2007 OFFICERS OF THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB

PRESIDENT - John Hodkin, Jr., 506 Gordon North Little Rock AR 72117-4713 (501-945-2128), ntrailfan@sbcglobal.net
Vice-PRESIDENT - Mark Silverberg, 10524 Helix Drive, Mabelvale AR 72103-1638 (501-455-5050), onetrackmindtrains@hotmail.com
TREASURER - David Hoge, PO Box 1679, Little Rock AR 72203-1679 (501-397-2552), davidhoge@mac.com
SECRETARY - David Hoge, PO Box 1679, Little Rock AR 72203-1679 (501-397-2552), davidhoge@mac.com
EDITORS - Joe Roddy, PO Box 2495, Little Rock AR 72203-2495, (501-221-9104) jroddy@WEarch.com or arceditor@trainweather.com

NJRHS DIRECTOR - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)

PHOTOGRAPHER - John C. Jones, 117 Cottonwood, Sherwood AR 72126-4031 (501-455-3729), johnphotomani@aristotle.net
HISTORIAN - Gene Hull, 3507 E Avenue #31, N Little Rock AR 72114 (501-945-7386)
BOARD '07 - Ken Ziegeman, 1023 Claycut Cir, North Little Rock AR 72116 (501-756-1340), ken@trainweather.com
BOARD '08 - Ron Esserman, 126 Essexman Ln, Dover AR 72837-7754 (479-331-2029), caboose25552@centurytel.net
BOARD '09 - Douglas Harley, 840 Horseshoe Mountain Rd, Paris AR 72855-5543 (479-963-2800), dharley2@cswnet.com
BOARD '10 - Robin Thomas, 10980 Rivercrest Dr #26, Little Rock AR 72212-1412 (501-225-1952)
BOARD '11 - Jim Wakefield, 316 Aubum Dr, Little Rock AR 72205-2769 (501-664-0232)

JOINING THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB & NRHS

The ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB is a non-profit organization of railroad and train enthusiasts that was formed in 1969. We are also the Little Rock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. We meet on the second Sunday of most months at 2 p.m. Anyone interested in trains is welcome! Dues to join the ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB are currently $20 a year, which includes the monthly Arkansas Railroader newsletter.

If you’d like to join the NRHS through our club (thus being a member of both the Little Rock Chapter NRHS and national NRHS), you must pay $33 a year more, bringing the total to $53 a year for both. Dues are always payable on January 1st of each year, but you may join at any time (membership will extend through the following year). To join or renew, send your name, address and phone number plus dues to:

ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB, PO BOX 9151, NORTH LITTLE ROCK AR 72119. Call 501-758-1340 for information.

NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Arkansas Railroad Club will be SUNDAY, January 13, 2008. It will be held at Curtis H. Stout, Inc., 2400 Cantrell Rd Suite 100, Little Rock, Ark. in the same complex that has Cajun’s Wharf! We will hold our annual Christmas Party on SATURDAY, December 8, 2007 instead of the monthly meeting. The party will be at the usual meeting place.

November 11, 2007 minutes of the Arkansas Railroad Club: Meeting began at 201 p.m. with John Hodkin presiding. John C Jones gave a report on the UP operations since the dispatching was turned over to Omaha. He also said that the lady that had the UP K9 dog had fallen and injured her hip and may not return to work. They had to call her husband to get the dog out of the car. Arkansas Midlands Christmas train will begin December 1 from Malvern to Mountain Pine and December 8 from Warren to McGehee, leaving at 9 a.m. each day. This was announced by the Arkansas Midland people, who were at the meeting. Robin Thomas told of the KC’s Christmas train that will be running through western Arkansas the first week of December. Fred Fillers gave a report on the Little Rock & Western. The club’s Christmas party will be held December 8 at an usual meeting place. The following were nominated and voted on to be 2008’s Officers and Board members of the club: John Hodkin, Jr. - President Doug Harley - VP David Hoge - Treasurer and Secretary Board Members: Jim Wakefield, Robin Thomas, Ron Esserman, Fred Fillers and Joe Roddy Ron Esserman gave a great movie program of the Durango & Silverton then ran a movie on old streetcars across the country. Meeting adjourned about 4 p.m. (business meeting adjourned 2:20 p.m.)

COTTON BELT WORK TRAIN LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Work Train at Pine Bluff in Jefferson County has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The country’s official list of historically significant properties, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Director Ken Granewald in September 2007.

The St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Work Train, which is located at the Arkansas Railroad Museum at Pine Bluff, consists of a relief crane, boom car, generator flatcar, kitchen car, tool car and crew sleeper car, all constructed around 1940.

"Railroad rolling stock, like the St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Work Train, are important parts of Arkansas's railroad past," the National Register nomination says. "The St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt Route) Work Train was important in helping to keep Arkansas's railroad lines open and functioning and in allowing goods to move freely around the state. Additionally, the Arkansas Railroad Museum has done a good job in preserving this important part of our railroad heritage."

COTTON BELT DEPOT AT COY BURNS

Sometime in the last few months, the old Cotton Belt depot at Coy, Arkansas was destroyed by fire. Arkansas Railroad Club member Fred Fillers had seen the depot standing earlier in 2007 but on a recent trip the depot was gone, apparently burned to the ground.

L.N. “Buddy” Gaines, Sr., father of Arkansas Railroad Club member Lynn Gaines of Pine Bluff, worked at the depot in the 1930's. The depot was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

According to information from the National Register of Historic Places, the depot was built about 1910-11 after the Cotton Belt leased the Central Arkansas & Eastern in 1910. The last passenger trains operated through Coy in July 1929.

DEADLINE

Deadline for submitting material to the Arkansas Railroader is the meeting date of each month. We go to press a day or two after the meeting to ensure that members receive their newsletter before the next monthly meeting. You may submit articles, artwork and photos which will be returned as long as you include your return address. If you have questions about submitting digital images please contact an editor.

November 11, 2007

The following were nominated and voted on to be 2008’s Officers and Board members of the club:

John Hodkin, Jr. - President
Doug Harley - VP
David Hoge - Treasurer and Secretary

Board Members:
Jim Wakefield, Robin Thomas, Ron Esserman, Fred Fillers and Joe Roddy

Ron Esserman gave a great movie program of the Durango & Silverton then ran a movie on old streetcars across the country. Meeting adjourned about 4 p.m. (business meeting adjourned 2:20 p.m.)
ARMS MIDLAND CHRISTMAS TRAINS
The annual Arkansas Midland Santa Trains will operate from Malvern to Mountain Pine on Saturday, December 8, 2007 and will oper-ate over the Warren Branch from Warren to McGehee on Saturday, December 8, 2007. Each train will have several stops along the line. Santa and his wife are escorted from the Santa Train at Hot Springs, Arkansas. December 2, 2006. David Hoge photo

CHRISTMAS PARTY SET Our 2007 Christmas Party will be held Saturday, December 8, 2007 at our usual meeting place. It will start at 6 p.m. We will NOT have a regular meeting in December. The catered meal will cost $15 per person. Send your money and RSVP to the Arkansas Railroad Club, P.O. Box 9151, North Little Rock, AR 72119.

ELECTIONS FOR THE ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB were held at the November meeting. The following people were elected as officers for 2008. John Hodkin, Jr., President: Doug Harley, Vice-President; David Hoge, Treasurer and Secretary. Board Members: Jim Wakefield, Robin Thomas, Ron Esserman, Fred Fillers, and Joe Roddy.

UNION PACIFIC CALENDARS FOR SALE. The Arkansas Railroad Club is selling official 2008 Union Pacific calendars as a fund-raiser for the club. The calendar this year features photos of UP’s SD70ACe Heritage units, steam locomotives 844 and 3985 plus the 2002 Olympic units and the George Bush unit. Arkansas Railroad Club member Ken Ziegenein has a photo in the calendar. Cost is $10 plus $3 for shipping. Order from the Arkansas Railroad Club, P.O. Box 9151, North Little Rock, AR 72119.

ARKANSAS RAILROAD CLUB has donated a set of Shortline Railroads of Arkansas to BASE (Books for Arkansas Students’ Education). The program provides free books on Arkansas history and culture to public high schools across the state under a points system that gives special consideration to schools with high percentages of low-income kids. Anyone can donate either books or money. Visit their website at www.baseeducation.org for more information.

SHORTLINE RAILROADS OF ARKANSAS by Gene Hull is still available for $20 plus $2 postage per book. Orders may be sent to the Arkansas Railroad Club, P.O. Box 9151, North Little Rock, AR 72119.

NRHS NEWS
NRHS DUES INCREASE. The NRHS voted to increase dues $11 to $33 per year at its business meeting at the 2007 convention. Any Arkansas Railroad Club member wishing to maintain his membership in the NRHS, will owe $33 per year for the combined ARC and NRHS dues. Family dues, at-large memberships and student dues have also changed.

Another change to the dues will be that the members will now receive a bill for their NRHS dues directly from the NRHS. The members will still pay their NRHS and ARC dues in the Arkansas Railroad Club which will then remit the NRHS dues to the national organization.

NRHS HAS IMPLEMENTED a new electronic dues system. Members will not be affected directly by this, but there is a learning curve for those of us involved. Be patient, as some information may take a while to update.

CHARLES WINTERS COLLECTION has been donated to the Fort Smith Trolley Museum in Fort Smith. Winters’ history on the Fort Smith streetcars led to the formation of the trolley museum. The papers included files on the streetcars and the Fort Smith & Western. The museum is planning to build a library to house the papers.

TEXAS, OKLAHOMA AND EASTERN engineer Lawrence “Larry” Green was severely injured in a train/truck collision with a log truck near Wright City, Okla. October 18, 2007. The driver of the log truck was killed. Both locomotives on the train were derailed. The other crew members were not seriously injured. Green was airifted to a hospital in Texarkana and later taken to a hospital in Little Rock with head, upper body and internal injuries. (via the Southwest Arkansas Daily)

BNSF INVESTED IN INTERMODAL FACILITY IN MEMPHIS A $280 million expansion at its Memphis Yard will give the railroad the capacity to move one million containers a year. Five of the largest wide-span cranes in the country will be used at the yard to transfer containers from truck to rail. The railroad believes that the expansion will enable them to take business away from Union Pacific’s inter-modal facility at Marion, Arkansas. Trucking carriers to Marion cost shipping companies about $100 per trip. (via the Memphis Commercial Appeal)

FIRES IN SAN DIEGO FORCED THE CANCELLATION of Amtrak’s Pacific Surfliner service on October 23, 207, between San Diego and San Juan Capistrano. (Amtrak press release via Daryl Stast)

AMTRAK MAY EXPAND THE HEARTLAND FLYER to Tulsa. Success of the Flyer has made state transportation officials optimistic about expanding the service. The Flyer, which saw 68,035 passengers in 2006, is operated under contract by Amtrak for the Oklahoma and Texas departments of transportation. (via Pauls Valley Daily Democrat)

UNION PACIFIC CLOSED THE DISPATCH CENTER in North Little Rock as of 10:24 am, October 24, 2007. According to Arkansas Railroad Club member John Jones this is the first time in Arkansas that there is not a dispatcher for the UP in Arkansas. All duties of the North Little Rock dispatcher will now be handled by the Harriman Dispatch Center in Owalma.

ONE OF THE SMALLEST MOVIE THEATERS in Wales has been donated to the Charles Winters Collection. A $200 million expansion at its Tennessee Yard will give the railroad the capacity to move one million containers a year. The expansion will enable them to take business away from Union Pacific’s inter-modal facility at Marion, Arkansas. Trucking carriers to Marion cost shipping companies about $100 per trip. (via the Memphis Commercial Appeal)

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP HITS 25.8 MILLION. For the fifth straight year, Amtrak set a record for the number of passengers using Amtrak. Ticket revenue increased 11 percent to $1.5 billion. Amtrak attributed the rise in passengers to highway congestion, increased fuel cost and environmental awareness. (Amtrak news release)

KANSAS CITY SOUTHERN REVENUES ROSE 6.8 percent to $444.1 million over the same quarter in 2006. The operating ratio fell to 77.9% (the lower the better). Earnings per share were $0.48 (via Yahoo Finance)

SINGER ROD STEWART’S MODEL TRAIN LAYOUT is fea- tured on the cover of the December 2007 issue of Model Railroader. The singer has built an HO scale layout of New York’s Grand Central Station in his mansion in Beverly Hills, California. He also has a layout of the English East Coast Line at his other home in Essex, England. Other performers such as Phil Collins and Eric Clapton are train enthusiasts too according to the article in the Telegraph. (via the London Telegraph).

MORE BUSINESS FOR THE KIAMICHI? Ash Grove cement announced a $350 million replacement of its Foreman, Arkansas, facility. The expansion will enable the plant to increase output by 1.7 million tons annually. Ground breaking cere- monies were held in October.

1920’S STREETCARS RETURN TO NEW ORLEANS Streetcars operated for the time since Hurricane Katrina in the historic Garden District on St. Charles Street in New Orleans in November. Six of 13 miles of track have been re-opened with the help of $14 mil- lion provided by the federal government. The St. Charles line has operated since 1835.

ITEMS FOR SALE
BOOK FOR SALE FOR SALE Joseph A. Cammalleri has written a book titled Guthrie, Oklahoma: Always A Railroad Town. The cost is $39.95 plus shipping of $5. Contact him at 907 Koko Isle Circle, Honolulu, HI 96825. (808) 395-2212, Jcamma455@aol.com

ITEMS FOR SALE
ANNUAL RAILROADANA & MODEL TRAIN meet will be held Saturday April 5, 2008 at the Arkansas Railroad Museum. Prices are $5 for adults, $2 for children 6-12 and children under 6 are free. The Arkansas Railroad Museum is located in Pine Bluff, Arkansas at 1700 Porter Road. For more information call 870-535-8819 for more information.
Union Pacific EC-5, a track inspection car passes through Union Station, Little Rock, Arkansas on September 20, 2007. EC-5 is a state-of-the-art track inspection vehicle costing $8.5 million and was built by Plasser & Theurer in Linz, Austria. The unit was put into service on the Union Pacific in December 2005. EC-5, with its crew of three, can inspection track at 70 mph. Joe Roddy photo

DODX 40138, a 6-axle flatcar used to haul tanks, with obsolete M-60’s going to Ft. Chaffee, Arkansas. Photographed at the Union Pacific yard in North Little Rock. October 12, 2007 John Jones photo
Recently repainted into the Kansas City Southern’s Southern Belle paint scheme, F9’s KCS 1, 2, & 3 head to Jackson, Mississippi after a day on display at Meridian Railfest. Meridian, Mississippi, November 3, 2007. David Hoge photo
A “Coach-Mail” and Baggage Car?

Number 57 probably was purchased as a standby for M&NA No. 53 (Pullman 1907) and No. 55-2nd (ACF 1914) on daily trains in each direction between Neosho, Missouri, and Kensett, and for M&NA No. 60 on a daily round trip between Kensett and Helena. The first two cars were built as mail-passenger combines like No. 57. They were converted to baggage-mail in 1931 and continued in service until 1946, albeit on a standby basis after a pair of ACF motor cars took over the runs north of Kensett in 1938. Number 60 was a bag-gage-mail-passenger combine. Another baggage-mail car, No. 58, was acquired in 1931 and probably became the standby car.

Prior to November 1918, primary passenger trains on the M&NA usu-ally ran through from Joplin, Missouri, to Helena, Arkansas. For most of this period, a local passenger train also made a round trip between Heber Springs and Helena. After 1918, the primary trains terminated at Kensett, leaving the Heber-Helena locals as the only passenger service south of Kensett. Before and after 1918, these runs often were made by a General Electric gas-electric car with a trailer containing a short (20’ or 15’) RPO apartment. The last trail car was No. 60, a bag-gage-mail-passenger combine rebuilt in 1926 from Coach No. 11, a former Pennsylvania Railroad car built in the 1880’s and acquired by the M&NA about 1911. Number 60 had a 20-foot bag-gage-express section, a 15-foot RPO apartment and a coach section seating twelve. Initially, these seats supplemented the “colored sec-tion” of the GE cars which had a maximum capacity (with three to a seat) of “66 W” and “19 or 20 C.” Normal capacity (with two to a seat) was “46 W/14 C”. The GE cars were sold in 1927 and the south-end trains became steam-powered, using No. 60 and a coach.

In March 1929, the trains were cut back to Kensett-Helena. Combine No. 57 was acquired the following month. In 1931, the still-daily Kensett-Helena passenger train – requiring less than nine hours round trip, including a ninety-minute layover at Helena – was replaced by a pair of daily mixed trains that carried both freight and passengers. Their crews worked south one day and back the next. The trains were scheduled for about six hours or more either way but may have taken longer since they handled all of the railroad’s business south of Kensett. The RPO clerk worked all the way to Helena and back on the passenger train, but worked on the southbound mixed only to its scheduled meeting point with the northbound, where he changed trains to work back to Kensett. Mail service between the meet point and Helena became “closed pouch” only.

M&NA and M&A employee timetables from 1930 through 1945 listed Combine No. 57 as “Coach-Mail” with “No Partition” and seating capacity of “36” or “36 W”, but a partition and an extra toilet were added, changing the capacity to “20 W/14 C” or less, and there are some indications the RPO section also may have been subdivided so the car could carry baggage and express as well as mail, probably

Combines No. 57

The Last M&NA Passenger Car?

Article and Photos by Jim Wakefield

For about sixty years, this old wooden combine, stripped of its trucks, sat on the east side of Oak Street in Searcy, Arkansas, just a few dozen feet from the former main line of the Missouri & North Arkansas Railroad, and its interchange with theotton, Kensett & Searcy Railway, which switched the former M&NA trackage in Searcy after the successor Missouri & Arkansas Railway ceased operations in 1946. The car was used as a residence for many years; then sat empty and deteriorating for several more. It remained there after the last M&NA trackage was removed to make way for Beebe-Capps Expressway and the nearby DK&S trackage was removed to facilitate expansion of Harding University. The car remains there no more.

Photographs indicate the combine was M&NA No. 57. Rosters in railroad employee timetables from 1930 to 1945 listed it as “Class Coach-Mail, [Vestibule] Yes, [Partition] No, [Length Over All] 66 Ft. 8 In., [Seating Capacity] 36, later 36 W, [Weight Empty] 110,000 Lbs.” Research by Dr. James R. Fair indicates it previously had been Missouri Pacific No. 2706, sold to the M&NA on April 12, 1929. His research papers, which he generously donated to the Boone County Heritage Museum at Harrison, include a diagram of MP No. 2707 which was built in 1904 by St. Charles Car Co. Number 2706 prob-ably was built about the same time and very likely by the same builder. Four very similar cars were built for the M&A between 1907 and 1914. All six were mail-passerenger combines with 30-foot Railway Post Office apartments, where Railway Mail Service clerks picked up mail along the way, sorted it in route, and delivered it along the line or forwarded it to connecting lines. The coach section of all six cars contained seats for thirty-six passengers, usually serving as the “smoker” or sometimes as the “colored section” when “Jim Crow” laws required the segregation of passengers by race.

The MoP cars were a few inches longer than the M&NA cars, but interior arrangements were nearly identical, with a toilet in the right rear corner and a stove in the left rear corner. The most noticeable external differences were the trucks – six-wheel on these two MoP cars; four-wheel on the M&NA cars – and the passenger windows. The MoP cars had five pair on each side; the M&NA cars had a sin-gle, four pair and a smaller cut-glass single near the rear of each side. Unlike the other M&NA cars, No. 57 had a common upper sash over each pair of coach windows. In later years, the window openings by the stoves were covered over.

(Above) Mail section – rearward. The door leads to the coach section, but it was added after RPO service when a letter case and casing desk occupied the width of the car. Access, if any, between sections was through a “creep door” below the desk. Paper boxes hung from the ceiling and bag racks were mounted below the windows on each side.

(Right) Right side door. Needs work, but it is still there. The left side door and the coach end door were removed a few days before the car was moved, but the culprit had been told by the operator building the property that the car was going to be demolished. He has promised to return them.
(Above) New home at Bald Knob. Much of the car is sound, but water seepage heavily damaged the roof, floor and sides at the mail end. Many layers of roll roofing have been removed to about the car, exposing the clerestory for the first time in decades. Trucks are being sought to properly support No. 57. (Right) Toilet corner. The vertical lines from ceiling to floor mark the toilet wall location. The toilet ceiling (possibly glass) angled downward from the clerestory side toward the train door at right.

while the Helena-Kensett RPO was running in mixed trains. These details were discovered only after residential trappings (linoleum, sheetrock, etc.) added while the car was on the ground at Searcy were removed, and the car was moved to Bald Knob.

Number 57 may have been modified to provide all passenger-train accommodations necessary on the Kensett-Helena trains in a single car. RPO fixtures could have been rearranged to reduce the mail apartment to the space (about 17 feet) rearward of the side doors, leaving the portion forward of the doors available for baggage and express. A partition to separate mail and baggage sections could have been installed. It would have required a door for the RPO clerk to access the side doors to pick up and drop off mail. Changes shortening the RPO would have been unlikely prior to the acquisition of No. 58 since a 30-foot RPO was required north of Kensett. A longer car could fill in for a shorter one (15-foot RPO south of Kensett), but not the other way around. A desk also may have been installed in the coach section for the conductor to do his freight business paper work. This would have reduced seating capacity to about “16 W/14 C”, but that might have been sufficient for declining passenger traffic.

After the M&A succession in 1935, the “Third [operating] District” was restored to Heber-Kensett as it had been prior to the 1920’s. The south-end mixed trains also were extended to Hebe-Helena, but becoming daily-except-Sunday, around January 5, 1936. North-end passenger trains continued to run daily to and from Kensett. Brill Motor No. 605 restored straight passenger runs – daily-except-Sunday Kensett-Helena round trips – to the south end when it entered service around August 2, 1937. It had a stated seating capacity of “14 W/14 C” and a 12-foot baggage section, but no RPO apartment since the Helena-Kensett RPO was discontinued altogether on or about July 19. The only mail now carried south of Kensett was “closed pouch” which was allotted space in the baggage section. Number 57, pulled by a 30-class 2-8-2, probably was used when No. 605 was out of service. The last of No. 57’s RPO fixtures probably were removed and the door that is now in the center partition may have been installed at this time. Number 57 was retired in 1945. Other scars in the interior suggest it may have been further modified for work train service before being sold, probably by 1949 when most of the M&A was scrapped.

To a New Home for Restoration

On June 14, 2007, the old combine was moved to Bald Knob for restoration as part of a new railroad exhibit adjacent to the depot. It is the last known surviving M&NA passenger car. Any one with additional information is encouraged to share it with the White County Historical Society, to whom the car now belongs.

Very few photographs of the Kensett-Helena segment of the M&NA are known. Any photos that include trains (or anything railroad related), even if only a small portion in the background behind people, may be very helpful in answering questions about the railroad, including changes to No. 57 and its usage. (Used as an RPO, the car would have been lettered UNITED STATES MAIL/RAILWAY POST OFFICE; if modified for baggage and express: RAILWAY EXPRESS AGENCY/BAGGAGE.) If you have any such pictures, please share them.

Missouri & North Arkansas combine No. 57 sitting at Searcy before its move to Bald Knob in June 2007

(Please provide additional text as needed.)
PROTOTYPICAL TRACK PART-I

By Joe Musgrove

There have probably been more articles written on laying, ballasting, and weathering track than any other type of model railroad article. So my article is not intended to “reinvent the wheel” but to take a combination of these great modeling techniques I have used and pass them onto you. Being an N-Scale model railroader I will use N-Scale code55 track for this demonstration but the techniques can be used for HO scale as well.

Before getting started I want to emphasize safety which is sometimes overlooked in the hobby of model railroading. In this hobby including track work there will be times when you will use paints, chemicals, and tools. Always take care to wear the proper safety equipment including eye protection and mask. Pay attention and obey the recommended precautions such as proper use of tools and working in a well ventilated area. Remember to obey these precautions as an engineer obeys signals. Both will prevent bad consequences.

So let’s get started! The first thing to realize is track is an important part of your overall scene. However this is overlooked many times even by experienced modelers. I have viewed layouts where great attention to detail has been given to the surrounding area but the track itself has been ignored causing it to look completely out of place and ruining a great scene.

So let’s learn a little about the track itself. Code 100 for HO-Scale and code 80 for N-Scale was standard at one time and is still available in sections, (straight and curved), and three foot flex track sections which can be cut, bent, and curved. Both code 100 and 80 have black ties, nickel silver high-profile rails, and are not very prototypical. Later more prototypical track was introduced to include Code 55 track for N-Scale and Code 83 for HO. Both code 55 and code 83 can be purchased in straight, curved, or three foot flex track sections.

Code 83 and code 55 tracks are more realistic with low profile nickel silver rail, scale tie spacing, and brown ties. While code 100 and 80 track is still available it is not prototypical and I recommend using more prototypical track for your layout. However, if you already have code 100 or 80 track in place don’t panic; you can still weather this track to get a more realistic appearance which is much easier then ripping out what is already there!

For this demonstration I will install a main-line and passing siding. For the mainline I am using pre-cut N-scale cork roadbed and for the passing siding I am using foam road bed. The foam roadbed has been cut from foam squares that can be purchased from most retail or hobby store art departments.

Both types of roadbed have been attached with track nails. Many hobbyists use glue but I don’t use this method to secure either my roadbed or track. One advantage of using track nails is both the track and roadbed can be used again.

Cork and foam roadbed

The chances of nails used to secure roadbed coming into contact with the metal rail would be extremely slim if nailed down properly. However, as a precaution I seal the top of the exposed nail head using white school glue. This is much easier than trying to track down an electrical short caused by something as small as a nail.

You will notice the foam roadbed sits lower, (2mm compared to 3mm cork roadbed), to simulate track that has a thinner layer of ballast which is normal for passing sidings and industry spurs. You can also simulate this by attaching your track directly to the surface of your layout. Be aware you will get more noise from moving trains when track is attached directly to the layout surface.

Also note the cork roadbed has been painted with gray stone textured paint similar to the color and texture of ballast I will be using. This serves two purposes. First, this will hide small areas that get missed when laying ballast. Second, this is a great way to simulate ballast for areas where laying ballast might cause problems such as around the moving parts of a turnout. Once the paint was dry, I sprayed the roadbed with a dull coat sealer. The color of my foam roadbed is very close to my ballast color so painting was not necessary.

Holes are completed using rotary tool

Now that my roadbed is in place I will prepare the track for installation. Atlas code 55 track does not have pre-drilled holes for track nails but has depressed areas underneath every 13th tie where these holes can be drilled. Using a rotary tool with a 1/32 size bit I will use these depressed areas as a guide and drill my holes. Make sure to use the lowest speed on your rotary tool when drilling holes through plastic ties!

Run cars along the new section to test for problems

Once the track is nailed in place I vacuum the track and surrounding area. Once complete I then run a group of railcars along the newly installed track to check for problems and insure smooth operation. If you notice problems don’t ignore them. Even a slight problem can become annoying and you run the risk of future operating problems.

Using a nail kit will help you avoid track damage

Once the nails are placed I use a nail kit and hammer to insert the nails. Use care when doing this because you can bend or break the tie if the nail goes too deep. Nails heads should be hammered down until the nail head comes into contact with the top of the tie.

If you do bend or break a tie don’t panic. Using needle nose pliers very gently remove the nail and straighten the tie. Once you ballast and weather the track this mistake will disappear. However don’t try and place a nail back into the damaged tie. In most cases the nails on either side will be sufficient to hold the track in place.

Questions, ideas, or stories you would like to see in a future article?

You can contact me by phone or email: 501-833-8050 jdmusgrove@ualr.edu

Next Month: Once you are satisfied with the smooth operation of your track you are ready to ballast and weather. I will cover these techniques in part-II of this article next month.

Layout Tip: Need to practice your model railroad skills before applying them to your active layout? Building a small diorama is a great way to get this experience and can be a fun side project.

Volume XXXVII, Number 12, December 2007 Arkansas Railroader (Little Rock Chapter NRHS) Page 15
Arkansas Railroad Club member Ken Ziegenbein's photo (above) is featured in the official 2008 Union Pacific calendar. Union Pacific's 844 is greeted by school children at the old Texas & Pacific depot in Marshall, Texas in May 2006.

The Arkansas Railroad Club is selling official 2008 Union Pacific calendars as a fund raiser. Order today! See Page 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/23</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Shreveport, LA (KCS Family Only)</td>
<td>KCS Yard, Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Shreveport, LA, Rockets Over the Red</td>
<td>Festival Plaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/25</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Leesville, LA</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 901 S. Third St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Port Arthur, TX</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 548 West Fifth St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Braumont, TX</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 4095 S. MLK Plwy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/28</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>DeQueen, LA</td>
<td>Railroad Museum, 400 Lake Charles Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>DeRidder, LA</td>
<td>111 N. Washington Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Ruston, LA</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 206 W. Railroad Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/01</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Meridian, MS</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 2206 A St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/02</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Tupelo, MS</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 101 Wallace St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/03</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Jackson, MS</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 650 Childre Rd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/04</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Vicksburg, MS</td>
<td>3900 Block of S. Washington St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/05</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Monroe, LA</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 600 Desiard St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/07</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Ashdown, AR</td>
<td>Highway 71 &amp; Commerce St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/08</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>DeQueen, AR</td>
<td>124 N. Port Arthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/09</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Heavener, OK</td>
<td>KCS Yard, 403 W. First St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Stillwell, OK</td>
<td>Old KCS Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Lanagan, MO</td>
<td>N. County Rd. EE, So. of Pebble St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/12</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Pittsburg, KS</td>
<td>1600 N. Taylor Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Drexel, MO</td>
<td>W. Main St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>9:30AM-5:30PM</td>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/16</td>
<td>Noon-5:30PM</td>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>Union Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/17</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Mexico, MO</td>
<td>326 S. Jefferson St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/18</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Godfrey, IL</td>
<td>Pearl St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/19</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>RoedHouse, IL</td>
<td>Old Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/20</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Slater, MO</td>
<td>Depot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/21</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Grain Valley, MO</td>
<td>East of Main St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/22</td>
<td>4PM</td>
<td>Blue Springs, MO</td>
<td>Main St.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>