sometimes

Mud Ring Monthly

Cinder Sniffers News

May, June 2014

From the President's Desk:

Jun 3,2014: Wow! time flies by when you're having fun, but another quarter goes by!

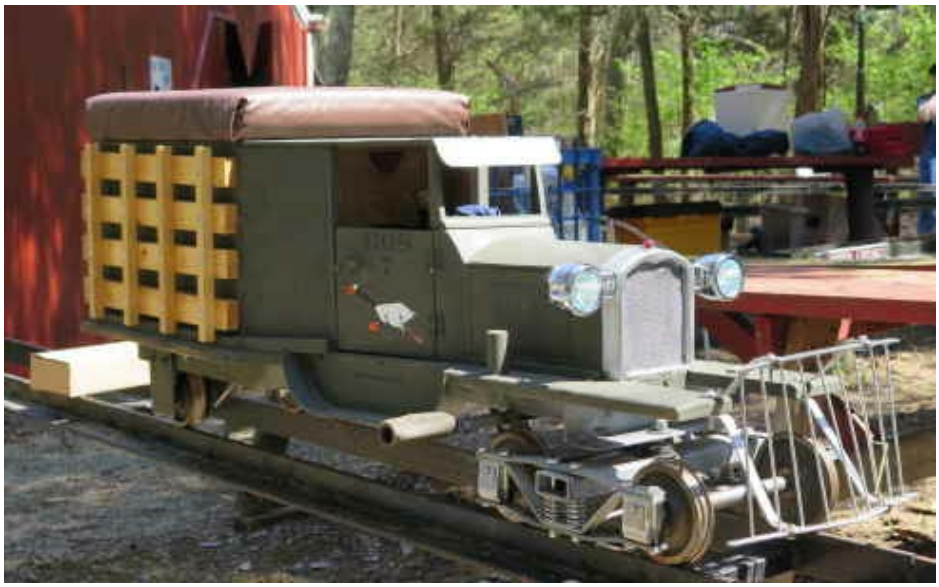
First, on the land acquisition at the track, I have spoken to the owner of the land and she will call me when she is back in town. They do not want to sell, lease or rent the land, but they are willing to let us use the land until??????? Denis Larrick has drawn a schematic of the land and the proposed rail bed. So we are waiting for a phone call from the owners of the land, and, at that time, we will have both husband and wife visit our facility and see where we propose to utilize their land.

We have to absolve them of "all liabilities" . I have contacted the track's insurance company and they said it will not cost us any more on our premium to use this additional piece of land. I will keep you updated when I receive more information.

Second, as for our real estate taxes, we had a hearing with Dearborn County Assessors Office at 9:00 am on June 11, 2014. We should know something soon. Something else to keep Dave Sams and me busy! But the pay is great!!!! ha ha!!!

Harvey Bond
president

P.S. Do not forget the Dayton's rail fest on June 21, 22, 2014. Remember they came to our track for the 3-club run in April. Time to pay back.



The Goose that saved a railroad –
Greg Davis' Rio Grand Southern Goose #1

For most of us *old time* trains watchers, an automobile – with an added freight container and modified to run on steel rails -- would be an unusual sight. But in 1931, because of economic necessity, the narrow gauge RGS Railroad "clobbered" together seven such vehicles. Their task was to haul a few passengers, *less-than-car-load* freight and, most important, the United States mail. They traveled in Colorado between the towns of Ridgway and Durango, and replaced four daily steam passenger trains. Indeed, these light self-propelled vehicles, operated by a single motorman, reaped considerable savings.

"The Mail Must Go Through": Dave Sams tells me that Greg Davis' *Goose* (pictured above), which visited our tracks on April 19, was built to the likeness of the *first* RGS *Goose*. That first *Goose* was built from a 1925 Buick Master Six touring car purchased for $50 in 1931 plus $250 in parts and materials. ... Sounds like a deal. ... But almost immediately, the Post Office Department objected to the "stake body"; it could not be locked. And so the design of this -- and subsequent -- *Geese* evolved to have entirely enclosed (and lockable) freight compartments. Also it was soon found that the compartments needed to be larger. Nonetheless, the trials of *Gosling* #1 soon lead to six sister "Motors" as they were initially called by RGS. It was years later that RGS accepted the public appellation of "*Galloping Geese*".

Thank you Greg for bringing your *Goose* to the tri-club meet. ... *jsk*

(Historic info is from an article by Stan Rhine in Railroad History #210, Spring-Summer 2014.)

Harvey Bond welcomes visitors to the April 19 Invitational Meet.

The interurban owned by Dave Luttrell, shown here with CPR&SS President Joe Mock.

Dave tells me that the car was built by Al Albecker.

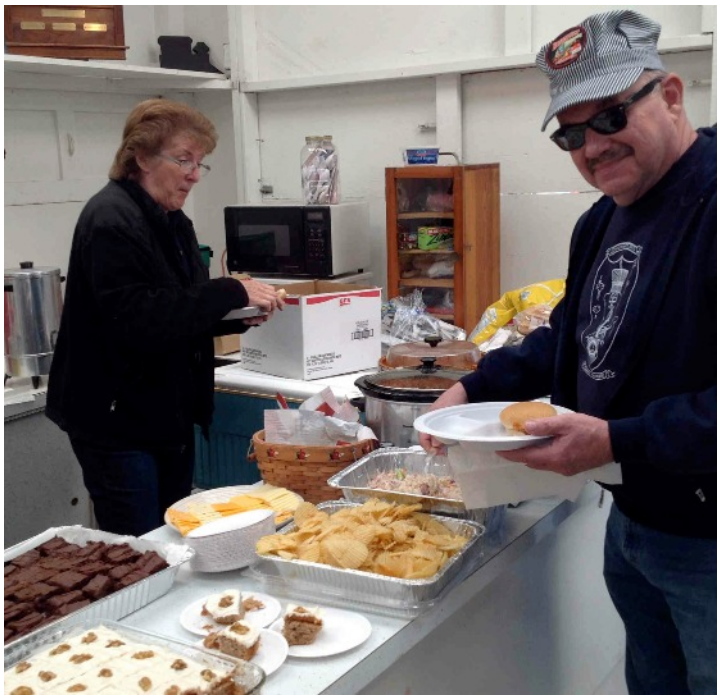
Last December Denis suggested that we take advantage of "one of the prettiest times of the year" and hold a special meet in April. April 19 (the day before Easter) was chosen as "the" day.

Invitations went to Carillon Park Rail & Steam Society (Dayton) and to the Indiana Live Steamers (South of Indianapolis). Approximately three dozen folks, including CSI's Associate Member Brian Valleau from the Chicago area, attended.

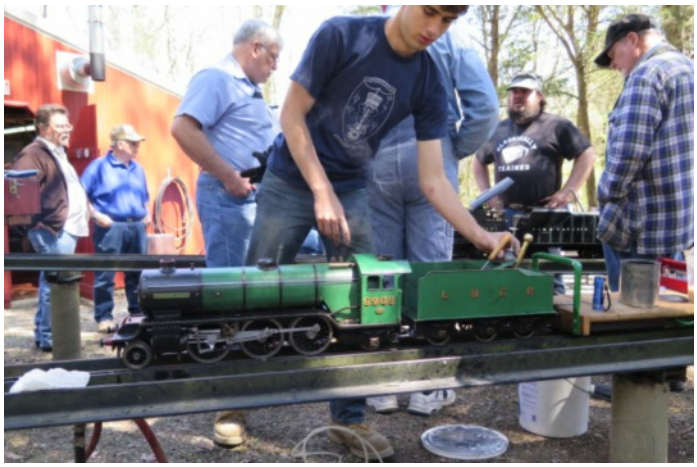
Operating equipment from CPR&SS included Davis' Galloping Goose and Luttrell's Interurban; from CSI: Chromik's ride-in 0-4-2T, Balmer's EG&B 4-4-2 & Oak Hill RR 4-8-4, Harrod's LNER 2-6-2 *Bantam Cock* and Heurich's 'O'-Scale PRR 6-8-6 Turbine – that count's doesn't it?

A highlight of the day was the feast arranged by Bill Mense ... barbequed chicken and much more. ..... Thanks go to Harvey, Bill and Dave Sams for organizing and making this event a success.

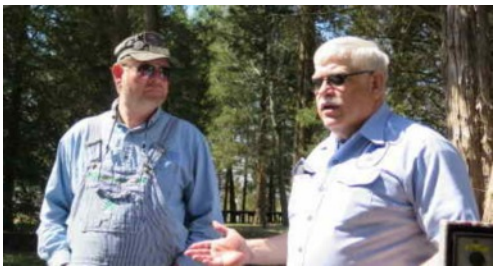
Charlotte Hughes sees that the chow line runs smoothly, while Dave Sams partakes.



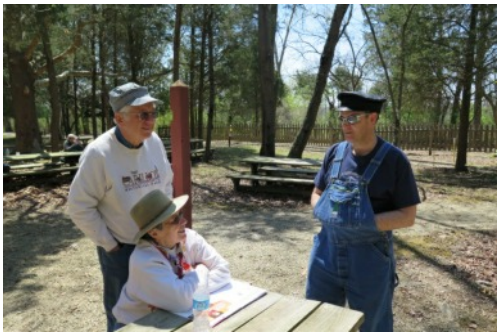
More Invitational Meet Photos



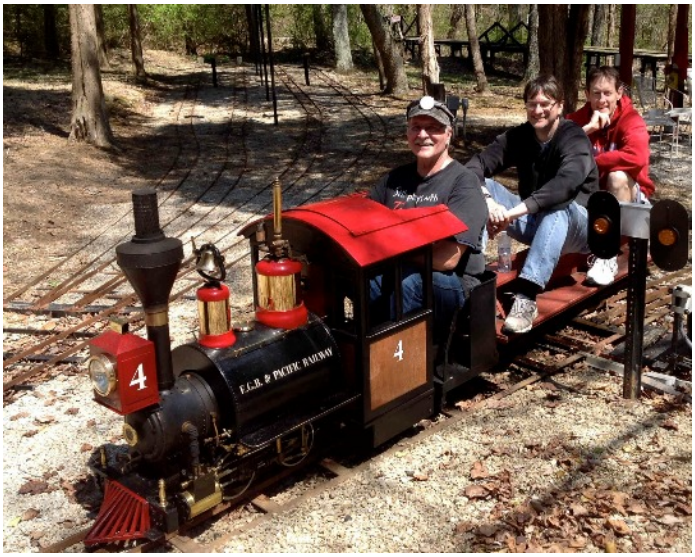
Stuart Harrod prepares *Bantam Cock* for its run.



Denis Larrick and Brian Valleau discuss old times.



Don and Lois Bigler talk with Steve Harrod



Steve Chromik & passengers Dave and Mike Keith

Bernie Rumker:

We'll miss Bernie; he died June 5, 2014. He was 82. Bernie, a member since January 1995, frequently joined the Wednesday group and often brought Al Lohmoeller with him. ... Bernie had a ritual .. a side trip to the local pub before lunch. Then, usually just about noon, his car would reappear and someone would shout: "It's lunch time, Bernie is back."

Bernie was a retired engineer and had stories to prove it. He started with the B&O, evidently after the days of steam as he would not admit to having been a hogger on a steam loco. In 1987, the B&O and C&O operations were merged and, according to Bernie, it was a culture shock. ("The C&O folks just didn't seem to know how to properly run a railroad.")

Even though Bernie piloted diesels, he liked trains of any sort. He was famous for his many travels, visiting and riding any vestige of rail equipment -- often with one or more of his grandchildren.

The Lohmoellers -- Three generations:

We have a new **Life Member**. In a conversation with Sally and Fred Lohmoeller, I learned that Fred is 82 and eligible for Life Membership. Fred is a *second* generation Lohmoeller "Sniffer".

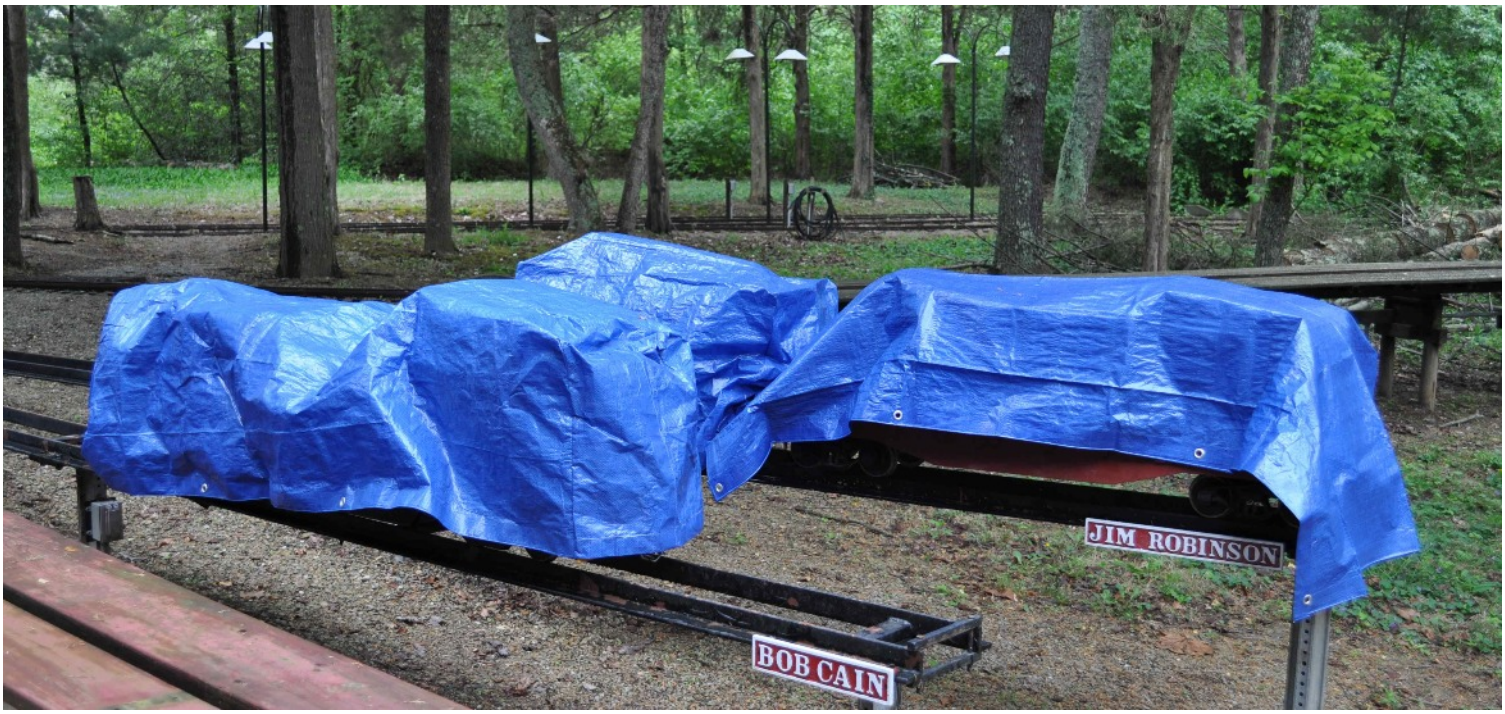
Available records indicate that Fred's father, Al Lohmoeller (mentioned above) joined our club sometime between August 1976 and July 1978. In 1980 he became Treasurer and served in that capacity for 18 years.

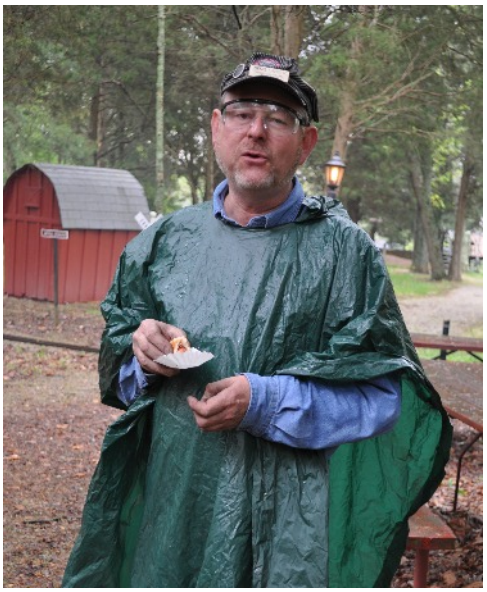
It was always nice to have Al about and hear his tales of *workin' on the railroad* -- the Louisville and Nashville -- which Al would remind us was known as the *Old Reliable*. He started at the bottom in the early depression years and progressed to Dispatcher. ... Al died on Nov 24, 2009.

Al's son Fred joined CSI in 1984 and Al's grandson, Bernie, joined in 1986; both are still members. Fred says he can't get around too well anymore but may join us, with his locomotive, one of these days.

Fred, we'll look forward to your visit. And, as our newest Life Member, Congrats!

Run Day, May 10



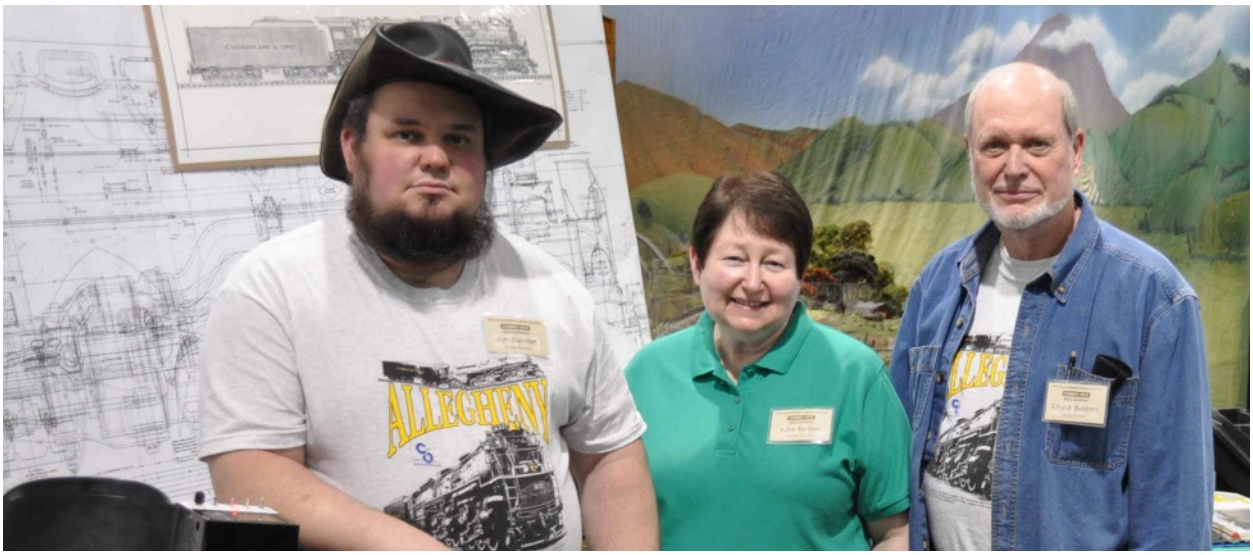


The weather was a bit damp and the crowd was light. We had 15 people sign wavers and the fare box collected $35. We had 6 engines attending (and some of those running).

The Balmers brought two locos, the Hughes had two (under cover, above), Larrick's *Lewis Brown* made an appearance and the club engine was in passenger service.

But no matter the weather … Denis said the hot dogs were good.

Balmers' Exhibit at EJ's Model Engineering Show, March 8

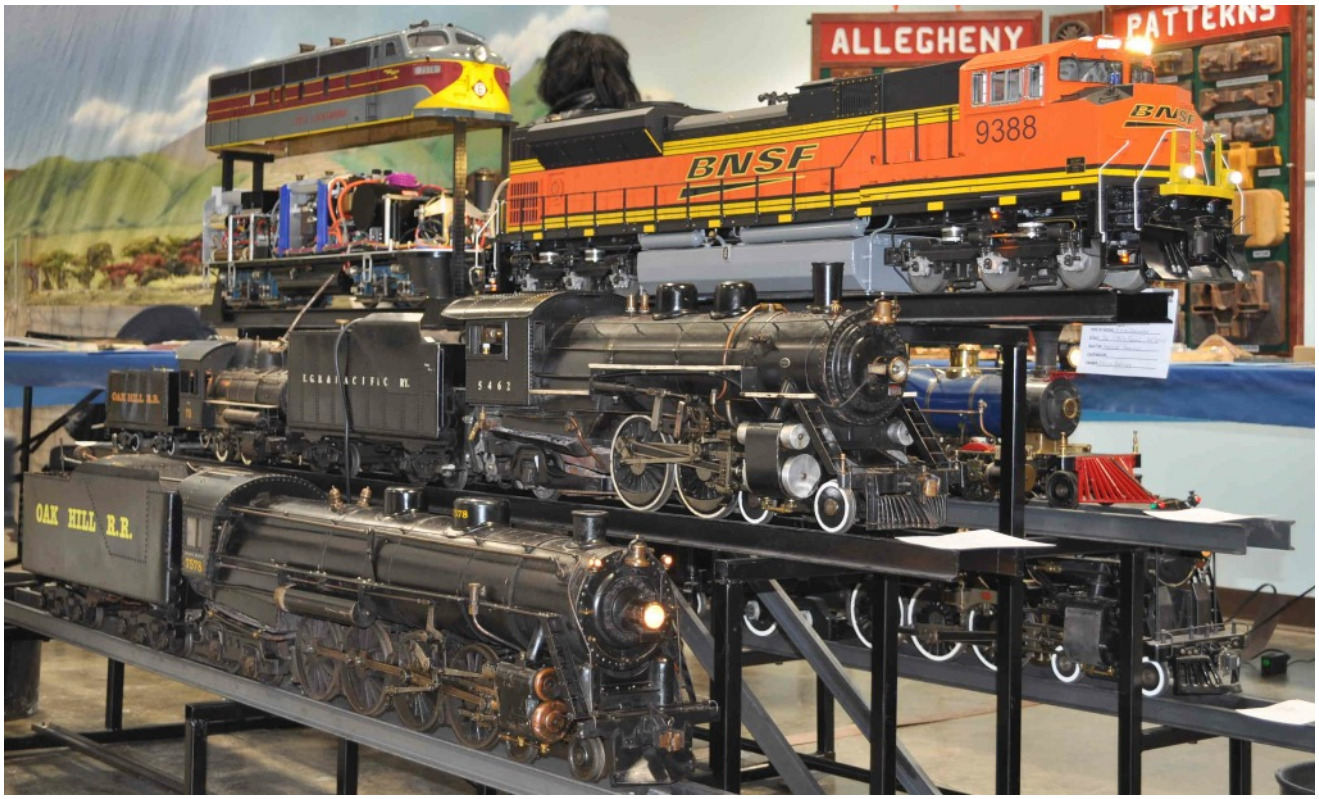


Jim, Julie and Chuck

The Balmers have quite a collection of locomotives. Chuck has built six and three more have come from CSI members' estates. The Balmers have taken 3-1/2" gauge as their "standard" and all of their locos conform to this gauge. Thus, it has been appropriate for BLW (the **B**almer **L**ocomotive **W**orks) to acquire and preserve engines of this gauge which have been associated with the Cinder Sniffers and folks in the area. They have, at present, ten locomotives and chassis for an eleventh (see the Roster on page 8).

You'd think that maintaining ten locomotives in operating condition would be an overwhelming task, but somehow, the job gets done. For example, last year Chuck completely tore down the NYC 4-6-4, repaired a pin-hole leak inside the firebox, replaced the asbestos cladding with silica cloth, added a new sight glass, a lubricator for the operating power reverse gear and a second safety valve. Then he repainted and re-lettered it all.

That's one of the ten. Plantation loco *Sugar* got a similar complete tear down and rebuild. The 0-4-0 *Pidge,* Maynard's Atlantic and Payne's Mogul also each got a number of enhancements last year.

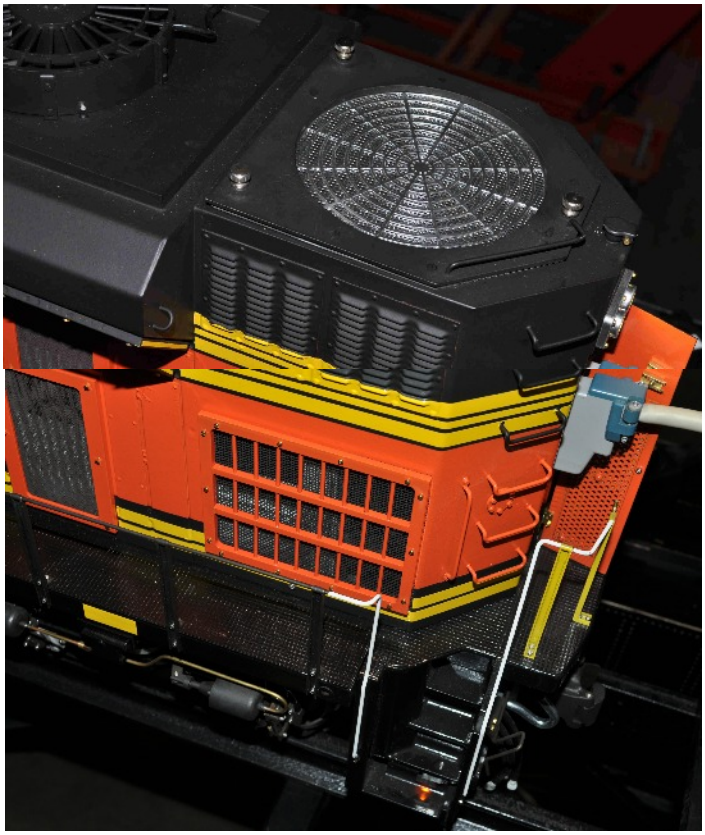


Nine of the ten BLW operating locos were at the show; only 4-4-0 *Virginia* was missing as it was her turn in the "back-shop". Attracting the most interest were, of course, the C&O Allegheny and the just completed SD70ACe. I had a few questions about the SD70's construction and this is what I learned:

The body is made from 1/32" flat sheet brass. To form the corners, the sheets are riveted to corner angles fabricated in BLW's shop with a (metal bending) brake. The assembly was soldered and the heads of the rivets were then ground off with a Dremel tool. Chuck took care to use an abrasive wheel no larger than the shank which acted as a stop to prevent gouging. Stay-Clean flux and Stay-Brite solder was the flux and solder of choice.

The hood was actually built in five sections and the sections then mated, again by riveting to backing-material and soldering. Each section was sand blasted for subsequent painting. However, the mating edge-areas were masked, to retain clean, un-sandblasted edge surfaces for soldering.

In the photos to the right, you will notice (hopefully) the fan grill and the anti-slip ribbed walkways. Jim Balmer manufactured these through an etching process. He used the "Decal Pro fx" system to create dry-transfers with the desired patterns. These were then applied to the "factory" metal to mask the areas which were *not* to be chemical etched. Easy but there are a few tricks, Jim warns. [Maybe Jim will write a paragraph describing this process more fully for future publication. … jsk]



I also asked about the engine's electronic controls and Chuck graciously responded: "There are 3 circuit boards in the SD70. The one in the hand control contains the scale speedometer display. One of the boards in the engine contains the throttle servo control, engine RPM detector, and the throttle PWM generator for the alternator field. The other board has several circuits. One is the timer for the bell solenoid. The second is the speedometer detector and the direction inhibit control. This circuit prevents the motor direction from being changed when the scale speed is greater than 10 Mph. The third circuit is the braking throttle inhibit control. This circuit shuts down the throttle when brakes are applied and enables the throttle when the brakes are released. It also activates the dynamic brake load."

Julie Balmer writes:

As most readers of this rag know, Julie's knowledge of model railroading has made her an excellent docent for visiting boy scouts and other kids (of all ages) at Maynard Park. I also observed her bent for teaching at the EJ Model Engineering Show. Actually, she participates in the BLW venture in a number of ways. But let Julie tell it:

I'm not sure how typical my role is compared to others in the club/hobby. It is a function of how deeply you're involved in the building and running of the engines.

Building: Chuck is totally responsible for construction and maintenance. As much as I like machinery, my skills are terrible, so I learned early on not to try to help. For about the last seven years, our grown son Jim has helped with castings and welding. My support is financial and motivational (Yes, you can buy all that metal, or Yes, I'm fine with you spending hours in the shop rather than with me.) But I do like to go out to the shop and see what progress is being made.

Getting there: When going to run days years ago, my support was as little as packing food in the cooler and getting the kids in the car (although there were times when even that was a major task). Loading the engines and equipment was done by Chuck, but I helped with the smaller items. Over the years, three things have changed. Jim helps with both loading and packing, Chuck has built equipment that helps move the engines with ease, and we have a vehicle which can transport any or all of the engines. Only one problem - now that I'm retired, I love to sleep late and going to the track involves getting up very early (it's over a 2 hour drive). I usually try to catch a nap on the drive down.

Running: When I was younger and more flexible, I loved to operate the engines on run day. These days Chuck and Jim do all the work getting the engine under steam. Early in our relationship Chuck showed me how to run both coal and propane fired engines, and I liked doing that. He explained to me the fundamental science and mechanics of steam locomotives, which I found interesting. Alas, age and lifestyle have limited which engines I can operate, and Jim "hogs" the equipment. Now that the Allegheny is done, and we can use the 1 ½ inch scale flatcar, I'm looking forward to being an engineer again, not just a passenger. Of course visiting with club members and their families and talking trains is always fun too.

Exhibits: I like going to exhibitions, even though it's a lot of work setting up things. I help set up the display stand, get the big blueprint display up, and help put out display material. During the exhibit all three of us talk to folks. We have such a variety of engines (the new diesel makes 10), that it's easy to talk about the evolution of locomotives. I've seen Chuck going through the various steps of making castings, and since he and Jim made the video, it's fun to share that skill. Mostly it's grown men who ask questions, but I always look for a chance to explain steam engines to young kids. And every great once in awhile there's a girl friend or mother with kids that I try to encourage because they like mechanical things. With exhibits in Cincinnati, we don't have to leave quite so early. For the Detroit show, we go up the day before. Exhibits last at least two days and usually run from 10 to 6. Plus there's at least one night in a hotel room and eating out for meals. It makes for a long, expensive weekend, but we all enjoy sharing the hobby with others.

Chuck said, "It can be a great hobby for the WHOLE family". For our family, there is definitely something for everyone.

… *Julie Balmer*

Packing Up

The Balmers' exhibit is extensive. The gear that must be packed includes: the step-style 5-track bolt-together display stand, two roll-around lift tables for moving the locomotives between their vehicle and the display-area (one table is hydraulic and also serves as the Allegheny's display stand), ancillary exhibits such as Allegheny's wood patterns, the large Allegheny erection drawing, photos and notebooks of general interest. Finally, we must not forget the nine or so locomotives themselves. ... Though quite a task, the three Balmers work together and in no time the job of packing up is *fini*.

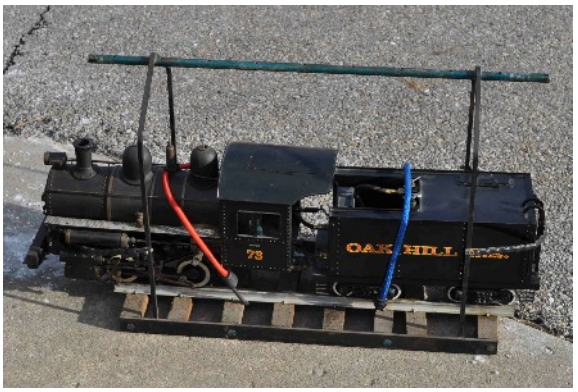
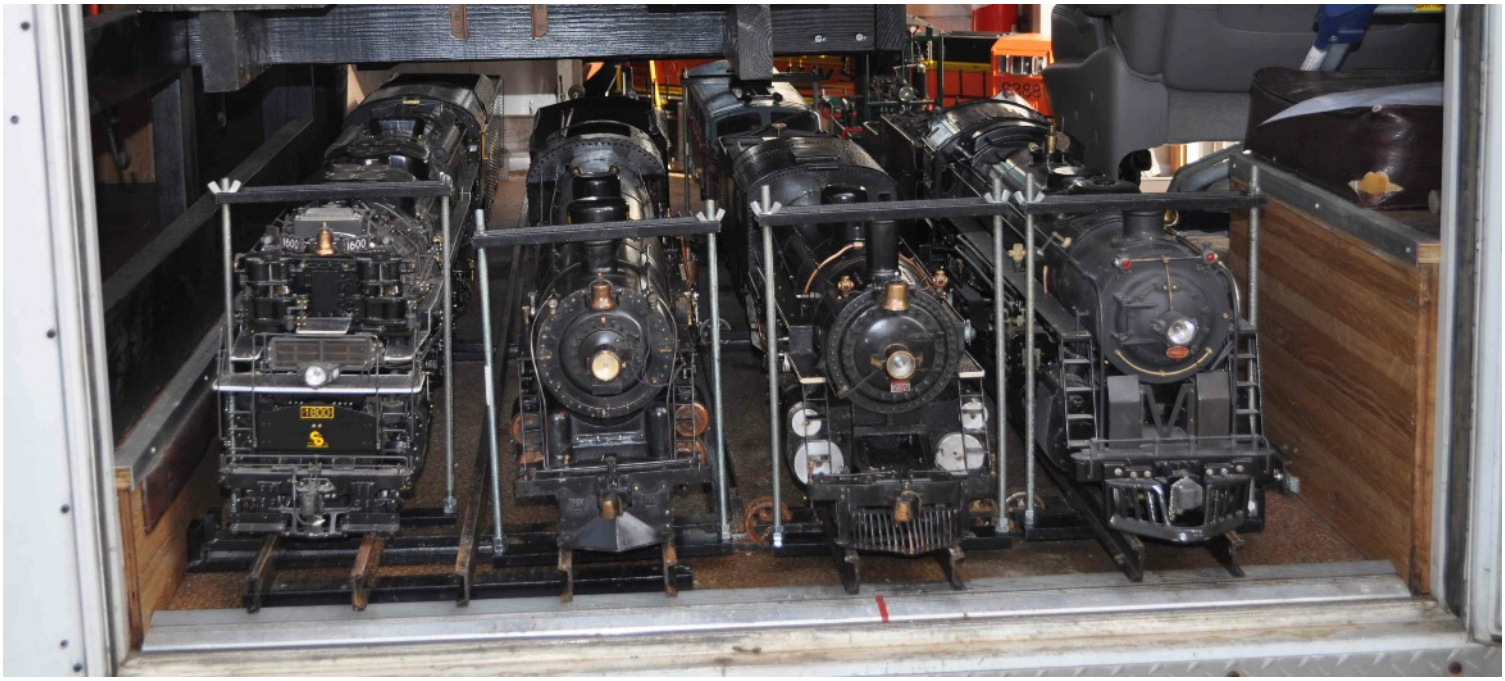


Photo Credits: Jim and Dorothy Keith



Almost ready to head out … the last time in the ol' Ambulance … How many locos can you spot in this photo ?

Correct answer: seven.

Only *Pidge*, #73 (in the above small photo), and the Mogul are not in this photo. … *Pidge* fits behind the driver's seat and on this occasion the Mogul traveled in Jim's car.

BLW's Roster of Locomotives

Compiled by Chuck Balmer

	Engine Nbr	*Date Built*	*Builder*
1. NYC 4-6-4 J3A Hudson	#5401	1971	Chuck Balmer
2. Pidge 0-4-0 switcher	#73	1972	"
3. EMD F7 diesel (A unit)	#2578	1975	"
4. Sugar 0-6-0 plantation engine	#76	1976	"
5. C&O Allegheny 2-6-6-6	#1600	2012	"
6. EMD SD70ACe	#9388	2014	"
7. EG&B Atlantic 4-4-2	#5462	1962	Bob Maynard
8. Mogul 2-6-0 OS kit loco	#2	?	purchased from Jon Payne
9. Virginian 4-4-0	#4	?	purchased from Jon Payne
10. Northern 4-8-4	#7578	?	purchased from CPR&SS
A. Hudson 4-6-4 incomplete chassis		?	purchased from Dan List
B. Hudson 4-6-4 incomplete chassis		?	purchased from Martha North

I don't know much about the history of the Northern or the Virginian but I believe they were both built by the same man.

The name on the Northern is Arthur Hamann who may have been the builder. My connection to the Northern began around 2001 when my son was a student at Edison college. One of his professors had the engine on loan from someone he knew. He knew that Jim was into live steam and ask if he could fix a problem with a broken throttle. Jim said we could take a look at it if he could bring it over to our shop.

I ended up fixing the throttle and the auxiliary water pump. We returned the engine but it was never run because the professor did not know how to run a coal fired locomotive. I knew the owner was associated with the Dayton club and during the 2010 EnterTRAINment Junction Model Engineering Show I asked one of the exhibitors from the Dayton Group if they knew anything about the Northern. My timing was perfect because he said that the owner's son had donated the engine to the club. He said that no one was interested in it because of the small scale. I said that I was interested and several weeks later I purchased it. It took about a year of fixing problems before it was a reliable engine. . . *Chuck*