



CENTRAL CROSSINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CENTRAL RAILWAY MUSEUM



SERVES THE UPSTATE

Volume 30, Issue # 2

April 2020

108 Werner St
Central, SC 29627

Website:
www.crmha.org

President
Dan Marett

Treasurer
Jim Alexander

Secretary
Sage Viehe

VP of Programs
David Mead

VP of Marketing
John Johnston

VP of Exhibits
Ken Greenwood

Museum Curator
Jack Green

Train Expo
Sandy Eustis

Newsletter
Wayne Cunningham
Joanne Cunningham

Webmaster
Wayne Cunningham

NEXT MEETINGS

4/2, 5/7
6/4

(TENTATIVE)

@ 7:00 PM

AT THE
CENTRAL
RAILWAY
MUSEUM
ANNEX

FROM THE EDITORS:

THE REALLY IMPORTANT STUFF FIRST.

The big rage right now (3/18/2020) is COVID-19. I can't recall anything in my lifetime that has had such a wide impact upon pretty much everyone. Schools are out, sports seasons canceled or postponed, travel impacted, restaurants, entertainment, gatherings of any kind over 10 people discouraged. Social distancing is the new 'it' phrase. Basically, everyone is at home and recommended to stay there for the foreseeable future.

These times require tough choices, even when they are not really a choice at all. *That being said, the Central Railway Museum will remain closed to the public until such a time that the CDC and other health organizations feel that lifting said restrictions is safe to the public and appropriate.* We, along with many other Railway museums and train clubs feel that the health and safety of our volunteers and our visitors is far more important than our main mission of educating the public on the wonderful history of railroading in the Upstate of South Carolina and across the United States.

We at the CRM&HA want our volunteers and visitors to remain healthy and safe, so while these closures are a bit of an inconvenience, they really are for the best. We are not sure exactly how long this will last, as nothing like this has been experienced before, we are still looking forward to the Town of Central's Railroad Festival on April 25th, 2020.

There have been some good developments through these tough times. Neighbors, communities, and businesses are coming together to help support each other, new technologies are being used for education and business, people are able to spend more time with their families or their passions.

Personally, I have been looking into some technology solutions to integrate into our social media platforms and our website. More on that in following pages of this issue.

Now, let's move on to some better news...



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

There are several events coming up that we have been invited to attend, details on those events will follow on Page 3. That being said, it is an exciting time here at the CRM.

Sage has informed me that Karl Bacon has stepped up to take over the American Flyer area. My thanks to Karl, as it proves that at least one person might read this thing. :) Although, I still think cloning Sage would have been fun as well. Also on the American Flyer side of things, there has been some rearranging to the bookshelves located under the layout to change the entry point and add a glass display case to display some of our AF treasures that are not able to run on the layout.

The signaling system that has been in the works is finally coming into its own. Ken, Howard and Bob have got the computer to talk to the signal control boards, change to the proper colors when they are supposed to and operate just like a real 1958 era Southern Railway system. This additional control aspect will really add to the realism of our monthly operating sessions.

Speaking of the monthly Operating sessions, those are going to really start happening monthly again. Several months ago, the Digital Command Control system suffered a major electrical surge, damaging several of the power boosters and stations, many of the plug in and IR receiver plates around the layout and some of the wiring. Now, all of our gear is from Digitrax - which has great repair and warranty services - but Digitrax has been swamped due to damage that they received from Hurricane Matthew almost 2 years ago. Much of their manufacturing and repair equipment was damaged beyond repair, not to mention the almost total destruction of their shops. So, while they have been getting back up and running, many of their devices had sold out. Add that to the back log of repair orders and it made a long process. We have finally gotten back all of our gear and the electrical team is getting everything back together so we can run more than the Saturday trains. Now, of course with everything else going on right now with COVID-19, I am not sure if we will do an April session, but it will be on the schedule and we will verify it when it gets closer.

Now, Sage has sent me some very interesting train related stories that appeared in train magazines from the 1940's. Some of the terms and writing will be a little different from what some are used to today, but they should be very interesting. They will start this issue and be a running feature until Sage runs out of stories to share.

Something else that is going to start appearing in the newsletter this issue is a by-line called 'Laying Tracks'. It is a chronicle of a model train layout from its earliest stages of design of the layout, to the decoration and preparation of the space for it, to the actual building. Now this is a very special project for me, as it is Joanne and I's home train layout. I figured a running column of the creation of the Carolina & Western Railway would be an interesting feature for those that have been in the hobby for a while and those new or thinking about jumping in. We'll see how it turns out together.

On the website, we have had it going for just about a year now for the new look. One thing the developer told me long ago was that the photos we have were going to take up too much space and cause me problems. Eh, what does he know... We will be fine. Yep, that was my thought at the time. Fast forward to the last two weeks and I have been fighting - guess, come on, yep - space issues on the server... Who would have thought that would happen...? Oh yeah, Daniel (of CWD) did. Well, over the last two weeks I have transferred many of the photos (mainly event photo albums) to a new host to free up space on the main website. You may notice a little difference between the albums that are native to the website and those that are on the new host, but once everything is moved, you'll never know. The great thing is that I can load 1,000 photos for free and after that point it is a relatively low cost option for more space. With all the photos I have moved so far, I have about 600 more photos left. 2 or 3 more train shows and I will worry then...

At the beginning of February, the CRM&HA hosted its 2020 Train Expo at the Impact Center in Easley. 1,216 visitors enjoyed the show this year. That was down a little bit from the 1,300 that we had last year, but all is good. The folks that were there on Saturday got the special treat that we arranged - a snow storm... Now, Joanne and I were out in the parking lot directing cars when it started snowing and I was having fun playing in it. That ended pretty quickly. It was neat though and the kids had a blast playing in it. You can check out the photo galleries for the entire event here.

Now, for those events I was hinting about earlier.

1. Central Railroad Festival: April 25th, 2020 - All Day - FREE!!

Every year, the Town of Central celebrates its railroad heritage with food, vendors, rides, entertainment and open houses at the Central Historical Museum and at the Central Railway Museum. This is easily our biggest single day event of the year. Roughly 1,100 visitors last year came through the museum. Plus those that came through the Caboose that we staffed. This year the Caboose has been restored on the outside and work has been getting done on the inside. This is an 'All Hands' event where everyone that is able is asked to help out.

2. Palmetto Live Steamers: April 28th through May 4th, 2020 - Anderson, SC

This is a wonderful event hosted by Dean Hunter and Mark Fredrickson. They have an old working wood mill run by a case steam tractor. 16" live steam railroad and a 1000 plus 7 1/2 inch gauge railroad. 3 buildings of antique cars trucks and tractors. A most go too. There are 34 sites for campers. Anyone interested in attending please contact Mark Fredrickson. The event listing can be found here.

3. The 5th Annual Big Train Show at the George L. Carter Railroad Museum: June 5th-6th, 2020. Johnson City, TN

Join us for this two day event featuring many vendors selling everything from model trains and railroad memorabilia to t shirts and coffee mugs and of course operating layouts all located at the ETSU Memorial Center Mini Dome 1081 Robert Bell Dr Johnson City, Tennessee. The George L. Carter Railroad Museum will also be open during the event. Admission for the event will be \$6.00 per person and children 12 and under are free. Museum admission is still free during the event but donations are welcomed. You can find more information on the Museum here.

Now, my required disclaimer - all these events were planned and in the works before the current health crisis. Please check the event or Facebook pages for more information as to possible cancellation(s) or postponement(s). I will also try to get more information as this develops.

Now, about that technology solution / improvement that I was talking about on page 1. I am looking into the option to do Facebook 'Live' events on evenings that we have a guest speaker or presentation. Something else that could be a possibility is streaming other events that we do during the month. Imagine the possibility of streaming the Modeling Skills Workshops, the Business Meetings, heck - even the Operating Sessions. Some of these streams would require a bit more security, as some of it is intended for members, but it is workable. Basically, I am trying to use available technology to be able to include more members of the club in meetings and activities.

At the March 2020 meeting, Dr. H. Roger Grant, noted Railroad and Transportation historian and Clemson Professor, visited us again and spoke to us about the research that he has been doing for his upcoming book all about early rural Train Stations, the Station Masters and Telegraphy of early railroads. It was a great evening and really a fun and interesting subject.



Upcoming Events for the Central Railway Museum as well as regional shows and events.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

If the April 2020 meeting happens as planned, Wayne Fowler will be joining us again to share more of his experiences as a Railroad engineer for CSX for many years as well as his early years with the Pickens Railway. Mr. Fowler has over 30 years railroading and has a unique perspective on operations as he has worked through many of the positions.

A CALL TO ALL MEMBERS: THERE ARE NO SPEAKERS SCHEDULED FOR THE BALANCE OF THE YEAR....WE NEED YOUR SUGGESTIONS NOW IF YOU WANT TO CONTINUE THIS WONDERFUL PROGRAM!

Please contact Bill Fogerty or David Mead if you have any interest or suggestions for speakers.

MUSEUM OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
THURSDAYS - WORK DAY
9AM(ISH) - ??
(LUNCH IN THERE AT SOME POINT)

SATURDAYS - TRAIN OPERATIONS
9AM TO 2 PM

THE COST IS ALWAYS FREE!!

🌀 SCHEDULED EVENTS & SHOWS 🌀

CRMHA CALENDAR

Give it a [click!](#)

When the calendar opens click on an event to get more details and click on the arrows at the top left to move to another month.

If you would like to have your event added to our calendar, give us a shout at centralcrossings@crmha.org.

OPERATING SESSIONS SECOND THURSDAY @ 7PM

APRIL 9TH, MAY 14TH,

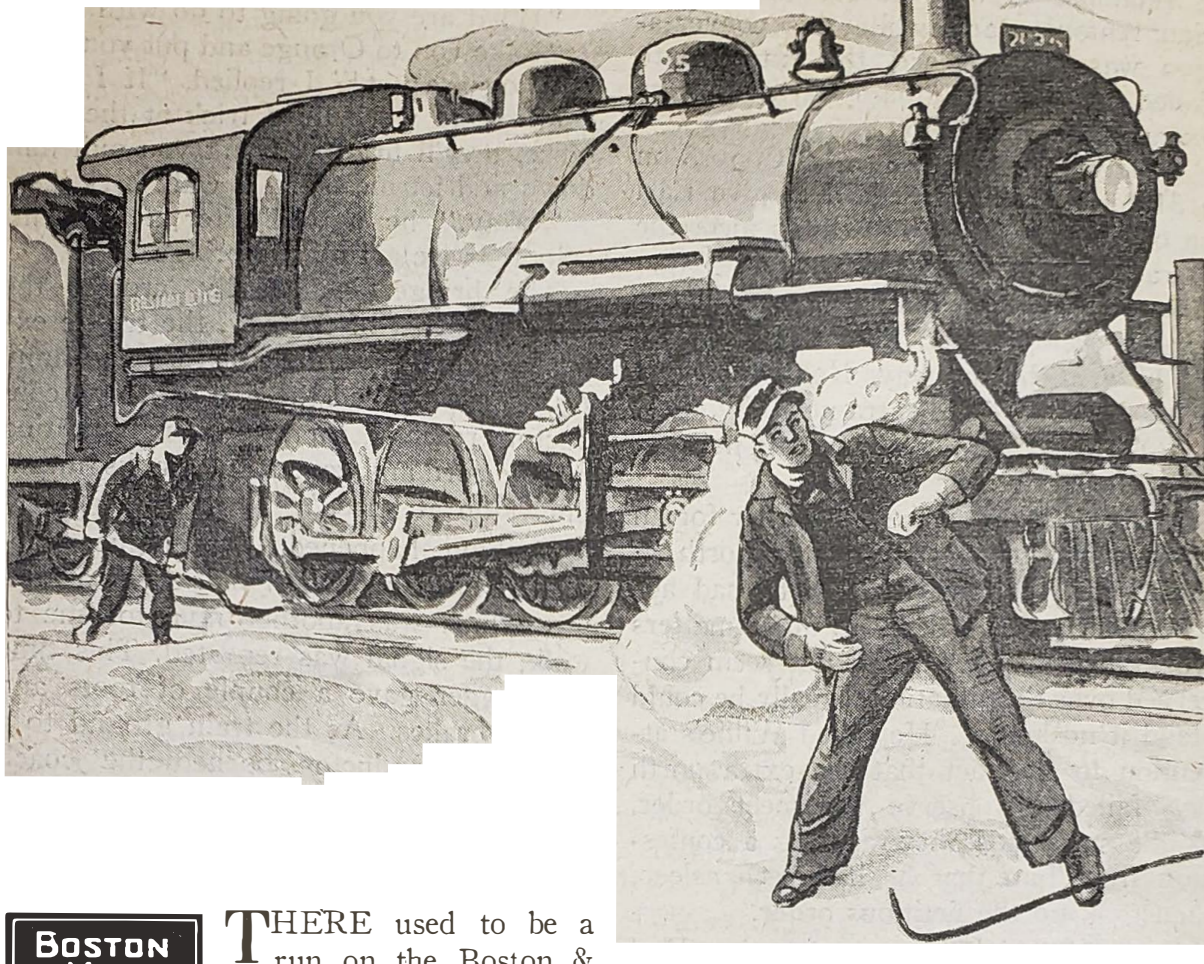
JUNE 11TH

ALL TENTATIVE

The Central Railway Museum holds regular operating sessions on our museum HO layout from 7-9pm(ish) on the second Thursday evening of most months. This is when we use our unique "scenario card" system to assemble and run trains around the layout, setting out or picking up loads at industries, clearing the main for a crack passenger train to roll by, etc. etc. So if you're interested in realistic railroad operations, or if you just want to learn how to run trains on the museum layout, you're encouraged to attend these sessions. No experience is necessary; rookie engineers are routinely paired with experienced ones.

Sleeping Beauties

By CHARLES W. TYLER



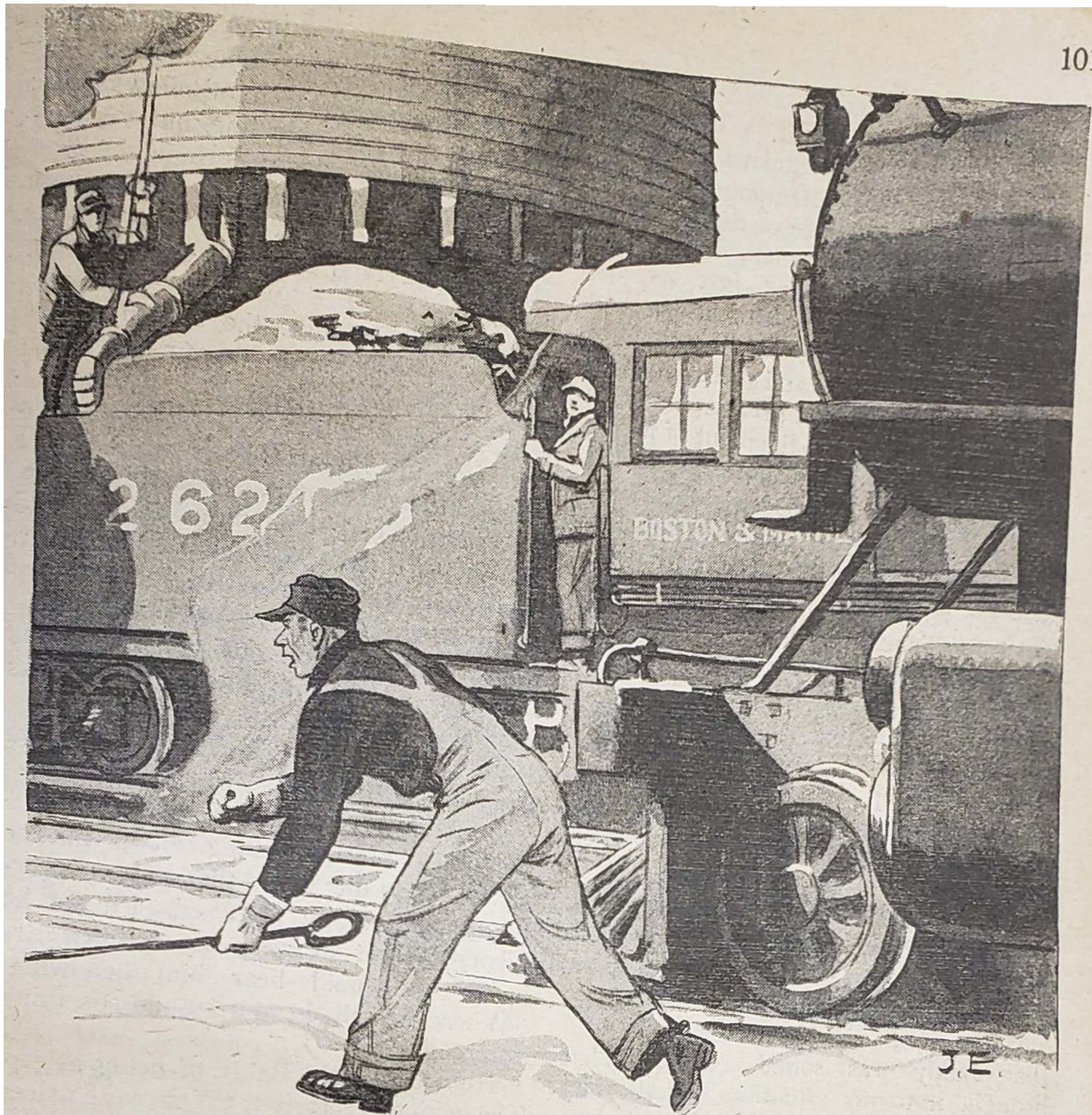
THERE used to be a run on the Boston & Maine known as the "Williamstown job," connecting Ayer Junction with Williamstown, Mass. That was thirty years ago, as I remember it. Williamstown is on the west end of the Fitchburg Division, west of North Adams, on the line to Mechanicsville, and close to the borders of Vermont and New York. Why this job operated, I haven't the slightest idea. Williamstown was a college town, with no connecting line, and it was not a gateway, in the accepted term; but it did have a small roundhouse and turntable.

They called this Williamstown job a *razwhide*, as they did all the regularly assigned cross-country runs at that time. This one ran as an extra. You might have thought nobody cared much what hap-

pened to it, so long as the train eventually reached its destination. Often it never did, with the crew that started, for they were frequently "canned." I fired it once, and talked about that trip for years afterward, and now am writing about it.

Two incidents remain sharply defined in my mind. They were funny then; they still are. The first one occurred when I was working out of East Fitchburg and was called to "deadhead" to Ayer Junction to fire the Williamstown job. The engine was an old 2300 or 2400 Class, grimy and dilapidated, but a pretty good old girl, at that.

The engine crew—well, I guess they were about as incongruous a trio as ever climbed through a gangway. The en-



gineer was a "character," if there ever was one. I'll not reveal his name, for he may still be alive. I won't mention his nickname either, for some of the boys would surely remember it. So let's just call him "Baldy."

Baldy was weathered and runty, with a head as hairless as a China egg. He wore black overalls and a jumper that were shiny with grease. Old Baldy was just about as smooched and dirty when he climbed on an engine as when he climbed off at the end of the run. He always carried a bulky "war bag," stuffed with personal belongings, as though he expected to be gone a long time—and he generally was. He was dour and silent,

the result, perhaps, of long association with the Williamstown job.

"Aroostook," the head brakeman that trip, had been with me on my first run. He hailed from "down Maine," from Aroostook County, famous for its potatoes. The fellow was lazy, easy-going, and he did not take railroading seriously. This was his first trip to the west end. Except for the Northampton, the Williamstown and the Mechanicsville jobs, everything on the line turned at East Deerfield, about halfway between Boston and Mechanicsville. The west end was that portion of the main stem between East Deerfield and Mechanicsville.

I, of course, was the fireman. I had

been firing about a month and I still didn't know what it was all about. When I hired out to Mr. Todd, the Master Mechanic, I weighed less than 150 pounds and got on the road only because of the desperate need at that time for firemen. New hands were quitting almost as fast as the brass hats could hire them. Firing had worn me down to less than 140 pounds. I was a scarecrow, gaunt and green as young corn, and wore a pair of greasy pants that always seemed to be on the point of falling off. Like Aroostook, I had never been farther west than East Deerfield.

When we pulled out of Ayer Junction that day, the head brakeman came down over the tender and asked: "Where the hell is Williamstown?"

I said: "Haven't the slightest idea."

Old Baldy just looked at us and kind of leered, as much as to say, "You'll find out."

We picked up some cars at East Fitchburg and started up Ashburnham Hill behind the Bellows Falls job, which branched off at South Ashburnham. This was a little after dark. We passed the Bellows Falls job somewhere on the hill. They had pulled off for some reason or another—I think the engine was not steaming. Shortly thereafter, I noticed that Baldy was sound asleep. What brought it to my attention was the fact that he did not shut off the injector when I hooked the fire. I wasn't sure whether or not I ought to wake him up. Anyway, I didn't, feeling it might embarrass him. Instead I watched the water glass and told Aroostook to keep an eye out for signals. Aroostook called a couple—"All green"—and then he fell asleep.

This is the first half of this story, catch the ending in the next issue.

Thank you to Sage for sharing this with us.

Story Copyright by Railroad Magazine and Railfan and Railroad Magazine

A little history about Railroad Magazine:

Railroad Magazine was a pulp magazine which first published in October 1906, founded by Frank Anderson Munsey. A railroad man born in Maine in 1854, he moved to New York City in 1892, where he authored a few books and published periodicals and newspapers in many cities. The magazine's first offices were located in the Flatiron Building in New York City. At the time of its founding, there was no organized railroad enthusiast movement, and initially the magazine was targeted towards railroaders and retirees. The magazine title was later combined with Railfan to form the new Railfan & Railroad, published by Carstens Publications.

Wikipedia - Railroad_Magazine

Every good story has a beginning. Whether this turns out good or not, is still very much in the air.

“Laying Tracks”

By Wayne Cunningham

35 years ago I was a high strung, hyperactive 12 year old. Getting into trouble and driving people crazy were my skills and I was really good at them. Basically, a reasonably normal 12 year old. I lived in Broomfield, Colorado, a nice quiet suburb of Denver. Mom and dad had their hands full with me, as I was a bit of a behavior challenge. Kinda hard to believe nowadays, huh?

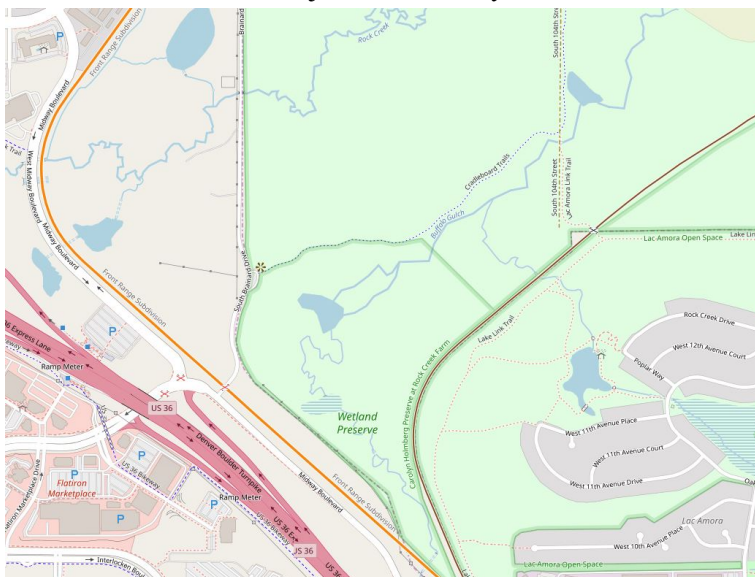
During the summer months, spring break, basically anytime I was out of school for more than a couple days, I spent the time at my grandparent’s ranch in Canon City, Colorado. Driving into the mountains to check cattle, irrigating fields to raise alfalfa and grass hay, learning to drive tractors and trucks (neither successfully at the time), kicking my feet against an upside down water tank and then being chased around by an angry grandpa with a shovel threatening serious injury, riding in the back of the pickup with the dogs, all sorts of farmer / rancher stuff. It was a great way to entertain myself and burn off energy.

My mom’s youngest brother was just a few years older than me. He lived at his grandmother’s (my great-grandma’s) house to help her out. I visited her often (she made great cookies and let me eat sugary stuff), but I was always sad that I was not allowed into his room. One day, I caught a glimpse in there and saw a small world on a table – a model train layout. I had never seen one – didn’t really even know what it was. I just knew I wanted to see more. Try as I might, I never did see in there again – probably because of the padlock on the door to keep people out. How rude.

However, I did discover some of his train stuff at my grandparent’s house. Probably not supposed to have, but the cat was out of the bag. Needless to say, he was not all that impressed to find all of his extra stuff spread around me in the upstairs spare bedroom. He was mad to say the least. I heard words that I had never heard before (grandpa was a sailor after all – and he did him proud that day), but the point was not received by me all that clearly. After negotiating to continue playing with someone else’s toys, Uncle Pat relented. He gave me a 3 foot circle of HO Scale Atlas track and a bulkhead flatcar. Victory! Okay, I had my own trains, now what do I do with them? No clue at all.

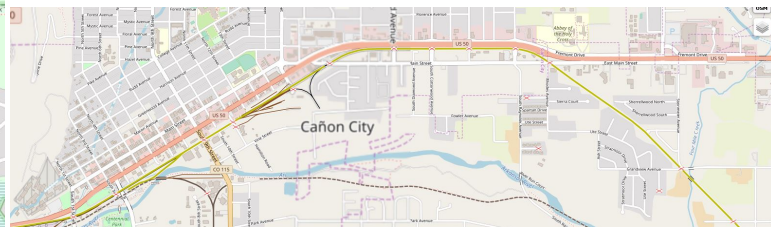
After my visit ended and I went back home, I would spend hours in the basement, sitting in the middle of this 3 foot circle of track running my bulkhead flatcar around in a circle. Did I mention I would do this for hours?

Now, I was no stranger to real trains. Behind my house in Broomfield ran the Burlington Northern north-south mainline, when traveling to visit my grandparents, we paralleled the BN / SF / DRGW / UP Colorado Joint Line between Denver and Pueblo, but the best of all was in Canon City – the entry to the D&RGW Royal Gorge Route and Tennessee Pass. I saw trains all the time, I just didn’t really ‘see’ them.



Central Crossings

< Photo of the current BNSF mainline going north from Broomfield, CO. The residential area in the bottom right of the photo was where I lived through my teens. It was situated at the top of a hill, so I had a great, unobstructed view of the mountains and the trains. I even once watched a train derail from my back yard...



^ D&RGW (Now UPRR) Tennessee Pass subdivision through Canon City, CO. Sadly, UPRR has abandoned it. The Royal Gorge RR runs a tourist operation here now.

That year, for Christmas, my folks got me a Life Like starter set. I was thrilled to say the least. I can't count the number of times I took that oval of track apart and set it back up again. Designing a layout was not something that I had any clue about. Don't get me wrong, I tried. I spent more time tearing things apart than actually running trains.

Building layouts was very frustrating to me, since I had no one to really give pointers or help. My dad would be the transportation department to get wood home and supervise me with power tools, but other than that, it was all me. I made more backwards movement than I did forward...

Something else happened during this time. My dad's brother and sister in law heard I was getting into HO Scale. My second Christmas of liking trains, they got me some Walthers MoW rolling stock kits (way too advanced for me) and the Walthers HO Scale catalog. I spent hours dreaming and looking at that catalog. This was what caused me to find what I really loved to do with trains.

Growing up in Denver, in the 80's, I was lucky. Local hobby stores still existed. Denver was home to the famous Caboose Hobbies (The Original Store) and Mizell's Trains in Westminster. Heck back then, Michael's, Hobby Town and other places all still sold Athearn Blue Box, Bachmann, Life Like, Mantua and others. Going to Caboose was great – the literal 'kid in a candy store' phrase.

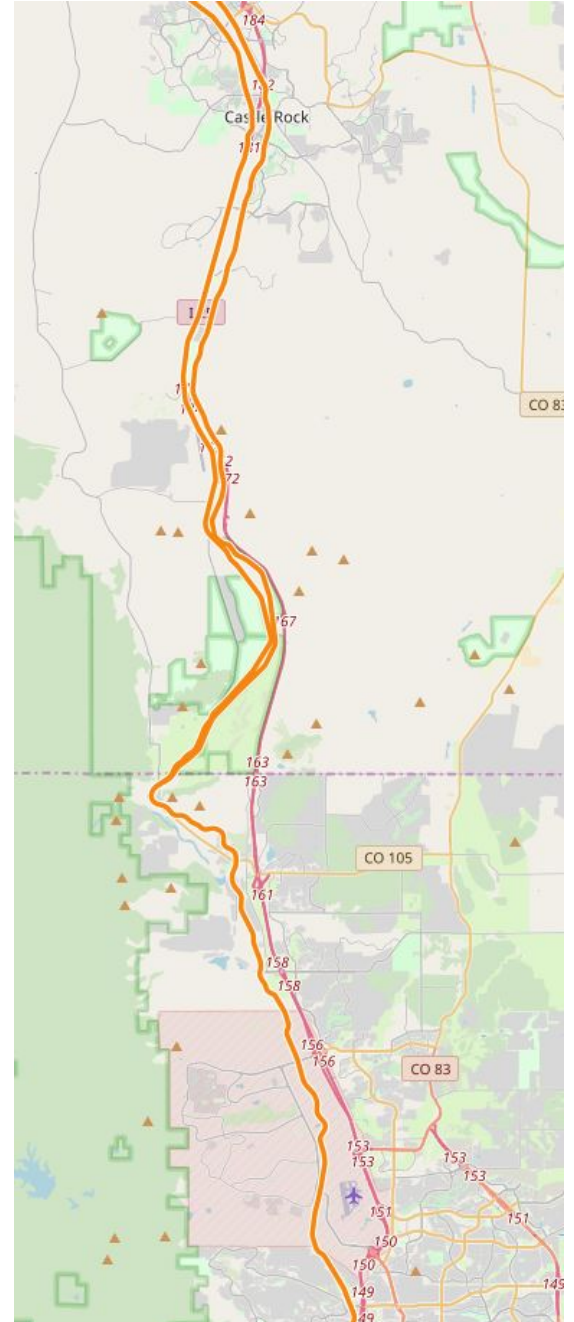
I could go through my Walthers catalog and put together a list of locomotives and details for them and then go to Caboose and get everything right off the shelf. I spent many hours in that store with my dad, looking at everything. But the biggest treat was to drool over the brass engines from Overland. I knew I would never be able to get one of those, but they were still so neat to look at and dream about.

I would spend hours planning and then working on a project. Literally, I could sit still for 4-5 hours building. Did I mention that I was extremely hyperactive and could not sit still for more than 5 minutes without causing trouble? I probably built 40 locomotives in a 10 year span, some of which I still have to this day. In my late teens / early twenties, something else happened – real life. I moved out of my folks house, got married, played the part of a young adult. One that did not have the funds to play with trains. My locomotives got boxed up and pretty much everything else went to the trash.

I still loved to watch trains, I still loved to ride tourist railroads like the Georgetown Loop, I still kept up with the hobby and tried to fit it into my life, but I just didn't make it a priority.

This is gonna wrap up the first chapter in this story, if you are still reading, thanks. I hope you are enjoying reading a little bit about me and my early days of getting bit by the bug that is Model Railroading.

Wayne



Map of the Colorado Joint Line
Between Denver, CO and Pueblo, CO

So, yesterday (3/24) I was working on what I thought was the final page of this issue, when I received a couple pictures in an email from Jim Alexander. The email also had a message that stated "Story to follow". After I received it, I asked him if this was for the Newsletter or the website Members Pages. His response was to use it when best needed. Now, I asked him several months ago about his layout and his interest in others seeing it on the Member's Layout pages on the website and he did not seem interested, as his layout was "toy" HO Scale trains from Tyco, Life Like and the like. Heck, it uses EZ Track, so it must be a toy train... I told him that someone out there might just find inspiration from his toy layout.

But, only so many people have looked at the Member's pages on the website and the Newsletter has a broader reach. Rest assured, this layout will be on both mediums.

Without further delay (or me yapping),

"Jim/Alex's Layout

About eight years ago I became the owner of several "piles" of model railroad stuff. Although I had an American Flyer as a kid I had little other model train experience with my sons when they were in middle school and with my grandson when he was 8-10 years old, all of their stuff showed up in my basement. What do I do with this stuff? After a short search I heard about from Ette Ruppert; she mentioned that she knew a gentleman by the name of Bob Folsom who "played" with trains.

To shorten this story, I found out about the Central Museum and took my old (and cheap) engine to the museum and looked for Bob. He wasn't there that day, but Jim McInnis was available, and he was kind enough to look at the 10 engines I had and politely (in Doc's unique way) tell me those pieces of STUFF were not worth much.

I offered to pay him for his kind evaluation, but he said he couldn't do that, but I could join the "club" for only \$30. I accepted that offer. And became hooked!

I was soon one of Sandy Eustis' students in an OLLI class. Of course, that class piqued my interest and I learned more about model railroading. Joe Fitzpatrick and Bob Folsom shared their talents which made me buy more model railroading items. Soon my basement started seeing major changes. The first 4' X 8' table for a Lionel layout was also built in such a way that it could double as a heavy-heavy-heavy duty bomb shelter! Over the next year or two, the layout started to grow. It has now reached the 8' X 21' size and has been converted to a HO layout (because I am trying to get even with Sage).

After the recent Train Show I am now down to about 40 engines (or maybe 60) and 200 pieces of rolling stock (some of which still have the hook and horn couplers).

The recent virus scare has allowed me to do some additional scenery work as well as run the rails a few times. If you ever want to see a non-planned generalized, non-era layout give me a call.

A special thanks to all who have helped me enjoy playing with trains!"

Photos to follow on the next page!



CLOSING THOUGHTS...

Well, a week has passed since I started this newsletter. 7 days and a ton of changes later, this thing is done. Twelve pages of news and stories. This is a pretty big issue and I hope everyone has enjoyed it. Many thanks to those that contributed to this issue.

The leadership of the CRM&HA, in fact all the membership, appreciates your continued support and we all hope that the current situation that we all are facing starts to improve so that we can all return to our normal lives.

One great thing about Model Railroading is that it is an escape from the realities of the world - a happy place that is not affected by anything that we don't choose to include. I hope that in this time, you can find enjoyment in the simple things in life, your family, your hobbies, the things you love. Things are going to get better and when they do, we will be ready.

Be healthy and keep running those trains,

Wayne