

THE
NER

No. 187, December 1996

coupler



A Publication of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association

Messages from Tower A

I'm going to do some official business this issue. Let's welcome Patti Bettinger in her official capacity as Secretary for the NER. Patti has often functioned in the role, sitting in when others were called away



with more pressing issues. Now she has the office to go with all that hard work. Patti is my executive assistant, as

well as one of our convention Registrars, so she is pretty busy with her NER affairs. Wouldn't some of you like to give her a hand with part of this work load? As Jim Heidt so often says, we just keep passing the hats around the same core staff forever.

Next, you need to know about a new division proposed to encompass the southwestern Connecticut county of Fairfield, and the southeastern New York county of Westchester. The Division is to be called Metro North. Both of the counties

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"Hudson Valley Photo-Op" depicts a summer's day in the late steam era on the NYC. Two railfan photographers have caught a meet between the Empire State Express and a local freight at Cold Spring.. In the background are the mountains of the Hudson Highlands. Famous Break Neck Mountain is behind the trains while across the Hudson River lies Storm King. The shot was taken at the actual location and the background is real. Photo by John Bortle. John's 1st place (Best in Show) Color Slide-Model "Down by the Station", (Kingston) can be seen in the December issue of Model Railroader, p. 119. He's a regular contributor .

INSIDE: ✓ Early information on the "Saratoga Limited" Spring Convention, 16-18 May 1997.
✓ Articles from our readers ✓ A report on the Kingston Convention for the 600 NER members who didn't make the 50th birthday meeting
✓ News from the NER Divisions, other Regions

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

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

should be sent to the Office 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
15 February 1997
CONVENTION ISSUE**

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

p.1 Messages from Tower A

in the proposed area fall within the boundaries of existing Divisions, Nutmeg and Hudson Valley, respectively. Neither Division is very active, though Nutmeg has recently had a meeting to rekindle the flame. I hope it catches.

The Hudson Valley Division appears to be dormant, but is the division of record for Westchester County. I know of no current officers for the Hudson Valley Division. However, some of you may know more about activities there. If you

If an area with significant interest and NMRA members wishes to form a division, is proposed with logical boundaries and is not served by an existing division, or is ineffectively served, then it has a perfect right to do so.

do, please contact me. Also, please contact me if you have strong opinions regarding whether we should create this particular new division from the edges of existing divisions. If you're just going to complain without logical arguments, please spare me.

Though Kevin Feeney has submitted names of more than the required number of petitioners, all members in good standing, there are other steps which must be taken. We may have been a bit loose with the procedures in the past, but many members are insisting that we follow procedures to the letter this time. The process for starting a new division requires me to notify existing divisions from which the area is to be extracted, and those which border the proposed division. Some of these divisions were represented at the annual meeting, but there were objections from Nutmeg Division Charlie Bettinger.

I'm in the dark about activity and officers of the Empire Division which, I'm told, served New York City. The Empire Division is a bordering division and entitled to notice. I don't think Empire had a claim on Westchester County. Please correct me if I'm wrong, and notify me if you know of officers and/or any division activity.

The Sunrise Trail Division is, of course, a neighboring division across Long Island Sound and has been notified at the annual meeting of the proposal. Ludwig Riemenschneider expressed concern that two Region members living in the proposed area but active in Sunrise Trail might be offended. He's going to check into this. I'm also writing to the Sunrise Trail Division Superintendent to give official notice. This stuff gets pretty complex, especially contacting officers in divisions much less active than Sunrise Trail. These phantom divisions appear to exist in the third dimension little postal service.

The Garden State Division is a neighbor to the west by way of the Hudson River, but has not had a division function since 1985, though some of the Garden State folks ran a great convention for us in 1989. Rich Laube is the last known superintendent, so I've notified him of the proposed division. If others in the Garden State Division have strong opinions, please contact me, and jump-start your own division.

Let me just step up on my soap box for a bit here. If an area with significant interest and NMRA members wishes to form a division, is proposed with logical boundaries and is not served by an existing division, or is ineffectively served, then it has a perfect right to do so. You define ineffective, but really now, who are we to object? I have 22 names in front of me that want the Metro North Division to be formed so they can attend

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p. 3 Messages from Tower A

functions which support the hobby and are not a two-hour drive from home. They certainly have my blessing, and I am a member of the Nutmeg Division from which some of the area is to be extracted. When I lived in California many years ago, I was "served" by a dormant division with few activities and no elections or officers. I wanted more, so I joined a neighboring division. I still participated in the local division, but found the additional events from my second membership much to my liking.

Few divisions require you to be a resident of their geographical boundaries as a prerequisite for membership. Get the point? If you are a Nutmeg member and suddenly wake up in the Metro North division, you won't be any less welcome at a Nutmeg event. At least I don't think so. You are certainly welcome at my layout! And, best of all, there will be some fun to be had close by your home. Sounds good to me.

So write to me! Tell me what you know about the dormant divisions, existing divisions, and would-be divisions, I'd like to hear what you want to see happen there, what you think of the proposed division. Fill me in on some history, or just give me a good smack. I got smacked pretty hard at the annual meeting and I'm still here for more if you feel the need.

Respectfully,

BRIAN C. WHITON, PRESIDENT

P.S. When you finish writing me, go build a model.

Messages from your Business Manager, Ron Bergeron.

As of November, Ron reports only three new members; they are: Brian Curry,

Weedsport, New York; Robert Peters, Coventry, Rhode Island; and, Kenneth Nelson, Scotia, New York.

Non-life members should now get their renewal notices two to three weeks prior to membership expiration. Remember, you must maintain your NMRA membership to renew with NER. You'll also be getting a re-designed membership card.

Please let Ron know if you change your address or have it modified due to the new 911 locating programs.

Ron needs current addresses for the following Life members (last-known address is given): J. Clarke (Ville St Laurent, Quebec); James Clokey (address unknown); Robert Gustafson (New York City); Myron Johnson (Steilacoom, WA); E. Ludington, Jr. (Greenwich, CT); Roger Marble (address unknown).

SIG Layout Design Meeting

The Layout Design Special Interest Group (SIG) is an active organization within the NMRA that is involved in all aspects of layout design and operation. It publishes the *Layout Design News*, which includes items that are time relevant, and short articles. It also publishes the *Layout Design Journal* which carries more in-depth articles. This SIG has, for many years now, held meetings, panel discussions, private layout tours and op sessions, bull sessions, and displayed exhibits at national conventions. Regional and local meetings of this group are becoming more popular around the country. There are currently one hundred members of this SIG residing in our Region.

We recently held our first regional meeting at the NER's Fiftieth Anniversary Convention at Kingston, New York. Twelve people including both Sig members and non-members met to discuss how we might include some of the above activities at our conventions. Later the group had an open discussion that included operation, linear versus deep layouts, aisles, block versus command control, and car order systems. Rich Laube and Mike Evans brought plans of their layouts for discussion.

For those unfamiliar with this or-

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p. 4 **SIG- Layout Design**

ganization, you may be surprised as I was, At what this group may have to offer you, Discussion topics include, not just track plans, but all aspects of design and operation. This can include the layout environment, all of the physical characteristics of the layout, including structure, track design, scenery, industries, structures and controls, as well as operating practices based on the prorotype.

The goal of the SIG is to provide members with the information and help they need to design, build and operate their layouts to provide the maximum enjoyment for themselves and their operators. Even if you have already designed, or even built, your layout, there are many ideas you may find that you can incorporate in it to enhance your enjoyment.

We are planning to have a room for display and discussion at the Saratoga Convention in May. Again, this would be open to anyone interested in seeing our displays, or participating in the discussions. I would invite anyone who has questions, track plans, or photos of their layout to bring them. We anticipate that this will become another regular element of our regional conventions

If you have questions or comments, please contact me by phone or mail. Look me up on the BRASS page (2).

Glenn Glasstetter

Loose Spikes

Notes from the ashpit

by Jim Heidt, NMRA Trustee



Well, friends, as your NMRA Trustee perhaps I should rename this column, "Notes from the Bunker," especially given the comments about the "health" of the NMRA in the last few issues of the *Coupler*! I'm with you in feeling lots of frustration whenever I see or hear debates/conversations/complaints about "what's wrong with the NMRA?" and my frustration is not because these comments are made at all. Make those comments. Sure, we have problems. Everyone who cares about our organization and hobby can - and should - acknowledge that the NMRA, at all international/regional/divisional levels can improve in many, many ways.

But, as NMRA Trustee serving the NER area, my frustration is greater than yours. Why? As I stated at the most recent NER Board of Directors meeting:: lack of communication! With all due respect to Editor Joe Popecki and fine *NER Coupler* that we have, a page or so every three months just is not the adequate forum to receive, and later respond to all of the detailed issues that so many well-intentioned, dedicated and caring NMRA members like you have. **cont. p. 6**

NER 50th Anniversary Souvenirs

Patches: Quantity _____ @\$2.50 +.50 shipping and handling. (3" dia.) Total: \$_____ this item

T-Shirts with Anniversary Logo: Quantity _____ @ \$10 (\$11 for XXL) + \$5 for shipping and handling. Circle size: S M L XL XXL

Total this item: \$ _____

NER 50th Anniversary History: Quantity: _____ @ FREE, \$1 shipping and handling. Total this item \$ _____

Check enclosed for total of \$ _____,

payable to: **NER Conventions**

Ordered by _____

Street _____

City,State _____ Zip _____

Mail your order to:

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



Northern Lights☆☆

[Excerpts from a report of NER Canadian Director Denis Fortier to NMRA President Bob Charles. It was presented at the Kingston 50th Anniversary Meeting]

My greater frustration is felt over actual progress and improvements and positive news about the NMRA, but that news is not getting out to you!! Make no mistake, the NMRA is really attempting to be responsive to the membership and is aggressively acting on many fronts. You need this updated information in order to help us all keep our focus on what we all can do better. Therefore, I have two requests of you:

First, I have prepared and printed a 17 page written report to the NER Board of Directors with 30 or so pages of attachments, a result of NMRA Board of Trustees meetings last winter in Ft. Lauderdale, and this summer in Long Beach, California. **Write, call, FAX, or E-Mail me your request for a complete copy of this report** and I will send it to you without charge. Then, after you have read it, you can more effectively comment/worry/complain with better information behind you!!

NMRA Needs Your Membership

Second, all of us in the NMRA need YOU...and your modeling buddy...to remain NMRA members! When your renewal reminder arrives in the mail, send it back with your dues right away. If you don't get a reminder, keep in mind when your membership expires and renew anyway. If you have problems with getting your renewal handled, contact me! As I stated in the report, and live at the NER BOD meeting, we must "draw our line in the sand" and consider as unacceptable the expiration of any modeler's NMRA membership. This organization needs your continuing dedication and, with its past history of leadership in the hobby, also deserves your patience while the kinks work out.

Quality membership services must be our immediate goal at every level of the NMRA and, if we successfully minister to our members at every level on a one-to-one basis, we should not have to worry about the future of the NMRA. And each one of us should make a personal, individual commitment to make an effort to keep every member we personally know an NMRA member. Next issue, I'll share with you how you can help with that personal, individual commitment. Thanks

Jim Heidt

[This continues a report by NER Trustee Jim Heidt at the NER Atlanta convention in 1995] in which he mentioned the NER Convention in Quebec City, the French effort done by a bilingual crew for Division Alouette Québec, and a French magazine published since 1988, *Le Rail Miniature*, edited by Guy Meilleur, with copies going to the Kalmbach Library.

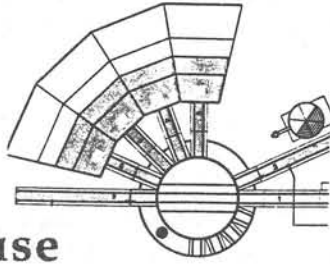
The region continues its French services toward its Canadian members by providing a translation of the main topics from [each issue of] the *NER Coupler*. Already three translations have been done. At this time, I must thank Joe Popecki, editor of the *Coupler* for providing a *Coupler Digest* which I must translate in about 48 hours [while the edition is at the printer]. Michael G. Saunders provides the E-Mail [and mail] services.

Also, since January 1996, I busied myself translating the AP [Achievement Program] from the NMRA AP WEB Page! Thanks to Paul R. Rivers (he's American) who provided me with the way to put French accents on the NET so that I can carry on the translation...This translation was first done in 1978, with my sister Frances...Pete Moffett, NMRA AP Chairman, has designated me the official AP French translator to approve French language WWW pages for the NMRA AP site.

The Golden Spike Award information has been translated to French and is available in a printed version for distribution...I will try to convince Benoit Leclerc, AP Chairman for Division Alouette Québec to send a copy of the rules and forms to all club presidents in the Province.

I am considering the idea of having a special "Definition Section" added to the NMRA's APs which would be a lexicon (glossary) of French and English terms for railroads ...in fact a glossary composed by Guy Meilleur has been a great help in translating the AP terms. Finally, I have made a Web site for Division Alouette: <http://netrover.com/~capaigle/DAQ.HTM1>

Glenn Glasstetter Down at the Roundhouse



The NMRA - What is its Future?

My column in the last issue of the *Coupler* entitled, "What is Wrong With the NMRA?" generated some reponse from people both inside and outside the region. That was my goal. It was not meant to throw stones, but to bring forth comments and ideas expressed by many members. It was intended to get people thinking and to start a healthy discussion of the issues and of the solutions that might be implemented. It was also intended to point out that what may be perceived as a problem to one person, may not be a problem at all from another's perspective.

The article presented some of the problems we have in the organization and stated my views on these issue. Some of these problems are with *National*, or the *Region*, and some are based on the impression of what individual members think the organization should provide. This was pointed out to me recently when one member complained that the recent issue of the *Bulletin* containing the yearly periodical index was a wasted issue. When I asked another member if he thought the issue was a benefit, he assured me that it was and that he made good use of it. It's all a matter of perspective.

Bob Charles, our NMRA President, attended our recent Fiftieth Anniversary Convention in Kingston, New York. In what has become Jim Heidt's traditional convention clinic regarding national issues, Bob presented slides of Headquarters, the Library, and the people who serve our organization from there. Bob then opened a question and answer session which I was unable to stay for. However, Bob sought me out the next day and we had a long discussion regarding what I had written and what was happening with the organization. The one comment Bob made which concerned me most was that the Headquarters Staff was offended by my remarks about the service we receive from them. Although that service needs improvements, my criticisms were not directed at their personal efforts, but rather the facts that staff has been reduced and that they are operating with an

inadequate computer system for all that is required of them.



To excerpt the conclusions Jim Heidt made in his report of the Ft. Lauderdale BOT meeting, "...1)HQ has too many detailed functions and responsibilities for its 2) too small staff restricted by our financial crisis, which could be easily remedied by 3) improved office efficiency through (at least) integration of a state-of-the-art office computer system. (See his column for instructions on securing a complete version of his report.) This was in response to a presentation made by Connie Rudder, NMRA Headquarters Office Manager, on the daily functions and priorities she and her staff are responsible for. These people are under tremendous pressure and need relief. I'm sure Bob will address these issues in his column in the *Bulletin*.

Is there a Plan to Resolve the Problems of this Organization?

I was very concerned because we were not being told what is being done to correct these problems, so it makes you wonder if anything is being done. After talking with Bob and reading Jim's Report, I am convinced that issues are being addressed. While I may not agree with all of Bob's views on the issues, I strongly do agree with his view that the NMRA can no longer be run as a good ol' boys club, but must be run as a business. It has been a long time since this organization was run by a relatively few dedicated volunteers out of their homes. And with an annual budget of \$992,495, this organization needs to have its operation based on sound business practices. It also has become something that can no longer survive on membership dues alone. That leaves three alternatives: 1) find new sources of income; 2) eliminate sources of expense; and, 3) raise dues to cover expenses.

It has been the unanimous opinion of every member I have discussed this with, that raising dues is totally out of the question. Our greatest loss of membership has occurred since our last dues increase, a 25% jump in September 1994. This is also confirmed by the survey which indicated by far that the two greatest reasons for people leaving were financial. Many of us feel that we need to lower the \$30 dues to attract and keep more members. However, this is impossible considering our current financial

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p. 7 ⇒ NMRA, What's Its Future?

situation. The intention of our officers in hiring an Executive Director was to have that person develop and secure alternative funding sources. This is the only way we can sustain the facilities that we have built. A search is now underway to find a replacement executive director. With this year's projected budget deficit of \$64,420 added to the previous deficits totalling over \$145,000, it is easy to see that unless we are able to secure alternative sources of funding, we will have to eliminate sources of expense.

So, what is the future of the NMRA? Only time will tell. Our officers are committed to putting the NMRA back on a healthy financial footing and building an even stronger organization. They have been, and are, dealing with what is probably the greatest crisis this organization has experienced. They need our support. It is easy to criticize and find fault with the NMRA, but what we need to do now is remember what is good about it and offer suggestions for how it can be improved. I know that our Trustee, Jim Heidt, listens to his constituents and takes reasonable suggestions to the Board of Trustees.

In my last column, I asked, but never answered, the question, "Is the glass half empty or half full?" I believe the glass is half full! What do you think?

Saratoga Limited NER Spring Convention Saratoga Springs, NY 16-18 May 1997

Part of any convention's success is location, location, location. The spring meeting has a winner in that department. Bob Hamm and his hospitality committee are proceeding with the same care to detail that has been characteristic of past site planning. *This is but a preview. The complete program and registration forms will appear in the March issue.*

WHERE? Saratoga Springs, New York, just off Exit 13N of Interstate 87 (Northway).

SITE? Holiday Inn and Conference Center, on Route 9 in the center of the city,

convenient to all the urban amenities. The hotel features the full-service Rascals Restaurant. The room rate, very reasonable for a resort town, is \$75 per room, per night (single or double occupancy).

ON-SITE ACTIVITIES All of the things NER conventioners have come to expect: Clinics, Model and Photo Contests, Hospitality Room, Rail videos. These will all be in the hotel.

OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES On Saturday, from mid-morning through the afternoon, there will be a trade show at a location near the hotel. Convention-goers will be admitted free and given a one-hour preview before the show opens to the public. Layout Tours will be plentiful and are scheduled for Friday evening and most of Sunday. The Adirondack Live Steamers will be open for visitors on Sunday morning. You'll be able to ride their 1/12 scale train cars over a half-mile of track. The layout features an 80 ft. curved trestle, turntable, transfer table, and engine house. The ALS group can cook and will serve breakfast to early risers at a reasonable price.

TOURS The railfan trip is scheduled for Saturday afternoon on the Battenkill Railroad's *Rambler*. Buses will take you from the hotel to Salem at noon. The trip will be through the Washington Valley on 1940 stainless cars with an RS-3 on the head end. In 1850, this area was the site of the Rutland & Washington RR, with its major locomotive and car-building shops located adjacent the present-day station. The line crosses the Battenkill River (which runs into Vermont) four times. There will be the usual photo ops.

Buses will leave regularly on Saturday for Tours of historic Saratoga Springs, including historic sites, museums, Congress Park, Canfield Casino, National Museum of Dance, National Museum of [horse] Racing and Yaddo Gardens. The tours will start mid-morning and continue through the day.

BANQUET Of course! With all the usual features. Speaker: Bob Richardson, Colorado Railroad Museum founder.

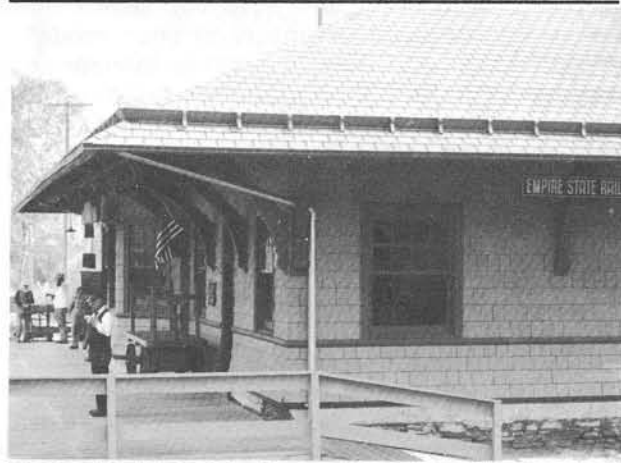
Kingston Convention= SUCCESS!

Ya shoulda been there.

The Northeastern Region of the NMRA celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary on the weekend of October 25-27, 1996 in the city where it was founded in 1946, Kingston, New York. The original meeting was sponsored by the Kingston Model Railroad Club, and that club again played a part in the celebration. The weatherman cooperated by providing comfortable temperatures, blue sky and sunshine.

The weekend activities got off to a rousing start at the Kingston Ramada Inn, with the opening of the registration desk and hospitality room in the afternoon. For those who wished to brave navigating the local area, there were three clubs open to convention attendees: the Kingston Model Railroad Club with its O gauge Hudson Valley Lines layout

(now 58 years old), the West Shore Model Railroad Club with its HO gauge representation of Conrail's West Shore Line, and the Hudson Valley Railroad Society with its HO and N gauge layouts, as well as the opportunity to visit the restored New York Central station and its collection of memorabilia.



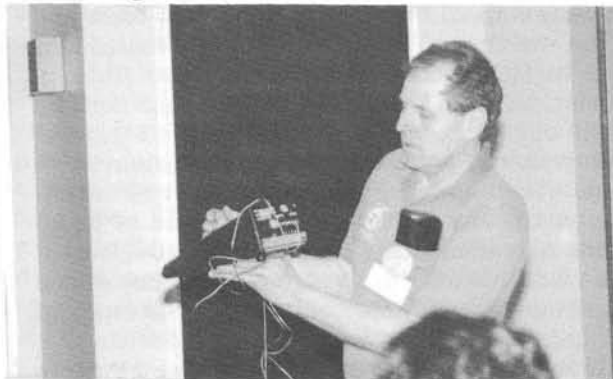
A KMRC O-gauge diesel loco about to shift tracks on a transfer table.



A bank of KMRC's prototype manual switches

There also was as full dose of clinics from eight until eleven o'clock. These featured one by Bill Comley on basic electricity; a clinic by Audrea Winston on scenic backdrops; a clinic by Mike Rourke on kitbashing in N gauge to achieve specific prototypes when they are not available from the manufacturers; a clinic by members of the Hopewell Junction Model Railroad Club on building layout modules to NMRA standards; another by Bob DeRonde on air brushing with the new acrylic paints; a clinic by John Prestopino on the history of the Catskill Mountain RR; and, a joint clinic by NMRA President Bob Charles and NER Trustee Jim Heidt which offered a photographic visit to NMRA headquarters, and an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns about the national organization.

Saturday morning began with a buffet breakfast at the Ramada. At 8:30, the clinic schedule resumed. These seven clinics featured: Art Curren of *Model Railroader* on kitbashing HO scale structures; Stan Ames



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p. 9 ⇒ Kingston Convention

on Digital Command Control (DCC), where it's at, where it's going; Debbie Ames on model railroading via Internet; Dwight Smith on what kinds of freight are loaded on certain types of freight cars, and why; Bill Quick on how to maintain an inventory of your model railroad stock and how to provide insurance coverage for it; and, Paul Allard on the value of the Achievement Program (AP). For the final hour, all clinic rooms were opened up so that *Railroad Model Craftsman's* Hal Carstens could make his presentation, based on early 8mm films, on the railroads in the Kingston area during the decades of the 40's and 50's.

In the afternoon, two fan trips were offered: the first featured a visit to the Kingston Trolley Museum and a ride on a vintage trolley car. Then the group was transported to the Catskill Mountain Railroad, a tourist line run-



ning on part of the old Ulster & Delaware RR and including a visit to the the Phoenicia RR station where the New York Railroad Museum is located (see photo, bottom of page 9). Again the fans lucked out because the cars are open to the weather. The second fan trip featured a visit to the Delaware & Ulster Rail Ride, a tourist railroad operating on another section of the old U&D. Both groups enjoyed the fan trips and had wonderful late fall weather.

That evening, due to limited hotel capacity, the banquet was held at one of Kingston's nicest meeting places, the Hillside Manor. Nearly two hundred members enjoyed a mouth-watering choice of prime rib or chicken français. Of the twenty-one presidents the NER has had during its 50 years, seven were

present. The local committee provided an ample quantity of door prizes, while the awards for the Achievement Program and the Model &



Paul Allard reads the names of the AP awards given at the Kingston Convention.

Photo Contests demonstrated healthy participation in those aspects of the NER and NMRA programs. Following the usual program elements, Hal Carstens presented a slide show entitled, "Pioneers of the Hobby." His slides showed pictures of many past NER officers and members, and reflected upon the formative years of the hobby.

Activities on Sunday included the annual membership meeting of the NER. About 25 members attended and the regular business meeting was conducted without much fanfare. One

item of particular note was presented: there



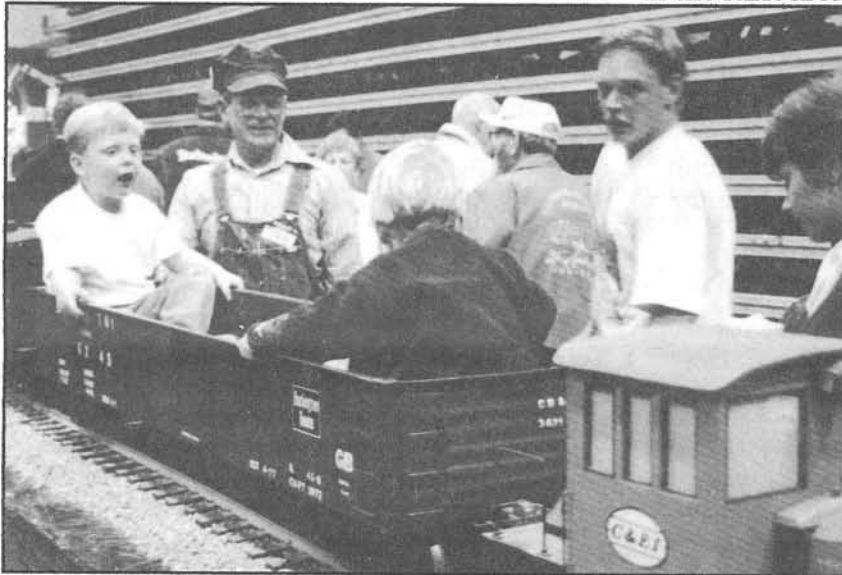
A regular contributor to the Coupler, John Bortle receives one of his awards from Jim Heidt.

cont. ⇒ p. 11

p. 10 ➤ Kingston Convention

is a move to try to organize a new division in Fairfield County, Connecticut, and Westchester County, New York, to be called the Metro-North Division. Application was made by this group and was referred to the NER Board of Directors for action based on NER rules as published in the *Constitution* and *By-Laws*.

Following the meeting, many conventioners headed to Poughkeepsie to check out the Train Show sponsored by the Hyde Park Model Railroad Club. In addition to many dealers, the show featured a number of modular layouts. [In the photo below, kids get a ride in gondola car pulled by a 1.5 inch scale model of a yard switcher built by White Motor Car Company.



Upcoming Conventions

The Permanent Convention Committee is pleased to Announce that the Spring 1997 Convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga Springs, New York. [See advance information on page 8.] The Fall 1997 Convention will be held at the Huntington Hilton in Melville (Long Island), New York. The meeting will have all the usual attractions and a fan trip to the Long Island Shop facilities. There will also be a train show. Long Island Chairman Buzzy Washington and his hard-working crew plan to have an outstanding program ready for the weekend of 30 October-2 November 1997. Long Island has long been a very active area with focus on club activity.

There are no convention bids on the table for 1998 and beyond. Members are open to a good convention almost anywhere in the



Puiblsisher Hal Carstens prepares to share his reminiscences of the hobby in the 1940s during the NER Kingston banquet.

in the NER area.. Some places we haven't visited in awhile are: Bangor Portland, Maine; Cape Cod, Plymouth, Pittsfield or Williamstown, Massachusetts; Utica/Rome or Plattsburgh, New York, northwestern or southern New Hampshire; anywhere in New Jersey; central or southern Vermont. If you live in any of these areas and have an interest in hosting a convention, contact me. [Ken May's address and phone numbers may be found on the BRASS page (2).] We haven't visited your area in at least ten years.

Souvenirs

If you didn't make it to the Kingston convention, NER is making available souvenirs of this special 50th birthday occasion. Please check out the order blank on page 5 of this issue. Joe Lecaroz produced a very special memento, a brief history of the Northeast Region during its first fifty years. Copies of the publication are free, but we ask you send \$1 for postage.

Everyone had a great time at the Kingston Convention. Why not plan now to attend the 1997 conventions? There's nothing like getting together with your fellow model railroaders. Bring a friend or a new modeler.

Ken May, PCC

Several members have submitted articles for publication. Thanks, we'll publish them as soon as space permits.

Congratulations

to Convention Contest Award Winners, Kingston, 1996

PHOTO CONTEST

Craftsman Category

Model Color Print: HM, Rudolf Slovacek for "Rutland RS-1 #404".

Model Slide: 1st, Carl Cascone for "Hanawa Creek Local"; 2d, Carl Cascone for "Main Street Crossing"; 3d, Rudolf Slovacek for "Green Mountain RS-1".

Prototype Color Print: 1st, Ralph O. Gabler for "D&H Alco PAs"; 2d, William H. O'Hara, Jr. for "Dash 8 at Ravenna, Ohio"; 3d, David Keim for "Susie Q #142"; HM, Russell Panecki for "EBT #14, Orbisonia, PA"; HM, William H. O'Hara III for "GP-40 at Clark Avenue."

Prototype Slide: 1st, William C. Quick for "Durango & Silverton #404"; 2d, David Keim for Penn Central at DeWitt"; 3d, David Keim for "Penn Central RS-3"; HM, Rudolf Slovacek for "Battenkill RS-3".

Master Category

Model Color Print: 1st, John E. Bortle for "Hudson Valley Photo-op"; 2d, John E. Bortle for "Watchers"; 3d, Patricia Lecaroz for "Pioneer Valley #7436".

Model Slide: 1st, John E. Bortle for "Down by the Station" (BEST IN SHOW); 2d, John E. Bortle for "Vintage Train Watchers"; 3d, Jack Alexander for "The Bison Streamliner".

Prototype Black & White Print: HM, Patricia Lecaroz for "D&H #5017 on the D&U".

Prototype Color Print: 1st, John MacGown for "Into the Smokebox"; 2d, Patricia Lecaroz for "Metro North #2045"; 3d, (Tie) John MacGown for "Over the Trestle" and Patricia Lecaroz for "Amtrak 701 at Chelsea".

Prototype Slide: 1st, Jack Alexander for "Empire Builder".

[Jim Heidt, Chairman, with Ed Scott, Brian Whifton, Joe Lecaroz (selective categories).]

MODEL CONTEST

Baldwin Trophy (Best in Show, 118 points), Brian D. Curry, Weedsport, NY.

Sunrise Trail (Highest Point Total, New Modeler) Brian D. Curry

HUB Award (Second Highest Point Total)

Brian D. Curry

NERC Award, (Second Highest Point Total New Modeler), Brian D. Curry

The Baldwin Trophy was given for Brian's scratch-built N gauge sawmill; the HUB Award was for his scratch-built N gauge machine shop; the Sunrise Trail prize was for the sawmill, while the NERC Award recognized Brian's skill in the Machine Shop Diorama.

Other Awards

Brian Curry

1st, New Modeler, Structures, for N gauge Sawmill; 1st, Motive Power, other, for N gauge Gas Electric; 1st, Passenger Cars, for N gauge passenger car; 1st Dioramas, for N gauge machine shop; 3d, Freight Cars, for N gauge scale box car.

Edward F. Bommer (Cooperstown, NY)

1st, New Modeler, Freight Cars, for S gauge box car; 2d, Non-revenue, for S gauge Flanger; 1st, Motive power, Steam, for S gauge 0-6-0 Camelback.

Thomas G. Rhodes (Ballston Lake, NY)

2d, New Modeler, Structures, for HO gauge Company Store; 2d, Motive Power, other, for HO gauge Motor Car.

Bob Bird

1st, Master, Non-revenue, for HO gauge Covered Gondola; 1st, Freight cars, for HO gauge Poultry Car.

Howard P. Dwyer, (Farmingville, NY)

3d, New Modeler, Craftsman, for HO gauge Harbor Structure.

Paul G. Lessard, (Manchester, NH)

1st, Craftsman, for HO gauge DT&I standard station.

Walter Neumen, (Massapequa Park, NY)

2d, Master, Structures, for HO gauge Machine Shop

(Don Howd, Chairman)

NMRA Achievement Awards, Kingston New York

By Paul Allard, NER AP Chairman

While the Northeastern Region's 50th Anniversary Convention held in Kingston, New York, is now history, I am sure that all who

cont. ➤ p. 13

p. 12 ➡ **Achievement Program Awards, Kingston, New York**

attended will have great memories for years to come. The convention provided yet another opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of many NMRA/NER members through the Achievement Program. Although not all the recipients were able to attend the convention, their work was publicly acknowledged.

At the Saturday night banquet, I had the pleasure of presenting a record number of AP Awards, including Merit and Golden Spike Awards, as well as AP Certificates. Earlier in the year, NER members earned seven Merit Awards. They are: **Gayle Heron** for Motive Power, United Electric Articulated, Brooklyn Rapid Transit, and Boston Elevated; **Simon Parent**, for Motive Power, CNR Switcher; **Jay Rogers**, for Cars, SP Box Car; **Joseph Kavanagh**, for Civil Engineering; and, **David Mooney**, for Scenery.

The Kingston Contest Room overflowed with outstanding models in both N and HO gauges. There were fourteen entries that earned over 87.5 points on the 125 point scale, and thus qualified for a Merit Award. These modelers and their prize entries are: **Ed Bommer**, for Motive Power, 0-6-0 Steamer; **Brian Curry**, for Motive Power, Nn3 Gas Electric; **Thomas Rhodes**, for Motive Power, Motor Car; **Robert Bird**, for Cars, High Side Covered Gondola, and Poultry Car; **Ed Bommer**, for Cars, LV Box Car, and B & O Flanger; **Brian Curry**, for Cars, Nn2 Passenger Car, Nn3 SP #5 Box Car, and Structures, Sawmill; **Howard Dwyer**, for Structures, Harbor Structure; **Paul Lessard**, for Structures, DT&I Standard Station; **Walter Neumen**, for Structures, Maintenance Shop; **Thomas Rhodes**, for Structures, Company Store & Town Hall.

Merit Awards are required to qualify for Achievement Program Certificates in these categories, so all NMRA members are reminded to keep track of their awards. When a member applies for an Achievement Award, a copy of each Merit Award should be included to satisfy

the judging requirements.

Golden Spike Awards are issued for modeling accomplishments in building rolling stock, structures, scenery, and completing Civil and Electrical Engineering tasks on a layout. The following NER members earned Golden Spike Awards during the past year: **Paul Allard, Charles Bettinger, William Brandt, James Ferguson, and David Mooney.**

The highlight of the AP Awards Program was the presentation of thirteen Achievement Certificates. Each represents a significant accomplishment in a specific discipline. The recipients are: **Joseph Kavanagh**, for Civil Engineer and Electrical Engineer; **David Mooney**, for Scenery; **Ludwig Riemenschneider**, for Official duties; the following for Volunteer duties: **Carl Cascone, Robert Gatland, Glenn Glasstetter, Herbert Klein, Robert Riegl, Glenn Salvatore, and Michael Saunders**; as Authors, **John Bortle and Carl Cascone.**

These additional certificates have been earned. Unfortunately, the certificates themselves did not arrive to present at the Convention. The NER members are: **Gayle Heron**, for Motive Power; **Joseph Sokol**, for Official duty; and, **Ronald Parisi**, Author.

I think you will agree that this is an impressive list of achievements by NER members. I was pleased to see the large number of volunteer certificates. These individuals have given freely of time and talent to help promote the hobby of model railroading. We all benefit from their work and owe them a big thank you.

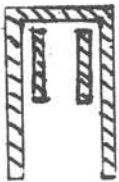
If you are interested in the NMRA Achievement Program, or are just curious, please drop me a line. (See BRASS, page 2.) I will send you materials describing the various awards and how you can qualify for them. You don't have to build a monster layout; an HO modeler can qualify with as little as 32 sq. ft. of working railroad. That fits on a sheet of plywood. You don't need to enter a Contest Room. Any NER Division AP Chairman can judge your models for Merit Awards. The AP is a membership service. Your staff is ready, but **the program starts with you!** Why not begin today?

Windows 97

by Paul G. Lessard

Today's structure modeler is fortunate in many respects. At our disposal we have many commercial detail parts to enhance our buildings. In the Walthers 1977 HO catalog, I counted nine manufacturers just for windows and window parts. Despite this variety, there are still some types lacking, particularly for masonry structures. Another problem for the budget-minded modeler is the sizeable cost when a special window is needed in large quantities.

After years of experience, I have developed a simple jig or template which will facilitate the assembly of most double-hung windows. I always make two of these jigs so that I can build one window while the previous one is setting. My preferred material is styrene, which necessitates a wooden jig. My dimensions are in HO scale (1/87") measurements. Use the NMRA scale converter if you plan to work in a different scale. The base of this template should be at least 1/16 inch thick for rigidity. Illustrated below is a top view of this template.



As you can see, it is open at the bottom. This is so the assembled window can be pried out after setting. The sides and the top member are .040" square, while the two short pieces are .020" thick. These will support the upper sash in relation to the lower one which sits directly on the base. The spacing of these two pieces will depend on the thickness of your window frame. I generally use .020" by .040" stock for this frame. The sashes will fit inside the frame and are made with .020" square stock. The sill is a .020" x .060" piece which should be long enough to match the overall width of your window including trim, if there is any.

Start construction by cutting all window members beforehand. A Northwest Short Line Chopper or other cutting jig is essential in this operation. The top of the frame is first, followed by the two side members. You may cut a 10 degree angle at the bottom end of these two pieces. This will create a realistic downward slope to the sill. After these four parts are as-

Start construction by cutting all window members beforehand. A Northwest Short Line Chopper or other cutting jig is essential...

sembled and glued in the jig, you are ready to work on your sashes. Remember that on double-hung windows, the upper sash overlaps the top of the lower one. For this reason, you can use a .020" x .040" piece at center to be common to both sashes. Then you can assemble and cement the remaining three parts of each sash to this common member. If your windows are intended for a wood-frame building, you may now apply trim work. Typically, .010" x .060" stock is used for both sides as well as the top. An optional .010" x .030" drip cap can be assembled above this top trim piece.

Once the assembly work is completed, it is advisable to paint your windows before glazing is installed. I use .005" clear styrene for this work. If you are making a multi-pane window, such as a 2 over 2 or a 6 over 6, the following method can be used. After your glazing is cut to size, score this material with a dull X-Acto knife for the desired number of panes. Take a fine brush and paint a narrow line over your score marks. Be sure you use a water-base paint that matches the rest of your window. Do one window at a time and remove excess paint with a cotton swab. It will take practice, but soon you will have a nice sharp line which simulates a muntin. Cement your glazing in the sashes but do not use the applicator brush that is included with the bottle. Instead, use a toothpick and apply cement very sparingly. Allow the completed assemblies to set thoroughly. Your custom windows are now ready for installation. HAPPY MODELING!

News from the Outback Divisions, Clubs, Regions

Sunrise Trail Division, Long Island, Winter meeting on 25 January 1997, Recreation Center, 390 Post Avenue, Westbury, NY, Noon to 5PM. Free. Info: Carl Cascone, 23 Harborview Drive, E. Northport NY 11768. 516-754-2790.

HUB Division. Spring Show, 5 April 1997, 10 AM-4 PM, at Holiday Inn, 700 Miles Standish Blvd, Taunton, Massachusetts. 1-495,

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Adults: \$4, children 6-12, \$1. Info: Bill Goldthwait, 30 Baker St., Lexington, MA 02173, 617-862-8078. HA.

Vermont Rails '97, the tenth anniversary of the biggest train show in Vermont. March 8, 1997, 10 AM-4PM, Frederick Tuttle Middle School, Dorset Street, South Burlington (Exit 14E off I-89. Adults \$3, children 6-12, \$1. Sponsored by Northwestern Vermont Model Railroading Society. Dealers, layouts, door prizes. Info: 800-978-3472.

Wayne Wesolowski's 1" scale "Lincoln Funeral Train" (15' long) a model headed by the "Nashville", which took Lincoln's funeral car from Cleveland to Columbus Ohio in April 1865, will be a feature of the **Niagara Frontier Region's** Golden Jubilee Convention, 6-8 June 1997 in Cheektowaga (Buffalo), New York. Site: Sheraton Inn, Buffalo Airport. Info: Richard Dilley, Registrar, 208 Chalmers Street, Oakville, Ontario, CANADA, L6L 5R9.

The Lake Junction, NMRA National Convention, Madison, Wisconsin, 28 July- 2 August 1997. (See the *NMRA Bulletin*).

NMRA President Bob Charles announced the creation of the **Howell Day Model Railroad Museum** to be located within the organization's headquarters in Chatanoooga. While there are expositions of toy trains, it will be the only facility to be dedicated to the history and technology of model railroading as we know it.

Hudson & Berkshire Division. Bob Hamm will host a division meeting at the Iron Gorge and Western headquarters in Saratoga Springs, New York, on 17 January 1997.. Info: Bob Hamm, 40 Michael Drive, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Kingston Model Railroad Club will sponsor the 14th Annual Kingston Model Train and Hobby Expo. Place: New York State Armory on North Manor Avenue in Kingston, New York. Time: 23 March 1997, 10 AM-4PM. Adults, \$3, Children under 12, \$1. Info: Tom Scrivani, 206 Shady Drive, Station Road, Hurley, NY 12443. 914-331-4218.

David Collinge's *Railroad Information* (January 1997 edition) announces **The Great Scale Model Train & Railroad Collectors Meet** on 25-26 January 1997 at the Cow Palace, Maryland State Fairgrounds, in Ti-

monium, Maryland. Just north of the Baltimore Beltway, off I-83, Adults, \$5, children 6-12, \$1, Family, \$10. 2d day free.

Suncook Valley Model Railroad Show, Hookset, New Hampshire, 6 April 1997. Memorial Junior High School, North Daniel Webster Highway (that's routes 3 and 28), 10 AM-4PM. Adults \$2, under 5 free. INFO: Chuck Tuson, 74 Cross Road, Hooksett, NH 03106. 603-485-9818.

The resurrected **Seacoast Division** has a fresh Constitution and By-laws. President David Collinge continues to be the spark plug in the Division's engine. The Seacoast's quarterly publication is the *Switch Tower*, edited by Ron Palmquist, PO Box 229, Cape Cottage Branch, Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-0229. 207-799-1761. The Division is experimenting with the introduction of classes on model railroading and railroading history in the high schools and adult education programs in Maine. Makes sense. If you want someone to model a piece of a railroad, that person better know what a railroad is all about, historically speaking.

Big Railroad Hobby Show. This is the famous annual two-day show at the New England Exposition Grounds in Springfield, Massachusetts, 1-2 February 1997. Sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society. Info: Robert A. Buck, 413-436-0242. Not one to miss!

Robert Gatland, editor of the **Sunrise Trail Division's Canon Ball**, (vol 26, no. 4) complains that the 50th anniversary Kingston Convention got short shrift on marketing and promotion, especially compared with the media blitz in areas like New Jersey. He's right. Nothing in the *NMRA Bulletin*; pro-forma basic info in the division newsletters; hardly anything in the metro area media (newspapers, radio & TV). We should be able to get more than one-fourth of our NER members to at least one convention each year. In fact, the NER membership is but a fraction of the NMRA members in the area. However, I must disagree with Robert's conclusions about the *NER Coupler's* efforts in this regard. Of our four issues each year, two concentrate on the conventions. The in-between issues offer advance info. We even had our first ever color cover dedicated to the big 50!

Ronald J. Bergeron
Office Manager, NER
11 Alpine Drive
Sanford, ME 04073-2446

FIRST CLASS



Exp.: 09-30-1997

TC

Flus.



and Debbie Ames, front table. The festivities started on Friday evening with dinner at the Yarmouth House Restaurant, then on to a social hour at the Ramada Inn in Hyannis.

Saturday was Railfest and the Cape Cod RR yards were open for inspection. Operations Manager Phil Nickse, offered a surprise Sunday morning run of the visiting New Haven FL-9 (owned by CT Dept of Transportation). Also on hand was the MBTA's GP-9, #1921, in the classic maroon & gold livery of the Boston & Maine

NER "Old Timers" will go to any length to attend a good model railroad convention. Bob Bird took this photo of Bob Bowe, Joe Sokol and Ken May at the joint MCR/MER convention in Pittsburgh, April 1996. NER didn't have a spring meeting this year. Also on the trip were Lilian Bird, John Campbell, Pat and Charlie Bettinger.

RR. Other visiting equipment: Amfleet Coach and Lounge car; Bay Colony RR's Alco RS-1, #1064; P & W's #2211; and, Conrall #1998.

The Railfest Program hosted a trade show and exhibit in the former New Haven Roundhouse. The time was filled with picture taking and reminiscing. Wayne Craigie made a HUB Division drumhead for the loco and Bill Parker supplied the ladies with corsages!

HUB Division's "Spring Fling" -a New Tradition is Born.

Dick Towle reports on a new way to combine railroading and social life: a weekend on the Cape, featuring a dinner-train aboard the 1913 PRR Diner, the "Nobska". Enjoying the trip in the photo at right are Bob & Colleen Taylor (rear table), and Stan



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