



The Daylight Observation

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PCR 2021 Coming to Daylight Division

by John Houlihan, Chairman PCR 2021

Contents

PCR 2021 Convention	1
July Daylight Meet	2
April Meet Report	3
Member Aid	4
Achievement Program	5
Director /	
Superintendent report	6
Contest Report	7
Railroad History	8
In Memory of Jim Scott	9
Daylight Calendar	10

The 2021 convention will be sponsored by the Daylight Division. The dates and location have not been finalized, but more than likely will be held at the same location as the 2008 convention was held (Ramada Inn). The chairman is John Houlihan. I [John] am accepting volunteers for the various functions that are needed to make this a pleasant experience for the attendees. I would like to see railroad-themed table decorations for the banquet.

The name for the meet has not been finalized. I would like to continue the 2008 theme of honoring the San Joaquin & Eastern. Perhaps a strong back flat car can be created using laser cutting and 3D printing for a kit. The car could be offered in several scales on a preorder basis. Submit your ideas to me.

The convention will be called a “mini convention” because of the NMRA National convention being held in the Coast Division area. The PCR convention could be a one day affair. If enough interest is shown, it could be expanded to 2 or 3 days. You can contact me [John] at ‘oscalejohn@gmail.com’ 



Fresno's Ramada Inn, right next to freeway 41, is currently being considered for PCR 2021.

Photo by Chuck Harmon

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Daylight Summer Meet Planned for July

by Bruce Morden

Save the date of July 27 because you are invited to the beautiful Santa Barbara area. We will be meeting at the Historic Goleta Depot.

At the time of this writing we are not sure what will be on the program; maybe a track clinic with prototype track or with 7 1/2" gauge track. Also being considered is a history talk and tour of the 1901 Depot, or perhaps a eucalyptus tree making clinic. If anyone else has a clinic and is willing to step forward, we would welcome that also. We will also have some railroads to visit after the meeting so save that date!"

We are discussing some way of live streaming the meet so those in Mariposa, Merced, Fresno or Bakersfield don't have to make the long drive. No promises but stay tuned. 🚂



Goleta Depot during a Daylight meet in August 2008...That's Bruce Morden giving a historical lecture on the freight platform.

Photo by Chuck Harmon



Daylight members enjoyed great food and fellowship at Tehachipi's Steampunk Cafe.

Daylight Division Meet - 4-13-2019 by Chuck Harmon, MMR

Meet location: Tehachipi, California, Steampunk Restuarant.

Attendees - 7 members, 1 non-member

Income \$35.00; Bills - none

General discussion about reducing number of meets to 3 per year. No motion, no resolution.

Mike O'Brien moved that we purchase 12 kits to be used for a future kit-bashing contest. It was seconded and passed.

Neil Fernbaugh presented a hands-on clinic on weathering with powders.

John Stahl won the contest with his MOW train. There were no other model entries. There were no photo contest entries.

Brewster Bird made a brief appearance to announce that he was moving to New Mexico.

Neil Fernbaugh appointed Chuck Harmon to be the new Observation Editor. 🚂

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The Daylight Observation is published quarterly to inform members of division activities and to provide educational articles for the advancement of railroad history and the art and science of model railroading. It is distributed to all members of the Division and to officers and newsletter editors of other divisions in the PCR.

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O-Scale Lego layout was a feature of the Tehachipi Train Show, which we visited after the meet.

Mike O'Brian photo

See page 9 for more meet photos.

What's New in Model Railroading?

by Robert Pethoud, Member Aid Chairman

What's got me excited about improving my modeling most recently is a new book from Lance Mindheim, *Model Railroading As Art*, CreateSpace.com, 2018. For years I've admired Lance's structures and scenes, photos of which simply appear too realistic to be models. His Los Angeles Junction (LAJ) layout, which has been featured in the model press lately and which decorates many pages of the book, is a case in point. If you haven't seen some of these astounding photos, check out Lance's website, <https://lancemindheim.com>, to find an impressive gallery of scenes to inspire you.

Mr. Mindheim's latest book reveals many of the secrets he employs to achieve extraordinary realism. For example, the volume is full of products and techniques he uses to get just the right color (hue and tone) and texture on his models, and I ended up making a lengthy shopping list to take to my local hobby shop and hardware store.



However, for me the highlight of the book is his explanation of artistic composition to create scenes which are both believable and esthetically appealing. Prior to reading *Model Railroading As Art*, my approach to modeling a built-up area was to make each structure as complex and detailed as possible, then fill in every available square inch with these super-detailed jewels. The goal was something like what you could see on George Sellios's

Franklin and South Manchester.

Lance Mindheim turns this thinking inside out. To create a more realistic scene, he suggests that only a small fraction (maybe 1/4 or 1/5) of the structures should be focal points, noticeable by their shape, height, color (warmer or darker than surrounding buildings), or prominent location. The rest of the structures should be more mundane and even nondescript. Moreover, he employs a lot of open space, such as parking lots, vacant lots, and fields to give more attention to the structures and to enhance the realism of the scenes he creates. Lance also explains which scenic features can be realistically selectively compressed and which ones cannot. I find it comforting that I may be able to improve the overall appearance of my scenes by modeling fewer structures, and many of those without much complexity or detail.

This new book is not a complete course on structure modeling, scenery construction, backdrop painting, or weathering, but it will give you strategies and techniques to improve the quality of your work in all of those areas and more. In case you were in doubt, I heartily recommend Lance Mindheim's book, *Model Railroading As Art*.

Mr. Mindheim also has written a series of books on planning, building, and operating "small," "modern era" switching layouts (I also recommend these highly). He likes to model flat, urbanized areas like Los Angeles and Miami in the modern era; I prefer small towns in the mountains during the steam-to-diesel transition era. Despite this glaring difference in focus, I find almost all of his ideas applicable to my projects and I have already started implementing them. I'll be reporting on the results in the future. 🚂

Achievement Program - What is the AP?

By Dave Grenier, Division AP Manager

So what exactly is the Achievement Program? From the introduction on the NMRA website, we can read “In simple terms, the Achievement Program (AP) is a travel guide to help you on your journey through the world of model railroading. The AP also provides incentive to learn and master the many crafts and skills necessary in the hobby of model railroading. With the completion of each category, you will be issued a certificate acknowledging your achievement.”

“The AP requirements are a set of standards, but they can also serve as a set of guideposts for those who are new, near-new, and not-so-new to the hobby. Not because they lead to some sort of official pat-on-the-back, but because they are a source of ideas for projects that can help us learn to become better modelers.”

“Briefly, the AP is a system of requirements for demonstrating a superior level of skill in various aspects of our hobby. It covers not only building various types of , but also building other things, which are important to the hobby, such as

[scenery](#), [structures](#), [track work](#),

and [wiring](#). It also recognizes service to the [hobby](#) and the [NMRA](#), which are important as well. “The Achievement Program is also a personal commitment to share one's knowledge with others and to encourage them as they also make the AP journey.”

There are eleven different AP categories in which a certificate can be awarded. The requirements for each category are beyond the scope of this article, but are described in detail on the NMRA website (nmra.org/categories). The eleven categories are grouped into four areas, as shown below: (see next column)

Railroad Equipment

Master Builder – Motive Power
Master Builder – Cars

Railroad Scenery

Master Builder – Structures
Master Builder – Scenery
Master Builder – Prototype Models

Railroad Construction and Operations

Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Chief Dispatcher

Service to the Hobby and NMRAMembers

Association Official
Association Volunteer
Model Railroad Author

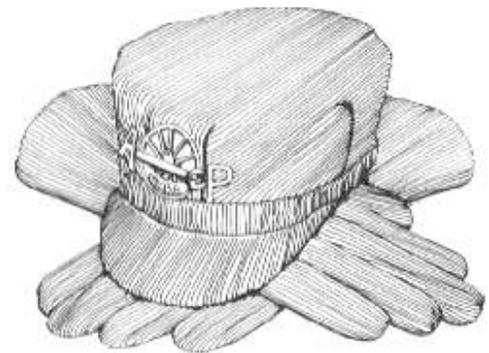
Although there are eleven different AP categories, a member only needs to meet the requirements for seven categories, with at least one from each of the four areas, to qualify for the eventual, and the ultimate goal of Master Model Railroader (MMR). This may seem daunting to some of you, but please don't get discouraged. There is also a “starter” award for those modelers that are new to the AP, the Golden Spike Award. We'll go over the Golden Spike Award in the next installment of the series.

For more information on the Achievement Program, visit the NMRA website at

nmra.org/education/achievement-program

or contact the Daylight Achievement Program Manager, Dave Grenier,

grenida@pacbell.net. 🚂



Director / Superintendent's Report

by Neil Fernbaugh, Daylight Division
Superintendent and Director

This year's Pacific Coast Region Convention was held at the former McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento rather than at a typical hotel venue. Just seeing how the air base, closed in 1995, has been reinvented as a joint public/private business park and community was interesting in itself. Of course the UP railroad line and Roseville yards were close by.

Our own Bill "Grumpy" Scott hosted this year's Hobo Breakfast close by the tracks. Daylight Division members were well represented at this year's clinics. Bob Pethoud gave his workshop on Cheap and Easy Trees, Paul Deis presented his clinic on Tuning Up Your Rolling Stock, and I repeated the hands-on weathering workshop that we did at our Tehachapi meet. Ed Hall and Bob Chaparro, Daylight Division "Boomers"* also gave clinics.

As noted in our lead article, John Houlihan has volunteered to chair the PCR 2021 Convention in Fresno. Because the National NMRA convention will be held that year in the Santa Clara area, we will be hosting a mini-convention lasting somewhere between one and three nights.

I was happy to run into Daylight members Mark Simonian and Walter Mizuno at the convention as well, and I'm happy to note that they both are planning to become more involved in our Division leadership.

Among the highlights of the convention for me were the opportunities to visit and operate on four different and amazing layouts. I would urge all of our members who are interested in operations to explore similar opportunities at the Bay Area Layout Design and Operations weekend next January, and at our future conventions (the next PCR convention is in Concord next April 30th, and is co-sponsored by the Western

Railway Museum in Suisun City). Take time to look up these, and other future events in the PCR Master Calendar link on our Daylight Division web page.

I won't try to put everybody to sleep with a blow by blow of the Board of Directors and Business meeting, but I do want to mention a few things that came up.

1. The board is really interested in how to encourage more entries in our regional and division contests. Among the ideas proposed were bigger prizes, a bigger variety of categories, kitbashing contests, and providing ways that those who cannot come to the conventions would be able to have their models displayed.
2. The board continues to be concerned about increasing our membership base and providing more services and opportunities to participate for members who don't usually attend meetings or conventions. Our new President, Chris Palermo, and Vice-president, Frank Markovich, are setting up visits with members all around the division. They will be sending out an invitation to Daylight Division members to meet with them in Fresno this July and planning a visit later in the year to the coastal areas.
3. Because the 2022 NMRA convention is scheduled to be held in Birmingham, England (a bit of jaunt for most of us), the board is interested in working to create a multi-region convention, probably with the Pacific Southwest and Pacific Northwest Regions. More on that later.

Lastly, special thanks to Chuck Harmon for stepping in to edit the **Observation**, and to John Houlihan for taking on the role of Division Paymaster/Clerk in addition to stepping up to chair the 2021 convention. 🚂

*Frequent participants in Daylight Division activities who do not reside in the division.



Contest Report

by Chuck Harmon, MMR, Division Contest Chairman

John Stahl won first place in the MOW contest at the Tehachapi meet on April 13th. There were no other contest entries. The photo category was Workin' on the Railroad. There were no photo entries. Congratulations to John.

The categories for our July meet in Santa Barbara (Goleta Depot) will be Model: Structures and Photo: Model - Black and White. You can also bring a model of any category for AP judging. Models for display only, especially those in process, not yet completed, are welcome.

Remember that you will receive a

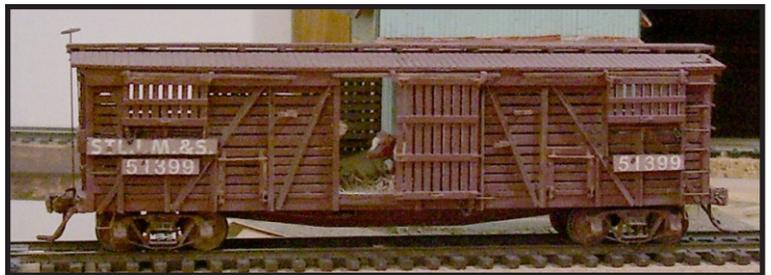
bonus raffle ticket for entering the contest.

It is encouraging to see models entered in the contest. It shows others that some of us are still interested in building a really good model, rather than just getting a ready-built car or building. This is encouraging to other modelers who may be reluctant to build something. My first contest entry years ago was an Ambroid kit, that I was really excited about. I entered in kit category and was disappointed to learn that the points were limited in that class. Gus Pasternak encouraged me to enter in open class next time. I did, with another kit that I had added detail to and was surprised to get a merit award (87-1/2 points or more).

For more information on contests go to the PCR web site and click on contest information. pcnmra.org 



John Stahl's MOW train took first place in the Model Contest
Photo by Doug Wagner



This Chicken car and stock car are both Ambroid kits that received merit awards in a Daylight contest. They counted towards my Master Builder - Cars certificate for my Master Model Railroader. The cars were constructed per the kit directions, then details were added, such as chickens and cows, scratch-made hinges and fasteners, brake detail, coupler lift bars and air hoses. The Poultry car garnered 97 points and the stock car received 105.

Photos by Chuck Harmon

714TH Transportation Battalion (Railway Operations-Steam & Diesel Electric)

Roadname: U.S. Army – Fort Eustis, VA

A Brief History – Submitted by Joe Bencivengo, 663rd Railway Car Repair Company.

(Forwarded to the Observation by Bob Sexton)

As an active duty Transportation Corps Officer from June 1966 until June 1968, I think destiny mandated my assignment to this Unit from January 1968 until my discharge on June 15th 1968. After all, my grandfather worked his entire adult life on Pennsylvania RR Road Gangs in and around Philadelphia.

The 714th was originally activated on October 18, 1927 and originally known as the 56th Engineering Battalion (Railway). It existed only on paper from then until WWII being “reconstructed” because the entry of the US into war was eminent. On April 1, 1942 it was activated as the 714th Engineer Railway Operating Battalion at Camp Claiborne, LA.

Railroading required years of experience & skills not attainable overnight, thus the Army had an agreement with civilian RR Companies to provide personnel & training during wartime. The 714th trained by maintaining 50 miles of track between Camp Claiborne & Ft. Polk, LA. Rain & good old Louisiana mud conditions kept the entire Battalion busy keeping the road open & returning derailments to the track. Military training was also diligently pursued until GI Joe didn't know if he was in the Army or workin' on the RR. The 714th left Camp Claiborne via the US Navy Transport Vessel, Chaumont, for service in Alaska on March 14, 1943. Battalion strength was 1092 Enlisted Men, two Warrant Officers & 23 Commissioned Officers upon arrival at Seward, AL.

The men of the 714th had the responsibility for operating the 513-mile Alaskan Railroad and made it “tick” for more than 25 months. During that time they renewed 240,387 crossings, 75,000 switch

ties, installed 63,000 cubic yards of ballast, and rebuilt or repaired 50 bridges consisting of 318 spans. The unit proved to be the most important rail line in operations against the Japanese being awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Award on April 4, 1945.

With the establishment of the US ARMY TRANSPORTATION CORPS during 1945 it was re designated as the 714th Transportation Corps, Railway Operating Battalion, and relocated to Ft. Eustis, VA.

From August 1950 until July 1951 the 714th was deployed to Pusan, South Korea to assist with the operations of their railroads with a total strength of only 229, 20 percent of who were experienced railroad men. Bands of North Korean guerillas added materially to the dangers of railroad operations and the 714th was forced to engage in combat with them on many occasions. During the summer of 1951, fighting had become stationary & the South Koreans were taking over most of their railroad operations. Although there for a short period, the Battalion saw plenty of action and earned six Campaign Streamers and another Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Upon return to Ft. Eustis, it was redesigned the 714th Transportation Battalion (Railway Operations) (Steam & Diesel Electric). During my short tenure with the 714th, time was mostly spent training troops as part of the Riot Control Task Force for the Military District of Washington. In fact when Dr. King was assassinated during April 1968, my Company was deployed to an eight-block area near downtown to enforce the nightly curfew & assist local law enforcement officers. At every intersection we deployed eight combat equipped soldiers and roving Jeep patrols armed with a mounted M-60 Machine Gun (for visual effect). The unit also participated in a Pentagon protection operation during 1967 and again in November 1969 & May 1972 during Civil Disturbances. We continually conducted unit troop training, daily train operations,

Continued on Page 9

714th (Cont.)

locomotive & car maintenance, and track repair on the 31 miles of track within Ft. Eustis. We “ferried” troops around the base for training and delivered freight cars of equipment & supplies to on-base warehouses from the Baltimore & Ohio (now CSX) sidings 1 mile outside the base. We returned the empty cars for pickup. I did on one occasion get to engineer a GP-16 Diesel Electric Locomotive, around base, under the watchful eye of the soldier “engineer”.

Sadly, the 714th Transportation Battalion then consisting of Headquarters Company; A, B, & C Companies; 157th

Transportation Company (Diesel/Electric Locomotive Repair); and 663rd Transportation Company (Railway Car Repair) was deactivated on June 22, 1972. Thus ending the active duty military role in railroad training & operations. The Ft. Eustis rail operations were turned over to civilian contractors to date.

After “wrestling” thru many recruiting sessions to extend my active duty for 1 year (promotion included), I opted for a return to civilian life. I would not have exchanged the many challenging and unique learning experiences I had in the Army Transportation Corps for anything. 🚂

Jim Scott - 1942-2019

It is with a very heavy heart I bring news of my dear friend James Scott’s passing on May 1, 2019 in Lompoc, CA from kidney failure. He was 76 years old. Jim was a longtime member of the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society and worked a number of the annual conventions over the past several years, primarily in the model and photo contest room. Jim was also one of my co-moderators on the Espee email list. Jim’s railroad interest was Southern Pacific in the 1950s, primarily focusing on modeling Coast Line trains in 1953. He was also a member of the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. (Forwarded from Espee group by Ed Hall)



Jim Scott - 1942-2019
Photo by Bob Chaparro

More April meet Photos by Doug Wagner.



This car takes on new life (???) with a weathering job. (Hope it gets some wheels in the left truck)



Neil Fernbauge put on a weathering clinic.

May 18, 2019 - 11:00 am to 4:00 pm, Redwood Empire Division Spring Meet, Monroe Hall, 1400 West College Ave, Santa Rosa, CA.

May 23-25, 2019 - O Scale National 2019 in conjunction with O Scale West, S West, & Narrow Gauge West, Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, 5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA.

June 2, 2019 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, The Quarterly NMRA Coast Division Meet - a FREE Model Railroading Event,, 1001 Davis Street, San Leandro, CA. (at SF Bay Area Council Office, BSA)

June 8 & 9, 2019 - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

July 7 – 14, 2019 - 2019 NMRA National Convention & National Train Show®, The Little America Hotel - Salt Lake City, 500 South Main Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

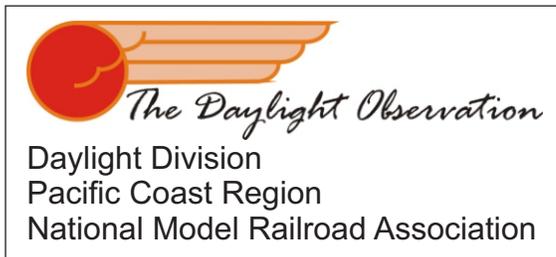
July 27, 2019 - 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Daylight Division Summer Meet, Goleta Depot, 300 North Los Carneros Road, Goleta, CA.

August 10, 2019 - Sierra Division Summer Meet & BBQ. Morning activity: 9:30 AM to Noon at the Fair Oaks Public Library, 1601 Fair Oaks Blvd, Fair Oaks, CA.

August 10, 2019 (Saturday only) - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Model Railroad Open House, Carquinez Model Railroad Society, 645 Loring Ave (across from C&H Sugar), Crockett, CA.

August 17, 2019 - Redwood Empire Division Summer Picnic, Location: TBD

September 4 – 7, 2019 - 39th National Narrow Gauge Convention, Sacramento, CA.



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