



Monthly publication of the

Lake Erie "N" Scale Society

"L.E.N.S."

November, 2005

News and Opinions
Monthly Meeting Info
Web Sites of Interest
Learning from Prototypes
Show Schedules
and more!

N-TRAK
N SCALE MODULAR RAILROADING

Welcome!

LENS is a group of people with a common interest in modeling N scale railroads using the "NTRAK" modular concept.

Any time we meet and/or display our work and promote this hobby, we would love to have you join us.

This means that ALL of us have chances to participate in the hobby by helping with any or all of the following:

**Setting up / tearing down
Running trains
Sharing your knowledge
Learning something new
Answering questions
Hosting a meeting**

Notice that NONE of the above requires a module. We need your help... so bring yourself, your enthusiasm, your interest and your trains.

Thanks in advance for helping! Hopefully, we will continue to see you at the meetings and display events.

Come and join in the fun!

www.geocities.com/lensohio

The Lake Erie N Scale Society newsletter is published monthly for the sole use of its members by a crew of volunteers.

Opinions published here are solely those of the editor and/or the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

This publication is intended to be a monthly newsletter describing the business, events and the common interest in N scale model railroading enjoyed by the members of the Lake Erie N Scale Society.

For information or questions regarding our Society, you may contact Dennis Lloyd at 440-352-7081 - or - (dennis.lloyd@comcast.net)

Meetings normally start at 8:00 p.m., the fourth Friday of each month.

Lake Erie N Scale Society

November, 2005

We are about to begin the busiest part of the year as it pertains to our hobby. In the next few months, we will have at least 3 opportunities to set up the modules, with the set up at the FarmPark requiring the most effort.

Please consider making yourself available as much as possible to help with set up, running and/ or tear down, as “many hands make light work”. These activities are a great way for someone that has just joined our group, to find out how the concept of modular model railroading works. It is also a great time to renew old acquaintances and friendships.

Let’s all try to join in to show the public what we have worked so hard to perfect and that we are proud of our hobby.

Starting in January we are going to try something different, We are going to “go back to basics” (no Denny, not BASIC). Because of an influx of new members in recent months, each meeting will focus on some part of the building of a module. Hopefully, that will give some of the new people the courage to dive in and build a module. Let Denny, Lou, Matt, etc. know if you would like to be a presenter for one of the upcoming meetings.

Working on this newsletter is making me hungry. I look forward to our traditional “pie eating contest” at Belle’s...

Last Month's Meeting

.Our October meeting was held at the home of Perry P. on the 4th Friday of October.

The main topic of discussion was to plan the next several set ups and to determine how many members would be participating. Please contact Denny L., Matt K., or Lou D. with your availability for the "season". <<< **Very important !**

Several "old timers" were not present (for one or another reason). However, we had a nice sized attendance for the meeting. This is encouraging since we are about to "get busy" and need plenty of help at future displays.

We were reminded that November is National Model Railroading month, and were invited to attend an Open House at the permanent display being constructed by the NMRA Div. 5, on Tyler Road in Mentor, OH.

A vote of the members present turned down an opportunity to do a set up at the Mentor City Hall. Part of the reason was the timing of the event, but the lack of security and some other minor problems were cause for concern.

Ken S. commented that the next morning was slated to be sunny, and he going to head back to the New Castle to Beaver Falls, PA area for more photos - he invited others to join him.

Thanks Perry for volunteering to host the October meeting!

This Month's Meeting



The pictures above should be enough for you “old timers” in the group. However, for the newer members...

We will set up a display in the library on the square in Burton, OH. The tradition is that we set up the layout in the

library on Friday, followed by eating **pie** at Belle's Restaurant on the square. This display is usually done the same time as the book sale which hopefully helps us to draw a crowd..

Setup will be on Friday (11/25) from 1:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., followed by pie from 1:16 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (or something like that). Running will be on Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) & Sunday (1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.), with tear down to follow.

This venue is usually a relaxed one where we have a chance to socialize with each other and run lots of trains.

That's right, this looks familiar - I stole it from last year's issue. I'm tired and the creative juices quit flowing about 2 days ago!

Learning From Others

Ballasting

Bob Gilmore of Ogden, UT

(part 2) ...and now the exciting conclusion.

In last month's installment, Bob talked about selecting the correct size and color, filling in spaces under rail joiners, preparing the roadbed and track colors, preparing and pre-wetting the ground cover and ballast, and applying the Matte-Medium so everything stays in place and looks good.

Okay, your ballast is pre-soaked with wet-water from your atomizer and now you're ready to apply your pre-mixed glue/water adhesive. I use a good sized dose-dropper and get real close to the tops of the ties (between the rails) and gently (GENTLY) soak the entire ballasted area...just let it run down to either side of the rails. Don't squirt your adhesive, or let it drip on your ballast as it will leave impressions or wash away your carefully contoured ballast profiles . . .

You can easily see where your adhesive is flowing because it's like thin milk...but rest assured, it will be invisible in the morning and your ballast (as well as your track) will be socked down, solid as a rock.

I can do long distances of ballast this way. Just remember that it's nearly impossible to contour your ballast after it's

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

wet. If you screw up and apply more pressure from your dose-dropper than you should and wash away a bit of your ballast contour...just leave it till the morning, scrape it away and re-ballast it with dry ballast and re-wet it and re-soak it. Now that your ballast is DRY and solidly stuck down, it's time to go and pick the rocks off the tops of your ties and off the sides of your rails. You will INEVITABLY have these little derailleurs there. Touch up your rail colors as sometimes pulling these off also scrapes the paint off.

Done yet????well, ALMOST. Now is the time to weather your ballast and rails. I use an airbrush to shoot a very thin wash of grimy black or flat roof brown to the center of my rails. UP uses a rusty colored weed-spray on their mainlines and it's really evident in pictures and when I'm out rail-fanning. Your prototype might be different...but NOW is the time to do this over-all weathering...before your structures are in and your railroad is full of cars and engines that you'll have to take off to do this.

Okay...VOILA!!...wow...your track work looks SO great!!! A compliment to your ultra-detailed N-scale engines and cars that are available today!!

Have fun!

Our "Annual Swap Meet", is now available at every meeting!

If you have surplus engines, buildings, rolling stock, modules, etc., bring them to any of the meetings to offer great deals to your fellow members.

Next Month's Meeting

For the last several years we have set up at the FarmPark in Chardon, OH., and we have been invited to attend once again to help them as part of their Country Christmas .

More details will come next month, but mark your calendar for run time, as we have 6 solid days of time to fill, including some times early in the evening. There are plenty of opportunities to run and lately we have had trouble filling all of the slots. ***Come and join the fun!***

THE STRUCTURE SQUIRREL

As you know, squirrels store up nuts for the winter.....On the other hand, the nutty Structure Squirrel stores up N-scale building kits.....only to sell several of them off to his LENS friends at unbelievably low prices later! Well boys and girls, my supply is getting close to depleted, but I'm sure I'll come up with one or two (or more) at Railfest for your purchasing pleasure. But in the meantime I felt compelled--since I am missing the meetings--to make a contribution 'for the good of the order' and offer some comments on the history of N-Scale Structure kits.

(Continued on page 10)

Stewart's Hobbies & Collectors' Toys

38033 Euclid Ave.

440-942-6632

Microtrains Dealer

You've seen Rob & Sandy at Railfest — why not visit their store in Willoughby when you get a chance

Event Planner

Venue	<i>Burton Library</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Times</i>
Set up	Friday	11/25/05	1:00 p.m.
Operate	Saturday	11/26/05	9 a.m.—5 p.m.
Operate	Sunday	11/27/05	1 p.m.—5 p.m.

Venue	<i>FarmPark</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Times</i>
Set up	Saturday (day time)	12/17/05	TBA
Operate	Saturday...	12/17/05	TBA
Operate	...through Friday	12/23/05	TBA

Venue	<i>Willowick Library</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Times</i>
Set up	Friday	2/11/06	6:00 p.m.
Operate	Saturday	2/12/06	9 a.m.—5 p.m.
Operate	Sunday	2/13/06	1 p.m.—5 p.m.

Looking for LENS “gear”?



Contact Karen (440-347-0938) to order your favorite items. Quality, prices & selection to fit every budget!



(Continued from page 8)

As you know, there is currently a plethora of kits on the market, especially the wood laser kits which I am hooked on. Somewhat of a 'soft addiction'! Didn't used to be so, but now I only like the 'hard stuff'. . In the early days (I've been at it for 38 years) there were only the plastic kits--and I built most of them. In the 70's, there was Western Railcraft, and Muir Models emerged with a wooden kit-of-the-month for about \$5! Not laser-cut (lasers were hardly invented then) but at least the parts were mostly diecut. The big plus though, was that these structures when built were indeed selectively compressed, so they didn't overwhelm when placed on the layout.

Railhead also had some nice kits; then, along came John Rendall JV Models and early N Gauge Architect with kits that weren't exactly shake and bake--more 'basic' craftsman kits with only wood and instructions enclosed--you do the rest. Early Gloor-Craft kits were probably the best at that point, with Period Miniatures not far behind in design and quality.

Fast forward to the past 15 years and there has been a veritable structure kit explosion. American Model Builders led the way, and eventually the N-Scale Architect also introduced laser-cut kits, followed in no particular order by Showcase Miniatures, Bar Mills, JL Innovative Design, Model-Tech Studios, GC Laser Innovations, Blair Models, Northeast Scale Models, Micro-Scale Models, and more recently New Rail Models and Mountaineer Precision Products (you know them, they provided the Sugar Shack

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

kit) and one of the newest entries, Branch-Line trains. (Have I left anyone out?) (Yes, Monroe Models and Show Me Lines).

Believe me, I own (or have owned) many if not all of the offerings from these folks, even the one single offering from Yesteryear Creations which I sold off. At any rate, I want to end my running commentary with a compliment to Branch Line. I have most of their kits, have now built several, and find their instructions, graphics, peel-and-stick windows, and foundation peel-and-stick 'masonry' to be superb; definitely one of my favorites. All laser-cut kits feature very good precision fits between most wood components, and go together well. If you haven't built laser-cut structure kits, be not afraid, and start with either Northeast (NESM) or Branch-line; they are the easiest. The hardest kits to build are without a doubt many of the Republic Locomotive Works kits (my blue coal mine, kit # 1---and I would have been better off with kit #39 or so after he learned how to operate his new laser). I'm now tackling the entire RLW Slaty Fork Sawmill complex and hope to have this available for a new module insert (as well as my home layout) SOMETIME yet this decade! In the meantime I think I'll scour the laser kit suppliers to see what else the Structure Squirrel can find!

Dave N.

Visit our web site at www.geocities.com/lensohio/

“F.R.E.D.”



See you at the next station!

Copyright 1999-2005 The Lake Erie N Scale Society

www.geocities.com/lensohio/