

THE CROSSING GATE



Twin Cities Division ❖ Thousand Lakes Region ❖ National Model Railroad Association

Fall 2017

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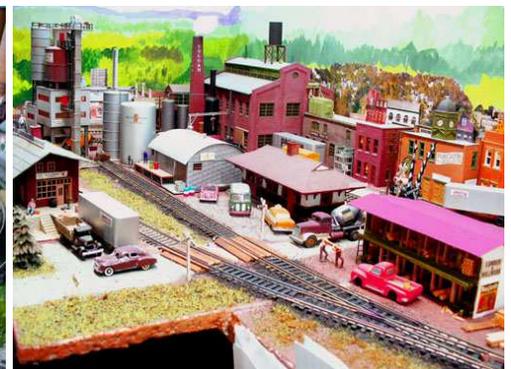
In This Issue

- TCD Fall Tour
- Small European Layouts
- North Metro layout

TCD FALL LAYOUT TOUR OFFERED VARIATION AS WELL AS SKILL



Bill Craig used to live in Pennsylvania, not too far from Maryland and West Virginia. That was Appalachia, and his layout is a good representation of what towns look like there. In fact, he tried to represent some of the scenes his family has experienced. His layout crowds towns from all three states into his basement. The whole family helped build the structures. Bill worked for the BN. See Pages 4 & 5 for more tour.



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THE CROSSING GATE is published quarterly by the Twin Cities Division of the Thousand Lakes Region of the National Model Railroad Association. Material may be reprinted with permission.

Articles, photos, tips, or ideas are heartily encouraged and will be enthusiastically accepted! The preferred format would be in Rich Text Format (RTF), with photos as JPEGs, but we will accept any format (from a PC or Mac; MS Word, Simple Text, typed, or handwritten). Send it to your editor by regular mail to **THE CROSSING GATE**, 1922 Christensen Ave, W. St. Paul, MN 55118, or by email to weugbj@yahoo.com

From the Superintendent

On September 14, 2017 the first meeting of the 2017-18 season was at the Jackson Street Roundhouse. Members brought items and videos of what they have been working on this last summer. Contests would include; Oct 2017, Business structure or display, Nov 2017, Grain handling and/or storage, Jan 2018, Open top cars with loads, Feb 2018, Box cars with loads, March 2018, Car loading facilities, April 2018, Best photo display (shot by member), May 2018, Figures (people or animal). In February Ed Petry will give a clinic on operations, what to consider if you have never operated your layout before. In March Walt Thompson will give a clinic on JMRI DecoderPro.

The Saturday October 14, 2017 meeting will be at Mount Olivet Lutheran Church of Plymouth, 12235 Old Rockford Rd, Plymouth, MN 55441. At 9:30 AM. Presentations will include the prototype, a slide show, and a modeling presentation. There will be no charge for admission to this.

We are invited to Joe Frischmon's Annual MN&S Railway get together on Saturday November 22, 2017 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 701 Fillmore St, NE Minneapolis, MN. At 10:00 AM. The church is one block south of Broadway St. Between Central Ave. and Hwy. 35 W (Close to Mpls Jct.) JIM BUCK Supt

SMALL EUROPEAN LAYOUTS AND MODELS:

CHOOSING A EUROPEAN PROTOTYPE

BY MIKE NOLAN

Building a small-sized layout can offer some interesting challenges as well as some rewarding operational action. In addition, a small layout can be completed more quickly with less expense.

Generally, before constructing a small layout, one must answer three questions: What time period is being modeled? What scale will be used? What prototype railroad will be used as a basis for this model railroad? Including a European prototype railroad in this selection process provides some interesting alternatives.

European railroads were initially individually established to connect specific city pairs, and were operated by a variety of state, federal and even royal authorities. Railroads located in the German-speaking regions of Europe, which include Austria, Germany, Luxemburg and Switzerland, were quite innovative and offer an interesting place to start. For variety, one could even include Belgium, Italy, France, Great Britain or any of the other countries that have rail connections with the German-speaking countries.

European railroads, when compared to North American railroads, tend to be similar, yet more compact, with tighter curves, lighter-weight locomotives and smaller-sized rolling stock. They tend to run shorter trains, and, in the German-speaking region, they operate both standard gauge and narrow gauge railroads. Older passenger and freight cars tend to be smaller, with fewer axels than their

(Continued on page 3)

From the Editor

What a fine layout tour again! Elliot Feinberg seems to know everybody in town who has a layout. The layouts all have been inspiring in one way or another and always reignite members' interest in their own railroading. It is exciting to belong to an organization such as the National Model Railroad Association that affords its members such delightful opportunities.

This season, the Twin Cities Division will try a slightly different format in its regular meeting schedule in that we will not be tied to the Jackson Street Roundhouse on Thursday nights. The October meeting on Saturday the 14th will move to Plymouth, where we will get instruction and inspiration on building structures in a place with ample space and light. On Saturday, November 18, we will get together with the Twin Cities MNS modelers and railfans. That will be a new experience for quite a few of us.

This issue of the *Crossing Gate* contains an article on European layouts, which is really an ad for the TCD January meeting, also in Plymouth. Next issue, in December, look for another article on European trains to get you really hyped for the January meeting.

Don't forget to prepare entries for the TCD contests throughout the season. The NMRA is only as good as its members' participation; the organization cannot carry out its mission all by itself. Your membership does not empower you to absorb model railroading through your pores while relaxing before your fellow members. Your membership does offer you the chance to get in there and mix it up with them. It works. W Bjorlie, ed

(Continued from page 2) Mike Nolan

North American counterparts. Finally, industrial structures tend to be downsized there, as well.

North American railroad history tends to be divided into several different time periods. For example, there is the land grant expansion era, the steam to diesel transition era, the merger era, the Amtrak era, etc. Similarly, German railroad history is divided into 6 neat eras or epochs as shown in the following table: Era I covers 1835 to 1925; Era II covers 1925 to 1945; Era III covers 1945 to 1970; Era IV covers 1970 to 1990; Era V covers 1990 to 2006; and Era VI covers 2006 to the present.

Each Era provides the modeler with a wide variety of prototype locomotives, rolling stock, passenger stations and industrial facilities as inspiration for a model railroad layout.

SMALL LAYOUTS

European homes tend to be smaller than their North American counterparts, so there is a natural tendency for European layouts to be smaller, with great concentration on detail. Also, many Europeans like to run several individual trains at the same time or in quick succession. Normally, to accomplish this, they will select a smaller scale, HO, N or Z, and incorporate as many loops and tunnels in their layout design as possible. They may also select a narrow gauge option to conserve even more space.

Of course, if one likes switching, an alternative is to construct a switching layout, which can provide hours of enjoyment solving operational puzzles by shunting freight cars onto various tracks, instead of running complete freight or passenger trains down the mainline.

Several manufacturers offer European model railroad equipment that is era specific and available in HO, N, or Z scale (both standard and narrow gauge), and the latest in DCC and sound technology is also available.

By carefully selecting the scale, era and type of railroad to be modeled, an interesting, easy to build, small layout can be up and operating in a very short time.

Paul Hantelman received part of his layout from a late friend and has made a yeoman effort to expand it so that it fills his whole basement. Done in N scale, it represents a very credible passenger train circuit that includes all of the Santa Fe named trains, as well as many from other western and midwestern lines such as Rock Island and Milwaukee. So far, the track is in and operating, and some landscaping has been roughed in. The most amazing aspect on the layout is that almost all of the Santa Fe trains can be lined up on separate sidings, ready to roll. The layout room also shows a large collection of Santa Fe passenger signs. Here, the California Zephyr cruises into the scene and passes, from left to right, the Valley Flyer commuter, second edition of the Super Chief, the California Limited, El Capitan, Chief, Super Chief, and Fast Mail behind the nearby steamer.



Here, the California Zephyr cruises into the scene and passes, from left to right, the Valley Flyer commuter, second edition of the Super Chief, the California Limited, El Capitan, Chief, Super Chief, and Fast Mail behind the nearby steamer.

We also visited the garden layout of our TCD Paymaster, **Eric Boone**. This is Eric's second layout which he improved by raising the track about two feet off the ground and incorporating a pond and real trees. He laid cement blocks to surround the layout, then filled in with dirt and gravel. Not much is fastened down—no mortar or spikes or adhesive to hold the ballast in place. But, it stays. The track is not powered because, on his first layout, track corrosion stopped his trains. Now, he relies on batteries in the loco. He swears that prototype ducks flew in and planted the reeds!



A bonus visit was the train expo at St. Alphonse church, where five layouts were in operation, everything from G gauge to HO. Below left, **Tom Pappas** shows off his Christmas 027, while his son, **C.J.** adjusts a track connection on an HO Great Northern circle. **Dave Jones**



and **Chad Jones** showed off their "Old-to-Modern" modular layout. It consisted of several modules that they had built. No diesel was allowed, though.



NORTH METRO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB LAYOUT

The North Metro Club has been hard at work on their layout since the last time TCD visited in 2014.. Since then, most of the big gaps have been filled in with good scenery, and many new shelves of track have been added. It really looks like a modern urban railroad with the many industrial sites and machinery already installed. It is obvious that members have first-hand experience with industries such as grain milling and storage, scrap yards, and power generation. The structures look credible, and the workmanship on the models is first rate.



Here is another large project under way by members. It is one of three large terminal elevators on the layout and is beside a large yard already nearly filled with grain hoppers.



The club has several large projects under way now, including this power plant, which is accompanied by a very large coal yard and half-surrounded by a crescent of track for coal trains to bring in the fuel. It is remarkable how one or two members can take on a large project such as this one which requires many hours of dedicated work and which they know will contribute to the overall enjoyment of participating in the club's railroad for everybody.



Though many members have worked very hard to bring the layout to its marvelous current state, no project of this magnitude could happen without leadership and gentle guidance. **Jerry Larson** constructed much of the benchwork and is ready and able to advise wherever needed. He strongly denies he is or has been "in charge" of anything to do with constructing the layout and credits all of the members with this great accomplishment. That is a sign of a true leader.

HOBBY SHOWS & RAILFANNING EVENTS

<p>Sat Oct 14 Also Jan 13</p>	<p>Woodbury Flea Market at Woodbury Sr. High School, 2665 Woodlane Dr. Woodbury, MN 9am-2pm Adm. \$5, under 12 free. Info: Ed at 651-233-3310.</p>
<p>Sat Oct 14 & Sun Oct 15</p>	<p>West Wisconsin RR Club Train Show, Eau Claire Indoor Sports Arena 3456 Craig Road, Eau Claire, WI. 10am-4pm. Adm: Adult \$6; Student 6-16 \$3; under 5 free. Info: 715-830-1204 imrrclub@gmail.com www.trainweb.org/imrc</p>
<p>Sat Nov 4 & Sun Nov 5</p>	<p>Great Train Show, Canterbury Park, Shakopee, MN. 1100 Canterbury Road, Shakopee, MN 55379 10 am - 4 pm Adm:\$10 , under 12 FREE.</p>
<p>Sat Nov 11</p>	<p>Granite City Train Show. River's Edge Conv. Ctr. , 10 4th Ave S, St Cloud, MN 9am-3pm. Adm: \$6 Under 11 free. Operating models. Kids' area. Lionel Set or FSM Structure kit awarded as door prize.</p>
<p>Sat Nov 11 & Sun Nov 12</p>	<p>TRAINFEST. Wisc. Exposition Ctr. at Wisc. State Fair Park, 8200 W Greenfield Ave, Milwaukee, 53214. Reputed largest operating RR show in USA. Over 70 lay- outs operating. Photo contest. Sales booths galore! 9am-5pm. Adm: NMRA mem- bers: 1 day, \$10; 2 days \$15. Kids \$2-3. Mil. Vets \$5.</p>
<p>Sat Nov 18 Also Feb 3</p>	<p>Upper Midwest Train Show. Century College. 3300 Century Ave N (Hiway 120) White Bear Lake, MN 9am-2pm. Adm: \$5, under 13 free.</p>
<p>Sat Dec 2</p>	<p>North Metro RR Club Fall Train Flea Market. VFW, 1929 Coon Rapids Blvd NW, Coon Rapids 55433. 8am-2pm. Adm: \$5, under 13 free. www.nmrrc.org</p>
<p>Sat Nov 4 thru Feb 24</p>	<p>Twin Cities Model RR Museum Night Trains every Sat. 6-9pm. 668 Transfer Rd. St. Paul 55114. Adm: \$15. Group rates avail. Under 5 free. See trains and scenery with its own lighting. Exciting holiday spectacle!</p>
<p>Thur Dec 14</p>	<p>TCD-NMRA Great Holiday Train Auction and Sale. Jackson St. Roundhouse, 193 Pennsylvania Ave, St. Paul. Starts 7pm. Adm: free. Open to the public. Not limited to NMRA members.</p>

TCD Timetable

Schedule for 2017-18		Contests
Sat Oct 14	9:30 AM at Mt. Olivet, Plymouth. Clinic to build something. Slides. Small fee may apply. Build something. Ken Zieska, Greg Smith.	Business structure or display that you built.
Sat Nov 18	9:30 AM at Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church, 701 Filmore St NE Mpls. MNS Modelers & Railfans Get-together. Joe Frischman	Grain handling, storage, and/or shipping.
Thurs Dec 14	7 PM. Jackson St. Roundhouse. Holiday Auction	No Contest
Sat Jan 13	9:30 AM at Mt. Olivet, Plymouth. Larry Vanden Plas on Small European Layouts.	Open-top cars with loads.
Thurs Feb 8	7 PM Jackson St. Roundhouse. Ed Petry on operation of model railroads.	Boxcars with loads.
Thurs Mar 8	7 PM Jackson St. Roundhouse. Walt Thompson on JMRI Decoder Pro.	Car loading and/or unloading facilities.
Fri & Sat Apr 6-7	Spring Modelers' Retreat at Mt. Olivet in Plymouth. Fri 4-10pm. Sat 8am-5:30pm. Small fee is likely. Ken Zieska. Open to the public. Not limited to NMRA members.	Best RR or model RR photo shot by TCD member.
Thurs May 10	7 PM at Jackson St. Roundhouse. Annual TCD business meeting.	Figures, people or animal.

PRE-MEETING DINNER GET-TOGETHERS

WHEN MEETINGS ARE AT JACKSON ST. ROUNDHOUSE

McDonald's University Ave & Marion Street

GATHER ABOUT 5:30 PM ** EVERYONE IS WELCOME

** OR **

Keys Café and Bakery, 1682 Lexington Ave N, Roseville, MN 55113

5:15 on the day of TCD meetings. For those from the northern suburbs.

Twin Cities Division, TLR, NMRA
4476 Mason Ave NE
St. Michael, MN 55376

THE CROSSING GATE NMRA National Convention

Next Meeting: 9:30am, Oct 14. Mt. Olivet
Lutheran Church, 12235 Old Rockford Rd.,
Plymouth, MN. 55441.

See Page 7 for info on future meetings.

In accordance with stated NMRA policy, to participate in almost any regular Twin Cities Division activity, you must be a member of NMRA or become a member of NMRA after three visits as a non-member during your lifetime.



**Kansas City, MO
Aug 5-12, 2018**



Mike Haugen's bubble cars at St. Alphonse during the Sep 30 tour.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:

Elliot Feinberg, Paul Hantelman, Eric Boone, Bill Craig, Jerry Larson & NMMRC,
Mike Nolan, Mike Haugen, Tom Pappas, C.J. Pappas, Dave Jones. Chad Jones

Except Nolan piece, photos & text by W Bjorlie, ed.

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St Paul, MN 55114

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