

# THE BRASS POUNDER



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

Volume 23 Number 8

August 2023

## Division Coming Events

**OUR AUGUST Meeting  
and Activity is at Rick  
Beam's house:**

**107 Stallion Lane  
Shelby, NC 28150**

**Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup>  
starting at 10:30am**

**JOIN US FOR CLINICS  
AND DISCUSSION OF  
TECHNIQUES**

## Superintendent's Corner

By Andrew Stitt

Details, details! It struck me when I looked at Ed Smith's HO model of an RPO car he brought to be judged at July's meeting for the AP award for rolling stock. As you can see elsewhere in the Brass Pounder from the interior pictures of the car, he went to great lengths to make the model "look right" by adding a number of interior details. The worker sorting the mail into slots particularly struck me. How did Ed do it? I suspect he figured out a way to produce the small-scale mail and found or configured a figure to look like that is what he was doing. Why did he do it? Without asking him, I suspect he wanted to make the scene look complete and enjoyed the challenge of doing it.

My friend John Short was recently completing a HO Ridgeway round house kit. Included in the kit were the correct foundational piers to support the structure. He knew once the round house was installed on his layout nobody would ever see these, but he used them anyway because it was the right thing to do. John coined the phrase "hidden details."

In all aspects of our hobby, we encounter the need for details. They are what makes the T Track system work so well. That's what makes DCC decoder installation and programming work. That's what makes building a diorama a challenge. How much detail in some things is up to the builder. Personally, in building my layout, I subscribe to the late Allen McLelland's axiom "good enough". If it is something near the front of the layout, you will likely see more detail than towards the back. The back side of structures you will never see don't have any detail at all. Why bother? I can still sleep at night.

My point is this – our hobby is one to enjoy. That’s why we like it. The amount of detail you put into something is your decision. Some things, like electronics or track laying require attention to detail to allow things to run the way we want them to. Others not so much. What you choose to do is your decision. Don’t get bogged down on a project because you don’t have enough details. Life is short!our members the opportunity to attend both our meetings and the conventions without a schedule conflict. Further, it was noted that both the Concord Area Modelers, and the Metrolina Area Modelers as well as other railroad special interest groups have their meetings the third Saturday of each month. So, I hope this schedule adjustment will increase the attendance for those with prior commitments at our meetings going forward. Perhaps we will stay on the second Saturday for monthly meetings in the future. Let me know what you think?

---

**Fellow member Rick Beam has graciously agreed to host our August meeting at his house:**

**107 Stallion Lane Shelby, NC 28150**

**Saturday, August 19th  
10:30am – 12:30pm**

### **What’s on the agenda?**

- Host Rick Beam will give a brief clinic on using LEDs.
- Keith Iritski will give a clinic on Fine Scale Miniatures "Cartwright's Machine Shop" kit that he is building. His “work in progress” clinic will focus on the challenges, changes, and scratchbuilt items he added.

**In case you’re not familiar with the area, and in case your navigation system can’t find the address (the street was recently renamed), Rick provided some directions. Here’s an excerpt from his email:**

The address is 107 Stallion Lane, Shelby, NC. I think it now shows up on most GPS but it is off Thamon Road which is off Stoney Point Road. From 74, take the Moss Lake Waco exit. It is the one past the camper dealer that sits up on the hill on the left You can see a BP station to the left at the top of the exit. It is 5 or 6 miles to Thamon road. You will come to an intersection where Tom’s Family Mart is on your left. Go straight. You will pass Woodbridge Golf Course on the left. When you pass Suburban Acres Trailer Park on the left, you’re almost to Thamon Road. After the trailer park, there is a curve to the left and a big corn field on the right. At the end of the corn field is Thamon Road on the left. Iturn onto Thamon Road and it is about a mile up to Stallion lane on the right. You

will see a white fence before you get to Stallion lane on the right. Turn onto Stallion lane and my house is the first house on the left. It is just around a curve to the left. There are wooded lots on either side of my house and wooded lots in front of my house. Parking on the street either in front of my house or the wooded lotta is okay and there is not much traffic.

From 150 in Waco, turn south at the one stoplight in Waco where the post office is. You cross over the bridge over the CSX tracks and go about 2 miles. There are no good landmarks this direction and I still have trouble finding Thamon Road. The best I can do is say if you pass a very large cornfield on the left and the Suburban Acres Mobile Home park on the right, you have gone too far.

The meeting will be in the large metal building at the end of the driveway

Sorry for the lengthy directions. They renamed my street just about the time I bought the property and I did not show up on many GPS when I first started having the Metrolina meetings.

---

## **WHILE YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT DIVISION MEETINGS, PLAN AHEAD FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER.**

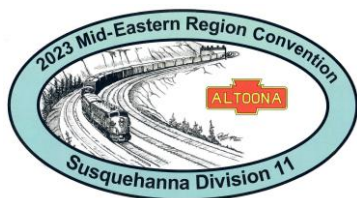
For the months of September and October, The Division will hold its meetings on the SECOND Saturday of the month instead of the third. This temporary change will enable us to avoid a conflict with the SER and MER conventions, respectively. It also will avoid conflicting with monthly meetings of the Metrolina Model Railroaders Club. If this change is popular, it could result in a permanent schedule change in the future.

Here are links to the Conventions:



### [Cartersville Express – 2023 SER Convention](#)

Thursday Sept 14 thru Sunday Sept 17  
Cartersville, GA



---

### [Round the Curve to Altoona 2023](#) MER Convention

October 19 – 22 Altoona, PA

## While I'm on the subject of upcoming Division activities....

**It's almost picnic time.** Our September meeting will be the annual Division Picnic on the second Saturday of September (Sept 9<sup>th</sup>). Good News – we're going to hold the picnic at Jack Parker's beautiful lakefront home at 12012 Abernathy Rd., Charlotte. It may seem like September is a long way off, but it's not. Please help us plan for how much to cook by filling out the online form at:



[2023 Annual Picnic Registration.](#)

As usual we ask that you bring a side dish or a desert that you would like to share with the membership. After you've had your fill, stay awhile and see Jack's fabulous P&W layout which has been featured in Model Railroader magazine.

**Six days later**, there's an opportunity to see some real trains on Friday the 15<sup>th</sup>. We have been invited by Jack Dziadul to attend an upcoming tour of the Aberdeen, Carolina and Western Railway located at 967 NC Highway 211 East, Candor NC 27229 on Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023



from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. We will tour their facility and get a close look at rolling stock. If you are a NMRA member and would like to attend, pre-register to

[Jackdziadul@gmail.com](mailto:Jackdziadul@gmail.com)

**Finally**, as mentioned earlier, our October meeting will also be held on the second Saturday (Oct 14<sup>th</sup>). More details in next month's newsletter.

**UPCOMING  
AREA TRAIN EVENTS**

**Fort Mill Train Show;**  
Saturday, Sept 16<sup>th</sup>  
9:00am – 3:00pm  
Clarion Hotel, 3695  
Foothills Way  
Fort Mill, SC 29708

**Autumn Rails All Scale  
Train Show**  
September 29-30  
Fri 12:00pm – 6:00pm  
Sat 10:00am – 4:00pm  
NC Agricultural Center  
1301 Boylston Highway  
Fletcher, NC 29732

**Editor's Notes**

By Ed Gumphrey

In addition to the activities discussed on the previous pages, it's good to see a couple of train shows on the horizon. Superintendent Andrew Stitt's efforts to move our meeting locations around the large geographic footprint of the Division is proving to be popular. All in all, a nice increase in model railroad activities.

As a follow-up to my comments last month about searching for a new editor, I 'm pleased to say I'll be starting the turnover process with the next editor. Stay tuned for more details. I'll keep it a surprise for now.



**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

I target the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for publication. Please submit articles for publication by the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month.  
The preferred format is MS Word, but I can convert most other formats.  
For questions and help, email me at [editor@carolinasouthern.org](mailto:editor@carolinasouthern.org)



---

## DIVISION AND REGIONAL NEWS

By Ed Gumphrey

### Train Town Update

Contributed by Ed Smith

Here's the July update on Wade's Legacy Room at the Newton Train Museum:

#### Train Town Box Score

July 2023

Open Houses      5

Attendance        160

Hosts: Ed Smith, Gil Brauch, Keith Iritsky, Tim Rust, and Bob Halsey

**To volunteer, go to:**

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

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

Attendance was up during July. I want to thank all our volunteers and especially Tim, who has become one of our docents. We could always use more volunteers, so if anybody's interested, we'd still like to see volunteers to help. See the link in the score box above or on the CSD website.

### July Activity

July's Division meeting was held at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in York, SC. Our thanks to member Doug Algire for arranging this, and also thanks to his pastor, Rev Charles Aurand. It was a great venue. Turnout was good, and those who attended enjoyed the presentations.

Congratulations to Brad Johnson for earning his Golden Spike Award, presented by AP Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR.

And speaking of the Achievement Program, in addition to Ed Smith's discussion of how he built his rolling stock, it was a great opportunity for members to see the AP judging process in action as Neal Anderson along with Dave and Michele Chance evaluated Ed's models. My thanks to Andrew Stitt for the photos, presented here in no particular order.



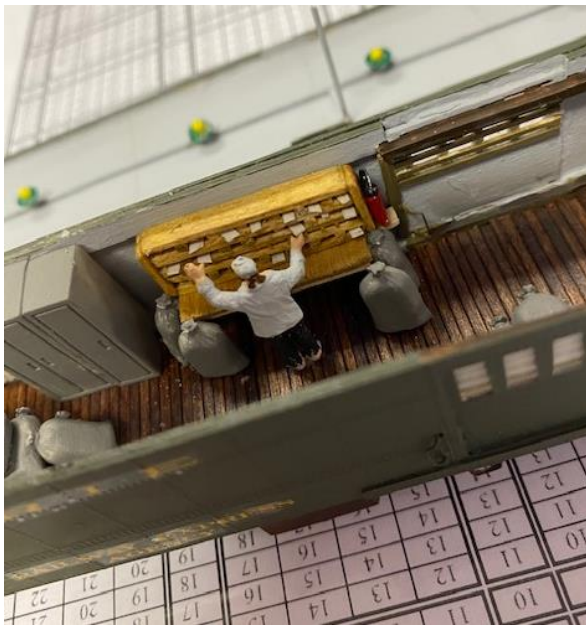
A good turnout for the Division's July meeting. It was nice to hold a meeting at a location more convenient to our South Carolina members.



AP Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR, present the Golden Spike Award to Brad Johnson.



Ed Smith points out some details in his reference material to AP Chairman Neal Anderson, MMR.



Here's a good view of the interior detail in Ed Smith's RPO that Andrew Still mentioned.



Ed Smith's scratchbuilt piggy-back flatcars. More detail in his article on page 12.



An overview of Ed Smith's RPO, made with a brass-side kit along with scratchbuilt details.



Two of Ed Smith's detailed resin car kits on the evaluation table.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO ED SMITH**

**The NMRA approved Neal Anderson's submission of the paperwork after Ed Smith's evaluations – Ed has been awarded MASTER MODEL RAILROADER #742.**





## My Foray Into 3D Printing

By Joe Skorch

The prices on entry level 3D printers had dropped significantly, enough to catch my attention to make the plunge and buy a Creality Ender Pro 3 printer. After I received the package, I found out that it needed to be assembled and the instructions were pretty much useless. I did manage to get through the process and built the machine.

Now what? The manufacturer included a micro-SD card that had one item that was easy to make, a cute little cartoon-like dog that Kelli seemed to enjoy. Great.

At RMU Chad Barnett instructed a class on 3D printing that I attended, which once again got me interested in this thing that I have been looking at for months, wondering if I was nuts for buying it.

I was informed of several sites where I could download free model files, with the key word being free. What did I have to lose? I had a need for an oil bunker tender for my Southern Pacific steam engines so I searched through a site called [Thingiverse](#) and found exactly what I was looking for. This is where the fun begins.

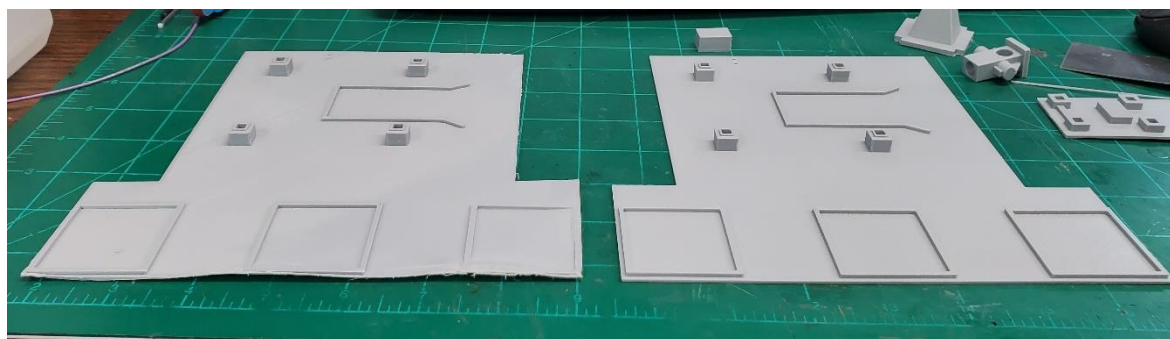
I started by downloading the file and I thought great, now what do I do with it? Time to learn about different types of files and how to use the related software associated with the files. The files that are downloaded are STL files, but for this printer I needed G-code files. Luckily the manufacturer has links to websites, including their own which has the programs that I needed. [Ultimaker Cura](#) is the software that I needed to convert the STL files to G-code. The program will take the file, and as I read, will “slice” the file to enable printing. Huh? Slicing is the terminology used to define how the printing is accomplished. Each slice represents another layer of extruded plastic, in this case the most common is PLA ([polylactic acid](#)), but there are other options to be found. For now, I’ll stick with the common one. Although the machine came with a small sampling of PLA, it was only enough for a toy dog but not for much of anything else. So, I googled PLA and found many sources for the plastic in a variety of colors, so I went to Amazon and ordered what I thought that I would use.

Let me tell you that the learning curve is very steep but once you attempt to make some prints it becomes apparent as to what needs to be done. Leveling the bed is extremely important so I found on the Creality site that there were some very affordable upgrades for my

printer. Well, by now the hook has been set and I was getting reeled in. I ordered an automatic bed leveling kit and a motherboard to operate it. Also, the upgraded firmware had to be installed to make it all work together.

I decided to try and make the tender and to put it into nicer words than what I was thinking, it was not very good, in fact it was not even worth taking a picture of. By now I was getting pretty discouraged by the results that I was getting, so I checked out some sites on YouTube and got more answers to what I was doing wrong. One problem that I was having was trying to get the initial layer, or slice, to stick to the build plate. I tried Elmer's glue stick as I read that that was a viable choice of bed adhesives. All it did was create a mess that I had to clean up and start over again. This is when I did some more research and learned of a very important setting called the "Z offset", which is an adjustable setting between the nozzle and the build plate. This dictates two things, the first is the amount of plastic that gets put down on the bed and how well the initial layer sticks to the bed. After some playing around, I found a setting that seems to have worked fairly well. I was still searching for a tender, but found a Roundhouse tender on E-bay that would work for what I needed. The only problem was that I wanted to install all the electronics inside the tender and it had a metal chassis. I used a program called [Tinkercad](#) to design a new chassis that would replace the metal one. I found the basic program for this easy to learn and went about designing something that I could use. This was my first successful print and it fit so well that the tender body that went on, did not require anything to hold it into place. I now am becoming quite pleased with the machine. However, I still think that there must be something better out there because I look at other objects made by modelers with similar equipment that look a lot better than what I was producing.

Creality sends me emails quite often with information and tips to get better prints out of the machines that they sell. One such article dealt with bed adhesion and the products that were available with the results of what they used. After reading this I decided to try a product called [Layerneer](#) Bed Weld. This adhesive was just what I was looking for as it goes on with a foam applicator and once the bed heats up it grips the plastic almost like it was welded in place.



Before and after using Bed Weld

After the print is made and the bed cools off the adhesive releases and the print comes right off. Since I started using this my prints have become nearly perfect and as a result, I am currently producing a cement plant that will tie into the Walthers Concrete plant. After this is finished, I'll have to think of what is next to make. I think I have a new sub-hobby.



The cement plant was built entirely from parts that I printed. This was downloaded from Thingiverse with some modifications made by me. The thing that I noticed is that with this kind of printer you will not get the fine detail to make this contest worthy, but as we used to say in the racecar world, it will look good from the stands.



## IN QUEST OF THE MMR

By Ed Smith

After being a member of the NMRA for over 30 years and active in our division for the last 10 years or so, I find myself on the verge of reaching the pinnacle of our organization, The Master Model Railroader Award. Like so many who have gone before me, the last AP decision usually comes down to building cars or Motive Power. A few years ago, MMR Gil Brauch gave me advice on which way to go. He said Motive Power, which only needs 3 pieces built, compared to cars, which needs 8 pieces, may be the way to go. This article will be about my decision to build rolling stock. And I must say, as I built these 9 pieces, several times I questioned myself about why I didn't listen to Gil. That said, building these pieces has been informative, interesting, and enjoyable.

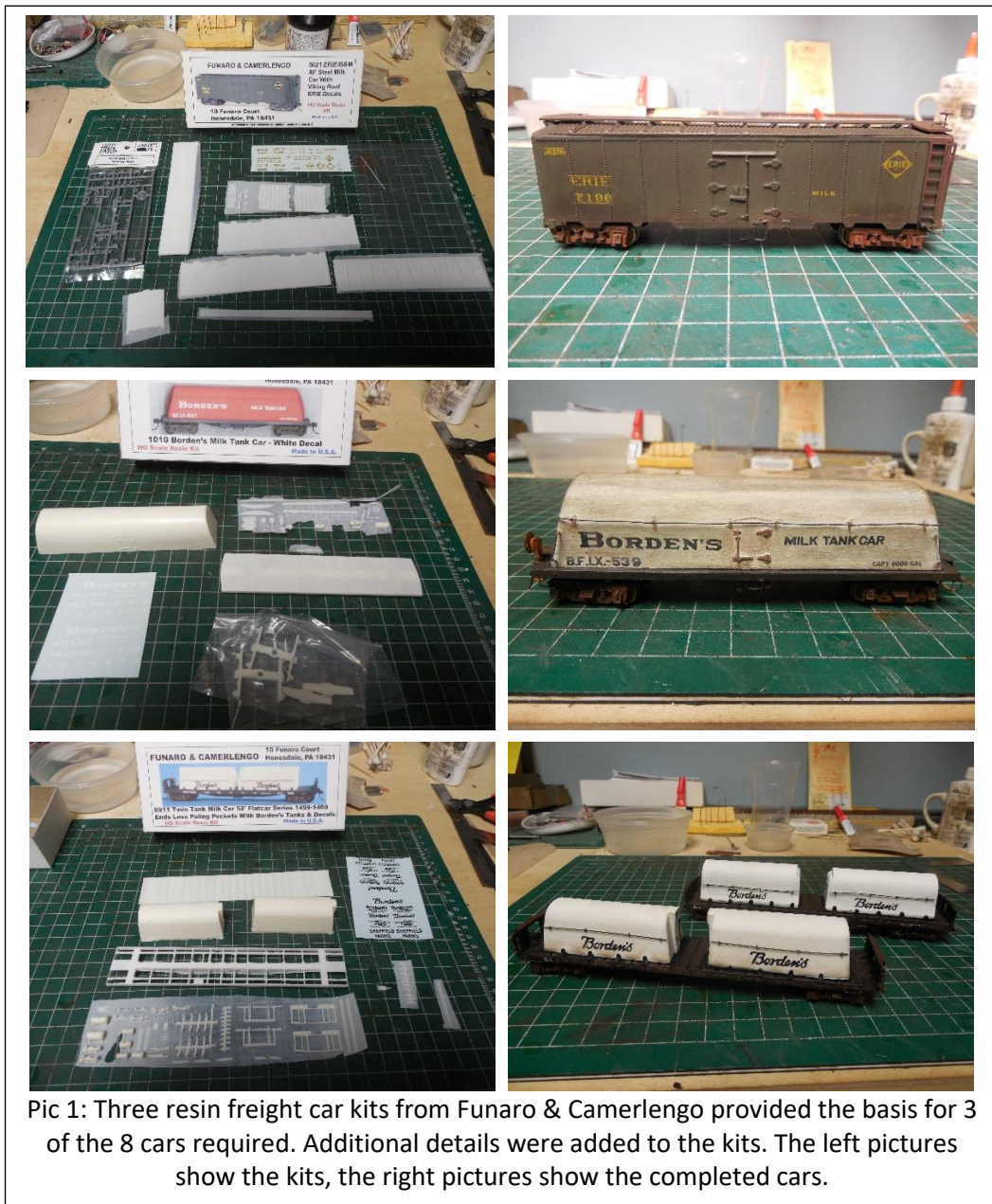
After settling on rolling stock, I had to make a plan on how I would approach this project. This is where I will advise those involved in the AP program, not to make the requirements for any AP more complicated than it needs to be. The cars AP requirements state that you must build at least 8 cars, 4 must be scratch-built, at least 1 must be a car found in a passenger train consist, at least 4 different types of cars, and 4 must attain 87½ points in the evaluation process. Now, you could read this and make it complicated, but I tried to simplify this as much as possible.

First, I decided to build cars that would fit my layout and era. That is the Erie RR circa 1947-1955. I like building resin kits, so I built and detailed 4 cars, of 3 different types. Also, I belong to the Erie RR Historical Society and have purchased several brass side baggage car kits. I turned one of these into an Erie RPO car. After building these 5 pieces, I had achieved 2 of the 5 requirements, 4 different types of cars and 1 passenger car. This left me needing 4 scratch-built cars, which would give me 2 more requirements, a total number of 8, and 4 scratch-built. This would leave only the evaluation, with hopefully at least 4 attaining 87½ points or more.

This is where I tried to simplify the process. After inquiring with MMR Gil Brauch, MMR and AP Chair Neal Anderson, past AP Chair Dave Chance, and Regional AP Chair Kurt Thompson, I received approval on building 4 cars that are basically the same. This is because I had already built at least 4 different types. I decided I would build 4 Erie 53' 6" piggyback flat cars from the early fifties. Each car would have minor different detailing, as the cars changed over the years. I will try to give a quick overview of each build.



First the resin and RPO car construction. Since these are kits, it's mandatory you take your time building each piece. You will receive few, if any at all, scratch-building points for kits, so you want to maximize your points in the construction, detailing, finishing and decaling, and, importantly, conformity. By taking your time and being meticulous, you should build a car that has no gaps, square corners, added details, appropriate paint and decals, and is a good representation of the piece you're trying to replicate. Here is where it is a big plus to have pictures of the actual car you are building. My final results are shown below and on the next page (pics 1 & 2).



Pic 1: Three resin freight car kits from Funaro & Camerlengo provided the basis for 3 of the 8 cars required. Additional details were added to the kits. The left pictures show the kits, the right pictures show the completed cars.

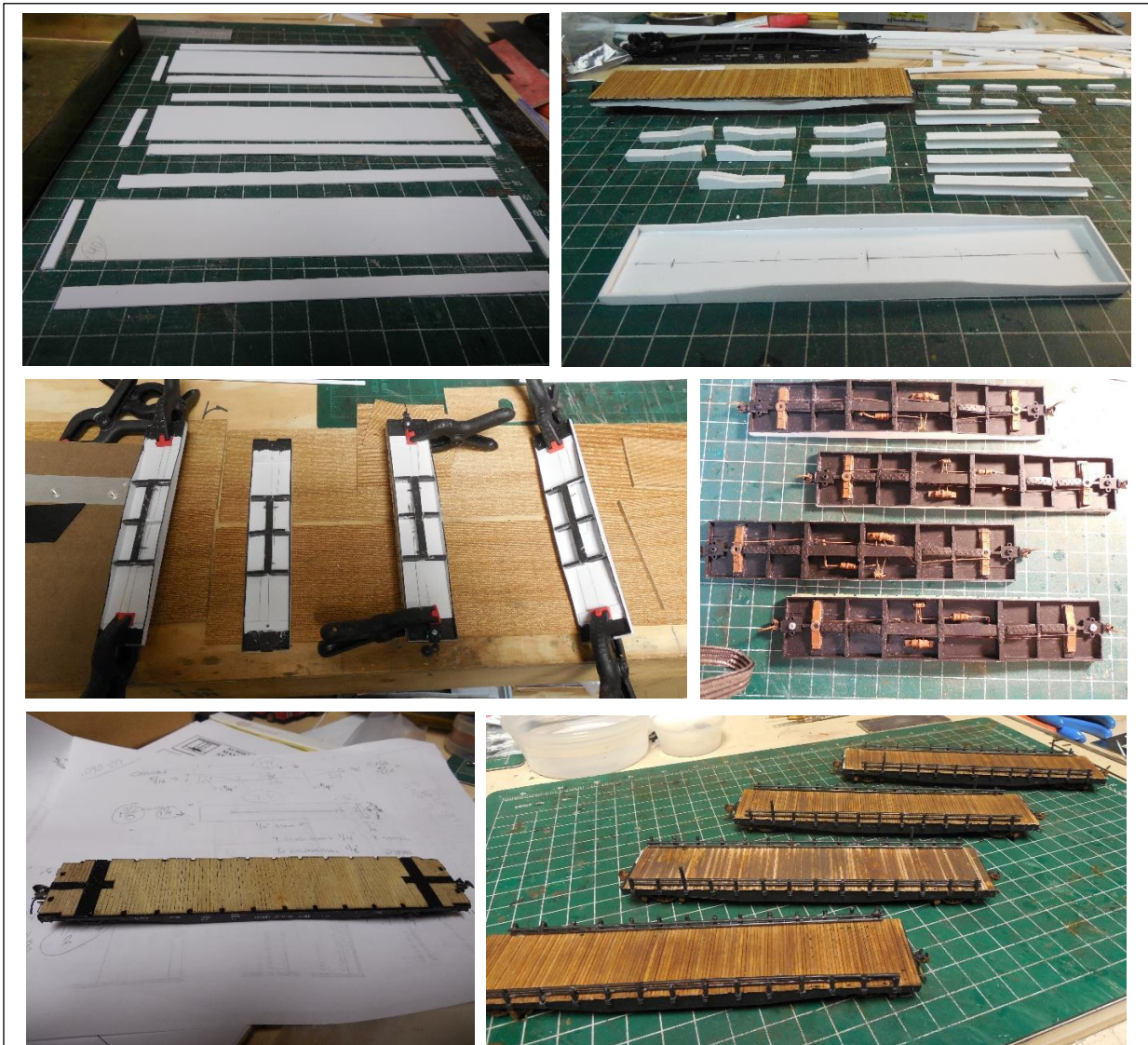


Now, for the scratch-built pieces. The first thing I did was purchase an Intermountain 53' 6" flat car to examine the construction and dimensions. Next, I researched my library of Erie RR Historical Society periodicals and found construction articles on this type of flatcars,



both prototypical and modeling projects. Finally, I drew precise building plans from the acquired info, and was ready to proceed. I will not get into specifics, but touch on the basic build.

I used styrene, flat sheets and forms, for the basic construction, times 4. The pieces were cut, fabricated, squared, sanded for fit, and using AC adhesive, secured together. Next, the under-body detail was added. Finally, using dimensional 2" x 6" HO wood and stain, the decking was added. Piano wire was used to fabricate the side guards. Now, extensive details and the trailer loads were added (pic 3). Like I said earlier, these are basically the same car with minor detail changes.



Pic 3: Assembly process for four scratchbuilt flatcars. Left to right, top to bottom: Styrene sheets cut to size; Car body assembly started; Underbody structure added; Underbody and brake system details added; An almost completed car laying atop the detailed plans; and decked flat cars awaiting trucks and final details.

All the building requirements I mentioned in the kit builds are vitally important with the scratch-built pieces also. But what is most important is that each car is at least 90% scratch-built using pieces you have fabricated yourself. So, keep track of every piece, no matter how small. This last tip is advice Gil Brauch gave me and I did use it. These four scratchbuilt cars completed the requirements for total cars and the number scratchbuilt. The fleet of cars is shown below (Pic 4).



Pic 4: The four-car fleet of piggy-back flat cars completed the requirements for both the number of cars and the number of scratchbuilt cars.

In closing, this AP is not as hard as it may seem. Take your time and I think you'll enjoy the process and results. By the way, I did attain the necessary points during my evaluation of all 9 cars. So, this will be my 7th AP merit award, and I believe I may have reached MMR designation. It's a great feeling of accomplishment. Ten years ago, this wasn't on my radar. I owe many thanks to so many people in our division. I only hope I can be as helpful to somebody as they were to me. One last thing, I know there are far more talented members in our division than me, so jump in. Take the AP achievement journey. You'll be glad you did. This is truly a great hobby.

Until next time,

.... ED



## CLOSING PAGE BONUS



This picture of the interior of a Pullman Parlor Car at Strasburg Railroad is a salute to an August event. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) was founded on August 25, 1925 in New York City. The union was led by A. Philip Randolph and was the first predominately African American labor union. The members of the BSCP were porters employed by the Pullman Company.

### Division Brass

<u>Superintendent</u>	Andrew Stitt	<a href="mailto:superintendent@carolinasouthern.org">superintendent@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Asst. Superintendent</u>	Alan Hardee	<a href="mailto:assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org">assistsuper@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Clerk</u>	Ed Gumphrey	<a href="mailto:clerk@carolinasouthern.org">clerk@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Paymaster</u>	David Thrams	<a href="mailto:Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org">Paymaster@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Director 2025</u>	Ed Smith, MMR	<a href="mailto:director1@carolinasouthern.org">director1@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Director 2026</u>	Joe Skorch	<a href="mailto:director2@carolinasouthern.org">director2@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Director 2024</u>	Larry Paffrath	<a href="mailto:director3@carolinasouthern.org">director3@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>AP Chairman</u>	Neal Anderson, MMR	<a href="mailto:Apchair@carolinasouthern.org">Apchair@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Webmaster</u>	Joe Skorch	<a href="mailto:Webmaster@carolinasouthern.org">Webmaster@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Newsletter Editor</u>	Ed Gumphrey	<a href="mailto:editor@carolinasouthern.org">editor@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Program Chair</u>	Keith Iritsky	<a href="mailto:program@carolinasouthern.org">program@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>RMU Chair</u>	Doug Algire	<a href="mailto:RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org">RMUchair@carolinasouthern.org</a>
<u>Membership Chair</u>	Nancy Campbell	<a href="mailto:membership@carolinasouthern.org">membership@carolinasouthern.org</a>