



Three Lakes Model Railroad Club
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1st 100% Club in Wisconsin
March 2012

Street Rail: Amsterdam

by R.G. Blocks

Amsterdam is Capital of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Marge and I had biked a long week from the beautiful little town of Bruges, Belgium across Holland to this thriving metropolitan area of two plus million souls. Driving a car is discouraged. Bike riding is popular and Amsterdam boasts the only multistory bike parking lot I've come across.



I asked a local what a bike cost in Amsterdam and the answer was a surprise. "Bikes cost nothing." He said simply stand on any corner, wait for a group of bikers, then in a loud angry voice yell, "That's my bike!" Three or four folks will drop their bikes and run away. Pick out the best bike. They cost nothing.

Bus (rubber tired road vehicles) and tram (street car, trolley car on rail) and boat lines are operated by Gemeentelijk Vervoerbedrijf (kind of rolls off your tongue). Abbreviated GVB it is the municipal (owned by the city) transport firm. Amsterdam street cars run on tracks buried in the street and at times on parallel to the street rights of way. The service

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also exists between outlying suburbs and towns and plays the role of an interurban in our parlance. I'm not sure where tram-train becomes the operative word; but they certainly did have multicar trains. Here is an example of a tram (or modest tram-train) on a city street. Note the purple boarding island raised up within the street.



Power is picked up by pantograph (roof mounted and spring loaded) from overhead wires. Voltage is reported to be 600 or 750 V DC depending on the line.

In the second photo on this page we see two trains bound for different destinations while on a common street but not the same path. There is a turnout under the rear most car.



Note also the side skirting on the tram. Wheels are virtually out of sight. The trams are built with the external structure very close to the ground. This makes it very difficult to roll over a foot or have little children crawl under the tram cars at a stop.

The cars are very smooth externally. Thus, if pushed into a train on a typically crowded rush

hour moment there is less probability of an inadvertent brush against rail-car doing damage to oneself. The between cars bellows are also nice and smooth when on straight track and reasonably smooth in a turn. Nothing to hurt you is evident. It would be tough to sue this GVB transport company for not having planned ahead.



The turnout on the right looks like a model rail #5 or 6 switch to my eye. Amsterdam weather is fairly modest. It does get

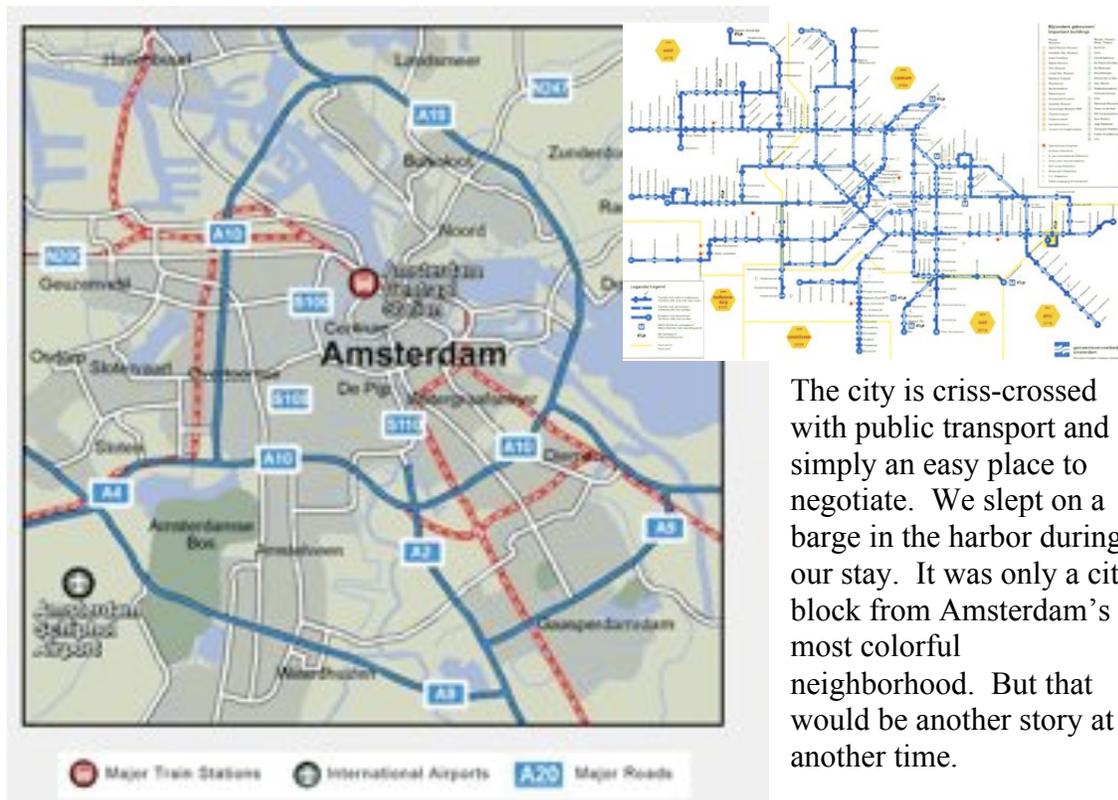
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down to freezing. However, not for long. Thus, we don't see snow and ice as a major impediment to the rail buried in city streets.



The two photos capture the extensive use of windows in the tram design. The city has more than three million visitors each year. All want to look out and take photos.

Note the paving bricks on the right photo. Typically, we found brick set in sand was the preferred method of making a road or walk way throughout much of Europe. Utilities such as overhead power or telephone are absent most anywhere. They are where they belong, below the pavers, set in sand. It's both easy to remove the cover and relay the area once work is done.



The city is criss-crossed with public transport and simply an easy place to negotiate. We slept on a barge in the harbor during our stay. It was only a city block from Amsterdam's most colorful neighborhood. But that would be another story at another time.

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Railroad Happenings: or Semi-local events...

March 3 - 4, 2012 High Wheeler Train Show, Palatine, IL info at
www.highwheelertrainshow.com

March 9, 10, 11, 2012, Midwest Region Convention, Annual Meeting of
Members, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Springfield, Illinois.
Discount Amtrak fares: host Illinois Valley Division.

March 11, 2012 Metro Model RR Club Show & Swap Meet, Circle B Recreation
6261 Hwy 60, Cedarburg, WI info at www.metrorrclub.org

March 18, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel,
1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

April 15, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel,
1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

April 28 – 29, 2012 Titledown Train Show, Shopko Hall, Green Bay, WI
Info at www.ttsgblc.com

May 5, 2012 NMRA Winnebagoland Division Spring Meet, Plymouth, WI

July 29 – August 4, 2012 it's the 77th National Model Railroad Convention, Grand
Rapids, MI. The host club is found at www.grmrhs.org a 100% NMRA
club. For info on the convention: www.gr2012.org Seventy
fantastic layouts within one hour of the 12th best hotel in
North America (Amway). Let's all go!

April 2013 Convention, Midwest Region, Marriot Indianapolis, IN (tentative).

A Brief Note about TLMRC

by R.G. Blocks & P.A. Wussow

We began the Three Lakes Model Railroad Club (TLMRC) to satisfy a need. We discovered a large number of model train enthusiasts coming out of the North Woods while building the layout at the Choo Choo store in Three Lakes. There was no active group of model rail folks in our area focused on: building layouts, talking trains, holding educational sessions and promoting model railroading and the NMRA. We think it important to perpetuate fellowship of modelers as well as the aspirations and goals of NMRA given that is the source of all the dimensions, specifications, techniques and technical consistency that have standardized our hobby has made each of the popular scales and gauges possible.

We began TLMRC and in so doing became the first 100% NMRA Club in Wisconsin. It appears we grew 30-40% last year. We've been quite active and perhaps that is our difference. We work with other clubs, NMRA Divisions and promote the NMRA

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Achievement Program. To improve we're publishing our Purpose, Mission Statement and By Laws. We hope that all contribute by improving what has been started.

Three Lakes Model Railroad Club **Three Lakes, Wisconsin**

Purpose: This club is a non-profit educational association to promote the hobby of model railroading. To that end all members are encouraged to independently build rolling stock, structures, scenery and layouts in any scale or gauge.

Mission Statement: Our goal is to encourage model railroaders to partake of the hobby and membership in this and other railroad clubs. It is to encourage any member to partake of the Achievement Program (AP) of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) and to promote model railroading as a hobby. It is also to promote new memberships, new ideas and follow the guidelines of NMRA and maintain 100% NMRA membership.

By Laws

Section 1.

The **name** of the club shall be Three Lakes Model Railroad Club. We shall use the club name or an abbreviation of same, such as TLMRC when referring to the club in print.

The club shall have a **logo** described as follows: (see photo of the Bradley Junction, in Grayscale with red letters:



All members of this club, as a condition of membership, **shall maintain membership** in the National Model Railroad Association abbreviated **NMRA** herein.

Members shall keep the Treasurer of the TLMRC organization apprised of their NMRA expiration date and member number.

Section 2

The Board of Directors shall serve without pay and consist as a minimum of two members and fill the tasks of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster persons.

Any member in good standing is eligible to serve as a Director.

Board of Directors Members will normally serve three years beginning with a staggered start with two members serving one year each, one serving two years, and one serving three years.

Vacancies due to illness or termination shall be filled by direction of the remaining Directors.

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Board of Directors Members who are absent three consecutive meetings shall normally be terminated unless properly excused by the President.

Members on the Board of Directors shall serve until their replacement is trained.

Section 3

Duties of the President shall be to chair all Board Meetings, Introduce Hosts and Speakers and arrange for the proper management and business of the club.

The Vice President shall construct a monthly schedule to include: speakers, host layout locations, projects, and notices to members of the programs of the club.

The Secretary shall keep records of all business of the club, all publications of the club, all meeting notes of the Board of Directors, and a list of members and background sheets on all members to include their home address, email, business, and personal telephones.

The Treasurer, will collect funds from the membership as directed by resolution of the Board of Directors and disburse funds as directed by the Board of Directors.

The News-letter Editor & Web person will keep the membership advised of the programs organized by the Vice President, publish layout information of the members, and serve as a conduit of information for the membership by publishing a monthly newsletter at least 9 months per year.

Section 4

Committees may be formed from the membership as the Board of Directors finds necessary.

Section 5

Regular meetings shall be held at the home of members, public buildings such as the Three Lakes Library, or Rhinelander Library, or civic/public/ or commercial locations such as the Reiter Center, or the Choo-Choo Shop or other places located in or agreeably near the town of Three Lakes, WI.

The Secretary shall in cooperation with members keep a list of NMRA points for the volunteer hosts and authors as they pertain to NMRA's Achievement Program (AP).

Board of Directors meetings will take place normally during regular meetings of the club. Thus, all members are encouraged to participate in any meetings and club decision making.

Two Board Members present or in communication during voting constitutes a quorum. Without a quorum no business decisions of the club takes place.

This club will use Skype as a normal communication method: a Director or member is thus effectively present if he or she is in communication during voting on Skype.

Members are encouraged to equip their homes with a wireless base-station to support the current high-speed voice over data Internet communications.

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The Editor will attempt to publish the TLMRC newsletter about one week prior to any meeting date of the club. There will be no paper copies of the newsletter made or offered other than those kept by the Secretary and Newsletter Editor. The newsletter will be four pages as a minimum and generally contain, a calendar of events, a President's Column, a Vice President's announcement for the next meeting, and articles (and data to support talks and clinics) written by the members and such news the Newsletter Editor deems worthy of publication. The Newsletter Editor and Webmaster are encouraged to use each other or other members of the club to edit newsletters and website changes prior to general release to others.

Section 6

The business year of this club shall be Jan 1 through Dec 31 annually. At least one business meeting shall be held each year and the financials reported.

Section 7

The By Laws of this club may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors at any meeting provided a quorum is present. One-week notification of such change must be published in the newsletter before the change becomes effective.

Section 8

Dues will be \$10 per year for each member. The President may authorize the waiving of dues for a portion of a year for any member (health, infirmity, hardship or a contribution of skills to the benefit of club members). Members must however maintain their membership in the NMRA to be a member of TLMRC and will cease being a member if their NMRA membership lapses.

Approved by on this date: September 12, 2010

Roger G Blocks
Founding Director

Paul A Wussow
Founding Director

TLMRC: Reflections after a year

by R.G. Blocks

Many say a layout is never finished. I would agree. It seems to me but a painting that needs improvement and my eyes focus on different things with time. So too our club.

We need folks to teach or simply talk about subjects of interest (clinicians), to write about what they call fun and we call subjects of interest (authors), to operate trains following their version of timetables and train orders (dispatcher-engineer-tower operator-switchman) and builders to talk and write about their favorite projects, trips, layouts, scenes, prototypical things, electronics and the like. Always a want, a desire, another day.

More of Life’s Challenge

by R.G. Blocks

Brendan Marquardt asked about 3 D insofar as module design and construction. Here is a bit more of an evolving answer from my view.

Since last reported, I’ve worked on five portable modules: framing and two coats of scenic work are done with a final coat of plaster, track and bridgework to follow.

Module 1 (not shown). End of T&O line: turntable with facility service stubs for maintenance, storage of seven engines and provides run around. Size 19.5 x 32 inch

Module 2 (1st photo on left) Out-load potatoes and logs, receive misc goods for Three Lakes. Car clean and repair & engine house facility. Cattle loading. Foam top, screen and plaster on rags for small hill features. Screen stapled and glued to foam and wooden frame for durability in travel. Size 19.5 x 62 inch

Module 3 (next photo on right) Car storage, misc loading, dump and track to mine. Foam top, screen and plaster on rags for small hill features. 19.5 x 62 inch.



Module 4 (next page top left) Corner transition module: probably not as mobile as originally envisioned: three mine sidings atop slight 1% grade and a gangue and ash dump track below mine, max grades are a bit above 4%: no track work is flat (level), three bridges. Track supports and frame ½ inch plywood. Scenery is aluminum screen stapled to frame and track supports, with rags dipped in Plaster of Paris covered with brushed on, color tinted, all purpose joint compound. A last coat of colored joint compound with dirt, sand, gravel and appropriate quantities of burnt umber, raw sienna,

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brown, black, yellow and red concentrated paint added will finish the scenery. 19.5 x 48 x 31 inch

Module 5 (top right) Bridges to Outasite Mountain Range: gauntlet track upon exposed tie Wooden Trestle (256 scale ft long x 56 ft ht), a Stone arch bridge, an 88 foot x 26 ft height stone deck wooden trestle: module 31 x 65 inches.



Track supports are covered with green masking tape. The photo on the left shows modules 4 and 5 bolted together. The long trestle will be behind the beginnings of a sandstone version of Stand Rock. The various hills cause the trestle to have a compound curve.

Complex 3 D models should provide interesting rail operations. They should look a bit more realistic in the next round of effort. The idea is to

illustrate how modules, bridges and a scene evolve. The last two issues of Three Lakes Turn (Jan & Feb 2012 have earlier photos and our planning thoughts. All newsletters are available at www.tlmrc.org).

Adding a passing siding at Thunder Lake *by P.A. Wussow*

While holding operating sessions on the Perch Lake & Superior it became clear that we needed an additional passing siding at the location known as Thunder Lake.

This is almost in the middle of the point to point operations of the layout and is in fact a reverse loop. The radius of the loop is about 38” and it is the highest point on the layout. The problem was how do I install a passing siding inside the 38” radius loop without taking out the current loop and using it to cut new plywood for sub-roadbed?

The answer I found was in a recent article on spline roadbed. In the years gone by modelers who had wide turns on their O scale layouts would take lathing strips, that were used in plaster walls and stand them up on end to form sub-roadbed. I found that using 1” wide strips cut from a 4’ X 8’ sheet of Masonite and gluing them together, one at a time, allowed me to build a sub-roadbed that conformed to the inside radius of my current reverse loop. Here is a quick step by step. If you are interested I will provide a detailed clinic at a later date.



The loop at 38” radius contains a 1% grade and has .013” super elevation on the main line with roadbed is supported on 1” of laminated plywood. The Passing siding will need to be inside the current loop and provide for connections to the Perch Lake Lumber Co. trackage. An access space must remain available in the center of the loop and no additional support structures may go below the current track.

I started by ripping 1” strips of Masonite 8 feet long out of a 4X8. (Photo to left)

With the strips ready I used ¾” plywood for supports and spacers to set the bottom support and the horizontal spacing of the roadbed. These were glued in place under and next to the current loop. (photo to right) As I was doing this I had hoped to keep the layout operating by not removing the track from the loop. As we



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will see later this did not work out.

After installing the support and spacers it was time to let the glue dry. Glue drying became the most time consuming part of the project. (Photo right)

With these supports in place it was time to install the strips of Masonite. I attached the first strip to the starting



block with glue and a power driven nail. I then moved to the next block making sure to keep the curve smooth and evenly spaced. I was surprised at how easy this first strip was to install. I cut the length of the strip to meet the next strip at a support.



After completing the first of what was to become 11 layers I pre cut the subsequent strips to have the butt joints meet at different support locations. Each spline was added by gluing and clamping it to the previous spline. As I added layers the number of clamps needed grew with the number of layers.

Each spline, equal to half the loop had to have a 24 hour drying time. As I ran out of clamps I had to extend the length of time the project would take.

When I had all the splines in place I found that the surface needed to be cleaned and leveled as glue and the edge of the splines did not provide a smooth sub-roadbed. Sanding did not work so it was up to my planer to do the job. This was a double setback, I had to remove the outside track and roadbed to clear the planer and without a vacuum attachment to the



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planer dust went everywhere. The planning made for a lot of extra work and cleanup but provided a very nice surface to the sub-roadbed.

At this point I reinstalled the roadbed and the switch plates on the main line for the turnouts thus allowing me to get the track back in place for a scheduled operating session.

From the Tower

This month we look back at the past year and how far we have come in modeling and membership. Our club has worked with our members and local clubs and has been asked to present clinics in other divisions. We have had combined meetings, constructed modules, and answered questions from many members and nonmembers.

At least Six NMRA Achievement Program Certificates have been earned by members and there are more pending. We have been recognized by the NMRA Education Department and ask to participate in their Beginners' Course Project.

Gatherings of people interested in trains have provided opportunities to share information and techniques as well as a hot cup of coffee and some armchair railroading. Helping each other have more fun in, if you will, “playing with our trains” has helped bond new friendships at home in Three Lakes and around the world. Our use of the Internet to distribute our newsletters and provide on line clinics has allowed the North Woods to have a voice far from our own town.

Family health problems have limited some of us from being in town but that has not stopped us from working in the hobby and expanding the interest in model railroading. While having to stay in Glen Ellyn IL I have been able to invite some of our snowbirds and visitors to operate on my Perch Lake & Superior layout. This has given me a chance to test new ways to operate in a prototype manor while having fun and fellowship. It also has added to our membership in the NMRA and our club.

House calls to local North Woods modelers has allowed the club members to help other get their layouts operating and eliminate shorts that show up unexplained. Members and friends can't bring their layouts into meetings so members go visit and assist where they can.

All in all I believe that we, as the Three Lakes Model Railroad Club, have lived up to our mission and hope to continue in the coming years.

Paul Wussow
President TLMRC