

Official Bulletin of the Northeastern Region of the National Model Railroad Association

THE DISPATCHERS TOWER

We have just concluded a most successful joint meeting with the Niagara Frontier Region at Syracuse, N.Y. It was well planned, well executed, and everyone who attended had a most enjoyable time.

I would like to call your attention to the membership figure appearing elsewhere in the COUPLER. It represents an excellent job done by your Vice Pres and his committee members. In 1949 we ended the yr with 178 members, 1950 with 185, 1951 with 376, & 1952 with 390. This year to date we have 434, and are shooting for 500. Our renewal of 75% annually is excellent, and indicates that you are getting your money's worth. Your NER is growing in a good healthy fashion--- and YOU can help too---by signing up a new member, or contacting Ed Safford & giving him a little assistance.

In spite of membership growth, there is one thing which does not seem to improve---your exercise of your right to vote.. There are several important issues in addition to the election of officers, on the ballot. If you were not permitted to vote, you would certainly put up a howl-- and the effort and expense involved is most certainly a small one.

This year we will have the figures of the voting percentage of each Region, and your officers definitely expect that NER will far exceed the poor 25% national average. I can only remind you- the rest is up to yourself, and depends upon how much you are interested in the organization which is trying to do so much for you and your hobby.

Hope to see you at the National at Toronto in Aug. and many more at New Haven in the Fall, where there is something really special in the wind.

IVON PREBLE, Pres.

REPORT FROM THE VEEP

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP TO DATE.... 434
 LAST YEAR'S TOTAL..... 390

Provisions were made in the late part of last year for volunteer mailing of letters to 1800 NMRA members not previously affiliated with NER. The mailing of about 1300 was verified by loyal workers thruout the Region. Figures indicate this to have been effective, resulting in a gain of over 100 new members. Reminder letters were mailed out to last years members who were lax in renewing. To date it results in better than 75% renewal, which is good.

Reminders are again going out and hobby shops will be supplied with application blanks. You are all requested to send us lists of all such shops in your area to help us out, so that we will have a still better showing at the Fall Convention.

At this time I want to thank all of those fellows who helped on the committee. Although I have been writing to about 30, I still do not know them all personally. Be sure to introduce yourself when you see me, so we can get on an even keel.

Standouts in this important job of solicitation which we undertook this Spring are:- For the Mass area, Bill Illig, Ivon Preble, and Bob Walsh. The Long Island area was handled by six good men, one being 12-year old Paul Thompson. In the Metropolitan N.Y. area Fred Graf, Bruce Coughlin and Jim Veccia. Charlie Cole supplied form letters in North Jersey where 15 fellows cooperated 100% in distributing them. Westchester was ably handled by Kin Salmon and A. Q. Smith. Ray Snow, Dick Folts, H.P. Brayton, D.F. Griffith, Bill Livingston, and Les Wurth did a wonderful job in Central Eastern N.Y.

A month ago I released 80 letters to a group in Canada, and have had 8 responses, with promises of many more once a committee is organized there. I'm looking forward to a big fat 500 total by Fall.

ED SAFFORD, Vice Pres.
 Membership Chairman.

THE HOSTLER SEZ:

Sorry we are late with this issue, but we did not have enough material to fill it, and the editor is not in an inventive frame of mind. In fact, we are going to do a little knocking. Elsewhere in this issue you'll see a comparative convention attendance chart. Our Region made a mighty poor showing. It seems that despite all the work put in by your committees, resulting in constantly improving affairs, the patronage is steadily falling off. At this rate, it soon will not be worth the effort. We might just as well realize that if we do not attend the affairs, and contribute to other undertakings, they will not be continued.

In the June issue we explained an organization's need for funds so as to finance its activities. We have heard a number of complaints about NMRA finding it necessary to increase its dues to \$3 yearly. Some people make the extra dollar sound like major personal disaster. They don't seem to consider we have to find the funds to meet steadily increasing costs of everything. We are not in business for a profit, and the only source of revenue is from the members' dues. The question will be on the ballot, and when voting on it, remember that the only alternative to the increase is a curtailment of our activities and benefits. Which do you prefer?

APPLICATION FOR N.E.R. MEMBERSHIP Dues \$1.00.
 Mr. Irwin Lloyd, Sec-Treas., 11 Case St, Hartford, Conn.

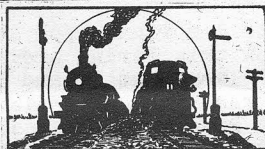
NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 NMRA Member? _____ Your gage? _____

THE COUPLER

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE NORTHEASTERN REGION- NMRA.

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GILA MONSTER ROUTE

The lingering sunset across the plain
Kissed the end of an eastbound train;
And shone on a passing track close by,
Where a hobo sat on a rotten tie.

He was ditched by a shack and a cruel fate,
The con highballed, and the manifest freight
Pulled out on the stem behind the mail,
And she hit the ball on a sanded rail.

As she pulled away in the falling night,
He could see the gleam of her red tail light,
Then the moon arose and the stars came out--
He was ditched on the Gila Monster Route.

Nothing in sight but sand and space;
No chance for a guy to feed his face,
Not even a shack to beg for a lump,
Or a henhouse to frisk for a single gump.

As he gazed far out on the solitude,
He dropped his head and began to brood,
He thought of the time he lost his mate
In a hostile burg on the Nickel Plate.

They had mooched the stem and threw their feet,
And speared four bits on which to eat,
But deprived themselves of their daily bread
And blew their dough on Dago Red.

Off in the west through the moonlit night
He saw the gleam of a big headlight--
An eastbound stock train hummed the rail;
She was due at the switch to clear the mail.

As she drew up close, the head end shack
Threw the switch to the passing track;
The stock rolled in, and off the main,
And the line was clear for the westbound train.

When she hove in sight far up the track
She was working steam, with brakeshoes slack;
She hollered once at the whistle post
Then she flitted by like a frightened ghost,

He could hear the roar of the big six-wheel,
And her drivers pound on the polished steel;
And the screech of her flanges on the rail
As she beat it west o'er the desert trail.

The bo looked round, and jumped aboard
As the fireman reached for the whistle cord;
She whistled twice and highballed out
Along the Gila Monster Route.

MODEL RR CLUTCH

The U.S. Nat'l Bureau of Standards researchers were working on a complex electronic computer, and found that unless they could make a clutch which would do their bidding instantaneously, their computer would not work. Jacob Rabinow, Chief of the Bureau's Mechanical Research and Development Section, Ordnance Division, came up with the perfect answer- magnetic fluid clutch.

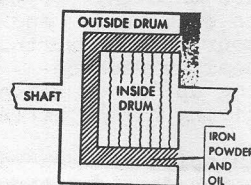
To understand his clutch, imagine two wheels connected by an "axle" of water. If such a thing were possible, when one wheel turned, the other would remain at rest. But if the "axle" were frozen suddenly, both wheels would turn.

Rabinow thought of using powdered iron mixed with oil instead of water. Then, instead of freezing the fluid, he could put it into a magnetic field. The tiny pieces of iron would then cling together and make a solid axle between both of the wheels.

Aside from being used in computers it has gone into machines for winding wire, thread and motion picture film under constant tension. It has found its way into the fans that blow tornado-sized gales in wind tunnels, into lift trucks, air compressors, concrete mixers, machine tools, and many other uses.

Altho the sketch shows the magnetizing coil within the inside drum, it seems likely that it could just as easily be placed outside the whole clutch. So for model RR purposes the magnetizing coil could be connected across the motor leads, and gradually freeze the clutch as the track voltage is increased. We feel that the unit can be kept small due to small clearances and quantity of powdered iron-oil fluid necessary.

CLUTCH SEEN IN CROSS SECTION



Probably the most experimenting will be in designing the magnetizing coil so that it will not freeze up on too low a voltage, but will be solid just before reaching maximum voltage. Perhaps there should be another coil in series with the motor, that will buck the magnetizing effect of the shunt coil if the motor current should go beyond a safe value.

This type of clutch seems to have considerable advantage over the straight fluid or centrifugal type and would make a good project for one of our researchers. Keep us posted on your developments.

LONE WOLVES

In the past there have been complaints that the Region was run for the benefit of the clubs, and that the lone operator was left out of things. That has never been the case; they are as much a part of the Region as any club, and we have always urged and welcomed them to participate in our activities. Each member has the privilege of expressing himself, with equal rights as any other member. True, some of them have bigger mouths; some can talk louder and longer than others, but each has the same privilege in that respect. Any such idea that lone pike owners, or non-club members, have no place in Region activities, has long since been exploded. In fact, our efforts to bring activities closer to home by district and local meetings are aimed directly at those who are unable to attend regional affairs. All that is necessary is for the "lone wolves" to come out of their shells long enough to contact a few of their neighbors, so as to arrange a local gathering. Once the ball is set to rolling, the rest is easy. What's more, you'll be surprised to find how much information and enjoyment you will get out of it. These activities must be initiated locally, and the Region will do everything possible to help them along.

Last issue we stated that we'd keep you posted on progress in HON-3 and ON-3. We hear that there is a big narrow gage model railroad section slated in Model RR Craftsman. Dick Andrews is handling this section, and he needs help in the way of plans and photos, layout work, prototype and anything else of interest. Contact him at 8 Brinkerhoff Ave, New Canaan, Conn.

Pacific Coast HO Narrow Gagers Assoc. of 416 East Hazel St, Inglewood, Calif. informs us that there has been considerable interest expressed as a result of our last story. They say we must have a lot of fans back East, and they are sending out a full batch of info. This branch of the hobby offers a great deal of possibility, especially for layouts in a restricted space-- it enables you to get in a substantial layout and still make it look natural.

Western Car & Loco Works, Chandler, Ariz. announces plans for a flat car, probably a 24' ET&WNC, with enough material and plans to make it a convertible gon or pulpwood rack. Cars to follow will include gons, box and reefers, and eventually passgr cars and caboose. Wood parts will be precision milled, with castings and stampings where necessary. Price will run about 25-50¢ over a comparable standard gage car, to cover cost of shorter runs and more expensive trucks and castings. They want your suggestions, and are willing to pay for plans, data, drawings, photos, etc. Contact Dave Beadle there.

The HON-3 boys are really making a big effort to institute activity in this branch, and this is an opportunity for those interested to participate.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The NER Exec. Comm. met March 22nd at Hartford, and considerable work was accomplished. Plans were reviewed for several coming conventions. Permanent convention badges were authorized, and may be secured from Irwin Lloyd for 25¢ (they look very nice gold on blue). Making up a convention banner was likewise discussed. Two 100% NER clubs were announced. The treasurer's report was approved, and the financial condition of the Region was found good. Vice Pres. Ed Safford submitted the membership comm report, and he was commended for an excellent job of promotion. Another item taken under consideration was the necessity of being NMRA member before being eligible to NER. The suggestion of increasing the COUPLER to 6 issues year was tabled when it was found that the editor could not handle the increased work involved. A Bye-Law amendment was approved and will be found elsewhere herein.

IRWIN LLOYD, Sec-Treas.

N.M.R.A. UNIVERSAL COUPLER

We hear rumors of the rapid development of a good operating, rugged new automatic coupler design now actively under way by the HO Standards Committee. It will couple with all presently existing types, including dummies, and has delayed uncoupling feature. If successful, it will be a universal coupler. SOUNDS WONDERFUL. Anyone who'd like to help with the testing, get in touch with Russ Houghton.

WE VISIT MID-EASTERN

Quite a large group of NER members attended the ME Region convention at Philly on May 2-3 and enjoyed a most pleasant weekend. Highlight was a trip thru Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton diesel shops at Eddystone Pa to observe locos and other diesel applications in all stages of construction. Several local clubs held open house, and on Sunday we enjoyed fantrip on the Reading to Gettysburg. This Region runs its banquet and business meeting on Sat. night, and we felt that a model contest and a little more modeling activity might have been appropriate.

NEW HAVEN ON OCT 11.

Everyone asks what happened to our last issue- and it shouldn't happen to a dog. We purposely held it a few weeks because the Convention was scheduled a little later than usual & we wanted the last minute dope included. Then when it got to the printer he was on a trip--- 2 weeks delay. The package was shipped by express, but didn't arrive. We discovered that the driver had absconded with the truck & our COUPLERS. The cops recovered them a week later and then Preble spent a whole night putting them into envelopes for quicker mailing. The P.O. clerk said 2¢ postage was correct. 4 days later the Post Master called that they were ½ inch too large, and required 3¢ each. Ivon went down and paid the extra dough. Several days later they called him to state they were still holding the mailing, waiting for someone to come down and lick the stamps. That did it--- Ivon blew his top. It took the threat of a Congressional investigation to get the darn things on their way. If you were provoked, you can imagine how WE felt at this comedy of errors. So you can blame it on what you want, but PLEASE not us!

GREAT BRITAIN

The British Region has instituted an interesting news sheet entitled EXTRA FARE, with Fred W. Cooper as editor. It gives a thorough coverage of activities in the U.K. and deserves commendation. They likewise have a dues problem, because of the great difference in currency valuation. For these lads a larger assessment really means something, and we wonder whether a concession is possible on account of the monetary standard. Their annual convention is scheduled for London in October, and they have many other activities under consideration.

THE ANNUAL BALLOT

Only one quarter of our membership was sufficiently interested in the affairs of NMRA to cast their ballots last year. This is truly an unimpressive record, even for a nation that is notoriously slack in exercising its right of franchise. Voting on our annual ballot requires very little time, even for the exacting detail hound who desire to personally check every decimal point of standards changes. It is difficult to see how our voting procedure could be made any simpler or cheaper. It is most important to make sure of competent hands at the helm, and the questions on the ballot have been placed there after a great deal of deliberation and study by your committees. If they weren't of importance, they would not be on it. The least you can do to help is to express your views and preferences. Why not give your ballot some careful consideration & then fill it out and send it in this year?

FRANCIS BROWN, Sect'y.

THE CANDIDATES

We have never made a practice of electioneering in these columns, but you ought to know who are the national candidates. Our Region knows two of them quite well: Ivon Preble is on the Vice-Pres. slate and Hube Huebenthal is running for re-election as Treas. Certainly we need not extoll their virtues inasmuch as their record and experience speaks for itself. Some of the Regions are actively pushing their favorite members for election.

The Presidential candidates are both ex-Regional presidents; George Brown of Mid-Continent and Bill Lang of Mid-West. Both are good men, with George having perhaps a little more experience and background for the job. For Secretary we have had good reports on Francis Brown, but some people feel that from a geographical distribution standpoint the W. Coast should be represented by Dick Dickinson, who is from California.

We are sure that the Nominating Committee has made a careful and thorough investigation, and that all these candidates are worthy and well qualified. It is up to each member to give careful consideration to the selection, and to vote according to his best judgment.....DON'T PASS YOUR VOTE.....

BIG TIME AT SYRACUSE

The joint NER-NFR Convention at Syracuse set a new high standard in Regional meetings. Attendance was wonderful, and we had the opportunity to meet a grand bunch of model RR'ers from Canada. If anyone had a dull moment, it was not for lack of a planned activity. The local committee went all out to provide a real program, and Old Sol obliged with some favorable weather for a change.

Saturday morning was spent registering & renewing old friendships. Bob Rich and Gene O'Connell gave us a big surprise with their "auto-top" model R.R layout, completely scenicked even to an operating waterfall, which they had hauled all the way from Nyaack under a tarpaulin through a "monsoon". They HAULED the layout, and I suppose you could say too that they hauled the waterfall along, judging from the storm damage enroute. Emergency repairs made by this resourceful duo soon had everything in the clear and trains were in constant operation there after. This was a constant attraction to all those present, and the tiny complicated looking portable control panel was really something to see.

Bob Bast had his tiny "trolley-on-a-victrola", and Hube Huebenthal brought a working block-selector-& indicator which he demonstrated to all and sundry. Big bundles of literature handed out by the Comm. will keep all hands busy reading for many weeks.

The Sat. afternoon agenda consisted of a fan trip on the NYCentral to DeWitt Yard. A very pleasing feature was the open air cars, consisting of open end gondolas fitted out with seats upholstered by fir planks. There were also 3 coaches of standard construction which included spring filled cushions. The only persons who rode in them were the train crew and those delegates in need of sleep. As usual the RR representatives walked back and forth continuously with worried looks, cautioning us not to jump in front of moving trains as it would cause a delay in operations if anyone got killed. Loud speakers in each car were utilized by the trainmaster to describe points of interest in passing. The big DeWitt Yard was the focal point- over 4 miles long, 131 tracks handling 95 trains daily, dispatching an average of 109039 cars per month, repairing 165 cripples a day & with separate hump yards for each direction. The large engine house dispatches about 125 diesel and 10 steam units per day, with large diesel facilities rapidly pushing steam out of the picture. Over 1100 men are employed in this area alone. Equipment and facilities are all modern and radioized, and it was a real pleasure to see this big operation at first hand.

After dinner Hube Huebenthal spoke on push button cab control, and Gene Shear on high frequency lighting. Hugh Jack showed a large collection of slides covering dreamliner trips and national conventions and several good railroad movies were likewise on the program.

The auction sale actually "brought down the house" and in fact it did bring the Fire Marshall. The hotel assigned 2 small rooms for this event, very inadequate for the overflow crowd. We soon took over the entire 2nd floor hall-- at least until we were chased back. Every item was sold, and it was long past midnight when the auctioneers were able to total up their accounts. We sold almost \$400 worth of merchandise, and many smug faces could be seen afterwards walking around with a box or two under their arms. Each person had made the best deal of the evening!

A great deal of business was accomplished at the Sunday A.M. meeting. Margaret See, charming better half of Jim See of White Plains NY graciously offered to make up a NER convention banner. The NER's long-standing Coupler Committee was discharged with thanks after having turned over its data to the new National Committee. Its researches were instr-

umental in getting the present project under way. It was voted to incorporate the Region after a discussion disclosed that the risk upon individual members of an unincorporated association in the event of injury to anyone, or of financial reverses, was a serious one. Stan Bradley offered to handle the legal details at actual cost, and he was authorized to do so before the next meeting. Cliff Pope and Gerry Curtis were named to the Committee.

White Plains N.Y. made a bid for the Region's 1954 Fall Convention, which was accepted. Montreal announced that its 1954 arrangements are already well under way, under the direction of Art Calvin. Bob Walsh agreed to handle the next auction sale, now apparently a permanent fixture, at New Haven.

After the meeting, everyone enjoyed looking over the models entered in the model contest. There was an unusually large display of outstanding equipment, exemplifying a great amount of work on the part of the members. These should give the screw-driver boys an incentive to try building from scratch. The most soul satisfying part of this hobby is construction from raw materials.

An excellent banquet wound up activities, and it was noted that practically the entire NMRA leadership was in attendance, constituting some kind of a record. We had Pres. Ed VanLeer, Secty Francis Brown, Treas. Hube Huebenthal, Office Mgr Bob Bast Eng. Chmn. Gene Shear, Military Chmn Gene O'Connell Ex-Sec Paul Mallery, Trip Chmn Manny Padin, Pres. Gerry Hunt of NFR, Pres Ivon Preble of NER, Toastmaster Ray Snow and many others. A sumptuous fare was provided--- but how did the ham get under the fowl?

A large number of door prizes were drawn, and the model contest awards were presented. The table favors included N&W hopper cars and Chesterfield cigarettes. All too soon it was necessary to whistle off and return to the workaday world, firm in our resolution that each convention is a better 1 than its predecessor, and that we will all look forward to meeting again in New Haven in the Fall. Thanks to Ray Snow and his fine committee for a fine time.

TEST TRACK WANTED

There were quite a number of motive power units sold at the auction, and the buyers had to take a chance on whether or not they were in operating condition. The question was raised as to whether a short test track of portable variety could be devised, so that locos could be tested before sale. Thus they would bring a better price because we'd know whether we were buying something that's running. It could be demonstrated first. The idea is a good one, but is it practical? Does anyone have any ideas on the subject?

SCENERY MATERIAL

Many of you saw an operating layout I demonstrated at Syracuse, and commented upon its realistic appearance. Did you know that I hauled it 250 miles from Nyaack NY on top of my car, through a terrific rainstorm and howling gale? It had no protection other than a tarpaulin, which the wind kept flapping and beating off all the scenery. The road behind was strewn with model parts, and after a while we gave up trying to salvage them and let her rip!

The point of the story is that the layout was made of Celastic, and in spite of the awful beating, we merely dried the water off the layout & it was as good as ever. The material stood up perfectly and showed no signs of damage, cracking or discoloring. After that kind of an experience, I feel safe in saying that it is a mighty good layout material.

BOB RICH

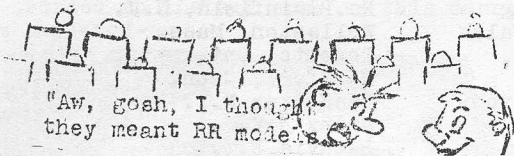
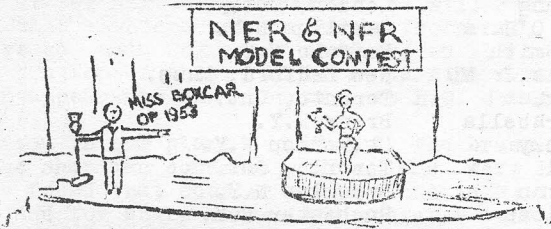


Lone-Star Region, Houston.....260
 Mid-Eastern Region, Phila.....233
 Mid-West Region, Garfield Park...222
 North-Central Region, Lansing....156
 Northeastern Region, Syracuse....109

BOY, DO WE STINK!

HIGH FINANCE

The Hotel Syracuse will have a hard time balancing its books on our convention if Herb Ruddock's experience is any criteria. He thought his bill was a little steep, and asked whether he had received a credit for his deposit. The desk clerk discovered that he had not, and asked the other girl what to do. She was told to make a "Paid-out slip", which she did. She put it and the bill into the machine, punched some keys, and the machine whirled for two minutes. The paid-out slip came out all right, but the machine had added five more dollars to the bill instead of subtracting it. The girl corrected it in ink; which did not correct the machine total. And Bruce Coughlin says he came out 50¢ to the good on his statement. We wonder how the books are kept in balance with such an arrangement.



ELMWOOD MODEL R.R. CLUB

This club gave those attending the convention a nice exhibition of operation on a well laid out track system. We were particularly interested in a hump yard which was quite complete, where trains are made up in real prototype fashion. The yards and main line are operated separately, and we can visualise a great variety of operation as the pike develops. The members have had hard luck in being moved about several times in the past few years, but now seem to be well established and active. We enjoyed our visit with them.

ONONDAGA MODEL RAILROADERS

This lively Syracuse group issued a special convention issue of its publication THE PIE STRIP to welcome us to the Salt City. We enjoyed a pleasant visit to their layout and saw some real good model railroading. We were especially interested to see the novel system they employ to obtain their 12 volt propulsion current. Instead of the usual step down arrangement, the 115-volt line voltage is boosted up to 300-volts, rectified, and passed along to a DC dynamoter where it is converted to 15-volt DC at considerable amperage. The operating results are excellent.

The club was organized in April 1946 as the Salina & Western (Finger Lakes Route). They started to build a "dream layout" but found that the project was such a tremendous one that its attainment was impossible. Last year it was dismantled, and is in the process of replacement by one of more modest proportions, which is now well under way.

N.E.R. WAS THERE

33 members of the Met. District had a pleasant and adventurous trip to the Syracuse Convention May 16th. We rode the 2nd Section of #17 (The Wolverine) in back of a big Hudson class. A special stop was made at Poughkeepsie to pick up our genial VP, Ed. Safford. A much more sudden stop was made near Newton Hook--- most of us thought we had hit something. The engineer of a passing freight stated he thought the rear end was on the ground. Neither was the case, but a half-inch bolt beneath the cab had sheared off loosening a flange and dumping the pressure in the air line, thus automatically applying the brakes on the train.

From an operating standpoint, the situation was a serious one. The engine, otherwise in good running order, was unable to pump air into the train line and release the brakes. We were blocking one of the few 2-track sections of the main line between N.Y. and Albany, and to make matters worse, 3 of the Central's crack Limiteds were following us.

Here is how the RR handled the situation. As soon as we stopped, the fireman ran a short distance ahead to a block phone. These are located about a mile apart and connect to the nearest signal tower. He informed Hudson Tower #84 of the mishaps, and the tower man in turn informed the dispatcher. The latter called Stuyvesant Tower #90, ahead of the stalled train, with orders. A southbound freight from Selkirk Yard was just arriving there. The crew dropped their 157 drags on the southbound main off from the Castleton Cutoff and raced south against traffic on the northbound main to our disabled train, while the following varnish crossed over and ran around us on the southbound track.

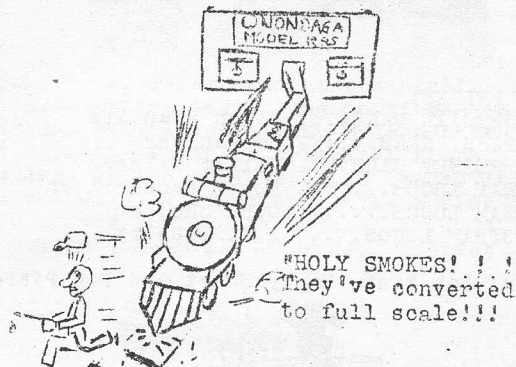
Of course the model railroaders had meanwhile got off their conveniently placed coach & walked forward to render "assistance". The engineer explained that he had worked steam when the brakes went into emergency, so as to ease the jolt. He was holding the sheared-off portion of the bolt. RR officials like to see such items turned in with the report.

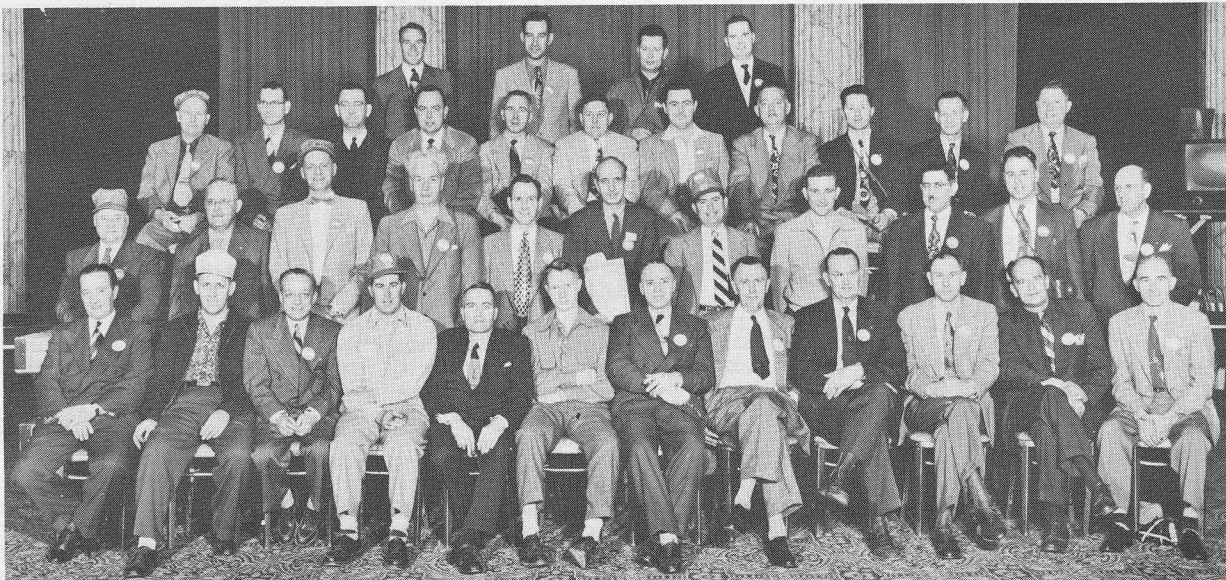
When the freight diesel was finally coupled on to the Hudson a special NMRA whistle signal was blown and we all ran inside to look up what it meant in the book. Then they blew in their flag and we went on to Albany, where another loco was coupled on & the freight diesel returned to its own train. As a result, we were 90 minutes late--but what a pleasant hour-and-a-half for us! No complaints.

The return trip of our Special Car on Sunday was uneventful to all except Ed Safford. He missed it, and took a later train. They developed driveshaft trouble west of Schenectady, but there was nothing else due in 4 hours, and no-one seemed in a hurry to clear the pike. Finally a crew came out of Albany and hauled everybody backwards to Amsterdam, where another loco coupled on the head end and got every one home safely in time for sun-up. It could not have happened to a better guy!

BRUCE COUGHLIN

We drove all the way home in the rain, and it took 12 hours, so you get no sympathy from me--- Ed.

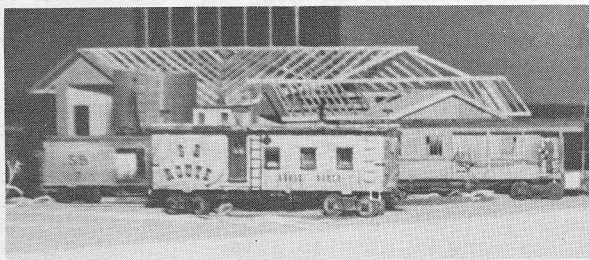




MODEL CONTEST WINNERS

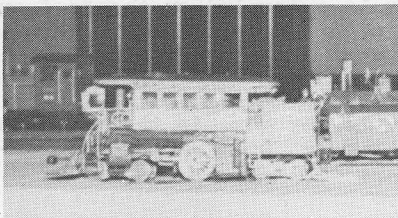
FIRST PRIZES:

H.O. LOCOS..... Glenn Staubitz
 O. CIRCUS..... Bob Sweetser
 H.O. STRUCTURES..... Glenn Staubitz
 H.O. SPECIAL CARS.... Robert E Bird
 H.O. PASS. CARS..... Walter Hilgers
 ON-3 FREIGHT CARS.... Vincent Ryan
 H.O. FREIGHT CARS.... Glenn Staubitz
 O. DIESEL ELECTRIC.... W.G. Shaw
 O. STEAM..... Vincent Ryan



SECOND PRIZES:

H.O. STEAM LOCOS..... J.J. Pauer
 O. ELECTRIC..... James E See
 H.O. FREIGHT CARS.... Robert E Bird
 H.O. PASS. CARS..... R.W. Folts
 H.O. SPECIAL CARS.... Ed VanLeer
 H.O. STRUCTURES..... Glenn Staubitz



THIRD PRIZES:

H.O. SPECIAL CARS.... Glenn Staubitz
 H.O. PASS. CARS..... Ed VanLeer
 H.O. FREIGHT CARS.... Walter Hilgers
 O. STEAM LOCOS..... Roger Ramsdell Jr
 O. STEAM LOCOS..... C.H. Shedd
 H.O. STEAM LOCOS..... D.J. Dossert

Judges: Bob Bast, Harry Ebert and Don Pierce



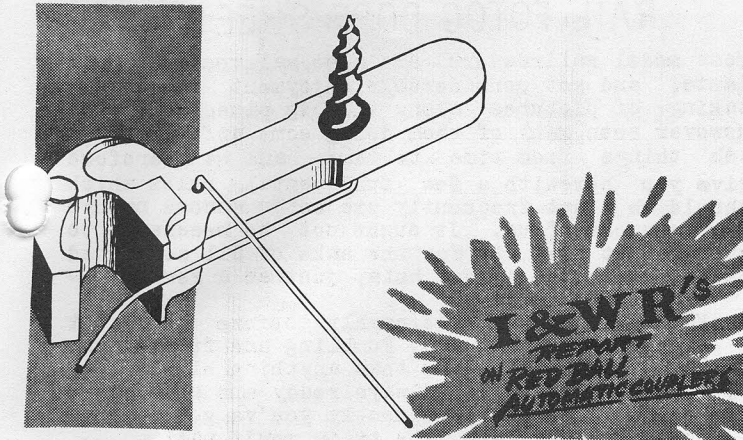
DOOR PRIZES:

Bob Walsh	Wollaston, Mass.
Vince Ryan	Buffalo N.Y.
Walter Hilgers	Buffalo N.Y.
Bill Young	London, Ont.
Charles O'Hara	Camillus N.Y.
Gerald Smith	Buffalo N.Y.
John Dias Jr MD	New Bedford, Mass.
Ken Bingham	Toronto, Ont.
John Sirabella	Bronx N.Y.
B. Kraisky	Mt. Vernon N.Y.
Bev Gill	Toronto, Ont.
R. Feldman	Brooklyn N.Y.
P. Loveless	Rochester N.Y.
J. Moreno	Hartford, Conn.
C. Welling	No. Plainfield, N.J.
Mrs Bob Walsh	Wollaston, Mass.
F. Sandor,	Toronto, Ont.
Joe King	Hartford, Conn.
Francis Brown	Rochester N.Y.
Joe Cohn	Bronx N.Y.
Cy Fargo	Batavia N.Y.
L. Abramams	Auburn N.Y.
Howard Burkhalter	Auburn N.Y.
R.E. Button	Hamilton, Ont.
I. Fleischman	Syracuse N.Y.
Glenn Staubitz	Buffalo N.Y.
Wayne Roundy	Old Orchard Beach, Me.
C. Chapham	Toronto, Ont.

PEOPLE WHO PROMISE.

I enjoyed handling the details of this Convention, although it involved a great deal of detail work, advance planning and careful arrangement. It was my first experience at this sort of thing, and the committee who worked with me was most helpful. All of my thanks to them. For whatever difficulties to come up, you have my apologies. One of the problems was the change of date after all arrangements had been made, as it threw our reservations all out of schedule. That was however not the most serious drawback. I refer to the people who promise---and then do not keep them. Naturally, all of us do the work voluntarily, and must rely upon assistance of others in order to make the affair a success. They are given certain assignments, and are expected to follow through on them. I have found to my sorrow that in many cases you can't rely upon them. As a result, you find many last minute chores which you must do yourself. To me this does not seem quite fair. This is a cooperative effort, and no-one can do it alone. I can only ask each and every one of you to assist when requested; and most urgently to follow through and keep your promise. Otherwise you wont get people to handle your conventions in the future. And they are YOURS, remember?

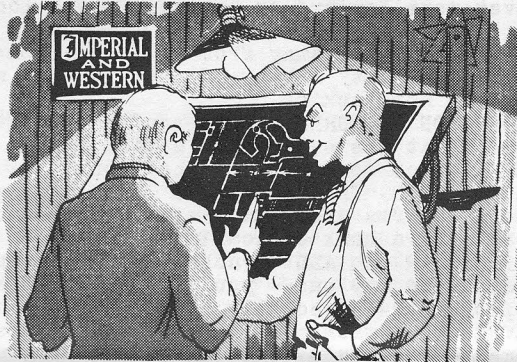
RAY SNOW, Convention Chairman.



The IMPERIAL & WESTERN RAILWAY has made some tests with RED BALL operating couplers set up as per the instructions which come with them, and we have an interesting report on their conclusions with it:-

We have given them some stinker tests, far beyond the expectations of the prototype coupler. 20-car trains thru multiple yard switching, 40 car freights on 20" radii curves and thru "S" switches at the same time, forward and backward at various speeds from "It's quicker to walk" speeds, to "HELP, let me off at the next stop" speeds. We will start by saying that although not perfectly foolproof, it's far more so than any other coupler on the market today. On top of this, it is as darn near prototype in appearance and operation as H.O. can get.

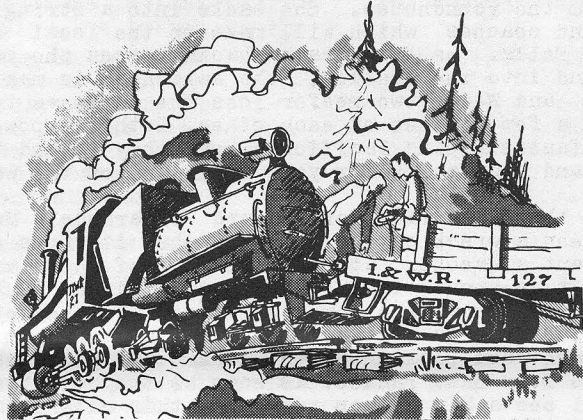
We started in our plans department. The brass hats and the shop men convened. The plans were layed out. We found that coupler pockets had to be a bit larger, and for sharp curves the pocket should have a longer horizontal opening for full and free movement. We decided to install some in this manner and see what happened-----



Let me tell you, our shops were busy, but we learned many things. Such as, perfectly adjusting the couplers is no small job. The removal of our old clumsy couplers was a pleasure. We were also glad to get rid of our "between-the-rails" ramps.



As fast as we could get them installed, we road-tested them--- but good. The tension of the coupling springs is a delicate deal. Too little tension- unexpected uncoupling; too much tension- too much shock needed to couple. Proper centering of the couplers is essential and requires care and patience. We like the way derailed cars drop out of the train instead of being dragged to ruination. We also like the advantage of picking a car out of the middle of a train, and closing the gap without any trouble. It can be easily hand operated too.



Up to now the difficulties are overshadowed by the advantages. One difficulty comes to mind, which is the proper clearance between train and the rubbing posts. I can devise retractable posts if necessary. Tests are not over, but up to now with the number of cars we have changed over, this coupler seems to have very good possibilities.

John S. Anderson

RAILROADIANA

Did you know that there is a group of fans of the old Colorado narrow gages, which is keeping tabs on developments out there? They carefully watch all that's going on, and not much passes them by. They are very happy to inform us. Not only that, but we have received from them a quarterly sheet entitled "The Narrow Gage News" which is absolutely free for the asking. Simply send them 6 self-addressed envelopes, stamped, and you will receive quite free the next 6 issues. These folks also operate the "Narrow Gage Motel" at Alamosa, Colo, which is the meeting place for all fans getting down into that area, and where you can always get information and advice for the asking. We reproduce ~~herewith~~ their "Narrow Gage Country" which is a historical item.

WILL

BOY SCOUT PROJECT

Troop #1 BSA has salvaged quite a bit of material of historical value during the dismantling of the romantic old Ligonier Valley RR, which it is selling for the benefit of its troop fund. If you are interested in railroadiana, write to them at PO Box 394, Ligonier, Pa. for information.

FAN TRIPS

A large number of interesting trips has been in the works this Spring, indicating continued interest in railroad activities. Many modelers find it a pleasant adjunct to their principal hobby, and are encountered on the various runs. The railroads themselves are willing hosts, and it is a fine opportunity to secure photos and data. If you'd like to get on some of the mailing lists, contact your editor, Stan Bradley.



ESSEX VALLEY RAILROAD

This is the story of an evenings operational activity on the Essex Valley R.R. of the North Shore Model R.R. Club while at Lynn. Let's spend a night at Blackstone Tower and watch the parade go by. You'll learn a lot about how a railroad operates.

#E-1, the way freight, is made up in the yard at about 4:30 by a diesel yard goat. A heavy Consol is readied in the service yard and soon ties on. As the drag clears for points east, a 10-wheeler is coming up from the roundhouse. She backs into a string of open end coaches which will make up the local for Little Falls. As this train backs across the main line and into the station, the switcher is making up E-3 and W-4, two reefer jobs due to leave town within a few minutes of each other. Both are powered by fast-stepping Pacifics. There they go, and the fruit and vegetables for your table are on the way.

What's that whistling for a yard clearance? Must have been a wreck out on the line--but it turns out they want a wrecker at the other end of the division. It is about time for the streamlined Yankee Clipper--and here she comes swirling into the depot for a fast run to Portland. Now the switcher is in the coach yard picking up the diner and plush cars for the Down East Yankee. As soon as they are ready we will see a big Hudson take over this all-Pullman consist headed for St. John.

By this time it is getting dark, and a gas-electric is loading for the evening run to Valley View. At the same time the yard goat is making up the New York Yankee, which will depart immediately upon arrival of the inbound Down East Yankee from St. John. As soon as these trains clear, the switcher high-tails to the freight yard to make up the train for the high-car transfer. These cars are too high for the tunnel and thus have to be diverted. The branch line diesel couples on this drag and is on its way.

A special green caboose is now being spotted on the make-up track, and is soon coupled to a long string of express reefers from the unloading platform. They are from the milk train, empty now, that will soon be on its way to Vermont points to bring back tomorrow's dairy goods. A two-unit road diesel backs in and tests the air, but has to wait for the inbound New York Yankee--and here she comes! As the road engine cuts off and the switcher takes over, the milk job whistles for a clearance and is off on the high iron.

The tower is quiet for the rest of the night, except for hooping up orders to several manifest freights, and clearing The Owl. We have time for a snack and a chat with some of the train crews. It is growing daylight when the switcher picks up a hack and goes into the yard for a string of tank cars for the oil depot. Later she returns with yesterday's empties. Meantime we hear the inbound milk train whistling for the board at the west lead, and the cars are quickly spotted for the dairy trucks that are now waiting to make their morning deliveries.

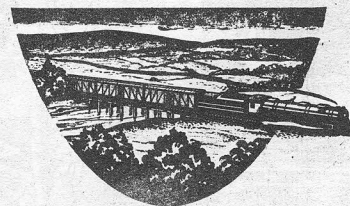
Things will pick up now, as there are 8 trains due in, close together, from both directions. They don't always arrive in the same order, but we see the reefer hotshots spotted at the icing platforms, the local from Little Falls, the Yankee Clipper from Portland, the gas-electric from Valley View, the Hi car transfer, the empty tankers, and maybe a few extras that weren't on our time card. Last of all we see the way freight dragging in with its usual consist of mixed and bulk freight.

After all these are cleared, the switcher drops down to the engine house for coal and water, and the hostlers spot the motive power for the days activities. If you're tired after a night at Blackstone, how do you think the crew feels?

RAIL FOTOG DOPE SHEET

Most model railroaders are also railroad enthusiasts, and get considerable enjoyment out of the taking of pictures along the big pikes. We have however seen many of them doing some awfully foolish things from time to time, and we therefore give you herewith a few fundamental rules which should be (but frequently are not) second nature to every one of us. It ought not be necessary to even repeat them, but for the sake of all concerned let's paste them in our hats, just as a reminder:-

1. KNOW YOUR CAMERA thoroughly before going out for railroad pictures. Fumbling and fussing can spoil more good shots than anything else.
2. HAVE YOUR EQUIPMENT always ready and accessible when on the job. Frequently you've got to jump out and shoot fast. The train won't wait.
3. IDENTIFY YOURSELF and get permission before you go onto railroad property. If you don't, we will ALL eventually be excluded.
4. OBSERVE RULES and instructions. Don't try to SNEAK pictures after being told that it is not allowed. Many CHARACTERS try it.
5. DONT CLIMB AROUND on structures or equipment without permission. You'll get in bad, and so will everyone else.
6. AROUND RAILROADS is no place for children; and if you're CHILDISHLY INCLINED- this means YOU.
7. NO DRINKS and NO DRUNKS. Rule G applies to you.
8. DON'T BE A JERK. Be careful and vigilant at all times, and refrain from any actions which would lead to criticism of railfans in general.
9. IF YOU ARE a gentlemen, you'll usually be welcomed to come again- and so will the next fello.
10. SAFETY is of first importance always- to both yourself and to the railroad. Follow safety rules carefully, and USE YOUR HEAD.
 - a- Don't step on the rail. Many injuries have occurred in this manner- and it identifies the GREENHORN- the man who must be watched.
 - b- STAND STILL while focusing your camera, and never move forward or backward while looking into the camera.
 - c- Stay off of and away from moving equipment- it has a nasty habit of SOCKING YOU when you are not looking.
 - d- NO HEADON PICTURES unless you're absolutely sure that the equipment is tied down- and NEVER shoot moving trains head-on.
 - e- FACE PASSING TRAINS-- loose lading and projecting parts are common-were you ever clogged with a hunk of coal?
 - f- KEEP CLEAR of ALL tracks when a train is passing on any one-- you cant hear another approaching- especially a diesel.
 - g- NEVER CROSS within 10 feet of standing equipment- you can't tell when something will suddenly JUMP at you.
 - h- LOOK in both directions before crossing ANY track-- it's safer to assume that there is always something moving along the railroad, and to look out for it in advance.
 - i- GET SET for pictures BESIDE the track and not ON IT if you value your skin, besides which the angle is better.
 - j- HOLD FAST when riding-- if your camera cant be worked with one hand, dont try to use it under such circumstances.
 - k- STOP, LOOK, LISTEN, and STAY ALIVE.

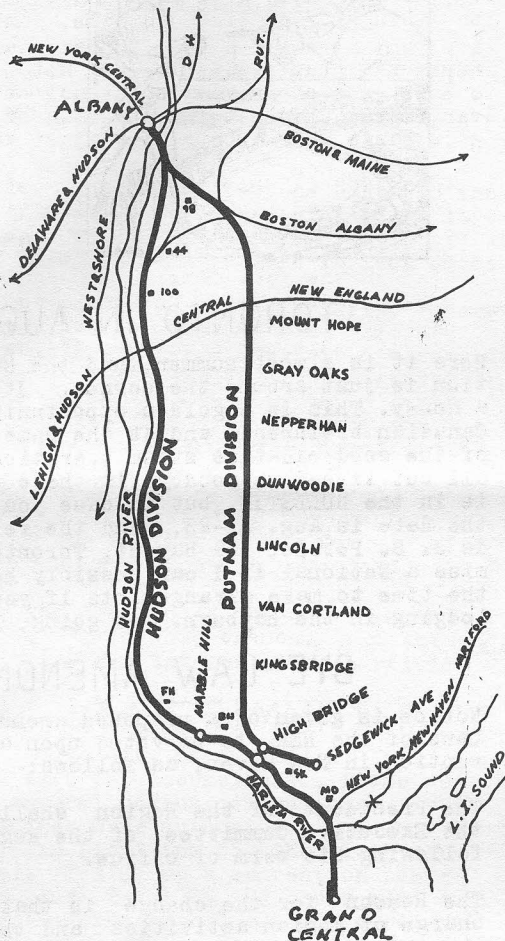


GREATER PUTNAM R.R.

The Greater Putnam Railroad is operated by the Yonkers Model R.R. Club, which was organized in May of 1948 as successor to the Tibbets Valley RR Club (1938-1941), the Hudson River RR Club (1941-47) and the Yonkers Model RR (1946-48). The pike is located in basement of First Methodist Church in Tonkers N.Y., and represents 4,000 man-hours of labor, and an investment of over \$2000 in materials.

Equipment is HO, 12-volts, with 6 panels operating and 5 more under way. The total trackage is over 1000 ft, with 71 sidings and 102 turnouts. The line is divided into the Hudson & the Putnam Divs.

The former is modeled after that section of the real N.Y.C. between MO at Mott Haven and DV at Spuyten Duyvil. Part is 4 track and the remainder 2 track. Stations are Grand Central, High Bridge, Marble Hill, and Albany. The latter is single track with stations modeled after Kingsbridge, Van Cortlandt, Lincoln, Dunwoodie, Nepperhan, Gray Oaks and Mount Hope. Equipment consists of 25 locos, 50 passgr and baggage cars, 150 freight, and 25 caboose and work cars, all owned by the members.



Regular meetings are held on Thursdays at 8 P.M., but the rooms are available any evening except Sundays. Applications for membership are welcome, the only requirement being a sincere interest in model railroading. Interesting activities are assured.



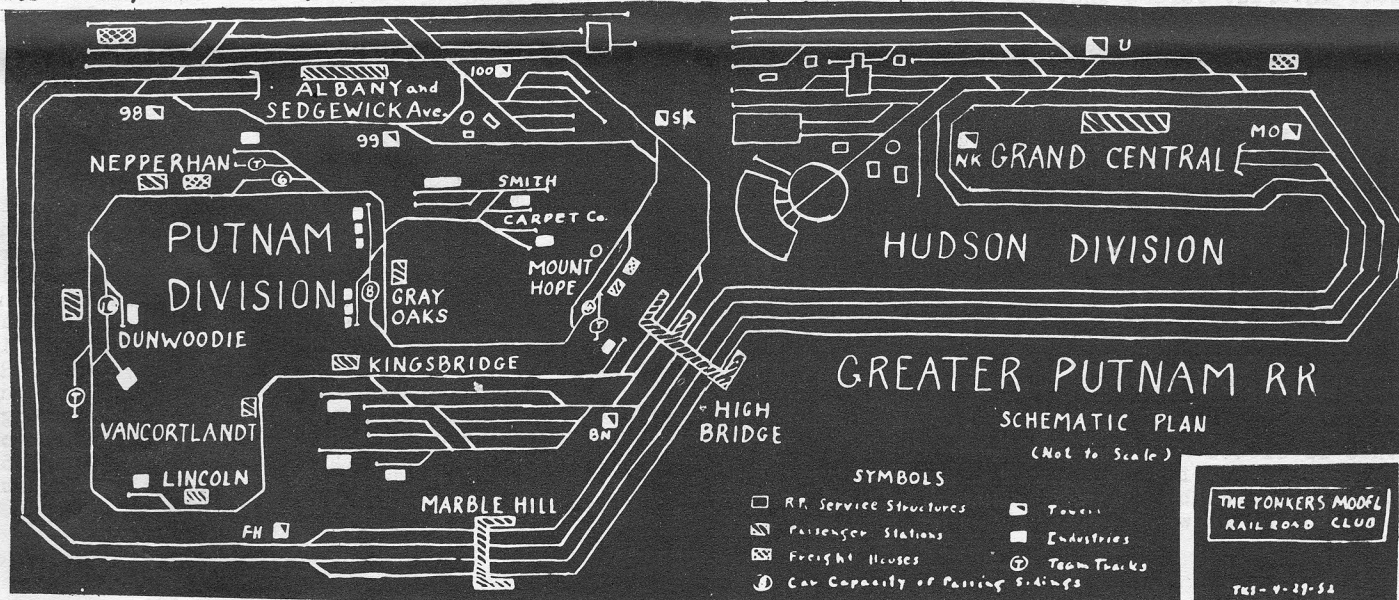
OLD 97 AGAIN

THE COUPLER recently carried the Story of Old 97. There is another version of the wreck which gained considerable credence. Coming down from Washington she was delayed over an hour by a washout south of Rapidan Station. It was almost a religion with the crews that this fast train come thru on time. There were additional reasons on this particular day. Joe Broady had received word of the birth of his first child at Danville. His fireman was hurrying to his parents wedding anniversary. Old Man Clovis back in the mail car was making his last run after 30 yrs service. Thus they all had reasons for making up time on that 196 mile run over the Division.

They didn't know that they had unexpected passengers- 2 escaped convicts jumped on behind the tender at Monroe, and rode the blind end. The fine new engine, most powerful of her time, just in from the Chicago Worlds Fair, was really able to make up time, and they had picked up 52 minutes as they approached the trestle on White Oak Mountain, when Broady applied the air to slow her down. One of the convicts, seeing that they were approaching a town and fearing that they were stopping for the Sheriff's men to search the train, reached down with his knife and cut the airhose. Jim found that he had no air, and that is why "His whistle broke in to a scream"-- he was whistling for hand brakes.

"It was down that grade that he lost his airbrake, And you can see what a jump he made."

They still say at Danville that the train would have held the rails if Brody still had his air. The wrecking crew came down from Lynchburg that night, & found 97 buried in the mud of Cherrystone Creek with a cut airhose on the tender. But there was a stranger crew waiting at Danville for the men who never arrived:--Joe Broady's wife with a brand new baby girl--Tom's parents waiting for their youngest son-- the welcoming committee to bid farewell to Old Man Clovis from the RPO--- and the Sheriff's posse to gather up the killers. But destiny had played its part, and the Sheriff was the only one who benefitted at all from the mishap.



THE YONKERS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

ACTIVITY IN MONTREAL

Things are humming at the Montreal HO Assn, which is handling our convention there next Spring. The date will be the May 15th weekend. Art Calvin, of 7-4100 Cote des Neiges, Montreal 25, P.Q. is the convention chairman, and he promises a real bangup program. This will be the first time NER has gone to Canada, and it will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy some of the marvelous railroading which we have heard so much about. It is not too early to start thinking about it and making your arrangements. Any of our Canadian friends who would like to lend a hand should contact Art immediately.



HOW STUPID CAN
"STUPID" GET?

THE COWCATCHER

FALL CONVENTION

We always try to have some advance convention dope for you well in advance, so here is what we know of the Fall meeting at New Haven, Conn. It will be on Oct 10-11, and Clark Benson is handling the details. There will be an entirely different kind of program, and we will try to avoid any "double-headers". The city is very accessible from all directions, and there are several clubs within hailing distance which we will visit.

The Metropolitan District is again trying to form a special group if enough are interested. Depending upon where you board the train, there will be a substantial saving on fares. Driving on the Parkways is always a rat-race weekends, and the enjoyment of a pleasant train trip is well worth a consideration. With 50 passengers the New Haven can give us our own RDC making any stops we wish. Or with 40 we can have our own coach on a regular run stopping at any major point enroute for 10 or more passengers. How about deciding NOW and notifying Geo. Reisz, 359 E. Moshulu Pkway, NY 67, telling him where you want to get on and how many. Advance information is essential for this program.

DATA SHEETS

Thanks for the plug on help for the Data Sheets Committee in the March COUPLER. Ivon Preble sent me a list of names to contact, and I wrote to them all, but so far have had a very meagre response from N.E.R. That seems to be the general way with hobbyists--- only a very small fraction is willing to help promote the hobby, and many of those even lose interest before they are fairly started. That makes it very discouraging. If there are no new Data Sheets issued, plenty of members will scream, but that is just what's likely to happen unless we get the additional volunteers I'm still hoping for.

ED RAVENSCROFT

Doggone it, fellows, let's get busy and help the man out----- he can't do it all alone, and a few hours a year is little enough to ask for such an important project-----SWB.

KINGSTON EXPANDS

Kingston, birthplace of NER, is at it again! Whether the rapid growth of the Region is the reason we neither deny nor confirm, but the fact remains that a second addition, 30x28', is being added to the south end of the Kingston M.R. club. Time and money are important factors in the new project, and this is slated as a 2-year program. When completed the expansion of the HUDSON VALLEY LINES will be housed in a club house that measures almost 100 ft long and 28 ft wide. That's BIG TIME RAILROADING!
HANK EIGHMEY

TORONTO IN AUGUST

Here it is almost summer, and the National Convention is just around the corner. It promises to be a honey. This is a golden opportunity to visit our Canadian brethren, and at the same time see some of the good old-time steam operation which has now all but kissed us goodbye in these parts. Full data is in the BULLETIN, but in case you haven't heard, the date is Aug. 21-23, and the fellow to contact is J. S. Petrie, 159 Bay St, Toronto, Ont. I don't miss a National if I can possibly help it, & now's the time to make arrangements if you want to avoid lodging in the haybarn. Get going, Lads.

BYE-LAW AMENDMENT

Notice is given of a proposed amendment to the Bye Laws of the NER, to be voted upon at the Fall Convention in New Haven, as follows:-

The President of the Region shall be a member of the Executive Committee of the Region for 1 year following his term of office.

The Reason for the change is that he has been in charge of Region activities and the Committee can thus have the benefit of his knowledge and experience for the following year.

NORTH JERSEY FEDERATION

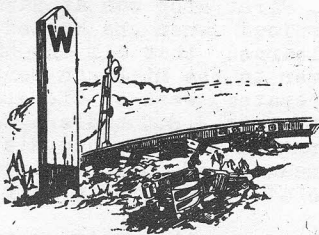
The Spring program was concluded with a pleasant visitation to the North Jersey Midland, extensive 00 gage pike at Roselle N.J. Many valuable ideas were discovered by the members. Coming events for the Fall are a visit to the Summit-New Providence Club at Murray Hill N.J. on Tuesday, Sept 15, and to the Elizabeth Club at 323 16th Ave. Newark N.J. on Tuesday, November 24th. This will be the first open house of this 0 gage club at its new pike.

TOUR PENN STATION

The next meeting of the NMRA Metropolitan District will be on Thurs.eve, July 16, to enjoy a complete tour of Penn Station. We will have supper at the RR YMCA Cafeteria (take elevator at 8th Ave entrance), at 6 PM. The behind-the-scenes tour of this busy N.Y. terminal will begin at 7, including many points of interest not ordinarily seen. After that will be a short business meeting, and RR movies in the Y.M.C.A. auditorium (guests welcome). All NMRA members automatically belong to the District. Any last minute change of plans will be noted through hobby dealers and clubs in the area, but if you desire to get on the mailing list for the year, 25¢ sent to membership VP Bill Dietz, 3348 Hull Avenue New York 67 N.Y. will do the trick.

HOW THE COUPLER WORKS

You may be interested in knowing about the many steps necessary to get your paper to you. Members send in the material (or else the editor has to dream up something). It is rewritten by the editor in the rough, and then again a second time to get proper spacing for straight margins at both ends of the lines. Each item is then cut out and pasted up on large cardboards. Something has to be found to fill any vacant spaces on each page. Headlines must be lettered and pasted in. All this takes over 15 evenings of work. Then it is sent to Jack Wilson who gets the photo offset work done for us. Jack then sends the paste-ups back to the editor, and the finished COUPLERS to Ivon Preble. Irwin Lloyd sends Ivon a list of all paidup members. The latter types out the addresses, stuffs the envelopes, adds any extras such as plan sheets, and mails them out. He sends what is left to the editor, who by that time is getting busy with the next issue. All of these jobs take time and work, and for these reasons must be rotated occasionally so as not to overload the willing horse. The time has now arrived when someone else must take over the mailing job, which comes only 4 times a year. Plenty of you fellows should be willing to lend a hand, and Ivon will anticipate hearing from you.

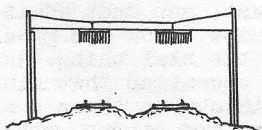


Cuts in this issue are from RED BALL NEWS and can be had on railroad stationery with 4-line copy at \$2.75 per hundred. M. Dale Newton, Medford, Oregon.

MEASURING CURVATURE

Have you ever looked at a railroad curve, and wondered how sharp it was? Here is a simple method of measuring curvature. The results are not exact, but are accurate enough for most purposes. Take a string 62 feet long and tie a knot exactly in the center. While a companion holds one end of the cord to the inside face of the outside railhead, have another person stretch it taut and hold the other end to the inside face of the same rail. While they are doing the hard work you can measure the distance from the knot to the inside of the railhead at that point. Each inch of space between the knot and the railhead equals one degree of curvature. I suppose that you could use scale distances and measure it out on model pikes as well. M.E.R. "LOCAL"

Hint of the Month - Telltales supports may be built by using wood dowels or brass rod for poles but here is a new one. Take some old brass rail and tin the base. For each support cut a 26' and 30' length and soldered together. The butt end goes in the ground, the short rail to face toward the track. B.S.M.E. "SWITCHER".



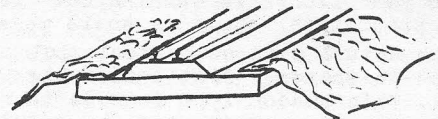
Hint of the Month - - If you are having trouble with cars derailing at a switch, here is a trick that may be the answer in solving your problem. When a turnout is built the stock rail should have a slight offset put in it to receive the switch blade. Without rebuilding the turnout the same effect of an offset may be obtained by adding just a little solder to the head of the rail in front of the point.

CLEANING SOLUTION

You often run into trouble getting your hands clean after finishing a particularly dirty job on the layout. The Model Railroader has suggested a simple solution to this problem. Ordinary water, available at most faucets, is an excellent solution for removing dust and grime from the hands after an evening spent working about the pike. Care should be used not to get it on any iron or steel parts, for they will rust readily.

Have you heard the story of the runaway Ma & Pa work car? It seems that a platform truck which was behind the motor car derailed and uncoupled, throwing its rider to the ground. The operator of the motor car thinking that he likewise was going to derail joined the birds. As it happened the motor car stayed on the rails and running uncontrolled, made a 11 mile trip before being stopped. A full account of this story appeared in the Evening Sun on September 12, 1952.

Hint of the Month If you plan to put scenery on your layout, take steps to have a firm track board from which to work. Use what ever type of construction you wish but make the base board wide enough so that the material for the scenery may be fastened without interfering with the track.



N.E.R. CONVENTION



THE COWCATCHER

PAY YOUR 1953 DUES NOW

NMRA APPLICATION

name _____
 street address _____
 city _____ zone _____ state _____
 age _____ gage _____ card no. _____

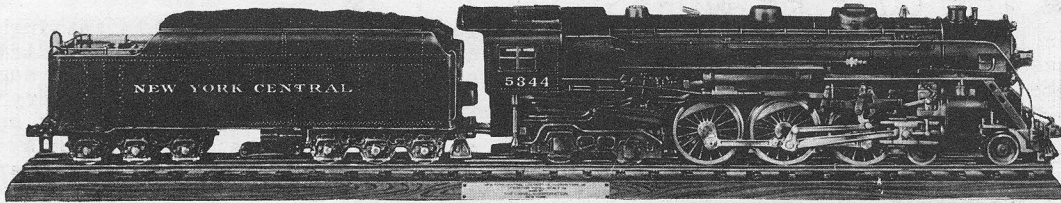
occupation _____

name of your local club _____

MEMBERSHIP DESIRED HOME LAYOUT

regular \$2. 2 rail
 sustaining \$10. 3 rail
 paid up life \$50. traction
 installment \$10. ac dc





HUDSON 5344

For 6 years prior to 1937 NYC's #5344 was merely 1 of the 5340 series of Hudson-type locomotives that hauled the 20th Century Limited along the banks of the Hudson River. But in that year it became famous, and #5344 could gleam on the sides of cabs in the castle of the King of the Belgians, in the palatial structure that the Rajah of Jaunpur called home, and in the immense playrooms set aside for the lighter moments of Italy's Benito Mussolini.

From "ESSO OILWAYS" for November 1937 comes the story in "Playing the Iron Horse" of how this engine earned its place in the hearts of model railroaders around the world. This article about the Lionel Corporation of Irvington, N.J. says:-

"This year Lionel is turning out for the 1st time on a production basis a scale model locomotive, 1/48th actual size, so perfect that the unretouched photo is scarcely distinguishable from the real thing. This Hudson type is made to retail at \$75, & supplies a demand created by American buyers and those from 50 foreign countries who have apparently grown tired of clockwork toys and of electrical pseudo-locomotives. Railroad men themselves lead the parade which is demanding close reproductions of favorite engines and pet rolling stock of other descriptions. In N.Y. members of the Society of Model Engineers construct replicas of entire trains."

"There are a half million railroad model fans in the nation," the article continues. "So great is the grip of the model fever that some fanciers, with the necessary means have indulged in oversize miniatures. On the estates of these enthusiasts midget locos pull dwarf trains over narrow gage railroads, and haul gleeful guests about the grounds. The average Lionel customer, however, whether he rides his hobby in Algiers, in northern Canada, or in the far-flung-rarely-heard-of corners of the world, still finds that electrically operated sets are the easiest on the pocket book."

"For 37 years Lionel has gratified the desires of those who want trains looping about the living room; those who would rather finger a remote control switch than eat. In 1900, Joshua Lionel Cowan a New Yorker who worked at dry-cell batteries, determined to test a theory. He believed that he could establish a market for battery toy trains, and he accordingly formed the Lionel Corp. That his reasoning was sound is to be seen in the fact that the first Lionel locos, together with trains of passenger or freight cars, found many a ready customer at \$6 per train, a lot of money in those days."

"Five years later the growing business hired Mario Caruso, a naval engineer with a flair for design. Today he is Vice-Pres and Cowan is Pres. of a firm which employs a peak personnel of 1,200 and publishes MODEL BUILDER, a magazine for which an army of enthusiasts plunks down 10¢ every other month."

Messrs Cowan and Caruso have seen their products sprout from the original \$6 set to a line of varied miniature equipment which includes one outfit retailing for more than \$100. The most popular has a price tag of about \$30. Pace setters among the models for which U.S. enthusiasts last year paid in

excess of \$5 million were reproductions of such famous trains as the Blue Comet, Flying Yankee, City of Portland, Hiawatha, and other electric, diesel, and steam originals. A newcomer to this year's market is a low-priced 6-driver steam engine at \$9.95, and there are many others."

#5344 which was one of Lionel's most popular locos in the late 1930's and 1940's is now out of production. According to the Dispatchers Report in the Feb. 1935 RR MODEL CRAFTSMAN: "Lionel is still getting requests to bring back the famous NYC Hudsons but apparently not enough to warrant production. The prototype of Lionel item #700 has been relegated to a much lesser service than the proud train it once hauled. Who knows what happened to old #5344 itself? Is she still in service?"

This question spurred some detective work by the COUPLER staff. First stop was at Harmon N.Y. where #5344 was serviced when she hauled the Century. There it was learned that all the 5340 series had been turned over to the Michigan Central Lines, and were being operated west of Cleveland. The next move was a letter to J.E. Chandler, Master Mechanic at the NYC Terminal in Cleveland. His reply is good news for thousands of model railroaders who are still using #5344 to haul their expresses.

Mr. Chandler reports that this engine is still in passenger service. He added that she was built in November 1931, and had accumulated 1,406,554 miles up to January 31, 1953.

THE COUPLER wishes many more miles of smooth running for #5344 and its thousands of baby sisters.
Kin Salmon.

MODELER OR RAILROADER?

Many of us who call ourselves scale model railroaders look down our noses at those who operate Lionel or Amer. Flyer equipment. We brag about how our trains and track are built in the image of the prototype, and smile indulgently at the oversize flanges and tight radius curves of tinsplate.

Granted that their trains fail to match our scale models in appearance. But let's look at some of the arguments in their favor. How about operation? To some railroaders, that is more important than appearance, and who's to say they are wrong? In 99 cases out of 100 they make a much better showing in that respect. Derailments are rare when you have deep flanges, and if you want your equipment to stay on the track, then maybe appearance is not so important. And how many scale models make smoke & whistle realistically?

If you'll be honest, you must admit that our scale flanges are oversize, and the grades are quite a bit steeper than the real thing. Another big point is the amount of operation that can be cramed into a small space, thanks to those sharp curves. For apartment dwellers and others whose space is limited or impermanent, O27 has it all over the big curves of O gage, or even HO.

Most model railroaders, whatever their present gage, started out with tinsplate. Some will even admit that they'd like to be back in that relatively trouble free tinsplate field. How about it?

L.S.R. COWCATCHER