



News from Houston N'Crowd



THE ORDERBOARD

January/February 2015



All aboard for 2015!

Don't get left at the station! Plan now to get on board for N'Crowd's 2015 activities.

Membership Meetings

Third Wednesday of Every Month

BC&G Operating Sessions

First Wednesday in February, April, June,
August, October, December

Greater Houston Train Show

February 21, Stafford Centre

Fall Layout Tours

Every Weekend in November

And More!

Clinics? Or where to?? Hill Country Flyer,
Amtrak, Texas State Railroad, New Metro
Lines? Let us know your thoughts!



"GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Vincent Walker, President

Let's get busy!

I would like to thank everyone who participated in N'Crowd activities in 2014. Let's give a special thanks to Ray Byer and Gordon Bliss; without these guys I believe we would have more track and electrical issues on the club layout. Thanks also to Tom Marsh for a newsletter that is second to none.

We need to give a big thanks to Allyn Pearlman of Papa Ben's for continuing to provide the layout room. As you know, we get the room at no charge in return for running trains on Saturdays and respecting the store's operations and the paying customers.

During my second term as your president, I'm looking forward to even more participation by "old" and new club members in the new year. Plans are to have more clinics, club layout work and operation sessions, and another crawfish boil. If you missed the last one you missed a treat: Eric threw everything in but the kitchen sink! I would also like to plan an Amtrak trip. We have several options, but we need group participation to make it work. Also, let's not forget our club operating sessions. These will take place on the first Wednesday of even numbered months.

Finally, we want to encourage everyone to renew their membership and help sign up new and lapsed members. This year, let's try to get more involved with the new members and let them know that with membership they get not only access to a fine layout (with a few rules), but also plenty of jokes and fun.

All of this will take YOUR involvement, so try to make the club meetings, stop by the layout room on Saturdays and run some trains (bring that locomotive you bought last year), and sign up for the operating sessions. We know you'll have fun!

Dues Time

The N'Crowd new member/renewal application for 2015 is now available in the layout room at Papa Ben's or from the N'Crowd website:

www.houstonNcrowd.org

WANTED!

Your contributions to *The Orderboard*.

As with most aspects of your club, this only works if you participate.



N'Crowd Wednesday Membership Meetings:
January 21 / February 18 / March 18 / April 15

BC&G Operating Sessions:
February 4 / April 1 / June 3 / August 5 / October 7

Most activities take place at Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd. Our monthly membership meetings start at 7 p.m. The BC&G Wednesday operating sessions start at 7 p.m. Come earlier to join us for dinner.

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
December 17, 2014
Prepared by Tom Marsh**

Meeting called to order at 7:15 p.m. by President Vincent Walker. Three door prizes given out: Joe Kingsberry - rerailer (can't have too many of these...); Tom Marsh - Astrorail pin (might be able to have too many of these...); Richard Bartlett - cap donated by Gordon Bliss.

Attending: Vincent Walker, Tom Marsh, Gordon Bliss, Ray Byer, Joseph Kingsberry, Harvey Stalarow, Richard Bartlett, Dejan Suskavcevic, John Sweigart.

No reports: The vice president, treasurer and secretary were not present.

New business: President Walker solicited ideas for possible group trips. Among the suggestions: Louisiana Railroad Days Festival via Amtrak; Austin Steam Train; Texas State Railroad; Dallas Area Train Show; and Oklahoma City Train Show. Vincent also called for volunteers to present clinics at 2015 meetings.

General discussion about work needed on the BC&G. Joe Kingsberry noted that he has completed the overhaul of two BC&G locomotives, including replacing one complete prime mover. He will also repair the Kato SP RPO truck.

Editor Tom Marsh said he expected to send out the January-February issue of *The Orderboard* before the January meeting. Newsletter contributions always welcome!

2015 Membership Applications/Renewal Forms will be available in the layout room and will be sent out with the next newsletter email.

Old Business: We need to man the layout on Saturdays and Sundays before Christmas. Everyone is encouraged to help at the layout on Saturdays during 2015.

Meeting adjourned 7:40 p.m.



Congratulations, Mr. President!: N'Crowd President Vincent Walker has been recognized as a 25-year member of the National Model Railroad Association. Now, Vince, when did you say trains would be running on your layout?

Go ahead, make a scene!

by Tom Marsh

If you have a small piece of real estate on your layout that needs a little something, but you're not sure what, grab your camera and head to your nearest railroad for inspiration.



Board it up: You bought that tower kit years ago but it doesn't really fit your modeling era. Build it anyway and board it up. Boarded-up towers can be found in many locations, so why not on your railroad?

Don't like the abandoned look? Some old towers now house small museums. Instead of boarding up your tower, add a caboose on a short piece of track, build a fence around it all and put up a "Welcome to the Railroad Museum" sign. No small town is complete without one!

Piling on: Stuff tends to get piled up alongside railroads; sometimes it's junk, sometimes useful materials. Nearing the end of a recent track relocation project in Houston, the contractor has piled gravel, concrete ties and what appears to be a "remainder" in the form of a short section of pre-fabricated track.





Gimme shelter: Your yard crews will appreciate a little shade or shelter from the rain while they are waiting for their next switching move or the crew van. The bench and trash can at this substantial steel shelter at BNSF's New South Yard in Houston are well secured to keep them in their intended places.



Lying down on the job: This spot of trouble can be easily modeled. Notice that not a single railroad worker or piece of equipment for removing the cars is in sight; all that has been done is to place a number of yellow danger signs aimed at keeping away those who might like to know what's behind those big yellow doors.



Crude, but effective: This derail, spotted on the BNSF in Temple, will keep your cars from rolling off the edge of the layout on that spur to nowhere you built because you couldn't think of anything else to do in that space.

N Scale Speed Table
 Courtesy John Brady, Worldwide Group of the N Gauge Society

Time over 4 ft module (seconds)	Actual Speed in MPH	Scale Speed in MPH	Scale Speed in KPH
1.00	2.73	436.36	702.24
1.50	1.82	290.91	468.16
2.00	1.36	218.18	351.12
2.50	1.09	174.55	280.90
3.00	0.91	145.45	234.08
3.50	0.78	124.68	200.64
4.00	0.68	109.09	175.56
4.50	0.61	96.97	156.05
5.00	0.55	87.27	140.45
5.50	0.50	79.34	127.68
6.00	0.45	72.73	117.04
6.50	0.42	67.13	108.04
7.00	0.39	62.34	100.32
7.50	0.36	58.18	93.63
8.00	0.34	54.55	87.78
9.00	0.30	48.48	78.03
10.00	0.27	43.64	70.22
11.00	0.25	39.67	63.84
12.00	0.23	36.36	58.52
13.00	0.21	33.57	54.02
14.00	0.19	31.17	50.16
15.00	0.18	29.09	46.82
16.00	0.17	27.27	43.89
17.00	0.16	25.67	41.31
18.00	0.15	24.24	39.01
19.00	0.14	22.97	36.96
20.00	0.14	21.82	35.11
25.00	0.11	17.45	28.09
30.00	0.09	14.55	23.41
45.00	0.06	9.70	15.61
60.00	0.05	7.27	11.70
90.00	0.03	4.85	7.80
120.00	0.02	3.64	5.85

This N Scale Speed Table was originally published by the UK-based N Gauge Society. The society is a non-profit organization run by volunteers for the benefit of the railway modeling hobby in general and N-gauge modelers in particular. The N Gauge Society has supported modeling of UK and worldwide railways since 1967; the group has almost 6,000 members across the globe. If you have an interest in modeling the railroads of the British Isles, the N Gauge Society is the place to start. The society publishes a glossy magazine six times per year and produces ready-to-run and kit car and structure models.

The Worldwide Group of the N Gauge Society focuses on all things railroad outside Great Britain. The Worldwide Group has two quality email publications, *The Globe* and *The Globe E-Supplement*. *The Globe* covers N scale modeling around the world (including items from the N'Crowd Orderboard), while the *E-Supplement* presents prototype news and photos. In addition to learning how things are done across the pond and elsewhere, membership in the N Gauge Society lets you toss around terms like "inspection saloon", "brake van", "bogie" and "specialist trader". Go to <http://www.ngauesociety.com/> for information.

An Open Letter to Atlas Dealers, Distributors and Consumers

December 16th, 2014

Dear Atlas Customers,

In this season of caring, giving and hope, I would like to sincerely thank you all for the past and continued support you have given to Atlas Model Railroad Company during recent turbulent times.

As many of you know, Atlas dissolved its relationship with a primary overseas supplier due to their request for excessive, across the board price increases. These increases would have placed Atlas and our dealers and distributors in a no-win competitive position, resulting in more severe business disruption, and potential business failure for Atlas. We, of course, could not allow this to happen.

Following this decision, Atlas needed to transfer thousands of its proprietary molds and tools from multiple factory and warehouse locations to multiple new supplier locations. This was easier said than done. Mold transfers were delayed, incomplete, damaged, etc., which necessitated Atlas to remake needed molds and tools, acquire new machinery, and in some cases go through a steep manufacturing learning curve.

The chosen path, while painful for Atlas and our customers, has eventually allowed Atlas to reconfigure its supplier base and resulted in a stronger and wiser Company. At this point in time, Atlas is close to the healthy production levels reached prior to market disruption. Dealer and distributor fulfillment is currently averaging 70% and many of our products are at much higher levels. 2015 will be better, as our new suppliers work smarter and more productively to deliver needed products.

Let me be crystal clear regarding any rumors about the imminent demise of Atlas Model, Atlas O, and our products. Setting aside the wishful thinking of a few competitors, these rumors are baseless and without merit. I will admit that some of the O scale product re-development efforts were more difficult than some of the N & HO. This was caused by complex and lengthy re-creation of needed molds and tools, as well as the additional opportunity to upgrade all 2 & 3 rail switches. Be assured that the added time to market for any Atlas product is well worth the effort.

Atlas has re-established consistency in the production and shipment of HO & N track and accessories, and a 100% effort is now being given to O scale 2 & 3 rail track and accessories. We are totally committed to the complete return of all scales in all categories, including rolling stock, locomotives, track and accessories. The overwhelming majority of all Atlas product categories in every scale have had molds and tools fully restored to equal or better quality. Initial production and reproduction is proceeding on schedule, and an active new product development plan is being carried out.

The resolution of the above situation could not have occurred without the hard work and dedication of all Atlas team members, as well as the understanding and continued loyalty and support of our customers. I sincerely apologize for the effects this disruption may have caused your business and, or hobby pursuits, and I look forward to increased mutual development and growth in this great hobby of model railroading both now and in the immediate future.

Happy Holidays to All,

Thomas W. Haedrich
Executive Chairman
Atlas Model Railroad Co. Inc.

LCL

Less than Car Load: a few notes from your editor

Website changes and update: The N'Crowd website - www.houstonNcrowd.org - has been updated and also sports a new look. Page navigation and the look and feel of much of the site have been overhauled for better presentation on modern monitors with larger screens.

In addition, the underlying location for the site has changed, and it is no longer at kingswayrc.com. The actual URL is now <http://www.turbotrains.com/ncrowd/>, so if you

have bookmarked any links with "kingswayrc" in the URL, these will not work after March 31.

Your suggestions wanted: Do you have suggestions for N'Crowd activities in 2015? If so, bring your ideas to the next membership meeting or contact club president Vincent Walker.

We have had a few suggestions, including one for a road trip to the Ausin area to ride ASTA's Hill Country Flyer. What do YOU think?

HOUSTON N'CROWD TIME TABLE

January 17-18

29th Annual Dallas Area Train Show, Plano Centre

January 21

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

January 24-25

San Antonio Model Railroad Association Jamboree

February 4

Wednesday BC&G Operating Session, 7 p.m.

February 18

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

February 21

Greater Houston Train Show, Stafford Centre. N'Crowd will have a table, please volunteer to help for a couple of hours!

March 7-8

Junction & East Texas Train Society Show, Longview

March 18

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

April 1

Wednesday BC&G Operating Session, 7 p.m.

April 9-11

Louisiana Railroad Days Festival, DeQuincy Railroad Museum

April 11

Arkansas Railroad Museum Railroadiana Show & Sale, Pine Bluff

April 11-12

New Braunfels Railroad Museum Train Show Jamboree, New Braunfels Civic Center

April 15

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

April 25-26

Cotton Belt Historical RR Society Annual Train Show, Tyler

May 9

Shreveport Train Show, RiverView Hall

May 16-17

Jefferson Train Days and Train Show, Jefferson, Texas

THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

Tom Marsh, Editor

Published fairly regularly for members and friends of N'Crowd Model Railroad Society, Inc., Houston, Texas.

Send newsletter contributions to: tom@houstonNcrowd.org.

Please note: We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and length.

Visit our Web site:

www.houstonNcrowd.org

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