

The Philadelphia Dispatcher

Official publication of the Philadelphia Division of the
National Model Railroad Association

September 1994

Volume 1, Number 3

Division Meet

The Philadelphia Division of the National Model Railroad Association is pleased to announce that it will be conducting a meet on Saturday, September 17, 1994 at the Christ United Methodist Church, 6 N. Clifton Avenue, in Prices Corner, Delaware. (Please see the accompanying map and directions on page 8). All Division members are encouraged to attend and bring a friend. Entrance to the meet will be free to all Division members with a current dues card. All others will be charged a nominal \$3.00 admission fee which includes a one year membership in the Division.

The meet will start at approximately 9:30 A.M. Rob Kuhlman, the *Dispatcher* editor's father and a teacher of geology, will be presenting *Geology For Model Railroads*. Rick Maguire, the NMRA's Mid-Eastern Region Vice President and a CSX locomotive engineer, will discuss *Signals*.

There will, of course, be door prizes given out during the meet. As always, the popular vote contest will be conducted and the category this time is cabooses of

any scale or gauge - whether you call them cabooses, vans, hacks, or cabin cars, all are encouraged to participate. Division membership is not required. The winner will receive a door prize, so bring a model caboose and enter the contest.

In addition, flea market tables will be available to interested members for a \$5.00 fee. Why not clean out your basement, attic, train room, whatever, and make some money from your unwanted or unnecessary items? If you

would like to reserve a table, please contact John Nawn at least one week prior to the meet.

The meet will conclude at 1:00 P.M. for layout tours. Layouts will be open until 5:00. Maps will be distributed at the meet.

You may also want to visit some of the hobby shops in the area including Mitchell's Family Store in Wilmington.

Mark your calendar and be sure to join us for the Division meet on Saturday, September 17, 1994.

Dwarf

New Division Freight Cars

Nobody likes to talk about money, but occasionally we have to. While the Division is currently not broke, we can see the point in the very near future when we will be. In order to avoid a dues increase, the Division has decided to initiate a fundraising effort that we hope will appeal to the members. If successful, we plan to offer this fundraiser once a year.

In accordance with the survey

results, the Division will offer a limited edition, HO scale, AAR style, 40' boxcar, available to Division members only. The car will be produced by C&BT Shops. C&BT makes one of the better cars on the market and are one of the few manufacturers that will produce as little as 100 cars (most want a minimum order of 300 to 500 pieces). We chose a boxcar


➡ continues on page 8

Filmsies

commentary by the editor

This issue is quite a big one! I'd like to keep the *Dispatcher* this length, but cram in more modeling or prototype features, instead of just Division business. Therefore, please send in your articles! A big thank-you goes to Bill Lambert, who reviews a video for us (on page 7).

Next month I'd like to introduce a new column: Tips & Techniques, in response to the survey results (see page 5). If you have any short modeling tips, suggestions, or mini-articles, please send them in.


The Division has been busy over the summer, with the surveys and now the introduction of the freight cars. Remember, the deadline for the November issue is Sept. 26, only a little over a week after the September meet! 

The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Philadelphia Division, nor the NMRA.

Mail Pouch

letters from readers

Hopper Weight

Paul Backenstose described procedures for weighting rolling stock in his clinic at the March meet and in the handout reprint in the June *Philadelphia Dispatcher*. For hoppers, he recommends loads or lead shot glued into the bays. Andrew McCann wrote in the margin of his survey that 1/16" lead sheet, when cut to fit into the hopper bays and painted, is "totally unnoticeable!" 


Interesting commentary, corrections, or suggestions are welcome in the Mail Pouch column. Please label submissions "To the Editor" and send them to *Philadelphia Dispatcher*, 1226 Linwood Ave., Norristown, PA 19401-4211.

Timetable

coming events

NMRA Philadelphia Division Meet. September 17. Christ United Methodist Church; Prices Corner DE. Free for current Division members; all others \$3.00 (includes one year membership). Contact John Nawn; 144 Laurel Rd., Sharon Hill PA, 19079-1322; (610) 461-8644.


NMRA Mid-Eastern Region Fall Convention, "FUNIVENTION '94'." November 4-6. Ramada Inn, Hagerstown MD. Contact FUNIVENTION '94; 2193 Bellemonte Ct., Jefferson MD, 21755; (301) 371-9129.

NMRA Philadelphia Division Meet. November 12. Fairview Village Church of the Nazarene; Fairview Village PA. 

The Timetable column is open at no charge to anyone planning an model railroad- or railroad-related event, but the *Dispatcher* reserves the right to refuse or edit any submission for any reason. Label submissions "Timetable" and include the name, address, and phone number of the person submitting the information in case of error.

All Aboard!

new members 1/1/94-8/11/94

Phillip Peschi, Villas, NJ; Jim Dalberg, Berwyn; Peter Culeman, Malvern; Fred Lehman, Lansdowne; Leonard Chaikowsky, Lansdowne; James Eisenhart Jr., Phila.; Rick Hansell, Newtown Sq.; Andrew McCann, Glenolden; Jack Chester, W. Chester; Richard Wilson, W. Chester; Roger Readinger, Brookmall; John Povey, Newtown Sq.; David Temme, W. Chester; Jimmie Bilinski Jr., Phoenixville; James Bilinski, Phoenixville; Gregory Riley, Phila.; Christian Kier, Phila.; Bill Blackburn Jr., W. Chester; Shekhar Deshpande, Ardsley; Art Shaw, Phila. 

The Philadelphia Dispatcher

Official publication of the Philadelphia Division, Mid-Eastern Region, National Model Railroad Association

Editor

Nathan Ashby-Kuhlman
1226 Linwood Avenue
Norristown, PA 19401-4211
(610) 279-1646

Submissions: The *Philadelphia Dispatcher* welcomes any model railroad- or railroad-related material. Members are encouraged to send in articles, letters to the editor, reviews, etc. Submissions are preferred typed, double-spaced. The editor reserves the right to, when necessary, paraphrase small portions of the text in order to fit the space available.

Next issue: November 1994. Due out early October. Deadline: Sept. 26.

Membership: \$3.00 per year. Neither NMRA nor MER membership is required, although recommended. Address all membership applications, renewals, address changes, etc. to the Chief Clerk. If the date in the upper-right corner of your mailing label is highlighted, your membership will expire soon. Pay at the next meet or mail payment to the Chief Clerk.

Division Officers:

Superintendent
John Nawn
144 Laurel Road
Sharon Hill, PA 19079-1322
(610) 461-8644
Assistant Superintendent
Steve Salotti
RD #2, 46 Meadow Road
Collegeville, PA 19426
(610) 489-1940
Chief Clerk
Mike Hazzard
12 Pickering Court
Downingtown, PA 19335-1753
(610) 269-6914

Mid-Eastern Region, N.M.R.A.

Clyde Gerald, Office Manager
2107 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-5710
Dues: \$8.00 per year

National Model Railroad Assn.

4121 Cromwell Road
Chattanooga, TN 37421-2119
Phone: (615) 892-2846
Dues: \$24.00 per year

From the Superintendent

commentary by John Nawn

Time; it's been called the great paradox. It's present everywhere, yet occupies no space. We use it constantly, yet have difficulty defining it. Although we can't see time, store it, change it or get rid of it, we can indeed measure it...and experience its flying by; and before you know it, the summer is over and it is time for the fall and the plethora of model railroading events that every fall seems to bring. I would encourage you to participate in as many as you can, especially the Division's two upcoming fall meets.


Our September meet will be on the 17th in Prices Corner, Delaware. Yes, I know this is pretty far from most of our Division members, but the Division does include Delaware, and we thought it was time to include those modelers in the Division's activities. Besides, it gives us a chance to see some layouts that we might not normally have the opportunity to see. We trust that those of you who continue to support our meets will make the trip to the Diamond State for what promises to be an excellent program. Although you might read elsewhere in this issue that the theme for this meet was going to be scenery, Murphy's Law struck. However, we have managed to schedule clinics in the areas of scenery and operation for this meet. We are still planning to have a clinic program entirely devoted to scenery at our September 1995 or November '95 meet.

Be sure to also keep the date of our third annual November meet free on your calendar for what promises to be an exciting program on operation. You will note that the date of our Novem-

ber meet is one week later than it normally is. This was done so as not to interfere with the Mid-Eastern Region's convention in Hagerstown on the first weekend of November. It has been many years since the MIER convention has been this close, and I would encourage you to attend, even if you have never been to a region convention before.

Speaking of conventions, as I write this, I am sure a few of you are on your way to Portland for the NMRA National convention. If you do go, why not drop the *Dispatcher* a line and relate some of your experiences?

Let's just say that our New Hope Meet in June was an "intimate" experience for the 20 or so members that attended. Disappointed, yes; discouraged, not that easily! Perhaps it was a bad date, perhaps two years in a row at New Hope was too much, perhaps this type of meet does not appeal to you? If you have any thoughts, I would like to hear them. I can tell you that we will *not* be in New Hope in 1995, but more about our future plans will appear in the November issue. I would like to thank those who attended; it was a lot of fun. I would especially like to thank the couple of you who attended, but did not have the opportunity to participate. I appreciate your effort.

I have to run; I promised Nathan I would be short - nice try, huh. See you in September. 

Comments, corrections, or suggestions about subjects addressed in this column should be directed to the Phila. Div. Superintendent: John Nawn, 144 Laurel Rd. Sharon Hill, PA 19079-1322; (610) 461-8544.


L.C.L.

miscellaneous business

HO Module News: As promised, a meeting for all those interested in modular rail

be held on AS OF PRESS TIME WE WERE NOT ABLE TO CONFIRM A TIME, DATE, OR LOCATION. MORE INFO FORTHCOMING AT MEET AND NEXT NEWSLETTER. STAY TUNED attend to discuss all aspects of the module including size, scale, standards, type of desired set-up, etc. A target date for our first set-up will also be set, and we will be looking for someone to assume the duties of the director of the module group. If you can't attend the meeting but are interested, drop the Division Superintendent a line and we will put you on the mailing list.

We currently have a dozen or so members who showed interest, and we suspect there are more. If you have or are working on an HO scale module, let us know.

National Convention: The Philadelphia Division is well represented in Portland at the NMRA National Convention this year; two of our members are giving clinics. Dave Messer will be presenting a clinic entitled *Consider the Layout Room*, and Job Luning Prak, *Railfanning in Switzerland*. Maybe we can feature these clinics at upcoming meets. Stay tuned. 

Interchange Track

classified ads

The Interchange Track column is open at no charge to anyone wishing to buy or sell model railroad- or railroad-related items. Submissions must be brief and be typed or printed. They will run once only in the first available issue. The *Dispatcher* reserves the right to refuse or edit any ad for any reason whatsoever. Label submissions "Interchange Track" and send them to *Philadelphia Dispatcher*, 1226 Linwood Ave., Norristown, PA 19401-4211.

Member Survey Results

The Hard Facts

by Nathan Ashby-Kuhlman

First of all, I want to thank the 45 members who returned their surveys. It makes a person feel great when that many pieces of mail arrive at your door!

The graphs on this and the next page show about all there is to show. Please note that some of the categories in the graphs were not choices on the original survey, but are compiled from written "others".

Our Division is made up primarily of "intermediates," as shown by the "skill level" graph. A

full one-third are "advanced", but only 7% consider themselves beginners.

The "scale" graph needs some explanation. Since respondents could choose a number for a particular scale that would represent their interest, rather than just picking "yes or no" like the others, there are two figures. The "interested" figure represents simply the percentage of members who gave that scale *any number at all*.

The "choice adjusted" figure is more representative of the actual interest in a scale, as it adjusts the percentage for the numbers respondents gave it. (For those who want to know, I set first choice

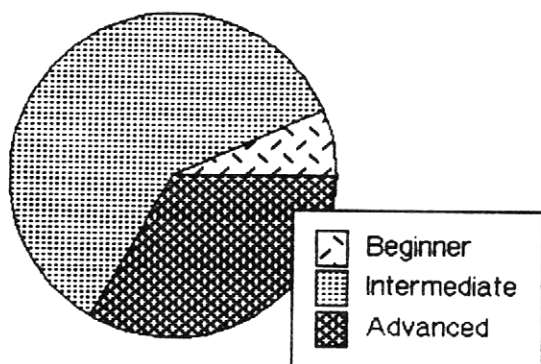
equal to one modeler, second equal to one-half, third equal to one-third, etc. The total number of "modelers" - which in most cases was a fraction - was divided by the number of surveys received to get the percentage.)

The scale percentages are predictable; HO has the lead by far, but it's surprising the amount of interest in some of the "minority" scales. However, S, TT, and Z (write-in's) are all under 2%.

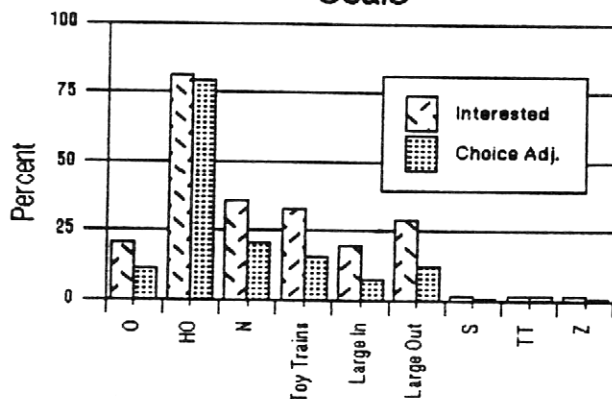
The "era" figures are a study in contrast - the "transition era" (1940-1959 on the survey) has almost 75%, and none of the other choices are even half that!

In the "types of railroad- ➡

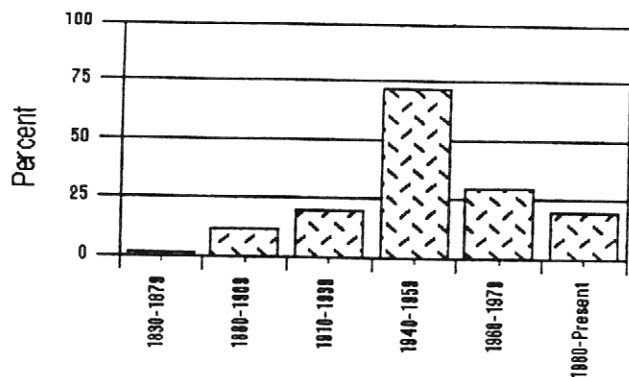
Skill Level



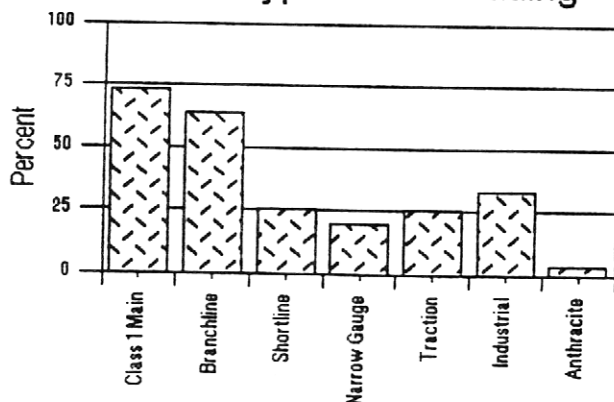
Scale



Era



Favorite Types of Railroading



Member Survey Results

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ing category, the "class 1 mainline" choice was the most popular, with almost 75%. This is not a "narrow gauge" Division; every other choice (including shortline, traction, and industrial) got a higher score. Two people indicated that they were interested in anthracite coal railroading (which didn't beat narrow gauge, however).

The "modeling interests" category is benign; what really does the data represent? However, the fact that operation got an 80% vote is very interesting. How about some operation articles? For people with large layouts, a suggestion on one of the surveys was "publicize information on who might be willing to have others join in work or operating sessions." If you need a larger crew, you're welcome to submit a note asking for help.

I'm glad to see that over 90%(!)

of the respondents wanted to see "short tips and techniques" in the *Dispatcher*. I want to introduce a column for these in November, so if you have any helpful hints, please send them in! However, any of the other types of articles would also be appreciated. I apologize for leaving "layouts" off! Judging by the number of people who put this in "other", we're interested in each other's modeling. If you think your layout would be of interest to others, please volunteer to be on a layout tour at a future meet or send in an article. Several people are interested in local prototype news as well. I asked last month if someone would be willing to conduct a column on the subject. If you know anything about railroads in the area, please share your knowledge.

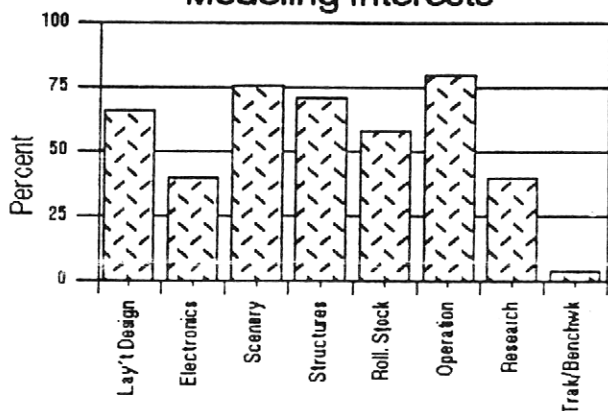
Finally, a few figures that couldn't be grouped into a graph:

- NMRA Members: 73%
- MER Members: 72%
- Home Layouts: 78%
- Club Members: 26%
- Average number of years in the hobby: 29
- Average rating of modeling prototypicality - free-lance (1) vs. prototype (10): 5

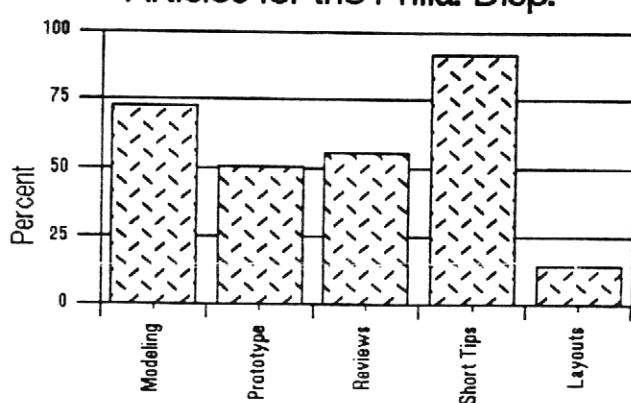
I noted that 45 members sent in surveys. It happened, however, that we received one from a non-member. I want to give special thanks to Bob Charles, who is running for NMRA President this year and was the chairman of the Valley Forge Express convention. His survey says, "Thanks for the complimentary copy [of the *Dispatcher*] - it is appreciated. I will try to make your meets if possible." Good luck, Bob, and we know you'll be at our meets in spirit even if you can't make the drive from Harrisburg!

Dwight

Modeling Interests



Articles for the Phila. Disp.



Survey Says... (A Closer Look)

by John Nawn

Nathan was kind enough to tabulate and summarize the survey data and report on it in another

article. I would like to take this opportunity to add my own comments and address some of the

written suggestions.

We had 46 respondents out of a potential 165 +/- members. Although it doesn't seem like a lot, as surveys go it is actually pretty good. Thank you to those who took the time to fill out their

Member Survey Results

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surveys, and if you didn't, I hope your interests are similar to the results.

It is nice to see that over 70% of you belong to the NMRA and MER. Although not required for membership in the Division, we do strongly encourage membership in the region and national. Remember also, if you want to participate in the Achievement Program, you have to be a member of the NMRA.

I noticed that 78% of you have home layouts. That means that there are a lot of layouts out there we haven't seen yet. We are getting to the point where we may have to start going back to the same layouts again. Give us a hand by letting us come see your layout, no matter how it looks, no matter how small it is. As long as you don't mind having us, we don't mind coming. Give me a call or drop me a note.

Well folks, I hate to be the one to say this, but we are average when it comes to model railroading. Philadelphia Division members are interested in HO scale (80%), class 1 mainline (73%), railroading in the steam-diesel transition era, 1940-1959 (72%) with an equal mix of free-lance and prototype elements. This pretty much sums up the national averages.

I feel the most interesting survey results are in the area of modeling interests. The two most popular categories were operation (80%) and scenery (76%). This indicates to me anyhow, that a large portion of those 78% home layouts are Plywood Centrals. To that end, we tried to gear our September meet especially toward scenery,

and the theme of our November meet will be operation. You were wondering what we were going to do with the survey results!

We had one suggestion for a "white elephant" table at the meets, where members could bring items to sell. Great idea, but who is going to staff the table? We have deliberately kept the table prices low at the meets to encourage the membership to buy tables. In fact, the original idea for the tables was *not* for dealers, but rather the individual members. (Notice how we always refer to them as flea market tables, rather than dealer tables.) Buy your own table or get together with a couple friends.

We had one person suggest that we return to weeknights in lieu of the Saturday meets. Just comparing the attendance figures, I would venture a guess that the Saturday meets are more popular with the membership. However, the officers have discussed, on more than one occasion, the possibility of having weeknight meets in addition to the Saturday meets. The idea was that the Division is so spread out among the five counties and Delaware, it might be beneficial to have a few local meetings throughout the year in the individual counties. However, along with this, we would be recruiting "branch superintendents" for each county to be responsible for the meetings - unfortunately, there is a limit to how much the officers can do! If anyone would be interested in spearheading such an effort in your local area or county, please contact Steve or me, and we will support you as much as we can.

We had a suggestion to have

judged (NMRA rules) contests once a year. Again, we have discussed this before, but, quite frankly, I am a little disappointed with the number of entries we get (with the notable exception of the November 1993 passenger equipment contest). Judged contests are coming, but, please, let's have a little more participation in the popular vote contests.

We had lots of comments about the *Philadelphia Dispatcher*. Many were kudo's, and I thank Nathan for his continued excellence. Someone asked if we could improve the short notice on meets. Short notice? We try to publish the meet dates months ahead of time. However, the one area where we may be a little weak is when the *Dispatcher* arrives at your door. That's my fault and we are trying to improve so that you get your full information about four weeks prior to the meet date. [The officers didn't have a location for the September meet by the deadline I set for this issue! Help them get the meet information to me earlier; help set dates and locations six months ahead of time! - Ed.]

We had a request to publish the *Dispatcher* more often. Our goal is a minimum of four issues per year timed to come out in conjunction with the meets. If you want frequency of publication to be improved, send in some articles. In the last issue, Nathan asked for submissions about local clubs, local hobby shops, modeling articles, prototype articles, timetable submissions, classified ads, etc. Well, we only received one submission. We will make the *Dispatcher* as large and as frequent as necessary to cover the ➡

Member Survey Results

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material we receive. We just need you to send it in. For instance, it was asked if we could publish information on who's looking for people to join in work or operating sessions. We will be glad to publish this type of info as soon as you send it in.

A respondent asked if we could publish the layout tours in the meet announcement. Would you still come to the meets? I would be interested in hearing your comments on this.

One person asked if we contact new NMRA members in the area and encourage them to participate. The region sends us a periodic listing of the national and region members within the Division boundaries, and yes, we do make the attempt to contact them and invite them to the Division meets. In fact, once a year, we send out the *Dispatcher* to all the NMRA mem-


bers within the Division inviting them to join us. Give us a hand if you can and bring a new member to the next meet.

With regards to meets, someone asked if we could have nametags available at the meets. Good idea; we will try it. Someone also asked if we could have special meets without "chapter business". Just what do we consider "chapter business"? We will try to keep our comments and announcements at the beginning and end of the meets as brief as possible. We also had a suggestion not to schedule our meets on the same day as the New Jersey Division. We try not to but there is so much to schedule around, it's sometimes unavoidable.

We had a request to make the membership list available. Sorry, in order to protect our members' privacy, we can't do it. If you have a particular product or skill avail-

able, or have a special request you'd like to make, or whatever, send it in and we will publish your query in the *Dispatcher*.

And finally, my favorite comment, "encourage members to share their work with others and serve as a link between members with common interests." This statement just about sums up the theme and purpose of the Philadelphia Division, and the NMRA for that matter. Thank you to whom-ever the author is. Everything we do in the Division - the meets, clinics, contests, layout tours, newsletter, etc., is for this same purpose: *model railroading is what we do between the meets*. The meets are our opportunity to share our work and encourage others, thereby sustaining and nurturing the hobby.

Thank you for participating and, as always, I welcome your comments and suggestions. 

A Different But Neat Railroad Video

Bill Lambert

While reading the Sunday Philadelphia Inquirer recently, I spotted a video review entitled "A Kaleidoscope of 'Choo-Choo' Images". Did I read on? You bet! Even the first sentence, which began, "The next time your child wants to watch a videotape ---", didn't deter me!

Decidedly, the tape called "Choo Choo Trains Close Up and Very Personal" is aimed at kids: it has absolutely no narrative to confuse them, many of the scenes are of short duration, and the only sounds to be heard are those of the trains themselves. But the very absence of distracting background

music and voice-over is, in my view, the best thing this tape has going for it.

Its more than 28 minute playing time is comprised mostly of steam coverage, 17 minutes in all, from as widely separated locations as the Blue Mountain & Reading and the Hawaiian "Sugar Cane Train". Diesel coverage of about 7 minutes includes, among others, UP, C&NW, and BN freights, as well as the Nebraska Zephyr, preserved at the Illinois State Railway Museum. Cab interior footage is also shown.

And throughout its entirety,

from the mundane and commonplace footage of hump operations, container handling, and a track gang at work to the spectacle of an ex-D&RGW rotary OY clearing mountain right-of-way, the camera work is excellent. While this tape is intended for children we big kids can really enjoy it too!

Choo Choo Trains Close Up and Very Personal, \$14.95 plus \$3.00 s&h (no credit cards)

Stage Fright Productions
P.O. Box 373
Geneva, IL 60134-0373
1-800-979-6800 

Division Freight Cars

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because that is the only product that C&BT produces. Plus, this car fits perfectly into our HO scale, transition-era majority. The cars are expected to sell in the \$10.00 range, and the Division stands to make approximately \$500.00 per 100 cars sold.

So as not to create a riot between the Pennsy and Reading fans, we have decided to produce the cars lettered for members' home roads. However, for the honor of having your railroad on the car, you are responsible for developing the artwork and the upfront cost (about \$500.00). Therefore, there's no risk to the Division. If the cars don't sell, it's the Division member, not the Division itself that's out the money. As the cars sell, the priority is the reimbursement of the member. Once the member is paid back for his original expenses, the remaining funds become the Division profit. Sound like a neat idea? We thought so, but we would be interested in hearing any comments you may have.

Our first offering will be Steve Salotti's Perkiomen Valley. More information on color lettering, etc. will be presented at the September meet where we also hope to start taking orders. If successful, we will make this an annual offer. If you would like your railroad to be next, contact John Nawn for more details and we will schedule you for a subsequent offer. ~~DWP~~

June Meet Report

Nathan Ashby-Kuhlman

The Philadelphia Division of the National Model Railroad Association conducted a meet on June 4, 1994, at the New Hope & Ivyland Railroad in New Hope, PA. The day was perfect for railfanning. Although only 19 people - Division members and their families - were present, a good time was had by all.

The day began at about 9:30 AM, when attendees could view the NH&I's yards and its engine #40 steaming up. At 10:00 we gathered in one of the coaches for a clinic, *Food Decoration*, given by Steve Salotti, a professional chef.

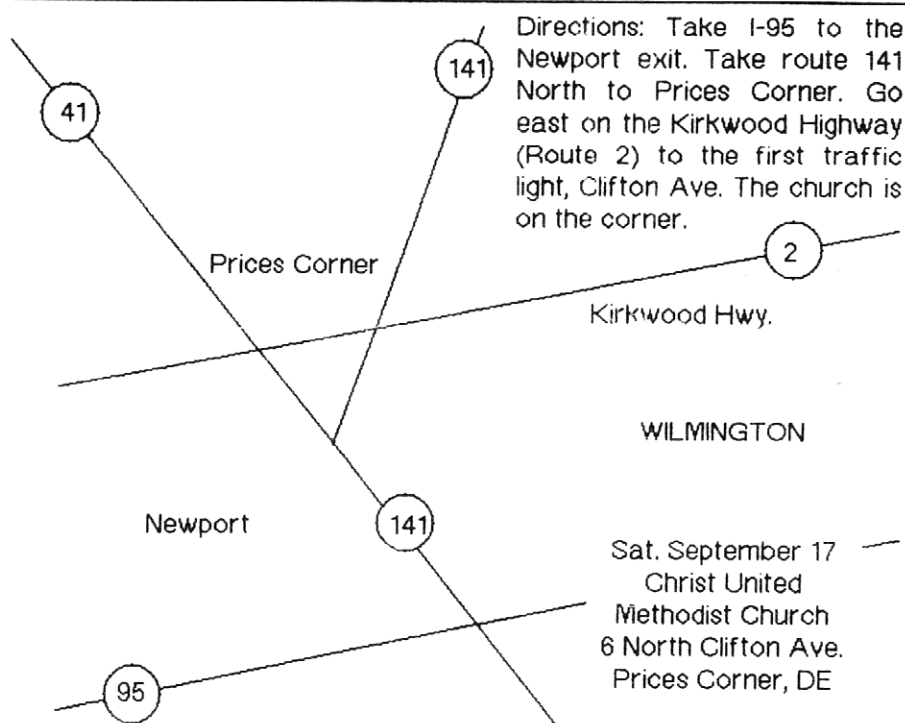
After Steve's clinic, Bob Buzard, president of the NH&I, spoke to us about the NH&I's recent history, especially the meticulous restoration of the Baldwin 2-8-0 #40 several years ago. He then allowed us to peek through the door of their shops and see the equipment currently under repair.

For the next several hours, there was free time to relax, eat lunch, browse through the many shops in New Hope, or see more derelict equipment lying around the NH&I property.

At 3:00 we reconvened for the train ride. Riding in one of two coaches behind #40, we viewed the scenic country near New Hope, the railroad itself, and conversed on the leisurely trip. As a special bonus, we arranged with the railroad for a door prize of a cab ride, won by Jim Hart.

The Abington Lines Club was open during the afternoon; most participants visited it. Though the layout has only minimal scenery, it was evident that when completed, it will surely be a sight to see. ~~DWP~~

How to Get to the September Meet



PLEASE POST

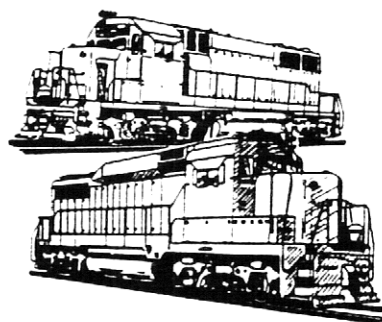
Philadelphia Division, NMRA Train Meet

Saturday, Sept. 17, 1994

Christ United Methodist Church, 6 N. Clifton Ave.,
Prices Corner, DE.

9:30 AM to approx. 1:00 PM; layout
tours to follow

Entrance free for current Division
members; all others \$3.00, which
includes a one-year membership



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Clinics

*

Door Prizes

*

Popular Vote Caboose Contest

*

Flea Market Tables

*

Layout Tours



For more information, contact:

John Nawn

144 Laurel Rd.

Sharon Hill, PA 19079-1322

(610) 461-8644

PHILADELPHIA DIVISION, NMRA
12 PICKERING COURT
DOWNINGTOWN, PA 19335



note 20 January 1994
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