

**NORTHERN
VIRGINIA**

NTRAK

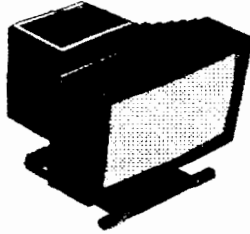
**Northern Virginia
NTRAK**

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May 1995

Volume IV, No. 5



**New Site for NVNTRAK
on the
World-Wide Web (WWW)**
By Gil Brauch

Since last month's newsletter we have changed server sites, and thus the Universal Resource Locator for our Northern Virginia NTRAK Home Page on the Internet's World Wide Web. The new URL is as follows: <http://metro.turnpike.net/N/nvnttrak/index.htm>.

Our arrangement with this new server operator, the Volant Corp, means that we can keep the page updated more easily. For those of you who cannot yet "surf the Web", I have included a copy of what our page looks like with this newsletter. The underlined words are places that the reader can "click" on which will automatically page the screen to that section of the document. For example, one screenful is approximately the size of the opening graphic, the title and the opening paragraphs just above the mailing address section.

In a later issue of the newsletter, I will include a copy of what the convention homepage looks like. It is still "under construction" as details of the convention are being developed.

Oh, by the way, if you have any photographs of your module that you are especially proud of, contact Bernard Kempinski. He has the capability to scan them into an electronic format, which I can then include in the homepage so you can show off your handiwork to the world (in full color, no less)!

NEWS FLASH!!!

**May Setup Date Changed to
Memorial Day Weekend
Both Days - 28th and 29th**

A scheduling conflict at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church as necessitated that we change our setup for May from the third Sunday (May 21) to the fourth Sunday (May 28th). The real good news is that we will be able to run trains both Sunday afternoon and Monday all day!!

As of this writing, Gil Brauch is still trying to work out the details of what happens to the Kid's Clinic because of this change. Let him know if you are interested in helping him out on the 30th with such a clinic if he is able to reschedule for that date.

NEWS FLASH!!!

**May Setup Date Changed to
Memorial Day Weekend
Both Days — 28th and 29th**

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

May 28	Setup at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va — 1 p.m.
May 10	Convention Meeting, Prince of Peace, 7:00 p.m.
June 3	Manassas Rail Fest
June 9-11	Fairfax County Fair (tentative)
June 18	Setup at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va — 1 p.m.
July 29&30	Greenberg Show-Timonium
Sep 17	Setup at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Springfield, Va — 1 p.m.
Sep 30-Oct 1	Brunswick Railroad Days
Oct 14&15	Great Scale Train Show-Timonium

RUNNING TRAINs IN '96 NTRAK East Convention

CONVENTION CORNER

By Rodney Smith

We started convention business this April with our monthly meeting on the 10th at Prince of Peace Church. Several Key committee members were taking Easter Break so we held an informal meeting to discuss items of current interest by those members present. We discussed the work done on the publicity module and future events where it would be best employed, came up with plans for convention letterhead and other business printing needs for committee correspondence, discussed NV NTRAK participation in this summer's and fall's conventions and the financial needs of the convention.

Brian had a work session at his house on Saturday, 8 April to teach module building techniques by building the club's advertising module. We had a good turn out of new and old club members to get the module well on its way. By the end of the day we had the frame built and one leg mounted. It made its public debut — sort of — at the Springfield Mall show with the other three legs, the top, and display racks mounted. Its a good start but we need some help in designing the graphics to go onto the modified sky board. If any of you are budding or seasoned graphics artists give me or Brian a call.

We are looking for appropriate activities in which to employ the ad module. We already plan to take it to several of the local area set ups and railroad shows such as Greenberg's, Manassas Rail Day, etc. But, we need you all to keep your eyes and ears open for other opportunities beyond the local area and a willingness to go forth and push the convention. We especially need people willing to take the module to other clubs in the area and set it up in their public layouts. Seventy percent or more of our potential convention goers are going to come from a 300 mile radius of Washington. We need to get out there and bring them on board. If you know of an appropriate event and are willing to haul, set up, and promote, we can use the help.

Seeing as our correspondence will be the first contact many individuals have with us, I asked Gil to develop a letterhead for the convention and see to its printing. He has since provided several samples of which the best was selected. These will be printed off very shortly and should be used for all future convention correspondence.

This Summer and Fall will be a busy time for us on the committee. I will be attending the Albuquerque N TRAK

convention in late June, a large contingent of us will be setting up and operating a layout at the NMRA convention in Atlanta in mid-July, and we plan to have a table and the ad module at the N Scale collectors convention in Baltimore in September. We have held back some not wanting to steal the thunder of this Summer's conventions but we plan to hit them hard starting with Albuquerque.

The last piece of business we covered was the budget. We have held off as long as we could on asking for money but the time has arrived for us to show our support for our convention. We need to get as many of us as possible to register early for the convention for \$45. We will use this money to pay for forecast expenses such as mailings, flyers, convention cars, and other essential expenses. We have not worked out the details but most of you will see this money back based on your participation in the convention. Of course, this will all be predicated on our final financial accounting at the close of the convention but we feel we have a good plan and chances are very good.

Our meeting next month will be at Prince of Peace Church on the 10th of May at 7:00 p.m. The topic of discussion will be Matt's plan for activities within the convention site. All members are cordially invited to attend and participate.

May's Clinic for the Kids

by Gil Brauch

Don't forget that we have promised to leave some modules overnight after our May setup so that we can have a Clinic for Kids the next morning. Modules will be available for pickup after 3 pm. I will stay until the last module is picked up, or until 7:30, whichever comes first. With prior arrangement, I can take modules to my house for pickup on another day.

Volunteers to help with the Clinic are still needed. Also, the loan of some engines and rolling stock is required (mainly old-time steam and ultra-modern "bullets"). If you want to help or have equipment or ideas to share, call Gil at (703) 569-7985, evenings between 8 pm and 10 pm.

Railfan Ramblings

Bernie Kempenski

Where is the Chase Marine Terminal? Beats me. The truth is I've been traveling a lot lately both personal and business related and haven't had much time to work on the module, but I haven't been idle with regard to my rail related hobbies. Over the past two months I visited several interesting rail sites. These include the Donner Pass and Truckee, California, where I saw several SP and UP through freights and AMTRAK, the Houston Ship Channel across from Baytown in Texas, I followed the Sante Fe line from Killeen to Houston and passed several freights highballing across the Texas countryside, I visited the Air-Rail inter modal facility in Huntsville, Alabama (that's right, air to rail. They actually have jet air planes parked next to the siding and have a huge gantry crane. It would make a great module), and spent several days touring the Huntington, WV/Ashland, KY area and the New River Gorge looking at endless coal trains on CSX and NS with Matt and my kids. We visited Paul Fulks and saw his beautiful layout and module trailer. We checked out Thurmond and Quinnimont. The former has the making of a nice tourist destination thanks to park service restoration. On the contrary Quinnimont was rather bleak. The neat structures are gone. All that is left are a few old box cars used for storage and a couple nondescript utility buildings#012# made with metal siding.

After all this rail fanning though it was the last trip I made to the rolling hills of Maryland that really tickled my fancy. The following is a report of that trip.

I've visited the western end of the Western Maryland East subdivision two weekends ago. This is an area that I frequently drive by while traveling on I-70 but had never stopped to check out. Boy am I glad I did. Traveling the area between Hagerstown and Thurmont reminded and reinforced to me why the Western Maryland is such a great RR to model. It's beautiful country, has lots of neat railroad structures and the view of the sunset from the top of Catoctin Mountain is spectacular.

I exited the interstate and crossed downtown Hagerstown with my first objective being Security, MD. There I found the cement factory that is only hinted at in all of the WM books and information I have. It is quite a large complex, perhaps as big as the cement plant in Union Bridge. Most remarkable from a modeling perspective is that the facility is oriented parallel to the tracks. To model this facility will not require much selective compression perpendicular to the track axis. Since it was a Saturday, there wasn't much activity. The kilns were turning and presumably making cement. They have a large visitors parking lot which gives you views of almost the whole factory. I was also able to walk around and get pictures from different angles of the various silos. I also discovered that the B&O branch line comes from the west out of Hagerstown on a wooden trestle, with one steel deck bridge section across a stream. It would make an interesting model. I followed MD RT. 64, which roughly parallels the WM mainline to Chewsville. There I spotted a picturesque farmer's coop with a rural grain elevator adjacent to a single stub siding.

The rails were shiny and fresh seeds were sprouting on the tracks where a covered hopper must have been recently unloaded.

Scores of prosperous farm houses dotted the countryside. On the eastern outskirts of Chewsville were two large junkyards with all the usual accouterments. The next towns were Cavetown and Smithsberg in close proximity. There is a small double ended siding between these two towns. There was also evidence of a quarry with one or two abandoned sidings. Smithsberg had a very quaint grain elevator. It had six silos which were constructed using clearly different materials: brick, concrete and steel plates with rusty welds. It had the look of being gradually expanded and would make a grand model along the right of way.

Between Chewsville and Smithsberg the uphill grade is obvious and in several places the WM resorts to large fills to maintain the grade. East of Smithsberg the rails turn north and begin to climb along the side of the Catoctin Ridge. There were several apple orchards along the right of way at the turn but the terrain is mostly open and the view is great. I had been hoping to find the steel trestle that is shown in both the Fireballs and Black Diamonds and Western Maryland Diesels books. All I knew was that it was east of Smithsberg. I was beginning to think I missed it when I spotted it in a ravine. It is definitely worth a stop. The bridge is a deck girder design with two different thickness webs. The center is supported by a four corner steel trestle with interesting concrete abutments. The steel appears to have recently painted and is in excellent repair. The bridge is situated at the confluence of two small streams. A now abandoned road also cuts across the scene. It is very modeligenic.

Shortly after the trestle location, the road heads steeply uphill while the rails continue to contour around the ridge. I meet up with the right of way at Fort Ritchie and headed back west to Penn Mar. The view here was gorgeous. The sun was beginning to set but I wanted to find the twin bridges before dark so I could not stay long to enjoy it.

I stopped in Highfield and made notes about the track patterns. This is the point where the Dutch sub rejoins the East sub and will be an important location on my home pike. The cabin there had recently been gutted by fire. I was able to reach in the doorway and pick up some charred waybills as souvenirs, but I was hesitant to trespass into a very obviously unsafe building. Here I also spotted another interesting trackside industry, a National Guard Armory replete with camouflage vehicles. The station at Blue Ridge Summit, now a library, is in good repair.

I followed MD Rt. 550 to Thurmont. I crossed under one concrete arch and turned left to the Academy at the top of the ridge. I couldn't see the WM main line but I knew it snaked around the bottom of this ridge and then made a horseshoe curve at Sabillasville. There I stopped to take pictures and notes as this is another de rigeur location for my home pike. The sun was dropping fast by the time I descended into the canyon that Owens Creek cuts as it drops to Thurmont. I found the twin bridges location and

quickly shot the remainder of my film. The bridge is about 80 feet above the creek bed. One of the concrete abutments is quite massive and will make an impressive model. I climbed the hillside and took a sample of the rock near the outcropping for future reference.

I stopped in Thumont to get a cup of coffee and to transcribe some notes. It was dark now and further photos were not possible. Nonetheless, on my way back to Rt. 15, I followed the rails through town and took some notes on the track layout.

As I drove back to Alexandria I reflected on the results of the trip. I filled in several data voids on locations I wanted to model in my pike. Two rolls of film documented most of the locations of interest. I found several prototype industries that will make outstanding models. Most of all, I confirmed what I already knew, the Wild Mary, especially its East Subdivision is a great railroad to model. In its eighty mile stretch it has a wide variety of facilities: a mostly single track mainline that originates in a compact but full service port facility, then winds west to numerous sidings to service cement, grain, a Pepsi bottling plant, apple orchards, junk yards, several other small industries, steep grades through rocky canyons, a couple notable trestles, horseshoe curves and interchanges with the B&O and Pennsylvania. I've already scouted the area from Union Bridge to Westminster. My next trip will be to Baltimore to document the mainline from Westport to Emory Grove. Anybody want to come along?

Local Operations on the Blue Line

by Bernard Kempinski

During the highly successful Springfield Mall show Tom, Brian and I made a first attempt at running a local on the blue line during a show. You might have missed it since we set up and ran the local during the last hour on Sunday but the demonstration was a success and showed the potential for switching operations during a show. In fact several visitors watched the whole spectacle as engineer, conductor and brakeman circled the layout picking up and dropping off cars.

Much of the credit goes to Tom for organizing and planning the moves. He drew up a schematic of the layout and planned a series of logical car moves for the demonstration. Various revenue cars were situated around the layout. For example an empty covered hopper awaited pick-up at Fudruckers siding (There was a discussion if the hopper had earlier hauled cement and therefore was inappropriate for carrying animal feed. Perhaps that explains why Fudruckers burgers taste so good). The Springfield Local was then called at M&K Yard 4:30 PM. We left the yard light and had several pick-ups planned at the various locations and a set-out at the Table Rock interchange. Brian and I provided the cars while Tom's new BN C30-7 and my Chessie SD-40 took the point.

Therefore the crew was Tom as engineer with radio throttle in hand, Brian as fireman (naturally) and I as the brakeman. We used the blue line throttle to control the train.

As the local proceeded around the layout, unfamiliarity

with the radio throttle and some untested local trackage made the beginning moves a little bumpy. But things settled down. Tom quickly got the feel of the throttle and by the time we had orbited the subdivision we looked like a veteran road crew. A couple of lessons learned are worth discussing. First, if you have a siding on your module, please check it to make sure it is serviceable. It should be wired such that the blue line provides the power. The rails should be cleaned and ballast removed from around the rails. Instructions for operating the turnouts on the module would be helpful. I suggest a simple sign on the back of the skyboard that provides the guidance, for example "All turnouts use ground throws," or "Use toggle switches for local turnouts." If your module has a separate electrical block for the local tracks its control should be clearly marked, and be functioning properly. Once we get more experience instructions will not be as important but they will always be helpful for newcomers or visitors.

A little prior planning can make the experience even more fun. One idea is to present the local operators with a switch list when they are called. This list would simply describe which cars are to be set-out and picked up. Also blocking instructions for the cars would be included. For example, "Pick-up empty coal hoppers at Possum Point and Baytown and set-out at Table Rock interchange track." This gives the operators the added challenge of planning run around moves to block the train properly. The same switch list could be used over the weekend by multiple crews if a second switch list essentially reverses the operations of the first. Tom's efforts showed that this is not a daunting task and I vote that it become a regular part of our shows. For even more realism, the power for the local should be required to start and end in an appropriate engine facility, M&K for diesels and Rowes Run for steamers.

A pleasant surprise was the crowd's interest in the progress of the local.

Several people walked around the layout with us and enjoyed the action. This type of activity combined with heavy passenger traffic on the red and multiple long through freights on the blue helps explain why NTRAK adopted the three track main lines. Combine this with the spectacle of long trains pulling in and out of M&K yard, action on the mountain division, sound effects from Chester's and Obie's modules, and trains looping private tracks made for a fantastic display.

DD&DM Paint Shop Back In Business

by Gil Brauch

The Back Shops of the DD&DM RR are re-opening now that the foreman's pre-occupation with other matters has subsided somewhat. We have also acquired some decent Accu-Flex in the correct colors and a paint stripper that promises to be easier to work with than brake fluid. We hope to be able to reduce our long-standing backorder list to near zero by the end of May.

There is one glitch, however. The foreman's record keeping has been seriously deficient. In other words, we're not sure what we've promised to whom or what we've already delivered. To correct this grievous situation, we are asking our customer's indulgence and help in "filling in the blanks."

The next time you see our recalcitrant foreman, Gil Brauch, please tell him if you already have a club car and your name is not on the list (or the information below is incomplete or incorrect). Also, please help him remember if

you have ordered a car or given him a car to be done and it is not reflected below.

For those of you who don't know, Gil paints and decals the NVNTRAK Club Cars for our members. The cars are Santa Fe Yellow with silver roofs (or walkways in the case of covered hoppers) and black club logo and reporting marks. The reporting marks for the first member car are the member's initials and "1992" (the year the club constitution was adopted). All subsequent cars are marked "NVX 1992." The cost is \$10.00 per car for paint and the cost of the custom decals. You provide the car. Undecs are preferred, but we can do stripping (no extra charge). Cars 50' long with smooth sides work the best. Heavily ribbed cars like Roundhouse's Waffle Side Boxcars or most outside braced coal hoppers don't look as nice as the smoother sided cars. Now that the DD&DM Back Shops have re-opened, Gil is once again taking orders (this time with better record keeping).

NVNTRAK Club Cars already delivered

Customer	Type of Car	Reporting Marks
Dennis Austin		(Charter Member)
Edd Braithwood	50' Covered Hopper	EGB 1992 (Charter Member)
Edd Braithwood	50' Boxcar	NVX 1992
Edd Braithwood	40' Boxcar	NVX 1992
Brian Brendel	40' Covered Hopper	JAKE 1995
Brian Brendel	50' Tank Car	NVX 1992
John Cook	50' Covered Hopper	JMC 1992 (Charter Member)
Chester Freedenthal	50' Covered Hopper	CJF 1992
Al Griggs		WAG 1992
Lyman Krekel	50' Boxcar	LEK 1992
Jim Krehmke	50' Hopper	JWK 1992
Phil Lebet		PL 1992
NVNTRAK	Passenger Coach	Club Car
Fred Obermeyer	Bay Window Caboose	1991
Fred Obermeyer	Wood Sheathed Caboose	NVX 1992
Tom Reid	40' Boxcar	TFR 1992 (Charter Member)
Rodney Smith	50' Hopper	RLS 1992
Leonard White		(Charter Member)

Outstanding Backorders

Customer	Type of Car	Reporting Marks
Brian Brendel	50' Covered Hopper	BCB 1992 (Charter Member)
Al Griggs	40' Gondola	NVX 1992
Matt Schaeffer	89' Boxcar	CMS 1992 (Charter Member)
Bob Spitzer	50' Boxcar	RS 1992

Obies Corner

Obies Corner of Trains . . . Oh! Boy!

Micro Trains Reprints	Sealand # 81020 Container Rock Island Boxcar # 25430 American Refrig. Transit Co. # 69050 Southern Pacific Overnighter # 97940
Intermountain Re-runs	PFE 12 new numbers Western Fruit Express 12 new numbers New York Central 12 numbers new release
MDC	TTX Trailer Train 12 numbers
Restock Burt	Trucks and cars, etc. pre painted

MODULE TALK MATERIALS IN GENERAL

Plywood of 3/8" thickness is available in what is known as MDO board for top of module or for the back drop of your scenery. It is an exterior grade plywood with a very thin layer of white monofilament paper adhered to the surface, it is great for painting and gluing backdrop areas. Modular items such a 1/4" luan are OK but 1/4" AC plywood is more dense for a better structural effect down the road. Some other good lumber to use is redwood because it has no sap to make it warp out of shape like the eastern wood pines have. It is very light, dry and easy to use but must be drilled so it won't split. Some new lumber approaching the industry is Cypress wood which is also light and dry and good to use. Most of these selected woods can be bought at Smoot Lumber in Alexandria, and yes they are open Saturday for your convenience. Sanding Sealer is a great way to seal plywood areas so no moisture can get inside the wood. It will act like a wax finish and nothing will get through it. It is quick and easy to use because it dries in an hour and can be scened in a couple of hours. Where paint may cause some problems if it is not oil base primer. Oil based flat finished white Bond and Seal by Duron paints is great for sealing and bringing the nap to the surface for that second and final coat. Some other fast and quick things to use are Black Oil Spray paint flat which dries in about 15 minutes, for quick results.

If you have no saw or anything to cut with, Home Depot will make all your cuts free. But mark it yourself to be sure.

Cinch-Jones Connectors can be bought by the dozens at Arcade Electronics, General Greenway Drive, Alexandria. I am planning an 8' module with Viaduct drop and roll effect to the mountain line. Wait and see . . .

The Northern Virginia N-TRAK Newsletter is produced for and by the members of Northern Virginia N-TRAK. Membership is \$30/year or a Newsletter subscription for continental USA residents is just \$10/year for twelve issues. Send check: Treasurer, Northern Virginia N-TRAK, P.O. Box 1951, Herndon, Virginia 22070.

Submissions should be sent to the editor, Jackie White, 137 Jasper Place, Alexandria, VA 22304, by electronic mail to PNUM72A@Prodigy.com or faxed to 703-370-9682.

Please send articles for the June 1995 Newsletter by May 22, 1995. Thanks.



Northern Virginia NTRAK

Bringing N-Scale Railroading to the Nation's Capital

This page was last updated on *April 30, 1995*.

Northern Virginia NTRAK is located in the National Capital Region and is made up of about 35 members throughout the Northern Virginia and Southern Maryland area. In addition to our monthly setups and public shows, we are sponsoring the 1996 N Scale East Convention. Some pictures and descriptions of club modules are included for your viewing pleasure. We hope this page will be a gateway for those interested in all our activities, particularly the convention.

We would like thank Kenn Goutal for providing a place on the Web for NTRAKers to gather. Our thanks also for this WebSpace furnished courtesy of Volant TurnPike(tm).

Northern Virginia NTRAK Mailing Address

Our mailing address is:

Northern Virginia NTRAK
P. O. Box 1951
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Northern Virginia NTRAK Membership List

The following members have INTERNET access and welcome correspondence with other model railroaders:

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Leonard White	pnum72a@prodigy.com

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The logo for the 1996 N Scale East Convention features the word "RUNNI" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. Below it is a large, stylized letter "N" with horizontal lines extending from its right side, similar to the NTRAK logo. Underneath the "N" is the text "TRAINS IN '96" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the words "N Scale East Convention" are written in a bold, sans-serif font.

The 1996 N Scale East Convention will be held at the Radisson Plaza Hotel at Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA on August 15-18, 1996. Specific details on activities and registration will be placed here as they are developed. In the meantime, requests for information can be made to the VoiceMail box at (703) 620-0812 extension 4.

At the convention, we have room for a huge NTRAK layout, plus lots of manufacturers and vendors. Manufacturers and vendors interested in more information, click here.

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Northern Virginia NTRAK Club Monthly Setups

We hold monthly setup meetings on the third Sunday of each month at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8403 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA between 1:30 pm and 6 pm. Call Matt Schaeffer (703) 978-2946 for more information.

NEWS FLASH!!!!

The May '95 monthly setup will be held on the *fourth* Sunday (May 28th) because of a scheduling conflict at the church. The *good news* is that we will be able to leave the modules up overnight and operate on the Memorial Day holiday (May 29th), too!! Guests and visitors are welcome both days. Our operations on the Monday the 29th will be from 8 am to 5 pm.

Click [here](#) for a map to the church.

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Northern Virginia NTRAK Public Shows

Our next public show is scheduled for June 3, 1995 at Manassas Depot in Manassas, VA in connection with their rail fair. This is a one-day setup only.

After that we will be at the Fairfax County Fair on June 9-11, 1995 at the Fairfax Governmental Center.

Come on by and mention that you "Saw us on The WEB!!"

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Northern Virginia NTRAK Module Descriptions and Pictures

[Gil Brauch's DD&DM Railroad](#)

[Bernard Kempinski's Chase Marine Terminal](#)

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What's New

April 30, 1995 Update

Added reference to [Bernard Kempinski's Chase Marine Terminal](#).

Updated listing of [public shows](#).

Updated information concerning our [May monthly setup](#).

April 15, 1995 Update

-Began service with [WebSpace](#) furnished courtesy of [Volant TurnPike\(tm\)](#).

-Added names of members with [EMail](#) addresses.

-Updated listing of [public shows](#).

-Added supplementary page for [N Scale Convention](#).

-Added information [point of contact](#) for manufacturers and vendors for the convention.

-Added reference to [Gil Brauch's DD&DM Railroad](#).

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The content of this page is maintained by Gil Brauch, gbrauch@lmi.org.
