



Modular Mumbblings

The Amherst Railway Society, Inc. HO Scale Modular Layout Newsletter Winter 2008

Amherst Belt Lines
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email:
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Show Schedule:

January 24-25, 2009:

**Amherst Railway Society
Railroad Hobby Show**
West Springfield, MA

Saturday 9:00AM to 5:00PM
Sunday 10:00AM to 5:00PM.
Setup starts Thursday afternoon,
January 22, around 1:00PM

February 22, 2009:

**Worcester Model Railroaders
Model Railroad Show and Sale**
Auburn, MA

Sunday 10:00AM to 4:00PM.
Setup starts Sunday at **7:00AM!!**

March 29, 2009:

**Nashua Valley Railroad Assoc.
Railfair 2009**
Shirley, MA

Sunday 10:00AM to 4:00PM.
Setup starts Saturday afternoon,
March 28, time to be determined

Coordinators:

Sudro Brown
Clark Huber
Alan Rice
ABEL_planning@amherstrail.org

*A Special Interest Group of
The Amherst Railway Society, Inc.*

Look for us on the Internet at www.amherstrail.org/abl

Another Year Comes to a Close...

Where has 2008 gone? It seems like only a few months ago we were preparing for a "small" show in West Springfield and now, looking at the calendar, it is time to do it again! The 2008/2009 Show season is off to a fantastic start, with three successful shows down and three to go. As always, there is much to be said about the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show – so without further ado...

The Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show January 24-25, 2009

This year has been a very busy one for your coordinators and the Show Committee. The Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show for 2009 promises to be another terrific show with four buildings, lots of new vendors and a few exceptional surprises. The show is still at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds in West Springfield, MA and will occupy the Better Living Center, Young Building, Stroh Building and part of the Mallory Complex building. The Show opens to the public on Saturday, January 24, from 9:00AM to 5:00PM and continues on Sunday, January 25, from 10:00AM to 5:00PM. The Belt Lines will be in the Better Living Center, in the same location as past years, and will be able to begin setup on Thursday, January 22 starting around noon.

If you would like to have your module(s) included in this year's layout in West Springfield, **NOW** is the time to let Alan know. The deadline for notifying Alan that you will be bringing a module is **Sunday, December 28, 2008**; after that date, he can not guarantee that he can work your module(s) 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.

If you have made any plan changes to your module(s), they should be sent to Alan by email or as a sketch via the US Postal Service so that he can update the database. 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. Any plan changes should be sent to Alan not later than the deadline for module participation and can be emailed to ABEL_planning@amherstrail.org or sent to the P.O. Box at the top of this newsletter.

CHECK-IN: As has been the case in past years, the layout must be checked in to the Show Office 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: Also 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 10:00 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(s) 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 9:00 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(s) 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 and will try to make arrangements to do so. 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. Also, when you notify Clark of your attendance, please indicate if you plan to be at dinner Saturday night (see below) and how many you expect in your party; this will help us get a preliminary count. Please let Clark know about your participation before **Friday, January 9, 2009**.

SHOW ACCESS: You must have an Exhibitor Badge provided by the ARS Show Management for admission to the buildings during the Show on Saturday and Sunday, and on Thursday and Friday for security. The old “Red Badge” identification will no longer be accepted at the door on Saturday and Sunday, but may also be worn if you so choose. 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 when you contact him regarding attendance 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 Friday and on Saturday morning as they did last year. We will try to obtain a number of tags for module owners and other participants that will be distributed on a ‘first come, first served’ basis. If you want a tag please see one of the coordinators on Friday. If we run out of tags, you will have to purchase one on your own. We will reimburse the cost of the tag for individuals who actively participate at the layout. Our policy regarding parking reimbursement will be the same as last year – for clarification, see one of the Module Coordinators. We do 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 requesting or purchasing a hang tag.

FRIDAY NIGHT MEETING: A mandatory 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 always, pizza will be served.

SATURDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES: We will have dinner and entertainment on Saturday night for the Modular Group and invited guests. Dinner will be held at the Carriage House on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition – the same location as last year. Holding dinner on the grounds proved to be successful and less stressful than trying to get off the property along with all the rest of the Show crowd. If you plan to attend dinner on Saturday, you may want to plan your parking so you don’t have to go too far after dinner to retrieve your car! In addition to our crew from the Belt Lines, we will be extending the invitation to Show vendors on a ‘first come, first served’ basis. Because we are opening up dinner to more than just our group, Clark needs a fairly accurate count of those planning to attend dinner, including guests, prior to the show so that we know how many seats are available for the vendors. Let Clark know if you will be going to dinner with the Belt Lines on Saturday by not later than **Friday, January 9, 2009** and how many will be in your party. 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 are looking forward to another great year in West Springfield and another great layout. Remember that the deadline for module notification is **Sunday, December 28, 2008** and for attendance and dinner is **Friday, January 9, 2009**. We want to see you there!

Bedford Boomers Model Railroad Exhibition Bedford, New Hampshire

The Bedford Boomer’s 26th Annual Model Railroad Exhibition was on Sunday, November 2, 2008 at the McKelvie Intermediate School in Bedford, New Hampshire. The layout went together pretty much as planned, although *Eastside Yard* and *Sullivans* replaced *Athol*, and there was a little juggling to make it work. Dave and Tommy Kmetz introduced a new module, *North Stratford*, at the show, adding to the industry and track from their *Broadway* module. The layout ran primarily under untethered control for the weekend with few, if any, problems. Saturday night, after dinner at the Longhorn Steakhouse, we broke up into three groups and headed out to different layouts for operating sessions. Bruce Robinson opened his doors to the Valley Junction, Joel DiTrolio hosted a group on his Rutland layout and Mike Grahame had a contingent operating his UP & SP Eastern Division. All three layouts are terrific and we thank each of the hosts for accommodating the Belt Lines.

We would also like to thank all of you who participated, and the Bedford Boomers for another great show and look forward to next year.

NMRA HUB Division Model Train Expo Marlborough, Massachusetts

The New England Model Train Expo, sponsored by the NMRA HUB Division, was on Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7, 2008 at the Best Western Royal Plaza Trade Center in Marlborough, Massachusetts. Amazingly, the layout was assembled exactly as designed – which is only about the third time this has occurred since Alan started developing the plans! Interference in the building made using the NCE radio difficult and has us somewhat concerned about

the Amherst Show in January – we will just have to wait and see. John Flanders debuted a new module set known as *Stony Brook Creek* – a massive steel arch bridge spanning over a deep ravine and ‘creek’ – it looked larger than a creek! It is always great to see new work on the layout, and the variation in elevation on this module makes for some real visual interest. James Mayo had his models for the passenger and freight stations for *Bolton Junction* on display – they are coming along very well. On Saturday, after dinner at the Longhorn Steakhouse (is this a trend?) we went back to the hotel for an *ad hoc* slide show by Doug Scott and Gary Munsey – great pictures! Clark also presented a time lapse video of setup and tear down of last year’s Big E layout. If you didn’t see it, we will run it again at dinner on Saturday in West Springfield; it was really quite interesting to watch!

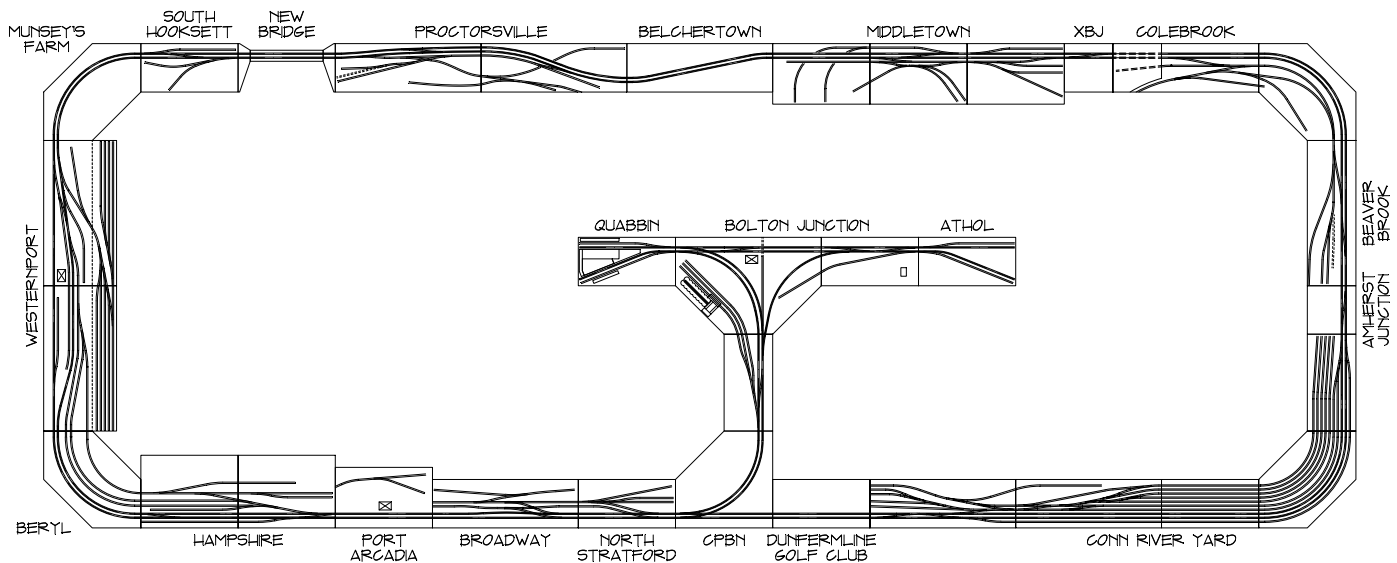
We would again like to thank all of you who helped setup, operate and take down the layout at the show. Without your help, Sudro, Clark and Alan would have a lot more to do! Thanks also to the HUB Division for the invitation and we look forward to coming back next December.

End of the Line

That will do it for this edition of the *Modular Mumbblings*. We look forward to seeing you in West Springfield at the end of January. Remember that the deadline for module sign-up is December 28, 2008 and for attendance is January 9, 2009. In the meantime, have a joyous Holiday, whatever you celebrate, and a happy and prosperous New Year. See you in West Springfield! Until then...

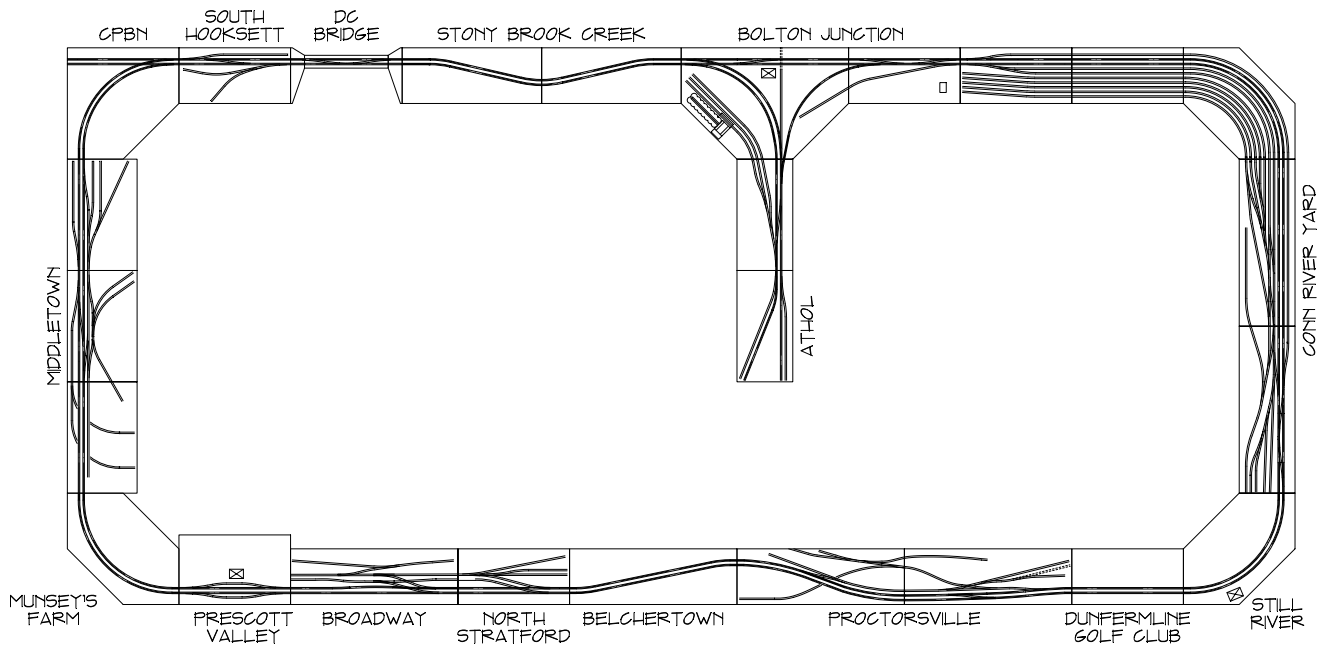
Happy “HO”lidays!!

Sudro, Clark and Alan



Layout Plan (20'x54') – Bedford Boomers Show, Bedford, NH 2008

Modular Railroading is Fun!



Layout Plan (20'x44') – Hub Division NMRA Show, Marlboro, MA 2008

