

A Publication of the Northeast Region, National Model Railroad Association

White Mountain Flyer Was a Crowd Pleaser

Although the foliage season was long gone, New Hampshire offered the NER conventioners the best possible seasonal weather. North Conway not only boasts an enviable array of shopping and a full-service hotel, but is home to a superb tourist railroad which runs down the valley to Conway. The restored railroad station is virtually the town's logo, the tower of which became part of the convention badge.

More than two hundred NER/NMRA members checked in to the Sheraton. All but a few arrived by automobile because North Conway is a community in which the railroad was king, and air travel only a distant cousin.

The immediate area, as well as the routes home, offered many private pikes to visit. As Rick Shoup put it, "I couldn't believe the number of new layouts in the area since the last time the convention was in North Conway."

On Friday night, the open houses were thoughtfully scheduled in the immediate area for the convenience of the visitors. Ken May obligingly describes his opening night adventures: "The first layout was Armand Wood's 'Carter Notch & Wildcat Railroad.' This is an N scale pike quite far along toward completion. Its roots struck me as similar to those expandable layouts in the model press aimed at beginners. I was especially impressed by the time and effort it must have taken to model a golf course - not something often seen. Next we visited Dwight Smith's home. Until his 'retirement', Dwight was part owner of the Conway Scenic Railroad and did his modeling full-size. Now he does



If North Conway could have a trademark, this would be it. The restored turn-of-the-century station is the focal point for all activity.

it at 1/87th scale most impressively, even though much of it is still open benchwork. Dwight's experience with the prototypes is most evident in the yard design, which is scattered about with the usual "junk".

"Our tour took us next to the North Conway Railroad Station. Here there is a cluster of four layouts. The Hartmann Model Railroad Museum (a commercial venture) contains eleven layouts of varying scales and national origin. Separate rooms are devoted to European and American prototypes and ranged from N to G scales. There were a few display pieces in even larger scales. Entry to the museum (at a discount to members) is through the Brass Caboose Hobby Shop.

NER BRASS

Officers

James K. Heidt, President.....PO Box 195
(315)245-3664 Camden, NY 13316
Brian C. Whiton, Vice-President.....94 & 96 Spring St.
(203) 623-8512 Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Bill Parker, Past President.....65 Coweaset Dr.
(508) 586-0271 Brockton MA 02401
Diane Salvatore, Secretary.....33 Elm Street
(609) 769-3065 Woodstown, NJ 08098
James Truax, Treasurer.....32 University Terrace
(802) 864-5052 Burlington VT 05401

Department Chairpersons

Bob Boudreau, Achievement Program.....PO Box 7122, Station A
(506) 672-2374 Saint John NB E2L4S5
Brian C. Whiton, Conventions.....94 & 96 Spring Street
(203) 623-8512 Windsor CT 06096
Brian C. Whiton, Model Contest.....94 & 96 Spring Street
(203) 623-8512 Windsor CT 06096
Frank A. Dietz, Photo Contest 38 Sandra Ave
(518) 562-8058 Plattsburgh, NY 12901
Diane Salvatore, Non-Rail & Crafts.....(address above)
June Neumen, Non-Rail & Crafts.....149 Clark Blvd.
(516) 798-0575 Massapequa NY 11762

Directors

Norman C. Guinard, Canada.....9 Dube Street
(506) 735-6084 Edmundston, NB E3V2G1
Joseph F. Sokol, Connecticut & Rhode Island.....213 Reagan Rd #12
(203) 872-2240 Vernon CT 06066
Ludwig Riemenschneider, Long Island & NYC
516-781-3534 4039 Wicks Ave, Seaford, NY 11783
Wayne R. Craigue, Massachusetts.....26 Thurman Park
(617) 389-3194 Everett, MA 02149
Jon S. Sem, New Jersey.....271 F. Englishtown Rd.
(201) 251-4297 Old Bridge, NJ 08857
Frank A. Dietz, New York State.....38 Sandra Ave.
(518) 562-8058 Plattsburgh, NY 12901
David Collinge, Northern New England.....RR-2, Box 500
(603) 569-4876 Wolfeboro, NH 03894

Working Crew

Joseph T. Popecki, Editor.....33 Woodridge Drive
(802) 863-4121 Burlington, VT 05401
Michael G Saunders, Technical Staff, Coupler.....84 Aldis St
(802) 524-4429 St. Albans VT 05478-1913
Charles & Pat Bettinger, Convention Registrar.....29 Foster Drive
Vernon, CT 06066
Rod & Elizabeth Brown, Office Managers.....79 Hemenway Road
(508) 877-1827 Framingham, MA 01701

#175, December 1993

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

Joseph T. Popecki, Editor

33 Woodridge Drive
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 863-4121

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 FEBRUARY 28, 1994.

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.



p. 1 → Green Mountain Flyer

"Next, we went out to the Conway Scenic RR yard. The freight house contains the layout of the North Conway Model Railroad Club. There was considerable progress evident since our last visit a dozen years ago. The Club was reactivated only a few years ago, and the members found it remarkably easy to put it back into running condition. Still in the yard, we next visited Ben Merry's BAR caboose. Ben presented the clinic about the history of the hobby on Saturday. He and his wife camp out here in the summer months and he has a portable N scale layout inside to amuse him.

"On the other side of the engine house, Wayne Allen is building the HO 'Swift River Railroad' in an antique, wooden-framed MeC Flanger. Out last visit of the evening was to Ron Barber's 'Old Colony Division of the New Haven.' Ron must be a transplanted Cape Codder. That's the only explanation for finding a model of the Buzzard's Bay lift bridge so close to Mount Washington. The bridge model even sagged prototypically when the train passed over it."



Nighttime photography of the heavy metal can be tricky but rewarding and dramatic. You just have to be sure the equipment stays parked because this art requires patience.



Ben Merry conducts a clinic on the history of the model railroading hobby. Ben showed a partly finished Z scale layout at the convention.

Another Friday night feature was the clinic presented by railroad illustrator Dennis Adams on night-time photography. The session had some problems getting the lights to work on schedule, so I took a few flash shots before I had to leave. Photography on this scale is big time, both in terms of the effort and the results.

Six clinics were scheduled for Saturday morning in the hotel. All were SRO filled, which should tell us that good clinics need bigger rooms. I was disappointed that, in several instances, I couldn't work my way in far enough to get a picture. Those who couldn't get into the clinics were able to view the models and photographs entered by members. There were many impressive examples.

The Non-rail trip and luncheon departed the station about 11 AM. Somehow, I'm bothered by this carefully orchestrated effort to shunt the female rail enthusiasts away from the main program. I was pleased that my wife and granddaughter chose to accompany me on the railfan trip. A number of area clubs set up their modular layout in the John Fuller School just a few minutes from the railroad station.

Bob Boudreau, who came about as far as anyone to the convention, had

3 → Green Mountain Flyer

some interesting observations on the Saturday schedule: "I was pleased with the number of entries in the model contest, but would of course always like to see more members participating. We are, after all, an association of railroad modelers. The rather small number of those who actually participate by entering contests suggests that there are more 'arm-chair' modelers out there than actual model builders. The one universal 'problem' at such conventions is the inability to take in all of the events. With the railfan trip ending late Saturday afternoon, I didn't have time to visit the modular layouts on display (which closed at 4 PM). Being from Canada, I always look forward to these conventions to be able to stock up on the latest model supplies. So, I was somewhat disappointed in the small number of dealers present. I think shows open to the public with many dealers on hand are more interesting."



At the Hartmann Museum, Tommy the Tank Engine and friend had a layout all their own to please the youngsters.

The railfan trip drew two coaches full of enthusiasts along with a small fortune in cameras. The only disappointment with the ride down the valley to meet with a scheduled tourist trip at Conway station was the absence of the usual steam locomotive. A cracked piston ring on one "jug" made it necessary to call into service

a B&M F7 (#4266). The "extra" and its crew were most accommodating to the fans by scheduling two "run-bys" for the photographers.



Railfans filled two coaches for the scenic trip down the valley to Conway and return. Just about everyone brought along a camera.

The Sheraton chefs served a tasty mozzarella-stuffed chicken breast for dinner (what, no vegetarians?). In addition to the door-prizes and the photo and model awards which are a standard feature of these affairs, Bob Boudreau presented Walter Neumen his Achievement Program Master Modeler Certificate, and President Jim Heidt distributed NMRA certificates recognizing members who have been part of the association for twenty-five years or more. Dwight Smith, founder of the Conway Scenic Railroad, and a railroad man of many years, presented a delightfull, illustrated history of the scenic railroad's beginnings and restoration. The pace of the day's activities found most conventioners asleep in their beds before midnight. Not even Santa and his reindeer team could have wakened them.

Sunday morning was reserved for the annual meeting of the NER's Board of Directors (see report elsewhere in this issue). As conventioners departed, they had a choice of visiting

→ p. 5

4 → Green Mountain Flyer



At a second runby, north of the station, passengers turn into photographers and wait for #4266 to come roaring past.

layouts on their journeys home, no matter what direction they traveled. Of the dozen and a half available, some were as far away as the Maine coast and Saint Johnsbury, Vermont.

How did **you** rate the White Mountain Flyer? Those whom I managed to interview commented that the conventions just keep getting better and better.

JTP



The crew of the North Conway Scenic Railroad did all the right things for the railfans. At the first runby, #4266 makes a pass for photographers at full throttle.

Achievement Awards Given at North Conway Meeting

By Bob Boudreau, Chairman

At the NER Fall Convention in North Conway, I had the great pleasure of presenting Achievement Program (AP) awards in person at the banquet. **Walter Neumen** of Massapequa Park, New York, received awards for Chief Dispatcher, and Master Builder - Motive Power, his sixth and seventh. This qualified him for the Master Model Railroader Award, the highest our hobby organization presents. It is estimated that it represents 10,000 hours of effort. That is certainly a major achievement!

Herman Botzow of Tuxedo, New York, was the recipient of four awards: Master Builder of Scenery and Structures, and Model Railroad Engineer - Civil and Electrical. **Ludwig Riemen-schneider** of Seaford, New York, picked up his award for Chief Dispatcher, while **Herbert Klein** of Flushing, New York, was awarded his Model Railroad Engineer - Civil certificate.

Other members who also recently earned awards include **Carl Cascone** of Northport, New York, who got his as Master Builder - Scenery; **Allan Haughton** of Marshfield, Massachusetts, was recognized as a Master Builder - Cars; **Edmund J. Neale** of Sayville, New York received one for Association Volunteer; and, **Bob Mitchell** of Weston, Connecticut, has been awarded Master Builder - Structures.

Many of the models in the contests at North Conway were given Achievement Program Merit Awards for earning at least 87½ points out of a possible 125, testifying to the ability modelers in our region. These Merit Awards can be used toward the requirements for the AP individual awards. If any of your models have this many points in this or other contests, you have already taken the first step toward participating in the Program.

→ p. 6

p. 5 → AP Awards

The Achievement Program is designed to be another way of keeping people interested in the NMRA. We do not solicit non-NMRA people to join, but rather work within the organization to give existing members craftsmanship goals and acknowledgement of accomplishment so they will want to remain in the NMRA.

A great way to get started in the program is by applying for the "Golden Spike Award." A typical layout that might not have enough completed for Master Builder - Scenery, or Model Railroad Engineer in Civil or Electrical, can qualify if it runs. This can also apply to an operations-oriented pike with well-laid trackwork, but with just suggestions of buildings and a little scenery, yet the owner and friends operate it with a large degree of satisfaction. Toy train and garden railroads can also qualify for the Gold Spike Award. A recent NER Golden Spike Award winner was **Richard A. Loomis** of Syracuse, New York. Why not give it a try yourself?

A good item that came out of the North Conway Convention's Sunday NER Board meeting was President Jim Heidt calling for a listing of NER Division boundaries. I was looking for such information myself so I could solicit Divisional AP Chairmen who could help me promote the Program. If Division Superintendents could furnish me this information and names of possible helpers, it would be greatly appreciated.

The Green Mountain Division, which serves members in and around northern Vermont, now has an AP Division Chairman, Paul Allard. Paul has earned the Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical Award, and is part of a group that is very active in promoting model railroad-ing among the Boy Scouts of America. Green Mountain members can contact Paul at 53 Rollin Irish Road, Milton, VT 05468, for AP forms and assistance. Thanks, Paul!

I'm looking forward to hearing from you if you have any questions concerning the Achievement Program. Write

to:

Bob Boudreau, Regional Chairman
NMRA Achievement Program
PO Box 7122, Station A
Saint John, N.B. CANADA E2L 4S5
and remember, letters (one ounce) to
Canada require a 40¢ U.S. stamp.

Directors Meet at North Conway Convention

The annual meeting of the NER Board of Directors was held in conjunction with the Fall Convention (The White Mountain Flyer) in North Conway, New Hampshire, on 24 October 1993.

President Jim Heidt called the meeting to order and immediately set the date and place for a subsequent gathering of the Board, 28 November 1993, in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

President Heidt charged each Division director to clearly define their legal borders and report division status at the next meeting. A brief discussion about the **NER Coupler** resulted in suggestions for items that should be included, such as contest rules, club information, Achievement Program activities, etc. Concern was also expressed that NER contest rules conform to those of the NMRA. Jim Truax reported the Region's bank account amounts to \$42,403.16.

Convention Chair Brian Whiton confirmed the location of the spring convention to be Worcester, Massachusetts. Pending Board approval, the fall 1994 convention will be held in Rockland, Maine. The spring 1995 meeting "will be somewhere in Quebec." Brian also noted that contest and award rules are in harmony with those of NMRA. The Young Modeler category is working well, but the "Kitbash" one has been dropped since it isn't part of the Achievement Program.

Everyone involved with contests pleaded for more help in judging entries and asked that contestants be prevented from badgering the judges. Bob Boudreau repeated his request for more assistance from Division members in the certification process in order to

→ p. 7

p. 6 → Directors Meet

cut back on the extraordinary need for travel. The Non-rail contest category needs a new chairperson. Frank Dietz has taken over as Photo Contest Chairman from Ed Scott.

Office Managers Rod and Elizabeth Brown count 774 regular NER members and 99 Life members. Seven new members were signed up at the convention. On the down side, the Browns have announced their intention of resigning from their responsibilities for day-to-day operation of the Region.

Trustee Bill Parker reported that NMRA has approved command control digital system standards. The home office has had increases in operational expenses and will soon make a pitch for improved support. These national convention locations have been set: Portland (1994), Atlanta (1995), Long Beach (1996), and Kansas City (1998). Bill also complained that Life membership is too expensive and noted that a single dues structure (national and regional) is still under discussion.

Frank Dietz recorded the minutes for the absent secretary, Diane Salvatore.

New Members

(09/02/93 to 12/08/93)

Connecticut: Charles Dougherty (Vernon); Roy S. Fine (Trumbull); Bob Frame (Shelton); Jonathan S. Harger (Niantic); Gerald E. Herzig (Stafford Springs); George H. Reitze (Glastonbury). **Hawaii:** Earle K. Gates (Honolulu). **Massachusetts:** Deborah P. Ames (Chelmsford); Robert D. Battis (Beverly); Michael Harris (Lynn); William Haug (Byfield); R.S. Johannes (Newton); Edwin J. Kroeker (Hudson); Nobuyuki Mizunuma (Brookline); Roswitha O'Hara (Abington); George D. Thompson (Wrentham); Diane Towle (Foxboro). **Maine:** Tim Byrne (Scarborough); Douglas E. Clark (Newcastle); Terrence P. King (Monmouth); David Manning (Biddeford); Robert Wildhage (South Portland). **New Hampshire:**

Jack Ellis (Madison); John Kelleher (Ashland); Douglas C. Lawson (Charlestown). **New Jersey:** Samuel P. Caliciotti (East Hanover). **New York:** Mark Hubbard (Utica); Terry B. Ketcham (Islip); Brian F. King (Frankfort); Joe Macaluso (Port Ewen); Michael J. Walker (Pearl River). **Ontario:** John Tumbas (Whitby). **Quebec:** Dominic Bourgeois (Brossard); Simon Parent (Quebec City). **Rhode Island:** Marc Tremblay (Smithfield). **Vermont:** Tim Eaton (Derby Line).

Baldwin Trophy Certificates Looking for Owners

Beginning with the Fall 1989 Convention in Albany, the Nutmeg Division has awarded certificates of recognition to past winners of the Baldwin Trophy for **Best in Show** in the Model Contest. Each year, most of the Certificates have been delivered to their owners. However, a small number have not been delivered because I do not have and cannot find current addresses for these individuals.

Therefore, I seek your help. I have certificates for the following winners: **M.A. Coles**, who won the Baldwin Trophy at White River Junction in the fall of 1974; **David Mealey**, who won the trophy at Granby, Quebec in the spring of 1979; **Robert D. Thompson**, who earned the trophy at Plymouth in the spring of 1980; **Peter Barney** won the Baldwin at New Bedford in the fall of 1983; and, **Kenneth Hamilton**, who won the Trophy at Providence in the fall of 1985. If you know any of these individuals, please send me their current address to 71 Buff Cap Road, Tolland, CT 06084-2605. I'll see that they get their certificates and I won't have to lug them around any more.

Kenneth May



R. RAMSDALL

Walter J. Neumen MMR #205

Walter J. Neumen, MMR #205, is a native New Yorker who started building model airplanes and ships at age eight. When he was about fourteen and visiting a local hobby shop, he noticed a Megow model refrigerator car which cost 25¢. From that time he has been an avid model railroader.



Walter enlisted in the Coast Guard during World War II. During the next 42 months he was involved in the invasion of Normandy and the occupation of Japan at its surrender. Like thousands of GIs, upon separation from the service, he went to school, got a job, and married. Eventually, he got back to model railroading.

Now, the Neumens have been married for 44 years, having brought into the world four children, who in turn have blessed them with six grandchildren. Walter and his wife, June, enjoy attending national and regional model railroad conventions. This footloose lifestyle is possible because Walter retired five years ago as Senior Design Engineer after 38 years of working for the Sperry/Unisys Corporation.

Neumen has been a member of

NMRA, Northeast Region, and the Sunrise Trail Division since 1964. He has been a Life member of NMRA since 1986, and has served as a Director of the Sunrise Trail Division for six years, and two years as Contest Chairman of the NER.

His layout was started in an attic room in 1950, and was moved to his present house in 1960. It has expanded in a basement room 13 x 23 feet. All of the track is hand-laid using Code 70 rail and wooden ties. Turnouts were scratch-built in place. The layout design is point to point with stub yards at each end and a turntable of original design. One third of the track is signaled, with remaining detectors and signals constructed but not installed. Several logic boards must be made before that part of the layout is finished. Scenery has just been started and several buildings are in progress. Command control is the operating system, using computer-generated way-bills.

Walter attributes his improvement in all phases of model building to the NMRA Achievement Program. While the paper work involved is time consuming, he has been gratified by the resulting accomplishments. Walter Neumen holds AP certificates in these categories: Cars, Structures, Civil and Electrical Engineering, Association Volunteer, Chief Dispatcher, and Motive Power.

Congratulations on your MMR recognition.

OOPS Department!

Rick Shoup, Chairman of NMRA's Achievement Program Department, liked the last issue of the *NER Coupler*, but points out an error on the part of your editor. He writes: "One correction...The AP [Achievement Program] issues Merit Awards, not the Contest Committee. The AP at this time does not have any way to issue a Merit Award for a module unless it is in a specific category application in the AP (e.g., Prototype Module- 4A). The module contest points awarded have no

→ p. 9

p. 8 → OOPS!

bearing on a module's receiving a Merit Award.

"Yes, it is confusing to the non-AP person. What it boils down to is that there are two separate worlds: Achievement and Contest. The AP is a distinct department while the Contest is a committee within the Convention department. The AP scoring schedule is similar, but not identical, to the contest. The reason is that we are also interested in judging in the home, and we are not striving for museum-quality models. Our desire is to have a well-built, complete model layout and a well-rounded modeler."

Donald Robinson, MMR, and Coupler Editor 1957-61, calls our attention to an error in the "Soot & Cinders" which appeared in issue #174, p. 12. He says, "No. 97's home road was the Birmingham & Southern, not the Burlington Southern." Thanks.

White Mountain Flyer Photo Contest Winners

Craftsman Category

Model Color Print

Best in Class- Denis Fortier, "The Orange Nose".

Prototype B&W Print

1st- John Tumbas, "CN2030".
2nd- John Tumbas, "CP927".

Prototype Color Print

1st- Roger Robar, "B&M F Unit at Night".
2nd- Frank Dietz, "CN at Lacolle Diamond".
3rd- John Tumbas, "CP5412 at Bay View Junction".
3rd- John Kellemer, "Winnepesaukee 44 Tonner".

Prototype Slide

1st- Roger Robar, "View from Crossing Shanty".
2nd- Brian Whiton, "Extra 489



A proud Glenn Glasstetter of Northeastern Vermont Model Railroading Society shows off the certificate that makes Green Mountain the newest NER Division.

West".

3rd- Deborah Ames, "#3985 Feather River Canyon".

HM- Stanley Ames, "The Next Generation".

Master Category

Model B&W Print

Best in Class- Denis Fortier, "Looking for the Green Light".

Model Slide

1st- Gerry Gilliland, "Cooling Temptation".
2nd- Gerry Gilliland, "Winter Pit Stop".
3rd- Denis Fortier, "Tiding Up".

Prototype B&W Print

1st- Pat Lecaroz, "Metro North FL9 #2013".
2nd- Pat Lecaroz, "NJ Transit on Moodna Viaduct".

Prototype Color Print

1st- John MacGown, "Autumn on Cumbres & Toltec".
2nd- John MacGown, "Llangollen, Wales".

Best-In-Show

Gerry Gilliland, "Cooling Temptation" (Model Slide).

Not all places were awarded due to

p. 9 → Photo Winners

some categories not having very many entries, and other entries which scored much lower in points.

Frank Dietz, Photo Contest Chairman

White Mountain Flyer Model Contest Winners

Loco-Steam

Craftsman: 1st, Simon Parent for CN Pacific.

Loco-Other

Master: 1st, Walter Neumen for EMD SC Switcher.

New Modeler:

1st, John Tumbas for SD40-2 CP Rail.

2nd, Robert Wildhage for Conrail C32-8.

3rd, Robert Wildhage for Conrail C40-8.

HM, John Tumbas for TH&B NW2.

Freight Cars

New Modeler: 1st, John Tumbas for M&A Box Car.

Non-Revenue

Master: 1st, Bob Bird for D&RGW Jordan Spreader.

New Modeler:

1st, Tim Byrne for D&H Jordan Spreader.



Mount Willard Section House modeled by Jack Ellis of Madison, New Hampshire.



Ken May presents an award to Ole Bye of Chester, Vermont. Keep your eyes on this fourteen year old youngster—he has the skills of a veteran model railroader.

2nd, Tim Byrne for NYC Oil and Sand Car.

3rd, John Tumbas for CP Wood Caboose.

Structures

Master: 1st, Gerry Gilliland for Country Store.

2nd, Bob Boudreau for Acme Machine Co.

New Modeler: 1st, Ole Bye for Covered Pony Truss Bridge.

2nd, John Tumbas for Burnt River Mining.

Diorama

Master: 1st, Mount Willard Section House.

2nd, Bob Boudreau for "End of the Line."

Merit: Gerry Gilliland for Back Woods Saw Mill.

Sunrise Trail Award

New Modeler: Tim Byrne for D&H Jordan Spreader.

Hub Runner-up Award

Bob Bird for D&RGW Jordan Spreader.

Nutmeg Division Youth Award

Ole Bye for Covered Pony Truss Bridge.

NERC New Modeler Runner-up

→ p. 11

p. 10 → Model Winners

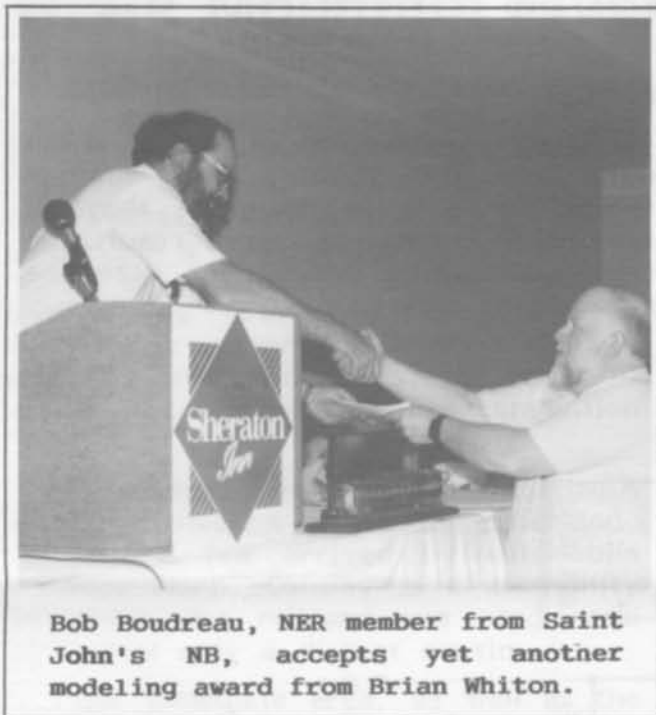
Ole Bye for Covered Pony Truss Bridge.

Baldwin Best-in-Show Award

Jack Ellis for Mount Willard Section House.

Brian Whiton

Model Contest Chairman



Bob Boudreau, NER member from Saint John's NB, accepts yet another modeling award from Brian Whiton.

Another Block Occupancy Detector

By David Metal

This is another form of block occupancy detection that works like the Twin T Block occupancy detector. The presence of a train (locomotive or other device which draws current) is detected because it does draw current and therefore has a voltage drop through one of the diode paths. It is this voltage drop that is detected in the Twin T detector to provide the "occupied" signal. As some of you may know, the voltage drop (1.2 volts) is large enough to allow a quality H0 locomotive to creep along the track when it is supposed to be



President Jim Heidt distributes certificates to twenty-five year members.

stopped. The circuit I have been building has a voltage drop close to nothing. In fact, the drop is equal to the value of the current drawn in the block times the resistance of a six inch piece of number 24 gauge wire. The resistance of 1,000 feet of such wire is 25.67 ohms, so the resistance of six inches is about $25.67/1000/2$, or 0.012835 ohms. Using a worst case current of 1 amp (most Athearn units will draw about 0.6 amps) would result in a voltage drop of 0.012835 volts. If your application requires more current, you might want to use two pieces of wire through the frame in parallel (this will lower the resistance by half).

The circuit will provide an output (positive voltage) when the block is occupied and drives a light-emitting diode (LED) on the board for adjustment. Other LEDs can be connected on panels, signals, or a low-current 12 volt relay directly if you want to.

Construction

Start by modifying the transformer by cutting off all leads except the green and the blue ones. Cut six inch piece(s) of 24 gauge wire and strip $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of insulation from each end. Bend the wire(s) in a "U" shape and thread the ends of the wire

11 → Occupancy Detector

between the coil and the metal frame of the transformer, as shown in the circuit drawing. Mount the transformer on the perf-board using the tabs on the frame and thread the wire leads through the holes in the board. Mount the potentiometer, 8-pin dip socket and connector to the perf-board, then position the LED, 2 resistors and 2 capacitors on the board and wire the circuit as shown in the diagram. Use 24 gauge wire or wire-wrap wire if you like. Check your work and apply 12 volts and ground to the proper terminals. Adjust the resistor until the LED just comes on. Adjust in the opposite direction slowly until the LED goes out. The circuit is now set to detect any current in the track block and may be installed

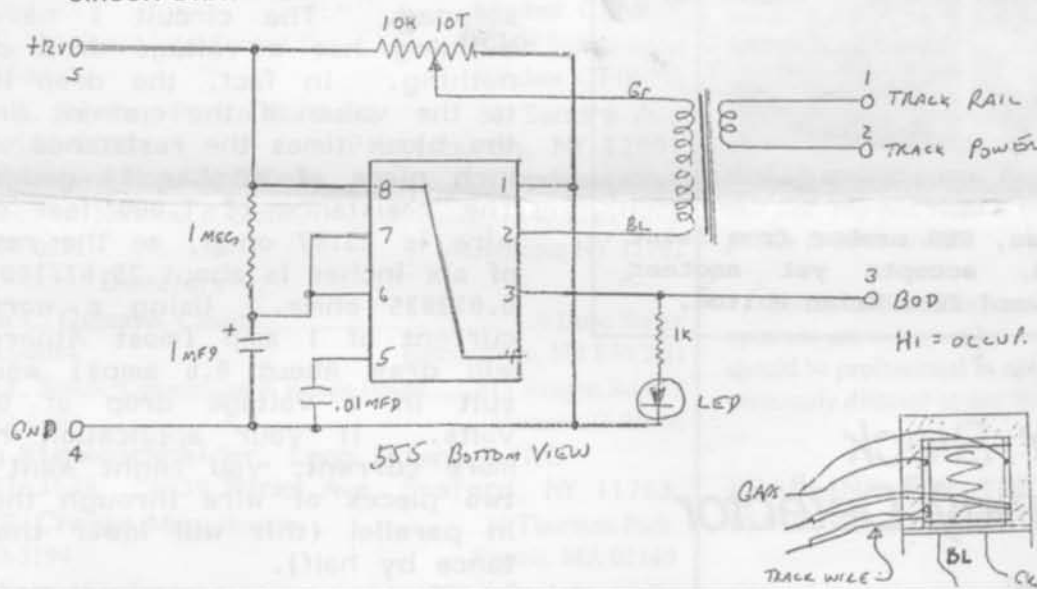
PARTS LIST:

271-1321	1,000 1/4 watt resistor	5ea	.49
271-343	10,000 ohm 10 turn potentiometer	1ea	1.49
271-1356	1,000,000 1/4 watt resistor	5ea	.49
272-1434	1 mfd tant capacitor	1ea	.49
272-131	0.01 mfd disc capacitor	2ea	.49
273-1380	transformer (modify to text)	1ea	1.69
276-1723	NE555 chip	1ea	1.19
276-1995	8 pin dip socket	2ea	.59
276-150	2 inch by 3 inch perf board	1ea	1.19
276-1388	6 pin connector (if desired)	1ea	2.29
276-022	LED	2ea	.99
	6 inch of 24 gage telco wire		

for use.

After construction of ten of these units by the author, and another twenty by a fellow designer, they all worked immediately. As a result, no trouble-shooting instructions can be supplied at this time.

CIRCUIT DRAWING:



R & E Brown Office Managers
79 Hemenway Road
Framingham, MA 01701

FIRST CLASS



Season's Greetings!

TO