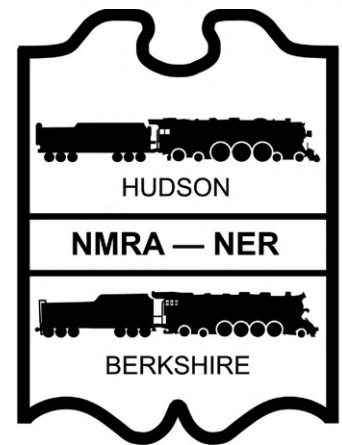


FORM 19

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



Order Number 404

March 2025

March Division Event

**Saturday March 22nd HBD Meeting
10:30 AM - 1 PM
John VanDenburgh's - layout visit
3606 Putnam Road Rotterdam NY**

Sudoku for a Retired Railroader - Editorial . . . By CHARLES NEWTON

The model railroading bug bites, and not being a modeler, I found getting started building the dream railroad was tough. Why?

Planning that Perfect Model Railroad is just that, a plan. One friend pointed out to me, “the analysis paralysis” can be all consuming. Escaping from the planning loop into the construction phase is the first step to building a railroad. Action.

My friend’s comment resulted in a solemn reflection of my modeling/ life situation:

60 years thinking about building the railroad was long enough.

30 years planning in the wrong scale was long enough.

8 years acquiring new equipment in the new scale and pedaling off the other scale equipment was long enough.

Looking for the perfect layout room was subject to job relocations: 8 times was enough!

I was an armchair model railroader. Retirement seemed to be the ideal time to proceed with the plan.

I purchased a capable computer assisted track planning program. That was a good decision.

What did I first consider: Look at what others have built. There was a lot of modeling going on in the Capital District.

Thanks to Mark Sklar who arranged the visits, I started seeing existing model railroads in my area. I visited Jack Cutler, Bob Hamm, Tom Rhodes, Geoff Wood, Kevin Surman, Paul Harmon, Doug Dederick, Rich Smith, Bob Mohowski, Vic Roman, Irwin Nathanson, Dennis Hultay and Mark Sklar layouts.

(continued on Page 3)



Form19

The *Form19* is published ten 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 Division Point

By Artie Krass

Some catching up to do
First off thanks to Mike Hachey for hosting our January monthly meeting at his basement empire – a truly inspiring layout with some gorgeous structures! And thanks to James Lauser for his very informative presentation of JMRI Operations Pro at our February meeting. As James pointed out it can be used as simply as you want but has many other capabilities if you care to expand upon its many nuances. You can find more JMRI information on the HBD website on the Links page.

Secondly, I apologize for the lack of a February Form 19 being published. We bought a new Windows 11 laptop for our new Editor to use, and it took longer than I expected to get all of the software and security set up. Charlie was away and the onus was on me (my choice) to cut-and-paste into Adobe Acrobat the February Edition, but February turned out to be a brutal month weatherwise and work wise, so time just slipped by.

One Yard At A Time – Years ago I started building my layout in the basement – The RTK – a free-lanced HO scale railroad based on the Delaware & Hudson. The benchwork has been tweaked over the years – wider aisles and gentler curves – and although all of the track work was tentatively in place

I began to realize I would never be able to finish it as designed as the years went by. So, over the past two years I removed some benchwork, and decided to incorporate a small branch line into the design so I could “finish” something, and make the rest of the layout construction doable. I refer to my method as One Yard At A Time – either one yard (36”) or one railroad yard being increments of construction, and I try to get down to the basement for at least ½ hour everyday if I can. It works! I recently watched, well actually about 7 months ago now, a video by Larry Puckett – “The DDC Guy” on his YouTube channel – “Is This The Last Run Of The Piedmont Southern?” - where he made me realize my decision was a wise one. Check it out.

So, what is the point of all this? I guess after reading Charlie’s Editorial this month (page 1) it reminded me of those, including myself, who have yet to start to build their layout (or second or third) or, still working on their first layout, to think long and hard about what you may begin to undertake.

(Continued on next page)



(President's Corner Continued)

Charlie has done all of the necessary legwork and incorporated that into his endeavor. Be realistic. There are a lot of good plans out there for a shelf layout, or T-Track modules, or simply building one module at a time. Underestimating the time and effort involved can lead to frustration or disappointment down the road.

This is a great hobby and should lead to enjoyment and not exasperation but at the same time, having said that, in Charlie's words, "let the construction begin", and have fun!

Doug has again lined up some great activities for us for the months to come. This month John VanDenburgh has graciously invited us to his home

to view his Boston and Maine Railroad Fitchburg Division in HO scale. More information can be found within this month's Form 19.

In April Kevin Macomber will be giving a presentation entitled "The House That Cheerios Built". Hope to see you there – enjoy!

Artie

EditorialBy CHARLES NEWTON continued.....

The resulting observation showed the construction range was new benchwork, 'plywood central' and all the way to full scenery with DCC and even working signals.

When visiting their layouts, I 'lifted the benchwork skirts' and looked at the construction techniques involving leg bracing, wiring and track roadbeds. All these guys have extensive experience I would draw from. A couple of these guys were degreed engineers. Most were modelers since their youth.

Once I had the 'train room' claimed and conditioned, the materials for benchwork were acquired: wood, plastic, metal, foam, adhesives, screws, nuts, and bolts. I was now on the launchpad! Very scary!

Note: I had to tweak the plan as I built. Problems arose because it was not a perfect plan, and more location

photos came to light. I was determine on staying focused. My limited skill sets would test my abilities.

Finally, yes, accumulating and reviewing 65 years' worth of MR, RMC, TRAINS, Classic Trains, EXTRA 2200 South, Railroad Modeler magazines, railroad Historical Society Magazines, timetables, endless internet searches etc., would continue.... however, a mandate was heard to let the construction begin.

Advice to self:

Make the decision to "Do or do not. There is no try." (Yoda proverb from Star Wars). Obviously I'm a late bloomer.

Get started. I'm only going to live once.

Charlie Newton

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Upcoming Meetings/Saturday March 22nd HBD Meeting

Saturday March 22nd HBD Meeting

Layout Visit at the home of John VanDenburgh
HO scale Boston and Maine Railroad set in October 1944

April Division Meeting - Friday April 18th at 7 PM

Kevin Macomber presentation
"The House That Cheerios Built"
Location TBD

March 22nd HBD Meeting

John VanDenburgh

**B&M railroad from Mechanicville NY to the Hoosac Tunnel in the
1940s.**

HO scale Boston and Maine Railroad set in October 1944

The layout is in the basement and there is a "duck under" to view the layout.
John has a small bench to help those who may need to sit and slide under.

There is a long driveway and don't suggest parking on the road. John usually
backs onto the front lawn so he can pull out when leaving.

We can park cars on the front lawn just off the driveway. John will have a
couple of cones out front to help with that.

I suggest that those attending car pool if possible to minimize number of cars
to park.



**The Hudson Berkshire Division would like to
extend a hearty welcome to these new members
who joined recently:**

Nathaniel Wolfson-Seeley of Williamstown MA

John Arnold of Valatie NY

David Dobson of Schenectady NY

Welcome aboard!

**Please send some photos of your current projects and layouts, construction
techniques, prized models etc.**



HBD Director Mike Hachey's New York Central Railroad open house on January 17, 2025 was this year's first event for the HB Division. James Lauser attended and took the photos, and Mike provided the captions.



This is the cement plant in Uniondale. It is inspired by the Blue Circle plant in Ravenna. It is across the street from my sons' high school football field. I must admit that sometimes I was planning this scene, instead of rooting for the team. In the background you can see the large brick Phelan building which I "stole" from a friend. Ok, I loosely copied it. I think his came out better than mine.



This is part of Port. Looks like I better get to work on that lighthouse. Could be a disaster waiting to happen.



HBD Director Mike Hachey's New York Central Railroad



.Junior's Market in the center of Saranac. A good friend calls me Junior. Odd since she is younger than me. We recently added trees to this area.

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HBD Director Mike Hachey's New York Central Railroad



This is Darien. My dad and I used to go to the Michaels Restaurant quite often. Usually on the way home from the Springfield show. We joked about making a billboard using their business card. I finally did. Somewhere I have a pile of unused cards. Looks like the Drug store needs a sign repair.



This is the town of Fine. The Blair, Campbell & McLean, Inc building is a kit bash of some old IHC stone warehouse kits. This was inspired by George Selios' F&SM layout. Looks like some drunks visited the Boilermakers Brewery. This will be an upcoming scenery project.



HBD Director Mike Hachey's New York Central Railroad



Mike is chatting with his open house visitors. Obviously, Mike enjoys constructing buildings known to him from his past.

Mike added comments as follows:

I moved into this house the Friday before the 2011 Springfield show. I did bring some buildings and stuff from my old house.

There is no diagram of the layout. I did draw a basic plan for the bench work. Not sure where that is.

I haven't counted the buildings. I should count them and have people guess. We can have a contest in the Form 19.

For operations, the layout is set in the week of June 16, 1960. My birthday. It is freelance with some city names, but they don't really represent the actual cities. Most equipment is New York Central, but I may not be following prototype operations.

For operations, I use a unique car card system. I am also creating switch lists for additional guidance. operators do mostly local switching with turns. I have 2 operating yards that keep yardmasters busy.

Thank you, Mike for the opportunity to look over your empire. You did pick the right railroad to model. (editor's opinion)

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