

NER **COUPLER**

NORTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

Summer '81

Rockport Report



Rockport, Massachusetts, one of the most beautiful spots in New England (and that's saying a lot!), was the scene of the NER's Spring Convention, May 15-17.

Here is a photo of its famous harbor.

For contest results, etc., see inside.

One of the layouts open to convention-goers was the O-scale Nehigh Valley of Paul Harling.

Much of the layout is outdoors! (In answer to the obvious question: Yes, there are two snowplows, capable of handling up to two inches of powder.)

Traction and narrow gauge are included.





NER BRASS



President: David W. Messer, 12 Hillview Court,
Wyantskill, NY 12198
Vice President: William S. Parker, 65 Coweset
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



NER COUPLER
#128, Summer, 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.

President's Column

As I indicated in Rockport, by the time you read this Bill Parker and the rest of the Boston Convention Committee will be putting the finishing touches on their bid presentation for the 1986 NMRA National Convention. The Greater Boston area offers excellent facilities, an extensive and varied array of railroad activities, and an experienced and dedicated crew to take on such a massive undertaking. Wish them well!

I am very pleased to announce that Brian Whiton of Windsor Locks, CT, has agreed to accept the responsibility of NER Model Contest Chairman. Brian is an expert modeler and has recently served as a contest judge. I am sure Brian will continue the standard of excellence the NER model contest has evidenced for some years while utilizing contest judging as a means of guiding and encouraging newer modelers to improve their efforts. Brian replaces Harold Fossum, who has resigned due to employment uncertainties. My appreciation to Harold for his efforts, and we hope he will be able to stay in contact with the Region.

The Fall NER Convention, to be held October 23-25 in North Conway, New Hampshire, will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Region. NER Historian Doc Dias will be preparing a history of the Region, and we hope to have an announcement before the convention of an item to commemorate this event.

See you in North Conway --- or in San Mateo if you can make it!

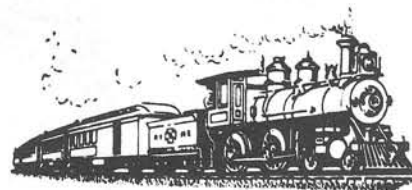
--Dave Messer

DEADLINES

COUPLER DEADLINES, 1981-82

Issue #129, Fall '81 July 31 (Fall Convention
publicity persons, please note!)
Issue #130, Winter '81 November 20 (Fall Conven-
tion photographer, please note!)
Issue #131, Spring '82 March 12 (Assumes May 13-15
Spring Convention date)
Issue #132, Summer '82 May 28 (Same assumption
about Spring Convention)

Issue will be mailed approximately one month
after deadline listed (Fall issue about six weeks
after).



Frank Murray

Master Model Railroader No. 85 considers himself typical of most participants in the NMRA's Achievement Program. Says Frank Murray with a telling smile, "I was really surprised at just how much I've gotten from model railroading once I started to write down what I've done over the years and how. My becoming a MMR probably would've taken even longer without some help with all the paperwork!"

Frank has modeled in HO scale since 1938 and recalls that his interest in that scale was prompted largely by the Ideal passenger car kits then on the market. "I was quite impressed," he says, "with their scale appearance, particularly when compared with the tinsplate cars sharing the local hobby shop's shelves." And while he's dabbled a bit in the other major scales, Frank has stayed with HO because "It isn't too big for the layout spaces I've had and isn't too small to limit my particular interest in scratchbuilding and superdetailing."

Frank's attention to details on houses, stores, and other prototype structures isn't lost to his fellow modelers. The photos and line drawings he uses in building his own "Seaford and Oyster Bay Railroad" frequently appear in the Sunrise Trail Division Cannonball. Many have also served as the basis for live participation clinics conducted by Frank and his "SOB Sipping and Switching Society" colleagues at Division and Region meets.

A 30-year resident of Seaford, NY, Frank shares his interests in model railroading with his wife, Rita, and their two daughters, Diane and Marian. Not always interested in the hobby, Frank says they were truly won over to "Dad's Folly" a number of years ago when, while on vacation in California, Frank accepted an invitation from John Allen to visit the "Gorre & Daphetid Railroad".

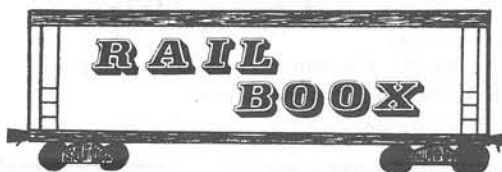
Frank holds AP certificates for Cars, Structures, Scenery, Civil Engineering, Chief Dispatcher, Association Volunteer and Author, with work in progress (mostly paperwork, he says) on Locomotives and Electrical. He is the recipient of several divisional President's Awards, and was recently re-elected Division Vice President after 11 years service as a STD director.

Frank is the sixth STD member to reach MMR, holding up the Division's #1 rank amongst all divisions on the regional level. NER is still #1, with a total of 15: Doug Smith (#1), Paul Mallery (#4), Waty House (#5), Don Robinson (#13), Walt Olevsky (#19), Graham Harvey, Jr. (#40), George Konard (#44), Bill Lorence (#45), Frank McKenna (#46), Ira Rothberg (#53), John Nelsen (#57), Norman Briskman (#63), Blair Foulds (#75), Frank Murray (#85), Jack Alexander (#86).

--Ira Rothberg



((There is at least one other MMR in the NER, Bob Van Cleef (#52), though I don't know if he achieved the MMR while a member of the NER. In any case, I would be happy to print any additions to Ira's list. -- M. G.))



TRACK PLANNING IDEAS FROM MODEL RAILROADER: 58 Track Plans From Past Issues, Selected by Bob Hayden (Milwaukee: Kalmbach, 1981). \$5.95.

The tremendous wealth of material that has appeared over the years in Model Railroader is being made available in a series of books from Kalmbach, and this one is a fine addition to the series.

The plans included "represent a wide variety of sound approaches to the task of routing model railroad track. Included are plans for all scales and gauges, plans for portable railroads and plans that will fill a basement, layouts designed for point-to-point operation and others designed for continuous running. One particularly useful aspect of this collection is that most of the plans are designed for a modest space ...".

Linn Westcott's article on "Converting Track Plans From One Scale to Another" is included.

Since I have trouble visualizing a two-dimension track plan in three-dimensions, I very much appreciated the sketches which are included (in addition to the track plans) for some of the pikes. I hope that this will become the standard practice in the hobby for future articles and books. It really helps those of us who had trouble with solid geometry, cube puzzles on SAT's, etc.!

--Murray Goodwin

ROCKPORT CONVENTION

MAY 15-17

The Rockport Convention was attended by 208 persons.
They came from:

Connecticut	27
Maine	4
Massachusetts	102
New Hampshire	9
New Jersey	6
New York	33
Rhode Island	2
Vermont	8
Canada	8
Arizona	2
Maryland	2
Missouri	1
Pennsylvania	4
	<u>208</u>

The banquet was attended by 158.

NMRA President Huebenthal and Eastern Region Vice President Gerald attended.

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

- 1st, Craftsman
Tom Kabele: B&O 0-4-0 #96 Steam Switcher
HUB DIVISION AWARD (Second Highest)
- 2nd, Craftsman
Skip Caswell: SP&S 4-6-2 #625
- 3rd, Craftsman
Peter A. Watson: SR&RL 2-6-2 #18
- Honorable Mention, Craftsman
Skip Caswell: SP&S 2-8-2 #506

OTHER LOCOMOTIVES

- Merit, Craftsman
Richard J. Watson: MEC U18B #408

NON-REVENUE CARS

- 1st, Craftsman
Alan N. Houghton: SR&RL Flanger #505
BALDWIN TROPHY (Best in Show)
- 2nd, Craftsman
Thom Donovan: Free-lance Logging Caboose
SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION AWARD (New
modeler)

STRUCTURES

- 1st, Craftsman
Alan N. Houghton: Marbles Station

DIORAMA

- 2nd, Master
Robert Bennet: Free-lance Engine Terminal

#All awards qualify for Achievement Program credit.

Judges:

Brian C. Whiton
Walter J. Rogers
John MacGown
Lawrence G. Carlson
Graham Harvey
Harold Fossum, Chairman



It has been very rewarding the last two years as Model Contest Chairman. I've had the pleasure of making many new and interesting friends.

I also enjoyed introducing a few dozen modelers to the Achievement Program when I presented their awards.

I want to say thanks because I could not have done it by myself. There were many wonderful people helping me all the way.

Due to my personal employment situation Brian C. Whiton has been chosen to take the job over, by your BOD, with my recommendation. Good Luck, Brian! I'm sure you will do a great job!

--Harold L. Fossum

The Modular Concept:1

Concept and Planning

Paul Ingraham

There are probably few railway modelers who are not yet aware of the modular concept. The idea has been around for over 40 years, but it was really brought into the limelight in 1974 with the N scale modular layout at the NMRA National Convention in San Diego. This effort was created as a showpiece for N scale models and the display was designed to highlight the long trains and spacious perspective which this small scale can offer. The system is designed to be promotional and the approach geared to the public. The operations scheme is simply to "keep 'em moving". For its intended purpose the system has been a spectacular success. The idea has drawn a lot of attention and has been copied in other scales. Modular display layouts have become a part of many local and regional meets where they are introducing thousands of people to the hobby of railway modeling. Modules are certainly one of the best promotional tools our hobby has and we're certain to see increased use of this medium for exhibitions.

Concurrently with all this proliferation of modules for display, there has been development of the concept in other directions. Many modelers were quick to realize that this new idea also held potential as an operations medium. Though this aspect of the modular concept has been largely overshadowed by the use of modules for display, the significance of operational development is having a profound effect on modular concept development.

In this series of articles we will look at the modular concept in depth - what it is, how it works, what it can offer the individual modeler as well as the club and exhibitor. At the same time we will introduce you to the modular specifications and guidelines that have been developed as a result of five years work on the NMRA Modular Project. This undertaking compiles, analyzes and evaluates the specifications of over 25 systems in all scales. The best features of these have been brought together to create the most versatile and reliable modular system possible. The highlights of this work will be presented in this series and, as we progress, it will be possible to actually construct a module in any scale following the material presented.

Bear in mind that we will be looking at an optimal system in which the modeler can develop the modular concept to fit his particular needs. There may be ideas presented here that you have not previously associated with the modular concept. But, then, that's the reason for the modular project!

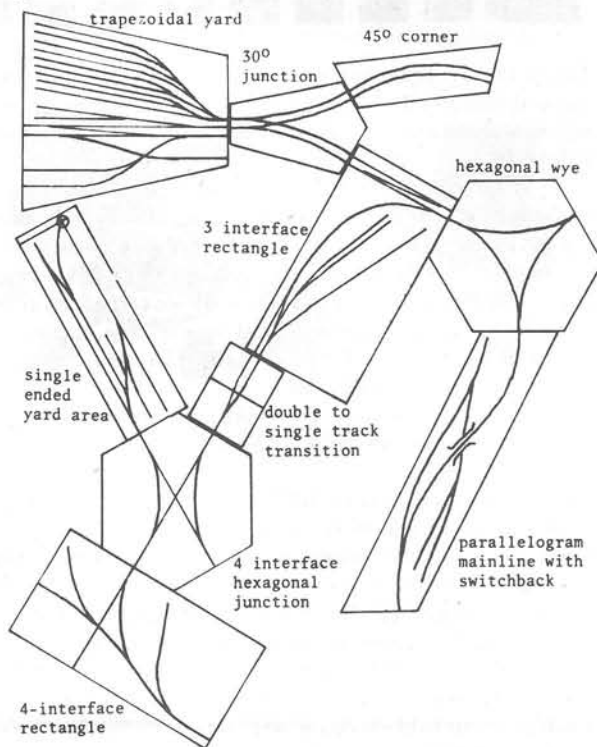
CONCEPT AND PLANNING - Whether your model system is permanent or modular, it is important to realize that, first and foremost, you are building a railway. What this means is that you are creating a system to transport people and goods from one point to another on the system. While it is the system upon which your attention is focused, it is those points of activity that make it possible. Model railway designs which ignore the balance between local and long haul activity quickly become uninteresting.

The modular concept can help provide this balance. Some modules can focus attention on the points of activity. These can feature concise scenes with concentrated operation and detailed structures. The activity areas can be linked together by simpler mainline modules which emphasize the expanse of territory the railway serves. The builder can concentrate on scenery and lineside detail.

For operators this arrangement provides a clear sequence of points along the line. For viewers the progress of the train

is easily comprehended. And each scene is viewed more completely than it would be in the usual multi-layered "spaghetti bowl" layout plan because distracting elements are screened out.

In considering the endless variety of scenes that can be represented on a module, one quickly realizes that different settings will require different sizes and shapes of modules. And, indeed, ANY plan can be accommodated in the modular concept! Here are some ideas that have actually been built. These may be quite different from what you thought modules could be. They certainly pose challenges for modular system design.



As we progress through this series, we'll see how these and other ideas can work in the modular concept. We'll find out why it is not at all necessary to specify modular size or shape when we discuss modular system design next time.

The complete Modular Coordinator's Report includes the specifications together with background data, the systems comparison charts, a list of modular groups and a selected bibliography. Copies may be obtained for \$5, postpaid, from Paul Ingraham 3304 Maybelle Way, No. 1 Oakland, CA 94619

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Paul Ingraham has been a railway modeler for over 20 years. He was a founding member of the Bay Area N Scalpers. He is an internationally known N scale modeler.

He began working with modular ideas in 1970, designing a portable, rearrangeable home layout. He has built modules for both NTRAK and INTERAIL in N scale and to the specifications given in the Modular Coordinator's Report in N, HO and LIONEL.

Paul was appointed the first NMRA National Modular Coordinator in 1976 and, since then, has collected, compiled and evaluated modular data from around the world. He has also authored the Modular Coordinator's Report, upon which this series of articles is based.



SUMMER 1956

Emphasis at the recent Trenton convention was on operation. ### NER membership totalled 574.### The Nutmeg Division was formed, with Arthur Wadhams as its first President. /He's still an active member - M. G. /### George Allen reported that "Out on the west coast another chap by the name of Allen is building quite a railroad empire. We correspond frequently."###



alignment, assure electrical continuity, and present no shimming effect to the rails. Using your needle nose pliers to uniformly bend the end of the rail to a curvature close to that desired will further reduce spring-back or kinking tendencies and make spiking easier. The resulting joint will be smoother in alignment and surface.

Soldering the bonding wire in place is, I admit, an annoying chore, but it is electrically more desirable than a rail joiner and required in the absence of a rail joiner. Two techniques are shown for you to choose from.

Another bothersome thing is using four spikes on the central tie. It is, however, very important. The extra support on the tip of the rail is the key to a smooth joint. It's not hard with a bit of practice. Without all four spikes the joint will not be much smoother than one which used a rail joiner.

Adjusting the spikes (called heeling the head) can be accomplished by using a nail set and small hammer to tap lightly the head of the spike against the rail or even to move the spikes and rail slightly. It's better to adjust a spike than reset it in the interest of not chewing up the ties unnecessarily.

On my Vermont Midland Railway and the Berlin Bangor and Maine of John Sacardote, which have been built to these standards, there is an excellent success record for the five tie joint.

You fellows who are using prefabricated track can use the technique too. Merely remove the last two ties of the prefabricated section and substitute two Campbell (or similar) ties, which you must glue to the roadbed. When you place the track, add one more tie central to the cut ends of the joint and spike as shown in the drawings.

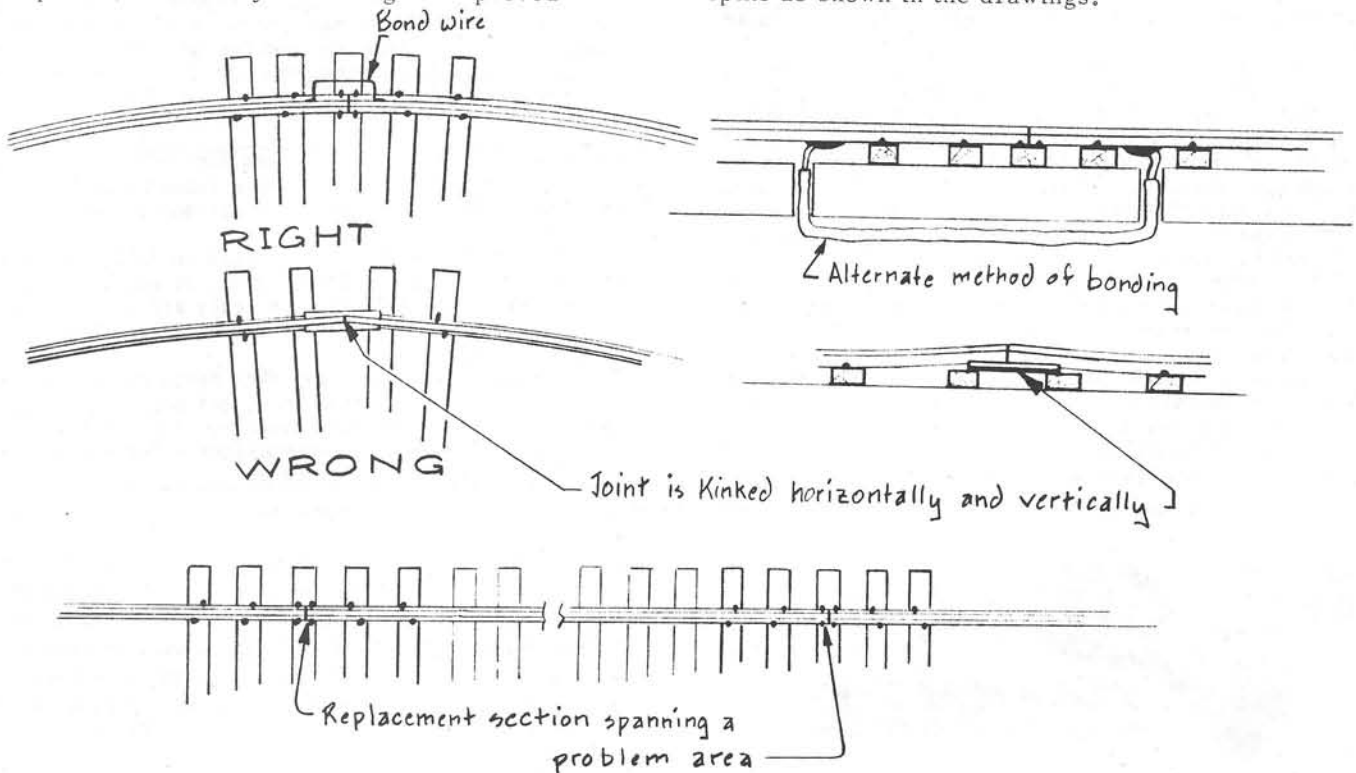
Let's take a look at rail joints. Most modelers who have expressed their dissatisfaction to me about operations have not given enough attention to rail joints.

Most of us are running some equipment with unequalized trucks. I know I have about 80 pieces in service. These truck assemblies cannot tolerate much deviation in the surface or vertical alignment of the track. I cannot afford to replace them, so the track must be kept up to a high standard.

Horizontal deviations or kinks, of course, are a hazard to even the best of equipment.

Both of these sources of trouble are easily overcome. The secret is the three tie joint. Frankly, I have never seen a rail joiner that really worked. Most modelers count on them to do the job and give little further thought to the matter. Usually the rail joiners cause peaking or vertical misalignment of the rail. Furthermore, because of the nature of the device it cannot induce uniform curvature through the joint. Invariably a kink will occur. So why use rail joiners at all? Even their electrical continuity can break down due to oxidation.

As can be seen in the drawings, a three tie joint or (as I prefer) a five tie joint will give improved



Please take notice of how the spikes are placed on the ties. Spikes set outside to the curvature are placed nearest to the joint. This technique will assist in bending the rail into proper alignment. If the spikes are opposite to that which is shown, they would tend to allow the rails to kink outward.

If you wish to repair a badly mutilated joint or one which falls right over a joint in the roadbed, it will be necessary to remove about four inches of rail. By so doing, you may cut the ends back such that they occur over a tie. Insert a proper length piece of rail and spike per the attached drawings. The area between the two new joints should be spiked at a closer interval than normal. However spiking every tie is not necessary.

Take a look at your rail joints where there have been derailments. Correct the offending joints and check the gauge. If both are corrected, the problem will be corrected as well.

Remember, surface and alignment are the key to derailment-free operation, and derailment-free operation is the key to your enjoyment. Don't forget to solder the bonding wire, or you will not be able to run past the joint. Be critical of your own work. It will pay off in many hours of fun.

In the next issue we will discuss some tried and true remedies for rolling stock problems.

RAIL FUN

--Tom Shaffer



YOU DROPPED YOUR CONTACT CEMENT.

Clinics



Here is a summary of material presented at one of the many live clinics at the Spring Convention at Rockport.

CARRIER/COMMAND CONTROL - Abbott Lahti, Power Systems, Inc., assisted by Steve Russell, VP of PSI



Carrier Control is specifically the type of control in which the "command" signals are superimposed or piggybacked onto the propulsion voltage. All present commercial command control systems work this way, and this was the subject of the clinic.

Some of the desired features for commercial systems which were discussed in detail were:

- As close to prototypical operation as possible.
- Its effect on unconverted equipment. Will it hurt it?
- Are expansion parts available (e. g., cable from Radio Shack, etc.)?
- Response to shorts on track. Will it melt equipment, etc.? Circuit breaker types.
- Control station types: fixed base or tethered? Ease of control wire hookup.
- Channel-changing techniques.
- Compatibility with other systems of same manufacturer.
- Power-sharing through multiple divisions.
- Receiver sizes and power ratings.
- Controlability: slow speed control, mid-range control, instantaneous control.
- Multiple Unit capability.
- Memory walk-around.
- Special effects: bells, whistles, etc.

There was discussion of the pros and cons of the various types of systems:

- Frequency division (Dynatrol, Alphatronics/Astrac, On Board)
- Time division (digital, Zero-One)
- Time division (analog, CTC-16)
- Types of track power (AC or DC and effects)

The second hour of the clinic was a "hands on" demonstration of various systems, features, locos, etc.

This was the first time that most of the attendees had operated a carrier command system, and they were interested in the flexibility of operation and freedom from control panel constraints.

by DAVE MESSER

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

CARDSTOCK AND SHEETWOOD (Part II)

Fabrication Techniques

The first step in the construction of any model, after the material has been selected, is to lay out the pattern. This is best done on a smooth, flat surface, with good lighting. Accurate measurement, square corners, and a sharp pencil are basic requirements. Once the pattern is laid out, recheck measurements before cutting. Cutting cardstock or sheetwood is best done with a sharp model knife against a steel rule. Making several light cuts rather than one heavy cut produces a cleaner edge with minimum distortion. Stripwood should be cut either with a model knife or single-edge razor blade (small thicknesses) or with a razor saw in a model miter box (larger thicknesses and structural shapes). A "filler strip" between the flanges of structural shapes while cutting will minimize breakage. All cut edges should be checked and sanded very lightly to remove any roughness.

Generally speaking, except for very small models, both cardstock and sheetwood need bracing to maintain their shape. If interior appearance is not a factor this is readily accomplished with stripwood (about 1/8" square in HO) around the perimeter of each surface, with intermediate members as needed. Where interior appearance is a factor, reinforcing can be accomplished by using thicker material, hidden bracing (below the floor, between interior and exterior walls, etc.), laminates (to be discussed later), or a combination of the above. In any case, construction must be planned in advance to take into account whatever system is to be used.

Unlike prototype construction, where surface (siding) material is applied to a completed frame, model construction usually involves attaching the frame members (bracing) to the back (inside) of the siding. This is not only easier, but results in less chance of distortion. In some cases, particularly when the siding consists of individual pieces, the frame for each side should be completed first, but the sides not put together until the siding material is applied.

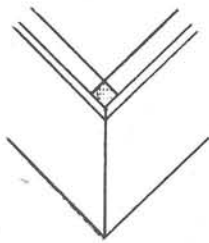
In either case, the side assembly should be weighted or clamped until the glue is completely dry and stored flat until final assembly.

In addition to positioning bracing to avoid door and window openings, the type of assembly at corners must also be considered. Note the location of the corner brace in each case below.

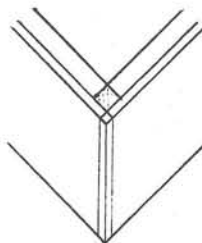
Adhesives

The most satisfactory adhesive for the vast majority of uses in joining cardstock and sheetwood to themselves or to each other is white glue (Elmer's, etc.). It is easy to use, inexpensive, dries moderately fast and holds firmly without cracking. Solvent cements (Ambroid, etc.) have a relatively fast drying time, which can be a mixed blessing. While it is often useful when securing small parts, too rapid drying can prevent sufficient penetration into the materials being joined, resulting in a weak joint which eventually separates. Rapid drying can also be a disadvantage when coating a large joint surface or where exact positioning of a part is necessary before setting. Contact cements (Goo, Pliobond, etc.) are of limited value for modeling purposes when using card and wood alone, except possibly for large-surface joints. They are extremely useful when joining non-porous materials (sheet metal or small castings, styrene, etc.) to cardstock or wood (more on this later).

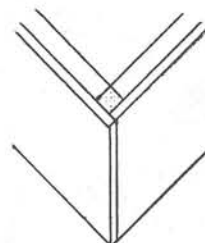
To ensure a firm joint and prevent warping when using white glue, larger objects or flat pieces should be clamped or weighted until set. Where several smaller pieces are to be joined, and for any joints that show on the finished model, it is best to dispense a small amount of glue on a piece of scrap wood or card, and then use a toothpick or similar thin object to apply the glue to the pieces to be joined. For



Miter Joint
 Good for clapboard, board and batten siding, and masonry.



Corner Post
 Where visible corner post is desired, as with clapboard or novelty siding.



Lap Joint
 O.K. for vertical scribed siding, or where material is to be covered.

extremely fine work, white glue may be diluted with a small amount of water (4:1), but it is better not to carry this too far.

Whatever adhesive is used, getting into the habit of using only the minimum amount necessary and removing the excess on visible joints will make a big difference in the appearance of the finished model.

Finishing Methods

Solvent-based model railroad paints (Floquil, Scale-coat, etc.), because of the wide range of appropriate colors, ease of application, finely-ground pigment, and fast drying time, offer the best all-around paint type for use on cardstock and wood. Water-based paints (Poly-S), with the possible exception of being odorless, offer no real advantage over their solvent-based counterparts for use on wood and cardstock. Stains, either shoe dye in alcohol or ready-mixed (Flo-Stain), offer a more penetrating finish where a weathered look is desired. A similar effect can be obtained with solvent-based paints by diluting and/or wiping the surface after a few seconds. Finishing materials not specifically intended for model railroad use can sometimes be used, and are often cheaper, but they are generally unsatisfactory because of their coarse-ground pigments which tend to obscure detail and provide an uneven finish.

For smaller areas, brush application of model railroad paints gives generally satisfactory results on wood and cardstock. For larger areas or for large numbers of small parts, spray application is faster and gives a more even finish. Although aerosol cans are available for the popular colors, maximum control and flexibility for color mixing and blending are obtained with an airbrush. This is particularly true for weathering.



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, FALL CONVENTION, Fox Ridge Resort, North Conway, NH.

Jack Alexander



NER Permanent Convention Chairman Jack Alexander has become the National Model Railroad Association's Master Model Railroader No. 86.

He earned certificates in the following: Master Builder - Structures, Master Builder - Cars, Master Builder - Scenery, Association Official, Association Volunteer, Author, and Chief Dispatcher.

Jack is a director and the treasurer of the Hub Division. He was vice president of the Northeastern Region for four years and the president for two years. He has been a member of the Permanent Convention Committee and has served as its chairman for 12 years.

A few years ago he was presented with the Hub Division's Don Pierce Award for outstanding service to model railroading.

He has been chairman for many NER and Hub conventions. He lives in East Bridgewater, MA, and many NER members had an opportunity to visit his layout after the Plymouth convention.

NER DIVISIONS

Saturday, September 26, SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION FALL MEET, St. David's Church, Clark Blvd, Massapequa, NY, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Albert Waltien, 38-23 212th Street, Bayside, NY 11360. 212-423-6036)

Sunday, November 8, NUTMEG DIVISION TRAIN SHOW, K of C Hall, Torrington, CT (Dennis Fustini, 18 Pennyrise Lane, Ledyard, CT 06339. 203-536-1828).

Railroadiana

THE FIRST MILE A MINUTE

There have been many "firsts" in the history of the world's railroads. Just as England is conceded to be the "Mother of the Railroad", New England may justifiably lay claim to being the Cradle of the American Railroads.

In early 1795 a short incline of wooden rails was used for the transportation of materials to and from cer-

tain kilns near the Beacon Hill area of Boston. This was the first application of the use of rails to guide the wheels of goods carriers from one point to another. Horses provided the motive power.

Exactly 31 years later the Granite Railway Company was incorporated in Massachusetts. It was commenced on March 4, 1826, to haul granite blocks used in the construction of the Bunker Hill Monument, a distance of three miles from Quincy to Milton on the Neponset River. Again horses furnished the power, but there was one notable improvement over the earlier line, the application of strap iron along the top of the wooden rails in order to improve their wearing quality. This was the idea of Gridley Bryant, builder of the road.

This railroad was opened for business on October 7, 1826, and it was the very first incorporated railroad company on the North American continent. It is said that as late as 1952 the New Haven Railroad still operated over about 1,500 feet of the original road-bed. This gives New England in general and the New Haven in particular a just claim to being connected with the first of all the great "Number One" claims during the decades of this industry's varied history. It involved the creation of a method known as "rails" to guide the flanged wheel, from which came the words "railway" and "railroad". Thus this was the "first of firsts", and the original great accomplishment which was later lost sight of as one improvement followed another in the pages of railroad history, the accomplishment without which none of the subsequent ones would have been possible.

Few people realize the fact that the iron rail made possible for the first time the breaking of the speed barrier, one of the really great forward steps in science. Prior to that time, man's fastest rate of was his running ability or that of his horse or his boat. Here again a New England railroad did "the impossible". The little Boston & Maine Railroad was only about five years old when it engaged the services of a man as Master Mechanic who was to become immortal in the archives of American Railroading, who was destined to command all of the motive power of the United States Armies, to become superintendant of the great Erie, and to send the world's first train order along the shining wires of the new telegraph system.

Charles Minot foresaw the fact that speed was to be one of the great factors in the success of railway operations, and Man was about to break his earth-born shackles and travel "with the speed of the wind".

In August of 1848 preparations were being made for an event of tremendous importance of which few people were really aware. Little attention was attached to the fact that #19, The Antelope, had been sent to the shops for servicing and then scheduled for certain "trial runs". This little locomotive was built by Boston Machine Shops in 1843 as 4-2-0 #7, and was thereafter rebuilt as 4-4-0 #19 by Hinckley & Drury. There had been some talk about The Antelope in railroading circles in Boston, but nothing

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

PO Box 2040
Vernon, Conn
06066

Enclosed is \$ _____
Please send me _____
copies

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

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



was divulged until September 11, 1848. On that date a goodly crowd gathered at the old B&M station to witness the departure of a "special move". Mr. Minot electrified the newspaper reporters with the thrilling announcement that "Today we shall try to reach the speed of one mile in one minute, or better still, twenty-six miles in twenty-six minutes. Ladies and Gentlemen, Boston to Lawrence in twenty-six minutes!"

The very thought of such a speed was fantastic, and hardly anyone thought it could be done. As a matter of fact, the entire assemblage was rather stunned by the announcement, and many felt that the trial would be prohibited.

However, with John Pemperton at the throttle and Master Mechanic Minot in the cab, the newspaper reporters and railroad observers who were willing to take the enormous risk boarded the train, and the Captain (Conductor today) gave one of the most momentous highballs of all time. The little train eased out of the station and gathered speed only moderately until the marshlands at the Charles River Bridge had been left behind. Then The Antelope leaped ahead at a rapid pace. The coaches commenced swaying dizzily, and most of the passengers took to the floor in combined fear and prayer.

By the time they reached Reading, 16 miles north, Pemperton and Minot had made up their lost time. A number of spectators were down at the depot, but they all scattered madly as the train flashed by. "We are all right," said Minot, "and I figure we are hitting close to 70 miles an hour." The Captain went through the coaches to see that all was well, and found the passengers terror-stricken. "My God, how much further?" they asked. "Nine miles, and nine minutes to go", was the answer.

Up on deck Minot smelled the tell-tale odor of a not bearing, and he knew that all would be lost if it let go. Snatching the tallow pot off the back head, he leaned out of the cab window and tried to pour hot tallow on the drive pins. The wheels were turning so rapidly that this was impossible. However, he noticed that they were passing what in later years would be known as Shawsheen Village, and he figured that if they were able to reach White Pups Crossing they could ease off a little and coast for the last mile downgrade into Lawrence Station. By a stroke of good fortune it happened in just that way, and the train rolled to a stop exactly 26 minutes after its Boston departure time.

The passenger were actually stunned, not so much at the successful run of The Antelope, but at the fact that, as one reporter expressed it, "we are still alive to write the story." The whole world was amazed at this outstanding exploit. A British paper remarked that "The bloomin Yanks will reach the speed of the planets at this rate." They were right on that score too. Mr. Minot was thereafter known as Mile-a-Minute Minot, and he became the first of the truly great immortals of the American Railroad Scene. --Stan Bradley

NER MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Mail to R. Roderick Brown, 79 Hemenway Road, Framingham, MA 01701). \$5 for 2 yrs; \$10 for 5 yrs.

NAME _____
 STREET & NUMBER _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

The Train Exchange

Your shop for all the nitty gritty



The "Undecorated Railroad" — In stock: All the undecorated locos and cars from Athearn, Model Die Casting, Silver Streak and Ulrich. AND all the accessories to customize your locos and cars.

Badger Air-Brushes and Parts
 Decals — Champ, Accucal, Microscale, Herald King (Miller), Walthers
 Paints — Accupaint, Scalecoat, Floquil, Poly-S

The area's largest model railroad operates for the public the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays between 3 and 4 p.m.

Tues-Fri: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
 Sat: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Sun: 1-5 p.m.



The Train Exchange
 71 Hillard St. Manchester, CT 06040

VALLEY HOBBIES INC.

**HO, N, HO_{N3} Engines,
 Cars, Structures
 All Scratchbuilding
 Supplies**

Books — Brass

— Try Us. We Care —

Hours

MON-FRI	10-8
SAT	9-5
SUN	1-5

**782 Hopmeadow St. (Rt. 10)
 Simsbury, Conn. 06070
 (203) 651-3234 MC-VISA**

SOOT & CINDERS

by RICHARD M. HANSCHKA

Years ago, when trolley cars were the competition for steam railroad operation, some companies such as the Baltimore and Ohio decided to compete by using the trolley as a two man-operated train on sparsely populated lines. Later when the Depression occurred and passenger traffic dropped remarkably the trolley was a means of survival as it could handle some mail and express also.

Many franchises depended upon passenger and mail service in order to operate more lucrative freight service. There is one line which still operates from Atlanta with a tax provision based upon continued passenger service though private passenger service is nearly ended as a profit-motivated means of transport.

Cincinnati Hamilton & Dayton was a B&O subsidiary line. The Toledo Special was run over the connecting Cincinnati & Lake Erie electric line. Here is a good excuse in days of high price equipment to put on a one car train (even 1920-30 era) and so keep your franchise.

Toledo, Ohio, April, 1928



NER Office Manager

79 Hememway Road
Framingham, MA 01701



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Robert Strobel
1203 89th St
N Bergen NJ 07047



NMRA Headquarters