



A Publication of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association

## Messages from Tower A

*The following article was written by President Whiton prior to the recent loss of NER Secretary Patti Bettinger.*

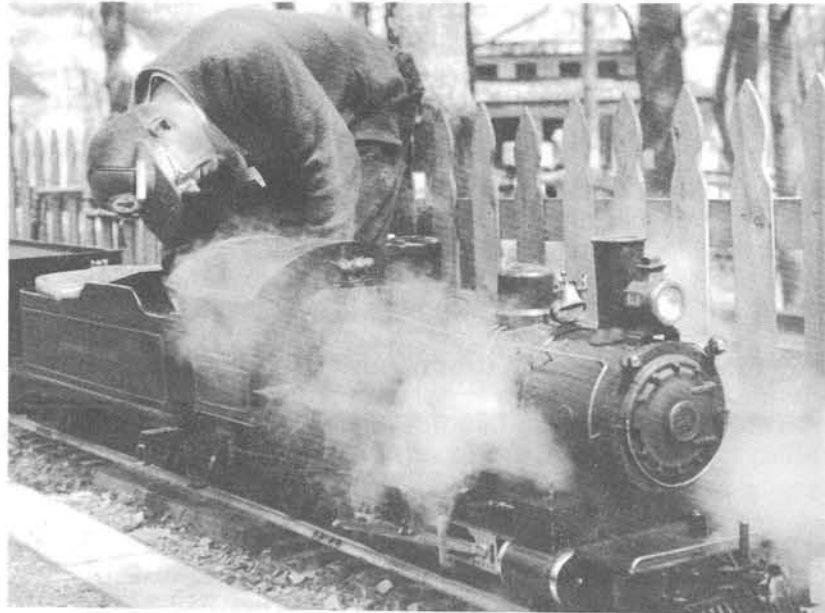
This issue we need to discuss some organizational stuff again. I know you are interested in having a broad cross section of well thought out, fully functional member services. Some we are currently providing could benefit from improvements. Then, there are other member services that are needed. Most importantly, we are working a few compulsive staff members beyond reason, and not using our other assets, all of you, to support one another. We do occasionally get vol-



unteers who tell us if we had a task list to choose from, they might step forward. So, as you requested, here is a list of positions in need of people.

1. **MARKETING MANAGER.** The staff at NMRA headquarters is pretty overworked, and is still not sending adequate new-member packages, though they do send the membership card and a new member starts getting his or her *Bulletin* soon after joining. I think we need to handle the welcome wagon at the ☞ p. 3

## Adirondack Live Steamers Enliven the Saratoga Springs Convention



*Dick Hosmer, a charter member of the ALS, makes some adjustments before mounting his steed for another trip around the 3,305 ft. track located a few miles from Saratoga.*

### Convention Chairman Ken May summarizes the Saratoga meeting:

The Saratoga Limited convention, 16-18 May, blessed by good weather (for the most part), entertained over 180 members and their families. Chairman Bob Hamm and his committee put on quite a show. Friday evening provided the usual fare of home layout tours and clinics, along with registration, hospitality and video theater. The Committee did something a little different this time: they arranged for a good-size room to house registration, hospitality and displays. This kept the registration process out of the hotel lobby and provided a central location for convention folks to gather.

In this room, the Layout Design group (SIG) provided an opportunity to share ideas and discussions on planning concepts and ideas. Also set up in the room were two modular switching layouts, one in Sn3 and another in HO gauge. Both of these layouts featured locomotive sound units. Hearing and seeing the equipment in operation provides an ☞ p. 4

*Within the last few weeks, the NER suffered the loss of two treasured members, Paul Hackett, and Patti Bettinger (NER Secretary and co-Registrar with her husband Charles). See Memorials, p. 12.*

# NER BRASS

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#189, June 1997

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  
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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  
August 30, 1997  
CONVENTION ISSUE**

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

### p. 3 Messages from Tower A

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tact for new members to find out about clubs in their areas, or to visit them when traveling around the region. So, one of you interested folks should volunteer to take on this task. You will need to write a short column for the *Coupler* on club news, organize the club directory, and answer a bit of mail. Easy! You can do it!

Well, there it is. If a dozen "agents", and one of each of the other volunteers came forward to help, I'd need CPR! Will you please consider helping out? I find working for the Region quite rewarding. I think you will too.

Now, if you're going to volunteer and then sit on your hands and stop the train, don't bother to volunteer. The Northeastern Region needs workers, not deadbeats. None of these jobs are of a consuming nature, but they all must have meaningful, organized effort. I think you could handle any of these jobs in one evening a week. That's about what it takes me to handle the mail, my column, and my other duties, and I'm not asking you to do as much. Some jobs require you to meet deadlines, such as for the *Coupler*. Obviously, you must perform if you volunteer, or the Region will suffer. Many times a member will offer advice to me on how to do something better or more effectively. Usually, he or she has a great idea. So, there is a big talent pool out there. Let's apply the talent directly to the tasks outlined above. We could easily double the size of the *Coupler*, and our level of member services.

Remember, the Northeastern Region and the NMRA are what we make them. There are no elves who do this work at night while we dream of our trains. We can't continue to ask the people you see on the "BRASS" page to take on more tasks, and work days without end for the Region, when there is the possibility of dividing the work load into manageable-sized tasks spread among the members.

Brian C. Whiton, President

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#### New NER Members, 11/01/96-05/17/97

**Massachusetts:** Paul Conant (Leominster); Claudio Topolcic (Concord); Bay State Soc. of Model Engineers (Roslindale); S. Knowles (Boxford); Jay Cashook (Needham); Richard Michaud (North Attleboro). **Rhode Island:** Roger Laliberte (Coventry). **Connecticut:** Albert Daley (Weathersfield); John Campbell, Jr. (East

Hartford); Robert Davis (Pomfret Center); Herbert Leach (Woodstock); Kevin Feeney (New Canaan). **New Jersey:** Kenneth Decker (Rockaway). **New York:** Mike Martin (Floral Park); Thomas Rhodes (Ballston Lake); Marvin Kahn (Albany); Bruce Watkins (Plattsburgh); William Quick (Elma).

**Did you know?** Two-thirds of NMRA members who live in the Northeast Region are not members of the Region! Get some membership application forms from your Office Manager (no room in this issue for one) and sign up your non-member colleagues.

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### News from the Outback

NER is getting a **Web page** on the Internet. Michael Saunders is doing the English text, while Denis Fortier (Canadian Director) provided the French text. The French address is on the page now; its address is [www.cite.net/-capaigle/nerhome.html](http://www.cite.net/-capaigle/nerhome.html). Richard Paquet of Division Alouette did the NER logo. Denis also produced the French text of the Achievement Program regulations. You can find them on [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) if you look up the AP text.

The annual general meeting of **NMRA (Canada)** will be held at the NMRA National Convention in Madison, Wisconsin on 29 July, 1997. The site is the Flashbacks Room of the Convention Hotel, Holiday Inn-West. More info from Steven R. Stark, President (and NMRA Trustee) at 604-736-9811 or FAX 604-736-2859.

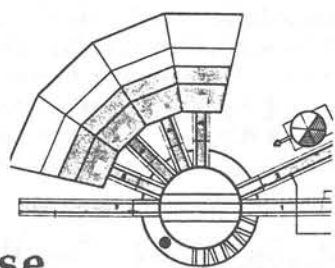
The **Kingston Model Railroad Club** is celebrating its 60th anniversary in O-gauge modeling by offering a special run, two-bay, offset hopper car manufactured by Weaver Quality Craft Models. Cars are available in 2- and 3-rail versions complete with couplers. Send check or money order for \$29 each & \$5 shipping (+ sales tax for New Yorkers) to KMRC, PO Box 1885, Kingston, NY 12402-1885. This is a limited run.

NER's **Nutmeg Division** has scheduled its Annual Train Show for 19 October, 1997 at the Best Western Colonial Inn, from 10am-3pm. The Inn is at exit 45 off I-91. Admission: \$3 adults, \$2 senior citizens and children 5-12, \$5 family. Dealer inquiries from Joe Sokol, 88 West Street, Apt 3R, Vernon, CT 06066. Call 1-860-872-2240.

**Swanton, Vermont** may soon have its own archeological interpretive park devoted to railroading. GeoArch archeologists found the remnants of two wooden covered bridges on state property, and nearby the remains of a turntable, roundhouse foundation, and maintenance pits dating back to the 1890s.



## Views & News by Glenn Glasstetter Down at the Roundhouse



### Creating a Memorable Model Railroad

What does it take to create a memorable model railroad? There are probably any number of things, depending on our individual perspectives. A well designed track plan, flawless operation, a comfortable layout environment, state-of-the-art electronics and control systems, are all important features that help to create a memorable model railroad. But what certainly has the greatest impact for railroads that we see on layout tours is the modeling, scenery and attention to detail that the builder has created. Not that these elements, and maybe some not listed, are not important. They are, but if the trains, scenery, structures and details are well executed, and look as if modeled after the real world, I find that that it has a much more lasting impression on me. Furthermore, if we can relate to what we are seeing, it will certainly have a greater impact. It is always much easier to remember something if you can associate it with something else. Having just returned from the Saratoga Springs Convention, I have plenty of references that are still fresh in my mind. First of all, I know that I missed some fine layouts as there were just too many to see in the time allotted.

So, how do we go about creating a believable model railroad? We can choose to model a specific railroad such as Tony Steele's Delaware & Hudson, or a freelanced railroad with obvious reference to a certain area, such as RPI's New England, Berkshire & Western. Scenery can also define a locale, such as Bob Hamm's Rocky Mountain scenery and innovative backdrops, or Dick Elwell's New England fall foliage-covered hillsides, and backdrops photographs and paintings. Engines, rolling stock, buildings vehicles, signs and figures are all elements that can be used to define a model railroad. If these are just a hodgepodge mix with no regard for reality, it sends a mixed message to the viewer, but if they are carefully selected and modeled to be homogeneous, it is much easier for the viewer to relate to. I remember one layout I saw at another convention that displayed exquisite modeling, but the scenes jumped eras and geography so

much that I was unable to relate it to anything except very well modeled dioramas connected by track.

The New England, Berkshire & Western has quite probably the most replication of specific buildings and scenes of any layout in our area. Partly due to its sheer size, the layout can sustain a large number of scenes, but more importantly, the members have made a commitment to seeking out prototype buildings and scenes and then accurately duplicating them. As many times as I've seen that railroad, one of the first things I look for when coming into the first room is the house by the bridge in North Creek that friends of mine used to rent, and in which I have stayed. There are many other buildings and scenes that I can relate to on the NEB&W, such as buildings in Chateaugay based on those on Battery Street in Burlington, Vermont, Kennedy Brothers Woodworking in Vergennes, Vermont, the Red Rocks area in Willsboro Bay, Fort William Henry and Million Dollar Beach in Lake George, the causeway and swing bridge over Lake Richelieu (Champlain), and the lift bridge over the Hudson River, to name just a few. I have seen all of these in the real world, and therefore easily relate to them.



Two other established railroads that have been refined and further defined over the years are Lou Sassi's West Hoosac Division of the Boston & Maine, and Dick Elwell's Hoosac Valley Railroad. Lou's original railroad used to be a freelanced New England railroad with the tongue-in-cheek name of Postabe, for "supposed to be".

In 1986, Lou changed it to the B&M, and over the years he has refined it with new structures, scenery, motive power, rolling stock, and names, so that it quite obviously represents the Bennington, Vermont/Adams, Massachusetts area. Even though he has not modeled every structure and major scenic detail of the area, he has created a very believable railroad that is easy to relate to a prototype railroad, geographic area and time period. Dick, on the other hand, has stayed with his freelanced Hoosac Valley Railroad that uses prototypical names and structures to define the locale. Dick has also refined his railroad over the years with "new and improved" scenery and structures to further define what he is attempting to recreate. The prime example of this, in my mind, has been the replacement of the mine near the farm scene with Van Gelder's Casting Co. This is a much more believable industry to depict for this area of the

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## p. 1 Messages from Tower A

region level This person would also conduct retail activity. That's all you would have to do - just these two tasks. You'd need to brush up on the available member services at both the national and regional level. You will need to learn which divisions are active and which are dormant, and refer new members to the right key people. A list of current events is a nice touch, too. You should be computer-literate and have one, as well as enjoy the art of correspondence.

You can configure the job to suit yourself, but as I see it, it would be a matter of obtaining from our Office Manager Ron Bergeron a list of the new NMRA members residing within the Region boundaries each month and writing a welcome-aboard letter to each. I can give you one from the President to supplement yours. There is a nice brochure on the Region to include, but at the moment, supplies are low.

Ron can furnish this staff person a list of members who have not renewed so you can contact them. Sometimes it only takes a nudge or a willing ear to re-rail an errant car. Ron does this now, but he is pretty overworked, as are all existing staff members.

**2. AGENTS/OPERATORS.** We need folks to attend trade shows and run a publicity table. We have limited funds to make a display developed by Frank Dietz. One display per Division would be adequate, though a couple in the hands of frequent show attendees would be good too. Most shows will give an NMRA representative a free table and admission, so, if you like shows, why not get in free, have access to the dealers ahead of the crowd, get to kibitz with your fellow modelers all day, and generally have a good time while promoting the NMRA, the Northeastern Region and your Division. Only a few divisions are doing this now, so let's have some volunteers. Each division needs one leader, and a few people to work the shows. They can share the display as needs be, that way, no one person is giving up too much time.

**3. MODEL CONTEST CLERKS.** Don Howd just has too much to do to be effective running the convention contest room single-handedly. I know, I had his job for fifteen years. A clerk helps watch the room and register models during the morning of the event, sometimes works as a judge, or if he or she desires, helps with paperwork and awards distribution in the afternoon when the model judging is complete. You get to see the models in

much greater detail than usual, exchange ideas on techniques with participants, and the work is not so demanding you can't slip out to do or see a clinic or two.

**4. PHOTO CONTEST CLERKS.** Our photo contest chairman (right now it's me!) is in transition, and for good reason. Entries are heavy in this contest and it isn't just a one-person job. I'd have no trouble recruiting a new chairman if he or she had some help. You would assist with paperwork, room security, encouragement of entrants, awards distribution, etc., and much like the Model Contest Clerk, you would not be tied to the contest room without a break all day.

**5. ADVERTISING MANAGER.** We need to get some advertising into the *Coupler* to supplement our income. The average realized from dues for the Region is only a few dollars more than the cost of printing our magazine. Occasionally, we have a small profit from conventions, but sometimes this turns out to be a loss. Bottom line: *we are chronically broke*. Ads placed in the *Coupler* must be effective and appealing or none of the region's retailers and manufacturers will buy them. Joe has all he can do to get the basic text into print each quarter, so we need a volunteer to work the phones, send the bills and put the art together for the ads. Hey, it's only four times a year, so it isn't going to tie you up, especially if you're experienced, such as a retired advertising person who would like to keep your hand in, or a computer whiz with some good software, and a bit of time to support your hobby.

**6. CLUB DISPATCHER.** There is very little news in the *Coupler* about clubs in our area. We haven't published our club directory in some time, and it's likely in need of editing. There is no point of con-

Model Contest judge, Don Howd, reads off the names of winners at the Saratoga convention banquet.



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## 1 Saratoga Limited

enhanced experience.

In the evening many attendees headed off to visit home layouts, which included those of Glen Fogle, Bob Hamm, Bill Mackey, John McBride, Ken Nelson, Tom Rhodes, Lou Sassi, Tony Steele, Jack Wright and Marcel Zucchini. Computer-generated maps made it easier for visitors to find layouts, which they judged to be "excellent".

Back at the hotel there were railroad clinics as well as those with other themes. George Cook showed movies of Colorado narrow gauge railroading in the 50s and 60s. Pat Hamm put on a fashion show which drew many women attending the convention. The evening ended with a layout design group (SIG) meeting in the Hospitality Room.

Saturday was the usual day full of activity opportunities. There was a clinic on the preparation of healthy, fast foods. Model rail clinics were presented by Mike and Jimmy Tylick, Jack Wright, Lou Sassi, Biagio Pace and Jeff Manning. Across the street in a high school gym the Kiwanis Club sponsored a train show that was free for meeting attendees.

At Noon, buses took rail fans to Salem, New York, where they boarded the Batten Kill Rambler, which runs the route of the old Rutland & Washington RR and the Batten Kill RR (now Northeast Rail). While the sun didn't cooperate with the photographers on the runbys, the rain did hold off for the trip to Shushan and back.

Nearly 130 folks were present for a great banquet, the distribution of door-prizes (almost everyone got one), and the announcements of

*Rail-Fan Railroading from the rear end on the Batten Kill (photo by Denis Fortier) and*



*from the front end with a pair of ALCOs.*



contest winners and AP achievers.

The gem of the evening was a fascinating slide-talk show by Bob Richardson a founder of the Colorado Railroad Museum. Bob, who has been chasing trains most of his life, has a slide collection to be envied and the crisp delivery of a journalist.

**The fall meeting** will be at the Huntington Hilton in Melville, Long Island, New York on 31 October - 2 November 1997. Details will be found in the next issue of the *Coupler*. Spring 1998, will likely be in Hyannis, hosted by the HUB Division. -KM





### p. 3 Messages from Tower A

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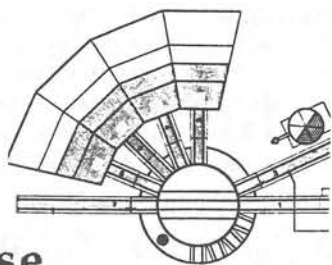
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cont. p. 7



country, and quite obviously pays homage to Bob Van Gelder who has created all those wonderful New England mill kits.

On my own C&O Railway, although not trying to duplicate C&O in West Virginia, I am using structures and specific scenic elements that any student of the Chesapeake & Ohio would be able to associate with, as well as the overall scenic elements that anyone remotely familiar with railroading, coal mining and the mountains of West Virginia would be able to associate with. I am able to do this, even though I have never been there, by using a wealth of books, photos and reference materials which are available through the C&O Historical Society. Besides the mountains and mines, I am using structures that were specific to the C&O, a coal-marshaling yard in which only hoppers, both loaded and empty, were received, sorted and dispatched, and scratch-built tunnel portals based on the C&O practice of casting the name and completion date of the tunnel above the portal. I am trying to choose names that sound like they could have been used in that area, and as in the prototype world, I am naming everything from the mountains and streams, to the tunnels and tracks. As we start out in this great hobby, most of us just like trains and are not focused on a particular railroad, locale or era. Over the years, I have focused on the C&O in West Virginia in 1952. I hope to create a believable facsimile that most people can relate to. Whether you are still building a railroad or have an established railroad, you can still create a memorable railroad.

## Scratch-building HO Gauge High Level Switch Stands

by David MacPherson

Small details add much to the realistic appearance of a model railroad. One item that many layouts do not have are high or low level switch stands. Looking down a yard ladder track and seeing a row of stands is quite a sight. This article deals with just one type: the high level switch stands used primarily on main lines. I needed a total of about fifty of both kinds for my "Clinch Mountain Railway" and, after searching for some that were commercially available, I decided to build my own from scratch as it didn't appear to be too difficult, could be a lot of fun doing, and the price was right. While viewing some prototype slides, I noticed that even on the same railroads switch stand design varied greatly. Those described in this article are of a freelance pattern somewhat similar to what can be found on the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad.

I used a red diamond for the top target, a white circle for the bottom one, and a switch lamp at the top of the mast. The models are non-operational and the turnouts are thrown by twin coil switch machines located under the roadbed. As the stands were to be made in fairly large numbers, I used an assembly line system for building them, making the job a whole lot faster and easier, with much better uniformity for each piece. All diagrams are drawn to the scale of twice HO's 1/87. Use them to make direct measurements.

The first part to be manufactured is the foot, which is cut from a piece of .015 brass sheet (see fig. 1). Drill a 1/16" hole in its center for the tubing to pass through. Next, cut a piece of 1/16" brass tubing for the body assembly (see fig. 2). For the tapered section, I used an electronic terminal turned to the proper configuration in a Dremel tool, but you can use whatever is available for this part or omit it altogether (although the appearance of the model is much better with it). Slide the tapered section onto the tubing along with the foot and solder the assembly together with a small iron. I used solder mastic, but TV solder will do.

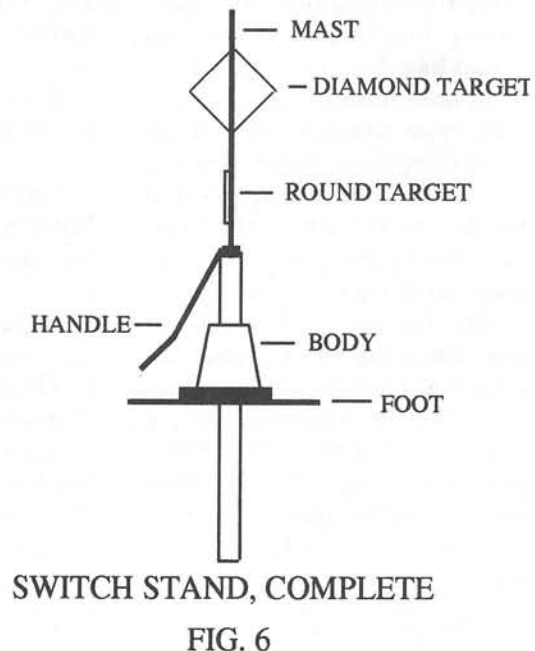
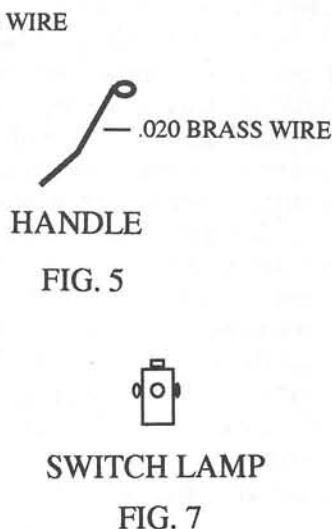
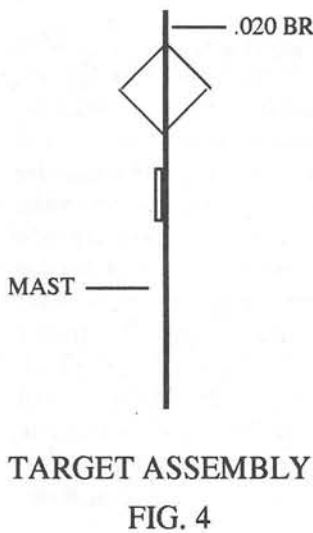
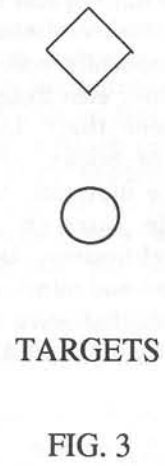
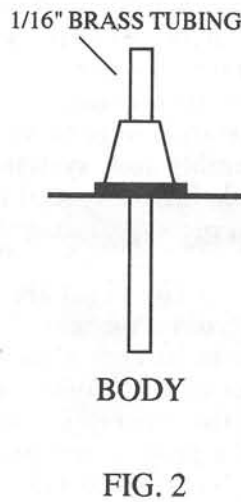
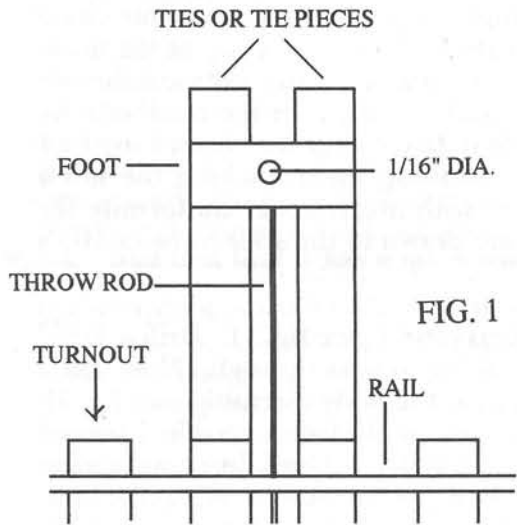
Cut the two targets from brass shim stock and solder them to a piece of .020 brass wire, which is the mast (see fig. 4). Form a handle as shown (see fig. 5), making the loop end by forming it around another piece of .020 wire to get the correct contour. Leave some extra material when cutting the handle and trim it the proper length when the loop is done to make the job easier. Insert the mast assembly (with the handle) into the body (see fig. 6) and solder the parts together using spring clamps as heat sinks to prevent the previously soldered parts from coming undone. Make sure the handle is parallel to the track and that the targets are in their desired positions. Hint: clean all parts before soldering to insure good flow and bonding. Remove all surplus solder and flux and wash the model in warm water and detergent to remove anything that might mess up the paint job.

cont. p. 8

p. 7  **Scratch-Building High Level Switch Stands**

Now we can paint the switch stand with Floquil Engine Black, except for the diamond targets which are painted with Caboose Red, and the round targets with Reefer White. Leave the top end of the mast paint-free to allow the lamp (fig.7) to be installed. Using ACC adhesive for that operation, slide the lamp base over the mast end being careful to keep it from tilting. Place two precut tie pieces against the ends of the turnout ties, locating them at the turnout throwbar, making sure to cut them so that the distance from the the switch stand to the nearest rail is as shown in figure 1. Drill a clearance hole (again, see fig 1) to install the model. Cement the tie pieces to the roadbed and the switch stand to the tie pieces and clearance hole, with targets facing in the proper direction. Install a piece of 1/32" brass wire painted a rusty brown as the turnout operating rod, and the project is finished.

- LIST OF MATERIALS**
- HO Gauge Ties
  - K&S Brass .015" Sheet,
  - Shim and 1/16" tubing
  - stock
  - K&S .020, 1/32" brass
  - wire
  - Electronic terminals
  - HO Gauge switch lamps
  - Floquil paint
  - 3-minute epoxy cement
  - ACC Quick-Gel cement



# NER Constitution and Proposed Changes

## Proposed Changes to the NER Constitution

*The following is a description of the proposed changes to the NER Constitution.*

**Article I, Section 1:** The old version of the Constitution stated that the date the NER became a non-profit Corporation in the State of New Jersey was August 27, 1953. The incorporation papers from New Jersey state that the date of incorporation was November 2, 1953. We have changed the date to November 2, 1953.

**Article II, Section 1B:** The old version of the Constitution had wording that was different in structure from Section 1A. We have changed it to be similar to Section 1A.

**Article III, Section 2:** The old version did not state when the Annual Meeting should be held. We changed it to establish the timeframe of September, October or the first two weeks of November.

**Article IV, Section 2:** Throughout the Constitution we have changed all references to "Area Representative" to "Director". In addition, the NMRA Trustee was added as an ex-officio member of the BOD.

**Article IV, Section 4:** The position of "Assistant to the President", established in this article in the old version, has been eliminated.

**Article V Section 1:** Section 1H, Achievement Program, has been dropped from the Constitution. The AP is now administered by the NMRA.

**Article VI, Section 1:** This section was added. The Nominating Committee was mentioned in the old version, but it was not defined how the committee was formed and what its duties should be.

**Article VI, Section 2:** This was the old Section 1.

**Article VI, Section 3:** This was the old Section 2. Three other changes were made to this section. The phrase, "Not less than 60 days before an election" was changed to, "Not later than April 1st of the year of an election". "Area Representative" was changed to "Director". The reference to the By-Laws was added.

**Article VI, Section 4:** This was the old section 3. The phrase, "Not less than 60 days before an election" was changed to, "Not later than April 1st of the year of an election". The reference to the By-Laws was added.

**Article VI, Section 5:** This was the old section 4.

**Article VII:** The title of this article was changed from "Voting, Elections, Amendments".

**Article VII, Section 1:** The title was changed from "Elections and Proposals".

**Article VII, Section 1B:** "Area Representative" was changed to "Director".

**Article VII, Section 1D:** In the last sentence, the words "requiring referendum" and "for balloting" were added to clarify the meaning of this section.

**Article VII, Section 2A:** The words "in a referendum" and "ballots to be prepared according to Article VII, Sec. 2B of the By-Laws" were added to clarify the intent of the section.

**Article VII, Section 2B:** The word "referendum" in the sentence and the By-Laws reference were added to clarify the intent of the section.

**Article VII, Section 2C:** The word "shall" was added to clarify the intent of the section.

**Article VII, Section 3B:** "Area Representative" was changed to "Director".

**Article VII, Section 3D:** The word "shall" was added to clarify the intent of the section.

**Article VII, Section 3E:** This section was added.

**Article VII, Section 4A:** The phrase "in accordance with Section 2 above" was added to clarify the intent of this section.

**Article VIII:** The word "Representative" was changed to "Representation" in the title.

That's it! Review the revised text, and then fill out and mail the enclosed ballot (or a photocopy)

\*\*\*\*\*

## CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTHEASTERN REGION, NMRA

### ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1: The Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. also known as the NER, was organized April 28, 1946 at Kingston, New York, and became a Nonprofit Corporation of the State of New Jersey on November 2, 1953.

Section 2: The purposes of the NER are the furtherance of the objectives of the NMRA, the enjoyment of the hobby of model railroading, and the promotion of closer social activities among members of the NMRA, the NER, and its divisions.

### ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1: The classes of membership are:

- A. REGULAR: NMRA members may become Regular Members upon application to the Office Manager and payment of dues as directed by the By-Laws, as the same are amended.
- B. LIFE: Life Members of the NMRA may become Life Members of the NER upon application to the Office Manager and by payment of dues as directed in the By-Laws, as the same are amended.
- C. HONORARY: Honorary Members may be elected by the Board of Directors and shall not pay dues or vote.

Section 2: The Board of Directors may waive payment of dues for Regular Members.

### ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

Section 1: An Annual Meeting shall be held in September, October, or during the first two weekends of November each year to receive reports from Officers and Committee Chairmen, to discuss matters pertaining to the NER, and to install the newly elected Officers and other Board Members on even numbered years, as specified in the By-Laws.

Section 2: Social Conventions shall be held semiannually if practicable, one in conjunction with the Annual Meeting in September, October, or during the first two weekends of November each year, the other during the last two weekends in April, or in May or June of each year.

### ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Section 1: The Officers of the NER shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Cont. p. 10



## NER Constitution and Proposed Changes

Section 2: The Board of Directors, also known as the BOD, shall consist of the following: President, Vice-President, immediate Past President, and one Director from each area. The NMRA Trustee for the Northeastern Region shall be an ex-officio member of the BOD. The President shall be the Chairman of the BOD.

Section 3: The general management of the NER shall be vested in the BOD which shall hold title to all moneys and property of the NER in trust for the members.

Section 4: The Secretary, and Treasurer shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the BOD.

Section 5: Vacancies developing in the BOD shall be filled by appointment by the President, except that the President shall be replaced by the Vice-President.

Section 6: Vacancies developing in positions normally filled by appointments of the BOD may be filled on an interim basis by appointment by the President, such interim appointees to serve until the next meeting of the BOD.

Section 7: Only Regular or Life Members shall be entitled to vote or serve as Officers or Directors.

### ARTICLE V - STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: The Standing Committees shall include the following:  
A. Nominating; (Art. V, Sec. 2 of By-Laws)  
B. Ballot; (Art. V, Sec. 3 of By-Laws)  
C. Permanent Convention; (Art. V, Sec. 4 of By-Laws)  
D. Audit; (Art. V, Sec. 5 of By-Laws)  
E. Membership; (Art. V, Sec. 6 of By-Laws)  
F. Model Contest, (Art. V, Sec. 7 of By-Laws)  
G. Photo Contest, (Art. V, Sec. 8 of By-Laws)

Section 2: The composition and duties of the Committees shall be as specified in the By-Laws.

### ARTICLE VI - NOMINATIONS

Section 1: The Nominating Committee members and duties shall be defined in Article V, Section 2 of the By-Laws.

Section 2: The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of at least one candidate for each elective office in accordance with the By-Laws.

Section 3: Not later than April 1st of the year of an election, 20 Regular or Life Members of an Area may petition the nomination of a candidate for Director from their Area. Such candidates shall appear on the printed ballot and may become part of the slate of the Nominating Committee. (Art. V, Sec. 2(E) of the By-Laws)

Section 4: Not later than April 1st of the year of an election, 30 Regular or Life Members, not more than 10 from any one Area, may petition the nomination of a candidate for President or Vice-President. Such candidates shall appear on the printed ballot and may become part of the slate of the Nominating Committee. (Art. V, Sec. 2(E) of the By-Laws)

Section 5: The right of voting members to write in names not otherwise on the ballot shall be preserved.

### ARTICLE VII - VOTING, BALLOTING, ELECTIONS, AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Elections, Referendum, Initiatives

- A. Election of the President and Vice-President shall be by mail vote of the Regular and Life Members.
- B. Election of each Director shall be by mail vote of the Regular and Life Members of each respective Area.
- C. In the election of Officers and other Directors, the candidate receiving a plurality of votes shall be declared elected. A tie vote shall be resolved by a majority vote of the BOD.
- D. Election of the President, Vice-President, and other Directors shall take place in even numbered years. The length of term(s) shall be specified in the By-Laws. Other matters requiring referendum may be submitted to the membership for balloting in any year.

Section 2: Voting by the General Membership


- A. Those matters petitioned under Article XI, and matters the BOD may direct, shall be submitted to all Regular and Life Members in a referendum for a decision by mail vote, ballots to be prepared according to Article VII, Sec. 2B of the By-Laws.
- B. The preparation of referendum questions or proposals and the means of handling the mail vote shall be as directed pursuant to the By-Laws. (Art. VII, Sec. 2(B)5, 6 of the By-Laws)
- C. Except as otherwise provided, a simple majority of valid votes cast shall decide.

Section 3: Voting by the Board of Directors

- A. A majority of the BOD shall constitute a quorum.
- B. A Director may appoint another Regular Member, in good standing, or a Life Member, by written proxy, to act on his behalf as a Director on all matters at meetings of the BOD. Such proxies shall be counted in all voting and in determining a quorum.
- C. Adoption of amendment of By-Laws for the NER as hereinafter authorized shall be by at least two-thirds majority of those BOD members present at a meeting of the BOD, a quorum being present.
- D. Except as otherwise provided, a simple majority of valid votes cast shall decide.
- E. Votes may be cast by voice vote, show of hands, or paper ballot.

Section 4: Amendments

- A. Amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted to all Regular and Life Members for decision by mail vote in accordance with Section 2 above.
- B. At least a two-thirds majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to amend this Constitution.

Cont. p. 11 

## NER Constitution, Proposed Changes & BALLOT

### ARTICLE VIII - REPRESENTATION AREAS AND DIVISIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Section 1: The NER territory shall be divided into logical geographical areas for the purpose of electing Directors. These areas shall be as specified in the By-Laws.
- Section 2: Divisional organizations may be chartered within the NER, in accordance with the By-Laws, to provide local activities.

### ARTICLE IX - PUBLICATIONS

- Section 1: The Coupler shall be the official publication of the NER and shall be issued at least four times a year.
- Section 2: An Editor of The Coupler shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the BOD.
- Section 3: Other Publications may be authorized by the By-Laws.

### ARTICLE X - BY-LAWS

- Section 1: By-Laws to implement the provisions of this Constitution may be adopted or amended by the BOD as herein provided.

### ARTICLE XI - INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM

- Section 1: The Regular and Life Membership shall have the right to have any proposal placed on the next annual ballot by petition by a minimum of 30 Regular and Life members, not more than 10 from any one Area.
- Section 2: At least a two-thirds majority of votes received on such proposals shall be required to adopt a proposal initiated under Section 1 above.

#### Ballot and Voting Information:

The NER By-Laws state that the ballot in not to be cast if the individual's NER or NMRA membership has expired, and further states, that to be counted, the Member's name, address and NER number (it's on your membership card) must appear on the outside of the envelope containing the ballot. "An 8 1/2 x 11 inch facsimile or photocopy of the ballot...as printed on the NER Coupler will be accepted by the Ballot Committee from those members who wish to keep their Couplers intact."

Vote for or against the revisions to the NER Constitution by marking a X in the appropriate box. Mail your ballot to Charles Bettinger, 29 Foster Drive, Vernon, CT 06066. Your ballot must be postmarked by September 30, 1997. Ballots postmarked after that date will be invalid and not counted.

#### Northeastern Region Ballot on Constitution Revision 1997

- I approve the changes to the NER Constitution
- I don't approve the changes to the NER Constitution

Remove this ballot or photocopy it, place it in an envelope and send it to Charles Bettinger (Ballot Committee), 29 Foster Drive Vernon, CT 06066. **Be sure to write your name, address and NER ID number on the envelope. Your ballot must be postmarked by 30 September 1997.**

## Loose Spikes

Notes from the ashpit 🖊️ 🖊️ 🖊️

by Jim Heidt, NMRA Trustee



Well friends, we have a couple of loose spikes to pull from the tie this issue. First, on a tragic note we mourn the passing of Patti Bettinger, our well-known, unanimous but unofficial, "NER Mom" as Brian Whiton always called her. Either in this column, or at Region convention banquets, I have often stated that the people in the NER, and friendships made with them, are the real member benefit of the NMRA. Patti comes instantly to mind.

Patti was extensively involved in many organizations outside of model railroading, and yet, with her busy schedule caring for her two young grandchildren, she had a special energy and ability to touch people in a lasting and personal way. Suzanne and I joined a number of NER members at the funeral and were told that many others had attended during calling hours on the day before. All this is a small tribute to the special efforts expended by her in service to our Region, as well as the personal friendships each of us can treasure. Our prayers, fond memories and thoughts are with Charlie and his family.

The second spike reveals a lighter subject. One very special "door prize" given at the Kingston 50th anniversary convention was an HO gauge boxcar kit lettered #1946, which was made 50 years ago to commemorate the Region's founding. It was donated by Walter Neumen. Paul Dauerheim won the prize, and has since built and detailed the kit with help from recent Baldwin Trophy winner Brian Curry. They presented the model, enclosed in a case, to me as NMRA Trustee at the June 1 CNY Division meeting, to be forwarded as an NER donation to the new Howell Day Model Railroad Museum at NMRA headquarters in Chatanooga. We'll attach an engraved plaque giving the contribution's historical significance. Thanks Walter, Paul and Brian.

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

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### Paul Hackett 1940-1997

The "conscience of county government" in Dutchess, after having served as Comptroller since 1973, died in St. Francis Hospital at the age of 57. Paul was trusted implicitly by his fellow citizens of both parties. His reputation in his New York community went far beyond the profession of number-crunching, as the Poughkeepsie Journal reported, "...Hackett had more than his job and politics on his mind. His interests were varied and his life, after his family and his job, was filled with music, song, theater, model railroading and volunteering."

He was a busy man and several heart surgeries didn't slow him down. Last St. Patrick's Day, he and Rev. Charles P. Coen entertained the "Lunch and Listen" crowd with a riot of Irish music.

In the 1960s, Paul served as NER Secretary, on the HUB Division's Board of Directors, and as a judge in the convention contest room. He returned to service last spring as part of the convention committee for the Kingston meeting. At the Saratoga convention Paul took three prizes in the Diorama category as a new modeler. This was the last picture of Paul, taken at the awards banquet. Lorraine, you have our prayers and love.

We had a lot on our editorial plate this issue, so the names of the convention contest winners and AP achievers will appear in the next issue. Keep sending your contributions. JTP

### Patti Bettinger 1943-1997

The "NER Mom" is how Brian Whiton characterized Patti Bettinger. NER members found it difficult to believe that this cheerful facilitator of NER business was no longer with us. In 1972 Patti was already helping Irwin Lloyd with the convention registration process. In 1992, she and her husband Charlie took over this complex and often unappreciated job. When Brian was elected President of NER in 1994, she became the executive assistant to one very busy guy. In 1996, Diane Salvatore had to give up her secretarial position with the Board of Directors, and like the trooper that she was, Patti took over the job.

Model railroading was just one of the interests to which she was dedicated. Mrs. Bettinger was a member of the Union Congregational Church in Vernon, Connecticut, belonged to its Pilgrim Fellowship and sang in the choir. She was a partner with Charlie in the J and E Train Depot, and belonged to local model railroad clubs. She even volunteered as a school crossing guard. There was almost nothing Patti didn't respond to in her community.

Besides her husband, Patti leaves her son Jeff, daughter-in-law Dawn, and grandsons Timothy and Justin. She also leaves son Scott and daughter Jennifer. And she leaves us, sorrowful but grateful for her company. Charlie we love you.

**CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND THE BALLOT ARE ON PAGES 9-11! DO IT NOW.**