



MAINE 3 RAILERS

M3R CLUB NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER 2023

NEXT MEETING IS THURSDAY, October 12, 2023, at 7:00PM on ZOOM. Watch for the email from Dana Lindsey with the link to join.



President's Message by Gene Thayer

My message this month is short.

We just completed a successful run at the Cumberland County Fair. We could have used more help, particularly at the breakdown on Sunday. Four members were left to finish what 120+ members were credited with creating.

We will be doing the layout at L.L. Bean in November so watch your emails for information. This as you know is a long-term event so get ready and most of all be there for the set-up, operation, and **take-down!**

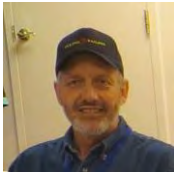
UPDATES



M3R YouTube Channel Update by Channel Master Carlton Spring

August and the majority of September were very quiet with no events. With no events there have been no new videos uploaded to our YouTube Channel. Our September 16th event at the 2023 Poland Springs Heritage Days was cancelled due to the storm.

The video of our participation at the Cumberland County Fair the last week of September will be produced and published soon. Stay tuned!



M3R Website by Webmaster Mark David

Mark David has graciously accepted the role of Webmaster. Thanks to Tom Hartwell for his great past work and commitment to developing and to maintaining our electronic link to the world.



M3R Activity Committee by Chairperson Bernie Pender

Upcoming Events

Our Legacy Instructor we had scheduled for the September class came down with an unfortunate and serious illness. Due to that we postponed the Legacy Training. The first session of Legacy Training is now set for October 27th from 9am to noon. Rick Hills will be the instructor. Location: 243 Neptune Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011. Reservations are required. Sign up with Dave Hodgkiss, dwh39@aol.com or text 207-318-1120.

Other activities for October include:

- October 14th Rob Osur will be hosting a layout tour at his residence in North Yarmouth from 10am to 2pm. Rob has asked for the curtesy of a head count.
- October 21st Henry Groth Day! and a good opportunity to visit the WW&F Railway Museum as a group. When: 10:00am to 12:00pm Where: 319 Maine St (old route 1), Waldoboro. Henry's Grandson has graciously offered to open the property from 10am-2pm.

Henry's outside trackage is still available for viewing.

A Special note:

Bill Halley's layout was mentioned in Classic Toy Trains magazine (Nov/Dec edition). Also mentioned was Brian and Riley Inch's layout (same edition). For those that did not come out to Brain's Layout tour, I would strongly encourage you to come out to a future layout tour and see firsthand what a wonderful job Brian and his son Riley have done. The Activities Committee is also working with Bill Hailley to schedule an open house/layout tour of his remarkable layout. Bill, Brian, and Riley have done this club proud. We should strive to follow their excellent example of what it means to be a Member of the Maine 3 Railers

For more information on these activities, type Groups.io into your browser and check out the Club's Calendar.



M3R Club Store by Peter Hanson

Celebrate 25 years of the Maine 3 Railers!

This fall the Maine 3 Railers will be 25 years old. We now have anniversary hats in stock for sale to replace your worn older hats.

Call or write to me to get yours and be up to date. The cost is just \$15.

207 514-3629 pvhan@roadrunner.com



From the Editor by Art Shean

Near the end of our time at the Cumberland County Fair, I received an email from a relatively new member that read in part, "I did enjoy my shift at the fair with ----. I do have a question. Why do we do the Cumberland Fair?" After some contemplation, I thought that was a great question. Not just for the Cumberland Fair but for all of our activities. In this case, why do we invest so much in presenting model railroad displays?

Every member must answer this question for themselves. For me, the answer has multiple aspects. We provide model train displays at over twenty locations and events each year and they fall into various categories: Veterans and Senior Living Homes, Libraries, Train Shows, and Special Events.

Veteran and Senior Living Homes are a no brainer for me. As a veteran and offspring of some great parents, such displays are a way to entertain and honor my parents and retired veterans. Our displays offer a reprieve from the residents' routine and sedate daily activities. When the residents visit, sit, and talk, I remember my parents and fellow comrades in arms and wish I could have done this for them when they were alive.

At the libraries, we focus on the kids. One check of our Club demographics and you know we need to plant the seed for new recruits. Model railroading will die without a new generation of enthusiasts. So, we make the layout as fun as possible with sounds, lights, action, and interactive games and activities. The more fun, the more likely they will pursue railroading as a hobby when they mature and have children of their own. Nothing engages kids more than a train running around the Christmas tree. Who among us can resist the smiles we receive as they run around our layout chasing a train and opening a Tootsie Pop after finding all the characters we hid around the layout.

At train shows, we entertain and challenge model train enthusiasts to stretch their involvement and help vendors to stay in the business. Without business, our sources of train goods will dry up. Nothing worse than getting a great idea but not having the stuff to make it a reality. We also demonstrate new products and techniques to generate ideas for future projects for new and experienced modelers.

At special events we get to strut our stuff to the largest audiences available. Cumberland Fair, Moxie Festival, and our L.L. Bean display are primary examples. When I picture what a model train layout should look like, I see picture postcards in my mind of layouts I have seen in the past. Those postcards become the standard to which I measure a design's success. I can still remember a complete model of downtown Omaha at a train show I attended in the Midwest, a European downtown at an LGB Train Store in Kansas City, the multiple layouts at the San Diego Train Museum, and the American Flyer and Lionel train layout my friend's father had in his basement. I rekindled my interest in trains when I returned to Maine and saw the holiday train layout at the Maine Mall. So, by participating in special events, we introduce the general public to model railroading as a hobby, reignite interest in those who once enjoyed the hobby, and provide all with a picture postcard they can use to envision their own model train world.

As a Club we offer an avenue for model train enthusiasts to enjoy their hobby and enhance their participation. We also must recognize that the only way our hobby will survive is to reach out to kids and the general public to spread the word that model railroading is fun and a hobby worth pursuing. My only wish is that someday a future enthusiast will list one of my layout designs as a picture postcard they use to measure their layout's prowess.



EVENT REPORT

After 151 Years, Better Than Ever! Cumberland County Fair 2023 by Jeff Jacobs and Art Shean

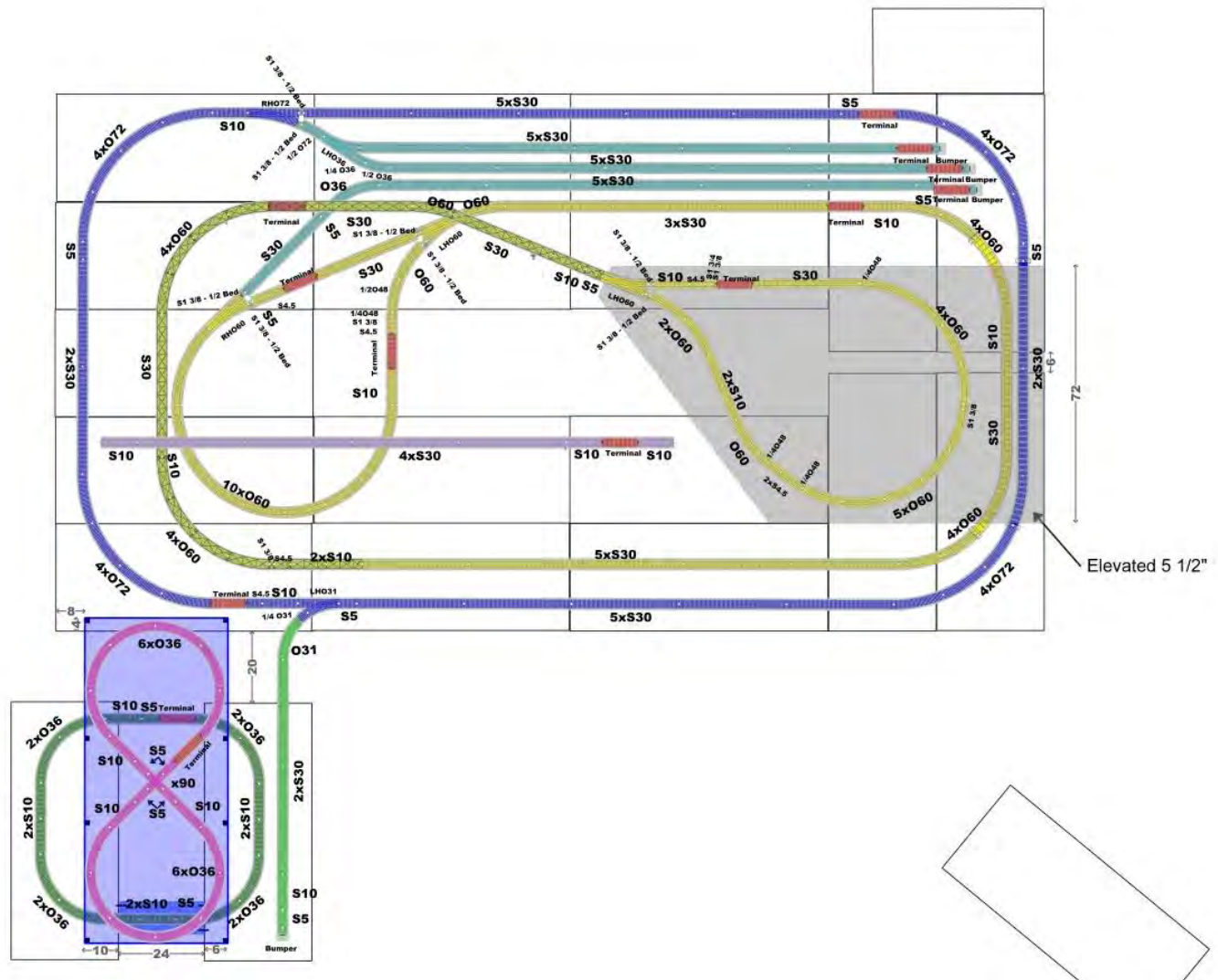
The large-scale M3R model train exhibition we provided at the Cumberland County Fair has become somewhat of a Fall tradition. So, here is what it took to make the 2023 display and some observations of things which transpired during the seven-day event.

Jeff Jacobs was approached by our Event Coordinator, Sam Carr, many weeks prior to the Fair to design a track plan for the back third of the Horticulture Building situated along the center of the midway. The space is about 24' x 18' and can utilize all of the tables and almost everything else in the club's inventory. When Jeff approached the layout design, he factored in these issues: amount of space, interesting movement of the trains, operation of large engines and long trains, trouble-free operations, public interaction with the layout, lots of exterior facing walk-up room accommodating many viewers, a fresh concept, and assembly time needed.

Our 2023 layout had an outer loop of O72 and straight track near the table's edge which operated seamlessly, offering higher bursts of speed. On the interior of the plan was a contorted double reversing track loop which offered trains moving in less predictable motions and captivating our spectators. The loop included a climb up a custom-built incline from ground level to a raised rural village. Trains disappeared under the raised portion through large tunnel portals. To ensure the tunnel portals properly aligned with the track, the crew custom cut the openings on site.

While designing the layout, it was important to minimize switches as we have learned that they can be a problem and interrupt the show. Curves on the inner loop were O60 which helped performance and appearance of the trains in motion.

On the opposite end of the table from the raised rural village, the design included a pair of Thomas and Friends Engine loops in cupcake fashion. On top of our Thomas table was a figure eight with dairy farm and farm supply buildings and below was a simple loop passing under the Thomas table on two 2.5'x6' tables. Also, included on the main table was a "bump & go" trolley which always entertains bouncing back and forth between two custom trolley platforms. Lastly, for crew operations, the design included a 3-track siding area near the control table to stage consists and store engines for routine rotation.



Power to keep the trains moving at constant speed is forever a challenge and this year we fed the simple outer loop with 2 leads while the complex inner track required 5 feeds. Three more feeds were planned to energize the “dead sidings” holding other trains in reserve.

With a design in mind and one week prior to show time, the lead up to set-up day consisted of fabricating the frame and ramps that would hold the upper area. Bridges were custom built, and the items had to be painted and skirted. Also, time was spent conferring with other members to coordinate buildings and accessories to dress the display. The Cumberland project always features an agricultural scene, but we no longer have the member who furnished those important details in the past. Art Shean, Sam Carr, & Carlton Spring stepped up to fill the void with animals, barns etc. on the Thomas table.

With the components fabricated and lined up, the important set-up day was upon us. There was much to do including moving the club’s trailer from its storage to inside the Horticulture Building while threading the needle of the many booths tightly arranged near the building’s doors. Building manager Jim Googins, as always, was helpful in getting us situated within the building.



Many hands were available early in the morning and the trailer was emptied in no time. Next the tables were covered and jostled into their places. Track began to be placed according to sketches while several hands assembled the elevated platform and ramps leading to it. Within a couple hours the tracks were nearing completion and feed wires were being strung. Jim Kennie was on hand preparing the wiring that powered interactive accessories and buildings. Art, Sam, Carlton, and others began placing buildings in the open areas along with streets of tarpaper.





The crew placed the control center in the back right corner of the layout away from the patrons. It featured a new ZWL transformer boasting 620 watts. Unlike past years when we used multiple transformers, this new unit handled the entire layout electrical needs.

As we passed noon and fought off our hunger pangs (the food concessions not being open yet), the debugging process commenced and by 1pm trains began rolling. The club collection of cars emerged from storage and the best engine candidates were selected for a full week of operation. Lion Chiefs were preferred for ease of operation, consistency, and potential kid operation.

By 3 pm the assembly process was wrapping up and testing and area clean up remained. A long day with many hands resulted in a unique show which patrons enjoyed in the following Fair days.





Highlights and Notes from Members During the Layout:

Sunday 9/24:

Sam Carr: It was a good opening day at the Fair. There was a lot of high-speed kids activity at the Thomas table. Jim & I kept cleaning the engines, but as of last night only Thomas and Percy were running. I took 3 engines with me for "Q-Tip Cleaning". They will come back tomorrow along with another spare.

We had some derailments in the tunnel due to kids grabbing cars and took the Lobster Boat Car off the layout for that reason.

Monday, Sep 25:

Jeff Jacobs: The throngs of kids on school day where faces filled the entire room, and the noise was deafening. In particular, one young lad was laser focused on the scene before him and his caring mom struck up a conversation. Before long we had the whole family signed up as 3 Railers and looking forward to collecting O Scale cars. For me, that experience was the epitome of why we brought the model trains to the public. Of course, there were the incidents where kids were "less than respectful" of the trains and the sad scene where a whaling child was dragged away by parents

explaining that it was time to go. Balanced against that several of my friends stumbled across me at the fair and weren't entirely surprised that I was running trains.

Both I and the crowd were surprised during a rare instance when we lost control of an engine and it accelerated to high speeds. During this episode, the crowd became especially engaged and audibly "ooohh d" at the spectacle. I suspect many still recalled their youth when trains were run faster and faster until they left the tracks!

Most folks congratulated the M3R for what we created and were amazed that it was assembled in under a day.



Tuesday, Sep 26:

Carlton Spring:

The Barrel Loader and MTH Firehouse were very popular. Some kids became frustrated with the animated buildings because they were slow to react when the buttons were pushed, took a long time to complete their cycle, and did not work all the time. Maybe we should find and include some other Lionel operating equipment like the barrel loader.

David Christie: The discussion last night during our Roundhouse Session centered partially around the interactive pieces. I have a Lionel icehouse loader that is better set up on a siding and with the old wire track. It does work. I would be willing to donate that to the group, if they think it would work for this kind of layout.

Wednesday, Sep 27:

Ken Thorson: Art Shean planned to broadcast the M3R Roundhouse Session Thursday evening. However, we are in a steel building that makes communications difficult if not impossible. When I phone home, I have to step outside the building. While there is WiFi at the fair, I have had limited success with connecting to the fair WiFi inside the building. In fact, it is so unreliable, it is virtually useless. I do not think that is doable.

Sam Carr: Tonight, we had a problem with power to the front line of accessories at the Fair, from the Drive-In to the Firehouse. It probably happened when I went under the tables to clean the trolley track. Carlton and I checked the wiring but did not find the problem before closing time.

I will come to the Fair tomorrow morning to try and figure this out. I did send an email to Art S and Jim K last night in case we need them. There is a club roster with phone #s in the blue notebook near the transformers.

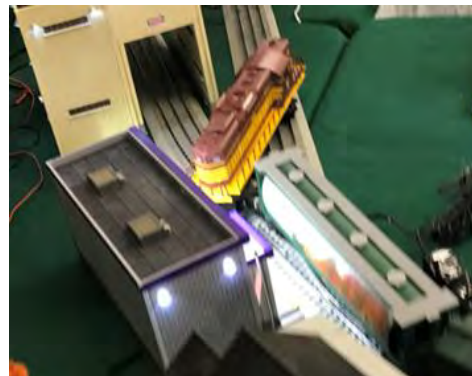
Thursday, Sep 28:

Doug Pollock: Last night we were trying to figure out the low voltage problem. I found a power track which was a trolley track so that was no help. I wanted to see if the power track on the layout was connected to the transformer, so I started to pull the power track wire and got about 1-2 ft of wire connected to nothing, somehow it became unplugged? Ken plugged it in, problem solved.

Ken Thorson:

1. We had one side of the inner loop with low voltage and poor engine performance. After vigorously cleaning the track and checking for other track problems without success, Doug found that one of the power tracks was not connected to the transformer. Art Shean went under the tables and found the extension cord that was not connected to the power track. Voila!!! Everything returned to normal. Note to Tom Hartwell: That is why you had the same problem of poor engine performance.

2. We had one of those kids who cannot keep their hands off the trains and he managed to cause a major derailment even after we emphasized that he should not touch the trains. This behavior continued for the better part of an hour, including him messing with Percy and Thomas. I thought I recalled seeing that kid earlier in the day, so this was his second visit. We were exasperated with the kid, and I was just about to ask him where his mom or dad were. Just then, a uniformed police officer entered the building, went straight up to the kid, asked him if he was Billy and he said yes. The officer said "You're coming with me. I am taking you to your mother who is very worried about you and did not know where you were." Off they went and our problem disappeared out the door.



3. This was a first for Doug and me. A father with a couple of small kids spent a lot of time with them at the barrel loader and started a conversation with me about model trains and our club. When they were ready to go, he called me over and asked whether he could donate to M3R. I hesitated because Lou Bragaw, our Treasurer, was not there and I worried about what he would think if I just stuffed the \$5 bill in my pocket. I resolved to accept his generosity and walked over to Doug and visibly handed the fiver to him. Lou is my neighbor, and I will get it to him pronto.



Rick Hills:

I had a teenager problem last year so watch out. Had a couple of nights by myself and if something goes wrong you are up a creek!

A group of guys and girls would show up during the 7-8 pm witching hour and hide a cow or figure or car on the track. They would laugh as the trains would hit them and derail. The guys were definitely showing off to their girlfriends.

My solution was to ask them politely not to do it and then step into the middle of their group as they were figuring out their next move, just stand there. After a while they left. No teenager wants an old geezer in their midst!

Friday Sep 29:

Sam Carr: No one signed up for the morning shift. I stood the watch by myself.

Art Shean: The mass crowds have subsided, but we continued to see a steady stream of visitors.

Jim Goodins, the Horticultural Building Superintendent reported that the 2023 Fair attendance

exceeded previous year's numbers. From my observation our layout appears to have likewise set records.

Midway through our tour of duty we received a pleasant surprise. A barber shop quartet came by and wowed the crowd with a rendition of "Carolina Chou Chou". Boy did they sound good, and the crowd ate it up. I heard they showed up at our layout several other times.



Member Participation – Good News and Bad News:

M3R Staff for the 2023 Cumberland Fair as of 10/3/2023

Sep-23		Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26	Sep-27	Sep-28	Sep-29	Sep-30	Oct-01
Unload, Set Up Layout	Shift Schedule	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Pack Up, Load Trailer
8am Start Gene T, Sam C	9am-3pm	1 Sam Carr	5 Richard Ridolfo	9 Jan W., Jeff J.	13 Gerry Gotreau	17 Tom Hartwell	21 Sam Carr	25 P. Mahoney, C. Spring	8am Start
Shift 0 J. Kennie, J. Ash.	9am-3pm	2 Jim Kennie	6 Jeff Jacobs	10 John A., Vic F.	14 David Christie	18 Jack Dexter	22	26 Sam Carr	Shift 99
P. Brown, A. Shean,	3pm-9pm	3 Sam Carr	7 Tom Hartwell	11 Gene Thayer	15 Sam Carr	19 Ken Thorson	23 Tom Hartwell	27 Dennis Robillard	S. Carr, A. Shean,
J. Jacobs, D. Hodgkiss, C. Spring, B. Pender	3pm-9pm	4 Jim Kennie	8 Ron Brown	12 Carlton Spring	16 Carlton Spring	20 D. Pollock, A. Shean	24 Art Shean	28 Gene Thayer	L. Bragaw, G. Thayer

Big thanks to the 21 members who supported the 2023 Cumberland County Fair M3R Model Train Layout that included 10 members for setup, 18 members covering shifts, and only four members for disassembly and pack up. No one signed up for shift 22.

Photography by Jeff Jacobs, Art Shean, & Carlton Spring



L.L. Bean 2023-2024 by Jeff Jacobs

Fall has arrived and the Holidays are just around the corner. LL Bean asked M3R once again to provide model trains at their Christmas event. The 2023 display will be much like last year's but with more details and the addition of another Jan Williams building creation – the 1897 Bangor Fire Station.

Jeff & Gene will soon meet with Karen Levesque of LL Bean to finalize when set-up will commence. The moose must be removed from the showcase and the benchwork put in place. Another crew from Beans will cover the exterior windows to somewhat disguise our construction work.

Indications are that the display will open on Nov. 17 and run through Dec 31st. We will again aim for a display which is automated and runs with minimal M3R member attendance. Naturally, the track must be cleaned frequently, and the rolling stock rotated so we anticipate that there will be some M3R presence on most days but not for the 12-hour period that the trains will operate (9am to 9pm). It is a pleasant task to stop by the layout just before 9am to perform chores and be there to visit with the patrons who are delighted by our creation.

On some occasions the trains derail and while the ZWL transformer technology will keep the other trains running, an impromptu visit is required to rerail things or correct an issue. Please be thinking of when you can support this exhibit by either daily cleaning support or as a standby troubleshooter when things go awry (recommend you live in the area).



The 2022 Maine 3 Railers L.L. Bean Model Railway Display

MODEL RAILROADING

Fire Station Update by Jan Williams



The Bangor Fire House project continues... It's interesting how a project takes over your life...

In late January Sally and I visited the 1897 Bangor fire station, now a museum. We were

hosted by an Assistant Fire Chief, Chandler Corriveau. We had a fascinating tour of the building, including the basement arrangements for dealing with the output of the horses above. It turns out the BFD is delighted we are modeling their building!

Here is a picture of the building so far, we are in the home stretch. Remaining tasks are gutters, downspouts, and weathering the roof. That's it!

I should mention the truck doors. This photo shows the original doors, as well as a state-of-



the-art piece of fire equipment circa 1898. The original doors swung in; at some point overhead doors were installed. I went with the original doors...

Getting the rear dormer right was an interesting challenge, since I can't get a clear, close view of the exterior to measure.

Managing Scenery Perspective



I've commented in the past about designing layout scenarios, considering how the eye sees things, and how it views perspective. Two weeks ago, I had a few commercial trees and was looking for places to plant them on the layout. I spotted a place where a tree might fit, in front of a scene I've looked at literally hundreds of times. After I planted a tree, the scene transformed before my eyes: the tree in the forefront caught my brain's attention and the entire scene rolled out in three-dimensional effect. I know, sounds weird, but it really happens...



The Final Product

Thank you Jan. Fantastic job that will truly enhance the L.L. Bean Layout!



The View from Doug's Chair by Doug Pollock

Hi. Well, this is from my book titled, "Railroad Fever."

The railroad fever that swept the mid-nineteenth century America was not an isolated influenza, but a widespread epidemic. Few aspects of American life were left untouched. Within a few short years of America's introduction to railroads, life for most people would never be the same again. Now it was possible to travel at the unheard speed of 25 miles an hour. Goods which had traveled only by wagon could now be shipped by rail. Merchants who had once sold only to a local or regional market could now look to the 4 corners of the country for more customers. The world suddenly got smaller.

Well, the Cumberland Fair was in full swing according to the paper when I scribbled this note. The first day saw over 1000 people.

Railroad Superstition: It is unlucky to leave the shade up while traveling on an evening train lest the passenger becomes "moonstruck".

That's about it for me this month, so keep the tracks clean and I will see U at the Baxter Library in October. B Safe Doug

- END -

Maine 3 Railers Upcoming Schedule of Events

Future Maine 3 Railers Events

- Oct 13&14 **Baxter Library Fall Book Sale**, Swan Gym, Gorham Recreation Center, 75 South St., Gorham, ME 04038. Trains run Friday 9am-6pm and Saturday 9am-1pm with setup Thursday 2-5pm (Portable)
- Oct 14 **M3R Member Model Train Layout Tour**, Rob Osur's layout, 10am to 2pm, 26 Hazel Lane, North Yarmouth, ME 04097
- Oct 27 **Lionel Legacy Training Part 1**, 9am – Noon, Presented by Rick Hills at 243 Neptune Drive, Brunswick, ME 04011, Reservations Required. Sign up with Dave Hodgkiss, dwh39@aol.com or text 207-318-1120.
- Oct 30 **Sunnybrook Retirement Community**, 340 Bath Rd, Brunswick, ME 04011. Trains run from 10am to 3pm with setup 8-10am. (Portable)
- Nov 04 **Southern Maine Model Railroad Club Fall Train Show**, Westbrook Community Center, 426 Bridge St., Westbrook, ME 04092. Trains running from 9am to 2pm with setup from 5-9 pm Friday Nov 3rd. (Portable)
- Nov 17 **M3R Member Model Train Layout Tour**, 2 Locations in Amherst, NH
- Dec 09 **M3R Member Model Train Layout Tour**, Jan Williams' Layout, 10am-2pm, 6 Hiram Hill Road, Hiram, ME 04041
- Feb 17 **Annual Maine 3 Railers Model Train and Dollhouse Show**, Augusta
2024 Armory, 179 Western Ave, Augusta, ME 04330. Run trains 10am-3pm.
Move in on Friday Feb 16 8am-4pm. (Portable)

M3R Zoom Meetings (All meetings start at 7 pm):

- Oct 09 Executive Board
- Oct 12 Regular Monthly

Roundhouse Zoom Sessions (All sessions start at 7 pm):

- Oct 19 Roundhouse Session, Topic: TBD, Host: TBD
- Oct 26 Roundhouse Session, Topic: TBD, Host: TBD

Maine 3 Railers Group Email:

The Maine 3 Railers have a group email account in which all members are enrolled. This is the primary channel of communication for club meetings, events, and activities. This also enables members to send emails to other club members. Like club forums, this service allows members to ask questions, provide advice, help other members solve model train problems, buy, and sell items, and pass along model and prototype railroading news of interest.

This is a free service for each member. The group "owners" (Lou Bragaw, Dana Lindsey, and Art Shean) will add your name and email address when you join the club. You will then receive an email with a link to accept the invitation. Follow the link to confirm your account. You may not receive emails if this step is not completed. We restrict the use of this service to M3R members. Because the site is not moderated, Lou, Dana, or Art will review your first two posts to assure you are a member. The URL for our group is: <https://groups.io/g/M3R>.

Once subscribed you can email all other M3R members by addressing your email to m3r@groups.io, email individual members by using the Directory, update your personal profile, change how you receive emails, or unsubscribe. If you have any questions, contact Dana Lindsey, M3R Secretary.