

THE BRASS POUNDER



Newsletter of the Carolina Southern Division 12, Mid-Eastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association

Volume 16 Number 1

January – February 2016

Coming Events

(See CSD Website for
further details)

RMU

Saturday, Jan 23
CHRIST THE KING
13501 S. TRYON ST
CHARLOTTE
9:00 – 1:00

CSD Monthly Events:

Hunter Acres Baptist
Church, 4620 Heman
Drive, Charlotte

Saturday, Jan 30th
CSDiv Annual
Business Meeting

Saturday, Feb 20th
Clinic: Make 'n Take
Part I - Soldering

Saturday, Mar 19th
Clinic: Make'n Take
Part II – RR Fusee

Other Events

Saturday, Mar 19th
10:00 – 3:00
Greatest little Train
Show in Greensboro
Greensboro Amtrak
Depot
300 E. Washington St
Greensboro, NC

Superintendent's Corner

By Jack Haynes

As this year as Superintendent draws to a close, it's natural to look back and see how things went.

First of all, I want to recognize all the people who have contributed to their Division with their time, talents, and efforts. We are all fortunate to have these dedicated members. Andrew Stitt stepped in as Program Chair and set up a great series of events for our education and enjoyment. Doug Algire took the reins of RMU when things looked pretty bleak, having lost the venue that served us so well for several years. He has pulled things together and has another great session arranged for us. Gil Brauch has, as always, been a dependable resource, taking care of Train Town and the web site and regularly reminding the rest of us when we need to get something out to the membership. He and Marcus Neubacher have launched the Division into digital media with a Facebook page. Fred Miller has updated the Brass Pounder with a great new look. Roy Becker has often been involved in making things happen but which get little attention, like handling registrations, arranging for facilities and equipment. Others have contributed with activities that go on behind the scenes, such as AP and Membership, that even the Superintendent isn't fully aware of, but that contribute equally to improving the Division for all of us. If I haven't mentioned someone by name, please blame it on that awareness and an old memory.

I also want to express appreciation on behalf of the Division to those who have supported our programs by presenting clinics at RMU or at monthly meetings, to those layout owners who have opened their homes to Division members for tours, hands-on clinics, and operating sessions, and finally to the members who reward their generosity by attending Division events.

We had hoped to have the Annual Meeting right after RMU, but that has proved impractical, so the Annual Meeting has

been scheduled for January 30 at Hunter Acres church hall. This is the opportunity for all the members to help direct the efforts of our officers toward things that matter most to you. Sitting through a Business Meeting is not anyone's favorite Saturday morning activity, but please come out and show your support and appreciation for what the Division officers do for us and contribute your ideas for the future. If there is something you would like to see us do, it's not hard to become involved. Just let one of the officers know how you would like to participate and they will find a way for you to be included.



Editor's Notes

By Fred Miller, MMR

I trust all had a great holiday with lots of model railroad related "acquisitions" and activities.

Well now it's time to buckle down and start working on all of those postponed modeling activities. And the division sponsored RMU (Railroad Modelers University.) is a great place to start the juices flowing. Lots of beginner to advanced topics for all. Take a look at the schedule elsewhere in this newsletter.

Andrew Stitt has been busy establishing our Division Activities Program for this year. See his notes below. Two of the clinics listed for February and March, conducted by yours truly, deserve some further comment. See my notes later in this newsletter



Division Website:
www.carolinasouthern.org

Division Program for 2016

By Andrew Stitt

The program calendar looks to be an interesting one for 2016. As of this date, there are programs planned through May. After the RMU in January, Fred Miller, MMR, will get us going with a two part series on building custom electronic projects. He will begin in February by offering a tutorial on soldering small electronic circuits to help those attending gain skills and confidence in soldering techniques. The second part of the presentation will follow in March with a project to assemble a railroad fusee for your layout.

In April plans are in the works for two employees of Norfolk Southern to offer those attending some insight into how the track maintenance, and operations departments of the railroad work. This should be a lot of fun to learn how a real railroad works. At this moment, May appears to be a time for a road trip to visit the Jones Hill Railroad which is operated by the Southern Piedmont Live Steamers in Oakboro. The exact date has yet to be set, so watch the CSD Website for further details.

Beyond May, the programs for the remainder of 2016 are still fluid. I am hoping to enlist help in programs about 3D printing, photographic backdrops, and historical research of your favorite railroad. Among road trips are a possible visit to the narrow gauge museum in Claremont, and a prototype visit or two. As always, if anybody wants to help with these ideas, or has ones of their own that they would like me to pursue, do not hesitate to let me know, and I will work on it.

I hope everybody will want to share in the education and fun we are planning on presenting in 2016!

January 23, 2016 Railroad Modelers University (RMU) Schedule

Provided courtesy of Carolina Southern Division Website

TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	16-1	Modeling Fences and Roads: Your driveway connects to all the roads of the world. You fence things in and fence things out. Now you can make roads and fences with expertise. Come join in hands on clinic, and enjoy creating.	Michele Chance
10:15 AM	16-2	How to Solder Like a Pro: How to solder circuit boards, rail or make drop feeders. Alan learned to solder while working on the Apollo project at NASA in Florida. The right tools, and skills can save hours of troubleshooting. Please bring a soldering iron (15 to 40 watt) and an extension cord. Also (optional), if you have any or all of the following supplies bring them, too: solder, small sponge, needle nose pliers, wire stripper, a small section of track with rail joiners, a used tooth brush, alcohol, liquid or paste resin, to name a few.	Alan Burdick
11:30 PM	16-3	Learning about and from the Achievement Program: Now that you have decided to model, how can you improve? Looking at the AP awards and qualifications can be a guide or outline to skills you can develop. It really isn't a competition with others but is you competing with your former self, always improving. Come with questions and see what others have done and learn a little about what the Achievement Program is all about.	Dave Chance
TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	17-1	Laying and Ballasting Track: Neal will demonstrate laying track to NMRA Standards on a model railroad module that can be used with clubs in the local area. He will then cover ballasting that same track. This is the first hour of a two hour class continued below.	Neal Anderson
10:15 AM	17-2	Laying and Ballasting Track: This is a continuation of Class 17-1 above.	Neal Anderson

11:30 AM	17-3	Timetables and Train Orders: Seth will cover Implementing Timetables and Train Orders for your railroad. Attendees will learn how to setup, write up and use Timetables and Train Orders to create prototypical operations on a model railroad.	Seth Gartner
TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	18-1	Using Static Grass and Modeling Rocks: Ty will how to make your own static grass applicator and how to apply static grass. He will teach you how to use Urethane Foam to make rocks and a little different way to use your plaster rock molds.	Ty Brown
10:15 AM	18-2	Modeling Trees: This class will cover a variety of trees: Home made bottle brush trees, “featured” trees, using wood for trunks and real evergreen boughs for the branches, and other styles of foliage.	Ty Brown
11:30 AM	18-3	Creating Better Backdrops: Ty will cover the following during his demonstration of backdrop creation:	Ty Brown
		- basic preparation for the background	
		- getting the Blues right	
		- creating easy to make clouds	
		- Painting your back drop in a weekend	
TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	14-1	Basic Model Railroading: If You have questions, Doug has your answers. Doug walks attendees though how to get started, scale vs. gauge, layouts and modules, time period, where to build, construction, DC vs. DCC, rolling stock, cost, and links to terminology and resources.	Doug Algire
10:15 AM	14-2	Track & Wheels – Making It Work: Two of the most common and frustrating problems with model railroading is track and wheels. Jack addresses common problems with track, wheels, and couplers, while demonstrating to attendees how to use a NMRA Standards Gauge to identify the cause of such problems. Attendees are invited to bring their own NMRA Standards Gauge.	Jack Haynes

11:30 AM	14-3	How to Use an Electrical Meter: Electrical issues can also frustrate model railroaders, Jack will show attendees how to properly measure properties of model railroad power systems, circuits, and components, and do basic trouble shooting. This is a "Hands On" presentation. Circuits and meters will be available, <i>but attendees are encouraged to bring their own meters. Class size is limited to 12, so register early.</i>	Jack Haynes
TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	20-1	Sound Animation (Layout Background Sounds): Adding background sounds is a way to enhance the "multi-dimensional" effect on your layout. Industry, city or country sounds broaden the viewing and operating experience. There are a number of commercial "sound boards" offering pre-recorded or recordable capabilities with prices ranging from \$10 to \$100. This clinic will review both commercial and do-it-yourself sound projects.	Fred Miller, MMR
10:15 AM	20-2	Tips and Tricks from a Master Model Railroader: Mr. Parker will demonstrate and discuss Tips & Tricks he has learned over his 50 plus years of model railroading. Everything from weathering to scratch building will be discussed.	Jack Parker, MMR
11:30 AM	20-3	Using JMRI Decoder Pro: Roy will give an introduction to programming Decoders using JMRI software including:	Roy Becker
		1. A brief discussion on installing software and requirements for different DCC systems	
		2. Basic programming of essential Configuration Variables (CVs)	
		3. Adjusting values for different effects on the same output	
		4. Remapping of functions	
		5. Considerations for sound decoders	
TIME	Class #	Description	Instructor
9:00 AM	19-1	LED Lighting: Joe returns to RMU with his always popular class on LED lighting. Attendees will be introduced to LED basics, size, placement and using LEDs for turnout indication.	Joe Burden

10:15 AM	19-2	Introduction to JMRI: "What is JMRI? What does it do? How do I set it up?" Have you ever asked yourself these questions? If you have, here is your chance to ask an expert. Dick will answer all these questions and many more of he walks attendees though JMRI. NOTE: JMRI = Java Model Railroad Interface	Dick Bronson
11:30 AM	19-3	Signaling Your Layout: Dick picks up where he left off in Class 19-2 above and takes attendees deeper into the capabilities of JRMI and setting up a prototypical signaling system on your model railroad using JMRI.	Dick Bronson
12:45 PM	Special Presentation	Our Special Guest Jack Dziadul will give a feature presentation in the main assembly area during this time slot.	



Railroad Fusee Learn-Make-Take Clinic

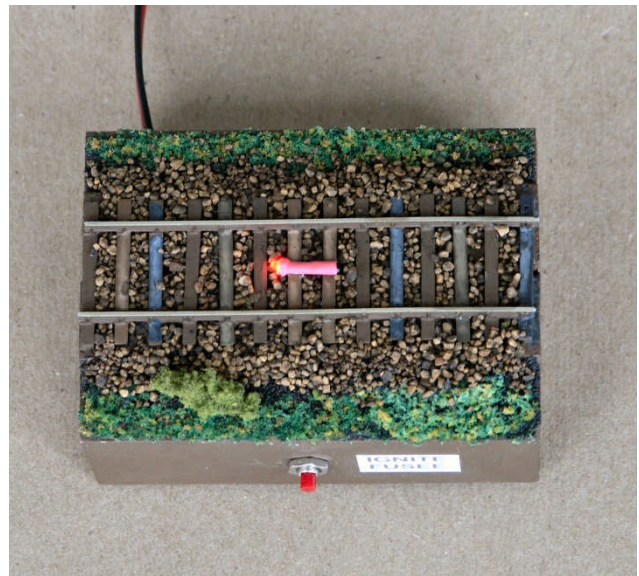
By Fred Miller, MMR

As noted elsewhere in this Brass Pounder, I will be giving a two part "make and take" clinic on the construction of a Railroad Fusee.

In the days before train radio communications, fusees (fyu-'zE), or railroad flares were used to keep trains apart on un-signaled lines. Railroad fusees were timed to burn for ten minutes and were dropped behind a train to ensure a safe spacing. If a following train encountered a burning fusee it was not to pass until the fusee burned out. Fusees are frequently used in modern railroading to protect difficult road crossing locations particularly around dense industrial switching situations not otherwise signaled with lights or gates.

One or more fusees placed on your layout would provide an interesting aspect to your operations.

Several commercial fusee products are available for \$25 to \$30. Our make-and-take project will yield similar capabilities but at \$10



SAMPLE FUSEE MOUNTED BETWEEN RAILS

The project requires soldering electronic components to printed circuit boards. I thought it useful to provide, as a first part (in February), some practice on soldering components to a printed circuit board. This practice session will yield (if successful - <G>) a useful 5VDC power supply.

Description and construction of the Fusee project will take place in the second (March) clinic.

Since I will be ordering the printed circuits and parts before the clinics, I will need to know, in advance, how many modelers will be taking advantage of the make and take clinics. I will need to be reimbursed \$5 for the Part I and \$10 for Part II. Participating members will be provided all components including a pre-programmed microcontroller, but they will need to bring their own 15-25W pointed tip soldering iron.

Submissions For Brass Pounder

Next Issue	Submission Date
Mar-Apr 2016	February 29, 2016

Articles are welcome on any railroad topic, model or prototype. Your editor is available to assist in preparing the materials.

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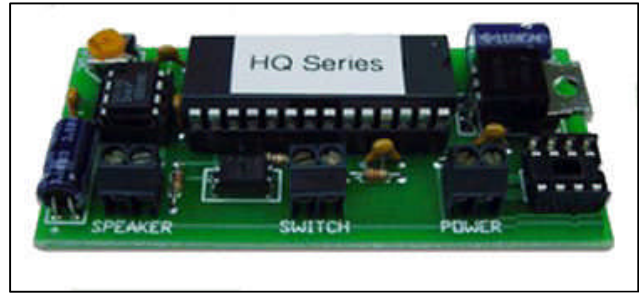
Layout Background Sound

By Fred Miller, MMR

Operating locomotive sounds provided by a wide variety of sound decoders are becoming pretty much standard these days. However, another opportunity to enhance our layouts with another dimension is available through the use of Background Sound.

Commercial background sound devices have been available for some time now. Offerings from manufacturers such as ITT

provide brief 30-60 second pre-programmed sounds for a large variety of subjects. Most

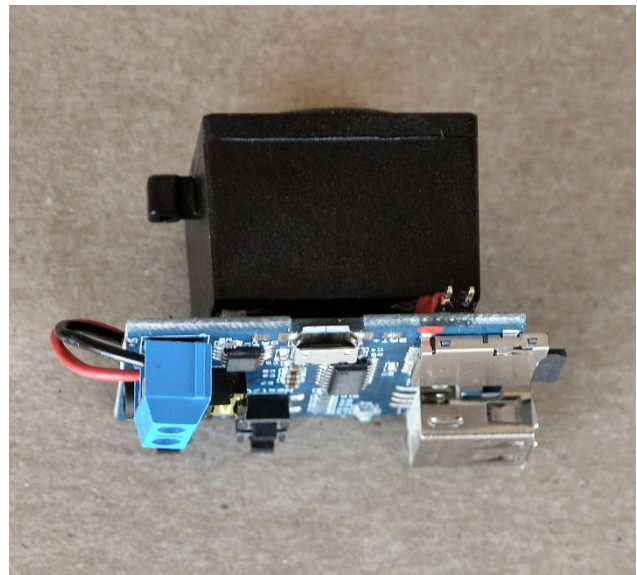


ITT 60-second Sound Board

of these offerings, although easy to install, are limited in the length of "playing time" and cost \$25-30.

Advances in electronic devices and very low prices offered through Chinese eBay stores broaden the opportunities for inexpensive, long playing background sound.

I recently constructed some simple "sound player" boards with price tags below \$10. At that price it is very reasonable to place background sounds adjacent to towns, factories or even countryside features.



Example \$7 MP3 player project

The above example uses a \$2 speaker from Allelectronics, a \$3 MP3 sound board from an eBay store and a micro SD card for \$2

also from an eBay store.

Applicable sounds must be captured and saved to the micro SD card. Literally hours of sound can be saved to the card and played automatically and continuously by the MP3 sound board upon power up.

One source of excellent quality background sounds in a wide variety of subjects is available from Fantasonics on CDs.

EDITORS NOTE:

Be sure to participate in the Division's Annual Business Meeting on January 30th.

This is your opportunity to select the new officers and help direct the activities of the division

EDITORS NOTE:

This issue of the Brass Pounder is somewhat shorter than previous versions. I simply have not received article materials from the membership and I don't like filling the newsletters with just my own material.

Take advantage of the newsletter to share your projects and layout photos.

Division Brass

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