

THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 22 Number 8

August 2022

Division Coming Events

(See [CSD Website](#) for
further details)

DIVISION MEETING

**The Division's
Monthly Meeting for
August will be on
Saturday
August 20th
10:00am at
David B Waymer
Recreation Center
14008 Holbrooks Rd.
Huntersville, NC
28078**

Superintendent's Corner

By The Convention Planning Staff

Hope you are all having a happy, hot, summer! And finding enough time to get some projects done in our favorite hobby, model railroading, even if it is only a diorama or a structure to add to your layout!

However, a number of us have been working hard at preparing to host our Look South 2022 MER convention, particularly Neal Anderson, MMR, and Dave Thrums, our CSD convention chairmen. Neal has arranged tours, and he and Doug Algire have lined up an impressive array of clinics! There are only a couple of slots left to fill, so if you or anyone you know would like to present a clinic, email Doug At 2022clinics@carolinasouthern.org

Alan Hardee and his crew are setting up a truly impressive group of layouts to visit. There will be operating sessions too.

Gil Brauch, MMR, has arranged a great lineup of model railroads to be on display at the hotel, incorporating several railroads in five different scales; O, S, HO, N and Z.

The General Store crew (Bob Halsey, Tim Rust, and Joe Skorch) have a good start collecting items for raffle prizes and door prizes, but are still looking for more! Raffle prizes should be items that are new/unused, either railroad

structures or kits, rolling stock or engines, tools, or unusual souvenir items. They are especially looking for N, O and G scale items. If you have anything you would like to donate, email Bob at 2022sales@carolinasouthern.org. Of course, you will be able to sell your own items in the store, subject to a 15 percent deduction of the sale which goes to the MER/Division.

Finally, we need a few more volunteers to help out at the convention itself. People are needed to serve as clinic classroom assistants, floor monitors, and other tasks to assist wherever necessary, etc. If you can help on any of the convention days, please email Neal at 2022chair@carolinasouthern.org. We need all the help we can get to ensure this will be the best MER convention ever!



LOOK SOUTH IN 2022

REGISTER NOW FOR THE MER CONVENTION IN OCTOBER.
REGISTER AT: https://mer-nmra.com/mer_convention_2022/

DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

IN CASE YOU MISSED THE BANNER ON PAGE ONE....

The Division's Monthly Meeting

**for August will be held on
Saturday August 20th 10:00am at
David B Waymer Recreation Center
14008 Holbrooks Rd.
Huntersville, NC 28078**

***A Zoom option will also be available for those who can't
attend in person.***



David B Waymer Recreation Center, 14008 Holbrooks Rd, Huntersville, NC 28078

Train Town Box Score

June 2022

Open Houses 5

Attendance 79

Hosts: Ed Smith (3), Keith Iritsky, Gil Brauch, MMR (2), Fred Miller, MMR, Fred Brrooks, and Larry Paffrath

To volunteer, go to:

<http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html>

(#)=frequency (r)=first time host

Attendance increased a bit during July. That said, interest is still on the upswing at the Newton Museum and Wade's. With new displays being planned, the future continues to be bright. All that's needed are a few more volunteers. If you are interested in joining us on a Saturday, please go to the following website to volunteer:

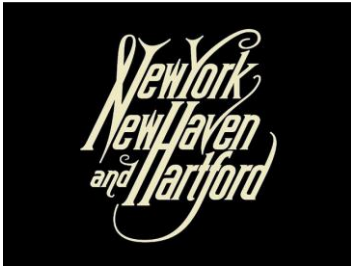
<http://carolinasouthern.org/ttvolunteerrequest.html>

ED Smith

MEETING

The Division's monthly meeting for July was held Saturday, July 16th at the David B Waymer Recreation Center in Huntersville, with a Zoom option for members who couldn't appear in person. Although the "hot spot" for the Zoom was a bit erratic, it was an informative meeting. Unfortunately, Superintendent Andrew Stitt was ill, but Assistant Superintendent Alan Hardee was able to preside. There were about 7 people in person at the Rec Center, and another six on Zoom. I also noted that one of the Zoom connections was from the Back Shop in Spencer with 7 more members who are also Metrolina members joined while hosting their active layout display at Spencer. The bulk of the meeting was an update on Convention planning by Neal Anderson, MMR and co-chair Dave Thrums. Since that status is summarized in the Superintendent's Corner on Page 1, I won't repeat it here.

The most important message from the meeting was the call for more volunteer help during the convention. As noted above, if you can help out, contact the appropriate Convention leadership member.



A BACKDROP ON THE FLY

By Keith Iritsky

My layout lives in our dining room as our farmhouse built in 1905 has no basement. The room has a bank of five windows facing an enclosed area that our dogs run around in. I wanted to be able to keep an eye on them, and also enjoy the view and light provided by the windows. I also wanted to have a backdrop with a city scene of buildings representing the area behind South Station in Boston Mass. So, what to do? I have a background in technical theatre, and after remembering hoisting backdrops up and down for numerous productions, I figured why not make a movable backdrop for my railroad.

I wanted to have something with substance to it but also be thin. I could have made a lightweight wooden frame with canvas material stretched over it, but that's an added expense for the material. I already had 1/8" hardboard in stock so I used that. Measuring the space I was willing to sacrifice at the top of the window and still have a good view, I came up with 17" for the height of the backdrop which would still give me enough for photographs of the scenery. I cut an 8ft X 17" piece of the hardboard, and another piece measuring 6ft X 17". These two pieces were joined together with a splice plate of 1x4 screwed to both pieces resulting in a fourteen foot long backdrop (Photo 1).

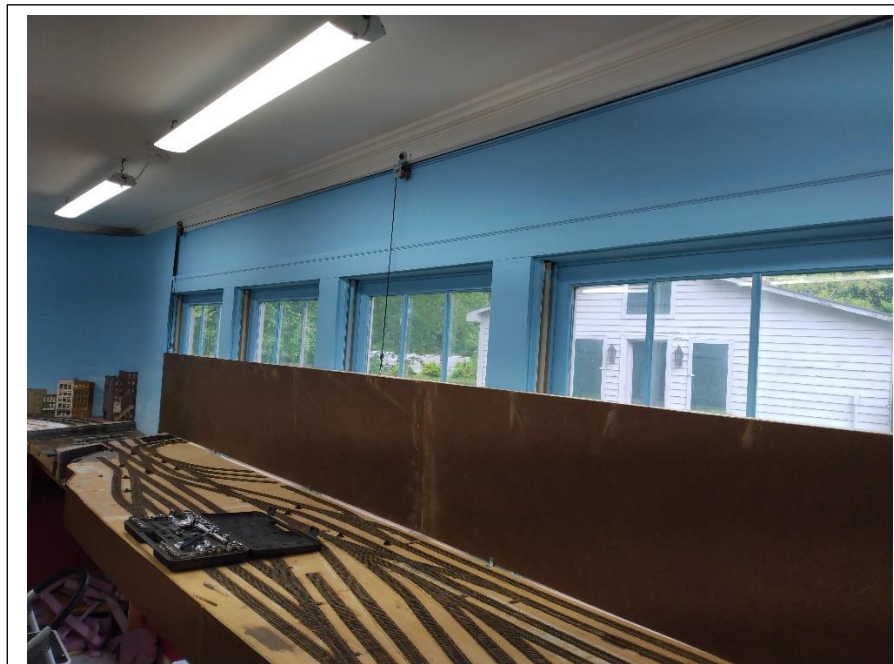


Photo 1: The 14' backdrop in the lowered position.

I beefed up the top of the hardboard with a piece of 1x3 screwed along the rear top edge of the backdrop. I installed three pulleys fastened to the moulding just below the crown moulding above the windows, one dead center and one 3" in from both ends of the backdrop. I dropped a plumb bob down from the pulley and marked where the Screw eyes had to be installed in the three locations along the top of the 1x3. I ran nylon rope rated at 110 lbs, which gives me a 3X safety factor, through the pulleys and down to the screw eyes (Photo2). The center pulley and the right pulley are double sheave pulleys. Three Nylon ropes run from the screw eyes through the pulleys and are secured around a 4" cleat screwed to the right-hand end of the window frame. These were bound together with a wire thimble, to keep them together (Photo 3).



Photo 2: The left-most pulley attached to the moulding, with the nylon rope secured to the backdrop frame with screw eyes.



Photo 3: A wire thimble binds all three ropes together so that they move in unison when raising the backdrop, keeping it level.

Okay, the backdrop goes up and down, but I needed some security devices to keep the backdrop from crashing down and crushing everything if the ropes slipped or broke. I also needed to keep the hardboard straight along the bottom of the benchwork surface, as well as flat against the window frame along the top. The problem of the backdrop crashing down was solved with some chain secured at each end and slipped over a hook screwed into the moulding near the pulley (Photo 4). To hold the backdrop in place at the bottom, I placed small angle irons along the benchwork surface to hold the hardboard behind and in place. (Photo 5) (caption: angle iron "holders". These will be painted to blend in with scenery when it's finished. To hold the top upright, I screwed hanger bolts into the window frames between each window. When the backdrop is lowered it is pushed back and the hanger bolt protrudes

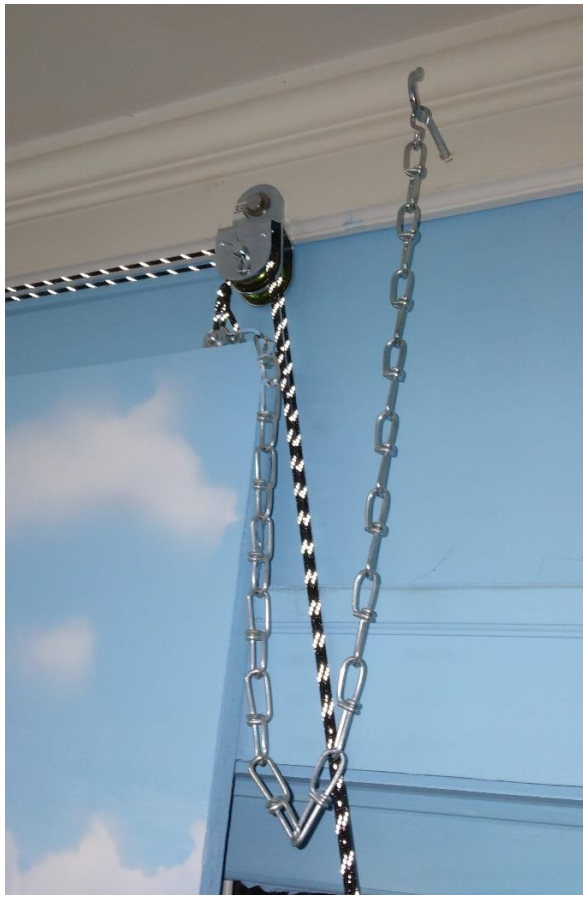


Photo 4: Safety chain mounting.



Photo 5: Angle iron "holders".

through a hole in the hardboard and is secured with a wingnut.(Photo 6) Caption:(the hanger bolt for holding the backdrop upright and straight.). Here is the backdrop in it's raised position.(Photo 7). and the backdrop lowered and secured.(Photo 8)

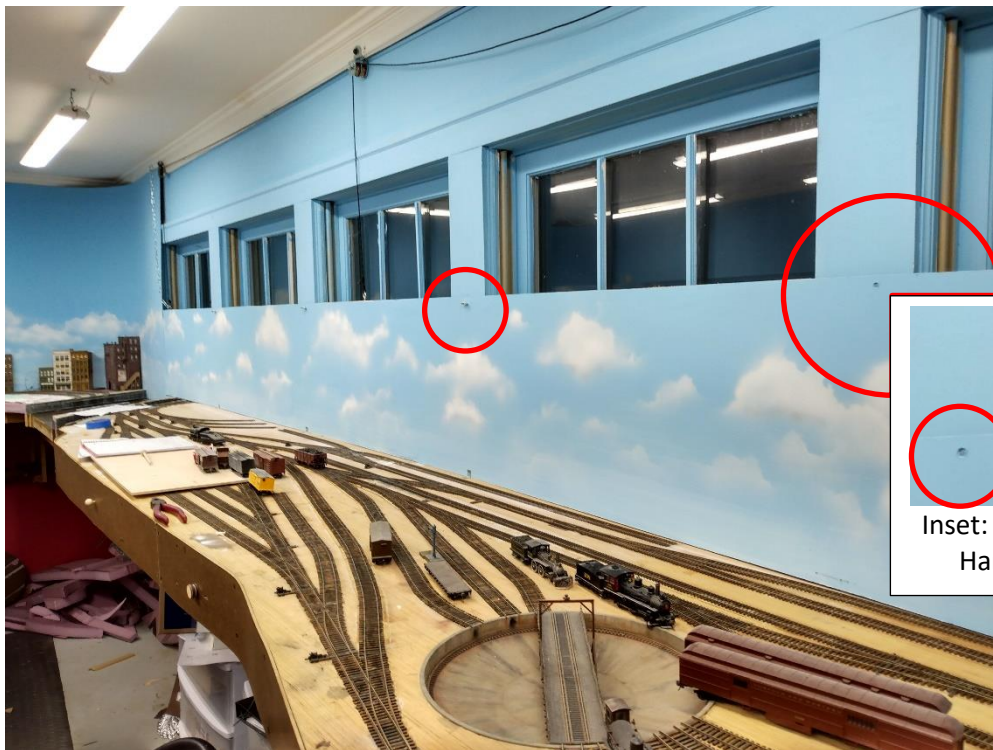
It takes about 1 minute to raise and lower, most of that time is spent installing or removing the wingnuts. It's not a perfect solution, but it suits my needs and budget, and I get to watch the dogs playing in their enclosed yard while shaking my fist and cursing at the squirrels in the bird feeder.



Photo 6: Hanger bolt.



Photo 7: Backdrop in raised position.



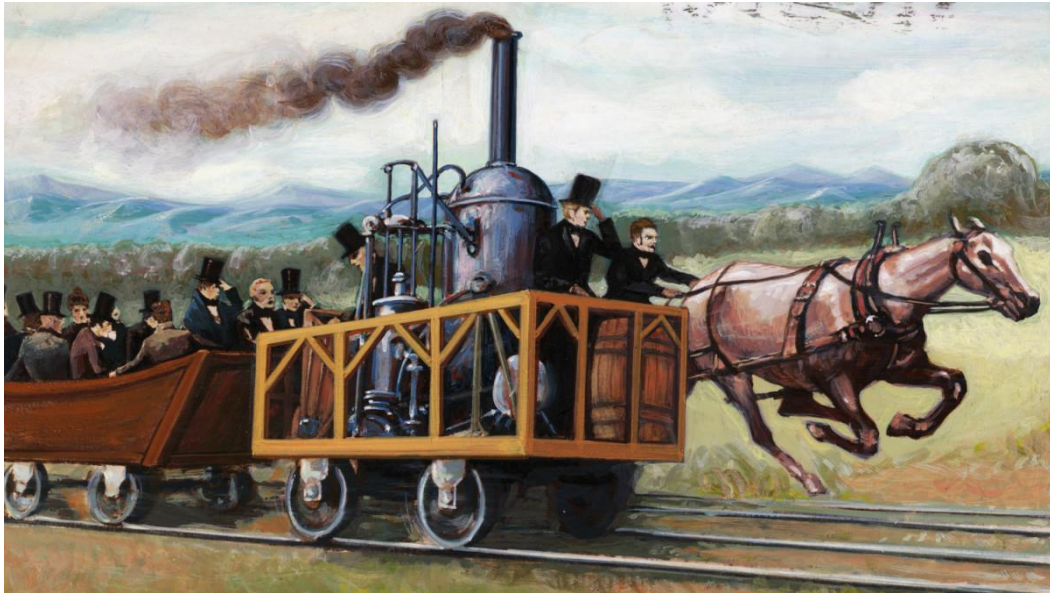
Inset: Wing Nuts on Hanger Bolts.

Photo 8: Backdrop in lowered position.

CLOSING PAGE BONUS

AUGUST RAILROAD HISTORY

AUGUST 28th, 1830



Although Peter Cooper's Tom Thumb lost an impromptu race against a horse-drawn carriage after a blower belt failure, the locomotive's initial lead impressed many observers. Captured in this artist's rendering, the event helped accelerate the development of steam engines and railroads in the United States. A replica of this famous locomotive resides in the [B&O Railroad Museum](#) in Baltimore, MD.

Division Brass

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