

***All 'NEW' from across the NER...
New York, New Jersey, and Newfoundland!***

THE COUPLER

NMRA NORTHEASTERN REGION

No. 272

JANUARY-MARCH 2019



**Return to the Coastal
Newfoundland Railway
Page 10**

***First Stop: New Jersey—
Reviewing the 'Erie Ltd.'***

***Then, Syracuse—
'Empire Junction 2019'***



***Also—
Exploring the NER:
NY Transit Museum
Page 14***

Jim Rizzolo

Nov. 13, 1942 - Sept. 26, 2018



Sadly, I must report that Jim Rizzolo, the Northeastern Region's membership chair, and my close friend, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, September 26 at his home in Scotch Plains, New Jersey.

I first met Jim, about four years ago at the *World's Greatest Hobby* show in Edison, NJ. I was there representing the Garden State Division, attempting to get people's attention by building an "underbed" 3'x 5' layout on premises. Well, it worked as I drew Jim right in. We talked for a while about the hobby and he was hooked! Jim signed up for full membership with all magazines —not unusual for Jim as he was an "all in" type of guy.

He loved the hobby, but most of all he loved the people in the Garden State Division. I was able to introduce him to a number of guys in his area who were building basement empires, and he became fast friends to the point he would be over at

their homes helping them build. He always wanted to be of help, and was never satisfied unless he was busy.

He wanted to build a layout in his basement and started by finding out as much as he could about what he wanted. Together, we went to the NER and MER conventions. This provided Jim with opportunities to "operate." He'd say, "I need to understand what I want to have and what I don't."

Jim was always willing to volunteer and that spirit is what really made us click. Jim volunteered to be the Region's membership chair and travelled with me to Albany, NY, to attend a show there and represent the NMRA. We also attended the show in Springfield, MA, two years in a row, and the recent *World's Greatest Hobby* show in Edison. Jim was a fantastic recruiter, signing well over 50 new members in the last three shows.

At the end of his life, he had accepted his fate, as he always lived by the serenity prayer: "God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

We'll miss you Jim. —Bob Dennis

Matching Funds Program Helps Divisions

We discovered in the *NMRA Bulletin* last year that the NMRA has made available up to \$50 in matching funds for an event or purchase intended to foster member retention. The article by North America At-large Director Peter Youngblood MMR announced the Division Retention Event Matching Fund program.

Our Central New York Division board decided to apply for the funds to help defray the cost of our annual division picnic. The picnic has been one of our best-attended

events, held on a Saturday in July at the home of a member. We also decided to invite our neighbors from the Lakeshores Division. Nearly 60 members and spouses attended.

It turns out the most difficult part of the grant process is locating the form on the NMRA Website. You must be logged in as a member, click on the "Regions" tab, then on "Regions and Divisions," and then on the "Division Matching Fund" tab. The form comes up in the Microsoft Word DOC format.

I wrote up the application and sent it to Peter, who approved it the same day. We then submitted the completed form with our receipts attached and a copy of the picnic information from our Division newsletter to the NMRA National Office. We received our reimbursement within a week.

If your division hasn't already planned an event to foster member retention, you ought to consider it. It doesn't have to be as elaborate as ours; the funds could be used to purchase materials for a



PITCHING THE NER. At the recent *Great New York State Model Train Fair* in Syracuse, the CNY Division was promoting the Region and the upcoming 2019 *Empire Junction* convention. Taking part were Division Superintendent Bob Verkuy; Rich Martin, visiting from the Garden State Division; NER VP Bob Dennis; and Ed O'Rourke, NER Western Director and chair of *Empire Junction* 2019.

THE COUPLER Deadlines

FEBRUARY 15 — April-June issue
MAY 17 — July-Sept issue
AUGUST 16 — Oct-Dec issue

TIMETABLE

Compiled by JACK LUTZ

CONVENTIONS

April 4-6: 34th Annual Sn3 Symposium;
 Bellevue, WA <www.sn3seattle.com/>
September 19-22: NER Convention— *Empire Jct.*
 2019; Syracuse, NY <www.empirejunction.org>

SHOWS

January 5-6: 61st Annual Model Railroad Show;
 North Haledon, NJ <www.gsmrrclub.org>
January 20: Toy & Model Train Expo; Lincroft, NJ
 <www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/cba.htm>
January 26-27: Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby
 Show; West Springfield, MA
 <www.railroadhobbyshow.com/>
February 10: Model Railroad, Train & Toy Show;
 Wallingford, CT <www.classicshowslc.com/>
February 16-17: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show;
 Swansea, MA <trainshow.com/swansea/>
February 16: 33rd Annual Model RR & Doll House Show;
 Augusta, ME <www.whitefieldionsclub.com/>
February 24: Worcester Model Railroaders Annual Show;
 Worcester, MA <www.wmrr.org>
March 2-3: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show;
 Rochester, NY <trainshow.com/rochester/>
March 3: Cheshire High School Band Parent Association
 Fall Train Show; Cheshire, CT
March 9-10: Spring Model Railroad Show & Open House;
 Hingham, MA <www.ssmrc.org>
March 9-10: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show;
 Edison, NJ <trainshow.com/edison03/>
March 9: Vermont Rails Model Railroad Show;
 St Albans, VT <www.nvrrailroad.org/>
March 10: Southern Connecticut Model Train Show;
 Greenwich, CT <www.southerncttrainshow.com>
March 17: Wayne Train Show; Wayne, NJ
 <www.eastcoasttrainparts.com/wayne.htm>
March 23-24: Greenberg's Great Train & Toy Show;
 Wilmington, MA <trainshow.com/wilmington03/>
March 29-30: East Coast Large Scale Train Show;
 York, PA <www.ecslts.com/show-info.html>
March 30: Maine3Railers Annual Train Show; Augusta, ME
 <maine3railers.org/calendar/>
March 31: The Great Batavia Train Show;
 Batavia, NY <www.gsme.org/>
April 6: Great Northern New England Train Show;
 Dover, NH <netca.org/>
April 6: First Annual SMMRC Train Show; Westbrook, ME
 <southernmainemrc.wordpress.com/>

MEETS

January 5: Seacoast Division NMRA 2019 Winter Event;
 Westbrook, ME <seacoastnmra.org/>
February 23: GSD Winter Meet 2019;
 Oakland, NJ <www.nergsd.com/upcoming.html>
April 6: Seacoast Division NMRA 2019 Spring Event;
 Newington, NH <seacoastnmra.org/>

OPS

April 27-28: "Ops" Til You Drop" Weekend 2019;
 Syracuse and Utica, NY <www.cnynmra.org/>

hands-on clinic, or perhaps to purchase expensive layout-building supplies or tools (such as FastTrack jigs, rock molds, or similar items) to be kept by a division and loaned to members.

—Ed O'Rourke, NER Western Director



'Erie Limited' Delivers Successful Convention

Event noted for variety and number of clinics

Mark Lutz

By **CHUCK DILJAK**

After less than a year of anticipation following the Newport convention, we met in Mahwah, NJ, for the North-eastern Region's convention. The *Erie Limited* started even before the registration desk opened with a *Modeling with the Masters* clinic lead by Peter Youngblood, MMR and assisted by Tom Oxnard, MMR. Participants constructed and carved bridge abutments and

loading docks from balsa foam, discovering the potential of this material for model railroading.

The afternoon was a surprise for early registrants, as well. The convention featured four clinics – presented by Bruce DeYoung, Tom Wortmann, Jim Homoki and Chuck Diljak – called “*Works-in-Progress.*” Participants were invited to view techniques using real glass for windows, making trash, weathering with pencils, and painting brick. One attendee commented, “These clinics were easily accessible and allowed for more interaction with the presenters. I would definitely like to see these continued at future conventions.”

Later that afternoon, the convention began hitting its stride as the first of

55 classroom clinics got underway. There are two schools of thought when it comes to convention clinics: Do you have each clinic presented more than once or only once? For this convention, the latter approach was taken. As a result, only two clinics were presented twice over the course of the convention. And, only one clinic spot was vacant due to a late cancellation. This gave everyone a wide variety of clinics to choose from, including scenery techniques, history, operations, electrical projects, layout design, modeling techniques, and even podcasting. Many people said they enjoyed such a variety of clinics and depth of knowledge, even if they were not able to attend all that they wanted.

Friday and Saturday saw a continuation of the clinic schedule, with a *Make & Take* clinic added for good measure.

Top of page: An archway near Hoboken Terminal celebrates the terminal's sea and rail connection. *At left,* Pat O'Connor and Mike McNamara of *New Jersey Free-mo* show off the Free-mo layout at the convention hotel.

Below: Using makeup sponges, Chuck Diljak paints the brickwork on structures during the “*Works-in-Progress*” session. At another table, Tom Wortmann shows how easy it is to make scale trash. Always on the lookout for new tools for his modeling, George Downer demonstrates how he uses a Cricut die cutting machine for making structure walls, windows, doors, and more during his clinic. Whoever thought of using cellphone speakers for DCC sound? Kaylee Zheng did. And, she demonstrated how well they work during her clinic.



Jeff Paston



Three photos: Jim Walsh





Chuck Diliak



The *Make & Take* was presented by Stephen Funaro, of Funaro & Camerlengo. Steve guided attendees through constructing an HO scale Erie or Susquehanna horizontal ribbed hopper produced as a one-piece body especially for the convention. Hopefully, we will be able to see how these models turned out from those lucky to attend!

Vendors, including Micro-Mark, the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society, Ontario & Western Historical Society, Metropolitan Division of the Train Collector's Association (METCA) and the New York Society of Model Engineers (NYSME) had booths at the hotel. A METCA/NYSME member who acquired a 40-60 year old printing pad featuring the *NMRA Bulletin* has loaned it to the NMRA for inclusion in the Model Railroad Exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum. That may have been "the find" of the convention. However, many others made their own

personal "finds" in the raffle and white elephant sale room.

In addition, Free-Mo, T-Trak, and traditional modular layouts were set up to demonstrate their unique features. For those with some free time, the Free-Mo layout offered an operating session. First-time operators worked alongside veteran operators, keeping the freight moving over this modular layout. The Free-Mo layout demonstrated that a modular layout can be assembled to look and operate like a traditional home layout.

The T-Trak modular system in N scale was also an eye-opener for many. You may have read about the record-breaking T-Trak layout

created at the National convention in Kansas City. T-Trak demonstrates a compactness and ease of construction that can be done right at your workbench. And, the modules easily and quickly assemble into an operating layout.

While the Gulliver's Gate tour for Saturday was cancelled a few weeks before
(Continued on page 6)

Andy Brugada



Top of page at left, NMRA Marketing Consultant, Christina Ganzer Zambri, takes a turn operating the Free-mo layout at the convention hotel. *Top right*, tour members pose for a portrait at the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Operations and Maintenance facility in Jersey City. They are shown entering the facility in photo *at right* for the tour that received plaudits from participants.



Scott Dunlap



← Keynote speaker Bernard Kempinski describes his Civil War-era layout and the research that went into it.

↑ Northern New Jersey N-Trak displayed its modules in a large layout at the convention hotel.

→ Stephen Funaro conducts his "Make-and-Take" clinic in which participants started construction on a Funaro and Camerlengo hopper kit.



Three photos: Jeff Paston





Awards Presented at Banquet

↑ Garden State Division President Chuck Diljak presents the GSD Dedicated Service Award to Bruce DeYoung, MMR, past Division president; and Tom Wortmann, *Erie Limited* convention chair.

➤ NER President John Doehring presents the *President's Award of Appreciation* to Coupler Editor Jeff Paston, top right, and convention Model Contest Chair Ken May, middle right.

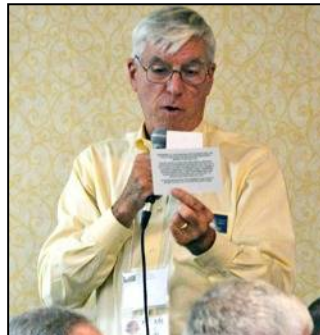
Three photos: Jim Walsh

→ Chair of next year's convention, Ed O'Rourke, announces plans for *Empire Junction 2019* in Syracuse, NY.

Photo: Jeff Paston

➤ NER Convention Chair Dave Insley presents the HUB Division's *Keith Shoneman Award* to Al Oneto, Region Op-Sig coordinator, for his service and promotion of model railroad operations, below right.

Photo: Jim Walsh



(Continued from page 5)

the convention due to building maintenance, the two remaining tours offered on Friday were well received.

Despite the overcast day, the trip along the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system from the maintenance facility to Hoboken Terminal offered many sightseeing opportunities. Everyone enjoyed the tour, leading one participant to comment that "the light rail tour was wonderful with a perfect leader with the appropriate background."

Meanwhile, those on tour at the Sterling Hill Mine spent much of their time underground or indoors in the museum oblivious to the cloudy weather. Inside, those on the tour were treated to a rainbow display of fluorescent reds, greens, blues, and yellows of the minerals. They also learned about the miners, the mining process, and the equipment used.

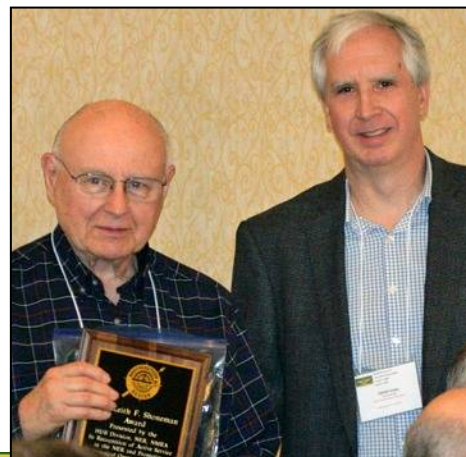
There were many layouts open for tours and operating sessions, some for the first time. "The wide variety of layouts available for tours was excellent," one visitor told us.

The banquet was enjoyed by more than a hundred attendees. We received many positive comments on how good the dinner was. It was followed by special presentations, awards, and our guest speaker, Bernie Kempinski. Bernie's pre-presentation on his

research and modeling a portion of a Civil War-era railroad in O scale also received many appreciative comments from our audience.

Before closing the book on the *Erie Limited*, recognition must be given to the many volunteers who manned the registration and raffle tables, contacted museums, gardens, and other points of interest, assisted with audio-visual equipment, solicited manufacturers and merchants, opened their layouts, presented clinics, and otherwise organized this great convention. It takes a team. Team, take a bow!

Yes, we met in Mahwah. Let's meet again in Syracuse this September. 🚂



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

By BILL BROWN MMR, AP Chair

Successful Year for AP CNY Division Clinches 'Challenge'



NER AP Chair Bill Brown turned over this box of prizes to CNY Division Superintendent Bob Verkuy at the 2018 convention banquet.

Kudos to the Northeastern Region for the 63 Achievement Program certificates that were awarded during the year since the 2017 convention. "A typical year generally produces about 40 awards, so everyone really has something to be proud of," I told the audience at this year's banquet in Mahwah, NJ.

This record was generated by 40 Golden Spike Awards resulting from a "*Golden Spike Challenge*" that I and President John Doehring initiated during the 2017 convention.

The 2018 campaign officially closed with the winning declaration for The Central New York Division. CNY accumulated 10 Golden Spike Awards, or 12.5% of it's 80 members. Although the HUB Division actually accumulated more GS Awards, the contest was based on a percentage of total division membership. The HUB's 5.6% placed second of the 14 NER divisions – above Seacoast (3.8%) and Lakeshores (3.6%), finishing third and fourth.

CNY Superintendent Bob Verkuy was presented a box of prizes to be distributed among those that earned Golden Spikes in his division during the challenge. The prizes were donated by Art Fahie of *Bar Mills*, Dave Myers of *Gatorfoam*, Martin Collard of *Bordino Scale Line*, and also from my *LARC Products* line of backdrop materials.

Overall, *Scenery*, *Electrical Engineer*, *Chief Dispatcher*, and *Volunteer* were the most popular achievement award categories with four in each category.

Leading the charge this year was HUB Division coordinator Peter Watson. HUB accumulated a total of 19 awards. Those were closely followed by 13 certificates each from Central New York Division's Dave Martini, and Seacoast Division's Larry Cannon and Tom Oxnard. 🚂

Putting in a Backdrop

By JEFF HANKE

Don't do what I did. My first experience with putting in a model railroad backdrop has been a steep learning curve, but I am now prepared to do it right on future layout sections. I recently completed a 22 foot backdrop behind the Martinsburg, WV, area of my home layout. The experience has taught me one major rule: **PUT THE BACKDROP UP FIRST!** I can't stress this enough.

I started layout construction in 2014 by painting the wall behind this section light blue. I thought, that would be adequate and, if needed, I could add a photo backdrop later. What I didn't account for was the effect the upper deck support brackets (Hancock, WV, in my case) would have in ruining the look of the plain light blue wall on the lower level (Martinsburg, WV). I use L-shaped steel to support the upper deck. These sturdy brackets are just 1/4" thick. However, no amount of painting would adequately blend



Martinsburg area with two tree line backdrop images mounted.

them into the light blue wall on which they were attached. Enter the backdrop dilemma.

By the time I realized that my plain light blue wall wouldn't do on the lower level, I had 20 feet of benchwork, track work, and some scenery in place. To make matters even more exciting, I built a hill and a siding so close to the back wall that any backdrop would have to be notched around these obstacles. Furthermore, one end of the backdrop would be coved to make a smooth corner, and the other end needed to be both coved and allow for a tunnel through the wall to the next room.

STEP BY STEP

To solve this issue, I decided to use sheet styrene mounted to wood strips as the backdrop material. The wood strips provided

the appropriate offset to clear the steel brackets. This allowed the backdrop to be perfectly smooth with minimum intrusion into the Martinsburg benchwork. I found wood strips at my local hardware store. I used 2 1/4" wide by 3/8" thick strips. These strips run along the top and bottom of the area where the backdrop will be hung, and vertically about every two feet.

My two levels are 23 inches apart with the upper deck being four inches thick. This leaves 19 inches of space between the track on the lower level and the bottom of the upper level. I chose a backdrop image height of 18 inches since it was readily available, and unless you duck down and look up, you can't see the other inch anyway. I cut the styrene to 19 inches and mounted it with screws along the top. Since I didn't want screws to distort the image along the bottom, I adhered the rest of the styrene to the wood strips with Gorilla Glue® tube adhesive.

The backdrop images I chose are quite generic since the area I model in Martinsburg has just a tree line in the background. I found what I needed on eBay® from Affordable Backdrops. Each image was eight feet long (96 inches), so three were required to fill the total 22 feet.

Needing three images to match and align over this long distance created a concern for me. I decided the best way to maintain alignment was to draw a horizontal line one inch below the top of the styrene and use that as a guide for putting the images up.

To ease installation, I started by spraying 3M® Super 77™ multi-purpose adhesive on just the first two feet of the styrene sheet – not the entire eight foot length and not on the image itself. That way the alignment could easily be set first, prior to having to roll out the rest of the image. This prevented having to deal with an unwieldy eight foot long image with wet glue. This technique worked out well and made the images much easier to align and hang than I expected.

I allowed one image to dry overnight before hanging the next image. This also made for less mess and reduced the risk of tearing or creasing any of the images.

THE COVE AND TUNNEL

The most difficult section of the backdrop was the west end of Martinsburg, where the tracks exit through the wall into

the next room. I decided to make the backdrop in two sections in this area.

First I hung the long piece of the backdrop along the wall the way I had done on the rest of the backdrop. Next, I cut a smaller piece of styrene – 14x12 in my case. I took this smaller piece and heated it with a heat gun while wrapping it around a cylindrical mold I had. This helped the plastic maintain its curved shape when attached.

Once I had the small curved piece attached, I filed the edge to the large piece of the backdrop with lightweight plaster. The lip is only 0.080 thick, but I made the file about six inches wide, so it was very subtle. I sanded the slope smooth and the transition is barely noticeable. I applied the image over the styrene the same way I did for the rest of the backdrop.

FLATS


The final steps on putting in a backdrop are adding any images of buildings you want to show trackside. I added a brick

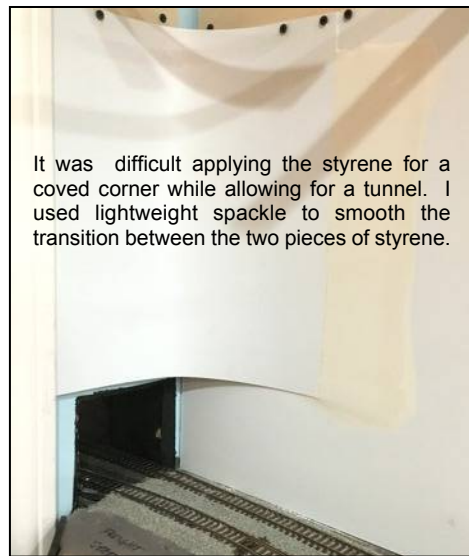


This building flat was added to represent a line side industry for which there was no room.

structure to represent Continental Brick in Martinsburg. It is just printed paper held on with the spray adhesive. I'll add the famous Martinsburg roundhouses soon.

I've already started planning the next 20 feet of backdrop. Luckily for me, this Hancock, WV, section of my benchwork is not yet installed, so putting up the backdrop will be a breeze!

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



Three photos: Jeff Hanke

NER 2019 Convention Syracuse Aims at Fulfilling Experience

Bill Brown



By **ED O'ROURKE**
Empire Junction Chair
NER Western Director

Plans are coming together for another fulfilling NER convention in Central New York State. *Empire Junction 2019* is based in Syracuse and hosted by the Central New York Division.

The hotel in suburban Liverpool is once again serving as our convention headquarters, as it successfully did in both 2008 and 2012. It is located at NYS Thruway (I-90) exit 37. The room rate for single or double occupancy is \$115 a night. This rate is good for Wednesday through Sunday nights to accommodate a potentially longer stay should you wish to enjoy more of what Central New York has to offer. (As this is written the hotel is converting from a Holiday Inn to a Wyndham Hotel.) The hotel has a restaurant and there are more than a dozen eateries nearby.

As noted in our previous story, we

named *Empire Junction* because Syracuse is at the transportation crossroads of New York State. Canals and railroads intersected here. The city was once known for the mainline passenger trains that ran on streets through the center of downtown. Even now, CSX; the New York, Susquehanna and Western; and Fingerlakes Railway intersect in Syracuse, as do Interstate highways 90 and 81. The area offers plenty of train watching sites.

Thursday afternoon of the convention, a welcome reception (snacks and cash bar) will include a presentation on train watching in Central New York. During the convention, CNY Division members will be available in our Hospitality Room to assist you with whatever concerns arise.

The local chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will open its museums at two former stations: Central Square where the Rome, Watertown & Ogdensburg (New York Central) and the New York, Ontario & Western crossed; and

Martisco on the former NYC Auburn Branch, now Fingerlakes Railway.

Plans call for more than 45 rail clinics from Thursday through Saturday afternoon. Most will be offered more than once. We anticipate having several "hands-on" clinics so participants can make and take models.

Both the CNY Division, and the adjacent Lakeshores Division will offer numerous high quality model railroads—including some that have been featured in national magazines—that will be open for visitation and operations. More than 25 model railroads of all scales are already committed.



Top photo: A Boston & Maine passenger train crosses the bridge as a Boston & Albany freight traverses tracks below on Dick Hehir's HO *Boston & Albany Central Division* layout. It is one of more than 25 layouts that will be open for touring and operating during *Empire Junction 2019*.

The convention hotel, *left*, in Liverpool outside of Syracuse will be a Wyndham franchise when it hosts the NER convention in September.

Among places to visit during the convention are station museums of the CNY NRHS at Martisco, *top right*, and Central Square, *right*.



Jeff Paston



Courtesy CNY NRHS



There will be many non-rail activities during the convention to interest spouses/significant others. One being planned is a quilt and card making workshop. The quilt above by Judy O'Rourke is typical of what can be made. Participants can also take part in making a quilt for veterans.

Upper right: The CNY Division is already known for its yearly operating



weekends. The convention also will have plenty of operations opportunities like the one above on Bob Vickery's *Sioux City Lines* layout.

Another layout expected to be open for visitation and operating is Ron Stacy's *Rondemont and West Shore*, where you might expect to see long coal drags negotiating the mountainous terrain.

Those of you who have taken part in the CNY Division's annual "Ops 'til You Drop" weekend know the variety of operations available. Operators will likely find a session that will appeal to personal interests. There will be more than 100 "Ops" slots, but we expect these to fill up fast.

In addition to model railroading topics, the convention will offer a variety of non-rail activities for spouses/significant others. A "Sip 'n Paint" event in the hotel is already planned for Friday evening, where a few beverages can be sampled while producing artwork to take home and display.

There will be quilting and card making workshops during the convention. You can take part in producing a "Quilt of Valor" and greeting cards that will be presented to a local veterans organization when completed. Materials and sewing machines will be provided for use throughout the convention.

As this is written, negotiations are underway for a potential railroad fantrip. Also in the planning stage is a trip on railroad speeders along a local line.

The convention will have both a Saturday night banquet and a Sunday morning awards breakfast.



Shane Wilson

Shane Wilson, president of ScaleTrains.com, is booked as the banquet guest speaker. Shane's resume includes many years at Horizon Hobby, where he played a role in the acquisition of Athearn and Model

Die Casting/Roundhouse. He moved on to start ScaleTrains.com with three friends in 2013. In its first 2½ years, the company reports that it shipped 130,000 models to more than 35 countries. It has announced 35 new HO and N scale locomotives, freight cars, and vehicles.

Registration information and updates on convention events will be posted on the *Empire Junction 2019* Website <www.empirejunction.org>.



NEW MEMBERS

Compiled By **MARK HARLOW**
NER Office Manager

As of 11/1/18

NEW BRUNSWICK

Peter Caralano

CONNECTICUT

James Braxton
Marty Ludwin
Brendon Matthews

MASSACHUSETTS

William Beskalo
Kenneth Gikas
Elijah Wilhelm

MAINE

Howard J. Devaney
Brian Jewell

Frederick Oliver
Southern Maine RR Club
Lawrence Vollar

NEW HAMPSHIRE

William Wernik

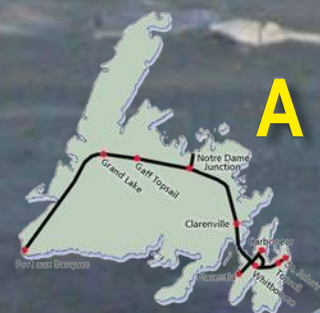
NEW JERSEY

Scott Gothe
Donald R. Jaffe
L. Kalogera
Arnold G. Mercer
Patrick O'Connor

NEW YORK

David Devaul
Paul Eisner
Kim Jones

Bacon and Eggs Late!



A Prototype Railway that Spawned Many

By **GEORGE JARVIS**

Eastern Canada Division VP

Layout Photos by the Author

"Bacon and eggs late," you say. To understand the meaning behind this turn of phrase you need some background. For that we have to go to the island of Newfoundland off the east coast of Canada.

This island was a British colony until 1949, when it became the 10th province of Canada. When the colonial government, in the late 1800s, decided to build a railway across this rugged landscape, they sought advice from the experts in England. Upon that advice, the Newfoundland government decided to build the railway as narrow gauge, three foot six inches to be exact. It would run some 900 miles from the capital, St. John's in the east, to Port-aux-Basques in the west, where it would meet the mainland ferry sailing to North Sydney, Nova Scotia – making it the longest narrow gauge railroad in North America.

This railway has a colourful history. Due to the narrow gauge and the hilly topography, the railroad was slow. So slow, in fact, that stories were told – and often embellished – concerning the slow pace of travel. For example, it was said that during blueberry picking season, travelers would jump off the first car of the train, pick a gallon



Photo: Railway Coastal Museum



Anecdotes Still Runs as a Scale Model in HO

of berries and jump on the last car. Another story goes like this: On a passenger run across the island, the conductor, while collecting tickets, noted a very expectant mother-to-be in one of the seats. Very concerned, he said to the lady, "Madam, you should not be on the train in that condition." To which she replied, "Sir, I was not in this condition when I got on the train."

During World War II, when the United States had military bases on both ends of the island, military personnel often travelled on the passenger trains. Although the passenger train was officially called the *Caribou*, the servicemen nicknamed it, *The Newfy Bullet*. The name stuck!

In addition to the hilly, marshy, and rocky landscape, the railway had to contend with some of the worse weather conditions experienced by any railroad in Canada. This included a high plateau known as The Gaff Topsails where it was not unusual for the train to be stuck in 10 foot high snow drifts for days; and a windy plateau on the west coast known as Wreck House. The railway paid an individual to live there with his family. It was his job to telegraph the stations on either side of this area if it was too dangerous due to high winds for the train to proceed.

So, what has all of this to do with bacon and eggs? This anecdote was relayed to me by NMRA member and retired Newfoundland dentist, Norman Littlejohn, a member of my operations crew on the *Coastal Newfoundland Railway*. More about that in a moment. While in dental school, Norman spent his summers working in the dining car on the *Newfy Bullet* passenger run.

The east bound passenger train was due into St. John's, the terminus, at 8:30 in the morning. It was the railway policy that if the train was on time and would arrive on or before 8:30, the diner crew was only obliged to serve the passengers tea, coffee, and toast. If, however, the 8:30 deadline could not be met, the crew had to prepare and serve bacon and eggs. Consequently, on a slow train, the dining car crew would complain that they were "*bacon and eggs late*."

The Newfoundland Railway was absorbed into Canadian National Railways when the island joined Canada in 1949. In 1988, the last train ran across the island and the rails were ripped up. However, the railway still runs in HO scale in my double bay garage. And on operations nights, the *Newfy Bullet* still serves island residents and businesses as before. So far, it hasn't been "bacon and eggs late!"

(Continued on next page)

Bacon and Eggs Late!

While the prototype *Newfoundland Railway* was 3-foot-6 gauge, George Jarvis is modeling his version in standard gauge. Here, a freight pulls out of St. John's yard on its westward trek.

(Continued from page 11)

In 2014, I authored an article for *The Coupler* describing my efforts to build an operations oriented layout and find like-minded NMRA members in my area to form an operating crew. At that time, I was the only NMRA member on the island of Newfoundland. I am happy to report that we have quadrupled our membership. Yes, we now have four NMRA members!

In the previous article, I mentioned we were attempting to establish a division of the NER in Newfoundland. But given the small numbers, I took another route. I became involved with a group of modellers in the Atlantic Provinces of Eastern Canada. They were establishing a new Division which would include New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, plus Newfoundland and Labrador. This Eastern Canada Division replaces the inactive Maritime Division.

These efforts were successful and I am now the vice president of the NER's newest division. This is in addition to my sitting as a

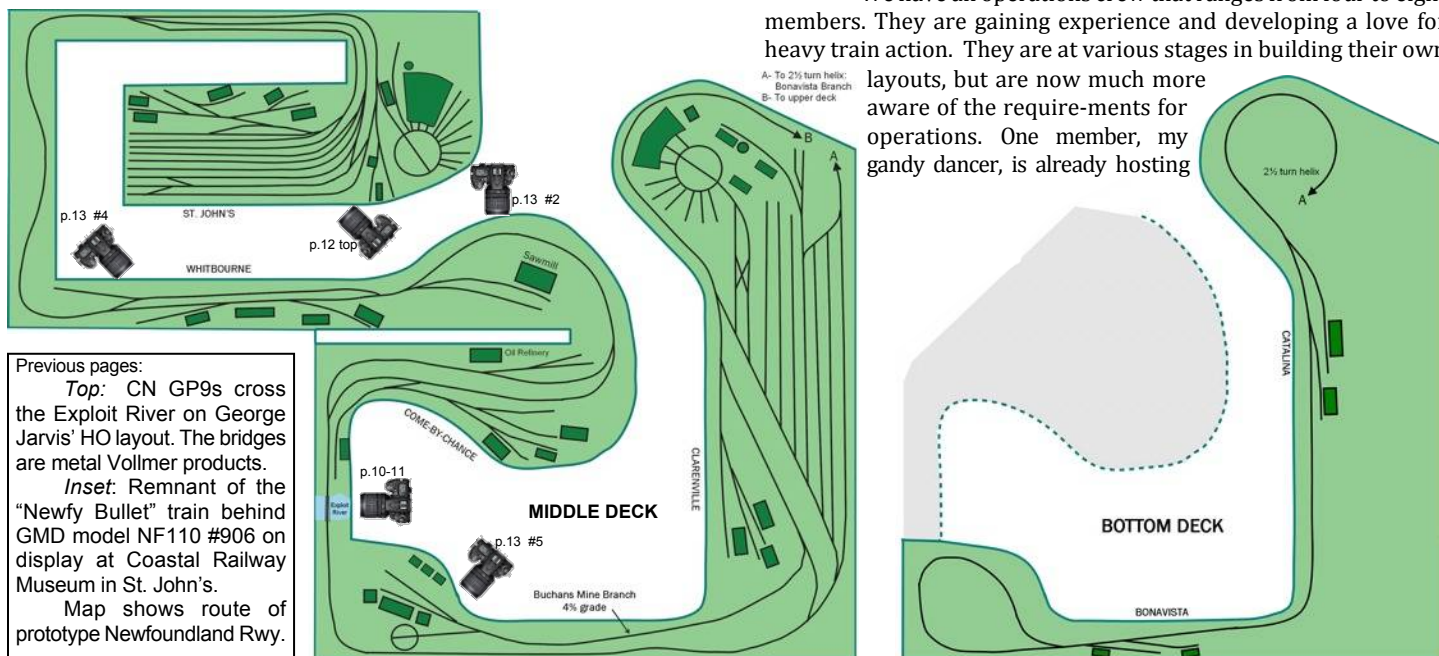
director at large of NMRA Canada. With six national conventions under my belt, I am looking forward to Salt Lake City next July. I am also working my way through the NMRA Achievement Program. I currently have three of the required seven certificates and am working on the fourth.

So, how goes the layout? You may recall that my layout represents the Eastern Division of the Newfoundland Railway from the provincial capital, St. John's, to Bishop's Falls, the division point in the center of the island.

The layout is built on three levels with 95% of the scenery complete. There are three major yards: St. John's, Clarenville, and Bishop's Falls, each keeping a yardmaster fully occupied. There are two branch lines; one to a mine in Buchans and one via a two-and-a-half turn helix to the seaport towns of Catalina and Bonavista. Both branches interchange at Clarenville where east and west bound freights often meet. Can you spell "hectic!"

We have an operations crew that ranges from four to eight members. They are gaining experience and developing a love for heavy train action. They are at various stages in building their own

layouts, but are now much more aware of the requirements for operations. One member, my gandy dancer, is already hosting



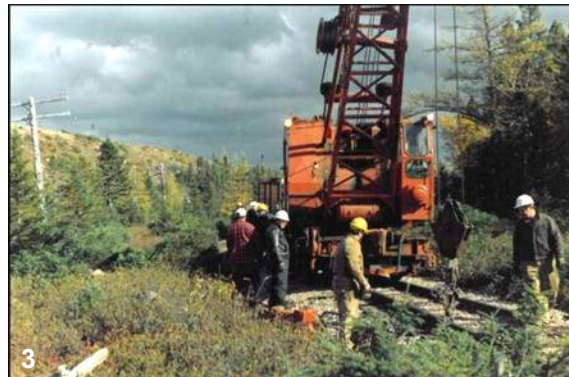


Photo courtesy: Railway Coastal Museum



1- A CN switcher sets out tank cars at the pulp mill at Bishop's Falls.

2- Above, the "Newfy Bullet" departs Whitbourne on the Eastern Division of the author's *Coastal Newfoundland Railway*.

3- While the railway lives on in HO standard gauge in George Jarvis' garage, the prototype Newfoundland Railway was ripped up between 1988 and 1990 as seen in *upper right* photo.

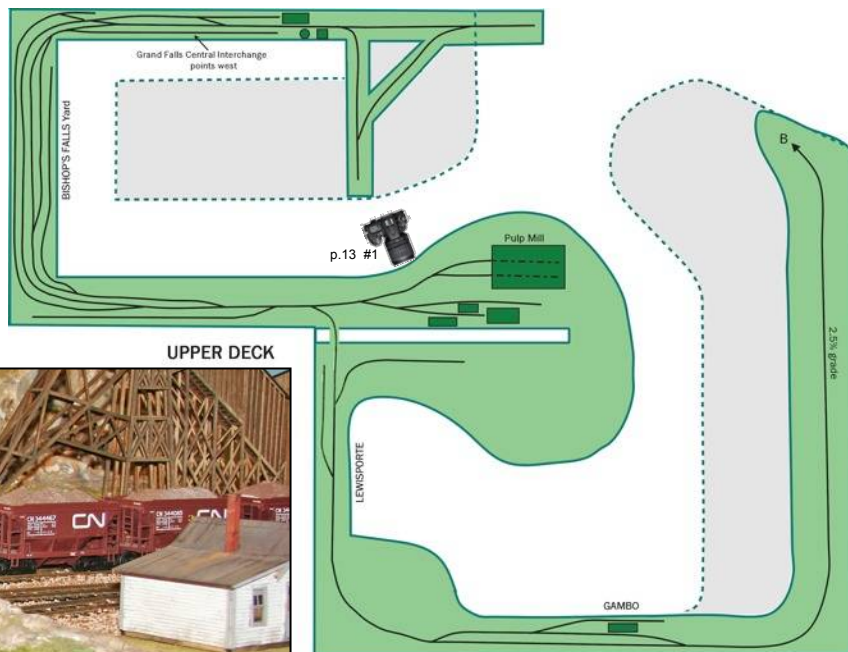
4- The Coastal Newfoundland still operates

some steam locomotives as one, *above*, hauls a local into Whitbourne.

5- *At bottom left*, a Shay locomotive stands by at the mine at Buchans awaiting assignment to pick up string of ore cars on adjacent track.

ops sessions on his On30 layout.

Where do we go from here? We are still attempting to grow the NMRA membership on the island. I am working frequently with the Division and NMRA Canada boards via Skype to find ways to entice new members to join in the fun. So, if you ever find yourself in Newfoundland, Canada – and everyone should visit at some time in their life – get in touch and join us for an ops session on the *Coastal Newfoundland Railway*. I can't promise bacon and eggs, but I can assure you of a warm welcome! 🚂



Visiting the New York Transit Museum



Display cases are filled with models of various NYC trolleys, *left*, and some buses, *above*.

At right, a mother photographs her son in the driver's seat of a New York City Transit General Motors "Fishbowl" bus.

By JEFF PASTON
Coupler Editor
Photos by the Author

Remember that old joke? "A drunk comes up the stairs from the subway and says, 'you should see the set of trains some guy has down there!'" Well, you *should* see the set of trains they have beneath the streets of Brooklyn!

Located in the former Court Street subway station at 99 Schermerhorn Street is the New York Transit Museum. Whether you are a modeler or railfan, if you like subways and mass transit, this is a must see. It certainly was for me, recalling visits in my youth where my grandmother and I would ride the subway system from Harlem to Coney Island. A whole day of entertainment for a dime!

It'll cost you \$10 these days to take in such nostalgia at the museum. There are many interpretive displays recounting the history of the private companies that built the subway, as well as those companies that operated surface transit, all of which eventually formed the New York City Transit Authority. To their credit, the exhibits also don't shy away from less than positive elements of the past regarding labor disputes and poor treatment of African-American workers.

The museum collection includes subway cars from the system's first years of operation in the early 20th Century to cars from just a few years ago. The collection also includes electric locomotives used in maintaining the subway.





↑ The highly detailed HO scale model of 19th Century elevated trains includes cutaway views of a station interior.

← Historic subway cars are on view in the museum's subterranean former station platform on page 14. One of the first displays encountered shows old turnstiles and a fare box.

↓ Visitors can view subway cars from many eras, including a R36 "Redbird," bottom left, and older cars that offered straphangers to standees, right.

Buses, trolleys, trolley buses, and elevated trains that formed New York City's above ground mass transit are featured in full size mockups and many highly detailed models.

I took some hours off from activities at the NER convention in Mahwah, and for a few dollars, headed to New York City via New Jersey Transit. The subway system was easily accessible at Penn Station. I took the Number 2 train to Brooklyn and walked the few blocks to the former Court Street station, stepped down the old station steps and into the Transit Museum. If you plan to visit, set aside at least two hours to see everything.

For modelers, it's a great place to do prototype research on the subway cars. It is also a nostalgic trip into the past. The museum and an inactive platform at the nearby Schermerhorn-Hoyt station are often used for scenes in movies and television shows.

Once down the stairs, the first level focuses on above ground mass transit, as well showing the history of all of New York's transit past. There is a display of the various turnstiles that channeled commuters

from the 1920s until recent years. There is also a display of subway tokens used over the years, including forged tokens used in attempts to defraud the system. (Tokens gave way to MetroCards by 1997.)

Among the first bus companies were Fifth Avenue Coach and Surface Transit Inc., both absorbed into a subsidiary of the New York City Transit Authority in 1962.

There are models of older buses and "trackless trolleys" (trolley buses) on display. There are two walls of display cases showing models of the various trolleys that operated over the years. The museum also cut off the front ends of two buses to allow visitors the chance to sit in a driver's seat. Many of the visitors to the museum are school children.

Down on the lowest level of the former station are the historic subway cars lining the platform.

The Interborough Rapid transit Company (IRT) opened the first fully functioning subway in 1904. The Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company (BRT) opened more lines by 1915, soon becoming the Brooklyn-Manhattan Transit Corporation (BMT). The city's Board of Transportation opened its own Independent Rapid Transit Railroad in 1932. By 1940, all three systems were under city control. And in 1953, the city's buses and subways were placed under the new Transit Authority.

The state legislature created the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in 1968, which became New York City Transit's parent agency. The museum is operated by MTA NYC Transit.



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