

YouTube Model Builders eMag

A Free YouTube Model Builders e-Magazine
Produced by YouTube Model Builders.

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VOLUME I

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JULY 2015

ARTICLES YOUTUBE CHANNELS COMMUNITY TIPS & TRICKS



Calling All Young Modelers!

IN THIS ISSUE WE PROMOTE THE NEXT
GENERATION OF YOUTUBE MODELERS

Special Issue

Young Modelers Edition

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Young Modelers & the Generational Gap
Barriers Faced by Young Modelers
Young Modelers' Inspiring Stories
A Perspective on Track Planning
Autism and Model Railroading
...And Much, Much More!

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT

Cover Photo: Gerrad Reynolds

YouTube Model Builders LIVE!
Join Us LIVE Every Month



Welcome YouTube Model Builders!

We are really excited to deliver this July a very special “*Young Modelers*” edition of the **YouTube Model Builders eMag** to the community. The YouTube Model Builders “Team” is committed to putting the “eMag” together with the assistance from the model railroading community at large.

We continue to deliver a useful and informative publication for model railroaders who travel this vast net of information. In this issue (and many to follow), we include many informative, tutorial-based articles, information on happenings in the community, listings of up-and-coming YouTube channels, information about the **YouTube Model Builders LIVE!** show, **Tuesday night Hangout Presentations**, along with general information that is inspirational in building of our model railroads.

Our Vision:

To establish free, online resources as a primary source for model railroad techniques and inspiration in an ad-free, selfless service environment.

Our Mission:

The mission of YouTube Model Builders is to inspire individuals for sharing model railroad building techniques through the use of YouTube and other free online resources. Our goal is not only to share knowledge in a community but also assist individuals who are learning or looking for inspiration through the online model railroading community.

— The YouTube Model Builders Team

Editor's Note...

Summer is in full swing and the dog days of summer are upon us. A time for many of us to take a break from work and go on vacations to relax, and to reconnect with our children and family members. This is also the perfect time to think about young modelers in our hobby. Therefore, we have dedicated this very special issue of the eMag to exactly this topic. In this mid-year, **Young Modelers Edition**, we promote and celebrate the talents, the contributions, and the successes of the many young modelers within the YouTube community. We explore in several articles the various challenges, barriers, and roadblocks faced by the next generation of young modelers as they enter this hobby.

In my article I explore the widening generational gap between the baby boomers and young modelers in our hobby. Andrew Gilmore gives us some useful tips on working with young children in model railroading, reminding us to exercise patience, and identifies several barriers to entry. Blayne Mayfield explores two issues that further widen the generational gap: the lack of model train ads on television and the rising cost of the model railroading hobby.

Harry M. Haythorn showcases and promotes 16 young modelers with his article "Calling All Young Modelers!" Flip through this listing to learn more about each of these talented individuals, and click on the links to check out each modeler's YouTube channel. Barry Rosier highlights two exceptional young model railroaders and how their involvement at the [Strasburg Model Railroad Club](#) has impacted them and the club members.

Bill Beranek -The Track Planner continues his track planning series with discussions about design elements #3 and #4: Long main-line runs and trains traveling through scenes once. He explains "selective compression" and how this technique can effectively be used in layout design.

Jack Hykaway, a young modeler himself, tells us how he got involved in the hobby and provides us his perspective on model railroading and the challenges he faces in this hobby. He also interviews Shane Mason (another young modeler) and Johnny of [Southeast Rails](#) about his work with two special needs young-adults in this hobby. In his interviews, Jack asks all the right questions to bring you an interesting, multifaceted article that is a must read. Chris Heili and Bill Beranek -The Track Planner tell us about two inspirational, special needs youths with Asperger's Syndrome, who are involved in this hobby. Dan Duviviers writes a personal story about his two sons' involvement in the hobby, one with special needs. He explains why model railroading is a special hobby for them, and why it can be a great hobby for special needs children.

Patrick Lynch, an HO/OO scale modeler, tells us how playing with Thomas the Tank Engine at an early age led him to model railroading, and his goal of modeling the Island of Sodor, so he can run his ever-growing collection of Thomas and Friends related trains. Marcos Huizel describes his love for the Golden Age of Steam and chronicles his entry and growth into model railroading.

In the "Food for Thought" section, I provide arguments for why I believe modeling Thomas and Friends is real model railroading. Also featured are three YouTube channels that are great resources for YouTube modelers in the Pick-3 section and a picture collage of Keith Edwards' beautiful G scale Thomas and Friends based [Sandwell Valley Railway](#).

There are some very inspirational stories within this issue; stories about some exceptional young modelers, some of them with special needs. Read these articles and discover the challenges they face, successes they have achieved, how the hobby has impacted them, and how this hobby has helped each of them grow. As you read this issue, I hope you take the time to reflect upon how you can involve children (whether they are your own children, neighborhood kids, or children at your model railroading club), and inspire them to participate in this great hobby!

I hope you enjoy reading this special **Young Modelers Edition** of the eMag as much as we have enjoyed putting it together!

– **Loggin' Locos**
Editor-In-Chief



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Young Modelers And The Generational Gap



By Loggin' Locos

For discussion and vintage pictures of store train displays, check out the [O Gauge Railroading On-Line Forum](#).

All of us in the model railroading hobby, have at some point or another, heard someone mention it, or have even thought about it ourselves. There is a generational gap between the young model railroaders and older model railroaders. For the purpose of this discussion, I define young modelers as being below the age of 20. We can all agree that the predominant group of model railroader is the older male. There are model railroaders in their twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties. However, this number collectively tends to be significantly modest in concentration than the number of modelers who are retired and are in their sixties and older.

There are many factors and challenges that contribute to the generational gap between young modelers and older modelers, but some of these factors tend to be more prevalent. These factors, or otherwise barriers to entry, limit the number of young modelers that decide to, or more importantly, are able to participate in this hobby. To understand some of these barriers, we must first understand the different points of entry for older modelers versus younger modelers.

The model railroading hobby took proliferating roots just after World War II when the returning war veterans (G.I.s as they were called back then) wanted to spend more time at

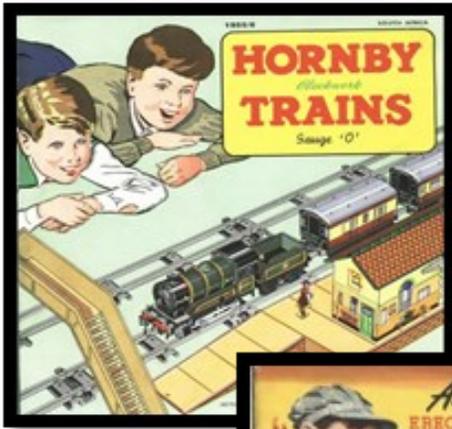
home with their children and families. Most baby boomers remember the times they spent playing with a tin-plate or a Lionel "toy" train set with their dads. In addition, Christmas time brought train displays in the local department or drug store windows (see above callout). Television commercials showing the latest Lionel or the MARX Toy Train sets that had the lights, the smoke, and all the bells and whistles, literally, were also common (see Blayne Mayfield's article "Model Train Television Commercials" in this issue of the eMag). This was the primary point of entry for the older model railroader.

There were no social or technical barriers such as the computer, the internet, video games, smart phones, or social media that would detract the young modelers of the 40's, 50's, and 60's eras. There was no information overload and there was limited number of stimuli to detract the young mind. In the way of tradition, the girls had their dolls and the boys had their train sets. And at that time the train sets represented the latest technology that was available in toys. The post war economy started to boom and the toy train sets being sold were more or less reasonably affordable. Cost was not a significant factor when compared to relative cost of train sets and engines these days.

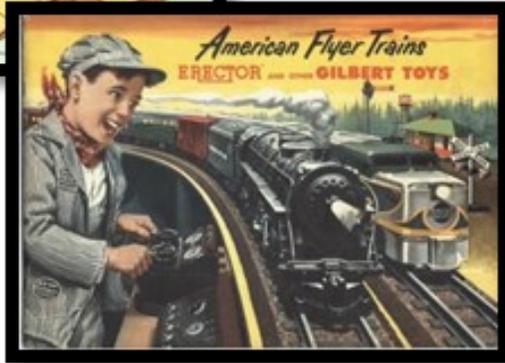


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From the 40's through the 60's, train displays were everywhere, and that meant that every boy had to have one. This is the main reason why there are many male baby boomers in model railroading today.



Model train manufacturers actively marketed to children to get them involved in the hobby.



Young Children in Model Railroading” in this issue of the eMag).

This, in my opinion, is eroding their ability to create with their hands, and is diminishing their ability to focus attention to the rest of the world, including model railroading. Staring into screens for hours and

hours is, I believe, reducing our youths’ ability to be creative, since more time is spent mindlessly clicking away at tiny keys.

design and collaborate with others (even through social media), and to build something of enjoyment with one’s own hands in which one can take pride. It allows us to exercise both our left (analytical) side and the right (visual) side of our brains.

There are two additional barriers for the young modeler. One of these barriers is the ever-increasing complexity of model trains. Designing and wiring for Digital Command Control (DCC) is more complex than simply assembling some pieces of track, plugging in the transformer, and running the trains. Young modelers today are more in tune with technology. The youth of today also know how to leverage technology to find resources and answers, including the use of YouTube, and of course, resources provided by YouTube Model Builders, such as this eMag. There are many young modelers within our community that can, for

For the young Modelers today, and even back in the 80’s through the 2000’s time period, the entry point to model railroading has shifted. Nothing else has had more impact on children, to foster love of trains and model railroading for well over the last 30 years, than the very popular television series Thomas and Friends. It has influenced many children to play with toy trains, and in many cases, to eventually move up to traditional model railroading, including G, O, HO, and OO scale Thomas and Friends engines.

Model railroading offers so much enrichment for the youth. It allows one to imagine and to think, to learn about the role trains and railroads played in the history of many countries, to envision and plan ideas, to

Children spend many hours each day on portable devices, playing video games, and “surfing the web,” and get no exposure to model railroading.

Yet, the number of youth getting involved in the model railroading hobby is significantly less than it was for the baby boomer generation. There are the tablets, MP3 players, smart phones, social media, HD TVs, video games on mobile devices, and video games on consoles at home – connected to those HD TVs, that capture, for hours at a time, much of our youths’ attention (see Andrew Gilmour’s article “Working with



example, change DCC decoders in N scale steam locomotives. That takes technical and motor skills, and at a minimum, some amount of basic knowledge of digital electronics.

Along with complexity of model trains, also comes the increased number of features such as improved and sophisticated digital audio quality, programmable lighting, horns, speed control and matching, synchronized chuffing and smoke for steam engines, detailed start-up and shut-down sequences, and so on. The demand for more detailed engines with more realistic features and controls, inherently leads to more complex engines. This level of complexity requires that modelers be more technically savvy and gain experience in working with more sophisticated trains and engines, something young modelers may find difficult to deal with, and therefore abandon the hobby.

Unfortunately, increasing complexity and features lead to another barrier for young modelers, and frankly, for us grownup “kids” too. That barrier is cost (see Blayne Mayfield’s piece “Cost: A key Barrier to Model Railroading for Younger Modelers!” in this issue of the eMag). Cost is, in many ways, related to complex decoder and motor technologies, updated manufacturing procedures, and newer tooling necessary to build newer models. Cost is also related to increased cost of raw materials and overseas labor. There are many other factors to cost, but at the end of the day, how does any of this matter to a young modeler who dreams of running a Union Pacific Big Boy 4-8-8-4 steam engine (which has a retail cost of approximately \$560), or

the latest HO scale GE EVO ES44AC Diesel Engine with Proto-Sound 3.0 and flashing underbody lights (at a cost of approximately \$275)? Even avid adult model railroaders balk at these kinds of numbers! Where does that leave the young modeler? It leaves them out of the ball park. In fact, when I speak with young modelers, cost is the number one challenge they face.

Kids today have many different hobbies from which to choose. With little to no exposure to model railroading from media and advertising, increased complexity, and increased cost, model railroading is not on top of the list of many youth of today. It isn’t that it is, or is not, in-vogue today, but rather a matter of how accessible model railroading is to the younger generation. Out of sight and out of mind, as the saying goes; and this holds true for model railroading. Lack of exposure to the

A highly detailed and complex engine with DCC, and the latest sound chip, such as this HO scale model of a New York Central SD70ACe, can be purchased for approximately \$250.



hobby means lack of motivation to participate when other “cool toys” and technologies are available much cheaper and competing for the same dollar. If you are a kid, what would you buy for \$250 – a new tablet or smartphone, or a single engine?

The youth of today are much more technically savvy and they can provide this hobby a fresher viewpoint. They are the ones who want to use their tablets and smart phones to remotely control their model railroads. It is they who can take this hobby into the future and advance it from a technical point of view (build better and cheaper costing DCC decoders, or even develop new standards for model railroading). If the barriers to entry are not addressed by the model railroading community, the generational gap will continue to widen. And we need young modelers to make this hobby mainstream again! 

About the Author

Loggin’ Locos is currently building two layouts. One is a logging camp based 6’ x 12’ table style layout. This is his first full sized layout. The other layout he is building is a dream layout in his mind with all the room in the world, from here to there, with all the perfectly weathered engines, rolling stock, structures, and scenery! Until he can get his dream layout to become reality, he is content documenting his current build on YouTube. You can follow him on his channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPYcxEM4sIqJJs0WzImVyKA>.

Model Train Television Commercials



By Blayne Mayfield

During the 1950s and 60s, it was a weekly ritual for many kids to watch their favorite Saturday morning cartoons on network TV. These programs would be interrupted (frequently) with commercials for sugary breakfast cereals, mix-at-home soft drinks, and the latest toys. Lionel and Marx were two toy companies that recognized the importance of this audience, and they advertised their model train sets (mostly O gauge in the 1950s and 60s, but also HO into the 70s). The advertisements drew countless young people into the world of model railroading with promises of engines that puffed real smoke, working crossing signals, and even helicopters that would fly off of flatcars on command. And, at Christmas time, it seemed that the percentage of model train commercials increased markedly. These commercials can still be seen on YouTube, today. (Below is a sampling of them.)

But, today, one does not see ads for model trains on TV. Perhaps it is because Saturday morning cartoons no longer are broadcast on network TV. Or, perhaps it is due to the manufacturer's belief that children no longer are the prime market for their products. Regardless of the reasons, today's generation of children are not exposed to model trains when they watch TV, the way we "older kids" were earlier in our lives. Thus, there is one less avenue by which young people can be drawn into the hobby, acting as yet another barrier to entry. But, the lack of exposure also contributes to the generational gap between younger and older people. This makes it all the more important for current modelers – young and old – to spread the word and involve more youth in this wonderful hobby. 🚂

- ◆ MARX Toys "O" gauge train set with the steam locomotive #1666 (from VintageTVCommercials.com) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_NMCdFxFBg
- ◆ Lionel Trains Commercial: Vintage Toys & Games for Christmas - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBkHBatUXDo>
- ◆ Lionel Toy Trains Commercial – 1960's Educational Film – S88TVI - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZ4zWBNIQ48>



Working With Young Children In Model Railroading



By Andrew Gilmour

Overcoming the Challenges and the Barriers

I have worked with children from ages 6 to 16 for over 30 years, and they never stop surprising me. Most are keen to learn new things, and they even become excited about learning maths, if you can make it fun. So why aren't more young people getting into model railroading?

One of the reasons for this is the wide variety of activities competing for the time and attention of kids today. At the risk of sounding like an old fogey ("Back when I was young ..."), it seems that children of today have more choices and tend to be involved in more activities than used to be the case. Of course, academic studies have and always will continue to fill a good deal of a young person's time during the school year. And today, it seems as though there are many more sports, theatre, dance, and other such opportunities open to the young folks.

Such activities are good, in that they help to develop a child's ability to socialize.

The arrival of the Internet, home computers, video game consoles, and social networks have been real game changers. Now, don't get me wrong; I think these are great resources of information, education, and entertainment for young people (and us "young at heart" people). However, they also can totally consume one's free time, and not always in productive, beneficial ways.

Since the "competition" has stepped up its game, we model railroaders must do the same to attract more young people into the hobby. So, what can we do to make this happen?

Kids are inherently curious and creative. However, one of the barriers they have to modelling is that, till

about the age of 13, their motor and cognitive skills are not fully developed. That is, the average pre-teen child literally cannot perform certain tasks that require precise hand-eye coordination or thinking things out fully because the associated areas of their brain still are developing. (Even so, if you take two pre-teens of the same age, they may develop different skill levels and at different rates.) This can lead the child to throw up their hands in frustration and walk away from the hobby.

As adults, we can help overcome this barrier by applying extra servings of our time and patience in teaching them. If we keep in mind the end goal – that of training and exciting young people with respect to the hobby – it can be easier to apply the extra time and patience needed. There are a few things to keep in mind when working with young model railroaders:

- Where adults might focus attention and exercise patience to work through some challenges, things must be kept interesting to a child or they lose interest in about 10 to 15 minutes. So, keep in mind that children learn best by doing. This can be done by getting them to do it as you show them how; don't do it for them if they can do it themselves.

We want your YouTube inspired articles!

Contact us at YTMBMag@gmail.com



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LIVE! Want to see live
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modeling techniques,
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About the Author

Andrew Gilmour lives in Australia and is a 67 year old retired shipwright who has been building small N scale layouts since the early 80's.

Andrew has been a volunteer Ambulance officer for 30 years, as well as, up until this year, a first aid instructor for St. Johns ambulance brigade Cadets and the Emergency Service Cadets.



**Baloo ຄຳຂຽນ
Noosa Sea Scout**

Currently, Andrew is a Cub Scout Leader with the Noosa Sea Scouts, leading scouts ages 7 to 11. He also helps out with the Joey Scouts ages 6 to 8, and on occasion, scouts ages 10 to 14. Please check out Andrew's Hobo Creek layout page by clicking [here](#).

- Get them to involve their friends. Young people like to work together, and they like even more to demonstrate their skills to their friends and help their friends learn.
- Keep things simple to start with and slowly build up their skill level. Dumping too much on them too quickly can frustrate them and drive them away from the hobby.
- It is important to give only positive comments like, “that’s a good drawing, but I think you could make it even better if you add more trees”; never say something such as, “you have to add more trees.”
- The most important thing to remember is never to talk down to them; that is, never talk to them like a child, but rather treat them like you would adults and listen to them. They can sometimes surprise you with great ideas.

Probably the best way to attract more young people into the hobby of model railroading is by sharing our time and knowledge with them. While pointing them towards YouTube tutorials on weathering or scenery construction is helpful, personal attention still yields the greatest dividends. And once a young person has developed some skills and confidence, they become model railroading “evangelists”, helping to attract other young people into the hobby. 

Cost: A Key Barrier to Model Railroading for Younger Modelers!

By Blayne Mayfield

A significant barrier to young people is funding; today’s DCC-based layouts and engines can be very pricey by the standards of a young person. (And even by the standards of some of us adults!) Invite them to use your resources – whether those be your tools, workbench, layout, or trains –as they are getting started.

You can advise them on low-cost rolling stock or structures that they find on eBay or at local train shows; there are many deals to be found that are great for beginners and give them the opportunity to practice weathering and repair techniques. (There also is something attractive about having your own trains that you customized yourself.) And, of course, if you have equipment that has been gathering dust on the shelf for some time, consider donating those resources to the cause.

Calling All Young Modelers!



By Harry M. Haythorn—UPHS #4043

Featuring the Next Generation of YouTube Modelers

In this issue we feature young modelers in this great hobby. We posted a call to all the young modelers in the YouTube Model Builders and several other model railroading related communities, asking all young modelers to tell us a little about themselves by answering a few questions. Below are the responses we received back. Some of these guys have just started modeling within the past month; others have been at it for a few years. These guys are all under the age of 20 and are diving into the hobby headfirst and not looking back. Let's get to know these guys and offer them some support. We start with the youngest modelers and move on to the oldest.

1 **BNSF model railroad** is a 13 year old **HO scale** modeler who also



enjoys rail-fanning. He models a fictional line located south of Fremont,

California on which the BNSF runs trains. His YouTube channel is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEtQLfFGdBfTccujjSk88qA>, and his Google+ page is <https://plus.google.com/+BNSFmodelrailroad>.

2 **Colin, aka Jupiter Railfan**, is 14 years old and has been modeling the Modern Florida East Coast RR in **HO scale** for about a year. "I am a



beginner in the hobby," he says. "My biggest challenge is getting to the local hobby shop, which is a 40-minute drive from my home." Colin also is into rail-fanning, as you can see on his YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtqlevaNCU4WbkaEXZdFsJQ>.

3 **Grant Repine** is 14 years old and has been a freelance modeler of UP, D&RGW, and MRL in **HO, N**, and

G scales for 6 years now. He tells us, "I consider my biggest achieve-



ment in the hobby to be the scratch building of a large scale box car." His YouTube channel is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGlIeQPzGCO9iH0JA3UkX7g>.

4 **Patrick Lynch, aka Oliver GWR**, is 14 years old and models in **HO scale** the real GWR prototype railroad and the fictional Thomas the Tank Engine line on the Island of Sodor. "I am a beginning modeler,"



he says of himself. “My biggest challenge has been making hook and chain couplings for my locomotives and rolling stock.” His YouTube channel can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGNn3qKwsPYMr3ttcXujThA>.

5
Buddy, aka The RED Engineer (Big Tex), is a 14 year old **HO scale** modeler who models the UP & SP merger era of the mid to late 1990’s in northern California. Buddy says, “I consider myself an intermediate modeler with 9 years of experience,” meaning he has been modeling since an early age! “My biggest challenge in the hobby is the purchase of new structures, locomotives and rolling stock, because I live in Hawaii.” But he has met the challenge head-on.

6
Joseph Chicarello is 14 years old and models a freelanced former UP short line from the 1940’s through the 1970s in southeast Alabama in **HO scale**. “I have been modeling



for 6 years and consider myself an intermediate modeler,” he says. “My greatest success in the hobby would be the homemade structures I make from simple household items.” Check out his YouTube channel,

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9VwUVxK-7_j67aFmDew8HQ.

7
Jackson Glozer, aka Jackson Railfan, is a 14 year old who models both in **HO** and **3-rail O scales**. In HO, Jackson and his father model a fictional short line railroad named The Shenandoah Valley Lines, a subsidiary of the N&W. In 3-rail, he builds modules for a club he is associated with, The Flower City Tinplate Trackers. He also has a NYC 1940’s layout. A long-time



modeler, Jackson says, “I have been modeling since I was old enough to run trains! I consider myself a seasoned modeler with about 10 years of experience. I consider my biggest accomplishment to be either starting my own weathering business/ website,

www.shenandoahvalleymodels.webs.com, or scratch building multiple buildings for my HO layout.” He also has a YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzA4S2W0tsHmhtxjYECfs2A>.

8
Joshua Dorrell is a 14 year old who goes by the YouTube handle **Model Railroader** and models both the steam and modern eras of UP and Santa Fe in **HO scale**. “I am a beginner with just **1 month** of

experience,” he says, “and my biggest challenge is waiting to make money and get the supplies to get going. My biggest success was when I convinced my parents to get my



first train set for me, starting me in this great hobby.” Even though he is relatively new to the hobby, Joshua already has started his own YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA9I4wct0EEvnKj4-xSOwdQ>, and a Google+ page, <https://plus.google.com/108404906132087620738>.

9
Aaron Adams, aka Northwest Railfan, is a 15 year old modeler. He works in **HO scale** and models the modern era Pacific northwest, specifically the state of Washington. The railroads he models are Silver



Falls Railway – a freelanced tourist railroad and museum – BNSF, Sounder Transit and Amtrak; the latter three run using trackage right. “I have been modeling for about four years, but have only had my layout for about a year,” he says, “and I am

an intermediately-experienced modeler. One of my biggest successes was starting my layout.” Check out his YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/aarona2u>.

10

Donnie Dixon is a 16 year old who models the 1970’s Santa Fe in **HO scale**. “My biggest success is Project Kodachrome, an Athearn Blue Box SD40-2 kit that I am detailing and repowering,” he says. “I have been



modeling since I was 10 years old.” Donnie’s YouTube channel is www.youtube.com/graywolfdonnie, and his Google+ Santa Fe page is <https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/115769881642448257352>.

11

Jack Hykaway is a 16 year old **HO scale** modeler of the Canadian railroads in the modern era and a member of the team for this eMag. He doesn’t model any location in particular, though many of the scenes on his layout are based off of those in southwestern Manitoba. “I have been modeling for 9 years, and I am



an intermediate-level modeler,” he tells us. “My biggest challenges have to be the sorting out of the bugs and problems of building a layout; I am still experimenting with new techniques and ideas. I consider my biggest success in the world of scratch building to be my modern Station for Silver Lake Junction.” (This station can be seen in the first issue of this eMag). About his other efforts, Jack states, “I also consider my contributions to the E-Mag my biggest contribution to the hobby.” You can see his efforts on his YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/user/WinnipegRailfanner1>, and on his Google+ page, <https://plus.google.com/u/0/+JackHykaway/posts>.

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Jay White is a 17 year old **HO scale** modeler who currently is modeling modern New England, including NECR, CSX, and Amtrak. He has been modeling for 8 years with electric trains, after dabbling in wooden Thomas trains and layouts. He considers himself to be an intermediate modeler. “My biggest suc-



cess has to be my YouTube channel. Being able to share my layout and experiences with others and to receive feedback from more experienced people is a lot of fun for me.” He goes on to say, “My biggest challenge has always been scenery work. I have a hard time deciding what should go where.” Jay’s YouTube channel can be seen at <https://>

www.youtube.com/user/Jaystrain08.

13

Ryan Adams, aka **Vermont Railfan**, is a 17 year old **N scale** modeler who models rural New England from 1990-2002, including Amtrak, New England Central RR, Guilford Rail, and Vermont/Green Mountain RR. He says that he has been modeling in various scales for



most of his life, but he has focused on N scale for about the last 4 years. “I consider myself an intermediate modeler in the hobby,” he says. “Originally, I was a HO scale modeler, and had a 4x8 layout; this layout was outside in the Arizona heat, which is not entirely ideal.” Ryan has faced challenges, such as, “the availability of units for the railroads that I model. I have had to custom paint a few units, and kit bashed a SD45 high hood.” He has contributed to the hobby as a whole by helping others plan their layouts and paint their equipment. He also recently sent a “train care package” to a friend who had a double lung transplant. You can see the fruits of his labors on his YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/vermonterrailfan.

14

Cam Nealy, aka **railfan220**, is a 17 year old **HO scale** modeler who has been in the hobby for about 10 years. He proto-freelances the

BNSF Plains Division, modeling the Twin Cities (in Minnesota) on the lower level of his layout, and Crawford Hill (in NW Nebraska) on the upper level. Cam says, “getting



trains running on the Plains Division” has been his greatest success in the hobby, and it also has been his greatest challenge! He considers his greatest accomplishment to be the YouTube videos he and his friend (**bnsfrailfans**) make to document the progress they make on their railroads. Cam’s YouTube channel is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo0UdTyfqDJReYmTMlpdlidQ>.

15

Shane Mason, aka **Thebrake-man17**, is an **N scale** modeler in the Kansas City area, and he models UP, MRL, and CB&Q from the 1940’s through modern times. “I am

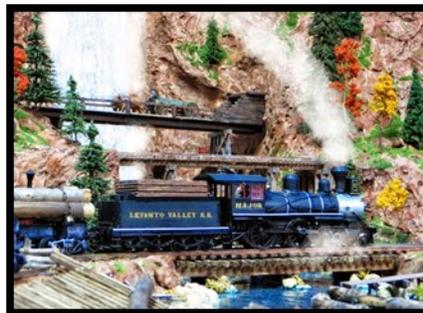


an intermediate modeler with about 4 years of experience,” he tells us. “My biggest challenges would be

from the financial view point; I don’t have all the retirement money that some of these guys have to spend. I have started [a DCC decoder] install business to help bridge that gap.” You’ll find Shane’s YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCduoZbucU9E527VTrE19fg>.

16

Marcos Huizel is a 19 year old modeler whose **HO scale** Lepanto Valley Railroad was featured on the cover of and in an article in the March 2015 issue of the eMag. In addition, his articles and pictures of his model railroad can be found in the May 2015 and the current issues of the eMag. His layout is set in the mid to late 1800’s in the areas of St. Paul and St. Peter (San Pedro), Minnesota, as well as the Black Hills of



South Dakota. Marcos considers himself an intermediate (on his way to becoming a seasoned) modeler and has been modeling seriously for 3 years. “My biggest challenge was finding the right equipment and structures for the time period I model,” he says. Marcos’ YouTube channel is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7ZOAIZWQFNXGRuACu-NiEPA>, his Google+ page is <https://plus.google.com/u/0/b/112453717984744504386/1124537>

[17984744504386/posts?pageId=112453717984744504386](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7ZOAIZWQFNXGRuACu-NiEPA), and he can be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/McIntockandWesternModelRailroad>. 

About the Author

Harry is a rancher who works with his father and grandfather to help run their 22,000 acre, 1500 head of mother cow, ranch. He lives in Nebraska with his wife and 6 children ages 11 years old to 6 months old and therefore stays busy all the time.

Harry has been model railroading for over 20 years and considers himself a serious prototypical modeler, but believes in “good enough” modeling and not rivet counting.

Harry models the Union Pacific Steam era from the 1930’s to the 1960’s, in central and western Nebraska (the area and time period that he loves the most).

Harry is a Sustaining Member of the Union Pacific Historical Society and a member of the UPHS Streamliner 100 club. He is a National Model Railroad Association member currently working on his Master Model Railroader Certificate and is also a Member of the National Hot Rod Association (Drag Racing), as well as a Lifetime Member of the American Quarter Horse Association.

Harry regularly posts videos on his YouTube page. You can follow Harry as he works on his 7th layout at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6-MPHmYU3Cc2uEVfjZDIcQ>.

The **YouTube Model Builders Big Build Contest** is a YouTube-based model railroad structure build contest that will be judged through YouTube videos by a panel of judges from the YouTube Model Railroad community.

The **YouTube Model Builders BIG Build Contest** is hosted by [Eric Hall](#) from [IMRRO.com](#).



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To enter is easy! Just click here for the [*Entry Form](#) and sign up! You must have a YouTube Channel on which to place your build videos so they can be judged!

Your build must be completed by **September 30th**. Any and all related videos of your build must be uploaded for judging by **September 30th**. A panel of Judges will then review the **YouTube Model Builders BIG Build Contest** videos and select the winners based on set criteria.

So share your **YouTube Model Builders BIG Build Contest** videos for everyone to see!

*For complete rules and further information, please click [here](#).

Involving Youth In Our Hobby...



By Barry Rosier (Barry's Bench)

A Noble Goal for All of Us!

The involvement of young people in our hobby is something all of us should strive for. Over and over again, I have read posts online that the hobby is fading, that new people, especially young people, are not joining our great hobby. So what are we to do about this? My model railroad club is the [Strasburg Model Railroad Club](#). We are a display club and have been around for 23 years; over those years we have been involved with young people in our membership.

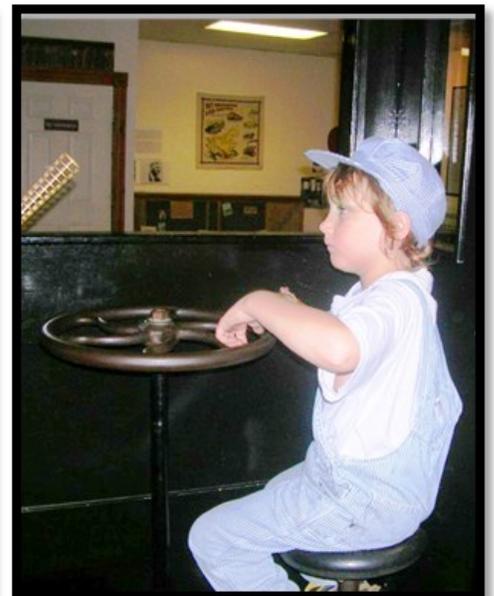
When we first started our club we had only adult members. Our first two young members were the two sons of our club President. David was our first, and he was a great help at all of our events. As he grew older, he created and managed our first website. His brother Brandon joined later and was always fun to have around and helped us run things.

David has since moved on, completed college, and lives across the country. Brandon is beginning college this fall, and we wish him well. Hopefully they will continue on in the hobby as they grow as young adults. We recently have picked up two new young members, Billy and Chris. I want to tell you about them.



Billy has been interested in model railroading since he was 2 years old and first began watching Thomas the Tank Engine. Thomas and Friends has been the absolute best thing for our hobby and has brought many new members to it. Billy's grandmother brought him to see our Strasburg Railroad layout at one of the Greenberg Train Shows several years ago. Billy has been to the real Strasburg Railroad many times, and as a result he has fallen in love with our layout.

Above: Billy works the SMRC DCC demo layout. Below: Billy in the cab of GP30 #2233 (left) and at another display (right) at the Railroad Museum of PA.



He spent all day watching us operate the layout, especially #90. He convinced his grandmother to ask me if he could come behind the ropes with me as I ran #90. So I let him join me and we became swift friends. He watched everything I did and even made sure that I blew the grade crossing whistle at every road. The best thing is that Billy really loves trains; he even dresses as an engineer when he goes to shows.

Billy and his grandmother Linda also are involved with live steam models and volunteer at a live steam club. They help out with the engines, and Billy even oils



Above: Billy attentively watches John's N scale trains run.

Below: Chris shows John some of his project notebooks.



some of them. I asked him what will happen as he grows older, or what if he wants to play sports? He told me that he will always love trains and model railroading, and I believe him. Even at his age he is very careful when handling locomotives and rolling stock, and when running them on the layout.

Billy is now an official youth member of our club. He is now 8 years old and has his own HO layout. We are looking forward to having plenty of great years with him. He loves trains so much that when he grows up he

plans to become an engineer and operate the real #90 on the Strasburg Railroad. We all are glad to have him in our club.

Our second young member is Chris. He joined our club last fall, and the first time I met him was at one of our shows in Stratford, NJ. Chris is 23 years old and is autistic. He has just completed college and wants to go on to study theater. He is a pleasure to be around and goes out of his way to help with everything we do.

Chris is very knowledgeable with all kinds of information in the hobby. He really is like a living encyclopedia of railroading, both real and model. I watched him give an explanation of railroad artifacts on display when our club was at an event in the restored West Jersey & Seashore Railroad train station in Glassboro, NJ.

Chris has a great time at all of our events and is planning his own model train layout. He plans to build in several different scales and yes, he is planning to build at least a part of his layout with Thomas the Tank Engine and friends on the lovely Island of Sodor! Just as with Billy, it was Thomas that first interested Chris in model trains.

Chris loves going out and doing all kinds of things, especially working with our club at the events we attend or host ourselves. He helps us share our love of the hobby as we all do what we can to answer the questions of everyone we meet, in hope that it will help them enjoy our hobby even more.

Both Billy and Chris are wonderful members of the Strasburg Model Railroad Club, and both bring a love and enthusiasm for model trains that helps all of us remember how we first fell in love with those trains under the Christmas tree. And in them, we can see a future in our hobby that looks bright.

I asked each of them what they felt is the biggest barrier to getting into the hobby and both mentioned the price of things such as locomotives, cars, etc. This surprised me coming from Billy; he may be only eight, but he knows how expensive these things are.

Next, I asked them how they felt about being in a club and what it meant to them. Billy told me he loves being around the model trains and has enjoyed the chance to run them with us, especially since we have so many different scales. Chris said that he enjoys running the trains with us, but he also is very much a



Chris Puts a derailed train back on John's N scale layout.

social person and – like myself – enjoys being around people at trains shows. (We both like to talk a lot. ☺)

Both Billy and Chris help us bridge the age gap in our hobby: one in the youth segment, and the other as a young adult modeler just starting out. I think that both of these fine young men will have a lifelong, enjoyable experience in our hobby, and I am glad that I and the great members of the Strasburg Model Railroad club are a part of it. 🚂

About the Author

Barry Rosier is currently building a 12' x 20' American Flyer S scale layout. This is his first personal layout

but not the first layout he has built. Barry is one of the founding members of the [Strasburg Model Railroad Club](#) and has worked to help build their 117 foot modular layout of the Strasburg Railroad near Lancaster, PA. The club is 23 years old. The other layout he is planning is a PRR HO layout that will be a double deck above his American Flyer layout. Barry is currently documenting his American Flyer build on YouTube. Hopefully the construction of the HO layout will begin this summer and will be documented on his channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/bsrosier>.

A Perspective On Track Planning - Part Three



By William (Bill) J. Beranek —The Track Planner

Design Elements #3 and #4: Long Mainline Runs and Trains Traveling Through Scenes Once

In last month's issue, I wrote about walk-along mainlines and narrow bench work. In this installment, I want to discuss designing track plans with long mainline runs and having trains travel through scenes once. I will use my layout as the example for both elements (see

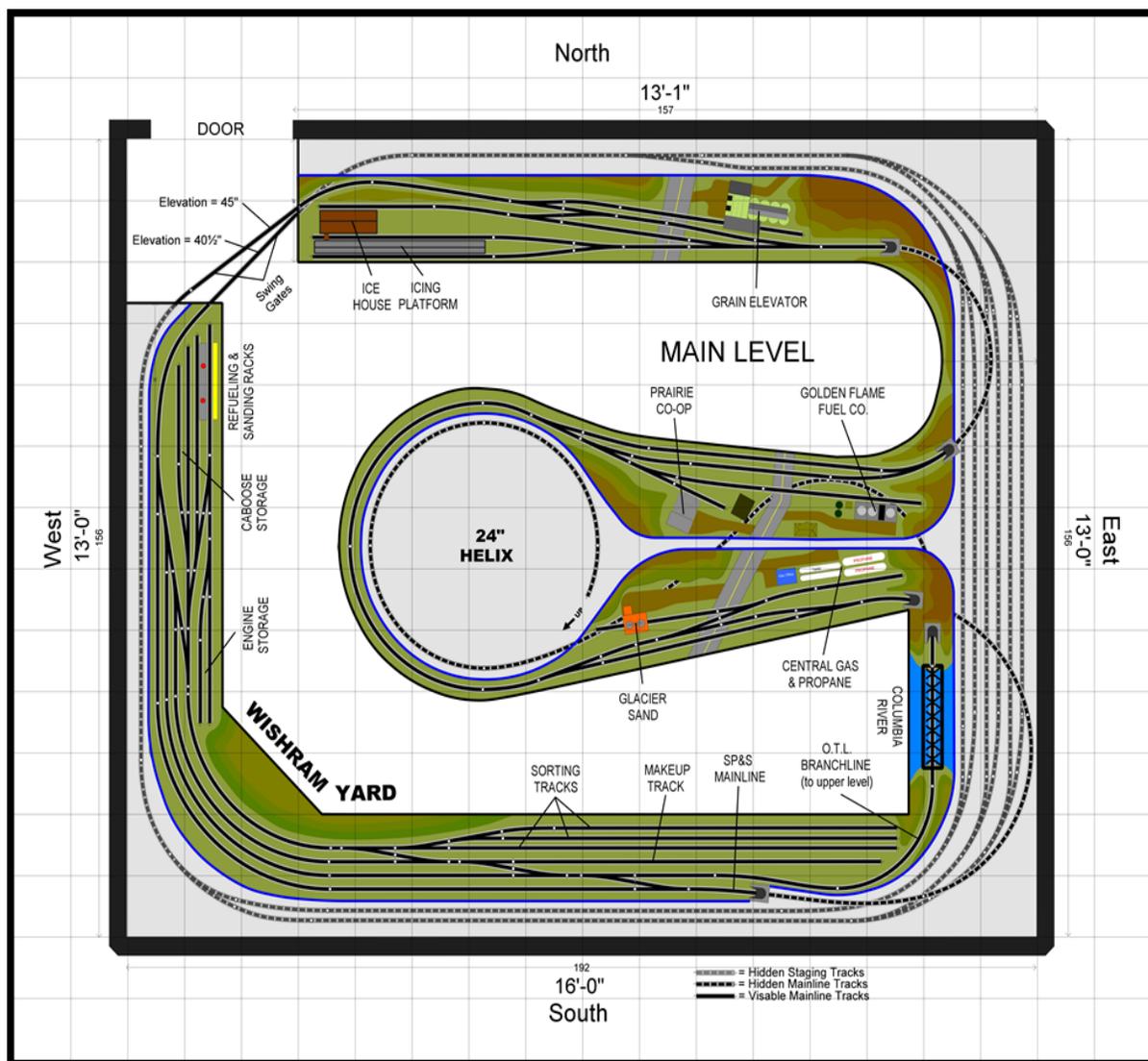
Figure 1 - Main Level and Figure 2 - Upper Level). My layout is relatively small, measuring 16' x 13' or 208 square feet. Within the 208 square feet, I have been able to include both long mainline runs and trains traveling through scenes only once.

Figure 1 shows the main level of my multi-deck layout. Trains entering the visible portion of the layout come from a six-track, double-ended hidden staging yard situated

along the east wall. Eastbound trains enter the visible portion of the layout along the west wall (near the door); the eastbound train traverses the main level, eventually ending up in Wishram yard. Westbound trains enter the layout via the north wall

(near the door) crossing over the swing gate arriving in Wishram yard. When eastbound trains leave Wishram yard they cross over the swing gate and immediately head into hidden staging. Westbound trains leave Wishram yard, traversing the entire

Figure 1— Bill Beranek's Track Plan—Main Level.



main level before heading into hidden staging. By including a center peninsula, as opposed to simply using the four outside walls, I was able to increase my visible mainline run by about 35-40%.

Why are long mainline runs important? Most of us "try" to model things we are familiar with or have an interest in; it could be as simple as something we remember from our childhood or something we see every day. Regardless

of how much space we have, it is never enough. Using "selective compression" (see sidebar on next page) prudently is vital in making a layout believable and having the layout operate in a prototypical manner.

Along with "selective compression," runtime length is the other element we have to deal with. I am talking about the time it takes a train to travel from point A to point B.

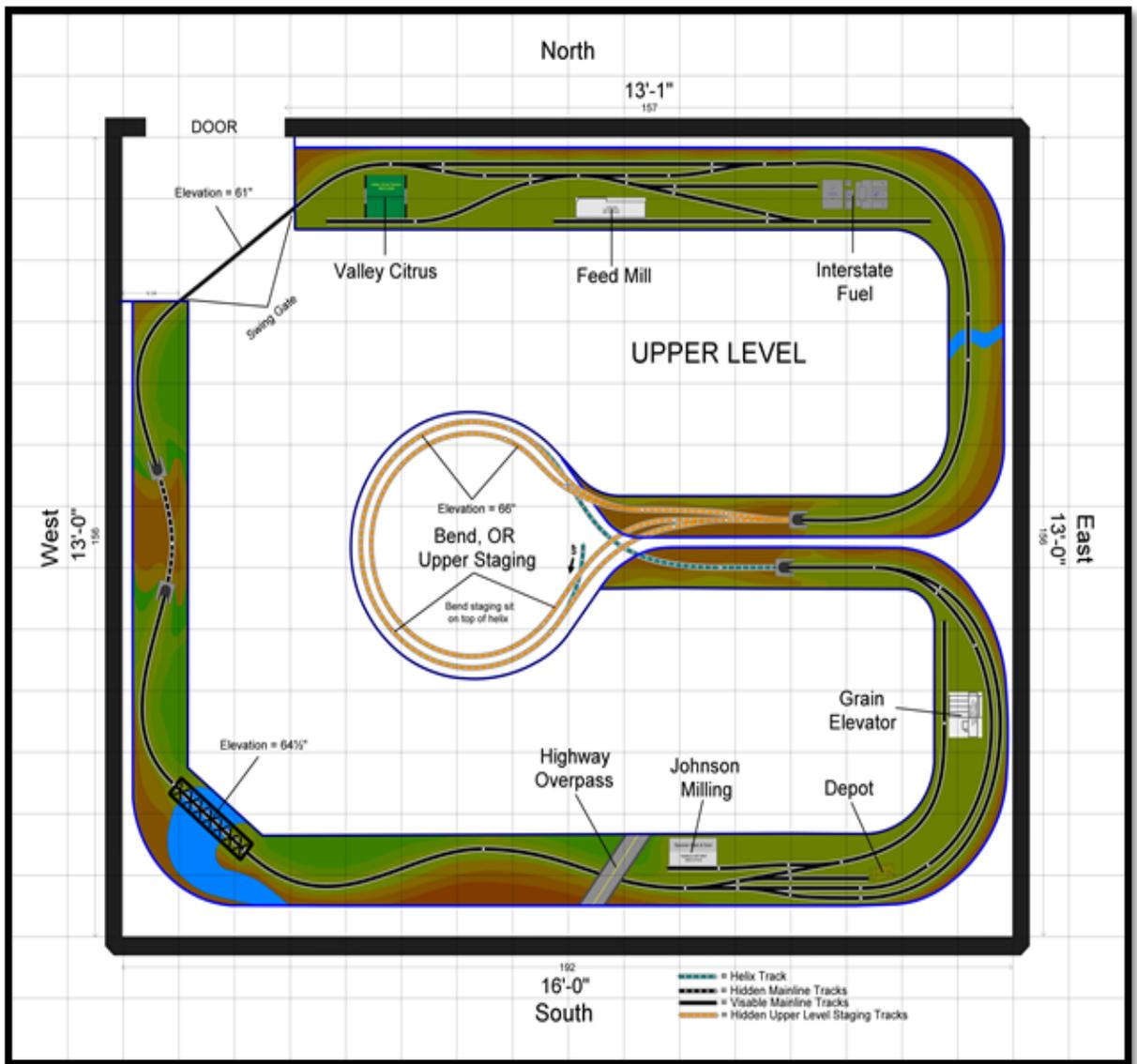


Figure 2— Bill Beranek's Track Plan—Upper Level.

By creating long mainline runs and operating trains at prototypical scale speeds, we are adding, "time and distance." The longer it takes a train to traverse the room, the larger the layout feels.

You can add the sense of "time and distance" by creating long mainline runs and operating at prototypical speeds.

My previous layout was designed with prototypical operations as the focal point. When new operators completed a 4-4½ hours long operations

session, I would ask them what surprised them the most about the layout. Frequently the reply would be "the layout operates larger than it looks." New operators were surprised at the amount of prototypical operations we packed into a four-hour operations session on the layout. This was partially accomplished by having long mainline runs and operating trains at prototypical scale speeds. When I design track plans, one of my major objectives is to give the client the longest mainline runs possible.

As you have seen (in Figure 1), my trains travel through scenes once, and the track plan does allow for continuous running, but you have to travel through the hidden staging areas to do so.

In Figure 2, you see the upper level track plan. To get to the upper level, trains negotiate a hidden helix inside the

peninsula. When trains arrive on the upper level, they traverse all of the upper level before heading into a two-track hidden staging reverse loop, sitting above the helix. Like the main level, I have continuous running capability, but I only use it for testing. During operating sessions, trains leave and enter the upper-level reverse loops only once. I designed the upper level to maximize the longest mainline run possible and still have trains travel through scenes once.

The combination of long runs and traveling through scenes once will give your operators the feeling of actually going somewhere. They are not retracing the same areas repeatedly. In the real world, trains travel from point A to point B; they do not travel through the same areas over and over again. Given the limited

space, most of us have, we should still make every effort to have our model railroads emulate the real thing.

I hope I have persuaded you to think in terms of long mainlines and trains

The combination of long runs and traveling through scenes once will give your operators the feeling of actually going somewhere.

traveling through scenes once. The next time you are building a layout, think about incorporating these design elements into your plan.

I think you will

be pleasantly surprised at how much larger the layout feels and operates.

In the next installment, we will look at using peninsulas and view blocks as design elements. 

About the Author

Bill Beranek - The Track Planner has over forty years in the model railroading hobby. Bill enjoys golfing, travelling, and of course designing "prototypical operations" focused track plans. He has been a member of a local 135+ member model railroad club since 2003 and has served twice as the club's president, twice as a board member, and is currently serving as the club's treasurer.

Bill is currently working on his latest triple-deck HO scale layout depicting the SP&S (Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway) in southern Washington and the OTL (Oregon Trunk Line) on the upper level in northern Oregon in the mid 50's.

You can find more about Bill—The Track Planner at:

www.thetrackplanner.com.

Up-Coming Articles By The Track Planner*

September 2015 Issue

- Design Element Five - View blocks & peninsulas
- Design Element Six - Staging yards

November 2015 Issue

- Design Element Seven - Prototypical operations

January 2016 Issue

- How the era you like sometimes conflicts with space

March 2016 Issue

- Computer Aided Design (CAD) software

May 2016 Issue

- Model railroaders who were ahead of their times

* Proposed topics—subject to update or change.



Google+ Hangouts! If you like real time video chat with other model railroaders, watch for these LIVE Hangouts to join. Ask questions, help others with their modeling videos, or just join in live chat and simply "Hangout!"

Youth In Model Railroading...



By Jack Hykaway

A Young Modeler's Perspective and Interviews

Model Railroading often is described as the “World’s Greatest Hobby” for one reason: whether it be weathering, electrical, track planning, or operations, there’s something for everybody of every age. I am a youth and part of the model railroading and YouTube Model Builders Communities. I devote much of my spare time to the “World’s Greatest Hobby,” and I enjoy every second of it.

I became interested in the model railroading hobby because of my passion for trains and the railroad. I have loved full-sized trains my entire life, and I enjoyed the idea of having a miniature version of them. I am an avid rail fan, and I try to get out at least bi-weekly to spend some time exploring the railroads of my region. The things I see while out rail-fanning influence my layout and how I run the trains in my 1/87th world.

Christmas of 2007 marked my entrance into this world-class hobby. I was seven years old. Under the tree, I was surprised to see an HO scale Model Power “Canadian Classic” train set. Almost as soon as I had it unwrapped, I had the four-by-eight oval of track set up and ready to run. It was a Canadian Pacific Action Red F-unit with a working headlight and die-cast chassis whipping around the small oval with a forty-

foot boxcar (with fancy, operational doors), ten-thousand gallon tank car, and a yellow CP bay-window style caboose in tow. For several weeks, my oval of track dominated the rec-room floor.

Just a few months after I was introduced into the hobby, my dad built me a table for the trains in the furnace room. He and I (but mostly he) covered it in a grass-mat, and we nailed the track down. This track was solid enough for four-hundred mile-per-hour running, and I took full advantage of that.

My seemingly unbreakable Model Power locomotive and cars sped around the small oval (not without a few incidents, of course) for a few months on a bare grass mat. I continued to purchase more buildings, track and rolling stock. After a year,

I had a lengthy train and a fairly established display, complete with a tunnel, siding, lake and even a few buildings.

In 2009, we moved to a larger house, and my first table was dismantled. Moving up to a four-by-nine space in the new house, I was able to recycle a few parts from my first train table and incorporate them into my present layout. The Silver Lake scene is a good example of a recycled scene.

I consider my present layout to be my first layout. It has been my funds (good thing there’s lots of snow here in Canada!) and my hard work that has brought the layout together.

It’s a challenge to put a layout, even a small one, together, especially for young people. From wire to scen-

A CP Model Power locomotive crosses over a bridge on Jack’s first display. Jack used some old, cut-up paving bricks to simulate rock faces.





Bob and Jen negotiate the waves on Silver Lake in their canoe.

ery, everything costs money and takes time to install. Money is hard to come by for any youth in the hobby, especially if you're too young to have a job. Time isn't the easiest thing to find, either. School, extra-curricular activities, a social life and sometimes a job consume the model railroading time. Believe it or not, living in a country outside the US is also a big challenge. Certain products aren't available in the local hobby shop and need to be ordered in from the States. Because the current exchange rate is approximately 80 Canadian cents to every American dollar, it really adds up when you order products. Add duty fees and international shipping to that price tag, and it's barely even worth it.

The track planning process on the layout began in 2009, and I had dozens of plans before I settled for one. The current plan has a double-track mainline loop, a small storage yard, and three fair-sized industries. I have to admit it's not the most efficient use of a four-by-nine space, but it works. Silver Lake Junction is where the small yard, a crossover,

the Lumber/Woodchip Company and the McGraw Oil Company are located. On the other side of the layout, the Shady Creek Crossover and large grain complex, complete with an eight car storage track, dominate the scene.

In 2010, track laying began, and shortly after – in 2011/12 – the scenery work commenced. YouTube was an indispensable resource for valuable tips and tricks that guided me through the construction of my layout. YouTube is an awesome resource for tips, tricks, and techniques for modelers of all ages and

A passenger train pulls out of the Silver Lake Station, running five minutes late.



calibers. Videos allow you to see how a certain look was achieved and which techniques were used, step by step. If you're not into the videos, YouTube Model Builders also offers a free eMag as well as the monthly Live! Show where you can ask your modeling questions and a panel of expert modelers will answer them.

In early 2014 I decided I wanted to give back to the YouTube model building community and share what I had learned over the years of building my first layout. Since I watched hours of YouTube videos to help with my layout, I decided to start a channel of my own and contribute to the hobby through videos. I continue to create and produce videos on model railroading and rail-fanning, which you can find on my YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/WinnipegRailfanner1>).

I was thinking about how I became a part of the hobby not too long ago, while I was working on the layout. I wondered why I would choose such an interesting hobby over all the others – obviously my love of trains played a big role in my decision. That led me to think about whether or not my story is common among

youth modelers. How did they become a part of this Hobby? There was only one way to uncover the answers. I decided to contact a couple active youth-modelers that are part of the YouTube Model Builders Community, and see if they would answer a few questions for me.

An Interview with Shane Mason:

I had the chance to interview Shane Mason, also known as “Thebrakeman17” on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/thebrakeman17>). Shane is an 18 year-old modeler from the Kansas City area. Shane models UP, MRL, and CB&Q in N scale. I asked him a few questions about how he got started in the hobby, and some questions about his perspectives on the hobby.

Q: How did you first become interested in the Hobby?

A: “My interest was sparked by my Grandfather, who used to work for the railroad as a machinist. He started out working with the Missouri Pacific Railroad, and continued to work with Union Pacific after the Missouri Pacific was purchased. He worked up until 2006, when he retired. When I was young, he used to take me down to the rail yards to watch some trains. As I got a little older and more responsible, he started buying me some miniature, electric trains.

About three years ago, I found a local club, the local N scale club I’m a part of now, and from there, it’s really taken off.”

Q: How old were you when you were first introduced to the hobby by your Grandpa?

A: “I was probably seven or eight years old when I got my first set, a Bachmann starter set. I had spotted it at Toys-R-Us, and my Grandpa bought it for me. From there, we started attending shows and we expanded our own empire.”

Q: What is your favorite aspect of Model Railroading?

A: “My favorite aspect is to be able to share information and hang out with people that enjoy the same thing you do. I spend so much time with my Grandfather, whether it is at the club or working on our ‘NTrak’ modules. The guys at my club are great too. I’m at the club every

Shane is running his Daylight locomotive on the left, and his grandpa’s locomotive on the right.



Saturday, working with them. I enjoy being able to get out and meet people. I've met a lot of great people from all corners of the country from my Install Business. It's really cool to go from a small group of local friends to knowing people all over the country."

Q: What are the biggest challenges you face in the hobby?

A: "Money is what immediately pops into my head. My Grandfather and I usually split the purchases, so that really helps me financially. This hobby is expensive, and many youths, including myself, struggle to come up with the money to pay for the hobby. It's not like the retirees – they have their pensions and savings they can spend on rolling stock and expensive locomotives.

Your geographical situation is also a large challenge for many youths. I'm lucky enough to live in a populated area, so I easily can get to the club and a hobby shop. Many youths live out in the country, and it's difficult for them to get to a city, especially if they're too young to drive."

Q: Is being part of a club beneficial to your experience as a modeler?

A: "Definitely; I've learned a lot of great things from the guys in my club. Before I joined the club, I couldn't tell you a lick about doing scenery. Being able to sit down, face-to-face, with a more experienced modeler is awe-



Participating in a local club and the community weathering project has really helped Shane learn about weathering techniques.

some, because you'll learn so much just by observing and talking to them. It's also good to be a part of a club because you make connections with people from your community."

Q: Where do you get most of your information/inspirations from?

A: "I get it from two major sources: through the guys at my club and through YouTube. I learn a lot about DCC and rolling stock through the Internet, but when it comes to hands-on stuff, such as scenery or wiring, I learn that through the guys at my club."

Q: Are there many youth part of your club?

A: "No, there aren't very many youths. The majority of the members are older than me. We have a few guys in their mid-twenties, a few 40-year olds, and some guys who are 60 or more

years old. It's not bad having such a varied range of ages in the club, I'm great friends with everybody. We have one 14 year old part of the club, but I wish there was more young blood in the hobby. I wonder if the lack of youths can be blamed on the intimidation of all the aspects of the hobby, and kids not knowing where to start. Money is always a problem for youth in the hobby, and could also be deterring them."

Q: What got you interested in creating and producing videos for YouTube?

A: "It was about three years ago when I was inspired by several other YouTube Modelers to make some videos and share what I knew about the hobby. I feel one thing this hobby really needs is a lot more sharing of information and techniques. I think a lot of things are too exclusive in this hobby – you have

to subscribe to this and pay for that in order to get information. I built my channel to share information and techniques with fellow modelers, cost-free.”

Q: Do you think that Social Media Sites (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, G+, etc...) have helped or have they harmed the hobby?

A: “I think it’s done a little bit of both. These sites really help with the sharing of information in the hobby. I’ve learned a lot using them. Take the Community Weathering Project for example. I learned so much about weathering thanks to everyone who’s contributed. Before I wasn’t so great at weathering, but now I’ve improved because I’ve seen other people do it. That’s the positive side, the amount of information that can be shared is almost endless.

I think social media sites have hindered the hobby by bringing out quite a bit of politics and opinions. I’ve seen it across multiple pages, there’s a lot of politics and outside stuff that comes in, and sometimes people’s feelings can get hurt.”

Q: You mentioned some challenges that youth face in this hobby. Do you think these challenges have a negative effect on the growth of the hobby? Do you think the model railroading hobby is “dying” out?

A: “I wouldn’t say it’s dying out; I’d say that the hobby is coming to a pause. The hobby seems to

pulse from what I understand. There’s no real way to gauge when it will pulse again; it’s kind of like the stock market: at one point in time there’s an influx of people, then it dies out for a while, but then pulses again.”

Shane brought up some very interesting points in his answers. He had very interesting views on whether or not the hobby was “dying” out. Like you read earlier, Shane mentioned that the hobby “pulses”, and sometimes many people will join at once, but then other times a few members may lose interest.

Throughout the interview, Shane mentioned some of the challenges that youth face in the hobby. He mentioned that the two biggest challenges for youths are financial and geographical. I can relate to the challenges he mentioned. It’s always tough to come up with the money to pay for several new freight cars or locomotives. I’m challenged geographically, in a financial way. Like I said earlier, ordering merchandise from the US is costly, because of the current exchange rate and international postage costs.

I encourage you to visit Shane’s YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/thebrakeman17>). He produces high-quality, informative videos, so check him out!

An Interview With Johnny of Southeast Rails:

The next person I wanted to interview was Johnny of Southeast Rails

on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SoutheastRails/feed>). He works with a group of model railroaders at Trainmaster Hobby Shop, on their store layout, and posts update videos to his channel.

Johnny isn’t a minor, but at “23” (or so he claims), he feels young at heart. Johnny volunteers his time and works with two young adults who have special needs. Johnny works with John, who is 35 years old and models HO, and Kyle, who is in his late 20s.

Q: You work with John and Kyle in the model railroading hobby. What do you do with them?

A: “I work with John more than Kyle now. Kyle used to be in a model railroading group called “Rooster’s Perch”. The group owned part of a large warehouse, so we would set up a large layout table in there. Unfortunately, they had to move to a much smaller space and didn’t have room for the larger trains. I figure they could probably fit a Z scale layout in their new space, but that was out of the question for Kyle, as he doesn’t have very developed fine motor skills, and can’t handle the small trains.

I still work with John at his house on his home layout. I’m over there at least twice every month, sometimes three times per month, helping out on his layout. I help him with anything with which he needs help.”



John focuses his attention to what he enjoys most in the hobby— switching in the yard.

Q: Do John and Kyle enjoy the hobby? What aspects are they most interested in?

A: “They both really enjoy the hobby. John really enjoys watching the prototypes, the 1:1 scale trains. He knows the different railroad schemes and locomotive styles. He can also tell the difference from a good variety of rolling stock. I believe the love of trains is one of the main reasons John is interested in the hobby. John also loves yards and switching. He drew himself a plan for the layout he wanted, and it included a huge yard. For now, on his home layout, he’s got a loop and a passing siding, and he has a lot of fun operating that.

Kyle is very similar when it comes to his interest with the

real trains. He enjoys the hobby because of the trains themselves.

Many people who have special needs have very specific interests within the hobby, just like John and Kyle do. When they’re part of a club, you have to assign them a task that they want to do, otherwise they won’t do the task at all, especially if they’ve never tried it before. Sometimes you can ease them into it a bit, but for the most part it’s a definite ‘no’, because they don’t think they can do it, even though they can.”

Q: Do you know how they got interested in the hobby?

A: “I’m really not sure how either got involved. I think it was kind of how you and I got involved – an interest in the railroad.”

Q: Are there any challenges that people with special needs face in the hobby? Do these challenges differ from those that people without special needs face?

A: “Yes, there are more challenges that people with special needs face compared to people who don’t have special needs, because their learning abilities are different. It takes them longer to learn, and sometimes they can’t learn it at all, depending on the complexity of the task.

While we easily can focus on many things at once, people who have special needs have different focusing capabilities. John, for example, has to focus on one thing at a time. If he focuses on too many things at once, he’ll do one task, but will forget to do

the rest. John comes down to Trainmaster's Hobby Shop to help out on the layout every once in a while. You can only give him one thing to do at a time, but he'll do it. Sometimes, when you give him a job to do, John will take a little longer to complete it. That's not because he's slow, it's just because he has to get it perfect to be satisfied with his work. Because he has to have it just so, John does some pretty awesome work. John has hand-eye coordination and good fine-motor skills, so he does build his own models. Kyle, however, doesn't have good fine-motor skills, so he can't build models or handle the small, such as Z scale trains.

Another challenge for people with special needs is that sometimes, they can't grasp certain concepts, such as switching tracks, even after being shown how. John has a partial layout set up at home, and I recently made a loop for him, so he could run some trains continuously. Like I mentioned before, he loves switching, so he desperately wanted a few spurs and passing tracks installed. I recently put in a 12-car passing track for him, with a switch on/off the main at either end. He uses Atlas Snap Switches because they're easy to install and throw. I showed him how to switch the new siding. John struggled with the idea that when you throw one switch at one side of the pass track, you have to throw the other switch at the other end to match. If you fail to align

both switches, the train will derail. The first few times he operated it, his train derailed. After a few runs, he got it down pat. I came back to his layout two weeks later, and he told me that his train is always derailed at one end of his pass track. I asked him if he remembered to throw both turnouts. Sure enough, he had forgotten to throw the second turnout. Eventually, he will get used to throwing both turnouts, because he sees them almost every day, and with enough practice, will get in the 'groove' of throwing both turnouts to match.

The financial aspect actually isn't such a large challenge for them. They're both able to work, and John is currently employed as a bagger at a grocery store. Kyle also has had jobs. Their incomes may not be much, but they're really proud of what they do. The money they earn helps them pay for the expenses involved with this hobby."

With his answers, Johnny explained that this hobby offers something for everybody of every age. Having special needs doesn't affect your interest or enjoyment of the hobby. Being part of the hobby may be slightly more challenging with some disabilities, mental or physical.

Please visit Johnny's channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SoutheastRails/feed>) to see some of his work, as well as John's and Kyle's work on the Trainmaster Store layout.

Conclusion:

I got my answer: it seems the majority of modelers who got started with the hobby have an interest in real railroads. The "World's Greatest Hobby" is in good hands with this generation and the generations to come. Thousands of youth from around the world are a part of this hobby, and they will pass their interest on to their children, and even their grandchildren in the years to come. 

Special Thanks To:

Shane (thebrakeman17):

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thebrakeman17>

Johnny (Southeast Rails):

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SoutheastRails/feed>

About the Author

Jack Hykaway is 16 years old and lives in Winnipeg, Canada. Model railroading and rail-fanning are his favorite hobbies. He spends his free time working on his HO scale layout, or trackside waiting for the next train to roar past. Jack has been in the model railroading hobby since he was seven years old. Like most people, Jack started with an oval of track, and a train set. He built his present layout when he was 11 years old, and he is constantly upgrading it. However, there is still a long ways to go. Climb aboard and follow Jack's progress on the Silver Lake Junction layout on his YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/WinnipegRailfanner1>.

A Real Prime Mover



By [Chris Heili](#)

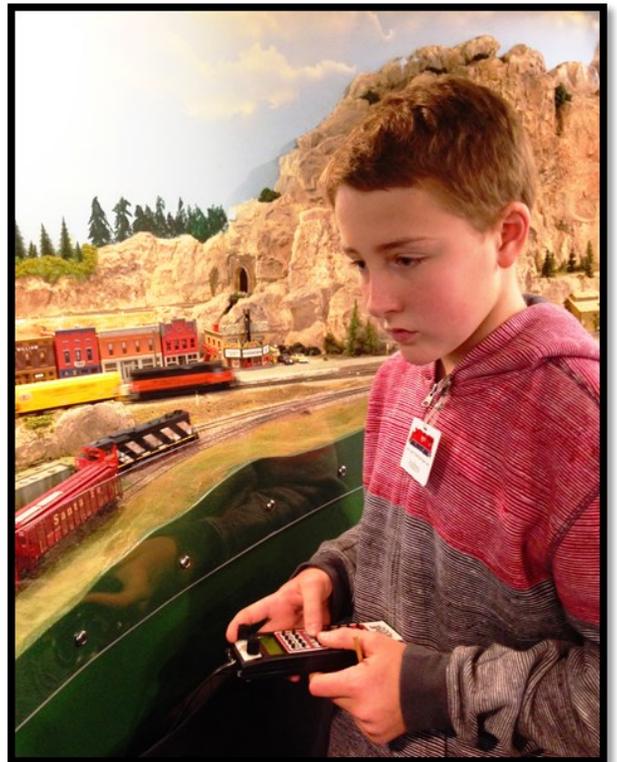
Two words: “No Idea.” This was the answer I got from 13 year old Andrew Gray of McHenry, IL when I asked him where he thought model railroading would take him. Under normal circumstances you would think this just means he doesn’t have a plan or he hadn’t really thought about it. But once you get to understand Andrew, you know it means he plans to take it as far as he possibly can and then keep going.

Andrew is not just a teenager that happens to like trains as a hobby. To say he’s passionate about them is an understatement. Trains are an integral part of his life, and they’re helping to define his future.

He currently has 3 model railroad

layouts and trains in 4 different scales. When he’s not busy with those you typically can find him out rail-fanning, watching a railroad DVD, or sketching up his latest idea for a new layout. You may even see him at one of the two different model railroad clubs to which he belongs. If it has to do with trains, he’s all in, and his parents Bill and Julie Gray do everything they can to feed his love of trains.

At a very young age, Andrew was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome (AS), a form of Autism that affects one’s ability to socialize and com-



Andrew runs trains like a pro at the club layout. Checkout Andrew’s YouTube video from when he was only 7 years old by clicking [here](#).

Andrew enjoys adding graffiti and weathering to his rolling stock.



municate. One of the characteristics of AS is an intense focus on a single subject. For him, that subject is trains.

It all started on his 2nd birthday, after he got a wooden Thomas the Tank Engine set as a gift. A locomotive named Gordon became his favorite, “because he was the fastest.” In fact, he loved Gordon so much that mom had to keep at least 2 extras on hand. “I had to keep a backup to the backup,” said Julie, “in case he lost one or two.”

Just pushing wooden trains around was not enough for Andrew. Every other week his father Bill would build a new track layout and Andrew would spend the next two weeks “re-engineering” it to his liking.

From wooden Thomas trains, the next step was a Lifelike HO scale



*Welcome to the Plymouth Rock & Eastern Railway.
A long trestle is one of the signature scenes on Andrew's garden railroad.*

train set, “in a Figure 8,” quoted Andrew. It turned out to be much more than just a train set. It also became a great learning tool. “Having to control the electric train and re-rail those HO scale train cars really helped Andrew develop his

fine motor skills,” said Bill.

As his love for trains continued to grow, Andrew expanded his passion by watching videos of real trains. When he began to demonstrate photographic memory at the age of

6, Bill and Julie leveraged his learning by equating everything to trains. “What color are Union Pacific box cars?” they would ask; “Yellow,” he would answer. If you ask him, “What is the state capital of Wyoming?”, not only will he answer “Cheyenne,” but he also will tell you what railroad lines run through there and give you the history of those lines. (Plus any tunnels, bridges and rivers you may encounter along the right of way.)

To help feed the ever-growing passion, Bill bought an RV camping trailer and began taking Andrew on trips to see the real railroads in action. Eventually that RV ended up on a permanent site at the Plymouth Rock Camping Resort near Plymouth, WI. That’s where I had the privilege of meeting Andrew, Julie, and Bill.

Last summer, at a meeting of the Plymouth Model Railroad Club, one of the members said he could arrange for us to see a large garden

Even Andrew's bedroom has a 4'x 6' HO scale layout.



railroad layout at Plymouth Rock. It turned out to be Andrew Gray and his [Plymouth Rock & Eastern Railway \(PREX\)](#). We

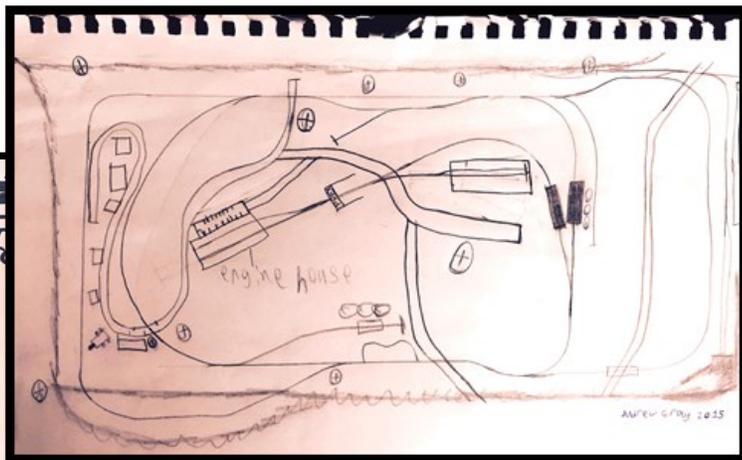
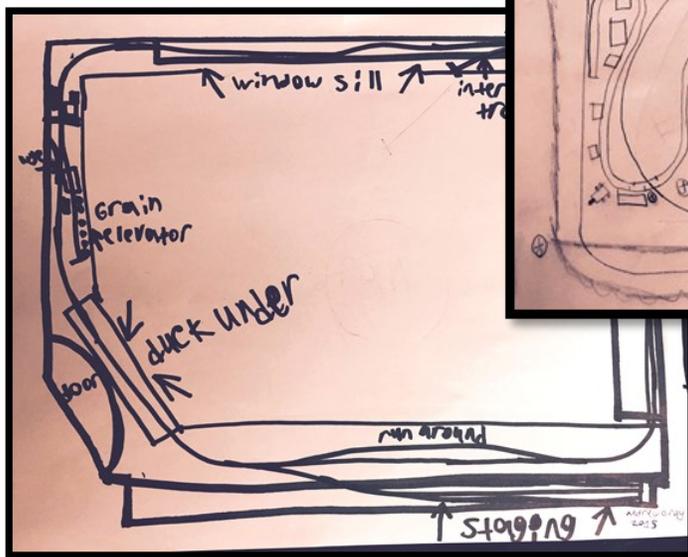
all had such a great time and were so impressed with him that we made him an honorary member before we left.

Andrew spends his winters at home in Illi-

nois where he has a 4'x 6' HO scale layout in his bedroom and a larger, modular layout in his playroom. He is also a member of the [Lake County Model Railroad Club](#) in Wauconda IL. But, when summer rolls around, he heads for Wisconsin and his G scale layout which was built not only for fun but for valuable life skills, as well.

Difficulties in social interaction is one of the hallmarks of Asperger's Syndrome. It's not that they're shy, but people with AS tend to carry on long, one-way conversations on a topic of their own interest without regard to the other party. "The idea of the outdoor G scale layout was to attract people so Andrew would learn to interact with strangers of all ages" said Julie. Meeting new people and showing them his railroad has helped Andrew learn two-way conversation and be accepting of others.

In fact, this has worked so well that Andrew is now starting to take on the role of teacher. When his club



Some of Andrew's layout sketches he shared. Andrew has captured some impressive layout design elements.

has an open house, he really seems to enjoy teaching others how to get started in model railroading.

Andrew also loves to do layout planning. Julie keeps "a crazy amount" of pencils and sketch pads on hand for him to use in drawing. He shared some of his plans with me and all I can say is, "he gets it". Layout planning is something I've studied and enjoy. I know good plans when I see them. While I was impressed with the layout plans he showed me, I was even more impressed by the LDEs (layout design elements) I saw sketched on the pages between layouts. It's obvious he's not just memorizing, but truly understanding how railroad tracks are used in the real world.

Andrew is a fountain of railroad knowledge and quickly can recite locomotive makes, models numbers and all kinds of other trivia. And if by chance he doesn't know an answer he will grab his smart phone and look it up. His enthusiasm is

contagious and he lights up the room whenever he shows up.

Where will model railroading take Andrew? He may have no idea right now, but Bill and Julie know it's been a great vehicle for developing his life skills.

My answer would be....."Where is Andrew going to take model railroading?" 🚂

About the Author

Chris Heili is an avid model railroader who currently is building a large HO scale prototype layout of Montana Rail Link's Mullan Pass. In addition to serving as President of the Plymouth Model Railroad club, he also belongs to a round-robin group and enjoys hosting operating sessions. He enjoys sharing his layout on his MRL Trains [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#), too.

Gerrad, Autism, And Model Railroading



By William (Bill) J. Beranek —The Track Planner

In early June, I got a call from JD (*Editor-in-Chief of YouTube Model Builders eMag*). JD asked if I would be interested in writing an article for the upcoming issue of YouTube Model Builders eMag on how, as a child, I got into model railroading and if that early exposure eventually led to my current track planning business. I had gotten into the hobby because of my older brother, not the usual "train under the Christmas tree" story; JD felt that could be a story worth telling.

During our phone conversation, I offhandedly mentioned the experience myself and others in our model railroad club are having with a young man diagnosed with autism, and the growth we have witnessed in this young man. After hearing the story, JD said, "You have to tell this story to the YouTube modeling community." I said I would be happy to write about the young man, but first, I needed to get permission from his parents. JD asked me to try and if I did, please write about my experience.

On a personal note, autism is of special interest to my wife, and myself, because we have a grandson with Asperger's Syndrome, an autism disorder characterized by significant difficulties with social interaction and nonverbal communication skills. When I contacted the parents, they agreed to let me write this article

and said it would be all right to use their son's real name. Below is the story of my experience with Gerrad Reynolds, model railroading, and our model railroad club.

First, a little background on Gerrad is in order. When Gerrad was in 6th grade, diagnoses found he had a high functioning form of autism. This was in 2010; around the same time, Ger-

Gerrad Reynolds standing next to his layout holding a diesel engine.



rad joined the [Northern Colorado Model Railroad Club \(NCMRC\)](#), a club with approximately 140 members and the one I have belonged to since 2002.

Individuals with a high functioning form of autism can still have social issues and problems with communication. When Gerrad joined the NCMRC, understandably, he was hesitant to make conversation and making eye contact was difficult. Gerrad had joined a model railroad club where the average age of the membership was nearing 55 or higher. Even for someone without autism, communicating with people four times your age can be difficult.

As time passed, Gerrad grew more comfortable and I noticed he was starting to open up. He would carry on a conversation with you and his love of trains and model railroading seemed to be the link. Then something happened that I doubt anyone could or would have predicted.

The NCMRC was having problems getting members to enter monthly modeling contests. The problem was our club has some of the best scratch builders anywhere and a large percentage of those individuals have won national awards for their scratch building skills. Some of our less talented members felt intimidated. We even tried dividing the contests into skill levels, without success.

One of our talented scratch builders suggested we include "show-n-tell" into our monthly meeting. His theory was, people may not like to compete in a contest format, but most people like to talk about their current modeling project. About a year

and a half ago, we started allotting a few minutes at monthly meetings for "show-n-tell." "Show-n-tell" became one of the most popular activities at our monthly meetings, sometimes lasting half an hour. It is amazing to see how people you normally would never hear from, get up in front of fifty plus people, and talk about their latest project.

How does all of this relate to Gerrad? At one of our meetings, Gerrad advised us he had something he wanted to share with the club during "show-n-tell". To say we were surprised is a huge understatement. Gerrad had brought some pages from railroad magazines and proceeded to tell the club about those things of interest to him. Gerrad did an incredible job and everyone gave him a round of applause at the end. Since that first "show-n-tell," Gerrad has done other "show-n-tells" equally as well. Members have commented on how much Gerrad has opened up and grown since joining the club. Today, Gerrad will carry on conversations with people three or four times his age and he will look you in the eye.

I am sure there are many stories out there like Gerrad's, but for me it has been very rewarding to see how model railroading and hopefully our club has helped this young man grow as a person. During my email correspondence with the mother, she wrote me the following story:

"In January of 2014, Gerrad had his tri-annual IEP test and all of his social skills came out normal. He scored so well on his tests and his teachers gave such positive feedback regarding his communication skills that he

no longer needs special services by the school district."

His mother further stated:

"Gerrad has grown tremendously in his eye contact with people and his communication skills. After high school, Gerrad wants to go to a Union Pacific training school."

She signed off by saying, "Thanks for thinking of him!" 

About the Author

Bill Beranek - The Track Planner has over forty years in the model railroading hobby. Bill enjoys golfing, travelling, and of course designing "prototypical operations" focused track plans. He has been a member of a local 135+ member model railroad club since 2003 and has served twice as the club's president, twice as a board member, and is currently serving as the club's treasurer.

Bill is currently working on his latest triple-deck HO scale layout depicting the SP&S (Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway) in southern Washington and the OTL (Oregon Trunk Line) on the upper level in northern Oregon in the mid 50's.

You can find more about Bill—The Track Planner at:

www.thetrackplanner.com.

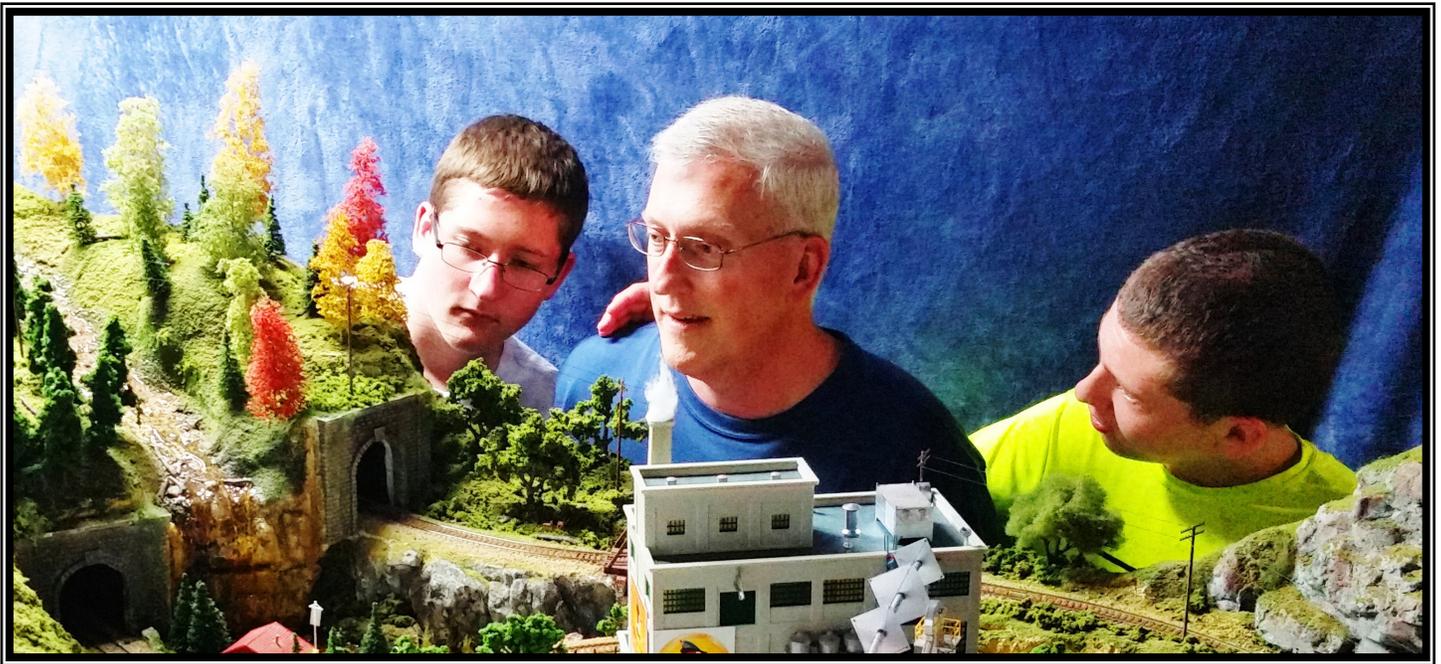
Your YouTube Model Builders Team is working for you! We bring the YouTube channels and FREE resources for model railroading to your doorstep.

Model Railroading - A Special Hobby Indeed!



By Daniel P. Duviviers

Why Model Railroading Can be Great for Special Needs Children.



Dan (middle), and his two sons Evan (left) and Matthew (right) watch in anticipation as they wait for a train to pop out of the tunnel on their 6' x 8' Grand Valley Railroad.

Recently I had the pleasure of speaking with Bill Graham on the phone and was asked to write an article for the upcoming issue of the YouTube Model Builders eMag. To be honest, I felt extremely honored and humbled to contribute my reasons why I became interested in model railroading and to speak about my layout, The Grand Valley Railroad; but for me, it had a deeper meaning as to why I got back into the hobby. It's more than just laying track and adding detailed scenes to my layout. Model railroading has allowed me not only

to express my creativity and detail-oriented skills, it also has allowed me to spend time with the two most important people in my life: my sons Evan and Matthew.

My son Evan, 15, is extremely creative and quick on his feet when I have some complex issues to solve on the layout. I can always turn to Evan and bounce ideas off him and watch his creative process and ingenuity come to life to solve the problems. A very smart kid, just like his mom (I was paid to say that), Evan has a love for switchers and switching activities on the layout.

When I sat down with Evan to write this article, I asked Evan what he liked about switching and he replied, "I have more fun operating the switchers in the yard because there's more to do." Evan continued to say that, "I want to be part of the action and being a yardmaster allows me to do that."

Evan enjoys the detailed scenes in the yard and feels more in control of the switchers when operating them in the yard, and states, "I don't like to put a switcher or GP-38 on the main layout and just watch it run. I

want to couple cars together and bring cars to different industries.”

Evan really can't wait for Christmas this year as I, (oops...Santa), mentioned to him that I was going to add another cab to the NCE power cab system so that he can work the yard while I run the main line. Not a bad tradeoff considering the fact that I'm able to share the hobby that I love so much with my son, and get him involved with something other than his cell phone or video games.

Evan has also mentioned to me several times that he would like to see an expansion of the layout. He would like to only see two or three main builds on the new layout, and have them represent a larger portion of the layout, so we can focus our attention on details and having them

look more prototypical. For example, Evan would like to see a paper mill factory or chemical plant on the expansion, and not worry about space limitations, so the scenes can look more prototypical instead of compressing scenes like I did on our existing layout due to space restrictions.

Evan has expressed to me on several occasions that he would like to take part in building the bench work, if we expand the layout. I was really excited to hear that Evan had such an interest in building, and when I asked Evan why that was so important to him, he mentioned that "I like working with wood and it would be a great hands on activity for me so I can learn to put something together, I really like to build things."

You might want to be on the lookout for him in weeks to come on YouTube, switching trains on the staging area, while I video his passion.

Both of my children are equally special in their own way, but why this hobby is so incredibly special is the fact that one of my sons, Matthew, 17, has special needs and is incredibly passionate and fascinated with model railroading, and trains in general.

Two years ago when Matthew was 15, he continued playing with Thomas the Tank Engine trains, both the wooden and plastic ones. I wanted him to play with something that was more age-appropriate. So I decided to get back into the hobby I loved so much when I was a kid, and share it

Dan and his sons Evan (left) and Matthew (right) plan the details of a possible future expansion of their layout.



with both of my boys. The transition for Matthew was quite easy; “when do we start dad?”

What has given me the ability to get back into this hobby easily in 2013 was an HO Woodland Scenics kit entitled “The Grand Valley Railroad”. This kit has allowed me to easily transition back into the hobby without purchasing an expensive list of power tools.

From the moment I opened the box, Matthew’s eyes lit up with excitement as he couldn’t wait for me to put it together. Everyday, Matthew would come home from school and ask me how my day went, and what progress I had made with the layout. He has always had an encouraging word for me every day, and never lacks enthusiasm, even to this day. I was always amazed at Matthew’s ability to show me everything I had

worked on that day, and talk about it in great detail. It put such a spark in my son’s eye that perhaps, this in itself, gave me the motivation and confidence I needed to see to it that the Grand Valley Railroad was going to be a success. I didn’t want to let him down!

Of course as you might have guessed, Matthew also brings up the possibilities of an expansion to the already 6’ x 8’ layout. As I told both boys, if we can make more room in the basement, it’s certainly plausible. Christmas isn’t really that far folks!!

Despite Matthew’s learning disabilities and Epilepsy, he continues to show an interest in model railroading and his passion is evident when we go in the basement together and play with the trains on the layout. I just recently started to show him how to control movement of the

switchers on the layout, and was quite impressed with what he has retained thus far, in such a short amount of time. Watching his facial expressions and excitement is so rewarding for me as a parent of a special needs child, and one of the biggest rewards I have had thus far since I’ve come back to model railroading. Perhaps his passion for trains, with the throttle at hand, has given him the confidence needed to further empower his ability to operate the layout on his own one day - a dream for Matthew, I know.

In my opinion, we all inspire one another and have an obligation as model railroaders to help educate each other so that we all have layouts of which we can be proud. This is a special hobby indeed! 🚂

An excursion Denver and Rio Grande Western 2-6-0 steams past the grain storage facility on Dan’s Grand Valley Railroad.



About the Author

Daniel P. Duviviers is a YouTube channel owner who has been model railroading since January 1, 2013. The Grand Valley Railroad measures 6’ x 8’ and represents the 80’s era. Dan enjoys operating his layout with his two sons Evan and Mathew. Together they enjoy adding as much detail as they can to the layout. You can follow their progress by checking out their YouTube channel the Grand Valley Railroad at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMoQ6qbXYIIIkVpd98dmUcA>.

YouTube Model Builders LIVE!

Join Us LIVE Every Month

Air Dates

YouTube Model Builders LIVE! show is aired monthly with a great line up of events and panel members. The main focus of YouTube Model Builders LIVE! is to provide a Q&A style forum for YouTube modelers to interact with their favorite YouTube model builders. Come watch and remember to register for great door prizes during the show! For the latest schedule updates go to www.YouTubeModelBuilders.com.

July 18th, 2015

Summer is in full swing and there is plenty to do outdoors, but we have some tips for you on keeping those modeling projects going even while you're cooking the hot dogs!

Panel Members: [Tarik Sykes \(a.k.a. DUNKonDUNKS\)](#), [Barry Rosier](#), [Dude Lindler](#), and [ModelerManMike](#)

August 15th, 2015

It is the Dog Days of Summer, and we are getting closer to the modeling season. This show will be on your basic, mid-range and top-of-the-line modeling tools.

Panel Members: [Barry Rosier](#) and [William "Big Bill" Graham](#)

September 19th, 2015

Cooler weather ahead, and summer will be behind us. The modeling season is about to commence!

Panel Members: [Barry Rosier](#) and [William "Big Bill" Graham](#)

COMMUNITY COLLAGE

Keith Edwards' [Sandwell Valley Railway](#)



In this issue we present pictures from Keith Edwards' YouTube channel. Although Keith's channel has many videos dedicated to his caving adventures, you will find many interesting and highly enjoyable videos of his beautiful G scale Thomas and Friends based [Sandwell Valley Railway](#).

In each issue we choose one YouTube model railroader and feature a collection of photographs of their layout, building structures, or any other YouTube model railroad related project. If you would like to share pictures of your layout in the Community Collage, please contact us at

YTMBemag@gmail.com.



PICK 3

In each issue we share with you three YouTube Model Builders' channels that stand out and provide the model railroading community new and interesting ideas, tips, tricks, and resources. Please check them out!



Donnie Dixon

<https://www.youtube.com/user/graywolfdonnie>

Donnie is a 14 year old modeler whose videos range from product reviews to weathering tips. Donnie's scale-of-choice is HO. He describes himself as "a major Santa Fe modeler."



Shane Mason—thebrakeman17

<https://www.youtube.com/user/thebrakeman17>

Shane is a 17 year old modeler and is a member of the Heartland NTrak of the Greater Kansas City Train Club. He manages the NTrak Facebook page. Shane has modeled in several scales but has settled on the N scale. Shane has quickly become an expert at installing DCC decoders in N scale engines. He enjoys sharing tips and talk with other train fans.



Pine Tree Junction

<https://www.youtube.com/user/PineTreeJunction>

This channel is hosted by Pine Tree Junction, a 45mm G scale garden railway that includes both electric and live steam locomotives. This is an enjoyable channel for younger train fans (and even the whole family), as most of the videos center around the locomotives found in Thomas the Tank Engine and Thomas and Friends series.



Into Facebook?

Check out the YouTube Model Railroaders Facebook page!

YouTube Model Builders HANGOUTS

We now have three different types of Hangout Presentations each month!

For the latest schedule updates please go to www.YouTubeModelBuilders.com.



The first Tuesday of each month is Geno's Show!

Geno's show is all about structures, weathering, scenery, and more.



The second Tuesday of the month is an open presentation hosted by Troy Pendzimas.

The third Tuesday of the month is an open presentation hosted by Dude Lindler.

Open presentations are topic driven and fellow YouTube modelers are brought in to present and answer questions from the panel and the viewers.



Every fourth Tuesday of the month is the MRR Tech Show hosted by Barry Rosier and Mike Dettinger.

The MRR Tech show is all about the technology of model railroading. Covered topics include DCC, JMRI, animations, 3D printing, and much more.

Calling all geeks!

My Journey Into Model Railroading...



By Patrick Lynch (Oliver GWR)

How Thomas the Tank Engine Led Me to Model Railroading

It was eye catching. Thomas the Tank Engine was my favorite show growing up. It's why I'm a modeler today. When I was a young boy most of my friends were playing other games such as Pokémon. But I had a fascination with trains. When I first saw Thomas and Friends on TV it was an episode from season three called, "Henry's Forest". The episode featured a green engine called Henry, which I later discovered is based on a British steam engine called a Black Five. The episode also included Toby, a British steam tram. The episode was beautiful, and it really turned me on to trains. A few days later my moth-

er and sister went out to the nearest Target. When they came back that night they surprised me with two "Take Along" Thomas and Friends trains. Can you guess which engines? You guessed it: Toby and Henry. I was ecstatic! This is how it all began.

Soon, I was watching episodes left and right. And I grew an even bigger collection of Take Along engines, and Wooden Railway trains as well. One day I watched a season four episode. It was called "Toad Stands By," and it featured a GWR 14xx 0-4-2T built by Charles Collett in Swindon Works in 1934. His name is

Oliver. I fell in love with Oliver's confident but kind-hearted and determined personality. He soon became my favorite character and has been ever since. I was desperate for Oliver in any form of toy I could get. I had him in Wooden Railway and Take Along. But that wasn't enough. Years went by and I had finally ditched the Wooden Railway and the Take Along toys for something more advanced. I settled on Plarail and Tomy. These trains are more detailed and run on batteries. I eventually found a Plarail Oliver which had to be imported from Japan. I soon got him and then started buying more Plarail trains from Japan because they had more detail.

About two and a half years ago, we were at my uncle's house for Christmas Dinner and gift exchange. We had just finished eating and were about to open gifts, when he pulled me aside to show me his HO scale Thomas and Friends collection from Bachmann. I was impressed, and he said HO scale trains are way better than my battery operated Plarail trains. He told me to consider buying some. Of course I knew I couldn't collect both Plarail and Bachmann trains. I only had one place to put them, which was in the biggest room in my basement. I was torn.

A year went by and I made a decision. I would grow up and become a

The famous Thomas the Tank Engine (loved by many children), model from Hornby is based on the Billington E2-Class 0-6-0T engine.





Oliver, Patrick's favorite engine, is based on a GWR (Great Western Railway) 14xx 0-4-2T engine number 1436 built at Swindon Works.

modeler. When I went over to my uncle's house for our annual Christmas Dinner the following year, he surprised me with a brand new HO set called, "Salty's Dockside Delivery." I was thrilled. It reminded me of the first toy train I ever got when I was three years old. Now, here I was thirteen years old, and feeling like I was three all over again. I went home late at night and went to bed feeling very happy. I woke up the next morning and opened my other Christmas gifts. The gifts were okay but none of them compared to my new set. That day I made a video reviewing it and uploaded it to my channel. I started buying more engines from Bachmann. It was great. I soon had a lot of Bachmann engines. But I felt as if I were missing something. It was Oliver. I needed an HO scale Oliver.

I knew the only company that made him was Hornby. They are a British company of course, so I had to look on eBay. Prices were not on my

side. I knew I couldn't afford it and I usually bought engines by doing yard work with my dad. With fall quickly approaching, and football, and school as well, I knew there would be no time to earn \$250. I told my dad about my situation and he was surprisingly very supportive, and we came up with a deal. He said do something very good on the football field, and I could have the \$250 to buy Oliver. I did just what he said I had to do. That night when we came home from the season opener, we purchased him.

I now proudly own eight Hornby engines. Six of them are very rare and one of them is filled with detail. It's a Bullied Q1. I turned him into a character from the

Salty is based on the actual BR Class 07 diesel shunter number 2991.



show called Neville. I took a Plarail Neville's face off and glued it on the smoke box of the train. I'm proud of how it came out and you can see the picture of it below as well as other photos from my collection.

This is a hobby where I can show my true creativity. My friends think it's silly that I "play with toys," but a real modeler knows it's not playing. It's something into which I want to invest more time and money. I want to take this through my adulthood, and hopefully pass it on to my kids when I'm a married man. I've had lots of luck. I have a supportive family and supportive friends on YouTube as well. This summer I plan to get a job to make money so I can build my dream layout. This layout will be based on the "Island of Sodor" where Thomas and his friends live. I make YouTube videos too. My favorite thing to do in these videos is trying different angles and doing my own



Patrick's weathered and customized 6 Ton Wagon and rare Hornby engines.

steam effects. I hope you enjoyed my story about becoming a young train modeler. Keep modeling, everyone! 🚂

About the Author

Patrick Lynch is a 14 year old modeler who loves to collect and model Plarail, Bachmann HO scale, and Hornby OO scale trains based on the British television series Thomas

and Friends. Patrick plans to build a layout representing "The Island of Sodor" which is based on this series. When Patrick is not modeling, he is either playing football, gaming, or just hanging out with his family. He's a rising freshman and will be playing football for his high school team. You can check out his model railroad on his YouTube channel [Oliver GWR](#).

Hornby's OO scale version of the SR Bullied Q1, 0-6-0 tender engine has been customized with Neville's face added to the smoke box.



It All Started With Casey Jones Junior



By **Marcos Huizel**

A Young Modeler's Chronical of his Model Railroad

Every model railroader has a beginning - a point that they remember from way back when that got them fired up for the hobby. Lots of us share similar experiences of how we all started and how we arrived to where we are today, in our skills and in what we like. I began to take an interest in trains from as far back as I am able to remember. It all began when I was a toddler and watched Walt Disney's Dumbo and seeing Casey Jones Junior, the little steam engine that pulled the big circus train up the mountain and winding through the hills. Ever since then I have been captivated by steam engines. Another very big influence was my grandfather. Whenever he would come over, when I was younger, to watch me while my parents were out; we would always watch train videos and play together with the wooden trains. As I got a little older, my grandfather, dad, and I would go all the time to the Twin City Model Railroad Museum at Bandana Square. We would be there for hours watching the trains on the massive O scale layout they have there. My parents would also take me to go watch trains like the Burlington Northern and the Soo line, when they were domi-

nant in Minnesota and upper Midwest. During the summers as time progressed, my dad would pull out an old train table from the attic in the garage and I would play with the trains that used to be his. And once in a while, my grandfather, or my uncle Bryan, would find one of their old trains and bring them for me to run. This continued for many years until I turned thirteen.

The Golden Age of Steam

On that day, my dad took me to the train store and bought me my own first HO train - a small beautiful steam engine. It is a NYC 0-6-0 and

it still runs occasionally on the L.V.R.R. today. When I got home, the first thing I did was call to tell my grandpa about it, and I asked if he would come and see it (he only lived three houses down the street), and we ran that steamer for hours. After that point, I began to gain more interest in model railroading. That winter, I was allowed to bring the table from the garage into the basement so I could continue playing with the trains year round. Then we found out about train shows and my grandfather, dad, and I started going to those all the time, and thus the snow ball effect began. I even joined a train club and went there every Friday night to run trains until the early hours of the morning. At the club I meet a very

Marcos' interest in trains began at an early age.



good friend of mine, Cal, who has always been there to help me in the hobby, whatever it may be. One thing I always remember that he advised me to do, and is perhaps the most important advice to ever use in model railroading, is “pick a time and a single railroad and focus on it.” This advice was a major influence on my decision to model the Golden Age of Steam.

When I turned fifteen, we moved out of the state, so the scenery had to be taken out and the train tables were sold. However, it was a great leap, for I decided to get very serious. So I followed my friend’s advice, and that got me thinking of what I really wanted to model. In the end I choose to model the 1800’s or the Golden Age of Steam.

I chose to model the 1800’s for multiple reasons. The first reason was that I liked the smaller steam engines, and I like to watch western movies, particularly those with John

Wayne; and all the steam engines that appeared in his movies were always eye catching to me. Another aspect to make me model the time was Walt Disney’s steam engines that operate in Florida. They are just amazing engines, and I am amazed how they still operate after all these years. The primary reason why I choose this era to model was that no two engines were exactly identical at the time and each engine was treated differently in a special way, and always looked great. Engineers took pride in their steam engines back then for they would be assigned to that engine for a long time.

It Takes a Family

When I began building the railroad, it was a family project. Between my parents and me, we accomplished a lot on the layout in three years, even expanding it twice. Although each of us would focus on certain aspects, however, we all have worked on all

aspects of the layout. My mother would focus on fixing up the plastic structures, painting them, and the complex scenery. My father would build the plastic kits, do the plaster work and bench work. I would primarily focus on the engines, rolling stock, track work, electrical work, and wood structures. This system has worked great and we still follow it.

I started customizing engines because I could never find one that looked exactly how I wanted it to be. There was always something off. Either the headlight was wrong, or it was all black, or it just needed help. So I started working on making each engine something of its own. The first engine I customized was Major #2. I originally only wanted to put the silver boiler bands on it; however one idea led to the next, and the engine was transformed. The idea of how engineers would personalize their engines was a subconscious attribute to my desire to alter each engine and personalize them. I also named each engine because engineers used to name their engines. Sometimes they were named after proponent people related to the railroad, while other times it would be random. The names of each of the engines reflects a piece of their personality, role and how they inspired me. For example, engine #7, Silver,



Details such as a weathered steam shovel helps to complete the scene.





The Golden Age of Steam comes alive on Lepanto Valley RR as Silver (#7) catches the last gleaming rays of a sunset.

gained its name for its silver boiler rings. This gave me the idea to add boiler rings to many of the other engines. Also coincidentally, it is named Silver like the horse, "Ay oh Silver" from the Lone Ranger (the old west trend is maintained).

It Was an Uphill Climb

Every model railroader always has big hills they have to climb, or barriers they need to get past, and a lot of them cannot be passed alone. Some of these barriers or some of the difficulties I have had while beginning to model the 1800's was availability of information. There are seldom any very useful pictures online of engines from that time, especially in color, and determining what colors to use is difficult at best. So I had to do things the old fashioned way, (old fashion trend still going here). I had to look for books and articles about the real engines and models done by others. This barrier was passed when I became friends with Sam. He models the Western and Atlantic in the 1800's and we share

with each other any information, ideas, and things we find about this time period. We still learn a lot, but it's mostly me learning from him, for he knows a lot more than I do about the Golden Age of steam. Another barrier was, and still is, finding train models from the time period I am modeling. All the manufactures that produced engines and other supplies for the 1800's are mostly gone. The market for these engines today is limited, and those few engines that are available, require a lot of back-dating and custom work in order to correctly fit them into the time period. However, with patience and time, I have found lots of good rolling stock, buildings, and engines for the railroad. Whenever I find a great deal, I usually take it, for you never know when another one will come around. The places I surprisingly find a majority of the rolling stock and engines are at train sales. The funny thing is that I usually buy them from the same vendors, again and again, when I see them at various sales. So much so, that I know most of them, and they always bring

something for me to "check out," which usually turns into buying and taking it home.

Transition to Lepanto Valley Railroad

The railroad used to be called the McClintock and Western back in its beginning stages; however I decided to change it to Lepanto Valley. I decided to change the name because of its significance in history: the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 where European countries such as Italy, Spain, and other smaller countries (which no longer exist) were united under the Holy League (assembled by Pope Pius V) to defend against the threat from the Ottoman Empire. Thus I decided on Lepanto Valley to be the name of the railroad as it carries a significance of a time long forgotten, an aspect that I wanted to reflect in my model railroad.

Everyone in this world does something, and then realizes that they should have gone about it differently. Some things I may have done differently would be to build the layout as



Marcos now sees his layout as a miniature dream world, where he can go to a place in time that is thought to be no longer reachable.

a shelf around the room type layout, rather than a table type with a center cut out. Also, I would not have used such steep grades, and not have a hidden lower level for the main line, for I seldom use the entire loop on the lower deck, or the hidden freight yard. Another thing I learned is to look into the time period before you begin purchasing models for it. This is because most of the very nice engines and cars that always look great end up being in narrow gauge instead of standard gauge. The layout is now way too far along to use dual gauge track. I also learned to be patient when trying to find information, or things to buy for the layout. It will all turn up eventually, and even better than if you were to rush it. However I am very grateful for the way the Lepanto Valley Railroad has turned out and would not alter it from its current state.

Sharing What I Have Learned

The idea to share about the railroad on YouTube, Google Plus, and Facebook came when I began to do re-

search on the time period for my railroad. I saw there was a lack of modeling information and pictures of that specific time period, which was recently and routinely updated. So I decided to document my railroad in order to help others get ideas for their own layouts and see how things would look if they tried painting an engine a certain way, or if that type of building existed back then.

Now that I have finally graduated from high school, my view on model railroading has changed over the years - for the better. I used to view it as just playing with trains where one would just have a loop of track twisting and turning and crossing over itself with perhaps a switch or two. Now I see it as a miniature dream world, where I can go to a place in time that is thought to be no longer reachable. To see the Iron horses that are mostly extinct, and hear the sound of a lone whistle in the mountains, or a midnight express crossing a mighty trestle bridge at night, and a mighty freight train fighting its way up a steep grade to

the top of the plateau is rewarding. This is how I see the Lepanto Valley R.R. and will always continue to see and experience it in this great way - the mighty railroad of the Upper Midwest! 🚂

About the Author

Marcos Huizel, is the owner of and the one creating the magic behind the scenes of Lepanto Valley R.R.

Marcos is 19 years old and recently graduated from High School this year. He is pursuing a future career in aviation and is currently training for his private pilot's license. One can say he has steel and air in his veins. Marcos enjoys flying as well as model railroading. He became seriously involved with model railroading and working on the Lepanto Valley Railroad over four years ago. He is glad that many enjoy his work and he hopes to continue learning, enjoying, and sharing in this great hobby with many of you. You can see more of L.V.R.R. on Marcos' YouTube channel: [Lepanto Valley Railroad](#).



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Google+ Hangouts And Etiquette



Dude Lindler

YouTube Model Builders works very hard to bring YouTube model railroaders together in what is called Google+ Hangouts. Google+ has many free resources for us to use and we look forward to taking full advantage of these resources.

What is Google+ Hangouts? It's an application that runs through a web browser that allows up to 10 people to connect with webcams. Using this forum for model railroading discussions is great! It builds friendships, inspiration for model railroad building, and most of all, a great place to air your designs, models, and share in your building adventures with others in real-time. Many of the YouTube video producers you know "Hangout" in these Google+ Hangouts.

Many builders simply place their webcam on their pro-

ject they are working on and show others what they are doing; it may be they are building a model, laying track, or working on anything model railroad related. Many look for feedback from the group, get questions answered, and elaboration on the many projects on which they are working. It's simply a great place to interact in real-time with other YouTube model railroaders.

These Google+ Hangouts are posted most every day on the [Google+ YouTube Model Railroaders Community](#) page. You are not required to use a webcam or even a microphone; you may only use the provided chat box if desired.

With the utilization of Google+ Hangouts by many model railroaders, YouTube Model Builders is now scheduling specific types of events for the community members. Here are two Google+ Hangouts

that we have arranged to help bring more model railroaders together.

Topic Driven, Tuesday Night Hangout Presentations:

YouTube Model Builders invites specific guests to explain techniques in model building, and many times these individuals are invited to our topic driven hangouts based on videos they have produced. Showing the progress real time, the topic driven hangouts are moderated by YouTube Model Builders staff which keeps these hangouts on subject and informative. The Topic Driven Hangouts are much like clinics as they are more so for instruction and techniques shared by a presenting individual or individuals.

We now have three different types of Tuesday night hangout presentations. The

first type occurs on the first Tuesday of each month. It is Geno's Show, which is hosted by Geno Sharp of [Gknos Model Trains](#). The second type of hangouts are moderated presentations that are hosted by Troy Pendizmas of [Pacific North Central](#) and [Dude Lindler](#) on the second and third Tuesdays of each month respectively. The third type of moderated hangout presentation is the Barry and Mike MRR Tech Show which is moderated by [Barry Rosier](#) and Mike Dettinger. This show is presented on the fourth Tuesday of each month and focuses on the more technical aspects of model railroading such as DCC controls and JMRI. There are plenty of opportunities to learn from many experts in model railroading through these hangout presentations and shows. So come and join in the Hangouts!

General Moderated Hangouts: Thursday Nights

Where many hangouts posted through the Google+ YouTube Model Railroaders encompass many subjects and often have many people showing their layouts, and discussion varies from model railroading to just general conversation, YouTube Model Builders has a weekly scheduled, Thursday night, general moderated hangout, to specifically keep on the subject of model railroading. The Thursday night hangout is moderated by Johnny of [Southeast Rails](#) and the topic selection is really driven by community feedback.

YouTube Model Builders as a team helps drive these Hangouts, to spread the word, and get the YouTube Model Railroaders involved. Many people participate and as these numbers have grown, a simple etiquette is followed for the hangouts posted on YouTube Model Railroad resources.

Below is a simple guideline for participating in any YouTube Model Builders hangout event:

- Always keep the conversation G Rated.
- Refrain from political/religion based conversations.
- When not speaking, mute your microphone.
- Keep the hangout fun and on model railroading subjects.
- Remember, you're in a room with others, try not to monopolize speaking time. Allow others to get in their input.
- If you have your camera on, please be presentable – remember others can see you!

Following these simple etiquettes will make hangouts fun, and most of all, suitable for anyone who might want to join! We hope to meet you in a hangout in the near future if you don't already participate! If you have any questions on this subject, feel free to ask any one of the involved YouTube Model Railroaders to help get you into the fun sharing in the Google+ Hangouts. 🚂



YouTube Model Builders

Live Chat / Presentations **HANGOUTS**

YouTube Model Builders Tuesday night Topic-Driven presentation Hangouts start at 9 PM CST / 10 PM EST and are scheduled for up to 2 hours so you have plenty of time to ask questions and learn. These presentations are also recorded for later viewing. For the latest schedule updates go to www.YouTubeModelBuilders.com.

July 2015

- 21st: Dude Lindler hosts Bob Olson of [Da'Bobs N-Scale Mancave](#) to discuss construction of shelf layout bench work.
- 26th: The Barry and Mike MRR Tech Show: Scale model animations.

August 2015

- 4th: Geno's Show. Join Geno Sharp as he and Tim Garland discuss creating scenes for prototypical operations.
- 11th: Troy Pendzimas of Pacific North Central model railroad will host this presentation.
- 18th: Dude Lindler will host Chris Heili who will show us how to speed-match engines.
- 25th: The Barry and Mike MRR Tech Show: Turnout control methods including DCC.

September 2015

- 1st: Geno's Show. Geno Sharp will host the Editor-in-Chief JD (Loggin' Locos), and the edit staff of the YouTube Model Builders eMag. Come and find out everything you wanted to know about the eMag, and how to submit your articles and pictures.
- 8th: Troy Pendzimas of Pacific North Central model railroad will host this presentation.
- 15th: Dude Lindler will host this regularly scheduled Tuesday night presentation.



Google+ YouTube Model Railroaders Community! This is the place to be to discuss model railroading, YouTube production, and most of all, share your model railroading layouts and videos!

Food For Thought...

In our feature called "Food for Thought," members of the model railroading community are invited to write an opinion editorial on some matter relating to the model railroading hobby. Topics may range from simply thought-provoking to downright controversial.

Please read it over, and then share your thoughts with us. Do you agree with the statements in his article? Do you disagree? Do you wish to add another point of view that you feel should have been made? You can send your response to us at YTMBeMag@gmail.com. We'll pick some of the more interesting responses we receive and publish them in our next issue. Please include the text "Food for Thought" and the issue date in the subject line of your email, and let us know the name you'd like us to use if we publish your opinion. If you would like to submit an opinion piece of your own, please contact us at the same email address above. Submission guidelines can be found at www.YouTubeModelBuilders.com.

Our author this month is [Loggin' Locos](#), and his opinion piece appears below. We look forward to hearing from you!

Modeling Thomas And Friends Is Real Model Railroading!



By [Loggin' Locos](#)

This issue of the YouTube Model Builders eMag is focused on the young modeler. One of the points of entry for many young modelers, for almost the past 30 years, has been the very popular television shows "Thomas and Friends" and its American counterpart "Shining Time Station." Thomas the Tank Engine along with his friend engines have now influenced several generations of kids and many of them now enjoy model railroading and are actively involved in this hobby.

I myself have enjoyed watching many episodes of Thomas and Friends with my two children now ages 7 and 11. If I think about it, my own entry point into model railroading really

started by playing with my children with their motorized Thomas and Friends



Motorized engines run on intricately combined sets and tracks. An initial start to layouts for children.

train sets and helping them build some intricate layouts by combining various train sets with extra track sets. Approximately three years ago, I migrated over my children to Bachmann's HO scale Thomas and

Friends engines, rolling stock, and structures. Meanwhile I was also purchasing electric, diesel, and steam engines such as Broadway Limited's Y6B Norfolk and Western. Soon we had a pretty good collection going

and a small, mixed, layout came about.

As I started delving more and more into this hobby, I started thinking about what type of layout I would like to build. Although my primary layout that I am building is a free-lanced logging theme, one question came to mind. In light of the fact that I have a significant investment in Thomas and Friends HO scale engines, rolling stock, and structures, the question practically begged itself. If I were to make a layout and utilize Thomas and Friends structures and run the Bachmann HO trains from the Thomas and Friends series, would this be a real model railroad? If I used Tidmouth Sheds, Knapford station, the water tank, coaling tower, the windmill, Cranky the crane, Terrance the tractor, and vehicles such as Bertie the bus, then is the layout a legitimate model railroad layout? In other words is modeling Thomas and Friends and the Island of Sodor (where Thomas and Friends live and operate) real modeling?

Terrance the tractor is integrated into a coaling mine and tower scene.



A mix of Thomas and Friends, traditional DC and DCC based engines, and a mix of rolling stock formed an initial collection of model trains.

I started watching again the older (not the new computer graphics based), Thomas and Friends shows (produced by Britt Allcroft and David Mitton based on stories from the Reverend W. Awdry), on my kids' DVDs with them, and this time I paid attention to all the details. I also looked through my son's book titled

“Thomas' Big Story Book” (ISBN 0-375-84013-3), published by Random House. It has stories from the Thomas and Friends show and large photographs from the show set. I found it to be an excellent way to see how professional modelers did weathering.

In the show, the engines were real working model engines in G scale with moving eyes that were remotely controlled. They “weeshed” real steam! The setting stage (layout) was an amazing work of modeling! Everything was meticulously built by professional modelers. The layout consisted of hand crafted structures and buildings with weathering and lighting, working signals, scale roads and bridges, properly weathered tracks with ballast, amazing snow scenes; everything you see and read about in model railroading. The only thing that made this show for kids was the fact the engines had faces on them and they had narrated voices.

Ok, the figures were not realistic looking, but other than that, everything in the scenery was to scale and quite well modeled. Heck, I am envious of this layout and the models! Even all of the engines in the stories were prototypical, based on real British railways and real engines that actually operated on these railways. You can look up the engines at the “Thomas the Tank Engine Wiki” website ([TTTE WIKIA](http://TTTE.WIKIA)). This wiki provides details of each of the engine’s prototype along with engine class, era, service railway, years operated, designer, and manufacturer.



A weathered Bachmann HO scale 6 ton wagon from the Thomas and Friends series is based on a prototypical wagon found on many British railways.



I started asking the question “is modeling Thomas and Friends and the Island of Sodor real model railroading?” to many modelers I knew.

I asked this question on YouTube Model Builders community hangouts. I asked friends who are into model railroading. I asked workers at sev-

eral hobby shops. And I asked many people at model train shows. Majority of the people I spoke to initially said “No!” To them running engines with smiley faces and moving eyes did not make a legitimate layout. Then I asked the same question with more details and presented the following argument. What if the layout

Many Thomas and Friends engines, rolling stock, and structures were integrated with traditional model trains to create a hybrid layout. This started the questions posed herein.

was built on a base workbench that would support both DC and DCC operations; the track plan would support industries and operations, as well as mainlines and branch lines with signals. There would be all the ground cover, bushes, grasses, hills, trees, rocks faces, fences, figures, weathered track, ballast, weathered structures, weathered trestle bridges, weathered rolling stock, and even weathered engines.



Once the question was asked in this manner, then many of these same “No” answers became a “well in that case, Yes.”

Since watching these shows again and giving it some good thought, I fully believe that if I were to model a railroad with the same techniques as I indicated above, and with all the weathering and scenery, etc., and run Thomas and Friends engines, then it is still model railroading. It is not playing with toys! If you don't want to take my word alone, then see what these engines have to say on Keith Edwards' G scale garden layout by clicking [here](#). Even though Keith has not set out to create the Island of Sodor, you will have to agree that his [Sandwell Valley Railway](#) looks amazing and it is a legitimate model railroad!

No rule says I cannot model structures from this show and incorporate them with other structures (even from different eras) on my layout, and run some Thomas and Friends engines on it. And yes, of

course, I can also run my other DCC based engines on the same layout! It is up to your imagination and creativity to come up with what you want for your layout. That is part of the fun in this hobby.

As you have seen within the pages of this issue of the eMag, many young modelers have taken their foray into model railroading because of Thomas and Friends, and some are actively modeling engines and characters from the original shows. Here are links to some very creative modelers' YouTube channels. Many of them are young modelers, and yet, some of them are adults. Some are just starting out and some are very sophisticated. You be the judge.

- [Dwarfboysim's Model Railway Construction](#)
- [Calebtrain](#)
- [samuel1993](#)
- [Oliver Chapman](#)
- [Danthe25Man](#)
- [TheBlueE2](#)
- [TheTrainModeller](#)

- [cactus190706](#)
- [Oliver GWR](#)
- [mallardfan62](#)
- [Percyengine619](#)
- [BrickTsar's Basement and Beyond](#)
- [BramGroatFilms](#)
- [Daniel Alsop](#)
- [DuckGWR08](#)
- [bluecoatscheesypoofs](#)

G Scale Garden Railways

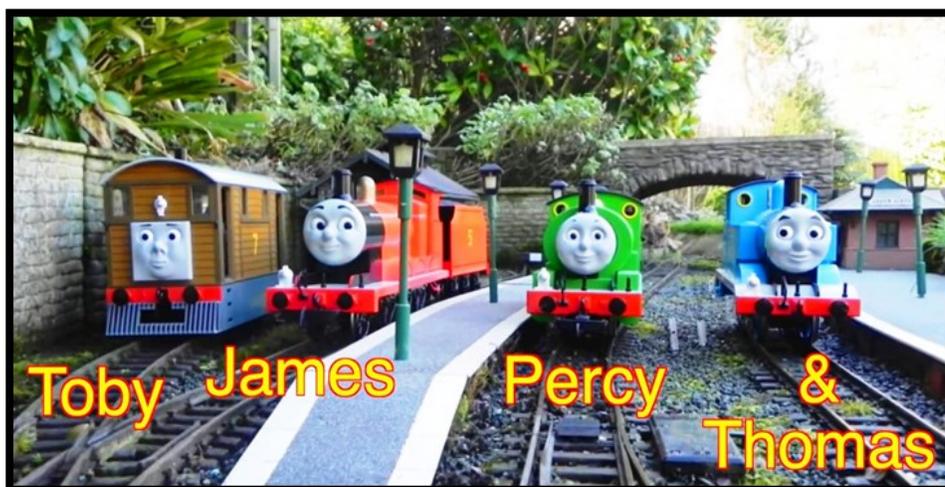
- [CFRailway](#)
- [Keith Edwards](#)
- [Pine Tree Junction](#)

What do you think? What is your perspective on the above posed question? Do you believe that modeling Thomas and Friends is real model railroading? 🚂

About the Author

Loggin' Locos is currently building two layouts. One is a logging camp based 6' x 12' table style layout. This is his first full sized layout. The other layout he is building is a dream layout in his mind with all the room in the world, from here to there, with all the perfectly weathered engines, rolling stock, structures, and scenery! Until he can get his dream layout to become reality, he is content documenting his current build on YouTube. You can follow him on his channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPYcxEM4s1qJJs0WzlmVyKA>.

Keith Edwards' G scale Thomas and Friends engines discuss on his YouTube channel that they are a fantastic way to promote railway modeling. They state they are not toys, and can "set children of on a lifelong love of model railways." Click [here](#) or on the picture below to see the video.



This free YouTube Model Builders e-Magazine is produced by the dedicated YouTube Model Builders team on a volunteer basis. Please visit their channels and show your support!

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Geno Sharp
Troy "PacificNorth Central"

A very special Thank You to Josie Haythorn for assistance with this issue's cover!

If you would like to submit an article for the YouTube Model Builders eMag or pictures for the Community Collage section, please contact us at: YTMBeMag@gmail.com. Submission guidelines can be found at www.YouTubeModelBuilders.com.

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