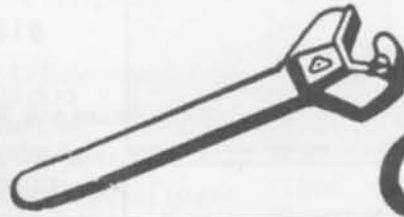


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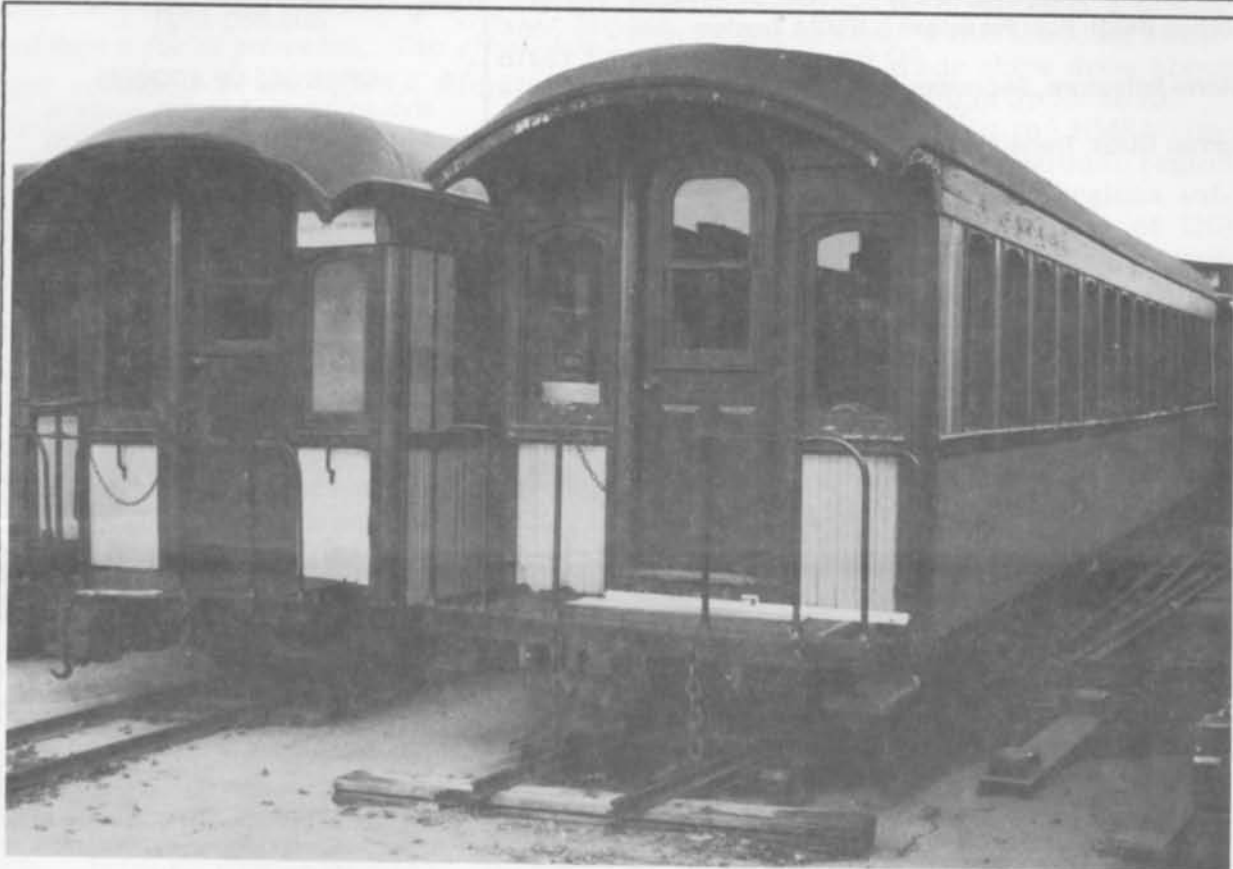
#180, December 1994

NER



Coupler

A Publication of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association



The Magic of Maine Layout Visit Number 6. Maine Narrow Gauge Museum, The two foot Narrow Gauge Prototype.

One of the half dozen layout tours offered members at the Maine convention was unique. The two foot narrow gauge equipment which had become a hallmark of Maine's early railroad development had been sold to the Edaville, Massachusetts tourist railroad several years ago. The equipment, a legacy of the late nineteenth century, has been purchased by the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Company and Museum and returned to the state. The equipment, awaiting restoration and refurbishing, is stored at the Museum's Yard at 58 Fore Street, in the Old-Port section of Portland's waterfront. The Museum association has received local Planning Board approval to lay 2 ft. gauge tracks along the former Grand Trunk right of way from India Street to Fish Point, on 8 ft, 6 in, cross-ties. More inside.

NER BRASS

OFFICERS

Brian C. Whiton, President 203-623-8512
94 & 96 Spring Street, Windsor Locks, CT 06096
Glenn Glasstetter, Vice -President, 802-434-3316
RFD #1, Box 385, Richmond, VT 05477
James Heidt, Past President & NMRA Trustee 315-245-3664
PO Box 195, Camden, NY 13316
Diane Salvatore, Secretary 609-769-3065
33 Elm Street, Woodstown, NJ 08098
James Truax, Treasurer 802-860-7372
32 University Terrace, Burlington, VT 05401

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

Bob Boudreau, Achievement Program 506-672-2374
PO Box 7122, Station A, Saint John, NB E2L4S5 Canada
Kenneth H. May, Convention Chairman, 203-872-3441
71 Buff Cap Road, Tolland, CT 06084
Brian C. Whiton, Model Contest Chair, 203-623-8512
94 & 96 Spring Street, Windsor, CT 06096
Frank A. Dietz, Photo Contest Chair, 518-562-8058
38 Sandra Avenue, Plattsburgh, NY 12901
Diane Salvatore, Non-rail & Crafts 609-769-3065
33 Elm Street, Woodstown, NJ 08098
June Neumen, Non-rail & Crafts 516-798-0575
149 Clark Boulevard, Massapequa, NY 11762

DIRECTORS

Denis Fortier, Canada, 418-665-4284
971 Boul. du Cap, Cap a l'Aigle, Quebec, PQ G0T-1B0
Kenneth H. May, Connecticut, Rhode Island 203-872-3441
71 Buff Cap Road, Tolland, CT 06084
Ludwig Riemenschneider, Long Island, NYC 516-781-3534
4039 Wicks Avenue, Seaford, NY 11783
Don Howd, Massachusetts, 508-689-9102
32 Adams Street, Lawrence, MA 01843
Richard C. Laube, New Jersey, 609-882-7341
6 Worthington Drive, Trenton, NJ 08638
Frank A. Dietz, New York State 518-562-8058
38 Sandra Avenue, Plattsburgh, NY 12901
David Collinge, Northern New England 603-569-4876
RR2, Box 500, Wolfeboro, NH 03894

WORKING CREW

Joseph T. Popecki, Editor 802-863-4121
33 Woodridge Drive, Burlington, VT 05401 2741
Michael G. Saunders, Staff NER Coupler 802-524-4429
84 Aldis Street, St. Albans, VT 05478-1913
Charles & Pat Bettinger, Convention Registrars
29 Foster Drive, Vernon, CT 06066
Brian C. Whiton, Office Manager pro-tem, 203-623-8512
94/96 Spring Street, Windsor Locks, CT 06096

#180, December 1994

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

Joseph T. Popecki, Editor
33 Woodridge Drive
Burlington, VT 05401 2741
802-863-4121

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

should be sent to the Business Manager (see under Working Crew in left column)

CONTRIBUTIONS

from NER and NMRA members are most welcome. The Editor reserves the right to accept, reject or edit copy as received.

Articles accepted for publication will be included in *The NER Coupler* in a timely fashion.

The newsletter is composed on a Macintosh Performa using Claris Works. Since copy must be edited and adapted to issue format, it is welcome in any readable form including computer diskette.

Photographs intended for individual publication or as part of an article are invited. If you wish us to return your photos, please include a sufficiently large envelope and adequate postage. Color photos of good color balance and contrast are acceptable.

Letters to the Editor of a constructive and professional nature will also be considered for publication.

Deadline for next issue is 25 February 1995

NER Membership is open to any NMRA member at \$6 per year. Look for the application blank in each issue.

Two Hundred NER Members Enjoy Maine Hospitality

The Magic of Maine convention in Rockland suffered only from one thing: SUCCESS.

Vice President Glenn Glasstetter explains it this way:

"The Rockland convention is now history and for the Region it was a great success.

"Two hundred people attended the convention. Based on past meetings in this area, at Belfast and at Rockland, the Convention Committee projected a much smaller turnout. While some attendees experienced inconveniences because of the overcrowding, their problems pale in comparison with the planning headaches with which the PCC, local convention chairs Henry and Ellie Groth, and the Trade Winds Motor Inn management had to deal.

"The Banquet seating was in three adjacent rooms in order to accommodate the crowd. A sound system, however, allowed everyone to hear what was going on. One of the rooms assigned to clinics was quite small because the original room was rented to convention guests. In fact, planners scrambled at the last minute to revise the program to reflect these changes.

It's easy to be critical and suggest what might have been done differently after the fact, but despite the statistical database available to the Permanent Convention Committee, projections based on past performance (like the weather) are no guarantee of future activity. My hearty congratulations to the PCC, which goes through this punishment for us twice a year, and to Henry and Ellie for a fine convention. As I overheard a

member say, 'I go to these conventions to see my friends, everything else is just gravy.' And I also make new friends at each convention I attend."

Attending Clinics is unavoidably like watching a three-ring circus- you can see just so much. Your editor was able to sample three of them.



Rich Laube, a member of the Union, New Jersey Model Railroad Club, shares building construction know-how with his audience.

Rich has given similar clinics at NER conventions, but he never fails to pack the classroom because he always comes up with new ideas and new products to try.

For years, modelers have looked enviously at Bob Boudreau's superior photographs in the pages of *Model Railroader* magazine. Most of us have wondered about the way he achieves the realism we'd all like to see on our model pikes. Even more, we'd like to record those scenes for posterity. The clinic on Model Railroad Photography had an audience ranging from "point and shoot" photographers to those with considerable experience and ex-

p. 3, Magic of Maine>>>>

expertise. Everyone came away with a bunch of practical ideas.



Bob Boudreau generously shares his simple but elegant ideas for creating super photographs.

When it comes to talking about small tools in creating scenery and structures for model railroads, Charlie Files comes across with more than ordinary authority. He makes tools which often can't be found anywhere else. He markets the Preac Micro-Precision Thickness Sander, and the Micro-Precision Table Saw. In his clinic, Charlie explained why specialty miniature tools can accomplish results not obtainable on larger scale machines, even those of the highest quality.

For the past few years, Brian Whiton (newly elected President of NER) has made a pilgrimage to Colorado in a quest for the "perfect mine" to model on his own layout. His vision of what he is looking for has been sharpened by a considerable experience as director of the convention model contests. Brian is a competent photographer of the elusive prototype. Like many other NER members, he looks for inspiration in the real world of trains, much of which can be experienced only in old photographs.



Though wheelchair-bound, Charlie Files is a dynamic teacher of micro-tool techniques.

The clinics regrettably I didn't get to attend were: Renumbering your all-the-same boxcars, by Rudy Slovacek; Signal Logic Designs (based on a prototypically correct live steam layout) by Joe Kavanaugh; Modeling Fire Trucks (an essential for any model community), by Robert Bennett. Brian Whiton offered a second clinic on the subject of linkages to connect turnout switch machines. He's written on this technique in the last two issues of the *NER Coupler*.

The trade show was housed in the nearby Rockland High School. In addition to the usual bargains and bargain hunters, I spotted the ultimate mini railroad, a Z scale layout in a standard briefcase.

The banquet is the usual venue for announcing the results of several events. The winners of the model and photo contests are listed in this issue. The number of entries in both classes of competition were lower this year than in most recent conventions. The quality, however, was as good as ever.



Ever see a model railroad in a briefcase? This beats the usual coffee table setup. Z-scale

There was other business of significance at the convention banquet. President-emeritus Jim Heidt was as relaxed and jovial as ever despite a recent battle with serious illness.



One of the duties of the outgoing president (just elected NER Trustee to NMRA) was to introduce the newly elected officers, chairpersons and directors who attended the Maine convention. See the BRASS page for new names, phone numbers and addresses.

Following a long standing tradition, a local -arrangements team from the next convention site made a spiri-

ted presentation for the wonderful expectations of Quebec City in spring.



The biggest ovation of the evening was reserved for Rod and Elizabeth Brown who are retiring as Business Managers of NER for more than a decade. President Heidt presented them with plaques recognizing their dedicated and quality service to the NER.



A successor to the Browns has been found, but will not be able to take over their work until early in 1995. President Whiton is serving as Business Manager *protem*. You'll find his address and phone number on the BRASS page (at least three times). An auction and

p. 5, Magic of Maine>>>>

bingo party capped the evening.

Rockland to Wiscasset on the Maine Coast Railroad

After a day and night of driving rain, the Maine weather relented and provided a mix of cloud and sun for the railfan trip on Saturday. The point of departure was the roundhouse area just a quarter mile from the motel. Four cars provided space for the 150+ conventioners who rode the special train. For once there was no gender-specific entertainment to separate spouses and children. As you will note from the following "snapshots" of the trip, there was ample opportunity for fans to photograph the trainset.



Layout Visits Attract Busy Conventioneers

Numerically, available layouts in the Rockland area were few, but were all built for fun. Friday evening, three of them were available for viewing and participation: Wendell Blanchard's HO "Georges Valley Railroad" (a no-period pike with more than a hundred pieces of rolling stock); Neville Lewis' G scale railroad with over 150 feet of mainline (and a live steam version a-building); and, Henry Groth's "Spare-time Lines", consisting of a large basement HO scale layout, and a 1.5 inch scale outdoor railroad which visitors could ride.

On Sunday, conventioneers could visit Richard Clark's HO scale and G scale railroads. Layout is still in progress and scenery is about one-third complete. Bob Hamalainen's "Pleasant Mountain Railroad" is an O scale pike begun just this year. Most of the stock is Lionel. Perhaps the most unusual "layout" was the full-scale Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad featured on the cover of and elsewhere in this issue.

PCC Ken May writes about the structure of producing a convention such as the Quebec City meet in May.

Board Picks Ken May as Permanent Convention Chairman (PCC)

Medieval theologians were fascinated with a question of cosmology: how many angels could dance on the head of a pin? The NER Board of Directors have had concern about a more contemporary problem: how many hats could fit on Brian Whiton's head? A long-time Region activist, Kenneth May has been appointed the Permanent Convention Chairman, or as you will more frequently see the position referred to in these pages, the PCC. You can find Ken's address and phone number on the BRASS page (#2) of each *Coupler* issue.

Not all members are aware of the planning and complex execution that are fundamental to a successful convention. As VP Glasstetter points out in his assessment of the Rockland meeting, the PCC committee and the local arrangement team suffer this self-inflicted "punishment" for our sakes twice a year. With the assumption of his new duties, Ken will no longer be able to function as the Convention Publicity Chair. He hereby solicits applications from members for this critical position. If you have a knack for this kind of work, get in touch with Ken. The *Convention Handbook* offers ample guidance on time-tables and other requirements of getting out the news.

Other important convention team members are the Convention Registrar(s), the Convention Treasurer, craft, model and photo contest organizers. Ken can tell you which positions are open, or about to be vacated. Another type of committee member of which I was unaware is that of the "Coach". As Ken explains, the role of the coaches is just what the word

denotes, people who have knowledge and skills in the mechanics of convention management. These resource people do not do the work, but advise committee members charged with a variety of duties: setting up the trade show, organizing a railfan trip or other local transportation, choosing a convention venue, dealing with hotels or motels, on-site signage, program preparation, solicitation of clinicians, and many more responsibilities I can't think of now. By this time you know how important a smooth functioning team with a competent leader is to the successful convention we have come to expect. Don't underestimate the contribution you can make to this wonderful aspect of our hobby. Men, women, boys and girls, get in touch with Ken today!

JTP

Oui! Quebec City in the Spring: the Weekend of Memorial Day

Long before we made the trip to Rockland for the "Magic of Maine" convention, the PCC team was worrying its way through the arrangements for the NER Spring Convention in Quebec City.

Ken May recalls that it was eleven years ago that those of us south of the border travelled to Quebec for the convention at Auberge Universal. The train show was located in a nearby church hall. Just about any member you talk to who attended that convention thinks fondly of it as one of NER's most memorable.

Les Halmos and Dennis Fortier, who head up the local arrangements team, approach the convention as "show biz". The official convention hotel will be the Holiday Inn in Ste-Foy. Its facilities are generous enough that the

p. 7 Quebec City Convention >>>

banquet and trade show will not share the same space. And so the train show will run both Saturday and Sunday. The feature of this part of the meeting will be a spectacular modular layout by Modu-rail, which co-sponsors the convention. Five rooms are reserved for clinics and contests, and the banquet will offer a choice of three entrees. Seven layouts will be open on Friday evening. You won't have to use your car and a road map to visit them because mini-buses will whisk you there, departing the hotel at fifteen minute intervals starting at 6:30 PM. Clinics will be in English while others will be given in French, the official language of the Province of Quebec.

Non-rail entertainment arrangements have not been finalized, but may include a tour of the City's famous 350 year old hotel, or a luncheon aboard a tour boat cruising the St. Lawrence River. If you already own a 1995 calendar, mark off the Memorial Day Weekend. This is one not to be missed.

And the Winner is...

Award Winners, Model Contest, Rockland, Maine Convention, 1994

New Modeler Class

Loco (other), Ludwig Riemenschneider, 1st for Fort Neck Traction Sweeper

Loco (other), Tim Byrne, 2d for D&H RS-3u

Freight Cars, Don Buesing, 1st for D&RGW Box Car 3687

Freight Cars, Don Buesing, 2d, for D&RGW Stock Car 5793

Structures, Paul Allard, 1st, for Merriam's Creamery

Diorama, Tim Byrne, 1st, for TOFC Ramp Scene

Craftsman Class

Steam Loco, Larry Cannon, 1st, for Edaville

#4

Steam Loco, Larry Cannon, 2d, for Edaville

#3

Non-revenue, Glenn Salvatore, 1st, for Rutland Caboose

Passenger Cars, Glenn Owens, 1st, for B&M Wood Coach

Structures, Scott Milligan, 1st, for Stock Pens

Structures, Scott Milligan, 2d, for Valley Road Depot

Structures, Paul Lessard, 3d, for 1935 era home

Master Class

Freight Cars, Bill Mischler, 1st, for Drop Center Flat

Diorama, Bob Bennett, 1st, Farm Scene

Brian Whiton, Model Contest Chairman

Award Winners, Photo Contest, Rockland, Maine Convention 1994

Craftsman Category

Model Slide

John Bortle, 1st, for "Say Cheese"

John Bortle, 2d, for "Caught in the Act"

Allen Houghton, 3d, for MEC Passenger Train

Allen Houghton, Honorable Mention for MEC Passenger & Freight

Prototype Color Print

Allen Houghton, 1st, for Layover on CN

Allen Houghton, Honorable Mention for Freight Cars at Wilmer Wood

Prototype Slide

Allen Houghton, 1st, for St. Lawrence and Atlantic

Allen Houghton, Honorable Mention, for CN Jeeps

Master Category

Model Slide

Bob Bennett, 1st, for 4-8-2 Under Viaduct

Stan Ames, 2d, for SJR&P Garden Railway

Prototype Black & White Print

Patricia Lecaroz, 1st, for Crossing Signal

Patricia Lecaroz, 2d, for "Smokin' Shay"

Prototype Color Print

Patricia Lecaroz, 1st, for "Reflections"
Bob Bennett, 2d, for BAR Excursion
Patricia Lecaroz, 3d, for Westbound at Sunset
John MacGown, Honorable Mention, for
"Shake That Fire"
John MacGown, Honorable Mention, for
Autumn on the C&T

Prototype Slide

Stan Ames, 1st, for #3785 In Steam
Stan Ames, 2d, for #3785 Fireman in Action
Patricia Lecaroz, 3d, for Stack Train on Mood-
na Viaduct
Brian Whiton, Honorable Mention, for #489
at Cubres Summit

Frank Dietz, Photo Contest Chairman

NER Achievement Program, 1994

by Bob Boudreau, Chairman

At the recent NER Convention in Rockland, Maine, I had the great pleasure of personally presenting AP (Achievement Program) award certificates to several members who attended the meeting. Many others chose to have their awards presented at their local club or Division meetings. So you'll have an idea of the magnitude of this program, the following is a list of all the awards made during this calendar year. Note that these members didn't *win* these awards, they *achieved* a level of competence which was recognized by the Program.

Bob Mitchell (Weston, CT), Model Railroad Author. **Bob Adler** (Kenilworth, NJ), Master Builder-Scenery & Model Railroad Author. **William Mitchell** (Sandwich, MA), Model Railroad Engineer-Civil. **Gerry Gilliland** (Saint John, NB), Model Railroad Author. **Warren Eckler** (Baldwin, NY), Association Volunteer. **Bill Mischler** (Sce-nectady, NY), Association Volunteer, Model Railroad Author, Association

Official. **Jeff English** (Troy, NY), Model Railroad Author. **Tom Rhodes** (Ballston Lake, NY), Model Railroad Author. **Ken Nelson** (Scotia, NY), Association Volunteer, Model Railroad Author, Master Builder-Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer-Electrical. **Don Buesing** (Ballston Spa, NY), Association Volunteer. **Robert Hamm** (Saratoga Springs, NY), Model Railroad Author, Association Volunteer. **Paul Allard** (Milton, VT), Association Volunteer, Master Builder-Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer-Civil. **Ron Bergeron** (Sanford, ME), Master Builder-Scenery. **Denis Fortier** (Cap a L'Aigle) Model Railroad Author.

Joe Lecaroz of Newburgh, NY, and **Denis Fortier** of Cap a l'Aigle, Quebec recently earned **Golden Spike Awards**

You'll notice that over half the awards went to members in New York State. An aggressive campaign by the Hudson-Berkshire Division members, and especially by President Bob Hamm was responsible for this record. These members are not only good modelers, but are active in NMRA and share their work with others through publication.

How the System Works

Merit Awards

These are presented to members whose models earn at least 75% (a score of 87.5) of the possible 125 total points in an NMRA model contest. One or more Merit Awards are necessary to apply for Master Builder status in Cars, Motive Power, Structures and Scenery categories. If one of your models has earned at least an 87.5 point score in an NER/NMRA contest, you're entitled to a Merit Award. Since I haven't been able to attend all such events, you may not have received the

p. 9, Achievement Program >>>

Award. Just send me a copy of your contest model score sheet, and I'll send your Award. Your score sheet is sufficient to qualify you for further competition.

In-Home Judging

It's very difficult for a Regional AP Chairman to find qualified members to do in-home judging. Layout scenery and many structures can't be brought to contest sites for that purpose. Regulations state that the in-home judge must hold at least the level of the award up for judgement. If qualified judges, as specified here, are not available, two regular NMRA members can be dispatched to do the job.

When these judging solutions fail, I have resorted to the use of a videotape record. Write me for guidelines for implementing this method.

If you have questions about the AP, write me or contact your Division Superintendent for the name of your local AP representative. Each category has its own validation form which lists the requirements in checklist fashion. It takes a minimum of two months for me to process an application and produce a certificate, so don't send in your application a month before a convention and hope to receive your Award there. You can choose to have your award presented at a Division meeting or mailed to you directly. Remember, first class postage to Canada is presently 40 cents per ounce.

Get those applications in!

Born Again: the Seacoast Division

The Seacoast Division of the NER

was chartered in 1968, having been organized eight years before. It held its first model railroad show in Dover, New Hampshire, followed by a number of November shows in Auburn, Maine. Later, these were followed by more shows sponsored by the Great Fall Model Railroad Club. The Seacoast Division also sponsored the first NER/NMRA convention in North Conway in 1971.

Charter Division member David Collinge (who is well-known as Northern New England Director of NER, and as publisher of the events newsletter *Railroad Information*) is trying to breath life into the SD. He has mailed vol. 1, no. 1 of a new publication, *The Switch Tower*. Vermont now has its own Green Mountain Division. If the rest of you in the old Seacoast Division missed the reorganization meeting in Monmouth, Maine on 19th November, get in touch with Acting Secretary Terrence P. King, at PO Box 188, East Livermore, ME 04228-0188.

In Memoriam

Ted Ritter, of Vernon, Connecticut, died unexpectedly, but peacefully, on Sunday, 30 October 1994 at his home. Ted served the NER as Office Manager prior to the tenure of the Browns, retiring about 1980. He was also active in the Nutmeg Division for many years. For the past decade and a half, he operated a basement hobby business, appearing at train shows around the region as "Ritt's Trains". Ted is survived by his wife, Elsie, two sons Michael and Martin, their wives and two grand-daughters.

Ken May

*Thomas Henry "Hank" Burke, 1918-1994
This announcement of Hank's passing is written with great sadness. Hank has been in and out of the hospital since the beginning of the year, undergoing complex heart surgery, and*

spent fifteen weeks in intensive care, succumbing on October 1.

Hank was a staunch, active member of the HUB Division of NER for many years. During most of that time, he was also an NMRA member. Having served several years as editor of the HUB Headlight, he chaired or co-chaired HUB Division and Region conventions many times. He promoted quality Clinics and kept a file of presenters. This effort was most noticeable at the NMRA Minuteman Convention in Boston in 1986.

During World War II, Hank was a B-17 bombardier/navigator in the 384th Bomb Group of the Eight Air Force in Europe, flying 27 successful missions over enemy territory. His career was electronics engineer for Raytheon in the Waltham and Wayland facilities. His closest friends knew him as sincere, honest and steadfast, as is his wife, Phyllis. God bless you, Hank, you've left a hole in our lives.

Glenn E. Owens

Members Meet with Board at the Close of the Rockland Meeting

It's the custom of NER conventions to open the Board meeting to members at the close of each meeting.

Information exchanges covered the waterfront and sent the talks into overtime. It has been difficult to solicit rail and non-rail contest judges. Should the Divisions supply them? The motion was made and passed to allow popular judging of some contests. Division-supplied judges, it was agreed, should be given guidelines and training.

Frank Dietz made suggestions for improving the photo contest and for setting appropriate artistic standards. Frank is also pursuing the "border wars", trying to settle the boundaries of Divisions in the age of zip codes, and also trying to determine which are still active.

President Whiton announced that

the By-laws are being revised and will be reviewed at the next Board meeting. He asked for member suggestions. Ken May reported on the convention and noted that Quebec City will host the May convention. No fall '95 site has yet been selected. Bids are in for future meetings in Hyannis, New Jersey, Portland, and a return trip to Vermont. Ken questioned whether a railfan trip is necessary for a good meeting. There followed a discussion of site attributes and schedule strategies. The Maine trade show drew about 400 and cleared a profit of about \$650.

Brian talked about the NMRA consideration of a single national/region dues structure. Would the regions suffer? What would be the status of Life members? Would Divisions be at a disadvantage? In such an arrangement, the NER Coupler would have a circulation of about 4,000, instead of 850. With that kind of base, commercial advertising would be feasible and could increase income to the Region treasury. Brian asked for membership's observations which could be taken to national board meetings by the NER Trustee.

Divisions: the Grassroots of Region Activity

Hosting a region convention is a good way to improve division activity. It certainly worked for Vermont's Green Mountain Division (originally part of the moribund Seacoast Division). Shortly after Mike Saunders galvanized the model railroaders of Northern Vermont into applying for division status, Mike and I bid for a regional convention. The experience of hosting that meeting enabled a lot of members to learn to work together for a common goal and get to know each other better. That momentum has carried over into division and club activities.

Layout visits are not only a highlight of conventions, but we have found them popular for our division meets. A whole year has been calendared for Division members. Tell Joe Popecki about your Division Activities.

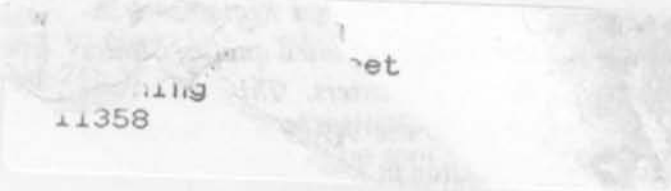
-Glenn Glasstetter, VP

NER Office Manager
 94/96 Spring Street
 Windsor Locks, CT 06096



FIRST CLASS

TO



Happy Holidays!

NER Membership Application / Renewal		NORTHEASTERN REGION, NMRA	
NAME _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL	<input type="checkbox"/> NEW MEMBER
ADDRESS _____	_____	\$6.00 for 1 year membership	
_____	_____	\$15.00 for 3 year membership	
_____	_____	\$110.00 for life membership (only if you are an NMRA life member)	
Please remit in U.S. FUNDS Make checks/postal orders payable to NER-NMRA		Office Use Only	
#	Xp	New	
Chk	Csh	File	Card

Mail to: NER Office Manager
 94/96 Spring Street
 Windsor Locks, CT 06096



MNG is on It's Way

There have been two narrow gauge standards in American railroad history. Comparatively few were of the two ft. size. At first glance, the rails look like someone's backyard live steamer, but the cars are not all that Lilliputian. The Maine Narrow Gauge Railway & Museum has the only parlor car in this size, and this railbus could be the inspiration for small scale urban transit in our suburban areas where unused railbeds and bus-like vehicles with truck size wheels could be the answer to traffic glut. JTP