

HOTBOX

"the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"

No. 164

November-December 1980

FAREWELL MY FRIEND!





HOTBOX

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • Tern Association of Model Railroaders

Issued every other month with an additional special mailing of a Directory of Membership during the summer.

Annual dues for the TAMR are as follows:

REGULAR (under 21 years of age): \$5.00
ASSOCIATE (21 years of age and up): \$4.50
SUSTAINING (both Regular & Associate): \$10.00

Please address all membership applications, renewals, address changes and complaints of non-receipt of the TAMR HOTBOX to the TAMR Secretary.

TAMR Secretary: Gerry Dobey
145 E. Kenilworth Ave.
Villa Park, IL 60181

All other HOTBOX business, except where specifically noted, is handled by the Editor. Please address all comments to the Editor.

DEADLINE: All material for publication must be submitted for consideration by the first day of the first month of the issue (i.e. for May/June issue, material must be received no later than May 1st). The TAMR HOTBOX assumes all material is contributed gratis and no payment will be made upon publication

HOTBOX Editor: Mark Kaszniak
4818 W. George Street
Chicago, IL 60641

The TAMR HOTBOX is distributed via third-class mail. If you'd like to receive it by first-class mail then please add two dollars to the Regular and Associate membership rates.

Life Member #6:

Timothy Vermande, former Auditor, TAMR HOTBOX Editor and currently in charge of our Archives, has been bestowed a Life Membership in the TAMR in recognition of his meritorious service during the past years. The officers, officials and members of the HOTBOX Staff wish to ask you to join us in congratulating Tim.

INTERCHANGE

If you have something to buy, sell or trade, use the INTERCHANGE to get results. Your ad is seen by all TAMR members. Rate: 10¢ per column line (35 spaces), name and address printed FREE. Send all ads to the HOTBOX Editor who is temporarily handling all advertising.

FOR SALE: Milwaukee Road yellow coach and diner. Each \$4.50
Full length dome: \$5.00
Amtrak coach, diner and baggage. Each \$2.50. Full length unpainted dome \$4.50. WANTED: AHM Alco RS2 Dummy & AHM FM B Dummy. State condition and price. All HO.
Richard Hoker, 1908 Henley St.
Glenview, IL 60025

(Continued on page 11)

Send your request for the Pass Listing to: John Huey, 13819 Jersey Ave., Norwalk, CA 90650. All requests must be accompanied by a pass made out to John and a 3x5 card showing your railroad name, your name and your address PRINTED or TYPED.

I have been informed that someone who has never been listed in the Pass Listing after he sent me his pass. If you have been neglected, maybe I didn't get your pass either. Please try again. --John Huey

Blue Grass Eastern RR
Don Leitch, 1840 Forest Drive
Sarnia, Ontario, Canada N7T 7H6

North Sydenham & Nipissing Bluff RR
Jeff Forgrave, RR 2,
Annan, Ontario, Canada NOH 1B0

Norfolk System
Bruce Faulkner, P.O. Box 561
Cary, North Carolina 27511

Chickamauga, Shiloh & Appomattox RR
Dave Ellett, 4277 19th Place SW
Naples, Florida 33999

Wynot Central
Greg Schneider, 9117 30th Street
Brookfield, IL 60513

Golden RR
Kevin Garrett, 4050 North Drive
Pueblo, CO 81008

Editor's Note: John tells me that he can not handle this column anymore. If you are interested in taking over the Pass Listing, please write the HOTBOX Editor

WE'VE MOVED! SAUGUS and PACIFIC

WRITE:

KEN KEELS
624 Birch Tree Court
Rochester, MI 48063
For Information.

WARS - TAMR - NMRA

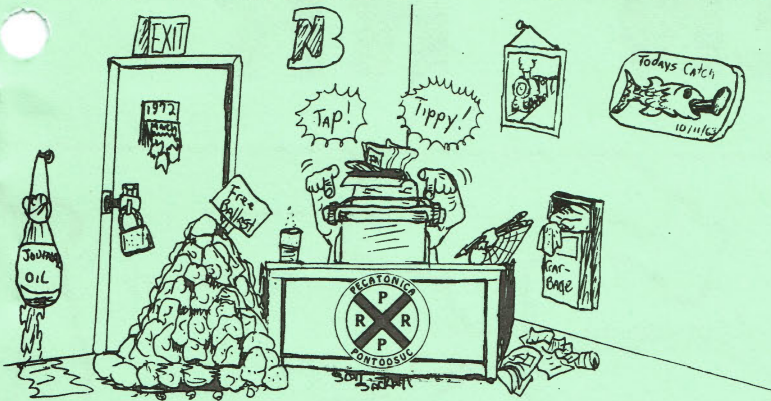
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CRUMMY NEWS



BY MARK KASZNIAK, EDITOR

Christmas Gifts

For some six years now there has been a tradition in the TAMR that the HOTBOX Editor forget all those important and vital editorial subjects and devote his last column of the year to the presentation of some gifts to some deserving members and officials that are not too badly needed.

Far be it for me to break with tradition especially when it affords me the chance to fill at least part of a page in the HOTBOX. After all, writing serious, thought provoking editorials on the TAMR and model railroading all year long is hard work--something most editors try to avoid as much as possible.

Therefore, in a grand (and maybe even glorious) tradition started some six years ago, I present this year's edition of the HOTBOX Editor's Christmas Gifts.

To Jeff Wilke, TAMR President: A serious association crippling crisis. Your administration seems to have been neglected in this area. How could this be?

To Greg Dahl, TAMR Auditor: A fleet of brightly colored boxcars for your layout, no two the same.

To Gerry Dobey, TAMR Secretary: A zillion letters asking when the 1980 DIRECTORY is coming out and what are passes.

To Rich Hoker, TAMR Treasurer: A bill for my services as Editor. We did agree on \$50.00 an hour for my services, didn't we?

To Gary Gardner, Western Region Rep: A two week, all expenses paid, trip to Park Forest, IL for some rest and relaxation. You obviously won't see any trains.

To Tom Gasior, new Constitutional Board member: An 11 x 14 print of an Illinois Slag and Ballast switcher for the train room.

To John Huey, CB member: Some Champion decals so you can learn how the other guys make them better.

To Tim Vermande, column author: A scanner that only picks up the Alaska Railroad.

To Doug Johnson, former Secretary: A trip to South Bend to visit Tim Vermande and return his maps.

To Talmadge Carr, POM: A bill for any conference calls the officers make as you may have started an expensive habit.

To Jim Kobrinetz, Associate Editor: A very special calendar that allows deadlines to be pushed back one week, but still gets the materials to me a day before the original deadline.

To Dee Gilbert, MSC Chairman: A timber trestle that is plagued with derailments.

To Ed Moran, Central Region member: The Milwaukee Road. We gave it to Jeff last year and all he did was cut its size. Now its your turn to try to make it work.

To Dan Carroll: A special Amtrak timetable where all the trains are renamed the California Zephyr and they all run over the Rio Grande.

To Luke Frerichs, HOTBOX author: A layout consisting simply of interconnected Timesaver sections.

To Dwight Anderson, HOTBOX author: A scale elevator so that it will be easier to move trains from one level to another on your layout.

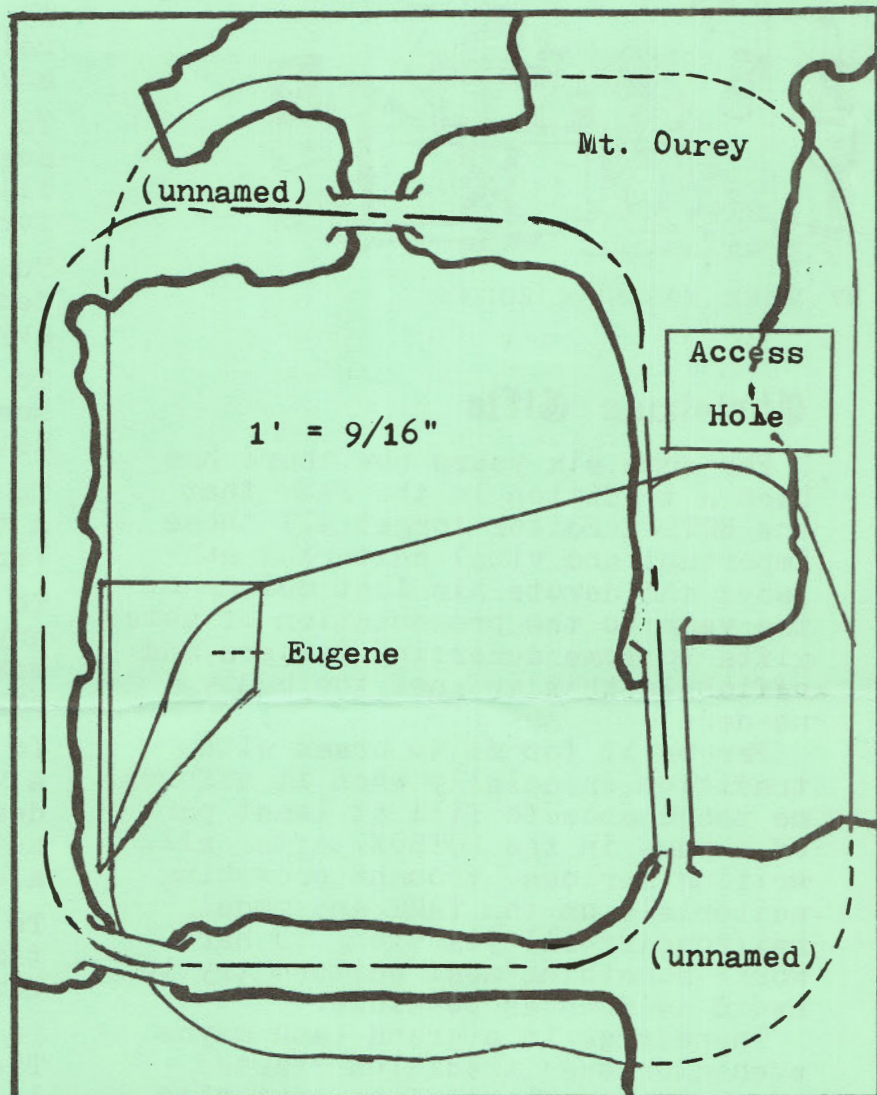
GOLDEN RR

The Golden RR is somewhat modeled after the Denver & Rio Grande Western which is my favorite prototype. The history of my line is short as I have not been a serious modeler for that long. I started when I was 12, but gave it up soon afterwards. Then in January of 1979, I started constructing my present pike.

As you can see by the track-plan, my layout covers an area of some 8x10 feet and features three prominent mountains. Two of the mountains are completed except for coloring and finishing touches and the third is presently under construction. I used cardboard to form the general shape of the mountains along with wood braces. Next I covered this supporting network with newspaper and added a mixture of Sculptamold and Red Top modeling plaster (3/4 Sculptamold, 1/4 Red Top with just enough water to make a dough. This mixture can then be reworked after it hardens by adding additional water).

I also enjoy building models and plan some scratchbuilding in the near future. Another of my passions is restoring old used HO locomotives. As of the present, I have two locomotives on my pike: a Santa Fe 0-4-0 and a 2-8-0. All of my rolling stock has been pieced together from items I have bought or obtained from my friends.

Finally, I am a railfan and have an ongoing picture collection. I also trade passes. As for future plans for the Golden RR, construction is proceeding on my town and the next major obstacle to be tackled is block wiring.



LEGEND

- hidden track
- proposed track
- ===== bridge
- mountains

Drawing by Mark Kaszníak

PLANNING YOUR CAR FLEET

Usually model railroad cars are bought at the hobby shops for a variety of reasons. A modeler may purchase a car because it is lettered for his favorite road, or he likes the color scheme or he simply needs some additional cars for his pike. Whatever the reason, buying cars becomes a pleasurable sideline of the hobby and is an innocent pursuit instead of being planned like the purchase of a brass locomotive or the designing of a trackplan.

The mix of road names, colors and car types has as much to do with the credibility of your layout as your scenic terrain. An unplanned assortment of cars can single handly distract the observer's attention from excellent model work, your model work.

What the typical modeler, teens especially, needs is a set of rules by which he can utilize commercially available car kits and ready to run cars to enhance his modeling efforts. The opposite effect is very easily attained. A collection of too bright, too colorful, too modern or cars lettered for roads on the other side of the country from what you're modeling tell the viewer that something is amiss even though he may not be able to read the visual clues correctly.

You must admit that the problem of too much variety is at its height. You can go into the hobby shop and purchase a wood sheathed boxcar of the 1920's along with an 86 foot hi-cube of the sixties. I suspect that many of us are guilty of over doing it. Since I'm starting to sound pretty drastic, let's lay down some ground rules:

A) You can do anything you want with your model railroad.

B) You can use brightly colored cars to show young children and non-modelers who want something more eye appealing than a string of 40 foot, very dull, boxcars.

C) You can always take those brightly colored cars to the club layout. Brightly colored cars usually out

number dull cars 3 to 1 because the dull ones are on home layouts.

D) Your main objective in this hobby may be car collecting which would then make this article very boring.

For the modeler with a layout, the tendency is to choke it with cars. This is a serious problem. Rare is the modeler whose tracks are not cluttered with cars.

Most of the cars on your layout should be plain. Almost every railroad has a collection of plain cars. The real railroads do it because a plain car cuts down on expenses. Modelers do it for a different reason. With a number of plain cars in a train, the viewer is less likely to recognize the cars as individuals. Thus your trains will appear to be longer than they actually are and this in turn will make your locomotives look like they are hauling more tonnage per unit. The human mind tends to lose count sooner or later. This is one reason why coal and ore hauling roads seem to be modeled more realistically.

Furthermore, like many modelers, I am reluctant to start putting crud on my nicely lettered and painted cars. I won't go into the details here, because many articles have been written on weathering cars including some for the HOTBOX, but weathering does make a car look used and helps to blend it into the geographical location of your railroad. The results are more realistic looking cars, cars that look like they've been used for some purpose other than just running over the layout and are going from somewhere to somewhere. Weathering gives a unified effect between your railroad and your scenic terrain.

Now for a few concluding points: Dull cars (boxcar red or the equivalent) help to build an atmosphere that makes your trains seem longer. Home road cars are the foundation of a fleet. Cars are usually found in groups in accordance with local industries. Open top cars are usually found close to home. Most cars belong to a specific time period and not all should be used on your pike. Finally, observe the prototype, it is your best example.



Attending Members of 1980 TAMR National Convention on Long Island:
 (Left to Right) Steve Boivin, Eric Garcia, Pat Lewandowski, Eric Hagman (kneeling), Rich Byerly, Ted Bedell, Kevin Lindstrom, Ted Tait, Ed Anderson (in rear), Chris Anderson, Bernie Stone, Jim Schweltzer and Bob Huron.

Convention Sights

Prototype photos
by Bob Huron



1980 Convention Report

The call had gone out several months ago and now all the preparations were completed. By the middle of August, TAMR members from all over the East Coast were assembling on Long Island to become a part of the 1980 TAMR National Convention. The convention officially began when Ted Bedell's entourage--which included Ted, Kevin Lindstrom, Eric Hagman, Rich Byerly and Bob Huron--met up with Ted Tait's entourage--including Ted Tait, Pat Lewandowski, Eric Garcia, Steve Boivin and myself--at Hicksville, NY on Friday, August 15, 1980. Never has such an impressive fighting force been established in the history of the Northeastern Region. Our forces joined together for an assault on the Long Island RR.

After the introductory pleasantries were exchanged, our first tactical move was to purchase tickets to Greenport. On the way, we picked up another ally, one James Schweitzer, a new TAMR member. Our first destination was Ronkonkoma where we would switch trains for our final destination. Yet the Long Island RR was a formidable enemy this day for upon arriving at Ronkonkoma we discovered there was no train to Greenport today and we'd have to go by (ugh!) bus. Being devoted railfans, we declined the offer and decided a hasty retreat to Syosset was in order.

When the troops arrived in Syosset, they were extremely hungry and a conflict developed on just where food could be obtained. This issue was resolved by having Ted Tait's entourage sack a local Wendy's while Ted Bedell's ravaged and plundered a local McDonald's. With eating out of the way, we returned to headquarters (Ted Tait's house) to engage in some strategy and tactics (RAIL BARON). Due to the excessive number of troops, two sessions operated simultaneously. At the conclusion of the multiple hour sessions, the headquarter's staff (Ted's mom) served dinner. Evening was now upon us and the troops were granted several hours leave with instructions to return later for a final briefing. Some

of the troops decided to spend their free time at the local cinema while the rest engaged in a local bull session.

Later, when all the troops were reassembled, the briefing began. They viewed slides of successful campaigns against various past enemies which helped to bolster their spirits and take their minds of today's tragic defeat. Comic relief was then provided when the movie, "the Magic of Railroading," was shown once forward and twice in reverse. This concluded the day's activities and all troops were retired in preparation for tomorrow's activities.

Our generals feeling that we weren't quite ready to face the enemy again planned for some special training (pun intended) courses to be undertaken. Our first stop was to be the West Island Model RR Club, but that course was cancelled due to the flooding of their instruction area (obviously a dastardly sabotage maneuver by the Long Island RR). However, we were prepared for that disaster because alternate arrangements were made with the Nassau Model RR Club in E. Williston for our session. All the troops were in total agreement that the club's depiction of enemy territory was certainly realistic. We were even given a chance to run our own miniature equipment.

We left E. Williston and proceeded to Mineloa where we had a chance to enlarge our collection of miniature equipment at Willis Hobbies as well as having the official convention photo taken. Then it was back to Ted Tait's house in order to prepare for the grand banquet. The banquet afforded everyone a good meal and the main order of business was the announcement of the model contest winners (listed at the conclusion of this article). Finally, the day ended with a fabulous beach party in Bayville.

(cont'd)

1980 Convention (cont'd from last page)

Sunday was to be the last day of our campaign and once again we decided to assault the enemy--this time at Princeton Jct. Our routing to the battle site was as follows (it is worth knowing as it totally befuddled the enemy): An M1 brought us to Penn Station. At noon, we departed on the Betsy Ross for an intermediate stop and then a one car electric took us to Princeton. After eating, we attacked the enemy and were justly rewarded for Princeton Jct was the last stronghold of GG1's, SD45's, E60CP's, GP's and Metroliners. After the enemy had been thoroughly trounced we returned to headquarters where the army was broken up and sent home victorious.



Coming Soon:

GG1's

The TAMR would like to thank the following companies for donating awards for our contests: Bachmann Brothers, Moses Ent., Walthers, Standard Hobby Supply, Woodland Scenics and Sterling Publishing Co.

1980 CONTEST RESULTS:

Best of Show: Andy Nortnik, Tillers Building awarded a Mikado

Steam Locomotives:

Position	Model	Name	Award
1st.	WIRR Pacific	Eric Garcia	Misc. Buildings

Diesel Locomotives:

1st.	A&A GP38	Eric Garcia	SW1
2nd.	GSL FT	Gerry Dobey	
3rd.	CNW FM	Gerry Dobey	

Passenger Cars:

1st.	Rebuilt PRR cars	Eric Garcia	Jailbox
2nd.	Midway Northern	Jeff Wilke	

Freight Cars:

1st.	A&M caboose	Eric Garcia	Misc. Buildings
2nd.	A&M boxcar	Eric Garcia	
3rd.	BCR Bulk Flat	Jeff Wilke	

Maintenance of Way:

1st.	Snow Plow	Eric Garcia	Campbell Wharf
2nd.	Blacksmith Car	Eric Garcia	
3rd.	Boom Car	Eric Garcia	

Structures:

1st.	Grusom Casket	Bernie Stone	Memorial Park
2nd.	W.E. Snatchem	Bernie Stone	
3rd	Lemon House Club	Bernie Stone	

Prototype Pass:

1st.	Saugus & Pacific	Ken Keels	Rail Facts & Feats TAMR HOTBOX
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WYE NOT?

In the province of Nova Scotia between Pugwash and Stellarton on the Canadian National's main line near the West River sits Brown Point wye (see Fig. 1). This wye shows the typical use for such an installation as it connects the CN main with a branch line that runs to Pictou. Back in the days of steam, the wye was obviously useful for keeping steam locomotives traveling in the proper direction. However, with the advent of diesels, this service no longer needed to be performed and as a result, the Pugwash side of the wye is no longer in use.

While not much is known about the operations centered about the wye in the past, certain physical characteristics indicate specific operating patterns. For instance, the runaround track on one side of the wye certainly suggests that either runaround movements needed to be performed or that the track could be used as sort of an inter-system interchange. Since a major yard is located at Stellarton perhaps local wayfreights dropped off cars destined for the Pictou branch where a local crew would complete the final switching arrangements. This local crew could then set out cars destined for Stellarton yard on the wye for the local wayfreights.

The presence of the freight depot and maintenance sheds tend to verify the fact that the Pictou branch was once an important source of revenue for the railroad. Perhaps the depot served local area businessmen who

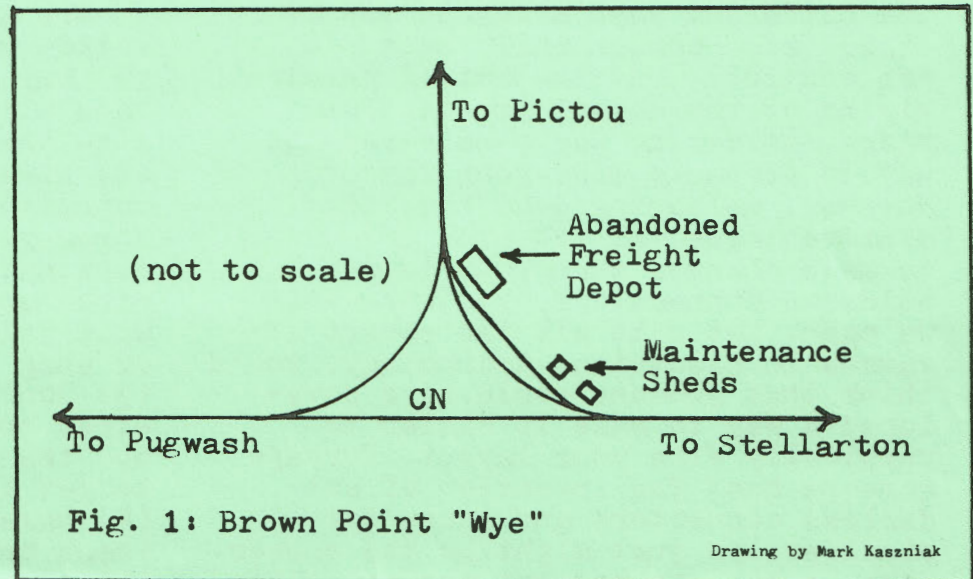


Fig. 1: Brown Point "Wye"

Drawing by Mark Kaszniak

didn't have local rail connections, but still needed to ship or receive items by rail on occasion. This is a reasonable assumption because Nova Scotia is mostly surrounded by water except for a small patch of land connected to New Brunswick. The railroad had to be an important means of transportation before the advent of the automobile and good roads and highways.

Since wyes take up a great amount of real estate, they are not often modeled on most pikes. In addition, most modelers do not grasp the purpose of such installations. The wye at Brown Point shows not only how it can be incorporated into your railroad, but also the numerous operating possibilities it provides. The wye can serve as an industry if it has a freight depot located on one of its legs. It can serve as a means for turning trains as well as an inter-pike interchange where operations on the branch can almost be run like a separate railroad.

For interesting operation, a wye is hard to beat.

Solder-less Wiring

Layout wiring is a subject not too often touched upon by the model magazines. We're not talking about the different ways a layout can be wired (e.g. common rail, multiple cab control), but the actual physical wiring of the layout itself. For years, soldering was considered the way to properly wire your layout. However, soldering does have its disadvantages. If you ever tried to make changes when your layout has soldered connections, you know what we mean. Yet with all the recent advances in electrical technology, you'd think that someone would have developed a way to make it easier to physically wire your layout. Perhaps someone has? The invention of solderless connectors and screw terminal strips just might be the answer. Here we hope to present the relative costs of a solderless wiring system as well as its advantages and disadvantages in hopes that you will at least consider adopting this kind of wiring on parts of your model railroad.

The items you will need for solderless wiring are as follows: (1) a special crimping tool; (2) a wire stripper; (3) solderless connectors (hook type); (4) screw type terminal strips; (5) a screwdriver and (6) some mounting screws. The cost of this system is comparable to what you would pay for a soldering iron and a spool of solder.

Wiring with solderless terminals is basically very simple. In addition, there are no hot irons to lean against and changes are made easily. The first thing you do is strip off some of the insulation from a piece of wire. Then you twist the strands of wire together (this step is unnecessary if you are using solid wire). The solderless connector is then inserted over the bare wire and crimped with the special crimping tool. This connector is then fastened to the terminal strip. Making changes is as easy as loosening the

screw on the terminal strip, removing the wire and fastening it to a new terminal position.

Here are a couple of points to follow when using this system:

(1) Buy a good crimping tool, many have wire strippers incorporated into them.

(2) Always buy hook solderless connectors. The round type will force you to remove the screw on the terminal strip when you want to move wires around and the spade type will fall out when you loosen a screw or snag the wires.

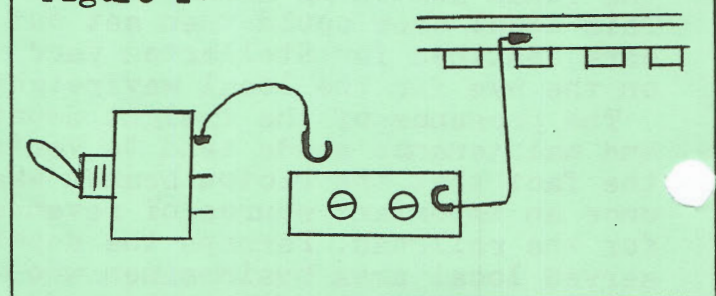
(3) Don't put more than two or three wires on a single terminal. If you do, the solderless connectors start to get in each other's way.

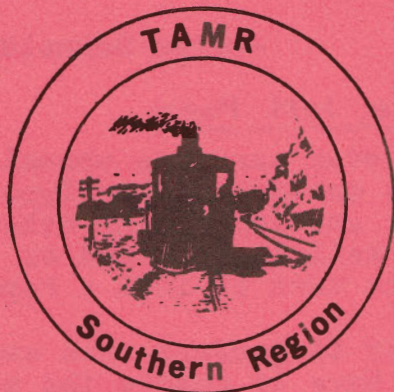
(4) Make good crimps with the tool. These crimps serve as both physical and electrical connections.

We suggest that a good wiring system combine both the techniques of soldering and solderless connectors. Use solder where you want permanent connections and the connectors where you'll probably make changes. For instance, solder wires to your track to give a good physical and electrical connection. You should also solder wires to your block switches or use the type with screw terminals. Then make the connections between your track and block switches with screw terminal strips and solderless connectors so that changes can be made easily (see figure 1).

Good luck, good soldering and good crimping.

Figure 1:





As many of you are well aware, the Southern Region of the TAMR has not been active for almost a year now. Many members still have subscriptions to the Southern Region's newsletter, the EXPRESS, and have not received their money's worth in benefits. We hope to rectify this situation very soon.

Therefore, I ask that all those who hold subscriptions to the EXPRESS to write me (Mark Kaszniak, 4818 W. George St., Chicago, IL 60641) before January 1st and tell me how many issues of the EXPRESS you received. Once we get a valid listing of those who still hold subscriptions, we can begin to revive the newsletter once again.

Various interested parties hope to get the region going again by the time a new regional representative takes office next summer. The representative can then assume the responsibilities of the region and keep it going. The members of the Southern Region comprise about 20% of the TAMR's total membership. Our officers feel that this is an adequate amount to sustain a regional organization which is why this revitalization is being attempted.

I urge all those who are interested in helping the region to write me directly with their comments and concerns. At the moment, Dee Gilbert has been appointed acting regional representative and we will be working to get your region back on its feet. Of course, any contributions for the region's newsletter will be greatly appreciated. Further updates on the region will be forthcoming in the HOTBOX.

INTERCHANGE (cont'd from page 2)

Am trimming HO locomotive fleet. All diesels are in fair condition. The GP20 is missing some steps

G&WR	F7A	\$11.00
G&WR	GP20	\$10.50

Add \$1.00 for shipping. Interested parties contact: David Goff, 2 Madison Lane, Acton, MA 01720

New HO: Model Power CN and CP C628, \$25. Santa Fe RS11, \$20. AHM BN Streamline RPO & Pullman, each \$10. Lionel CN and CP cabooses, \$2.50. All in original boxes. Used HO: Santa Fe Athearn Trainmaster and dummy with kadees, both \$34.50. B&O Penn Line coach, \$7. TM of CA reefers with Kadees and sprung trucks, each \$6. Trades welcomed. Write: John Chambers, 2039 Ogilvie Road, Ottawa. Ontario, CANADA K1J 7P1.



HENLEY

AND

HARLEM

LINES



"THE VITAL LINK"

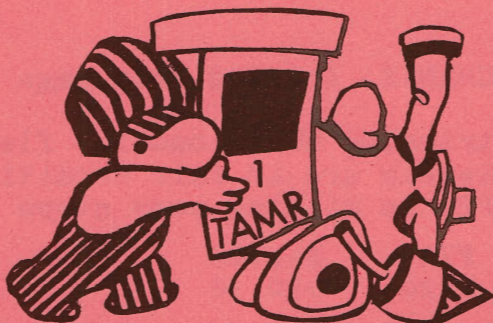
CONNECTING



The Member Services Committee can help you solve your problems; both model and prototype. Help is just a letter away. Write: Dee Gilbert, MSC Chairman, Box 132, Harrison, AR 72601.

Interested in promoting the TAMR in your area? If so, write Greg Dahl, TAMR Auditor, 1649 Euclid St., St. Paul, MN 55106 for further details. Help recruit a new member today.

Notice: The 1980 TAMR Directory should be mailed by Christmas, so be looking for it around New Year's.



HELPERS

Do you have any helpful hints for making your model railroad look more realistic that don't take a lot of time or money? If you do, consider submitting them to the HELPERS column. All items are to be sent to the HOTBOX Editor.

Yummy Trees

A quick, inexpensive way to make realistic HO scale tress is to utilize stems from grapes. Properly trimmed to the right height and desired size, they can represent good renditions of actual trees.

After you have cut the stems to the proper size, "clean" off a trunk portion at one end and apply glue (I use Elmers) to various points of the stems. Then apply some lichen to get a full sized top for the tree. Allow the glue to dry and trim it to your own likes. You can paint the stems to obtain a more realistic color, but I leave mine alone as the color looks alright to me and will darken somewhat over the years. Incidentally, this is one of the few projects where you can enjoy a snack while constructing something for your railroad.

--Gerry Dobey

Well Oiled

An oil dock can be a busy and needed part of any post-steam railroad. It can be used as an on line industry or as a refueling spot for your diesels. Campbell Scale Models offers an oil dock, but at too steep a price for me. Here's an easy way to kitbash one for a fraction of the cost.

You will need a tank car, I found an old beat up one in my scrap box. I followed no specific prototype so just about any tank car will do. I removed the trucks and couplers and weathered the car with Floquil's grimy black. Then I glued the walkaround for this particular car to the bottom of it. Next I attached some stands, which I procured from a bridge and trestle set, underneath the walkaround. A ladder to reach the walkaround and

some wire shaped like scale pipe along with some oil drums produce a very attractive scene to place near your company's shops or industrial area.

--Greg Schneider

No Smoke, Just Pepsi

Have you ever seen the unrealistic cigarette machine on the Tyco Arlee passenger station or any other Tyco product? Well I got tired of it and decided to turn it into a Pepsi machine.

In order to perform this conversion, you will have to remove the machine from the building and then find the decals that come with the station. Take either the Coke or Pepsi machine decal, cut it out and place it in the middle of the machine. Remove the excess plastic and file the machine until you get a rectangle the size of the Pepsi machine decal. Voila! You now have a Pepsi machine.

--Dan Carroll

Taking Notes

Here's a helpful hint that will make your problems easier to solve. How about making a problem notebook by cutting out the table of contents in your magazine (or photocopying it) and arranging them by months in a notebook. How many times have you needed a question answered and all you could remember was that you saw a similar question posed in a section of one of the magazines? If you're like me, you surely not going to go through your entire collection just to answer one question. If you had some kind of notebook, you might actually have some time left over to get some railroading done. To put this idea into practice all you have to do is have the table of contents and a listing of the questions that were in each issue. The initial work might be a bit tedious if you have a large collection already, but if you get in the habit updating your notebook when you get a new issue of your magazine, it isn't too bad. A little work now saves a lot of work later.

--Andy Nortnik

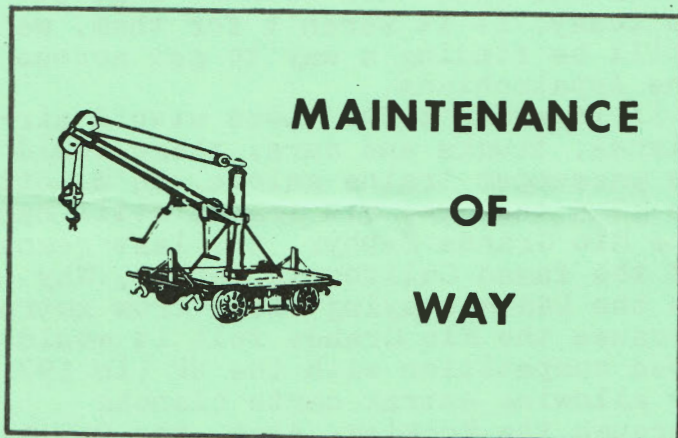
HELPERS is continued on page 13

A Pressing Issue

When pressing handrails into the plastic bodies of a locomotive, sometimes they will bend or break. A drop of plastic solvent cement introduced into the hole will soften the plastic and the hand rails will go in much easier.

It Pays to Advertise

Most railroad yards look alike to shippers who use them so to give your yard some identity, place your railroad's logo in a high very visible place--like your yard tower, roundhouse or diesel storage tank. Who knows, you may attract some additional customers!



M of W is a product review column written by our members on model railroading and railfanning items that may be of interest to you. All the opinions presented are those of the reviewer and are not necessarily those of the TAMM or the HOTSBOX. Please submit reviews to the HOTSBOX Editor.

The General, 1/25th scale model, Fundimensions, around \$25 at hobby shops.

Last February, MODEL RAILROADER ran a section on new products reviewed at the manufacturer's show. One of these items was a 1/25 scale model of the American Standard 4-4-0 locomotive, "the General," which was made famous through its attempted capture by the Yankees at Big Shanty, GA on April 12, 1862. This is the locomotive that was chased by its engineer and others until it was recovered. Through the persistence of its conductor, Capt. William A. Fuller, who lead the chase, The General survived the battle of Atlanta and served throughout the war. It is presently on display at

the museum in Kennesaw, GA.

The model is an MPC plastic kit. I wrote to MODEL RAILROADER for purchase information, then the MPC parent company, Fundimensions, to find out where to purchase it. I was referred to distributors in my state, Florida, none of which gave me a reply. In July, I was finally advised by Fundimensions that the kits would be available by late September and sure enough the model has finally become available.

The General is a museum quality model. It is highly detailed and some of the work required is very exacting. I wore magnifiers in several of the operations. The brass plastic sections are outstanding in appearance. I decided to spray paint the black and red plastic sections before assembling them. The black, as cast, is a high gloss lacquer black and I wanted a prototypical locomotive flat black. After all, realism is the name of the game.

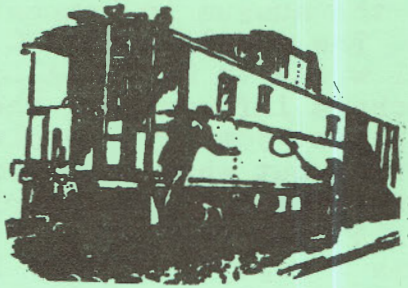
The model measures over 25 inches long and it mounts on a track section with a nice base. There is even a nameplate for the builder of the model. The wheels, drivers and drive rods, are mounted free and can be turned--although I don't recommend it. The model is absolutely complete in detail right down to the handles on the valves, Johnson Bar, Sand pull, Bell cord, etc. I do not consider the model expensive considering the value for your money of the finished product.

This is not a model to be built in a hurry. There are some 300 pieces to put in place and I'd recommend a fast drying liquid cement, rather than a tube glue. Regular styrene cement dries with a gloss shine on any excess and with this particular plastic, any adjustment has a tendency to soften the material.

Once finished, if carefully and properly done, the builder will have an item of which he can truly be proud. The instructions are simple, very well illustrated and easy to follow. I've built one for myself and am now starting on another for my grandson, David.

--Dave Ellett

TRAIN ORDERS



TRAIN ORDERS is a letters column in the TAMR HOTBOX where you can express your views on the TAMR, its publications and its officers. All letters for this column should be sent to the Editor of the TAMR HOTBOX.

PRAISE

I would like to congratulate you and the rest of the staff for a good July/August issue. You can really see the improvement over past issues.

--Don Leitch
Sarnia, Ontario

MORE O SCALE

I know some of you out there are O gaugers. Personally, I think O is funnier, bigger, more realistic and much more expensive. O gauge is once again becoming popular and thus it will be easier to find more items, but I want to see more O gauge in the HOTBOX!

--Doug DeLar
Crown Point, IN

RANDY RIVERS REPLIES

I would like to make a few comments in response to Randy Rivers' letter in the July/August issue:

He quotes that "we use our weight in oil every two days," yet gas stations across the country are selling less and less gas this year. People aren't traveling like they used to. This has created "stock-piles" of gasoline. It was said that gas prices should come down and they have in some places as much as eight cents.

The oil companies of the world are to blame, not our parents. If you had been there in their time, you'd have done the same thing as they. If you believe there is a gas shortage, you'd better wake up. The oil companies are only pulling the wool over our eyes.

Furthermore, I believe that President Carter did the right thing by not selling grain to the Soviet Union and by boycotting the Summer Olympics.

This was one of the few peaceful ways to protest the Soviet-Union-invasion without starting World War III. Our government may be messed up, but give it time and it will straighten out. However, I value my country and my life along with many others more than our railroads. Our government has made a mess of the railroads, but they will eventually be restored. In war, our country or railroads might not be.

--Mark Nerger
Pensacola, FL

I have a comment to say to Randy Rivers. Alleluia! Someone else besides myself finally realizes what airplanes, trucks and cars have done to the railroads. Amtrak is still a large government mistake and so is Conrail. Why? The U.S. Government doesn't know a single thing about railroads. Whatever happened to private enterprise? The railroads made this country what it is today, if it weren't for them, we'd still be finding a way to get across the Appalachians.

If it weren't for those stupid airplanes, trucks and cars, there would be passenger trains galore. We'd better be glad that the Rio Grande still has the Rio Grande Zephyr, the last remnant of the famed California Zephyr. Why is the D&RGW staying clear from Amtrak? Because the Rio Grande felt it would lose competition with the UP (in 1971) by allowing Amtrak carte blanche through the Rockies. Also, the D&RGW doesn't want late trains and rolling pieces of junk on their mainline. The Rio Grande has maintained their passenger cars so that they can be used as they were on the CZ. The Rio Grande wants to maintain their tradition of on time service. Will the government ever learn?

--Dan Carroll
Arvada CO

First, I want to say that the TAMR is great for teens in the hobby of model railroading and that Mark Kaszniak has been a great editor, so far.

However, I disagree with Randy Rivers on many points. As I understand railroad history, most of the railroad's passenger service was dying when the government stepped in and organized Amtrak. It is the way the company is run, not the idea for it, that has given the nation "one big headache."

Also Randy fails to take into account that not everyone can travel or ship by train. The railroads of this country don't go everywhere so new roads and repair of old ones must continue.

Furthermore, does Randy want President Carter to do nothing about the Soviet invasion? This is the impression he gave me. I would also like to know what "disasterous steps" the government has taken to eliminate our railroads? Finally, Randy complains about pumping federal funds into no good causes like the Rock Island and Milw. road. If the government didn't do this, both railroads would be one of the "ten railroads that merge or declare bankruptcy." But then that would simply give him something else to complain about.

--Luke Frerichs
Pasco, WA

While reading the TRAIN ORDERS column, I noticed Randy Rivers' letter. Most of what he says is true. Out of the 40 or 50 railroads that have merged since 1958, half have gone bankrupt again. A way to solve this could be in what Otto Mears did in his days. He built the Silverton RR in 1888 and the Rio Grande Southern in 1891. In the silver crash of 1893, he lost the RGS, but not the SRR. When he was building the Eureka branch of the Silverton, he decided to make it a separte railroad. This way if one went down, it would drag the other with it. I think this idea could work with Class 1 mergers too.

I agree with Randy that our government hero's in Washington DC are totally destroying our railroads. The major reason some railroads are in bad shape is they are taxed to death. Trucks don't pay road taxes and airplanes don't pay air taxes. The railroads are 5 times more efficent as trucks, 20 times more efficent as airplanes and 100 times more efficent than autos in addition to being safer.

When I was in Italy, I took a train from Venice to Milan. The railroads in Europe are government controlled and the most efficent on earth. Most mainlines are electrified and the average train speed is 100 mph. France is now upgrading a line for 135 mph speeds.

Why can't our government give our railroads money to do that? More people would travel by train and we'd save millions of gallons of fuel. I think I've said enough.

--Claude Morelli
Albuquerque, NM

Involvement is the KEY

I've been hearing a lot of complaining lately from members who think they've been left out and all seem to have a common gripe: "the only benefits of the TAMR are the TAMR HOTBOX and annual convention." The problem as they see it lies either with the officials of the TAMR or with our monetary problems. I've got news for these members, the problem is not with our officials nor is it with our finances, but with you the member.

You sit back month after month and wait for something fantstacic to happen which will improve your modeling skills 200%. Even if you sit on the RIGHT track, you're bound to get run over by the train when it comes along. I'm not suggesting that you should write a 40 page article for the TAMR HOTBOX or recruit 200 new members for us (although, we'll accept both if you wish to do so). However, there are other ways to get involved or get help in the TAMR. Our Member Services Committee is a good example. Here is a committee that allows you to get help when you need it, give help in an area you know or both. Then there are our regions many of which could use a booster shot right about now. You can submit articles to their newsletters, attend their regional conventions and get involved with members in your own area. Maybe some local members and yourself would like to start up a division within your region? Our DIRECTORY (coming soon--Ed.) can help you locate members in your area.

One of the biggest assets (which is also the one least utilized) is our ability to bring together modelers and railfans of the same age. If you want the TAMR to get better, maybe you ought to do something about it.

--Greg Dahl, Auditor

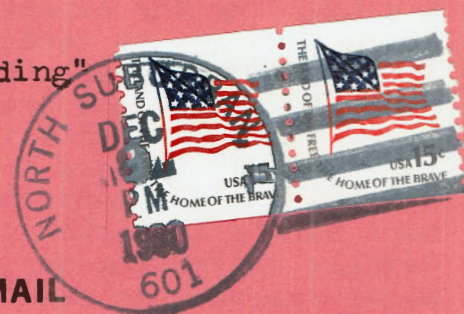
FRONT COVER: As 1980 draws to a close, we bid a fond farewell to South Shore #802 pictured here at Burnham Crossing in Burnham, IL earlier this year. After a busy day of switching, 802 is heading home to Gary, IN with a few cars in tow. Incidentally, this is the last year that the Little Joe's will see service as new GP38-2's are expected in December. Fortunately, at least one Little Joe will be perserved at the B&O Museum in Baltimore, MD. Photo by Mark Kaszniak.

MARKERS:

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: Join Ken Keels as he takes you on a tour of his Saugus & Pacific. Ever wonder what railroading is like on the other side of the world? If you have, then you'll enjoy John Van dorsselaer's article on the Kuranda Railway which is located in Australia! Looking forward to putting some scenery on your pike, but don't know how to go about it? Part one of our "Techniques you should know" series introduces you to the concepts of basic scenic construction. Of course, there will be our usual gaggle of columns--TRAIN ORDERS, M of W, HELPERS--along with a nomination form. All this plus a few surprizes will be coming your way in the January/February 1981 issue of the "Un-Magazine of Model Railroading."

Season's Greetings: The officers, officials and members of the HOTBOX Staff wish to once again extend their hopes that you have a happy holiday season.

TAMR HOTBOX, "the Un-Magazine of Model Railroading"
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Villa Park, IL 60181



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