

SPRING '77

 **NER**

COUPLER



Canadian National GP-38-2 on the point near
Yarmouth Junction, Maine.

Photo by Peter Howe

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The Northeastern Region- In which direction should we be heading?

If each member of the region were to take a moment to think back to the time of his original membership in the NMRA, NER or any division of the region, he will probably recall that he joined for one of, or possibly a combination of two reasons. These reasons were probably to further his knowledge of model railroading and to make the acquaintance of people with a common interest in model railroading.

The Northeastern Region covers a portion of the world that geographically varies extensively. From the rural areas of the northern extremity of the Canadian Maritime Provinces to the urban area surrounding New York City, one will find our members. Consequently we are composed of a group of people with widely varying heredities and environments, but, by our own choice, we are all MODEL RAILROADERS.

Would this not be an opportune time for us to set aside our petty, local and area differences to work together to make the Northeastern Region the strong, viable region it should be; dedicated to the dissemination of model railroad information and the fellowship associated with the hobby.

MODEL RAILROADING IS FUN! Let this theme be maintained in all regional activities, and let us work for the real goals of model railroading.

Any and all suggestions for implementing the thoughts set forth will receive the serious consideration of YOUR organization.

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**DONT
MISS
WORCESTER!** 

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

If my figures are correct, and I can count I am the 14th editor of the Coupler. While I am not too happy with this first attempt, I have every hope that the Coupler will be an important part of the activities of the Region.

By way of introduction, I am Douglas P. Adams, a rail fan from way back (and I won't say how far.) I am a firm believer in the fact that a steel wheel on a steel rail is still the most efficient method of transportation. As a modeler, my preferences run to steam and traction in HO, but I am far from close-minded on the matter. I have no layout of my own at present, but the local club is building a club layout in my basement.

Having stated my preferences, I would like to add that I hope the Coupler will represent all phases of the great hobby. The sure way for you to see your aspect of modeling in print is to send in an article on it. Hope that there will be enough from all phases to represent them all.

doug

NORTHEASTERN REGION (NMRA) ANNUAL SPRING CONVENTION

Sponsored by the Hub Division (NER)

May 20, 21 & 22, 1977

At the Holiday Inn, 70 Southbridge St.

Worcester, MA 01618 617-791-2291

This will be the NER's first Convention at this convenient central Massachusetts city. The Hub Division, who presented those great Conventions at Boston and Bellows Falls, will be the sponsor, with Board Chairman Bill Parker as chairman of the event.

Headquarters for the Convention is the 10 story downtown Holiday Inn at 70 Southbridge St., just a few minutes from exit 13 of I-290 and with plenty of free parking on all four sides of the hotel. The hotel management is holding 125 rooms at special rates of \$22 double and \$17 single and is most anxious to see that we have a best-ever Convention. Make your reservations now by mail or telephone as shown at the top of this page. Use the convenient coupon below to make it easier. Don't wait - do it now!

A full complement of activities will be offered from Friday night movies, layout tours and specials, to a full Saturday of displays, clinics, exhibits, shows, hobby shops (bring money), contests (bring a model or photo or both), white elephant table (bring your surplus equipment and surplus money), banquet and evening program (bring your wife or girlfriend or both, if they get along well) and prizes and awards. Don't forget your camera - put some film in it.

For the ladies there will be a daytime walking tour, a surprise clinic and late, late Bingo with prizes. (Bring your lady).

Several model railroads will be open on Sunday, in addition to those to be visited on Friday evening. There is a fair amount of rail activity close by with Providence & Worcester, Boston & Maine and Conrail all there. Amtrak stops at the nearby station, so come by train - check the latest schedules, since daylight saving time will be in effect then.

Fan trips on class 1 railroads are nearly impossible to arrange these days. We had one all set up with the P & W management, but their legal department scrubbed it at the last minute, including any chance for a yard tour. We are working on other possibilities - details will be given to you at the Convention.

Closing date for pre-registration by mail is May 16, 1977. Prices are per person, regardless of age.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Convention Pre-registration Amount

_____ Registrations at \$2.50 _____

_____ Banquets at \$9.00 _____

Total enclosed _____

Prices at the door - per person:
Registration \$3.00 Banquet \$10.00

SEE OTHER SIDE

SEE OTHER SIDE

Holiday Inn Reservation Request

Northeastern Region Annual Spring Convention May 20, 21 & 22, 1977 Worcester, Mass.

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Reserve ___ single rooms at \$17

Reserve ___ double rooms at \$22

Roll-away beds are available at extra charge for additional person in room.

SEE OTHER SIDE

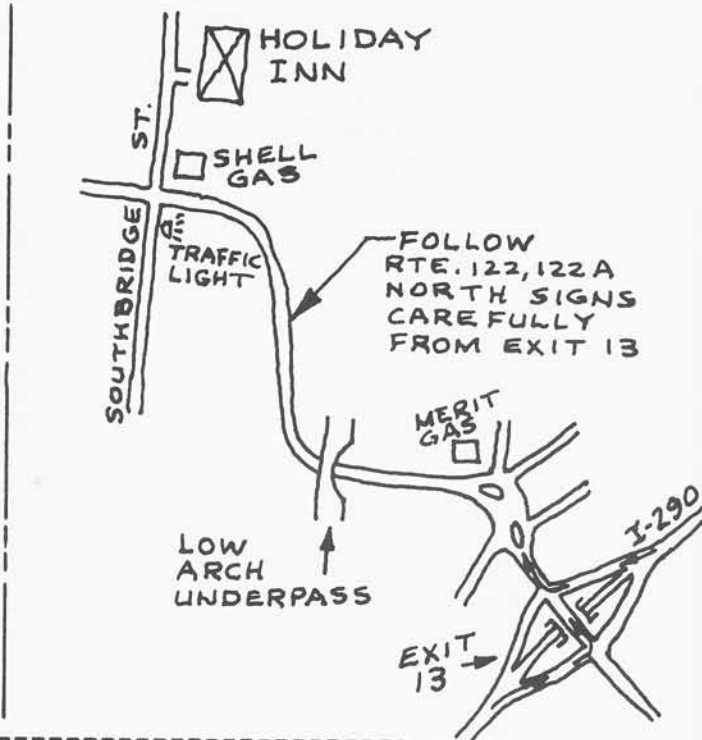
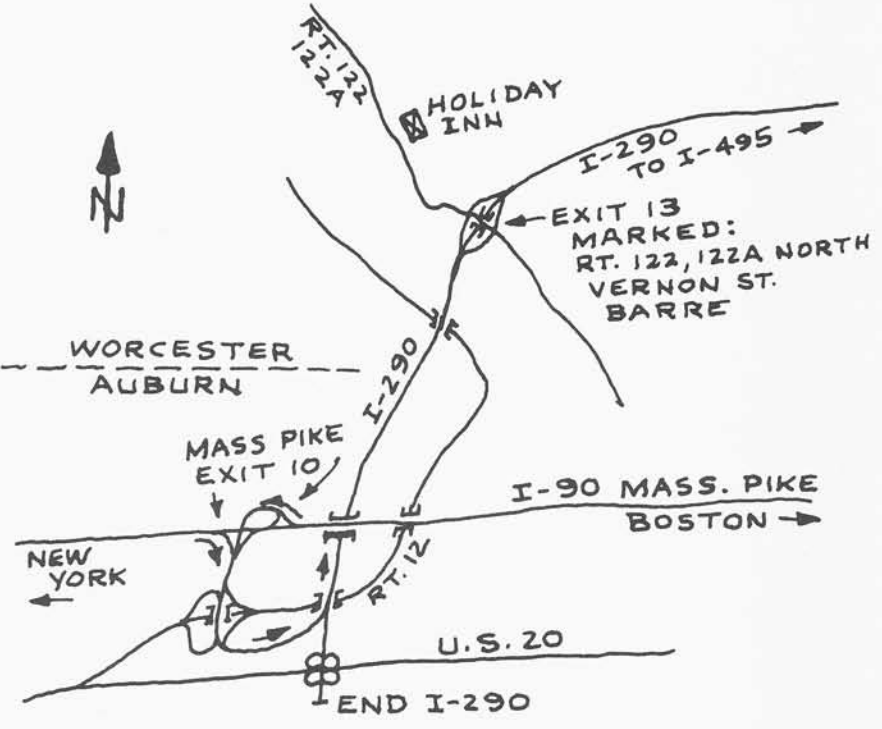
SEE OTHER SIDE

You won't want to miss the super movies by Bob Gustafson, to relive the days of steam in New England. If you will be going to the NMRA National Convention in Denver, you will want to see Jack Alexander's tape slide program on spectacular Colorado. If you're not going, you can get the feel of the wild west from Worcester, which is way out west of Boston (at least 40 miles).

You will want to join your fellow enthusiasts for a delightful Saturday evening banquet of roast sirloin of beef, from fruit cup to salad, baked potato and green beans, hot rolls, and hot fudge parfait for dessert.

Fill out the coupons and mail them today. You may check into the hotel anytime after 1:00 pm Friday May 20. The Convention Registration Desk will be open at 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm Friday May 20 and 9:00 am to 12:00 noon on Saturday May 21. You will receive your well filled Convention Envelope when you sign in. Then be sure to register your models and photos for the contests.

Send in your coupon now - maximum banquet capacity is 200 - don't be left out. Refunds for cancellations will be made up to 12:00 noon on Friday May 20.



No. of nights at Inn _____
 No. of persons in party _____
 Arrival date _____ Time _____

If you wish, you may guarantee your reservation by sending in the amount required or by giving your charge account company and card number.

Company _____
 Card No. _____

Put this coupon in an envelope and mail it to Holiday Inn
 70 Southbridge St.
 Worcester, MA 01618

Make your checks payable to:
 N.E.R. - CONVENTIONS

Put this coupon in an envelope with your check and mail it to:

Irwin F. B. Lloyd
 44 Lincoln Drive
 Glastonbury, CT 06033

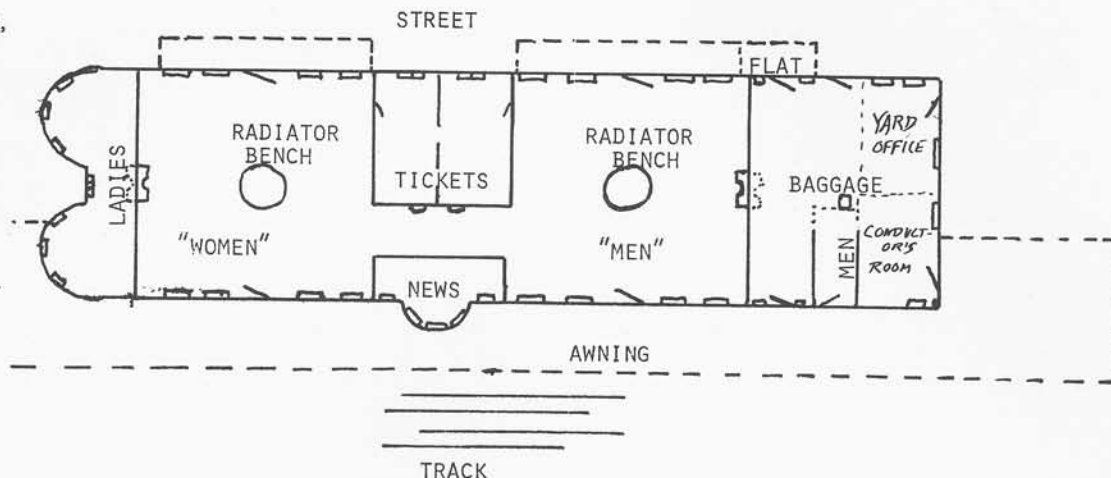
It must reach him by May 16, 1977 so mail it early!

NEW BEDFORD DEPOT
BUILT BY OLD COLONY RAILROAD COMPANY --- 1886
--NOT TO SCALE--

The New Bedford Mass. Depot was built in 1886 by the Old Colony Railroad. Unused since the discontinuance of passenger service on Sept. 8, 1958, the building has been acquired by the New Bedford Redevelopment Authority and is soon to come down.

Ironically, the cars parked by the station have nothing to do with railroad business, but belong to people doing business with the "unemployment office" (Employment Security) across the street from the old depot.

Boarded up and repeatedly vandalized, the brick and brownstone building is still majestic, though freight cars now occupy the tracks once given over to the "varnish."



BUILDING: 170'x42'
DOOR OPENINGS: 95" x 48"
BAGGAGE DOORS: EAST 64"W; NORTH 56"W
AWNING EAVES: TRACK SIDE 10'; STREET SIDE 8'H
AWNING POSTS: 12' APART, C TO C
PARTITIONING IN BAGGAGE AND LADIES ROOMS UNKNOWN.
BAY: 6' TO TOPS OF WINDOWS, 10' TO EAVES
BROWNSTONE TRIM BLOCKS: 9 1/2" H
BRICKS: 2 1/2" / COURSE
LARGE WINDOWS 48" x 68"



SCRATCH

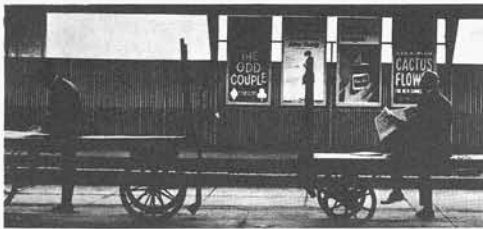
IDEA

by John F. Dias

The New Bedford, Mass. Railway Express Agency office is adjacent to the depot, indeed it has been extended under some of the passenger awning of the station. Although this building was in daily use until April 1, when REA moved out, it will come down when the depot does.

These buildings are still Penn Central property.





Waiting for the 7:11

Station Stops

HUB DIVISION

This is always a favorite spot to tell about the latest happenings in our never-ending membership drive. It was started about two and a half years ago, as has been reported here before, when we had 77 paid members in the Division. It reached a high of 290 in December, 1976. After the adjustments that must be made because of large numbers failing to renew, and picking up new members, the tally in March, 1977 comes to approximately 245. This is actually a gain as has been the case year after year. On March 12, we were invited to set up a membership table at the South Shore Club Open House in Weymouth, Mass. We did our usual thing which we do at all meets—15 new members for the Hub, 5 for the Region, and 6 for NMRA. Not a bad day's work. Are you other divisions doing the same, or hopefully better?

Since Hub is sponsoring the NER meet in Worcester this spring, it will be combined with our annual spring meet. This year, however, we will not have our business meeting at this time as we did back in Boston. We will have a special business meeting in Framingham in June. Any of you region members who live in or near the Hub stomping grounds are cordially invited to become members of the Hub at that time. Come and join us—look around for the April edition of the Hub Headlight for details of the meeting.

We will close in offering our congratulations to, and expressing our pride in, our own board member Fred Driscoll becoming president of the Region. Fred is a fine choice for the job. Our best to him.

SEACOAST DIVISION

While the division has been pretty much on the rip track recently, all residents of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont who attend the meet at Worcester are asked to contact Fred Driscoll, Stan Brink, Al Thurston or Doug Adams to set up a time when we can discuss the future of the division.

TIMETABLE

Valley Stream, N. Y.: Long Island Train-A-Rama and Auction. Sunday, April 24, 1977. Noon to 5 PM. Knights of Columbus Hall, Father Thomas Carroll 4566, 1 East Lincoln Avenue, corner of Rockaway Avenue, Valley Stream, N. Y. John Winston, Auctioneer. Over 3000 Square Feet of Trains. Door Prizes--Refreshments Free off-street Parking. Full Table \$7, Admission \$2. Information: Remo A. Rossi, 54 Peterson Place, Lynbrook, N. Y. 11563.

Massapequa Park, L. I., N. Y. June 11, 1977, 10AM to 6PM. St. David's Lutheran Church, Clark Blvd., Massapequa Park, Long Island. Live Clinics, Contests, Refreshments. Adults \$1.50, Children \$1.00. Sponsored by Sunrise Trail Division, NER, Garden State Division, NER, and New Jersey Division, MER.

Massapequa Park, L. I. Sunrise Trail Division Meet. Saturday, September 17, 1977. St. David's Church, Massapequa Park, L. I. 1 to 5 PM. Live Clinics, Slides, White Elephant Table, Refreshments, etc. Information: Contact: M. Lorence, 82 Edmore Lane, West Islip, N. Y. 11795

FALL CONVENTION, CONCORD, N. H. Oct. 14, 15 & 16

Rocky Rails '77

NATIONAL CONVENTION
Denver, Colorado



Come to Colorado

July 19-24, 1977

Displays • Fan Trips • Clinics • Auction
Model Contests • Prototype Steam
M.R.I.A. Show • Family Activities • Movies

"Take a gander at Denver in '77."

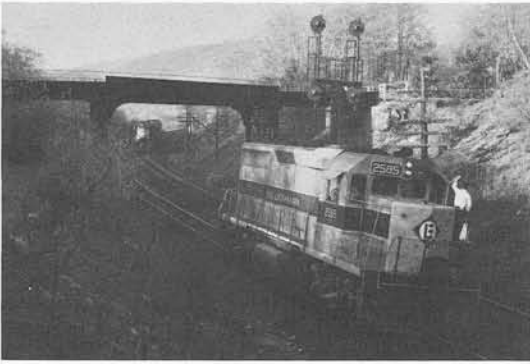


further information:

Registrar • Rocky Rails '77
Terminal Annex P.O. Box 17182
Denver, Colorado 80217



E8 #810 and three PA's with E-L train NY-98 east-bound at Port Jervis making crew change and helper pick up.



GP-35 #2585 (helper from previous train) waiting for helpers from NY-98 (heading east onto single track towards Otisville Tunnel.) These will couple behind #2585, and all five units will head west for Port Jervis with 2585 leading.

PROTOTYPE PRACTICES

By Charles Gerow



What railfan doesn't thrill to the sight of a long, heavy train battling a grade with several units of motive power "hooked up", shuddering and slipping to pull (or push) tonnage against gravity?

Even here in the East, there are several places where the grades were sufficient to require this type of operation. Even today, some of the nearby roads still encounter this problem with diesel power.

The B&O and Pennsy built their lines over the steep grades of the Allegheny Mountains. A look at these lines, west of Altoona, Pa., and Cumberland, Md., either in the pictures of steam or in the in person visits of today will provide fans with many good ideas.

Closer to home, the Boston & Albany's main line between Springfield and Pittsfield, and the Erie's main line just east of Port Jervis included helper districts.

Wherever possible, a road would locate a division point at the bottom of a helper district as in our examples. Trains headed uphill would come into town, stop for a crew change and more and/or heavier locomotives. At the top of the grade, pushers could be dropped or cut out, and double-headers run into the clear. The light engines would couple up and head down the hill for another trip.

At the division point there was usually a large classification yard, so that the tonnage of trains could be adjusted for both the hill and the flatland. A fair size engine terminal to service the engines for both the division and the helpers would be here too. The passenger station usually had several platforms and tracks, not only for the use of trains terminating here, but also for the longer stops of through trains while they changed engines or added power.

On the Erie, passenger trains eastbound were usually powered by Pacifics. If a helper was required, it might be another Pacific, a Mike, a Berkshire, or even a 2-10-2 Santa Fe! As on most other roads, passenger trains got double-headed power rather than a pusher to eliminate the slack action of the latter.

Freight trains on the line west of Port Jervis could make good time in both directions. In the late days of steam, a 2-8-4 was usually used on this run. But on the 457 foot, 11 mile Guymard Hill grade east of town, a train might be assigned a pair of 2-10-2's up front, and a third or even a fourth Santa Fe on the rear.

These trains would struggle up the hill as far as Graham Tower, where the triple main split into two double main lines. One of these was for freights and one for passenger trains. The helpers would be cut out here and head back down when the operator got clearance for them.

With the coming of the diesel locomotive in the late '40's and early '50's, things began to change. The passenger line between Graham and Howell's Junction was abandoned, but the steep grade between Graham and Port Jervis still exists. (The third track was taken up in the late '50's, and the grade was single tracked in 1975-76 as a result of rerouting over Lackawanna's route via Scranton.) Passenger trains usually came through with a pair of E8's, sufficient power to handle both the grade and the frequent stops on the New York Division's time cards. Freight trains handle more loads eastbound than west, and with the added power of diesels, longer, less frequent trains are run. Consequently half the classification yard has been abandoned. However, eastbound trains still stop here to exchange power. Three "F" units might go into the roundhouse, and a lashup of five, or maybe six Alco and/or EMD Road Switchers hook on for the pull up the grade. There are several reasons for this: the grade, of course, the delays caused by conflicting commuter trains require heavy power to accelerate the freight train east of Suffern, and last but not least, many of the RS's and Geeps were used in freight service between passenger assignments and were needed east of Port Jervis.

Even in the 1970's with the advent of the U33's and SD45's, the larger engines were often turned back at Port Jervis and older units substituted on west-bound trains. Train tonnages were adjusted for the newer engines and the stronger draw-bars of the cars. As a result helpers became rare. Up until 1974, however, the E-L still used helpers between Scranton and East Stroudsburg and between Deposit and Susquehanna.

Regardless of what power was used in helper districts, one item remained constant. Wood frame cabooses were not placed between a pusher engine and the train, or between pushers. It was not uncommon, however, for each pusher (steamer or set of diesels) to have its own steel-framed caboose behind it. If a caboose was placed in front of an engine, state law required the crew to ride in the rear one, behind the last pusher.

While the helper district, per se, in our region has been, for the most part lost. A trip to Altoona or Cumberland will find many long trains, up to 200 cars, being handled over the mountains with as many as ten diesel units. Their operations are intriguing, and the sight of one of these beasts alone is worth the traveling time needed.

the coupler
p.o. box 2334
Vernon, ct. 06066



FIRST CLASS MAIL

ROBERT STROBEL
1203-89TH ST
NO BERGEN NJ 07047

9-989

Please report any change of address to the Office Manager as soon as possible.

The CHICAGO & EASTERN ILLINOIS RR is now part of the Missouri Pacific system. At one time, it ran streamlined expresses such as the Dixie Flagler under steam. These ran Chicago, Evansville and on to the South. There were also passenger trains from Chicago to Saint Louis, but these did not compare to the glamorous Dixie's.

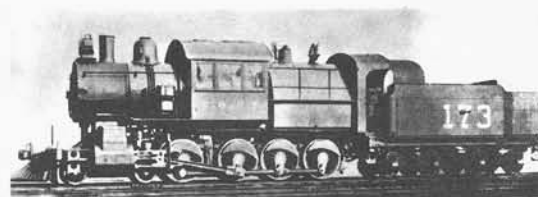
C&EI experimented with camelbacks. The 4-8-0 #173 is a typical coal drag engine. Of course, it was designed to burn hard coal, but it could burn bituminous coal with a lot of hard work hand firing a living room sized fire box.

C&EI engines had simple lettering on the tender or the engine number by itself. The practice of using numbers only is a boon to modelers who do not like to put on fancy decals.

For years, the C&EI handled L&N coal traffic, but that changes as the MoPac took control and the MONON (CI&L) was taken into the "Family Line" to afford a direct Chicago connection.

SOOT & CINDERS

Richard M. Hanscha



WELCOME

newest members

Nova Scotia:

Ken Dacey, Dartmouth
Daniel Haycock, Dartmouth
Kim David Murtha, Dartmouth
Mitchell T. Primeau, Dartmouth
Thompson C. N. Greenlaw, Greenwood
Craig W. Buckley, Guysborough
Bill Bainbridge, Halifax
Robert W. D. Morrison, Halifax
Eric S. Young, Shearwater

New Brunswick:

John W. Balser, Moncton
Peter Mesheau, Moncton

Quebec:

Gary Wayne Bowser, Baie Comeau
Rene Ouellet, Cap Rouge
Paul De Launier, Greenfield Park
Gilles Beaudoin, Lavaltrie
Jean-Claude Mallette, Montreal
Michel Saumier, St. Eustache

Massachusetts:

Richard J. Nolin, Attleboro
Richard C. Auren, Auburn
Charles W. Hurlin, Reading
Kenneth G. Lawson, Wakefield
John March, Wayland

Connecticut:

Donald R. Rzepke, Devon
H. W. McClusker, West Hartford

New York:

Francis D. Delise, Brooklyn
Jack Esquenazi, Brooklyn
Morris O. Edwards, Bronx
Willard P. Brown, Eldred
Balfour J. Abrams, Flushing
Chris Sideris, Flushing
Robert Henrichs, Sr., Franklin Square
Paul Schrottke, Lake Ronkonkoma
Jack T. Moy, New York
Dan Monahan, Orient
Dr. Eugene F. Stafford, Selden
Edward T. Ruffel, Stonybrook
Harold F. Morrison, Syosset
MAJ Terry N. Taylor, FPO NY

Maine:

Paul A. Hampson, Portland

New Hampshire:

Robert D. Eggleston, Wilton

Vermont:

Robert P. Daino, Barre

Rhode Island:

Philip A. Smith, Cranston
Donald C. Berube, Greene

New Jersey:

Michael F. Riopel, Marlboro
Donald David, Montclair
John S. Fox, Jr., Newark
Mike Sico, Paterson

Delaware:

Jack W. Treubig, Newark

Maryland:

S. Richard Knotts, Wheaton