

Green Mountain Express a Convention to Remember

Most NER members are convinced that a convention post-mortem achieves its greatest value in providing opportunities to brag about "how we did it good." There is a more serious side to this meeting review however, and that is the analysis which tells planners what works and what doesn't- what makes a superior convention.

Ever since Murphy's Law was codified from generations of experience, anyone who has ever participated in organizing a convention becomes aware that the operative word is "organization". As a basis for action, this means that nothing, from advance publicity to the last goodbye wave, is left to chance. Recognizing that some problems (even crises) will develop in spite of everyone's best efforts, strategies to cope with "worst-case scenarios" must be calculated. This could be as simple as what to do if it rains on a railfan trip, or as complicated as a no-show banquet speaker.

Playing the role of reporter, I talked to many members who attended the GME convention, and what follows is hopefully an accurate report for those who were not able to participate in Green Mountain Express, 1993.

Nearly 300 members and family registered, using a well-orchestrated process in what Brian Whiton judges to be "a world class hotel" - the Radisson. Registrants were given scrip to bid on "door prizes" donated mainly by manufacturers and merchants who serve the model railroad hobby. Just prior to



the banquet, the play money could be deposited in small boxes in front of each displayed prize according to the bidding strategy of the participant in this "silent auction". Some used the spreadout technique while others concentrated on a particular prize. Twenty-six donors supplied 86 prizes ranging from packages of couplers to a Bachman 70T locomotive with Rutland Railroad decals supplied by a Vergennes, Vermont dealer. Operating equipment ranged from N gauge to G and #1 scale. There were also a number of fine non-rail prizes awarded by MC Glenn Glasstetter during the banquet.

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Trustee Election Result

The NER Special Ballot Committee has submitted its report of the NMRA Trustee Election to the executives of both NER and NMRA.

The 142 valid ballots received were distributed as follows: James Heidt, 67; William Parker, 74; write-in, 1. Charles and Patricia Bettinger and Irwin F.B. Lloyd comprised the Ballot Committee.

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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 IBM 360K, 720K, 1.2 & 1.4meg 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 medium 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 SEPTEMBER 7, 1993

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.



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Two features of most conventions are the "clinics" and the visits to home and club layouts opened for the occasion.

Convention organizers Mike Saunders and Glenn Glasstetter provided seventeen rail clinics and two non-rail. The latter proved popular with everyone. Retired Saint Michael's College Mathematics professor Vincent Naramore tickled everyone's funnybone with some original tales illustrating Vermont's history and lore. The head of the frame shops of local Ben Franklin stores taught an audience of both men and women the fine points of successfully matting and framing needlework and other art.



In his evaluation, Ken May says, "Saturday clinics were top notch...Of special note was Jim Murphy's 'A Day in the Life of a Station Agent.' Jim used a full-size mock-up of a station agent's area as a stage to act out the duties of the job. Jim Heidt reported the clinic to be as good as any he had ever seen at any level, including national conventions."

Brian characterized the other clinics as, "good to phenomenal." Indeed, a hallmark of the presentations was the great variety, such as Marty McGurk's "Something Besides Summer." Not too many layouts model seasons of the year other than the lush green of summer. Another example is Ed Small's depiction of the New York Subway System's yard and terminal operations from someone on



the inside. It was accurately described in the program as, "real railroading that most people never get to see." Clinics presented by Whitney Maxfield, Bob Jones, Alan Irwin, Bill Brigham and Tony Steele concentrated on local and regional topics. Master model railroad photographer Bob Boudreau was unable to attend the convention and his competent advice about this artform was missed by many.

Ken May had these observations to make on some of the layouts he and others visited, "We visited five [on Friday]: Paul Allard's Northern Vermont Railway; Don Pare's, The Central Vermont; Ron DeYoung's, The Essex Central; Lew Buchspic's Lionel layout; and The Northwestern Vermont Model Railroading Society's Club layout...I particularly enjoyed seeing Onboard Command Control in operation, and also Don Pare's container unloading facility. As a bonus, we happened by the Essex Junction Railroad station at just the right time - the Amtrak's Washingtonian was loading passengers and we watched it pull out on its way south."

Many local layouts got their share of visitors on Sunday morning: Jim Truax's, "The Grand Isle Northern"; Glenn Glasstetter's, "Chesapeake & Ohio"; Bob Durkin's, "Pennsylvania, Maryland & Chesapeake"; and, Gary Schelley's Green Mountain & Lake Champlain. Jim, who could probably do a clinic on how to move a layout (he's done it ten or more times), makes clever use of a limited basement space. This was a

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good spot to poll visitors on their impressions of the convention. One who has missed very few allowed as how "this was the best...except maybe for Albany."

Fan trips can seriously affect the overall quality of any meet. Elizabeth Brown was especially enthusiastic: "The Bombardier trip was very well done - the company gets a lot of credit for that." Ken May also had kind words, "After providing coffee and donuts, they showed a promotional video detailing all the Bombardier holdings and operations, and explained what the group would see. Everyone got safety glasses as we headed out to the shop where two jobs were in progress- Superliner II Sleepers for Amtrak, and new design Red Line subway cars for the Boston MBTA. We were able to go through the cars in various stages of completion. They also showed us the paint shop and the fabrication department where modular interiors are assembled before installation in the cars. Finally, we saw the parts area and the wiring shop. There are 16.7 miles of wire in a Superliner II."

Cameras were not allowed in the Bombardier plant and, so far, our request for company pictures has been ignored. Those on the plant tour re-boarded the air-ride, air-conditioned bus for a train trip on the Lamoille Valley Railroad. Mike Saunders says that organization by the Green Mountain folks went so far as to influence the weather. When a photo run-by was offered, the sun broke through the clouds and the photographers became believers. The Bombardier trip was paralleled by one to the granite quarries of Barre, which offer some dramatic views and a look at a piece of retired motive equipment of near-antique vintage. For those not especially interested in prototype rail, a luncheon and cooking class was offered at Isabel's on the Waterfront. Late on Saturday afternoon several rail buffs walked the two blocks from the hotel to the Vermont Railway yards to watch the afternoon freight come in from the



Convention Co-Chair Glenn Glasstetter awards prizes to successful bidders at the banquet. More than 4 score rail-related good things were contributed by nineteen manufacturers and dealers.

south, and check out a locomotive on the still-operating turntable. By now, the sun had re-established itself as part of the scene.

Rod Brown highlighted another convention achievement: "The paperwork associated with the layout tours was better than anything I've seen before, and should go in the convention committee's handouts to future planning groups as an example of how it should be done. Showing the overall geography, and giving inter-layout travel information was a great idea. I know everyone on the committee needs a rest, but I, for one, am looking forward to the next effort by the Green Mountain Division. I'll be there." Elizabeth, co-manager with Rod of the NER office, was equally appreciative: "I was tremendously impressed with the diligence with which the committee prepared for this event - attending and making notes at many previous conventions, learning from their observations, planning for contingencies...if there were snags in this one, they were invisible."

Banquet speaker was Mark Smith, founder and editor of Locomotive and Railway Preservation magazine. Mark offered a serious message in calling for the conservation of our railroad heri-

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tage, both in prototype form, and through the painstaking modeling of scenes and equipment which no longer exist. A visit to Mark's large gauge "Huntington Valley Railroad" had to be cancelled because heavy rains had turned the site into a mud bog. We haven't had a report on visits to the Passumpsic Railroad maintained by Marvin Kendell and his sons. This full size layout, located near St. Johnsbury, features an 18-ton Heisler that Marvin trucked out to Railfair 91 in Sacramento, and includes rolling stock (flat cars and cabooses) from area railroads.

With all the good press generated by the Green Mountain Flyer, there should be a great attendance at the White Mountain Flyer, scheduled for 22-24 October in Conway, New Hampshire. A delegation from its planning committee showed the banquet crowd that Vermont doesn't have an exclusive on diligent and imaginative planning. See you there! Look for convention information in the next issue.

Joe Popecki, Editor

Brian Whiton gave one of his superb clinics on → "making a diamond".



Visitors cast a critical eye over the large layout of the Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Society, the trackage of which is complete, but waits much of the scenery and most structures.



Retired math professor Vincent Naramore entertained an appreciative audience with his anecdotes of Vermont history.





Rick Laube ponders the model contest entries, while Glenn Salvatore concentrates on structures. Members Monahan, Ferguson and Dietz discuss the photo contest hopefuls.

CONTEST WINNERS

Photo Contest Awards

CRAFTSMAN CATEGORY

Model Color Print

1st- Paul Allard, "A Day at Work"

Prototype Color Print

1st- Daniel Monohan, "Steam at Jim Thorpe"

Prototype Slide

1st- Joseph Lecaroz, "Lake Shore Limited"

MASTER CATEGORY

Model Slide

Honorable Mention- Glenn Salvatore,

"D & H Engine"

Prototype B & W Print

1st- Pat Lecaroz, "Amtrak 489"

Prototype Color Print

1st- John MacGown, "Number 497"

2nd- John MacGown, "Cog Train"

3rd- Pat Lecaroz, "Amtrak 226"

Hon. Mention- John MacGown, "Water Tower"

Hon. Mention- Pat Lecaroz, "FL-9 in Twilight"

Prototype Slide

1st- Glenn Salvatore, "B&M at Night"

2nd- Glenn Salvatore, "SW-1200"

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BEST-IN-SHOW

John MacGown, "Number 497" (Prototype Color Print)

NOTE: Not all awards were made due to the small number of entries in some categories and lower point scores.

Frank Dietz, Photo Contest Chairman.

Model Contest Winners

Bill Hoffman, Pacific Electric 855
3rd, M, Motive Power-Other

Bill Hoffman, Pacific Electric 678
HM, M, Motive Power-Other

Jean LeBlank, John Manufacturing
HM, M, Structures

Mike Evans, D&H Milk Car No. 827
1st, C, Freight Cars, Best in Show

William Brandt, KCR Station
1st, C, Structures

Ole Bye, Grade Crossing
1st, N, Diorama

Jonathan Garger, C. V. Caboose
1st, N, Non-revenue Cars

Paul Allard, CV GP38AC 5809, 9
1st, N, Motive Power-Other

Paul Lessard, Freemont Meeting House
3rd, N, Structures
Worcester Style Diner
New Modeler Runner-up

Dominic Bourgeois, D & H Station
1st, N, Structures
New Modeler Award
Hub Award

Brian Whiton, Chairman Model Contest

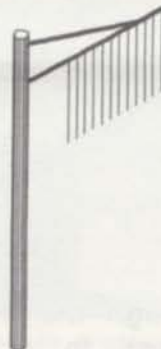
Shop Talk

By Brian Whiton

In the course of my prototype work of late, I have spent some time becoming re-acquainted with details that really enhance a model railroad. I think they go a long way toward making a scene as real as practical.

In the days when brakemen walked the tops of cars, there had to be a warning device called a telltale placed a distance in front of the vertical clearance restriction. The distance is not a factor for us modelers, as it would be too far away to look good, and might even be in the next village. To make a telltale, you need to hang some threads from a wire or a beam which is 22 feet above the tracks. The threads should hang down to about 17 feet above the rail. Since thread might not hang straight, you might want to substitute .005" wires with loops on the upper ends, made to hang with free swing.

Some railroads use a wooden horizontal



arm angle-braced to a pole, while others suspend a cable between two poles set ten feet either side of the track center. No power wires can be attached to these poles, but a signal is OK. For modeling purposes, I'd say place the telltale two car lengths from the tunnel or bridge.

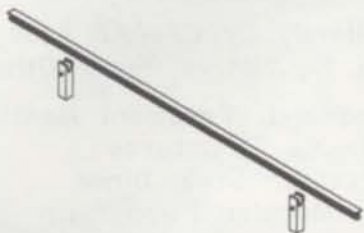
Rail stands are another often overlooked detail, and one which is exceedingly easy to make. In the days of twelve mile M.O.W. sections, these stands were frequent, at least one every three miles. On the layout I'd put two in the space between each village.

Most rail stands are easy to make. Commonly, there are two horizontal

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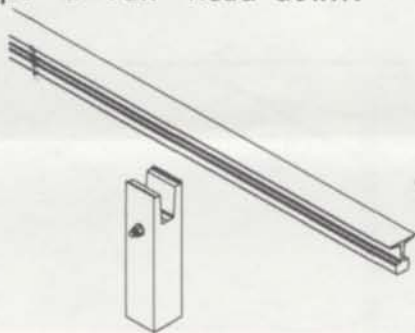
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brackets welded to the foot of a rail placed vertically in the shoulder of the roadbed, there being two such rails set about 20 feet apart. Make your rails for both the post and the rail to be placed in the stand out of code 55 for



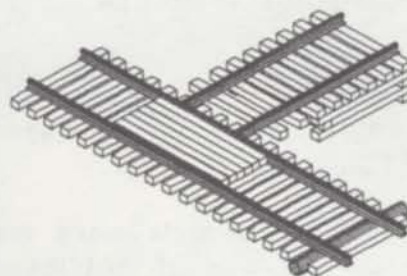
better looks, and don't forget to rust the rails. The stand can be black or yellow.

I found one on the New Haven which was an 8" x 8" wood beam set vertically in the ground, the top of which had been shaped with a chainsaw to accept a rail head-down. A bolt



had been placed through the wood just below the head pocket to act as an anti-splitter. Again, these were about 20 feet apart. Obviously, one rail was the capacity.

Hand-car set-off platforms are another often omitted detail. When trains were plentiful, getting off the track was a constant problem, especially when out on a shelf roadbed or a long fill. Most set-offs were a tie crib affair with two rails supported so that they were level and at the same elevation as the main line. Don't forget to plank the area between and adjacent the main line rails for about twelve feet or so. When you set off a hand car, you do so by picking up one end and rotating about the wheel nearest the set-off rail. The other wheel, therefore,



needs a flat surface to run over. Add a pile of O.T.M. (tie plates, joint bars, etc.), and you have a nice, logical prototype scene.

When was the last time you saw a flanger board on a model railroad? You need an up board and a down board at the limits of any flangeway obstruction such as a turnout or a crossing. These are so easy to make, I won't bore you.

How about pipes under the track? I mean the type that were dug in only half their diameter. These were sometimes accompanied by a bit of tie cribbing to direct the water. We have a lot of trouble with them being heaved up by frost action, so deform the pipe under the rail a bit. Use Envirotex to make the water course, but it will soak into the sandy banks, so do them last. Make the corrugated pipe by turning a bit of dowel in a $\frac{1}{4}$ " drill. Few people will notice that the corrugations do not spiral. If you are sure of hand, and use low rpm, you could even do spirals.



Got a siding to an industry which is between villages and otherwise unpopulated? Add a phone booth or a phone box on a pole.

Got a short fill between pastures? Add a cattle pass. Some of these originals were as narrow as three feet, so you need not bother to cut the roadbed. Just install the stone arch and wind walls, and paint the interior and the roadbed gloss black. It will look like a dark hole. Don't forget the mud in the path and some worn paths leading to and from the cattle pass. Throw in a bit of fence and you are done.

Double Helix: twice the action in a given space

By Jim Ramey

If you are considering a multi-deck layout, you will probably need to install a helix to get from one level to another. Space is always tight on such a layout, so installing a double track helix is usually out of the question. However, if you have enough room for a single track helix, you **can** install a double helix in the same space, thus achieving east and west bound tracks of the same radius in the same space!

The secret, of course, as old as human DNA. You simply install helix east inside helix west, but entered from the opposite side, half a turn away. The only penalty for doing this is that you will need to achieve a full-turn elevation in a half-circle rather than a full circle, thus doubling the grade. If you are modeling a narrow gauge railroad, this will not be a problem. Unless you are pulling 20-car trains, it won't be a standard gauge problem either, as a helix is not normally visible and an unrealistic grade should not cause exclamations of disgust from your visitors.

The entrance or exit from each helix will always be in the opposite direction from the entrance or exit of the other helix when both entrances and exits are on the same level. Entrances or exits can be in the same direction, however, if one is a half-turn above or below the other.

It doesn't matter how you construct the helix. Several published articles have discussed in detail how to build one. The only way the double helix differs is that you are interleaving the east helix and the west helix. As a practical matter, you should probably locate your double helix in the center of your layout rather than at one end, as is frequently the case, since entrances and exits must face in opposite directions. This may be a blessing in disguise because return track separation should add interest to the layout.

New Members

(02/14/93 to 6/16/93)

Connecticut: William M. Green (Canton); Wiley L. Harris (Stamford). **Massachusetts:** Milton Burge (Brocton); Larry Davidson (Cambridge); David P. Demers (Lunenburg); Jack Donovan (Danvers); Dave Frary (Swampscott); Charles A. Hancock (Leominster); John R. Lutz (Hamilton); Arthur Mitchell (Natick). **New Hampshire:** William Belcher (Conway). **New York:** Gus Altobello, Jr. (Syosset); Cyrus Bacchi (East Northport); Carl V. Cascone (Northport); Peter L. Darling (Rock City Falls); Bob Davidson (Liverpool); Kip Grant (Queensbury); Gerald Gundersen (Lake Ronkonkoma); Robert L. Hamm (Saratoga Springs); Henry Szabelski (South Osted); Peter H. Wilkens (Mahopac). **Province of Quebec:** Pierre Labarre (St. Lambert). **Vermont:** Ole Bye (Chester); James T. Ferguson (North Troy).

Courtesy, Rod Brown, Office, Manager

The Connecticut Company

BOOKNOTES

The sprawling Connecticut Company, which ran its last street cars in New Haven in 1948, comes to life again in this well-illustrated book showing operations on fourteen divisions in all parts of the Nutmeg State. Authors Fred Kramer and Ed Wadhams include rosters of cars assigned to each division as well as dates important to each.

The photos show a variety of The Connecticut Company cars including the many variations of their open cars. The 1906 Jones 15-bench cars came from the Consolidated Railways and were used on the New Haven Division. One of these cars with its railroad style roof is preserved at the Branford Electric Railway Museum. Other Connecticut cars came from the Hartford Street Railway, Hartford, Manchester & Rockville, Bridgeport Traction, Meriden Electric, New York & Stamford, and

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The NER in History



This photograph is a black & white print from a Kodachrome slide taken at the groundbreaking ceremonies for NMRA's headquarters building several years ago. It shows "NER People" who were there for the occasion. Left to right: the late Stanley W. Bradley, who subsequently retired to Florida; former NMRA national treasurer R. E. "Huebe" Huebenthal, who now lives in Arizona; former NMRA office manager Midge Reber of Indianapolis; and, Hal Carstens, publisher of Railroad Model Craftman.

Bradley and Huebenthal were both active in NER activities for many years. Carstens was one of the first three recipients of the NMRA Distinguished Service Award at Montreal in 1962, along with Linn Wescott and Allen Lake Rice. Carstens was also recently named to a new Pioneers Committee by NMRA President Eric Lundberg. (Photo courtesy of Carstens Publications.)

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many other lines. Connecticut open cars had from eight to fifteen benches and a variety of roof contours. They were most famous for their fall trips to the Yale Bowl, with each car jammed with eager football fans dressed in the picturesque garb of the early 20th century sports fan.

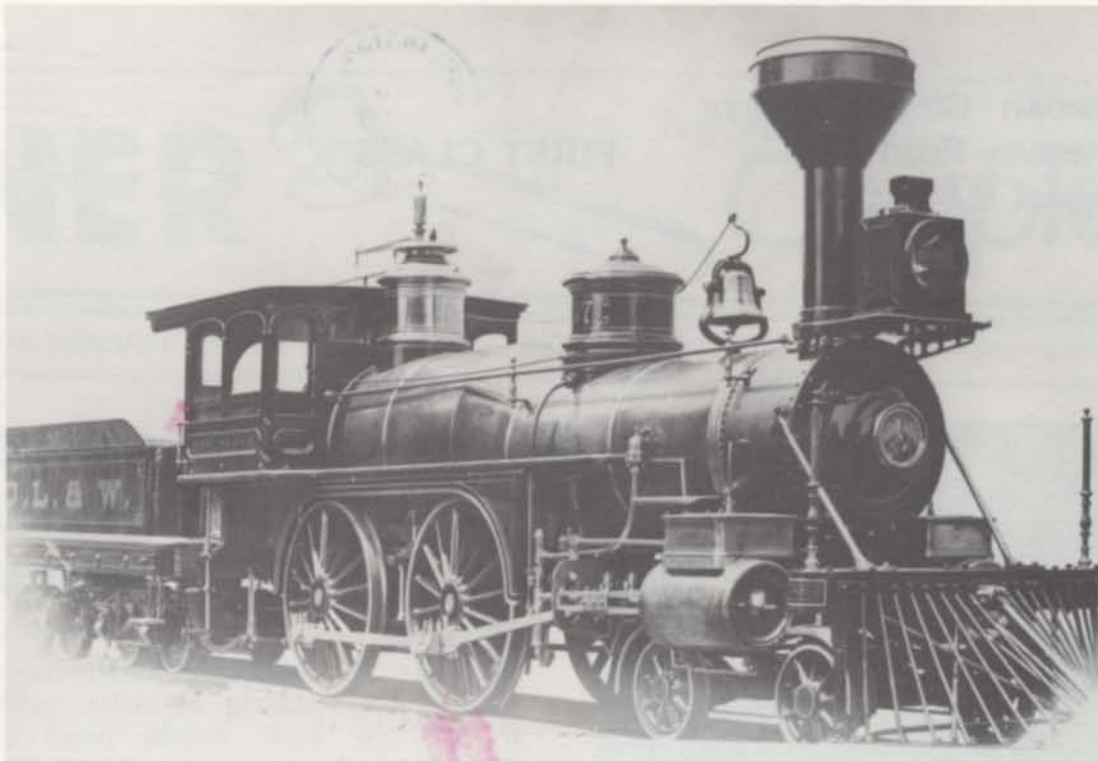
The sprawling statewide system also had a large fleet of wooden cars, and many remained on the roster until operations came to a halt in 1948. The well-known car builders Wason, American, and Osgood Bradley received contracts for the large group of single truck safety cars (Birneys) which started arriving on the system in 1918, at the close of World War I. Double truck steel Birneys from various manufacturers began arriving in 1915.

During the 1930s, the system fell on hard times, and half the trackage was

abandoned or replaced with buses. The Connecticut Company never modernized by using PCC cars or Brilliners. The last new cars were a series of double truck lightweights built by Osgood Bradley delivered in 1923. The newest cars on the line were the 3200-3211 series of double truck steel cars built by Osgood Bradley in 1927 for the Berkshire Street Railway. Some cars were later sold to the Third Avenue Railway System in New York City (but never used), Hoboken Manufacturers Railroad in New Jersey, and Johnstown Traction in Pennsylvania. Among the cars which have been preserved are: 615, 838 and 1391 to the Seashore Electric Railway in Kennebunkport, Maine; 500, 614, 923, 1414, 1420, 1425, 1911 and 2350 to the Branford Electric Railway; and, 840 to the Connecticut Electric Railway at Warehouse Point, Connecticut.

The book is published by Carstens

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Soot and Cinders

By Richard M. Hanschka

Sam Sloan was president of the Delaware, Lackawana & Western Railroad until 1899— fifty years of working on the railroad. He stayed on as Chairman of the Board until 1907, when he was over 90. When Sam died, the shop crew restored old "57" and put his picture on the smoke box. The engine was built in 1857 and fitted for coal burning in 1889, as shown in the picture. It was finally retired in 1912, having spent some of its final years running on the Dover - Hoboken lines.

Notice the flag staffs on the pilot in which railfans might place the U.S. flag. Usually they held the green second section or the white extra flags. The long-link coupler is still on the pointed pilot. The stack is meant for trapping wood embers, although the engine now burns anthracite. The crews were proud of clear stacks on the DL&W. The large light still burns oil because no generator has yet been installed. The wooden cab is also an old style design.

Sam Sloan was one of the proud founders of the YMCA movement. He would pay regular wages to workers who would give their testimony of how belief in Christ had saved them, and how it had changed their lives from that of many railway workers who were away from their families for long periods. He provided them a home away from home. The dangers of alcohol and drugs were just as real then as today. If a man died in service, Sam would see to it that the survivors had jobs to support themselves, medicine and help to pay their bills.

Old "57" ran holiday specials on memorial Day, 4th of July and Labor Day. Often there would be a four-car special for employee families. The first was a combine to carry bikes and other sporting equipment, while the passenger compartment was a smoker with leather seats. Two or three coaches would follow, each with open vestibules. They ran on the Boonton line, Hoboken to Dover, almost to the end of that road. Some of them ran on a recent excursion to Vermont.

R & E Brown Office Managers
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Publications (Railroad Model Craftsman and Railfan & Railroad magazines). It is available from your local bookseller, hobby shop or museum in a hardcover edition at \$26.95, or soft cover at \$21.95. Your local library should have it soon; request it if you don't find it.

JTP

Green Mountain Express Co-Chairs Glenn Glasstetter and Michael Saunders with NER President Jim Heidt (center).

