



Our “Modular Division” Celebrates It’s Sixth Year

Has It Really Been Six Years?

Our Club’s “Modular Division” started as a special interest group (SIG) by holding their first meeting on April 3rd, 2004. Several of our Club’s members had expressed interest in running trains during the Winter months when it was too cold to be outdoors. Also, several members had no home layouts on which to operate trains even had they wanted to, but starting a modular club layout would provide a large, portable venue on which everybody could run their own trains.

Several of our Club members worked over a year on developing “modular standards” to which all modules must conform. Original plans were to design modules similar to the Fort Wayne Modular Club, but their 45 degree corner modules didn’t work for our situation. Jeff Carter built some sample modules and displayed them at the April 2, ’05 annual Club Dinner held at Primo’s South. (See pictures on pg. 4 in May/June Newsletter 2005)

Finally, standards were agreed on by the group and goals were established. These are all available for viewing on our Club website. (click on Modular Division) The modules we build are approximately 34 inches deep by 59 inches wide. The layout, with all modules present, is an impressive rectangle approximately 40 feet wide and 60 feet long. There is a “lift bridge” section on one end that provides access to the center of the layout

where the controls and large staging area yard tracks are for assembling or “packing up” complete train consists.

After each module is constructed, the individual owner can build up their scene to depict any aspect of railroad life in which they are most interested. Examples thus far include a camp ground, an oil refinery (with smoke), a farm, a circus, grain silos, a saw mill and cities. It is still growing! (pg. 2)

This Could Be Your Last Newsletter

Check your address label on the front of this Newsletter. If it is circled in **green** then your 2010 Club dues are paid up. ☺ If your address label is circled in **red** then you need to get your \$20 check sent to Marion Hensley ASAP. ☺

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High Speed Amtrak - A long, first class Amtrak train glides by the oil refinery on the recent modular division display at the Great Train Expo held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds January 2nd & 3rd, 2010. Many of us were awestruck with the sight of an approaching train, just like the young boy is in this picture, when we were in grade school.

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The Modular Division members erect the layout for both of the Indiana State Fairground Expos and last summer at the Upland Strawberry Festival. At each event, the LARGE SCALE TRAINS draw a large crowd of both young and older people as they enjoy watching the trains making their rounds on the layout.

Any ILSR Club member can sense the camaraderie and pleasure the members of this group get if you have ever been present at one of their show exhibits. You may ask, what kind of person would give up part of a week-end to haul their own special train module (in a pick-up truck, SUV or mini-van) off to some Festival or Expo? Then, spend 2 to 4 hours, helping to setup the corners and all the modules in a connected rectangle to equal 40 X 60 feet. Then come back the next day to operate the trains for hours and hours and hours.

I guess the answer to the question is, you just have to join in and experience this for yourselves. Most of the modular folks just enjoy “talking up” the hobby of large scale trains. They enjoy seeing the smiles on the faces of the crowd - young and old alike! They enjoy seeing a long train of 28 coal hoppers, or perhaps a long sleek Amtrak passenger train. Sometimes they combine locomotives and cars to run long freight trains. Nothing impresses people like a long freight where 3 or 4 Dash-9 diesels (with sound & smoke) come roaring by just inches from your face. Mmmmm great!!!

Several of our newer ILSR Club members have joined our club as a direct result of seeing our exciting modular layout in action. Mel Turner is the Modular Division supervisor. Please contact Mel (765) 642-8825 for more info or if you are considering joining this special group of railroaders.



Half-Of-The-Fun is just watching the facial expressions of the visitors. (this picture was actually taken just 5 seconds after the one seen on page 2 at the beginning of this story)



Here Comes A Freight! Lots of train action as well. As I was watching the Amtrak, I heard the unmistakable growl of two Norfolk Southern freight diesels right behind me. Mmmm great!!!



Jeff Carter is visiting with a gentleman asking about the different couplers on G scale equipment. Jeff is our resident “expert” on this subject.



Paul Williamson just purchased this Amtrak train set. Paul noticed squeaking wheels on the lead locomotive. A little oil on the journals took care of this minor problem in short order.



👉 **Drive-In Movie Theatre**

This is a scene I took at the “Great Train Expo”. Just down the aisle from our own Club’s Modular layout, I spotted this N Scale Modular layout with a neat movie in progress. I always have loved the Drive-In’s and if I were a member of our own modular division, this is what I would build. Since I am not a member, I guess I will have to open this “brain storm” idea up to someone else. This could be your “calling”.

Hoosac Tunnel

An Interesting Look At Railroad Tunnel Construction

- by Bud Hunter

Seems like the majority of Garden Railroads I have visited (both large and small) have a tunnel for the trains to pass through. This is good because a tunnel adds visual interest, but more importantly, gives the impression of a larger railroad, due to the fact that the train disappears, and then reappears down the line at a different location.

Hoosac Tunnel was the longest tunnel in North America (1875) until the completion of the Moffat Tunnel in 1928, and remains the longest active railroad tunnel east of the Rocky Mountains today. Hoosac Tunnel is 4¾ miles long and passes through an extension of Vermont's Green Mountains in north-western Massachusetts.

In the summer of 2005, Nancy and I decided to take a vacation to the Northeast. (Our first time to ever visit this part of the country) As I was studying the road maps for our trip, the name "**Hoosac Tunnel**" jumped out at me. I remembered that back in my HO railroad modeling days, I purchased two plaster-of-paris tunnel portals for my B&O model railroad at the time. The Walthers catalog had a choice of 2 or 3 tunnel portals, and I chose the - you guessed it - the Hoosac Tunnel portals. I marked the spot on the map as a "point of interest" to stop and visit. (Little did I realize how steep and twisty the county roads were to get back to it!)

I discovered that the tunnel's east portal is along the Deerfield River in **Florida, MA**. The west portal is in **North Adams, MA**. The tunnel took over 20 years to build, cost \$21,000,000 and claimed the lives of 193 construction workers in the process.

A paper mill owner by the name of Alvah Crocker started the ball rolling on building the

Hoosac Tunnel. Mr. Crocker has become known as the "Father of Modern Tunneling". He laid down the rules, so to speak, for advanced use of geologists, explosives, pneumatic tools and boring technology. In 1848, Crocker secured from the legislature a charter for the **Troy & Greenfield Railroad** to begin building through the Hoosac Mountain.

In January of 1851, ground was broken on the North Adams side of the mountain. In 1852, work was started on the east side of the mountain using the infamous "Wilson's Patented Stone-Cutting Machine". This machine was suppose to chew a 24 foot wide tunnel through the entire mountain in 1556 working days. After about 12 feet of progress, the machine seized up and stayed in its own self dug grave for years to come.

Engineers soon realized the only way to go was to use a star drill. (much like a chisel with a star arrangement for cutting blades on the head) The star drill would be hammered by a 20 lb. sledge hammer. As the star drill moves forward, it has to be spun by hand. Thus, this work requires a 2 man team - one to hammer and one to spin the star drill between "hits". Even more dangerous was the blasting crew. Once the team had drilled about 2 feet, they would fill the hole with black powder and blast! (using a black powder trail!)

The Western Railroad (another railroad in the region) opposed the Hoosac Tunnel route and successfully lobbied to block state funding of the tunnel in 1861. This temporarily stopped the tunnel project after 4,250 feet had been excavated (about a fifth of the total distance). *(next page)*

In 1863 the state, with Alvah Crocker now superintendent of railroads, restarted the tunnel project. Workers were to work the tunnel from both the east and west ends. In addition, a 1,000 ft. center shaft was to be dug down from the top of the mountain to the proposed grade level of the tunnel. Once this shaft was completed in 1870, workers dug outwards from the center to meet the tunnels being dug from the east and west portals. Engineers built a 1,000 ft. elevator to hoist the excavated rock up from the central shaft.

The east end of the tunnel was very hard rock to blast through. The west end of the tunnel was just the opposite - much of it was a watery, crumbly "porridge stone". Every time a shovel full was removed it was immediately filled by another shovel full of crumbling stone. Ultimately, a 883 ft. 6 to 8 layer thick brick lining tube would be built to support the ceiling of the west end of the tunnel. 7573 feet of tunnel would be simple brick arching. Totally, 20 million bricks were used in the tunnel construction.

193 lives were lost during construction. The Hoosac Tunnel saw the first commercial use of nitroglycerine in the United States. Some lives

claimed due to the unstable nature of nitroglycerin, but many more were lost to the even more unstable black powder used in early construction. Still others were killed in a horrendous Central Shaft accident.

The first train passed through the Hoosac Tunnel on February 9, 1875. Regular service via the tunnel between Boston, MA and Troy, NY began in 1876. As more and more trains began using the tunnel smoke became more of an issue. Ventilation was so bad that train crews had to lie down on the floor to find breathable air. Boiler fires would die down to the point that crews had to stick broom sticks out against the side of the tunnel to determine if they were still moving. As 85 to 90 trains passed through daily, rear end collisions happened, often with fatal results. The line through the tunnel was eventually electrified to reduce smoke.

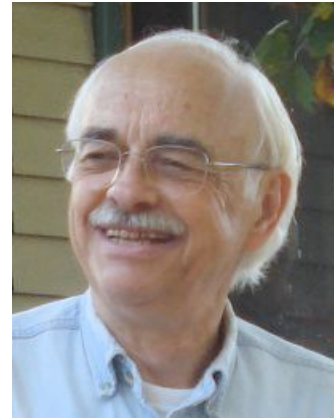
The **Boston and Maine Railroad** bought the Railroad in 1900. Today the Hoosac Tunnel is part of the Pan Am Railways (formerly the Guilford Rail System) and is still used in freight service. It was converted from double track to single track in 1973. During my visit, I did see one freight train pass through this historic tunnel. I am at a loss in explaining the 1875 date vs. the 1877 date on the east portal.



Picture here is a view of the east portal of Hoosac Tunnel. There were many "ghost" stories circulating about workers still crying out in agony that lost their lives during the construction phase of building this tunnel. I did venture inside the tunnel about 100 feet, but I did not hear any such ghosts.

*ILSR To Install Garden
Railroad At The March
Home And Flower Show
March 5 - 7*

– Jeff Carter



Each year for the past 19 years, our Club has installed a garden railroad at the Orchard In Bloom flower show. (This year's show will be held April 30 thru May 2, 2010) This year we will also be displaying a garden railroad at the new Indianapolis Home and Flower Show held at the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. These shows provide a good way for our club to let people see what our hobby is all about and to attract new members. Several of our members have joined our Club after seeing the layout at the Orchard In Bloom show. I am one of those people.

The Home and Flower Show will be held March 5 - 7, Friday thru Sunday. Hope that several of you can help us out or at least stop in and say "hello".

As with all projects, we will be using our club members to help set up, run and remove the layout once the show is over. All the preparation and pre-construction are completed by Jeff Carter. This keeps the actual install time to a minimum. This year we are trying a new method of installing the track and roadbed. The track will be installed on 2 inch thick foam board and each section joined with masonite "biscuits" to keep them aligned. The foam board was painted brown and then sprayed with paint that resembles gravel. This same system will be used at the Orchard In Bloom show the first weekend in May.

Our display is shaped in a "L" fashion with the long side being 40 feet long, and the lower part about 30 feet long. This is the largest display layout we have ever constructed. Included in the layout will be a large "hour glass" shaped track and a long reversing run for a trolley.

The trolley run will start in a small city running in the street and proceed to the second town with a station and ending at a small trolley stop station. Running two trains always seems to work best in attracting visitors.

Speaking of attracting visitors, our layouts seem to be a real crowd pleaser. Several times over the last few years, we have won the "Peoples Choice Award" at Orchard In Bloom! It seems that folks really enjoy watching the trains in a garden environment. It may seem odd, but we have found that some people just **do not get** the idea of staying off the display. We have had more than a one example of parents lifting kids over the fence and onto the display. A few have even kicked at the trains! While this is not the norm, I am surprised at how often it does happen. That aside, we have found **most people** to be respectful and curious about how the trains run and how we build such nice "temporary" displays.

At Lucas Oil Stadium there will be two Club members present each morning to mid-afternoon and two more Club members present from mid-afternoon to evening. In total we will use 16 people to install and run the train display. As with all shows, we will setup the display two days before, and tear down the display the day after the show. If you are planning to go and see the flower show, look for us in the featured gardens area at the North end of the stadium.

Jeff

Flower Show Coordinator

ILSR Treasurer's Report

Starting Bank Balance 1/1/2009 \$1,979.38

Income

Club Dues	\$1,760.00
Shirts & Aprons	1,140.00
Name Badge Sales	78.00
Bus Trip to Cinn.	1,385.50
Club Dinner	1,440.00
Ckg Acct Interest	<u>1.41</u>
Total Income	\$5,804.91

Expenses

Newsletter (printing & postage)	\$990.35
Shirts & Aprons	1,261.99
Badges (Indy Labels)	70.12
Bus Trip to Cinn.	1,536.50
Club Dinner	1,077.48
Door Prizes	314.47
Web Site	19.95
Club Picnic & Supplies	353.10
Check Printing	23.95
Return Dinner Check	40.00
Flower Show Supplies	<u>70.23</u>
Total Expenses	\$5,758.14

Ending Bank Balance 12/31/2009 **\$2,026.15**

*Respectfully submitted by Marion Hensley
- Treasurer*

Our ILSR Website

David Palmeter is still ramping up a "Class Act" Website for all of us to really be proud of. That means, you want to log in 2 or 3 times each month just to see what is new or look at the latest Newsletter in full color.

David is asking Club Members to submit some of their favorite pictures of "real trains" (as opposed to "model trains"). You can look at the pictures already on and see exactly what David is looking for here. A short caption line or statement to accompany each picture is helpful. Be sure to include the location, date, etc. etc.

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Welcome New Members

Due to lack of space in the last Newsletter, this update was omitted. My apologies, but let us all make welcome the following new members to our ILSR Train Club.

Fred Rees & Trudy Martin - Indianapolis
David & Dorothy Watts - Zionsville
Vincent & Berill Johnson - Carmel
David & Lisa Grounds - Bloomfield
Rick Whitt - Indianapolis

2010 CLUB EVENT CALENDAR

- March 5 - 7 Indianapolis Home and Flower Show - Lucas Oil Stadium
10:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M.
- Apr. 30 - May 2 Orchard In Bloom
Indianapolis
- May 15 Annual ILSR Club Dinner
Golden Coral - Noblesville
6:00 - 9:00 P.M.
- May 22 Open House Rex Bowman &
Bud Hunter 2 - 5 P.M. Lebanon
- June 12 Upland Strawberry Festival
Upland, IN. All Day
- August 2 - 8 26th National Garden Railway
Tacoma, Washington
- September 11 Four Club Tour to Columbus, OH
5 Garden Layouts on display.



