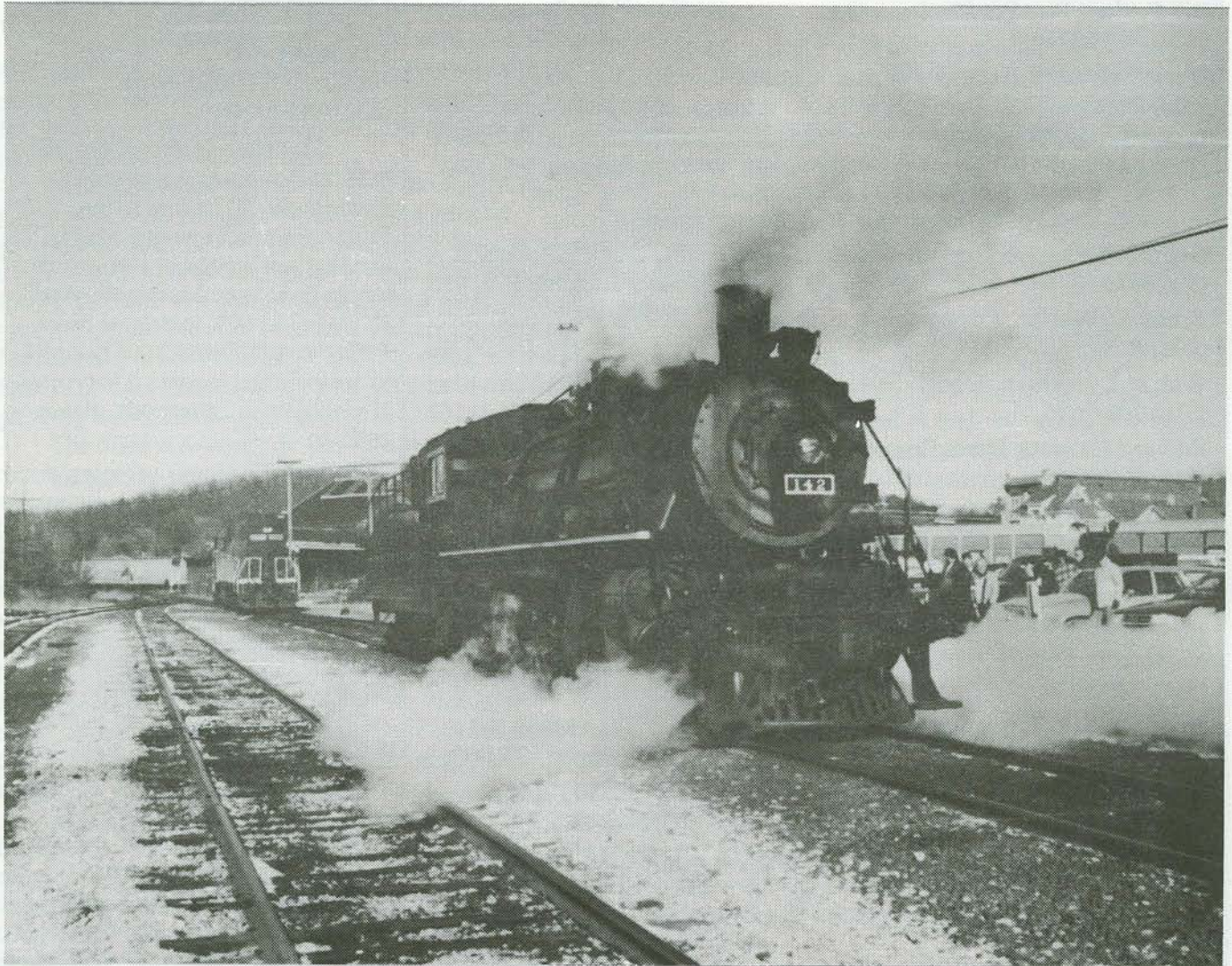


# **NER** **COUPLER**

Northeastern Region, *National Model Railroad Association, Inc.*

March 1992, Number 168



Ex Valley Railroad Mikado (ex something else, I imagine) now lettered for New York, Susquehanna & Western #142 spits steam from its cylinders and belches smoke from its stack in the foreground, a CV diesel behind it and, further down the track, a CONRAIL freight is crossing the diamond just beyond the station at Palmer, MA. The photo along with others on pages 6 and 11 were taken by Past NER President Bill Parker during a recent fantrip. His story begins on page 6. Also in this issue we complete the two-part series on building contest quality models from a clinic by Brian Whiton in which he describes the importance of the paperwork to winning entries. And, certainly not least, there is the registration form and event schedule for The Montrealer, the NER Spring convention to be held in the beautiful city of Montreal on the weekend of May 8 – 10. Make plans to join all of us there as we visit some outstanding layouts as well as the usual outstanding rounds of contests, clinics and non-rail events. The registration package begins on Page 7.



# NER BRASS

## Officers

James K. Heidt, President .....	PO Box 195 Camden, NY 13316
Brian C. Whiton, Vice President.....	94 & 96 Spring Street Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Bill Parker, Past President .....	65 Coweaset Dr. Brockton, MA 02401
Diane Salvatore, Secretary .....	33 Elm Street Woodstown, NJ 08098
James Truax, Treasurer .....	33 University Terrace Burlington, VT 05401

## Department Chairpersons

Bob Boudreau, Achievement Program .....	PO Box 7122, Station A Saint John NB E2L 4S5
Brian C. Whiton, Conventions .....	94 & 96 Spring Street Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Walter J. Neuman, Model Contest .....	149 Clark Blvd Massapequa, NY 11762
Edward C. Scott, Photo Contest .....	112 Glen Road, South Rome, NY 13440
Diane Salvatore, Non-Rail & Crafts .....	(address above)
June Neuman, Non-Rail & Crafts .....	149 Clark Blvd Massapequa, NY 11762

## Directors

Norman C. Guinard, Canada .....	9 Dube Street Edmundston, NB E3V2G1
Joseph F. Sokol, Connecticut & Rhode Island .....	213 Regan Rd #12 Vernon, CT 06066
John A. MacIntosh, Long Island & New York City ....	150 Kildare Road Garden City, NY 11530
Wayne R. Craigie, Massachusetts .....	26 Thurman Park Everett, MA 02149
Jon S. Sem, New Jersey .....	271 F. Englishtown Rd. Old Bridge, NJ 08857
Frank A. Deitz, New York State .....	38 Sandra Ave. Plattsburgh, NY 12901
David Collinge, Northern New England .....	RR-2, Box 500 Wolfeboro, NH 03894

## Working Crew

Phil Ackerman, Coupler Editor .....	PO Box 6461 Nashua, NH 03063-6461
Charles & Pat Bettinger, Convention Registrar .....	29 Foster Drive Vernon, CT 06066
Rod & Elizabeth Brown, Office Managers .....	79 Hemenway Road Framingham, MA 01701

# NER COUPLER

# 168, March 1992

This newsletter is the official publication of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc. and is published four times a year.

**Phil Ackerman, Coupler Editor**  
c/o Images and Ideas, Inc.  
P.O. Box 6461  
Nashua, NH 03063-6461  
(603) 886-6430

Send address changes to the NER Office Manager; all other material should be sent to the Editor. Editorial material may be handwritten legibly or typewritten, or can be sent on Macintosh, Apple II, or IBM 360K formatted disks. Please do not format your material as we reformat it when it is typeset. If you have any questions, please call.

For best results, photos for publication should be color or black and white low contrast prints. *Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for photos to be returned.*

Letters to the editor, and editorial opinions are welcome; however, criticism should be professional in nature, not personally directed at any individual.

**DEADLINE** for the next issue is May 20, 1992. The issue will be mailed in June.

Membership in the NER is open to all members of the NMRA, regardless of scale modeling preference or experience. Dues are \$6.00 per year and can be paid to the NER Office Manager, 79 Hemenway Road, Framingham, MA 01701. A membership application is found on page 9 of this NER COUPLER



# How to build models that win contests – Part 2

*A clinic by Brian Whiton*

**O**K so you have a model that is the maximum you can produce for detail quantity, construction quality and complexity, and which is pretty darn close to prototype or at least prototype practice.

*You can still foul up!*

**PAPER WORK!** Oh those ugly words. It is really not that bad if you approach it with good intentions. There are generally two forms, one to tell the attributes of the model, and another two identify the model and its builder, provide the judges slips and a claim ticket. The latter form is a piece of cake. Just answer the questions as they appear.

Only one word of caution. Category and Class are a bit tricky. Ask for help if you are in doubt, but here is the rule. You are a Craftsmen class entrant if you have never won a first place in the category in which the model is entered.

A Master Model Railroader, entering for the first time in diorama is a Craftsman Class entrant. If it is his first time, he obviously could not have previously won a first in that category. It might be his 11th entry yet still being short of a first place, he could well be still in Craftsman Class.

Win the big one, though, and you play with the big boys. You are then a Master Classification entrant. More is expected of you and more you shall give if you want to compete. When you need a breather from the heavy competition, just enter a Category in which you have not won a first place and are therefore a Craftsman Classification entrant. You will run out of this shelter soon enough.

Category, is the type of model, aimed at having like models compete in roughly the same category. There are concessions made to keeping enough models in a given category. As a result in some regions you will find categories mixed together to keep the number of models up to levels necessary to allow competition. For example, Cabooses, a separate category at national competition is often mixed with M of W or Non-Revenue in a regional meet. A one model contest is not competition.

Categories in the NER are Non-Revenue, Freight Cars, Passenger Cars which includes head

end cars, Structures, Diorama, Steam Locomotive and Locomotive-Other.

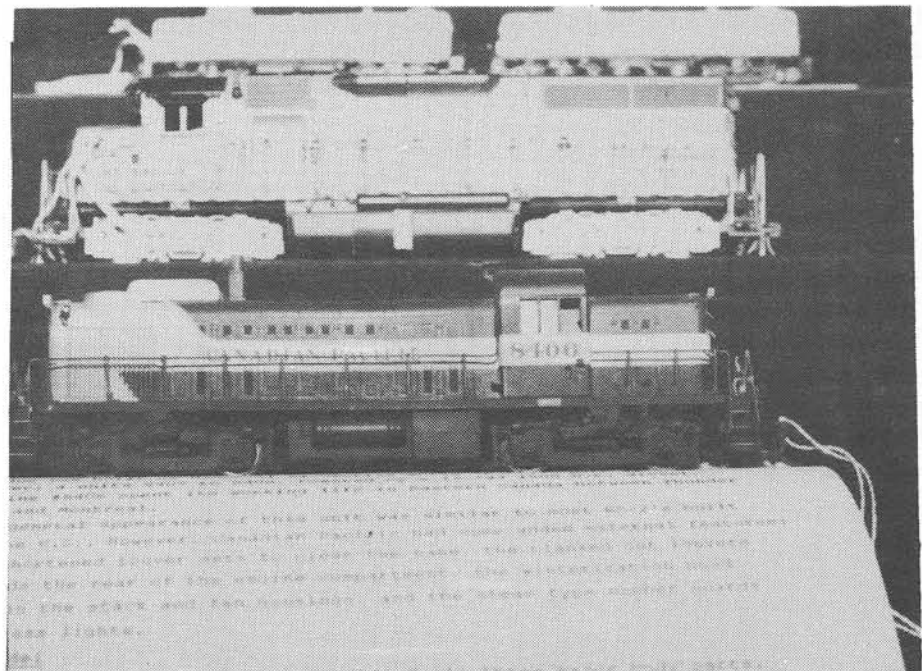
Diorama is a scene containing structures and related scenery. A whole scene, if you will, comprises a diorama. A structure can have disconnected related items, but not disconnected unrelated items such as scenery.

**EXAMPLE:** A water tank with disconnected water column, pit and valve is one structure. A house built on a base with a tree next to it can still be judged as a structure, but the tree is not in-

*continued on page 10*

---

## Alternative Contest Power



*Favorite train/locomotive contests have become an alternative to the formal modeling contests sponsored by the NMRA at conventions. These are characterized by peer votes rather than on a merit point system. In some cases, all attendees vote for their favorite. In other cases, most notably the Modern Prototype Modelers, all entrants vote for their favorite. This CP RS-3 model won the favorite locomotive entry at Binghamton. It shows the effort needed to produce a quality layout model, while still maintaining the spirit of the hobby.*

# A Trip On A Prototype Layout

By Bill Parker

**T**oday's model railroaders are fortunate in that they are able to obtain pictures and plans of many railroad structures and a wide variety of railroad rolling stock and locomotives dating from the 1820's right up to the present. In addition, due to careful research of the information available by many different model railroad equipment manufacturers, the modeler can obtain a wide range of carefully detailed scale reproductions of both the railroad equipment and the structures. The diversity of available kits and/or factory assembled models affords each individual model railroader the opportunity to select a scale, time period and location that suits his personal tastes.

I decided many years ago that I would model in HO scale and that my layout would be based on New

England railroads in the mid 1940s. As such my motive power consists of steam locomotives and my structures, both railroad and non railroad, can realistically date back to the early 1800s. This means that any time I want to add to or modify my layout I have two options, either research books and other available information or grab my camera and go out and photograph the real thing.

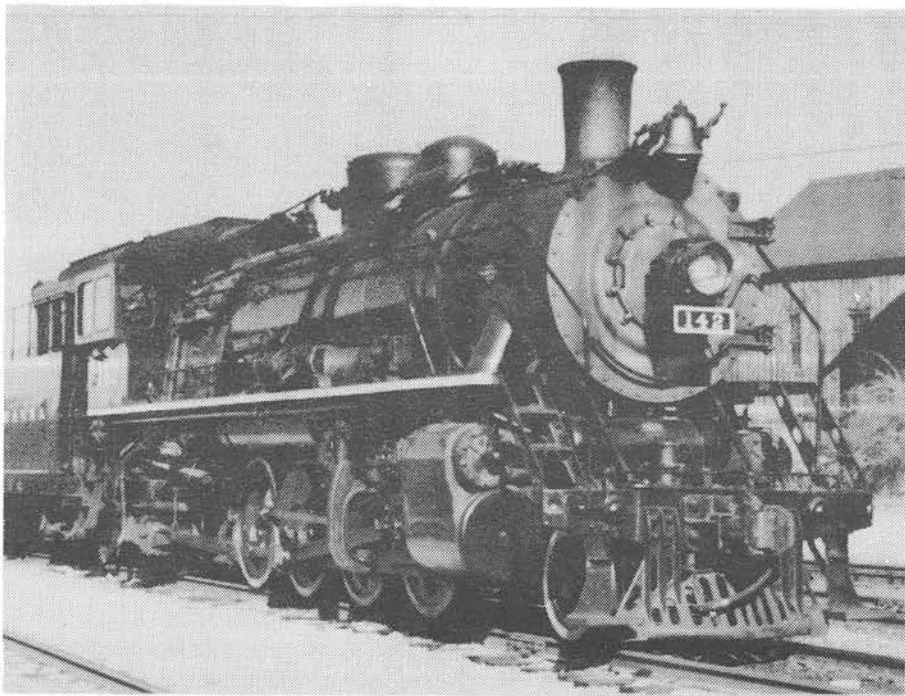
Obviously, finding structures along the railroads of New England that existed before World War II is no problem at all. On the other hand, finding rolling stock that was built in the 1940s or before that is still in existence on Class I or Class II railroads today is a bit more difficult. Finding an operating steam locomotive on a Class I or New England Regional railroads in 1992 is extremely difficult, but not impossible. If you wait patiently,

keep your ears open and act quickly when an opportunity presents itself you get rewarded with a real honest to goodness scene that existed 50 years ago.

The opportunity to capture some photos and the nostalgia of railroading as it existed fifty years ago came when the Valley Railroad of Essex, Connecticut agreed to sell their 2-8-2 Mikado steam locomotive to the New York Susquehanna and Western Railroad. The big plus to this news was the fact that the Mikado was to be moved over the Central Vermont Railroad from New London, CT. to Bellows Falls, VT. operating under its own power.

The move took place on Wednesday, January 22, 1992. Due to insurance considerations, the Central Vermont decided to couple the Mikado up with a CV GP 38-2 diesel locomotive on its trip over the high iron. The locomotives left New London about 7 a.m. and proceeded northward for 64 miles to Palmer, MA., arriving just after 10 a.m. (See timetable for passenger train No. 623 for stations and mileage between New London and Bellows Falls). Fortunately for the railfans, a split rail at Amherst delayed the locomotives' departure from Palmer for 1 1/2 hours. During that entire time the steam engine was uncoupled from the diesel and it ran on its own up and down the mile long yard, blowing its whistle, spitting steam from the cylinders and belching smoke to the delight of all in attendance.

At 11:30 a.m. the Mikado was coupled to the CV diesel again for the run up to Amherst (20 miles) where a fire pumper unit was waiting to top the locomotive's tender off with water (6000 gal. capacity). That procedure con-



*The former Valley Railroad steam locomotive all newly painted, lettered and renumbered for the Susquehanna at Palmer, Massachusetts*

*continued on page 9*





The

# Montrealer

The Alouette Division invites you to attend "The Montrealer," the NER Spring Convention to be held the weekend of May 8, 9, 10, 1992 in Montreal, P.Q., Canada. Convention Chairman Jacques L'Ecuyer promises to provide a layout based convention that will keep you busy for the whole weekend. Add to that a visit to the beautiful city of Montreal in the Spring with the opportunity to view some Canadian prototypes and you have the making of an exciting weekend of trains with your NER friends.

Our headquarters for the weekend will be the Auberge Universal Inn in Montreal. This hotel features an indoor pool and excellent restaurants and pubs. It is located within easy walking distance to the Botanical Gardens, Olympic Stadium, and the Metro (subway). It is also about a five or six mile ride by taxi to the Montreal train station. Hotel room rates will be from \$68 for a single up to \$78 for a quad, Canadian currency.

Major activities of the weekend include layout visits, clinics, model, photo and craft contests, and a train show. The non-rail program will feature a visit to the Botanical Gardens. Montreal is one of the most beautiful cities in North America, and there are many, many interesting things to do in the city.

## Friday

Friday activities will begin with the opening of the registration desk in the hotel lobby from 3:00 PM until 9:00 PM. Early arrivals can pick up their registration packages before deciding what activities in which to participate.

The hospitality room will be open Friday evening. It will provide a place to meet and greet both old and new friends, while getting a cup of coffee and a snack.

Friday evening there will be layouts to visit. Among those planning to be open is our good friend Jean LeBlanc and his "Sugar Pine RR". Jean has been a regular participant in the NER Model Contest, so you know that there will be some very fine modeling to see at his house. Also open on Friday evening will be Ivan Dow. His layout is in HO scale and features a lot of special effects including day/night operation.

## Saturday

Saturday morning will begin a very full day of activities. The registration desk will be open at 8:00 AM and stay open until 12:00 noon. The morning will be full of clinics, contest entry times and the Train Show which opens at 10:00 AM.

On Saturday afternoon there will be a layout tour/fan trip featuring three club layouts and a visit to Century Locomotive (Locomotive Montreal, Inc.). All three layouts are very nice with approximately 80% completed scenery. Century Locomotive re-manufactures older diesel locomotives.

Saturday evening the activities will begin with a happy hour from 6:00 PM until 7:00 PM. A cash bar will be provided to prepare you for your dinner. Dinner at 7:00 PM will feature a three course meal with one of three entree's - Flambe Roast Beef, Chicken Brochette or Salmon Steak. Following the dinner the

awards presentation will take place. Following the awards dancing to a band will be provided.

## Sunday

Sunday morning there will be three club and home layouts open for visitation. The train show will be open from 9:00 AM with many modular layouts. Take the opportunity to visit the park on top of Mont Royal before leaving the city - the view is spectacular!

On the way home to the USA, plan to stop in St. Constant (15 miles south) and visit the Canadian Railway Museum. This museum presents an interesting collection of locomotives, rolling stock and memorabilia chronicling Canada's railroad history. Admission is \$3.75 for adults, \$3.00 for teens and seniors, \$1.75 for children.

## Clinics

As of the advance date of this pre-registration package, the clinic schedule has yet to be finalized. Plans call for a schedule of live clinics from the ranks of our Canadian friends as well as our experienced NER clinicians.

## Contests

The full schedule of NER Contest will be presented at this convention. Walt Neumann and company will present the Model Contest; Ed Scott and company will present the Photo Contest; and June Neumann and company will present the Craft contest. Don't forget that in all contests, many of the Canadians will be presenting fine models that we don't often get a chance to see.

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**NER 1992 SPRING CONVENTION - MONTREAL, P.Q., CANADA - MAY 8 - 10, 1992**

**Registrant #1**

**Registrant #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/PC: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/PC: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registrant #3**

**Registrant #4**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/PC: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/PC: \_\_\_\_\_

Event	Price	Registrant				
		#1	#2	#3	#4	
Full Registration	<b>\$ 55.00</b>					All Prices \$ 2.00 Higher At Door Add Across
Convention / No Banquet	<b>\$ 25.00</b>					
Banquet Only	<b>\$ 35.00</b>					
Tour Choice - R-Rail N-Non-rail						
Banquet Choice - B-Beef, C-Chicken, S-Salmon						
Total						

Please make checks payable to "NER CONVENTIONS" and mail with this form to:

Pat & Charlie Bettinger  
 NER Convention Registration  
 29 Foster Drive  
 Vernon, CT 06066

**NER HOTEL RESERVATION FORM**  
**Auberge Universal Hotel, 5000 Sherbrooke East, Montreal, P.Q., Canada**  
**May 8 - 10, 1992**  
**1-800-463-4495**

Rates: \$68.00 Single \$70.00 Double \$73.00 Triple \$78.00 Quad (Canadian)  
 Arrival Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # Beds per room: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Rooms: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Persons: \_\_\_\_\_ Sharing room with: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Crib Required: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card: AE MC VI DC Card #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (1 Night) Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Complete and mail to:  
 Auberge Universal Hotel  
 5000 Sherbrooke East  
 Montreal, P.Q., Canada H1V 1A1  
 Attn: Lilian Sienkiewicz

## The Montrealer Layouts

*There will be seven (7) club and home layouts available to visit during the Montreal convention. All of them provide at least 50% scenery and full operation. All but one are in HO scale the other O scale narrow-gauge.*

*The Pine Valley Railroad of the Pine Valley Club* is a 30' x 35' HO scale pike set in the mid-1940's. This railroad features a mountain range across the layout and a large city scene. Operation features both steam and diesel locomotives travelling through mountainous scenery. Two branch lines enhance the operation. Structures are a strength on this pike, with many being contest winners. Due to mountainous terrain, many types of bridges are represented.

*The Canada Central of the Montreal Model Railroad Association* is a very large - 55' by 155' - HO scale pike. With an actual 1 1/2 miles of track, four (4) master cabs and eight (8) local cabs, it is possible to have twenty-two (22) trains in operation at the same time. Both steam and diesel locomotives are used. This club layout is located beneath the exit of Central Station - prototype locomotives passing over-head can create quite a racket.

*The Sault St. Louis Model Railroad Club* has a 16' x 17' HO scale model railroad plus a 2' x 30' HO scale modular layout as well as a 1' x 30' O scale shelf layout. Both HO scale layouts are operational. The O scale layout represents the Lachine canal - Dominion Bridge Co. operation in the 1940 period.

*The Sugar Pine Railroad of Jean LeBlanc* is a 12' x 20' HO

scale pike set in the 1950's. It is built in a U shape with a mainline about 125' in length. The layout is fully scenicked, and operation is primarily freight service with early generation diesel motive power. Structures are a strength - look for the wood sawmill.

*The P. W. Rouge Lumber Co. of Paul DeLaunier* is a 16' x 16' On3 scale pike based on a logging theme. This layout is built as two foot shelf along three walls of a room. The scenery is 50% completed, with the theme one of logging in the Provinces.

*The J. S. J. F. & F. Railroad of Claude Berube* is a 11' x 23' HO scale pike set in the 1950 era. Featuring loop to loop operation, ferry operations to CN and CP, late steam and first generation diesel power pulls both passenger and freight trains over a 235' mainline. Scenery on this layout is 60% completed.

*The layout of Ivan Dow* has no name, but is a 12' x 30' HO scale pike set in the 1940's. It features freight and passenger operation on a layout with 1000' feet of track. Control is by Zero 1 command control, and the operation format provides many special effects - day to night operation with sound, including a storm. Also of interest is his toy train collection.

### Central Locomotive Inc.

As part of the Saturday afternoon layout tour/fan trip, a visit is planned to Century Locomotive Inc. This company is a locomotive re-manufacturer who takes first and second generation diesel locomotives, removes the insides, and rebuilds them with new power plants, new electrical systems, and whatever else is required to extend their life. The old Lackawanna E-8 that appeared in the last NER Coupler is one example of the kind of locomotive they work with. At last visit, there were at least thirty (30) locomotives sitting in the yard waiting for a second life.

### Non-Rail Program

The Non-Rail program will feature Friday evening clinics. On Saturday afternoon take a walk in the park. Near the hotel is the Montreal Botanical Garden. This garden contains more than 26,000 varieties of plants within thirty gardens and ten exhibition greenhouses. Extensive orchid, begonia, gesneriad, bonsai, and Penjing collections are featured. The visit will include the China Garden, Japanese Garden and Pavilion, and the Montreal Insectarium, the only museum of its kind on the American continent.

For those who are interested in shopping, no matter what country we are in. Montreal offers a great variety of shopping. There are several underground shopping centers connected to Metro stations, as well as the older street level shopping district downtown. Information on Montreal should be available from the local committee - perhaps distributed at the registration desk.

### Train Show

There will be a train show in the hotel on both Saturday and Sunday. Hours on Saturday will be 10 AM to 5 PM, Sunday 9 AM to 4 PM. The show will occupy 7300 square feet in the hotel. In addition



to dealers of model railroad supplies and memorabilia, there will be six modular or display layouts - three HO scale, one S scale, one O scale and one G scale. This should provide an opportunity for those of us from the USA to examine the somewhat different selection of hobby supplies available "north of the border"

### Hotel Reservations

Hotel reservations should be mailed or telephoned to the Auberge Universal Hotel as soon as possible.

### Getting to the Convention From a Canadian Location East, West, North

Montreal is entered from the east or west using Autoroute 40. Once you have entered Montreal, look for the exit for Viau Boule-

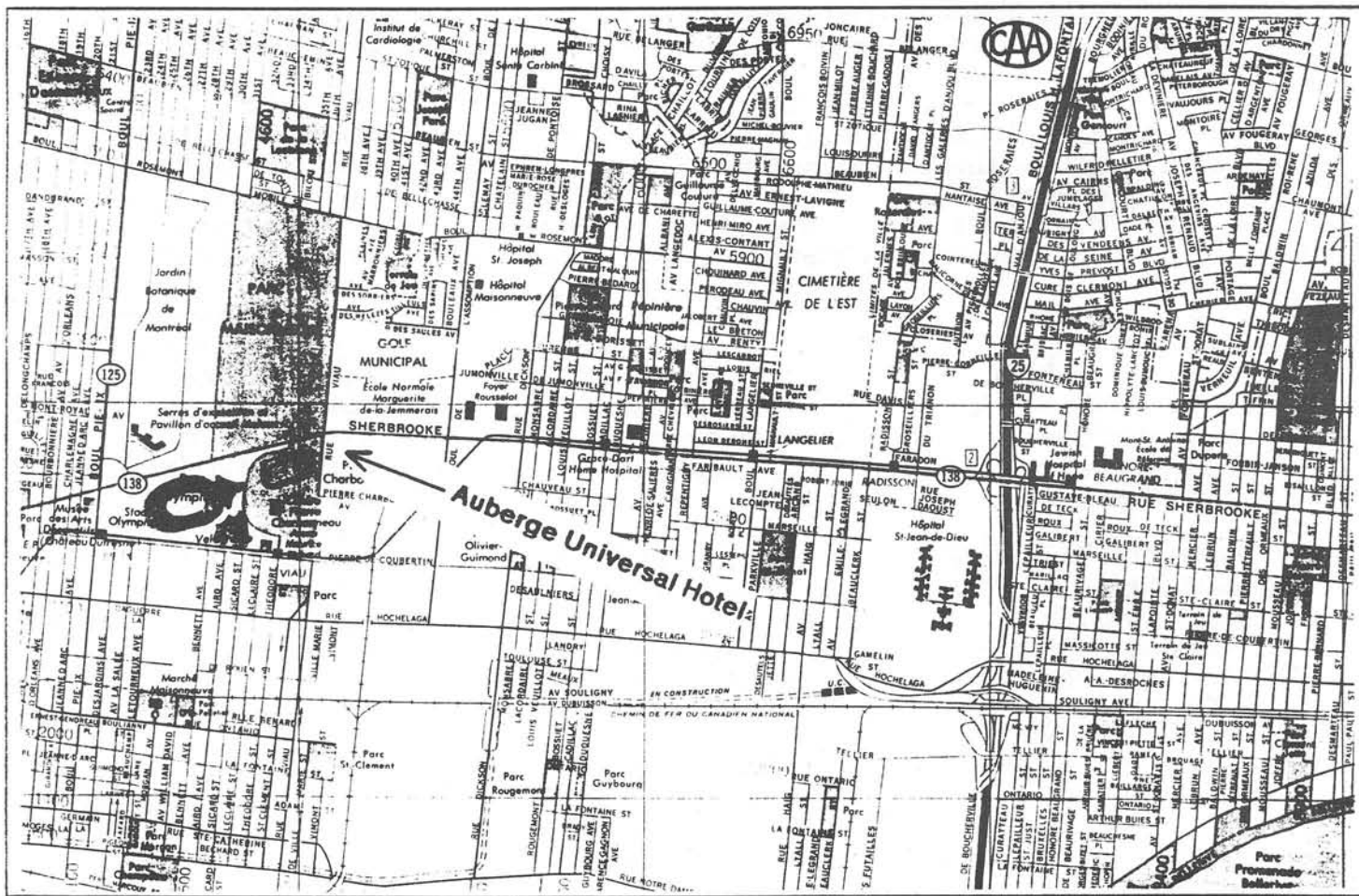
vard. Go south on Viau and Sherbrooke. The Auberge Universal will be across Sherbrooke on the left.

### South

Approach Montreal from the south using either Autoroutes 10 or 15. Take Route 132 north along the St. Lawrence across the river from Montreal. Follow Rt. 132 north until you reach the exit for the H. P. LaFontaine Tunnel (also Autoroute 20). Take the tunnel under the river. Coming out of the tunnel stay left for exit to Hochegala and head west. About 1/2 mile from getting on Hochegala, you will reach the intersection of Hochegala and Viau Boulevard. turn right on Viau, and follow Viau north until the Auberge Universal Hotel is on your right at the intersection of Sherbrooke.

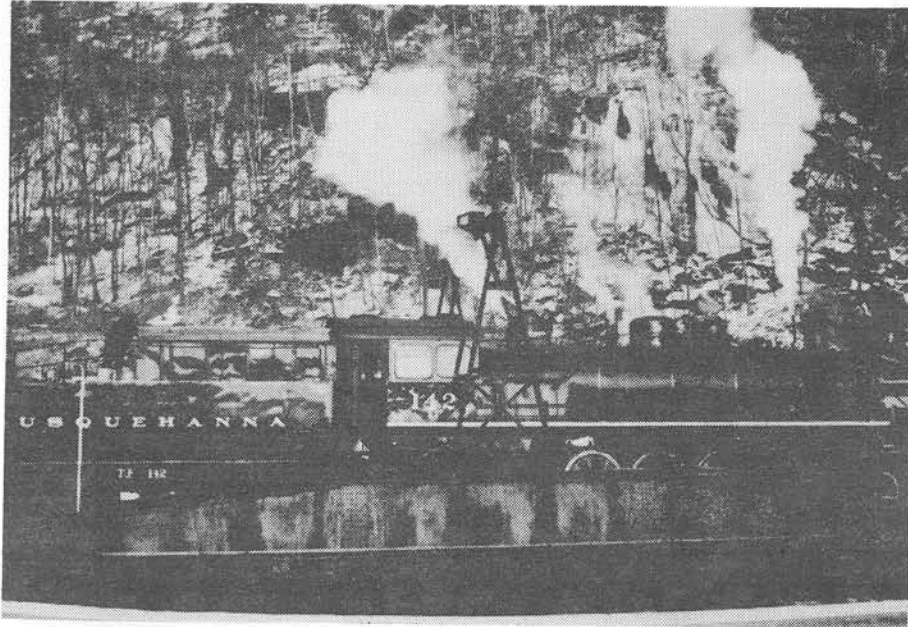
### From a USA location South

Most US residents will be approaching Montreal from the south, either from New York state and I-87 (the Northway) which becomes Autoroute 15, or from Vermont and I-89 from Burlington which connects to Autoroute 10, or from I-91 from St. Johnsbury which also connects to Autoroute 10. Routes 10 and 15 join south of Montreal. Follow Rt. 132 north until you reach the exit for H. P. LaFontaine Tunnel (also Autoroute 20). Take the tunnel under the river. Coming out of the tunnel stay left for the exit to Hochegala and head west. About 1/2 mile from getting on Hochegala, you will reach the intersection of Hochegala and Viau Boulevard. Turn right on Viau, and follow Viau north until the Auberge Universal Hotel is on your right at the intersection of Sherbrooke.





## A trip on a prototype layout .....continued from page 4



*Susquehanna Mikado on the turntable at the former Boston & Maine roundhouse at North Walpole, NH. This is the roundhouse used by Steamtown when it first opened about 25 years ago.*

sumed approximately 15 minutes and gave the photographers another chance to increase Kodak's profit margin.

Then we were off northbound again. Picking up Route 63 in North Amherst, we paralleled the CV tracks for approximately thirty five miles to Brattleboro Vermont where the locomotives made another scheduled stop to allow the engineer to check the lubrication of all the major moving parts on the Mikado. During that thirty five mile run, sometimes we just paced the locomotives, other times we played hopscotch with the consist — racing ahead to a good photo location, getting a picture of two and then racing ahead to the next photo stop.

Another very interesting part of the day's activities was monitoring the Central Vermont road frequency pm the scanner as we chased the Mikado north from Palmer to Bellows Falls. The Mikado was newly painted and numbered as Susquehanna No. 142. The engineer in the CV diesel would continuously communicate with the steam engine — "No. 142, shut

down power.": No. 142, resume power" etc. The CV's general manager also paced the entire movement all the way to Bellows Falls. He had a 2-way radio in his car so we were able to monitor his transmission also.

Leaving Brattleboro, the locomotives travelled non-stop for 25 miles to Bellows Falls. We basically paralleled the tracks all the way, stopping for photos when the opportunity presented itself just as we had done on the previous legs of the journey northward.

When we arrived at Bellows Falls, everything was more or less as if a time machine had taken us back to the 1940s again. The CV diesel was uncoupled and the Mikado was operated on its own. The old brick passenger station (now Amtrak) was open so we could stand inside the steam radiators and watch the steam engine pass by the window. The Mikado switched off of the CV tracks onto the present day Green Mountain RR (formerly the Rutland Railroad) and then sat for a while right opposite the station. Old brick

buildings, vintage through truss railroad bridges and a steam engine — what more could you ask for?

The trip back in time concluded with the locomotive running across the old stone arch bridge over the Connecticut River to the former Boston and Maine Roundhouse in North Walpole, NH. There the fire was banked, the ashes dumped and the tender topped off with both coal and water. When all of the maintenance chores were finished, the steam engine was moved onto the turntable and then into the center bay of the five stall roundhouse. We stayed to the very end when they finally closed the roundhouse doors. It was then time for the locomotive chase crew to seek out a human "roundhouse" to replenish our body energy and rest our wear bones.

As I stated earlier, that day in January 1992 was a great opportunity to see firsthand how things really looked fifty years earlier. The Central Vermont Railroad from New London CT, to Bellows Falls, VT was our "prototype layout." On that "layout" we got to see, smell, touch and hear railroading as it was years ago — the structures, rolling stock and locomotives. To reduce the 145 mile long segment of the Central Vermont prototype to a manageable and interesting home layout, all that is really needed is to meld together selected "diarama" segments of the CV (or for that matter, any other railroad) and to shrink the length of yards, sidings and main line trackage to fit the size and shape of the space you have available. Yes, today's model railroaders are fortunate indeed.

**Congratulations to  
Larry Madsen, new  
Chairman of the  
Hub Division**

## *It ain't over till the paperwork is done! .....from page 3*

cluded in consideration.

Locomotive-Other is any form of self propelled vehicle intended for pulling, pushing or carrying. A diesel loco is in this category and shares it with a motorized self propelled car such as a gas-electric passenger car or a mine motor or a trolley sweeper.

Unfortunately, we do not get enough traction in NER to warrant a separate category. National is able to maintain a separate category for this modeling discipline.

Now that we have identified you and the Class and Category of the model, we must impart its attributes to the judges. Furthermore we must warn them about items on the model, which although conforming to prototype, might differ from standard industry practice. I can't emphasize this enough. If the model is odd in any way you must point it out and justify the condition. Failing to do so, could cost you points. No sense in throwing away points to a communication error. After all, you are in a model contest.

**EXAMPLE:** A model I judged at Washington was a flat car of impeccable quality, however, the judging team doing conformity felt that a lack of stirrups was a flaw. Lucky for the entrant a modeler infinitely familiar with the prototype was present. The prototype had no

stirrups. The model was correct. The entrant, failing to provide plans or photographs had almost lost the model contest to close competitor for a miscommunication, not a modeling flaw. The model placed first in its category, the point loss that would have been attributed to the stirrups was 1 point. The nearest competitor was one point away.

Fill out those informational sheets as completely as possible. List the purchased items vs the scratch built or altered items. Describe the complexity of the work and the extent of the bash, refinements of the model etc. Point out the tricky prototype issues and provide photographs and or plans. Give the judges all the tools they need to give your well earned points.

Armed with the above, you have only modeling skill separating you from best in show. Your skill will improve with practice while you accumulate lots of technique from seeing what the competition has done on the other models.

Shoot for the gold, but don't take offense if you don't rocket to the top on the first try. Don't be discouraged if you come up against some close competition on your first effort. That can happen. It is in fact, much more satisfying to complete fiercely and win than to compete in a push-over atmosphere.

On that note, be advised that in most cases you will not win a category for showing up if there is not other or too few entries. In NER and many other regions, you compete first against a point scale and secondarily against your fellow modeler.

As a result a first place given in a contest with only 4 models present is nearly as meaningful as one given where two dozen closely competing models are present. Naturally when the latter case prevails, the point spread among the winners may narrow up and may be high on the over all 125 point scale. This is not a condition unique to model competition.

After your model has been judged, you will, in the better run contests, have a chance to talk to the judges and get their comments on how to best improve on the less than the best areas of the model. Don't use this time to attack the judges about their methods or scoring. This only serves to alienate the judges. It's hard enough to get former entrants to give up entering and be judges without subjecting them to wounded pride attacks. The judges are capable of errors, however infrequent. In most cases, this is not correctable in that the contest is over. Let by-gones be just that and enter again at the next opportunity. Remember

this is a hobby for both you and the staff.

Incidentally, you can fix the deficient items on the model and enter again. The only catch is you can't compete for an award equal to or less than that previously given to the model.

**EXAMPLE:** I once judged an interesting, but mildly done model structure at a division meet. All of its deficiencies were reworkable, so I suggested the builder do so and enter at region level. He did and placed well. Still the model was a long way from the best achievable, so I again recommended that rework the model. He added detail, I replaced a removable roof with a more accurate and better detailed roof, improved on the finish, added signs, etc. The model turned up at National in Washington D.C. and took a Third place in structures. This all happened in the course of 9 months. The gentleman elevated his modeling from crude scratch built to outstanding, merely by keeping his mind open to suggestion and persevering in his effort. I was more proud of the effort than he was. You should see his layout now. Wow!!

I wish you skill and perseverance and I'll see you in the contest room.



## A Letter to the N.E.R. Members

This letter is written with some sadness and displeasure, but I feel strongly that you are not aware of the state the operations of the region are in. The current region officers have done little to further the greatness and respect of our region. The integrity of one division has been questioned and there has been little done to aid another. Information has been published by our convention committee that has not been confirmed or approved by your board of directors.

First, in the N.E.R. trustees report to national, The HUB Division was accused of being an isolationist group. This accusation was without any basis. Although the president has apologized, the feelings of many HUB members were hurt.

Secondly, I myself, representing the N.M.R.A., N.E.R. and HUB Division have received several complaints about the lack of interest in the Nutmeg Division to the point that members have inquired about joining the HUB Division. I have relayed these problems to both the Nutmeg president and the Connecticut director. But to my knowledge not very much has been done to contact these people to see what can be done to get more activity in this division.

The third and most dire problem is the lack of control over the convention committee. This committee has done a very poor job in the past year or more. The Binghamton convention was not handled well behind the scenes. Some of you may be aware that those who attended paid a flat fee for registration which included a fan trip. You paid for it even if you could not or did not go on it. There was no refund either way. Also, our friends north of the border got a bargain registration fee at the American cost. Registrations fees should be equal and not subsidized by some. Lack of communication by our convention chairman allowed this to happen.

This Spring, you have been told, we will hold a convention in Montreal, Canada. Well, I hope this is to come true. The Board of Directors has yet to approve this convention. One of our duties to your members is to see that you get your dollars worth at these conventions. So far we don't know anything about this convention except location and date. If the convention chairman thinks this will pass, no matter what, he is mistaken. I feel the board will opt for no location rather than offer you, our members, a bad convention.

Please write to your directors and or the N.E.R. president and voice your dissatisfaction at their performance and demand the services your dues pay for. Help me and others get back the efficiency and pride that has been the standard of the N.E.R.

*Wayne R. Craigue*  
Massachusetts Director of Northeastern Region

## NER president apologizes to Hub Division for remarks made at national meeting

Mr. Peter A. Watson, President  
Hub Division, NER

Re: NMRA 21.1 Report

Dear Pete:

Thank you for your letter personally delivered to me by Wayne Craigue, NER Massachusetts Director, at our last NER Board of Directors meeting relative to my comments concerning the Hub Division contained in the above-referenced report.

As I stated to the NER Board at that meeting, I would send you a letter of apology and explanation concerning that report, as well as note the correction in the next 21.1 report to the NMRA national organization.

The Hub Division is generally and historically acknowledged within the NER and beyond as the Division in this region that has been the most active and supportive of the NMRA over the years, and that strength has continued into recent years by the activities and personal participations so clearly stated in your letter to me. As a result, it was clearly an error in judgment on my part to implicate in any way that it was, or is, the policy of The Hub Division to isolate itself from the rest of the NER.

If anything, I may have overreacted from the perception that I had as the newly elected president of the NER that certain individuals, all residing within the Hub Division area, have for one reason or another reduced their cooperation and service at the regional level.

If this unfortunate episode has had any beneficial end, it is that every Hub Division member I have had contact with since then has expressed genuine hospitality to me personally in advance of my visit to your show, as well as a continuing interest in the entire region.

I hope that my long-term friends in the NER will share my sincere dedication to this organization and its divisional units, and I am pleased to have been invited to the Fall show in part to have some fun and in part to right as wrong.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

James K. Heidt, President  
Northeastern Region, NMRA

# On The Schedule



## NMRA National Conventions

August 1 - 8, 1992: Columbus, OH.  
 July 25 - Aug 1, 1993: Valley Forge, PA.  
 Aug 15 - 18, 1994: Portland, OR  
 July 21 - 30, 1995: Atlanta, GA  
**Northeastern Region**  
 May 8 - 10, 1992: Montreal, Canada  
 Fall 1992: Syracuse, New York  
 May 14 - 15, 1993: Burlington, Vermont  
 Oct 22 - 24, 1993: North Conway, New Hampshire

## Club Members Wanted

### Smithtown Model Railroad Club (HO - HOn3)

Meets Tuesday Nights  
 Located in the St. James L.I. Gyrodyne Industrial Complex  
 Contact: Fred Hirte  
 228 Hudson Ave.  
 Lake Grove, NY 11755  
 (516) 585-1635

# Welcome On Board

## New NER Members (since October 14, 1991)

Connecticut		New Jersey	
Paul J. Combs	Ashford	Frank A. Dreitlin	Hopatcong
Thomas F. O'Connor III	Windsor	Louis M. Matuyza	Pompton Plains
Ronald J. Pelatzky	Meriden	Frank Prybeck	Milltown
Steven Samul	Avon	New York	
George E. Shertzer	Norwalk	A. L. Banner	Poughkeepsie
Dave Swinford	Stamford	Richard F. Brown	Brooklyn
Blaise Vece	North Haven	J. P. Flaherty	New York
		John Lee	Wappingers Falls
Maine		George P. Lind	N. Floral Park
Lucien L. Champagne		Francis J. Mascarelli	Bronx
Kennebunkport		Francisco Melendez	Bronx
David Stickney	Wells	William Muller	Seaford
Walter G. Williams	Warren	Edward D. Ormond	Elmhurst
		Herb Pfoh	Farmingdale
Massachusetts		Sal Simeca	Highland
Cal Beal	Lynn	George H. Warnken	Yorktown Hts
Kevin Campagna	Lunenburg	Melvin Wishinsky	Kew Gardens
Henry O'Connor	Grafton	Rhode Island	
John Russo	Norwood	Michael B. Baumann	Portsmouth
Frank T.B. Sleeper	Boylston	Rich Kulakowski	Portsmouth
Stan Zoll	Stoughton	Vermont	
		Edward R. Gagnon	East Burke
New Hampshire			
Peter M. Geisler	North Hampton		
Charles W. Hammond	Bedford		

## NER Office Manager

79 Hemenway Road  
 Framingham, MA 01701

