

THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 265

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Hobby Manufacturer
Turns 80

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COVER PHOTO

A Providence & Worcester freight inches by a station on Don Irace's HO scale P&W layout. The station was kitbashed by Mike Tylick years ago from Railway Design Associates Buzzard Bay tower parts. Don's layout is one of many to be on tour during this year's NER convention "Rails to the Gilded Age" in Rhode Island. Photo: Don Irace

FROM THE EDITOR . . . By JEFF PASTON

A funny thing happened on the way from the Post Office. Actually, it wasn't so funny! We excitedly printed our first all color magazine just before Christmas. Normally, we could expect delivery around the end of December or very early in January. That's when we discovered that most of our press run was lost by the US Postal Service. (Canada readers weren't affected.)


After waiting a few weeks to see if the *Couplers* would turn up, NER leadership decided to *reprint* those missing copies and mail them again. This time, they were delivered. Now, we need your help in an attempt to get some reimbursement from the USPS. If you indeed received your January issue by the first week in *JANUARY* (or so), please drop us an email <media@cnynrhs.org> with just your name and ZIP code. That's all! This will help determine what areas never got *Couplers* delivered.



Generally speaking, our first color edition came out pretty well. The only real "glitch" was on the *Pacemaker* convention article. The translation to print didn't make the white background behind Artie Krass's article opaque enough (you can see the difference in the PDF version online). My apologies to Artie. I'll be more cognizant of such things next time.

"Next time" is actually this issue! I hope you receive this in a timely fashion and the color features continue to "wow" our readers. I've already had a few very nice comments emailed regarding the color upgrade.

This issue features a lot of layout photos. We bring you a preview of some exciting layouts that will be on tour during the 2017 NER convention. We also show you some really neat vignettes on a number of layouts across the NER that really do bring the model world alive.

And don't miss Mike Tylick's fascinating visit on page 14 to a longtime NER manufacturer celebrating its 80th year. 



www.nernmra.org

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OPEN DOEHR By JOHN DOEHRING NER President

Gold-Gilded Returns on NMRAMembership

Would you like to squeeze much more enjoyment out of your NMRA membership this year? To start, I hope you are regularly participating in local division activities (meetings, clinics, meets, layout visits, operating sessions, and train shows). This is your best path to connecting with other modelers, sharing ideas, learning skills, and making new friends. And I trust you're also reading *NMRA Magazine*, our *Coupler* magazine, and various division publications for additional ideas and inspiration along the way.

Now, here's an important secret for raising your NMRA value much higher: *attend the NER's convention this fall*. This November, we're meeting in Newport, Rhode Island, for *Tracks to the Gilded Age* hosted by the Little Rhody Division.

Today about 15 percent of our members attend the convention, and while that's a big group, it's not (in my opinion) big enough. Having participated now in the last five of these events, I can't imagine why anyone would miss it.

I'm familiar with the common reasons why some don't attend (primarily time, distance, and cost). And of course, these are real constraints for some. But for many others, I suspect the real issue is *trust*. (Are we telling the truth? Will the investment, time away from home, and experience really be worth it?)

But, oh, how much fun it is! I've learned from real experts in scores of great clinics. I've visited numerous inspiring home layouts, and operated on several of these magnificent pikes. There are usually great tourist train rides, and prototype tours you can't visit on your own. Additionally (of


course), you get a banquet and awards ceremony with friends, an amazing model celebration room, a brief NER annual meeting, and a chance to win a raffle – or to pick up bargains from a white elephant table, train show, or from nearby local hobby shops.

Newport is a great destination – a perfect long weekend getaway for you and your spouse (or the whole family). The Doeblings visited two years ago for a walk along the seaside cliffs, and visits to several of the gilded age mansions of the Vanderbilts and others. Add in a gaggle of great restaurants, bars, museums, and shops, and you're in for an amazing weekend of priceless memories.

Too much money? Not really. Drop your costs a bunch by pairing up with a buddy to share the ride and hotel room. Event registration costs are usually pretty modest (and I think worth it given the large variety of participation options).

I want you to think about this *seriously*, because I want you to come to Newport this fall. We'll have at least a couple of hundred railroad modelers there, but we want more. In just a few years, this annual gathering should have 300-400 attending. (That will be a game changer: more people, more ideas, more sharing, more learning, more options – more fun!)

We've got a big vision for the future of the NER, but it all begins with just one person: you. After all, aren't you a railroad-owning, empire building, gilded-age robber baron yourself (even if it's still mostly locked up in your head – rather than built out in the basement)?

Come make it happen with us this year in Newport! I'll see you there. 



Award Remembers Shoneman

The HUB Division and the NER lost a friend last May when Keith Shoneman passed away after a battle with cancer. Keith was a former NER Secretary and very active in the NMRA, but he was probably best known for his operating sessions on his beloved Pennsylvania and New England Railroad. While this was a fictional Class 1 railroad connecting the state of his youth with his adult home, it was run with prototypical fidelity. His railroad ran trains to easily recognizable locations, which thrilled his guests at the countless operating sessions he hosted to welcome operators, ranging from first timers to folks with national acclaim.

It was this dedication to prototypical



Keith Shoneman

operations that led the HUB Division to create an award in Keith's honor. The Keith Shoneman Award will be presented by the HUB Division at the NER Region Convention each year to an active member of the NER who has done an exemplary job in promoting prototypical operations.

If you know of someone that has worked to promote operations in the NER, we would like to hear from you. You can submit your nominations <info@hubdiv.org>. Please include the nominee's name, address and contact details, along with a few paragraphs explaining why you believe that individual should be honored at the Newport Convention. – Dave Insley

THE COUPLER Deadlines

MAY 20 – July-Sept. issue

AUGUST 19 – Oct-Dec issue

NOVEMBER 18 – Jan-March issue

CONVENTIONS

July 30-Aug. 5: NMRA 2017 Convention – *Orange Blossom Special*; Orlando, FL. <nmra2017orlando.org/>

October 12-15: MER Convention – *The Susquehannock*; Harrisburg, PA <www.mer2017.org/>

November 9-12: NER Convention – *Rails to the Gilded Age*; Newport, RI <www.newport2017.org>

September 16-18, 2018: NER Convention – *The Erie Limited 2018*; Mahwah, NJ

MEETS

April 29: Sunrise Trail Division *Spring Meet*; Baldwin, NY; 10-4. Contact Steve Perry at <seperry@optonline.net><sunrisetraildiv.com>

June 2-3: New England/Northeast Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet; Enfield, CT <nerpm.org>

OPS OPPTS

April 1: Central NY Division *Ops 'til You Drop weekend*; Utica and Syracuse NY

April 21-23: Sunrise Trail Division *Island Ops 2017* <http://islandops.org>

Email 'Newsletter' Modeling Tips Wanted

The NER is renewing its focus on its email distributions and moving to a monthly email 'newsletter.' As part of that monthly email blast, we would like to include a modeling tip.

If you have a good tip that can be presented with a picture and around 50 words of text, we want to hear from you! Please send your tip to <email@nermra.org>.

If you are not getting regular emails from the NER, please let us know you are interested by going to the Web site and clicking the link to subscribe to the emails. This is based on NMRA registration information, so please make sure it is up to date and has your preferred email. You can always opt-out from getting emails by clicking the link at the bottom of each message that is sent.

We hope you enjoy these news 'blasts' from the NER and we welcome your suggestions. — Dave Insley

Bob Dennis Named NER VP

The NER Board has named Bob Dennis to fill the vice president vacancy. Bob joined the NMRA in 2009. In 2012, he was elected a director of the Garden State Division, then treasurer in 2013, and president in 2014.

In his spare time, Bob models a freelance version of the



Bob Dennis

New York Central in HO. With the help of friends, his garage layout is operational with 45 percent of the scenery completed.

Coupler Needs Your Help

The US Postal Service apparently lost most of our press run of the January *Coupler*. We ended up reprinting the issue and re-mailing it! To assist us in making a claim, if you did indeed receive your January issue on or before the first week of *JANUARY*, please let us know by emailing only your name and ZIP code to <media@cnyrnhs.org>. Thank you for your help. – Jeff Paston

NER Attracts Attention at Amherst Show

The NER once again took part in the annual Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show in West Springfield, MA. January 28 and 29. NER President John Doehring and I thank the Society for giving us space in the main building close to the center of the hall. We would also like to thank all those who volunteered their time to help staff our booth. A special thanks goes to Jim Rizzolo,

who worked the booth for the two days and was successful in getting a number of new members to join, and some old members to re-join.

Held in four buildings at the Eastern States Exposition grounds, the show had more than 430 exhibitors, including the NER. The attendance was 23,291, of which 19,541 came through the gate! – Bob Dennis

NEW MEMBERS

Compiled By **MARK HARLOW**
NER Office Manager

As of 3/1/17

QUEBEC

BV Rail

Geoffrey Meyer

NOVA SCOTIA

C. Keith Lampier

CONNECTICUT

Michele Andre

Nathan Andre
William P. Farrel
Van Gould

MASSACHUSETTS

Michael Damara

James Emerson

David MacLead

Tom Moram

Logan Murphy

Austin Sa

Richard Stanton

Roland Tyler

Michael Wheeler

MAINE

George S. Carhart

Goodwin Stuart

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Bob Kotsonis

NEW YORK

Donald Ackley-Perot

Ken Bianco

Clinton Bogart

Richard S. Carmichael

Brian J. Dermody

Hael Fisher

Colin Fitzgerald

Aiden Flynn

Jacob Flynn

Michael Flynn

Frank Goodman

Rob Gould

Carl Heiner

Dave Henderson

RB Johnson

Douglas Jones

Arthur R. Little

SJ Rhoads Goodman

Mario Saldana

Donald R. Thorn

Victor Vartanian

Jerry Vessichio

RHODE ISLAND

David Smith

VERMONT

Bill Badger

Leo Greany

NER Convention Layouts

Riding the 'Rails to the Gilded Age'

NOV
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THURSDAY



Providence Northern RS11 1802 awaits clearance at Gardner, MA, on the Providence and Northern Model Railroad Club's HO layout. The locomotive was custom painted by John Breitmaier.

Photo: Ray Schofield

By **MIKE TYLICK**
Contributing Editor

You've heard of destination weddings; well, the Little Rhody Division is hosting a destination convention! "Rails to the Gilded Age," the 2017 Northeastern Region convention, will be held in Newport, Rhode Island. If they can pull you away from an extensive list of non-rail and prototype tours, expect to find the usual compliment of railroad hobby activities. Among them are a number of fine quality layouts that will be open for visits – some will be available for operating sessions. Rhode Island is little, so most of the Gilded Age layouts are quite close to each other.

Thanks to Ray Schofield and his springtime "Free Layout Tours," I have had the good fortune visit these quality model railroads, meet their owners, and even operate on a few. There will be many others available for the convention, but here is a preview of a few of my favorites.

PROVIDENCE NORTHERN

Founded in 1994, the Providence



Northern began as a hobbyist club in Providence, RI. Over the next 12 years, the club designed and built the largest HO scale model railroad in southern New England on Hathaway Street in Providence. Because of rising costs at that location, the PN moved to the old Warwick Grange Building in 2006.

The layout was redesigned for the new space, incorporating lessons learned from the first location. The Providence Northern Railroad is based on the New England area in 1885. The fictitious line runs north from

Providence, RI, through Vermont and on to Montreal. The PN is 35 feet by 60 feet with a 400 foot double track mainline, a separate single track branch line, and supported by many staging yards. The mainline and branch line are operational with yards, scenery, and a computer-based signal system in various stages of completion. The club uses an NCE DCC control system.

WESTERN MARYLAND

Owned and operated by Tony Donatelli, the Tygart Valley Division is an HO scale prototype-based freelance division of the Western Maryland Railway. It operates as a north-south bridge line through the Tygart River Valley south of Elkins, WV.

The double decked layout is set in the mid 1950s and is operated point-to-point during operating sessions. Its mainline is 95 percent complete; the spectacular scenery is 65 percent complete. The layout is powered by NCE DCC with computerized dispatcher control utilizing Panel Pro and features coal mines, industries, local switching and interchange, as well as some passenger



Southbridge Street yard is the main hub of the prototype Providence & Worcester. Don Irace has done a credible job of replicating the full size version. Built from a Railway Design Associates kit, the yard office is a close copy of the original. It was the company's main office when the railroad first broke away from the Penn Central in 1970. The P&W really does paint highway bridges with this neat design.

service. When visiting Tony's layout, you'll take a trip to Appalachia while you are in Little Rhody!

PROVIDENCE & WORCESTER

Don Irace's P&WRR is a fictitious line between Worcester MA, and Queens NY. It models the Providence & Worcester Railroad as a regional freight carrier with trackage rights on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor.

Commodities "carried" on Don's line include paper goods, coal, stone, plastic resins, produce, lumber, grain, cement, chemicals, general merchandise and scrap metals. Interchanges are made with CSX Transportation, Sea View Transportation – a Davisville, RI, short line, the New England Central Railroad in Connecticut, and the Guilford Rail System in Gardner MA. The 42' x 25' double decked HO scale railroad is controlled by two dispatchers using computerized CTC (Centralized Traffic Control). One dispatcher is on site, the second office is located in Georgia, and is connected via the Internet during operating sessions.



Eastbound train AT-5 crosses the Glenrock High trestle with Bailey Creek in the foreground on Tony Donatelli's Western Maryland – Tygart Valley Division.

Several years ago, about a third of the railroad was demolished and redesigned. Now, the improved scenery and structures are mostly completed.

QUEBEC & NEW ENGLAND

Jim Reddington's Quebec & New England Railroad represents a freelanced rail line running easterly from Hopewell Junction, NY, (trackage rights westerly on the NYNH&H /Penn Central provide access to Maybrook Yard). It continues easterly through northwestern Connecticut to the Springfield-Chicopee, MA, area, then north to St. Johnsbury, VT. The era modeled is around 1969 to 1980.

The modeled portion begins at Chicopee yard, where hidden staging represents the Litchfield Division to the west and where connections are made with NH, PC, and B&M. Q&NE maintains an engine terminal there, but all Chicopee switching is actually handled by a subsidiary road, Berkshire Terminal. The single track mainline continues north to St. Johnsbury, VT, where interchange is made with both CPR and Maine Central. Portions of both of those lines are modeled.

This HO scale layout has about 85

percent of trackage in place, and has about 35 percent of scenery complete. Track is mostly code 83; turnouts are controlled by Tortoise machines. NCE DCC is in use. Most of the diesel locomotives are sound equipped. Except for a stairway area and HVAC unit, the layout occupies a 26' x 44' basement.

NEW ENGLAND AND WESTERN

Bill Robertson operates a freelance HO scale railroad which models New England prototypes of the steam era. His whole basement is filled with numerous interesting line side structures suitable for that period. The layout is operated by NCE DCC system

(Continued on next page)

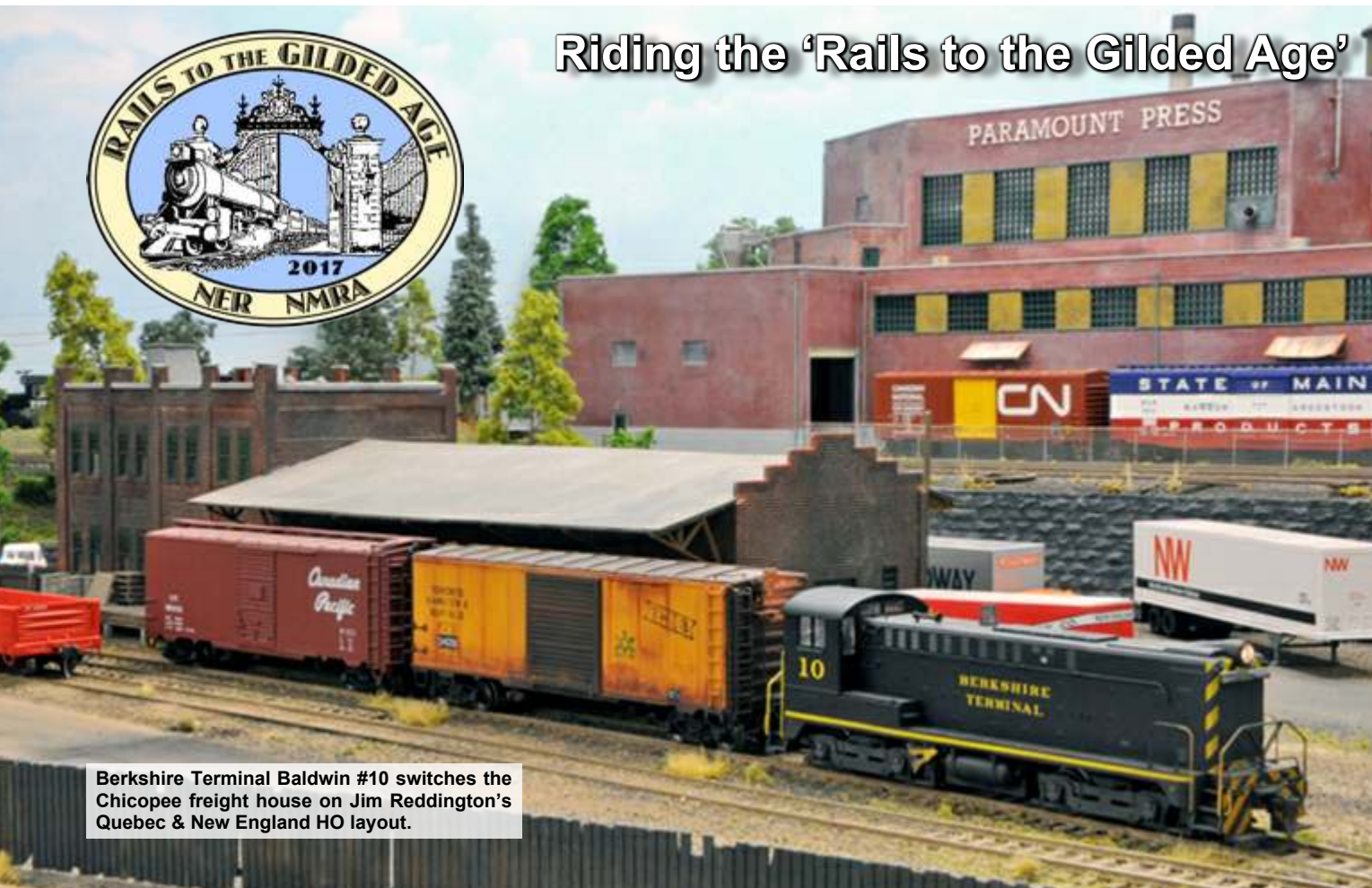


Photo courtesy: layoutour.com

The cityscape on Marshall Sommer's HO Rhode Haven line.



Riding the 'Rails to the Gilded Age'



Berkshire Terminal Baldwin #10 switches the Chicopee freight house on Jim Reddington's Quebec & New England HO layout.

Photo courtesy: layouttour.com

(Continued from page 5)

control with sound. The layout features car card freight operation. Scenery is about 90 percent completed with some very interesting scenes depicting life in the early to mid-part of the 20th century.

The layout was featured in Lou Sassi

photographs in the July 2013 *Model Railroader* magazine.

RHODE HAVEN

The Rhode Haven Railroad of Marshall Sommer fills most of the basement of a large townhouse. This freelanced HO scale line is set in the 1930s and 1940s using New Haven power. The railroad features many craftsman

kits, as well as kit-bashed and scratch-built structures.

The layout resides in two finished rooms – one contains an extensive city and yard; the other depicts a smaller town and countryside. Recently, Marshall expanded the railroad into a third room. A harbor peninsula is now complete and features a large waterfront area with many structures, boats, and a branch line. The extension has increased the mainline run and eliminated a duck under, also making space for more of Marshall's craftsman and scratch built structures. Scenery is virtually complete.

Marshall was fortunate to have Lou Sassi photograph the layout for the February 2010 *Model Railroader*. The layout is also featured in a *Model Railroad Masters* DVD by FOS Scale Models.

More information on the 2017 convention is at <www.newport2017.org>. The registration form will be in the next issue of *The Coupler*.

I would like to thank Ray Schofield for allowing me to paraphrase his background information and permission to use his photographs for this article. I'd like to also thank Doug Scott for the use of his photographs from our touring trips, the owner s of these fine layouts, and Jimmy Deignan, site manager of <layouttour.com>.



Photo courtesy: layouttour.com

A New England & Western freight skirts an industrial area on Bill Robertson's HO layout.



Al Oneto is getting to permission to pull his train out of the yard at one of the many operating sessions held at a recent Region convention.

What's in a Convention?

By DAVE INSLEY
NER Convention Chair

Have you ever been to an NER convention? If not, we would like to hear from you! Is it too much time away from work or the family? Too far to travel? Not in the annual budget? If you have been to a convention, then what is it that you enjoy? What would you like to see changed?

I personally have enjoyed going to most conventions recently with my wife and parents and it has been a fantastic way to strengthen my connection with my father and our shared passion for trains, both models and prototype. We have enjoyed countless clinics, from traditional presentations to hands on make-and-take sessions, and everything in between. We have had the opportunity to operate together on several different layouts, and we have gone on some fascinating industry tours. Each year, we look forward to planning what we will do, which clinics we want to attend, the tours that are interesting, and we try to sign up early to get an operating session or two.

“...If we all had so much fun, then why weren't more of us there?”

The Region now has a renewed focus on conventions after not having one in 2015. Luckily, we were able to join the Mid Eastern Region at its convention in Mt Laurel, NJ, but it was not the same. The Hudson Berkshire Division did a super job getting us back on

track by hosting a fabulous event filled with lots of great clinics, several different prototype tours, and a whole lot of world class layouts to visit and operate on. It was truly a fantastic event capped off with a lot of fellowship at the banquet.


NER President John Doehring climbed onto a chair and asked how much fun everyone had that weekend. And, if we all had so much fun, then why weren't more of us there? he questioned. In fact, we had 200 participants in Albany. It's not a bad number, but we do have more than 1,500 members in the NER.

So, I go back to my question at the beginning of this article. If you did not attend, then why not? What would entice you to come to an NER convention? We really do want to hear from you.

The NER has a lot to offer and I think conventions are an extraordinary value when you consider that offering. The NER is home to some world renowned modelers and world class model railroads. NER is home to some leaders in model railroad manufacturing, and we also have plenty of tourist railroads. We are truly blessed with a ton of high quality railroad related people, places, and things. We are working hard to bring them to you in our annual celebrations of all that is good in the Northeastern Region.

We are fortunate now to be planning two upcoming conventions. We will be the guests of the Little Rhody Division in

2017 when they host the next NER convention in Newport, Rhode Island. Stay tuned in for the registration package and details. The following year will bring us to New Jersey, where the Garden State Division will team up with the Hudson Valley Division to host the 2018 convention in Mahwah, NJ.

So, what do you say? Will you join us in Newport and Mahwah? Let us know your thoughts. What would you like to see changed? What should stay the same? Where do you want to see the conventions held in 2019 and 2020? Our goal on the Convention Committee is to continue to bring quality events to the members of the NER. With renewed focus, we want to bring these great events to more of you. 



Participants at the 2016 *Pacemaker* convention photograph an Amtrak locomotive during tour of the Amtrak facility in Rensselaer, NY.

The Devil is in the Detail!

Scenes that Make Layouts Come Alive



Lou McIntyre's *Hampton & St. Martins Rwy.*

By JEFF PASTON
Coupler Editor

At St. Peter's Church on Lou McIntyre's *Hampton & St. Martins Railway*, there's a flurry of activity as HO scale workers heed the advice offered here, "Repaint and Be Saved!" Part of the fun of model railroading are the vignettes played out on our layouts that often include inside jokes and tongue-in-cheek names.

But, there are also those snippets of everyday life "hidden" within these miniature worlds. Roofs need to be repaired; neighbors stop to talk with one another; people shop for supplies; and teams meet to play games. We model prototype railroads, so why not the various activities that take place alongside of them? Here are some details spotted on NER layouts that might just give you some ideas for your own work.

At every turn on Kip Grant's Delaware & Hudson *Sunnyvale Branch*, workers and residents are going about their everyday chores. At LeFevre Lumber in Jasperdale, lumber is being loaded into a Chevy Nomad station wagon. Meanwhile, a few miles away in Sunnyvale, trash collectors make their morning rounds in a truck Kip kitbashed.

Our plastic folk are not as plastic as we thought when it comes to saying hello, or exchanging pleasantries along a country road.



Kip Grant



D&H *Sunnyvale Branch* by Kip Grant

That's the case on Kevin Surman's *New York & Long Branch*. In a back alley, the owner of The Cobbler Shop shoe repair greets a neighbor. Note the cat and empty soda bottles on the makeshift table. Over on Andy Clermont's *Ogdensburg & Lake Champlain* subdivision of the Rutland Railroad, local farmers stop to talk near a grade crossing; one with a truckload of hay bales for shipment.

In another scene on Andy's layout (top

photo, page 9), a farm hand is pitching hay to his cows beyond that barbed wire fence. If anyone wants to help, you'll find two more pitchforks available.

At Grey Signs, they're working well into



Modeling by Kevin Surman



Andy Clermont's *Rutland sub*

Top photo and two at left: Jeff Paston



Andy Clermont's Rutland sub

the evening to meet demand. Business is obviously good in this scene on a module displayed at last year's St. John, NB, *Port City Rails Train Show*.

The Titus Bakery is getting a new roof as can be seen by this hard-working crew at the downtown business. It's happening on Lou McIntyre's *Hampton & St. Martins Railway*. Studying the activity, you'll spot ladders at the ready, a worker carrying buckets of roofing tar; and other workers sweeping away debris in preparation for laying down tar.

On *page 10*, Steve McMullin has modeled the ubiquitous yard sale on his Carleton Railway (feature story in *The Coupler* #263). It is so common a scene, yet how many of us

(Continued on next page)



Lou McIntyre's Hampton & St. Martins Rwy.

Scenes that Make Layouts Come Alive



Street scene on Steve McMullin's *Carleton Rwy.*



Construction on Bob Boyce's layout



Rich Smith's *City of Wauwatoga*

Photos this page: Jeff Paston

(Continued from page 9)

actually modeled it? Steve's yard sale has all sorts of household stuff from carpets to furniture to appliances!

Another rarely modeled scene involves construction of a new highway overpass. Bob Boyce captured the detail of workers building wooden forms in preparation for a concrete pour from the truck at left. It takes place on his *CPR McAdam Sub and CNR Sussex Sub* layout depicting the area around St. John, NB.

There is a lot of activity and detail in front of the local movie house on Rich Smith's Milwaukee Road-themed *City of Wauwatoga* layout. Most notably, a worker is fixing the marquee. He's apparently spilled some stuff on the pavement beneath the ladder. In front of the adjacent store, a woman sweeps the pavement as empty soda bottles pile up for retrieval. Then, there's a couple probably hoping to do business nearby as he's carrying a sales case and she's fumbling with her purse.

Finally, an unusual scene I've actually seen modeled at least one or two other times. This one was at the St. John Train Show during the *Port City Rails* convention last year. Make no bones about it, you have a pretty good idea of what's going on at the "Fundy Geological Museum" archaeological site.

So, as you can see, the "Devil is in the details." These tiny model snippets really do add to the whole presentation we make on our layouts, and each one has a story to tell.





Using Forced Perspective to 'Fool' the Eye

2

By AL SOHL MMR
Photos by the Author

On our O scale (narrow gauge, circa 1939) railroad, we – like most model railroaders in the hobby – are always craving for more layout room. Even though we have a 950 SF area to build this rather sizable layout, we (myself and the great bunch of guys who show up Tuesday nights to assist using their amazing skills) are still trying to make it appear like the open vastness of the Colorado and New Mexico landscape in which the Denver & Rio Grande Western and the Rio Grande Southern built their empires in the late 19th and early 20th century.

There are a number of simple tricks and techniques we use to fool the visitors eye into thinking there is more distance in what they see. In our scale, O, it is especially hard to find many actual scale (1/48) figures or vehicles. Most are 1/43rd or 1/50th size. This is not as severe in the case of scale figures.

Photo #1 shows an O scale vernier and an unpainted figure with a scale height of over 6' 6"! Next to him are three other "scale" figures that should never be posed close to each other on a layout. We take advantage of this disparity. In Photo #3, I modeled a fallen tree near the edge of the layout (almost crashing onto an outhouse), by adding two of the larger (1/43) scale figures which stand there telling the "story" and the figures further away from the edge of the layout are a true 1/48 scale size, but the eye is fooled by forced perspective. Same with Photo #2. The figures posed at the front of the platform



1

are larger than the figures standing back by the building. The eye is once again tricked into believing what "just isn't so!"

The discrepancy in available vehicles is used to my advantage in photo #4. The 16th Street Bridge I built spanning over our Denver yard is normally viewed from the aisle. Here I placed two 1/43rd vehicles closest to the viewer where as the next auto is indeed 1/48th scale. I planted the 1/50th scale bus about midway, and toward the back end are two 1/64th scale trucks.

I like to use different scale animals to fool the viewer's eye in a few areas as well. For example, I used HO scale deer for a scene near the base of a mountain and N scale deer (and a bear) higher up to portray them as twice the distance than the ones nearest the viewer.

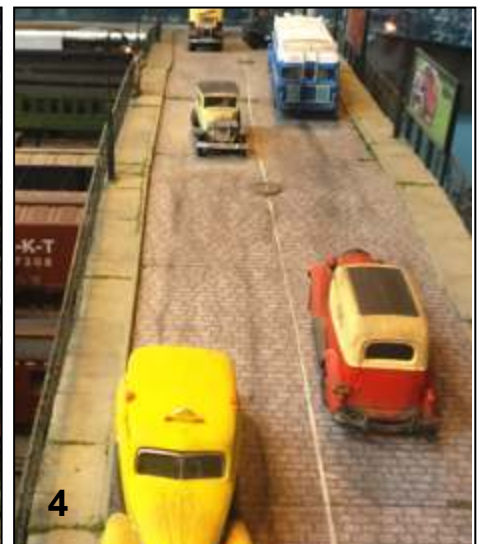
What may seem like a bit more work than placing scale figures, animals, or vehicles in a scene is worth the extra effort. I used the same techniques of reducing scale in creating a bucket cableway servicing a mine, which itself includes structures of differing scales.

We think that when visitors (and our 'regulars' at our monthly Saturday op sessions) look at any or all of these scenes on our Port Saint Lucie, FL, Western Bay Railroad get the feeling that there is some real "distance" thanks to our 'forcing the perspective!' 🚂

Al Sohl is a former NER member who relocated to the warmer climate of Florida.



3



4

Lakeshores Division

Say Hello to Our Newest Division

By RICH WAGNER

Greetings to our new neighbors in the Northeastern Region! In February, the NMRA Board approved transfer of the Lakeshores Division from the Niagara Frontier Region to the NER. The LSD has about 95 members, 17 of whom are lifetime. It consists of 11 counties in western New York State, which originally formed the core of the Niagara Frontier Region when it was formed in 1947. The NFR's original boundary was a 150 mile radius from Rochester, NY. The Division was formed on March 4, 1962, and defined then as Rochester and the surrounding area of the Finger Lakes region, hence the name "Lakeshores" Division.

Founding members of the Division were Harold Russell Sr. and his son, model railroad author Harold Russell Jr., the late Fran Brown, Ed VanLeer, and Henry O'Meara; and Bob Achilles, and Bob Gullo, both still members. Ed VanLeer served as NMRA president from 1951 to 1952. The LSD was home to three past NFR presidents (Ed VanLeer, Mike Pyczeck, and Rich Wagner). Rochester hosted the NMRA national convention in 1942 presided over by NMRA Vice President Hugh Jack. It was at this convention that the regional format for the NMRA was approved. The LSD hosted an NFR convention in 1957; a tri-regional (NFR, NER, and MER) in 1987; and NFR conventions in 1995 ("Lake City Flyer"); 2007 ("Flower City Flyer"); and 2015 ("Mortimer Junction").

Division members who attained Master Model Railroader (MMR) status include Ed VanLeer (#2) Harold Russell Jr. (#14), Ned Spiller (#343), and Dick Senges (#483). VanLeer's Best in Show steam locomotive is displayed at the NMRA's Howell Day Museum in Sacramento, and the remainder of his collection resides at the New York Museum of Transportation in Rush, NY. Russell has somewhere around 1,000 published plans in the model railroad press, and helped with a Division-published book on local depots, coal facilities, and other structure plans. A few of his plans have been made into model kits.

Over the years, the Division has sponsored tours to the Erie Railroad's shops in Hornell, NY, and again in the 1990s when Alstrom took over ownership; a tour of the former Lehigh Valley and Finger Lakes Railway Geneva, NY, station; Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum in Rush, NY, adjacent to the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad; and the Medina (NY) Railroad Museum.

Back at that first meeting forming the Division in 1962, it was decided to have two "meets" a year. Those meets generally were daylong events that included clinics and popular choice model and

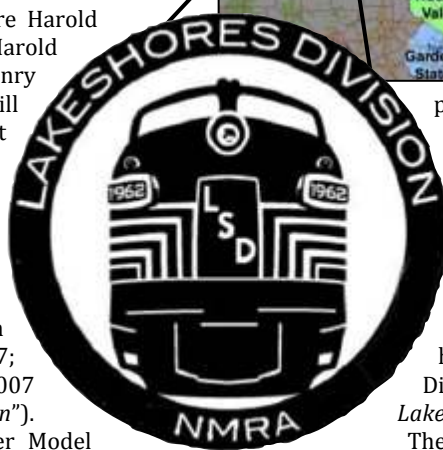


photo contests in the morning and several layout visits in the afternoon. In recent years, the Division added summer picnics at such locations as the Finger Lakes Live Steamers property near Waterloo (NY), the Medina Museum, and the NY Museum of Transportation; and a winter meet or operating session to get membership together a bit more often. A few such meets have been held jointly with the adjacent Central New York Division. The LSD puts out a newsletter, "The Lake Shores Limited," about six times a year.

There were a number of reasons motivating the LSD's transfer to the NER, including increasingly difficult border crossings due to increased security, and distances to NFR events across Lake Ontario in Canada. So for the past two years, the Division pursued the transfer, which now comes to fruition. 🚂



A Lakeshores Division clinic conducted by Dave Mitchell several years ago.



Photos this page: Ray Howard



Above, Dave Mitchell and Ned Spiller with the Division's "Modeler's Corner" at a recent Rochester Institute of Technology-sponsored "Tiger Tracks" Train Show. At last year's Division meet, left, John Becker, Jeff Faust, and Dave Tyson show off T-track modules they made.

Adapting to the Layout's New Location

By JEFF HANKE

If you have to move your layout like I did, the first rule is not to throw anything away. Keep every section, bracket, scrap piece of wood and foam that you can. Think of the layout sections in terms of time invested. Think of the raw materials as money you have already spent. By reusing as much as possible, you save time and money setting up the layout in the new location. And



if you are like me, your family really appreciates you spending your hard earned dollars on them or other house projects and not the layout.

Since no two layout rooms are identical, the new space will bring on needs to modify or tweak existing sections. This was the case for the west end of Hancock Yard on my Chessie System: East End. Since the longest usable wall in the old house was 13 feet long, the original Hancock Yard was built in three sections, bent 90 degrees in the middle. The new Hancock Yard in my current home, is



along a 20 foot wall and has allowed for the yard to be straightened out as on the prototype. To adapt to this new space, I removed the entire west end yard section and removed the curved track in the middle section. I then made a new west end of the yard (from a generic benchwork section that

had only bare foam on it from the old layout).

This simple modification, allowed 75 percent of the original Hancock trackwork to be used as is and got the Hancock section up and running at the new house in a matter of weeks. However, I also found that I could recycle the original Hancock west yard section, and repurposed it as my rendition of Miller Yard. That reuse saved almost all of the other 25 percent of the original Hancock Yard.

The repurposed section was easily adapted. I stripped off all of the curved parts of track and kept the yard throat. The ladder entrance to the yard is the expensive part of the track with four turnouts. Each track also already had a feeder drop to the main wire bus under the foam, so I saved all of that work too.

The section was one of the first I ever built and was built on bare pink foam. The starkness of the pink color really ruins the believability of a scene under construction. Today, I paint the foam dark grey prior to laying the track on it. This makes for a much better looking area around the tracks. The photo here clearly shows the areas from the original with pink under the ties and the new areas with gray.

As part of my rule never to throw away anything, the original Harpers Ferry area was sculpted in the old layout with a nonprototypical curve in the tunnel. The new Harpers Ferry plan is completely different, with a prototypically straight bore and will require all new benchwork. I harvested the foam from the old section and used it to make the hills at Miller. Even what most would have considered scrap was repurposed, saving money for other projects.

NATURE HAS FREE GROUND COVER

Once a section of track is ready for scenery, I look to mother nature to save my wallet. I really like Woodland Scenics and other products, but they are expensive. Doing my large layout with commercial products would require getting another mortgage.

To save money on ground cover, I have a couple of tricks. The first one is to sweep the garage. Yes, sweep the garage. It is unbelievable how much fine dirt collects in your garage. Once swept up, all of that fine

dirt that we put on the roads during our Connecticut winters makes for perfect ground cover. Also, I get bonus points since my wife appreciates the cleanliness.

Another good spot is under wicker door mats. These mats do a great job naturally filtering out the large bits and leave just the finest dirt underneath them. I sweep up this fine dirt and put it in gallon zip bags for use later. Don't worry if there is any extra



debris mixed in with the dirt. It will be put on later through a tea strainer and only the dirt will get on the layout.

Another trick is stone dust. Your local paver supply store will have what they call stone dust for the lowest layer of a paver sidewalk or deck. This dust is absolutely perfect for use as gravel areas. It is too fine for ballast, but great for gravel roads, driveways, etc. I put in a paver sidewalk at our old house and was left with several gallons of the stuff when the job was done. Also, by using the tea strainer to put it on the layout, the remaining small rocks in the strainer make great bottom detail for ditches, lakes, and gulleys.

look forward to sharing more on the new East End going forward, but until then... Keep on workin'.

MADE IN THE NER

OK Steamliners Celebrates 80 Years

By MIKE TYLICK
Contributing Editor

Unlike many of the northeastern hobby manufacturers I have written about, OK Streamliners is not a recent startup. The company traces its heritage back to 1929, when Charles Brebeck and Harry Bliss formed the Interstate Bearing Company in Herkimer,



Charles Brebeck Jr. showing the OK Streamliners line at a train show.

NY, a rebuilder of automobile and truck parts. Years later, Charles' son brought a friend's model car engine in for repair. Charles became intrigued by the small engine and rebuilt it many times. Model engines were quite popular at the time, so Charles bought out Bliss and with his son and lawyer as officers incorporated the Herkimer Tool & Model Works in 1937 to build small engines for model airplanes. Why the name "OK"? If a product was "OK," it passed all tests, which became a catchy and easy name to remember.

With World War II just around the corner,

model production ceased in favor of war production of small gasoline engines until the end of hostilities. Soon afterwards, OK Engines acquired an international name and market for its products. Ninety miles west in Rochester, NY, another business was also becoming a success. Kasiner Hobbies quickly grew from a dealer to a distributor and manufacturer. By 1948, nine O scale and eight HO scale streamlined passenger cars were available.



Charles Brebeck Sr.

ing HO and O scale products, the line became known as "OK Streamliners."

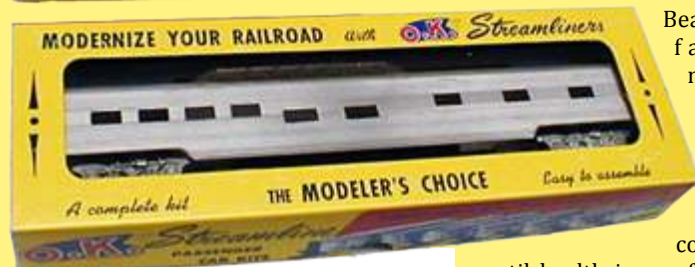
During the heyday of roadside attractions in the 1950s, Herkimer Tool sponsored an "OK" model railroad layout at Santa's Workshop in Lake Placid, New York.

For many years, "Herky the Bear" was a familiar mascot for both the aircraft

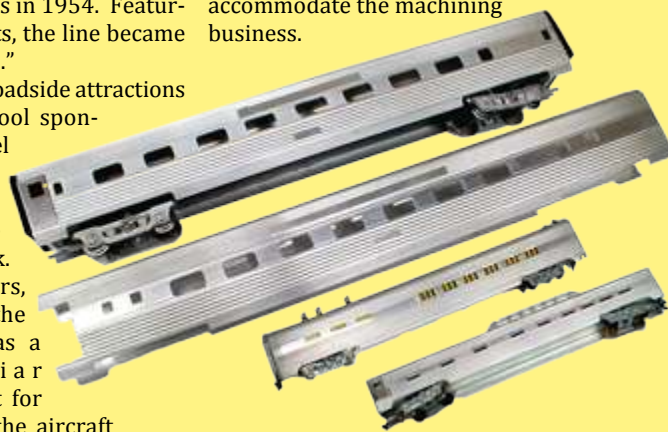
engine and streamlined passenger car divisions.

Charles Junior continued the business until health issues forced his retirement in 1975. He sold Herkimer Tool to F. Ellis Greene,

who kept the OK Streamliner line, while Charles Junior retained the airplane engine business as "OK Engines." Greene sold the passenger cars for the next 20 years mainly from stock on hand. The company name was also changed to Herkimer Tool and Machining Corporation, and today continues to do subcontract machining. An interesting side note is that in 1964, Herkimer Tool moved into the former New York Central passenger station, expanding the building to accommodate the machining business.



Familiar OK Streamliners "legacy" packaging

A vintage advertisement for Herkimer Tool & Model Works, Inc. featuring three Santa Claus figures holding signs that say "Set a CHRISTMAS SALES RECORD This Year", "with the LINE THAT'S ALL WAYS OK", and "OK FOR QUALITY! OK FOR PRICE! OK FOR PACKAGING!". Below the signs, text reads: "For years, OK products have proved their leadership in performance from coast-to-coast. Now, new low prices make them better values than ever—your opportunity for a holiday 'clean-up' in fast moving model engines, fuel and accessory sets, passenger and freight train sets. All are attractively packaged for holiday selling!"
LOOK AT THESE "OK" CUB ENGINE VALUES!
OK Cub 14 "OK" Cub .074 Now \$5.45 (was \$5.95)
NOW ONLY \$6.95 (was \$7.95)
"OK" Cub .099 Now \$5.95 (was \$6.95)
And here is the engine value of the year. It's the OK Cub .049A, complete with fuel-valve, nylon tank, high impact propeller, spin starter. Only \$3.95
Other Models Ranging to \$12.95
"OK" CUB GLOW FUEL and ACCESSORY SET
Contains the right fuel and accessories for perfect engine operation. ONLY \$1.39
Sell a Set with every Engine!
"OK" TRAIN SETS . . . Perfect Christmas Sellers
All train sets are perfect in detail and operation. Passenger cars are of aluminum, interior lighting showing passengers in silhouette.
391 COMASTER (Blue) F7 Diesel (H) 9 diesel, baggage coach, tank, trailer, 18" radius track, terminal track and tender. ONLY \$19.95
OTHERS AT \$29.95 — \$49.95
304 FREIGHT (Blue) F7 Diesel, two box cars, twelve 18" radius track, terminal track and tender. ONLY \$12.95
OTHERS AT \$19.95 — \$29.95 — \$49.95
HERKIMER TOOL & MODEL WORKS, Inc.
HERKIMER, NEW YORK
107 HARTER STREET

The founder's grandson (Charles Junior's son) Ted Brebeck relates how in 1995, "I visited the old factory and found Mr. Greene did not really want the train department. So I bought it back and combined it with the engine department that I had owned since my parents passed away."



A collection of model train passenger cars, including several silver and grey streamlined cars and one black and white car, arranged on a white surface.

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