

# THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 270

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2018

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NER ELECTION**

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HUDSON DELAWARE & OHIO



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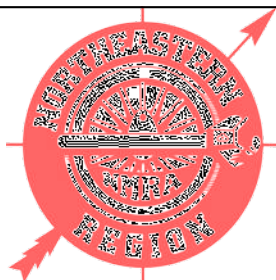


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## COVER PHOTO

A Hudson, Delaware & Ohio freight pulls into Pittsburgh Yard on The Model Railroad Club's layout in Union, NJ. The huge layout is just one of many railroads open for operation and visits during the upcoming *Erie Limited* NER convention. There's more about the convention starting on page 5; and the HD&O on page 8. Photo: Scott Dunlap



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## FROM THE EDITOR . . . By JEFF PASTON

In the "old days," we'd be adding another four pages to this issue of *The Coupler* to disseminate biographies and a ballot form to the membership at a sizeable extra cost. It was a ritual repeated every four years as NER leadership came up for election.

With the newly approved governance plan (see *Coupler* #269), your Region is not spending those hundreds of dollars on what yielded only a handful of returned ballots out of more than 1,600 members. The new plan now calls for elections every three years.

Steve McMullin and Greg Williams in the Eastern Canada Division reported a far reaching election was successfully accomplished using the Internet. Even better, they said this voting method resulted in a high participation.

So, it makes sense to shift all of that election material to the Region's Web site, where you can read those bios and cast your ballot. Arrangements are also in place for those few members who don't have computer access. I've written more about this on page 4. Having taken




part in the NER Board meeting, I know your leadership is excited about this arrangement and is anticipating a good response.

In our last issue, Dave Insley struck a chord with his story "*The End of an Era*" about what he had to do with his father's model railroad collection upon his death.

Larry Cannon, MMR, who has been in many leadership roles in the Region and in the Seacoast Division, recognized what Dave was going through, and had more suggestions on easing the burden on those surviving a deceased model railroader. His article – as did Dave's – sheds more light on this inevitable problem, starting on page 4.

As we close in on this year's NER convention, *The Erie Limited*, in Mahwah, NJ, on September 13, we have two features in this issue previewing some of what's being planned.

Chuck Diljak previews convention activities, and Scott Dunlap takes us to *The Model Railroad Club* in Union, NJ, where an operations session is planned. 

## OPEN DOEHR By JOHN DOEHRING NER President

# Driving My Own Golden Spike

This month, I am re-reading Stephen Ambrose's fantastic book *Nothing Like It In The World, The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869*. In page after page, Ambrose details (and draws us in to share in the wonder) the overwhelming scope and scale of the cross-continent project – along with the creativity, tenacity, fortitude, and optimism of those who did it – dreaming, designing, and achieving the goal. Truly amazing.

Likewise, I'm working this month on my own transcontinental scale project (and my own *Golden Spike*) in the NMRA Achievement Program. OK, the analogy is silly – a non-sequitur stretch – but I must admit that at times my project (and even making progress on anything related to trains) seems far away, across endless plains, or through the impenetrable mountains ahead on the horizon. Mostly for me (and I'm sure some of you), it's just the constant pull of other life priorities, combined with a long winter (and at times too much couch-sitting).


I've had earning the *Golden Spike* on my to do list for a good while. Now I want to get it done this year, in part because we've issued the challenge across the NER to see how many we can earn as a group (25? 50? 100?) before this year's convention in New Jersey. I know there have been a number of these achieved around the Region, and I don't want to miss this train myself before it leaves the station. So, it's an all out push for me now. Time to get 'er done.

I'm almost there on benchwork, which I worked at on and off all winter. *Golden Spike* requirements include building a small section of layout (8 sq. ft., or as small as a 2' X 4' module). I'm working on a set of new modules for my N-Trak

club that includes 15' of interchangeable parts which can be used independently or as a full set. Trackwork, wiring, and electrical come next, and I plan to complete this part by July 4.

Requirements also include constructing five structures. My module set will end up hosting many more than five structures in total, so I'm focusing this part of the project on just one piece – a corner module with a cluster of five or six structures in close proximity. These structures are primarily Walthers kits, which I will assemble, paint, decal, detail, and lightly weather. The bulk of this work will happen in July and August, including time while I'm away on holiday at the beach, or at this year's NMRA National in Kansas City!

I'm also currently working on the six pieces of rolling stock I'll need to display. Like many modelers, I have a closet full of unbuilt kits to choose from. What I don't have is a lot of experience. So after much back and forth, I've chosen six cars that will be (in my view) on the easier side (and in HO scale, even though I'm an N scaler at heart). As with the buildings, I plan to assemble, paint, decal, detail, and weather these a bit to make sure they qualify. My goal is to finish all of these models – and the project as a whole – by Labor Day.

Just in time for the wire(!), I'm looking forward to driving my own *Golden Spike* at this year's NER convention. How about you? There's still plenty of time (especially if you've already built a number of things). Perhaps you just need to get someone to come over and take a look to witness your effort. After that, make sure you join us in Mahwah for a great weekend celebrating our accomplishments, dreams, friends, and all things trains. You know: *There's Nothing Like It In The World*. 



## NEWS & EVENTS

### NER Members Build Museum Model Layout

A major historic renovation and interpretation project has been ongoing in the Town of Wakefield, NH, with the help of some NER NMRA members. The 2017 season brought an increase in the number of visitors to the Heritage Park Railroad Museum (HPRM) and a surprising number of volunteer hours. In addition, the 1909-era Boston & Maine model railroad located in the Museum Freight House expanded its historic interpretation of railroading in the greater Union and Wakefield area.

That model railroad is because of the efforts of George Allen, Rochester; Rich Breton, Rochester; Jay Ehlen, Durham; Bill Gaver, Brookfield; Lee Gridley, Ossipee; Chris Oliver, Rochester; Joe Santoro, Wolfeboro; Bob Verdonck, Moultonborough; Ken White, Rochester; and Bob Zelf, Wolfeboro. These HPRM members provided a total of 1,352 volunteer hours during the 2017 calendar year.

Weekly work sessions were devoted to expanding scenery dioramas; constructing, painting, and decaling freight cars, passenger cars, as well as steam locomotives; and preparing the layout for visitor participation. An automated program was installed to permit running multiple trains realistically, depicting station stops, trains passing each other on sidings, and having train whistle and bell signals reflecting the prototypical actions of the real railroads.

Not included in the summary of volunteer HPRM hours, were the hours the model railroad work crew worked at home constructing structures, rolling stock (freight and passenger cars), and other diorama details for placement on the 1909-era model railroad. You can see more about the layout



Bill Gaver and Rich Breton at work on layout, above. The Museum Freight House is modeled below with a B&M 2-6-0 pulling into Union. Next photo depicts Matthews, NH, stop.

Photos: Rich Breton



at [www.historicwakefieldnh.com](http://www.historicwakefieldnh.com).

Last summer's season at the HPRM attracted 867 visitors to the Museum Freight House from New England, Canada, and from as far as California and the UK.

— Thanks to Bill Gaver

## Webmaster Wants to Hear From You

NER Webmaster David Abrames wants to hear from Region members. He is looking for ideas and suggestions for



**PAY BACK?** Former NER resident Lou Sassi did a feature about NER AP Chair Bill Brown's layout in the June *Model Railroader* magazine. So when Bill dropped in during a recent trip south, Lou put him to work making trestle bents for his Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad.

the NER Web site. He also says he is available to help with Division Web sites regardless of whether they are hosted by the NER or not.

If anyone has pictures to share with fellow members, let David know. He is creating a member showcase for posting of "anything trains."

Web site maintenance is regularly scheduled for the second weekend of every month from 9 PM Saturday to 4 AM Sunday EDT. The NER Web site and domains may not be available during maintenance times. An alternate maintenance period is the last weekend of every month at the same hours. David requests reports of any outages, concerns or questions. He can be reached at [nerwebmaster2017@gmail.com](mailto:nerwebmaster2017@gmail.com).

## THE COUPLER Deadlines

AUGUST 17 – Oct-Dec issue  
NOVEMBER 16 – Jan-March issue

### TIMETABLE

Compiled by JACK LUTZ

### CONVENTIONS

July 8-14: Lionel Operating Train Society National Convention; Manchester, NH  
<[www.lots-trains.org/html](http://www.lots-trains.org/html)>

July 22-28: 48th Annual Lionel Collectors Club of America Convention; Lombard, IL  
<[www.lionelcollectors.org/](http://www.lionelcollectors.org/)>

August 7-12: NRHS 2018 National Convention; Cumberland, MD <[nrhs.com/](http://nrhs.com/)>

September 13-16: NER Convention – *The Erie Limited* 2018; Mahwah, NJ  
<[www.ErieLimited.org](http://www.ErieLimited.org)>

September 19-22, 2019: NER Convention – *Empire Junction* 2019; Syracuse, NY  
<[www.empirejunction.org](http://www.empirejunction.org)>

### SHOWS

August 11-12: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show; Edison, NJ  
<[trainshow.com/edison08/](http://trainshow.com/edison08/)>

September 15: Windsor Model Railroad Show; Windsor, NS  
<[mfmr.ca/event/windsor-model-railway-show](http://mfmr.ca/event/windsor-model-railway-show)>

September 23: 18th Annual Train Show: Taunton, MA  
<[oldcolonymodelrailroad.tripod.com/train-show.html](http://oldcolonymodelrailroad.tripod.com/train-show.html)>

September 29: Model Rail & Hobby Show; Phillips, ME  
<[www.phillipspace.org/events](http://www.phillipspace.org/events)>

September 29-30: Montreal Model Train Exposition; Montreal, QC  
<[montrealmodeltrainexposition.com/](http://montrealmodeltrainexposition.com/)>

October 13-14: Railfair 2018; Boxborough, MA  
<[nvrta.com/railfair-18/](http://nvrta.com/railfair-18/)>

October 13: Annual Truro Fall Train Show; Truro, NS  
<[mfmr.ca/event/annual-truro-fall-train-show/](http://mfmr.ca/event/annual-truro-fall-train-show/)>

### MEETS

July 14: Seacoast Division NMRA 2018 Summer Event; Auburn, ME <[seacoastnmra.org/](http://seacoastnmra.org/)>

## It's a Bird... It's a Plane?



From the archives comes this photo of a rather unique model. It was displayed at a Santa Fe modelers convention in Connecticut in 1975. We can't tell you who made it, or any other circumstances of its existence. But, we can certainly say it would have been *fast*, a' la New York Central's prototype jet engine-powered RDC car from nine years earlier.



**Polls Open Until August 15**

# NER Elections Underway via Internet

## New NER Governance Model Brings New Voting Process

By **JEFF PASTON**  
*Coupler Editor*

With the change in the way the Northeastern Region is organized (see *Coupler* #269), the Region is no longer promoting its elections through the pages of *The Coupler*.

In the past, this issue would have been where you'd be reading biographies of candidates running for Region office, and find a printed ballot to submit with your choices. The participation from the membership using this costly method was dismal.

Modern technology is offering us a solution to improve participation in the voting process! As you read this, voting is underway via the Internet and will continue until August 15. The NER has added a voting

system to the Web site <[nernmra.org](http://nernmra.org)>.

Positions up for election for three-year terms are president, vice president, and



the four newly created area directors. Since this *Coupler* had already gone to press before the candidates' names were announced, you will find who is running and their biographies on the Web site. You can then immediately vote using your NMRA member number. Full instructions are posted at <[nernmra.org](http://nernmra.org)>.

For those who do not have access to a computer, contact your division superintendent who will have all of the necessary information and paper ballots so you can mail in your vote.

An email is also being sent to the membership announcing this new voting process.

The results of this election will be announced at the fall NER convention in Mahwah, NJ. 🚂

## **Follow-up to "End of an Era" in Last Issue**

# We Should Have an Exit Strategy!

By **LARRY CANNON**, MMR

Dave Isley's recent article (*Coupler* #269) clearly points out the model railroad you someday might leave behind for others to deal with is much more work for those people if you haven't left any guidance. Cataloging what you have is a good start, but there are a number of other things we can do that also would be helpful.

Assuming you have a layout, are there people, such as relatives or your modeling friends who would help them, that have at least a basic understanding of how your layout is put together and probably how it would have to come apart? If not, educating people with written guidance, or at a minimum, an overview of how to salvage things is a big help. Dave's father did leave some indication of how to dispose of his collection and that too should be communicated to those who will be doing the work if you are not able to help.

You should also be sure that your heirs understand the relative value of what you have and the fact that the financial return is a function of the amount of effort made to market and sell it, the condition of items, and the items' status relative to the current technology in the hobby.

I belong to a local club that is also a non-profit organization that receives donations. As a result, I have done estate counseling for model railroads, processed donations to the club, and done some appraisal work (mostly pro bono). On occasion, there have been questions of why

something that cost so much new, is now worth so little. Use and care are the key factors, but technological obsolescence has become a big factor in recent history. If needed, people should hear from you rather than from someone else that your treasures aren't worth what they once were.

It also may be time to evaluate your personal style of model railroading. I – like

## ***YOUR HEIRS SHOULD KNOW...***

- ☞ How to salvage layout
- ☞ The value of your stuff
- ☞ Who can help them
- ☞ Preferences for gifting

virtually every other model railroader that I know – have accumulated things that I probably will never use. As hobbyists, we tend to save things we might use someday and the definition of "someday" varies.

About 20 years ago, I adopted a "rule" on rolling stock and locomotives: *Unless it was a reserve diesel locomotive drive unit or hard to locate parts, I should sell these items and use the money to buy something I actually needed on the layout.* (I will admit

that I have a layout that will hold 500+ pieces of rolling stock, but there is nothing in boxes on shelves waiting to be built "someday"). I make an effort to minimize my parts inventory (except for two small store counter displays of Evergreen and Plastruct) to what I see myself definitely using to finish the layout or that I could be using during my estimated lifetime.

Okay, so I have more or less committed myself to a discipline. But how do I enforce it? As with rolling stock and locomotives, if possible, I sell my excess inventory, or I trade it with modeling friends for favors, services, or materials I do need. If those don't work, I give things away or otherwise arrange "homes" for them. My motivation is to leave less stuff behind so my children will be muttering less when they have to clean up what is left.

In summary, see that your survivors are informed about values, where they can look for help (or that you have arranged that help), and what your preferences are for gifting things. Cull your treasures to increase your enjoyment of what you have, and leave behind less that might get thrown away.

One of the things we do in the Seacoast Division that seems popular is having "sale/swap tables" at our meetings. Other than renting a table at a show, this creates a "venue" for members to part with things that they no longer need. It creates more than a little interest at meetings. It also has become a source of attendance prizes from the stuff that doesn't sell. 🚂



# A Wealth of Things to See & Do

SEPT  
19  
THURSDAY

# TO TRAINS



Chuck Diljak



By **CHUCK DILJAK**

**Y**ou've received a taste of the layouts that will be open for tours and operating sessions during the 2018 NER convention, *The Erie Limited*, in the last issue of *The Coupler*. But there is so much more planned! The convention also has exciting tours to experience, a wide variety of clinics in several very different formats, and a banquet to celebrate your visit. It is all based at the Doubletree Hotel in Mahwah, NJ, on September 13-16.

## GULLIVER'S GATE

You read Irwin Nathanson's story about *Gulliver's Gate* in the January-March issue of *The Coupler*. His article, accompanied with photos by his wife Julie, provided an excellent overview of this brand new museum in New York City. But, that is what the general public sees. We have arranged for a special "behind the scenes" tour of *Gulliver's Gate* on Saturday morning.

You will visit the museum's Private Academy for a talkback with a *Gulliver's Gate* model maker. The museum model makers have scratchbuilt many historic structures from around the world in HO scale. During the Private Academy, you can learn about their techniques, materials, tools, models, and scenes. You will get a chance to see and feel the different materials used to create their miniature world – materials that you might discover useful on your own layout. Bring your inquisitive minds and ask the model maker about techniques, materials, tools, and models.

Our special tour will break into small groups to visit the museum's model workshop. Here, you will have a chance to see what the model makers are working on before they make it into the exhibit.

Your visit to the museum will wrap up with a tour of the exhibit. Finally, you get to see what the general public gets to see, but with a different perspective after what you learned. Visit the museum website at [GulliversGate.com](http://GulliversGate.com) to learn more about the tour. And, visit the convention Web site to register for the tour.

## LIGHT RAIL AND HOBOKEN TERMINAL

The second bus tour at the convention will offer plenty of photo opportunities, both rail and non-rail. This tour takes you on the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) system and to Hoboken Terminal.

The HBLR is a passenger light rail system in Hudson County, NJ, and is owned by New Jersey Transit. Since 2000, the light rail system has connected many of the communities along the western banks of the Hudson River. Your tour begins with a coach bus ride from the hotel to the system's shops on Friday morning. After the shop tour, everyone will travel to historic Hoboken Terminal using the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system. Along the way, you will see the former New York Central tunnel HBLR uses and artwork in the Bergenline Avenue Station.

While the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system is fairly new,

(Continued on page 6)





# A Wealth of Things to See & Do

(Continued from page 5)

Hoboken Terminal is more than 100 years old. Still in use today, Hoboken Terminal is one of the New York metropolitan area's major transportation hubs for commuters to and from New York City. The terminal connects New Jersey Transit commuter rail lines, a Metro-North Railroad line, various bus lines, Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, the Port Authority Trans Hudson (PATH) rapid transit system, and New York Waterway-operated ferries. It is a very busy terminal, to say the least.

When you disembark from the light rail system, you will be given a tour of this landmark station and surrounding area. Afterwards, time will be provided to find lunch at one of the many local restaurants in Hoboken before boarding your bus back to the hotel.

Remember those photo opportunities? While you are traveling the HBLR, learning the history of Hoboken Terminal, and seeing all the rail activity at the terminal, don't forget to take in the fabulous views of the New York City skyline. Bring an extra disk for your camera!

## STERLING HILL MINE

A third tour is self-driving, allowing you to visit layouts or participate in operating sessions later in the day before returning to the hotel. The Sterling Hill Mine is one of the oldest mines in the United States, beginning around 1739. The mine, which contained zinc, iron, and manganese, finally closed in 1986. After its closing, two brothers purchased the facility

and turned it into a museum. In that time, they have collected many examples of mining equipment and minerals for the museum that you will have the opportunity to see.

A two hour group tour of the mine will begin on Friday morning. The majority of the time spent on the tour will be in the underground zinc mine – a 1300-foot underground walking tour. Within the mine passages are numerous pieces of equipment used while the mine was in operation, plus exhibits on the mining process. Visitors will see the lamp room, the shaft station, mine galleries dating to the 1830s, the ever-popular fluorescent "Rainbow Tunnel," a sight-and-sound blasting demonstration, and much more. The remainder of the time will be in the large exhibit hall and museum of fluorescence.

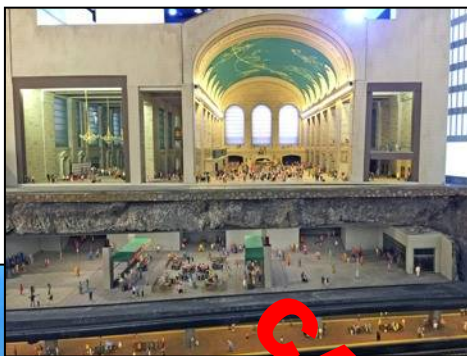
## CLINICS

The Erie Limited convention is offering a variety of clinics in various formats. There are hands-on clinics with *Modeling with the Masters* and a Make and Take. You can also see modeling techniques up close and personal during Works-in-Progress clinics. And, of course, there are the traditional classroom clinics covering a wide variety of topics. Because there are so many clinics, most will only be presented one time. But, that also means that you are bound to find topics of interest.

**Modeling with the Masters.** Even before the registration table is set up, the convention will already be in full swing. Peter Youngblood, a Master Model Railroader, will be conducting a *Modeling with the Masters* (MWTM) clinic Thursday morning.

Peter is one of the leaders of the popular NMRA MWTM program and will present "Modeling with Balsa Foam." This material is a plastic foam that carves like butter, paints like wood, and has countless model railroad applications in all scales. Using this amazing

Gulliver's Gate model of Grand Central Terminal, *left*, and London's Tower Bridge, *below*. At *right*, Hudson-Bergen Light Rail train waits at Hoboken Terminal.



Two photos: Julie Nathanson

Chuck Diljak

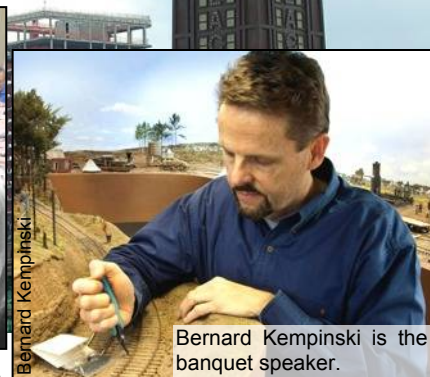




The author will be one of the Works-in-Progress clinicians on Thursday.



Peter Youngblood, MMR, will lead *Modeling with the Masters* clinic on Thursday morning.



Bernard Kempinski is the banquet speaker.

material, you will build a single track concrete pedestrian underpass and learn how to make bridge abutments, retaining walls, signal pedestals, platforms, and much more. There is a list of tools you need to bring for this clinic listed on the Erie Limited Web site.

**Works-in-Progress.** On Thursday afternoon, a "Works-in-Progress" clinic will allow the audience to be up close to the presenter so you can see a technique demonstrated closely. In addition, during the Works-in-Progress session, multiple clinics are occurring at the same time in the same room. And, if you missed one of the clinics, stick around. Each of the Works-in-Progress clinics are repeated every half hour. So, after you have visited the registration desk, stop at the Works-in-Progress clinic room.

**Make and Take Clinic.** On Friday afternoon, a Make and Take clinic will be presented by Steve Funaro of Funaro & Camerlengo. Steve is going to guide you through the construction of one of his company's resin kits during this 90 minute Make & Take clinic. By the time the clinic is over, you should be eager to build more resin car kits. Like the MWTM clinic, participants will need to bring their own tools and Bettendorf trucks to this clinic. Look for a list of what is required on the Erie Limited Web site.

**Classroom Clinics.** The convention has time slots for more than 50 classroom clinics. The convention committee is close to filling every time slot with a unique session.

There will be industrial clinics covering anthracite mining, logging, and waterfront railroads. Clinics will also cover prototype railroads such as the Staten Island Rapid Transit, NYO&W, Erie, and others. Scenery topics will cover backdrops, backgrounds, foregrounds, freshening up scenery, using natural materials, and more. For those of you interested in operations, there are clinics on scale tracks, redesigning a layout for operations, LCL operations, commuter trains, and marine operations. And, there are modeling clinics that cover building from a photograph, modeling vehicles realistically, structure interiors, tips and tricks, weathering, scratchbuilding in styrene, and using a Cricut® machine for modeling.

Historic ore cars greet visitors to the Edison Tunnel entrance to the Sterling Hill Mine, *below*.

At *right*, a conveyor structure towers over the landscape of the Sterling Hill Mine. The conveyor transferred ore to storage silos to await loading into rail hoppers.

Two photos: Chuck Diljak



Electronics will also be covered with clinics on LED lighting, using smartphone speakers for locomotive sound, animation, and even a clinic on deadrail.

## BANQUET

Saturday evening, the convention is hosting a banquet buffet, after which awards will be presented, we'll hear from our guest speaker, and see a preview of next year's NER convention hosted by the Central New York Division.

Our guest speaker, Bernard Kempinski, is presenting "High Tech Approach to a 19th Century Model Railroad." He will cover how he used laser cutters, 3D printing, photo etching, and casting techniques to model an unusual early steam era prototype. His Civil War era O scale layout and other projects are on his blog at [www.usmrr.blogspot.com](http://www.usmrr.blogspot.com). Bernard is a freelance writer who has written dozens of magazine articles and several books on model railroading and layout planning. He has built many models on commission for museums and individuals. A former U.S. Army captain, He is a retired defense analyst. He is also the proprietor of Alkem Scale Models, a cottage industry specializing in fine scale kits and detail parts. ([www.alkemscalemodels.com](http://www.alkemscalemodels.com)).

## NON-RAIL

As you would expect, there is much to see and do in the greater New York metropolitan area. Your convention team has assembled information on many venues in an exceptional program book for our non-rail visitors.

Don't forget to bring along a GPS! Addresses for the layouts, Sterling Hill Mine tour, and Non-Rail venues will be provided in the convention booklets. The convention programs will also include QR codes for you to obtain directions using your smartphone. You will need a QR reader and Google Maps applications on your smartphone to use these QR codes. Go to [erielimited.org/ErieLimited/files/QRCodes.pdf](http://erielimited.org/ErieLimited/files/QRCodes.pdf) to download the instructions on how to set this up.

With your GPS working, we will "Meet you in Mahwah."



# Time to Operate at *The Model Railroad Club*

1



2





By **SCOTT DUNLAP**

Photos by the Author

About 45 minutes south of the convention hotel in Mahwah, an HO layout takes up most of the floor space of The Model Railroad Club's 11,000 square foot facility in Union, NJ. The layout has been under construction for more than 45 years. As is the building in which it's housed, the layout is being built in phases as time and money permit. There is no formal timetable for completion, but there is a basic track plan and a general sequence for construction. The original section of the layout measures 40 by 40 feet and is, for the most part, complete (see track plan). Work is expected to continue for many years to come and parts of layout expansion are now operating.

Attendees at this fall's NER convention, *The Erie Limited*, can take part in a special op session at 10 AM on Saturday, September 15. Regular operating sessions take place almost every Tuesday evening from 7 to 10 PM. Each session represents eight hours, so it takes three sessions to complete an operating day. At the end of a session, all trains are stopped where they happen to be as time runs out, even if they have not completed their runs. At the following week's session, things pick up from right where they left off.

### THREE RAILROADS

The layout includes three fictional railroads, the Class 1 *Hudson, Delaware and Ohio*; the *Trenton Northern Transportation and Light Company*, an interurban and traction line; and the *Rahway River*, a short line. Each railroad interchanges with the others, but has its own operating crews and procedures.

Upon completion, the *Hudson, Delaware and Ohio* (HD&O) mainline will run from Hoboken, NJ, to Pittsburgh, PA, where it connects with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. There is a branch line which runs from Summit to Gladstone, and other branches are planned for the future. Interchanges with the *Trenton Northern* are located in both Jim Thorpe, on the HD&O main, and Bernardsville, on the Gladstone Branch. In Jim Thorpe, there will be another interchange with the *Mauch Chunk Terminal Railroad*, which is still under construction. In Summit, the railroad links up with the *Rahway River*.

The *Trenton Northern's* line runs from Trenton, NJ, to Northampton, PA. Branches run to Jim Thorpe and Bernardsville with the previously mentioned connections to the HD&O. The *Trenton Northern* also has an interchange with the *Rahway River* in Allentown.

The *Rahway River* is an independent short line that provides both passenger and freight service. It runs from the small town of Kenilworth, NJ, to Allentown, PA, with a short branch to Summit.

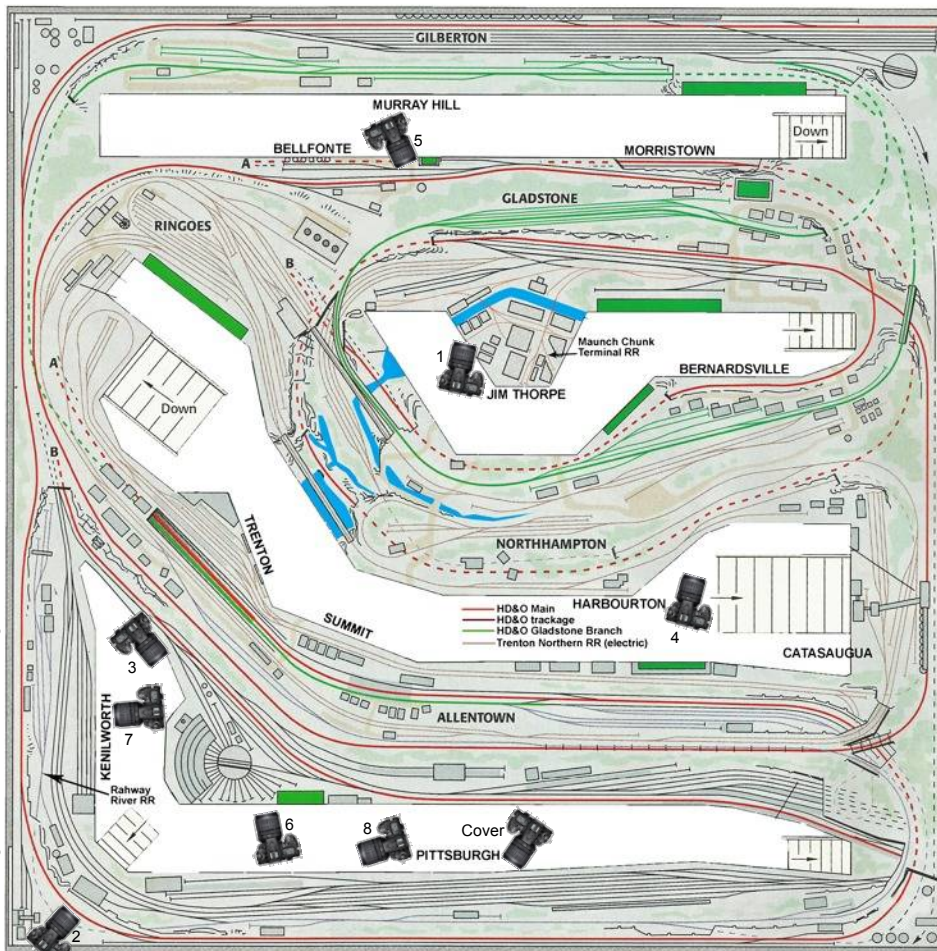
### OPERATING JOBS

Starting with the HD&O, here are the jobs that will be available for our guest operators. First, we will have two dispatchers. Typically, we have our own experienced members handle the dispatching duties, but if there are enough guests available, then they are more than welcome to give it a try. Of course, our own guys will be there to help them along.

There are yard positions available in Pittsburgh, Gilberton and Newark. If you really like switching, then these are the jobs for you. If you end up in Pittsburgh or Gilberton, you can expect to stay very busy for the entire session.

(Continued on page 10)





(Continued from page 9)

In Pittsburgh and Gilberton, there are large passenger stations that require their own crews. With trains arriving and departing from both directions, consist changes, sleepers that need to be serviced and express cars that need to be spotted, there will be plenty of action. Both towns also have major engine facilities, so there are engine hostlers needed as well.

Along the main line, there are tower operators needed for Bellefonte, Jim Thorpe and Summit. Tower operators coordinate movements through their territories with the dispatcher and the road crews. There is switching at Jim Thorpe since it is the major interchange with the *Trenton Northern*. Summit too has some

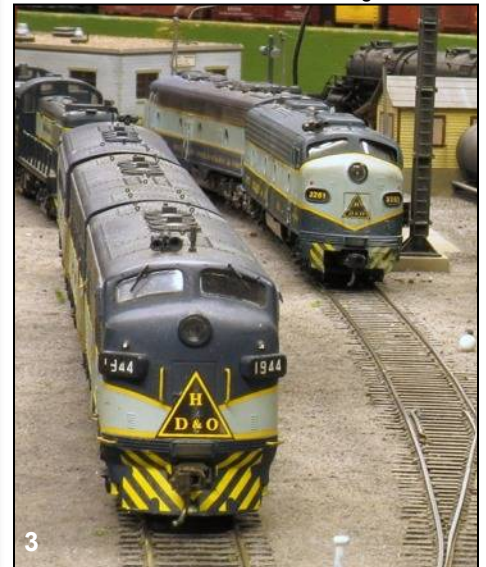
switching and the HD&O's connection with the *Rahway River* is located here. Summit is also where the Gladstone branch meets up with the main line, so it is not unusual to see two, three, or even four trains meet there at the same time.

For those who prefer to be engineers, there will be up to six road crew jobs available. Roads crews can run their trains from the operator aisles or, if they prefer, can do so from the overhead balcony. Not a bad alternative if things get a little crowded.

Now let's move over to the *Trenton Northern* (TN) starting with the dispatcher's position. As with the HD&O, the dispatcher is usually one of our own members. But, again, the job will be available to one of our guests if someone wants it. On the TN the dispatcher is



The Trenton Northern's dispatcher's panel is quite elaborate with the look and feel of the real thing! Below, HD&O locomotives await assignment.



Trenton Northern commuters make a cross-platform connection with the HD&O in Bernardsville, at left.

Below, a pair of Hudson, Delaware and Ohio commuter sets in Gladstone Yard stand ready for the morning rush.







6

Hudson, Delaware and Ohio motive power are being readied at the engine terminal on the Model Railroad Club layout. It is obviously the motive

power transition era on the HD&O as evidenced by the articulated 2-8-8-2 N&W prototype Mallet locomotive in the foreground.

responsible for lining up most of the routes, unlike the HD&O where that function is handled by the yardmasters and tower operators.

There is a yard located in Ringoes that will most likely be run by a club member simply because, with all of the guest operators and club regulars needed to be on hand, it can get a little tight in the aisles

#### OPERATING OTHER LINES

Five road crews are needed for the TN. Unlike on the HD&O, the Trenton Northern engineers can spend most of their day in just one aisle and it is a bit easier to keep track of their trains. Traffic on the line ranges from single car trolleys to multi-unit passenger trains, and from local way freights to manifest freights and coal drags.

Finally, that brings us to the *Rahway River*. Operations are very laid back on this little short line, perhaps a little *too* laid back for

most. For that reason, we will not assign a guest to run this railroad exclusively, but instead pull road crews from the HD&O when needed.

Well, that's it! We hope this whets your appetite and gives you some idea of what to expect should you participate in one of our op sessions. Of course, no article of this nature can relay everything that you'll need to know. But don't worry, there will be plenty of club members on hand to answer every question and help you every step of the way.

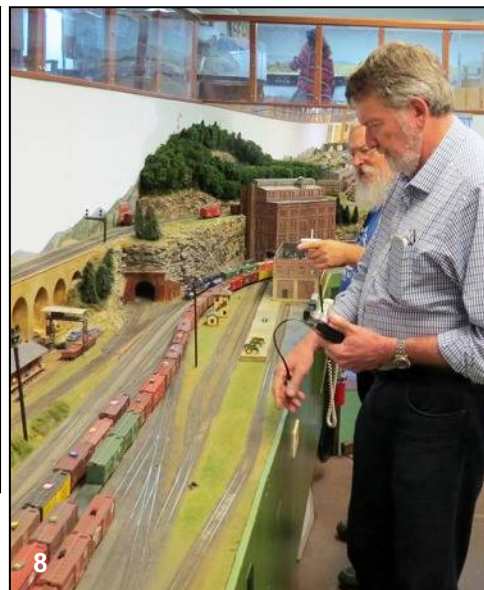
If you're planning to attend this NER Convention, we hope that you'll be able to join us for the fun. Space is limited. If you are interested, you need to sign up soon. Even if you can't make the session, please stop by afterwards between 1 and 4 PM to see both our HO and N scale layouts in action. 🚂



7

The Rahway River is a short line on the layout. Here, switcher #8 prepares to leave Kenilworth station with a one car passenger consist.

At right, Australian Garry Glazebrook was recently a guest operator. He's seen here sorting cuts of cars in Pittsburgh. The club uses magnetic waybills which are clearly visible in this view.



8





## CNY Division's "Ops 'til You Drop"

# 'Op'ting for Success a Fifth Time!

On the last weekend of April, the Central New York Division successfully hosted its fifth annual "Ops 'til You Drop" weekend attracting 43 model railroad operators from many areas of the northeastern United States and eastern Canada. The event steadily grew in popularity to the point, where for the first time, participation had to be limited. The word was put out in January that this year's event had a first-in, first-served registration, and the field was filled by the end of February — a full two months in advance of the event.

This popular event was the brainchild of Bill Brown, MMR, after he had attended similar events in other areas.

"Several years ago, we recognized that Central New York had some great layouts that were already holding local ops sessions. It was a natural for us to tap into that on a wider basis," Bill said. He attributes some of the success to a low cost (\$10), and the variety of operating schemes available. An informal Sunday breakfast has become a "love-fest" of friends meeting to share stories — friends that met years ago at this event and look forward to seeing each other each year.


"When the event first started, we took what we felt were the best aspects from other ops events, and molded our own unique ideas into a plan that has proven to be very popular," Bill said. "People seem to like the fact that the weekend focuses on operating trains — and nothing else!"

This year's lineup featured nine outstanding layouts with a 10th being readied for next year. Each participant got to choose three of the nine layouts for three rotating sessions of 3½ hours each — two on a Saturday and one on Sunday after the breakfast. All layouts offered this year were HO or HO<sub>n</sub>3. Next year's planned addition is a very large G scale pike. On Saturday, the host of the first session provided dinner for the folks that spent the afternoon there.

"The layout owners have been wonderful at providing a welcoming atmosphere for participants of all skill levels and experience," Bill said. "Our great layouts and their owners can be credited with the reasons for the event's success."

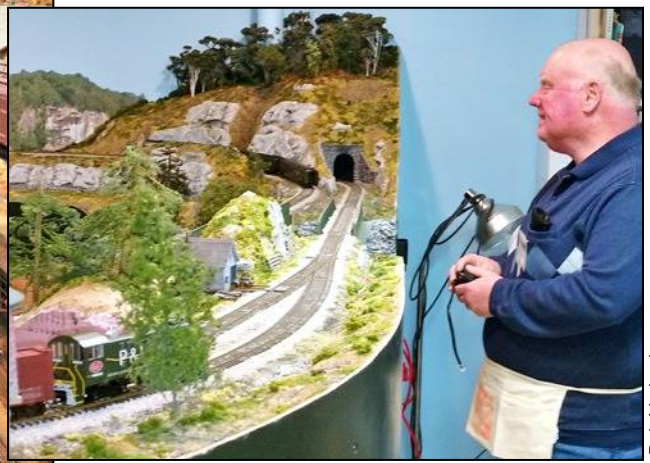
Attendees came from many NER divisions, including Lakeshores, Hudson-Berkshire, Allouette, Little Rhody, Sunrise Trail, and Central New York.

"Ops 'til You Drop" is scheduled next year for Friday and Saturday, April 27-28, 2019. Bill can be reached at [larcproducts@yahoo.com](mailto:larcproducts@yahoo.com).

Another successful operations weekend in the NER is *Island Ops* [islandops.org](http://islandops.org) based in the Sunrise Trail Division. Dates tentatively set for 2019 are April 26-28.  — From Bill Brown, MMR



Rick Mniece (CNY Division) and Ray Howard (Lakeshores Division) control movements at Silverton on Bill Brown's *Leadville & Red Cliff* layout in Jamesville, NY, above left. At top of page, Jean LaCroix of Montreal switches



Benson Mines on Roger Beiswenger's *St. Lawrence Division* in New Hartford, NY. Above right, Jeff O'Neil (Lakeshores Division) is at the throttle on Dick Hehir's *B&A Central* railroad in Fayetteville, NY.



# Trying Wallpaper Liner as a Backdrop

By **MIKE TYLICK, MMR**  
Contributing Editor

**N**ot too long ago, I finished the third, and probably final, section of my On30 *Marshfield & Old Colony Railroad*. The tables sat around for months while I procrastinated about assembling them. My best excuse was that I was deciding whether or not to add a

backdrop. I didn't want to ruin the walls of my finished room; sooner or later the house would be sold. I also didn't want the aggravation of hanging heavy Masonite® panels.

Then my friend and neighbor, Jim Kerkam, suggested I try wallpaper liner. It's inexpensive, easy to put up, and easy to take down.



All photos: Mike Tylick

**1.** Jim is applying the liner over my wall. Heavy duty wallpaper liner is just heavy enough to hide the seams. Other than the short lengths, this is really no different than hanging wallpaper in your dining room. Note the neat paper pasting table and wallpaper tools. It pays to have the right tools for the job.

**2.** We masked off the wallpaper with blue painter's tape and newspaper. Jim rolls on

a coat of latex primer. We gave it one coat, but in hindsight, we should have given it two. The liner is quite porous and probably not really meant to take paint.

**3.** Painting a sky that fades from a deep blue to almost white is much easier than you might think. This is Jim's first try, and he is doing a wonderful job. Part of what makes this possible is that the sky is different every day. Gradients are uneven and often

streaked. The "color lines" often run in several directions. On some days the sky even looks completely different from one direction to another.

It makes sense to start on the light side and gradually darken the color. Blue is a strong color and it takes a lot of white to lighten it. The paint dries quickly on this porous surface, so don't be afraid to paint over either wet or dry paint. Other than painting the darker colors towards the horizon, almost anything you do will look good.

**4.** I am using stencils and a spray can to make clouds. Directions are simple: Use the front side of the stencil for the tops of the clouds. If you reverse one of the stencils, the wind direction of the cloud will look

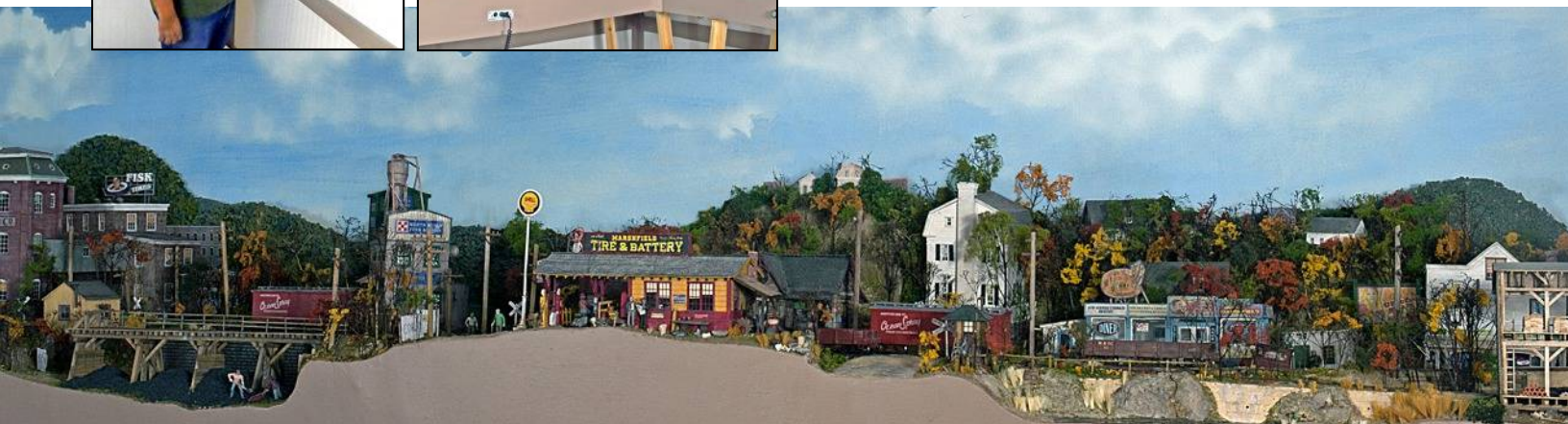
wrong. Hold the stencil close to the backdrop for a sharp top edge and allow the spray to fade away towards the bottom.

For the bottom of the cloud, turn the stencil upside down and use the back. Hold the stencil several inches from the backdrop for a fuzzy edge. Work from top to bottom. It goes quickly! These cloud stencils are manufactured by New London Industries of San Antonio, Texas, and available from Walthers.

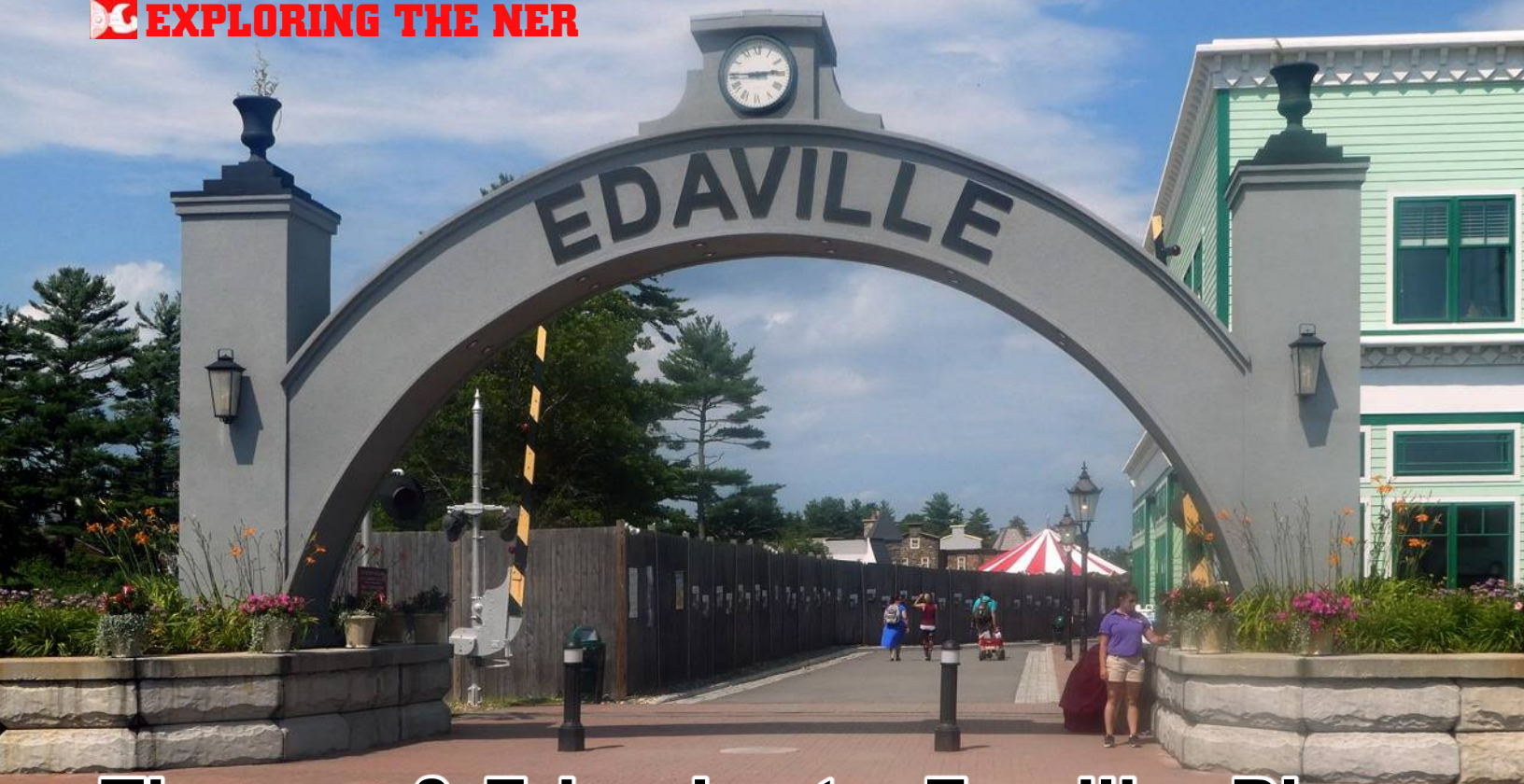
**5.** Removing the tape is a boring, but necessary task.

**6.** The space above the backdrop provides a good place to display my NMRA certificates.

Once the layout is in place, it is really apparent how much the backdrop enhances its appearance. 🚂







# Thomas & Friends at a Familiar Place

By **MIKE TYLICK**, MMR  
Contributing Editor  
Photos by the Author

Certainly, all of us are familiar with the BBC's "*Thomas & Friends*," the delightful railroad-themed children's television show. *Thomas & Friends* has probably caused more youngsters to play with miniature trains than any three rail Christmas tree electric trains ever did. And now, Thomas has also inspired a theme park here in the NER.

Edaville Railroad opened in 1947, only two years after the first of Reverend Wilbert Audrey's railroad-themed books were published. **EDAVILLE** is named after its founder, **Ellis D Atwood**. Atwood purchased two engines and most of the cars from the Maine two foot gauge Bridgeton & Saco River Railroad after it was dismantled in 1941. He brought them to his large cranberry plantation in South Carver, a town in southeastern Massachusetts, to haul sand, supplies, and harvested crops. Atwood's

neighbors were quite taken with the diminutive railroad. At first, rides were offered to the locals for free. As demand grew, a nickel a ride was charged. Eventually the line became less of a working railroad than a tourist attraction.

After Atwood's death in 1950, ownership of the railroad went through a number of hands and eventually languished. In January, 1992, Edaville ceased operations. Much of the equipment was sold to the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad in Portland. By 2005, after several unsuccessful attempts to revive Edaville, what was left of the the railroad and its property were changing. Some of the cranberry bogs were sold for development, and the train ride was shortened to two miles. Now known as Edaville, USA, the property became a theme park.

The newly dieselized train ride was still a big draw, but 32 amusement park rides were added to help draw crowds. In 2013, Dino Land was opened – a walking park which features 24 life sized animated dinosaurs and other related attractions.

After a three year reconstruction, the park reopened in 2015 with the addition of "Thomasland at Edaville," a children's park based on the popular *Thomas & Friends* TV series. It includes 11 new Thomas character rides, a stage show, and animated recreations of locations from Thomas's home – the fictitious Isle of Sodor. The train ride that once made Edaville locally famous is now led by a full scale talking Thomas the Tank Engine.

The Festival of Lights, held from late November to early January, remains a very



Percy, James, and Emily rest between runs at the Tidmouth Engine Sheds. At top of page, the new entranceway at Edaville includes a visitors and customer service center beyond the archway, as well as a quaint old English village.





Some of the inhabitants of the Isle of Sodor pause to have their snapshot taken. Thomasland features numerous photo props for families to enjoy.

popular holiday season event. Other seasonal events are held throughout the year. An Internet search found only one other Thomas theme park – that one in England.

We've taken our young grandchildren to the park twice, and our experience was good both times. Oliver (age 8) and Lidia (age 4) both had a wonderful time, and of course I enjoyed myself as well. No one is ever too old for Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends. Despite hot weather, we had to drag the children away in the late afternoon. The park is clean and is kept in good condition by its polite and attentive employees. It's pricey, but considering all one can do, the costs are in line with other area attractions. Ample parking is free, and the park is convenient to the Interstate highway system. There are numerous discounts available, especially for Massachusetts and Rhode Island residents. More information is on line at <[www.edaville.com](http://www.edaville.com)>. 🚂



Thomas's friend, Diesel, leads the train ride at Thomasland.



Thomas the Tank engine proudly leads Edaville #2 into the station. Several of the open air passenger cars were rebuilt from old Maine two-foot gauge boxcars.

## NEW MEMBERS

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NER Office Manager

As of 5/1/18

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Michael McBride

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Krikor Hajjan

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