


THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION



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www.nernmra.org

THE COUPLER

The official publication of
The Northeastern Region of
the National Model Railroad
Association

Issue No. 250

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The editorial policy of *The Coupler*, the official publication of the Northeastern Region, shall be to contribute, wherever and whenever possible, to the promotion, growth, and understanding of the hobby of model railroading. *The Coupler* is published four times a year by and for the members of the Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association. Subscription rate is \$7.00 per year. Any items related to the activities of the Northeastern Region and its member divisions are gladly accepted. Please address all correspondence, news, photos, and drawings to the Editor. Any submissions sent by mail will be gladly returned if the sender provides a self-addressed stamped envelope.



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Next submission deadline is
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COVER PHOTO

BAR GP-38 #88 arrives at the switch lead at North Maine Junction on John Newick's N scale Central Maine & Aroostook Railroad. The CM&A is one of the many layouts on display during *Tracks to Lakeport*, the 2013 NER convention. (Photo by Rich Breton)

In the Club

By JOHN DOEHRING
Coupler Editor

Don't you struggle at times to make progress on your railroad? Most of us do. Model railroading is a challenging hobby, and success requires both time and effort - often in short supply in our lives today.

For me this was a good year with trains. After many years of in and out, on and off again activity as a (primarily) armchair railroader, I finally completed my first module - a 12 foot NTRAK affair.

Well, more accurately, it's operationally complete. Benchwork, track, and electrical are all done, and the thing works. Scenery is still in progress, and about 50% done.



My secret to action this year was *joining a club* (in this case Northeast NTRAK). Becoming a part of a group, and deciding to build a module, forced me to 1) develop a plan, 2) commit to real deadlines, and 3) respond to some friendly peer pressure to get 'er done. As I worked toward completion, I began to feel more a part of it all. The club wanted (and needed) my module.

Mirabile dictu! I met the deadline for the first show (in my local town of Pepperell). Then across a full train season I participated in five shows, covering eight layout days total.

What a year it's been. I've learned an awful lot. Of course I bit off too much - insisting on a 12 foot straight module for my first effort (a simple four footer would have been better). I made lots of mistakes, and redid many pieces at least once. Most goof ups were harmless, though one cost me some \$\$\$ (note, there is a difference between 12-gauge solid and stranded wire).

I had new experiences in every area: benchwork, track laying, electrical (I didn't like soldering much), scenery, and kit construction. Most of it was great.



Scooter's Junction

By GEORGE "SCOOTER" YOUST, NER President



Hello and welcome to summer, traditionally a time when model railroaders come crawling out of their winter hibernation in the basement to spend more time with the family and performing outdoor chores around the house. But, just because it is summer does not mean we have to lay off our love of model railroading. This is a great time and opportunity to join up with friends who start their season with outdoor railroading. So find a local garden railroading club and get involved, or volunteer to help a friend that has an outdoor layout. You may be amazed at how much your smaller scale skills apply to a larger scale railroad. Another idea is to find and join a live steamers group (if you have one in your area), or to locate one that you can visit as part of a day trip with family or other model railroad pals.

Now is also the time to look over all of the information (in this and other recent issues of *The Coupler*) about the great NER convention planned for this fall in Laconia, New Hampshire. Visit the convention Web site at <http://www.seacoastnmra.org/Convention/Lakeport2013/> for all the details. Folks in the Seacoast Division have been working really hard to bring us a great convention in a beautiful location. Send in your registration form early and make your hotel reservations now. You won't want to miss this one.

On behalf of the Northeastern Region Board of Directors, I want to congratulate the Garden State Division on reaching a great milestone in its and the Region's history. The Garden State Division is a very active and strong group of modelers and wonderful friends who will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this summer! They are having a summer meet and celebration dinner on July 27th (I will be attending, and I encourage anyone else that can make it to attend). You can get more information about this event at the Garden State Division Web site <http://www.nergsd.com/dinner.html>. Congratulations on the first 50 years of modeling and supporting the best hobby in the world. We look forward to the next 50 years of modeling and friendship in the Garden State Division!

We recently completed a financial audit of our books and came through with flying colors. I would like to thank our treasurer Larry Canon for doing such a fine job with the books, and I want to thank Peter McKenney and Tom Coulombe for their work performing the audit. If you have any specific questions about the audit, contact me through my information listed in *The Coupler*.

Vice President Henry Pierce has been hard at work meeting with the superintendents and presidents from the divisions. Henry is trying to have a couple of meetings each year where division leaders can get together in an informal session to discuss and share ideas about their divisions and the Region. Henry has kept me up to speed on what is being discussed, and he says he is pleased with the attendance at these gatherings. I think this group of divisional leaders has some great ideas about how to run their divisions, and some good solid ideas about the future of the NER and what they would like to see happen. So I encourage each of you to talk to your division superintendent or president about any ideas you have, so that they can discuss it with the others at Henry's meetings. I also encourage you to get involved with your local division, and attend as many divisional and regional functions as your schedule will allow. Volunteer to serve on a committee or to hold office, and (most important of all) be a friend to other railroad modelers. ☒

And I really see now that model railroading is a *social* hobby. It's more fun with friends, and I've made a number of new ones. I enjoy interacting with the public at shows, and both teaching and learning from others. I've received many helpful hints, some constructive criticism, and even a little praise - often just when it was needed most.

This summer, I'm working to fully complete the module to (hopefully) earn my Golden Spike Certificate this Fall. In fact, our kitchen table is covered with paint bottles, brushes, and styrene buildings kits (what do you use your kitchen table for?). I'm having a great time, and also importantly, I really feel now like I'm in the club. ☒



NER 2013 Convention

Tracks to Lakeport Promises Unique Experiences

By PETER McKENNEY
Publicity Chair

Tracks to Lakeport 2013, the NER's first-ever convention in Laconia, NH, October 17-20, will offer NMRA members exciting new model railroad experiences in a vacationland setting. The convention will include all of the traditional activities, but many of the clinics, layouts, and other activities offered will be all new to NMRA members. Planning is well along, but more details will be added continually. Please check online at <http://convention.nernmra.org> for the latest information.

Please register now! The earlier you sign up, the better your chances for securing your preferred activities and/or layout operations assignments. Here are some updates and highlights of this year's convention.

Location

The convention will be centered on Lake Winnepesaukee in the heart of the Lakes Region of New Hampshire during the colorful fall foliage season. The Lakes area has a long and storied history of railroading, and still has many railroad activities and structures to visit. Plus, it's a beautiful vacation spot and there are many other area attractions within easy driving distance, including shopping, dining, siteseeing, and cultural, historical and similar opportunities. Our host hotel, *The Margate*, is on Paus Bay and is now taking reservations. A complimentary continental breakfast is available to all overnight guests, or a hot buffet breakfast can be purchased for \$6.95, plus taxes. Contact the hotel directly at 1-800-Margate, or online at reservations@themargate.com. Remember to use the group code "NMRANER" to get the discounted rate (valid until September 17). For additional information on lodging, see the convention website. Come early and stay late to further enjoy the wonderful environment of the Lakes Region. Bring a travel companion with you and share a room. Please let the hotel know that you are connected with the NER convention, so that your stay will count towards the NER's guaranteed room block.

Thursday Night in the Lounge

Join fellow convention-goers in the lounge area of The Margate starting at 5:30 PM on Thursday to enjoy light snacks, a cash bar, and informal conversations about model railroading and how you plan to enjoy the convention activities. This will be a great opportunity to get the latest convention information,

determine things that you want to do, and possibly find others with whom to share some convention experiences. During the convention, the lounge area will contain an N-scale modular layout, raffle tables, the registration desk, convention information and bulletin board, and the hospitality area. During the day, the lounge area will also be the site for "Made in the NER" displays and some of the mini-clinics to be offered.



Maine Central RS-2 # 551 leads the "Wood Job" from Northern Maine Junction to Waterville Maine through a beautifully detailed cut on John Newick's N-scale *Central Maine & Aroostock Railroad*. John's layout will be open for operating sessions and layout tours during *Tracks to Lakeport*. (Photo by Rich Breton)

Layout Tours

There will be more than 20 layouts open at various times from Thursday morning through Sunday afternoon for you to visit. Many of these layouts have not been associated with prior NER conventions, so you can expect to see lots of new modeling ideas and approaches.

Layout Operations

If you like operations or want to know more about how to have fun operating on a layout, *Tracks to Lakeport 2013* is for you. There will be well over 150 pre-assigned operating slots at off-site layouts, and more than 50 positions (sign up for these at the convention) on the on-site modular layouts. The signup process for operating on these layouts is separate from the registration process. On the registration form, indicate your interest in operating (off-site and/or on-site) and you will receive a call or email – whichever you prefer – with more information on how to submit your operations wish list. Off-site operating sessions will be assigned in order of convention registration number (the lower the number, the higher the priority), so register early!

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

Clinic Presentations

Nearly 30 regular clinic presentations offered by well-respected clinicians and modelers are already planned. See the Web site for details on these clinics. Again, most of these sessions will be new or substantially revised for this convention. In addition, there are opportunities for mini-clinics and show-and-tell on a space and time available basis. Please contact Larry Cannon, Inside Activity Director <director5@seacoastnmra.org>, for more information.

Complementing regular clinic presentations, there will be many learning opportunities on the modular layouts, including modules from New England Free-Mo, Amherst Belt Lines, Upstate Model Railroaders and other module owners. Watch the Web site for more news on how these modules will be connected and the clinic topics that will be covered.

There will also be several presentations by published authors on local and regional railroad features and history.

Riding the Rails and Lake

This year's outside activities include four rail rides and a great boat ride from which to choose. The following are departure times (remember that you'll need to be ready at least 30 minutes before departure).

- Friday, 10 AM: Cruise Lake Winnepesaukee on the *M/V Mount Washington* departing from Weirs Beach Station.
- Friday, 10:30 AM: Ride the Budd RDC *Millie* on a five-hour round-trip out of North Conway Depot.
- Friday, 1 PM: Ride a two-hour trip on the *Winnepesaukee Scenic RR* from Meredith Station to Lakeport and return.
- Saturday, 11 AM: The WSRR's *Fall Foliage Special* departs Meredith Station for a four-hour trip to Plymouth and back. Bus transportation is included for this particular rail trip, so plan on leaving the hotel by 10 AM.

In addition, on Sunday, the *Cotton Valley Speeders* will offer a limited number of seats on their railroad speeders for a 16 mile round trip in Wolfeboro. Sign up for the speeder trips at the registration desk upon arrival at The Margate. There is no convention charge for the speeder trips, but voluntary donations (directly to the Cotton Valley Speeders) will help them to maintain their program.

Other Area Activities

With so many outside attractions nearby in the area, there will be no additional organized inside "non-rail" activities this year. Instead, information on top area attractions will be posted on the Web site and in the hospitality area of the convention. A ride board will also be available in the hospitality part of the lounge area for those wishing to arrange carpooling opportunities.

Contests and Showcase

The "Celebration" Room is expected to fill with models and

photos for judged contests, as well as the Model Showcase. Bring your models and photos to share, and plan on spending some time learning from all of the exhibited items, and from others visiting the room. Vote in the People's Choice balloting and have fun socializing.

Other Features

Besides acquiring modeling *ideas* at the convention, there will be good chances to acquire some *materials* for your model railroad hobby as well. Attractive items are arriving daily from manufacturers, retailers, and hobbyists to be entered into the convention raffle. Manufacturers from the NER and some of the clinic presenters will have periodic opportunities to display their products for sale to convention-goers. And to better appreciate the local area railroading history, self-guided tours will be designed so registrants can see the old railroad structures still in existence and visit local railroad and related museums at specified times.

Banquet and Awards

On Saturday evening, the NER will once again gather to enjoy the social hour and a delicious buffet dinner. After dinner, there will be plenty of awards distributed and lots to celebrate. Capping off the evening will be a presentation entitled "*Bitten by the Bug*" from noted author, speaker, and lifelong railroader George Melvin. Accompanied by lots of photos, George will share how he became a part of the model railroad hobby.

Important Dates

Keep these important deadline dates in mind as you plan for this year's convention: August 6 – Registration cutoff date for the RDC trip in North Conway; September 1 – Registration cutoff date for other outside trips; September 1 – Last day for obtaining the early registration discount; September 17 – Last day to reserve a hotel room at the discounted price; October 7 – Last day to submit convention registration by mail.

All registrations received by September 1 will qualify registrants for a drawing to win two tickets on Vermont Rail System's 2.5 mile excursion to and from White River Junction along the scenic Connecticut River. The winner will receive the tickets prior to the convention. More details on the trip are at <<http://rails-vt.com/train-schedule>>. ☒

HOTEL INFORMATION

The Margate on Winnepesaukee

Rooms facing the lake are \$129 + tax per night.

Rooms facing away from the lake are \$114 + tax per night. These rates are valid for booking through September 17.

Call *The Margate* now at (800) 627-4283 and make your reservation. Be sure to tell them you want the room rate for the NMRA-NER Convention.

You may also make reservations via e-mail at <reservations@themargate.com>.

Please make your reservations as soon as possible. The rate will be valid as long as the hotel has rooms available, up to and including September 17.



Tracks To Lakeport
October 17—20, 2013 Laconia, NH
The Margate on Winnepesaukee—Laconia, NH

OFFICE USE ONLY
Registration #

Name: _____ E-mail: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____
NMRA #: _____ Region: _____ Division: _____

Is this your first NER Convention? Yes No (Circle one)

Early Registration—Prior to September 1, 2013—\$45 \$ _____

Late Registration—After September 1, 2013—\$50 \$ _____

6 month NMRA Railpass Membership required for Non-NMRA members—\$10 \$ _____

Northeastern Region Coupler 1 year Subscription by U. S. Mail—\$7 \$ _____

Registration for Spouse/Children 18 & under (Railpass not required) - \$10

Spouse/Child 1 Name \$ _____

Child Name \$ _____

Child Name \$ _____

Banquet—\$28 X _____ = \$ _____

Conway Scenic RDC Railfan Trip—Friday 10:00 AM—\$39 (Cutoff August 6, 2013). . X _____ = \$ _____

Winnepesaukee Railroad “Tracks to Lakeport” Trip—Friday 12:30 PM—\$14 X _____ = \$ _____

Lake Winnepesaukee Cruise on M/S Mt. Washington—Friday 9:30 AM - \$24 X _____ = \$ _____

Winnepesaukee Railroad “Fall Foliage” Trip (Includes bus)—Saturday 10:30 AM—\$62 X _____ = \$ _____

Wolfeboro Speeder Trip — Sunday 9:30 AM—N/C X _____

Make & Take Clinic with Dave Camber (20 seats available) - Sat. 10:30—\$12 N/HO—\$20 S/O \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Operating Sessions are being planned and will be available at a future date. Please indicate if you are interested in participating in operating sessions, either external to the hotel or on-site and we will contact you with sign-up information. Operating sessions will be assigned based upon registration number, lowest to highest.

Off-site operating session(s) . . . Y / N On-site operating session(s) . . . Y / N
Best way to contact you: phone # above ____ or e-mail address above ____

Registration Information

Registration fee includes all clinics (except extra-fare), layout tours and operating sessions based upon availability. All other activities are pay and play, including the banquet. Parking is FREE at the hotel.

Non-NMRA members must pay for a 6-month introductory NMRA “Rail-Pass” membership. You will receive 6 months of the monthly publication “NMRA Magazine”. Rail-Pass payment must accompany registration form.

Bounced checks will not be put through twice—you will be required to pay your entire fee by money order or cashier’s check through the mail or in cash at the convention. You will be responsible for all bank fees charged.

DO NOT enclose hotel room reservation requests with your registration. If you pre-register and later need to cancel, a full refund will be given only if the registrar receives the request by September 30, 2013. Allow 4-6 weeks for the processing of your refund.

DO NOT mail a registration after October 7, 2013; register at the door.

DO NOT staple your check to your registration form.

Send Completed Registration form and payment to:

Robert Robbins, Convention Registrar
11 Stella Court
Stoney Point, NY 10980

E-mail: marrob17@optonline.net

Telephone: (845) 942-1470

Make checks payable to
“NER Conventions”
Sorry, NO Credit Cards

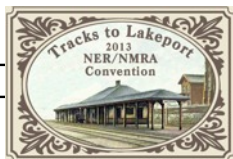


Photo Contest Aims for Entries in NH

By WILLIAM BARRY
NER Photo Contest Chair

I know you all take pictures of your models and models at layouts you have visited. And many of you go railfanning. But how many of these photos have you shown to others? The NER Photo and Art Contest is one venue where you can display your handiwork to your fellow model railroaders. If you're not comfortable with entering a "contest,"

The contest rules and entry form are posted on the NER Web site at www.nernmra.org/contests. You will need a separate form for each entry, so please fill them out ahead of time so you can drop them off and head to your other activities. You are welcome to use return address labels on the form to save time.

We will be accepting entries at set times in the afternoon and evening Thursday and Friday, and early Saturday morning before 8:30. The schedule of times isn't formalized yet, but I will make sure it is posted on the NER and convention Web sites, as well as posted outside the contest room.

Please email me at ner.photocontest@gmail.com if you have any questions. I'll see you in Laconia! ☒



we have a *display only* category just for you. Heck! You might be the next O. Winston Link and not even know it. So now's the time to find out! What are you waiting for?

Look through your collection of photos, whether it is in a shoe box or filling up your hard drive, and find your favorites. If not, head out and take some new photos. Who doesn't like an excuse to go railfanning or visit a friend's layout?

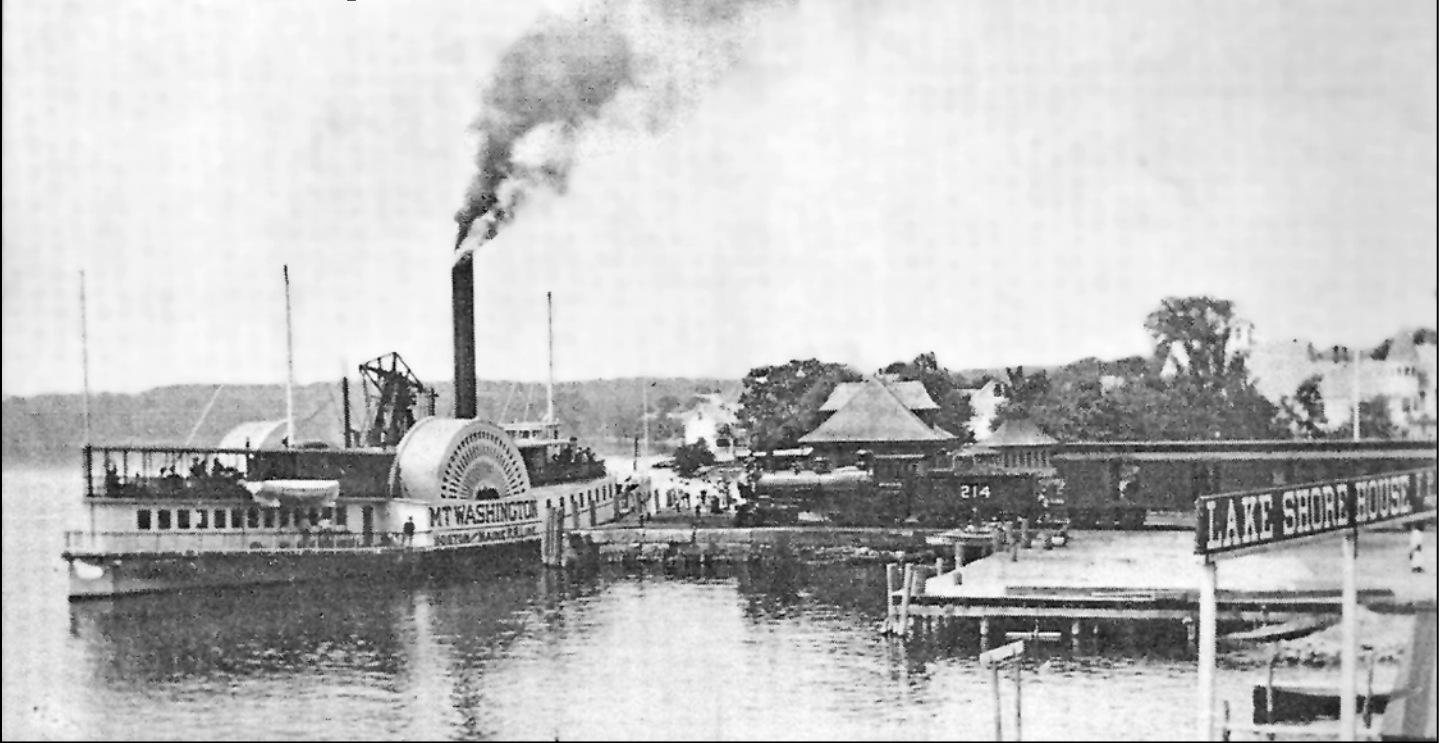
There are categories for model and prototype photos, either in color, or black and white. Remember to consider your digital photos as black and white because they may be more striking in this format, plus we haven't had as many entries in the black and white categories in recent years. Photo manipulation has been done for years in the dark room and has now moved to the computer, but keep it reasonable and let us know what you did. Otherwise, you can certainly display them in the "*imagineered*" photography category. We do ask that you mount your photos, but not frame them. Also, we no longer accept slides, so you will need to have prints made from them.

For those of you with an artistic bent, we have the *art show* category. This is for any type of graphic art, painting, drawing, etc., with a railroad theme.



Here are two past photo contest winners. *At left* is Bill Brown's popular entry, "18 Meets 6." Bill literally stumbled onto this shot while traveling in Colorado. Bob Robbins took home two awards with his image, *at right*, of East Broad Top No. 15.

Tracks to Lakeport



RELIVING HISTORY

Conventioneers Will Cruise into the Past

By DAVE SIAS

One hundred and fifty years ago, you could board a train in Boston or New York and be carried away to central New Hampshire in the relative comfort of the day, eventually arriving at the Lake Winnepesaukee port of The Weirs in the town of Laconia. There you would be transferred from your iron horse-drawn train to a large steam-powered, wooden side-wheeler vessel which carried you smoothly across the beautiful waters of Lake Winnepesaukee to your final destination. The lake was renowned not only by early settlers and travelers, but also by the Native Americans of the area who referred to it as "The Smile of the Great Spirit" and the "Beautiful Water in a High Place."

More than just a beautiful place to these earliest travelers, the 72 square miles of

water provided a central route for moving people and cargo through an otherwise rugged land. This was not lost on the Native Americans, or on the ambitious white settlers who followed who could see that reaching the lake made their journey far easier. No ox cart could move a load as easily as a sailing gundalow or a horse boat, and canals and rails struck out in search of a route to the lake.

Two major thrusts were made by the earliest railroads: one from the area of Dover, NH, where the Cochecho Railroad advanced northwest towards Alton Bay on the lake's southeast corner; and another which followed the Merrimac and Winnepesaukee Rivers to Concord and Laconia, and eventually Lakeport and The Weirs, closer to the southwest part of the lake. After much infighting among the competing railroads, the two lines came together in Lakeport in 1890 as the

Lakeshore Railroad was completed from Alton Bay to Lakeport. From that point, the Village of Lakeport was destined to become a real railroad hotbed with its own repair shops, yards, turntable, and engine house. Today the area is dismantled and diminished from its railroading heyday, but some relics hang on. One stall of the old eight stall engine house remains, and the restored freight house and rails themselves refuse to let go of their memories. The Lakeport Freight House Museum fights this good battle as well.

So where does this leave today's traveler? Visitors to the area today can actually relive a part of these earlier travelers' experiences, and learn first-hand why and how the railroads and the lake were so closely intertwined. Of course, you will be obliged to travel to central New Hampshire by more modern means, but

Opposite page: The original *Mt. Washington* steams up to the Wolfeboro Town Docks in the early 1900s with a passenger train awaiting its arrival. The *Mt. Washington* was built by the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1872, and served several other landings on Lake Winnepesaukee, including Alton Bay, The Weirs, and Meredith. The side-wheeler was the largest and fastest vessel on the lake until it was destroyed by fire in 1939. It was replaced in 1940 by the current M/V *Mt. Washington*, which is still in operation. (Photo: Boston & Maine Railroad Historical Society archives)

once here you can board a train and ride the very rails that ancestors rode, alighting on the very same boardwalk (albeit rebuilt) as they had. Then descending the same ramp, you can board the M/V *Mt. Washington* for your very own cruise on the (still) beautiful waters of Lake Winnepesaukee. Perhaps you will find it just as enchanting as they did, reflecting on their past adventures as you glide among the islands and take in the views of White Mountain peaks far to the north (which appear seemingly unchanged and uninhabited from this distance).

The lake continued to demonstrate its importance in the area as the various railroads reaching it built and operated their own steamboats to serve communities not connected by their railroad operations. In 1852, the Cochecho Railroad constructed the steamer *Dover* and operated it between Meredith, Alton Bay, Wolfeboro, and other ports. Goaded on (by jealousy and the prodding of the fiery captain of its first slow and leaky ship, *Chocorua*), the Boston & Maine also built its own steamboat in 1872, and named it the *Mount Washington*. Based at The Weirs, "The Mount" also served other ports around the lake. These early boats carried freight as well as passengers, and some were even used to tow cargo and logs.

Another major player in the area's railroading history was the Laconia Car

Company. Formed originally in 1844 as the Ranlet Manufacturing Company (which did millwork, and built wagons and stage coaches), the firm began building railroad freight cars in 1848. In 1881, the business became The Laconia Car Company, and it eventually produced hundreds of freight, passenger, and streetcars every year.

At its height, the Laconia Car Company occupied seven acres in the center of the City of Laconia. (Some of these buildings still exist in downtown Laconia, transformed into condos and businesses). Coincidentally, in the 1950s, another Laconia Car Company was formed. It operated in a part of the original building complex. One difference though — this second firm built cars in HO scale! You can view a nearly complete collection of these models at one of the layouts on tour at this year's NER gathering.



Of additional historical interest to the railfan visitor are a number of railroad buildings still in existence within a 40 minute drive of Lakeport. In this area, there are no less than 10 stations and five freight houses standing. Convention goers will receive information useful for self-guided tours of these historic structures.

The rich railroading and steamboat history of the Lake Winnepesaukee area is alive for all to explore during this year's NER convention, *Tracks to Lakeport 2013*. Come join us, and experience the beautiful setting of the Lakes Region and White Mountains of New Hampshire. ☒



Weirs Beach station on Lake Winnepesaukee is shared by both the M/V *Mount Washington* cruise ship and the Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad. (Photo by Rich Breton)



By JEFF PASTON

The number “100” rose two of the four floors encompassed by the huge windows over Grand Central Terminal’s Main Concourse.

This year marks the building’s centennial and its tenants Metro North Railroad and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) are going all out to celebrate with several events.

On Saturday and Sunday, May 11 and 12, one of those events drew thousands to the terminal and its underground platforms. For those interested in prototype trains, model trains, architecture, and history, the “Grand Centennial Parade of Trains” was an event not to be missed.



It seemed like everyone was taking pictures everywhere — with cameras, smart phones, even I-Pads.

The architectural element was indeed a draw showing off Metro North’s extensive renovation generally completed in 1998.

There were 28 prototype pieces of rolling stock on display on Tracks 34 to 37. Some were new, most were historic, and all had a story to share. Upstairs in Vanderbilt Hall, the former long

distance waiting room, there was a small model train and railroadiana collectibles show on one side, and an interactive kids event on the other.

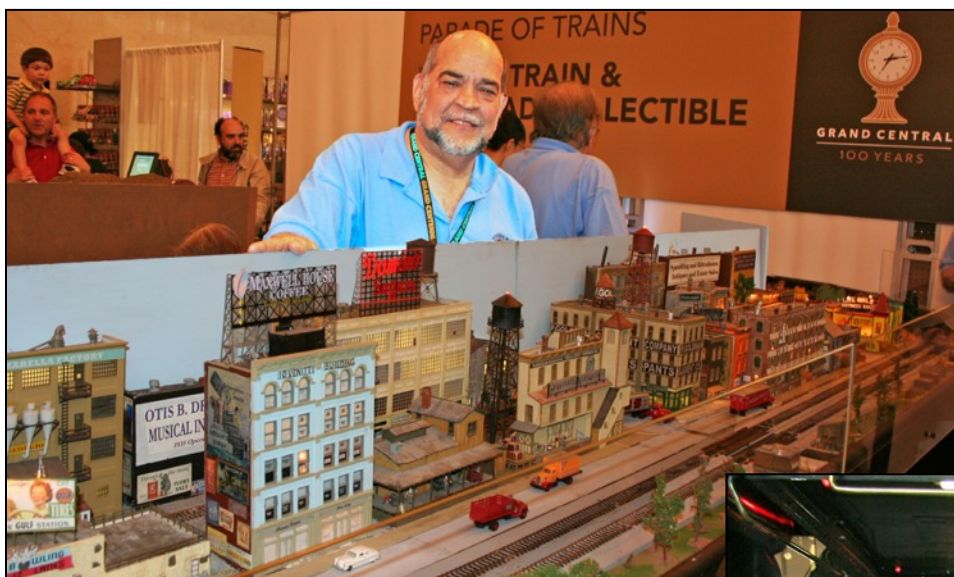
With throngs of humanity crowding the four aisles of the train show, there was hardly room to display much model railroading. Even so, there were three layouts in attendance among the vendor booths.

The Yonkers Model Railroad Club brought a 16x12 foot modular HO layout featuring two ovals of track and urban scenery. Layout builder Dunham Studios showed off two small layouts – one in HO and the other O scale high rail.

Clarke Dunham related how event organizer, MTA, asked him to bring the former “Citibank Station” display for the weekend. He replied that it was not likely since the display now fills a large portion of a building (his roadside attraction called “Railroads on Parade”) in Pottersville, NY, and would require weeks of preparation, a huge crew, and two tractor trailers.

Carstens Publications (*Railroad and Railfan* and *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazines) and Kalmbach Publishing (*Trains* and *Model Railroader*) were on hand to greet visitors. Otto Vondrak, *The Coupler’s* former layout editor was holding court as the Webmaster for Carstens.

Downstairs, it was both daunting and awesome to see so many people interested in trains creating long waits to step inside the historic cars. On the other hand, people in New York City appreciate mass transportation more than most places. When you arrived at Grand Central dictated how long of a wait you might face and how many lines in which those waits would occur. It certainly appeared



NYC/Pullman observation "Tonawanda Valley," right.



Photos by Jeff Paston

NMRA Metro North Division member and Yonkers Model Railroad Club Secretary Tony Siano worked the club's modular display, *above*. Clarke and Barb Dunham hosted visitors at their booth, *below*. Model railroad manufacturer Athearn sponsored 1:1 business car "Tioga Pass," *right*.



that MTA did a great job in managing the Disney-like lines. Many MTA employees volunteered as security and crowd control on their days off.

The MTA had sets of modern Connecticut MU cars staged on one hot platform to provide seating and air conditioning for an hour-plus waiting period. Then people were escorted down one stairway into a mezzanine, through a security checkpoint, and up another stairway to see the "Parade of Trains." An especially nice touch was walking on one of the original 20th Century Limited red carpets, rolled out on the Track 34 & 35 platform for this special occasion.

Most lines took about 20 minutes or so, but the line to see the former NYC 20th Century Limited observation "Hickory Creek" was averaging an hour and a half when we were there — and people still lined up! The memories of yesteryear when the New York Central occupied Grand Central came to life with such restored cars as "Hickory Creek" (1947), Pullman observation "Tonawanda Valley" (1928), NYC lounges 43 (1947) and 448 (1947), and observation "Babbling Brook" (1949).

Cars from other railroad heritage added yet another dimension. CN business car "Tioga Pass" (1959) was sponsored by model railroad manufacturer Athearn. As a model railroader, it was nice to recognize a familiar name, yet unusual to see the Athearn trademark on 1:1 scale. You really had to see the detail on this car — right down to the rivets and handrails!

Also on display were the Milwaukee Road business car "Wisconsin" (1948), L&N/Pullman sleeper-observation "Ohio River" (1926) now owned by the Morristown & Erie Railway, PRR/Pullman sleeper "Kitchi Gammi Club" (1923), CN diner-lounge "Birken" (1954) from the Morristown & Erie roster, PRR baggage car "Dover Harbor" (1923) from the *Broadway Limited*, Southern Pacific's "Overland Trail" (1949) from the *Overland Limited*, UP sleeper "Pacific Sands" (1950), UP and American Orient Express sleeper "Berlin" (1956), B&M sleeper "Salisbury Beach" (1954), Frisco/Pullman sleeper "Cimarron River" (1948), and Milwaukee Road business-lounge "Montana" (1947) from the *Olympian Hiawatha*.

(Continued on page 12)



The *Hickory Creek* backed in on Track 35, *above*. At right, they really did roll out the red carpet — an original 20th Century Ltd. red carpet! *Below*, a look at the crowd and line waiting to view the “Parade of Trains.”

CGT's GRAND CELEBRATION

(Continued from page 11)

On the Track 36 & 37 platform, visitors were treated to more historic cars and some locomotives. Danbury Rail Museum's NYC lightning stripe-painted EMD FL-9 led the consist on Track 37, followed by ex-NYC Metro-North MU coach 1171, Danbury Rail Museum's ex-Metro-North/ex-DL&W RS3M 605, two new Kawasaki MU coaches, and a Metro-North BL-14 GenSet switcher. On Track 36, a CDOT/Metro-North GE Genesis loco led a former NYC coach (1941) remade as a Metro-North inspection car in the 1980s, former DL&W *Phoebe Snow* tavern and lounge cars (1949) also turned into inspection cars by MNR, Danbury Rail Museum's ex-PRR RPO (1910), and the aforementioned “Tonawanda Valley.”

There were two miniature renditions of Grand Central on display — one, a detailed model of the building's front; the other, artist Lothar Osterberg's “Zeppelins in Grand Central,” which defies logical description other than to say it is more art than model of what Osterberg imagined people of a hundred years ago might have thought the “future” would hold in 1984. The artwork was commissioned by the MTA and exhibited in the Transit Museum shop on GCT's lower level.

For modeler and railfan alike, the event was a great source of prototype and historical information, not to mention that it was also an all around good time. Happy 100th, Grand Central! ☒



News and Events

SEACOAST DIVISION

<<http://www.seacoastnmra.org>>

August 3: 10 AM–2 PM, *Summer Meeting* at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, 144 Mill St., Auburn, ME.

May 15–October 18: *North Conway Model Railroad Club Public Open House*, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 10 AM to 4:30 PM; 500 sq. ft. operating HO layout located in the freight house at the Conway Scenic Railroad's yard in North Conway, NH. Admission is free, donations accepted. For more information contact <geebud@roadrunner.com>, or <www.ncmrrc.com>.

LITTLE RHODY DIVISION

<<http://www.trainweb.org/lrddivision>>

Division meetings are held monthly on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30PM at the German American Cultural Society, 78 Carter St. in Pawtucket, RI.

HUDSON BERKSHIRE DIVISION

<<http://www.hudson-berkshire.org>>

September 13 (Friday): Dick Elwell's Hoosac Valley.

HUB DIVISION

<<http://www.hubdiv.org>>

July 21 (Sunday): *Annual HUB Division Cookout* at Waushakum Live Steamers, Holliston, MA. RSVP requested, see the Web site for details.

September 20 (Friday): *HUB Railfun Meeting*, 8 PM, Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA. Our season opener and welcome presented by Railfun staff.

December 7-8: HUB sponsored *New England Model Train Show*, Marlborough, MA. This is one of the region's largest train shows!

GREEN MOUNTAIN DIVISION

<<http://www.greenmountainnmra.com>>

September 21 (Saturday): 2:30 PM, *Division Meeting*, at the home of Lew White.

GARDEN STATE DIVISION

<<http://www.nergds.com>>

July 27 (Saturday): 2:00–6:30 PM, *GSD Summer Meet and 50th Anniversary Celebration*, VFW Hall, 66 Main Street, Sparta, NJ. Guest speakers are Tony Koester, and Atlas Model Railroad Company's Rob Pisani. \$15 pre-registration, \$18 after June 30. Admission includes full dinner, cash bar, model popular vote contest. (Continued on page 13)

NEWS and EVENTS

(Continued from page 12)

Oct 5 (Saturday): 9 AM-Noon, *Division Fall Meet*. Clinics in morning, layout tours in afternoon, Eric S. Smith Middle School, Ramsey, NJ.

CENTRAL NEW YORK DIVISION

<<http://www.cnynmra.org>>

July 27 (Saturday): *CNY Division Picnic and Joint Meet with the NFR Lakeshores Division*, at Finger Lakes Live Steamers, Marengo, NY.

August (date & time TBA), *Train Watching* at Tractor Supply, East Syracuse, NY.

Got a good layout? You could be part of the NMRA's promotion for *National Model Railroad Month*. Please send two layout photos and a 200-word write-up on why you feel you're the "face of model railroading" to <marketing@hq.nmra.org>. Mark the subject "NMRRM Submission." ✕

CORRECTION

Oops! Our apologies to Rich Breton. It was he who took the cover photo for *The Coupler* #249 of Dave Sias' layout, not Dave, as credited.



NEW MEMBERS

COMPILED BY MARK HARLOW, NER Office Manager

As of 5/15/13

QUEBEC

Michael D. Curran

CONNECTICUT

Robin Bengtson
Grant Carstensen
Thomas Hughes
Dennis Jacobs
James Kline
Asa Myers
Chris Rollend
Robyn Rovelte
Richard Sabreen
Alan Varner
Chaz Zygmunt

MASSACHUSETTS

Tom Adamchak
Samuel Blanchard
Jacob Blum
John P. Bonner
Richard A. Breton
Curtis Brothers
Mark Carreiro
Mike Chen
Todd Clayton
Joseph F. Connolly

Tom Constantine
James F. Duncan
David J. Ferreira
Phil Goss
Robert F. Hall
Bruce Hansen
James Hillcoat
Paul Imbeau
Brian C. Johnson
Jeanne E. Kleinknecht
Brian L. Kleinknecht
Wolfgang Klinger
Fred Koschara
Bill Larner
Aron Levy
Arthur N. Mabbett
Stephen Messer
Frank Moore
Alan Munro
Travers Peterson
Christopher Rogers
Martin Rooney
Carl Rychwa
Brian Shaw
James Stolle
Charles S. Tower
Ralph W. Vecchio

Mary Tracey Walsh
Throdore M. Winther

MAINE

Mark Campbell
Matthew de Jongh
Richard Feld
Matthew Trischler

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Ray Bryant
Jeremiah Cahill
Adrian Levesque
David P. Olson

NEW JERSEY

Thomas E. Digby
Carl Fuchs
Martin E. Gray
Walter Johnson
Andrew Plank
David Steggles

NEW YORK

John J. Aufenanger Jr.
Russell G. Ball
Anthony Barrera
Peter Blomstrom

Palmer Bunker
Shawn Clayton
Lloyd Coon
Richard Desir
Robert V. Fey
Peter Galvin
Mark Glickman
William J. Graham
Paul Kilb
Solomon Kuckelman
Mike Lahar
Charles Matthews
Peter Mueller
David W. Nelson
Michael Scholz
Becky Shaw
Audrey Shepard
Ralph Terrell

RHODE ISLAND

Shannon Dekonski

VERMONT

Tony Conner
Todd Summers
Jerome Varrato
Dean Writer

Join the GARDEN STATE DIVISION's 50th Anniversary Celebration!

July 27
2:00-6:30 PM

VFW Hall
66 Main Street
Sparta, NJ

Register at
www.nergds.com

Email:
gsdtrains@yahoo.com



Guest Speakers

Tony Koester

Author & former NMRA Director

Rob Pisani

VP of Product Development,
Atlas Model Railroad Co.

Admission includes
Dinner,
cash bar, and
Popular Vote
Model Contest



50 Years and Counting!

Garden State Division Rolls On

By JOHN DOEHRING
Coupler Editor

Encompassing the relatively compact and densely populated geography of the northern half of New Jersey and Staten Island, the NER's Garden State Division today counts some 250 members on its roles. The Division was founded in 1963, and this year celebrates its 50th anniversary in business. GSD's 2013

president in February. There's a good deal of experience on the board of directors, but there are also many new faces, and a new energy, in the division leadership team.

Compagno shares that GSD has worked hard over the last couple of years to improve the quality of its quarterly meets. In the past, these meets often revolved solely around local model railroad clubs (there are several notable ones in the area),

valuable and appreciated.

Today, most quarterly meets include self-guided layout tours in the afternoon.

Another technique on which the Division has focused is designing clinics to be more *hands on*. Again, members indicate that learning *how to do* is more valuable (and more fun) than simply learning *about*.

Today, the GSD recipe includes clinics in the morning, and tours in the afternoon (participants do lunch on their own). The results have been fantastic – attendance has more than doubled to the 55-70 range. Compagno says the goal is still to draw in 100+, but the group is happy with progress so far.

Despite this success, GSD continues to experiment with improvements in its programs. There's been talk of potentially adding operating sessions to the quarterly meet (or special meet), perhaps using one of the outstanding local model railroad clubs. There's also been a good deal of discussion on how to increase involvement in modeling through participation in the Model Contest and/or the Achievement Program. Expansion of *show and tell*, *bring and brag*, and *'present your model'* activities have all been well received, and represent a growing area of interest. This creates a lot more relaxed and fun atmosphere.

Under new leadership today, the Garden State Division is trying new things, learning what works, and constantly looking for ways to improve the NMRA experience for area modelers. As Compagno says, "yes, we're at work to keep changing and getting better, but always guided by our rule #1: it's a volunteer organization, it's about model railroading, and it needs to be fun."

For 50 years, the GSD has been rolling down the line, providing help, friends, and fun for model railroaders in Northern New Jersey and Staten Island. Still hard at it, today the Division is poised to roll on successfully into its next fifty. ☒



Bruce DeYoung, *left*, receives the 2012 Mallory Award from GSD President
Ciro Compagno for his trio of scratchbuilt HOn3 cars at a recent GSD event.

Summer Meet and 50th Anniversary Celebration will be held on July 27 in Sparta, NJ. Social time and a full dinner will be followed by two outstanding guest speakers – noted author (and NMRA bigwig) Tony Koester, and Rob Pisani, Vice President of Product Development at Atlas Model Railroad Co., Inc. This will be followed by a popular vote model contest planned in the afternoon.

According to Division President Compagno, the work of running, growing, and improving the GSD continues. Involved in leadership since 2006, Compagno was elected

but attendance was normally 20-30 at each. By contrast the New Jersey Division (GSD's neighbor to the south and a part of the MER) routinely gathered typically more than a hundred attendees at their functions. So GSD officers visited and learned more about NJD meets, and got busy learning how to apply some of their strategies.

One idea they uncovered is that a *home layout tour* is a critical piece of the puzzle. Attendees want to see and learn from the work of other model railroaders. Organizing opportunities to do this for members is



WORKIN' ON THE RAILROAD

By GLENN GLASSTETTER



Why Master Model Railroader?

I had actually started this column on another topic last night when I came up with a different idea in the shower this morning. Oddly enough, I come up with a number of good ideas during my morning shower. My mind is usually fresh after a night's rest and after so many years of taking showers, it's kind of like mowing the lawn – I no longer have to think about what I'm doing so my mind is free to contemplate other things. Since I'm so wrapped up in model railroading, that is a topic I often think about.

If I wake up early before my wife Ave gets up at 6:15 AM, I usually head downstairs to work on some model railroading activity. Lately I have been working on the documentation for my Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical Achievement Award. This morning I finally completed the paperwork. In the shower I was reflecting on why I am working toward becoming a Master Model Railroader.

In The Beginning

I acquired my first Achievement Award for Volunteer way back in 1995. I actually started accruing points for that award before I knew about the Achievement Program by holding a director's position in the newly formed Green Mountain Division, and co-chairing the 1993 Burlington NER Convention. The Association Official certificate followed in 1997 after my friend Brian Whiton asked me if I wanted to run as NER vice president when he ran for president. At that time, I started writing a column for *The Coupler*, which along with a few articles in other publications, allowed me to receive enough credits for the Author Award in 2000. (I had to look back in my records for these dates, and I'm now contemplating how all that time flew by with no more activity). My intention after receiving Volunteer was to someday complete enough of the right awards to achieve the Master Model Railroader award. So what have I been doing in the meantime?

Model railroading is a big part of my life, and many of the friends with whom I

spend time are model railroaders as well. While I spend a considerable amount of my time on the hobby, it's not necessarily all devoted to building my railroad. And as I have said here before, I'm not a fast model railroad builder. More importantly, I am really enjoying many of the facets of this great hobby. Actually, I have been working on the requirements for a number of the other Achievement Awards over the years as I build my layout. Just as I acquired enough credits for my first three awards by performing the activities that allowed me to achieve them, I haven't concentrated on other requirements solely to achieve other certificates I need for MMR, but rather as a matter of course in my hobby activities.

Number Four

A while back while Mike Evans, Bob Hamm, Bill Brown and I were visiting Andy Clermont, I overheard Bob and Bill say to Andy that with all he had done on his railroad that he probably had met enough requirements for the Model Railroad Engineer - Electrical Achievement Award. They checked what Andy had done and determined he had indeed met the requirements. All he had to do was document them. When I heard that, I wondered if I too had constructed all of the electrical requirements. After arriving home, a check revealed that I only needed one or two more, plus the documentation. (By the way, Andy has just been qualified as our newest Master Model Railroader. I expect he will be receiving his plaque at the Laconia convention this October).

The Remaining Awards

To achieve the Master Model Railroader award, you need at least seven of the 11 available Achievement Awards, with at least one from each of four categories. The first three awards I received fall under the *Service to the Hobby and NMRA Member* category, one of the four categories. Since my first three are in the same category, if I qualify for Electrical (a different category), I will only need three more, including at least one each from the two remaining categories. Although I only need the three, I am planning to go

for at least five more awards, since I have to do that work to complete my railroad. I'm well on my way to at least the Structures, Scenery, Civil Engineering and Dispatcher awards. The only certificates I am not contemplating pursuing at this point are Motive Power and Prototype Models, since they will subtract time from building my railroad. The one remaining award that I will need is Cars. Since I have not yet scratchbuilt any cars, I will have to concentrate on building at least four and super detailing at least four others to meet the requirements for this award. This will be my only award that will not be tied directly to my other model railroading activities, but instead due to a concentrated effort to attain that certificate.

The Bigger Picture

In the NER, we have two Master Model Railroaders that have acquired all 11 Awards (Larry Cannon and Paul Allard). That is an extraordinary achievement and one which very few attain. I know there are others in the NER who are also working toward Master Model Railroader. If I'm not mistaken, Gerald Abegg from the Hub Division must be getting close since I have seen his name a lot recently in the *NMRA Bulletin* for achieving awards. Kevin Surman of the Hudson Berkshire Division has been blitzing the model contest as of late and is the vice president of his Division. Those two stand out in my mind because I see their names pop up frequently, but I am sure there are others (like Mike Evans and myself) who will meet the requirements over time by performing them in our normal course of enjoying the hobby. Whatever course you take, consider applying for these awards as they will help make you a better model railroader. Check out the Achievement Program on the NMRA Web site at <http://www.nmra.org/education/achievement/>. You might find that you have already met many of the requirements, and you just may learn some things you never knew.

Why Master Model Railroader?

For me it is not necessarily so I can put MMR after my name, but for my own self-satisfaction of completing a formal course of study to achieve a goal and learn some things I might not have learned if I had not challenged myself.

OK, break's over, back to work. ☒



BACKSHOP BITS

This edition of “Backshop Bits” finds us finding a place for our plastic people to worship. What is more iconic in any town than the community church? Every town has at least one, so our model world should too!

This N scale “model” started life as a Christmas ornament offered by *Hallmark* in 2005. You’d be surprised how some of these ornaments can be repurposed for our model railroads. That was exactly the case when this elegant early 20th/late 19th Century church building showed up. It was really too exquisite to pass up!

The conversion was easy. The ornament base was removed; the “snow” on the roof was filed down and covered with “slate” shingles from *Builders in Scale*; and a rectory was added utilizing some *Evergreen* styrene and *Tichy* door and windows. — Jeff Paston



Artist Lothar Osterberg describes his “Zeppelins in Grand Central” as imagining what people of a hundred years ago might have thought the “future” would hold in 1984. The artwork was commissioned by the MTA and exhibited in the Transit Museum shop on GCT’s lower level. In his rendition, Osterberg makes Grand Central a Zeppelin depot.

