

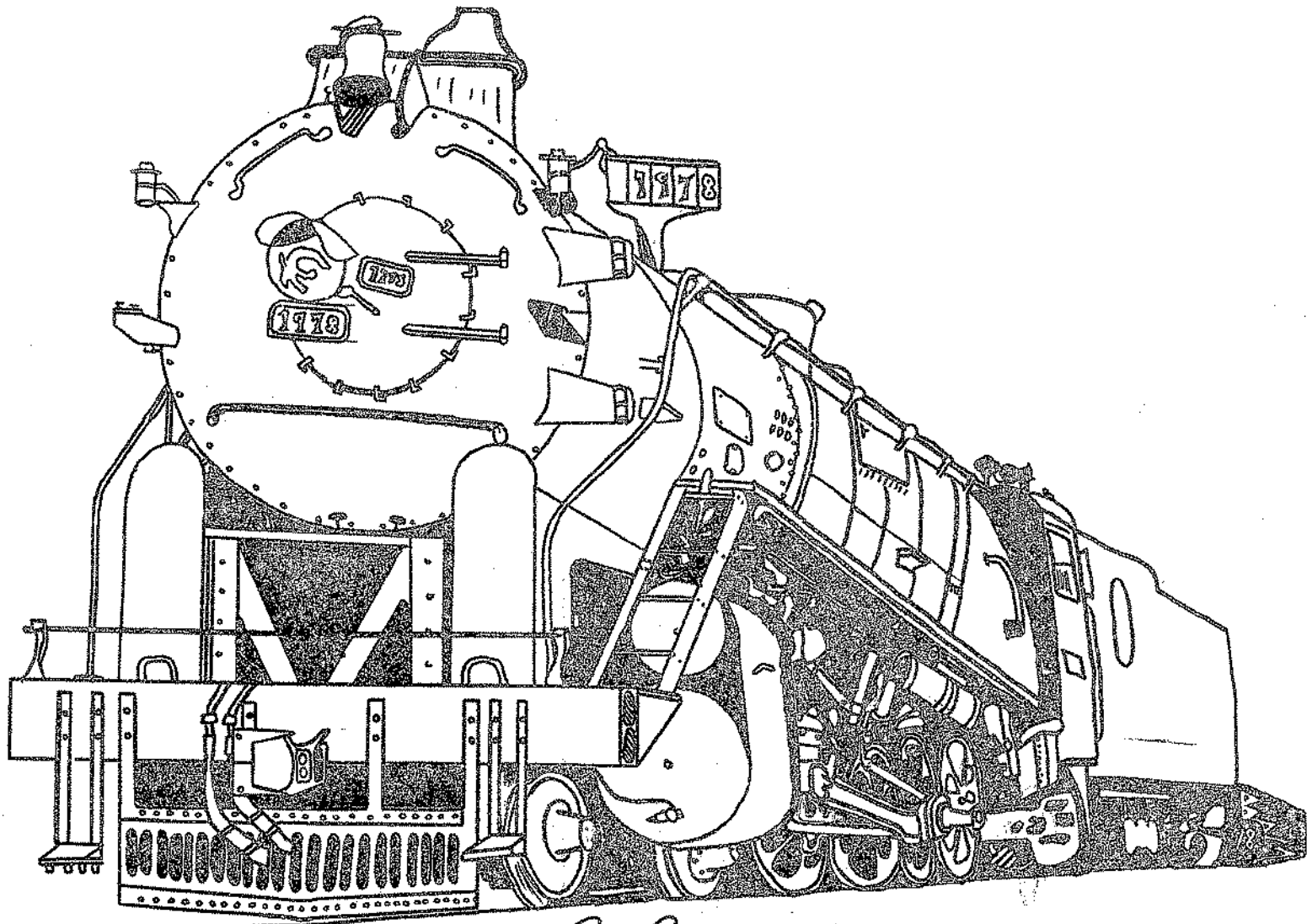
Allegheny
Region

Dispatcher

Volume 8

Number 6

Dec/Jan 1978



Denver and Rio Grande 4-8-4

It's too late to say Merry Christmas so we won't.

Deadline for next issue is February 22, 1978.

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Publication

All material is submitted non-grattis and becomes the property of the Allegheny Region. By-line and proper credit will be given. All material and/or artwork is to be submitted to the editor at the address mentioned.

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On The Cover

This is one of the five Baldwin-built dual service type, 1800 series, 4-8-4's of the Denver and Rio Grande. They have 26x30 inch cylinders, 72 inch drivers, 285 pounds pressure. Weighing 476,360 pounds, these engines deliver 5,000 horse power and exert 67,000 pounds of tractive effort. Costing \$140,000 a piece, these beauties of the rail were used to haul the road's crack freight and passenger runs on both Moffat Tunnel and Royal Gorge routes.

Editor's Notebook

This issue features a special guest editorial from former Dispatcher editor (now publisher), and former AR president, Paul J. Manton.

Remembering The Old AR

Once again, holiday greetings are in order from me, your ex-president, to you, the AR membership family. This Christmas, however, we notice a steady decline in AR membership and active participation in the Region. What is to account for these unfortunate figures? Well, we're not intending to point the finger at anyone, but, rather let's take an analytical look at the problem.

When I first assumed control of the AR back in 1973, our membership stood at an all-time high; about 36 members. That was a whopping total for those days. Bob Sprague was still editing the Dispatcher, which rarely reached 12 pages. A new talent was beginning to surface around that time, too, as we started to see some really cool covers popping up on the front page of the Dispatcher. This "talent" turned out to be our present Secretary/Treasurer, Frank Chadwick, and, I might point out that Frank was only a lad of 13 when he joined the Region. We would often kid him alot about his youthfulness, but it just goes to show you that it really doesn't matter how old one is if he is involved enough with the hobby. The younger AR member has oftentimes provided us with many innovations in the past. This is also, unfortunately, a trend which seems to have dropped off by the wayside as of late.

Back in the old days, the yearly dues used to be only a buck. One would get alot for that single greenback, too, including a printed membership card, a membership directory and the latest issue of the Dispatcher just for signing up. When Bob Sprague decided that he could no longer afford to keep editing the Dispatcher, the duties were turned over to Frank Chadwick and Chris Buckley, also at the time one of our youngest members who has shown some real initiative by producing, along with Frank, some of the finest Dispatchers we have ever seen. With the use of some of the offset printing equipment at Chris' school, we were able to, for the first time, see pictures printed in the Dispatcher, which was quite a jump from the six page ditto printed rag we'd been seeing all along up until that period.

It was also around that time, say 1974, when the infamous AR fued was taking place between the "North Jersey Boys" (namely Ray Hakim, again one of our younger constituents), and the "Philly Boys" (which was probably directed to myself). These days, our members would actually look forward to the next issue of the Dispatcher just to catch up with the fued. And the fued itself was really circled around some pretty mediocre subject matter, having taken my first railfanning trip to the Scranton PA en-

gine facility after a bit of trouble finding it. Oh well, we won't dig up dead dogs but, one must admit, back in those days, the AR was always jumping with excitement.

During the period from 1972 to the present, AR membership has fluctuated immensely. We dropped to 48 members during my administration from 1973-1976, giving or taking a few. It seemed to remain pretty stationary despite a dues increase to a dollar and a half. But, the extra fifty cents from each member was put to the fullest use, as there were several double length (24 page) Dispatchers released in succession. The 24-pager was starting to become a standard commodity especially around the time I personally assumed editorship of the publication. The money was used for extras like more pictures a printed directory and, not to mention, higher postage costs. We also initiated a full-fledged membership drive through the efforts of fine folks like Lone Eagle Payne and Betsy Summers (who for a while held the distinction of being the only girl in the AR). Besides the only female among us for some time, Betsy has certainly done her share for the advancement of the Region.

She held the post of secretary/treasurer from 1974-1977 and, during that time has kept on top of our budget and has personally recruited more new members than any other single person in the group. With Betsy's hand in the money box we've never gone in the red. Betsy now holds the distinction of being your new Dispatcher editor and so far she's been doing an absolutely splendid job of it. I would like to urge you to please help Betsy by sending what you can. Help to keep the Dispatcher the good, readable publication it has been for years. We still like to see some diversity between the pages. If an issue is written entirely by one or two people, it tends to get a bit monotonous and one-sided and the average member will eventually put it down after the first couple of paragraphs.

Lots of other names should be mentioned here too. How can we ever forget about Steve Harper, past AR president who practically built the Region up from the ground in the early days of 1970-71-72? Or John Held, whose organizing efforts in the past have kept many railfans happy. John was also an ex-Dispatcher editor to boot. I think he has perhaps planned and organized more conventions and activities than any single force we know of. Last but not least, try to remember if you can, the one and only elusive Tom Papadeas, the famous New Jersey Greek who has supplied transportation on countless occasions in the past. If any AR member had only one fellow's phone number, it was probably Tom's. (Tom, where are you when we need you?)

What has happened to all of this as of late? Well, president Drake is trying to continue the trend which was started years before with the help of Betsy, as editor, and Frank as secretary/treasurer, but there is still much to be done to get the AR back to the way it was in its heyday. And it can be done if we all do our small part. Right now we stand at an all time low of 34 members, not really a small group but if we can assume approximately a 10% participation principle (which seems to be the case in just about every railfanning/modeling group or organization), we can expect that about 3.4 people are actually pulling their weight. Let's take a quick name by name rundown judging from the past six months of Dispatcher publication. We see names like Frank Chadwick, Betsy Summers, Deuce Manton, Ducky Drake, Dave Kings, John Gibbons, Barry Sith, Chris Buckley, and possibly two or three others who pop in on an occasional basis. Granted it's a bit more than 10% participation, but the figures still could be improved. How about sharing your views? We're always glad to hear from you, and you'll always get a reply. All of the officer's addresses are printed right in the Dispatcher, so why not give it a try?

The Duck Speaks Again....Something New For '78?

Once again the time of year is upon us when we let 1977 roll back into our minds and let the new year of 1978 begin. Most of us tend to agree that 77 was a year of change and, as usual our membership has taken a turn for the worst. Only a handful of people bothered to renew their dues back in October, therefore, the membership list now stands at an unhealthy 34. Not a very good turn out to start the new year. Teamwork is the name of the game, but I hardly call 34 people a team, only because about half of those people are considered active members. In the last Dispatcher, on the front cover I asked if anyone was interested in planning a trip over the Christmas holidays. I only received one letter from a New York resident interested in the idea. Granted everyone had something to do or somewhere to go, but what about all 33 of you others?

Seriously folks, let's put our heads together and look into the future. If we all get together we can plan several trips for the new year but, I'll be damned if I'm going to go another year as president of "SMCAR" (Silent Majority of the Allegheny Region). How about a few railfanning trips to those places you've always wanted to go but you could not afford? If we all get together we can get group rates to railroad museums, railroad yard and shop tours, etc. But when I say group, I mean at least 20 to 30 members. For those of you out there who receive Dispatchers, look at the covers and then throw them away, what can I say? Really now, who are you kidding - just yourself. Most of the AR staff probably feels the same way I do but what can we do besides come to your home and hand deliver the Dispatchers with a baseball bat to wake some of you up! Let's get off our butts and get a future railfanning trip together for everyone to meet those people who make up the AR. I can't do it myself, believe me I've tried but at times I feel that I'm just weating down my fingers typing this for someone to throw into their fireplace. I'm always open for suggestions. I tried everything that I can think of: membership drives, railfanning trips, etc. but I need your help. Drop me a line, write me a letter, drop a bomb on my apartment, anything. But I'm not going to spend my time being president of the AR if there is no AR. We, yes we, can pull this Region out of the hole it is in only if you, the members, stand up and help. Let's make '78 a real year of change, a change for the AR. A more active Region for 1978 should include more organized railfanning trips, meets, slide shows, and, hopefully, this year a convention. Now, it's all up to you the members, to decide either to sit back and let the AR staff waste their good time or stand up and take part in the face-lift of the AR. Make it stronger, bigger and better for the new year. Something new for '78, how about PARTICIPATION??!!

He Speaks: The Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Frank informs us that the balance on the books is holding at \$21.34. If you were listed in the last issue as being up for renewal and haven't done so, RENEW NOW!! If you did renew, please disregard this notice.

Chris Buckley

Frank Chadwick

George Cunic

Scott Drake

Steve Harper

John W. Held

Greg LaRocca

Paul J. Manton

Dave Manton

Chuck Klein

Kent Mays

Mark Solomon

Bob Sprague

Regional News: Old Heads Revival by Paul J. Manton

Thursday, December 29, 1977 saw the first officially organized "AR Old-Fogies" reunion, which took place at Ralph DeBlasi's house in Cherry Hill, NJ. The event was planned and organized by John Held but, unfortunately, John came down with the flu the night before the meet and was unable to attend. However, those who did show up had a good time reminiscing old times, looking at slides, and playing around with Ralph's Lehigh Valley Railroad. Participants included Bob Sprague, Tom Devenny, Tom Papadeas, John McLoughlin, Paul Manton, and Ralph. It took a few hours to get everyone together due to conflicting work schedules and stuff like that but, it was good to see everyone together again. Ralph made a proposal to organize a spring railfanning trip, like sometime around March or April, for all the "Old-Fogies" to get together again perhaps up along the D&H. Maybe even try to include Altoona and Pittsburgh if possible. More details on this meet to come in a later issue.

Meet Review: Manton's Birthday Trip

November 11-13, 1977 -- Manton's "birthday trip" to Hagerstown, Cumberland, MD and Pittsburgh, Altoona, PA. The group consisted of Paul and Deuce Manton, Ducky Drake, Frank Chadwick for the first leg to Hagerstown, where we camped in the cold at track-side along the B&O main. The 12th we moved on to Cumberland and the Chesapeake/Western Maryland facilities there, finally moving on to Pittsburgh that night where we joined Betsy and Patty Summers, Dave Hay and Kevin Scanlon. Movies and slides followed that night at the Sheriton Inn in Pittsburgh. We also made a television production, having brought the video-tape recorder along for the trip. The following day, the 13th, we headed back east, stopping at Altoona where we found our way up a narrow and muddy ser-

vice road to MG tower (up grade) at Horseshoe Curve. It was a cold weekend, but well worth it in pictures.

Very

Very belated Christmas Gifts to various AR members ... From the AR staff. At this time we would like to break away from our usual format to present these well thought wishes to some very special people.

JOHN HELD.....Railfan's Guide to Death Valley
 DEUCE MANTON.....Trackage Rights to the First Railroad on Mars
 DAVE KINGS.....The Entire Union Pacific Railroad Including: All Locks, Keys, Switches, Maintenance of Way Equipment, Conductors Caps, Signs, Signals, Timetables, Stations.....
 JOE TARQUINI.....A 500,000lb. Big Mac
 DAVE HAY.....One Large Overstuffed Chessie Cat
 FRANK CHADWICK.....First Atomic Space Train to Jupiter With Twin Tunnels Through the Asteroid Belt
 LEONARD HARLOS.....Lehigh Valley Conrail Red Touch-up Paint for His Pinto
 BETSY SUMMERS.....A New Canon AE-1 Camera, A One Year Supply of Film, and a Week of Uninterrupted Railfanning on the Northeast Corridor
 PATTY SUMMERS.....The Last Four Remaining Lehigh Valley "Snowbirds" Repainted in Their Original Colors
 CHRIS BUCKLEY.....A Working MG-1 High Blast Horn for His VW
 BEN BITTEN.....A Fresh Set of Tires Every Month For a Year
 JOHN GIBBONS.....The Hellertown Engine Terminal
 GREG LAROCCA.....A Trainload Supply of Kleenex
 CHUCK KLEIN.....Greg LaRocca
 LONE EAGLE PAYNE.....Five Year Supply of Postage Stamps
 BOB SPRAGUE.....Gift Certificate to Leon Stark's Brooklyn Bonanza Restaurant
 TIM TONGE.....Pike's Peak
 DAVE FOLEY.....That Long Awaited Shower From Days Gone By
 SCOTT DRAKE.....Three Pool Balls and an Orange for His Mouth and a List of Do-It-Yourself Jobs in the Home From Mrs. Summers
 PAUL MANTON.....One Million Dollars to Pay His Bills With, A Car-Trouble Free Trip to Pittsburgh and a Quiet Afternoon at the Chessie Mani Near Chiopyle

That's this year's list. If you really can't use what we wished you that's too bad. You're stuck with it.

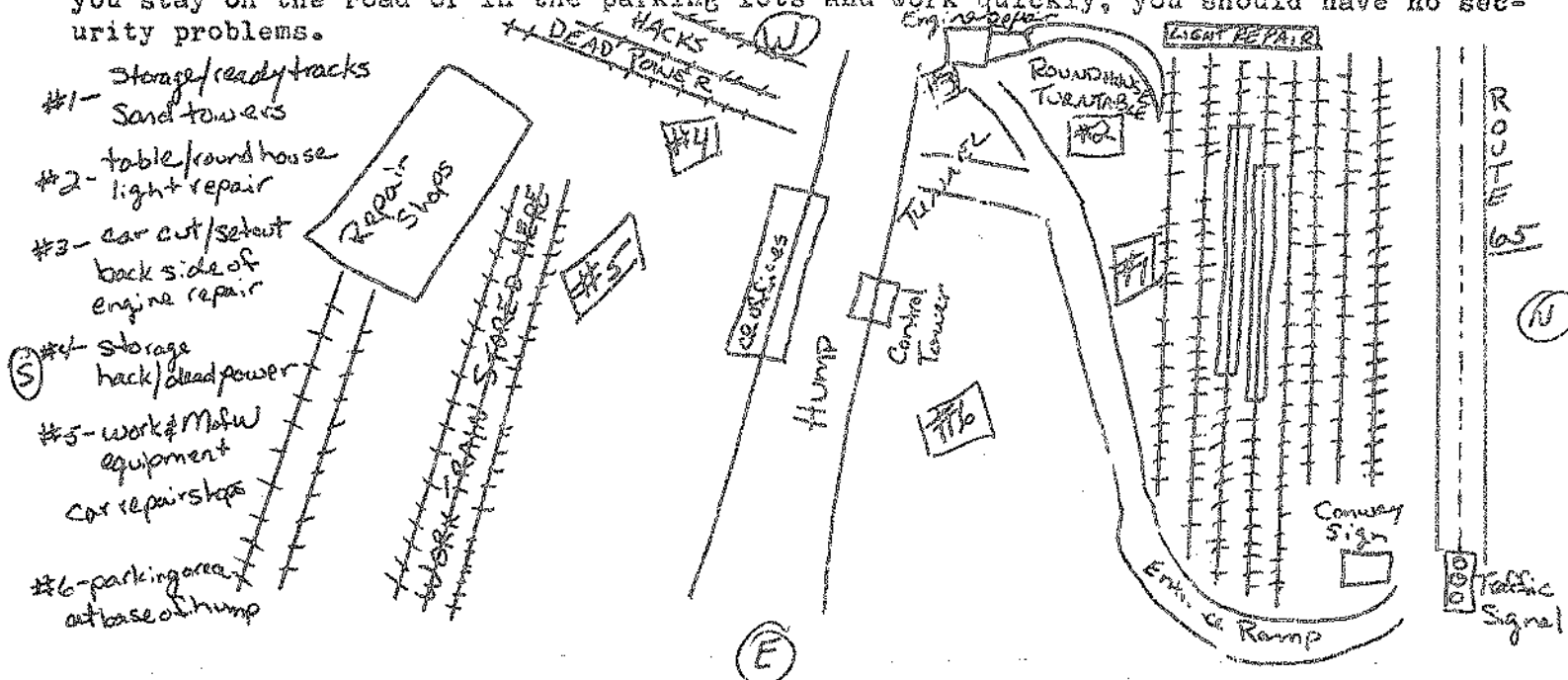
The Allegheny Region's Railfan Guide: Conrail's Conway Yard

Conway Yard, once part of the PRR (PC) system, used to boast being the largest pushbutton yard in the world. Now, as part of Conrail, this huge complex has been relegated to the status of one of the nation's busiest automated yards. This facility is located some 15 miles northwest of Pittsburgh, PA along Route 65. It is such a long yard, located on the banks of the Ohio River, that from the eastern approach through to the western end, Conway stretches along the borders of three communities, Baden, Conway and Freedom.

Back in the spring of 1976, Conway was heaven for Pittsburgh area railfans. Reading Alco, Lehigh Valley units, CNJ, SL, and many leased units could all be seen. Eventually the Canadian National leased units, an occasional SP or UP engine and even the infamous Valley Snowbirds showed up here. Today these rare sights are becoming less frequent. Almost all of the equipment has been thoroughly CR-ed., painted blue or been moved out, still leaving quite a bit of PC basic black.

Unfortunately, along with Conrail came tighter security, but the determined railfan can get his or her shots if you're fast. At East Conway tower (at the yard approach), you can stop your car to catch action shots in yard approaches or through freight. At several locations along Route 65, there are bridges that traverse the tracks. These often have sidewalks on which you can stand unhassled for shots. At a traffic light on 65, you will see a sign on your left (when coming from PGM.) for Conway Yard. This

is at the top of the entrance ramp that will take you directly down to the yard between the service tracks and the lower end of the hump yard. Once down in this area you have to keep a sharp eye out for the "man". The best thing I have found is to stay either in the car or right by it. Belwo is a map (and a rather crude one at that), of the complex with the key areas numbered. The arrowed line is the route you should travel in your car. The yard area itself, is very narrow so, it does not take a long time to cover all of the territory in the yard. The first area (#1) on your right, is where you will probably find the biggest concentration of power. Proceed in the direction of area (#5) under and to the other side of the hump. Backtrack towards area (#6) and its parkinglot, watch for the "man", turn around and it's a straight shot out of there. If you stay on the road or in the parking lots and work quickly, you should have no security problems.



Prototypical Wisdom: by John Gibbons and Ducky Drake

Delaware and Hudson PA'S (JG)

The infamous PA's are still working out of South Station in Boston. They are limited to the Boston-Farmingham run as reported in our last issue. MBTA is leasing these beauties for \$150 a day.

Delaware Ostego System (JG)

This shortline excursion company (headquartered in Cooperstown, NY), has recently purchased ex-Amtrak 9300, a dome parlor observation. No information was available as to the car's intended use.

Amtrak News (JG)

Amtrak has released a new five year plan, calling for capitol loans and grants of \$1.05 billion through 1982. With this aid, Amtrak plans to purchase 353 new passenger-cars to replace the Amfleet cars currently being used on overnight trains. This move could then free the Amfleet equipment for corridor use. 76 new locomotives are to be bought, upgrading existing power to F40PHR types, and overhauling of the Metroliners is also in the making. Track improvements as well as station construction and repair are also touched upon.

In its feud with the federal government, Amtrak has retaliated for the cuts in federal spending. Service (as usual), is what was cut back. It had been reported that 22 of the 120 trains a day between Washington and New York-Boston corridor were cut back. Connecticut and New Jersey also will suffer from these service cuts.

American Freedom Train (JG)

The cars of the Freedom Train are on their way to Canada for use in that nation's

"Discovery Train". 15 of the 20 cars are planned for use as exhibit cars.

The ex-Southern Pacific 4-8-4 Daylight #4449 used to pull the "Freedom Train" is reported by Railroad Magazine to be in storage. No plans for further excursions on the old lady's part are in the making due to lack of financial support or a participating railroad.

Reading News (Jack Pehowic)

The former Reading tower at Third and Penn Sts in Sunbury, PA was razed on November 2-4. The Reading had crossed the Penn Central (PRR) here back in the good old days. The Reading Diamond was removed earlier in the year because of trackage changes in Sunbury. The tower was built in 1919.

Amtrak News (DD)

The National Limited now leaves New York at 4:55 pm (30 mins. later), and the Broadway Limited at 6:30 pm (4hrs. earlier), Eastbound. The National operates via Union City bypassing Dayton due to Conrail track conditions. The only train visible at the Horseshoe Curve during daylight hours is the Eastbound Broadway Limited near 6:30 or 7:00 am.

About half of Amtrak's twenty surviving E-8's are now in storage. The last three black units (#450-#452 stored in Chicago) and #455, recently were repainted in the stripped scheme at Harrisburg.

All 40 of the first group of Amtrak's SDP conversions have gone into EMD. Half of them have been returned to Amtrak as F40PHR's. A second group of 32 SDP's will follow the first group and be converted at a rate of six units per month. The final group of 39 units will be scheduled to be rebuilt sometime in the spring. The F40PHR's have fairly small fuel tanks, so an experimental program will rebuild an E unit into a fuel tender to permit a pair of F40's to go 1500 miles without refueling. Amtrak would like to buy three new wire trains to replace ancient Penn Central equipment.

Conrail (DD)

General Electric in early November began delivery of ten C30-7 diesel-electric units to Conrail. The 3,000hp six-axle units numbered #6600-6609, represented the last of 171 new units ordered by Conrail early this year most of which were EMD GP40-2 and SD40-2's. Here are a few more additions to your Conrail rosters:

#2800-2816 new B23-7	#2971-2974 new GE U-36B	#3275-3312 new EMD GP40-2
#6358-6440 new SD40-2	#6600-6609 new GE C30-7	

Conrail's roster now shows a total of 4,745 units, including 7 Chicago Union Terminal.

Conrail's lone blue E-8a, #4022 was recently spotted on the head end of a piggy-back mail train passing through Philadelphia. Since the unit was repainted last winter, it had been reserved for occasional use on Conrail inspection trains and on Amtrak's Broadway Limited.

Conrail will not be caught short by heavy snows this winter, as it was last January and February. According to a recent announcement, the rail road has positioned a total of 117 snow plows, spreaders, flangers, and snow blowers to work sites along the system. They have also winterized a large number of locomotives to help prevent storm-related breakdowns.

Speaking of Conrail and the winter, the recent heavy snows and ice storms all along the east have wrecked havoc with many trains. A portion of the Corridor was blocked for a day by a derailment between Washington and Baltimore. In Pittsburgh, 30 cars of a Conrail freight derailed, blocking the entire main for almost an entire day. Horseshoe Curve reported 35 inches of snow on the ground, 30 of it falling in less than two days. This is only January. Last year it was cold, arctic air. This year it's heavy snow. What next? At least this gives Conrail a good excuse for loosing more money this quarter than they had estimated.

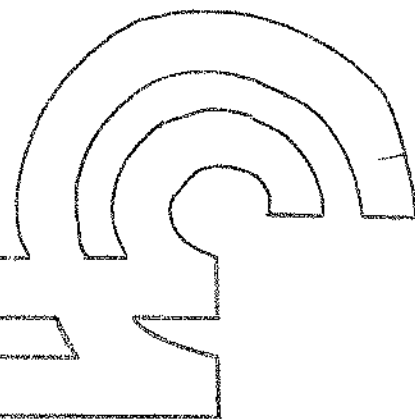
Conrail's infamous CR-ed "hurry up and label it" scheme is starting to wear off of a good many engines. You all are familiar with these blacked out heralds. Recently in Pittsburgh I spotted good old Reading Co. #5202 (CR #2491) on the head end of a westbound freight. It seems the black is wearing off. The diamond is clearly visible under the cab along with Reading Lines and a bold face 5202 at the rear, 1/2 of the CR was gone. Old Reading C-424's never die. They don't even fade away! (SS)

CONRAIL: by Barry P. Stiak (with the help of Conrail)

This is the first in a series of articles giving information on prototype railroads. Do you have a favorite line that you would like some information on? Let us know and we will try to cover it for you.

CONRAIL

CONRAIL



Conrail is a private, for-profit corporation with headquarters in Philadelphia, PA. It was created pursuant to Federal legislation from the railroad properties of six bankrupt Northeast and Midwest railroads: Penn Central, Central of New Jersey, Lehigh and Hudson River, Erie Lackawanna, and Reading. It commenced railroad operations on April 1, 1976.

The Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) is now the largest railroad in the United States in terms of freight volume, equipment and people. It has a 17,000 mile system which blankets the 16 states in the Northeastern quadrant of the United States. This stretches from the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan to the Atlantic Seaboard, and from Canada to the Ohio and Potomac Rivers. This region includes 55% of the nation's manufacturing plants which employ 60% of all factory workers. Conrail employs about 96,000 people and owns 152,000 freight cars, nearly 4,700 locomotives, and almost 34,000 miles of track. Approximately 1,500 freight trains and 1,850 passenger trains are operated by Conrail everyday.

Conrail resulted from the reorganization of the hopelessly bankrupt private sector lines in the Northeast and Midwest as was stated earlier. It was created to restore them to the profitable, self-sufficient status necessary to provide efficient and essential rail service to shippers and to the public. These bankrupt systems operated thousands of miles of light density branch lines at a net loss. Difficult to eliminate under existing regulatory procedures, they collectively represented a cash drain which could not be sustained. Conrail will continue to operate many of these branch lines for regional and social purposes by shippers and state governments, willing to provide separate subsidy funds to meet the difference between revenues and actual costs. Federal assistance is available to states providing such subsidies.

Duplication of service on some routes and redundant facilities have been eliminated providing for more efficient operation. The bankrupt railroads have seriously been hindered by the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) from responding effectively to changing patterns of manufacturing and shipping in the Northeast, increasing competition from other modes of transportation and increasing operating costs. Congress substantially revised the ICC's regulatory standards to permit increased upward and downward rate flexibility to permit abandonment of money-losing service where no public subsidy was forthcoming, and in many other respects. Conrail is one step from a national rail system completely government owned. Hopefully this corporation will succeed and will keep railroading alive in this country for many years.

SEE OTHER ARTICLES ON RAILFANING ON CONRAIL AND MODELING CONRAIL ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE. UPCOMING IS A SERIES ON THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD.

Better Railroad Movies by Deuce Manton (Sour Mash Productions, Inc.)

Hello folks! Do some of you railfans out there use movie cameras for railfanning? If so, perhaps I can be of assistance in giving you a few pointers on how to achieve some good shots. I've been using one for almost five years and I have found that you can get some pretty decent action footage with one.

First of all, select a good brand of film, preferably Kodak. I use Kodachrome 25 8mm and have found it to be about the best. Included in the packaging of the fresh roll of film, is a small piece of paper containing an exposure guide and other technical data. Hang onto it! It will help you out considerably in eliminating "guess-work" on manual exposure cameras when the light starts to screw up on a railfan meet. After a while however, one can eliminate the chart completely because using the same film in the same camera can get to become routine. Essentially, setting the exposure becomes "old hat", so to speak, but reference to the table is still beneficial. Because Kodak sometimes upgrades their film you sometimes have to change the aperture setting on your camera to achieve the same type of shot the older film provided. This happens very seldomly but you still never know when they're going to do it. So, I always carry one with me.

Another good tip is the use of a tripod. Use a tripod whenever possible. Without one, you have to hold the camera by hand. This can tend to be a pain in the neck when it comes to the actual focusing and shooting because you only have one free hand with which to perform these tasks. The tripod eliminates this by providing a swiveling, level plane in which to rest your camera, leaving both hands free to manipulate the controls. You also will end up with nice, steady, professional looking footage, guaranteed to bring "ooh's" and "ah's" from your audience.

One drawback of a movie camera in railfanning is when you go to an engine terminal or yard. Upon arriving at the yard, you see several units, but no moving action. What do you do? No problem. Find the nearest embankment or signal and climb up. This will provide an overview of the yards, enabling you to get all the units in the picture from one location.

The next thing we'll discuss is photo spots. If you don't have a good filming location you can destroy the whole effect of your film. One good photo spot is an overhead signal bridge. This provides a good ariel platform for those "bird's eye" views. Also, you get the whole train in the picture, not just one side. Also, another thing is if you go to Horseshoe Curve or Thompson Curve, stand on the inside of the curve. This way you can follow the whole train around without having to shut down your camera and move.

No motion picture is really complete until it has been edited and titled. Properly titled pictures heighten interest and make oral explanation unnecessary during projection. By using titles innovatively, odd scenes can be joined together to form an interesting sequence; often a complete story. Making your own titles can add just that much more pleasure to making home movies. Title cards can be made by using photographs or other illustrations such as magazine pictures, calendar pictures, or just an ordinary piece of paper. Titles may be typewritten, printed, or hand lettered to suit your convenience. For those of you who prefer hand lettering your titles, especially where it is necessary to letter over photographs or other illustrations for main titles, I recommend the use of a magic marker for lettering purposes. Where titles are to be printed with a typewriter, sharper impressions will be made if typed through carbon paper. Make your titles as brief as possible to enable easy reading by your audience.

Exposure of the finished titles is no different than shooting regular pictures. Out door exposure will be similar to your normal outdoor settings. Use your exposure table that I talked about earlier, if you have any doubts. A light meter is also a good idea. Indoor exposure is tricky because requirements differ according to type of film, age and size of flood lamps, distance from lamps, etc. I suggest this test to determine proper indoor exposure. Photograph a sample title at various exposures. Use just a few frames with each lens opening, but keep a definite record. Special effects can be (for example) shooting one word of the title at a time, using just a few frames for each word. When the title is projected it will appear as though the title is

writing itself as one word at a time flashes on the screen. To determine proper footage, photograph each title for as long as it takes you to read it, slowly, twice. This method will insure titles of sufficient length for your audiences to read.

When your titles are returned from the processing lab they will be on a 50' roll just like the rest of your footage. This means that you will have to cut and splice them into the rest of your film. You may also want to cut spots from the rest of your film that may be dark or overexposed. This process is known as editing. For this you will need a device called an editing machine. It contains a viewing screen and a splicer, enabling you to preview your film and place titles just where they are needed. It also permits you to splice eight 50' reels onto a 400' reel that will play for 30 minutes. This is the final step for what it takes to get a professional looking film guaranteed to please any crowd.

Locomotive Updating: Conrail Blue Units by Paul J. Manton

Since we're on the subject of Conrail, let's talk about that eventual goal of the big CR-Execs -- the standard blue scheme. Now these colors are not yet, to my knowledge, available in spray cans (Floquil planned cans and has already released bottles also Accu-Paint from SMP Industries has bottles, ed.), so you'll either have to use an airbrush with Scalecoat Conrail Blue, or go down to your local paint store with a color chip from either a prototype locomotive or sign, and try to find some paint in a spray can which comes closest to the original. Once you have decided which paint you want to use, it's a very simple operation from here on in. The Conrail paint scheme is certainly an easy one at that, being only one color (except for the underframe and trucks which are black), so simply spray the shell with blue. Give it a couple of good coats for even coverage and that "fresh from the shops" appearance. Most importantly, it's best to allow the model to dry overnight, or if you're one of those types who sleeps by day and plays at night, give it at least a good 12-16 hours, depending on the humidity and conditions of the area in your workshop.

Decals should be no problem. The Herald King and Caboose Industries decals include a decal positioning diagram (usually cute little sketches of an EMD with the Conrail logos in place). Or, if you encounter problems, you can always refer again to one of your slides for accurate representation.

My first Conrail blue unit was an AHM C-424 with Scalecoat paint applied by hand with a brush. It looked a bit crude, but the effect was there. I don't recommend painting units by hand with a brush, but in all it was a good one-evening project and well worth the time. If I had been working with anything other than an AHM unit I probably would have put a lot more time into the job. I should have tried to find some body with an airbrush.

Now that you've learned the secret of keeping your roster up to date with the last Dispatcher issue, and this little hint, there's a few more things you can do to add that little "something extra" to your freight drags. Get yourself one or two Bangor and Arcostock units like Atlas GP-38's, or how about a Chicago and North Western SD-45 by Athearn or even a few Canadian National units. As you know, Conrail was faced with a power shortage over the summer months, and these units were not uncommon on many freight drags. Why not even go as far as to add a representative unit from your own road, be it fictitious or prototype. Why not?? There's no law against it. Have fun, and remember, you can invent your own practices and carry them to any extreme you desire.

Supplement: Below is a partial list of ready-to-run units in paint schemes found on Conrail. Many of these and other units are available undecorated.

HO: AHM: Alco 1000 (EL), Alco C424 (CNJ), Alco RS-2 (CNJ)

HO: Athearn: SD9 (PC), GP35 (EL), S-12 (EL), U28-C (PC)

HO: Atlas: GP40 (PC), SD35 (PC), GP 38 (PC)

HO: Bachmann: GP 40 (PC)

HO: Life-Like: GP38-2 (LV)

HO: Model Power: Alco 420 (PC), FP45 (PC)

HO: Tyco: F9 (CR)

N: Life-Like: SD45 (PC), Alco C420 (LV)

O: Lionel: GP7 (PC), GP9 (CR) (EL) (LV) (CNJ)

GE center cab (LV)

Streets and the Detailing of Them by: Barry P. Sitek

We all remember our first train set, one that we probably got during the Christmas season: a simple loop with a train going around it. For the scenery, we used our imagination and we were satisfied with this for a while until we wanted to delve more into this fascinating hobby. We then built an empire. In this so-called empire of ours, detailing in any category of model railroading is essential, for we are modeling a railroad and its surroundings. If we do not include detail, whether it be big or small, we are merely dealing with toy trains. The subject that I am now going to talk about is streets and the detailing of them.

If you don't have a street to detail, I suggest you put a street in. I am going to use HO scale for illustration. If you have an N scale layout take half the measurements. If you have an O scale layout, multiply the measurements by two. My method of making roads is alot simpler than other techniques I have seen. First cut thin cardboard into strips of 2 and 9/16" wide. (Cardboard from shirt boxes or paper pads.) If these strips can be cut on a slight curve, the finishing results will be more realistic and will add more depth to your empire. Let me point out that it is somewhat of a problem placing buildings on a curved road. The next stage is to plan where the roads are going to be placed. Mark this place down on the platform. Now, with a waterproof cement, Ambroid or any other type of acetate will do, cement down the cardboard where you planned the road. If you do not use a waterproof glue the cardboard will tend to buckle. After this has dried it is time to paint the roads. If your road is in a small country town you can paint as is with a brush or an airbrush or spraycan. I suggest using Dio Sole concrete color. (Many colors for roads ranging from dirt to concrete are available. ed.) If your roads are in a larger city, I think it would be best to have a white or yellow line down the middle. If the cardboard was already white or yellow just lay a strip of tape lightly down the middle of the road and paint the surface of the road. After the paint dries lift the tape and you have a ready-made line. The strip of tape should be about five millimeters long. Now, if the cardboard was any other color, paint the majority of the center of it either white or yellow. When this has dried, lay the strip of tape across the middle of the road. Paint the road surface and when it dries peel the tape. Grade crossings are described in the illustrations.

The roads are now complete unless you want to add sidewalks. The sidewalks do not have to be along all of the roads but may be on a side road near a school or something. These walks should be about ten millimeters wide and for more realistic results should be cut into blocks of about one inch in length. The same cardboard and paint can be used.

Now for the detailing, try to model and detail things that envelope your home town. On a typical road some of the usual items found are fire-hydrants, street lights, signs, telephone booths, mailboxes, advertizements, and hundreds of other things. Some of these details can be bought illuminated and have to be hooked up to your power supply. Some details like the street lights and signs may have to have their bases removed for better appearance. To install these make a small hole in the platform surface, put a drop of white glue in and insert the piece.

The people are a very important aspect in the model railroad scene. I can't say the model people make the layout come alive but they at least give a feeling of life. Many scenes can be created using model people. Here are a few ideas: children walking to school, a man fishing, a news paper boy, etc. Try to create ideas that people can relate themselves to. The bases of the "little people" do not have to be disconnected. I suggest that you don't glue them down either so you can make different scenes every so often.

What about some of the not so usual details on the road that can be put

on your model roads? A few that I know of are as follows: a car crashup situation in which the car is toppled over, a car that went right through a house, a person falls off a horse, a mayor giving a speech, a bear walking the streets, and anything else that your imagination can dream up. One layout I read about in the "Railroad Model Craftsman" magazine had a lady sunbathing in the nude and who was asleep causing alot of commotion with the police force. I think you can handle the rest. Good luck.

NOTE: DUE TO A SLIP UP SOMEWHERE IN THE EDITORIAL STAFF THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE GRADE CROSSINGS FOR THIS ARTICLE ARE MISSING. SORRY. YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO RELY ON YOUR IMAGINATION AND SKILL. (editor)

MINI TIPS for that closer to life look on your buildings

The best way I have found to make your plastic brick-sided buildings look a little less store bought and a little more real is to add mortar lines and paint run off. Smoke lines and even some ivy can really help. Take your kit walls before you put the kit together and after trimming the mould flash off of them with a sharp knife, wash them in warm soapy water. Let them air dry. Now, to make mortar lines on the brick, find yourself some paint and thinner. Check the labels to see that the paint and thinner will be safe to use on unprotected plastic. The paint can be any shade from white to dark grey depending on your preferences. Make a wash with the paint and apply it liberally to the brick surface. Let this dry and then with a clean, lint free cloth, wet with the thinner only, wipe the surface of the bricks. Be careful to do this only lightly because you don't want to remove all of the paint. When you are finished you will see that the paint is still in the mortar lines between the bricks. This technique helps to reduce the plastic shine and adds depth to the wall.

Look at the houses and buildings in your area and you will notice how the paint around the doors and windows often runs down the walls. A lot of rain on a cheap paint job nearly always leaves these tell-tale lines. They, too, are easy to duplicate. Paint around your window frames with any color you want. At the corners on the bottom is where the run off line starts. Again make a wash with the paint that matches the window frame. Dip a small brush into the wash taking care not to load the brush. Also, dip the very tip of the brush in straight paint. Touch the brush to the window edge and with a slow stroke draw the brush down. ~~Make~~ the line by slowly raising the brush from the surface as you move down. Be careful not to make these lines too dark or they will become too obvious. After all, we are only trying to highlight the buildings not call attention to them. These lines are not only found by windows, but doors and, in particular, under shutters.

Smoke lines are found all around chimnies and vents. These can be represented easily with washes of thinned black paint mixed with a touch of grey. Areas with the heaviest sooty residue are the tops of chimnies and on the wall where a vent is attached. Again don't make the detail too dark. Ivy and vines can be added up the sides of the buildings. Many substances may be used to duplicate the vines such as dyed sawdust or grass made by such manufacturers as Woodland Scenics or B&K. Take some white glue and thin it with water. Brush it in a thin line on the wall and turn the wall upright to let the glue flow naturally down the side. Sprinkle your vine material on this line of glue generously enough to cover all of the glue. After this dries you can gently blow off the excess. Ivy and vine usually don't grow too thickly on a wall so don't over do this either. It also won't grow too close to chimnies or vents either.

These little tips will add much to the realism of your buildings. Just use some or all of these techniques in moderation and you will be pleased with the results. Even a coat of dulccost spray applied on the finished model will help hide that plastic shine.

Do You Want the AR to look like this?

WELL, IF YOU DON'T GET INVOLVED NOW, AND LIKE RIGHT NOW, THE
PEOPLE WHO RUN THE AR TODAY WILL START TO LOOK LIKE THESE CREEPS.
A HANDFUL OF GRISELY BUMS GETTING WORSE EVERY UPCOMING ISSUE.



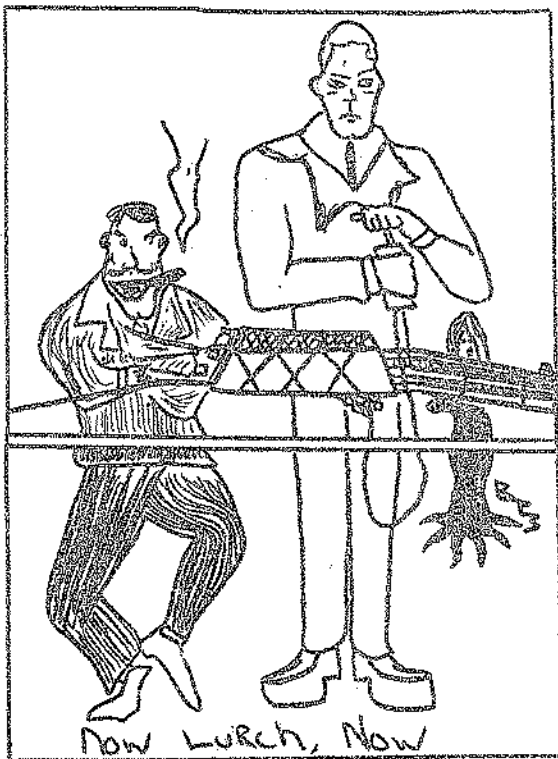
LETS GET SOME NEW FACES INTO THIS PICTURE!!!

From left to right (top) Scott "Duck" Drake, Frank "Chadz" Chadwick,
Paul "PJ" Manton, (bottom) Dave "Duece" Manton, Chris "Buck" Buckley

Junk Box Steam Locos by Ducky Drake

As you will remember in the last Dispatcher I showed you how to turn that unused diesel shell into a new unit by the means of "kitbashing". Well, now we are going to move on with bigger and better things, steam locos. If you are an avid modeler like me, you will notice on your work table a large box in which you place those parts and units that don't run that well, or you are using for extra parts. For example; during the past three years, I have collected enough kits and extra parts to build two 2-8-2 Mikados, one Roundhouse 2-8-0 Consolidation, (still waiting for factory parts) and one Tyco 2-8-0 Consolidation. These were made from all of those collected bits on my workbench.

Sitting at my workbench, I noticed that the Tyco 2-8-0 was a nicely detailed unit but it had one major drawback that set it aside from my other steam units; Tyco's tender drive. Removing the unit from the junk box, I studied it for a few moments.



An idea struck me and I proceeded to take the unit and the idea into the shop. About an hour later I came out with the first dummy steam switcher in the history of the Northwoods and Western. Before I go into more details of the unit, I will tell you step by step how I converted the rest of the unit.

I first separated the tender from the unit by removing the drawbar and cutting the wires leading from the tender to the loco headlight. Next, I borrowed the Vanderbuilt tender out of the Roundhouse kit to use until I was able to finish that kit. To convert this model it was necessary to insulate the tender from the loco since the loco driver wheels were grounded the same as the tender. I first thought of a fiber drawbar but I decided to go one step further. I mounted a Kadee coupler and assembly to the rear frame of the loco with epoxee, and I mounted another Kadee to the front of the tender. This resulted in the connection of the loco and tender via Kadee couplers. This idea was two-fold: First, it enabled the tender to be removed with no trouble at any time; second, it allowed the unit to be pulled or pushed without a drawbar buckle. The Kadee also provided the insulation needed between the loco and tender.

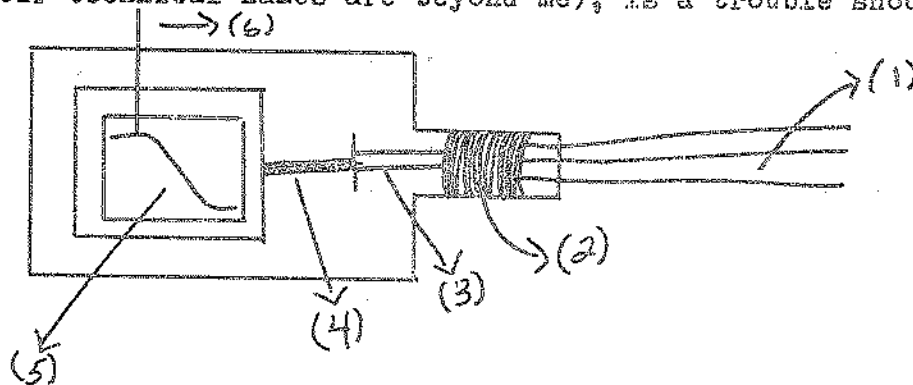
Removing the pilot wheels converted the unit into an 0-8-0 switcher. Connecting one of the wires from the loco headlight to the tender, I was able to power the headlight. Further details would be a tender mounted back-up light with a diode mounted in line with the light circuit allowing forward lighting and backward lighting on the respective ends. The unit has about the same weight as that of three small freight cars and the only drag is the smoke unit powered off the driver axles. Testing the unit double-headed with a Mikado, it was pushed through #6 crossovers at a scale speed of 15-30 mph with no derailments. This unit could now be either placed on the point of a freight or at the rear of a long freight for helper service. Even though the unit is unpowered, it could be powered by just adding the powered tender with a Kadee coupler again replacing the drawbar.

Now I have the only dummy steam loco that is light enough to pull at the end of a long freight, chugs smoke, has working valve gears, lights in front and rear, and looks as good as a \$50 kit.

Repairing Atlas Switch Machines by Betsy Summers

Often after you shell out \$3.00 to \$6.00 for an Atlas remote control switch you are lucky if it works. The biggest headache is the switch machine itself and who wants to pay Atlas another 75¢ to fix it? Solution: fix it yourself. It's a simple matter even when working with N gauge as I was doing at the time. Following is a schematic diagram of the switch machine and an explanation of how it works. Basically every

labeled item (their technical names are beyond me), is a trouble shooter.



The connecting wires (1) connect the machine to the AC power source, (one carries positive, one negative charge, the third is a grounding wire). These wires are then spun out and wound to make the coil (2). When the current is passed through this coil, the field (or area in the center of the coil), experiences a change in polarity. This change from + to - or from - to +, either repels or attracts the magnet (3) depending on the charge. This magnet, in turn, is hooked to the connecting bar (4) which connects to the slide mechanism (5). Finally, the slide mechanism is attached to the wire linkage (6) which moves the switch. So, when the magnet is repelled, it moves out of the coil, pushing the bar, pushing the slide, pushing the wire. When the magnet is attracted, it is pulled into the coil and the sequence occurs in the opposite order.

When the switch machine does not work what do you do? Check your wiring first to make sure all connections are holding. Are the rails blocked or bent? Does the switch operate manually? If all of that is alright, your problem is in the switch machine, so go to it. First take the top off the switch machine. It pries off easily with a small screwdriver, but be careful not to break it. Inside, if you will find what is diagramed above.

Check the wires. Are the leads connected to the coils? If not, you've got one of the toughest soldering jobs ahead of you. Your biggest problem will be if more than one wire is broken because you have to figure out which one to connect with the other.

Find the magnet. Is it in the center of the coil with the right end down? This is a diagram of this magnet; following this paragraph (#1). Next to it is a diagram of the connecting bar (#2). In diagram (#1), the end (A) should go into the coils first. The connecting bar looks like the drawing and the notched end (C) fits into the end of the magnet (B). Put the two ends together with a slight twist and they will fall into place. The end on the bar (D) has a small hole in it that fits over the little point on the two part slide mechanism. A little white glue will hold this securely but don't glue the slide parts together. Now you can fit the magnet into the coils and the slide mechanism back in place.

(#1)



(#2)



Finally, check the wire linkage. If it is broken you will have to replace it entirely with a piece of wire no bigger than the broken one. Be sure you notice just how the wire is attached to the switch rails before you remove it. You also can check the packaging diagram for this positioning. Replace the wire in just the same way.

If the switch still doesn't work, operate it manually and check to see if the parts are moving correctly. Sometimes the switch is only stiff and eventually will loosen up. Still not working? Start all over. Be patient. It will save you money. If it is working you can replace the switch machine cover and install the switch on your pike.

PLACE AN ADD IN THE DISPATCHER. THEY ARE FREE. WANT TO SOUND OFF OR HAVE SOMEBODY TO WRITE TO? SEND A LETTER TO THE RPC SECTION IN THE DISPATCHER'S TELEGRAPH.

Scale Tracklaying Made Easy by Paul J. Nanton

Many of you model railroaders have probably at one time or another become totally disgusted with the art of tracklaying. Face it, we're dealing with some pretty tricky business if we're talking about scale roadbed with good clean tangents and wide sweeping curves. How can one accomplish this effect without going too far in expenses? Well, in this article I would like to show you how you can use relatively inexpensive components to achieve that desired look.

A lot of people seem to have the misconception that in order to lay good track you must start with "good track". Now, of course, one guy's idea of "good track" may be another guy's headache. But, let's try to set the record straight for everyone by going into a few basics of how to choose track for a model pike.

Walk into any good hobby shop and you'll probably be surprised at the rather wide variety of HO scale track available on the market today. I mean even as recent as ten years ago, things were pretty much to the point of using strictly Atlas track or you might as well forget about building any kind of model railroad. Well, that's all in the past now because we can turn to fine manufacturers such as Lambert or Shinohara. But, is it really worth the extra money these guys charge for a single three foot section of flex? Examine your situation. How big is your layout going to be? How long do you plan to keep it active in its present location? How much service do you plan to give the finished product? It will not be until you answer these and other questions accurately that you'll be able to make this proper decision regarding trackwork. If you're like most model railroaders, operating on a limited budget, usually working with a pike that's "the right size" for you, you will probably reach the determination that all the extra expense for better trackage is not really needed. With a little patience and a bit of tender loving care, you can achieve that same "club" effect using, you guessed it, Atlas track. Let's take a look at how this can be done.

As we said earlier, most good hobby shops carry a variety of track. You will also discover that most hobby retailers are willing to go as far as allowing discounts on large purchases. For example, if you are planning to buy a minimum of twenty sections of three foot track, and it normally sells for about a buck a section, you might be able to talk him down to 85 or 90 cents per section. This allows a 10% discount. This really helps, although it doesn't sound like much of a saving. Before leaving the hobby shop, examine each section carefully for flaws like loose rail, broken ties, etc. Like we said, you want to lay good track, so start with good track. When using Atlas flex, I tend to shy away from their plastic tie version and opt for the more familiar cardboard tie. This track I have found to be structurally stronger than the plastic ties and, believe it or not, stronger than Lambert or Shinohara. The rail is literally bolted to the ties with heavy staples, whereas the plastic versions are simply moulded into place. The rail can very easily work itself loose from plastic ties after a period of time. Even if you don't run your pike that often, the humidity and general conditions of your layout room have an extremely important effect on trackwork through warping, shrinkage, and stretching. All these factors must be considered before you even attempt to start your layout.

Allright, let us suppose you decided to buy a quantity of Atlas flex track. What now? By this time you should have some kind of trackplan you wish to follow, and like any project of this nature, a good deal of time should be spent beforehand working out things like gradients, curvatures, etc. Get all the paperwork done first, so when you come home with your track you can go right to work. There is still one standard which seems never to vary much in the art of model railroading, and that, my friends, is the good old chalk line. Trace the entire circumference of your pike on the wood in chalk and this will essentially act as a template to aid in laying the track straight. For curves, you can observe the following procedures: measure off the radius of the particular curve and at the dead center of the circle you may drive a small nail. Alright now, get yourself a piece of string, tying one end of it to the nail and stretching the string to the outermost radius of the circle. To this end of the string you attach a piece of chalk and carefully follow the circle around while pulling tightly on the string. You have just constructed your curve and when the track is laid in place it will look darn good because it will be even and smooth. Follow this basic procedure

for all the curves on your pike and, when finished, you will have a full scale trackplan fully drawn out for you. The rest is easy if you take your time and do it right.

Now let's start the actual tracklaying process. Remember that in this article we are dealing with Atlas track on fiber ties and you will notice that this kind of flex track provides small spiking bolts along the sides of the rail which is more prototypic when completed and better in appearance than those center-spiked plastic cousins we were discussing earlier. Position the track dead center over the chalk lines before spiking and "eye down" the track to make sure it is straight and even. Unless you are a real derailment freak you will find that all these checks will certainly pay off in the end for a well modeled pike. Utilizing a good pair of pliers (needlenose, a model railroader's yoman tool) grasp the spike firmly and, with a good swift forward drive, push it into the woodwork. Don't push too hard and by all means don't use a hammer!!! After all, we are dealing with a little too much force. I like to spike about every tenth or twelfth tie, alternating the spikes from side to side on straight track. On curves, spike about every fifth or sixth tie on the inside of the curve only! This will allow your curves to take on a slightly superelevated effect and you will find that when you run trains over it at high speeds the entire train will simply glide around the curve with very little static or hesitation. For yards and other trackage that won't receive as much service as the mainline, you can even spike further apart. Once the track is bonded in place with ballast (a technique we will discuss in a future article), the spikes could be literally removed completely without disturbing the straightness of the rail. You would not want to do this though because we want track to be STRONG to last LONG!

By following these few simple guidelines you can put yourself on the right track to a better layout and more dependable operating sessions. Next issue we will talk about how you can take the money you saved on your initial purchase of flex track and apply it in obtaining good turnouts. Even though we have been discussing Atlas flex track in this article, I tend to shy away from their turnouts as they leave alot to be desired. From my past experiences with Atlas turnouts, be it snap or custom line, I've always encountered derailment problems. They don't seem to be constructed as ruggedly as they want you to think they are. One more thing, whatever you do, don't use sectional track if you really care about your pike. Sectional track will eventually develop "humps" and all those rail joints certainly do not add to the electrical conductivity. So, remember, do what the pros do, go welded!

A Railroad's Life Story: The History of the Springfield Valley

by Bruce Manton

Once upon a time, back in 1975, P.J. Manton had an idea. Running down to the basement of our house, Paul grabbed a 6foot rule and a piece of chalk. Shoving aside assorted crates and boxes, Paul measured out an area 6 x 20 feet on the basement floor. After about a week of hammering and sawing, the framework for a new model railroad stood in that measured space. Utilizing lumber salvaged from seven previous pikes, the framework looked like a patchwork quilt, scarred with last year's grass and ballast. Another week's work and the main was laid. This routine continued for several weeks until the "Reading Company" began to look and operate like the real McCoy.

During this period of construction, I was preoccupied with de-clashing my old N-scale pike. After a few business deals with various AR members and some local associates, I had enough bucks to convert to EC. Loading my pockets with the Greenbacks, I trucked off to the hobby shop and marched back with my first EC locomotive, a Life-like F9. After a few days in the shops, the Chicago and Northwestern lettering was replaced by blue and gold. On the loco's nose and side was painted "Springfield Valley", named after Springfield

Township, Montgomery Co. where I live. With the acquisition of this engine, I was granted trackage rights on the Reading Company. Thus the Springfield Valley was born.

Several weeks later, another Life-Like F9 was purchased from PC. Like the C&NW F, this one also received the SV blue and gold livery and was teamed with #100 (ex-C&NW) for use on coal drags out of the Tarquini mines (the largest industry on the RDG Co.). Due to the crude Life-Like drives, however, the units saw more time in the shops than on the roads. Disgusted with the poor performance of these units, I went in search of new motive power. Dealing through a New York firm, the Springfield Valley purchased three new units. Two new Baldwin RF-16 "Sharks" (ex-NYC) and an EMD GP-35 (ex-ESFEE). These units were renumbered as #102 and #103 (sharks) and #235 (geep). The units performed most efficiently and were often used as helpers on Reading freights. When the industrial burdru died for the weekends, the Sharks went into fan trip service between Philadelphia and Pottsville. Shortly thereafter, this stretch of track was purchased from Reading Company and became the present SV mainline.

When the Valley purchased the main, freight operations were only handled until Reading agreed to lease two ancient Doodlebug rail cars to us along with an aging EMD F-8, thus forming the first Springfield Valley passenger service. The E-8 was revamped at Reading by adding a snow plow pilot, ice breakers, new horns, and a duct vented cooling system.

Things proceeded rather smoothly for the Springfield Valley due primarily to the fact that Reading shared the load in coal shipments (40% to be precise). Then came the real shocker; on June 26, 1976, my brother was getting married and this meant that an end had to come to the Reading Co. Since my road only had trackage rights over Paul's system, the fate of the Reading/Springfield Valley rested in his hands. So, on March 8, 1976, the last run of the system took place. By the following week, all that remained was six large crates filled with equipment.

It was at this time of demolition that the Northwoods and Western RWY. of AR president Lucky Drake stepped up with a shortage of motive power. So, it was agreed that the Springfield Valley would lease their units to the N&W until the Family of Lines was constructed in Joe Tarquini's basement. It wasn't until late in 1976 however, that construction finally began on the ill-fated "Family of Lines".

This 6x14 foot monstrosity sported a double-track main, two main yards, a colossal engine facility, grades, bridges, tunnels, bypasses, and switchbacks. In a phrase, our "green pike". Being a combined effort of Paul Vanton Scott Drake Joe Tarquini, and myself, the road offered quite a bit of action by the four roads. (Not to mention the units used by honorary FOL members). Six unit freights were not uncommon as curvatures were wide and banked for high speed operation and the steep grades afforded the use of such power.

On this pike, no one person held the title of "owner" of the trackage as we all chipped in on for the materials. Hence, he who ran on the tracks of the Family of Lines (members that is), owned the mainline. With all of this trackage, the Springfield Valley was once again in need of more motive power. The Sharks kept stalling out on the steep 3% grade into "Rock Interlocking", a high spot on the pike where the main goes into single track to pass through a tunnel and a deep rock cut. Dealing once again with the New York firm (Uncle Sam's) the Valley purchased an ex-NYC RF-16B making an A-B-A lashup of Sharks. Talks of a fourth Shark popped up between SV board members, to keep in competition with the highly acclaimed A-B-B-A lashup of Also PA's and FA's of the Northwoods and Western and Reading respectively. However, none was ever purchased.

Also, during this time, the SV acquired their first steam power. One 2-6-1 "Prairie" locomotive was purchased from Reading Company and was lettered as #24 on the SV roster. This unit saw most of its service on branch lines.

She was also used as a yard switcher. A 2-8-0 "Consolidation" also ex-RIC (class I-1) was purchased and restored to her 1920 livery. This one, being a real eye catcher, retired the Sharks from fantrip service and took over all mainline passenger runs. The Sharks resumed their role in freight service. (That B unit really helped out).

With the newly acquired steamers, the Valley was now receiving orders from other roads to build steam for them. One such order came from Northwoods and Western who asked for a 2-8-2. Opening a new steam shop in January 1977, the Springfield Valley turned out two 2-8-2 "trikes" of which one went to NW&W. The other remained on SV's roster and was used for mainline freight operations. The Springfield Valley and the Northwoods and Western were about the only FOL roads that had steam in regular service.

Then came the final blow.....

As mentioned in a past Dispatcher, the FOL members were informed that the pike could not remain in Joe's basement. So, as of this writing, the Family of Lines, along with the operating roads of its members, lies in a dormant state. All equipment of the Valley now remains boxed up and stored in our basement until we either build a new Family of Lines or a new Springfield Valley. There you have it. The story of a road that began with one locomotive and grew to be one of the most successful short lines of the FOL system. Plans for a new pike are still up in the air as of yet, but who knows? Someday soon those blue and gold beauties will roll once more.

Dispatcher's Telegraph

Attention: If you have anything for sale, trade or want, put an ad in the Dispatcher. Ads for anything (see page 13) are absolutely free as a service for the members of the Region. Take advantage of it.

Wanted: HO scale model of E-60 in Amtrak livery. Good condition. Quote price. Patsy Summers, 202 Tappan Ave., Eph. PA 15237

For Sale: N scale equipment, track, turnouts, power packs, 2 Bachmann F-9's in Santa Fe livery, assorted rolling stock. Separately, make offer. \$25 takes all. Will consider trade for equal value HO equipment. Patsy Summers

RIO

If you would like to correspond with other readers, want to have some questions answered or voice your opinions, write to the RIO in care of the editor. Letters received by the deadline date will appear in the following issue.

Member: Steve Quinn
80 Gelder Dr.
Holland, PA 15966

Steve is looking for other members to correspond with. HE models in HO and offers the following advice.

If you are interested in saving around 50% or more when buying new and used rolling stock, locos, buildings, kits, etc., then you should try to attend one of the train meets held every month at various places.

Model railroaders bring their equipment that they want to sell and sell it, usually cheap. You have to belong to the MRA, TCA, etc. to get into some of them but you just have to pay \$1.50 or so to get into the public ones. Schedules for these meets can be found in Model Railroader and RIO magazines. If you've never attended a train meet, please do, you'll be glad you did.

Members: Jack Ketonis
345 Fern St.
Sunderbury, PA 17801

Jack is looking for help. he writes:

Intend to model Reading Railroad in future. Will model line between Williamsport and Reading. Need photos to detail engines and rolling stock, also any other information you are willing to loan, share or sell. Am unable to accept visitors until garage (building) for layout is built. This will be built in a year or two. Then I will extend an open invitation to anyone.

editor's reply: I myself have some good pictures of Reading equipment. Our publisher Paul J. Nantor (address on page 2) is very knowledgeable of the Rdg. Lines and certainly is willing to offer any help he can. Any other Reading modelers and/or fans are urged to contact Jack.

The following is an editorial comment by Barry J. Sitek. Both Barry and the editor invite responsible reactions to this editorial. If you have an opinion on modeling or railroading please feel free to write to the editor.

Trains R' Truckin'

Over the past year or so, mostly during the summer, I have been working in the trucking business (United). From this job I got real pretty darn good, fringe benefits, a great boss, and mainly experience of the truckers. I got to know them, their actions and mostly everything there is to know about them. I realized there were many similarities between truckers and railroaders.

There is a competition between the two jobs but I feel free to say that railroaders can carry just about anything, unlike trucks, with less hauling labor. Railroaders and truckers are both working with freight, whether it be people, produce, livestock, and so on, bringing this freight from one point to another. Both jobs have a special lingo or language in which they speak to one another. Both jobs have a special unity for their members. Railroaders respect other railroaders as well as one trucker another trucker. There are truck magazines and clubs but I doubt there is a "Teenage Model Truckers Association". There have been songs written about truckin' as well as rail-roadin' (we have Johnny Cash on our side). These songs tell it like it is and the songs will show similarities in themselves. Both jobs have unions to which they belong.

What about the similarities in their personal life? I speak of the majority of them, both railroaders and truckers. I noticed that they like sipping a can of beer while listening to a good joke after a hard full day of work. Both groups seem to be able to take a punishment without showing it. They seem like rugged and tough men at work but at home when the work is finished they are gentlemen and calm. They seem to take advantage of the good things in life. They will help out each other in time of need. When I was on the road it seemed that truckers got to go first class at most places. Everybody loves a trucker. Everybody loves a railroader. They are both very much the same and very much different in many ways.

I have been fired for the time being for reasons I fail to mention. It has been a good experience for me for the time it lasted. Maybe some day railroaders will have CE's in their cabs while the truckers will wear a black and white striped railroad hat in their cabs.

So much for the Dec/Jan 78 issue. Sorry it is so late but so what else is new. The next issue will be the Feb/March 78 issue. We are trying to get back on schedule so the deadline date is February 22, 1978.