

APRIL EVENT

The next Little Rhody Division event is scheduled for **Saturday, April 1st** at the United Methodist Church in East Greenwich, 1558 South County Trail (Route 2), East Greenwich, RI. Parking and entrance are at the rear of the building.

Donuts, coffee and socializing will begin at **9:30 AM**, followed by presentations and information sharing at **10 AM**. At **Noon**, we will dine on lunch ordered from a local pizza/sandwich place with those who want to continue the discussion. Spouses are always welcome.

The Life and Times of the Wood River Branch Railroad with Stephen Boothroyd.

There has always been something uniquely endearing about shortline railroading. Is it their quaint, old-fashioned equipment, often cast-offs from some other line? Perhaps it is their unhurried comings and goings of modest consequence in contrast to the constant parade of trains scurrying by on the mainlines. Or, is it the contrast between the manicured, ballasted, signaled heavy rail of the mainline and the weedy, light rail of a branch? Maybe it is that their crews are not distant figures, like on a mainline, but locals anyone might have gone to school with. Or, perhaps, it is because shortlines are local, they are ours, and that is what makes them so special.

The 6-mile-long Wood River Branch Railroad struggled through 75 years, from 1872 to 1947. Along the way, it battled floods and fires, was sued over a lost hat, and survived four attempts at abandonment. In 1907 it had the youngest engineer to get his papers, introduced its step-parent (the New Haven) to the internal combustion engine in 1927, and was once sold for \$301. In the 1940s,

it was the only railroad with a female Vice President of operations and never once paid a dividend.

Stephen Boothroyd is a 19th century transportation historian and author of 16 books and e-books. He is a veteran of Edaville Railroad and the Mohawk Valley Line. Most recently, he was a staff historian and steam engineer at Erie Canal Village in Rome, NY. He is also a model railroader and was a member of the Little Rhody Division NMR before moving out of state.

T-TRAK Trials

The Little Rhody Division N-scale T-TRAK modular group will set-up and test the modules in various configurations in preparation for the 2017 North Eastern Region Convention in November. If you have a T-TRAK module, bring it along so we can test it out, photograph it, and add it to the catalog of modules. If you do not have a T-TRAK module, come and check it out. Perhaps you will decide to join the fun.

Plus, **Ask a Question/Solve a Problem**, a forum for our in-house experts to answer your questions and solve your nagging problems related to model railroading.

OTHER NEWS

- Sadly, we have learned that W. Cliff Coutinho of New Bedford passed away on February 23, 2017, after a long illness. Cliff was an avid model railroader and long-time member of the Little Rhody Division.

- The 2017 Self-Guided Model Railroad Layout Open House Tour (MA, RI & CT) will take place on Saturday, April 8th. Details are available at <http://www.layouttour.com>.
- The Friends of the Kingston Station is looking for a new home for their collection of bound *Model Railroader* and *Trains* magazines going back to 1948, along with a small collection of other magazines. There is only one catch - whoever takes them, must take them all, and remove them in one visit; the collection will fill about half of a pickup truck. If interested, contact Frank Heppner by e-mail at birdman@uri.edu. Be sure to include a phone contact number.
- Our May Little Rhody Division event will be Saturday, May 6th at the Providence Northern Model Railroad Club, 1175 West Shore Road (Route 117), Warwick, RI. For information, visit their website: <http://www.providencenorthern.com>.
- The Little Rhody Division Annual Dinner Meeting will be on Wednesday, June 14th.

As always, please contact me with any questions or issues. Also, we are always in search of topics of interest for future meetings. If you want to learn more on a specific topic, just let me know.

Linda Bergemann
Membership Chair
Little Rhody Division NMRA