



# Modular Mumbblings

## The Amherst Railway Society, Inc. HO Scale Modular Layout

### Newsletter

#### Winter 2007

Sudro Brown [WCRY\\_1960@comcast.com](mailto:WCRY_1960@comcast.com)  
Clark Huber [chuber@charter.net](mailto:chuber@charter.net)  
Alan Rice [ABEL.planning@comcast.net](mailto:ABEL.planning@comcast.net)

Look for us on the Internet at [www.amherstrail.org/abl](http://www.amherstrail.org/abl)

#### And We're Off...

Wow! December already! Time has flown by and we are already three shows into the 2007-2008 season. The Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club show in September, Bedford Boomers 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary show in November, and now the HUB show this past weekend (December 1 and 2) are behind us and we are left with two more races to the finish - our own show in West Springfield at the end of January, and the Worcester Model Railroader's show at the end of February. We were sorry to hear that the NMRA Little Rhody Division show has been canceled for the spring of 2008, it always made for a great way to wrap up the season.

We have a few new faces to welcome into the Belt Lines circle. Travers Rank and Ken Wilson have joined *our* ranks (sorry, Travers, couldn't resist...!) as of the Pepperell show this year. Ken brings with him two terrific modules that were made "abel" to hook into the Belt Lines layout with just a few wiring modifications. His *Dunfermline Golf Club* and *Wheeler's Race Track and Stables* (*Wheeler's Downs* for short) have added considerable interest to the layout and attracted a great deal of attention. We were trying to figure it out this weekend, and we think we decided that the jockey in the yellow hat with the blue jacket is winning the race! (For those of you who haven't seen the module...all three jockeys are wearing the same colors...) We are happy to have both Travers and Ken along for the ride.

Now is also an appropriate time to say "Thanks" to everyone who has helped with setup, operation and tear down at the Pepperell, Bedford and Marlborough shows. We know that this layout is a success because each of you is willing to put in time to assist in the various activities that make this layout function. Clark, Sudro and Alan may coordinate the activities of the group, but it is *your* effort that makes everything come together at the show. We thank you all for your support and energy that have kept this organization functioning for nearly 30 years.

So, we are off and running, having gone down the back stretch we must be coming up on turn number three and getting closer to the home stretch...

#### Schedule for the Rest of the Year

Looking forward to the end of the season we have the following shows left on the calendar:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| January 26-27, 2008 | Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show, West Springfield, MA<br>Website: <a href="http://www.railroadhobbyshow.com">www.railroadhobbyshow.com</a> Setup of the venue and the Belt Lines layout starts at noon on Thursday, January 24 and continues on Friday, January 25. |
| February 24, 2008   | Worcester Model Railroad Club Annual Show, Auburn, MA<br>Website: <a href="http://www.wmrr.org">www.wmrr.org</a>  |

We look forward to seeing you and your module(s) at any or all of these shows!

#### The Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show – January 26-27, 2008

Here it is the beginning of December as this is being written and January looms far too close. Preparations are already underway for the largest show of the season – the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show. This year a fourth building has been added to the mix (Better Living Center, Young Building, Stroh Building and now a part of the Mallory Complex building!) in West Springfield, Massachusetts. The Show will be Saturday, January 26, 2007 from 9:00 AM to

5:00 PM and Sunday, January 27 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Setup will begin on Thursday, January 24 starting around noon.

If you would like to have your modules in the layout in West Springfield, **NOW** is the time to let Alan know that you will be bringing them and what you will be bringing. Any plan changes should be sent to Alan by email or as a sketch via the US Postal Service so that he can update the data base. Nearly all of the track plans for all the active modules are entered into the system at this point, so changes and updates can be made prior to the show. The deadline for notifying Alan that you will be bringing a module is **Friday, December 28, 2007**; after that time, he can not guarantee that he can work your module into the layout. We make no assumptions about a module arriving at the show site, and the layout is too big for last minute changes to add or subtract modules, so please notify Alan as early as possible about your participation with a module.

**CHECK-IN:** Please note that the layout must be checked in to the Show Staff before individuals will be let into the building. Check-in will be done by Clark, Sudro or Alan on arrival at the Better Living Center. If you get there before one of us, please wait so that we can go through the proper check-in procedures.

**MODULE ARRIVAL:** As in previous years, our goal is to have all modules in the building, on their feet and in position by the close of the day on Thursday. The building is closed at 11:00 PM, but we encourage you to get to the Better Living Center as early as possible. If you are unable to get to the Show site on Thursday, please let Alan know when you notify him of the availability of your module so that he may plan accordingly. If you have not made prior arrangements for Friday arrival, or do not call one of the Module Coordinators on Thursday (cell phone) and do not arrive by **10:00 PM** on Thursday night, we will redesign the layout to close the gap and your space will not be available when you arrive on Friday. We have a large number of people involved in the setup of the layout on Friday and waiting for a module to arrive so that we can continue setup is not a good use of our time.

**NEW MODULES:** If your module(s) have never been in an ABEL layout before, please make a point of bringing that to our attention when you notify Alan that you want to include the module in the layout. You must send Alan a track plan and industry list (name of industry, what car types serve the industry, length of siding in 50 foot car equivalents) so that he can get it drawn in the database. New modules also require an inspection and a “through-wiring” harness before being placed in the layout. Ideally, we would like to inspect any new modules before they arrive at the Show site. If we are unable to inspect your new module beforehand, please come to the Show site as early as possible so that we can make the inspection and install the wiring harness. We will supply the “through-wiring” harness.

**MODULE CHANGES:** If you have made significant changes to the track arrangement or electrical system of your module since the last time it was included in the layout, please follow the directions above for “NEW MODULES”.

**MODULE REPAIRS:** We will not repair modules at the Show site! If repairs are required, the owner will have until close of setup Thursday night to make these repairs or the module will be removed from the layout. The Module Coordinators reserve the right to make repairs to the mainline tracks during the course of the Show to keep operation flowing smoothly on the layout.

**INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION:** If you would like to help out with the layout with or without a module or modules, please join us! We always need help with setup, operation and breakdown of the layout. If you plan to participate let Clark know **NOW** that you will be there. The policy for show access has changed this year and the “red name badge” will not get you in the door as it has in years past. You must have an exhibitor badge from the ARS Show Management for admission to the buildings. We need to prepare a roster of ALL participants so that we can get the appropriate badges made up prior to the show. If you are not coming on Thursday or Friday for setup, let Clark know so that we can make arrangements to get your badge to you prior to the show, or give you instructions on how to obtain your badge. Last minute badge requests will be charged \$10.00 by the Railway Society, so get your name on our list **NOW!** The show opens at 9:00 AM on Saturday and 10:00 AM on Sunday; it would be appreciated if you could arrive about one (1) hour early to help out with any last minute items.

**PARKING:** Parking will be free on Thursday and Friday as in past years. On Saturday and Sunday, the Big E will charge *everybody* entering the fairgrounds for parking at their standard rate per site entrance. We expect that the Big E will have hang tags available for sale on the setup days as they did last year. If you want a tag, you will have to make the purchase on your own as neither the Amherst Belt Lines nor the Amherst Railway Society will be supplying tags. Our policy regarding parking reimbursement will be the same as last year – for clarification, see one of the Module Coordinators.

We once again ask that you consider whether you really need your car on the property for one or both days of the show, or if alternate means of transportation are available, prior to purchasing a hang tag.

**FRIDAY NIGHT MEETING:** A meeting of all operators and module owners will be held on Friday night at about 6:00 PM to discuss operations and special instructions for the layout. The agenda will include operating rules, special instructions for the layout, DCC regulation and more. As with last year, pizza will be served.

**SATURDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES:** As in previous years, we will have dinner and entertainment on Saturday night. Gary Munsey will be providing a slide show from some of his expeditions, but we welcome material from anyone interested in presenting. If you have digital slides that you would like to show, please bring them in eForm such as CD-ROM, DVD, Thumbdrive, or other media. If you bring good old fashioned paper or plastic mounted slides, let Sudro know so that a good old fashioned slide projector can be brought to dinner!

We want to see your work! 2008 represents 30 years of modular railroading for the Amherst Railway Society and we want to make Saturday night *your* night!

We are looking forward to another great year in West Springfield and another great layout. Remember that the deadline for module notification is **FRIDAY, December 28**. We want to see you there!

### **The Worcester Model Railroader's Show – February 24, 2008**

Our last show for the season, at least at this time, will be the Worcester Model Railroader's Show at the end of February. This is a one day show in every sense of the word. Setup begins at the Auburn Elks Club at 7:00 AM Sunday morning and we need to be running by 10:00 AM when the doors open. We have only missed our deadline once, and that is largely due to the great number of folks that show up to help out with this small show. The layout plan has been pretty static in the past years, as the allotted space is limited. If you are interested in bringing a module, let Alan know before February 1 and he will see what he can do to work your module into the layout.

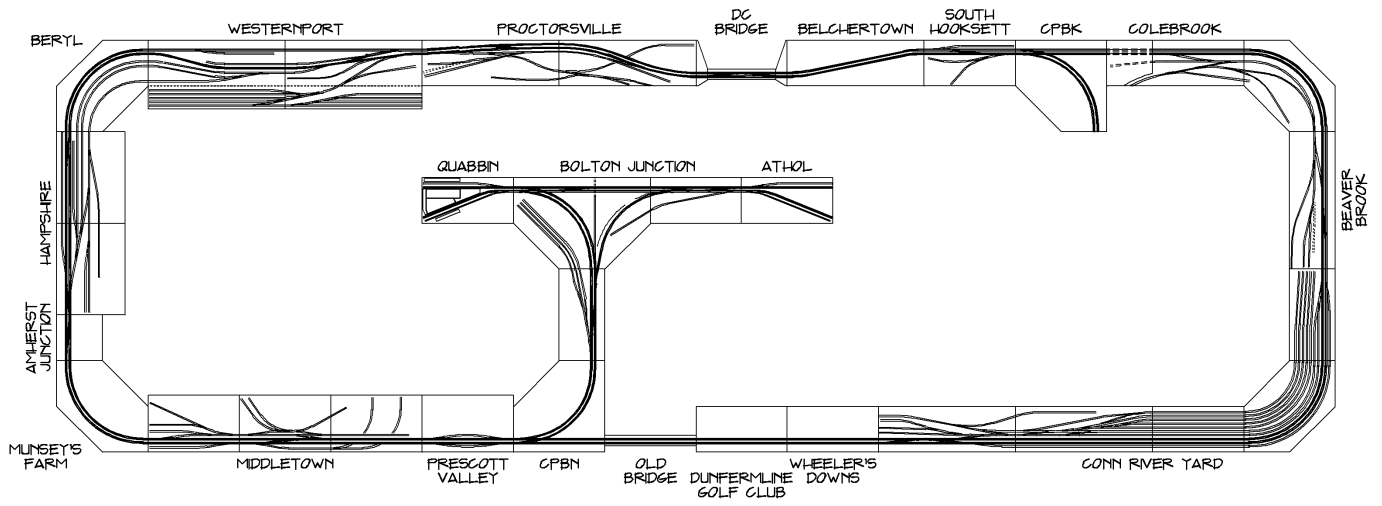
### **Happy Holidays From Your Module Coordinators**

Well, that's all for this edition of the Modular Mumbblings. The Holiday Season is well upon us now, and the weather has turned remarkably colder. Now is the time to start prepping for the ARS Show and doing some tune up work on the modules, motive power or rolling stock while keeping warm indoors.

Whether you celebrate Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanza or any other winter event at this time of year, have a happy and joyous holiday and a happy New Year!

**Have a Happy "HO"liday!**

Alan, Clark and Sudro



**2007 BEDFORD BOOMERS EXHIBITION LAYOUT with a Twist ... Bolton Junction *INSIDE* the Layout (56' x 18')**

**Amherst Belt Lines**  
 c/o Amherst Railway Society  
 PO Box 2351  
 Amherst MA 01004-2351