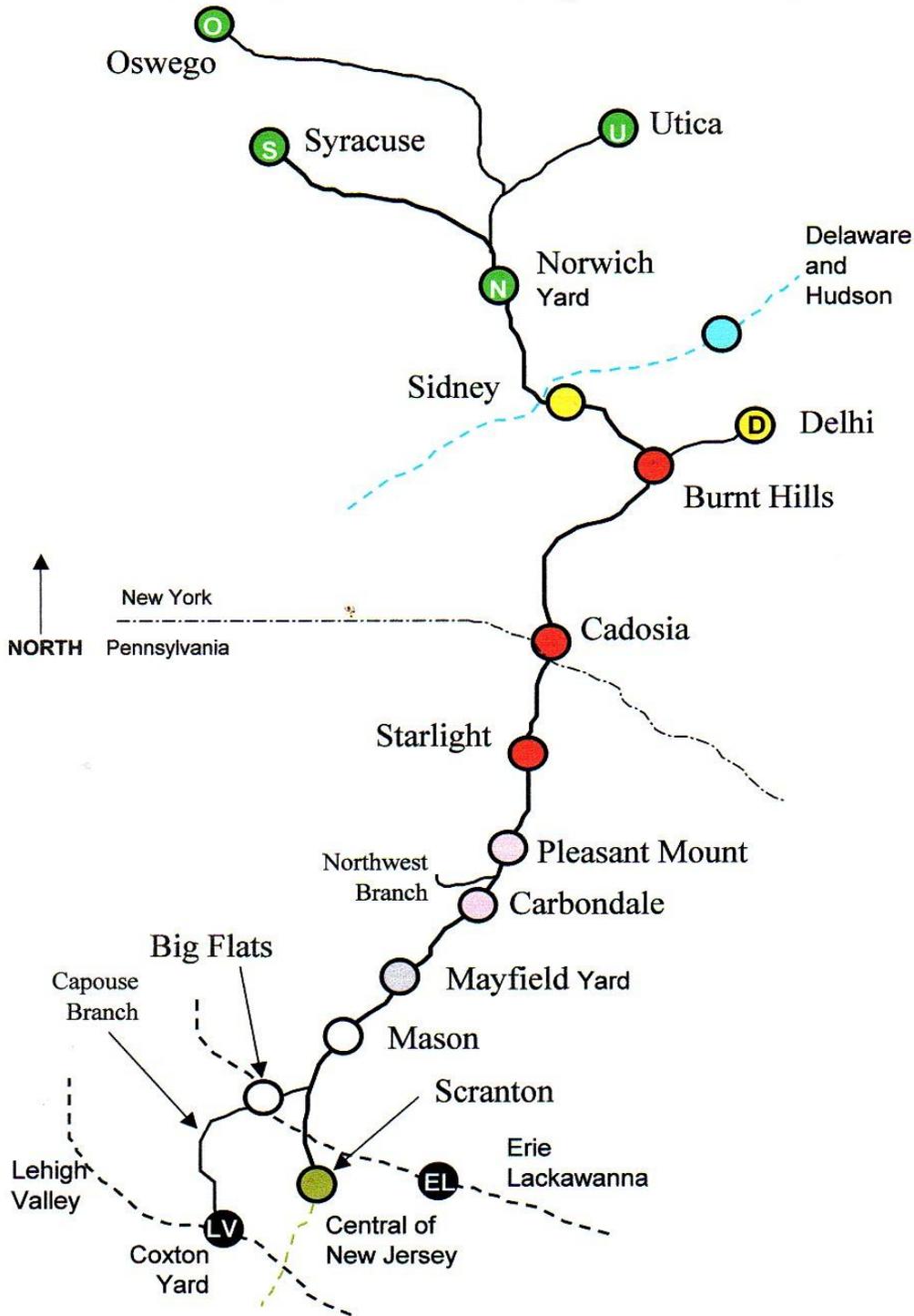


Burnt Hills and Big Flats Railroad



LAYOUT TOUR BOOKLET
Revised 1/1/2014

Introduction and Background

It's June, 1970, and the Northeastern U.S. is struggling. The Penn Central is heading for bankruptcy. Oil prices are climbing. The recently formed DERECO holding corporation is made up of three railroads – the Erie Lackawanna, the Delaware & Hudson, and the Burnt Hills and Big Flats. The BH&BF consists remnants of the New York Ontario & Western, which were sold off in 1957.

DERECO is providing service to New York State from its Scranton PA gateway. Poor Penn Central service has caused traffic to shift to DERECO, and the Lehigh Valley. Higher energy prices are spurring on mining of anthracite coal, and recovery of culm piles (tailings from past operations).

Traffic flows north on the BH&BF, out of Scranton (with its coal breakers, and railroad interchanges), through the Mayfield division point yards, and into New York State. There are four primary destinations in New York – the Delaware & Hudson interchange in Sidney, and the cities of Utica, Oswego, and Syracuse (reached by an ex-West Shore branch).

The Delaware & Hudson has routed some through traffic over the BH&BF, including the NE-84 and 87 Washington DC to Maine trains.

Operating the Model

In 2013, the BH&BF changed over from Track Warrants to Timetable and Train Order. This was driven by the local operating group, and the availability of NMRA OPSIG materials on TT&TO.

BH&BF employee positions for a full operating session are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Road Crew 1 | 7. Mayfield Main Yard Switcher |
| 2. Road Crew 2 | 8. Mayfield Yardmaster |
| 3. Road Crew 3 | 9. Big Flats – Mayfield Operator |
| 4. Road Crew 4 (Mine Run) | 10. Carbondale – Cadosia Operator |
| 5. Hostler | 11. Burnt Hills – Norwich Operator |
| 6. Mayfield Coal Yard Switcher | 12. Dispatcher |

Road crews operate the mainline trains. These range in complexity from through runs, to transfers which set out and pick up blocks of cars, to the local freights. A Mine Run handles all switching south of Mayfield, shuttling between Big Flats Hampden Yard, Scranton (and its Central of New Jersey yard), and Mayfield Yards. Mayfield yard is a true division point, serving the same purpose as the prototype yard. Traffic from the southern interchanges and coal breakers are made up into trains for delivery to New York State, and vice versa. If there are more than 12 persons present, the Mine Run and Local Trains will shift to two man crews.

This booklet is intended to provide visiting operators with an introduction to the N scale layout, and what the model railroad represents.

Scranton Area Interchanges

Northbound Traffic for the Burnt Hills and Big Flats originates with the Central of New Jersey at the end of the BH&BF mainline in Scranton. The majority of traffic for the BH&BF originates on the Capouse Branch, which includes connections with the Erie-Lackawanna and Lehigh Valley, and two major anthracite coal breakers.

Hampden Yard. Hampden Yard is the interchange with the Erie-Lackawanna in Big Flats on the Capouse Branch. Local Scranton traffic for the E-L is left in the yard, while through trains such as the train led by F-7 A and B units connect from the E-L's Taylor Yard (three hidden staging tracks). The track to the left of the small building heads for the McCormack's Coal sidings. The breaker is not modeled, but there are two tracks heading off the layout representing the lead to the breaker. Track heading under the steel trestle and behind the hill connects with the Lehigh Valley.



NE-84 arrives at Sibley Junction from the Lehigh Valley Coxtan Yard. The Delaware breaker is in the background.



The Capouse Branch heads northward towards Capouse Junction and Mayfield under the US Route 11 viaduct.

First Class freight trains NE-84 and 87 connect Washington DC with Portland ME via the B&O, Reading, Lehigh Valley, BH&BF, Delaware & Hudson, Boston & Maine, and Maine Central. This service provides competition with the troubled Penn Central. The connection to the Lehigh Valley is made via a two track staging yard, each track of which can hold two trains. The prototype NE-84 and 87 made so many changes of directions at interchanges, the train carried a caboose at each end to save time on train runarounds.

The Capouse Branch is serviced by the NE-84 and 87, LS-91 and SL-92 (LV to Syracuse and return). Four LV Coxtan yard to BH&BF Mayfield yard transfer runs, and four E-L Taylor Yard to Mayfield yard transfers. In addition, the southern mine run from Mayfield services Hampden yard, General Electric, and the Delaware and McCormack's Coal breakers.



View of the Capouse Branch / Big Flats area.

Capouse Junction. Capouse Junction marks the end of the Capouse Branch. The mainline heads southbound to Scranton via the left hand track of the tunnel. Labels on the fascia attempt to show the operators which way to go.

Scranton is serviced three to four times per day by the Southern Mine Run. This train shuttles between Mayfield yard and Big Flats and Scranton as needed during the operations of the railroad.

Capouse Junction with Train Order signal set for orders



Scranton Welcomes You. The Burnt Hills and Big Flats ends in Scranton with a connection to the Central of New Jersey. The CNJ offers connections with local industries and breakers, and also with the Penn Central in Buttonwood Yard, south of Wilkes-Barre.

The top picture shows the CNJ interchange yard on the left, and the lead to the CNJ freight house and team tack on the right.

The middle picture shows downtown Scranton industries, including the CNJ freight house and Dunder Mifflin paper company made famous by the TV show "The Office".

The bottom picture is an overview of Scranton trackage, which is on the lowest level under the road bridge. The Lackawanna Tool and Die building is in the middle of the picture, with the CNJ interchange heading under the truss bridges.



Capouse Junction to Mayfield.

Just north of Capouse Junction is Mason. There is a truck loading ramp for coal, and a short team track. The coal loading ramp is shown in the upper picture. Usually one or two hoppers are loaded per day.

The middle picture shows the Ontario mine. Similar to Mason, Ontario ships out one or two hoppers per day. These two locations are served by the Southern Mine Run as it proceeds from Mayfield to Big Flats.

The bottom picture shows the mainline crossing Route 11 again on its way to Mayfield.

These scenes are on the original 3 foot by 6 foot layout started in 1982. Several tracks have been realigned over the years as differing arrangements of sections were established.





An overview of the Scranton peninsula. Track on the upper level is not associated with Scranton. Track under the truss bridge is the Scranton CNJ interchange. The tunnel in the upper right is near Capouse Junction.

Mayfield Yards. Traffic from Scranton and the Capouse Branch are brought to the Mayfield Main Yard to be made into northbound trains. The old Mayfield Coal Yard is used for southbound classification. Most trains originate and terminate in Mayfield. Symbol freights such as NE-84 and 97 pass through Mayfield, setting out a block of cars and picking up a block of cars in the yard.



Up to four operators may be assigned to Mayfield – the Yardmaster, Hostler, Main Yard switching crew, and the Coal Yard switching crew.

An Erie-Lackawanna mine branch crosses the BH&BF south of Mayfield.

Mayfield Yards



Overview of Mayfield Yards. D&H mainline on the left side of the Lackawanna River. Coal Yard next to Lackawanna River, Main Yard to the right. The Southern Mine Run prepares to leave from the Coal Yard southbound. The Northwest Branch run is made up in the Main Yard and will depart after NE-84 does its work. The Yardmaster and Main Yard operator are stationed in the pit to the right.

Mayfield to Carbondale

Mayfield to Carbondale. The run from Mayfield to Carbondale is 3/4 scale mile longer than in the previous arrangement in Pasco WA. A filler piece made on insulation styrofoam was added at the north end of Mayfield due to the increased width of the room.



The top picture shows the new portion added at the south end of Mayfield.

The picture to the right shows a Northwest Branch local (Extra 34 North) climbing the grade out of Mayfield over one of many bridges crossing the Lackawanna River.



The twenty foot square room in South Carolina provided two challenges – two dormers of 42 inch width and 10 foot long. Too much real estate to pass up, but very narrow. Fortunately, in N Scale a turnback curve could be laid. Where the existing layout was broken apart in front of the first dormer, I intended to send only the lower level into the dormer, and have the upper level cross on a gate. However, John Decker (from Washington) convinced me to try double decking the dormer. The lower shelf is only 6 inches wide and the upper 3 inches. I put in only basic scenery, except in the turnback curve. The effect is reasonable, and provided an extra scale mile of trackage on the two levels.



An overview of the Starlight dormer



Exiting the dormer, the main crosses Decker Viaduct. Decker Falls may be seen under the viaduct.

Carbondale & Northwest Junction

On the Carbondale peninsula, the main loops back under itself and heads back to the dormer. The Northwest Branch leaves the main at Carbondale and heads into the second dormer as a dead-end branch.



Overview of the Carbondale siding, and Pleasant Mount (bottom center).

The Burnt Hills Local passes the Northwest Junction.

The Northwest Branch is the trackage leading off to the right.



Northwest Branch

The Northwest Branch leads to two major coal breakers, a truck unloading ramp, a team track, and a pulpwood loading siding. The Northwest Branch leads to the northern-most anthracite coal fields in the Scranton area. Loads from the branch are hauled back to Mayfield yard for classification. Pulpwood loads head for the Delaware & Hudson interchange in Sidney NY.



Anthracite breakers on the Northwest Branch. Northwest Breaker on left, Richmondale Breaker on right.



Richmondale Breaker. Note scale track on left

Carbondale PA to Cadosia NY

Departing Carbondale, the BH&BF passes through a rural area of Pennsylvania, with scenery and summer resorts. At Pleasant Mount, the station is still in operation as a stopping point for the Steamtown passenger runs. Side trips to various scenic locations and bed and breakfasts are available from the Pleasant Mount station.

The BH&BF proceeds downgrade to Starlight. Starlight is home to a pulpwood loading siding, and a station stop for the Inn at Starlight Lake.

The railroad then proceeds to Cadosia NY.



Caboose of the Burnt Hills Local passes Pleasant Mount station.



The Burnt Hills Local approaches the Starlight grade crossing. An empty pulpwood flat and loader await a delivery of pulpwood.

Cadosia NY

During the New York Ontario and Western days, Cadosia was a junction with a line going towards New York City. The line to New York has been abandoned by the BH&BF, and the yards were turned over to the state of New York for the NY 17 super highway. The Charles Auter manufacturing plant established itself in Cadosia due to access to NY 17, and the Burnt Hills and Big Flats. There is a team track, and a siding for Lee Farm Supply north of town.

The upper picture shows the Burnt Hills local arriving in Cadosia, preparing to switch the Charles Auter plant's three sidings.



The middle picture shows the train crossing the grade crossing near the New York / Pennsylvania boundary.



The bottom picture shows the train approaching Lee Farm Supply.



Cadosia to Burnt Hills

Beyond Lee Farm Supply the BH&BF meets up with the North Branch of the Delaware River. The railroad crosses the river twice as it approached Burnt Hills (prototype name – Walton NY).



Burnt Hills NY

Burnt Hills corresponds to Walton NY on the O&W. A branch to Delhi meets the mainline at Burnt Hills in a wye. Burnt Hills has a large number of industries, including a Niagara-Mohawk power plant. The Burnt Hills local switches Burnt Hills twice per "day". This page of the layout tour shows scenes around the Delhi Branch wye, and the passenger station. Fan trips from Steamtown end at Burnt Hills and turn on the wye.

Major industries include Behling Electronics, Spear Machine Company, Ignorsall-Rand, and the Edison #3 Power Plant.



Below is an overview of the Burnt Hills area. Most of the town is on the original 3 foot by 6 foot layout, while Behling Electronics, the stations, and the Delhi Branch wye are on a new connection piece made for the Graniteville SC train room arrangement. Access to the Edison #3 Plant (with the Reddy Kilowatt sign in the background) requires proceeding north of Burnt Hills, and then down a steep ramp to the coal unloader.



Spear Machine Co



Burnt Hills to Sidney



Climbing upgrade to Northfield tunnel.



Gravel plant near the Northfield tunnel southern portal.

Sidney was the division point between the O&W Southern Division and the Northern Division. The primary yard for the Northern Division was at Norwich NY. Sidney hosts the Delaware and Hudson interchange. The BH&BF history assumes that as part of DEREKO, some traffic between Scranton and Sidney has been rerouted over the lower ruling grade of the BH&BF as compared to the Delaware and Hudson route.

Sidney NY and the Delaware & Hudson

In the picture to the right, the local is on the main track. The track to the left is the passing siding, to the right is the yard lead for Sidney Yard. The brick buildings to the left hide the two D&H staging tracks. The light brown building is Eagle Shipping.



The middle picture shows the Sidney yard office. Sidney yard is to the left of the office. In the distance may be seen the D&H station, a gazebo in the town's "Railroad Park", and GX Tower, controlling the diamond crossing for the BH&BF and D&H.



The bottom two pictures show the Amphenol Areospace plant, and Sidney Yard.





Overview of Sidney NY

The final stop on the layout tour is the five track staging yard for the north end of the layout. Each track is long enough to hold two trains. The following destinations are represented:

- Norwich Local (between Sidney and Norwich)
- Norwich Yard
- Utica
- Syracuse
- Oswego

There are a total of 12 staging tracks on the layout, and up to 19 trains may be staged.



Appendix: BH&BF Schematic and Track Plan

