



**Three Lakes Model Railroad Club  
Volume 2, Number 11**

**1<sup>st</sup> 100% Club in Wisconsin  
Nov 2011**

### **Impressions of Berlin Transport**

*by R.G. Blocks*

We were there to bike and sightsee. Our hotel was in former East Berlin. It was an Art'otel and fit right in with what you might call four-star accommodations or better. Original artwork of Georg Baselitz, arguably one of the finest living artists adorned the commons areas. We were walking distance to downtown shopping, museums and transport center: all, a massive rebuilding program since reunification. A stones throw from one hotel entrance was a subway stop and a boat landing facing Fishers Island at the other. The Australian embassy was next door. Taxicabs were by Mercedes Benz.



Getting the picture? Berliners are quite industrious, champions in achieving spotless cleanliness, seem to be biker dominated and we were there in time for grape harvest and tasty Federweisser. New wine, it looked like lemonade, went down like cool-aid on a hot day and packed a 4 to 10% punch of the sort frowned upon by AA and AAA. I trust it doesn't color my impressions of Berlin transport.

Our subway station (left) was clean and Graffiti free. This was to be the standard. A simple 6.30 euro coupon was good for a ride on any rail conveyance within the Berlin

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area for a period of 24 hours. There were a variety of good ticket package options. Thus encouraged, we found public service to be a preferred way to get around town. Note the absence of litter. It was ever so tidy and proper.



Bikes are also encouraged. Bike rentals are spotted often and folks of all ages are wheeling about. Bike paths are everywhere and distinct from what we call sidewalks. They are generally a

portion of a vehicle traffic lane and clearly marked for purpose.

Sidewalks are mostly brick, smooth, and an improvement over concrete walkways. Laid on a sand base by bricklaying machine: they go down fast. They are also easily removed for utility repairs or additions. Utilities are located under the walks. Jackhammers and concrete saws are thus not



necessary for much of the work. We saw many miniature front and end loader device and small dump trucks.



Street Cars, overhead electric trams, operated here are sleek. New ones are being provided by German firm, Bombardier. Not shown here, they are air conditioned with low floors for easy on-off. The big sales push says 70% of the CO2 can be avoided by riding on rail vs. auto.

There are rubber tire busses on the streets of Berlin as well. They range in size from large articulated vehicles that fit the equation where the streets are narrow and traffic less dense to small seven person mini bus versions. Berlin is a place where the use of a car is discouraged. This is typical of

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much of Europe due to normally narrow streets, population density and congestion in general.



At the heart of Berlin downtown is the transportation center called Alexanderplatz, or Alex by locals. The fountain (top left) gets graffiti periodically but the Bahnhof station is clean as a whistle. Red trains are regional express or local whereas white ones are high speed.

The tall TV tower, known as Fernsehturm, or Tele-spargel (toothpick) is the second-tallest structure in Europe. It was built as a communist showpiece (with Swedish help) in 1969. The sun when shining on the Aluminum dome always forms a cross. Thus, many here call it ‘Revenge of the Vatican.’

Spargel is also what German’s call white asparagus, a German delicacy. When it is in season there are recipes for breakfast, lunch and dinner dishes. Soups, sauces, crèmes, crunch, etc. One year, when visiting friends we were served five successive meals of spargel something. It’s good; but, not that good. Once again I’ve taken my eye off the ball: back to trains.



Bahnhof Station has seen service in some form since 1882. Here, four regional express lines (semi fast with fewer stops) and four regionalbahn lines (local, make every stop sort of trains) call daily. Then, there is the S-Bahn rapid transit system with fifteen lines. It too calls at Bahnhof Station as one of its stops. We find daily ridership numbers 1,060,000 for the rapid transit portion alone and easily some 300,000 pass through this station area. Three more underground lines call at

Bahnhof. It is the largest underground station in Germany hence folks stream out from the many pores of Alexanderplatz.

High speed (186 mph) ICE trains operate all over Germany between major cities at hourly intervals and stop at nearby Berlin Hauptbahnhof another grand station.

Four Street Level Tram lines and five rubber tire bus lines serve Bahnhof and Alexanderplatz is simply one very busy place. Clean, neat, efficient. It's German.

Written, by Roger G Blocks after three weeks enjoying German hospitality, culture, food and friendship during September and October 2011.

### **How You Doing Mate?**

*by Glen Mills, NMRA, Australia*

I opened my email this morning and couldn't help but smile. Glen Mills, a buddy from the Melbourne Australia area wrote the following:

Hello Roger,

Howareyougoingmatealright?

We are alright, especially as how the temperature reached 31 deg C yesterday and nearly the same today.

Today one of our granddaughters celebrated her 5th birthday and on the way home from the party we captured the attached photographs, less than one and a half hours ago.

Regards,

Glen

(see photos and commentary on page 5 from Glen)

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*Puffing Billy opened in 1900, a single track, 15.6 mile system with eleven stations. It offers 3 to 6 trips / day except on Christmas on 30 inch gauge track.*



*Puffing Billy, one of the most popular steam railroads in the world runs along the foothills of the Dandenong Range to Gembrook near Melbourne. It has several 2-6-2T engines for normal use and a few diesel engines to use when fire danger is high.*

## **Railroad Happenings: or Semi-local events...**

November 12-13, 2011 – Trainfest, State Fair Park: The biggest show of the year !

December 4, 2011 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, 1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

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

February 18, 2012 Mad City Train Show, Madison, WI.

February 19, 2012 WISE Division Meet, Best Western Plus Midway Hotel, 1005 S. Moorland Rd, Brookfield, WI

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 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, 2012 Title Town Show in AM and Packer Hall of Fame or National Railway Museum in PM (a WISE Div'n Bus Trip). Contact [Sueoseland@aol.com](mailto:Sueoseland@aol.com) for more info.

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

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

## Meeting with a Master Model Railroader at his Layout

*Story and photos by P.A. Wussow*

On Sunday April 3, 2011 I had the chance to visit the layout of Master Model Railroader #344. James Duffin (Jim), a member of the Du Page Division of the Midwest Region, had his layout on the division layout tour. I saw was an amazing layout with fine details. I want to share some of his work with you as it matches with our modeling and education goals in the Three Lakes Model Railroad Club.

His layout is not overly large but includes all the elements that make a layout a miniature of railroad operational history. Jim models the Chicago Burlington and Quincy (CB&Q) during transition from steam to diesel. His layout was designed for operation by up to 4 operators using Direct Current (DC) and is now able to operate on Digitrax Digital Command Control (DCC).



Photo 1 (above) shows a control panel with the controls for DC operation via rotary switches selecting the cabs by color Red, Blue, Green or Yellow. Sockets with the same color code provided locations for plugging in the walk-around cabs. You will notice that all the rotary switches are set to yellow that is connected to his DCC system. Turnouts are all controlled by Tortoise switch machines from local control panels with Double Pole Double Throw (DPDT) switches. This uses a single 12 volt supply with the DPDT switch acting a reversing switch supplying current to move the switch points. Light Emitting Diodes (LED) indicates the position of the switch points. Jim built these control panels using 3/8<sup>th</sup> inch black Plexiglas and automobile pin striping tape in various widths and colors to create a very user friendly set of local panels. The care and detail in these panels serves only to indicate the quality of the rest of the layout.

Detailed structures are found all around the layout as shown in the photo to the right.

The buildings vary from scratch built to super detailed kits. Materials include wood plastic and paper all painted, weathered and adorned with fine details.



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I have included a set of photos to show what can be done with buildings including plastic kits that have been popular for years and are still available today. In the Jamestown Yard (to the left) there are examples of super detailing of simple kits.

In the next series of photos below you can see a coaling tower, now from Bachman, and a sand house that was sold by Tyco and Con-Cor over the years.



The Atlas Water Tower and diesel fueling station are shown on the next page.



Above, a diesel fueling station built from kit and scratch materials.

The above article will be continued next month.

These illustrations show the level of detail that can be attained with good planning and care of construction.

## View from the Tower

The view from the tower is a little blocked by construction going around my Atlas Signal Tower. I hope you all have had a chance to check out the web site and the “Kit-A-Long” project. I have not received any news from the members except to know a few of you have purchased HO and O scale kits. Progress on the kit will continue in November and be documented on the club website [www.TLMRC.org](http://www.TLMRC.org) so keep up with our progress and please share your work with all the members by sending your reports and photos to me [PaulWussow@WindyPines.net](mailto:PaulWussow@WindyPines.net) I will edit and share your work with the rest of the club and our global following via the web.

In the past I have written about operating our layouts and some of you have reported working on a number of layouts over the past years. The club is putting together a set of information to allow interchange between layouts no matter their locations. I will have more on this after we try this type of operation and interchange as we develop the data and information about layouts and their industries and destinations. If you would like to work with us on this project from your home layout of any size please contact me at the email above. Who knows we may be moving traffic across your layout to get from the variety of locations that our personal layouts represent.

I hope to see many of you during the month of November as I look to a quiet time before Thanksgiving and the Christmas rush of friends and family.

My Perch Lake and Superior Railroad has interchange connections that run all the way to that jolly old elf with a workshop at the North Pole. If you know a child who would like to receive a train set for Christmas and may not be able to receive such a gift due to the current economic circumstances please let me know.

Your Superintendent, Paul