



NER COUPLER

NORTHEASTERN REGION
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

NER Fall Convention

NER Life Begins at 40!

On Columbus Day weekend, about two hundred NER members, spouses and friends attended the Fall Convention in Utica, NY. Jim Heidt and the Central New York Division gang organized and put together an excellent convention out on the western edge of the Region. We arrived Friday afternoon shortly before 5 PM. After getting checked in it was time for supper. Unfortunately, the layout tours were leaving at 5:30, and by the time we had returned, they were well along. So I helped out with registration while my wife went to the ladies activities. Then there was time to check out where our friends were located in the hotel, get together to visit and watch some of the ballgame.

Saturday morning dawned bright and clear. After breakfast I took in clinics. Walter Neuman gave a clinic showing how to build an automatic turntable control - one that is modular and can be built at the workbench and then mounted on the layout. Then, a most interesting clinic by Rich Laube on how to cast structures in plaster. Included was a brief lesson in making the molds used to make these castings. This technique can be used not only for buildings, but also for stone and block walls, and abutments, and anything else made of stone or masonry. A very informative clinic. Then it was off to see Ed Scott's clinic on the use of photography in modeling. Ed has many excellent pointers to offer the individual who would like to improve his model photography technique, perhaps even become involved in the photo contest. If you ever have another chance to see his clinic, don't miss it. Other clinics offered were Jim Kelly of Model Railroader with the "Favorite Layouts of the MR Staff" with fascinating slides, Bob Mohowski of Railroad Model Craftsman giving a clinic

on painting brass models, John Nehrich talking about Building Scenery on the NEB & W, Bill Fredlund on Building L Girder Benchwork, and Doug Preston on the History and Construction of Utica's Union Station. All in all, an excellent selection of clinics.

After visiting clinics I stopped into the contest room to visit with Brian Whiton and his judges. At this convention Brian was experimenting with 'open judging' - that is, judging the models while the contest room was open to visitors. I'm not sure how that worked out and if we'll ever see it happen again, but it was tried in Utica. I took my photos (see pages 5 and 6) and then headed off to the hospitality room. Shortly after that, my wife returned from the Charlestown trip, reporting a good time for the ladies, with both trips interesting and worthwhile. Shortly after that, we went to our room to get ready for the banquet.

The banquet was set for 7:00 with a happy half-hour prior to the meal. Dinner began only a few minutes after 7, with a buffet dinner. The food was great, no-one went hungry, and Central New York Division Superintendent, Jim Heidt, keep the program moving along as Master of Ceremonies. What's more, he was resplendant in a tuxedo - all to celebrate the NER's Fortieth Anniversary.

After the banquet, Jim introduced Mr. Fred Beach as featured speaker. Mr. Beach was the director of the New York Central Railroad film bureau in the 1940's and 1950's. The railroad used its film bureau for several purposes, mostly promotional. But occasionally, as Mr. Beach explained, the film bureau would be used for an unusual task. He related one such situation: there was a particular section of track that always

Continued on Page 4

NER Brass

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Address changes should be sent to the Office Manager. All other material should be sent to the Editor.

DEADLINE

for the next issue, #150, Winter 1987 is January 1, 1987. The issue will be mailed approximately one month after this date.

Other deadlines:

#151, Spring 1987 - March 1, 1987
#152, Summer 1987 - June 1, 1987
#153, Fall 1987 - August 1, 1987

From The Editor's Desk
by Kenneth May

As this is being written, winter is closing in on Connecticut - in fact, on the whole Region. After the holidays I am looking forward to doing some modeling - finally beginning the construction of the K & L. I have been spending quite a bit of time planning what will have to be done to prepare the room for the railroad, and thinking about how I will fit in the railroad. I hope to have something to report in the next issue.

Another issue has been rolling around the NMRA for a few years. It's the issue of the declining membership and includes the dues increases, quantity and quality of services. This past summer a report was made to the National Board of Trustees at Boston which represented one person's investigation into the causes of the declining membership. While I don't agree with some of the conclusions made, many of the points raised are valid and in my opinion deserve serious consideration by the BOT. For now, I recommend you carefully read the presentation, make up your own mind about its contents, and please let our Trustee, Bill Parker, know your thoughts. The NMRA, and its offspring - the NER - is facing its second fifty years but cannot expect to operate the same way it has for the first fifty in the next fifty. I will reserve my comments until next time.

I must offer my sincere thanks to Jim Heidt and all the members of the Central New York Division for the fine effort in Utica October 10 - 12th. I found the convention to be a wonderful recovery from the hectic activity at Boston; Utica was just right. I saw some wonderful clinics, some very good contest models, and an excellent train show. About the only thing I didn't get to do a lot of was visit layouts -- we got a late start on Friday and did not get to Utica until late afternoon, too late to make the layout tours Friday nite. Others who were able to go reported that the layouts were well done, and certainly worth the trip. Saturday night at the banquet was a real treat; first of all, a buffet dinner with very good selection, and no-one went away hungry. Then afterward, Mr. Fred Beach and his films. And what films!! Would you believe twenty to twenty-five steam engines sitting in the yard at 10° below zero? Well, that's just a sample of what

you either enjoyed or missed. All in all, a wonderful time.

The winter BOD meeting was held in Vernon, CT on Thanksgiving weekend. Re-elected President Bill Parker is looking to set the agenda for the next two years. In May we will be having our Spring Convention in Holyoke, MA and the committee is hard at work to make this as successful as Utica. I have been drafted onto the committee, so I'll see you there. Have a good winter.

Shop Talk

by Brian Whiton

In my last, I shared some thoughts on the subject of color contrasts. Did I sound lost? I was.

I have, however, started some of the experiments that I eluded to in that column. Basically, I needed to subdue any of the too bright colors on my Vermont Midland, while being careful not to change the rural Vermont character of the scenes to that of a depression era coal town (always a temptation since I really like depression era coal town pikes).

The first experiment I conducted was nearly accidental. My friend, John, needed some extra rolling stock to make his layout more interesting for the Connecticut Rails tour at the Minuteman '86 convention, so I culled out thirty cars for his use. I started picking eastern and Maine prototypes since his is a northern New Hampshire/Maine pike. I noticed that a lot of the yellow and green cars were coming off the pike and the increasing dominance of the boxcar red and tuscan red cars was making the pike more typical in appearance of the 1940 era. I liked what I saw. As a result John got the majority of the cars on the pike which were other than boxcar red

Continued on Page 12

NER Fall Convention: (Con't)

derailed a particular class of locomotive. None of the work the track gang did, solved the problem. So, to isolate the specific location, they removed the pilot truck from a locomotive, set up cameras to cover the offending location, and filmed a locomotive going on the ground. Using this technique the problem with the trackage was located and repairs made. Mr. Beach showed three films he made for the railroad during his years with them. All of them showed things of interest to all.

On Sunday, there were home layouts open as you headed home. The convention committee made arrangements with the RPI club in Troy to allow convention goers to enter at reduced fare by showing a convention badge. Many who headed east for home took advantage of the offer to see the latest progress at RPI.

The next convention, Spring '87, will be back in the center of the Region at Holyoke, Massachusetts, near the intersection of I-90 and I-91. The program is well into development. There will be nearly a dozen home layouts open; modules (HO, N and maybe O), a good clinic schedule, and the model contest. It should be another good time, so I hope to see you all there.

Contest Results - Utica

In the Model Contest held in Utica, NY October 10 - 12, 1986, the following people were awarded the following prizes:

Master Category:

Freight Cars

1st Place: John M. Johnson - National Plate Glass Hopper - **Baldwin Trophy**

Craftsman Category:

Locomotive - Steam

1st Place: Elton Ireland - Lionel Challenger - **Deleware Trophy**

Locomotive - Other

3rd Place: Robert VanCleeef - North River Gas Electric

Structures

Merit Walter A. Scholz - O scale Chenango Station

Diorama

1st Place: Joe Ryan III - Forest Scene - **Hub Award, New Modeler Award**

Judges for the model contest were: Don Howd, Rich Laube, Dave Messer, Bill Mischler, and Bob VanCleeef. Thanks to all of them.

Photo Contest Results - Utica

Master Category:

Color Prototype

1st Place: Robert Welk - Amtrak Metro-liner
2nd Place: Robert Welk - Amtrak #200
3rd Place: Robert Welk - Speeding Caboose

Craftsman Category:

Color Prototype

1st Place: Dorothy Wilgosz - Steamtown #2317
2nd Place: Dan Monahan - Cass #5
3rd Place: Dan Monahan - #972 at Jim Thorpe

Color Model

1st Place: Charles Grover III - NYC #1605

Color Slide

1st Place: Dorothy Wilgosz - B & M F-7
2nd Place: Dorothy Wilgosz - Steamtown #2317
3rd Place: Dorothy Wilgosz - Conway Scenic #47

Judges for the photo contest were: Bill Dexter (NFR), Jim Hoffman, and Fred Regan (NFR). Our thanks to them.

Non-Rail Contest Results - Utica

At Utica the Non-Rail Contest gave the following awards:

General Original

1st Place: Myrtle Parmele - Christmas Wreath

Needlework Kit Built

1st Place: Marjory Fredlund - Christmas Skirt

Needlework Pattern

1st Place: Betty Owens - Crocheted Afghan

Best In Show

Betty Owens - Crocheted Afghan

Linda Craigue would like to thank all who helped with the contest and all the contestants. She encourages others to prepare to participate in the contest in Holyoke. MEN, please encourage your wives to consider participation in the contest.

Photos

Page 6, Left to Right, Top to Bottom

Master of Ceremonies Jim Heidt, Joe Ryan III's Forest Scene Diorama; NER Presidents Bill Parker, David Messer, Dick Towle, Jack Alexander, Irwin Lloyd; John Johnson receiving Baldwin Trophy from Brian Whiton; Dorothy Wilgosz receiving one of her three Photo Contest awards from Brian Whiton; Gladys Lloyd receiving Minuteman '86 plaque from Bill Parker; Myrtle Parmele receiving Non-Rail Contest award from Non-Rail Chairperson Linda Craigue; Charles Grover receiving photo award from Brian Whiton.

Page 7, Left to Right, Top to Bottom

Elton Ireland receiving the Delaware Trophy from Brian Whiton; 40th Anniversary Cake provided as dessert; Bill Parker, Joanne Heidt, and Jim Heidt cutting the cake; Bob VanCLeef's Gas Electric; Walter Neuman giving his turntable clinic; Bill Parker giving Jim Heidt a President's Certificate

for putting on the convention; Joe Ryan III receiving the Youth Modeler Award from Jack MacIntosh of Sunrise Trail; Walter Scholz's Chenango Station; Irwin Lloyd swearing in newly elected officers and directors; John Johnson's Baldwin Trophy winning hopper car.

On The SCHEDULE

National

July 28 - August 1, 1987, Eugene, OR.
July 18 - 24, 1988, Birmingham, AL.
1989 - Houston, TX.
1990 - Pittsburg, PA.
1991 - Denver, CO.

Northeastern Region

May 29 - 31, 1987, Holyoke, MA.

NER Divisions

January 18, 1987: NMRA Sunrise Trail Division Winter Meet to be held at Three Sisters Community Center, 94 South Ocean Ave., Patchogue, NY. Open from 12 to 5 PM featuring clinics, slide shows, video tapes, contests and more. Contact: Ed Neale, 42 Indian Head Drive, Sayville, NY 11782.

March 7, 1987: Nutmeg Division Meet at home of Kenneth May, 71 Buff Cap Road, Tolland, CT at 7:30 PM. Program will include a clinic as well as the beginnings of a new home layout.

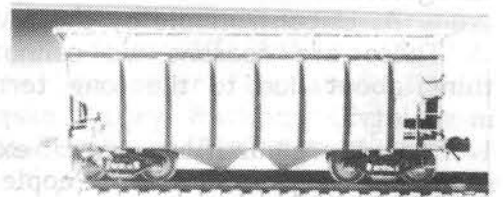
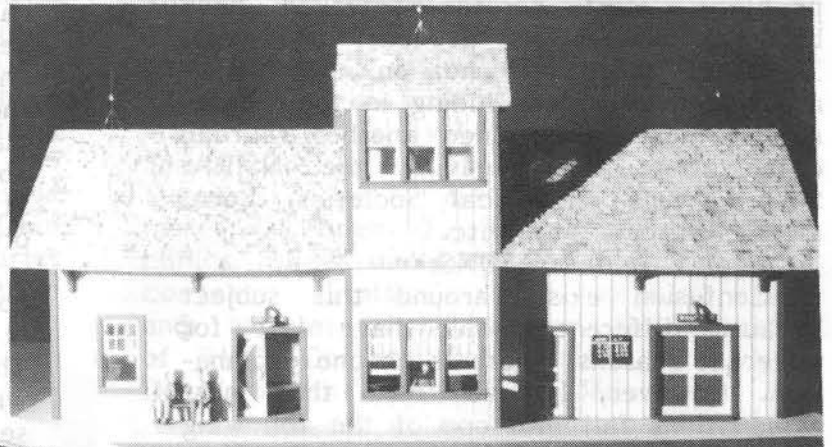
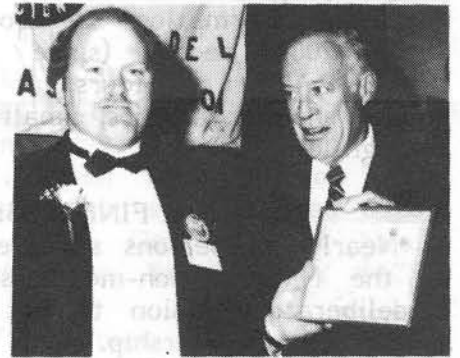
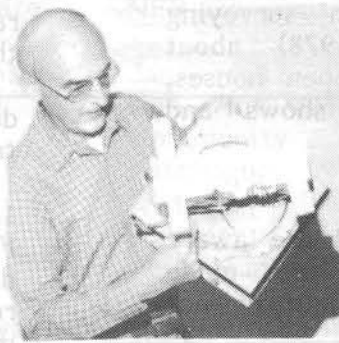
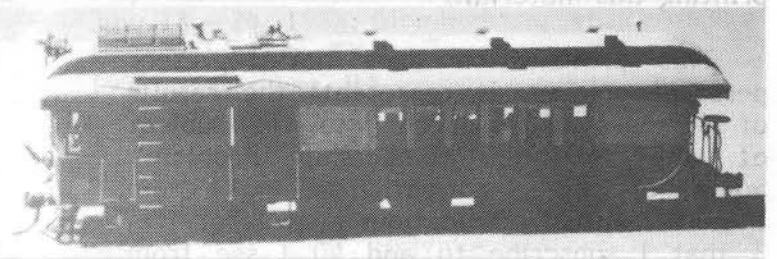
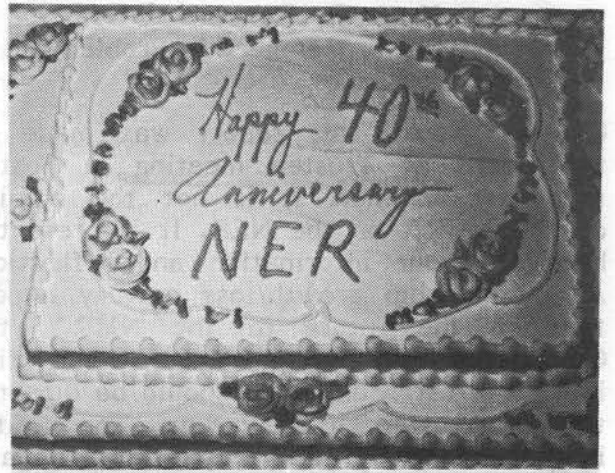
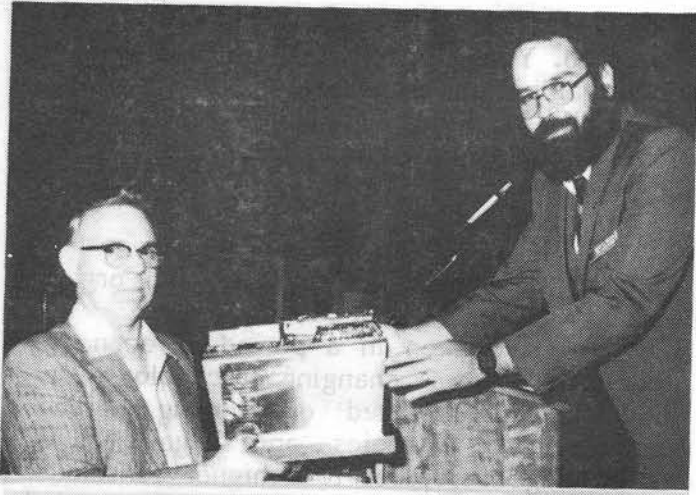
March 21, 1987: NMRA Sunrise Trail Division Spring Convention at the Bellmore United Methodist Church, 2640 Royle Street, Bellmore, NY. Open 10 - 5, program will include clinics, slide shows, video tapes, modules, contests, displays, white elephant table and banquet with speaker Hal Carstens of RMC. Contact: Bob Gatland, 21 Roydon Dr. W., North Merrick, NY 11566.

April 25-26, 1987: NMRA Alouette Division meet at La Ruche, 279 Principale, Granby, Quebec, Canada from 10 AM to 5 PM. Featuring the computer operated layout of the Yamaska Valley Railroad Club. Contact: J. P. MacLean at (514) 534-2776 after 6 PM.



July 23 - August 1, 1987, Eugene, OR.
July 18 - 26, 1988, Birmingham, AL.
1989 - Houston, TX





**Notes On Research Into:
N.M.R.A. Membership Problems**

(Editors Note: This report was made at the Board of Trustee meeting in Boston this past summer. It is not the opinion of the NMRA or the NER. It is presented here for your information and reflection. As membership growth/loss is very important to the future of the NMRA, the **Coupler** Editor thought you would find it of interest. Comments should be directed to our trustee, Bill Parker. The Editor is grateful to the TLR **Fusee** for originally printing this material.)

This presentation does not represent personal opinion. It represents the results of 8 years of research into the subject of the NMRA 'Membership Problem'. Some of the information comes from the 43 railroad publications that I receive, 3 that I subscribe to and 40 I see from the SIG program.

Most information is from surveying about 2000 people (since 1978) about the NMRA on bus tours, at open houses, hobby shops, railfairs, mall shows and through letters.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

1. Nearly all persons surveyed are aware of the NMRA. Non-members have made a deliberate decision to not join or not renew their membership.
2. Major problem is largely a renewal problem. Most persons surveyed have been a member for at least one year.
3. Model railroaders not in the NMRA are not lone wolves hiding in their basements; most have joined another railroad organization after leaving the NMRA: Scale groups, Historical Societies, Local Model Railroad Clubs, etc.

REASONS:

Confusion exists around this subject because different people have left for different reasons. There is no one explanation. However, I have found that most explanations fall into one of the following categories.

A. Uncontrollable by the NMRA

These are reasons we cannot do anything about due to the long term changes in society.

1. Most organizations are experiencing a membership decrease. People are not

joining organizations as much as they used to. Young people tend to be suspicious of organizations in general.

2. Fall in living standards due to the rise in energy cost has caused:

- A. Men to work longer hours or second jobs.
- B. Most women now working.
- C. Less time for hobbies and organizations.

3. We have been in a period of economic disruption from changing technology and imports. Unemployed or moving persons usually drop hobbies and organizations.

4. Change in values to a higher consciousness or outdoor environment and personal health. Such hobby time as there is available is going into outdoor and exercise activities. Last year's hobbyist is at the health club this year playing racket ball.

5. Reduction of railroads in the public consciousness: no passenger trains. Rise in grade crossing accidents because people believe that 'nothing runs there anymore'. Young people not aware of trains. Some railroads run fan trips to try to counter this lack of visibility.

About 1/3 of the NMRA membership drop is due to one of the above national trends.

B. Controllable by the NMRA

1. Bob Bast has never been replaced. Few people appreciate how much Bob did for the organization. As the person running the Headquarters Office he was many members primary contact. Most people expect to be able to write or call headquarters with a question and get an answer. They did get a relevant answer while Bob ran the office. Since then most questions have gone into a black hole of no reply. People find it absurd that there is no model railroader at the headquarters of a model railroad organization.

This item is the major source of the complaint that services are not what is expected or what they used to be. This is an especially common complaint with older members who remember the services available from Bob Bast.

It is not mere coincidence that our membership problem began shortly after Bob Bast's retirement. The home office is not a secretarial job; to understand it as only a secretarial job is to profoundly underestimate it's real function. Bob Bast must be replaced.

2. Open organization problem; NMRA is perceived as a closed organization run by a group of good old boys in a smoke filled room. Perception of the NMRA as a closed organization is a serious problem with younger people.

Young people, perceptions to the contrary notwithstanding, do have values.

- A. Long term protection of the environment.
- B. Personal health and healthy surroundings.
- C. Human interactions based on openness, no games. Young people have all read "Games People Play", "I'm OK, You're OK", etc.
- D. Young people hold the belief that closed organizations cause disasters: (Attack on Pearl Harbor, Bombing of Hiroshima, War in Viet Nam, etc.)

Young people will only join an open organization. You cannot just say you have an open organization; certain requirements must be met:

A. Simple organization, obvious from organization chart who is responsible for what. Pres., Treas., Secretary and Board of Regional representatives all that is required. Eliminate VP's and separate EC and BOT, eliminate executive handbook. The current situation of a complex office structure and confusion over responsibilities is viewed as absurd by young people; they think complexity is deliberate to confine knowledge of how organization works to a small "in" group.

Charge of "Too much politics" does not relate to conducting necessary business but to confusion surrounding complex organization.

Disputes over such items as whether the EC or BOT has jurisdiction, whether joint meetings are needed, who has the authority to call them, etc., are seen as absurd and worse, as designed to keep all but an "in" group from understanding what is going on. Only an "in" group has the time to read the giant executive handbook that explains how it really works.

Organization must be simplified so that its operation is obvious from the organization chart. (A side benefit would be a reduction in travel expenses.)

B. Meeting times, places and agenda must be published in advance. Advanced

publication of agenda permits members with an interest in a subject to attend or write in advance of actions being taken. Secrecy of information surrounding EC-BOT meetings seen as a sign of a closed organization.

Most of the adverse comments I have seen about the NMRA in print have been the result of people finding out about decisions affecting them only after the BOT has acted and set the latches for their implementation. Some recent examples:

a. The plan by engineering to change O, S, and N standards to make them compatible with a computer model based on HO standards. This plan was passed by the BOT for placement on the NMRA ballot before anyone affected by the proposal even knew it existed.

b. The proposal by engineering for module standards that are different from any of the modules that any of the module groups have actually built.

c. A teen program adopted without talking to any teens; program seen as an attempt to replace teen operated programs with adult operated programs.

If an agenda were published in advance then bad feelings from these and similar incidents would not occur when people are informed of proposals and invited to comment on them before rather than after the BOT acts on them.

C. Meeting minutes must be published soon after meetings are held, in plain English that people can actually read. For a period we did not publish minutes at all, and the ones we do publish leave the perception that they are designed to not be read or understood.

3. A simple dues structure must be established. The NMRA is the only organization of the many that I know where it is difficult to find and join the local level of the organization.

Successful organizations provide universal membership at all levels; local, regional, national and international.

Initial memberships can be sold at the national level, but renewals are sold at the local level. Renewal is based on what does or does not happen at the personal level. There is no system in the NMRA for anything to happen at the local level, as a part of the National. Due to social changes listed in the first section of this report memberships and

renewals must now be sold, we can no longer assume renewal. An association is organized to sell through the simple dues structure.

Simple dues structure requires specific procedures to be successful:

A. Member automatically receives local newsletter as well as the national "Bulletin" so she/he is informed about what NMRA events are happening locally.

B. Local membership officer receives from headquarters every month a computer printout listing 4 action items:

1. New members joining this month in this area.
2. Members transferring this month into the area.
3. Members in the area who's membership is due to expire that month.
4. Members in that area who's membership has expired and not been renewed.

C. Local Procedure:

1. Print new member list and transfer list in local newsletter so all members alerted to welcome new members at their meetings.
2. New and transferred members are called by local officers to invite them to their first meeting.
3. Persons due for renewal are called to solicit them and re-invite them to meetings.
4. Persons who failed to renew are called to invite renewal. If person declines, then stated reason is asked for and recorded. Reasons for non-renewal are sent to home office where they are tabulated by category. Organization then knows why its members do or do not renew.
5. A local officer is responsible to arrange for any members known to be in the hospital to be called upon.

4. The NMRA is in the position of a single product firm operating in what has developed into a multi-product market place.

The NMRA is perceived to be run by and for HO gaugers modeling main line prototypes. HOers tend not to see any problem because for them there is no problem.

Persons in other scales (Live steam, G, O, S, OO, TT, N, Z, all narrow gauges)

do not see their service needs in the NMRA.

Persons in specialized areas (Narrow gauge, trolley, transit, Hi Rail) do not see their service needs in the NMRA.

Persons modeling a specific prototype (Santa Fe, Great Northern, etc.) do not see their service needs in the NMRA. The matter reached a crisis in the 1970 walkout by O Scalers into the National O Scale Association. This event occurred after:

1. The "Bulletin" editor declined to continue printing plans in O scale.
2. BOT decided not to replace exhausted stock of O scale standard gauges.

O Scalers got the message that they no longer had influence to get the services they needed, so they left to form their own organization.

Several other groups have since followed their example; N-Trak, National Association of S Gaugers, LGB Clubs of America, The National Narrow Gauge Convention.

NMRA has no choice over development of a multi-product market. Decision is made by manufacturers who supply these markets, hobby dealers who stock it and persons supporting those choices by buying the supplies. The NMRA can neither create a special interest area nor prevent its creation; the decision is made in a free market of ideas.

The NMRA does have a choice of whether to include and serve these markets as they develop, or to continue to ignore them.

The NMRA must choose to include these markets if it wants to keep members or grow because most growth in the hobby is occurring in the new markets.

1. Women taking up N and Z scale.
2. Garden railways in G scale. Most LGB people are new to the hobby.
3. O and S scale both growing.
4. Interest in narrow gauge and trolley growing amongst historically inclined people.
5. Growing interest in modeling 'fallen flag' railroads; this movement is being supported through the historical societies.

To retain these people as members, the NMRA must restructure itself from a single product service to a multi-product

service. The NMRA must become an umbrella organization over many sub-organizations.

The present "Special Interest Groups" program may or may not be the ideal approach to the multi-product market. However, for any approach to the multi-product market to work the following requirements must be met:

1. Maintenance of a mailing list that identifies the people in each market (interest area).
2. Supply a publication devoted to each interest, edited by people practicing that interest, plans published for that scale, supplier notes and swap ads relevant to that interest.
3. Supply funding to each interest. It has been established that people with special interests are willing to pay extra to get the service they need.
4. Supply meeting space for special interests at conventions, provide a means for personal contact.
5. Each market segment must be served by people knowledgeable in that market.

Multi-market services cannot be run from a top down central authority. They can only be provided from a diverse bottom up organization. An open organization and a bottom up organization are two ways of saying the same thing; that it is run by its members, not its officers.

The role of the central organization is to run a free market of ideas. Like running a farmer's market, organizer provides spaces and general advertising, but on any given day farmers decide what will be offered for sale.

Role of a multi-product NMRA is to be the model railroaders market place of ideas; must provide the means for people of similar interests to find and support each other.

NMRA is an information exchange for local groups and special interests. (A local group is a special interest group of people who's special interest is defined by the fact that they live near each other.)

The NMRA provides meeting spaces (Conventions) where people can meet personally and see supplies and results.

Recruitment of members to the central organization must be done person to person, it cannot be ordered on groups of people. Recruitment is best done by showing benefits and incentives. Example of incentives:

Must be a member to receive the central information exchange in the "Bulletin".

Must be a member to receive the benefits of personal association at the local level.

Must be a member to receive discounts on convention fees, SIG memberships, perhaps other services. (We might want to consider increasing the non-member surcharge to attend conventions from \$5 to \$10).

NMRA services only available to members.

5. If we want to recruit modelers then we must find modelers where they are:

A. Non HO Scale persons are in the scale groups (NOSA, NASG, N-Trak, TT, OO, LGB Clubs of America, etc.)

B. HOers are in the historical societies. Historical societies are encouraged to participate in the SIG program so that these modelers are drawn to where they can be recruited. This result obtained by encouraging the historical societies to participate in our conventions and local events such as mall shows.

The NMRA can act to turn around its membership decline by:

1. Re-establishing a home office operation that is knowledgeable of and responsive to model railroading inquiries.

2. Re-structuring itself into an open organization.

3. Re-structuring itself as a simple dues organization with procedures to assure that services are delivered at the local level.

4. Re-structuring itself from a top down single product organization to a bottom up multi-product organization.

NER Office Manager

79 Hemenway Road
Framingham, MA 01701

First Class Postage Paid
Permit # 30
Stafford Springs,
Conn. 06076

Robert Strobel
1203 89th St
N Bergen NJ 07047

First Class Mail

Shop Talk (Con't)

or tuscan in color. Of course, B & M blue is logical and a few other strays like pistachio New York Central cars so these stayed. I reduced the tank car fleet to mostly black with a couple of cars in Union Oil colors. Boy did this back date the pike. Not Bad!

Next I took my normally simple weathering a step further on a couple of cars. These were boxcar red to start with, but needed to be weathered. I started with airbrushing a wash of Floquil mixed to match the body color, but a shade lighter. This was applied more heavily where there was no lettering to insure killing the plastic shine. Near the lettering I took it pretty easy stopping just short of a really visible color change on the lettering. The result was, by itself, quite pleasing. The car looked faded and dusty. Next I used my normal dry brushed dust, dirt and grunge colors to streak the sides and roof, leaning more to the blacks on the roof and the dust colors on the sides while using a mud/dust on the ends. Not so good. The streaks were too harsh. This was partly because I picked up some of the sprayed on color and partly because I am not that good with a brush. In retreat I again sprayed the car with the diluted body color, except I took it real easy this time. Wow! it took the curse out of the streaks and I had just what I wanted.

This must be a major element of the correct recipe for color balance. A dozen

cars later the area looked much more realistic. Since then, I have tried some automobiles, and a couple of structures with varying degrees of success. It is real easy to go too far, so I'm being careful and decreasing the contrast in gradual steps.

To some degree, this has suppressed the implied animation since the formerly harsh contrasts which attracted the viewers attention are now absent. I must take to compensate by adding even more implied animation to the scenes. One contrast which is entirely justified is the crystal clean appearance of the water (envirotex) so I am adding more water to the various scenes. This is an attention getter and a nice reminder that we are in Vermont.

A lucky break at Minuteman '86 allowed me to see Earl Smallshaw's clinic on Urban Modeling. Now there is little potential for urban modeling in western Vermont, but a lot was learned from this clinic regarding implied animation or life. Signs are a major factor. They really add life to a scene. That is the next major effort to be undertaken.

I will leave you hanging a bit here and break off. I want to relate real happenings to you, not speculation, so I will return next issue with more analysis of the results I have achieved. Pretty quick I'll weave this into a discussion of the Diorama category in the Model Contest. Its the one with the most fun packed into it and a good place for the beginner to try his hand. See you in the spring.