



SEMAPHORE



December 2024

We are meeting in a different location this month!

8:00 PM on December 20, 2024

Babylon Old Town Hall Museum

47 West Main Street, Babylon, New York, 11704

This is our annual holiday visit to the Old Town Hall Railroad display.



The Old Town Hall Museum as recreated on the Old Town Hall Railroad. Our meeting will be on the second floor of this elevator equipped building.

To access the parking lot at the rear of this building, please enter via Grove Place, turning onto Mansfield Road and then Cottage Row.



The Publication of the
Long Island - Sunrise Trail Chapter
of the
National Railway Historical Society



December Membership Meeting Information by Edward M. Koehler Jr.

LOG IN INFORMATION FOR THE DECEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Persons entering either this electronic meeting or the physical meeting room agree to not record any or all part of the presentation without the express written permission of the Long Island Sunrise Chapter NRHS, the host/producer and the presenter. Violations of this agreement could result in criminal and/or civil penalties. Thank you for your cooperation. Want to get in contact with a presenter? We will be happy to facilitate that.

8:00 PM on December 20, 2024
Babylon Old Town Hall Museum
47 West Main Street, Babylon, New York, 11704

This is our annual holiday visit to the Old Town Hall Railroad display.



Our usual meeting location, the Van Bourgondien House as portrayed on the Old Town Hall Railroad.

Friday, December 20, 2024 at 8:00 PM eastern, **7:00 PM** central: The December Membership meeting of the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter, National Railway Historical Society at the Old Town Hall Museum; 47 West Main Street; Babylon, New York, 11702. We continue with our annual holiday of a visit to the Old Town Hall Railroad. We will be broadcasting the administrative part of the meeting followed by our usual attempt to show a tour of the layout.

To attend this event via Zoom®, please click this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89715475454?pwd=sPL85vWFAXnr2z1lZxjXQjfXebe3o.1>

Meeting ID: 897 1547 5454 Passcode: 927204

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Do note that your normal internet or cell phone charges may apply.

Do you know someone who is willing to present a clinic as a part of this series? Perhaps you are willing to present? If so, send an E-Mail to the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter president at EdwardMKoehler@nyc.rr.com with the contact information of that individual or a description of your presentation. We are always in need of content.

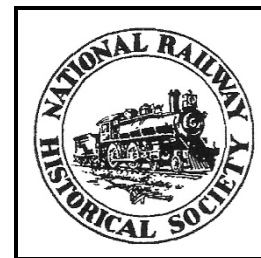
If you have any questions, please email your Chapter President Edward Koehler at EdwardMKoehler@NYC.RR.COM but remember Email service ends at 3:00 PM on the meeting date.

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**LONG ISLAND SUNRISE TRAIL
CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Founded in 1966



2025 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES NOTICE

The annual dues for the year 2025 for the Chapter are now due and payable by January 1, 2025.

Please note that dues for the National organization are separately payable and you should have already received an email notice for their payment.

The annual dues for membership in the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter are	\$20.00
The annual dues for a family member in the Long Island Sunrise Chapter are	\$ 1.00

We would like to remind you that your Chapter is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as an IRC 501(c)(3) charitable organization, which means donations to this Chapter are tax deductible to the extent of tax regulations.

Total Dues Amount Enclosed:	\$ _____
Donation	\$ _____
Total Remittance	\$ _____

Please return your payment and your remittance to:

**Alan Mark, Treasurer
Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter NRHS
111 Greenbelt Parkway
Holbrook, New York, 11741-4439**

Do not use this mailing address for any payment other than dues renewals. Thank you!

Name of member _____

Name of family member _____

Street, City, State and Zip Code _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Email address _____

Please provide your email address, while the SEMAPHORE will continue to be distributed by mail, we anticipate additional notifications to be sent our electronically.

We need your mailing address to make sure our SEMAPHORE mailing labels are correct.

Sincerely

Alan Mark

Treasurer

Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter NRHS

LIST Publications ORDER FORM*The following price list is for LIST members only!*

# _____	LIRR 2025 calendar	NEW	@\$8 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Morris Park Shops by D. Morrison	NEW	@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	175 th AND 185 th LIRR Anniversary Books		@\$7 for BOTH Total _____
# _____	The LIRR drawings of Vincent Quatroche		@\$10 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Port Washington Branch D. Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	The LIRR 1949-1980 by R. Sturm NEW Vol. 2		@\$38 each Total _____
# _____	The LIRR Co. A History 1834-1965 by R. Sturm		@\$38 each Total _____
# _____	Volume 1 and 2 of Bob Sturm's books		both for \$68 Total _____
# _____	Shortlines of Long Island by H. Fagerberg, E. Koehler		@\$27 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Montauk Branch by Dave Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Babylon Branch by Dave Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Multiple Unit Cars by M. Boland Vol. 1		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Main Line East by D. Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	GCT + Penn Sta. Statuary & Sculptures by Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Trackside with Matt Herson by M. Boland		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Oyster Bay Branch by D. Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	Jamaica Station by Dave Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	Sunnyside Yard+Hell Gate Bridge by Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Stations by Dave Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	LIRR Port Jefferson Branch by D. Morrison		@\$18 each Total _____
# _____	The Long Island Rail Road, in color Vol. 1		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 2		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 3		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 4		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	The Long Island Rail Road, In Color Vol. 5		@\$48 each Total _____
# _____	The LIRR, In Color Power 1952-2015		@\$48 each Total _____

Shipping for 1 or 2 Calendars is \$4.00. Shipping for 1 book is \$5. Shipping for both Bob Sturm's books is \$15. Shipping for other extra books, please email Chapter Secretary Christine Quigley at CSQuigley@optonline.net for the shipping costs. NY State Residents, add 8.625% sales tax to the total of the merchandise AND the shipping.

The Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society is a non-profit IRC 501 (c)(3) educational organization. The Chapter was founded in 1966 to serve the Long Island area. The SEMAPHORE is the official publication of the Chapter. Articles appearing herein do not necessarily express the attitude of the Chapter or the NRHS. Please address all correspondence and membership inquiries to: LIST-NRHS, PO Box 507, Babylon, New York 11702-0507.

Chapter Happenings by Edward M. Koehler Jr.

We all enjoyed Mike Boland's presentation on Long Island Rail Road switching locomotives at the November membership meeting. We had a good sized group in the Van B house and also in the Zoom® meeting room. Great presentation and well researched.

Chapter Trip Chairman Bob Grant has a few activities happening this month and next. The first two will be a ride on the New York City Transit Authorities vintage train. These will be followed up with a planned visit to the Bronx Botanical Gardens where the model railroad exhibit will be viewed. To receive full information as to times and dates, email Bob at Gorailroading2018@AOL.COM or call him at 917-327-5151.

As shown elsewhere in this newsletter, our December meeting will be at the Old Town Hall Museum where we will be viewing the Old Town Hall Railroad. Refreshments will be served.

With the winter season upon us it seems sensible to take a few weather related precautions. First, if the Babylon Public Schools are closed for weather related issues on either January 17, 2025 or February 21, 2025 we will be cancelling our in person meeting and holding our meeting via Zoom®. So, it behooves you to make sure that you have sent your email address to President Ed Koehler to be put on the distribution list. It is much easier to click on a link than to type in that long Zoom® meeting address as shown in the SEMAPHORE.

Speaking of the January meeting, we have arranged for a video presentation on the East Broad Top Railroad operations taken during September 9 and 19, 1995. This presentation will be delivered by Harvey Laner via Zoom® from Los Angeles.

We remind you that now is the time to renew your membership, the dues notice is elsewhere in the newsletter. Please use the address on the dues notice only for renewals or new memberships; book and calendar orders should be sent to our Babylon post office box.

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Just a reminder. The presenters of our Chapter meetings put in a substantial amount of time and effort in producing a show that we hope you like. PLEASE do not interrupt the presenter and keep comments to yourself. Hold your questions until the end of the show unless the presenter states they are open to questions. Courtesy and etiquette should be maintained during the meeting. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter!

THERE WILL NO VIDEO TAPING OR PHOTOS OF THE MEETING CONTENT WITHOUT THE EXPRESS CONSENT OF THE PRESENTER.

We are always looking for articles for the Semaphore, just let me know and I am sure that we will be able to print it [sooner or later]. My email address is edwardmkoehler@nyc.rr.com and my telephone # is 917-603-4276. Please do not mail me hard copies of your articles. Please email your articles as we have to retype mailed copies.

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE THE SEMAPHORE EMAILED TO YOU, PLEASE SEND ME YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND I WILL EMAIL IT TO YOU MONTHLY.

ALSO, IF YOU MOVE, PLEASE SEND ME YOUR NEW ADDRESS!

LIRR Happenings compiled by Edward M. Koehler Jr.

We begin this month with two items that are not directly related to the Sunrise Trail, followed by two that are marginally connected.

The MTA has announced that they have secured funding for the various environmental and engineering studies that need to be done for the proposed QBX light rail line. This proposal has a light rail line using some form of 'stud' contact rather than overhead wires that would begin in Long Island City and then head south along the Brooklyn waterfront. This project was originally proposed by Mayor Bill de Blasio who looked for others to fund it.

Metro North Railroad has taken delivery of the first two Siemens 'Charger' dual mode locomotives in an order of 33 (six of these locomotives will be owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation). The first one was unveiled to the press on November 1, 2024. These locomotives will eventually replace the P32 type on the Metro North roster. Several of the P32's bear commemorative paint schemes, so if you want photographs of them, head to Metro North country.

The New York City Transit Authority has announced that they will be shutting down their trestle over Jamaica Bay. This is the structure that replaced the 1950 fire damaged Long Island Rail Road trestle. The plan is to close the trestle for seventeen weeks during the Winter and Spring of 2025. This is to enable repairs to be made to the structure that date back to Superstorm Sandy and to provide additional hardening against any future storm.

Many of the older New York City area enthusiasts remember when a pedestrian tunnel alongside Macy's used to link the Penn Station IRT station area with the PATH station in Herald Square. Due to criminal activity this tunnel was closed years ago. It's reopening was supposed to be funded by Macy's at one time, but the project got caught up in Macy's bankruptcy. Now a revival/replacement of this tunnel is a part of several Penn Station projects that the Federal government has announced funds for their study and design.

As mentioned last month, the LIRR changed timetables on November 11, 2024; there were no paper versions issued, only QR codes.

Again, off of Long Island, but really close to Long Island. On November 12, 2024, an Amtrak substation in the Bronx caught fire, apparently due to a power surge. Numerous small fires along the right of way followed usually at the locations were feeders connected to the overhead. At one of these separate incidents, the fire spread to a warehouse thought to be a portion of the former New Haven's Van Nest Shop (1601 Bronxdale Avenue vicinity). At the substation site, the FDNY responded to what became a three alarm fire with a request for firefighting foam units. Amtrak train 2163 was enroute at the time of the incident and was stopped at the site of the former Bartow Avenue station (New Haven East Bronx service); the passengers on this train were eventually 'rescued' by sending a diesel locomotive to tow this Acela Express train. Amtrak ceased services between New Haven and Penn Station during the duration of this incident, directing passengers to use CDOT/Metro North trains to avoid the area. The service disruptions continued into the next day.

"This is the train to . . ." On November 3, 2024, Van Ritschie, a prominent voice actor passed away at the age of 80. It was his voice that was used for the announcements for the M7 cars on both the Long Island Railroad and Metro North. May he rest in peace, may his family and friends find solace in the future.

The MTA Board has again approved a Capital Expenditure Plan for the coming years, included in this plan are new rolling stock (locomotives, multiple unit cars, and locomotive hauled passenger cars) for the Long Island Rail Road; upgrades to the Hillside Maintenance Complex and substations throughout the electrified zone, and evaluations of extending the electrification from Ronkonkoma to Yaphank, and converting the Bay Ridge Branch to a light rail line. Financing for these projects and goals were not identified.

Between 3:30 and 3:42 PM on Saturday, November 30, 2024 the Wantagh Fire Department was requested to respond to the historic Wantagh Station at 1700 Wantagh Avenue. It was reported that there was a fire in the attic area of the preserved railroad station and the fire department was opening the roof. The Seaford and North Bellmore Fire Departments also provided units to the scene under a mutual aid agreement. Further review in news articles the next day revealed that a Wantagh Chamber of Commerce tree lighting ceremony was taking place at the museum when smoke was seen in the area of the station's chimney. It appears that the fire damage was confined to the area near the chimney.

THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD MODELER by Mike Boland

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE: UPDATING AN ATHEARN "BLUE BOX" 50-FOOT RAILBOXBOXCAR KIT

These are great times for model railroaders such as myself. The quality of freight car models by such companies as Rapido, Scale Rails, Tangent, Moloco and others are nothing short of spectacular. These are all great model manufacturers and I have purchased a number of their exquisite pieces of rolling stock; they're all truly great models. Great models they are, but yes, they are expensive.

But there are other ways of increasing your freight car fleet and the other day, I did just that. Visiting Gulf Coast Hobbies in nearby Sarasota—I'm in Venice, Florida for the winter months now and coming back to the Cape and Mashpee in mid-May—I spotted a great little item on the shelf; it was an Athearn "Blue Box" freight car kit, a 50-foot "Railbox"-style car. It was Athearn #5527, a Chicago & North Western single-door boxcar with six (6) vertical posts on each side of the door. The car was lettered CNW 155114 and was painted CNW yellow, making it a very attractive car with black lettering and the C&NW herald in red and black. The car is a late model Railbox freight car product so it has no roofwalk and a low-position brakewheel and platform. The car has black ends and a galvanized, silver roof.

Overall, it's a very nice model but it needs to be updated to be more prototypical and realistic-looking; then it will be ready to run. The car came assembled but it needs to be unassembled to accomplish this.

So it's time to proceed.

First, remove the trucks that are screwed to the floor with rather long screws. The trucks did not have much play in them so I widened the holes by rotating a hobby knife or X-acto knife in each hole, making them a little larger. This allows much more play. Widen the holes enough to make this happen. When done, remove the wheels so they and the trucks can be painted. I use Micro-Mark Railroad Tie Brown and it's a great paint. I pour it from the bottle right into my airbrush cup and it's ready to go. It does not need to be thinned and goes on well. This is a great paint to airbrush and I use it for the bottom of the car and the trucks as well. This can be done later after the bottom of the car is taken apart temporarily.

The underbody is not glued and does not have to be glued. It comes apart in two pieces: floor and underframe with weight. Screws for the trucks will hold these parts in place should you decide not to glue them.

With the floor removed, carefully remove the car doors in order to cut off the bottom oversized clasps that allow the car doors to move. Use a hobby knife chisel here and cut carefully.

Since the model has been molded in black plastic, I touched up the black "spots" after I sanded them down with a fine, thin sanding stick. Use a primer to cover these "spots" first; I used Scalecoat II Primer to paint over the spots. Then use a yellow paint—I used an old bottle of Floquil (?) Reefer Yellow since I did not have any CNW paint on hand and I didn't know which CNW yellow was used insofar as the railroad has more than one yellow that they used. I had a bottle of MG Reefer Yellow but this color was way too bright. This touchup was done with a small minibrush; you don't need an airbrush here.

I find the bottom door clasps to be quite ugly so I remove them; it makes the car look better. What this does, though, is make the doors immovable but this doesn't bother me. Generally, I keep the doors of

THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD MODELER by Mike Boland ...continued

a boxcar closed but once in a while, I keep the doors slightly open. To do this and make the car look more realistic, I painted the black molded interior walls near the door a light gray since they will be visible via a partially open door. I also painted the floor near the doors Railroad Tie Brown. When done, I cemented the doors in position.

The "B" end of the cart needs to have its brakewheel placed and glued in its hole. You can use the Athearn brakewheel supplied or you can use one from a secondary market such as Kadee, which makes a number of different brakewheels. I sometimes think that the Athearn brakewheel supplied with kits is a little oversized and looks cumbersome and not too realistic.

The galvanized roof is a little too silvery for me so I toned it down with some gray paint. I'll make it more realistic by weathering later but that's another story. Also, it would be nice to give the roof a not-so-defined paint border between it and the sides of the car. It's just a little too clean, too defined and too shiny for me. This is easily fixed and you can weather the roof to suit with oils, powders or acrylics.

I haven't seen too many of these cars in person so I wanted to get an idea of what they look like. How did these cars weather? What did they look like in later years? Did they get "tagged" with graffiti? If so, how badly?

I'm sure the yellow paint did not weather well in later years. It faded and lost its luster. In fact, I saw a photo of one of these cars and it had a replacement door—in red, making for an interesting-looking car. Were the original doors replaced on many cars? Apparently, yes! There should be good photos of these cars on various internet sources so I looked for some good examples of weathering but not too severe with no graffiti. I found them on rrpicture.net/archives and noticed that a number of these cars had replacement doors, most of them in red. The red replacement doors were of a different style and manufacturer than the original doors, giving modelers a chance to add to the variety of the car.

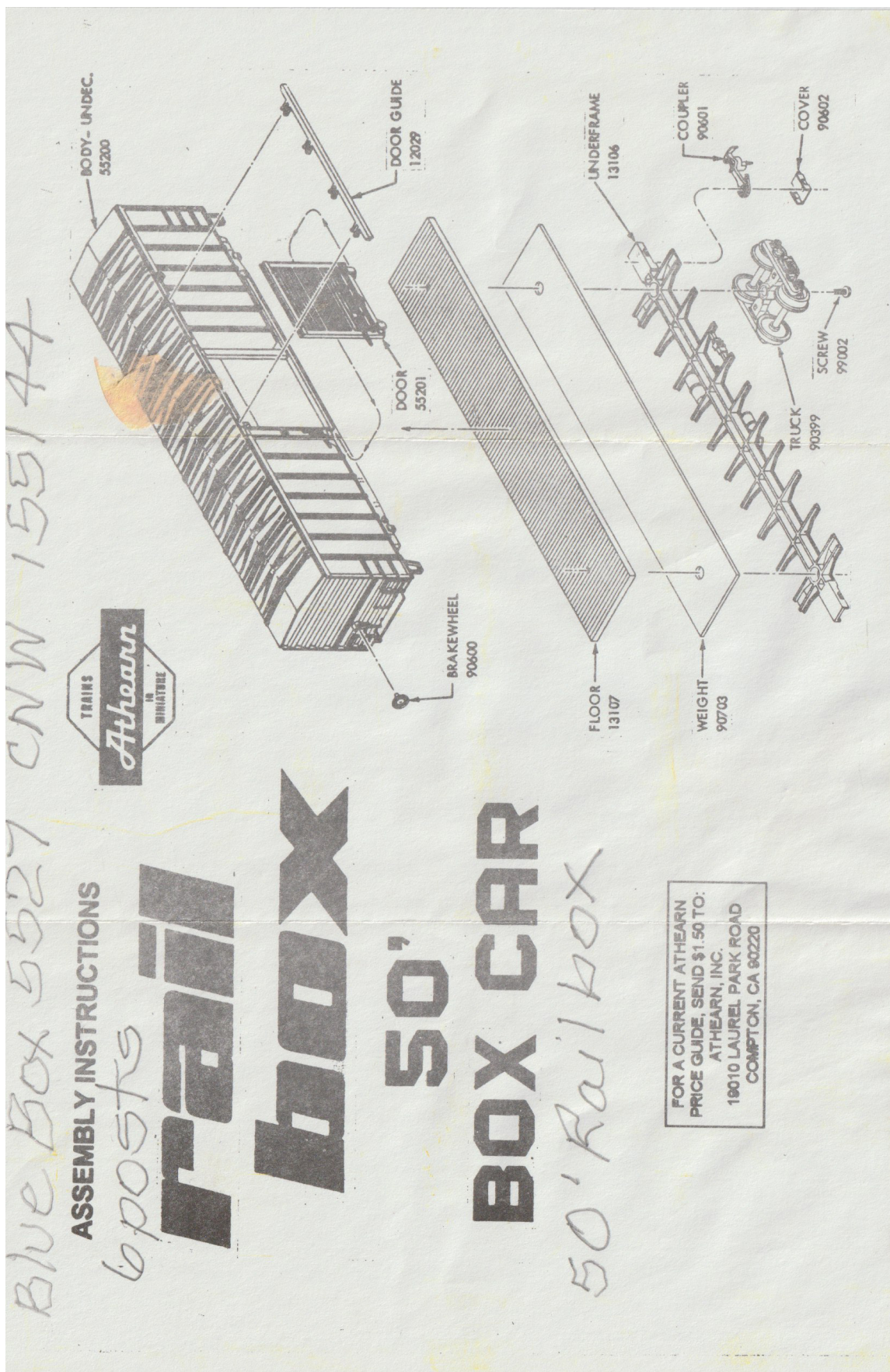
I studied a number of photos that I called up of CNW 50-foot Railbox boxcars on a fabulous website called rrpicturearchives.net beginning with my model of 155144. I called up a number of cars, including 155191, 155074, 155000 and 155001. There's quite a lot of variety in how these cars look. These cars are AAR-type A402 and have a capacity of 5067. This last car had its own yellow door, along with 155011, which had a patch job of numbering in white, and repatched in black reporting marks below the number; 155012 replacement 6-panel horizontal door painted light brown-yellow; 155018 had a red 6-panel replacement door; 155023 had its original door; 155024 has a red replacement door and 155025 also had a red replacement door.

One last thing is to replace the supplied X2f horn-hook couplers with modern Kadee #148 magnetic couplers. They are easy to install with the Athearn unique tab coupler pockets. Weather to suit and get that car in revenue service.

I'm off to Prototype Rails 2025 RPM Meet at Cocoa Beach early next month where I'm presenting my LIRR Switcher Show to an appreciative audience, I hope.

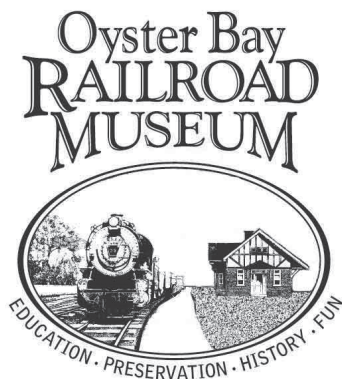
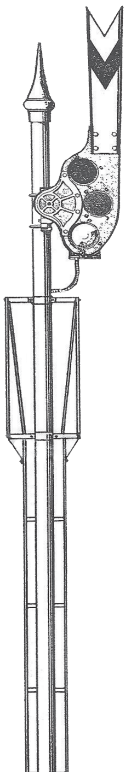
Until next time, Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Happy Kwanza and Happy New Year to all! And happy modeling, too!

THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD MODELER by Mike Boland ...continued



Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter
National Railway Historical Society
PO Box 507
Babylon, New York 11702-0507

Seasons Greetings and a Happy New Year!



Our Thirty-fourth Year!
www.rmli.org

Please support your local railroad museums!