

THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION



More
Layout
Details:



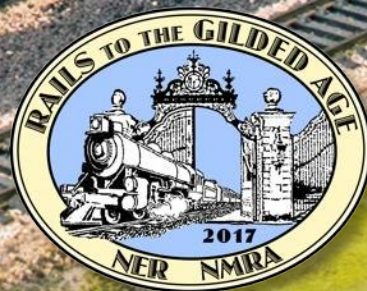
Utilities
and Highway
Safeguards

Page 4

'Rails to the Gilded Age' Preview

NER's Newport Convention Page 8

NYC Layout Like No Other Page 11



FEATURES

Open Doeher	2
News and Events	3
New Members	3
Details: Utilities & Safeguards	4
Workin' On the RR	7
2017 Convention Preview	8
Breakers NYC Layout	11
Made in the NER	14
Bob VanGelder's Layout	15
NER Brass	16

COVER PHOTO

A New York Central 2-6-0 pulls a 19th Century passenger train in the Breakers Carriage House in Newport, RI. The HO layout is truly a work of art and a tribute to the Vanderbilt family, who built the estate. It is slated to be on a special tour during the NER 2017 convention. The story starts on page 11.

Photo: Bob Peters



www.nernmra.org

THE COUPLER

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

Issue No. 266

EDITOR

JEFF PASTON

315-682-8144

editor@nernmra.org

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

MIKE TYLICK MMR

COPY EDITOR

STEVE RUSSO

CIRCULATION

MARK HARLOW

nerofficemanager@verizon.net

PRINTING

RAPID PRESS

Stamford, CT

©2017 Northeastern Region NMRA

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 \$10.00 per year. Any items related to the activities of the Northeastern Region and its member divisions are gladly accepted by email. Photos submitted must be high resolution of at least 300 dpi in order to be considered. Please send change of address to <nerofficemanager@verizon.net>.

FROM THE EDITOR . . . By JEFF PASTON

When I saw Doug Scott's photo of the Old Colony & Newport GE 44 ton locomotive running along Narragansett Bay, I just knew it should be a two-page centerfold. What a way to introduce you to this year's NER convention in Newport, Rhode Island!

Normally, this story would be right up front in *The Coupler*. But, in this case, the picture commanded a far different treatment. Views like this one on pages 8 and 9 are a great sales tool for any convention. Judging from the photos and article starting on page 8, *Rails to the Gilded Age* is shaping up to be a real winner!

For those of you who don't have Internet access, or who prefer to sign up using a "hard copy" registration, you can cut out or photocopy the form from page 13. If you want a quicker registration, just go the 2017 convention's Web site <www.Newport2017.org>

Many of us consider model railroading an "art" form, and our preview of one convention tour bears this out. It's evident in our cover picture, and in



closeups by Bob Peters in the preview article starting on page 11, that the New York Central-themed layout in the Breakers Stables and Carriage House required a lot of artistic skill. The backdrops and structures are artistic renditions in this ode to the Breakers' creator, NYC magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt. Instructions on how to visit this one-of-a-kind railroad will be announced to convention registrants.

Meanwhile, we'll start this issue with one more chapter of those neat details I've discovered on the many layouts I'm visiting. This time, we're dealing with how utilities and the requisite infrastructure are modeled. We're also looking at some highway accessories that aren't often seen on model railroads.

Mike Tylick shares the story of another NER manufacturer, only this one is going into retirement so he can spend more time on his model railroad. For 25 years, Bob VanGelder created unique model kits as *South River Modelworks*. Following this *Made in the NER* story, we'll show you some views of that model railroad on which Bob will be working. It all starts on page 14.

OPEN DOEHR By JOHN DOEHRING NER President

Bassackwards

This time of year, you'll commonly find model railroad column writers focusing on "getting out of the basement" in favor of outdoor activities and chores in the yard and garden. Trains then naturally take a back seat to sunny skies, warmer weather, and new possibilities – especially for those who've suffered through a long winter.

It seems I'm just the opposite. I don't have a basement layout (not yet, but check back in two years – that's the plan). I do have a set of N-scale N-TRAK modules, but I store these in the garage, where winter conditions are only marginally better than they are outside. No working there. Instead I stay inside, safely ensconced on a warm couch – the armchair railroader.

As the spring creeps (ever so slowly) into New England, along with rising temperatures, so does my sprit recover, as does my energy and passion for action. So mixed in with first mows, mulching, putting away the snow-thrasher, getting out the bikes, painting the whatever, and such – I get excited about building the railroad again.

This year it's an ambitious, two-fold project of two module groups – an integrated 15' N-TRAK module set focused on flexibility with independent 3', 4', and 8' sub-parts, and a 20' N-scale module set built to Freemo N standards and designed to help me earn both the civil and electrical engineering AP certificates. My goal is to get the bench work, track work, and electrical completed on both module sets before the fall module season kicks into high gear.

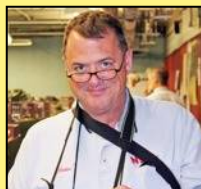
A couple of other items of note. First, we're working now to finalize the NER strategic plan,

which will provide a framework for the Region over the next five-plus years – including a vision of where we'd like to see the Region headed, and some specific strategies and initiatives we believe will help us to get there. A healthy strategic plan is really always a work in progress, always being updated and improved, but the goal is to have the draft plan done and approved by the NER Board by mid-summer.

Also in this same time frame, I expect that the NER BOD will be taking on the issue of updating our region governance model. A proposal has been brought forward to revise our governance to a model similar to most of the other NMRA regions – namely one in which each of the Division presidents/superintendents becomes a region director (or alternatively appoints another in his/her place), rather than having separate, elected region directors as we now do. There are pros and cons to each model, and I'm sure we will have some robust

discussion on the topic. I do think most of us on the NER BOD agree that strengthening the direct connection between the region and the divisions is very important and of strategic significance in our plans.

Finally, of course, there are many volunteers who will be working very hard this summer to bring you an unforgettable convention experience in Newport, RI, this fall. I can't take any credit for this work, but I do see the meeting minutes and much of the back and forth communication on a myriad of issues. It is a lot of work, but fortunately lots of folks have stepped up to take a piece of the effort. I can't wait, and we'll see you there!

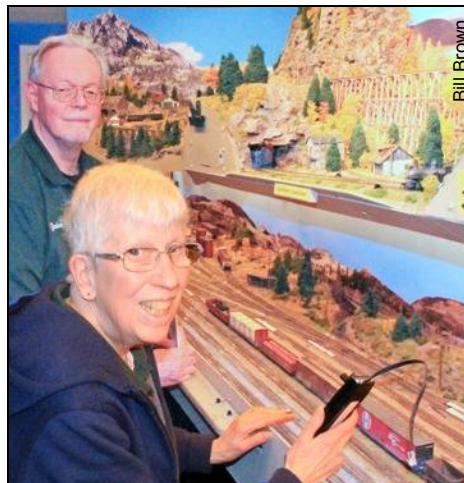


NEWS & EVENTS

CNY Div Ops Weekend Declared 'Huge Success'

The fourth annual "Ops til You Drop" weekend of The Central New York Division proved to be the biggest and best so far, and a smash hit among the record number of participants. Forty eight rail enthusiasts traveled from across the eastern US and Canada on April 1 and 2 to run trains on seven layouts in the Syracuse and Utica, NY, area.

Comments from guests indicate that a great time was had by all. Each person experienced 10.5 hours of operating time over their choice on three of the seven layouts available. Those railroads offered operating eras between 1910 and present day, the Pacific Northwest to The Colorado Rockies, to The Northeastern US, in all seasons



Gordon and Jeanne Spalty of Rochester, NY, in the Lakeshores Division, operate Bill Brown's D&RGW narrow gauge during the CNY Division ops weekend.

from lush summer greenery to spectacular fall color to blustery winter. Several of the layouts were featured in national model railroad magazines.

"I think the event has become very popular due to its affordability (\$10), but mostly because of the great comradery that developed between participants and CNY Division hosts," said local organizer Bill Brown.

The committee is already looking to next year, setting the weekend of April 28 and 29, 2018. "We have the possibility of adding three additional layouts for next year, bringing the total to 10," Brown said. "If that materializes, it will help the event continue to grow."

Taking the First Step



Activity is picking up in the NER Maritime Division. Don Fitzpatrick, Lou McIntyre, and Blake Woolley, members of the Saint John (NB) Society Of Model Railroaders, proudly display their Golden Spike Awards received on April 7. The Golden Spike is the first step in the NMRA Achievement Program leading to Master Model Railroader status.

NEW MEMBERS

Compiled By **MARK HARLOW**
NER Office Manager

As of 5/1/17

NEW JERSEY

Alan Bornstein
William Chapin
Richard Sullivan
Joe Valentine
R. Jonathon Vencus

NEW YORK

Wayne R. Aiken
Leonard Bernard
Donald Burns
Anthony J. Grandazza
Jerome Johnson
Benjamin Lynch
Geoffrey Oldfield
Thomas O'Malley
John Stewart

RHODE ISLAND

Richard J. Arigo
Maryann Schwartz

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Conrad Struckman
Nancy Struckman

QUEBEC
Robert Robitaille
NEW BRUNSWICK
William Turczyn
CONNECTICUT

G. B. Celedinas
William Fabiani
Keer Gardner
Georgia Nash

MASSACHUSETTS

Amoruso family
Mieke Citroen
Dennis Gurn
Harlan McCanna
Tresavon McClary

Ben Rosen
Paul Stansel

Near the start of the first operating session on Mike Shanahan's *Brunswick & Tuscan Railroad*, a sporadic short developed. The problem could not be found right away until a visitor saw smoke. He picked up the car and dropped it immediately as it was very hot! It seems the steel wheels on a truck with sprung metal side frames were hitting the steel weight under the car's floor due to a split bolster. The short from one of the side frames melted part of the plastic bolster!



Seeking Missing Couplers

Got any old copies of *The Coupler*? NER Webmaster Ed Hinton can use your help filling in missing editions for the Web site archive from the list below. If you can help, Ed's email is <edfhinton@yahoo.com>.

#201 - 223 (2000-2006)	#43 (1957)
#172 (1993)	#39 - 41 (1956)
#93 & 95 (1971)	#36 & 37 (1955)
#77 (1967)	#30, 32, & 33 (1954)
#61 (1962)	#19 - 29 (1951-1953)
#51 & 52 (1960)	#10 - 17 (1948-1950)
#49 (1959)	#1 - 8 (up to 1948)

THE COUPLER Deadlines

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

Letters

I just looked at the latest issue (#264) of *The Coupler* ... and it looks MARVELOUS!!! Fantastic work on your part. As you say, it has the look of a slick magazine, not merely a newsletter. Keep up the good work.

– Peter McKenney

I just received my copy of the Jan-Mar 2017 issue of *The Coupler*. What a joy it was to read the articles and see it with lots of color pictures. CONGRATULATIONS!

– Don Jennings, Cary, NC

I just finished reading the wonderful colored #264 issue of *The Coupler*. I was amazed at the quality and content of this issue. When I first saw the issue in my mailbox I thought it was an issue of *Model Railroader*! Congratulations!

– Dwight A. Smith MMR, Intervale, NH

I've just received my issue (#264) of *The Coupler*! WOW!! Full color. It is amazing. Good job. Beautiful!

– Al Olsen, Voorheesville, NY

I did receive my copy of the first issue of the new full color *Coupler* back in January. Very impressive ... and issue #265 is even better. Thanks,

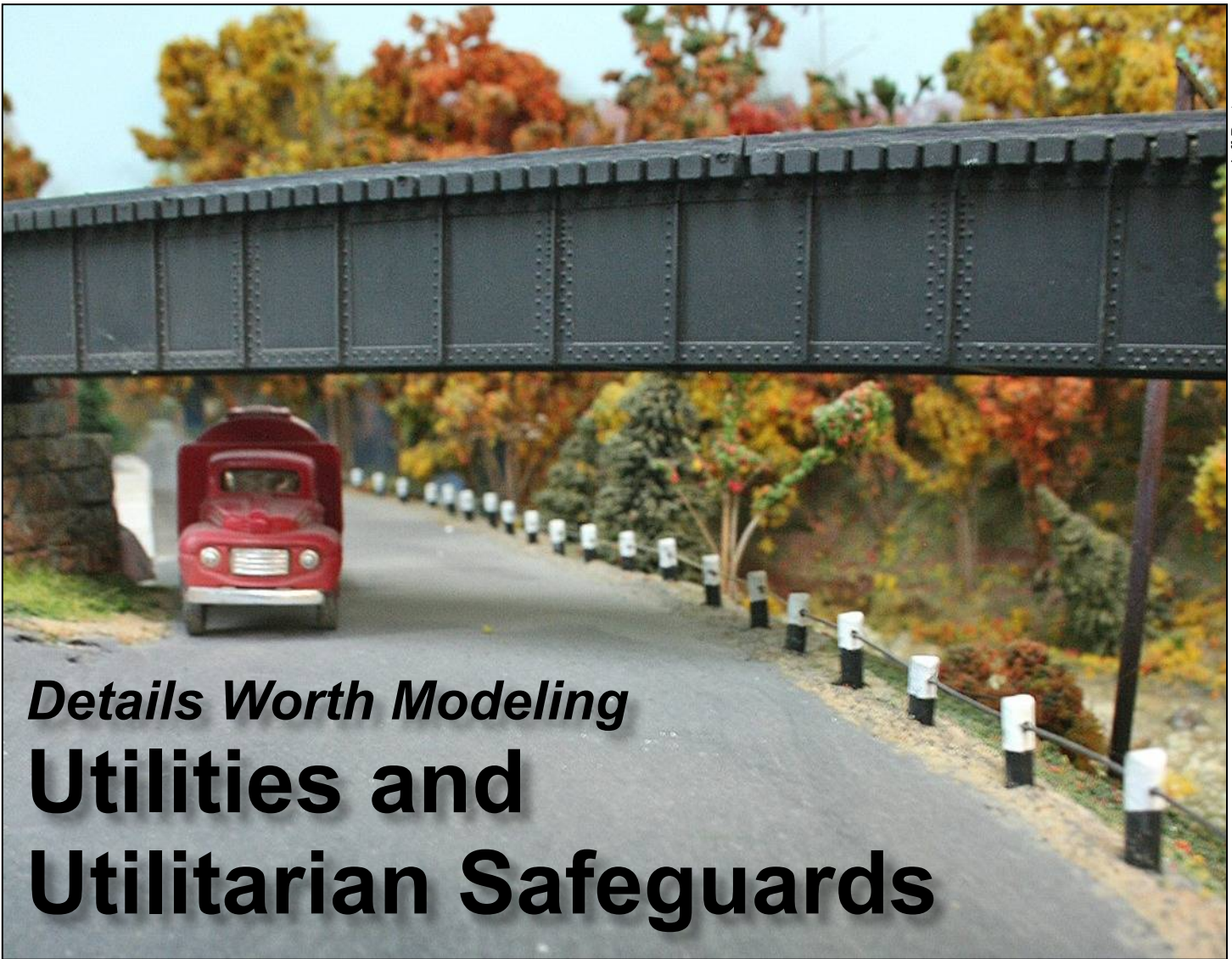
– Fred N. Peck, New City, NY

I love the new *Coupler*... color, layout, etc. Well done!

– Irwin D Nathanson;
VP, Hudson-Berkshire Division

A couple of notes on the dinosaur dig (on page 10 in *Coupler* #265). That module belongs to Mike Pearce who is a part of the *Narragansett Bay Railway & Navigation Company (Nova Scotia Division)* – and you know the ties to the Little Rhody Division. Thank you for another fabulous story!

– Lou McIntyre, St. John, NB

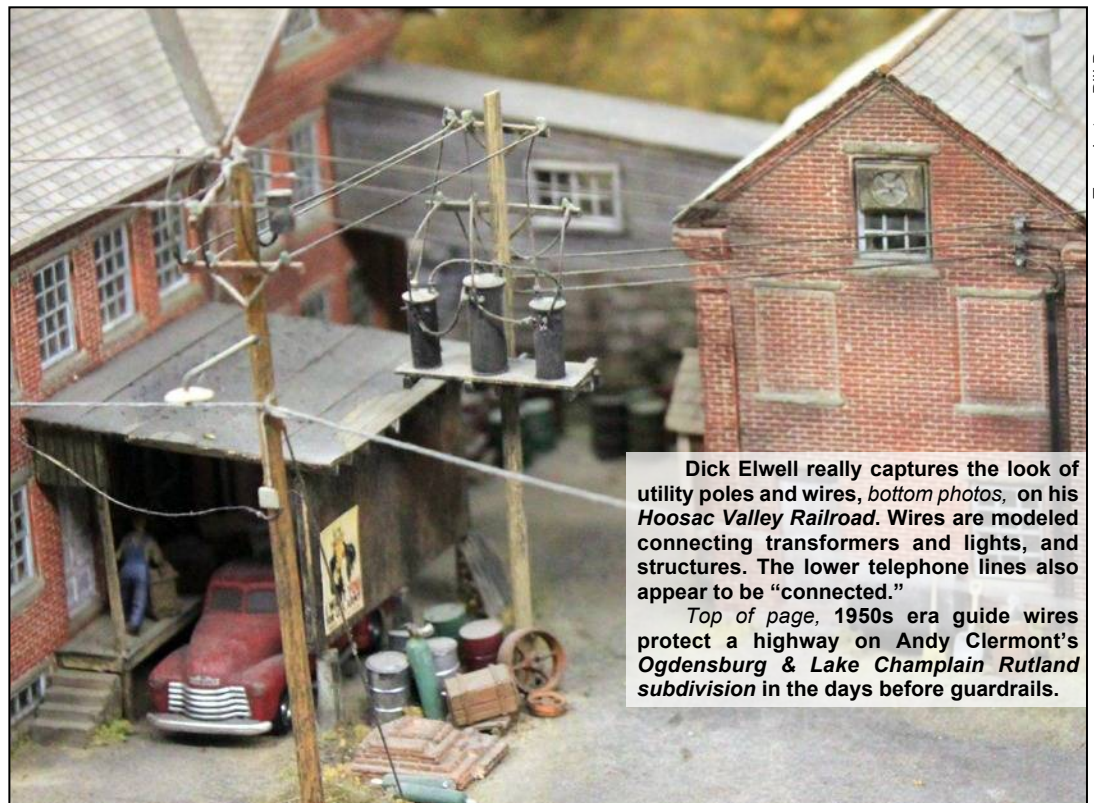


Details Worth Modeling Utilities and Utilitarian Safeguards

By JEFF PASTON
Coupler Editor

When studying the details that add realism in our model worlds, you can't help but note the replication of real world utilities, bringing simulated power and phone service to our

plastic people. And, there is also our concern for the safety of said plastic folk on our miniature highways and byways. What makes model scenes seem very real are such common things we expect to see. Because we expect them, we sometimes look right past them.



Dick Elwell really captures the look of utility poles and wires, *bottom photos*, on his *Hoosac Valley Railroad*. Wires are modeled connecting transformers and lights, and structures. The lower telephone lines also appear to be "connected."

Top of page, 1950s era guide wires protect a highway on Andy Clermont's *Ogdensburg & Lake Champlain Rutland subdivision* in the days before guardrails.



Kip Grant

Years ago, I had the pleasure of visiting Dick Elwell's HO scale Hoosac Valley Railroad. While taking in Dick's exquisite workmanship on structures and scenery, I suddenly zeroed in on his utility poles. It seemed to me that he had modeled every wire, connection, and appliance that existed – and often still exists – on power and telephone lines across North America. And with good reason, I found out! Dick knew what he was doing because he was a former phone company employee.

ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS

Those utility lines and poles really make a statement about creating a believable scene. How many of us give a thought to those everyday utilities?

How many times have you seen an industrial building with electrical conduits running up the side? Some of us are lucky to remember to place an electric meter and weatherhead on our model houses.

Kevin Surman paid attention to such electrical concerns on his *New York & Long Branch* layout. On the shore on a modeled inlet, he modeled a miniature "cable crossing" warning sign that many boaters will recognize.

It would be hard to find many layouts with typical fire department accessories in scenes featuring industrial, commercial, or government buildings. But for someone who served on a volunteer fire department, Kip Grant didn't leave his HO buildings in

"jeopardy." He placed the force mains and alarm boxes in an industrial complex on his Delaware & Hudson *Sonnyvale Branch*.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Just as in the prototype world, our model motorists need "protection" along the highways.

The posts and guidewires along N.Y. Route 11 on Andy Clermont's *Ogdensburg & Lake Champlain subdivision of the Rutland Railroad* is a model snapshot of a bygone era of highway "safety."

Traveling the New York State Thruway in the 1950s and '60s, I recall all of those local roads intersected by the toll highway and the
(Continued on page 6)

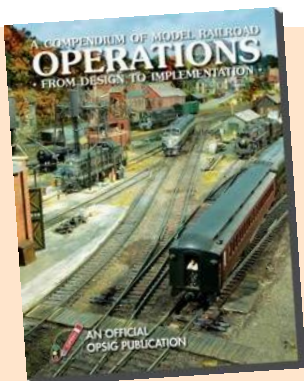


The track side of an industrial building along Kevin Surman's *N.Y. & Long Branch* railroad, left, shows electrical service entering via conduits from a transformer box, and from an underground source. At right, boaters are warned of underwater electrical cables in another scene on his layout.

Kip Grant didn't forget one company's beautification effort in a small flower garden in top photo. But most importantly, he didn't forget fire safety appliances like the alarm box and force mains.



Two photos: Jeff Paston



Comprehensive Ops Book Now Available

By VINCENT GALLOGLY

Each of us that has an interest in operating our personal railroad or operating on a host's road needs the Operations Special Interest Group's (OPSIG) *A Compendium of Model Railroad Operations: From Design to Implementation*.


This volume was announced to OPSIG members earlier this year and is just now arriving in the mailboxes of those who ordered it. It fills a need in our hobby and exceeds my expectations. A friend to whom I sent a copy said, "You have disrupted my work for the next month or so . . . so many ideas, so little real estate to put them in."

Developed by a team of 12 authors, three editors, and a graphic artist, it is presented in an easy to read style, delivering the whys and wherefores of operations with a history of each of the operations we are modeling.

I have found that each chapter presents a significant aspect of modeling as an assist in pointing the way to operating one's road. In their respective chapters, each author points out prototype railroad operations that have changed over time. Underscored by the authors are caveats for us modeler/operators that prototype railroad operations varied by railroad and distances covered. Communications used by the prototype and how they may be adapted to our roads in an operating session is carefully developed.

With this information and a knowledge of one's personal desires – e.g. time, place, and industries – one can truly create a reasonably prototypical operating railroad.

Each of the authors is known within the hobby for openness, NMRA clinics presented, and operations at his layout. The NER's Phil Monat, Craig Bisgeier, and Tom Bartley are among the volunteers who worked to bring this volume to us.

A description of each chapter can be found at <www.opsig.org>. To order, send a note with check in the amount of \$57.95 (\$49.95 plus \$8 shipping) for non OPSIG members or \$47.95 (\$39.95 plus \$8 shipping) for OPSIG members to Steve Benezra, 2737 Thistle Trail, Hillsborough, NC 27278-9302. 



Kip Grant

Utilities and Safeguards


(Continued from page 5)

roadblocks posted where the roads now dead ended. These were specific looking wooden structures painted white with black striping.

I had not seen one of these modeled until visiting Kip Grant's layout. Indeed, Kip had captured the look of these former wooden barricades (the prototypes are now pretty much gone today).

There were – and are – different styles of barricades used across North America. Kevin

Surman reproduced two more ways of blocking roads on his railroad. One uses cut rail to stop traffic; another uses a simple wooden barricade comprised of two horizontal boards.

Finally, one last safety measure. You can make it out in the scene in one of Kevin's business districts. A delivery truck's nose sticks into the street, and its driver wisely placed two safety cones in front to warn other traffic. Definitely considerate, even in HO! 



Various barricades warn that a road has suddenly come to a dead end. Kip Grant modeled a design from the 1950s and '60s, *top of page*. Kevin Surman blocked his roads at two trackside locations using two different means. Above, pieces of rail painted white and black stop traffic from crossing the tracks. A simple wooden barricade, *right*, does the same job in a business district.



Details abound in this scene on Kevin Surman's *New York & Long Branch Railroad*. Kevin has captured the technique of electrical wiring on his utility poles, as well as street

items like the mailbox, bench, and baby carriage. But, it's the safety cones in front of the delivery truck and pedestrian railing along the sidewalk that deserve special mention.

Three photos: Jeff Paston

Setting Standards for the Layout

By JEFF HANKE

In my inaugural column I eluded to setting standards for your overall layout, as well as for rolling stock. Standards for the layout include scale, turnout size, minimum curve radius, track code, control type, etc. My layout standards were listed in that first column, three issues ago. Rolling stock and vehicles too deserve some thought on standards.

LOCOMOTIVES

We all like locomotives, but they are also an expensive part of the layout. Setting a series of standards is a good way to have control over your spending at the local hobby store or online. Like many, scale is the first standard. Everything on my layout is HO scale. Second is the operating area and era. For me, this is a strict standard. If the locomotive ran over the East End during the Chessie Era of 1972-86, it is eligible to be purchased. If not, then I move on. Prototype railroaders, chat groups, books and photos are great ways to



being removed. This also includes making sure post-1986 features are not included, like ditch lights or reflective striping.

My numbering system is a unique standard. To save money, I have a number of dummy (unpowered) locomotives. Today's motive power can pull plenty of cars with a single unit. To give the appearance of the prototype's multiple units, many times my trailing unit is a dummy. To avoid operating issues, I number all powered locomotives with even numbers, and odd units are dummies. This system has served me well and no one has ever tried to put any odd numbered power into a throttle yet.

FREIGHT CARS & CABOOS

The same first three standards apply as above (scale, area and era, prototypical proportions). This does surprisingly well in limiting my "bad" purchases and wasted money. Never fear though, if you buy a car that doesn't meet these requirements, you can choose to just run it anyway or sell it on eBay later.

When it comes to prototypical details, this includes 1972-1986 period appropriate markings and safety appliances. These included COTS (Cleaned, Oiled, Tested, and Stenciled) markings for air brakes, ACI cards (on all cars but fresh repaints) and period correct weight dates. Additionally, it includes cut down ladders (when appropriate) and no running boards.

All models, must have metal wheels close to meeting NMRA weight standards, and Kadee® couplers. I don't have a scale, so weight is more of a guess with cars tending to be too heavy rather than too light.

VEHICLES

Most visitors – even if not remotely interested in model railroading – will be able



An Atlas GP7 was the starting point to adding Chessie appropriate details of spark arrestors, five-chime horn, and C&O-style nose mounted bell. There are also subtle details like evidence of the ACI card removed on the side sill, showing the old paint scheme underneath.

determine if a particular locomotive is eligible. The third standard is having a roster of a prototypical proportion. I purchase types in quantities that are proportional to a prototypical 1981 roster. This means common types like GP38, 40 and 40-2s have more presence on my layout than obscure models, such as SD20-2, GP39 or BL2s.

As for the models themselves, each has to be DCC, weathered, have prototypical details and numbered appropriately to be on my layout. Decoders and weathering are common.

For my prototypical detail standard, this includes proper bell and horn placement, slotted battery box door cover (if appropriate), etc. Also, ACI cards – a late '60s to early '70s car identification system – are either still present, or show some evidence of



This MoW hopper shows off period details standard on my railroad. The COTS stencil and wheel inspection dot are Chessie Era features, as is evidence of post-1982 renumbering.

to date your layout from the autos and trucks present. I trend toward having 1982 vehicles on my railroad, which means almost all of the cars on the layout are 1970s and early '80s models. Yes, there are a few 1950s or '60s cars, but unless you have a scene of a vintage car show, seeing more than one would be awkward for 1982. There are also no minivans, as the Dodge Caravan hadn't shown up until 1984.

Also, my standard in vehicles is to purchase the typical – not the atypical. Rural West Virginia is not the place for numerous sports cars or exotic foreign models. In 1982, most cars on the road were American models, so plenty of Chevys and Fords abound. Trident, Fresh Cherries, Malibu International, Atlas and Bosch are good brands for vehicles of this era.

As for their appearance, I make sure all of the vehicles are dull coated, except for the glass. I paint all the silver parts light grey, which looks better to me than the typical chromed plastic. I add license plates (any state will do), to any car on the road, and make sure ones that are new deliveries on flat car loads have none. Cars on the road must also have a driver and may have a passenger. In parking lots, they can sit driverless. I add loads of mulch, ladders, tools, barrels, etc. to open vehicles like pickup trucks and flat beds. I also lightly weather the cars, but not to look like they have been "off-roading" in them.

For semi-truck cabs, I try to find typical late '70's striping and coloring. Tans, dark browns and oranges really scream the Chessie era. Also back then, some cabs had multiple license plates due to trucking laws in respective states. Many of my cabs have two or three plates on the bumper.

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



Part of my standards for vehicles is to be period correct. These Trident trucks – perfect for the early 1980s – were painted in company colors and weathered lightly.

NER's 2017 Convention



'RAILS TO THE GILDED UNFORGETTABLE



By **STEVE ERICKSON**

Rails to the Gilded Age is shaping up to be a unique experience that should not be missed. In addition to all of the usual activities associated with our NER convention, having it in Newport, Rhode Island, gives us an opportunity to see things that you probably just cannot see any other time.

First, the weather should be beautiful. Early November in Newport is usually sunny and mild. Fall stays much later

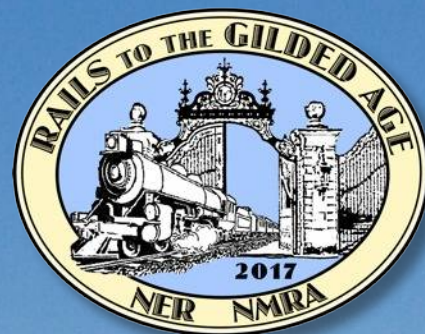
here than in other parts of New England thanks to the warming ocean breezes. Most tourists are gone and the parking meters are free! The week before the convention is *Restaurant Week* in Newport, enticing those who come Wednesday or Thursday to experience fine dining at a reasonable cost.

PROTOTYPE TRAINS

We will take a train ride on the *Old Colony and Newport Scenic Railway*, a tourist line that runs along the coast of Aquidneck

Island where Newport is located. The Newport Secondary Line was built to provide a rail connection to steam ships operating between Fall River, Massachusetts, and New York City. Passengers were conveyed from Boston to Fall River by the *Old Colony Railroad* to connect to ships headed to New York. As the ships had to travel down Narragansett Bay past Newport to reach Long Island Sound, it occurred to the railroad that travel time could be saved by extending the

AGE' PROMISES EXPERIENCE



passenger train to Newport in 1863. In 1980, the track to the mainline was closed when the Sakonnet River drawbridge in Tiverton was damaged by an overweight military train.

The 80 minute, nine mile round trip along the former Newport Secondary Line starts on the east side of the historic point section of Newport. It enters Naval Station Newport in about two miles closely following scenic Narragansett Bay from Newport to Middletown and Portsmouth, RI. The ride has

been touted as "The Million Dollar View."

We will also be taking a tour of the *Seaview Railroad*, serving a nearby major industrial area. For more than 30 years, the "Seaview" has provided integrated rail transportation for customers located in the Quonset Business Park in Davisville. The park features a foreign trade zone and multiple deep draft docks on more than three thousand acres of this former naval base. Among other goods, foreign automobiles are trans-

loaded to railroad auto carriers here. The tour of this large modern industrial railroad and its extensive trackage and switching service will include a visit to Seaview's main yard, shops, and engine facility. Quonset Point is better known as the erstwhile home of the "Seabees," the renowned engineering division of the U.S. Navy – developers of the famed Quonset Hut. We should also have an opportunity to visit the Seabee Museum and

(Continued on page 10)



Doug Scott

Above, an OC&N excursion train features classic old coaches.



Two photos: Steve Erickson

Our convention hotel, above, the Atlantic Resort Newport, prepares for its opening. The hotel offers spectacular views of the oceanfront, left.

Photo on preceding pages:
The Old Colony & Newport owns three GE 44 tonners, all former armed forces locomotives. OC&N 4764 is seen running along Narragansett Bay past the Mount Hope Bridge. Careful observers will spot the Bristol Ferry Lighthouse just to the right of the bridge tower.

Photo by Doug Scott.



The Seaview Railroad, bottom of page, serves the former naval base industrial park at Quonset point – home of the Seebees, where the mascot stands guard.

(Continued from page 9)

Memorial Park, and a collection of vintage aircraft at the Rhode Island Air National Guard.

RARE TOURS

Another highlight is the Naval War College Museum, an attraction that most tourists never get to see. Advance registration will be required for security reasons, but once at the Museum, visitors will have a chance to view wonderful ship models, a history of the Navy, and the connection between the Navy and Newport. The information on Naval operations, supporting and supply operations, and era specific displays will make this a once in a lifetime opportunity. Be sure to register for this event early because space is limited.

The *Breakers* is the most famous mansion in Newport. We will provide a bus tour to the “cottage” (as it was called) once owned by the Vanderbilts, as well as around all of Newport. Again, space is limited! This tour will provide an educational opportunity to learn about a city that has been a rail hub, a seaport, and much more.

Speaking of Newport, who knew that the Vanderbilts had massive stables as well? They are as well appointed as the

mansion itself, and now contain a fabulous HO scale layout and a museum of New York Central memorabilia. These are in an extension of the stables that resembles back to back Pullman cars. Also there is a collection of horse carriages that we think will “knock your socks off!” If you see nothing else, this layout, which is really a series of dioramas showing the growth and history of the NYC, should be on your list.

CONVENTION VENUES

We have added a select group of quality vendors for the convention, some of whom will be giving clinics. We also have a group of local historians and modelers that will provide information on familiar and unfamiliar topics (who knew you could model a full coal mine on the coast?). The large (9,000 sq. ft.) banquet room will house the modular layouts, vendors, and some “surprise” clinics.

Our dinner speaker will be Roland Boucher, formerly a vice president of the *Providence and Worcester Railroad*. He will be bringing memorabilia from the P&W for our raffle, and will discuss the development, acquisitions, and sale of the railroad. He is planning to bring two other P&W employees, making the evening presentation a panel

discussion and question and answer session.

OUR HOTEL

The convention hotel is the Atlantic Resort Newport – a brand new hotel overlooking Newport’s Easton’s Beach and the Cliff Walk. Many of the rooms face the ocean, so be sure to book right away. The rooms are fabulous – each room has a king bed; some have two kings, and there are also king suites with two separate sleeping areas. The hotel has a restaurant, indoor pool and fitness area. Everything is brand new. There is plenty of free parking, a shuttle bus (for a fee) and plenty of information on what to do in Newport. Our hospitality room will also be open during the convention, and our volunteers are compiling a special list of the best things to see and do.

Convention coordinators will also be offering wine tasting and other events, so check the Web site <www.Newport2017.org> to learn what is new! This is a great convention in which to bring the spouse or significant other. Be sure to tell your friends and Division members who have never been to a convention that this is a perfect one to start with!

Mike Tylick also contributed to this article.



Mike Tylick

10 • THE COUPLER #266



Mike Tylick

Breakers Stables, Layout Must-See!



Unseen by many who come to Newport, *All Aboard the New York Central with the Vanderbilts* is housed in the Breakers Stables and Carriage House built in 1895. Located about a half mile west of the famous Breakers mansion (which will be open for tours, and part of a guided tour of Newport from the convention hotel), the Stables contain an HO scale railroad and a fascinating collection of New York Central memorabilia.

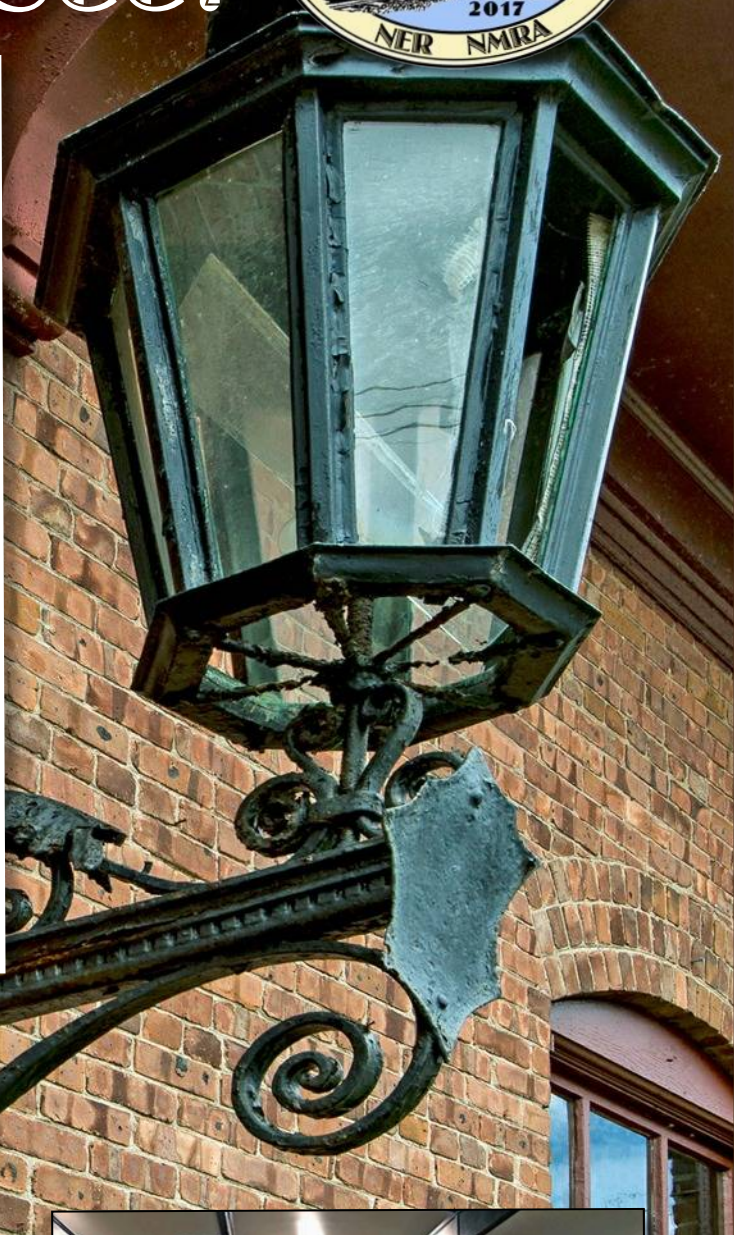
The Breakers was owned by Cornelius Vanderbilt, and features subtle references to railroads in some of its decorations. The Stables, on the other hand, have been converted in part to a massive panoramic model railroad showing the history of the New York Central in general, and Grand Central Depot in particular.

Nestled between a spectacular display of restored coaches and carriages used in the late 19th century and the actual ornate stables where the horses were kept is a long, narrow structure resembling back to back passenger cars. One wall is the layout – broken into six dioramas – displaying various periods in NYC history, including the original Grand Central. The other side is a long display of NYC artifacts and historical photos and documents that are on loan from the Vanderbilt family (which still lives on the third floor of the Breakers). The exhibit and railroad were built thanks to the generosity and collections of Countess Anthony Szapary, granddaughter of Cornelius Vanderbilt II.

The model railroad was built as an exhibit for the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Breakers in 1992. Although most people would go to the Stables to see the spectacular coaches on display, for model railroaders, the NYC exhibit is an undiscovered treasure! Although a great deal of time and effort was put into the exhibit, it has been mostly unseen since that time.

The layout has more than a hundred period-authentic scratch built structures and several independently operating trains that can be

(Continued on next page)

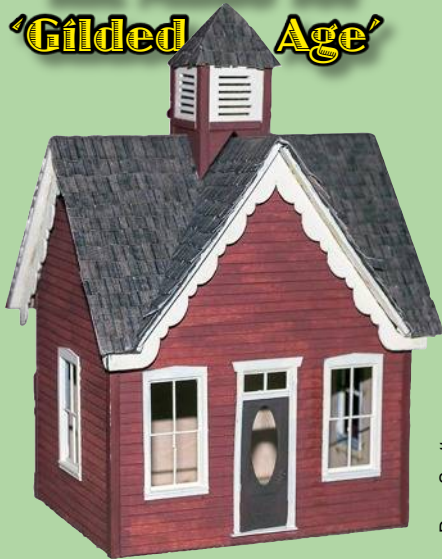


Bob Peters



Steve Erickson

Newport Depot Kit Made for 'Gilded Age'



Doug Scott

During the 19th century glory days of the Old Colony Railroad, Newport was a major connecting point for steamships from New York City to rail transportation to Boston and eastern New England. Rail mergers into the larger New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, and the construction of highways and the Cape Cod Canal eventually diminished Newport's importance as a transportation hub and the large original station was razed. With the closing of the Sakonnet River draw bridge in 1980, the Old Colony and Newport Scenic Railroad was isolated from the rail network. The present OC&N station started out as a maintenance office for a nearby cemetery, and was moved several times before finding its new home as a depot in 1986.

Rails to the Gilded Age is proud to announce a specially manufactured HO scale convention kit of the Old Colony and Newport railroad station. Deerfield River Laser (92 Parkview Street; Ludlow, MA) is offering this kit only by advance order. Deerfield River Laser can be contacted by email at <edfillion448@cs.com>. O scale kits are also available.

Deerfield River Laser is a small "Mom and Pop" laser cutting business. Started in 2005 by Ed and Tim Fillion, the business has evolved into a full line of structure, railroad car, and boat kits. Although a few S scale kits are offered, its product line is mostly geared towards the On30 market.

Customers had been asking for small depots to use in the limited space and short trains on their On30 layouts. While searching the Internet, Tim stumbled on the Old Colony RR and the present Newport Station — its small size and architecture fit well into the company's New England seaport line of kits.

You can meet the owners and see the rest of the Deerfield River line at the *Gilded Age* vendors show. —Mike Tylick

Breakers Layout Visit

(Continued from page7)

started and stopped by visitors. Multiple iterations of Grand Central Depot are part of the display.

The Little Rhody Division provided support for the Breakers Christmas train display in December, and is continuing its collaboration with the Preservation Society of Newport County to rehabilitate, restore, and update the display in advance of the convention. Sections of track are being replaced, scenery upgraded, locomotives

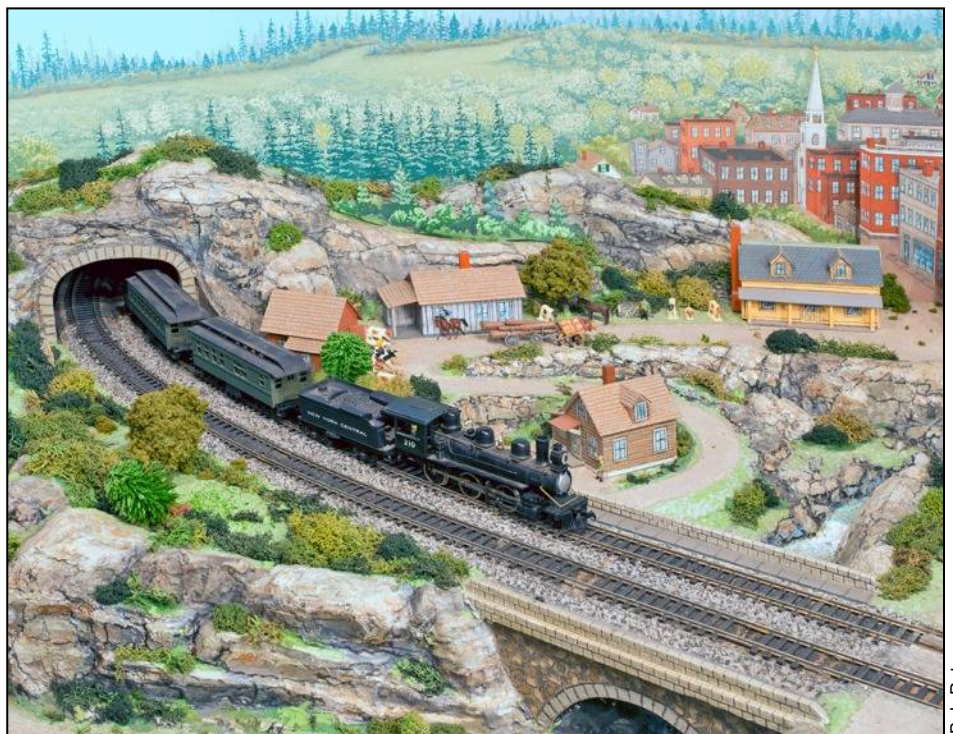
repaired, and lighting improved. Everything is being cleaned and made ready for NER convention goers.

Because of the expected popularity of this tour, it will be separate from the list of open houses that will be held in the vicinity. Special tour times are being arranged for convention goers, and opportunities to sign up will come in an upcoming email blast. — Steve Erickson



Bob Peters

The Breakers Stables layout is truly a work of art! structures and backdrops are all hand painted works. Above, the original Grand Central Depot opened in 1871 by the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad is beautifully depicted. The NYC&HR model layout shows the line traveling by small villages and rural countryside, below.



Bob Peters

RAILS to the GILDED AGE



A **Destination**
Model rail convention
In **FABULOUS**
Newport, RI










November 9-12, 2017

Save the Date!

Hosted by the Little Rhody Division
Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association

Atlantic Resort Newport

240 Aquidneck Ave., Middletown, RI

-  **Newport Tours & Activities**
-  **Prototype Rail Trips**
-  **Model Rail Open Houses**
-  **Model Rail Clinics**
-  **General Interest Clinics**
-  **Photo & Model Contest**
-  **And Much More!**

Saturday Train Show
9:00-2:00
Free to Public!!!

To register or for more information:
www.newport2017.org



South River Modelworks Fades Into History

By **MIKE TYLICK MMR**
Contributing Editor

I clearly remember discovering South River Modelworks at its first show, the Big Railroad Hobby Show in West Springfield, MA. Owner Bob VanGelder was tucked in


long been aware of the relationships of his structures to their environment, the myriad of natural and man-made systems that are all related, and especially to the people that inhabit the structures and the culture they have created. In many ways, Bob's kits have come full circle to his roots over the years. Delabarre Tap & Die, his first kit, and the last few – Delabarre Woolen and Tucker and Cooke – were all located close to each other in Bob's hometown of Conway, MA. His last kit, Hilltown Entrepreneurs, is modeled after several businesses he patronizes regularly.

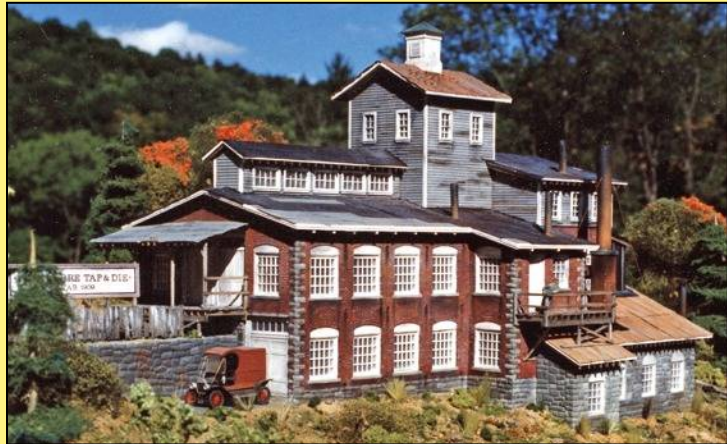
Over the years, I've had the pleasure of building several South River kits.

They provide the experience of working with many different materials, often completing several different structures. Of particular note

think for themselves. This reinforces a primary objective of South River — to encourage modelers to take the kits, put their own signature on them and turn them into something different. Bob tries to give people something he would want for himself.

By the time you read this, South River Modelworks will exist primarily as a Web presence and a fond memory for its many friends and customers. Bob VanGelder retired last year from the hobby business after 25 years of producing fine model structure kits. No more of the annual big "Red Box" kits will be produced.

South River has always been a very personal business for Bob, and selling the name to another manufacturer is not currently being considered. Other than Ebay, none of his kits are available any longer. Only the remaining kits from his final run and a variety of roofing materials are still for sale. But it seemed fitting to recognize a long-time friend and an NER manufacturer who has left an indelible mark on the business of manufacturing "craftsman" kits. For one, I am looking to see what Bob will do with his layout and his other interests now that he has the time. 



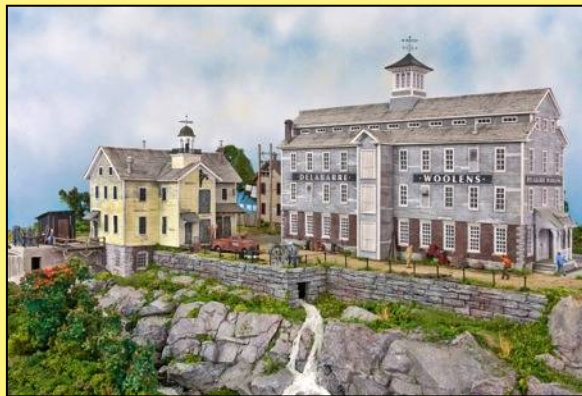
Delabarre Tap & Die, South River's first kit, was based on the old Conant Tap & Die building in Conway, MA. It is typical of the old mill manufacturing buildings clinging to a hillside and overlooking a river that supplied power.

behind a nifty model of an old mill. He looked friendly, so we started to talk. His work as a representative for Acorn Homes was ending in an economic recession, as was his visiting professorship (landscape architecture) at the University of Massachusetts. Like many others between careers, Bob decided to try his hand at the model hobby business.

At the suggestion of Amherst Show founder, the late Bob Buck, he hastily built a pilot model of his first kit and secured a table to peddle his wares. It seems hard to believe that this took place in 1991. By 2016 – 25 years later – South River has successfully sold out 28 kits; all limited edition offerings aimed at the high end "craftsman kit" market.

South River's kits are mostly inspired by the mills and businesses of the area where Bob has spent most of his life – the Pioneer Valley – the large watershed of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts. I had lived in this area myself for many years, and I immediately recognized many of the prototypes upon which South River based its kits. I thought many of these prototypes would make a good subject for me to build someday. Bob did too!

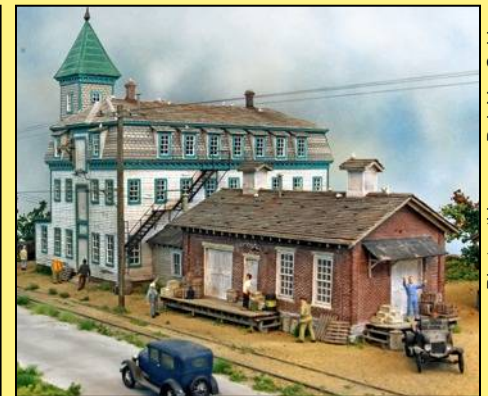
At least three of his kits – Wrisley Paper, Robinsons Electric, and Matt's Automotive – were based on models he built for the large HO scale layout that lives in the loft of his barn/shop. As an architect, Bob has



Delabarre Woolens, model above, operated in Conway, MA, from 1867 until 1904, when fire destroyed it. A brick mill for the manufacture of taps and dies was built on the site in 1909 (the name and basis for South River's first kit). Woolens

are the many plaster (now polyurethane) castings. A former ceramist, Bob loves the craft of creating these parts, resulting in a hand-made look that is hard to achieve otherwise.

Reading more like a historical novel than step-by-step tasks, each instruction booklet provides many insights into the history and function of the prototypes. They contain a veritable encyclopedia of paint and weathering tips, including a description of the techniques used to construct the pilot diorama. Although well thought out, the booklets and the kits try to teach modelers to



was South River's last large three-building kit. The Tucker and Cook Mill, model above right, was located just a short distance from Delabarre Woolens. Manufacturing commenced just before the Civil War and continued until about 1914.

Photos this page: Bob VanGelder

South River Modelworks

475 Bardwell's Ferry Road

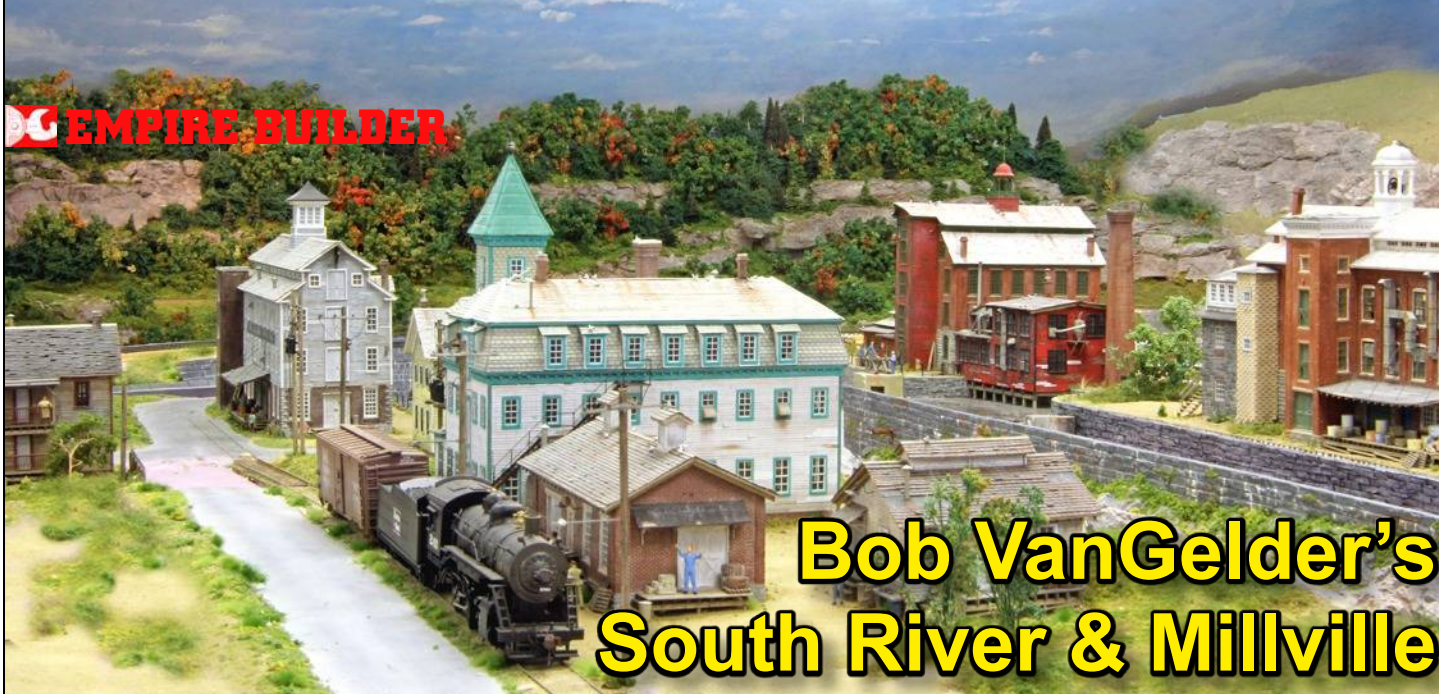
Conway, MA 01341

413-369-4482

617-716-5569 (fax)

<southriv@comcast.net>

<www.southernrivermodelworks.com>



Bob VanGelder's South River & Millville

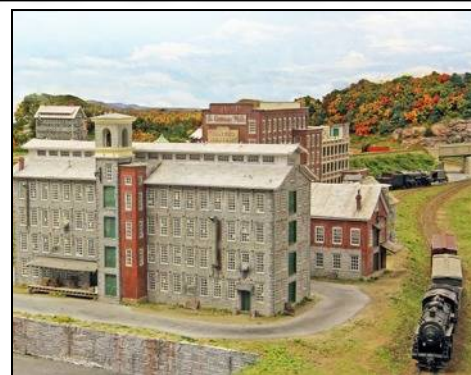
Retiring after a quarter century in the kit manufacturing business, Bob VanGelder is reported to be looking forward to working on his model railroad, among other hobby interests. The HO railroad – the *South River & Millville* – is scenicked as typical New England, and it prominently features Bob's South River Modelworks kits.

The 25' x 30' layout was featured in the May 2009 issue of *Scale Rails* (now *NMRA Magazine*) and was on tour at that time during the Hartford National NMRA convention.

Bob's artistic skills are put to good use on

the railroad from the scenery to the backdrops. The layout captures early autumn in the mountains of western New England as tree leaves change color. The communities modeled replicate early 20th Century mill towns – perfect environs for the South River mill kits Bob manufactured.

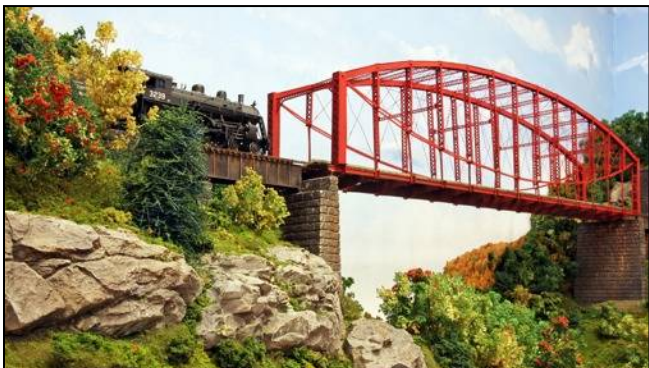
The layout is located in a finished room above the now former South River shop in a large barn on Bob's property in Conway, MA. Track is hand laid, and every structure is scratch built (obviously, since the kits are *his* originals, they *are* scratch built!).



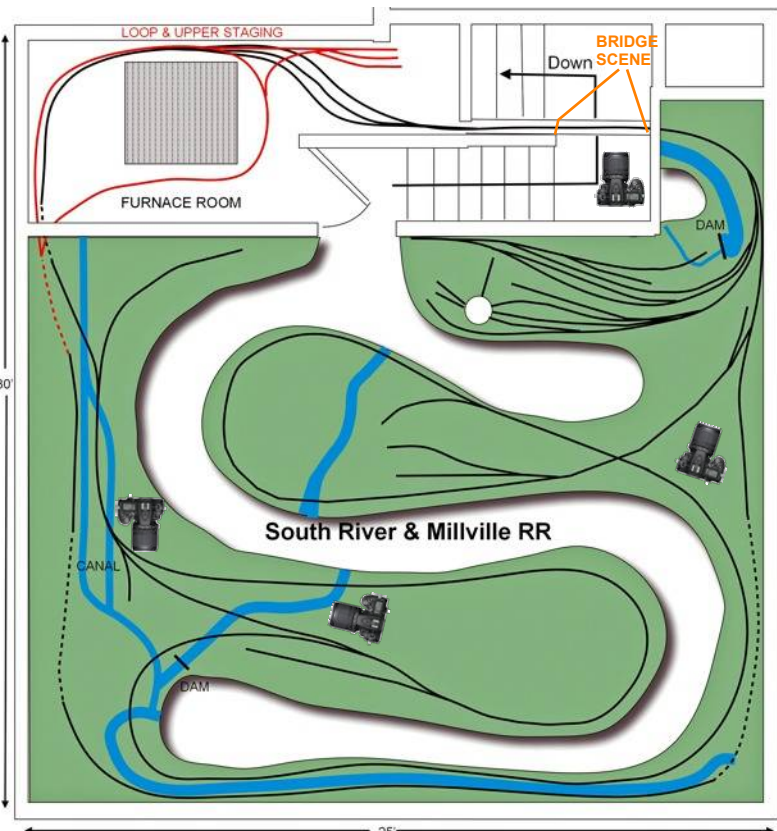
Top photo, a B&M switcher drops a boxcar at the Tucker & Cook siding with Delabarre Woolens behind. More of Bob's kits are to the right. Bob often uses kitbashed versions of his kits. Above right, Thorndike Mills is in the foreground, with Delabarre, Wrisley Papers, and Conway Mills behind.

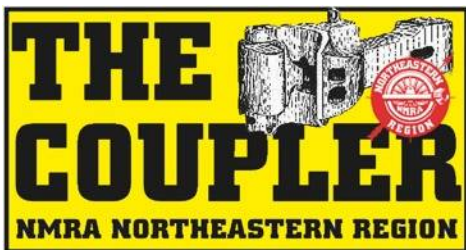


A train winds its way through typical countryside. The SR&M is set in the steam to diesel transition era with inspiration drawn from most of the New England prototype railroads.



The lenticular truss over the Deerfield River was built by Peter Abuzo. In real life, it bridges the stairwell to the first floor.





ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
STAMFORD, CT
PERMIT No. 1245

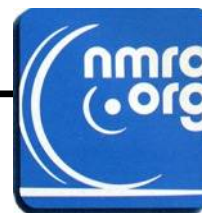
National Model Railroad Association
NER OFFICE MANAGER
47 Earle St #2
Woonsocket RI 02895-3105

REQUESTED IN MAILBOX BY JULY 8



NORTHEASTERN REGION

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION



PRESIDENT
JOHN DOEHRING
Pepperell, MA 978-877-9148
john@doehring.com

VICE PRESIDENT
ROBERT DENNIS
Staten II, NY 718-351-0782
bob.dennis@gmail.com

PAST PRESIDENT
GEORGE "SCOOTER" YOST
Baldwinsville, NY 315-303-0100
gyoust@me.com

DIRECTORS

CANADA
STEVE MCMULLIN
Saint John, NB 506-672-6960
mcmulls@nb.sympatico.ca

CONNECTICUT & RHODE ISLAND
STEVE ERICKSON
Middletown, RI 401-324-9051
sperickson@gmail.com

LONG ISLAND & NYC
KEVIN KATTA
W. Babylon, NY 631-759-0534
boxcarny@yahoo.com

MASSACHUSETTS
BARBARA HOBLIT
Marlborough, MA 617 955-6359
BLHoblit12@gmail.com

NEW JERSEY
ROBERT DENNIS
Staten II, NY 718-351-0782
bob.dennis@gmail.com

NEW YORK STATE
Open

NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
JAMES VAN BOKKELEN
Amesbury, MA 603-394-7832
jvnb@ttlc.net

NMRA EASTERN DIRECTOR
JOE GELMINI
Fayetteville, GA 770-460-8873
papagel@comcast.net

DIVISIONS

CENTRAL NEW YORK DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
BOB VERKUYL
New Hartford, NY 928-853-8770
watlingverkuyl@msn.com

GARDEN STATE DIVISION
PRESIDENT
BRUCE DEYOUNG
W. Milford, NJ 201-803-9766
pres@nergisd.com

GREEN MOUNTAIN DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
DANA BROWN
Essex Junction, VT 802-872-8602
dana24mn@gmail.com

HUB DIVISION
PRESIDENT
JAMES VAN BOKKELEN
S. Hampton, NH 603-394-7832
jvnb@ttlc.net

HUDSON-BERKSHIRE DIVISION
PRESIDENT
PAUL HOFFMAN
Mechanicville, NY 518-899-5707
trains@hudson-berkshire.org

HUDSON VALLEY DIVISION
PRESIDENT
WALTER PALMER
Otisville, NY 845-467-5161
Waltpal57@gmail.com

LAKESHORES DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
RAYMOND HOWARD
Geneva, NY 315-789-4801
rhoward1@rochester.rr.com

LITTLE RHODY DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
SUE OSBERG
Coventry, RI 401-822-0956
sosberg1@verizon.net

METRO NORTH DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
SCOTT RUSSELL
203-426-1407
upturbine@aol.com

NUTMEG DIVISION
SUPERINTENDENT
JAMES M. MAYO
Madison CT 203-245-7480
jmayo_railfan@yahoo.com

SEACOAST DIVISION
PRESIDENT
ERICH C. WHITNEY
Derry, NH 603-537-1120
conductor@blackcatrailroad.com

SUNRISE TRAIL DIVISION
PRESIDENT
DENNIS DEANGELIS
Northport, NY 516-885-3901
rs31556@yahoo.com

INACTIVE DIVISIONS
MARITIMES DIVISION
DIVISION ALOUETTE

REGION STAFF

SECRETARY
CHIP FAULTER
Phippsburg, ME 207-443-3135
faulter@comcast.net

TREASURER
PETER MCKENNEY
207-776-2033
pmckenney36@gmail.com

OFFICE MANAGER
MARK HARLOW
Hopedale, MA 508-528-8587
nerofficemanager@verizon.net

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR
JIM RIZZOLO
Scotch plains, NJ 908-294-0953
rizzolojim@gmail.com

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR
KEVIN KATTA
W. Babylon, NY 631-759-0534
boxcarny@yahoo.com

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR
JOE SANTORO
Wolfeboro, NH 603-569-2282
JLSantoroCPA@aol.com

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM
BILL BROWN, MMR
Jamesville, NY
larcproducts@yahoo.com

OP-SIG COORDINATOR
AL ONETO
Fairfield, CT 203-255-1331
aloneto@optonline.net

WEBMASTER
ED HINTON
Exeter, NH 603-321-0572
edfhinton@yahoo.com

CONVENTION STAFF

CONVENTION CHAIR
DAVID INSLEY
Townsend, MA 978-855-4363
david.insley@comcast.net

CONVENTION REGISTRAR
GERRY COVINO
Hollis, NH 617-543-0298
gcovino@charter.net

CONVENTION TREASURER
ROGER OLIVER
Denville, NJ 973-625-3414
oliver2@verizon.net

MODEL CONTEST CHAIR
KENNETH MAY
Tolland, CT 860-872-3441
kenneth.may@comcast.net

PHOTO CONTEST CHAIR
WILLIAM BARRY
Marlborough, MA 508-251-1252
ner.photocontest@gmail.com