



**NORTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**

COUPLER

SPRING '81



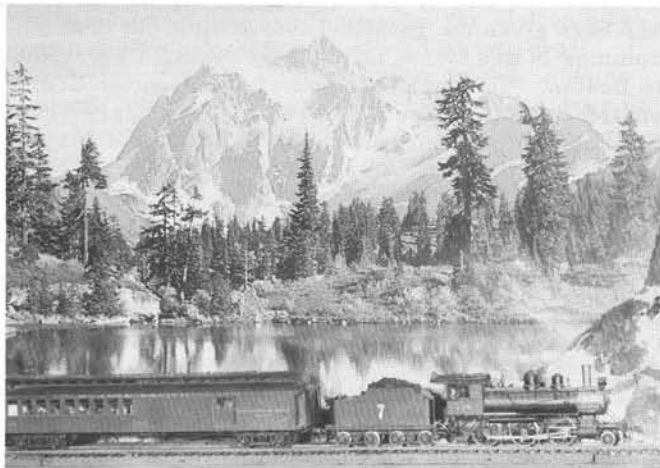
ROCKPORT CONVENTION MAY 15-17

The Spring, 1981, NER Convention will be held May 15-17 at Rockport, Massachusetts.

For further information and registration forms, see pages 5-8 inside.



Layout Visit



Scene from Walt Unruh's O-scale ROCK ISLAND WESTERN layout in Hopedale, MA.

Here's a scene taken recently on my Rock Island Western - a 1950's era bridge route between Colorado Springs and Leadville following generally the route of the long-abandoned Colorado Midland.

The locomotive is a Kemtron 2-6-0 Wabash Mogul

built by Bob Jones of Putnam, CT, and the combine was built from a LaBelle kit by Glenn Joesten of Marina, CA.

The background scenery is a Swedish color photo mural, and the foreground is made of real rock bound together with plaster of paris to simulate snow.

Building the Rock Island Western main line through the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies required 20 tunnels, 4 snow sheds, and 12 bridges, plus numerous cuts and fills.

The ruling grade westbound is 3.3% uncompensated, and the ruling grade eastbound is 3.5% uncompensated. Shown in the photo is #8, the eastbound tri-weekly passenger train ascending the 3.5% grade east of Leadville.

A single F9 diesel unit is limited to 500 gross tons on these steep grades. While the eastbound grade is slightly steeper by .2%, the westbound grade offers greater resistance to the movement of tonnage due to the sharper curvature.

Trains are limited to a maximum of 24 cars by siding length as well as drawbar strength.

RBR-1 (Red Ball Rocket #1), the daily westbound

(Continued, page 10)



NER BRASS

President's Column

President: David W. Messer, 12 Hillview Court,
Wyantskill, NY 12198

Vice President: William S. Parker, 65 Coweaset
Drive, Brockton, MA 02401

Secretary: Fred Driscoll, 15 Cushing Street, Dover
NH 03820

Treasurer: Douglas Handy, P. O. Box 798, Spring-
field, VT 05156

Office Manager, Membership: R. Roderick Brown,
79 Hemenway Road, Framingham, MA 01701

Achievement Program: Harry J. Wagner, 51 Ringwood
Avenue, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442

Permanent Convention Chairman: Jack Alexander,
111 South Street, East Bridgewater, MA 02333

DIRECTORS

Canada: Denis Fortier, 380 Chemin St-Louis,
App 1703, Quebec, P. Q. G1S 4M1

Connecticut-Rhode Island: Charles Bettinger,
29 Foster Drive, RRI, Vernon, CT 06066

Long Island & New York City: John A. MacIntosh,
150 Kildare Road, Garden City, NY 11530

Massachusetts: Richard Towle, Loading Place Road,
Manchester, MA 01944

New Jersey: Richard C. Laube, 13 Yorktown Road,
East Brunswick, NJ 08816

New York State: William Mischler, 1564 Regent
Street, Schenectady, NY 12309

Northern New England: Douglas Handy, P. O. Box
798, Springfield, VT 05156

Past President: Fred Driscoll, 15 Cushing Street,
Dover, NH 03820

DEADLINES

#128 Summer '81 May 29

Issue will be mailed approximately one month after
deadline listed.

NER COUPLER

#127 - April, 1981

Official publication of the Northeastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association. Published
4 times a year.

A. Murray Goodwin, Editor
57 West Point Terrace
West Hartford, CT 06107
(203) 521-2677

Address changes should be sent to the Office Manager.
All other material (including advertisements) should
be sent to the Editor.

I have the following to report to the NER member-
ship after attending the NMRA Board of Trustees
meeting in Phoenix. Although some of this has been
communicated elsewhere, it bears repeating. It is
clear to me that the national organization, under the
active leadership of NER's own Huebe Huebenthal,
has embarked on a course of increased service to
the regional and divisional structure as well as the
individual member.

Construction of the national headquarters office in
Chattanooga (scheduled to begin sometime this
Spring for completion in the first half of 1982) will
provide for more efficient central operations, in-
cluding a museum, library, and room for staff to
serve an expanded organization and member services.
This is a must if NMRA is to grow and prosper in
the 80's and beyond.

Specific items which will appear shortly are newly-
tooled Standards Gauges (O, On3/OO, S, HO, and
HOOn3); a new membership directory (to be released
every 3-4 years) in response to many requests; and
a new savings plan, open to NMRA members only,
with interest rates comparable to long-term certi-
ficates but with complete flexibility of withdrawal.
Other items in the works include low-cost model
insurance, more Data Sheets, reinstatement of the
Conformance-Inspection program, and more jewelry
and related "store" items. Planning is being initiated
to project additional member services in the future.

On another front, it is a pleasure to report that NER
has been given the go-ahead to submit a bid this
Summer in San Mateo for the 1986 NMRA Convention
in Boston. Your active support of Convention Commit-
tee chairman Bill Parker would certainly be appreciated.
Putting on a national convention is a monumental
task!

See you in Rockport. --Dave Messer

MEMBERS (continued from page 3)

Rhode Island

Paul M. Maziarz, Riverside

Vermont

William A. Parker, Springfield

Nova Scotia

Peter C. Waugh, Lower Sackville

Quebec

Richard W. Jewkes, Montreal
Andre G. Lacerte, Grand Mere
Jean Lafleur, Chateauguay

England

Mike Lucas, Calshot, Southampton

by DAVE MESSER

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

CARDSTOCK AND SHEETWOOD (Part I)

General

Cardstock and sheetwood can be considered among the most basic materials for the scratchbuilder. They are readily available, inexpensive, easily worked, and adaptable to a wide range of modeling situations.

Cardstock is actually a general term for a family of paper and paperboard materials, ranging in quality from the coarse-fibred unbleached stock (like that used for shirt cardboards) through illustration board to Strathmore board, which many consider to be one of the best all-around sheet materials for modeling purposes. Strathmore is available in a range of thicknesses from single-ply (.006") to heavy (.070"), and has an extremely fine texture and smooth surface which allows it to be cut evenly and cleanly, and to be easily rolled, laminated, and even contoured. (See Bill Clouser's definitive article in February '59 MR for more details.)

The sheetwood primarily used for modeling is kiln-dried basswood, which is a close-grained, even-textured wood of moderate hardness which can be milled to close tolerances to provide even-thickness sheets down to 1/32". Its close grain allows it to be sanded to a near shine and also allows accurate milling for special effects such as scribing, clapboards, board and batten, etc.

Another sheetwood modeling material often overlooked is fine plywood, available in thicknesses down to 1/16", and offering the advantages of increased strength and resistance to warpage. Balsa wood, because of its softness and non-uniform texture, has only limited use for finish modeling.

Storage

Because of their ability to absorb moisture and deform, both cardstock and sheetwood should be stored in a clean, dry area in either of two ways: (1) Vertically with some type of interleaving for retention of the vertical position and identification or (2) horizontally on a flat surface, larger sizes on the bottom and with the entire area supported uniformly. The first method has the advantage of not having to lift the pile to get at something near the bottom and reduces the possibility of damage

to adjacent sheets in the process. In either case it is desirable to let the materials acclimate to their final use environment before starting construction. Nothing makes a modeler grimace more than watching a completed structure "adjust" to its environment! (More on this problem later)

Surface Preparation

Unless a rough surface is desired, it is usually a good idea to sand sheetwood with fine paper prior to any cutting. This avoids rounded edges on individual pieces and assures a uniform surface. If a very smooth surface is desired, one or more coats of a sanding sealer can be applied, allowing each one to dry thoroughly and then sanding lightly. Whether this is done on the original stock, on individual pieces before assembly, or on the assembled model depends on the nature of the model. Cardstock, particularly the better grades, generally needs little or no surface preparation, except for sealing at the edges. This is usually better done after assembly.

(To be continued)

Members

The Northeastern Region welcomes the following new members (list as of 2-28-81):

Connecticut

- William R. Colwell, New Haven
- George Evanson, Hartford
- Dennis A. Fustini, Ledyard
- Richard H. McOuat, Rockville
- Roger S. Pugh, Rockville
- Kenneth M. Spector, Manchester
- William A. Sproull, Granby
- Ed F. Yuike, Wallingford
- Raymond J. Zarychta, Glastonbury

Massachusetts

- Peter W. Berlo, Medford
- Robert A. Buck, Warren

New Hampshire

- Stephen Doyle, Durham
- Charles A. Petkick, New Castle

New Jersey

- Michael M. Cherson, Kendall Park
- Kenneth Pfeil, Westwood
- Bruce W. Woolman, Kinnelon

New York

- Ira O. Covington, Highland Milles
- Herman S. D. Botzow, Tuxedo
- Richard L. Fisher, New York
- Richard M. Forest, Brooklyn
- Thomas J. Matthews, Rocky Point
- Edward F. Platz, Poughkeepsie
- William J. Rathjens, Wantagh
- Jan M. Roberts, Cazenovia
- James Tomaso, Hudson
- Michael F. Ungeheuer, Massapequa

(Continued, page 2)



Before we leave the subject of turnouts I would like to discuss briefly turnout controls.

The Midland crew is not too fond of switch machines due to the unreliability of the affordable models. The machine is probably more sinned against than sinned. I believe the difficulty of making a dependable linkage which is not too grotesque in appearance is the difficulty. To make such a linkage on a "bend the iron" turnout is not easy. It seems that the switch machines have little enough horsepower to throw "swing point types" without the added drag of a bend the iron condition.

Only the turnouts which absolutely had to be electrified were so installed. The remainder were thrown by Caboose Industries switch stands or by a hidden linkage.

The hidden linkage throws were found to be best. They have an unlimited source of horsepower, your hand. They have an electrical switch to direct polarity duplicating the electrical point function. They just don't fail. We have actually replaced electrified turnouts with this linkage due to consistent problems with the switch machines.

The linkage I recommend was first described in the trade magazines about 10 years ago. I found two problems with that design. It uses angle braces of metal to attach to the table, which were costly and hard to handle. I'm cheap, so I came up with a pine mounting block to hold the slide switch and allow easy adjustment of the assembly. It is shown in the accompanying illustrations.

The rest is obvious. The 2-56 threaded rod is the actuator and can be purchased from your hobby dealer. The model plane buffs use them for control rods. The slide switches are presently three for \$1.50 at Radio Shack. The pan head wood screw is available at your hardware store. The rail spikes that hold the switch to the block are only a personal preference. They tend not to crack the pine block while giving adequate hold.

I drill and tap the handle lengthwise 2-56 using a drill and tap from my hobby store. Next the hole for the .03 hard brass wire is drilled and the wire force fitted into the hole at 90 degrees to the tapped hole. At that time I also solder the wires to the terminals to avoid soldering upsidedown later. After making an appropriate size hole under the points of the turnout I screw the assembly to the bottom of the layout and attach the control rod.

Wiring is simple. Merely solder the center wire to the frog rails, and the others to the stock rails closest to them. Now no matter if the points get dirty, the switch will duplicate the function and serve as a detent for the linkage as well.

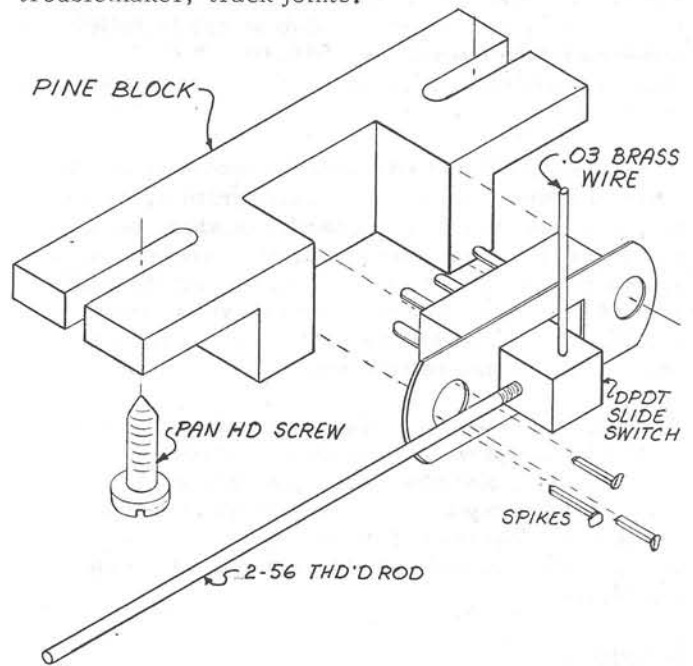
If you can't get to the point area for making a clearance hole, the linkage can be a first class lever just like a conventional switch machine linkage. You will have to reverse the wiring of the stock rails however to compensate for the reverse position of the switch button.

These installations are no more work than the average switch machine installation and a lot more dependable. Another nice feature is the cost. It should be under \$2.50 per installation.

Try these suggestions where you can. If an electrified turnout at a remote site is necessary, use the machine wisely and be sure to wire the machine to give the same electrical point duplication that we saw on the manual linkage. Use hard brass wire for the throw rod and be professional in its installation. You will probably do just fine.

When those turnouts are working right, you will really like the improvement in operation.

Next issue we will leave turnouts and look at another troublemaker, track joints.



The Spring, 1956, Coupler told of plans for the Spring Convention May 5-6 at the Stacy-Trent Hotel in Trenton, NJ. This was a joint project with the MER. Included were a trip to the John English plant in Morrisville, a clinic on "Prototype Operation" conducted by Watty House and Pop Houghton, and a trip to Edwin P. Alexander's model railroad exhibit and museum in Yardley.

Pittsfield, MA's Charles Ogren was the new Editor of the Coupler.

NER SPRING, 1981, CONVENTION



ROCKPORT CONVENTION

ROCKPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 15-17

Dick Towle, Chairman

FEATURED EVENTS

LAYOUT VISITS

LIVE STEAMERS

DISPLAYS & DEALERS

WHITE ELEPHANT

13 LIVE CLINICS

20 CLINIC SESSIONS

SCENIC TOURS

LADIES EVENTS

RAILROAD MOVIES

MODEL & PHOTO CONTESTS

SATURDAY BANQUET

PROTOTYPE DISPLAYS

NER ROOM RESERVATION

Please indicate choice of accommodations.

- Seaside hotel
 Modern motel
 No preference

Lack of a large facility could not keep us from offering you this beautiful resort area for a convention site.

Please mail (postmarked by May 2) to:

NER ACCOMMODATIONS
P.O. BOX 328
MANCHESTER, MA 01944

(See other side)

NER ROCKPORT CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Complete reverse side and mail (postmarked by May 5) to:

IRWIN F. B. LLOYD
44 LINCOLN DRIVE
GLASTONBURY, CT 06033

Make checks payable to "NER CONVENTIONS".

Save \$\$\$\$. Register early.

(See other side)

Schedule

FRIDAY, MAY 15

Registration at Ralph Waldo Emerson Hotel, 3-5 and 7-9 p. m.
 Three local layouts open for visitation.
 Rockport Police Department program on home security
 Clinics and movies in operation all evening.
 Don Robinson's "Cracker Barrel" discussion.

SATURDAY, MAY 16

Registration at Rockport High School, 9 a. m. - noon.
 Model Contest Room opens at 9 a. m. Bring models.
 Clinic sessions all day. You'll have a choice.
 Ladies Programs offered throughout the day.
 Exhibitors, dealers, displays open 9-5.
 Prototype equipment exhibit in yards in the afternoon. (Guided tours of B&M and MBTA equipment)
 Hub Division Annual Meeting at high school, 4:30 p. m.
 Happy Hour at R. W. Emerson Hotel, 6 p. m.
 Banquet (limited to 150 persons) at Rockport High School, 7:30 p. m.
 Presentation of awards and banquet speaker.
 Slides of past conventions, at hotel, 10 p. m.

SUNDAY, MAY 17

NER Board of Directors meeting, at hotel, 10 a. m.
 Beverly Live Steamers open at 11 a. m.
 North Shore Railroad Club open afternoon.

F. Y. I.: Rockport is a dry town (And we're not referring to the water shortage in the Northeast!)

LATE ADDITION! A needle-craft contest for the ladies! Please bring any knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, crewel, etc. you may have made. Any needlework accepted for the contest must have a railroad theme.

SEND YOUR RESERVATIONS IN NOW. SPACE IS LIMITED.

NER ROCKPORT CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Deadline for advance registration: Postmarked by May 5.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

	Number	Advance	At Door
Registration	—	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00
Banquet	—	11. 00	13.00
Railfan pkg.	—	16. 00	18.00
Spouse pkg.	—	15. 00	17.00
Child to 12	—	12. 00	14.00

TOTAL REMITTED \$ _____

Check here if this will be your first NER convention.

(See other side.)

NER ROOM RESERVATION

Deadline for advance reservation: Postmarked by May 2.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

Indicate choice:

— Double - one bed	\$35.00
— Double - two beds	35.00
— Single (Very few)	20.00

I will arrive on _____ at _____ a. m. /p. m.

Please remit first night's lodging to "NER ACCOMMODATIONS." If you wish to be in same facility as another member, indicate their name: _____

Layouts

* Three excellent local layouts will be available for your inspection on Friday night.

* The Beverly Live Steamers will open on Sunday for the benefit of all conventioners.

* The large North Shore Railroad Club in Wakefield will also be your hosts on Sunday.

Clinics

1. Rick Spano
ANIMATION ON YOUR RAILROAD
2. Rich Laube
CASTING STRUCTURES IN HYDROCAL
3. John MacGoun
CONTROL PANEL CONSTRUCTION
4. Buzzy Washington
LIGHTING LOCOS WITH FIBER OPTICS
5. Tony Steele
TRAFFIC & OPERATIONS PLANNING
6. Pete Prunka
MICRO COMPUTERS AND MODEL R. R.
OPERATION
7. Abbott Lahti
COMMAND CONTROL DISCUSSED &
EVALUATED
8. King Burrill
EVOLUTION OF FREIGHT CARS
9. Rod Brown
DESIGNING A WEST VIRGINIA
RAILROAD
10. Alan Marr
KIT BASHING VEHICLES OF THE
STEAM ERA
11. Peter Tuttle
WORKING IN WOOD
12. Peter Watson
USING HAIR FOR VEGETATION
13. Mark Hall
RELIABLE TRACKWORK
14. Jim Thorington
PAINTING & DECALING EQUIPMENT
15. Don Fiehman
TRACKSIDE SIGNALS
16. Wally Lloyd
HOW COME THE TRAIN DON'T GO?
17. Al Westerfield
FRONT PROJECTION PHOTOGRAPHY
18. Tom Eckstein
SCENICING YOUR MODEL RAILROAD
19. Al Turner
STYRENE AND OTHER STUFF
20. Joe Kurileck
EXPLAINING STEAM LOCO PARTS

Note: Numbers 14-20 are tape-slide programs

Contests

* NER Model Contest in all categories. This is the time to qualify for Master Builder in the Achievement Program.

*Photo Contest in black & white and color prints in both model and prototype categories.

*Special Winter Photo Contest. Bring a slide or print of your favorite Winter scene on the railroad. Limited to one entry per member.

Attention Scratchbuilders:

BUILD MODEL OF THE NMRA HEADQUARTERS FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A LIFE MEMBERSHIP!

See the October, 1980 NMRA Bulletin for plans and details.

There are prizes on the regional as well as the national level.

And, for NER members, the time to enter is the Spring Convention in Rockport.

While entry in regional contests is not a requirement for national consideration, those models entered will earn Achievement Program scores as provided under AP rules.

Displays

* Models displays will feature operating layouts, exhibits of equipment, new products, and dealers' offerings. A White Elephant Table will be in operation.

* Prototype displays at Rockport Yards will feature the latest in B&M and MBTA equipment with railroad personnel to guide you. A release of liability will be required, as well as identification badges.

Banquet

* The High School will be the site of our Spring Banquet. Chicken Cordon Bleu with rice pilaf and broccoli will be the main course.

* After the awards, Bill MacDonald, Chief Engineer-Rail Operations for MBTA and an ex-B&M man will entertain us with prototype experiences.

WHAT MAKES ROCKPORT A GREAT CONVENTION SITE?

Situated at the tip of Cape Ann and surrounded on three sides by water is the little picture book town of Rockport. Tourism is what makes this town tick. A multitude of good restaurants awaits you. A listing will be available at the registration table.

The pretty little harbour boasts of the much-photographed "Motif No. 1", which has appeared on magazines, calendars, place mats, etc. The coastline is rugged, rocky, and picturesque. You'll enjoy poking around the waterfront. Just out of the center of town on a spit of land is famous "Bearskin Neck", noted for all kinds of creations, novelties, knick-knacks, gifts, and paintings. You name it, they've got it.

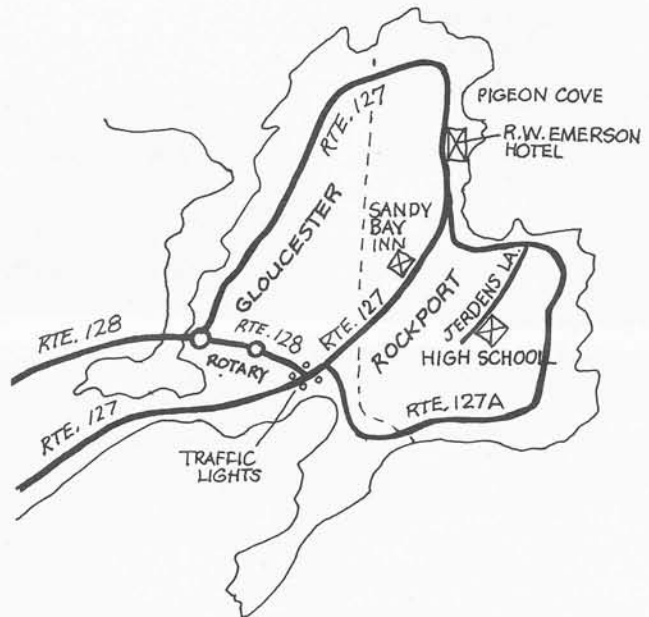
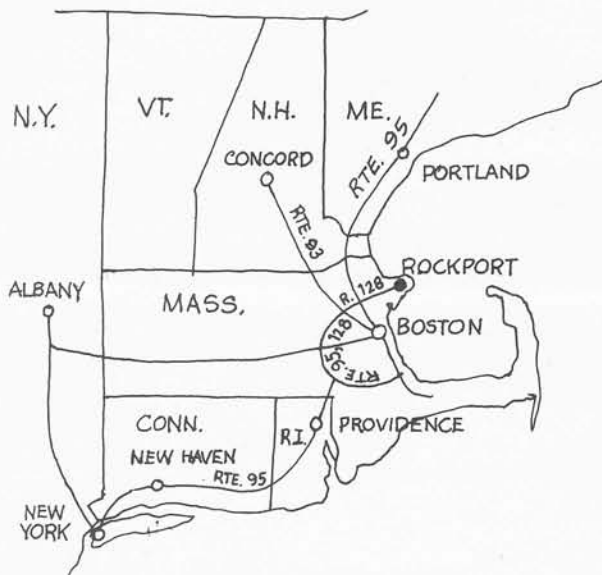
Ladies, we plan to show you the old homes, an art gallery, and to visit the chef at the Gloucester House

for his secrets of seafood cooking.

The MBTA operates regular passenger service into the Rockport Terminal. We have been promised that you will see F-10's, F-40PH's and B&M GP33's and GP40's, as well as "Go" equipment.

Be advised that there are plenty of rooms in town, but none of the establishments is large. So if you wish a choice, get your forms in at once. When the two principal units are filled, you'll be assigned to a good alternate accommodation, the Turk's Head Inn.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Hotel is located just off Route 127, beyond the Cape Ann Tool Co. at Phillips and Cathedral Streets. Headquarters will be here on Friday night.



ON THE **SCHEDULE**

NATIONAL

August 18-23, San Mateo, CA: WESTERN FUN IN '81 (Bob Dupont, 1448 Cary Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401)

July 13-18, 1982, Washington, DC
July 18-24, 1983, Winnepeg, MB
August 6-12, 1984, Kansas City, MO

NORTHEASTERN REGION

October 23-25, North Conway, NH

NER DIVISIONS

Sunday, May 3, LITTLE RHODY DIVISION'S 17TH ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE, Junior High School, 45 South Washington Street, North Attleborough, MA, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Alan W. Bliet, 190 Broadway, North Attleborough, MA 02760. 617-695-0998).

Friday-Sunday, May 15-17, MARITIME DIVISION CONVENTION, Wandlyn Inn, Fredericton, NB (81 Maritime Division Convention, Box 787 Station "A", Fredericton, NB E3B 5B4).

Sunday, May 31, DIVISION ALOUETTE QUEBEC SPRING CONVENTION, Service des Loisirs Building, 725 10th Avenue, Lachine, PO, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Films, clinics, modular layout, White Elephant table. (Robert Gauthier, P.O. Box 1029, Rigaud, Quebec J0P 1P0. 514-451-4152, evenings).



FROM THE DIVISIONS



ALOUETTE QUEBEC

The most active part of the division is Trois Rivières. At present they have a layout of 12 portable modules with more to come. They go out approximately once a month to different shopping centres of the region (Granby, Sorel, Shawinigan, Trois Rivières, Québec) to promote the hobby and to help the local clubs or association to get started. We found that there are a lot of modelers that have small layouts at home but did not know about the local organization. So by doing these expositions in the local shopping centres we bring these lost boxcars back to the main track. We believe that more modelers should get involved in the promotion of a fascinating hobby where there is always something to do twelve months of the year.

If anyone from other divisions is interested in obtaining our bilingual, 40-page magazine, write to: J. Lalande, 142 Place Mgr. Comtois, Cap-de-la-Madeline, Québec G8T 1X3, with a \$5 annual membership fee.

--Robert Lalande

GARDEN STATE

Ollie Billings conducted a "hands in" clinic on Hydrocal scenery January 12 at the Model Railroad Club in Union. On February 23 Ron Clark, an engineer with the Erie-Lackawanna, talked about prototype railroading (His father and grandfather also worked for the railroad!). Jim Boyd of Model Railroad Craftsman was the speaker March 6. Casting Buildings was the subject April 10. A fine variety, indeed.

--Whistle Post

HUB DIVISION

If any of you other divisions are looking to increase your membership and haven't really given it a go, you might want to try what we have been doing in Hub for about six (maybe more) years. This is only to be a helpful tip in the event you are looking for ideas.

We made up a professional looking vertical display that consists of three panels hinged together to fold over onto each other for ease in carrying. There are braces on the back, also folding, that get clamped onto a standard 2½ x 8 foot table. The display opens up into a straight line and is then 84" long by 42" high. All the way across the top is a train with engine and flat cars carrying words telling what the display is all about: "Join NRMA NER Hub". Each of the

panels then carries information about NMRA, NER and Hub along with room to attach the cover of each of the latest publications (Bulletin, Coupler, Headlight), dues info, and the next coming event. We have a full complement of membership applications for all three groups and blank membership cards for Hub along with our computerized member records.

We take the display to five area shows per year and to the NER convention whenever it is in Hub territory. We have been averaging about 75 people per year who fail to renew, but our drive brings in about 90 per year, so we have been growing steadily. When we started, we had about 77 members (about six years ago) and are now about to pass 400. In the years of Hub history prior to that six year period the membership count stayed quite stationary at about 75. Of course, you will need to give the members a good publication and a few good shows or meets to keep to keep their interest. Give it a whirl if you haven't already. It is a lot of fun and it works. Take a look at our display at the Rockport Convention.

Get your layouts and your clinics and your organizational abilities and your muscles all tuned up for the Summer of 1986. The Hub Division expects to host the NMRA National Convention in Boston that year, if all goes well. We are officially presenting our bid, as required, at the NMRA San Mateo Convention in California this Summer. This will be the big one, and if we win it we will need your help.

There will not be a Hub Division annual Spring Convention this year because of the NER Spring Convention in Rockport. We urge all Hub Division members who are reading this to attend that convention and of course all you good NER members too. See you there.

--Glenn Owens

LITTLE RHODY

On Saturday, January 31, 21 members of the Division held a workshop session to put the Division's portable layout in good working order, and to add to it. "There were more members present at this work session than some of the regular meetings. Maybe we should have more work sessions during the year."

--Yankee Clipper

NUTMEG

Officers for the year are Tom Hayes, President; Brian C. Whiton, Vice President; Kenneth May, Secretary; and Bruce Meulendyke, Treasurer. Other Board members are Clark A. Benson, Dennis A. Fustini, A. Murray Goodwin, Bill Kritzky, and Joseph Sokol. The March meeting was a visit to Don Clerke's "Boston and Maine and Others" in South Windsor.

--Murray Goodwin

SILK ALONG STEEL

by
Thomas Lewis

Silk Along Steel, with more than 35 illustrations of locomotives, railroad structures, etc., tells the story of the South Manchester Railroad, once the shortest privately-owned line in the nation. "A marvelous booklet ... Makes the past quite real." Winner of a Connecticut League of Historical Societies Award of Merit.

\$3.95

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Vernon, Conn
06066

Enclosed is \$ _____
Please send me _____
copies

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Please make check or money order
payable to: T. Lewis

RAIL FUN

--Tom Shaffer



LAYOUT VISIT (continued from page 1)

freight, is usually assigned two Atlas F9 units on the point with a two unit pusher from Colorado Springs to the summit at Divide.

Because coal is cheap and plentiful in the Leadville area, steam survives on the west end of the RIW. The roster includes the 2-6-0 in the photo and five 0-6-0's.

The large number of 0-6-0's might lead one to conclude that the RIW must be a switching road, but very little switching is done. The 0-6-0's are ideally suited to pusher service on eastbound tonnage because of the high tractive effort to weight ratio (all weight is on the drivers), and the relatively short wheelbase is less likely to spread the gauge of the many sharp curves on the line.

The RIW operates by timetable and utilizes a so-called "scale" time clock speeded up on a 60 to 1 ratio. That is, one minute of actual time equals one hour of "scale" time on the RIW. Thus a complete "15-hour" sequence of the timetable takes just 15 minutes actual operating time!

The photo was taken with a 4 x 5 bellows frame camera using Polaroid negative film by professional photographer Dan Hightower of Franklin, MA. I must admit my layout does not really look as good as the photo indicates. The credit goes to Mr. Hightower's skill. He spent four hours making this photo. Fortunately he charged me a previously agreed-upon price of \$25 plus expenses rather than his usual rate. His tricks included deliberately blurring a small area of the background just above the loco's smokestack to make it look like real smoke. --Walt Unruh

FROM THE DIVISIONS (continued from page 9)

HUDSON-BERKSHIRE

In November the Division visited Bill Kennedy's Ramapo Valley layout in Pittsfield, MA. The layout measures 12' by 28', with a 6' by 12' walk-in closet at one end for storage yards, and has a 180' main line. Dave Messer's Pennsylvania Northern in Wyantskill, NY and a clinic on "Vehicles for the 50's Scene" by Dave and Bill Mischler were featured in February.

--Form 19

SUNRISE TRAIL

The Winter Meet on January 17 featured The Circus Moves By Rail: An Introduction to Circus Modeling presented by the Dave Hooper Ring of Circus Model Builders International. The 15th Anniversary Convention was held April 4, with Russ Larson of Model Railroader as Banquet Speaker.

--Cannon Ball

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--Stan Bradley

THE TOUGHEST TOWN IN THE WEST

Away back in 1868 the Central Pacific, in its chaotic eastward dash from California to become part of the first transcontinental, arrived at the Humboldt River in Nevada. At this point the railroad town of Palisade sprang up. It soon became a highly important one and very active. The tiny community has witnessed over a century of progress, from tiny tea-kettle 4-4-0's hauling gangs of Chinese track laborers and their equipment, to the modern streamliner barreling through in a cloud of dust. Its hills which once echoed to the toots of the little diamond stacked wood-burners Leviathan and Antelope now reverberate to the rumbles of the multi-unit diesels with their hundred or more car trains.

After completion of the railroad, all trains stopped at Palisade for various reasons. The engine had to be watered and fueled, thus giving passengers time to get off for a snack at the station lunch room, or a snort at one of the Railroad Avenue saloons. The arrival of the train was a daily highlight in the humdrum life of the local citizenry, and they soon devised a little entertainment which gave them a great deal of fun but was a real shocker to the unsuspecting railroad passenger.

Every trainload of tenderfeet who alighted here would find the station area crowded with rough-looking "Western" characters spoiling for trouble. A loud argument would invariably start on the station platform. Suddenly shooting would break out in all directions. "Victims" commenced falling in pools of blood, which had previously been brought over in buckets from the local slaughter house. Terrified passengers dived for cover and begged for mercy. They never seemed to notice that the "victims" were soon dragged into the nearest saloon, where they would make a remarkable recovery, and that never was a tenderfoot or a trainman hit. The train crews helped create an atmosphere by dashing madly about and shouting that they had better get out of town quick before someone got hurt.

About 40 Shoshone Indians lived in town, and they enjoyed the act so much that they also wanted to have a part in it. Just as the train was ready to pull out, the howling painted savages came galloping out from behind the houses, "stabbing and scalping" with great gusto. The terrified tenderfoot, glad to be still alive after all this ruckus, would write home to his friends and to the newspapers about the "killings" he had seen. Palisade thus soon gained the reputation of being the "Toughest Town in the West", while its citizens chuckled and devised new wrinkles for the fun.

This was not difficult to do. There were plenty of

teamsters, idle miners, and railroad workers hanging around. Nick Pritchard had more than 500 wagons and 2,000 draft animals hauling supplies to the brawling mines at Eureka and other bonanza towns, and bringing back ore to the railroad for shipment. Saloons, hotels, and bawdy houses sprang up like magic. People worked hard, and they played hard. "Shooting up" the Overland Limited during its stop at the little Humboldt River town was the big event of the day, and the ham acting drama continued for many years thereafter without any abatement in the fun or in the gory reputation which ensued.

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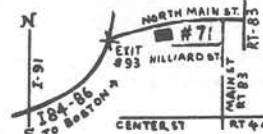
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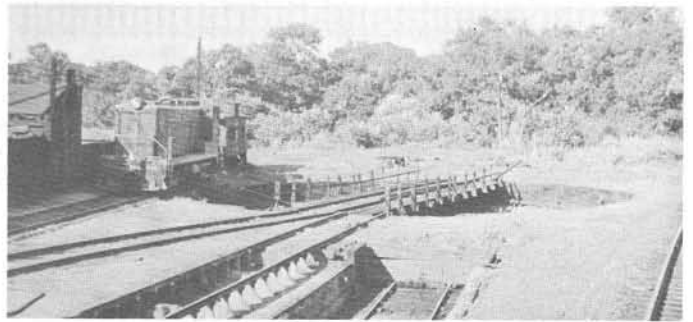
by RICHARD M. HANSCHKA

Here is an Erie turntable and junction scene at Erskine near Ringwood, NJ. In 1948 the sand facility and ash pit show clearly. Coal was loaded by a conveyor from a coal pile dumped near the track.

Peter Cooper had an iron foundry nearby. Cannon, chains, cannonballs, and various hardware were produced from local ore. In later years passenger locals to and from New York ended here, especially after the Greenwood Lake line was buried under Wanaque Reservoir.

The junction clearly shows in this photo. Note the simplicity of it all, befitting a model scene. By 1948 a VO1000 BLW switcher took over the yard duties even before the end of steam on the New York & Greenwood Lake branch.

Note the ash pit below the ash track. Concrete piers hold the rails as wood ties burn easily. A gondola rolled into the depressed spur and, after the cinders had been doused with water, the ashes were hand



shoveled into waiting steel gondolas which later were coupled to the ballast train. The cinders served the branchline for many years and can still be found. Actually the minerals in the ashes leached out from rain and snow so that black berries and black caps flourish along the right of way. Of course where the ashes fell and also were put to support the tracks, the weeds were controlled without need of materials like Agent Orange, which can be poisonous.

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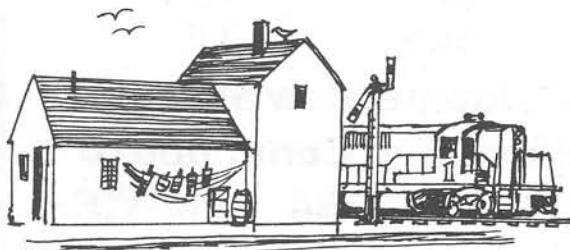
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