

## PLYMOUTH CONVENTION MAY 16-18



Pete Watson's photo of Edaville No. 7 heading up a mixed special anticipates the NER's fan trip on the "Cranberry Belt Line" Saturday, May 17, as part of the Spring convention at Plymouth, MA. See the special center section in this issue, and register early for a full and enjoyable weekend!

#### 



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## Achievement

## Program



I've been procrastinating for a long time now on assembling a cross reference of those people within the NER who have been awarded Achievement Certificates. However, I finally have it put together for use primarily to draft local AP judges.

An interesting outgrowth of this study though is the distribution of certificates among the various areas of achievement. As most of you are aware, there are 10 recognizable categories of excellence for which Achievement Certificates may be awarded: Master Builder in Motive Power, Cars, Structures or Scenery; Model Railroad Engineering either Civil or Electrical; Chief Dispatcher; Association Official or Volunteer; and Model Railroad Author. To qualify for Master Model Railroader, a modeler must hold certificates in at least seven of those categories in a certain mix.

The most popular areas for certificates are Association Volunteer and Association Official. Many of our members have distinguished themselves in service to the hobby in these areas, too many in fact to count. The category with the next highest number of certificate holders is that of Author - 18 writers who have been discovered.

Among the "modelling certificates" held comes something of a surprise. Master Builder-Cars has the most with 15 awardees. But the areas which to me are the most difficult come next: Electrical Engineering, 11, and Civil Engineering, 10. It appears our members are gluttons for punishment. Master Builder-Structures is a club of 9; Scenery has been awarded 7 times; and Motive Power and Chief Dispatcher each has 6 holders, I also found interesting the geographic distribution of certificate holders: New York City and Long Island, 10; New York State, 7; Massachusetts, 6; Connecticut, 2; Canada, 2, Vermont, 1; Rhode Island, 1. For geographical distribution, I counted only holders of certificates in the modelling categories plus Author. There are none from New Hampshire, Maine, and - very surprisingly - New Jersey.

Anyhow, there you are. It seems to me that there is a lot more modelling going on among our 1000-plus members than the mere 29 people our records reflect. The AP Program exists to foster and recognize excellence in modelling and service. To qualify may be simpler than you think. In fact, I'll bet that many of you already qualify for one or more Achievement Certificates and perhaps don't realize it. Let me hear from you.

As for the rest of you guys and gals, LET'S GO!!!

Model railroading is FUN. PARTICIPATE!!!



THE CROSSING GATE TENDER



During the early years of railroading there were comparatively few road crossings in existence, and speeds were so slow that crossing accidents were rare. The shrill locomotive whistle theoretically scared the horse into immobility, and people were supposed to "Stop-Look-&-Listen" before crossing the tracks.

As railroads mushroomed, the problem of the grade crossing accidents became ever more pressing. Gates were installed at places where the volume of traffic seemed to justify the expense or public clamor demanded action. Flag men were employed at less important ones. These crossing tenders were usually elderly or disabled railroad employees who had been "put out to pasture", but who could still earn a pittance at this easy and low-paid job. Whether he operated a crossing gate or merely stood with a red flag and lantern to warn of approaching trains, he was a familiar sight all over this country for the better part of a hundred years.

Thousands of tenders' shanties sprang up alongside the tracks, to furnish shade in the Summer and shelter in the Winter. A small pile of coal and cordwood outside served to keep the stove going and the coffee pot hot. Passers-by invariably stopped to chat for a few moments, and the job was not too strenuous.

One of the best descriptions of a busy grade crossing was written by Jim Relyea in his Boomers Diary around the turn of the century, when he was firing on the "4 Track Canal" of the New York Central. "At the foot of the hill is Schenectady, and somehow we would get over the State Street grade crossing without killing anyone. This was always a busy intersection, and several flag men were stationed here to separate the crowds from the trains - not always too successfully. There was always someone who wanted to be at the other side of the track at the last moment, and many of them didn't make it when a heavily loaded train came rolling down Schenectady Hill without air

brakes. The track is now elevated at that point, and the freights go around the city by means of a cut-off at Hoffman's."

The gate-keeper's job used to center around the once-familiar black-and-white striped crossing gates which kept vehicles from running out onto the tracks, thus preventing trains from running into them. The approaching train activated a bell through the signal circuit on the tracks, warning of its approach. The gateman then pulled the levers which activated the gates on each side of the tracks. Over the years this part of the job has gradually been taken over by machines, and soon there will not be anyone around any longer to help the school kids across, and exchange the day's gossip with their elders.

But what machine could give the kind of personal service that the gate keepers provided for the community? "In Rutherford several years ago," related one of them, "a man got his car stalled on the tracks. There were three little kids in it. The man paniced and fainted. The kids were screaming. A train was in the block. I put the gates up, ran out, and pushed the car off just in time."

"I often chase kids off the track," he added. "They don't realize the danger. And several times there have been derailments at the crossing where I had to run out and flag the next train so as to prevent a collision."

Quiet heroism used to be a part of the romance of railroading that fascinated an earlier generation, and still motivates grown men to go out and take pictures or collect models. But because of the fact that the gate keeper's every day job is so simple, he's apt to be replaced by a circuit breaker before very long. The machine may not be able to chase kids or push a stalled auto, but it is a lot cheaper than a man who receives \$3-4 per hour in wages.

--Stan Bradley

#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (NER)

Please fill out and return to:

R. Roderick Brown, Office Manager

79 Hemenway Road Framingham, MA 10701

NAME

STREET & NUMBER

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Amount enclosed:

\$ 5.00 for a 2 year membership

\$10.00 for a 5 year membership

Main railroad interest?

Scale/gauge?

Layout?

Size?

How long in hobby?

# SCRATCHBUILDER'S

by DAVE MESSER

((This series of articles originally appeared in the Hudson-Berkshire Division's Form 19.))

#### KIT PLANS

In addition to the reference sources discussed previously, an often-overlooked source of information for modeling is the plans and/or instruction sheets included with many kits, particularly the more advanced ones. These can be from kits which you have, or they can be copies obtained from others.

A good idea here is to have one or more copies of the plan made before starting construction, and then to use the copy to work from and save the original for permanent reference. This is particularly useful when the plan must be used as an actual template or jig. Just make sure that the copying process doesn't distort the plan. In fact, it is a good idea to check even original plans against a metal scale rule, as all printing processes can introduce some distortions.

Using the same plan more than once serves the same purposes for the modeler as for the prototype. Most railroad cars and many structures were (and still are) built to a standard plan for economy reasons, though sometimes with variations which are a study in themselves. The economies present are even more dramatic for the modeler than for the prototype. Compare the cost of the same model built from scratch with that from the kit. As mentioned before, this in itself is a convincing argument for scratchbuilding.

There is one additional reason for saving kit plans or instruction sheets. They sometimes contain prototype photos and other information for adding extra detail or for variations or modifications made over the life of the prototype.

#### KITBASHING

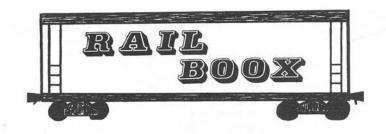
A definition of kitbashing might go something like this: the use of components of one or more kits (not necessarily the same ones), with suitable modifications and/or scratchbuilt portions, to build a model different from (and often nearly unrecognizable) the original. Kitbashing is particularly suitable (though not limited) to kits with relatively large preformed components, such as molded plastic structure parts or car and locomotive bodies.

The modeling potential of kitbashing is large and relatively unexplored. It is often the best method to achieve certain modeling objectives, and many times the only way to obtain certain detail parts, particularly metal and plastic castings, which are available only in kits.

Like any other modeling, kitbashing, to be successful, must be done well. Care must be taken that components to be put together go together logically from both prototype and modeling standpoints. Any operation involving cutting parts should be thoroughly planned beforehand, measured accurately, and performed carefully to assure a smooth joint. The quality of the end result is directly related to the care put into the planning and execution.

The economies are usually much less than scratch-building, as it is necessary to pay kit prices, and parts are often sacrificed to obtain a particular portion. But this can usually be justified by the flexibility and ease of attaining the desired results. Cost is not usually a factor when using plastic kit components, but can be a problem with craftsman-type kits, which are often priced higher than the sum of their parts. This is particularly true when limited run kits are utilized, where the investment in research, drawing plans, tooling and manufacture is spread over a much shorter production run. In any case, leftover parts can often result in a second model or find their way into the scrap box for future use.

The important concept to remember is to think of kits as a handy, valuable (and often unique) source of parts for model building, with the only limitation being the imagination of the modeler.



CLASSIC ARTICLES FROM MODEL RAILROADER.
Compiled by Mike Schafer. 1980. Kalmbach Books,
Milwaukee. \$3.95.

Here are 16 articles which appeared in MR from January, 1936, to February, 1964. The collection demonstrates "the excitement of the hobby, from its pioneering days in the 1930's through its tremendous growth in the 1950's and 1960's."

The chief value and interest of some articles are historical and give the reader a feel for "what it was like back then". But others (for example, John Allen's articles from 1955-56 on "Aging and Weathering Cars and Locomotives") are almost timeless in their application.

-- Murray Goodwin

THIS IS A REMOVABLE CENTERFOLD. GRASP BOTH PAGES TOGETHER AND PULL FREE. RE-FLATTEN THE STAPLES & YOUR MAGAZINE REMAINS INTACT.

# THE **PLYMOUTH** CONVENTION

THE NORTHEASTERN REGION, NMRA ANNUAL SPRING CONVENTION IN HISTORIC PLYMOUTH, MASS. MAY 16, 17 AND 18, 1980 AT THE GOVERNOR CARVER MOTOR INN

SPONSORED AND OPERATED BY THE HUB DIVISION OF THE NER

Many NER conventions are planned around a theme - sometimes the emphasis is on a particular prototype or a series of layout visits. This Spring, the emphasis is on clinics - clinics on all facets of the hobby. We have some new people and some familiar names giving clinics. Our effort has been made to cover subjects which are often neglected. Tape/slide clinics are being used to fill in the coverage and to describe alternate approaches. Altogether, there will be 26 clinic sessions.

Why did the Committee pick Plymouth for the Convention site? Could it be because of Edaville? Or the family attractions - Plimouth Plantation, Mayflower II, the Rock? (rhetorical question). Of course, there will be a special trip to Edaville. As you examine these pages describing the Plymouth Convention, you will see that a rather complete program has been prepared in addition to the schedule of clinics. Come see how the NER's own Permanent Convention Chairman (Jack Alexander) and Hub Division's own Chief Photographer (Pete Watson) team up to put on a great show.

#### FEATURING

CLINICS - CLINICS - CLINICS EDAVILLE RR FANTRIP SATURDAY EVENING BANQUET & PROGRAM AUCTION - BRING YOUR STUFF DISPLAYS & DEALERS

#### FEATURING

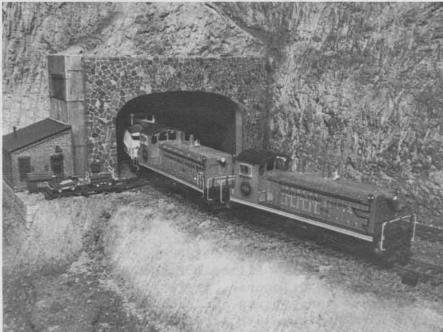
LAYOUT VISITS AREA ATTRACTIONS GUIDED HISTORIC TOUR MODEL & PHOTO CONTESTS CONVENTION ENVELOPE, PROGRAM & BADGE

Here is a sampling of the clinics to be presented in the 26 sessions: Evolution of freight cars Brass locomotive maintenance Plastic locomotive maintenance Hopper cars - prototype vs model Covered hoppers - 1945 to present Dioramas and scenes

Trees and scenery Painting figures Scratch building freight cars Model & prototype photography Model trackage Module operation & scenicking

and more - plus a number of tape/slide clinics







HERE IS A LITTLE SOMETHING TO WHET YOUR APPETITE FOR 3 OF THE LAYOUTS YOU WILL BE VISI-TING ON SUNDAY - ALL IN NEAR-BY EAST BRIDGEWATER. Top Photo: Engine No. 6 on Pete Watson's On2 Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes. Middle Photo: A caboose hop emerging from the tunnel on Jack Alexander's HO Intermountain Pacific Lines. Lower Photo: Some of the many Hobbytown diesels on Dave MacPherson's HO Clinch Mountain Lines. All photos by Pete Watson.

FAN TRIP ON THE EDAVILLE The famous 2 foot gauge Edaville Railroad in South Carver, Mass. will be the scene for our fan trip on Saturday afternoon. Buses, provided as part of the fan trip fare, will leave the motel in the early afternoon for the half hour ride to Edaville. Edaville is running a special mixed train for the NER Convention. Powered by steam, it will consist of 4 freight cars, 3 open excursion/passenger cars and a caboose. There will be two photo runbys, one at the Ballfield and one at 14 Acre Bog. In addition, the fan trip fare

In addition, the fan trip fare includes admission to the rail road museum and rides on any of the other Edaville trains. Edaville's other attractions, the outdoor locomotive exhibits and the fire equipment and antique automobile displays, will also be open for you. Bring your family and join us for a pleasant afternoon, riding through the cranberry bogs with the smell of coal smoke and warm oil permeating the Massachusetts Spring air.

#### DINNER MENU - SATURDAY

Fruit cup with sherbet
Roast rump beef au jus
Baked potato Peas with mushrooms
Tossed salad
Coffee Tea Milk Rolls Butter
Apple crunch a la mode

The following is a brief timetable for the weekend:

FRIDAY Registration from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Tape/slide clinics

Hospitality

SATURDAY Registration from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Display area open from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Edaville RR fan trip or Historic guided tour

Clinics

Photo and model contest Auction - bring your stuff Evening program and banquet

SUNDAY Layouts to visit - see photo page

Area visits on your own

You may also visit Edaville again if you wish;

you pay the regular public fare

The only activity at the motel will be the NER

business meeting, if one is called

#### HISTORIC GUIDED TOUR

The historic guided tour will be conducted for all those folks not wishing to go on the Edaville fan trip and who would like some first hand information on historic Plymouth. The tour will be by bus and will take place at the same time as the Edaville trip on Sarurday afternoon. Be sure to indicate your choice on the registration form.

The tour will include a visit to the ship Mayflower II, a nearly perfect replica of the original Mayflower. It was built in England a few years ago and sailed across the Atlantic in the same manner as the original. The famous Plimouth Plantation will be visited, showing excellent reproductions of life as it was in Colonial days. Cranberry World will provide you with a full picture on the growing and harvesting of cranberries and the making of cranberry products. There will be a visit to the historic Winery. More places will be added if time permits. You will be thoroughly entertained during your tour through historic Plymouth. Wear your walking shoes.

Fill in coupons below, cut out, put into envelopes and mail today. Rooms are \$30 total charge per day whether one or more persons are staying. Note that all rooms contain two double beds.

Check-in time is 2:00 pm Check-out time is 11:00 am

#### THE PLYMOUTH CONVENTION

	Per Person		
	Advance	At Door	
Registration	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.00	
Edaville Fan Trip	6.50	7.50	
Children under 12	5.00	6.00	
Historic Guided Tour	6.50	7.50	
Children under 12	5.00	6.00	
Saturday Evening Banquet	12.50	14.00	
Complete Convention Package	22.00	24.50	
Children under 12	20.50	23.00	

MAIL TO:

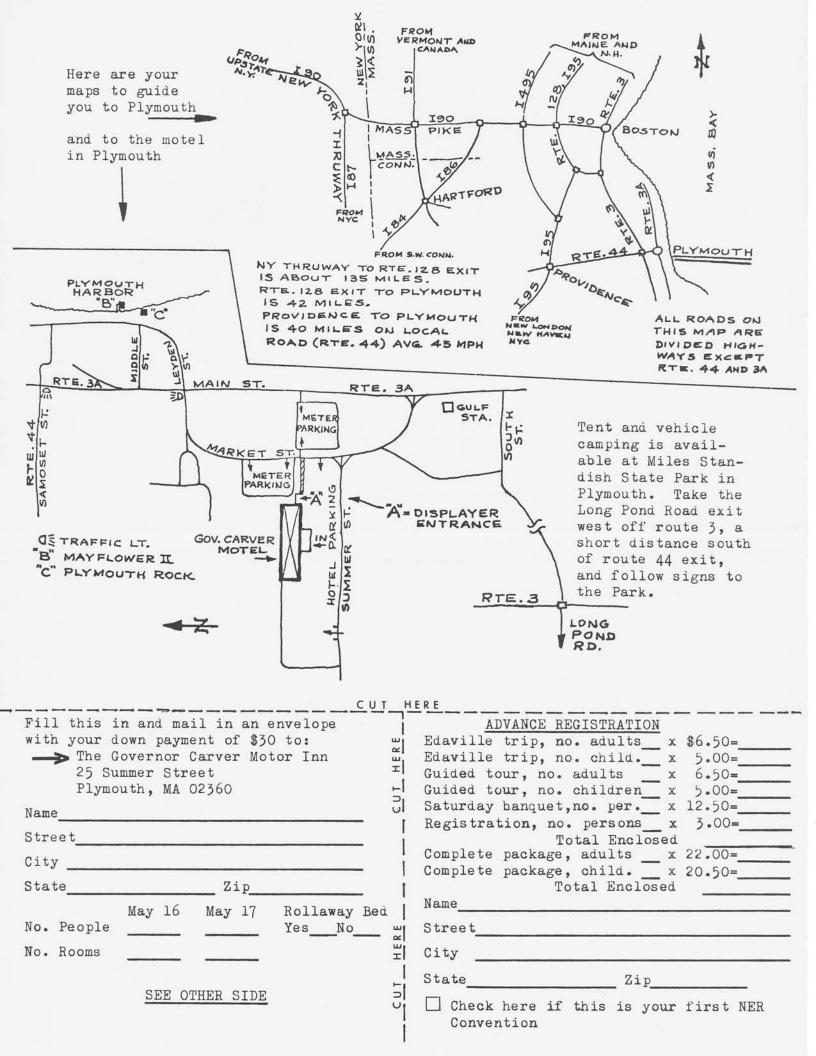
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NER CONVENTION MAY 16, 17 & 18, 1980
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FROM

DIVISIONS 444



#### 

#### ALOUETTE DIVISION

Samedi le 26 avril 1980, lors de Mini-Congres de la Division Alouette a Quebec, il v aura 7 reseaux a visiter dans la ville de Quebec et sa banlieu. Consultez le Signal de fevrier pour le parcours a suivre.

Dimanche, le 27 avril 1980, nous vous attendons au Campus St. Lawrence, situe derriere le Centre d'Achais Innovation sur le Chemin Ste-Foy, Apportez vos modules! Il y aura un concours special! Nous attendons vos modeles reduits esalement!!!

Bienvenue a tous!

On Saturday the 26th of April 1980, there will be 7 to be visited during the Mini-Convention of the Division Alouette Quebec in Quebec City. These layouts are located in Quebec City and the outskirts. Consult the February Signal for directions.

Sunday, April 27th, at St. Lawrence Campus, behind the Innovation Shopping Center on Ste-Foy road, we are expecting you with your models and especially your modules! A special contest will be held for modules!!!

Welcome to all!

-- Denis Fortier

#### HUB DIVISION

For the year of 1979 we again hauled our membership table to five shows in Eastern Massachusetts, including our own Spring Convention at Fort Devens (wildly successful) and the heavily rained on but very successful Fall Show in the town of Framingham. We have been averaging 25 new members per year for NER and NMRA and about 60 for Hub in the four years leading up to 1979. Last year we hit 82 for Hub, but only 11 each for NER and NMRA. A bit of a surprise there.

We are in the process of building a new membership display since the present one is getting a little shop worn and does sort of require a five-arm paper hanger to set it up. Most of our BOD members have only two arms, so sometimes a little difficulty is the order of the day.

Our Headlight editor, Don Brebner, is back in full swing after a lengthy period following spinal surgery in the Fall. Those of you who receive the Headlight have no doubt noticed that Don seems to create continuous growth and improvement in a mighty fine publication. The Division owes him a great deal for his excellent and tireless work,

At the time of this writing (mid-February) we are hard at work getting the NER Spring Convention together. Because of the extremely attractive area and the great activities planned by co-chairman Jack Alexander and Pete Watson, we feel you are really going to enjoy this one. Be sure to read the details elsewhere in this issue and send in your registration now. If we get a freak 18 inch May snowstorm, come anyway. We will devise a last minute clinic on how to tie Summer snowstorms in with model railroading.

See you all at Plymouth and in the next Coupler.

--Glenn Owens

#### NUTMEG DIVISION

About 45 persons attended the annual banquet and meeting at the Red Bull Inn in Waterbury. A deliciour buffet, plus roast beef, was the menue Allan E. Kaulbach, counsel for the Providence and Worcester RR spoke on the development and status of that amazing railroad. And, for the first time in several years, the weather was clear and dry!

The Board of Directors is: Murray Goodwin (President), Ted Ritter (Vice President), Bob Morse (Secretary), Bruce Meuleadyke (Treasurer), Charlie Bettinger, Clark Benson, Bill Kritzky, Tom Hayes, and Brian Whiton.

Nutmeg will sponsor the NER Fall Convention October 17-19 at the Ramada Inn, Wethersfield, CT. Plans are being made to include a ride on the Valley Railroad and on the boat along the Connecticut River.

The Division will also be holding its annual Fall train show. The date and place are to be announced,

Nutmeg is encouraging its members to build modules (to HOT rack standards) for use at the convention, train show, etc.

On March 1, members visited the Canadian Vermont System of Ted Bossert in North Stonington, CT. The year is now 1965 and the line has been completely dieselized.

-- Murray Goodwin

## Members

The Northeastern Region welcomes the following new members:

Connecticut: Peter G. Hess, Richard F. Grant

Quebec: Jos Tremblay

Rhode Island: Jack Walsh

(As of 3-13-80)

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Model Railroaders at your
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O Scale News, 48/Ft.

the O Scale Newsletter which is now available at . . .

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Liverpool, NY
Farmer's Model

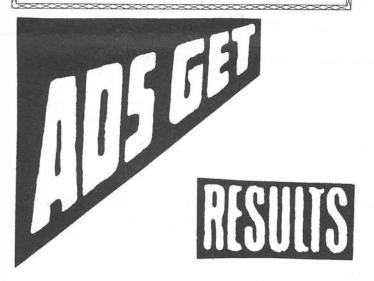
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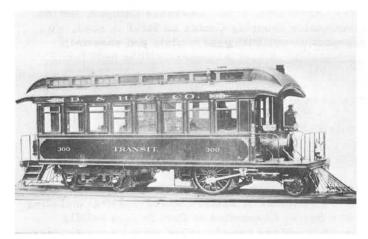
DISPLAY ADS: The prices below are for one year (4 issues) and include typesetting by our printer of a typical ad. Prices of ads with special requirements (such as photos) will be somewhat higher.

Column inches	Rate
1	\$21
2	\$33
3	\$45
4	\$57
5 ( $\frac{1}{4}$ page)	\$66
10 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ page)	\$120
20 (full page)	\$225



## SOOT " CINDERS

by RICHARD M. HANSCHKA



Long ago the Delaware & Hudson Canal Co. operated strictly in Pennsylvania moving coal from Carbondale to industrial cities. The railroad was built to ease coal shipment overland.

Even then there was a need for passenger service. #300, "Transit", was the light rail vehicle of the day. Two wheel drive engines were long gone by this time.

This would make a very unusual model. There is a small AHM 2-4-0 which could have a driver removed and be mounted in an old time car body. The single driver would allow operation on sharp curves as were prevalent years ago.

This is not an inspection engine which Red Ball and others have modeled, but is something different.

#### NER CHANGES OFFICE MANAGERS

Effective January 21 the Northeastern Region has changed Office Managers.

After a long and faithful stint of 10 years, Ted Ritter has resigned. The whole Region is indebted to Ted for his work on behalf of the Region.

The new Office Manager is: R. Roderick Brown 79 Hemenway Road Framingham, MA 01701

Membership renewals, changes of address, etc. should be sent to him.



Central New England #210 4-4-0, "The Tarrifville", August, 1912, Tarriffville, CT.

Notice the box car. Ice was brought down to Hartford, where the ice house still stands by the former line.

Along the Central New England the woodland grew right up to the tracks, and scenes were mostly rural.

A combine and a couple of box cars made up the train, which would be ideal for a modeler. The many curves and small but many hills ease separation of scenes in relatively short distances.

In 1926 the line merged with the New York, New Haven & Hartford. Only a few bits and pieces remain of the line, such as the Poughkeepsie Bridge line from Maybrook down into Danbury.

There is also the line from Hartford through Bloomfield, CT. The 1938 and 1955 hurricanes wiped out the vestiges of the line. Scrap dealers picked up what was left of the road.

#### DEADLINES

#124 Summer '80

May 23

Issue will be mailed approximately one month after deadline listed.

NER CONVENTION CHAIRMEN: Note that mailing is about one month before usual date of convention. If you will need more time than this, please let me know by May 23, when I will be setting the schedule for 1980-81 Coupler publication. --M. G.

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## SCHEDULE

August 9-16, 1980, Orlando, FL: NMRA SUNSHINE SPECIAL '80 (Sy Aufseher, P.O. Box 695, Orlando, FL 32802).

#### NORTHEASTERN REGION

May 16-18, Plymouth, MA: NER SPRING CONVEN-TION. For details, see elsewhere in this issue.

October 17-19, Wethersfield, CT: NER FALL CON-VENTION. Note change of location.

#### OTHER

May 24, North Conway, NH: NORTH CONWAY MODEL RAILROAD CLUB'S ANNUAL SHOW, Red Jacket Inn, Route 16, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Admission \$1 adults; 50¢ 5-15 years. (Gordon Lang, RFD, North Conway, NH 03860)

May 31 - June 1, Wolfeboro, NH: WOLFEBORO BRANCH RAILROAD CLUB MODEL RAILROAD SHOW, Masonic Hall, Glendon Street, 10:00 a.m. -4:30 p.m. Admission \$1; children 50 €. (David Collinge, Railroad Avenue, Newfields, NH 03856. 603 - 778 - 8461)



### NER Office Manager

79 Hemenway Road Framingham, MA 10701





FIRST CLASS MAIL

Robert Strobel 1203 89th Street North Bergen NJ 07047