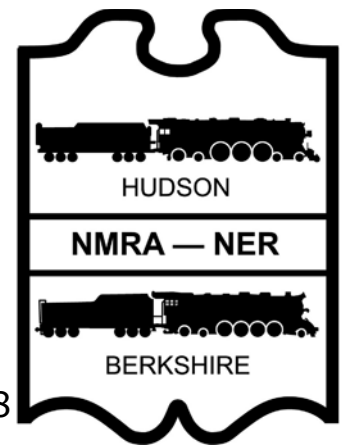


FORM 19

The Official Newsletter of the Hudson-Berkshire Division of the NER NMRA



Order Number 335

February 2018

Next meeting Friday February 16th at 7:00PM - 9:00PM

a **“Scratch Building Test”**
at Defreestville Fire Department
350 North Greenbush Rd, Troy NY, 12180



Our meeting is at the Defreestville Fire Department as The Division tries a new location to make the meetings more accessible to more people. Parking is to the REAR of the station via the driveway to the right of the building. There is an

entrance to the meeting area at the rear. It is a fully handicap accessible facility.

Inspiration for our meeting comes from the Carolina Southern Division and we thank their Program Chair, Scott Perry, for helping our Vice-President, Irwin Nathanson, prepare for and lead this event.

Participants' instructions will be to simply “build something” and all will have one hour to work on their creation. Options include houses, stations, factories, rolling stock, or...perhaps a bridge ...see related article in this issue! Then there will be a “show and tell” so everyone can show their results and discuss what they built. You can build something just for this event or something that you might put on your layout.

All materials will be supplied including cardboard, wood and plastic coffee stirrers, styrene sheets and shapes, bass wood in various forms, misc. metal tubes and forms and “pot luck” of material from Irwin's Scrap Box that you might be able to use. Irwin's Scrap Box is mostly plastic windows, doors, walls ... leftover parts from years of kit building. All HO but, for example, some windows would work with other scales.

Some limited tools will be supplied. For cutting, this includes safety razor blades. However, if you prefer, please feel free to bring your own Exacto Knife (#11 blade) or Scalpel. Newspapers, sandpaper, glues and quick-drying spray paint will also be supplied. *Above all you need to bring is your imagination!*

Please do not bring any drawings, photos, plans, etc. The real “test” of this exercise is not to see if you can scratch build, but rather to challenge your creativity. Blank paper and pencil or pen for sketching out your project is acceptable. Irwin is bringing his HO gauge Scale Ruler. Feel free to bring your own, especially if you model in another gauge. But you should indicate it's yours in some way, perhaps by attaching a piece of masking tape with your name on it to the reverse side.

A tour of the firehouse will be available after the program..

www.hudson-berkshire.org





Form19

The **Form19** is published eight times per year for members of the Hudson Berkshire Division.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Division. Products and publications mentioned in **Form19** in no way constitute an endorsement by the Division.

Contributing to the Form19

The **Form19** staff welcomes all contributions. Letters, articles, photos, and other items may be mailed or e-mailed to the editor. Please include a note if you would like materials returned. Suggestions also welcome.

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The Ready Line

By Paul Hoffman

Ahh, February, I'll be short and sweet just like the month!

The Springfield bus trip was a rollicking success yet again, so I have been told...

It seems yours truly was hamstrung by uncooperative technology. I recently acquired a Google Home device and had an alarm set for early Saturday morning. Either it didn't go off or I slept through it, either way it was quite the fire drill when Artie called me at 6:30 am and asked where I was! Needless to say, I told Artie to leave without me and I would try and catch up at Crossgates Mall. No such luck, by the time I had thrown on some clothes, brushed my teeth, got in the car and started moving I realized that it was a futile effort to get all the way down there without holding up the trip. I called Artie back and told him to go on and "save himself". I briefly entertained the thought of driving to the Lee service stop and catching up there, but my sleep addled brain thought better of that and I chalked it up to my own misfortune to have missed the bus. There are rumors that I had been out late the night before with a few buddies (Division members who will remain nameless to protect the innocent) but this is my story and I'm sticking to it...

So, the Bus trip, still the best value going, was a great time and I suggest that you don't miss the bus next year!

We have a Division member who is interested in taking on the role of Form 19 Editor. Bert and I are talking with that candidate and prepping them for the duties of the job. We should know more very shortly.

There have been on going issues with both the trains@hudson-berkshire.org and gtealbany.com email. Please use Hudson.berkshire.nmra@gmail.com for any correspondence until further notice

We have a BOD meeting scheduled for noon on Super Bowl Sunday. We will get some work done and then off to watch the big game. (Go Eagles)

We have an interesting event planned for this month, come on out and give it a try! See the lead article for more details.

I'm repeating the shout out for material for the Form 19 and the Facebook page below. Some of you have contributed and I am grateful, now if we could just get some more participation, woohoo!

Send us some photographs, write a brief article, contribute a post to our Facebook page, be active! Make every effort to welcome our new members (we had 3 sign up at our table at the GTE) and I promise, you will reap far more enjoyment from our hobby.

As President of this organization, the buck stops with me. If you have a problem or an issue, please work with your fellow members and do all that you can to help solve the problem. Feel free to contact me directly and I will do all that I can to help. Our doors and thoughts are always open to a fellow member and we welcome all to become involved. Please remember to renew your membership in the NMRA and to encourage anyone interested in trains to climb aboard.



Great Train Extravaganza (GTE)

Call for New Show Chairman

By Richard J. Smith

Thank you to all the Hudson Berkshire volunteers that supported another fun and successful show. You guys do a great job and work so hard to make the show a success every year. I do not have the final numbers yet in terms of this year's proceeds, but I can tell you we had 2147 paying adults (down only about 80 from last year) and 733 kids for a total of 2880 attendees, not bad at all! We had a record number of tables at 333!

As many of you know this is my last show as chairman. We will need a new chairman for 2018 and the future. If you have a modicum of organizational and leadership skills and are interested, give me a call or email (518-581-0535 or rsmith1@nycap.rr.com) and I'll give you more detail. I will mentor and coach the next chairman until they are comfortable with the process. Is there some work involved; of course, but anything worthwhile takes some effort. And I have some ideas to make the job a bit easier. I have all the tools you will need to be successful and I will still attend on setup and show day. I estimate your time commitment will be about 40 hours over a period of time from June to December not including show weekend.

So what does Chairman of the GTE do from June to December? Below is an outline of tasks I perform to make the show happen:

June: Meet with Hudson Berkshire Division and Upstate Train Associates (UTA) leadership to agree on the next show "ground rules" and budget. Document the agreement with minutes.

At this point the Advertising Lead (currently Irwin Nathanson) begins the longer lead-time ads in model railroad magazines and the NMRA Coupler. The Advertising Lead works independently with little supervision and reports progress to the Show Chairman.

At this time the Road Sign Lead (currently Greg Whittle) gathers all signs from the HBD and UTA members. He will re-condition the signs, sticker the signs with new dates, and order new signs if needed. In November he will begin to coordinate volunteers

for planting and reports progress to the Show Chairman.

July: Contact NY State to verify the show date coincides with the Albany Tree Lighting and other events at the Plaza. Edit print materials to be sent for dealer/exhibitor registration. Coordinate updates of GTE flyer and GTE website. Verify mailing list to ensure addresses are up-to-date and print the mailing labels. Coordinate printing and mailing of registrations ... actual labor is split between HBD and UTA volunteers.

August: Request contract for the venue and labor from NY State. Review and coordinate signing of the contract by HBD and/or UTA leadership and make sure the contract plus insurance certificate are sent to NY State.

Track the registrations with a spreadsheet. Currently dealer/exhibitor registrations are sent to the UTA PO Box. UTA deposits the payment checks and forwards the registration forms to chairman.

September/October: The first of two invoices from NY State usually arrives in September to pay for the venue itself (not labor). Make sure the Show Treasurer (UTA) makes the payment promptly.

Continue to process registrations which are due by October 31st and begin to contact HBD members for volunteer assignments. Track volunteer assignments for ticket sellers, ticket takers, money counters, and general load-in/load-out.

Contact club layouts and plan their desired footprints. Contact individual layout owners and exhibitors (like the circus guys) and the Roaming Railroad (Dan DeCosmo) to verify attendance. Contact the food vendor (Au Bon Pain) to verify attendance and get agreement for \$1 coffee coupons for dealers and exhibitors.

Continue to follow the advertising leads progress, especially the status of the Times Union ads. Continue to update GTE website "recent news section."

November: Call dealers that have not sent in registrations yet. Make final arrangements with the State for show logistics. Continue to process registrations. Continue to coordinate volunteer assignments. Buy and print (but don't stuff) badges.



Copy NYS Driver Entry forms for all dealers and exhibitors and send copies to NY State.

Two weeks before the show: Make sure signs are being planted with Road Sign Lead. Begin the Convention Center and Base of the Egg plan (you know, that thing that looks like an arts-'n-crafts project). Set final volunteer assignments, send volunteers email. Continue to update GTE website recent news section. Send honorarium payment schedule to Show Treasurer (checks distributed to exhibitors at show).

One week before the show: Create final Convention Center and Base of the Egg plan. Update spreadsheet with dealer/exhibitor locations and print out table labels (this is pretty cool ...the spreadsheet automatically makes the labels). Edit show exhibitor poster file with updated spreadsheet table and send to Staples to print and mount. Print out numerous show signage and show organization materials (dealer check-in, ticket sales slips, GTE receipts, etc.). Gather materials for show weekend like signage, tape measure, box cutter, zip ties, blue tape, first aid kit, etc. Review what Treasurer needs to bring to show like seed money, cash boxes, hand stamps, etc. Make final volunteer assignment adjustments (if any), send volunteers email.

Days before the show: If all the above is done, believe it or not, I do very little except pick up the exhibitor poster from Staples, send a final email to volunteers, and pack my car.

As you can see, much of what a Show Chairman does is make sure other people are doing their jobs and at least half effort is expended in the two week window before the show. The show is now a well oiled machine with spreadsheets and form letters, and it has taken me 9 years to get it to this point.

I guarantee you will feel the deep satisfaction I have felt when the Convention Center fills up with people (especially kids) for the show you organized. My parents took me to train shows as a kid (as did many of yours) and those fond memories are palpable. Doing the show was my way of giving back, to inspire some new kid in the world's greatest hobby... now it's someone else's turn from the HBD!

Please give this some serious thought. The Division needs a show chair. If we don't identify a show chair,

the HBD may not participate in the show in the future, it's that simple. If you don't want to be chairman but know a division member that would be natural for this, please talk to him or her about it! It has been an honor to serve as GTE Chairman these last 9 years and the HBD volunteers are simply awesome. I thank all the volunteers for their hard work and I



Richard Smith directing vendors as they arrive at GTE
Does he look stressed to you?



Nearly three thousand people - young and old; newcomers and those who return yearly - enjoy the Great Train Extravaganza on a December Sunday each year. Many look forward to doing this so that they can see old friends. This is especially true for the vendors. It is this region's version of the Amherst Railroad Hobby Show.

And all this happens because someone makes the show happen. Rich Smith has been that person for almost a decade. He has grown the show, more than doubling attendance and vendors. Now we need someone else to take on this task.

Please volunteer

Don't just trust that someone else will do it!



Then and Now

A Modern Marvel Nearby - So Was the Old One

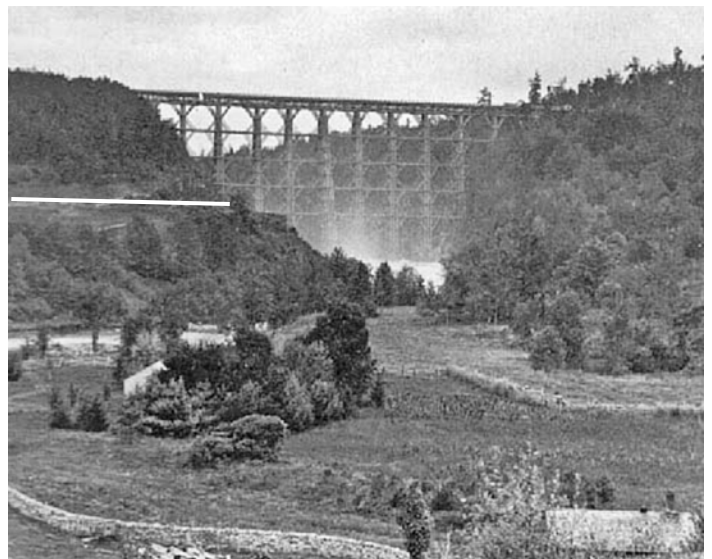
At 2:20 pm. Monday, December 11, 2017 Norfolk Southern's 36T, an eastbound general merchandise train running from Buffalo to Allentown, PA, with stops in Corning and Binghamton, NY, became the first train to run across the new Portageville Bridge on NS's Southern Tier Line. The bridge crosses the Genessee River in Letchworth State Park near Castile, NY and is the third (perhaps third and one-half) railroad bridge to span the river gorge; and therein lay the stories.



The finished bridge deck was 234 feet above the river and 800 feet long. A railroad station was built on the east end of the bridge, as well as a hotel for expected sightseers. It had cost nearly two hundred thousand dollars. The first test train crossed the bridge on August 14, 1852. Dedication ceremonies were held on the 25th, complete with a grand banquet on the flats below the bridge, and speeches by New York Governor Washington Hunt and President Loder of the Erie Railroad Company. Thousands gathered for those opening ceremonies, and tens of thousands more visited the bridge over the next twenty-three years. Indeed the bridge was designed for tourists as it had wide walkways with sturdy, attractive railings on each side of the six foot gauge track. Stairs led down into the structure and all the way to the canal towpath and fields below.



The original bridge was constructed by the New York and Erie Railroad, chartered April 1832 to connect New York City to Lake Erie and thereby the western areas of the new nation. The route had been mapped out and construction began in 1836, but it would be a while before the tracks needed to span the deep river gorge. In the two years prior to construction, nearly three hundred acres of pine forest were harvested to make the timbers for a bridge. Work on the Portage Wooden High Bridge began on July 1st, 1851. The construction was not easy and it was dangerous. Stone piers, held in place and together with nearly ten thousand yards of masonry, were laid in the riverbed. The great wooden towers were erected by the scores of Irish workmen hired for the project.

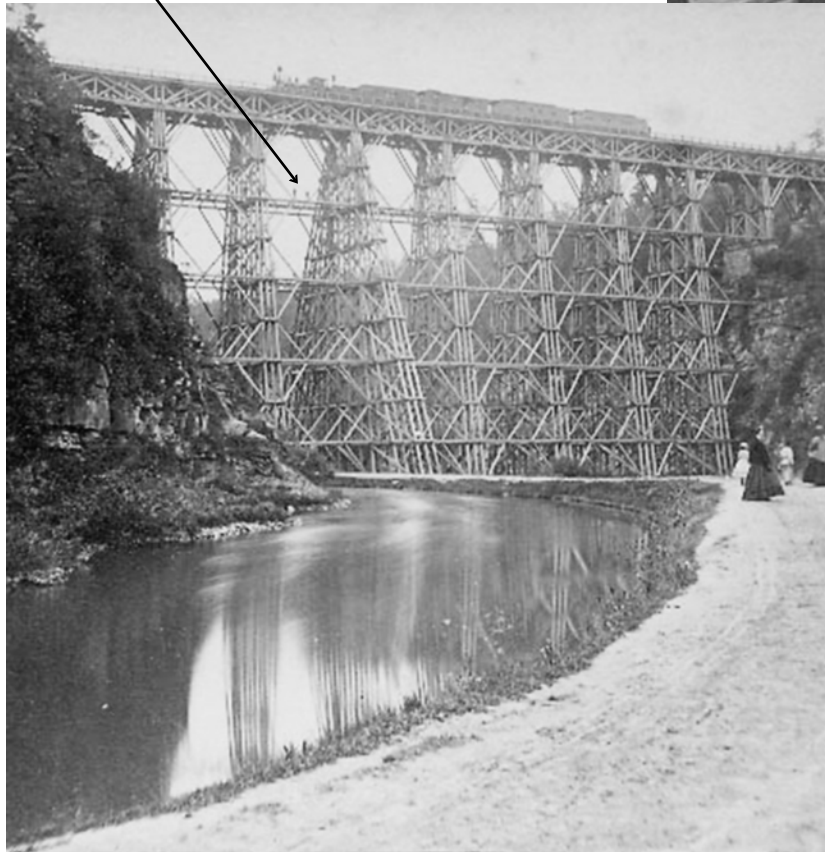


Bridge looking East from farmlands below.
Canal and path at white line, left



The bridge deck was created much wider than the 6-foot gauge Erie track and railings were designed in. Note the spacer bars to hold the gauge.

Note people on walkway second level down.



The eastern end (far end in picture) had a train station and a hotel. Tourism expanded with the construction of the bridge and before the creation of Letchworth State Park. The railroad made the gorge and waterfalls accessible to those living at distance.

Above you can see that the walkway was designed to be part of the structure. And there were stairs from the deck down through the structure to the level of the Genesee Canal and towpath and then to the farmland below.

Note the style of dress and realize that everyone wore leather sole shoes.

I guess the Erie Railroad management expected people to have the good sense to be careful and to enjoy the scenic wonder.

All pictures from Library of Congress except first two which are from the NS website.



The years and the mists of the Upper Falls began to take their toll, and by the 1870's there was talk about replacing the bridge with an iron one. The Erie Railroad floated the idea, but found that the fare-paying public and tourists were opposed to tearing down the grand wooden structure. On the night of May 5-6, 1875 watchman William Davis inspected the bridge after a westbound passenger train crossed shortly before 11PM. An hour later he greeted his replacement, Pardon Earl, and headed home. At about 12:45 AM he looked back at the bridge and didn't see anything other than "the usual signals." The next train was eastbound, and passed Earl's little watch house on the east end of the Bridge around 12:50 AM. Earl walked across to the west end, and then returned back. It was then he noticed a small blaze near the west end of the bridge. He ran quickly to the fire and tried to stamp it out, but broke through the decking. Next he tried to fight the growing fire with a hose connected to a water pipe, but wasn't able to turn the value due to corrosion of the metal. The bridge was gone.

Officials of the Erie Railroad were determined to rebuild quickly, and this time in iron. They contracted the ironwork to the Watson Manufacturing Co of Paterson NJ only four days after the fire. So quick was their response that rumors soon appeared of the company setting the fire, and that the iron was already milled and in warehouses waiting for delivery. But, according to the chief engineer George Morison, the iron workers on site had to wait for material, delaying the raising of the first tower until June 13th.

Morison also stated that the final design for the new bridge was "prepared in the hurry of a pressing necessity", and that he and the other engineers [see notes in extra pages] "were obliged to conform in a measure to the plan of the original timber structure." For example the masonry piers that had been laid for the original bridge made them extend the width of each of the six towers from the desired 25 or 30 feet to a full 50 feet. But Morison and his crew proceeded quickly, the last tower being erected in only eleven days.

The bridge was ready for testing by July 31st. It had cost only half as much as the original, probably because there was so little of it. But would the strange looking iron structure actually work? First a single locomotive was inched across from the east

to the west. Then it was joined by a second, which after crossing, was hooked to another engine. Finally six engines crossed the Bridge together, flags waving, to the cheers and salutes of the crowd, and the sighs of relief of the builders.



Six engines crossing bridge July 31, 1875. The structure below the top level and to the right were bracing used during construction and would later be removed.

Increased weight of locomotives and railroad cars necessitated the replacement of the bridge's iron structural members with steel in 1903. The bridge was again renovated with additional 200 tons of steel to the towers in 1944. So the bridge of July 31, 2017 had little of the structure of July 31, 1875, but it was similar and the original had never officially been taken down, just rebuilt.

On April 1, 1976, the Erie Railroad's Buffalo line was folded into Conrail's Southern Tier mainline. Norfolk Southern Railway began operating the entire route on June 1, 1999 through a lease agreement. NS acquired the route through a merger in August 2004. NS watched over the aging structure. A thorough inspection in 2008 found cracks, missing rivets and extensive corrosion. Structural gaps between the lateral columns and pier foundations were also found. Another inspection in September, 2009 revealed more broken rivets and structural cracks that required an emergency closure and



repairs. A 24-hour vibration and stress monitoring system was installed shortly thereafter.

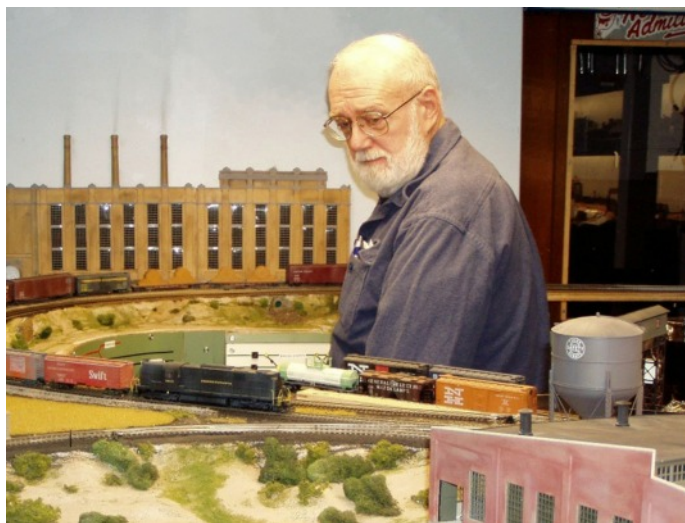
In 2008, the state of New York provided \$1 million towards preliminary engineering and environmental review and the process of creating a new bridge began. Activities of the preliminary engineering and environmental review stage included a project scoping meeting in October 2008, the publication of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement in November 2012, a public comment period from November 2012 through February 1, 2013, and a public hearing in January 2013.

Alternative 4 (out of 9), for a new bridge 75-feet south of the existing crossing, was selected by NS on November 29, 2011. The new bridge was approved in late 2014 with an estimated cost of \$71 million. The design and construction budget for the bridge project included \$15.5 million provided through New York State, \$13.5 million in state and federal funds through the New York State Department of Transportation; and \$59.5 million from Norfolk Southern. The design of the 963 foot long steel arch bridge and 4200 feet of track realignment was done by Modjeski & Masters, Inc., which also supervised the construction by American Bridge Company. The bridge is notably longer than the original as spaces for the end piers were carved out of the gorge walls so that they are, for the most part, not seen by park visitors.

In the fall of 2015, trees were cleared from the new bridge site and ground was broken for the new crossing shortly after. In March 2017, steel construction of the new crossing began. And the first train crossed December 11, 2017, after an eight hour period of re-aligning and connecting the end tracks. The train stopped mid-way across for pictures. Speed for now is limited to 30 mph due to the curve on the west end approach.

With a 483-foot main arch and three 80-foot girder spans on each side the total length is 963 feet

In January 2018, work began on dismantling the 142 year old bridge to provide a clean viewshed for visitors to Letchworth State Park.



Bill Trump (1939-2018) running a train on Kevin Surman's New York and Long Branch.

IN PASSING

On January 15, Bill Trump succumbed to his long illness peacefully at home. Bill had been married to his wife, Ruth, for 55 years and they had three children. He was a veteran of the US Army, a draftsman then designer for GE.

Bill was a member of both the Hudson-Berkshire Division and the Catskill, Adirondack and Berkshire Model Railroad Club. As man of many talents, Bill applied his craftsman and artistic skills to the model railroading hobby, evident in his home layout, depicting the Schenectady area, as well as many scenes on the modular layout.

Bill brought humor, common sense and a smile wherever he went. Members of the CAB RR and the Division will miss his presence.



Hudson-Berkshire Division NMRA Treasurer's Report December 31, 2017

	Checking & Savings	Toys for Tots
Balance on 12/31/2016	\$ 18,427.20	\$ 2,946.92
Total Income	\$ 8,458.88	\$ 1,223.33
Total Expenses	\$ (6,133.15)	\$ (1,878.66)
Balance on 12/31/2017	\$ 20,752.93	\$ 2,291.59

Welcome Aboard New Members

Thank you for joining the NMRA and we hope you enjoy the Hudson Berkshire Division.

Brian Mallory, Poestenkill NY

New members and old timers please greet others and introduce yourselves to others you may not know at our meetings. Friendships are one of the great benefits of the Division.

Upcoming Events

March: Friday, March 16, Layout Visit, John Smolik, Johnstown

April: Friday, April 27, Clinic, Bob Mohowski, Malta Community Center

May: Saturday, May 19, Layout and Antique Car Visit, Jim Gardner, Altamont

June: Saturday, June 23, family outing to Essex, CT for steam train and river boat ride

The Form19

The *Form19* is a newsletter, i.e., a means of sharing information with and by the members of the Hudson Berkshire Division that is of interest to the members. This may be meeting information, notice of events of interest, how-to information and ideas. The newsletter has not regularly posted information on items for sale or the passing of members because this information has not been shared by those who know. The Staff would like to change that but it means YOU need to keep us informed. Please. And thank you.



Track - it's what makes a railroad. How are your rails? Previous *Form19* talked about conditioning rail surfaces as well as cleaning. *Model Railroad Hobbyist* recently discussed the bad chemical effects of cleaning rail with alcohol or acetone. Chemicals of this type cause micro-sparks at the wheel-rail interface which cause pitting and contaminate the rail and wheels leading to poor operation.

At the Amherst Railroad Hobby Show, a vendor advertised a product called 'Track Magic' for cleaning and conditioning the rail for "improved conductivity for smoother performance" and providing "long term protection to reduce maintenance." The *Form19* has no experience with this product nor is it endorsing it. We do mention it to raise awareness that cleaning track may actually be defeating the purpose and that there are products that will improve performance and reduce aggravation. You can get more info at www.deluxematerials.com.

NER Convention



Mahwah, New Jersey

September 13-16, 2018

Did you see the *Form19* mentioned in the Division Business Car column of the December *NMRA Magazine*? There is more information and pictures for all the articles in this issue as well as pictures from January's meeting in the Extra Pages of the online edition.

From Signalman Gary

Unexpected Help

On a cold, blustery, nasty, cloudy day right along the Hudson River the snow was starting to mix with rain. We were working on the south end of the Iona Island trestle. The trestle crosses the inlet between Iona Island and the Fort Montgomery tunnel to the north. We had dug a trench with the 'Ditch Witch,' a 4-wheel tractor with an arm with a digging chain and a plow for back filling. We were having trouble with the machine but we got the trench dug.

So we pulled new signal, power, and communications cables into the ditch and started to back fill the trench with the machine. We managed to fill a bit more than half the trench when the machine quit. Nothing we tried got it working. We knew that we had to close the rest of the trench because safety rules stated we could not leave any open holes. Didn't matter where you were, they had to be filled.

It was late in the afternoon and we started throwing dirt back into the trench with shovels. At least the activity was keeping us a bit warmer. And then the supervisor showed up. We stopped to answer his questions about the machine and have a some coffee from our thermoses. Then we went back to work closing the trench.

The supervisor walked to the truck and came back with a shovel and started helping us close the hole. He worked just as hard as we did. It was near dark when we all finished. It would have been much later without his help. So, tell me, when was the last time your supervisor helped you complete a job. It was certainly a good feeling.

Old Signals Helped Out

Late one afternoon we were called to do a signal check at a control point. There was just the two of us and we didn't have any radios. The signals were pointed away from the control box so one of us (me) had to go to the control stand and tell the other guy what was showing. But it was a bit too far for even shouting to work. It looked like I would be spending time walking back and forth as we checked every thing out.

But then I thought about what came before these lights and suggested we use arm signals like upper quadrant semaphore signals. So an arm raised vertical was for clear or green, 45 degrees for yellow, and horizontal for red. For what we had to do, this worked fine. It saved time and there was no misunderstanding what someone was trying to shout. You might say it was a bit primitive, but it worked.

**FORM 19**

Hudson Berkshire Division
PO Box 83
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First Class Mail



First Train over the New Arch Bridge in Letchworth State Park!



Train 36T is stopped partially onto the new Portageville bridge so the photographer can take pictures and to calm the nerves of the driver. You can see the three girder bridge sections (similar on other side) that are the approach to the 483-foot long arch section that has its abutments set into the gorge walls. And where is the photographer? Why he is in the white bucket on the end of the fully raised arms of that bucket truck at the right of the picture. And that bucket truck is parked on the old bridge. And the picture he took; that is the one on the top left of page 5.



In January 2018 (just days ago) American Bridge started the process of dismantling and removing the old bridge to that there will be nothing left. The steel and abutments will be removed. Some pieces will be save for museum-display purposes. You can see the nature of the structure that was first erected 142 years ago.



Above are three young fellows enjoying the GTE. Note their concentration. They are typical of the many children who are learning and are fascinated by model trains. Most of the adults are there because of their strong interest. Would you want to tell them that the show has been canceled because no one stepped up to be the director.



Here is a woman who has come to look at and maybe for some of the ephemera of railroading - silverware, china, The vendor is obviously happy to be talking with her. Contacts like this are throughout the show.



Above are some vendors setting up their displays. They are all looking forward to interacting with customers and earning a profit. But if you participate in the show set up, you know that many of these people go around seeking out old friends from other shows. Perhaps the last time they saw each other was at last years GTE.



Rich Smith has volunteered and done the job of directing the Great Train Extravaganza for nine years. He has developed a process for managing the show and maintaining its quality. He has dealt with the needs of contacting and recruiting vendors and people with displays. He has dealt with the Plaza management and staff. He has created advertising and set up an advertising program. And it all has worked wonderfully.

Please volunteer to take his place. If more than one person volunteers, all can meet and learn more and we can chose the best candidate. If no one volunteers, ... well it will be awful. And please don't think Rich can go on doing this forever.

Top to bottom this side:
 Artie waves to photographer
 Sawing timbers for the mine
 Chemical wood products gets wood
 sawmill doesn't use



Top to bottom this side:
 Taking video of hump action
 A really big Shay
 This is really interesting