

Georgetown Branch
Notes: Part 1

An ongoing project to collect as much information about the GB as possible by compiling email messages, conversations and other notes here in one document. This is part 1 of the project.

From: "smithhilary1947" <hsmith@c...>
Date: Fri May 3, 2002 8:06 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Branch

Dear Group:

For those interested in the Georgetown Branch, you may wish to consult some of the standard sources. In addition, you frequently can find material if you try researching the Georgetown Waterfront or sometimes the Whitehurst Freeway.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: They are available at larger libraries, and if you live around Washington, DC the Map Room at the Library of Congress has them on microfilm/fiche. These allow you to reconstruct Washington at whatever date you choose. At the LoC you can copy what you find. Sanborn maps are plan view, and show individual tracks and name individual buildings. Depending on year, for the Georgetown Branch you can get track arrangements in the yard but they do change over time. Sometimes though they just say "Bunch of Tracks."

ICC Valuation Maps & Engineering Field Notes: Go to the National Archives website and check out how to research railroads. The valuation maps -- I think there are seven or eight for the G'town Branch. The maps were originally done, I believe, to show land acquisitions but they can be very revealing. I haven't checked the ICC engineering field notes for the Branch but they should have something.

Aerial Photographs: Also at NARA. Can be valuable and several exist showing sections of the Branch.

Washingtoniana Collection at the MLK Library in Washington. They have an enormous collection of photographs and other material. Included in that are some priceless low-level aerials of the Georgetown Branch yard and the related industries along the waterfront.

Historical Society of Washington: They have some interesting photo collections that are worth checking out.

Montgomery County Historical Society: They have some real estate maps that show the Branch in the county in the early 1950's I believe.

B&O Rails: During the mid-1990s there were a group of Rails who worked in the Washington area who met once a week for coffee and chat. I'm not sure if they still do, or how to get in touch with them.

There may be other sources; I'll post them if they occur to me. I drew several layout designs for the Branch but in the end, I did not want to build a one-train a day branch line.

Hilary Smith
Northern Virginia

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Sat May 4, 2002 11:10 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

The tracks down the middle of K Street were about a mile long, so a lot of compression would be needed. I remember riding bikes with 2 friends down there about 1963 & trying to keep our wheels from getting caught in the rail grooves. I was always fascinated by the single point switches in K St. If memory serves, I believe two spurs crossed on the south side of the street, west of the yard.

What was also interesting was that directly across the river were two yards in Rosslyn. A Pennsy branch came up from the end of Long Bridge & I can remember coal trestles there, right where the Gannett building and other office buildings are now. The Washington & Old Dominion came in from the southwest and ended just west of where Key Bridge enters Rosslyn. The two yards didn't connect.

Back to K St. There were 2 tracks down almost the entire length, beginning about where old Aqueduct Bridge crossed above. There was a crossover near the yard.

I have always wanted to model tracks in the street & have about 15 inches worth on my layout, but have found in operation that there are problems. You have to be very careful that the pavement is not higher than the rails or locomotive wheels lose electrical contact. Also, cleaning the track is

a pain - if you've painted the pavement the Bright Boy can rub the paint off if you're not really careful. I supposed you could mix your plaster as a concrete color, but it would take a lot of dye to do it. Anyhow, I'd be anxious to see what you do with it. You could spend a lot of time operating a model of the branch.

Duane Carrell

----- Original Message -----

From: Kelly & Rachel
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Friday, May 03, 2002 6:34 PM
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Nick,

I E-mailed your other address.
What is the cost to become a member?

I think a map of the track layout in Georgetown is the first thing I will need, I need to figure out what amount of space this area will need take to model in HO.

I have a web page that shows my hobby room at :

<http://users.rcn.com/kandr1/>

The layout shown in the hobby room is only one of several ideas I have for the space.... It is starting to look like I will need to go around the three walls in the hobby room with a shelf type layout.

Just so you know the long wall in the hobby room is 20 feet long, the wall next to the powder room is 5 feet long. The shelf in the office will be used as staging and a display area. It will have scenery, and a hinged glass front.

I want to thank everyone for the great information you have posted.
I will be a great help in planning this layout.

At 07:33 PM 5/3/2002 +0000, you wrote:

>Kelly, and anyone else interested,
>Henry Freeman showed me the Land use reports we have in the archives,
>and one of them is a report on the repaving of K. Street, with a fold
>out blueprint of B&O trackage, and the footprints of all buildings
>along K street and the names of the building owners. There are all
>sorts of them here. After I clean up the organization of the photos
>and B&O art we have, I think these will be the first set of documents
>to be cataloged.
>As for taking Company Store, I'd rather not give up the archivist
>spot, its too much fun. If I could do both, I might take up Co
>Store, but I really need to get my act together in the archives and
>my important changes in my own life (FT job starting Monday-So I will
>not be moving away from the area!) before I even think of taking more
>responsibility. Besides, I don't think there is a better feeling
>than discovering something new that nobody has seen in almost 50
>years.
>-Nick Fry
>Archivist BORHS

Bruce,

I first wanted to tell you I enjoyed your article in the Sentinel on making the towers. While I model a branch operation that wouldn't have application for a tower, you've gotten me to thinking of maybe finding a way to work one in at my junction.

Regarding your comments on Bethesda & Chevy Chase: we belonged to Chevy Chase Lake pool one year in the early 60s and I went as a guest other times. I remember one train through Chevy Chase being pushed by the engine - caboose first. Maybe that was their way of switching Bethesda on the way down. I imagine it would also make switching in Georgetown easier since most switches there were facing point for an inbound train.

I was always interested in the tracks at the River road crossing. Nowhere have I found this area mentioned in timetables as a separate location. North of River Road was a spur that wandered east up the side of a street, and south of it were a few spurs to buildings that were "back in the woods". I don't remember any cars sitting on those spurs, though. The branch also passed through

Kenwood, which was interesting seeing a train going through an upscale neighborhood. There are a lot of cherry trees in Kenwood and cherry blossoms brightened up the area in the spring.

In Chevy Chase T.W. Perry had a spur on the east side of Connecticut Ave., across the branch from the old car barn. I remember there always being a box car on the spur and I'm thinking hopper cars, too, but maybe my memory is playing tricks.

Duane Carrell

From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@j...>
Date: Tue May 7, 2002 6:13 am
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Duane;

Yes, I do remember the siding at Chevy Chase, any you are right, it always had at least had one box car there. It would be interesting to know what that siding served at River Road. As I recall, it was a siding with a siding. I have seen freight there in my early years, but I could not tell you what. I forgot to mention that a couple of years before the branch died, "Dover Harbor" was kept in the yards in Bethesda along with another passenger car.

Bruce

From: "jfnevin20878" <jfnevin@l...>
Date: Wed May 8, 2002 7:32 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Branch

Just a couple of random thoughts on this and Bruce's earlier missive. The other passenger car at Bethesda in the '70's was B&O office car 908. It was then privately owned and painted in a medium blue and crème scheme without lettering except for a name (I can't remember what it was) and is currently displayed at the B&O Museum as the "John T. Collinson" named by the Museum in honor of the B&O President who chaired the last B&O stockholder's meeting in Baltimore in 1987. The car was built by the Chicago and Alton in 1917.

The caboose that stood on the siding west of River Road into the 1980's was not a B&O car. While preparing to lead a tour of the Branch by the Smithsonian Associates in 1982 I had occasion to thoroughly examine the remains, and it's only resemblance to any B&O caboose was that it had once been painted red!

Bruce mentioned seeing GP's under the freeway; when hurricane Agnes hit in June of 1972, a GP7 or GP9 was trapped with its train down on K street and the water level rose so fast that the crew climbed to the roof of the unit and was rescued from there! The unit was there until the washouts along the Branch were repaired, and then towed to Baltimore for examination.

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@y..., Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@j...> wrote:

> Duane;
> Yes, I do remember the siding at Chevy Chase, any you are right, it
> always had at least had one box car there. It would be interesting to
> know what that siding served at River Road. As I recall, it was a siding
> with a siding. I have seen freight there in my early years, but I could
> not tell you what. I forgot to mention that a couple of years before the
> branch died, "Dover Harbor" was kept in the yards in Bethesda along with
> another passenger car.
> Bruce

From: Kelly <kandr1@e...>
Date: Sun May 12, 2002 2:45 pm
Subject: Georgetown Yard

Hi all,

I am still working on the idea of modeling the Georgetown Branch of the B&O. I have not had a chance to visit the archives to see the map of Georgetown yard, (still waiting for the member application). I need a little help here.

1: Did the Georgetown yard area have any docks' where they received goods from the river? I believe Smoot Sand and Gravel dredged the river for sand and gravel, transporting it by barge. Did any of this go to Georgetown?

2: Was there a way to turn engines at the end of the line? Turntable or Y.

3: What year was the freeway built over the yard?

4: What year was the last steam engine run on the branch?

5: Modeling the interchange between the B&O main line and the branch...

Was the main line always double tracked?

Did the engines that worked the branch line originate at a yard and bring cuts of cars with them to switch. Or, did a through freight drop cuts of cars at Silver Spring to be picked up by the local engines for switching?

Did that make sense?

Thank you

Kelly R.

From: "arctaurus26us" <arctaurus26us@y...>

Date: Sun May 12, 2002 7:20 pm

Subject: Re: Georgetown Yard

Kelly:

I am not sure if you are aware, but according to Impossible Challenge II, the Georgetown Branch was originally intended to be a means for the B&O to get across the Potomac River and reach south. The B&O had always been looking south, and since the Shenandoah Branch never got farther than Staunton, VA, the B&O decided to try again and head due south from Washington. The rails would have crossed the Potomac slightly above Georgetown, crossed into northern Arlington County and would have winded their way south through Dunn Loring/Vienna (crossing the Washington & Old Dominion) and directly interchanged with the Southern Railway at Fairfax Station. Unfortunately the B&O was vastly over-extended and swimming in debt, and the rails never crossed the river. The construction of Potomac Yards in Alexandria killed the proposal.

The Georgetown Branch left the Metropolitan Subdiv just north of Silver Spring, MD, curved westwards and headed through Bethesda, dove thru a small tunnel and then began winding its way down into the Potomac Valley. Early operations seemed to be coal deliveries to Washington's street car power plant and the U.S. government's steam plant (still located in Georgetown). Impossible Challenge II has several photographs of the Georgetown waterfront, including what seems to be a small yard, freight house and other customers. There was no turning facility, so steam engines ran tender-first back to the Met.

Apparently during World War II, when lots of troops were being shipped out, the B&O used this branch to move those troops out as they were brought up from nearby Fort Belvoir in Virginia. These movements were apparently done at night.

In the latter years, the B&O used a variety of diesels on the branch, mostly GP-9s, VO-1000s and small switchers. The branch did also boast one of the longest timber trestles the railroad owned. It crossed Rock Creek on nearly 800' of wood. That bridge was destroyed in 1972 when Hurrican Agnes' floods devastated much of Maryland.

Hope that helps!

Gregg Otten
Silver Spring, MD

Kelly,

In answer to some of your questions:

In the team track yard a siding ran along the wall above the river, & while I never saw a barge there, I can imagine it was used for that at one time. I haven't heard of anything being transloaded from water to rail there, at least not since the early 1900s. Until the 1920s the C&O

Canal had barges of coal unload in Georgetown, & some locked through into the river for unloading at Alexandria & Indian Head, MD.

There were no turning facilities in Georgetown. Steam engines had to run tender-first in one direction.

In Impossible Challenge, Harwood says the freeway was built in 1949.

Don't know about when steam last ran on the line, but I would guess around 1950, to eliminate facilities and also for smoke reasons.

Georgetown Jct. I've always thought was a neat place. The branch curved away into the trees & there were a couple of short spurs parallel to the Met that I remember holding covered hoppers. Impossible Challenge says the Met was double tracked to Gaithersburg by 1893 - the Geo. Branch was begun in 1892, so the jct. was most likely always with a double track line. Harwood indicates that the branch was run with a turn from Eckington Yard, and also with an engine in Georgetown running cars up to the junction. I have also heard that some eastbound freights would leave more urgent cars at the junction rather than take them into Washington. There was a passing siding on the north side of the Met that ended just short of the junction & while I never saw any cars on it, I would guess that's where inbound cars to the branch were left so that the engine could pull them down - otherwise, the two sidings on the south side of the Met at the jct. were facing such that the engine would have to push cars to Georgetown.

I wasn't around to see any switching at the jct. so I'll defer to others who may know more about how it was done. Anyhow, hope this helps.

Duane Carrell

----- Original Message -----

From: Kelly
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Sunday, May 12, 2002 9:45 AM
Subject: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Georgetown Yard

Hi all,

I am still working on the idea of modeling the Georgetown Branch of the B&O. I have not had a chance to visit the archives to see the map of Georgetown yard, (still waiting for the member application). I need a little help here.

1: Did the Georgetown yard area have any docks' where they received goods from the river? I believe Smoot Sand and Gravel dredged the river for sand and gravel, transporting it by barge. Did any of this go to Georgetown?

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Did that make sense?

Thank you
Kelly R.

From: "jfnevin20878" <jfnevin@1...>
Date: Wed May 22, 2002 5:21 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Yard

The last steam I saw on the Georgetown Branch was in the early 1980's. Jack White of the Smithsonian Institution brought the "John Bull" onto the Branch and ran from Georgetown to the Pratt bridge at Arizona Avenue, and the "Best Friend of Charleston" also ran public excursions a few years prior to

that. If you mean B&O steam, the last runs I am aware of were in 1953 running from Eckington Yard to the GSA plant.

While the branch was served from Eckington in its final years, there was a switch engine based in Georgetown working the Branch at various time periods. When that engine worked the Branch, there was considerably more industry taking cars along the Metropolitan Sub than we see today. A local turn out of Brunswick left coal shipments on the siding east of the Junction, and they were picked up by the Georgetown switcher for delivery to the GSA plant. When the abandonment proceedings were taking place a few years ago, CSX devised a plan to truck coal from the northeast part of Washington to Georgetown, and that sealed its doom.

From: "rnnelson2002" <rnnelson2002@y...>
Date: Wed May 22, 2002 10:48 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Yard

Here are a few memories that I hope will help.

The Georgetown Branch ran east and west by railroad definition and the engines always faced west. You were going "west" when going to Georgetown.

When there was a switcher assigned at Georgetown, a train order was needed to run on the branch.

When the Georgetown switcher was steam, a fireman from Ivy City would be assigned over night to keep the fire going.

For many years, the Georgetown job would back all of the way out from Eckington, on the westbound main and cross over at the junction and back to Georgetown. The cabooses had a loud chime back-up whistle that the conductor (his name was Lake) had made at the B&O shop.

B&O eastbound freights on the main would spot cars on the team tracks at Georgetown Junction and either the switcher or the regular Georgetown job from Eckington Yard would pick them up.

The long siding on the other side was called the "westbound siding" which ran from Silver Spring and was mainly for westbound freights to pull into the clear, but from time to time, cars to/from Georgetown were spotted there.

Contee Sand and Gravel had a plant beside the yard in Georgetown and much of their sand and gravel arrived by barge from a pit they had down the river in Southern Maryland.

The shoving ended when a run-around was added in Georgetown.

Switch irons to throw the single-point switches on K Street were left leaning against the freeway support posts.

Hope this helps.

Ric

From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@j...>
Date: Sun May 26, 2002 8:03 am
Subject: Georgetown Branch

Had an opportunity yesterday to bike the branch. There is about 300ft. of the siding at River road that is still there because it is imbedded in the street. Depending on one's interest in industries, there was a mill located by Little Falls, between Mass. Ave. and River Road that was started by a man named Loubaugh (Loughborough?) (I think that is right). It was destroyed by the confederate army during the war which predates the line, but old ruins would make an interesting model.

Bruce Elliott

From: "Ross E. Pollock" <bando@m...>
Date: Mon May 20, 2002 1:14 am
Subject: Re: feedback on a published plan by John Armstrong

Since no one has taken a shot at this, I will give it a try. Kelly R asked about using the track plan on page 31 of "The Classic Layout Designs of John Armstrong" to represent the B&O's Georgetown Branch.

Of greatest importance to me is that this is not at all like the track arrangement for the B&O's Georgetown branch.

But, if you are willing to compromise greatly to fit your space while using this plan then I would consider the following.

The B&O mainline through this area was double tracked. I would consider double tracking the mainline, leaving crossovers at the location of the present ends of the passing sidings.

Curves are pretty tight - 24" on the main and 18" on the branch. I would eliminate the track from the branch to the main at the lower right marked "Up 4%" which does not seem to serve any important purpose here. The mainline could be built without grades and the branch line allowed to sag down hill on the way to the end. This would help separate the branch from the main.

The town at the right end of the layout could represent Silver Spring, MD. Those on the branch could be Chevy Chase Lake and Bethesda, MD plus Georgetown, DC at the end.

If you can pick up a bit of width, I would add it to the back and then add staging tracks at the rear. This would let you store your branch line train between runs plus give you several mainline trains to make things more interesting. The country in this area is wooded, rolling hills, so it would be easy to hide the staging area with scenery and buildings. I would leave the area over the tracks open so it can be reached (with difficulty) from the front.

The main in this area carried heavy passenger traffic - all of the trains between Washington, DC and the west -but because of the tight curves, you should probably stick to freight trains on the main (the Georgetown Branch never had passenger service so you would only have freight trains there anyway). The mainline freight traffic in this area was between the west and Potomac Yard in Alexandria, VA and thence to the south. In most years, freight traffic to Baltimore and the NE was carried on the Old Main Line from Point of Rocks to Relay, MD, so did not pass through this area.

Operationally, Georgetown Branch trains originated at the Eckington Yards in downtown Washington. These yards are not represented, so your branch line trains would originate in staging, proceed counterclockwise around to Silver Spring, then down through Chevy Chase Lake and Bethesda, MD to Georgetown. Georgetown never had a turntable (but it is your RR, so go ahead and put one in if you want!). On its return, it would go back clockwise around the main to staging. If you operate prototypically sans turntable with the engine running backwards on the return trip, your engine would just need to be run around its train between op sessions to be ready to go again. Otherwise, trains could be turned using the connection marked "interchange" at the center/right and "down 4.5%" at the left between operating sessions. These connections could also be used for main line trains during operating sessions if desired. If the main is double-tracked, you could keep a couple of trains orbiting there while you run down the branch and back.

Hiding some of the Digby loop under Georgetown sounds like a good idea and Georgetown does rise steeply up the hills from the tracks. It would take some thinking to make it work though.

I remember Georgetown Branch trains powered by Q-3 Mikado's in the late-40s and later Fairbanks Morse switchers (the very high hoods impressed me) during much of the 50s. Towards the end, it was serviced by GP-7s (and maybe 9s too but I was gone by then and did not see them).

Hope that is some help.

Ross
Pollock

> Date: Sun, 12 May 2002 12:48:20 -0400
> From: Kelly <kandr1@e...>
> Subject: feedback on a published plan by John Armstrong
>
> I was looking for feedback from the group on a published plan by
> John Armstrong.
>
> The plan is on page 31 of Classic Layout Designs of John Armstrong.
>
> This plan would fit nicely into my layout room with a little tweaking
> and a bit of added staging. It would also allow me to model a condensed
> version of the Georgetown Branch of the B&O. It also has a continuous
> run.

>
> Although the B&O main line does not run right next to the branch i would
> like to model, I could get over that by hiding some of the loop near Digby
> under the Georgetown City scenery.
>
>
> Kelly R.

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Wed Aug 28, 2002 5:53 pm
Subject: Georgetown Branch

To the group,

As some of you know, I am writing an article on the Georgetown Branch for the Sentinel to appear next year. While I have a number of materials to work from, there is still a good bit of information that I will need. So, for the next month or two I will be periodically asking questions that I hope some of you can answer. For beginners:

1. Geo. Jct.

Is Mason-Dixon Recycling still receiving cars? I had seen box cars there about 8-10 years ago, last business on the branch. The old bridges carrying Talbot Rd. and Brookville Rd. over the Met - separate accounts about each saying they were built from old turntable girders. One account says Talbot was from Martinsburg turntable. Is this correct? Did the branch switcher use the westbound siding on the Met for pickups/setoffs, or for runaround moves? I have account saying (and I have seen once) that the local ran cabooses-first from Jct. to Georgetown in 1950s. I have also seen it run engine-first, with cabooses tucked in behind - there are photos in Reflections of the Capitol Dome from 67, 72 and 78 showing that. When did cabooses-first stop, did it have to do with running from Eckington as opposed to turning from Georgetown? And when did operation change from Georgetown to the Jct. and back to Eckington to Geo. and back?

Canal Bridges

What kind of truss bridges are those? The Capital Crescent Trail history, from their website, says they are Whipple trapezoidal, but the 2 spans are different. Also, they evidently came in second-hand - any origins?

Georgetown

What industry caused the smell down there? I have heard meat rendering plant mentioned, but none of the maps I have show one down there. Was it Wilkins-Rogers Milling? Regarding the single point switches in K St. - were these thrown by crowbar?

That's enough for now, but any help would be appreciated. Any other info any of you have that you think would be of interest, please let me know. Thanks.

Duane Carrell

From: "yitbos22405" <jackrizer@c...>
Date: Thu Aug 29, 2002 8:56 am
Subject: Re: Georgetown Branch

The smell on the Georgetown Branch at the Whitehurst Freeway was from a rendering plant on the river side of the tracks. There used to be sign on the mill building which said "the objectionable odors you may notice in this area do not originate in this plant" or words to that effect.
Jack Rizer

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Thu Aug 29, 2002 3:56 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Jack,

Thanks for the reply. The Sanborn map shows a Milton Hopfenmaier Estate - hides, wool & tallow - that is diagonally across K St from Wilkins-Rogers flour mill. Is that the place?

Duane

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Thu Aug 29, 2002 4:05 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Georgetown Branch

Andrew,

Thanks for replying. The maps show a brewery just east of Key Bridge with a siding, called American Brewery, between K St. & the canal. Older map shows the location as Crystal Plate Ice. Co., with no siding. Do you know anything about it, when it stopped operating, how long it would have rail cars delivered? Thanks.

Duane

From: "yitbos22405" <jackrizer@c...>
Date: Sat Aug 31, 2002 5:30 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Branch

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@y..., "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>

wrote:

> Jack,

>

> Thanks for the reply. The Sanborn map shows a Milton Hopfenmaier Estate - hides, wool & tallow - that is diagonally across K St from Wilkins-Rogers flour mill. Is that the place?

>

Duane:

Yes, that was the place. My time frame for that area is the 60's so I believe the rendering plant, a lumber yard and the milling operation were the only remaining industries, other than Washington Gas plant, left in the area. I do recall a small brick B&O office (closed) and an unoccupied Baldwin (?) switcher idling along the waterfront during one of my infrequent visits (early to mid 60's). I'm guessing that the Capitol Traction power plant was the reason for the branch being built in the first place.

Jack

http://www.norvapics.com/cgi-bin/norvapics_viewer.pl?washington_lonestarcement1

From: "wbaerr2" <WBAERR@m...>
Date: Sun Sep 1, 2002 6:18 pm
Subject: Re: Georgetown Branch

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@y..., "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...> wrote:

> To the group,

>

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For beginners:

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> The old bridges carrying Talbot Rd. and Brookville Rd. over the Met - separate accounts about each saying they were built from old turntable girders. One account says Talbot was from Martinsburg turntable. Is this correct?

The bridge with the inverted turntable from Martinsburg what was called the Grace Church Road bridge, just south of Georgetown Jct. over the Met. Later, the road on the south side of the railroad, which had no name and was the approach for the bridge was named Talbot Ave., so I guess it is now the Talbot Ave. bridge.

The Brookville Road bridge was wooden and was replaced by the current span.

Did the branch switcher use the westbound siding on the Met for pickups/setoffs, or for runaround moves?

No, not normally. Westbound cars for the branch were set off in D.C. by road jobs and added to the Georgetown train when it was made up in Eckington Yard. Empties from the branch, going east, were normally taken back to Eckington in the evening, either after Number 8 or Number 22 ran. The main use of the westbound siding, which ran from Silver Spring, was for freights to be able to pull in the clear for passenger trains. In fact, the long lead on the track from Georgetown Junction to number 2 track was built for local passenger trains and freights to pull into the clear for eastbound through passenger trains.

But as you know, on the railroad, things change from day to day and hour to hour and sometimes, the switcher would spot cars on the westbound siding, at the top. This was a move that was not done often and required much since moving from the branch to the siding would tie up the main for too long a time. The signals at the crossover were automatic, not absolute.

The switcher, that worked out of Georgetown, would come east to the junction and pick up/set off cars on the team track and return. It would also switch along the way: E.C. Keys at the junction, Perry's at Chevy Chase, the freight office at Bethesda, Marriott at River Road, and Dalecarlia water plant come to mind. The coal was usually on the local from Eckington.

You'll find two jobs working at the same time: one called the Georgetown Local, which worked out of Eckington and the other, the Georgetown Switcher, which worked out of Georgetown, only as far as the junction. In the 1950s the switcher was abolished as traffic declined. In the steam days, a fireman from the extra list would be assigned the switcher in Georgetown overnight to keep the fire going. Our neighborhood hero, Bruce D. Fales, the photographer, worked on the B&O as a fireman from 1938-52 and had the job once in a while. Of course on those nights, he'd have plenty of company. Coal was hand loaded from a gondola next to it (tell me about it!) and water was from a fire hose. Steam left the branch early account of the neighbors in Chevy Chase and Bethesda.

Speaking of people along the way, Mrs. JFK had the White House call the B&O and arrange for a caboose ride for a birthday party group in Kenwood. A clean caboose and engine with a crew wearing clean clothes were dispatched from Eckington. The local had to remain in the clear in Georgetown until the little event was over.

A rail fan special also came down the branch with an E unit, number 51 I think, and a few passenger cars. The switcher came out to get the train at the junction and pull it to Georgetown with the E unit on the end. Going back, the switcher stayed in Georgetown as the E took the train east. The westbound move with the switcher on the point was done for safety.

That Georgetown job changed in the 1970s to three times a week, then twice a week. Oddly, they put down ribbon rail just before they called it quits. There was a kink in the rail just before you went under Wisconsin Ave. and you know, it was still there after they put down the ribbon rail. Now you figure that one.

> I have account saying (and I have seen once) that the local ran caboose-first from Jct. to Georgetown in 1950s. I have also seen it run engine-first, with caboose tucked in behind - there are photos in Reflections of the Capitol Dome from 67, 72 and 78 showing that. When did caboose-first stop, did it have to do with running from Eckington as opposed to turning from Georgetown? And when did operation change from Georgetown to the Jct. and back to Eckington to Geo. and back?

On your question about the caboose running first, it ran first since there was no run around track in Georgetown until later--I'd guess the early 1950s The regular conductor was Harry Lake, who had a chime whistle made at the shop in Baltimore for the back up. It took so much air, when he blew it too long, it would dump the train line. When that job worked out of Eckington, they would back all the way from Eckington on number 1 track to the crossover at Woodside (trailing) and back through to number 2, then reverse again and continue down the branch. They'd pick up any cars that had been left on the team track at the junction overnight, for Georgetown.

As kids, in the afternoon, we'd watch from the Grace Church bridge and after 94 set off, the switcher would move up off the branch and couple up to the loads in the team track and take them

west (to Georgetown). From the bridge, you could here Lake blowing for crossings as far as Jones Mill Road. I lived two blocks away on Hanover St. and on summer afternoons, I could hear Lake and his whistle from my house.

Engines on the branch always faced west. So when they backed from Eckington, the engine on the back shoving, faced the train. Same was of the switcher, both steam and diesel.

> Georgetown

> What industry caused the smell down there? I have heard meat rendering plant mentioned, but none of the maps I have show one down there. Was it Wilkins-Rogers Milling?

It was the rendering plant, on the water side of K St. Wilkins milled flour.

> Regarding the single point switches in K St. - were these thrown by crowbar?

There were switch irons at every switch that were made by Mt. Clare and kept leaning up against the overhead I-beam freeway supports. There were wooden plugs to throw down in the flange way once the switch was thrown.

R.N.Nelson

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Tue Sep 3, 2002 6:42 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: More Georgetown Branch

Tee,

I hesitated to answer since I'm putting so much up on the branch & was waiting for someone else to follow up. There will be an article on the Georgetown Branch early next year in the Sentinel if the schedule holds, but short answers are, yes, there were actually 2 team track yards in Georgetown, about 3 blocks apart, one parallel to the river and one perpendicular. No, there was never any passenger service, aside from 2 or 3 excursions and some Army movements during the Korean War.

Duane

----- Original Message -----

From: teenyrailfan
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Sunday, September 01, 2002 1:34 PM
Subject: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: More Georgetown Branch

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@y..., Kelly <kandrl@e...> wrote:
> If i model the branch i think it would look great having the
> elevated freeway above. It is pretty high, so you can see all the
> action under it.

Hi Group

As a New York City-based B&O fan I'm not too familiar with the DC area (though I finally visited there this summer and rode MARC Camden-Rockville as much as I could). Lately it seems I see references to the old Georgetown Branch EVERYWHERE!!

In the riverfront photo Kelly refers to above, was a B&O yard located there at some point? Was there ever passenger (shuttle) service on the branch? Maybe way back?

Tee

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Tue Sep 3, 2002 10:23 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Jack,

Thanks for confirming the rendering plant. Until about 1963, about all I knew of the rail facilities was what I could see from Whitehurst Fwy. - I could see the Wisc. Ave. Yard from the car & wondered how those cars got down there. The switcher you saw was most likely an Alco S1 or S2 - that seems to be in all the photos. Road power for the local varied all over. The brick office had freight station

painted on it & seemed odd to me because of its size & no real loading dock. Of course, Bethesda didn't have a track adjacent to it & I never figured that out.

Duane

From: yitbos22405
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Saturday, August 31, 2002 4:30 PM
Subject: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@y..., "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...> wrote:

> Jack,
>
> Thanks for the reply. The Sanborn map shows a Milton Hopfenmaier Estate - hides, wool & tallow - that is diagonally across K St from Wilkins-Rogers flour mill. Is that the place?
>

Duane:

Yes, that was the place. My time frame for that area is the 60's so I believe the rendering plant, a lumber yard and the milling operation were the only remaining industries, other than Washington Gas plant, left in the area. I do recall a small brick B&O office (closed) and an unoccupied Baldwin (?) switcher idling along the waterfront during one of my infrequent visits (early to mid 60's). I'm guessing that the Capitol Traction power plant was the reason for the branch being built in the first place.
Jack

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Tue Sep 3, 2002 10:47 pm
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Mr. Nelson,

Many, Many thanks for your responses to my questions. But they bring up other questions, so I'll throw them out, & if you can answer I'll be grateful.

You mentioned the switcher working out of Georgetown to the jct. and back, & being abolished in the 50s. An engine was kept in Georgetown well into the 60s- did it just switch in Georgetown?

As far as steam engines on the branch - Harwood in IC says an 0-6-0 worked it for years & a Q1 in later years. Is that accurate? All mentions I've seen on this site mention Q-class engines. What would have been the Geo. switcher?

You mentioned the local running cabooses-first due to lack of run-around in Georgetown. I have borrowed maps dating to the 20s showing crossovers in K St., plus there was the siding west of Aqueduct Bridge that I understand was used to exchange cars. Was it more a convenience to switching since most switches were facing-point going toward Georgetown? It really boggles my mind that the local would run cabooses-first from Eckington to the jct. I was also fascinated with your explanation for the long lead to the branch being used for locals to back in for higher class eastbounds. Do you know when they stopped running cabooses-first & put the engine up front? I remember seeing trains both ways.

At the junction there was a siding to the right that earlier maps showed as E.C. Keys and later as Mason-Dixon Recycling. I have photos showing two sidings to the left at the same location, one with a sharp grade up. Was this a coal dump track?

The more I get into this line the more questions I have, not only for the article but for my own interest. I will have more about other parts of the branch as I get further along. I really appreciate the help.

Duane

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...>
Date: Fri Oct 11, 2002 12:25 pm

Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: More Georgetown Branch

Kelly,

Regarding the crane - it was a Whiting, don't know the capacity. It spanned the two tracks closest to the river, with a driveway in between. It didn't appear to have any provision for loading/unloading anything in the river - just out of open-top cars. From what I've been able to find out so far in my research for the article, the only industry on the branch which would have shipped anything was Smoot Sand & Gravel on the east side of the Cap. Traction power plant. I'm trying to get verification, but it appears they received sand & gravel by barge & loaded into covered or open hoppers.

The heating plant was, and is, technically north of K St. along Rock Creek. What Jim Mischke referred to is the unloading building. Coal went through grates and was conveyed underground a block north. The actual heating process did not take place where the coal was unloaded.

As for curving the yard - I don't know if you mean the team track yard at Wisc. & K or the entire waterfront. The team track yard was straight although K St. curved from SE to east at Wisc. Ave, so bending the waterfront would be proper.

Also, most of the "action" in Georgetown was from the team track yard east. The area from Key Bridge to Wilkins-Rogers had very few sidings & could easily be compressed down.

Duane

----- Original Message -----

From: Kelly
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2002 5:27 PM
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: More Georgetown Branch

Now that I have decided to model this area, it is really hard to start chopping out sections so it will fit in my space.

What does the group think about curving GT yard? Don't you think it would kill the effect by forcing a 90 degree curve in the middle of GT yard?

even at 50% compression I'm looking at 20 feet from rock creek to the Key bridge!

>- Two and a half real feet is actually a small scale city block, not a large
>one. But if you cannot easily fill it with interesting urban scenery or
>additional operational interest - compress it to make room for the details you
>like better. This is the essence of selective compression, which all of
>us do
>whether we know it or not.

I can't believe i missed that..... it is very hard to see on my copy, but
yes i see it now!

>- Look again at the drawing. The West Central heating plant is on the
>south side
>of K Street between 29th and 30th street. At the very east end of the
branch.
>See it?
>

>Kelly wrote:

>
>> I have finally had time to draw the map of Georgetown Yard on cad. So far I
>> have the streets and tracks in place, the River front and Rock Creek.
>>
>>
>> I would post the cad file to my web page, but i don't know how James would
>> feel about this
>> since he is selling the plans?
>>
>> One other question for now.... Where was the large heating plant located?
>> it is not
>> on this plan and i would like to include it in my layout.

> >
> > Kelly R.
> >

From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@j...>
Date: Thu Sep 5, 2002 1:26 am
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Duane;
With out getting out "Impossible Challenge" and reading the chapter on the branch, I believe the purpose for the line was to gain access south, that was denied the B&O by the Pennsy. I do remember that a bridge to connect to the south was the plan. If the bridge had been built over the Potomac at Georgetown, it probably would have cut off a least 20+ miles to Potomac Yards for trains coming in from the west. Don't remember what happened to change that. The old Capitol Transit power plant was a long time customer, but was not the reason for the line being built.
Bruce

BS NOTE so coal was delivered to the coal plant *still extant* and was shipped up to the steam generating plant via a conveyer... interesting.

From: <gmazzie@c...>
Date: Wed Sep 4, 2002 6:59 am
Subject: Re: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Another important customer was the U.S. Government West Heating Plant. It received coal used to heat most of the Federal buildings in the NW sector of DC. Still in operation (oil now). Was recently there and noticed that the tracks are still in place at the receiving building.

From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@j...>
Date: Thu Sep 5, 2002 2:11 am
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: More Georgetown Branch

Tee;
I don't believe their ever was passenger service, at least not in the 20th century. Their were a couple of fan trips in the early 50's with a coach or two and a caboose or two and a Q class for power. These were sponsored by the Washington Chapter NRHS when steam was slated to leave the division. Their was a run around track located behind Fletchers Boat House, just before the Georgetown yards.
Bruce

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s... </group/Baltimore_and_Ohio/post?>
Date: Thu Sep 5, 2002 9:12 pm
Subject: Georgetown Branch

Here are a few more questions for the upcoming Sentinel article:

At River Road, Hot Shoppes had a facility on the north side served by 2 or 3 spurs - earlier maps show the property as Briggs filtration Co. Was this the HQ for Hot Shoppes in the late 50s? There also appeared to be Maloney Concrete & Griffith consumers facilities on the other side of the tracks, but the only spur goes to Better Body Builders. Anyone know anything about this?

On the south side of River Road were several spurs, notably to the cinder block plant that still sits above Little Falls Pkwy. The maps I have are all deficient in showing sidings there. Can anyone shed light here?

At Dalecarlia there were several tracks for the water filtration plant just south of the bridge over the Cabin John streetcar line, and these had covered hoppers on them, with one track holding a tank car. Memory is foggy after nearly 40 years, but remembering my hike on the line, the only track there I can remember was a gated spur that held a tank car, evidently with chlorine.

Anyone have a better memory?

In Georgetown, one item has me baffled. The Capital Transit power plant had a spur can came off K Street just west of Wisc. Ave., according to a 1928 map, & made an S curve along the west side of the bldg. to the river side and ran between the plant & the river wall. Just south of the Wisc. & K intersection it crossed a spur at a 90 degree angle that went to the east end of what became the yard, but was then Columbia Granite & Dredging Co. I could remember the spur behind the power plant from the mid-60s & that was an extension of one of the tracks in the yard. However, no other maps I saw showed this, not even a 1948 B&O track map, so I thought I was nuts. However, the Potomac River Freeway map that Jim Mischke reproduced, dated 1963, shows track 3 in the yard continuing through as I had remembered. Any answers? Why would they reconnect a track to a power plant that hadn't operated since around 1935?

Also, B&O had a wooden freight station at the end of the branch where the coal-dumping bldg. for the heating plant is now - have a borrowed photo of it when Georgetown was flooded - probably 1924 or 36. Any clues on when it was torn down & replaced by the brick office at the yard? And for that matter, when the yard was built - sometime after 1928.

Thanks for any help you can give.

Duane

Jim,

That's very interesting - more common than I thought. Was this sanctioned "upstairs" or just done like poling and flying switches? What I'm curious about on the Geo. Branch is that the local ran caboose-first on the Met main for 7+ miles, and there were run-around tracks on the branch, at Chevy chase, Bethesda, apparently at Dalecarlia, one outside Georgetown and one in the streets. Most sidings were facing point coming from the jct., although TW Perry at Ch. Chase and Hot Shoppes at River Road were trailing. This really fascinates me.

Duane

----- Original Message -----

From: James Mischke

To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com

</group/Baltimore_and_Ohio/post?protectID=023166235165082192112061163126147090132197055219053121161126077059143143157227073025078100211158086206>

Sent: Tuesday, September 03, 2002 6:10 PM

Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Re: Georgetown Branch

Running caboose first was the norm on the M&K branch. There were no passing sidings at most mines so the local switcher (an SD9, then an GP9, steam before that) would start out with a caboose in front and a caboose in back. The geep would work trailing point switches with the rear half of the train; and handle traffic to or from mines with diverging switches with the front.

The cabooses were also equipped with twin sealed beam headlights.

Duane Carrell wrote:

> It really boggles my mind that the local would run caboose-first from Eckington to the jct. I was also fascinated with your explanation for the long lead to the branch being used for locals to back in for higher class eastbounds. Do you know when they stopped running caboose-first & put the engine up front? I remember seeing trains both ways.

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@s...

</group/Baltimore_and_Ohio/post?protectID=114158113180127198138181203219021012239026038234061113251150166091061>>

Date: Sun Sep 29, 2002 1:08 pm

Subject: Georgetown Branch

To the group,

I'm in the process of writing the Sentinel article on the branch, and would appreciate knowing if the sand and gravel operation on the Georgetown waterfront shipped out by rail. They received a good bit by barge, not sure whether they got more by rail or processed and sent elsewhere.

Anyone know what type of loco the switcher in Geo. was when in steam? Was it an 0-6-0? The local from Eckington used a Mikado but I've seen no pictures or heard anything definitive about the switch engine.

Also, is the recycling business at Geo. Jct. still shipping/receiving by rail?

Thanks for any help you can give.

Duane Carrell

From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com> | This is Spam | Add to Address Book
To: cpl_clegg@yahoo.com
Subject: Georgetown Branch
Date: Sat, 26 Oct 2002 10:49:03 -0500

Ben,

I saw your message yesterday & thought I'd respond since I'm writing an article on the branch for the Sentinel - it's planned to be the 1st issue for 2003, so I'm scrambling to finish up.

I hiked the line in 1964 and haven't had much contact with it for 30 years, so some specifics I can't answer. I have been loaned a number of materials which have jogged my memory or added new information. Hopefully the article will help you out.

To address your specific questions:

Concerning Dalecarlia, this is the weakest part of my knowledge of the branch. Your mention of a timber trestle has me perplexed because to my knowledge, the Rock Creek trestle was the only wooden one on the line. I have a valuation diagram which verifies this. The Capital Transit tracks went underneath a deck girder bridge in a cut, & I remember in 1964 that the cut had been filled pretty much under the bridge.

2. The photo in Impossible Challenge is of the south end of the tunnel. The switch was to a siding that ran uphill to an Army Map Service bldg. It was unused the only time I was there. There are no published track maps - I have been loaned some large right of way maps that are 2 x 4 feet, & they don't show everything.

3. I know the inclined plane used to be there, but it was long since out of use by the time the RR built there. I don't know how much destruction of it construction caused.

4. The area around River Road has long fascinated me, mainly because by the early 60s few of the sidings were used - the cinder block plant being the exception. Again, the ROW maps are deficient here.

5. I know the rails are still in place in Conn. Ave. - I haven't been on the trail on either side. The team track was on the west side of the Ave. & I have no idea if they're still there.

If there's any video of the branch, I'm unaware. My guess is that the line ran too infrequently for someone to capture it on film, especially in later years. But there may be something out there. I'd sure like to see it.

Hope this helps.
Duane Carrell

Message: 4
Date: Tue, 10 Dec 2002 11:05:55 -0500
From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>
Subject: Georgetown yard track identification

I need a bit of help figuring out what all the tracks are on the map James sent me of the Georgetown yard.

Lets start on the east end by rock creek and work back towards the key bridge.

1) A single track that runs towards the river and is close to the edge of Rock Creek. It has a hopper over the tracks with a "No5" pointing to it. It also has a short track branching from it with the words "reloc. No6 T.O. (I assume this means relocate #6 turnout), but what was the track used for? What was the hopper for? and was that odd shape outline a building or property boundary lines?

2) 3 tracks that run toward the river. A "No.33" and a arrow are pointing to the end of the tracks. Was this a small classification area? or storage tracks for the heating plant?

3) 3 more tracks..... 1 track has a hopper over it near K street, and a silo over it in the middle, with a concrete block warehouse at the end. What was the hopper for? What was the silo for? and what where the other 2 tracks used for?

4) 2 more tracks next to the ones above..... more team tracks?

Thank you for your help.

Message: 6
Date: Tue, 10 Dec 2002 12:37:27 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: Georgetown yard track identification

Kelly,

The track by Rock Creek was a team track - a driveway separated it from the grouping just to the west of it. From photos in the 60s, they appear to mainly handle lumber for Galliher lumber, which was across K St. from the heating plant unloading bldg. The odd shaped building with the short spur was apparently a warehouse for Lehigh Portland Cement where they handled bagged cement. The hopper just off K St. was a cement batching hopper, but I don't know for which company. Please understand that the track changes on the map you have were proposed but never happened, so the hopper did not straddle a siding.

2. As indicated above, the three tracks were team tracks - this area was considered the Old Team Track Yard. The New yard was at Wisc. Ave. & K, built in the 1940s.

3. The next set of 3 tracks were primarily for cement. North American Cement and Medusa Cement had warehouses on the siding farthest east - North American and Lehigh Portland also had batching hoppers on the track. I'm sure they were also used for general delivery business as needed.

4. The pair of tracks farthest west served Smoot Sand & Gravel, which loaded gondolas with gravel and covered hoppers with sand - at one time they added dry cement mix and shipped that in covered hoppers.

The Geo. Branch article will have this info. and photos to show what was there. Hope this helps.

Duane

Message: 1
Date: Wed, 18 Dec 2002 14:42:06 -0500
From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>
Subject: Compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard

Lets talk compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard.

First lets deal with some train lengths for the branch line. How many cars would a normal run consist of in real life vs. the model?

Lets assume 12 for the model. A train entering the yard would have say 5 coal cars, 4 box cars, and 3 others.

Starting at the East end of the yard the Heating plant would hold maybe 6 cars on each track. The track to the odd shaped warehouse could be reduced to 1 or 2 car lengths. How many car lengths would you think the team track need to be? Maybe 4 or 5 for each track? The cement company tracks could be reduced to 4 or 5 per track also.

Tell me what you think!

Kelly R.

Message: 2

Date: Wed, 18 Dec 2002 17:27:29 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: Compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard

Kelly,

The unloading building at the heating plant held maybe 3 cars on each track.

Train length varied - some days maybe 6-10 - depends on what years you're modeling. Some photos from the 1950s show 10 cars. The photos in Reflections of the Capital Dome and Impossible Challenge will show trains that are generally short. However, Harold Buckley told me he saw a train at Geo. Jct. in 1972, with an H10-44 pulling, where he counted 90 cars. Ray Mumford said he saw an eastbound train in the 1950s at Bethesda with 50 cars behind a GP7.

One thing I have found in modeling is that you don't need anywhere near scale dimensions to give the impression you want. If a real siding holds 20 cars, you can have one that holds 5-6 and it will appear as big because the surroundings are more confined. Depending on the size of the layout, a train of 12-15 cars can appear as massive as a real train of 60. You won't have the room to model any of the tracks in Georgetown full size so just try to create the feeling. The passing tracks at Chevy Chase and Bethesda don't appear very long, but they were around 600-900 ft., which would be around 7-10 ft. on an HO layout - you have that kind of space?

To me the appeal of the line in modeling, aside from the scenery, is that Georgetown is laid out like we model - a bunch of industries crammed in next to each other, and a variety of cars - you could run about anything, except a reefer, and be correct. There used to be a stockyard where Lehigh Portland had their warehouse - it shows on a 1928 Sanborn map - so you could run stock cars, & maybe even justify reefers at the brewery.

You can do justice to Georgetown even if you shorten the tracks a lot. Many years ago I thought it would be neat to model the W&OD's yard in Rosslyn, across the river, as it seemed it would fit a 4x8, but to do everything in scale I would have needed several times the space.

Duane

Message: 5

Date: Thu, 19 Dec 2002 02:18:53 -0500
From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@juno.com>
Subject: Re: Compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard

I was not there with Harold Buckley to see 90 cars behind an H-10-44 at George town Jct., but I know two things. The first thing is that that train would have had to double out of Eckington yards. The second thing is that in the summer of 1970 when I used to ride the switcher at Eckington on Friday nights when we would make up the trailer train for Saturday morning to go west, we had to double head S-2's and S-4's once we got close to 50 trailer flats. A single engine just would not pull up hill out of the yards towards University by its self. Remember all of these engines are 1,000 HP. A GP-7 with 50 cars would be a good load with 50+ cars, And that is 1,500 HP. You would have to drop all of your work off at Bethesda, for Bethesda on the way down to Georgetown and then do some fancy switching in Georgetown, cause your run around track behind Fletchers Boat house is not that long. On more than one occasion in the early 60's as my family and I were swimming in the pool at Chevy Chase Lake that was located about 200 yards from the yards at Chevy Chase, we would see two trains a day make the run to Georgetown. I doubt they were much over 20 cars in length. Their calling for Conn. Ave. grade crossing always stopped all of my activity in the pool and brought me beside the fence till they went by.

Bruce

Message: 1

Date: Thu, 19 Dec 2002 10:33:46 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: Compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard

Mr. Buckley told me that the 90 cars were brought up from Eckington in 2 cuts. He submitted a slide of the train at Geo. Jct., which I have not seen, to Harry Meem for possible inclusion in the article. Mr. Buckley remembers that it was on a Sunday, so probably a few days accumulation of cars, and at a time when the suburbs were having a building boom, so was probably a lot of construction materials.

Duane

----- Original Message -----
From: Bruce Elliott
To: Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com
Sent: Thursday, December 19, 2002 1:18 AM
Subject: Re: [Baltimore_and_Ohio] Compression for a HO scale model of
theGeorgetown yard

I was not there with Harold Buckley to see 90 cars behind an H-10-44 at George town Jct., but I know two things. The first thing is that that train would have had to double out of Eckington yards. The second thing is that in the summer of 1970 when I used to ride the switcher at Eckington on Friday nights when we would make up the trailer train for Saturday morning to go west, we had to double head S-2's and S-4's once we got close to 50 trailer flats. A single engine just would not pull up hill out of the yards towards University by its self. Remember all of these engines are 1,000 HP. A GP-7 with 50 cars would be a good load with 50+ cars, And that is 1,500 HP. You would have to drop all of your work off at Bethesda, for Bethesda on the way down to Georgetown and then do some fancy switching in Georgetown, cause your run around track behind Fletchers Boat house is not that long. On more than one occasion in the early 60's as my family and I were swimming in the pool at Chevy Chase Lake that was located about 200 yards from the yards at Chevy Chase, we would see two trains a day make the run to Georgetown. I doubt they were much over 20 cars in length. Their calling for Conn. Ave. grade crossing always stopped all of my activity in the pool and brought me beside the fence till they went by.

Bruce

Message: 4
Date: Thu, 19 Dec 2002 21:39:10 -0000
From: "Norman Nelson <WBAERR@msn.com>" <WBAERR@msn.com>
Subject: Re: Compression for a HO scale model of the Georgetown yard

I must be missing something. 90 cars to Georgetown? And where would they have put them once down there? And what would they have pulled them with through the dip east of Chevy Chase and the hill west of the crossing?

To me, a photo of 90 cars at Georgetown Junction sounds like one of the 90s, not the Georgetown Switcher, The Hill Local (to Gaithersburg) or the Brunswick Turnaround but then, H-10-44s were after my time on the railroad.

Norman

Message: 4
Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 14:43:34 EST
From: O EZBob@aol.com
Subject: Kelly's Georgetown Layout

Hey Kelly ... As I read your post I really liked that you were giving thought to shifting your layout point of view from "riverside looking to Georgetown" to "town looking towards the river." But ... I want to encourage you to forget "town" no matter what your perspective.

First tho ... to your LDSIG comment ...

> The people over in the Layout design group swear by the "no turnout
> over 2 feet from the edge" rule. That one rule alone blows this plan out
> of the water.

My hands on experience, not to mention 20 or so great years with LDSIG, says the 2-foot rule is very valid ... e.g., a turnout 3 feet away will be the one where you will have your biggest problems. If you have super long arms and it's not a club layout, sure, you can play with that depth a little

bit, but don't fool yourself now and cuss about it later. You are right ... As drawn, your layout is dead on the drawing board. Put it in the bottom of the bird cage ... Now!

> How does everyone feel about viewing the yard from Georgetown instead
> of riverside?

I LOVE IT. This is the way I've always conceived a Georgetown layout and, perhaps most importantly, it's the way I always saw it growing up ... from ground level looking towards the river. From the Virginia side one really had to strain to see signs of Georgetown railroading and from Georgetown proper no amount of straining (except looking down one super steep cobblestone hill) would reveal trains. Trust me I tried for all my first 22 years. As a college kid, I'd often talk my buddies into parking at rail level and then walking to the bars UP the hill ... and one heck of a hill that is. The nasty bar by the tracks (ahhh? Bayou Something?) was often all the incentive I needed.

> Could the model be built like this? How fast did the terrain
> go uphill?

Verrrrrrry Fast! That was one steep and long hill and if you were going to the Tombs, well, that was almost twice the hill.

> Do you think the buildings would be in the way of switching
> operations?

Here's my "forget the town" crusade ...

Nothing personal here, Kelly, but I'd forget the Georgetown city effect and build only the buildings that relate to the railroad (virtually NONE on the north side of the tracks and K Street). I do not enjoy "reach over" switching layouts (a main line run thru would be cool, but that's not the case here). My arms are not long and the foreground structures often take a beating. Ask yourself, who are you trying to persuade thru use of foreground buildings and what is it that you want them to be thinking? You've already trashed the Whitehurst Freeway (as a kid I did that too in real life ... always insisting that my dad drive under the Whitehurst instead of on it ... I was successful maybe 1/3 of the time), so, why not trash the inconsequential buildings, too? For your layout, the buildings north of the tracks play no role other than a minor bit of atmosphere ... HEADACHES ... Dump 'em! Dump every last one of them (well, maybe except for the Bayou ... you could show ME sitting on a bar stool near the door ... perhaps singing).

If you do that, then the north edge of K Street with the tracks imbedded will be the very front edge of your layout (you'd be looking south to the river) with plenty of prototypical background "scenery" (you might spell that clutter) available to fill out to your wall and up the wall some. I don't recall many spots from that street that you actually could see the river ... the view was blocked by buildings, foliage, trucks, trash, equipment, tanks, etc. The north end was closer to the water and you could see it from there and that is where Beano parked a Geep quit often ... perhaps just for the night ... college drunks used to climb all over it in the weeee hours.

I understand that as you operate, you won't be viewing your layout from street level, but instead, from a standing position ... which would give you an angle as if you were up the hill on M Street. But remember, you can't see the RR from M Street. And you can't really see the RR from the C&O Canal either. Forget them! Think grungy B&O ... hard working crews ... nasty conditions ... in a pit.

Long time ago ... 1978? ... a modeler asked me some questions. I don't recall them exactly, but they were in reference to my interest in placing buildings in my layout's foreground, in front of the tracks.

- * What's most important to you -- layout or scenery? LAYOUT
- * Do you want to give up valuable layout depth for buildings? NO
- * Will you ever see the front of flats that face the RR? NO
- * Are you ready to move on with your layout? YES

> I don't think I want to model the freeway, or I might model it in a very
> early
> stage of construction just to get the feel of it.

Boy, I agree ... Ditch the Whitehurst ... It's no benefit to you and in real life all it did was block the sun. No matter what era you model, just model as tho the freeway never existed. You are already very tight for modeling space and if you model even the early bridge construction you'll have bridge piers to work around and alter your already constricted switching situation. Keep your space clear for your layout ... force your layout be the #1 priority ... everything else is razzmatazz. Put dem piers in the bird cage, too.

> If i built it with Georgetown on the front edge of the layout, and the river
> against the wall, all the turnouts would indeed be 2 feet or 30 inches from

> the edge of the layout. Never thought about it, but then i would have most
> of D.C in the backdrop...

Here's what I don't understand: Why do you want most of DC in the back drop? You are not modeling DC ... you are modeling the railroad tracks in Georgetown and -- if you must -- the view from that point. You can't see most of DC from the tracks or even from Georgetown proper (unless you're on top of some building). The real rail view (thru the clutter I mentioned above) from the Georgetown B&O tracks is Virginia ... Roslyn ... Key Bridge ... Roosevelt Island ... and yes, you could see the Washington Monument and (if you wander out toward the river) the Watergate, Kennedy Center area ... and maybe Lincoln Memorial from the very east end of the tracks. Truth is ... from many places along the tracks, you could not see even the river's edge, much less a distant view.

Hey ... Take a walk down there today and see what you see. K Street was there last time I was there ... Check it out. If you can see the Capitol Building, Lincoln Memorial and Union Station, then slap 'em on your layout. BTW ... Take some pix of what's left and of the view ... we'd love to see them. Take your pix and blow them up ... use them for your background ... cutting the modern stuff with care. Then, when your layout is about done, cover up some of the view with the rail related clutter that made this area such a great place to model.

Ask yourself ... How will DC on your back wall make your layout better? Showing DC won't give you a better feel for the layout you're creating because the environment around the tracks is totally different from the beauty of DC that you likely would show on your backdrop. The most prevalent view is Roosevelt Island, Roslyn river bank and the Geo Wash Parkway (and now days the high rise of Roslyn). Oh yeah, there used to be an oil port ... moderate tanker motored up the river now and then ... used to force the opening of 14th Street and Memorial Bridges ... oh, and the RR Long Bridge, too. Anyway, the tanker port was east of Key Bridge maybe 1/8 to 1/4 mile on the VA river bank. I think you could see it from a K Street peep hole.

> That would really look nice if i could make photo
> backdrops of the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, etc.

Nice ... yes, but the B&O RR in Georgetown was not nice. It was dirty, dark and grimy -- a real railroad switching environment -- and often it stunk so bad down there it nearly would make you sick. Maybe as your tracks get up river and away from Georgetown you can bring on the birds and flowers and the nice view of the Potomac and even the canal. And when you model that RR bridge over the road by the canal (Canal Road? ... The RR bridge near Chain Bridge), be sure to put my old girl friend's name there in bold graffiti ... her previous boyfriend sure did.

That's my take on it ... I hope you'll do what works for you.

Enjoy the Beano ... Bob

Bob Loehne * American AltaVista
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Email: oezbob@aol.com * Cell 229-224-3345
Toll free - 800-767-6067 & 800-611-1218
Web: <http://members.aol.com/oezbob>

Message: 8
Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 22:11:05 -0500
From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>
Subject: The whole yard in HO scale

I had more time this after noon to work on the Geo. yard.

I have changed my view on the yard from riverside to track side, or BAR side for some of you! ;) No freeway will be modeled.

I think this plan captures the feel of the yard and fits my space rather well. The layout will continue around the room on the left side where it says "Bridge over Canal" The bench work will narrow to about 20" in front of the windows on that wall.

Let me know if you think I have left enough room for buildings and scenery. I would like to fit in the spur for lone star cement close to the stone arch bridge, but I don't want to force it in and make the model look cramped.

All but one of the turnouts are within 2 feet from the front edge of the layout. All main line switches and the runaround are #6's. the rest are #4's and if I can make it work id like to make

them #5's. I have reduced, in number, some of the tracks that parallel each other. Please let me know if you think this will hurt the plan as far as operations will go.

One major question.... Do you think that runaround is too long? The real yard had a crossover, but they take up a large amount of space so I left it out.

One great thing about reversing the layout view.... as the layout continues around the wall of the room, it will end up against the closet wall. I will be able to go through that wall and stage the trains on a shelf in the closet! That means NO hidden track!!!

Kelly R.

Message: 9

Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 22:15:54 -0500

From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>

Subject: Re: New file uploaded to Baltimore_and_Ohio

I thought that would kill the affect or feel of being riverside. On the other hand switching to track side takes away Georgetown in the backdrop, witch might be a good thing...I had no idea how to model the streets going up that hill and blending into the backdrop.

> How about a walk-in between the two groups of tracks - that way you
> could reach the turnouts.
>

Kelly R.

Message: 11

Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 22:35:09 -0500

From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>

Subject: Re: Kelly's Georgetown Layout

> > The people over in the Layout design group swear by the "no turnout
> > over 2 feet from the edge" rule. That one rule alone blows this plan out
> > of the water.
>

>My hands on experience, not to mention 20 or so great years with LDSIG, says
>the 2-foot rule is very valid ... e.g., a turnout 3 feet away will be the one
> As drawn,
>your layout is dead on the drawing board. Put it in the bottom of the bird
> cage ... Now!

I agree... 3 feet is too much..... 4 or 5 forget it.

> > How does everyone feel about viewing the yard from Georgetown instead
> > of riverside?
>

>I LOVE IT. This is the way I've always conceived a Georgetown layout and,
>perhaps most importantly, it's the way I always saw it growing up ... from
>ground level looking towards the river. From the Virginia side one really had
>to strain to see signs of Georgetown railroading and from Georgetown proper
>no amount of straining (except looking down one super steep cobblestone hill)
>would reveal trains. Trust me I tried for all my first 22 years. As a college
>kid, I'd often talk my buddies into parking at rail level and then walking to
>the bars UP the hill ... and one heck of a hill that is. The nasty bar by the
>tracks (ahhh? Bayou Something?) was often all the incentive I needed.

I went to the Bayou also.... but all the trains were long gone. I never paid too much attention to the buildings etc. I was always there at night.

>Here's my "forget the town" crusade ...
>

>Nothing personal here, Kelly, but I'd forget the Georgetown city effect and
>build only the buildings that relate to the railroad (virtually NONE on the
>north side of the tracks and K Street). I do not enjoy "reach over" switching
>layouts (a main line run thru would be cool, but that's not the case here).

I did want the city effect, but only if it was in the background. I was pretty much thinking out loud as i was typing. I may model one or two, like Wilkins and Rodgers Milling.... maybe model the interior of that building or something?

>If you do that, then the north edge of K Street with the tracks imbedded will
>be the very front edge of your layout (you'd be looking south to the river)

>I understand that as you operate, you won't be viewing your layout from
>street level, but instead, from a standing position ... which would give you
>an angle as if your were up the hill on M Street. But remember, you can't see
>the RR from M Street. And you can't really see the RR from the C&O Canal

The bench work will be 48 to 54 inches at the low point.

> > If i built it with Georgetown on the front edge of the layout, and the
> river
> > against the wall, all the turnouts would indeed be 2 feet or 30 inches from
> > the edge of the layout. Never thought about it, but then i would have most
> > of D.C in the backdrop....

>
>Here's what I don't understand: Why do you want most of DC in the back drop?
>You are not modeling DC ... you are modeling the railroad tracks in
>Georgetown and -- if you must -- the view from that point. You can't see most
>of DC from the tracks or even from Georgetown proper (unless you're on top of
>some building). The real rail view (thru the clutter I mentioned above) from
>the Georgetown B&O tracks is Virginia ... Roslyn ... Key Bridge ... Roosevelt
>Island ... and yes, you could see the Washington Monument and (if you wander
>out toward the river) the Watergate, Kennedy Center area ... and maybe
>Lincoln Memorial from the very east end of the tracks. Truth is ... from many
>places along the tracks, you could not see even the river's edge, much less a
>distant view.

Again i was just thinking out loud...and you are right, Roslyn would be Straight across the river... but I'll have to get the Washington monument in the backdrop just so any visitor will know they are near ground Zero!

Thanks for taking the time to write such a long reply.... It really helps to talk these things out.

Kelly R.

Message: 12
Date: Sat, 21 Dec 2002 21:23:44 +0000
From: James Mischke <jmischke@worldnet.att.net>
Subject: Re: The whole yard in HO scale

Sounds good, Kelly, in a lot of ways. Napoleon said, "Plans are useless; planning is essential". The major benefit from your planning process are the emerging insights, not a particular plan or revision.

I haven't seen your track plans, I never access posted files due to my slow dialup connection. Nonetheless, several thoughts:

- Now that I am getting familiar with the Georgetown branch, a benefit from making copies for everyone, I would tend to think the entire branch can be modeled on a long 18-inch wide bench, bent around the walls of the available space. Why three or four foot wide bench work? You can make it wider in the places it needs to be, not necessarily everywhere.
- The freeway does not compress well. Bag it. On my railroad, I dispensed with the large Glenwood shop building, which would be the size of a ping-pong table if rendered to scale. Would still be the huge white elephant even if smaller. My operations would not include the back shop, so why try? Although it would be a good place to park my dozens of extra Life-Like diesels.)
- The building fronts on the street (K street) would make a good backdrop base. You need to hide the backdrop-bench interface with something, why not the row of accurate commercial buildings? Downgrade the street a little to local access only, not the thoroughfare that it really is. If the side street gaps worry you, eliminate them. K Street need not be perfectly parallel to the bench work, kink it a little this way and that. If your cement plant or lumberyard needs a little room

for a siding, put it in a part where the street is in the middle of the bench, rather than the far edge.

- Think through your operation like the railroad, how each industry will be switched and in what order. Trailing and diverging turnouts are chosen carefully by the railroad for ease of switching. Your switch crew has enough to do without deliberate or unwitting complications. My Wheeling, downtown, and Streets Run branches have all turnouts facing the same way. I don't want to condemn myself to running around my train every night on every branch. You don't have to be as militant as I am, but you get the idea.

- No duck-unders. You will not be young forever. A completely walk-in format will beckon to you, not deter you from play after a long day at work.

Hope there are some ideas for you here.

Kelly wrote:

> I had more time this after noon to work on the Geo. yard.
>
> I have changed my view on the yard from riverside to track side,
> or BAR side for some of you! ;) No freeway will be modeled.
>
> I think this plan captures the feel of the yard and fits my space rather
> well.
> The layout will continue around the room on the left side where it says
> "Bridge over Canal" The bench work will narrow to about 20" in front of the
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> on that wall.
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> Let me know if you think I have left enough room for buildings and scenery.
> I would like to fit in the spur for lone star cement close to the stone arch
> bridge, but I don't want to force it in and make the model look cramped.
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> All but one of the turnouts are within 2 feet from the front edge of the
> layout.
> All main line switches and the runaround are #6's. the rest are #4's and if
> I can make it work id like to make them #5's. I have reduced, in number,
> some of the tracks that parallel each other. Please let me know if you
> think this will hurt the plan as far as operations will go.
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> One major question.... Do you think that runaround is to long? The real
> yard had a crossover, but they take up a large amount of space so i left it
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> One great thing about reversing the layout view.... as the layout continues
> around the wall of the room, it will end up against the closet wall. I will
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> to go through that wall and stage the trains on a shelf in the closet! That
> means
> NO hidden track!!!
>
> Kelly R.

Message: 2

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 15:55:57 -0000

From: "Joe Nevin <jfnevin@lycos.com>" <jfnevin@lycos.com>

Subject: Re: Kelly's Georgetown Layout

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com, O EZBob@a... wrote:

> For your layout, the buildings north of the tracks play no role other than a minor bit of
> atmosphere ... HEADACHES ... Dump 'em! Dump every last one of them (well, maybe except for the Bayou
> ... you could show ME sitting on a bar stool near the door ... perhaps singing).

The only exception to this statement is the Wilkins Rogers building on the north side of K. Wilkins Rogers had a siding (which I see on your plan) and in the sixties boxcars were spotted there. There were flexible pipes hanging from the building to the location of the cars. I think these were out of service, but I often wondered if they had been bulk loaders for boxcars or covered cars of some sort in an earlier day. My guess is they were. Not of great interest to trying to model the area

pre-freeway, but I remember a sign on the Wilkins Rogers building at freeway level that stated the "objectionable odors" noticed in the area did not originate in the "home of Washington flour". The odors, of course, originated at the rendering plant at the West end of K. And if you model the Bayou, forget the guy singing on the bar stool, model Julie Gibson and her dance of the Veils!!! or maybe Charlie Byrd's guitar

Message: 3

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 09:06:25 -0800 (PST)
From: Benjamin Sullivan <cpl_clegg@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: New file uploaded to Baltimore_and_Ohio

Kelly,

I am facing the same struggle - here's my solution - to shape the yard as an L (with the tail of the L facing out from the wall) so that you don't have the total depth throughout - sure there's a loss of some of the scenic details, but you can still represent them by the tracks and some carefully placed out-buildings, figures, etc. Personally, I also feel as though you must model G-town from the River side, b/c the buildings along Water St. make a PERFECT and really REALLY interesting backdrop! Endless detailing opportunities. The terrain in G-town is all relatively flat; all the way to Fletcher's Boathouse for the most part.

I haven't yet reached Georgetown but I have reached Dalecarlia as of last night. Check out my design at <http://38.181.236.4/~bsullivan/layout01.jpg>. It's phase I and will undoubtedly change. This is level 1 of my 2 level layout plan.

I'm curious about the bridges over East-West Highway, Wisconsin Ave., and Bradley Blvd. ca. 1940 - 1950. I know the current bridge over Bradley Blvd. was built in 1956 (as the nice big B&O herald and "1956" debossed into each side of the center pier so clearly states to this day), but I'd love to see some pics of the previous bridges at all/any of those locations. Duane, are there any of those in the upcoming article? On the 1937 Sanborn map that I have it states a much narrower concrete bridge about 50' long w/ stone wall abutments. Sounds pretty plain, but what exactly did it look like?

Thanks so much,

- Ben Sullivan

> Message: 13

> Date: Fri, 20 Dec 2002 23:02:29 -0500
> From: Kelly <kandr1@erols.com>
> Subject: Re: New file uploaded to Baltimore_and_Ohio

> Everyone,

> I have been working my track plan for the Georgetown yard area. So far
> it is just the east end, but I wanted to get some opinions, and help before
> i do any more. The track plan is drawn with atlas right track free-ware.
> I uploaded it in a BMP format so everyone could see it. The grid lines are
> 12"

> My main problem is that even this scaled down version is 5 feet deep.
> The rivers edge would be the front of the layout. Rock creek would be the
> right edge of the layout. I would have room to walk on the right side, (its
> not against a wall) so that helps a little.

> This would work perfect in N scale, but I had to switch to HO !!!!

> Un-curving the tracks a little would gain a bit of depth back, and maybe
> shorten the
> tracks a bit more. I figure 4 cars for every 2 feet of track.

> The people over in the Layout design group swear by the "no turnout
> over 2 feet from the edge" rule. That one rule alone blows this plan out
> of the water.

> How does everyone feel about viewing the yard from Georgetown instead
> of riverside? Could the model be built like this? How fast did the terrain
> go uphill? Do you think the buildings would be in the way of switching
> operations?

>
> I don't think i want to model the freeway, or i might model it in a very
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> If i built it with Georgetown on the front edge of the layout, and the river
> against the wall, all the turnouts would indeed be 2 feet or 30 inches from
> the edge of the layout. Never thought about it, but then I would have most
> of D.C in the backdrop.... That would really look nice if I could make photo
> backdrops of the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, etc.
>
> What do you think?
>
>> File : /georgetownyard_east.bmp
>> Uploaded by : advent_01 <kandrl@erols.com>
>> Description : Georgetown yard EAST end HO Scale
>>
>>You can access this file at the URL
>>
>
>http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Baltimore_and_Ohio/files/georgetownyard_east.bmp
>
>>
>
>
> Kelly R.

Message: 4
Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 11:37:23 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: Re: New file uploaded to Baltimore_and_Ohio

Ben,

I don't know whether it was a typo on your part -only at Bradley Blvd. did the track bridge over. At East-West Hwy and Wisc. Ave. the roads were on bridges. I had thought Wisc. Ave. used to be a 2 lane timber bridge before being widened, but I may be mistaken. I have seen no photos of it. There should be 1 or 2 shots of the current bridge - 1950-1970 era - in the article. I have nothing on E-W Hwy. That bridge has been there for probably over 50 years, likely longer.

Duane

Message: 6
Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 13:58:52 -0500
From: "Harmantas, Andrew G" <andrew.harmantas@monroe.army.mil>
Subject: RE: Re: New file uploaded to Baltimore_and_Ohio

>>I'm curious about the bridges over East-West Highway, Wisconsin Ave., and Bradley Blvd. ca. 1940 - 1950. On the 1937 Sanborn map that I have it states a much narrower concrete bridge about 50' long w/ stone wall abutments. Sounds pretty plain, but what exactly did it look like?<<

The bridge over Bradley Blvd was a deck truss (I think that's the right term), the kind where the rail and ties go over a set of beams, over webbing, supported by two fabricated plate steel girders, which were painted black, unadorned by any B&O markings. I simply don't remember that bridge as being concrete. The bridge over Rock Creek in Chevy Chase had some timber supports. Way too long ago to remember for certain.

Andrew Harmantas, from very near C&O Milepost FM Zero.

Message: 7
Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 14:05:50 -0500
From: "Harmantas, Andrew G" <andrew.harmantas@monroe.army.mil>
Subject: G'town Branch bridges

The tracks went underneath Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, a few blocks SE of the intersection with Old Georgetown Road. That highway bridge was four lanes since at least 1952, when I first remember crossing it.

There indeed was a bridge along East West Highway as the rails crossed Rock Creek, and also crossed Jones Bridge Road. That's the one I recall as having some wood piers.

Andrew Harmantas, still here in Tidewater Virginia

Message: 8

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 13:36:20 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: G'town Branch bridges

The East-West Hwy. bridge over the branch and the Rock Creek Trestle are two different structures. E-W Hwy. is maybe 1/2 mile south of the trestle - barely visible in the winter. E-W Hwy. bridge was most likely concrete, maybe steel substructure. It's been 40 years since I've been below to see.

Message: 9

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 14:43:59 -0500
From: "Harmantas, Andrew G" <andrew.harmantas@monroe.army.mil>
Subject: RE: G'town Branch bridges

Okay, now I remember the East West highway bridge over the G'town branch. Yes, it certainly was concrete above the road surface, with narrow sidewalks and concrete railings. Hard to see anything on the rails from that bridge, as there was a sharp curve for drivers to negotiate on one approach, and the tracks were curving around Leland Junior High school. Most of the time, the trees obstructed the view of the rails except for what passed directly below.

I bet since the line has been converted to a bike path, it's got more traffic than ever, at least since the Great Depression.

Message: 17

Date: Mon, 23 Dec 2002 17:48:52 -0500
From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>
Subject: Re: Re: Kelly's Georgetown Layout

There is was also a brewery with a siding between 34st. and Key bridge. It is hard to see on the plan but you can see the end of track marker just above the Degree symbol where it reads S.37*52*E

At 03:55 PM 12/23/02 +0000, you wrote:

>--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com, O EZBob@a... wrote:
>
>The only exception to this statement is the Wilkins Rogers building
>on the north side of K. Wilkins Rogers had a siding (which I see on
>your plan) and in the sixties boxcars were spotted there. There were
>flexible pipes hanging from the building to the location of the

Kelly R.

Message: 25

Date: Tue, 24 Dec 2002 11:39:47 -0000
From: "Joe Nevin <jfnevin@lycos.com>" <jfnevin@lycos.com>
Subject: Re: Kelly's Georgetown Layout

I don't know, Harry, but I'll try to find out. My uncle used to work for Wilkins Coffee back in the 60's and they were a Washington DC based firm. Wilkins Rogers are the same people who used to operate the mill across the Patapsco from the Ellicott City station, and is on the site of one of the Ellicott brothers original mills. They made (make?) Washington flour and related grain products, so a tie to the coffee people is sure possible. Anybody else know??

--- In Baltimore_and_Ohio@yahoogroups.com, "dsr22175 <hmeem@t...>"

<hmeem@t...> wrote:

> Totally irrelevant question: Did Wilkins Rogers have any
> relationship to Wilkins coffee?

Message: 5

Date: Tue, 7 Jan 2003 13:25:17 EST

From: O EZBob@aol.com

Subject: More George ... the Town ... and Kelly

Kelly McGeorgetown -- layout planner supreme -- asked ...

> Do you think the track plan captures the feel of the branch?

Great question ... And your follow up was my answer.

I too have seen little more of the branch than on the waterfront, along the canal and at the bridge over the canal and Canal Road. Were I you, I'd plan a field trip someday, invite some of the B&O list folk and hike/drive the whole line. Sure the RR is gone, but the imaging in many places will be much the same as it was when the train ran.

I think you'll observe views and concepts that give you the feel of the RR surroundings and then you can work to those concepts and views as you develop the plan and build the layout. I really enjoy visiting layouts that show signs of the prototype, either specific scenes, as you are doing along K Street, or general environmental scenes which to me would make up much of the rest of the branch line. I never saw (other than from the Glen Echo Trolley ... and I do not remember it) where the Beano crossed the Trolley line, but that might be neat to model.

I love your busy track work along K Street (as per the Jan 03-03 drawing). Your Georgetown docks railway is all set for a 10-car freight to mosey into view from the tunnel. Between drops, pick ups, shifts and a dinner break, your crews will have a lot to do. Really cool. I can recall driving along K Street and banging across one set of tracks after another ... just like in your drawing. BTW ... I probably read it on here, but what era are you modeling?

In a previous post, I suggested you forget about trying to represent the city side of Georgetown ... i.e., the buildings, the canal and the steep hill to M Street. My first goal with a layout is to make the track layout work for my concept, and I think -- especially along the waterfront -- that you've done that ... Very Well!

NOW ... With that done, I'd ask myself, "Is there any way to sneak in some George?" And ... Yes ... I think there is ... and it's probably obvious to all.

I love the way you've worked the corner where the B&O crosses the canal. Nothing trackwise is square or parallel to your benchwork, but it is nicely oriented to the canal, Key Bridge and M Street. By pushing the track way back in the corner, you've exposed an area where you, at minimum, show the canal and area of the very steep hill up to M Street (gray cobblestone paved, as I recall). You might even be able to work in a hinged building or two that would force viewers to look over and down on that corner, which, in real life, one used to be able to do from M Street just west of Key Bridge ... creating a relatively realistic view (the track is not curved in the real view, but we can live with that).

Looking over buildings and down the hill would make the tracks appear farther away and, with no turnouts in the corner, you would not need as much hand access as along the rest of K Street. For those times you would need access, then just flip down the buildings (hinge would allow them to angle back under your layout) and you'd have easy arms length access to the whole corner.

Which buildings would you use? Well ... It would be tight, but as I recall, when one drove into DC over Key Bridge and turned right on M Street, the first building (or nearly so) on the right was a car barn for DC Transit (aka Capital Transit). It might be tight to fit in such a building, but if you did you could show one of the 3-rail trolleys entering the building (as they did in real life). That is a prime Georgetown-ish memory for me ... And I'm sure others who had to wait while a turning trolley blocked M Street. A PCC car would fine for the 40s or 50s ... even one with air conditioning.

There's also a car barn just across M Street from Key Bridge (with which I may have the first one confused ... Now, I'm not sure if there were two or just one car barn ... anyone?), but the problem with modeling the second building is that you'd have to bend over the building into M Street to see the front. For my money, you could get away with a car barn on the river side of M Street, but to

the right instead of left of Key Bridge (as you see it in the layout). Those car barns were quite ornate, tho I don't recall the name of the architectural style (a Russian flavor?).

Also, if you could find room for a "Little Tavern" in that corner ... well ... you'd not only bring back Georgetown memories for many, but also you'd bring a tear to the eyes of all those who chose the extra onion (correct me if I've misnamed this fine green-roofed, culinary home of 2-inch hamburgers).

I mentioned before on here that during my college years I often talked my buddies into parking down on K Street and then walking up the long steep hill to the bars (over the cobblestones). Usually we parked under or just west of Key Bridge. Why, you ask, did we park there? Well, because that's where Beano parked its loco at night (rather embarrassed, I easily can recall an EM-1 or other B&O steam from the early 1950s, but could not tell you for my life the brand or model of Georgetown loco in the middle 1960s ... I just presume a 4-axle). Anyway ... So we parked there, too.

I was the only railfan in that group, but they all enjoyed climbing all over the loco before we went home (and so did at least one female we'd met). Anyway, when your operating sessions are done, you might park your loco (I don't think I ever saw more than one engine parked there at a time) just west of the bridge knowing that at least on some nights, that's where Beano parked it. For what it's worth, I also vaguely recall a second track there, but don't take that to the bank.

Also, I like your "possible" plan for a continuous run connection over a drop bridge. As much as I enjoy operating I am not truly hard core proto-only and sometimes I am content just to let 'em run.

There's more, but that's it for now.

Great work Kelly ... Keep it coming ... Later ... Bob Loehne

Message: 6

Date: Sat, 29 Mar 2003 13:51:09 -0500
From: Kelly <kandrl@erols.com>
Subject: coal trestle in Bethesda

Since it is raining out today I had a chance to work on the mock up of the Bethesda area of my model.... A few questions.

First, the detail map in the Sentinel article shows a left hand siding near the arrow pointing to the freight station. The Sanborn maps I have do not show this siding. And my large map is rolled up and put away at the moment. Can you tell me what it served?

Second, on my Sanborn maps it shows a coal trestle next to Bethesda Ave. but on the detail map it shows a coal trestle near the intersection of Bradley and Arlington road.... While doing my mock up it would seem better to place the coal trestle as shown in the article. Since Bradley Blvd. is lower than the tracks I think the scenery would flow better if I placed the coal trestle near Bradley Blvd. with a drive way leading to the lower part of the trestle from Bradley, and the rest of the buildings on the upper side of the hill.

Thanks for the help,

Kelly

Message: 8

Date: Sat, 29 Mar 2003 14:37:29 -0600
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: coal trestle in Bethesda

Kelly,

The track that diverged near the freight station served Eisinger Millwork Co., which fronted on Bethesda Ave. and extended from the tracks halfway to Wisconsin Ave. The bottom photo on page 11 shows the track just to the left of the crossbuck at the left edge of the C&O boxcar that is sitting on the main line. A photo in Hilary Smith's collection showed a corner of the building by the siding - appeared to be light-colored block with a slightly pitched roof. Another photo showed a PRR gondola on the siding but was from an angle that the building wasn't in view.

As for coal trestles, Griffith Consumers had one about where the d in Reed St. is on the centerfold map - one of those short spurs had the trestle - and Columbia Specialty had one just north of

Bradley Blvd. where the map shows. I don't know when they were taken out - I don't remember them from our 1964 hike, but there's a lot I don't remember from then. They wouldn't have received cars much past 1955. So, depending on what year you're modeling, you can include them or not.

Duane

Message: 11
Date: Sat, 29 Mar 2003 20:22:24 -0500
From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@juno.com>
Subject: Re: coal trestle in Bethesda

Kelly;
The trestle was located about 2/3 of the way towards Bradley Blvd. The big brick building that is on the corner, and it's lot took all of the remains away.
Bruce

Message: 12
Date: Sun, 6 Apr 2003 14:43:21 -0500
From: "Duane Carrell" <dcarrell@springnet1.com>
Subject: Re: Re: Proto 2000 B&O D-30 0-6-0

Happily for Kelly and Ben a D-30 was the Georgetown Switcher until diesels took over in the late 40s. Now they have an excuse to go buy another engine and model Georgetown pre-Whitehurst Freeway. Besides, since it went to Ivy City every Friday for servicing, there's another operating move to make.

Duane

Message: 11
Date: Mon, 7 Apr 2003 20:45:21 EDT
From: Paul4Schil@aol.com
Subject: Re: coal trestle in Bethesda

Maybe I can help you. I grew up in Kensington in the 1950''s; my wife, in Bethesda, during the same time.

Paul Schilling

Message: 18
Date: Tue, 8 Apr 2003 01:42:15 -0400
From: Bruce Elliott <BNAElliott@juno.com>
Subject: Re: coal trestle in Bethesda

Kelly;
Don't forget DEVLIN LBR. CO. that set at the corner of Bethesda Ave. & Arlington Blvd. They did a thriving business at the Bethesda team tracks at the other end of the block. As a mater of fact they took up most of the block of residential businesses !
Bruce