Part of the Civil War Diorama (Union Soldiers) at the Medina RR Museum, Medina, NY. Built by Dick Senges of Victor, NY. Figures painted by Ron Walker of Rochester, NY.

The Sociology of Model Railroading – *E-mail Groups*

Modeling an Interlocking Panel – Part II

Lehigh Valley Shanty, Fish Creek, NY

Ask Doctor Dick – Using *EnviroTex*

Train Events – *Updated 2005 Calendar*

For past issues of

Rochester Model Rails

www.trainweb.org/rmr

Modeling an Interlocking Panel - CP-SK (Selkirk, NY)

by Bill Carr

Building the Tower Panel

The panel frame is constructed from 1"x4" pine and has a panel face and back made from 2' x 4' sheets of 1/8" *Masonite*. The bottom frame member is bolted to a heavy 2' x 4' table made from 2"x4" and 1/2" plywood covered with 1/16" masonite. I added large handle grips on the ends of this table for transportability.

Next, I constructed a full-sized template using a large plain sheet of drawing paper. This drawing would be used in transferring the track diagram and the location of drill holes for mounting several components such as LEDS for signal repeaters, block occupancy, and position indicators, as well as levers, code push buttons, and rotary switches.

Using Rix Products CTC Panel Components, I sprayed the plastic lever plates in flat black. Then, using 400 grit sandpaper, I softly sanded off the black paint on the raised portions of the lever plate. This brought out the details of the edging and lettering. Applying the supplied numbering decals created an authentic looking metal number plate. These plates are placed behind the supplied levers that attach to the shafts of two- and three-position rotary switches used for turnout and signal control, respectively.

The panel "inputs" into the interlocking mechanism consist of wiring twenty (20) Turnout levers, four (4) diamond-protecting signal levers, ten (10) rotary switches, and thirty-four (34) push buttons, one for each of the previously mentioned items. "Outputs" consist of over 200 LEDS on the Panel Track Diagram for reporting block occupancy as well as turnout, signal, and traffic request lever positions.

The Panel is interfaced with a computer running in DOS mode, which supplies the logic for the interlocking process. The hardware interface is comprised of the C/MRI (Computer Model Railroad Interface) designed by Bruce Chubb in the early 1980's and recently upgraded. The Tower Panel connects to one of five (5) C/MRI Input or eight (8) Output Cards located in a C/MRI motherboard on the backside of the Tower Panel. The C/MRI motherboard also houses a controller board with a RS485 five-pin connection. A five-pin cable is strung between the controller and a RS232-to-RS485 conversion board. The 3 pins on the RS232 side of the conversion board are connected to the computer's RS232 port. This basic set up is described by Bruce Chubb in the four (4) part "Signals Made Easy" series in the 2004 Jan-Apr MRR magazine issues. There is a similar motherboard with input and output cards located under the 4 train table modules supporting the connections to diode matrix cards, signal heads, and block detection input cards. The computer connection between this track side set of electronic modules and the panel's controller is the same five (5) wire daisy-chained RS485 cable. Overall, the computer reads the panel and trackside input, calculates signals and turnout requests, and then outputs the results back to the interface cards that effect changes at the panel and at trackside. This happens at approximately 5-10 times per second depending upon the size of your program, number inputs, number of outputs, and baud rate speed of the RS232 connection, and the computer speed.

Next Steps

Currently, the panel is not connected to my 4 modular train tables that make up CP-SK since each still need some additional cabling.

However, to test the function of the Tower Panel, I wrote a small program module, inside the main interlock code, to simulate the running of a train through the interlock when routes are set up and locked successfully. Recently, I hosted the Rochester, NY-based TNG (Tuesday Night Gang) to demonstrate and test the panel by having members perform the operator functions and pass trains through the junction. The CP-SK Tower Panel passed with flying colors. I'm anticipating by the fall of 2005 to begin taking the Panel and 4 tables "On the Road" to local train shows to demonstrate Interlocking/CTC type functions, something I've not seen at shows in the past.

Rail Fanning Selkirk

RailFan's Guide published in April 1994 issue of RailPace is an excellent guide to seeing the Selkirk Yard in action. Selkirk, New York, is located just off the Selkirk Exit of the NYS Thruway which is the exit going south from Albany, about 9 miles, and just before the exit to the Mass. Turnpike connector. There are 4 bridges that pass over this yard and CP-SK that allow picture taking without being on the property. Take a few minutes on your way to the next Springfield Model Railroad Convention to see lots of prototype action.

More Information

Additional information on the C/MRI can be found at Bruce Chubb's web site, JLCenterprises.net, as well as a Yahoo Users group called CMRI_USERS. Bruce originally published the C/MRI in the 1985 MRR. Each month of the MRR 1985 series had included specific articles on building and connecting the C/MRI. Information on Bruce's later designs was published in his Signals article series in Jan-Apr, 2004 MRR.

Bruce sells detailed user and application manuals for interested individuals and groups. Additionally, Don Woods of EaseeInterfaces provides high quality pre-assembled, RTR boards and components using Bruce's pre-etched electronic boards as well as the boards and parts kits for those inclined to tackle soldering. I chose a mixture of pre-assembled items and kits to lower cost and speed implementation of this very enjoyable, satisfying, and rewarding project.

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Sociology of Model Railroading

Part 4 - E-mail Lists and Forums

(Abridged Edition)

by John Bruce

An innovation in the hobby that has come with the Internet is the rise of e-mail lists and forums. Among the most popular e-mail lists are those found at Yahoo Groups, but others exist hosted by other value-added providers, as well as on independent servers. A forum differs from an e-mail list in that all messages are posted on the server and are viewed by visiting the site, rather than by receiving broadcast e-mails. A popular forum site is Trainorders.com. There really hasn't been a form of communication like e-mail lists or forums before the rise of the Internet; the closest equivalent was round-robin letters, in which each correspondent added sheets to a group letter that was re-mailed in sequence to a list of participants. This, of course, was slow and unwieldy. It was used, however, by model railroad pioneers such as John Allen and others to develop techniques that we now regard as standard for model railroad operation.

Clearly it's useful for a group of people whose interests focus on a common subject to exchange views on a real-time basis. If the information is complex and technical, doing it in writing will be more productive than a conference call. The rationalistic assumption would be that such an activity would be most productive if all members of the group are at an approximately equal (and relatively advanced) level of familiarity with their subject area, though necessarily some members will be better-informed in particular fields than others. Each member can then expand her knowledge of the subject by using the contributions of the other members, while providing her own contribution to the group from her specialty field. As one hobbyist put it, "nobody knows everything, but everybody knows something."

This assumes an egalitarian model, where each member has equivalent respect for every other member's specialty knowledge, as well as a shared view of the common goal of the group. It's possible to imagine ways in which such an egalitarian-cooperative model could break down. A central problem is that each member feels he has an equal claim on every other member's attention, and his opinions are of equal merit to every other member's. The result is likely to be trivial, disorganized discussion, or variations on bullying, which I will go into below.

Considering all the factors that can make a group's focus, productive discussion, and fellowship a fragile thing, it's amazing that many such groups' function as well as they do. The ingredients for success include strong, yet tactful and subtle leadership, as well as general good will and good judgment on the part of all members.

However, there also appear to be clear ingredients for failure on the part of e-mail groups and forums. Past a certain point, it appears that groups can be too large to be successful; in the case

of model railroading Yahoo! groups, this number seems to be in the 1000 range. If the group is in an area that's being promoted by the hobby magazines, such as layout design or operation, it may attract too many wannabes. Too many members may result in too many messages. The most popular lists can generate hundreds of e-mails in a single day, a potential technical problem for many people's in-boxes. (It's also plain that some participants receive group messages primarily at work, and reading hundreds of messages and actively responding to many of them during the work day is likely to have bad effects on work performance.)

The biggest sign of failure is flaming, public attacks against group participants, usually involving character assassination. Regular flaming in a group is a failure of leadership, since most e-mail groups and forums have the technical capability of banning users who don't adhere to basic guidelines. Every dog, as they say, gets one bite, but once a group leader recognizes a flamer, it's the leader's failure if that individual isn't banned. Yet flaming is very common on e-mail groups and discussion boards.

Mail bombing is, I think, a more serious abuse than flaming, less common on model railroad e-mail groups and forums, but it happens. This involves sending unwanted and abusive e-mails to the individual's personal e-mail address. The good part of this abuse is that, even if a group leader is unwilling to ban a flamer, you can contact a mail bomber's ISP directly, and such a complaint may result in the mail bomber's own Internet access being cut off.

I've also seen cases where individuals who participate in e-mail groups or on-line forums from work have sent me mail bombs from their employer's servers (this is evidenced by the sender's address showing as something like joe.blow@employer.com, where "employer" is a recognizable corporate name). Corporate information security policies typically specify that use of corporate computing resources is for business purposes only. Some amount of surfing the web during slow time at work may be tacitly allowed. However, I've seen one specific corporate policy prohibiting participation in non-business forums using a company e-mail address. And sending an abusive e-mail to a private individual from a corporate server, using a corporate e-mail address, is reckless activity.

Every domain is required to have an active "abuse" mailbox where such behavior can be reported. Anyone who receives an abusive e-mail from a corporate e-mail sender is entitled to forward that e-mail to the address "abuse@employer.com". I've probably received three or four such e-mails over the years. I always reply to the sender that his e-mail is likely to be a violation of corporate policy, and any further e-mails will result in my forwarding them to the "abuse" mailbox at his employer. Only once have I had to follow through and forward the e-mail to the "abuse" mailbox. (Interestingly, the individual whose e-mail I had to forward then began posting indignantly on the forum complaining about what I had done. The reaction of those on the forum was nearly unanimous that my doing this was completely out of bounds, since it could get the individual in trouble with his employer. Apparently the prevailing view on such forums is that bullying and abuse, including mail bombing using an employer's computer, is acceptable, or should be tacitly permitted, and any effective reaction to it, after a clear warning, is out of bounds. This situation has led me to question the overall level of maturity and realistic thinking among many forum participants.)

Flaming and mail bombing, it seems to me, are forms of bullying. The UK and Australia seem to have a much clearer understanding of this subject, perhaps due to general awareness of a bullying culture in their schools. Bullies are thought to exist in traditional English boarding schools largely because they are useful to the school administration in keeping the students in line. Ordinary discipline can be left to the bigger boys who are willing to dominate the smaller ones, and there's less work for the teachers. The difficulty, of course, is that petty jealousies, cronyism, corruption, violence, and even sexual coercion go along with the bullying, but are conveniently ignored.

In this interpretation, a flamer who is tolerated in a group or forum is performing a function that the group's leadership finds useful. The clearest case, as the example I linked to above suggests, "is sometimes directed at unwitting but opinionated newbies who appear in a newsgroup". It's much easier for a leader to let a flamer deal with a beginner who commits an obvious *faux pas* than to handle it tactfully and helpfully. But flamers are also useful for defending the prestige of the leadership and favored group members, and indeed for ensuring that only an accepted range of opinions is given in posts.

At worst, if a member stands up to a flamer and challenges him either for an unsupportable opinion of his own or for flaming in violation of established guidelines, the owner/leader (or his trusted designee) will ban the dissident -- for flaming, of course. Flamers are also useful for inconsistent enforcement of off-topic posts. For some reason, a number of model railroad e-groups discuss Krispy Kreme doughnuts in addition to the stated topic. Ordinary members who make off-topic posts on most subjects are flamed. Leaders and favored members who post on Krispy Kreme doughnuts are not flamed.

My experience and observation have been that, on groups or forums where flaming is tolerated at all, the group owners or forum proprietors are complicit and allow it to exist. Here's what I think is a typical situation:

- A flaming episode occurs: in other words, John Doe makes a post that reads along the lines of "That last post from Joe Blow just demonstrates he isn't taking his meds. He is a total jerk. He needs to see a shrink. I don't know why we allow him to post here."
- Joe Blow makes what I think is the appropriate response and e-mails the group owner or forum proprietor off list: "Did you see the post from John Doe at 3:40 PM on Tuesday? I think it violates the site guidelines, which prohibit abusive remarks against other members. Can you do something about it, like warn John Doe or delete that post? In fact, I've noticed John Doe makes a lot of flaming posts like that. Shouldn't he be banned?"
- The group owner or forum proprietor responds after some period of days: "I read your e-mail from last Wednesday. I was at work when that happened. Do you expect me to police this list all day and all night?"
- Joe Blow replies, "No, but shouldn't you take some action now that you know about it?"
- The list owner or forum proprietor hedges and retreats among various excuses: "That was last week. How can I do something about it now?" or "I don't see how that was flaming. He was just expressing an opinion. You're seeing something that isn't there." or "Didn't

you notice that 28 other members agreed with him? Maybe you shouldn't have said that the moon wasn't made of green cheese. You can only expect people to respond to something like that they way they did." And so forth.

The bottom line is that where flaming exists, it's probably because it's tolerated and even tacitly encouraged by the leadership. When this happens to me, I leave the group or forum, because the aims of the group appear to be to maintain a social pecking order where a usually very mediocre high-status group gets to abuse those they feel are beneath them. Hobby related fellowship is secondary to a few third-rate guys getting their jollies. Life is too short for this.

Electronic groups are at their worst if they have to deal with controversial subjects. In fact, a tendency toward rigid conformity is the other potential downside of electronic groups. This manifests itself in messages that can continue for days on a single, obscure topic, doing every possible detail to death. I think the reason for these sometimes maddening threads is that members appear to want to participate in the discussion and want to appear knowledgeable, but are too timid to initiate new topics, and indeed too timid to contribute in any but the least consequential way to existing topics. The penalty for misjudging one's contribution in this way is, of course, flaming.

One finds a certain bias toward the non-controversial and the trivial on forums as well as e-mail lists. A check of one such forum, for instance, the [trains.com Model Railroader General Discussion,](#) shows topics ranging from "How old are you?" to "Are you a member of a club?" to "Model railroading and my brother-in-law's wedding." There may be some specific threads regarding technical issues relating to specific hobby products, but very little in the nature of "what are we trying to do here, and are we succeeding?" Topics that may appear to address this, such as "How can we attract more young people to the hobby?" usually don't stray far from non-controversial remarks and conventional wisdom ("interest in the hobby is declining, there's nothing we can do.") As with e-mail lists, there is probably considerable peer pressure in forums to avoid truly maverick opinions.

I've read discussions of abusive family situations where there was a "walk on eggs" atmosphere, a sense that any slight misstep could trigger an extremely unpleasant reaction. Groups where flaming is common seem to have a similar ethos. As a result, I think that flaming, threads that go on and on over trivial issues, or a feeling that normally reasonable opinions will not be accepted by key members of the group are all signs that it's not worth participation. An atmosphere where flaming is excused because the victims "had it coming" is also classically abusive. Clearly the best solution is for individuals to understand that participation in such a group is less valuable than a sense of integrity and peace of mind.

I'm currently a member of some groups that approach my theoretical 1000 member limit, but the discussions are uniformly courteous, and epidemics of trivial and repetitious posts on a single subject are relatively infrequent. (I don't want to identify either good or bad examples for fear of upsetting equilibrium.) Clearly there are variations among groups, and this is probably a testament to the effects of good versus bad leadership, as well as to the good effects of tactful and intelligent key members.

Membership or participation in an e-mail group or forum can be a rewarding way to get information and experience good fellowship. But if we want to advance the status of the hobby, we need to be concerned with maintaining a high level of courtesy and mutual respect. We should withdraw immediately from groups that do not enforce a high standard of conduct on all members, and we should insist that our leadership maintain such standards. We have both the right and the responsibility to report anyone who sends unwanted, abusive e-mail to their ISP, and if the e-mail contains actual threats, to law enforcement. Hobby activities should not need to concern themselves with this kind of behavior.

That said, forums and e-mail lists are clearly not good places to try to express strongly dissenting opinions or controversial viewpoints, due to peer pressure among all participants to adhere to received opinions and the likelihood of "enforcement" via bullying tactics. It should also be noted that all such forums have a bias in favor of talk and against doing things. Other forms of web-based opinion, such as blogs, may be more effective.

Commercial On-Line Forums and the Image of the Hobby

While flaming and other abusive behavior are common to both e-mail lists (such as Yahoo! groups) and on-line forums, on-line forums present an additional problem for the hobby's image, because they're more visible and can be found by members of the general public via search engines. Flaming or bad language in an e-mail group is at least limited to a small audience that might know what to expect. This isn't the case with forums, where the general public may expect, but not necessarily receive, family-friendly content on a model railroad site. The absence of a small number of objectionable four-letter words in and of itself (though there's no guarantee of this) doesn't mean the tone of discussion isn't frequently vicious, and not the sort of thing children should see.

There's another problem on many lists, and that's the remarkably low level of literacy in posts. It's very common to see, for instance, phonetic spellings of what I would call "uneducated speech" -- for instance, "I've been workin on this year model engine", "I got a Athren kit", and so forth. I have vivid memories of elementary school in a small New Jersey town, where teachers in the first and second grades were assiduous in getting students to avoid saying "this here", or making sure we said "an" instead of "a" in front of a vowel. The level of elementary misspellings and phonetic representations of speech patterns that suggest a lack of training in the early grades is a feature of on-line forums that I simply find discouraging. Many participants are simply

semiliterate. I would assume that conscientious parents would not wish children to be exposed to this kind of an example in self-expression.

Add to this the fact that one of the worst forums in this area, Trainorders.com, charges money for members to participate, when there are many free forums available. In fact, it puzzles me that semiliterate posts of the sort I've described are almost the norm on Trainorders.com. (A quick search turned up this one on the front page of the model railroad forum on that site: *"is the yellow that is used by both kato and atlas on there sante fee war bonnets the corect coler or is it to orngish i am refering to units that would be fresh from the paint booth thanks in advance for your answers"*. Another poster then answered, *"I have a atlas gp 38 and a kato gp 35, the paint on them is a little off becuase kato painted the blue first, so the yellow is dark. Atlas paint the yellow first so it is a true yellow. But as far as correctness goes, it really doesnt matter becuase different shops painted with different shades of the yello and blues."*) One possible explanation would be that the forum members, who are currently paying \$29 per year for the privilege of posting there when many other forums are free, are a self-selecting group of uninformed consumers, or "suckers", similar to those already discussed in relation to train shows.

The Trainorders.com forum was at one point acquired by Yahoo!, with the forum's host apparently taken on as a Yahoo! employee. Trainorders was, however, dropped by Yahoo! in fairly short order, I believe at least in part because the bad atmosphere, bad language, and semiliterate posts appearing under the Yahoo! trademark were simply unacceptable to the company.

In an attempt to clean up the posting environment, Trainorders.com instituted reforms designed to keep children from signing on and posting, but the continued low literacy level of the posts only reinforces my sense of the odd nature of the population that frequents that and other forums. I'm also somewhat distressed to see frequent posts on all such forums where visitors discuss upcoming exploitive train shows with great enthusiasm. Forums are in many ways a way for the least-informed, least-educated strata of the hobby to reinforce a set of generally dysfunctional attitudes. Often the questions posted in forums are of the sort that could be answered via a simple Google search, or by purchasing and reading a hobby magazine. This suggests that many forum visitors lack a certain level of basic initiative, even if they're well enough off to pay exorbitant prices for forum membership or train show admission. It hurts all of us for this behavior to be so prominently visible.

There's an incentive for commercial web sites to include forums, since the visitors update their own content, and frequent return visits to view the updated content contribute heavily to the commercial site's traffic -- thus allowing the site to eke out an income from advertisers. But it's not in the interest of the commercial site to spend time (which is money) paying much attention to what happens on the posts. Thus flaming, bad language, and a vicious atmosphere are common, and are not dealt with by the moderators until the situations are well out of control.

As with train shows, I think commercial on-line forums represent a situation where bottom-feeding commercial ventures are damaging the image of the hobby. I'm puzzled, though, that established hobby businesses like Kalmbach Publishing with the Trains.com forums, and Atlas with its model railroad forum, contribute to the problem, since they are investing considerable

resources in hardware, bandwidth, and administrative overhead to provide "free" content that brings in no direct income. In fact, since some portion of what hobbyists now pay for Kalmbach publications or Atlas products pays for these forums, I think hobbyists should begin to question the price level of those companies' products in this light. I've both experienced and heard of an increase in quality assurance problems with Atlas products lately, for instance -- could the staff time and investment Atlas currently puts into its forums be better spent upgrading its quality assurance procedures?

It seems to me that Yahoo! made a correct corporate decision in deciding the typical content and behavior of a model railroad on-line forum simply didn't fit its corporate mission. I am waiting for Kalmbach and Atlas to reach similar conclusions. In fact, a recent post on the Atlas forum raises questions for me on what purpose some frequent posters think such a forum serves:

> *. . . those of us who have been around the forum for a long time have all seen quite a few members drop in and make a single posting - often taking wild shots or making personal insults directed at another poster or defending somebody that a negative comment was made about - and then never seen another posting from them again... We've also seen many new forum members drop in and then become long time valuable contributors to the forum. It's sometimes tough to tell which type a one posting member is at the start so some are suspicious of them.*

> *In this day of multiple e-mail names and accounts (most of us have at least three accounts somewhere) and the ease of setting up new accounts and quickly making a new Atlas forum name, there is always going to be some suspicion of those posters who haven't been around for long or don't have many posts... Maybe it is unfair, but it is something that can easily be overcome by the new posters staying around long enough to gain people's trust.*

Apparently this individual seems interested in assuring himself, and other long-term forum participants whose agreement he appears to assume, of the "trustworthiness" of new posters. The individual isn't a forum moderator, but seems very interested in assuring himself that the forum membership is somehow not "suspicious". (On his post, the forum software indicates he himself has posted on the Atlas forum well over 2500 times.) Earlier in his post, he enumerates

> *The Atlas forum now has about 484 pages of member names (I will use the term "member names" because we all know that there are some people who post under or have more than one member name) at 15 member names per page. That is roughly 7200 member names. Of those member names about 174 pages (roughly 2600 member names) have never made a single posting...*

> *Of those member names about 58 pages (roughly 850 member names) have made only one single post and then disappeared, and another 73 pages (roughly 1100 more member names) didn't stick around long enough to make more than 5 postings. . .*

And so forth. On one hand, this individual seems headed irretrievably toward establishing some type of political police mechanism, to ensure that these thousands of forum members are above "suspicion" (exactly what they're "suspected" of is never quite clear). On the other hand, it bothers me more and more that some part of what I pay for every Atlas product I buy is supporting these thousands of forum users and their variously trivial, suspicious, or actively destructive posts. I'm very sorry that Atlas is, at any price, providing a platform for this kind of seriously weird perversion of the hobby.

It occurs to me that one service a group like the NMRA might perform would be to offer a "ratings" system for forums similar to the US film rating system. The rating could be based on criteria such as overall family friendly language; a subjective judgment of "atmosphere" based on flaming, cliquishness, and courtesy; an objective judgment of usage, grammar, and spelling to be found in posts (a family-friendly feature for children); a judgment of content level (beginner, intermediate, advanced); and an overall judgment of the moderators' willingness to be proactive and even-handed in deleting offensive posts or banning troublesome members. One suspects this would be too useful a development for the current NMRA leadership to consider.
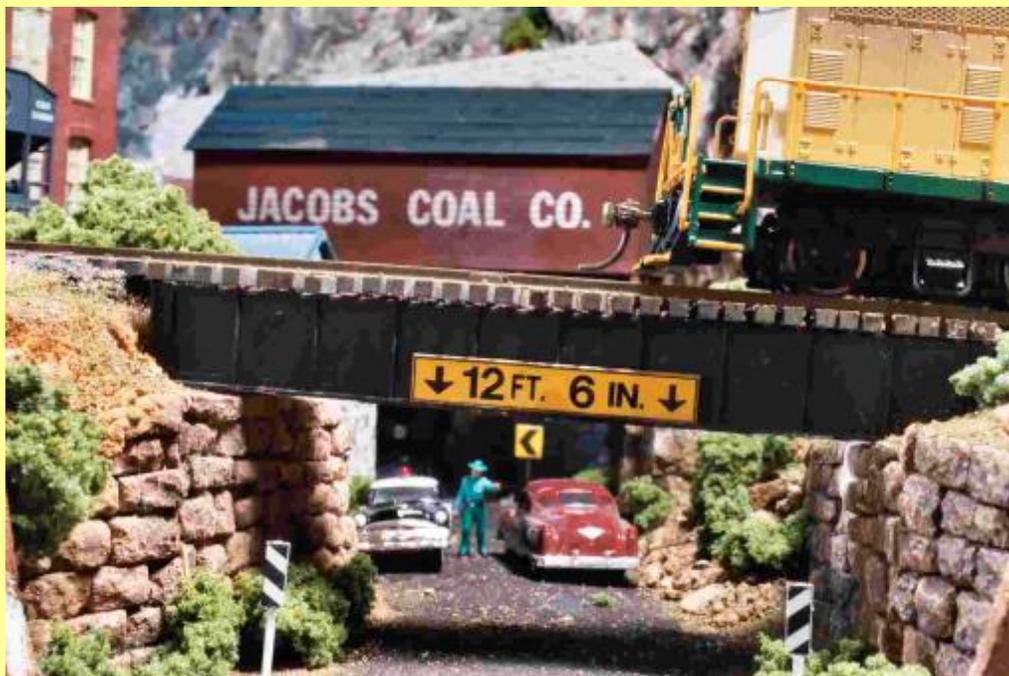
Next Issue – Part 5

Modelers' Meets

John Bruce's Model Railroad

Los Feliz and North Western Railroad

www.trainweb.org/lfnwfan

Lehigh Valley RR Shanty - Fish Creek, NY

by Lincoln Pinn

Outside the Medina Railroad Museum in Medina, NY, you will find this neat little shanty. Originally, I thought it was NYO&W heritage but correspondence with Joe Bux, their historian, confirmed it was not.

Marty Phelps, the director of the Medina RR Museum, believes it is Lehigh Valley and came from Fish Creek, NY. This is most likely the case. The Lehigh had a branch that used to run to Sylvan Beach in competition with the O & W. Around the time of WWI, both railroads ran numerous picnic excursions to the town on the eastern shore of Oneida Lake.

We know from inspection the building that it contained a toilet. The remaining space could have been for storage or a crew shelter during rainy weather.

In any regard, it would make a good addition to your model railroad. It was measured during a Lakeshores Division's visit to the Museum in 2003. See the dimensions on the next page.

Lehigh Valley RR Shanty - Fish Creek, NY

by Lincoln Pinn
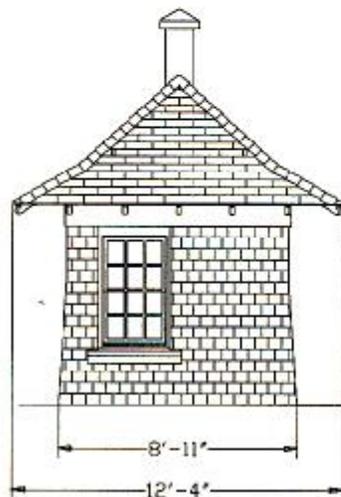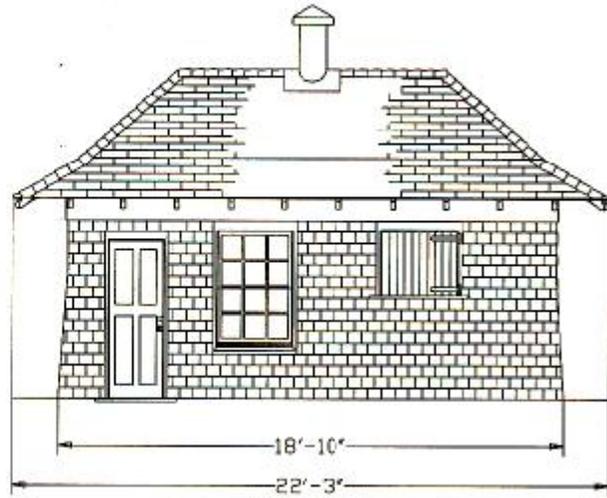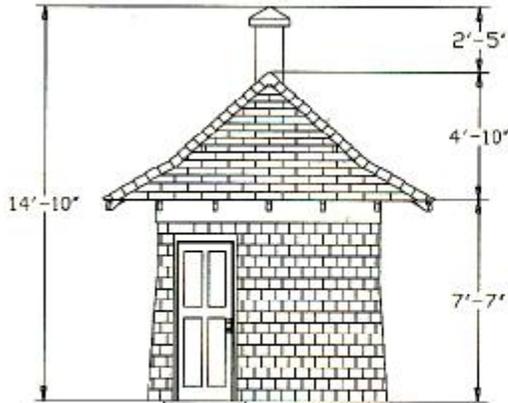
Ask Doctor Dick (The Scenery Doctor)

OCRR@frontiernet.net

Hugh writes:

I am working on my HO scale model railroad and will be creating a stream and pond. How should I do this?

Doc:

Hugh – great question. I have created many streams and ponds using *EnviroTex* and will describe the process.

The Product

First of all *EnviroTex* or *EnviroTex Lite Pour-On High Gloss Finish* is a two part epoxy. It is manufactured by Environmental Technology, Inc., Fields Landing, CA 95537 (phone 707-443-9323). It can be purchased at *Michael's* craft store. I usually purchase the 32 fl. oz. kit which sells for about $24.00, but can be bought using the Michaels 40% off coupon.

The Preparation

It is essential that your stream bed or pond bottom is prepared prior to using the *EnviroTex*. All stones, debris, etc. must be glued down and dry. For a good description of stream and pond prep, see the scenery books by Dave Frary and Lou Sassi.

The Mix

Once your area is prepared, mix one part resin and one part hardener by volume. Follow the detailed instructions contained in the *EnviroTex* kit.

The Pour

After the EnviroTex is thoroughly mixed, don't wait, but pour immediately. Do not pour more than 1/8" thick at one time. The *EnviroTex* is very thick, about the viscosity of molasses, so you will have to work the edges somewhat with a stick. I use a wood coffee stirrer and toss it out later.

The De-Gas

After about five minutes, air bubbles will rise to the surface. Gently exhale on the *EnviroTex* and the bubbles will disappear. Or you can use a propane torch, waving it about six inches above the *EnviroTex* in a sweeping motion. *(Be careful during this process.)* It is the carbon dioxide, not the heat that dispels the air bubbles.

The Cure

Depending on the temperature, the *EnviroTex* will be dust free in about 2 – 7 hours and will cure hard in 36 – 72 hours. I usually cover the area treated with sheets of newspapers for 48 hours to keep the dust from settling on the *EnviroTex.*

Comments

The *EnviroTex* will settle absolutely smooth and level – no waves. Some say that one can make waves after about seven hours by picking the *EnviroTex*. Also, it will creep up on pilings and banks, so you may have to add a bit of ground foam along your pond edges.

For Model Railroad Books,

Railroading Books,

And Books in General

See:

www.abebooks.com

www.addall.com

www.bookfinder.com

Don't Forget to Visit

www.railroadmuseum.net

Recommended Train Events for 2005

Updated 8-7-05

August 11 – 14   **Canandaigua, NY** - Pageant of Steam, www.pageantofsteam.org

August 13   **Gananoque, Ontario, Canada** – Thousand Islands Model Railroad Show

August 20 – 21   **Medina, NY** – 100th NYC Freight Depot Anniversary, train rides and celebration

August 20 – 21   **Rush, NY –** Diesel Days – NY Museum of Transportation, 6393 East River Road. View both Museums, the track car, locomotives, and cabooses all day.

August 31 - 3   **Dearborn, MI – 25th** National Narrow Gauge Convention – Silver Anniversary

September 10   **Holley, NY –** Ridge Road Station, Ridge Road West, - Train Races

September 15   **Rochester NY** – NRHS meeting, "Forty & Eight Club, University Ave., American Orient Ltd."

October 9   **Rush, NY –** RIT day at the New York Museum of Transportation

October 13   **Rochester, NY** – NRHS meeting – Forty & Eight Club, University Ave., "New York's Bridges" by Jim Stewart

October 15 – 16   **Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada -** Model Railroad Show, Bowmanville High School

October 16   **Rochester, NY –** RIT Model RR Club Show and Sale

November 5- 6   **Syracuse, NY –** Train Show and Sale at the NY Fairgrounds

November 13   **Batavia, NY** – Batavia Train Show and Sale

November 17   **Rochester, NY** - NRHS meeting – Forty & Eight Club, University Ave., Rochester Transportation by Donovan Shilling

November 31   **Syracuse, NY** - 31st annual CNY Train fair, NYS Fairgrounds

December 15   **Rochester, NY** – NRHS meeting, Williamsport, PA in the Late Steam Era" – by Bill Bigler