

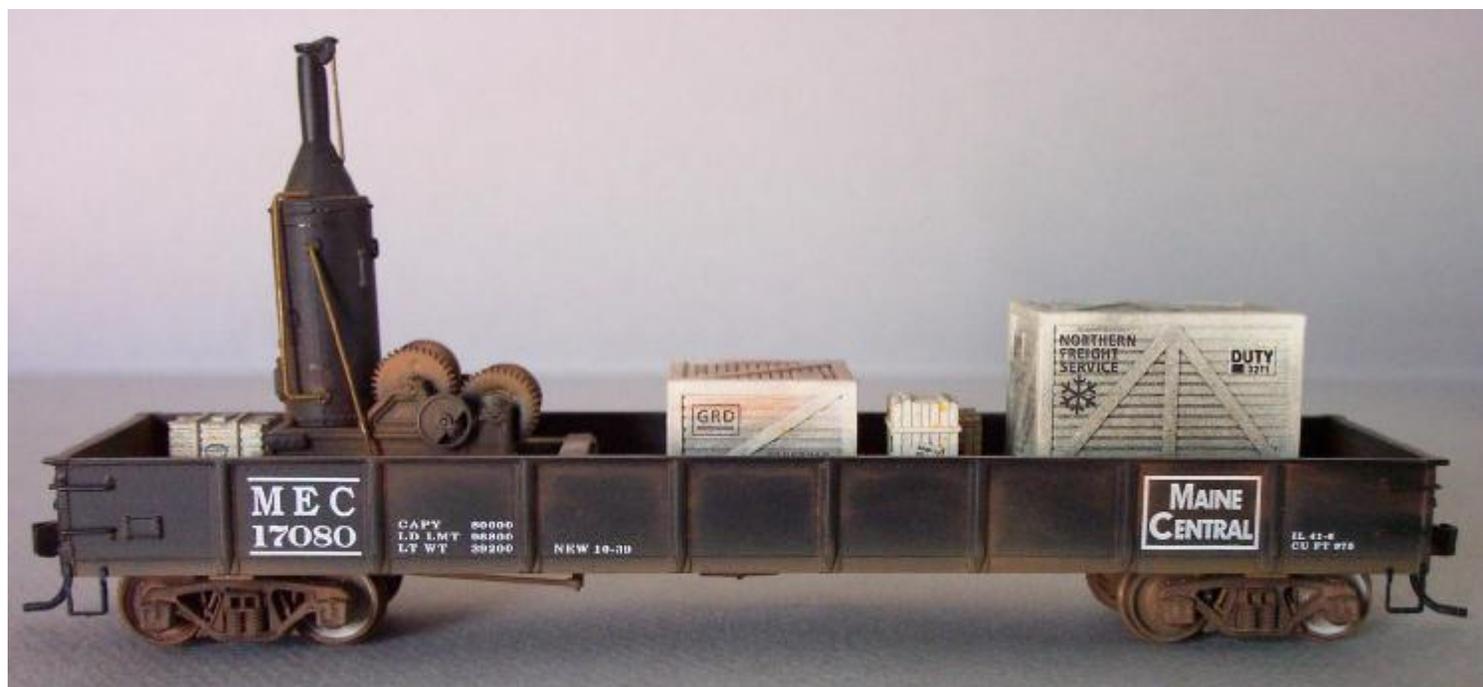
Rochester Model Rails

Dedicated to Quality Model Railroading

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AUGUST 2006



Freight car load and car weathering by Jack Matsik of Rochester New York.
See Jack's article and photos on pages 2 - 4. Digital image by Jack Matsik.

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MODELING FREIGHT CAR LOADS

by Jack Matsik

Freight car loads enhance the look of a prosperous model railroad. I believe a 50/50 split of loaded/unloaded freight cars is a reasonable goal for all model railroads. If you like, tip the scales in favor of loaded cars, as loaded cars are really impressive.

Boxcars, covered hoppers and tank cars are easy, as you can't tell a loaded car from an unloaded car. Flat cars, open hoppers and gondolas are very visible as either loaded or unloaded cars.

There are several model railroad companies today making all kinds of excellent model loads (machinery, boxed merchandise, construction equipment, various junk/scrap, vehicles, cable reels, lumber...etc.) for flat cars and gondolas. Several companies make loose coal, iron ore, sand and rock to make great hopper or gondola loads. I have found suitable period loads (vintage HO sized farm tractors, for instance) from the most unlikely source (a Hallmark store's Christmas ornament)!

Be creative; use black straws for steel pipe loads, plastic I-beam material for bridge structure loads, plastic/metal machined shavings for loose junk/scrap loads and plastic vehicle tires for a loose worn-tire load for gondolas...just to name a few.

The most important things to creating convincing loads are proper blocking/chalking and tying down your loads to prevent shipping damage. You need to use common sense to insure a load won't move in transit. I have seen many prototype pictures depicting similar loads with blocking/chalking and tie-downs done differently, so don't feel that it can only be done a certain way.

Railroads had rules to follow, but the manufacturers/shippers were responsible for properly preparing their equipment loads for transport. Blocking/chalking was done primarily with wood fixtures nailed/screwed/bolted to the wooden car floor. If the car floor was steel, steel blocking/chalking fixtures and tie-down rods were welded to the car floor. Tie-downs could be heavy rope/webbing strap, chains, rods or steel strapping material connected to the car's side pockets or special tie-down metal loop brackets installed on the railcar.

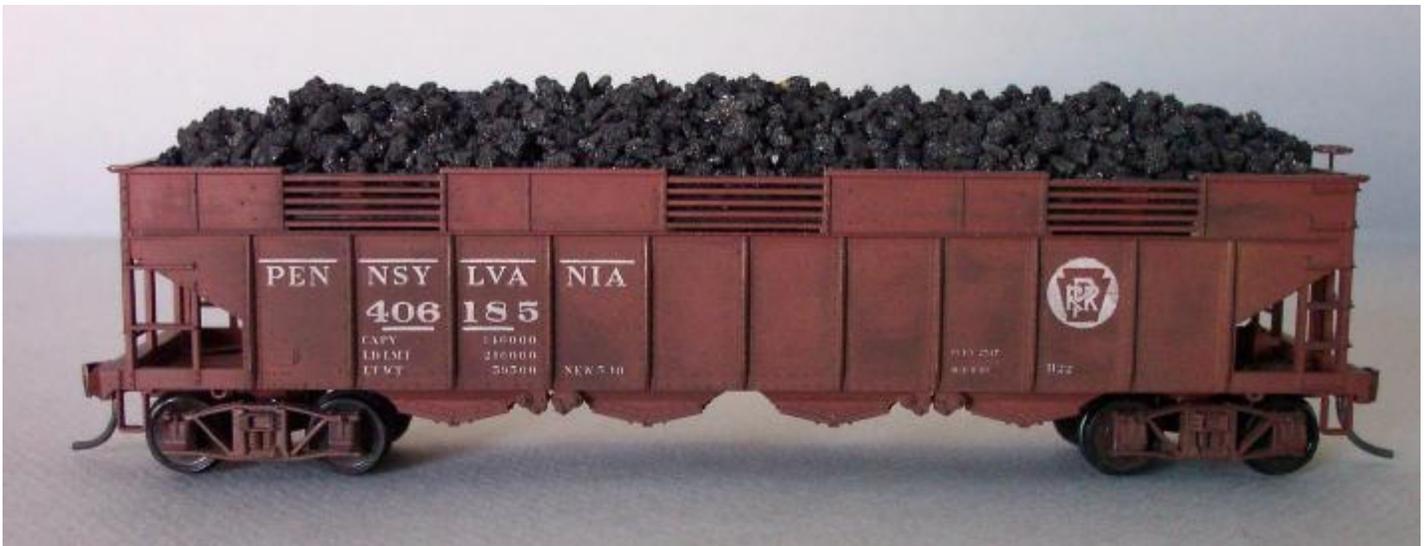
Depending on your period of modeling, choosing the proper tie-down material is important. I have not been able to definitively find the originating time steel strapping material began to be used by industries/railroads for tie-downs. I assume the 1940's or 1950's for widespread use. I have found one manufacturer's website (SIGNODE) indicating they developed the use of steel strapping in 1913 for packaging.

They also developed the first fully automatic strapping machine in 1946, revolutionizing the packaging business. Remember, iron/steel straps were initially used way back in the 19th century for barrel rings, on wagon wheels and on top of original wooden railroad tracks. SIGNODE also developed in 1965 color polypropylene strapping, in 1977 polyester strapping and in 1990 high strength polyester that replaced steel strapping in many applications. Chains can be used for all periods (include come-a-long detail to keep the chain tight). Heavy rope/webbing strap was used very early in railroading (1800's and early 1900's, probably up to the 1920's/1930's). Sometimes canvas covers were used on gondola/flat loads and were tied down with ropes to the railroad car.

See Images of some of Jack's railcars on the next two pages.



Digital images by Jack Matsik.



Next Month Part II

Installing Decoders in *Old Locos*

Part II

Clinic Given at the NMRA NFR LSD Meet in the Fall of 2005

by Dave Mitchell

Step 2: Where do I put the decoder

First thing to do is decide what manufacturers decoder you want to use. *NCE*, *Empire Northern*, *Digitrax*, *Atlas*, *Model Rectifier Corp (MRC)* and *Lenz* make decoders. *Soundtrax*, *QSI* and *LocSound* have DCC decoders that also supply sound effects.

NCE and *Empire Northern* are both located in Webster, NY so are available if you need replacements. Most decoders are guaranteed against manufacturing defects. If you hook it up wrong and have a cloud of smoke surround you, they are not guaranteed. However, I know from personal experience that *NCE* will replace their decoder that you have destroyed for \$10 if you return the bits of charcoal that you made out of their product.

Go to the manufacturers web site, or go to a hobby shop with your model. Determine the physical size that will fit into your model. Talk to your fellow modelers to find out their experiences with the different DCC manufacturers.

Now for the Installation

Steam locomotives are usually easy, as the decoder can fit into the tender. Check on brass models for braces or other items that take up space in the tender, and how they might interfere with the installation. An exception to this is the Vanderbilt tender, which may be a sealed tank. Some places

I have used are the cab roof in a road switcher, and the aisle between the seats in a gas-electric car. I have also mounted the decoder in the boiler of some larger steam engines, but try not to remove the factory installed weight. Removal of weight will affect the pulling and the tracking abilities of the locomotive.

Mount the decoder using double-sided foam tape applied to the flat side.

Determine how you are going to route the wires between the engine and tender on steam locomotives or inside the body on diesels. I would suggest that you replace the "wireless" drawbar on your brass locomotives with a hard-wired connection, as this is more reliable and will not interrupt the flow of information to the decoder when the slack goes in and out of your train. I try to put half of the wires on one side and half of the wires on the other side. I then cross the wires left to right and right to left under the drawbar so the wires do not have to bend much when the locomotive goes around a curve. Make sure when you reassemble the model you do not pinch a wire, thus grounding it.

(Always test the completed model on the "Programming Track", the programming function will tell you if there is a problem without burning up the decoder.)

Fortunately, the manufacturers are coming up with smaller decoders that are easier to find space for in your models.

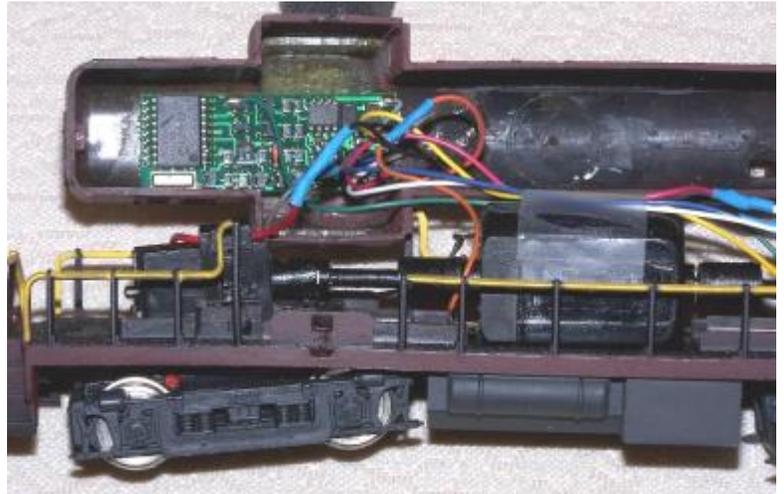
Step 3: How can I change motors

Now you have progressed to the point where you need to change the motor. What to do? First, what do you want to do? Do you want a smoother drive? Do you want sound? I will show you several examples of motor replacement.

Example 1 - AHM RS-2

This is a locomotive that I had painted and detailed for the Lehigh Valley. The problem here was that the motor clogged badly. Starting with a jump at 30 mph, I could then slow down to 10 mph. This is not prototypical!

I removed the superstructure and the motor. I used a *Micro-Mark* can motor to directly replace the *AHM* motor. The motor was mounted with double sided foam tape. I found that the motor was slightly wider than the hood. Fortunately the *AHM* casting had thick sidewalls, so I was able to grind some of the plastic casting to clear the motor. I rewired a plug-in *NCE* decoder using wires in place of the plug, and mounted the decoder in the cab roof. Empire Northern has recently released a decoder that has wires instead of the plug. This would have been easier to install if it had been available. Since the locomotive picks up from the front truck and returns thru the back truck, only two wheels on each side (4 wheels total) are in contact with the track. During programming of the decoder I set the momentum to zero, so if contact is momentarily lost, the locomotive will not stop and wait to start.

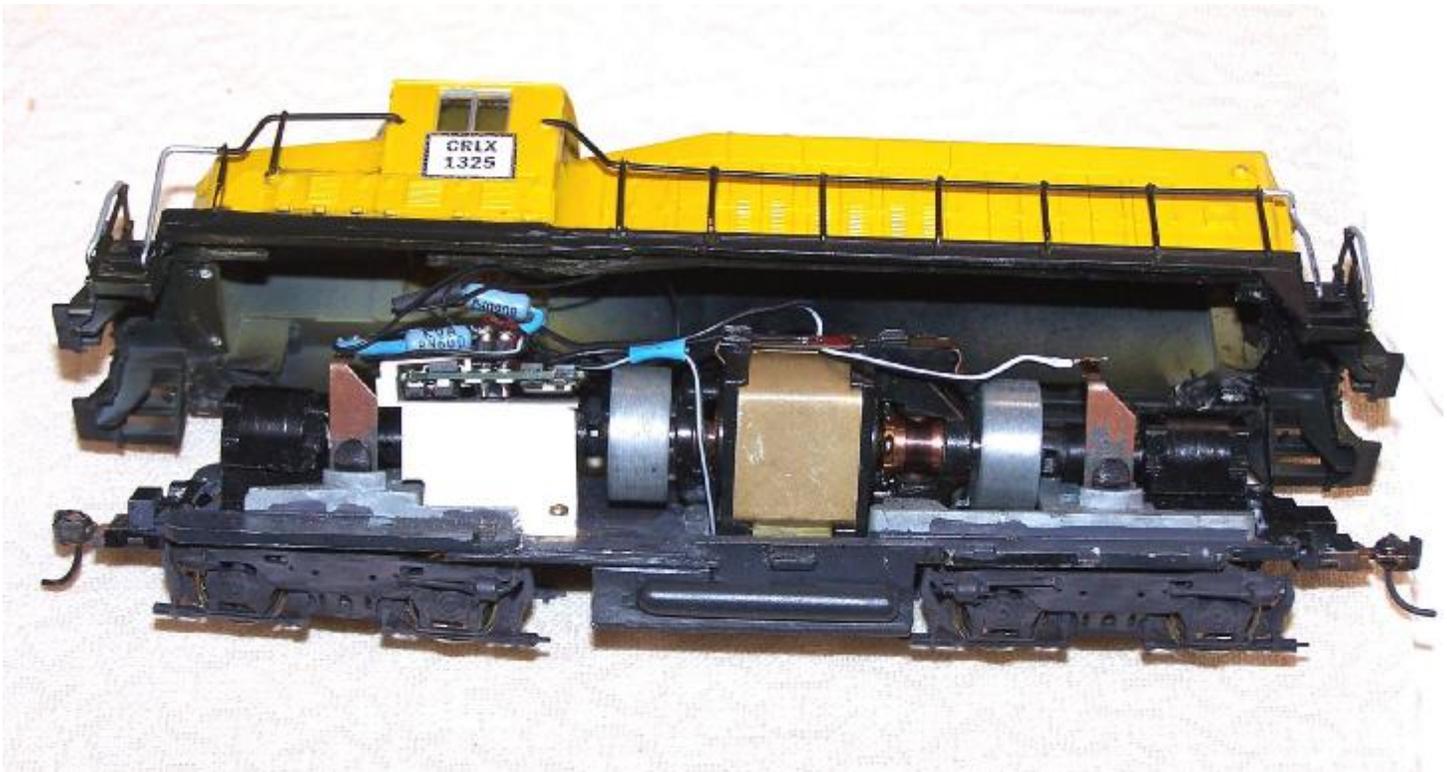


Example 2 - Kit-bashed RS-1325

I built this model of the rare prototype (only two were ever built, both went to the Chicago & Illinois Midland) back in the 1960's using a *Revel* SW-9 and parts of an *Athearn* GP-7. I liked the locomotive, but the drive was noisy, and had single truck pick-up like the *AHM* above. While attending a train show, I bought the mechanism for a more modern *Athearn* SW-1200, complete with 8-wheel pick-up and flywheels. I removed the motor and isolated it from the frame. I then extended the frame to accommodate the longer body of the RS-1325. I built a bracket out of styrene sheet and strip stock and mounted the decoder over the extended front drive shaft. Dual headlights were installed in each end and connected to the decoder.



See more photos of RS-1325 on the next page.



Next Month – Part III



Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)
OCRR@frontiernet.net

Pete writes:

I am just about ready to start building a plastic kit and am wondering if I can use dish soap to clean the plastic parts.

Doc:

Probably OK. Make sure that you rinse the parts very well to get all the soap off the parts and don't use too much soap. Use latex gloves when handling the parts after they are clean so you don't get oil on the parts from your fingers.

Resin cast parts sometimes have a residue left on the parts from the casting process. This must be removed before painting.

When painting the parts, try holding the part by the spru – the small plastic part that is left from the molding process. Some folks actually drill the bottom of the part and then mount the drill bit into clay to hold the part while painting.

When painting figures, I always glue a thin wire into one foot and then poke the wire into a piece of *Homasote*. That way I can hold the small piece of *Homasote* when painting the figure and not handle it. When "planting" the figure, I just poke a small hole in the layout and stick the wire in. This allows you to move the figure easily and also to rotate the figure on one foot to change its position as desired.

You can use *Floquil* on plastic parts if you use an airbrush and don't put too much paint on the parts. If using a brush, use *Poly S* or *Poly Scale*, water base paints.

Do not bake the plastic parts - they will melt. You can though bake metal parts in an oven at 225 degrees for 30 minutes between coats to speed the painting process.

Paint all your parts before assembly especially the window frames and small parts.

After the paint has cured (a week) you may want to spray the completed model with *Dull Coat*. This will give the model a very dull appearance.

A note on drying and curing: Some paints will be dry to the touch in a very short time. However, some may take much longer to actually cure. If you can smell the paint on the part, it is not cured.

Relative to the application of *Dull Coat*, if you want all your windows frosted, install the windows first and *Dull Coat* last. If you want your windows clear, spray the *Dull Coat*, and then install your windows last.

Stay on track ===== J

Ten Years of the RIT Model Railroad Club

Part III

by Mike Roque, Chris Stilson, and Otto M. Vondrak

FOREIGN INTERCHANGE

RITMRC has established ties with other model railroad clubs in the area and around the country. The club's members are regular operators on the Buffalo Central, the HO scale model railroad built by members of the Buffalo Model Railroad Club (<http://buffalocentral.railfan.net>). A recent visit to Boston by RITMRC members solidified ties with the Tech Model Railroad Club of MIT during an operating session on their well-known HO scale Tech Nickel Plate Railroad (<http://tmrc.mit.edu>).

In 2005, after doing a run of Accurail custom painted and printed boxcars, an interchange program was initiated with various college clubs around the country, including MIT, Penn State, and Milwaukee School of Engineering where RITMRC would exchange an R&IT box car for a car lettered for the other club's home road.

TRAIN SHOWS

To fund the club's activities, RITMRC currently produces two one-day train shows a year on the campus of RIT: the RIT Fall Train Show and RIT Spring Train Show. These shows are held in the cafeteria of the Student Alumni Union on Sundays, typically in March and October, and they feature over 80 tables of vendors and exhibitors, several modular layouts in various scales, a children's play area, and of course operations on the Rochester & Irondequoit Terminal Railroad downstairs.

The club has been successfully hosting these one-day shows for over five years. In fact, the last few shows have been filled to capacity with vendors and exhibitors. So, with an eye towards the future and the prospects of building a larger, improved version of the modules and the R&IT, as well as increased involvement in preservation and community service, RITMRC is combining both shows into a single, two-day show called the RIT Tiger Tracks Train Show on December 9-10, 2006 (<http://www.ritmrc.org/tigertracks/>).

The Tiger Tracks show will be held in the new Gordon Field House at RIT, one of the largest event venues in Rochester. Unlike the SAU Cafeteria, this 160,000 square foot space can support a larger two-day format, including up to 350 vendor and exhibitor tables, more and bigger layouts (At least one for each major scale: N, HO, S, O, and G), as well as better parking and access for the visiting public. RITMRC is already taking vendor reservations, and they are looking forward to reintroducing the two-day train show format to the Rochester area!

TENTH ANNIVERSARY CLUB CARS

In 2005, the club produced a run of 48 Accurail boxcars painted in the orange "Genesee Route" scheme that were quite well received. In 2006, the club will commemorate its 10th anniversary with another run of specially decorated Accurail covered hoppers that should be available at the Tiger Tracks train show.

FIND OUT MORE

Visitors and new members are welcome any time, just give us a call or stop by and visit. You can learn more about the RIT Model Railroad Club on their website at <http://www.ritmrc.org>. They also have a public message forum at <http://www.ritmrc.org/forums/>.



Each year, the club promotes itself to incoming freshmen and transfer students at RIT's Club Day event. Seen here with some of the tools of the trade, including new freight cars, custom painted locomotives, and a laptop computer are (from left to right): Phil Ng, Chris Stilson, Mike Walsh, Matt Dettman, Mike Roque, and Jessy Stallone. *Photo Collection of RITMRC.*

NRHS Rochester Chapter

Train Activities - 2006

This is a reminder that the Rochester Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will be running its diesel locomotives and cabooses again this year for you to ride on and enjoy. The dates are July 20, and August 17, 2006 - Thursdays. Activities start about 6:30 PM and last till dark. You and your family are most welcome to come as our guests.

If your club wants to bring a display or small layout that would be most welcome.

Please let me know if you intend to come so that we can properly welcome you. Contact: Harold Russell at 585-427-9159.

We will also begin running our trolley on July 15. (11AM to 5PM). This will be in addition to our traditional Sunday Track Car rides.

Please also do not forget that the dates for our Diesel Days - August 19 and 20, 10AM to 5PM. At this time we will be operating track car rides in addition to the locomotives and cabooses and trolley. These events all start at the New York Museum of Transportation, 6393 East River Road about 1.5 miles north of the depot at Industry.



The Model RR Post Office

Number 17 in the Series

by Norm Wright

Scott #605 of Poland was issued Dec. 31, 1953. It is a 10g violet stamp in a set of three (in different colors) currently valued at \$7 for the set, mint unused. This stamp is described as "Children at Play," with a toy steam locomotive visible in the lower left corner. It was issued both with and without perforations.



Future Articles

Resin Casting

Modeling Keuka Lake - Hammondsport

Modeling the Bath, NY Rail Yards

The Trials and Tribulations of a Large Model Railroad Club

Tortoise Installation Made Easy

Building the Lakeview Winery

Building a Large Sawmill

COMING NEXT MONTH

Jack Matsik's Car Loads – Part II

The Santa Fe CF – 7

Decoder Installation in Older Locomotives – Part III

Siegel Street Revisited

Train Events Calendar – Updated

Rochester Model Rails

E MAGAZINE

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Editor and Publisher
Richard A. Senges

Web Master
Ted Larson

Columnists
Leo Adamski
Gerald Brimacombe
Bill Carr
Fred Cupp
Jim Hutton
Betty James
Ray Howard
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Dave Mitchell
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Gary Patterson
Richard Roth
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Frank T. Smith
Gordon Spalty
Ned Spiller, MMR
David L. Thompson
Otto Vondrak
Norm Wright



www.railroadmuseum.net

Authors: Articles, digital images, and plans are welcome.

Mailing Address
1231 Wellington Drive
Victor, NY 14564

Old Issues of RMR

Web Site:
www.trainweb.org/rmr

Coming Train Events for 2006/2007

Updated 6 - 28 - 2006

- July 1 –2** **Galeton, PA** – Bark Peelers' Convention, PA Lumber Museum
- July 2 – 9** **Philadelphia, PA** – NMRA National Convention, Info: www.ij2006.org
- July 6** **Webster, NY** – **Grand Opening – new location, Empire Northern Models, 680 Ridge Road. About one mile east of the old store, across from the Farmers Market.**
- July 7- 9** **Philadelphia, PA** – National Train Show, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA
- July 3 – 9** **Santa Clara, CA** – Garden Railway National Convention, Info: www.bagrs.org/convention/index.html
- July 19 – 22** **Parsippany, NJ** – O Scale National Convention, Info: www.2006oscalenat.org
- August 2- 6** **Pontiac, MI** – S Scale National Convention,
- August 9 – 12** **Denver, CO** - N Scale National Convention, Info: www.nscollector.com/Denver_NSC.htm
- August 12 – 13** **Gananoque, Canada** - Thousand Islands Model Railroad Show, Thousand Islands Model Railroaders, Gananoque Recreation Center, 600 King St. E.
Contact: Bill 613-382-7575 or Rick 613-382-3244
- August 21 – 26** **Durango, CO** - 26th National Narrow Gauge Convention
- September 9** **Niagara Falls, NY** - The Sept. meet of the International Division of the NMRA will be held at the Niagara-Orleans Model Railroad Engineers club at Summit Park Mall, Williams RD. Niagara Falls N.Y. at 9:30 A.M. Clinics, and a Switching Contest will be held, and the clubs layouts will be open.
- September 10** **Buffalo, NY** – Buffalo Central Terminal First Train Show.
Info: www.buffalocentralterminal.org

Coming Train Events for 2006/2007

Updated 6 - 28 - 2006

- Sept. 30 – Oct. 1** **Brampton, Canada** - Brampton Model Railroad Show, Orangeville Shortline Model Railroad Club. Brampton Fairgrounds 12942 410/Heartlake Rd., Brampton
Contact: Dave 705-435-4986 or Carl 416-499-1498
- October 14 – 15** **Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada** – 20th Annual Train Show, Bowmanville High School, 49 Liberty Street North. Sat – 10:00 am - 4:30pm, Sun. 10 am - 4:00pm. Adults \$5, Senior \$4, Family \$10. Presented by the Soper Valley Model Railroad Association. Contact: Ron Radcliffe 905-987-3099
- October 20 – 22** **Parsippany, NY** – NMRA NER 2006 Fall Convention
- November 4- 5** **Syracuse NY** - Train Show and Sale at NY Fairgrounds
- November 12** **Batavia, NY** - The Great Batavia Train Show, Batavia Downs Gaming, 9:30am – 3:30pm. Donation \$5.00
- December 9-10** **Rochester, NY** – The *New and Expanded* Two Day RIT Train Show and Sale, Location – RIT Field House, many layouts displayed, largest train show in western NY.

2007

- May 4- 6** **Rochester, NY** – NMRA NFR convention. The “Flower City Flyer” event will include the usual – model railroad clinics, model contests, and layout tours. Info: Harvey McIntyre: hmcintyre4@cogeco.ca