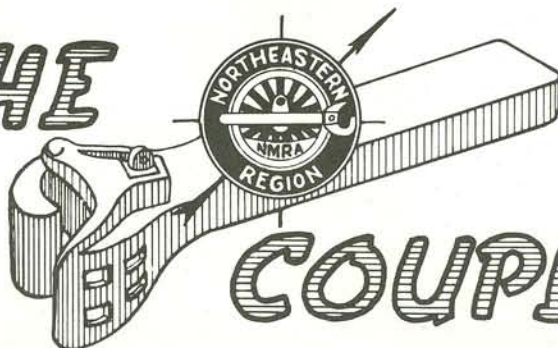


# THE



# COUPLER

## SPRING 1957

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

## ISSUE 42

### THE DISPATCHER'S TOWER



Each time a convention week end draws near I find my thoughts turning to the past few months, reviewing that which has been accomplished for the benefit of the members of NER. Most outstanding this season appears to be the Divisions, our most direct contact with those who do not, or are unable to, attend the conventions.

Having been a charter member of the Metropolitan District of New York (the first Division) I long ago saw the value of these groups and the problem of encouraging their formation interested me. Early in 1956, I made a concentrated study of the situation which resulted in letters to some fourteen NER members scattered geographically through out the Region. The results were more than discouraging, only two replies being made; one definitely negative and the other very doubtful. However the idea did take hold after a while. Without any suggestion of the activity, a letter in my mail announced an organizational meeting in Hartford, Connecticut, with an invitation to attend. This proved later to be the start. A group in central Connecticut had gathered together, sold their idea to those present, and formed the "Nutmeg Division of the NER". Today that state has a well formed and active organization. Thanks to Art Wadhams and Art Wilcox and their group, the membership is growing rapidly. They are extremely active and their programs are excellent. An example of the careful and comprehensive planning is the meeting to be held on Sunday afternoon, May 19th, at the Warehouse Point Trolley Museum following the Springfield convention activities. Not only is this an excellent manner to boost attendance, but of definite assistance to NER by materially helping to make a comprehensive convention program even more interesting and extensive.

The intense activity of the "Nutmeg Division" must present some kind of a challenge. It would be interesting to know what impact their success has had on other groups, both already organized and just forming. What is the thinking of the newly formed "Hub Division" in the Boston, Massachusetts area, which, I believe, is under the leadership of David MacDonald? Being very new, I have had no details as yet about them, though the locale and known NER members therein should produce much activity. Then there is Roger Ramsdell and the Metropolitan District. Are they planning to produce more improvements upon their past excellent gatherings? As to the divisions in planning and/or in the process of organization, the programs of the "Nutmeg Division" should be a good incentive. It shows the possibilities of local interest and the need for more closer personal contact. Apparently this is being recognized as there are two sections now considering formation of still additional divisions. One is in the Albany, New York, area and the other is on Long Island, in the same state.

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### SPRINGFIELD TO EMPHASIZE MODEL RAILROADING

#### Fall Meet Set For Albany

The emphasis will be placed on "model" railroading during the Spring '57 Convention, reports Don Robinson, Committee Chairman. In an effort to overcome some of the objections voiced after past conventions, several innovations are to be introduced. Among them, there will be no speaker at the banquet. This will permit more time for the model aspects of the evening program. Also, the Model Contest will be broader in scope.

The program starts with the registration at the Hotel Shelton, 70 Chestnut Street, Springfield, starting at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 18th, and will continue until 1:00 P.M.

At 1:00 P.M. busses will leave from the Hotel Shelton for the visit to the Pioneer Valley Live Steam Club located at Southwick, Mass. This club is different from the clubs usually visited, as live steamers are far and few between these days.

The banquet is scheduled for 6:30 P.M. and will be held in the Regency Ballroom of the Hotel Shelton. As was previously stated, there will be no speaker.

Following the banquet, there will be enough activities to satisfy all members attending. One of the highlights of the evening will be the model contest. This will be a bit different from past years. The contest will be staged under the N.M.R.A. Rules. Models entered will be placed in one of the following six categories:

1. Scratch Built, TT - HO - 00
2. Scratch Built, S - 0
3. Kit Built, TT - HO - 00
4. Kit Built, S - 0
5. Scenics, TT - HO - 00 (2x3 ft. max.)
6. Scenics, S - 0 (4x5 ft. max.)

It is requested by the Committee that those wishing to enter the contest DO NOT send them the models to be entered. All models must be entered by their owners at the Convention. It is also requested that those who have already had a model win a First Prize at a previous NER convention do not submit the same model this time. This will not only make room for more entries, but encourage the new-comers to the hobby to enter their models.

Also on the agenda for the evening will be the draw-bar contest for those interested in seeing how powerful their engines are. Facilities will be available, too, for the showing of slides and movies for those not entering the contests. As there will be no auction at this meeting, those with equipment to sell (non-commercial, naturally) should be tag-

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# THE COUPLER

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

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## THE HOSTLER SEZ:

If this issue looks a little off-center....it is. Received a letter from Alain Guilloton, of Westbury, New York, suggesting that the COUPLER be punched for a three ring binder like the Bulletin is. As his letter came rather late for this issue, we are doing the next best thing. The "inside" margins have been moved in to allow those who do keep their copies of the COUPLER in binders to punch the holes required without obliterating any of the print and also to make bound issues easier to read by not having half the page hidden because of the binder. In the mean time we will look into the cost of having the editions punched by the printer. Many thanks for the suggestion, Alain. Constructive ideas are always welcome. If any other members have ideas that will improve our publication (besides getting rid of the Editor) send them along. We want this to be the

best publication in the NMRA and only you, the members, are the ones who can make it that.

We are still looking for articles of interest to members of the Region. You don't have to be an author, just jot down the facts in their proper order and send your story along to me. If you have a special "gimmick" on your layout, the other members would like to hear of it. If you can make line drawings, using India ink, we'll use those too, along with your story.

We had in mind a new column for the COUPLER. We thought of calling it "Sandhouse Chatter", which will give mention of people, places and the lesser goings on in the Region. It would be something like the "Social Notes" in regular papers, geared more to the individual members as opposed to Club Notes for the larger groups. I'd like to have opinions on this from you members as you are the ones who will have to keep the column going by feeding the information to me. "Sandhouse Chatter" could be used by the members to express their thoughts and ideas on issues and matters of the Region, the National or just model railroading in general. This proposed column is NOT intended to be a crying post, but rather an outlet for constructive ideas and information. Let's hear from you on this.

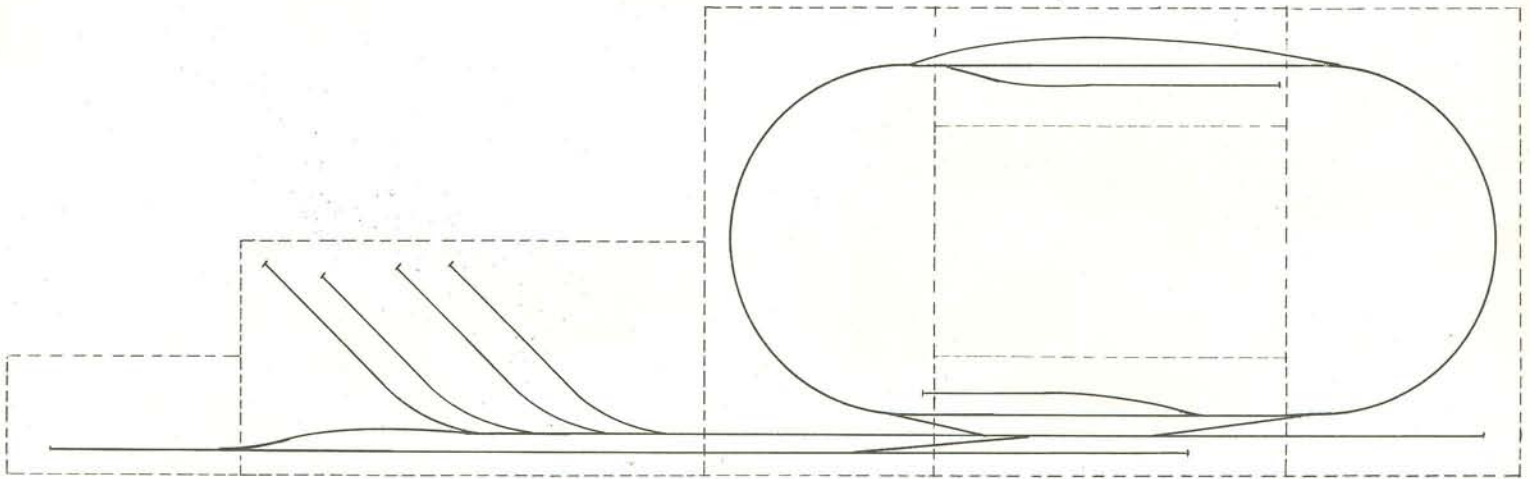
Looks as though Spring is finally here. Time to start thinking about vacations and, naturally, trips in quest of steam power. With steam locos rapidly disappearing it might be an idea to locate existing steam engines in operation and plan a trip around them. Your Editor and his wife are contemplating a trip (anyone want to take care of three rowdies?) through Pennsylvania and Maryland, an area to which neither of us have been before. So, with cameras in hands, we'll see a part of the country new to us and with some luck, perhaps some steam locos in action. Not making the trip entirely for railroading, but rather making the trip with railroading as a sidelight. Single day trips are also being planned to mix a little railroading in with family outings. Check the maps and cameras and have a good summer.

The Springfield Meet sounds like a good one. I was talking to Don Robinson, the Chairman of that Committee, and it will be a meeting of and for model railroaders. The model contest classifications were changed to encourage the newer members to the hobby who do not have enough experience, and those who do not have the facilities, for scratch building to compete among themselves without having to worry about the prizes going to the scratch builders. So pack up and bring along your favorite model, even if it is kit built, you will be competing with models in your own class. Who knows? yours might win the first prize. If you have any railroad slides or movies, either prototype or model, bring them along too. Projectors will be available. Most important, though...come yourself. Meet the people you have heard about and make new friends. That is the big reason for these conventions, giving model rails a chance to make new friends in the hobby, so we'll be looking for you in Springfield.

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A view of the well-sceniced L & N Short Line Railroad of Laurence R. Nielson, 64 Elliott Place, Freeport, L.I., N.Y. That pool looks inviting. Notice the swimmers at the lower left.



Many of us have read and heard of the portable layout built and operated by the Prototype Operations committee and displayed at the National Meet held in St. Paul last year. Above is the layout as shown in St. Paul and basically what will be used for the clinic at Springfield. The Committee says basically because it is not known at this time how much space will be available for the layout and those attending the clinic. The scale of the drawing is  $\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'$ .

The two sidings at the top of the print are used to store a passenger and a freight train. The station siding at the bottom was used to drop and pick up a pullman, or diner, or railway express car or two. Mythically, there are four stations - one at the top, one on each side of the loop, plus a fifth one at the end of the branch line at the lower left. It was also arranged to drop an occasional railway express or pullman at the end of that track to lay over until the next train came along and picked it up.

All the trains ran counter-clockwise on the loop, and about every other passenger train had to back down the branch line and come out again to complete the loop run as part of its schedule. The freights, of course, are all backed down into the

branch line, and there is some switching from the front end of the engine, although most of the switching is done from the rear. To extend running time and work from a timetable on the loop, trains leaving the terminal would not reach the first station until completing two loops and then making two or three more loops before reaching the next station, and so on. This helps to balance the fast running main line with the slow moving switching on the branch line terminal.

In lieu of actual buildings at the various stations and sidings, signs were used to show the names of the towns or industries involved. Arbitrary waybills were made up for the freight cars so that each engine had to drop and pick up stated cars down in the industrial section.

The layout uses "S" gage trackage and cars not only for the realism of two rails, but also so that the layout and its operation could be observed by more people, figuring that H0 was too small to be seen from any distance and O gage a bit too large, not being sure of space available at the shows.

The highlight of the Sunday morning session at Springfield will be the clinic on prototype operations in which this layout will play a major roll.



Getting ready to make its daily run is this "Belle of the Eighties" running on the Hither and Yon Railroad of J. D. Pressler, Rosewood Drive, Fort Wayne, Ind.



-HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET?-



COLLIER'S

"Who opened the cattle-car door?"

BY SCHECTER

FLAGSTOP ON THE TUXEDO JUNCTION

There are a number of other phases of model railroading which you can gaily trespass into besides laying track, erecting scenery, building rolling stock or operating trains. One of the most interesting of these comes under the "special effects" category; a very fertile field which you might want to explore for your own amusement and the amusement of others. I'm not referring to cute little chuffing locos that whistle -- we'll leave these for Lionel -- but the unexpected touches of inventiveness that bring our layouts more closer to realism.

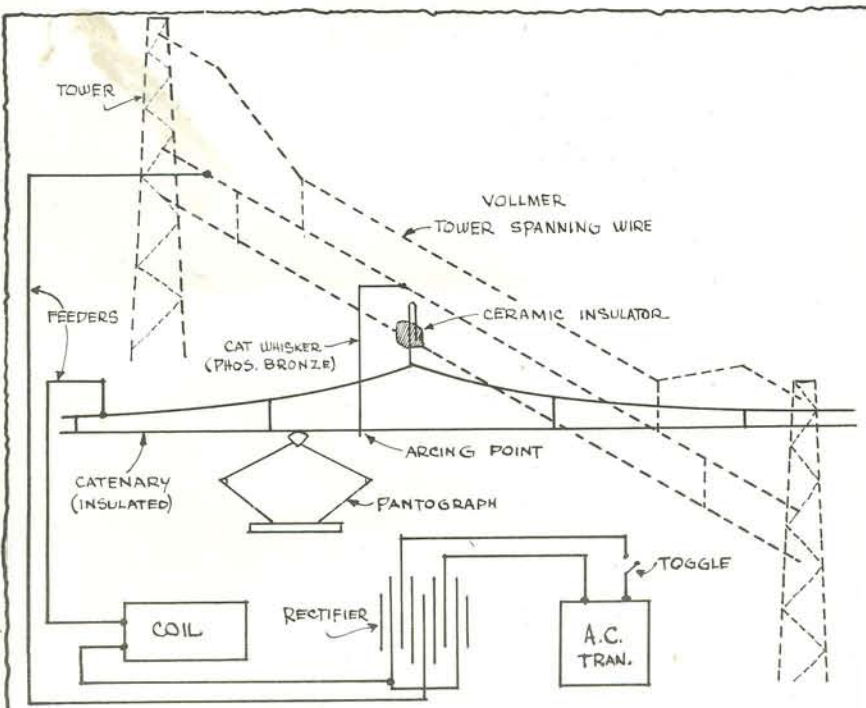
One of the most vivid impressions I carried away with me after seeing the 0 gauge exhibit at the World's Fair on the Flushing (N.Y.) meadows back in 1940 was the gradual transition from day into night as the lights in the factories and houses twinkled on, one by one, and the night express thundered by, brilliantly lit from mail car to observation lounge. Then, after a lapse of time (all lights were gradually extinguished as the night wore on) there was another transition into dawn and, finally, daylight. Not so long ago I decided to do a little work in this direction but quickly ran into a snag. The TJ is illuminated with overhead fluorescents and these, I learned, cannot be dimmed down with a regular heavy duty rheostat as used with tungsten bulbs. There's a device on the market that will do it, but it's prohibitively expensive. So I installed a switch at the main operating tower which lets me cut the room lights. I didn't get the gradual transition into "night", but I made up for it another way. When the lights went off it was too dark. You couldn't see anything, just pin points of light here and there. What I needed, I reasoned, was moonlight. Taking a cue from stage lighting I bought some sheets of blue spot light gelatin and to find the intensity of light needed, wrapped one of the 48" fluorescent tubes with one thickness of gelatin. The result was far too bright. Looked like a storm coming up in the daytime. Finally I hit upon the correct balance, two thicknesses of gelatin wrapped around a 25" tube. By installing five single 25" tube fixtures through-

out the room, the moonlight now softly illuminates the layout while the building, signal and train lights glow brightly in the gloom.

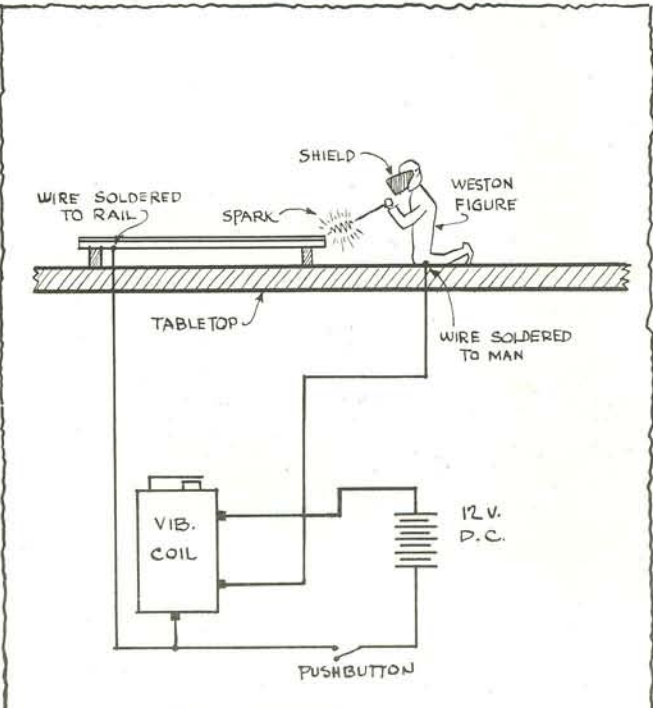
Train lighting is effective, too. A standard rule on the TJ is that every locomotive carries a working headlight (and an engineer in the cab) plus passenger cars equipped with interior illumination. In the beginning I was all hipped on high-frequency lighting because the lights stay lit when cars are standing still. It works beautifully as a rule but when you get into multiple-switch terminals you're in trouble. Every switch has to be by-passed with a special condenser and that calls for considerable work and wiring. For this reason I decided to have the passenger cars work off two types of current -- high-frequency and track power. Each car carries four small bulbs. Two of them work directly from 12 volt track power and the other two (with condenser connected into the circuit) work from high-frequency. Thus, when the cars are standing at the station the lights remain lit on high-frequency. But as soon as the train gets under way the h-f is shut off via a switch at the panelboard as the track power lights go on -- and remain lit throughout the run of the train.

Another delightful effect that adds tremendously to realism is sparking catenary. Up to now catenary has been something you rarely see, even on club layouts. But there seems to be a developing interest in this direction -- with many "0" gauge layouts leading the way and the pantograph equipped Penn-Line and Schrader GG-1 locos coming onto the market. Building catenary in HO from scratch is a challenge for anybody and most certainly time consuming. One way out is to buy it ready made and rework it for scale appearance. The finest catenary of all is RUCO of Germany. I saw some recently brought back by an army man and it is terrific. The masts are metal and completely equipped; tiny insulators, tension wheels, pulloffs and all. While they are European in influence, they are close enough to ours to get by. The catenary itself is just as close-

Continued on next page



ARCING CATENARY



SPARKING WELDER

GA

Cont. from page 4

ly detailed. But RUCO is practically unobtainable. A friend of mine in England couldn't even latch on to it. While not as superior, Vollmer ranks second. And when fully installed not only looks good but works. It has yet to snag a pantograph on the TJ. The "reworking" I mentioned earlier is to build up your own catenary over switches, crossovers and double-slips. The sections you buy are much too short. Also, Vollmer features curved catenary which just ain't prototype. You bend the straight sections in two or three places as it follows the curved track, and use pulloffs with insulators, that run back to straight poles (tube or rod). The catenary wire, which is plated steel, should be painted a dark grey or green. When completed, the TJ was working catenary. It actually carried power. But...few believed it -- they had to push the pantograph down when an engine was running to convince themselves. This was a nice kettle of fish. If, then, we had some sparks flying around overhead as the loco went across the switches it would look like the real thing. So, in order to get sparks I had to go back to two rail operation. Now, everybody is willing to make book that the catenary really works.

It's impossible to get sparks with ordinary track power. At least not the big, fat, blue kind that go "phffft" when the pantograph closes the circuit. The answer is to use a coil with a thick core and heavy windings, the type used for the old "make and break" ignition on boats and stationary engines. These aren't too hard to come by if you haunt the boat yards. They usually have 2 or 3 around loose somewhere in the workshop and are only too glad to get rid of them. For the sake of clarity I have shown a hook-up sketch. Note that the catwhiskers must be insulated from the catenary. This is possible with Vollmer because they use real ceramic insulators. Experimentation proved that the best spark was gained when 16 volt D.C. was delivered from the rectifier into the coil. Anything higher tends to burn the catenary. Lower voltages give a weak spark. WARNING: don't touch the catenary while the coil is working otherwise you'll be shocked at its surprising power.

You never know what you'll run across in second hand or surplus shops, such as those found on Canal Street in New York. On one of my noontime excursions I found a brass disc, about 4" in diameter, that had a series of notches on its perimeter. Closer inspection revealed that it came from a practice telegraph mechanism that automatically sent Morse. It was used by students learning the code. In-as-much as we already had a telegraph sounder (which Art Hendry donated) this proved to be the missing link. I fastened it to a shaft, driven by a low reduction worm and gear mounted to an old Pittman DC-60, and arranged a simple make-and-break contact relay blade assembly which followed the notches on the wheel. A flip of a toggle now gives us a continuous chatter of Morse and serves as an authentic background in the dispatcher's tower. This is used only on occasion and comes under the "sound effects" department. It would be an easy matter to make a wheel by filing a series of dots and dashes (short and long grooves) along the edge. These could be letters or actual words. Only a Morse man would know the difference.

Black light also offers unusual possibilities. The sources for this are either a special screw base type bulb or a fluorescent type. You can use the former for over head illumination and the latter for confined quarters. For example, I installed a small 5" fluorescent type black light inside the freight terminal office building. The windows were blacked out and a skylight was built on the roof so that one side faced a Heinz 57 roof sign (torn from an ad). The far side of the skylight was also blacked out so that the light would only shine on the sign. Letters were painted over with red, orange, white and blue fluorescent show card paints which can be bought at any art store. Now, when moonlight shines down on the TJ the sign glows with realistic brilliance and only a few have been able to discover the source of the light.

Don't overlook the usefulness of a "vibrator type" ignition coil, either. We had been going full

blast in the barn one Saturday last winter and the snow was coming down in carloads. I checked the thermostat, kicked it up a few notches, and all hands agreed it was time for a coffee break. Ernie propped his feet on a barrel, put a match to an El Fumo and blew a black cloud of acrid smoke our way. Phil coughed and turned on the electric fan.

"Had a swell idea last week.", Ernie announced. "But it backfired."

"How come?", I asked, plugging in the hotplate and putting a pot of coffee on to boil.

"Remember that old Model "T" Ford coil that's been kicking around my basement? Well, I finally made use of it. Bought a miniature Weston fireman and made a shield to fit over his face. Then I soldered a small piece of wire in his hand and fastened him down, bending over a piece of rail. Finally wired everything to the coil and when I slipped a shot of juice to the little guy -- you should'a seen the sparks fly!"

"Say, that's real neat," Phil cuts in. "I'll bet it looked like a real arc."

"Did at that," Ernie admitted. "To make things more realistic I installed a flasher wheel to an old gearbox so's to get intermittent flashes. All I do now is throw a switch and let it roll."

"No kiddin'." I grins, "But aren't Model "T" coils as scarce as prototype steam locos?"

"Naw. Most any auto junkie has 'em for about a quarter a piece."

I handed him his java. "But, like you said, it backfired...."

Ernie gave a hard pull on his El Fumo and Phil moved the fan closer. "I put the neighbor's TV set on the Fritz. Forgot to cut the switch one night and the next day they got nothin' but bleeps and blurps on their screen. They called in a repair man. He fixed it all right. Fixed me, too."

"Fixed you?"

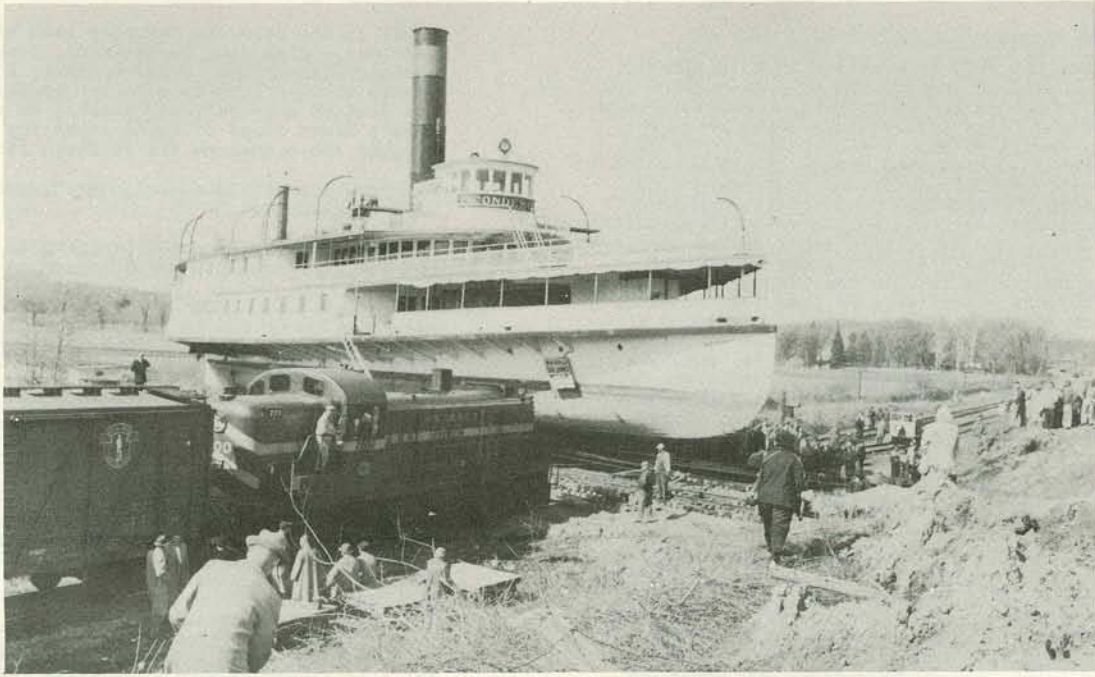
"Twelve bucks worth.", he sadly replied. "Traced the trouble to my layout."

(MORAL: Don't use an "automatic" on yours. Your friends will like you better if you settle for a pushbutton.)

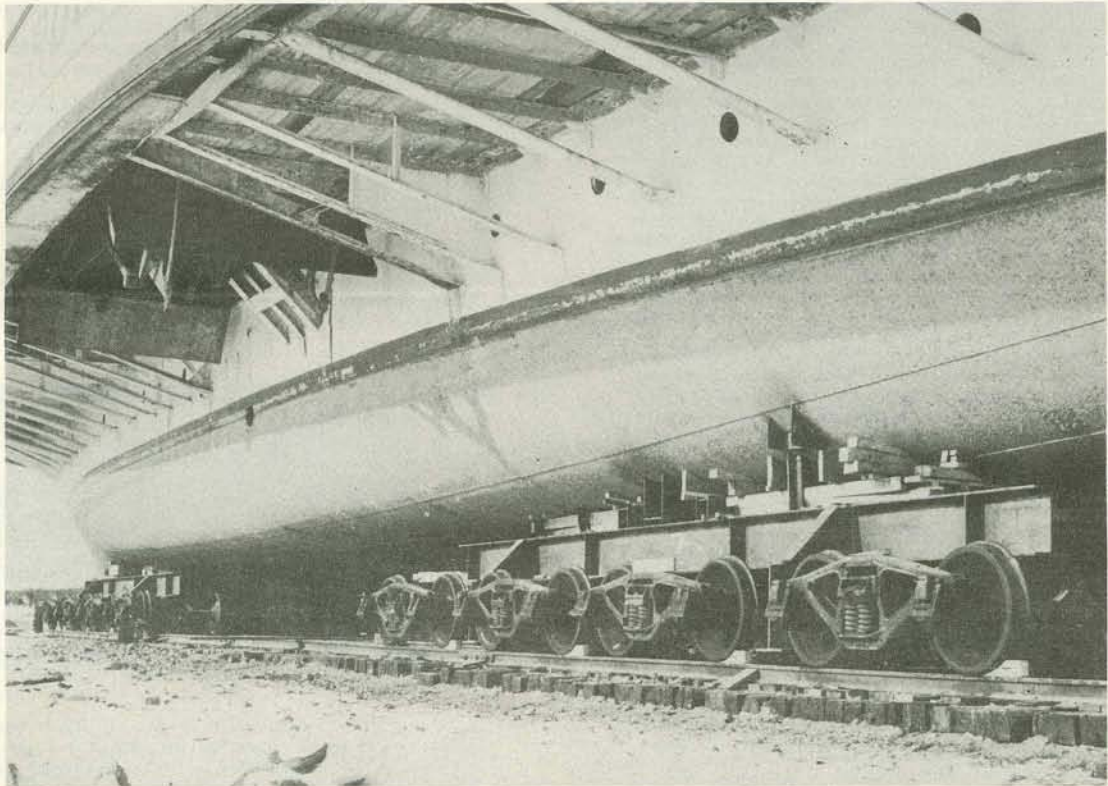
GEORGE ALLEN



Boston and Maine 2-8-4 No. 4024 taking on water at Rockingham Junction, New Hampshire in April, 1946. Built by Lima, these were the work horses of the B.&M. Notice the Coffin heater on the front.



An engineer high-balling along and seeing this scene might question the coffee he was served by the Hack at the last stop. No question here, however. The side wheeler Ticondaroga was in the process of being moved from Lake Champlain to the Shelburne Museum in Shelburne, Vermont. On the day of the crossing, the Rutland Railroad local was to have run on an earlier schedule. Somehow it didn't. The ship movers thought the train had already gone through, so set about building the cribbing and laying the rails. When the train did come it was too late, the "Ti" was in the way and could not be moved back. The photo below shows how the "Ti" was moved. The crews would lay the ties and rail, winch the ship as far as they could then chock the wheels. Then they took up the ties and rail from behind the ship and moved them to the front and so on until the "Ti" was in her berth at the Museum. Also at the Shelburne Museum is Central Vermont's last ten-wheeler No.220.



# Sidetracks

Emblems are a part of our civilization. People with whom we come in contact daily wear them everywhere. Some wear a Cross, some the Star of David on neck or key chain. I see many a Legion button, Discharge button, Masonic, Elk or Shrine button or ring every day. I can't, and I have tried to, imagine anyone questioning the wearer. Everyone knows what those emblems are, and why the wearers wear them.

But just you try wearing something new. As a saleswoman in a branch of a department store, I had thought people singularly unobservant until I began to wear an N.E.R. button. Perfect strangers spot it as not quite correct as an Honorable Discharge button, though I am about the right age to wear one, and ask what it is. When I tell them, there are two possible reactions: one is the hot brick reaction, the other is the, "Well, what have we here?" response.

I have a couple of charm bracelet pieces which I wear on a chain around my neck. People at our conventions, being "railroad minded", notice them immediately, though the largest is just an inch long. That is normal and I wear those charms as much for the amusement of my friends as myself.

The National patch, on an otherwise undistinguished navy-blue blazer, led to an amusing adventure with a worthwhile return.

One day I was showing merchandise to a very nice lady customer when a man came charging toward me from halfway across the store, and demanded, "Of what are you a member?"

I told him N.M.R.A. and went back to my customer. The man broke in with some more questions, upsetting me a bit. After all, I was supposed to sell silver to customers, not amuse casual by-passers. My customer noticed I was having difficulty and told me to go ahead and help the man satisfy his curiosity. He was her husband.

I then told the inquiring man that both my husband and I were railroad fans, both model and prototype. That we read railroad history fan magazines and any of the magazines of the railroads that came our way.

Then I found out that my new found friend was a member of the Auditing Department of the New York Central. He wanted to know if we had read a book called *The Beginning of the New York Central*. I told him we had read *Road of the Century*, but that wasn't what he meant. The book to which he referred was a financial history, not popular, of the beginning of the Central.

My name and address were demanded, that we might be sent a copy of the book, and I was allowed to go back to my customer. She put in an order for something not in our branch, and we delivered it quite promptly. At the end of the week the order came in and we notified the customer of the fact. The next day, my day off, they came in for it, leaving me the book with an engraved presentation card from the New York Central, and my new friends card stapled to the fly leaf.

Another day, I was waiting on a party of ladies. One of them was particularly interested in the locomotive I was wearing. When I learned that she and her husband were in the charm design business, I told her of our vain attempts to get tenders, coaches and caboose charms to go with my locomotive she was interested, and also interested when I said that there was probably a fair market for good charms in the less expensive silver. (Gold charms are slightly exorbitant in price.)

Another time, I was waiting on a lady who was accompanied by her teenage son. The son spotted the

N.M.R.A. patch on my blazer and recognizing it, was thrilled to see a real live member. I gave him a membership application in which he and his mother were very interested. The mother wasn't much interested for herself, but would do what she could to help the boy with his hobby.

On vacation on Cape Cod someone in a store asked me what my patch was. When I told him, he was eager to know if we had seen the famous Edaville railroad and was very pleased when we said we had.

One of the most amusing reactions to us was one I remember from the Syracuse Convention. There seems to be a custom there for local people to drop into the Syracuse Hotel for breakfast Sunday morning. These regulars saw a convention in progress and asked a waiter what group was convening. When told Model Railroad, the 'regular' exclaimed, "What other stupid thing can they think up to have conventions over!"

My experience is that this reaction is unusual. Most people seem to feel, "Well, well, isn't that interesting!"

MARGARET SEE



Edaville Railroad baggage car #101 at South Carver, Massachusetts.

FROM THE EDVILLE RAILROAD ENGINEHOUSE

January 6th saw the close of the Edaville's first full season of operation under the ownership of F. Nelson Blount and his associates. Although the season proved a success in many ways, there was some disappointment felt over the lack of patronage by the general public, particularly during the Christmas season. In years past, the road has depended upon the tremendous holiday traffic volume to balance what is usually a summertime operating loss. This year, due almost entirely to a combination of icy roads and bitter cold, passenger business was below the expected level, and this loss of potential revenue, coupled with an unusually heavy investment in new structures, rolling stock, right-of-way improvements and the addition of the Boston and Maine equipment, have resulted in considerable red ink appearing on the roads financial statements.

Speaking at a supper meeting on Friday, January 11th, which was attended by the road's employees and numerous railfans who had given of their time and help during the past season, President Blount expressed his faith in the line, and stated that although the financial losses have been greater than anticipated, they have not been so great as to interfere with plans to keep the two-footer running in its present location. According to Mr. Blount, 68,000 passengers were carried during the Christmas season from Thanksgiving week end to the close of operations January 6th. "If we hadn't had the bad break in the weather, I feel certain we would have realized our expected patronage of 100,000 people," Mr. Blount said.

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## THE DISTAFF SIDE

My husband, George, attended his first N.E.R. Convention in the Spring of 1948 at Newark, New Jersey.

Upon his return home he spoke with such enthusiasm about the meeting, the number of ladies who attended with their husbands and who appeared to enjoy every minute of the week end program. He kept insisting I attend the Fall Convention which was to be held in Providence, Rhode Island. At that time I wasn't interested in model railroading, or even railroads. To keep him quiet for the next several months, I acquiesced.

Time went fast and I found myself on the train with several members of my husband's club bound for Providence and the N.E.R. Convention. We went up the evening before and spent several enjoyable hours looking over the Capital City of Rhode Island.

We registered Saturday morning and at the registration desk I met several of the wives. Noon came and I went on my first fan trip, on the Edaville Railroad at South Carver, Massachusetts. How I enjoyed the ride through the cranberry bogs on that narrow gauge road.

The evening hours were spent visiting private lay-outs. A rather active day, I was tired at the end of it, but happy.

Sunday morning was the business meeting, with the banquet following in the early afternoon. After the banquet there was a lot of turmoil with checking out, running to catch trains and waiting to get started because of long distances to be traveled by car. There were hurried good-byes to people that wouldn't be seen for another six months.

Les Frankel did manage to gather about twenty of us model railroad wives for a group picture. We keep it in our "Convention Scrap Book" and this picture is a cherished memento of my first N.E.R. Convention, which was all too short.

In 1951, the Fall N.E.R. meeting was held in New York City in conjunction with the National Convention of N.M.R.A. What a program was arranged for our enjoyment. I have learned the Committee's do their hardest to give us the best of everything for our pleasure, whether it be a National or Regional Meeting.

After this convention, because of circumstances, it was impossible for me to attend our Regional gatherings and I did miss seeing old acquaintances, although my husband did see them all at the meetings that he attended.

Our only daughter had married so we had no problems when convention time arrived one Spring and we went to Montreal. Can those of us who made the trip from New York ever forget it? We had our own club car on the "Montrealer" and what a gab-fest we ladies had. It was a wonderful trip and meeting. The fan trip in the new C.N. coaches, breakfast and business meeting in Windsor Station, with the banquet in the Queen Hotel. We stayed over for a few days longer and it was a little sad to see our friends departing for home on Sunday.

Montreal changed the format of NER Conventions with the banquet Saturday night and the combination breakfast-business meeting Sunday morning. This way more people attend the meetings and, in my opinion, the meetings seem to go faster.

The next two conventions were held close to home, White Plains and Garden City, New York. Then came St. Albans-Burlington, Vermont. Remember the rain?

By this time I became interested in model railroading and railroads, and have become a convention goer. Springfield is next and the dates are set. From the advance notices, it should be a good one. Then there is always the joy of seeing the people from other parts of the Region.

Regional Conventions are enjoyable, it's a fine group and we always manage to have a good time. So you men, if it's possible, bring your wife along. I'm certain she will enjoy our meeting and in turn want to attend future meets.

SOPHIA P. RIESZ



CONVENTION, Cont. from page 1

ged with the price wanted. A room will be made available for those that just want to sit and arm-chair.

Taking the place of the business meeting on Sunday morning will be an Operation Clinic by the Prototype Operations Committee. The portable operations layout will be set up and used to demonstrate the various aspects of train movement.

The schedule for Sunday morning, May 19th, then is breakfast at 9:00A.M., Operations Clinic from 10:30 to 12:00N, when the convention will officially end.

All are invited to attend the meeting of the Nutmeg Division that Sunday afternoon at Warehouse Point, Connecticut. The meeting will start at 2:30 at the Trolley Museum, where there will be full scale (12"= 1') trolley operation. Warehouse Point is located about halfway between Springfield and Hartford, off Route 5, on Route 191. For those going by train, a car-lift service will be in operation by members of the Division.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with the Hotel Shelton. Room rates are as follows: Single, \$5.85-9.50; Double, \$8.85-10.85; twin beds, \$9.85-13.00

The total cost of the convention package is \$7.50, broken down as follows: Registration, \$1.25; Live Steamer Trip, \$1.00; Banquet, \$4.00 and the Breakfast, \$1.25. Those wishing to pay in advance should send their remittances to Bruno P. Pysznik, 5 Gordon Avenue, Thompsonville, Connecticut. Though not necessary, it would be helpful to the Committee if members did make their reservations for the convention in advance. In this way, they can get a better idea of how many will attend, and pass this information on to the Hotel and groups to be visited.

### ALBANY PLANS MEET FOR OCTOBER

The first week end in October has been tentatively chosen for the Fall '57 Convention to be held in Albany, New York. Convention Headquarters will be in the Hotel Wellington. Visits to two local layouts have been arranged and the fan trip is in the works. Aside from clinics, displays of professional railroad photos and foreign O gage locomotives will be included in the program. If all of the Committee's plans work out this should be a good meeting. More details in the Summer Issue.



-IF YOU HAVEN'T RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN NER, NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE CARE OF IT. 1957 MEMBERSHIP IS NOW DUE. SEND YOUR DOLLAR TO THE TREASURER NOW -





**FROM THE SECRETARY-TREASURER'S OFFICE:**

As usual your Secretary is way behind in his work at this time of the year. Between being in New York for several months and a brief visit to the hospital, I have not been able to devote the necessary time to the job. However, the addition to the home is completed and we are staying in Holden, so our work will again be on schedule.

Membership, so far this year is on the up-swing with approximately 160 new members enrolled at this time, the total membership to date being 769 with many renewals still to be returned. Those who have not renewed their membership for 1957 are urged to do so at once.

Many of you have written notes with your renewals. It is good to hear from you and please be patient. An answer will be along shortly.

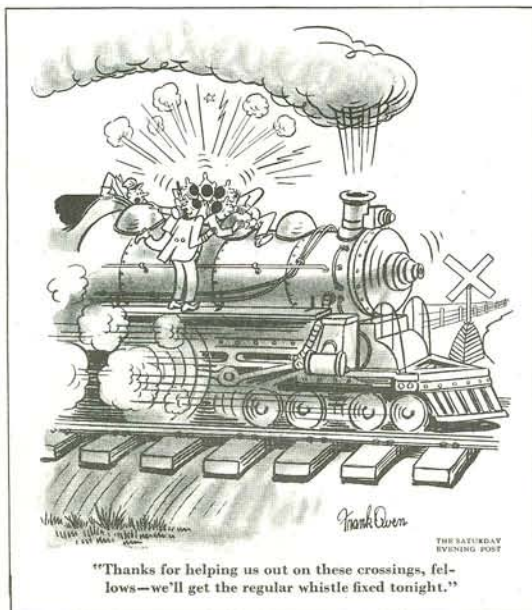
Mention should be made of our club secretaries, who are doing a wonderful job of promoting our hobby, the NMRA and NER.

It would appear that we will be having several more divisions established which should go a long way toward promoting model railroading and the NER.

A final note, the by-laws and constitution have been reprinted and can be had by sending me a post card. Also, there are some copies of COUPLER issues 38 and 39 available from me and issues 40 and 41 from the Mailing office. It should be noted that the address of the mailing office has been changed to 12 Glendale Drive, Danvers, Mass. Wayne Roundy is still in charge.

All for now. See you in Springfield.

ROGER MARBLE, Secretary-Treasurer



**HOSTLER SEZ, Cont. from page 2**

Please notice the new address of the Mailing Office. Wayne Roundy is still in charge of it, but he has moved to 12 Glendale Drive, Danvers, Mass. For any information on back issues of the COUPLER, write to him, not to the Editor.

As reported by the Secretary-Treasurer, membership seems to be on the upswing so far this year. Have you sent in your renewal yet? Better do it today as this will be the last issue of the COUPLER you will get. While you are sending in your membership, how about signing up a new member? There are many model railroaders around who do not know about the NMRA or the NER, or who need the little push to join. Lets get them in with us.

Had a talk with the printer this morning and received a bit of useful information. You will notice the number of pictures in this issue. With the photo-offset printing that we use, cuts do not have to be made for pictures, therefore, we can use more at no extra cost. If you have any good, clear pictures of your layout or a good prototype shot, why not send them along. One request, please try to make the pictures 5x7 inches in size. This is necessary because of the reduction for printing. Also, we will not be able to return any photos submitted. When sending pictures be sure to give all information about them. This should put our paper right up on top of the list of Region publications.

Along the same line, Wes Warner, of Orange, Mass., has volunteered to do articles on photography for us. Wes is a professional photographer with plenty of know how. Possibly we could get him to give a critique on pictures submitted. What is your opinion on that?

Through the efforts of the members, the COUPLER has now grown to twelve pages. Actually, we had 10½ pages of copy. Lets see if we can't keep the paper at this level. It needs your cooperation though, in submitting material. Keep up the good work. One more thing on the same subject, are any of our members artists and/or cartoonists? Perhaps we could get some cartoons, pictures (drawings) or even something in the way of title drawings for the columns that appear in every issue.

Don't forget to let us know what you think of these ideas. This is your paper and we want to give you what you want. See you in Springfield.

CHUCK OGREN, Editor



...It fell to Bob Mott, a CBS soundman, to provide sound for a terrible train-wreck scene. Resolved to make the customer's blood run cold, he let loose four train-wreck recordings at once. The result was a tremendous grinding crash which told of cars strewn around like toys, mighty locomotives groaning their last. It was shattering, except that as the dreaded din subsided, the playing arm on one of the turntables jumped to another "cut" in the record, another train effect. And now from the smoking rubble came a clear call. It was the voice of the conductor, matter-of-fact and a little impatient, bawling, "All abo-o-oard!"

SATURDAY EVENING POST

-FORGOTTEN SOMETHING? SEND YOUR DOLLAR NOW TO THE TREASURER AND KEEP ON SUPPORTING YOUR REGION -

In outlining plans for the future development of Edaville, Mr. Blount reiterated former statements regarding the acquisition of additional locomotives and cars, as well as building a regular roundhouse and larger museum space. The possibility of acquiring the Major Gouyette collection of old stage coaches, guns and other items of early Americana was discussed. A rumor that the entire railroad, together with its attendant attractions, was to be sold for \$1,000,000 was squelched by Mr. Blount.

Frederick H. Richardson, the line's Vice-President, commented on the present condition of the track and rolling stock, noting that both were in far better shape than had been the case for several years previously. He stated that very little other than routine inspection and maintenance, together with such running repairs as the next season might require, were necessary. In his statement, Mr. Richardson said that plans for a gasoline powered, steam outline locomotive were being considered as a means to help reduce operating costs in the off season when patronage is too heavy for the ex-Sandy River rail-bus to handle, and too light to defray the expense of keeping a locomotive under steam.

Proponents of the plan felt that since many people come to Edaville expecting to see a steam locomotive, the rail bus was a disappointing substitute, whereas a dummy steam engine would satisfy the general public while being much more economical to run. Those of us (including this reporter) who opposed the idea felt that the operational savings would be more than offset by the deception, and that the public, while it has no idea of how a genuine steam locomotive works, could readily detect the difference, and would feel that the road which up till now had always advertised as operating with "the very same locomotives and cars that once clicked through Maine's forests" was trying to pull a commercialized fast deal. It was felt that once the word got around that the locomotive was not what it was advertised to be, that perhaps the rest of the equipment would be regarded with suspicion also, and the results would be far more expensive to the road publicity wise than would the cost of a real steam engine. Just how the matter will finally turn out remains to be seen.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Richardson called attention to the coming Tulip Festival and announced that the 1957 season would get under way on Saturday, April 6th, subject to revision if weather conditions require. The possibility of night operation during the summer months was mentioned, but no definite commitments were made on that score.

Called upon to discuss the future of the Edaville Museum, Mr. Burt Logan, museum curator, recalled that 1956 marked the seventh year of the museum's existence, during which time the collection of railroadiana had been slowly enlarged until last summer when the theme was expanded to include antique fire engines and automobiles as well. Noting that the latter collections were far from complete, Mr. Logan spoke of some additional items which are expected and which include an early White delivery truck as well as an old 10 ton Mack "Bulldog" chain drive truck. A Brooklyn trolley car has been given to the museum and is awaiting transportation to South Carver. Tentative plans are to operate this car at Edaville. In addition to the three steam locomotives from Anaconda, a 30-inch gage engine from a Pennsylvania coal mine has been donated.

While making it clearly understood that the following is dependant on several factors, which have not become final, Mr. Logan concluded by announcing that the railroadiana collection of the National Railway Historical Society, presently displayed in the Baker Library of Harvard University, in Cambridge, is to be moved intact to Edaville, where it will be displayed as a unit on a permanent loan basis.

Cy Hosmer, known to railfans all over New England as a member of the Boston Division of the Rail Road Enthusiasts, a member of the Edaville Railroad's

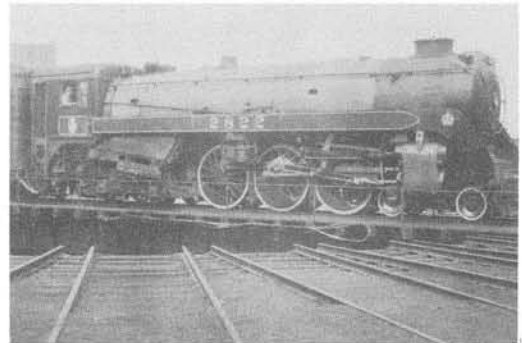
board of directors, as well as its parlor car conductor and strongest supporter, spoke very briefly on the reaction of the public and presented some of the comments which he had overheard in the course of his dealings with passengers. The only complaint that he had to offer on behalf of the paying public concerned the bees around the barbeque area. It seems as though the yellowjackets were as enthusiastic over last summer's barbeque as were the legitimate customers, with the results being about what you might expect. Other than that, according to Cy, the reaction of the public was very gratifying and held good promise for the future.

A vote of thanks was extended by President Blount and Assistant General Manager Herman Redfern to all those who, while not on the payroll, had volunteered to help out in any possible way during the season, and the meeting was thrown open to informal discussion and comments. Entertainment was provided by Russ Hosmer of the R.R.E. and Bill Clynes and Ben Perry of the New England Rail Fans Association, who presented a program of slides depicting the history of the narrow-gage line from its early days under Mr. Atwood's direction up to the end of the season just past.

So there it is, fans, the Edaville report, 1956. On the whole, it looks good, and your reporter feels confident that in 1957, Edaville will again become the great railroad attraction for the fans from all over the country.

BILL BOUCHER

(Many thanks to Bill Boucher and Dr. Dias for permitting the COUPLER to print this report. It originally appeared in the "Right of Way", the journal of the New England Rail Fans Association. Ed.)



REPORT OF THE PERMANENT CONVENTION COMMITTEE:

The returns on the Convention Questionnaire have been coming in slowly, with 95 received by the end of March. I wish first to express the Convention Committee's deep appreciation to all those - almost half of you - who took the time and trouble to write all the extra comments along with your check-marks. When those opinions have been studied your committee will be in a much better position to try to give you what YOU want at YOUR Conventions.

The tabulation shows some very definite preferences. Apparently we have been doing fairly well, for most of our activities are approved. There is a desire for movies, but they must be "railroad" type movies. Color slides of members' railroading activities seem to interest many.

Our next job is to get your preferences into actual existence. It may not be possible to do all of them at once, nor to get them into Springfield this Spring, but we will try to get as many of them as possible into the conventions of the future.

CHARLES McK. WELLING, Chairman



ALONG THE DIVISIONS:

The formation of a new division was discussed at great length during the Third Annual NMRA Night held by the Summit-New Providence Railroad Club of Murray Hill, New Jersey last March 20th.

Paul Mallery and Charles Welling spoke on the relationship between NMRA, the Region, and the proposed Division, and what each part of the organization could offer to the individual model railroader. Emphasized was the Division's ability to reach down to the very local level and to provide an opportunity for social contact with a (probably otherwise completely unknown) neighbor, which can not always be done by the Region, and even less so by the National organization.

A poll of those present showed a unanimous interest in the possibility of a North Jersey Division, comprising the counties in New Jersey that are included in the Northeastern Region. The question of dual membership in North Jersey and Metropolitan districts was eliminated since Metropolitan's membership area is described as "within commuting distance of New York City", and there seemed to be no more objection to dual membership than there is to dual Regional membership. In fact it was felt that it might well strengthen both Divisions.

Lee Graves of Short Hills "volunteered" as Temporary Chairman with David C. Bayer, 7 Hillside Avenue, Kearny, N.J., as the Temporary Secretary for the period of organization. Return postcards will be sent to all listed NMRA members in the North Jersey area, requesting more information as to interest, and giving tentative announcements of developments. If you live in the area and are not notified, a card to Dave will bring you what information is available.

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A meeting of the Nutmeg Division was held at the home of Kenneth Hyslop in Stratford, Connecticut, on March 16th, with Arthur C. Wadhams presiding. 27 members and guests were in attendance, as were several of the wives, who are also members of the Division.

It is planned to visit the American Brass company plant in Torrington, Conn., in September. This visit will be a regular meeting activity, with the business meeting held afterwards at the residence of Art Wilcox on Deer Island, Bantam Lake. Due to a limit on persons attending, placed by the American Brass Co., this meeting will be open for Division members only.

The next meeting of the Division will be May 19th at the Trolley Museum at Warehouse Point, Conn. This is not only a Division activity, but also in conjunction with the NER convention closing that day. A short business meeting will be held at the Hotel Shelton, in Springfield, before the trip to the museum.



A railroad car with a history is up for auction at Middletown, New York, along with a lot of other equipment of the bankrupt New York, Ontario and Western Railway. Known now as "Car 30" it is remembered by oldtimers as the honeymoon car more than 70 years ago of President Grover Cleveland and his young bride. The car still has ornate mahogany interior decorations, a cut glass chandelier and bedrooms with wide berths. There's also a spacious dining room, kitchen and servants' quarters. . . waiting the demands that probably will never come again.

Reprinted from an article by the United Press



A LAMENT

"Holy smoke," the fireman cried  
"The main rod's fallen off this side."  
The hopper, with a mighty curse,  
Threw his engine in reverse.

Ninety cars ground to a halt.  
The headend brakie sighed,  
"You handled her right well there, Walt,  
But that darn fireman lied."

"That warn't no rod he saw flash past,  
But just that shiny weasel.  
'Twas Aerotrains goin' awful fast  
The low-down, sneakin' diesel."

Old Walt, he eased his throttle back;  
The drawbars played their tune.  
Conductor, sitting in the hack,  
Said "Good, we'll home by noon."

A plume of smoke...A blasting stack;  
Around the bend she goes.  
When are the steamers coming back?  
Alas, nobody knows....

W.W. ROBERTSON



-MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS NOW DUE TO THE TREASURER-  
DISPATCHER'S TOWER, Cont. from page 1

With five different groups individually active, I foresee NER finally reaching closer to home. These groups are (or will be) more or less centered in points of concentration of our membership where it is easier for many to gather than at the widely scattered convention locations. Local gathering also makes it easier for non-members to become associated with our organization and the prospects of securing the memberships of these people is greatly enhanced.

So far, all of the Division activities have been in the New England States. How about our Canadian members? At my request, Rob Robertson of Senneville, Quebec, has made a survey by letter relating to the lack of convention attendance of the Canadian members. While this survey did not concern divisions, it did reflect very active interest in NER. Replies to Rob's 49 letters was a bit less than 25% and definitely showed that NER activities in Canada are much needed. Even though many North of the border are widely scattered, aren't there a few so situated who could, and would, take steps toward forming at least one Division in Canada? You can prove what can be done, and how worthwhile the program can be. Distance and expense are recognized handicaps, but some members must see the opportunities of local association. I have no doubt that Divisional meets, planned at the same time as the NER conventions would be of real value. How about this, Canada?

JAMES E. SEE, PRESIDENT





Central Vermont Railway 2-8-0 No. 454 in the terminal yard at St. Albans, Vermont. 454 had just been out-shopped and was assigned to work-train duty. The caboose, painted a bright orange, bears the Canadian National maple leaf, but with the C.V. herald in the center. As far as is known, this engine is still in service. Photo taken in June 1955.

#### TRAIN TOOTS

Ever wonder the "why" of the various whistle or horn signals used by railroad engineers? The Jersey Central Line's interesting "Commuter's Almanac" tells about them. With a dash meaning a long blast, a dot a short one, here goes: --.- grade crossing warning; -... flagman to guard rear of train; ...- flagman guard in front of train; ---- flagman to return to train from West; ----- flagman to return from the East; ... back up if standing still; when moving, though ... means conductor may signal for unscheduled stop at next station; ..... (many short toots) warning to people or livestock on track ahead to scramble out of the way, train's approaching.

(from New Jersey Bell Telephone Company "Tel-news")



#### CLUB NOTES

On March 20th, the Summit-New Providence HO Railroad Club, Murray Hill, N.J., a 100% NER club, held its Third Annual NMRA Night. The purpose of these nights is to give the local NMRA members a chance to meet each other. 36 NMRA members attended and, after a brief demonstration by club members took over the operation of the Hudson, Delaware and Ohio. One of the highlights was the operation of the "dirt-button" as written in one of the model railroad magazines last month.

According to Paul Mallery, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee, the object of the NMRA Night is not only to provide an opportunity for NMRA members in the area to become acquainted with the club, but more to supplement the Conventions. This is working into a new Division. (see Along the Divisions. Ed.)

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New Officers were elected at the April 9th meeting of the South Nassau Model Railroad Society of Woodmere, New York. Elected President was Sam Reichman; Bob Stetson, Vice-President; Secretary, Andrew Sackerman and Roger Ramsdell as Treasurer. The elected officers also make up the Board of Directors, with Henry Abraham as a member-at-large.

An ambitious work program has been decided on for the coming year. The first of the projects involves the construction of a trolley line planned to allow for future expansion. The second project concerns the relocation and possible addition of track to the club's Summit and Center Railroad. The new layout is designed to facilitate operation on a more realistic basis for timetable operation and for shows.

The Club held shows every Saturday and Sunday in March with the ENTIRE proceeds turned over to the Red Cross. \$877 was donated.

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We have received several queries from new clubs on how to handle junior memberships, what should the age limits be. An other question asked, on the same subject is who should exert the discipline, the parent accompanying the junior member, or the club. If any group over a year old can answer this, please do so through the COUPLER.

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