiar with the train history of an area that you are traveling to or through, that you can get an opportunity to look for remnants of old stations and rail lines and reminisce about the old days, like old brothers do from time to time.

I took some photos to share with the group. Maybe you can find in them a favorite piece of train equipment. Enjoy.

Keep oN Trakin.

***MORE PHOTOGRAPHS ON PAGE 5***

## The 2008 Raffle Layout

By Ed Aufderheide

This year's raffle layout is beginning to take shape. It's a combination of lessons learned from past layouts and an attempt to bring something fresh to the table.

Martin and I talked a lot about last year's effort. And, I received lots of feedback from the membership. The lessons learned department provides the foundation for the starting point. Experience has taught that the public relates most to specific features such as familiar like buildings and shops, and features like rivers/lakes. They also want to "watch" their train run, they aren't interested in prototype operations. So this year's layout will again feature water, urban and business buildings, and a twice-around loop.

Experience in building past layouts has shown that elevations (i.e. over and under figure "8" loops) create unfriendly running anomalies as the train slows down running up hill and speeds up running down hill. Also, the engines are stressed a lot and become less reliable. We also found that layout designs can become too small for effective track/crossover/switch spacing. While a 32"x48" layout is nice when transported in a car to/from working sessions, it creates problems when synchronizing the curves to the transitions. So



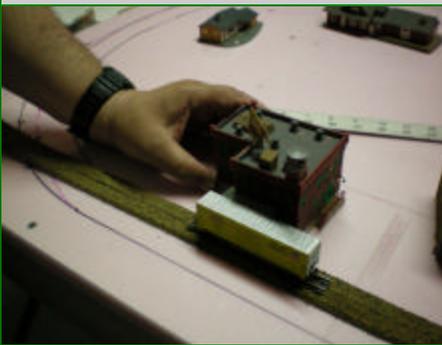
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for reliability, we will operate on one level, use new track and switches, and re-size the layout to a moderate 32"x54". For variety, we'll also keep the two siding features. And, we'll add a tunnel/overpass, a ravine/cut, and a visual dividing board to allow for two scenic themes.

To complete the design, we rely a lot on donations. I can't remember all who donated. So as not to offend, I won't try to list the names. Some like the engine, cars, power pack, etc. are great. But other items like buildings don't always work. This year we have a mix is excellent DPM structures that can be refurbished to work, but others that we'll store for another year. I'll be purchasing some structures to fill in.



We're making progress. I've held two work sessions to date during which Al DeGaudio and Al Potter participated. We're laying track and the next step will be to wire for power. Simultaneously, John Darlington and Steve VanMetre are working on the building.



We're off to a good start, but we have a long way to go to be finished by September's show date. I hope you'll be available for work sessions in the future.

### Photographs from the Past

Recently recovered photographs (courtesy of Jack Walsh) of our first BANTRAK (then GBNSA) meeting at the B&O Museum.

Boy, how some of us changed! Current members in the photographs—Jack Walsh, Harry Chavez, Jerry Mulford, Phil Peters, Bob Mohr, Ken Danneman, Ted Niznik. And Skip Hayes. The Club was originally named the Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates (GBNSA) In the early 90's we regularly displayed our layout at the

Museum, usually on the turntable. In return, the Museum allowed us to hold a few of our meetings in an upstairs office conference room.

Photographs by John Darlington (1991)



Photographs from Mark Bandy's Trip to the Jersey Shore

Signal mast at the marsh & creek area



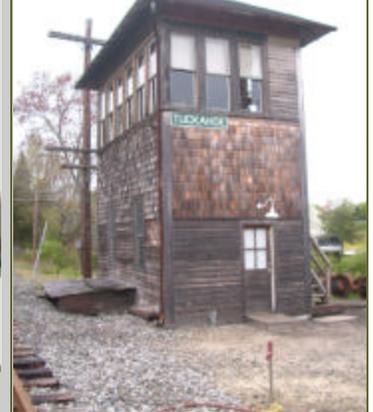
Track section at the marsh & creek area, looking west



Tuckahoe Station/Junction



Tuckahoe Signal Tower





## Camp Chase Industrial Railroad Corporation

*By Ed Aufderheide*

I'm not really into Rail Fanning, but I was visiting my family in Columbus, Ohio over the Easter weekend and these three switcher diesels caught my eye. They belong to the Camp Chase Industrial Railroad Corporation. Now Camp Chase may not mean anything to you, but if you are from Columbus and have an interest in the Civil War it means a lot. You see, I grew up on the west side of Columbus in an area called the "Hill Top". On that "hill", actually more of a raised area of the flood plain off the Scioto River, was once the military post of Camp Chase. During the civil war, the camp served as both a prisoner of war camp and an induction/training center.

It all began in response to the call for troops. On May 28, 1861, to a new military camp was sited four miles west of the city. It consisted of one hundred acres, plowed, harrowed and rolled smooth and will make a good place for drilling (that's marching for you civilians) purposes. The land was very flat recently cleared farm land with several sluggish creeks or run offs which ran from west to east in parallel of the National Road (that's US Route 40 today). It had one time been used as a Horse Racing Track, and was opposite The Four Mile House (a lodging/eating establishment). The buildings were made of rough wood planks, which stood on wooden stilts to raise it above ground. The new camp was at first also called Camp Jackson, but the name was soon afterward changed to Camp Chase, in honor of Solmon P. Chase, Ex-Governor of Ohio, and then Secretary of the United States Treasury. The camp lasted as long as the civil war lasted. Today the few indications of the camp include a local cemetery in within which 2,260 confederate soldiers are buried.

To day the camp is long gone. On its grounds are homes built over half a century ago, and the ground of my high school alma mater. However, the name Camp Chase lives on in the guise of the Camp Chase Industrial Railroad Corporation, a small, regional railroad. The line serves the factories and grain elevators from the West Side of Columbus to London, Ohio. The line owns 14 miles of track from Valleyview (near west side in Columbus) where the line connects to the Norfolk Southern Columbus to Cincinnati mainline, through Galloway, out to Lilly Chapel in Madison County. Currently, the Camp Chase interchanges directly with Norfolk Southern in Buckeye Yard, and indirectly with CSX through an NS intermediate switch move into CSX Parsons Yard. Most of the customer base is in the Columbus area with large grain facility being located at the end of the line in Lilly Chapel.

They own three switcher engines (numbers 1501, 1502, and 1504) which are painted orange, with blue writing that says "Camp Chase". I took my pictures as the engines were parked in a fenced holding area directly behind a local fire station, while my wife, Judy, purchased Easter flowers for Mom. Maybe I'll do a little more rail-fanning in the future when I'm back to my old stomping grounds.





## Railroading—A Capital Intensive Industry

By John Darlington

**W**e all know what it costs to build and operate a railroad, but have you ever wondered what the real thing costs? I read a very interesting commentary in a past copy of Trains Magazine entitled “*How much does it COST?*” by Tom Murray, and I have to admit that my eyes were opened by the facts and figures contained in his article.

Evidently, the material used was gleaned from an industry survey, and although most railroads are somewhat secretive about their capital expenditures, there was more than enough information to provide a pretty good picture of what “*Capital Intensive*” means. One of the central themes of the article centered on the rising cost of steel. There has been a general run on steel brought on by the continued industrialization of countries that were previously looked upon as “Third World”, and in this particular case, China. The Producer Price Index in the United States shows that the cost of steel has risen 72% between 2002 and 2006. This is particularly true with respect to scrap steel which feeds electric arc furnaces, a lower cost alternative to traditional “open hearth” furnaces. As an example, in 2002 a ton of scrap steel cost about \$88. In 2006, that cost had risen to over \$260 a ton. It sounds like the cost of gasoline, doesn't it? Coupled with the rising cost of raw material is the continued scarcity of steel manufacturing capacity, especially here in the U.S. All this has put tremendous upward pressure on carbuilders who made multi-year contractual arrangements with their railroad customers based on stable steel prices. This had forced some of these carbuilders and their component suppliers to go out of business thus putting even more upward monetary and delivery pressure on railroad costs. It would not be so bad if the railroads were back in the 60's and 70's and just making due, but railroads are enjoying a rebirth of prosperity due to smart mergers, the increasing costs of over the road transport, and the government's ethanol mandates that have resulted in the diversion of grain and corn products to gasoline-additive production. These two factors (steel cost v. higher freight car/engine need) have put railroads in a capital needs vice.

Most freight cars are constructed of steel, although many cars and hoppers are being manufactured with more aluminum. Unfortunately, the same pressures of the steel industry are also being felt with respect to aluminum prices. For example, the cost of a ton of aluminum rose from \$1,362 to \$1,820 from 2003 to 2005. While this increase is not as dramatic as that befalling steel products, it still represents a significant cost escalation even with light weight rolling stock. On the plus side, railroads that are replacing/upgrading their rolling stock fleet are finding that their old obsolete cars are worth a lot more on the scrap or secondary market.

Listed below are a few of these facts and figures that I picked out of the article that I hope you will find interesting:

**LOCOMOTIVES**—Class I railroads now generally purchase units with 4,000 HP in either DC or AC traction configuration. The average cost of a 4,000 HP DC unit is \$1.5 million. For an AC unit you can tack on an additional \$300,000+. BNSF reportedly paid \$1.65 for a DC unit and \$1.88 with AC traction. Used locomotives, in the SD40 and SD60 class are selling for \$200,000 and \$300,000 respectively. There is also a good market for environmentally modified switches ranging from \$800,000 to \$1.3 million .

**FREIGHT CARS**- Box cars 60 ft (\$110,000), 50 ft (\$96,000); **COVERED HOPPERS**—Costs run between \$68,000 to \$86,000 depending on capacity and configuration **GONS**— \$75,000 to \$79,000 **TANK CARS**—\$80,000 for 30,000 GAL capacity

**SUPPLIES & PARTS**—Rebuilt traction motors \$7,500; rebuilt locomotive axle \$2,300; high friction brake shoes \$784 per locomotive; oil filters \$500; draft gear \$500-\$800; Coupler \$450-\$600

**RAIL & TIES**—Standard \$900 per ton (\$35 per track foot); Hardened \$980 per ton; Wood Ties \$35 ea.; Concrete Ties \$65 ea.

**BALLAST**—\$7 per ton (it usually takes 800 tons per mile to resurface a line **LABOR**— \$15 per rail foot

**EQUIPMENT**— Average Tamper \$500,000 to \$600,000

These are only the highlights, there is a lot of miscellaneous equipment and supplies that are not factored in the above costs.

As a final example, the N&S allocated \$1.3 billion for capital expenditures in 2007, 90% of which was spent maintaining the main line trackage

The next time your wife or husband mentions how much you are spending maintaining your railroad, just tell her/him what a bargain it is!

SPIKES AND SLEEPERS

⇒ BANTRAK Club Cars—there is still a significant supply of our 25th Anniversary Club Cars available. Bob Mohr has advised that M.B. Klein's, and the B&O Museum have taken a number of them on consignment for sale. We will split the profits with Klein's, but donate the profit to the Museum. In addition, a supply of cars will be taken to the National N-Scale Convention in Louisville, KY this June for sale to the public.

⇒ THE NATIONAL N-SCALE CONVENTION—there is still time to sign up for the N-Scale Convention in Louisville. The Convention will start on June 25th and end with what is hoped to be the largest N-Scale Layout ever constructed on June 30th. A number of BANTRAK Members will be attending so if you would like to experience good fellowship, great



trains, layout tours and informative clinics, access the convention organizers at their web site

COMING EVENTS

1. The B&O/Thomas Train Show @ the B&O Museum—May 2 thru 4 -8AM to 5PM
2. The Brunswick Train Show, Brunswick, Md. May 16th thru 18th
3. BANTRAK Club Meeting June 15th Site TBA

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