

MAIL HOOK

SAN DIEGO DIVISION, PSR-NMRA

2nd Quarter, 2020 Edition

In this Issue

San Diego Division Winter Meet

Superintendent's Report

Director's Report

Layout Tours

Duncan Mcree

San Diego S Gaugers

Articles

The Nevada County Railroad, Dick Roberts, MMR

What are you doing in model railroading during your home isolation time off?

What's going on at two of our major museums in San Diego, Trudy Seeley

1938 NYC 10-5 Pullman-Standard sleeper, Jeff Cauthen

Intermodal Trains, Steve Moss

Railroad and Model Railroad links for home isolation time viewing

Calendar

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM YOUR VAN NUYS LOCAL 2020 PSR CONVENTION CHAIRMAN!

Superintendent's Report



Of power poles and chain link fence (Superintendent's Report)

I pray this issue of the Mail Hook finds you and those you love healthy and safe during this unprecedented time.

Personally, I have been experiencing a "new normal" while working from home. I have found that my time is more flexible and so, of course I have happily filled that time with projects for my layout!

A current project of mine has been researching and a depot I plan to build in the future. Looking at photos online, reviled in more than one picture, a power pole that stood awkwardly close to one end of the depot. I decided I wanted to capture that look, but I realized that pole could not stand alone! Thankfully, I remembered a bag of miscellaneous parts, including plastic power poles, that a fellow modeler (thanks Justin!) gave me at a recent Orange Empire Railway Museum swap meet. At this swap meet, Trudy and I, along with

Pete sold items for the Division. I am happy to report that the Division did well! If you ask, Trudy can tell you how much. And of course, I came home with power poles!



On my daily walks with my daughter, I continue my research by observing the power poles in my neighborhood for color and weathering, while she shakes her head at me of course. Later, I puzzle where to place these poles in the scene. In doing this, I notice a little building begging for a fence to separate it from the nearby tracks... so I began to ponder how to build a chain link fence in n-scale. Instead of researching the depot, I am now researching fences and power

poles. To build the fence, I ended up using piano wire and tulle. I worried that the holes were too large for n-scale chain link...does their size really matter if it looks right? The power poles, I determined, were too short. So, I sacrificed a few and spliced them to length. I have finished both projects, and I like how they turned out!

I hope you enjoyed my ramblings! I share since I know others are likely having similar experiences, now that we have extra time to model.

Thanks to those who responded to our call for pictures of your current modeling projects! If you were not able to submit in time for this current issue, we encourage you to share for the next issue. If we continue to receive submissions, there may be an opportunity for us to make it a regular feature.

So far in 2020, our division held some very successful events.

In January, there was a layout tour of Duncan McCree's Donner Summit RR/Nevada County Railroad in HO and HO_N3. At the time, Duncan was considering taking down his layout in favor of a new project, and so this event was our last chance to experience it. The event was well attended, and an enjoyable time had by all. In this issue, you will find some impressive photos taken that day of his railroad.

In February, we held our "Winter Meet". At this meet, one of our newer members, Mike Hampson, gave us a virtual tour of the NMRA website. He explained the features and resources of the website, including the Model Railroad Directory. The potluck at the event was good eats and the Hobo Auction was fun, as usual.

Finally, in March, held just under the wire of the statewide shut down, was a layout tour of the San Diego S-Gauge's clubhouse at Grossmont Center in La Mesa. The members of this, 100% NMRA club, are a great bunch. It was neat to see the progress made on the Westside Lumber layout. It is a Sn3 shelf layout originally built by the late John Constans. The club is doing a wonderful job restoring it, and it seems they are having a good time in the process! Also, this n-scaler admired the portable n-scale layout one of their members put on display for this event. Once things are back to normal, I recommend you go and visit! But, be sure to check their website before you go.

So now what? Although our upcoming events have been put on hold, your Division planning committee is discussing ways to bring us together, online! We are looking into what improvements can be made on our website and Facebook to keep the group connected! Stay tuned. We plan to get right back at hosting our events, just as soon as we get the High Green!

In the meantime, enjoy this Mail Hook issue.

I am looking forward to when we can again gather and in fellowship as we share this hobby at our local NMRA events.

Ryan
Happy Modeling!
superintendent@sandiegodivision.org

Directors Article

April 2020

By Pete Steinmetz

There is no NMRA news to report as all events are canceled.

I recently traveled from LAX to London Heathrow, then on to Amsterdam to visit my daughter and attend a train show at the Dutch Railway Museum in Utrecht. <https://www.spoorwegmuseum.nl>

After traveling to LHR, I took the train to Paddington Station. Side note, there are many signs and opportunities for the trip to Paddington Station on Heathrow Express. Fare is £24. They run every 15 minutes. Trains are non-stop. If you take the regular train, the cost is £10. It makes stops and takes 30 minutes as opposed to the express, which takes 15 minutes. Good value.

I was headed to St Pancras Station to catch the Eurostar to Amsterdam. (Eurostar goes under the English Channel via a tunnel and pops out in France.) Our family takes this route to Amsterdam often. Flights to London are much cheaper than flights to Amsterdam. Plus we get to ride Eurostar, and there is a Champagne Bar on the upper level of St Pancras. They also make excellent coffee drinks.

Eurostar from London to Amsterdam takes 4 hours.

Even with the spread of Corona virus, Amsterdam was functioning normally (That would change dramatically) The train show was canceled Thursday night as the Netherlands instituted a policy of no more than 100 people at a gathering.

My friend, Martin Welberg, was to have a booth at the show showcasing his Martin Welberg Scenic Studios scenery material. <http://www.martinwelberg.nl>

I ended up spending Saturday with Martin and toured his manufacturing operation. Got a 2-hour train ride each way. Martin had a set of the AK Interactive Weathering Pencils for me. Great favor, as they are very hard to find in the US.

On Sunday, with less than 2 hours notice the government of The Netherlands locked the country down. All bars, restaurants, coffee shops, sex clubs were shut down. Bars and restaurants could stay open to sell "to go" orders only.

I decided it would be best to return home early as I was worried there would be less flights and less availability at the last minute. I looked at one-way tickets and found the best deals on Turkish thru Istanbul and Aeroflot thru Moscow. Both have non-stops to LAX. As it turned out, I was able to contact Air New Zealand and move my ticket from Thursday to Monday with no change fee and a minimal fare difference. Looking at Eurostar to London, the fares were quite high. I opted for a British flight from Amsterdam to Heathrow, and then connected to Air New Zealand to LAX. The flights worked just fine.

While on the Air New Zealand flight (Clocked at 11 hours), I decided to weather a freight car using the AK Weathering Pencils. I brought two Accurail freight cars to weather at the canceled train show. I was in a window seat and did my weathering on the tray table. As I was heading west, the sun was always out. The lighting at 39,000 feet was excellent. I was able to control it with my window shade. I was mostly experimenting with colors as I only had pencils. I tested their ability to cover areas, the opacity of the colors, the ability to blend colors, and the overall effects. I was very pleased and will work these pencils into my next clinic. Next long flight, I plan to video the weathering and make it into a demonstration weathering video and post it to You Tube. (But that will be another story)

1st Quarter events wrap-up:

San Diego Division Winter Meet, February 8, 2020:

We had a good winter meet at Clairemont Christian Fellowship Church

Thanks to great participation, we had plenty of good food available for the potluck Lunch. We also had plenty of donations for our hobo auction. A clinic on Introduction to the NMRA Website was presented by a new member, Mike Hampson. Mike is currently a webmaster, graphic designer, writer and a small business owner. Mike gave us a very thorough overview of the NMRA website and how it benefits its members. He also provided a very helpful handout covering the details of the website.

Dick Roberts, our Clinics Chair, distributed a survey questionnaire about clinic preferences for future meets. If you have any ideas for clinics that you would like to be presented please contact Dick.

Layout Tour Duncan Mcree:



The Donner Summit is an HO/HOn3 layout representing the Southern Pacific crossing of the Sierras (HO) and its interchange with the Nevada County Narrow Gauge (HOn3) at Colfax around 1953. The layout is a 3-layer multi-deck housed in its own building behind Duncan's house. It features mountain scenery with steep grades and numerous tunnels. The motive power is all completely dead-rail with power coming from Li-polymer on-board batteries with DCC control over radio. The deadrail was self designed by Duncan who has high level expertise in electronics. The layout scenery is 100% complete with hand-painted backdrops and has numerous structures. Duncan's company Tam Valley Depot is also located on the property.



Visit to San Diego S-Gaugers, March 14, 2020



The S-Gaugers is an active group of modular layout modelers. Mike Forsys is the club president. They are located in Grossmont Center in La Mesa. The S-Gaugers are currently located in a Mall with plenty of foot traffic. They use a modular style configuration where the public is able to walk around the outside and operate various animation

features. The center area holds some smaller layouts, and their John Allen style Time-Saver game. They operate a mix of time periods and locales. San Diego S-Gaugers are all NMRA members and the club was awarded the Golden Spike by the NMRA after their participation in an NMRA event in Sacramento. It is a great group and we all enjoyed hanging out with them for a morning. We encouraged them to come to our meetings, but the meetings conflict with their operations on Saturdays. They said that they will try to send a representative to each meeting.



Articles:

The Nevada County Railroad, Dick Roberts, MMR

[Editor's note: We are very fortunate to have received a submission about Dick's incredible home layout.]



History

During my modeling lifetime I have built several free-lanced layouts; all had complicated control systems, miles of track, and awkward access, so I decided I wanted to simplify and focus my modeling life.

Simplifying meant eliminating all the complicated control systems and focusing meant finding a prototype that embodied my developing modeling interests.

I began by looking for a prototype that would satisfy my range of modeling interests, i.e. mining and logging operations, wooden bridges and trestles, small engines, short trains, and home-grown atmosphere. I discovered Gerald Best's book, *Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad*, and realized that I had found the perfect railroad for me, *almost*; the railroad embodied all of the criteria I had developed for my modeling interests and my "ultimate" layout, *but it had that narrow track*.

Since I wanted this to be an operating railroad, I didn't want to be limited to captive rolling stock typical of narrow-gauge railroads but wanted to be able to interchange cars freely, so something of a quandary had developed. Building the NCGRR as a standard gauge railroad crossed my mind; it seemed reasonable since most of the prototype right-of-way structures were built to standard gauge specifications, and it would solve the operations problem. As I mulled over the book once again, I stumbled upon the one piece of historical data that would provide the justification for my plan.



In 1913, the Board of Directors of the NCGRR, had proposed a plan to convert the railroad from narrow gauge to standard gauge. This discussion was prompted by the recent contract to haul gravel from the Bear River to the Southern Pacific mainline in support of the construction of the Spaulding Lake dam, which would require the use of standard gauge gravel cars, and required the railroad to build a section of dual gauge track from the Bear River to Oilville. Circumstances being what they were, however, they never funded a complete conversion. In 1987 I graciously provided the funding, and the Nevada County Railroad (in HO scale) was born.

My current layout, set in the spring of 1920, is the second iteration of the standard gauge Nevada County Railroad. The first layout was built while I was in Northern California, but a move to San Diego resulted in the dismantling of the layout, with many of its structures being acquired by operators who became the wrecking crew. Not wanting to duplicate the wooden bridges and scenes from the previous layout (set in 1900) I updated the line to 1920.

This allowed me to model the line as it was re-aligned in 1908, wherein the wooden bridges and trestles over the Bear River and Greenhorn Creek were eliminated and replaced by a single steel bridge over the Bear River. This new plan also includes the wooden Gold Flat trestle which I did not model on the previous layout.

Design

There were several design features that were also on my "criteria list": a walk-around layout; no obstructions, no major hidden track, no duck-unders; a simple electrical system, no centralized control panels; powered

turnouts with simple controls to minimize reaching into the modeled space. Visually, I wanted the “shadow box” effect that I had achieved with the previous layout.

In the end I had designed a “linear, walk-around, mushroom” layout. Turnout controls were recessed into the fascia, in line with their respective turnouts, and digital command control systems eliminated the complex block wiring of previous layouts. I was approaching model railroad heaven. (Those of you who are enjoying my age era will remember DC and Cab Control systems).

The track plan follows the NCSRR route from Colfax to Nevada City via Grass Valley with intermediate scenes at Oilville, Chicago Park, Peardale, Union Hill, Glenbrook, and Town Talk. These scenes are based on prototype photos and data. One of the main features of the new layout is the steel bridge over the Bear River (completed in 2006).



This layout incorporates the “mushroom” design concept, where two levels of track are stacked above each other, but only one level is visible in any scene (compared to a double-deck layout where both levels are visible in one scene). The mushroom design allows for easy access to all parts of the layout with linear walk-around operation. The track level is maintained at about 54” above the floor, with a walk-under span connecting the inside and outside upper levels.

As the layout and operations developed, the need for fold-down access tracks was realized, but compromised my criteria of no duck-unders. This has had a minimal effect on most

of us older folks, but is a nuisance nonetheless.

A unique feature of this layout is the elevator that connects the two levels. This eliminates the need for a helix or long grades, and traverses the vertical distance between levels (24”) in about thirty seconds. The elevator is completely automatic and is long enough to handle the typical five car train. The elevator was discussed more thoroughly in *Model Railroad Planning 2001*, and has been updated over time to provide a better drive system. I have recently added a two level staging area which is also positioned by an elevator system.

Construction

The layout resides in a 21’ x 24’ room which was purpose-built for the railroad. The flow of the track is like a spiral. It winds around the outside of the train room starting at Nevada City on the upper level, crossing over to the inside of the upper level at Grass Valley. It connects to the elevator at Coleman for the trip to the lower level, and terminates at Colfax.

The mushroom design required some creative carpentry, but the sub-roadbed and roadbed is fairly typical with ¾” plywood for the sub-roadbed with Homosote for the roadbed. Except for the staging area, the track is all hand laid with code 70 rail and scratch built turnouts. I glue the unstained ties in place then sand them level and “distress” them with a stiff wire brush before staining.

The scenery is formed with cardboard strips; I put a layer of blue foam on the top surface of the cardboard to make it easier to “plant” trees. This is overlaid with plaster cloth which is covered with a plaster/Celluclay mixture for strength and texture. This layer is painted and covered with sifted dirt, ground foam, saw dust, ground leaves, or whatever looks believable. Ballast is sifted, decomposed granite from my back yard.

I have used a variety of methods to make trees and have also used some commercial trees and components. Most of my evergreen trees, however, are made using the bottle brush method. The raw tree form can be shaped to represent various varieties of evergreen trees; using different colors to spray the raw tree and different colors and types of ground foam or flock produces a suitable mix of trees for my Sierra Nevada scenery.

In keeping with the NCNGRR theme, all of the railroad owned structures are scratch-built. While there are many yet to be built, the scene at Chicago Park (station and water tank) and the bridge over the Bear River are signature scenes of the NCNGRR. Likewise the tunnel portals at Town Talk are modeled from photos. Structures that I consider to be background or that have no particular basis in actual history (such as houses along the right-of-way) are built from kits or kit-bashed.

Rolling Stock

Engines on the NCRR are a mix of brass models that I have re-motored and re-gearred for smoother, slow speed operation, or newer plastic steam engines (Bachmann and P2K) to augment the aging brass fleet.

Since the first NCRR layout was set in 1900, many of the cars were 36 footers I built from Westerfield kits. Shifting the new layout to 1920 also improved the variety of rolling stock that appears on the line, with 40 foot cars being as common as the shorter cars. I discovered the Pacific Fruit Express was manufacturing 40 foot refrigerator cars in 1906, so the appearance of 40 foot cars in Colfax was a natural transition.



Operation and Control

Since one of my primary objectives was to have a layout that was focused on operation, I experimented with several different car forwarding methods, including car cards. I initially settled on RailOp, a commercial software program that provided random car movements and switch lists for the crews. Since the demise of this software, I have gone to JMRI Operations. This software has increased the operating capability of the layout and has provided many hours of “fun” for the operating crews. Regular operating sessions occur almost monthly except during times of quarantine and social distancing ☺

I have also been an advocate and user of command control systems since the first iteration of the Nevada County Railroad. I started with Dynatrol and used it for many years, but when I moved to San Diego, digital command control was on the scene, and I opted

to switch to Digitrax. This provided me with my ultimate model railroad operating scheme, a walk-around layout with wireless control of the trains.

The next step was obvious; install sound decoders in all the engines. This proved to be challenging with the small size of the equipment, but well worth the effort. There's nothing that adds more to an operating session than hearing your train working through a cut and blowing the whistle to keep the cows off the track. My most ambitious attempt at decoder installation was squeezing a unit into my Vulcan Duplex. All my engines have been updated with Tsunami2 decoders over the past year.

Not Finished

Although the layout is well along towards completion, it is not finished. As with many model railroaders, the layout is always looking for improvements. Scenery work continues with an ongoing foresting project which means making a lot of trees. Most recently the layout received a scratch-built sawmill and some updating of the staging area in Sacramento. All in all it's been a fun project; I'm happy with the way the design came together, and happier that we have a lot of fun running trains. I even enjoy the occasional question "Why did you standard gauge the track?", because I have a legitimate answer.

What are you doing in model railroading during your home isolation time off?

[Editor's Note: Trudy asked some of us to share what we were working on during this home isolation period.]

Trudy Seeley



I finished the O scale engine house I was working on for the museum. Now I have to figure out how to make the floor of the engine house look like cement (can't move the rails that are already there, as they are hand laid.) I'll have to wait until the layout opens up to finish it. I have a friend there that will do the hook-ups for the lights (in the pictures, I taped the wires to a middle support just to get them out of the way while I did some internal detailing.)



My next project is actually finishing an HO warehouse kit I started in 2014 and packed up to move to San Diego. I have to do a bunch of the detail parts before I can attach the 2nd floor porch....then comes all the staircases! I also have a sawmill kit started that never got finished. So much to do!

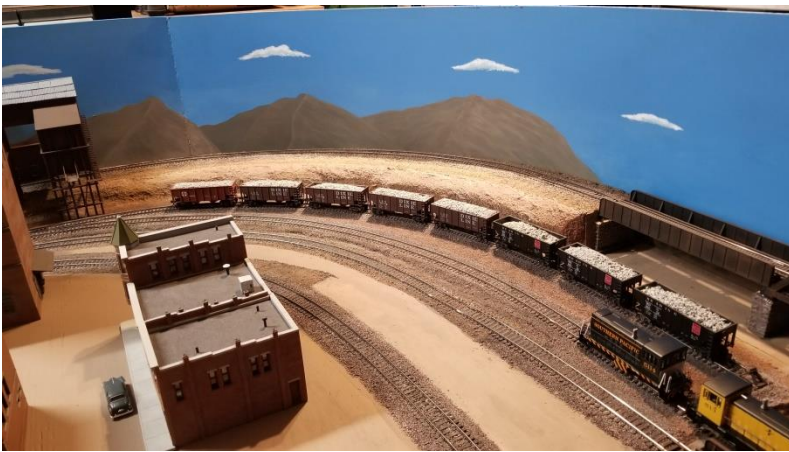
Pete Steinmetz

I'm also going to do live Zoom video weathering demonstrations with the NMRA Trinity River Division out of Texas and the PNR 7th Division out of Vancouver, BC. We are doing some tests this week. When I find out when we will be live for the public, I will figure out how to invite the group.

I am building a fleet of Santa Fe coal hoppers. I got inspired to weather the trucks over the weekend. So far so good. I'll post photos when I am farther along.

Tim Foote

Hello FCMs (that means fellow club members)



I am trying to prepare my layout for operations some day. All complaints should go to Steve Seidensticker and Dick Roberts who have encouraged me to do operations on my layout.

I have eight gondolas all ready completed and filled with borate loads from the Ryan Mine. (Named after a real place, not our illustrious superintendent.) I am matching those cars with 7 empties for switch out. I am also preparing 14 additional ore cars (half with ore loads and half empty) for switch out at the

Keystone mine. After that, I will focus on cargo trains and then attack JMRI's operations program.

I have learned to set up locomotive consists and plan to use those for the ore trains. Getting the locomotives to run the same at the same speed steps was fairly easy. If you use two locomotives of the same model and manufacturer, they probably will run the same at the same speed steps. To test, I set up the consist but kept the locomotives separated by about 6 inches. I ran the consist to see if they stay separated at around six inches. If not, the slower one might need its wheels cleaned or gears lubed. This avoids the complex task of having to adjust the speed settings. This would make a good clinic for one of you who knows how to adjust speed settings.

Ryan Di Fede



I am continuing my efforts at scenery and model building in the town of Springfield on my layout, learning as I go. I have added some trees and people... I repurposed a small building I dug out of a drawer. It is one of the first structures I built in the early days of starting this hobby. I modified it to fit against the back drop, built a new base for it and weathered it. I am hoping it functions to make the transition between the furniture factory and the depot scenes work... Mostly I have become obsessed with researching the Springfield Depot. I wound up building a paper mock up based on plans. It will

eventually be my first scratch build attempt. I also built a paper mock up of a powerhouse kit by N-Scale Architect by photo copying the building parts so I could figure out how to fit it into the scene. Next, the team track needs a road so the trucks can get in.



Don Fowler



I've been working on layout scenery & ballasting track.

I hope everyone is doing okay & taking advantage of this situation to catch up on their modeling.

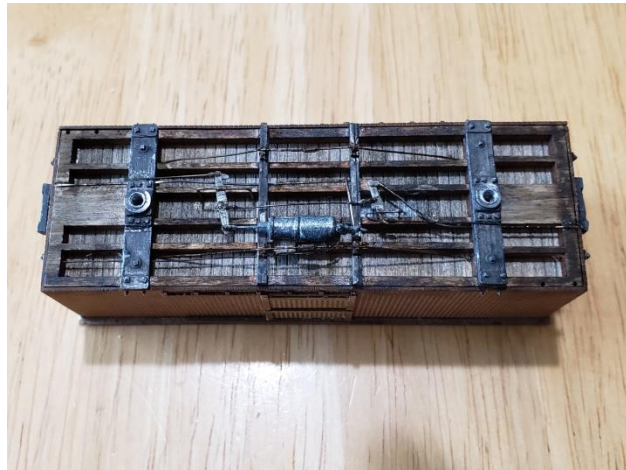
Stay safe, stay home, wash your hands & glove/mask up if you have to go out.



Rudy Spano



Been working on my creek. Here's a before and after photo, I'll let you guess which is which. Also working on a boxcar (Bitter Creek Models). This photo is the under frame with K Brake system, etc. Painting and details next.



What's going on at two of our major museums in San Diego, Trudy Seeley

In this time of forced closures, it's difficult for museums to continue to pay their expenses without people coming in. Two of our rail museums in San Diego are closed, but working on surviving the lack of income!



San Diego Model Railroad Museum

The Featured Exhibit at the museum, IRON WOMEN, opened just two days before the museum had to close down on March 16. It covers all spectrums from rail workers & engineers to the Harvey Girls. The museum is posting new content on the exhibit & on general railroad history on their Facebook Page. Recently they have featured information on the Harvey Girls, including some recipes for food served on the trains in their time.

Website: <http://www.sdmmr.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ModelRailroadMuseum>

Pacific Southwest Railway Museum:

On March 13, 2020, the PSRW closed and halted all train rides. The VP of the PSRM, Martin Caestecker, said that in consideration of their volunteers' health, no one is currently working on the equipment or track (always a lot of upkeep required on a working line!) Our thoughts are with these two wonderful museums – once this is all over (a bit longer for those of us who are seniors!) we will be back!

Website: <https://www.psrw.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SanDiegoTrain>

1938 NYC 10-5 Pullman-Standard sleeper, Jeff Cauthen



The car pictured here is a NYC 10-5 sleeper built by Pullman-Standard in 1938 for the 20th Century Limited. The car is an MTH model with factory paint. I'm modifying the car to

represent how it looked, circa 1954. I am de-skirting the car, have removed the full-width diaphragms, have

changed the trucks, and removed the A/C Brine tank. The car will be stripped and repainted in the NYC reverse two-tone gray scheme. De-skirting the car involves clipping off skirting and then finishing it with small tooth files.



Photo 1 shows the car as modeled. Photo 2 shows the skirting partially removed. Photo 3 shows the skirting as finished at the truck end over to the battery box cover, which will be retained.

Intermodal Trains, Steve Moss



Welcome back to another view of Unit Trains. So far we've looked at Tank Trains, Military Trains, Circus Trains, as well as a few others.

Today we look at the "Intermodal Train". We've all seen the ubiquitous big metal box rolling down the highway. These cargo containers are designed to with a common set of parameters that allow them to nestle nicely on big rig trucks, trains, ships, and probably on space craft in the future. They are even being used as the structure for homes and buildings.



The concept of a container that could be transported on multiple shipping platforms began as early as 1830 in the UK for hauling coal. Loading cargo efficiently and quickly has always been a goal for transport companies. The faster you load, the better the profits.

1933 found the first international standard for these

cargo containers. But as always, standards tend to follow the biggest companies. 1940s and 1950s saw increased use of containers by the US Military and development of the CONEX Box (Container Express) in 1952. By 1967 the military had 200,000+ CONEX boxes, which really drove the standard for many years.



Modern shipping containers really started with Sea-Land in the late 1950s. Sea-Land started developing containers with the interlocking corners that allowed the containers to be stacked and safely locked into position for double stacked rail and sea transport.



Sea-Land also developed the first MHE (Material Handling Equipment) for ground handling and loading. Perhaps the best example of this is the automatic "spreader", which could pick up and move a loaded container transferring directly from truck trailer to train car, or to position for pick up and loading on to ships.



So beyond cargo, these standardized containers are also being used to house machine shops, living quarters, hospital and MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) units. When a container reaches it's destination, often getting it up and running is as simple as starting up the attached generator for power.

So again, I thank you for taking time to look at some of what the Short Track RR museum exhibit has to offer. Please swing by and say hello any Saturday between 9-1 or AGSEM Show days.

Railroad and Model Railroad links for home isolation time viewing:

[Send me your favorite links for the next issue of Mailhook. mailhook@sandiegodivision.org]

U.S. Navy San Diego Boxcar & Flat Car, Bob Chaparro

I thought some of you would enjoy these "local" freight cars. These cars were built by American Car & Foundry. From the John W. Barriger III National Railroad Library Collection:

Boxcar

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/barrigerlibrary/49589808122/in/album-72157649155982802/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/barrigerlibrary/49589806352/in/album-72157649155982802/>

And flat car:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/barrigerlibrary/49589573661/in/album-72157649155982802/>

Some of my favorite links, Trudy Seeley

<https://www.facebook.com/hoscalecustoms/> Lots of sharing of modeling ideas. Live podcasts weekly on building techniques or projects and interviews with talented modelers and kit manufacturers. Father & Son team, Brett & Todd Wiley run the site.

<https://www.facebook.com/jason.jensen.39566> A fantastic modeler - does great videos on YouTube, too.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/644643932643613> The Craftsman Courtyard. Has articles on buildings, lighting, contests, scenery...

http://www.railroad-line.com/forum/forum.asp?FORUM_ID=64 Railroad Line Forums are probably my favorite long time sites. Anything you are trying to build, someone has tried it in the past and many of the postings really help figure out any issues. Members are responsive and it's just a fun place to hang out and explore!

My favorite links, Tim Foote

Traveling Tom is a diesel train mechanic that gives an amazingly detailed tour of a DDA40X on YouTube. The tour is an hour and 40 minutes long but well worth watching it all.

<https://youtu.be/ERNezIjd-GE>

Lance Mindheim is a highly talented model railroader who specializes in very realistic looking small layouts. In addition to YouTube videos, he has a web page and sells books he has written on model railroading which are available on Amazon. In addition to the link below you will see other suggested videos by Lance at this link. The same will be available for the other modelers listed below.

<https://youtu.be/WeEGpUy2oyQ>

George Selios is one of the most talented model railroaders there is. This is a video of his layout from YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/NW0QdEpGKVg>

Luke Towan is an extremely talented modeler from Australia. He puts together very well done instructional videos. Here is one:

<https://youtu.be/yygwun1cdug>

Dave Frary is also an extremely talented modeler. He has written books on model railroading and has instructional videos on YouTube. Check this one out:

<https://youtu.be/ym-2T6S8HyM>

Message from our own Steve Seidensticker regarding a video on the install of Tam Valley control for a large scale locomotive. [Steve works with Duncan Mcree on these projects.]

Now that we all have more time to indulge in our hobby, I have taken the opportunity to install a battery and Tam Valley receiver into a large scale (1:32) MTH F7 locomotive and then make a video of the process. I know that this will not be of direct interest to most of you, but it is full of nice views of a Southern Pacific black widow paint scheme, pretty pictures of the inside of a locomotive, and some audible grunts. And it might help you sleep if you watch it about bed time.

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51xyXzDYdd4>

EVENTS CALENDAR



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VAN NUYS LOCAL 2020 PSR CONVENTION CHAIRMAN:

Hello friends and fellow NMRA members in the San Diego Division,

It is my hope that you are safe and healthy.

I would like to take a moment to reach out to you during these unprecedented times to talk a bit about the Van Nuys Local 2020 PSR convention. As I write this (April 18, 2020), the world has been turned upside down, and has been for a while. The things we have taken for granted in the past are now precious, such as shaking hands, or toilet paper. The COVID 19 virus has left an indelible mark on our society.

I want everyone to know that the health and welfare of you and your family is of paramount importance to me. I would never put you or your family in harm's way.

At this point the Van Nuys Local 2020 convention committee continues the planning process necessary to hold our convention. We are all doing what we can to make this convention a reality, but there is much more to take into consideration than we would face in a normal year. So far, eight regional conventions, plus the national convention and train show, have had to cancel due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The future is unclear, and I monitor the evolving situation daily. There are multiple reasons why we may have to cancel Van Nuys Local 2020, such as governmental restrictions, or lack of attendance.

For instance, if groups of 50 or more are prohibited from gathering, then we would have to comply. The six foot physical distancing requirement currently in effect would make most clinics difficult and bus tours impossible. If we do not have enough attendees, or current registrants cancel, we may have to cancel for financial reasons.

All of this is why I need to ask you for assistance in our efforts. If you have already registered for our convention, THANK YOU! Please do not cancel your registration unless you absolutely have to. If you have not made your hotel reservation, please do so now. If we do not have enough room nights booked with the hotel, we will not be able to afford the meeting rooms and will have to cancel the convention. If you have not registered for our convention, please consider doing so now. I understand that the COVID 19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on the economy, but if you think you might be able to afford it, we would value your attendance immensely. Having a good estimation of how many will be attending as early as possible will be invaluable for our planning. If we have to cancel the convention, you will receive a full refund of your registration fee, minus any merchandise purchases. Any merchandise ordered will be delivered to you. There is no cancellation fee from the hotel.

We are doing our best to bring you a convention this year. We have not given up on you-please do not give up on us!

Pat Raymer

Chairman-Van Nuys Local 2020 PSR-NMRA Convention

<https://psrconvention.org/VanNuysLocal2020/>

NOTE THAT DUE TO CORONA VIRUS CONCERNS WE ARE NOT LISTING ANY OTHER EVENTS AT THIS TIME. WE WILL NOTIFY YOU IF CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE AND ANY EVENTS COME UP.

ALSO NOTE THAT THE NMRA HAS OFICIALLY CANCELLED THE ANNUAL CONVENTION THIS YEAR.

Model Railroading events in the Region, and by local clubs can be found on the following links. If you want your event listed please contact mailhook@sandiegodivision.org

LA Division events:

click the link for more information

<https://www.ladiv-nmra.org/events.html>

Cajon Division events:

click the link for more information

<http://www.cajondivision.org>

Arizona Division events:

Fall Meet, Saturday, Nov. 9th 9am to 4pm

click the link for more information

<http://www.azdiv-nmra.org/index.shtml>

From the Editor

The Mail Hook needs interesting articles and features. Please consider writing and submitting an article on a model railroading or railroading topic to share your knowledge with other modelers. It can be a how-to article or highlighting a project you are working on or any special knowledge you may have about a railroad. Maybe

you could write an article about your layout progress, including pictures. Earn AP points or just make it a fun challenge. Start thinking now because the next Mail Hook deadline is April fools day, 2020.

If you are a member of another club in the division and would like to see your club and club layout featured in the Mail Hook; please submit an article and pictures too!

I hope you enjoy reading the Mail Hook, and please consider contributing.

Tim Foote
 Acting Mail Hook Editor
 mailhook@sandiegodivision.org

Submission Guidelines:

Contributions of articles on any railroad or model-railroading topic of interest to the membership are welcome. There is no compensation. If you are interested in submitting articles, event information, or other information of interest to members of the Division. Please Submit by email to the Mail Hook Editor at mailhook@sandiegodivision.org, with the submission attached as a text document or in the body of email message. Pictures can be attached separately to the same email. Submissions may be edited for length or formatting, or not used, at the discretion of the editor.

The following are the quarterly deadlines for submitting to the Mail Hook Editor:

First Qtr.-January 2; Second Qtr.-April 1, Third Qtr.- July 1, Fourth Qtr.-October 1

San Diego Division Officers

Director: Pete Steinmetz	Superintendent: Ryan Di Fede	Chief Clerk/Paymaster: Trudy Seeley
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San Diego Division Chairs

Membership Services: Rudy Spano	Layout Tours: Tim Foote
Contests: Dick Roberts, MMR	Meet Coordinator: Don Fowler, MMR
Clinics: Vacant	Member Aid: Vacant
Publicity/Club Liaison: Vacant	Webmaster: Ben Sevier
Achievement Program: Rodger Gredvig, MMR	
"Mail Hook" Editor: Vacant	

Websites

San Diego Division

www.sandiegodivision.org

PSR

www.psrnmra.org

NMRA

www.nmra.org

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San Diego Division

Pacific Southwest Region

National Model Railroad Association

Have you checked the San Diego Model Railroad Museum web site lately? There is a LOT going on there these days, and they can always use the support of all model railroaders!

Museum Web Site: <http://www.sdmrm.org/>

