



The Engineer's Cab: LeRoy Brandimore

Hello all. Hope everyone is well, especially those in the D.C. area.

As of this writing we are still in the COVID-19 lockdown. The lockdown has forced us to cancel several activities, including the N Scale Convention in late June and the NMRA convention in St. Louis in July. I read on the NMRA site that one of the main organizers for their convention had become ill with COVID-19. We wish him our best.

You may have seen this coming; the May meeting is canceled. Chris Quinlan has said he is willing to host the next meeting which would be **June 28th**.

Hopefully, you have been able to work on some of your model railroading projects, if you have the supplies or can get them. Klein's is taking over a week to fill orders and did not post the April Micro-Train release until almost May. One company in Illinois says it is taking online orders, but they can't get to work to process them.

The future is looking up. The State of Maryland is talking about lifting the restrictions, most likely in stages. The Great Scale Train Show is planning to do the show in October. So, keep well and see you soon.

Happy Modeling,

LeRoy Brandimore



T-Trak Update & Editorial: Chris Hyland

So we enter Month Three of what I like to call “The Great Enforced Vacation”. Sounds a bit better than the alternative. Almost every event is cancelled until September. This does not mean that TTrak is dormant. We have been up to all sorts of things. Even though life seems like a remake of Groundhog Day, as my one of my favorite Profs at UMUC Archive School said (now that horrid name UM Global Campus) “When there seems nothing to do, there is always housekeeping”. My old adage was that the Cool Kids got to go to Florida during Spring Break. The rest of us had to write papers...

First, I would like to thank people who took part in the Poll. Dave Clyde, Jack Walsh, Matt Whiting, Leon, thank you very very much for your input. And also a special thank you to Geren who also gave sterling advice. I wanted to hear your opinions on when you thought it was safe to come out and do train shows. Train shows and events never “just happen”. They take planning, meeting with people, more planning, and sometimes contracts. And always commitment. And pressure from people who, especially now, are looking for us as a special event to help get people in the door. And as I said, I will not risk the members of TTRAK unless you guys say so. This helped determine what our future plans are and when to start up things. For those who didn't answer, READ YOUR BLOODY EMAILS. Someday the joke might be on you when you show up as the only guest at the party or hear nothing at all.

TTrak plans so far are publicly nothing doing until the earliest probably October. I am in contact with the Capital Trackers in the progress with the Kensington event (membership has it's perks). Kensington right now is the only show that is still on the calendar before October. As the Trackers are in the driver's seat on this one, I always defer to them as to the running of the show. Given the dangerous nature of life right now, they too are watching out for their membership. At the end of the day we all want to keep model railroading for a long time in the future. As information becomes available I will share it with you. We are also going to try some non public events. We will let you know as things progress. If this occurs it will be done via the list. Stay tuned.

Which leads to the next thing. The group is looking at trying to keep ourselves as safe as possible in these dangerous times. Besides masks and probably gloves, we are also going to try and limit the visitors to just us operators. Also IT IS VITAL THAT YOU LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT YOU ARE GOING TO ATTEND IN ADVANCE!!!! If they keep the limit to a certain number, we will probably do a first come first serve basis. If you feel ill, stay at home (but let us know, please) and if you don't think it is safe, no one will fault you for not showing up. But showing up on the fly. For the time being those days are over. It is a whole new world and a dangerous one at that. A member of the S&P lost his wife to *Covid-19* at the end of April.

Now for some good news. Lots of people are doing modeling out there. The NMRA hosted what they called ConventionX. I was not able to attend due to my computer being stupid. It was a great success and had guest from all over the world take part in it. Particularly a class given by some new pals I made from the Ohio division on TTrak and its modelling possibilities. We met these guys at the Midwestern Narrow Gauge show in March last year which turned out to be a mini TTrak convention hosted by the NMRA. My pals in SMR Division have told me that there is another virtual convention being held on May 30th. It is free and they are offering classes on all sorts of subjects. You too can glue your fingers together with the best of them. Furthermore remember to point the spray gun DOWN RANGE at all times.

Other good news. Dave Clyde has come out with a new generation of power box. Haven't gotten a chance to figure out how it works, but I am assured that even a Luddite like me can operate it. Other good things. Although most hobby shops are closed to customers as walk ins, you can still get stuff. It may take longer, but things are still to be had. I haven't contacted CMR, but last I heard they were still in operation. Bernie calls me up from National Capital Trains to see how we are doing and to let us know about all the goodies that came from Japan. And I got an email from New Zealand from Ironhorse Hobbies asking if I still was interested in some cars now that



T-Trak Update & Editorial: Chris Hyland

quarantine is over way down there. Operators are waiting...

Plus if you are bored there are lots of interesting stuff out there to watch and get inspiration from. They have been showing a lot of Film Noir era movies. It is amazing the amount of train locations where they filmed things. You might even see things that are now gone forever. One of the New Haven stations that was bulldozed over in Boston during the 60's played a prominent part in a movie I sadly have forgotten the title of. *Human Desire*, which takes place in a rail yard, starring Glen Ford shows up quite a bit as well as Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* with Union Station in DC as the opening scene. Jimmy Stewart's *FBI Story* has the B&O leaving Union Station and the New York Subway when they chase the suspect (read good for nothing bad guy hoodlum) to Yankee Stadium to watch a football game (!). Plus the Sam Peckinpah's *Wild Bunch* was filmed in Mexico with

NdeM's Mugal pulling the train and that could be termed research for the Mexican modules, huh?

So how are you guys getting on with projects? Anyone get the bug and set up the Great Living Room Central out of modules yet? Although a lot of the US mags were out before things got serious, *Railway Modeller* in the UK stated that the hobby over there had actually had an increase in people attempting to start layouts or get interested in the hobby. Plus they said that this was the perfect hobby to kill the time and keep your mind occupied during the hard times that we are going through. But like lotto, you got to play to win. Get building!!!

The most important thing, though; use caution at all times and stay safe no matter what you do.

Til next month,

Chris

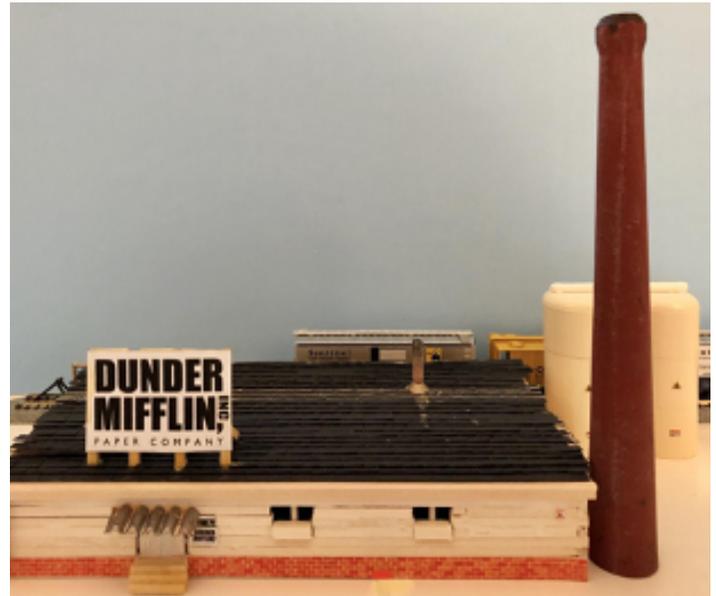


Quarantine Time = Modeling Time! : Ethan Bernstein

I hope all of you are safe and healthy, taking necessary precautionary steps and following all guidelines. One of the best components of model railroading (besides the trains), is the community and the ability to collaborate and run trains with other modelers. I have learned a lot in my first two years with the club, and have had a lot of fun too. This pandemic, however, has taken much from human society, primarily human interaction. The cancellation of the upcoming train shows was sad news for me as I am sure it was for all of you. With the closure of schools and inability to play sports and see my friends, I have gained a lot of free time. Instead of lingering on my negative emotions, I have decided to make use of my free time as best as I can, which of course means playing with trains! In addition to finally gaining some quality time with my layout, running brand new Scale Trains and Broadway Limited diesels, I have also decided to further my modeling skills through my other favorite pastime: scratch building. Having only completed two worthy scratch-built structures, I realized I needed to do some more building. So far during the past six weeks, I have completed two structures: one paper mill and one depot; as well as begun (and probably finished by the time you are reading this), a bulkhead flat car. Many of you got to see my first successful scratch build at a Timonium show about a year ago, my strip-wood-built coaling tower, for which I then wrote a How-To article in a Bantrak newsletter. I have expanded upon that technique in some of my recent scratch builds, the first of which I will share with you this month.

Some of you may have seen the comedy TV show, *The Office*. For those of you who have not seen the show, I will provide you with a brief background for my project. The show is set in Scranton, PA. in an office building for the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company Inc. I decided I wanted to build a paper mill as a small industry to expand the switching opportunities on my layout. I began the project, building the structure out of strips of wood, similar to the coaling tower I scratch built. After I spray-painted the structure, added a roof built using cut paper shingles, brick-patterned paper for the foundation, external piping, and exhaust vent, I realized I needed to add some signs and, of course, a company name printed on a billboard sign. That evening, while

watching an episode of *The Office* for at least the fourth time, it struck me: to make paper a paper company needs a paper mill. Voila! I had a name for my mill: Dunder Mifflin Paper Company Inc.*



Finished structure on my Trans-Tabletop RR (haven't gotten around to scenery yet). I weathered the structure with water color paints to make it appear old and well-used

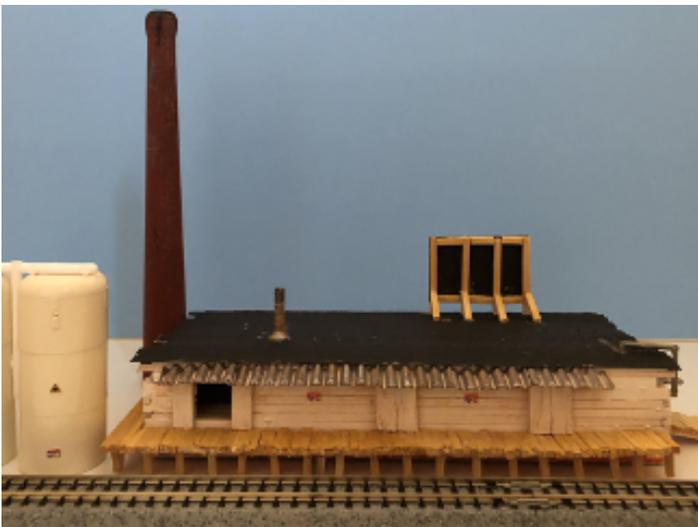
Now to the techniques of how I built the structure. The building is composed entirely from strips of wood, and the loading dock in the rear of the building is made from match sticks (without the match head of course). The brick foundation is brick-printed paper glued to wood strip. The roof consists of a base layer of strip wood for strength, topped with horizontal strips of black cardstock paper with cuts halfway through the strips to simulate shingles. The "shingle strips" are attached to the wood using double-sided tape. The building itself was spray painted with white wood all-in-one paint, primer, and sealant. The matchstick loading dock I weathered using water-color paints, which I also used to weather the building. The piping in the rear of the building is made from scrap plastic sprue, and, if you cannot tell, the roof vent is a screw weathered with water color paints. The billboard sign is made of strips of wood glued to the back of a piece of black cardstock paper, with the sign printed on white printer paper and glued to the cardstock.

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The building features numerous other warning signs, surveillance signs, and logo signs, all printed on plain white paper and glued to the building. I also built two storage tanks using small PVC pipe, with warning signs printed on white paper, as well as added a styrene brick smokestack which I found in my parts box.



Loading Dock. The metal awning is made from tile separator strips (used for installing tile).



The two storage tanks are made from small PVC pipe, the smokestack is a commercial product that I weathered.

I learned a lot of new techniques from this build which I think many of you will find interesting. First, wood glue is an excellent bonding material and is very strong, dries really fast, and can bond other materials to wood. Second, the shingling technique produced very realistic results with little tedious efforts. Third, an easy way to make “decals” for cheap is to find an image of the desired sign or logo, paste it on a Word document, resize image to appropriate scale dimensions, print, cutout the sign (the most tedious step), and attach with wood glue (yes, the letters are legible under magnification, even with an OK printer). Printing your own signs allows for a lot of customization or prototypical detailing, and makes the model stand out. Lastly, and most importantly, it is possible to make a really nice structure for super cheap. The costs of materials for the structure, excluding paint, was around \$7, with lots of remaining excess strip wood and paper. The total building time for the structure, excluding painting time, was around seven hours.

I now not only have another industry on my layout, but a great-looking scratch build that has taught me a lot of new modeling techniques. I hope you learned something from this article or at least provided you with newfound inspiration for your next modeling project.

Stay tuned for more of my scratch builds! If you have any questions about my models, please email me at epberns@gmail.com

Please stay safe, healthy, and stay inside with trains!

Wishing you happy quarantine modeling,

Ethan Bernstein

**The Office and Dunder Mifflin name credits: Deedle-Dee Productions, Reveille Productions, NBC*



Train Spotting: Leon Sorge



I believe this was taken in Nov 1981 EB from Chicago to Dc in Silver Spring. picking up my dad and mom from a trip to San Antonio Tx.

BANTRAK was founded in 1983 as the Greater Baltimore N-Scale Associates. Begun as a “round robin” group to share skills and experiences, we have expanded our focus to include participation in many diverse activities to promote model railroading in general and N-Scale model railroading in particular. Activities include participation in local, regional and national shows, meets and conventions. BANTRAK membership includes membership in the national NTRAK organization.

The BANTRAK Newsletter is the official publication of Baltimore Area N-TRAK (BANTRAK), Inc. This is **your** newsletter! Please send articles, photos, and suggestions to newsletter@bantrak.net
Editor: David Betz

BANTRAK 2020 Calendar

June 28, 2020

Club Meeting (MAYBE?)

Location: Chris Quinlan's house

June 24-28, 2020

N Scale Convention

Cancelled

October 3-4, 2020

Great Scale Show

Timoium Fairgrounds

Contact: TBD

BANTRAK Membership: Al Palewicz

BANTRAK does a significant amount of charitable activity, although we rarely think of it that way because we get pleasure out of it. When you think about it, that is as it should be with all giving from the heart.

What is our charitable activity? Our major participation is in the B&O Museum's (which is a charitable organization) Annual Festival of Trains. Our display has been a major draw for people to come to the Museum for many years, both recent and in the past. There are plenty more examples, this is just one.

Please contact Treasurer [Alan Del Gaudio](#) for more information regarding your membership status and roster questions or contact [Al Palewicz](#) with general questions.

Member Benefits:

- Sharing of your knowledge (railroading and modeling) with others of similar interests
- Access to railroading and modeling knowledge of other members
- National exposure and recognition of your endeavors in modeling
- Hands on activities: Club modules - track, wiring and scenery. Raffle layout - track and scenery Members' layouts
- Recognition as being part of a Nationally known club.

