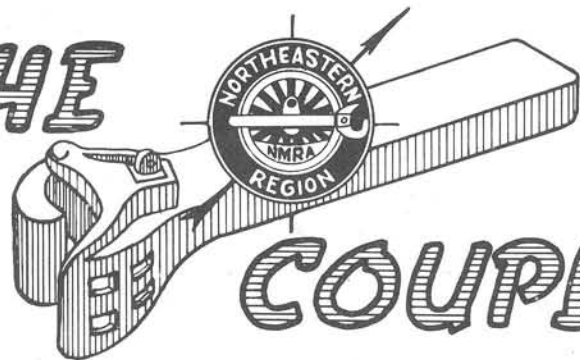


# THE



ISSUE 44

FALL 1957

# COUPLER

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

### HUB DISTRICT FORMED

A third District of the Northeastern Region became a reality after two previous attempts, with the formation of the Hub District in the Boston, Mass., area.

As the result of a special meeting held in the quarters of the Massachusetts Model Railroad Society in Cambridge, Mass., on the evening of September 13th, the Hub District was officially started and plans for the future were made. The meeting was attended by about 15 people, including Ivon Preble, retiring President of NMRA; NER Secretary-Treasurer Roger Marble and Wayne Roundy, Past-President of NER. Both Mr. Preble and Mr. Marble gave brief, but informative, talks on accomplishments of other such groups around the country as well as what they felt the Hub District should do in the future.

As part of the business, David C. MacDonald, of East Weymouth, was elected Temporary Chairman, while Frederick F. Kearns, Jr., of Cambridge, was named Temporary Secretary. Lyman B. Hurter was chosen to be Canvassing Committee Chairman. The election of permanent officers will be taken up at a later date, after the District has had a chance to become more firmly established. A committee on constitution and by-laws was appointed and will draft the documents to be presented to the membership for their approval at a future meeting.

Future meetings will be held at various points throughout the District. Boundaries have been tentatively set at Worcester on the West; Newburyport on the North and the Fall River-New Bedford area on the South. Any one living within this area who is genuinely interested in model railroading is invited to join.

The group felt that the District should be free from too much formality in their meetings and also that membership should be open to all model railroaders regardless of whether they belong to the NMRA and NER or not.

No definite date has been set for the next meeting, but it will probably be held sometime in November. Between now and then committees will be active and contacts will be made to see how many fellows in the area are interested enough to back the new District. To this end, Wayne Roundy, now in charge of the NER Mailing Office, stated that he would offer his assistance to the committees by submitting a mailing list of all NER members that would be eligible to join.

After the business meeting adjourned, light refreshments were served and color slides of a trip through Northern New England and Quebec were shown.

The first attempt to form the District was made a year ago and was met with apathy. The second try was made last January and no action was taken as there was a blizzard on the meeting night and only a few hardy souls attended the meeting. The District has a good start now and would like the support of any, and all, persons interested in model railroading and fellowship.

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### CLINICS HIGH-LIGHT FALL MEET

Full Schedule at Albany

One of the most active programs on record has been set up for the Fall '57 NER Convention to be held in Albany, New York, over the week end of October 12-13, 1957.

With convention headquarters in the Sheraton-Ten Eyck Hotel, registration starts at 9A.M. and runs until 12N. For the benefit of those who register early there will be visits to home pikes (9-11:30), clinics (10:30-11:30) and C.T.C. (10-12). Not only are there these morning activities, but also two Friday night affairs for those who get to Albany that night. There will be a visit to the RPI layout in Troy, and railroad movies in the hotel.

The fan trip will be a busy one, starting at 1 P.M. at Union Station, Albany. The group will board Budd RDC's for a guided tour of the New York Central's facilities at Selkirk Yard, after going through the Port of Albany. The big attraction at the Port is the world's largest single-unit grain elevator, where their car-emptying operation is unique - the whole car is picked up and tilted back and forth until it is empty. Then on to Selkirk where the largest classification yard in the East will open its doors to NER. Also to be seen at Selkirk will be the hump, roundhouse, turntables, diesel shops, and as an added attraction #999, the famous 4-4-0 that hauled the Empire State Express at speeds of better than 100mph. The fan trip price is combined with the registration.

Model judging will take place at 5:30. All models are to be entered before 12 Noon if at all possible. The judging will be based on the following point system:

Accuracy	
scale.....	10
completeness.....	10
Detail and realism	
amount of detail.....	10
realistic appearance...	20
Workmanship	
finish.....	25
ingenuity.....	10
Decoration	
painting.....	10
(includes color choice,	
coverage, finish mask-	
ing)	
lettering.....	05
(includes correctness,	
scale & neatness)	
Total points.....	100

With three judges, then, the maximum total points for any one entry will be 300 points.

Any model builder is eligible to enter the competition unless the builder is engaged professionally or commercially in the building of model railroad equipment.

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# THE COUPLER

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

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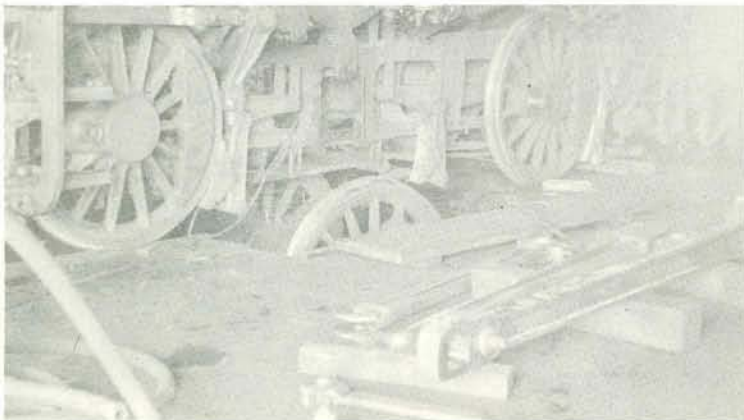
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*Write for  
deadline  
on Spring  
1957*



## THE DISPATCHER'S TOWER



At the approach of the end of summer, we turn our thoughts toward the October Convention to be held in Albany, New York. We again begin to think of meeting old friends, of making new acquaintances and looking forward to the new ideas which the Committee may have. As your President, I am also thinking of that which has not been too satisfactory to the membership and what should be done for improvement.

Study of the final results of the recent questionnaire shows that a large majority have given their approval of the convention programs of the past. However, I fail to find justification of the replies as pertaining to the model contests. Roughly 60% indicate they would enter the contests, while 30% would not. Observance during the past three or four years has shown a steady decline of entrants which was culminated last October in Concord. There were so few entries in Concord that it was pitiful and in Springfield it was not much better. I have wondered why this should be so. Approximately 2/3 have expressed satisfaction with the judging and methods of handling the contests. Again, where is the reasoning?

There could be numerous answers. Some may think their work not good enough to exhibit. Others may feel that they cannot compete with those they think are more skilled. The idea may prevail that to enter the contests is not worth the effort in view of so few entries. Perhaps some resent a few obtaining the majority of the winning places. There are undoubtedly many more reasons, but they have not been expressed to any extent. Yes, there have been a few members who have been quite outspoken but to date, no one has come up with the correct answer. And yet, entries in the contests have steadily declined in number.

Some of my thoughts regarding the situation may be of interest and I have decided to pass them on to those who may be interested. First, only one award should be given to any one person at a given contest. All models of each and any gauge should be judged in a single class (locos, cars, scenery, etc., together). Only completed models, declared as such by the owner, should be accepted. Operating qualities of powered units should be classed separately and in one group for the purpose, all gauges combined, although these models should also be eligible for entry in other categories.

As to the increasing lack of entries, I will be very outspoken. The majority of modelmakers are just plain lazy and can't be bothered to dust off his pet models and take them all the way to the convention and back. There is also a definite defeatist attitude prevalent among the builders, i.e.: Why should I be bothered to bring my models when so few others do so. If this type of person would only think in reverse, the cause of his personal gripe would quickly disappear. Then I have actually heard several say, "So-and-so is so much better than I am. I would feel ridiculous showing my work along side of his." This is a truism, but you should always remember that a super-modeler is always recognized as such and his work never, and I repeat, never, distracts from that of the not-so-skilled. All members of the hobby appreciate all grades of work except the very sloppy. The presence of a superior model has never restricted the admiration of the others. Remember this at the next contest and take note!

Judging could stand improvement. My suggestion would be for a panel of three semi-permanent judges, one to be replaced at each succeeding convention. I like the present point system, but perhaps it could be improved. Judging should be done early so as to have the winners labeled as such for as much of the convention as possible.

I believe the presence of models for 'display only' to be very much desired. If some have no de-

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## THE HOSTLER SEZ:

In the last issue we tried an experiment with this page regarding the size of the type in the printed edition. Due to a misunderstanding with the printer the page was reduced so that the type was the same size as the rest. Had the margins been kept the same as the other pages the type would have been larger. We are trying the same thing in this issue and I would like to have any and all comments as soon as possible so that the matter can be discussed at the business meeting in Albany.

Many thanks to Rudy Kausch of Huntington Station, L.I., for his comments and constructive suggestions for the Coupler format. His was the only response to the request for comments in the last issue. From the lack of response it could be taken for granted that the membership is satisfied with the present format and we should keep it as is. If there are any comments, or criticisms, let's have them now so they may be submitted to the new Board of Directors in October.

I must have been in a daze when I got to the end of the column in the last issue. In the part about the "poor man's transit" the most important part of the formula was left out. This part is converting the number of degrees in Angle A to a decimal. This requires the use of logarithm tables. These tables can be found in most books on mathematics in the trigonometry section. Just read across the columns from the elevation degree to the tangent column and that will be the number to use.

We hope that you have had a pleasant summer and had fun railroading. If you have any good pictures to spare why not send them to the COUPLER? Jot down the information on the back of the picture (where taken, etc.) and we'll welcome the opportunity to use it.

While on the subject of railroading away from home, we had several people stop to see us during the summer. Unfortunately we were not home at the time and we still do not know who came. As a matter of fact, one visitor did not leave his name with our upstairs neighbor who knew we were away for the weekend and who had told the visitor this and asked if he would leave a message. He didn't. From the descriptions of the callers, they were people we did not know and, therefore, it is reasonable to assume they were model railroaders. If I go calling without phoning first (very seldom) I have paper and pencil in the car for the sole purpose of leaving a note. It's quite disturbing to know someone came calling but not knowing who. If you go visiting and no one is home -- leave a note. It will be appreciated.

Convention time is here again and the annual meeting with its election of directors and officers as well as action on the Region's business. This meeting concerns all members of the Region and as many as possible should attend. Not only will there be a full program and a lot of fun, but most important, you will have a voice in the

election of your officers and directors and a say in the transaction of the Region's business.

See you in Albany?

CHUCK OGREN  
Editor



## SUMMER SOLILOQUY on RURAL RAILROADING

Over the fields, beyond the trees,  
Two major railways run.  
Through summer's heat and winter's freeze;  
Through rain and snow and sun.

The main "lines west" are busy  
Throughout the day and night.  
They keep dispatchers dizzy  
Regulating all this might.

But to us upon the sideline,  
Not concerned with railroad work,  
They afford a symphony sublime  
In which many pleasures lurk....

The distant blast of a straining drag  
Being tucked into the hole,  
Awaiting the varnish's whistled brag  
Of how Pacifics roll!

Now here she comes, black plume above,  
Her stack proclaiming loudly;  
High drivers stepping, hand-in-glove  
With side-rods thrashing proudly.

She dashes by and rounds the bend,  
A bridge returns her rumble;  
The notes of her steam whistle blend  
With the freight's awakening grumble.

Robust exhaust takes up the slack  
Smoke columns mushroom high  
And billow off along the track,  
Drawing pictures on the sky.

Eight drivers spin with sudden force,  
Checked by the weight at hand  
As the driver of the Iron Horse  
Judiciously valves sand.

Momentum gains by slow degrees;  
The stack's bark quickens pace.  
One hundred cars stir up a breeze  
As they get back in the race.

Alas, these scenes will pass ere long;  
The diesels increase daily.  
We'll miss that sweet, melodious song  
The steamers sang so gaily.

ROB ROBERTSON



REPORT OF THE "PROTOP" COMMITTEE:

A report of the Protop Committee (Committee for the Promotion of Prototype Operation in the NER) for the year stresses a new departure in clinics by the use of tin-plate at the Springfield Convention in place of a portable scale layout for demonstrating realistic operation.

Roger Marble, who has a cellar full of A-F "S" gage equipment, was shocked by the time, trouble and expense it took Watty House to set up a demonstration layout at the Trenton Convention last year. He saw the same thing repeated at the National Convention at St. Paul, where Allen Hazen built a portable layout at considerable expense for the clinic run by Watty House. On the way home it occurred to Roger that it would be easier, quicker and less expensive to use his tin-plate. It would have the added advantage of being more flexible, as the layout could be changed from clinic to clinic more easily than a portable, which has a fixed layout. The transportation problem would be simpler, too. It was found that the tin-plate was quite adequate for demonstrating the principles of realistic operation which they were talking about.

Roger (at Springfield) felt badly that engine trouble prevented a demonstration of passenger switching which had been planned. However, Pop Houghton pointed out that his introductory talk took up a lot of time, and that operating a way-freight with the changing station method, using the Dyar Card system, was somewhat complicated and was probably enough for one clinic. He suggested that passenger switching could be the subject of a future clinic.

The Committee was well convinced that the use of tin-plate was satisfactory, more trouble-free than scale and fulfilled the main objective of saving lots of time, trouble and expense. Roger Marble feels sure that at another convention it will take him only one day to set up the layout, instead of the three it took at Springfield.

The idea of using a demonstration layout at clinics is fairly new. The Protop Committee felt something different had to be done, because the excellent talks by Doc Buyse, Jack Wilson, Newt Guerin and others at conventions in past years had seemed to have done little, or nothing, to improve the operating in the Region, which seemed to be nothing more than continuous loop-running. Some kind of demonstration layout seemed to be the answer.

The "Evergreen Central" was the first layout considered. This is a portable layout built by the "Model Railroader" staff and sent around the country to attract new members to the hobby. The Committee was told that it weighed 400lbs and the shipping expense was considerable, although this was later denied by the "Model Railroader". The main objection to it, as far as the Committee was concerned, was the fact that it was designed more for continuous loop operation than switching. While there was a siding or two, the layout did not have enough sidings for the way-freight switching that the Committee wanted to show.

Finally Watty House tore up part of his 0 gage layout, hired a station wagon and carted it down to Trenton. Set up as a point-to-point with sidings and passing tracks at each end, Watty showed the boys plenty of switching, such as a peddler setting out cars at private sidings and turning the train at the end of the run. Many of the members were given an opportunity to run the trains themselves and find out first hand what fun switching could be.

Last summer, at the National Convention at St. Paul, Allen Hazen, former President of NER, felt the need of a demonstration layout for the clinic on operation. He was unable to locate one, so he built his own on a sheet of plywood and invited Watty House to operate it. Watty demonstrated switching of passenger and freight trains and answered questions from the audience. The clinic was hailed as a great success.

The interest shown at these demonstrations both at the Regional and National levels persuaded the Committee to plan another demonstration at Springfield. Roger Marble's offer to use his American Flyer equipment was accepted. At the last minute Watty House found that he was unable to attend, so he turned the clinic over to Pop Houghton.

Pop Houghton's interest in prototype operation started twenty-five years ago when he began to run a model railroad club in the school where he teaches. Although the club died a natural death long ago, Pop's interest in realistic operation is as much alive as ever. The latest outcome of this interest has been an article on operating methods, which has been accepted by the "Model Railroader". Pop gave a resume of this article as an introduction to the operating session. Pop referred to these operating methods as tricks to stretch the main line. Interestingly enough, the five methods of making operating more realistic were developed by members of the NER. The five methods are:

1. Forget about the main line and concentrate on switching - Watty House.
2. The "hidden train" method, where the illusion of distance is created by running the train behind a mountain or into a lower level hide-out as done by Ivon Preble's former club in Lynn, Mass.
3. Multiple Loop. Neal Fisk gives a new twist to an old gimmick by making continuous loop running interesting. He runs his trains around the loop several times between stations.
4. The House-Fisk Method. By having three loops on a layout, switching can be done on any one loop while running trains continuously on the other two. This method will enable clubs to operate realistically at shows.
5. The "changing station" method was used by Billi Bowen in his tin-plate days. A man with a small single station loop can do practically anything that can be done on a big layout by assigning a definite, but imaginary mileage to the loop, and changing the name of the station at each stop.

Pop illustrated the above method at Springfield by assigning a length of five miles to the loop for passenger operation. Using the Pennsylvania R.R. main line between New York and Philadelphia as the prototype, six times around the layout would cover thirty miles and bring the train to New Brunswick. Six more laps and the train would arrive in Trenton, another thirty miles away. Six final laps would complete the run by bringing the train to Philadelphia. For commuters and way-freights, Pop assigned a distance of two miles to the loop. This gives plenty of variation as there are about 15 local stops on both ends of the line, between New Brunswick and New York on one end, and Trenton and Philadelphia at the other.

Pop felt that this method is the most important for two reasons. In the first place, it can be called a "poor man's layout" as it needs only a small loop with a single station. In the second place, if a person can bring himself to use a little imagination practically anything can be done that is done by prototype railroads. The only catch is that not all model railroaders can bring themselves to use the necessary amount of imagination. It was to prepare the audience for the needed make-believe that Pop gave such a long talk as an introduction.

In order to make the peddler freight operation more interesting Pop, and his brother Russ, used the card system invented by Gerald Dyar, another native of NER. This method was described in the Fall 1956 COUPLER in the article entitled "The Layout that Jack Built". This card system has been successfully used by Jack Taylor, of New Rochelle, N.Y., Avard Fuller, of West Hartford, Conn., and Douglas Smith, of Bloomfield, N.J. Pop and Russ ran into trouble when they attempted to use it with the Changing Station Method, as the name of each plant on each private siding had to be changed every time the name of the station was changed. When the operators found out by charts and signs what plant belonged to what siding, things ran smoothly.



## THE MODEL

In the Summer Issue of the COUPLER, President See had some pertinent comments about models and model contests and under the heading "The Hostler Sez:", Chuck Ogren suggests that we use our cameras during the summer to capture some new ideas for models from the prototype.

Now I expect that each member of NER read these items, however when I turned to page 7 and saw the picture of Pat Hohenberger comparing Dave Bayer's photo of a "bridge over the Erie at Bloomfield, N.J." with his prize winning model of this oldtime wooden bridge, it made me realize that it is just things like this that make the difference between just being interested in model railroading or being a "scale man".

Dave's model took me back to 1900 when my family moved from Brooklyn, N.Y., to Bloomfield, N.J. This bridge spanned the Erie at that time and was at the head of Williamson Avenue. Just East and South of this bridge was Williamson Oval where the local ball club had their diamond. The hill on the West side of the Oval made a natural grandstand and the yearly fireworks celebration of July 4th was held in this same place. Across the meadow from the Oval, further South, was Fairview Grammar School and when the snow was good, our sleds would carry almost to the school. As small boys we often dared one another to stand on the bridge when the 5:34 came roaring through.

One day a train caught fire just after passing under the bridge and I can still remember the billowing cloud of black smoke from one freight car that was full of acid carboys.

Now I ask you, can you expect anything more of a model of a prototype facility than that it is so realistic that it conjures up memories like the above. The marvel, though, is that this relic of the past still stands in a neighborhood that had gone modern even by 1918 when I left Bloomfield.

Possibly one answer to bringing models to NER meetings and/or entering them in contests may be shown in this incident. I missed seeing a model at Springfield because I did not attend, and inspecting this model and meeting the builder would have made the trip worthwhile even though I am not a "social person". The moral of this piece is that one never knows what the total result of exhibiting a model may be. In my case it brought back memories. (But actually, I am making a model of this bridge, from memory and the photo in the COUPLER to lead a mountain road to a Hill Billy Homestead on my pike.)

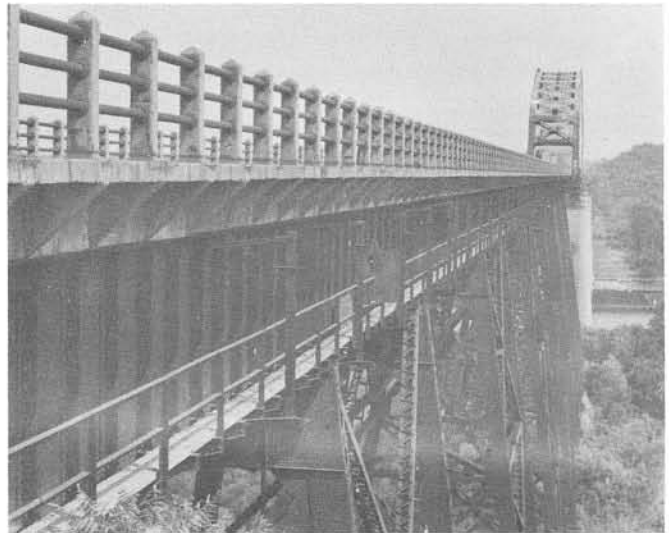
Exhibiting models as one of the best methods of interchange of ideas that we have in our fascinating hobby and we must all learn to accept intolerant remarks and those few who always belittle anything which is not to their way of thinking and bring our own "brain-child" to NER meetings even though we do not win a prize. All that it takes to enter a model is just a little more courage than it takes not to enter one. Even though your model may not please everyone, it may give someone just the idea he has been looking for and that's "somin".

JIM (M.G.) FISK

(for a diagram of the layout and lists of cars and their assigned sidings, see issue 43. Ed.)

The Committee feels that NER has pioneered again in model railroad progress. The use of tin-plate rolling stock and snap-track will make it possible to have demonstrations with less work and expense. By presenting several methods of operation (all developed by members of the Region) all members can find some method of making train running more fun whether their layout is large or small, whether club owned or private.

POP HOUGHTON CO-CHAIRMAN  
WATTY HOUSE



Castleton Bridge over the Hudson River. To be traveled over on fan trip. Finnegan photo.

## RAIL TRANSPORTATION TO ALBANY

For those people who are going to Albany by train here is a run-down of schedules.

These going to Albany from New York on Friday.  
NYC #1, the Pacemaker, leaves NY at 4PM,  
Arrives in Albany at 6:51PM.

From Boston:  
B & A #27, the New England States, (reserved seat coaches), leaves South Station, Boston, 3:30PM, arrives Albany 8:25.

From Syracuse:  
NYC #50, Empire State Express (reserved seat coaches), leaves 4:35PM, arrives in Albany 7:06PM.

From Montreal:  
D & H #36, the Laurentian, leaves Windsor Station, Montreal, 10:50AM, arrives Albany 5:35PM

From Boston:  
B & M #59, leaves North Station, Boston, 5:00PM, arrives Troy 9:30PM. Busses of the United Traction Co. operate at 20 minute intervals. 30¢ fare to Albany.

On Saturday morning:

From New York City:  
NYC #95, the DeWitt Clinton, leaves N.Y. 7:35AM, arrives Albany 10:45AM.

From Boston:  
B & A #691, leaves South Station 6:45AM, arrives Albany 11:30AM.

From Syracuse:  
NYC #2, the Pacemaker, (reserved seat coaches) leaves Syracuse 8:01AM, arrives Albany 10:45.

Time tables will be available for inspection at the registration desk for those interested in returning home by rail.

The Connecticut River Railroad wishes to advise its friends that, because of an approaching change in location of right-of-way and headquarters, no passes will be issued until further notice.

When new passes are available we will again be most happy to exchange.

DONALD S. ROBINSON  
Chief Brass Hat



Write  
Welling

FROM THE CONVENTION COORDINATOR:

That Convention Questionnaire

By the middle of July we had received 111 answers to the 700 questionnaires that were mailed with the COUPLER, a return of about 16%. This is also about the number of people that seem to get around to the conventions. I wonder if there is any connection?

The answers to most of the questions are quite definitely one way or the other, with only a few that show little decided preference. 82% of those answering attend our conventions, but only 33% bring their wives along. Of course, the 22 people who admit they have no wives to bring affects this figure appreciably. The main reason for lack of wifely attendance is very simple - no interest! And there's not much we can do about that - they either are or aren't!

Hotels seem to be reasonably satisfactory to 79 people; unsatisfactory to 2; and 30 have no expressed opinion. The same feeling seems to apply to our fan trips, with counts of 79, 9, and 23.

70% of our answers prefer our dinner on Saturday night; 10% on Sunday; and I guess the other 20% just don't eat. The dinner and breakfast arrangements seem to be OK by about the same percentages. 46 people want to be entertained; 42 don't; and 23 don't care one way or the other. I guess we'll have to let the local committees toss a coin for or against that one.

Clinics are practically demanded. 82% want them; the rest don't care. And of that 82%, two-thirds of them want something every time. Nearly everyone has received some personal benefit from them, and only a few have been bored. (For these we are trying to arrange some supplementary attractions for future conventions.)

The Prototype Operations program is very well supported, with 75% in favor and that same 20% without an opinion. Incidentally, it is very interesting that on many questions the "no-answer" proportion has run close to 20%, but not the same individual people in every case.

The question about movies produced violent results! 68% want them; 12% don't; and again 20% don't much care. But, if you think you are going to get anything but railroad pictures, guess again! Only three people will look at anything other than railroading - and most of the others want STEAM, but will settle for a little of other things. So that settles that - no beauty contests, or such, for these boys!

However, 70% of you are interested in your color slides of railroading. There is a preference for prototype, again especially for steam; nextbest are your own club or personal model activities. So I'd say bring along some of your pictures from Springfield, preferably those with people as well as trains in 'em. In that connection, one of our regular convention-attenders (a wife, incidentally) said to me, "I wish more people would bring to the next convention the pictures they took at the last one. There are always lots of people with cameras; some of them must have some pictures; why don't they let the rest of us see them? I live out side of a thickly settled area, no clubs, no model railroading neighbors. I never see any pictures unless they bring them the next time - and then show them". Now to my mind that's a legitimate complaint if I ever heard one. But only you can do anything about it. So bring along some pictures to Albany, and let us all see them. (The rest of us aren't expert photographers either.)

The model contest questions produced some interesting results:

	Yes	No	No Answer
Would you enter?	63	30	19
Satisfied how they're run?	68	5	38
Satisfied with point-judging?	69	2	40
Should gages be combined?	20	70	21

Study these for a minute; then think back to the last contests. Where were your models? At a meeting in Albany, Dave Finnegan agreed to go to town on the model contest this fall. So get out and dust off your best models and watch for Dave's announcement of the rules and classes for Albany this fall.

Once again I want to say "Thank You" to everybody who took time to send in the little green sheet. It has been a definite help to your Directors and to the local committees that have had a chance to see some of the results. And to the nearly half of you that added so much extra comment and suggestion, another "Thank you again", for your interest. All of these extras have been tabulated for the Directors, and are receiving genuine consideration. I cannot write each of you individually, so please accept this as my acknowledgement of your help.

CHARLES McK. WELLING  
Convention Coordinator

FROM THE MAILING OFFICE:

With this issue the mailing office has been operating for one year. To be sure, there were times when we were in doubt as to whether we had any good addresses to use, but it has now come down to about fifteen returned "Couplers" on the #43 issue, all of which have a forwarding address.

At no time has the "Coupler" remained at the Mailing Office for more than three days, and it is our aim to maintain this service.

We have at various times furnished special listings for specific requirements of the President. Any special listing must be so timed that it can be processed when a mailing is being done as the plates are maintained in alphabetical order, and cannot be taken from this sequence without a long resorting operation.

\*EVERY MEMBER NOTE\*

If you move please make your change of address known to the Mailing Office or the secretary. If you know of anyone who is a member and did not receive issue #43 please advise the Secretary.

WAYNE ROUNDY



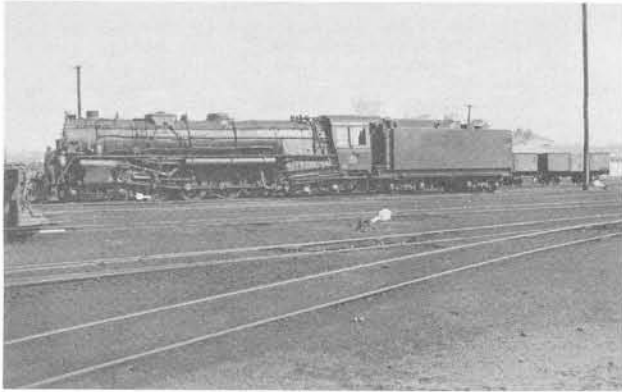
DISPATCHER...Continued from page 2

sire to compete, he can receive much satisfaction from the interest displayed by the observers. Also, many model on display increases interest all around. 'Exhibition only' models should be placed as near as practicable to those in contest and all should be placed near eye level, preferably just below.

If these impressions, even though incomplete, prove to be of any value, I will feel that my study of the model contests have been worth the effort and time involved. I have realized there has been a certain amount of dissatisfaction in connection with these contests which only recently has been directly brought to my attention. I urge the serious minded members to give this matter their attention and forward their ideas for solutions, along with any other suggestions, to the COUPLER for publication.

This coming October will mark the end of my second year as the President of NER. At that time I shall have to curtail my model activities temporarily due to lack of free time. I have thoroughly enjoyed working for, and with, the Region, sharing its problems and helping it grow. I wish to publicly extend my appreciation to both of the Boards of Directors ('56 & '57) for their sincere efforts and cooperation. I also wish to extend the same to the membership at large who have been very appreciative of our efforts and who have been so helpful.

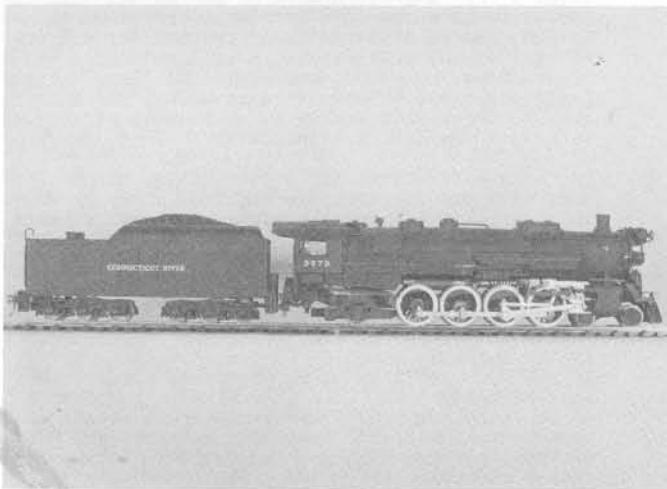
JAMES E. SEE, President



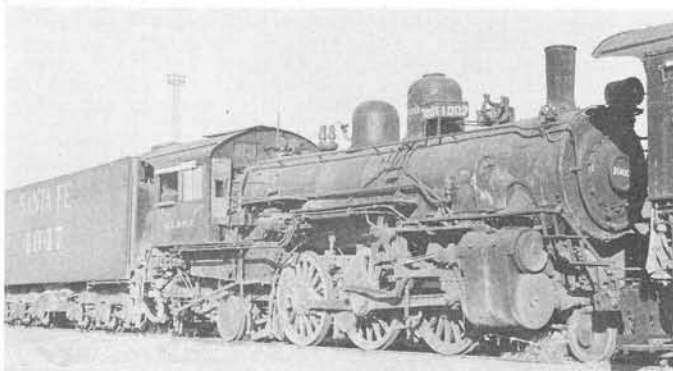
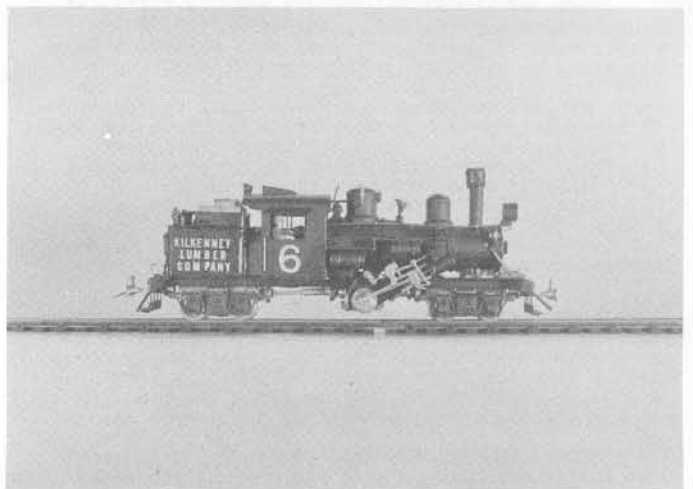
Most powerful engine on the New Zealand railway system is this K class 4-8-4 used for heavy freight and passenger service. Some burn oil.  
By Les Street



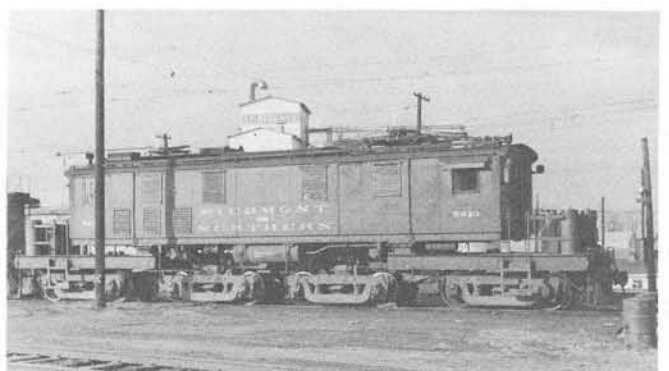
An A6 4-6-2 used in light passenger service in New Zealand.  
By Les Street



Two engines in the stud of Don Robinson of Springfield, Mass. Most of the engines are United-Tenshodo with added detail.



Santa Fe 2-6-2 waiting for the torch and for juice fans, a Piedmont & Northern electric.





## THE DISTAFF SIDE

How many of you model railroaders feel your wife is unappreciative of your hobby? If she will read my ideas on the subject, perhaps I can give her a different outlook on this hobby which can become so tremendously important to our husbands.

Chuck started railroading in the Spring of '51. When he worked on his first few kits, I could see he was quite absorbed in his hobby and very pleased. I had neglected to think that those fascinating little cars would have to run around on tracks, and that the track couldn't be snapped together on the living room floor, etc. However, I soon learned how involved model railroading can be - and began recognizing some strange-sounding words - like turn-outs, frogs, Consols, Mikes, prototypical, etc. I'm sure these are somewhat familiar to you other wives. If you listen to hubby even with half-an-ear they're bound to pop up now and then.

That summer Chuck asked me if he could get a 4' x 8' piece of plywood and some 2 x 4s. Well, you know, this hobby kind of sneaks up on you. I no sooner said "I guess so.", when this monstrous thing was going up right in the middle of the living room mind you. Of course Chuck had one thing in his favor - we were newlyweds and I was still in that anything-to-keep-you-happy-dear frame of mind. It's a pity that attitude is so short lived in so many marriages. We were living in a small apartment and the following year, when our first son was born I had quite a time trying to figure out where to put things - if the diapers go here, where will I put the tool box, and, I'd like to put the crib in that corner, but the work table is in the way.

It soon dawned on me that I had a rival right there in my own home! A large, curvaceous, time consuming attraction - the railroad. Well now, I just didn't like the hours I read, or sewed, or just sat and twiddled my thumbs because Chuck was fiddling with a new coupler or something, and I said so.

"Chuck," I said, "how can you enjoy that stuff? One little spring pops onto the rug and you start turning the air blue or you've got to make a flying trip over to New London or Providence for some parts you need "right now". Or - "You haven't been at this long enough to read the diagram for that imported engine and you're tearing your hair out over it." Or.....

"Now just listen", Chuck replied, and went on to explain that he was really enjoying himself with his hobby. "When I sit down to railroad" he said, "I forget worries, I forget my job. I can relax completely and it's a good feeling, not to say anything of the satisfaction of doing something creative. I could be out with the boys." When we finished our conversation I felt it was, indeed, good for him. Chuck's field of radio and television broadcasting is well known for its "ulcer" cases and my husband is no exception, so if he could shed tension by putting hours of work into one little car, or section of his layout, that was OK with me.

Finally I thought I might try my hand at it so I wouldn't feel so left out. I am not the least bit mechanically minded, and though I do know some wives who really enjoy making car kits, it doesn't appeal to me at all. So, I tried a house. And I tell you - it had the shakiest walls, the crookedest windows and the most lop-sided roof you ever saw, but I didn't think it was too bad for my first try. As I became a little more proficient at it I braved a scratch built structure with shingles and a chimney carved to simulate stone. My only trouble was - it turned out to be one gauge too big. With three pre-school children I rarely ever get to do any building now, but when I do I always work side by side with Chuck. I still can't follow the diagrams without his help.

Our next move was to New York State where Chuck also had his layout in the only available place -

the living room. There were many times when it was embarrassing and a good many times when I wished I had never seen the darned thing. But it was a case of having it in the living room or not at all. And if the railroad went, some of Chuck's happiness would go too and as happy people make for a happy home, I bowed to my "rival".

Another time, up in Burlington, Vermont, I had to put the bureau from our bedroom set out in the upstairs hallway to make room for the railroad. The table was set up next to the bed and took quite a beating. Every time Chuck tossed in his sleep he'd land an arm in Staton's Corners, or a foot over on the main line...well, almost.

But the hobby has its compensations too. One of my fondest memories is of a night in Vermont when we got together with three other couples at one of their houses. The boys railroaded for a while, then we all sat out on the porch and talked and laughed and in general had a wonderful time. The feeling of friendship and fun was very strong and just one phase of how good model railroading can be socially. We have found that model railroading and belonging to the NMRA has been the key to open the doors of friendship, especially when moving to a new community. Chuck looks in the Yearbook, then checks the local hobby shop for others in the hobby. With the odd hours he works it's difficult, at times to meet people, but we have made many friends through the hobby, friends from all walks of life - some better off than we, some not, but never the less, friends. Social barriers go down in this hobby. The comradeship in model railroading is an example of good old fashioned American friendliness!

I have yet to attend a convention. Either I am busy with the children, or short of cash, or something - like many another young wife, but I sure hope to make the next one and meet some of the people I have heard about and some I haven't.

Yes, it is sometimes easy for us wives to get fed up with railroading as a hobby. But there is no reason to if, and here is the solution, fellows -- if the husbands remember to consider their wives. If you have your layout in the house itself, keep it reasonably neat. Help your wife to get interested in railroading. She isn't likely to become interested without some prompting on your part. Make her feel you are both sharing in it and working together at it.

Many wives resent the dollar here - dollar there type of railroader. Many were the times when the only money Chuck could have for his needs was from the deposits on bottles, but they add up and still leave wifey's budget intact.

Avoid doing anything which might turn your wife against the hobby. I don't say give it up, but don't pursue it to the point of its becoming a problem in your home.

My personal ideas follow along these lines:

I like the confidence of knowing my husband has a wholesome hobby. I prefer his railroading by far when I consider the number of men who go over to the nearest bar to "see the boys" or leave home two or three evenings a week for a poker game. I believe a woman should encourage this hobby because I think its good points are so apparent. It's wonderful for any man who has a tendency to be nervous and tense, for any man with time on his hands.

We try to meet each other half way. Of course, we have times when Chuck brings all his paraphernalia into the living room so he can sit with me while he railroads. He has a 16" square piece of masonite that he uses to work on, so he puts it on the coffee table and can cut, paint and cement without worrying about harming the finish on the table. Quite often I have to send him back to the railroad room when the children get too curious and he gets that "I'm-having-trouble-holding-my-temper" look in his eye.

I know Chuck loves railroading and the people in it and though it may sound "old-fashioned" I still think a husband's happiness is greatly dependent on his wife and her management of his home life.



### FLAGSTOP ON THE TUXEDO JUNCTION

It was our intention at this time to present the details of an automatic block system that will give you two-way operation on the same track -- without the operational disadvantages, tricky wiring and costly investment of the commonly used detection circuits. The reason we have put this ahead to the next issue is that we are currently working on certain refinements that will incorporate some added interesting features.

Meanwhile we can relax a bit and if you'll pull up that chair I'll cut the power on the TJ while we do a little gabbing over a cup of Java. Model railroading is a many sided hobby, as you are probably well aware. And one aspect is the fact that there is a great deal of the historical side of the prototype all about us that can be dug up with a little detective work. It's amazing what one can still unearth in the way of old bridges, roundhouses, terminals, Pullman cars and day coaches, even steam power, by shoving off on a Saturday in the car for an exploratory venture.

Your best approach is to park the car nearby a large freight yard or passenger terminal, or small branch-line facilities, and take on foot from there. In large terminals trespassing is frowned upon without a pass. But these are easy to come by if you take the trouble before hand to secure one from headquarters. A pass is important because they know who you are and it also releases them from any financial responsibility in case of accident.

We can look back on many a venture of this sort and usually do most of our exploring in the fall when the heat is off and there is a crispness in the air which beckons us out to railroad territory. Best of all, you never know what you're going to stumble across. Why just across the Hudson from New York City there is still an old flat-top yellow coach, resting on antiquated trucks, nestling among some grass-grown sidings in the Weehawken Yards of the NYC. Its roof certainly dates it back to the '50s or early '60s and, as far as I can tell, is used as some sort of supply or workshop for the yard gang.

My main interest (when I can find the time) has been visiting the sites of the famous old locomotive works. Some of the buildings, or traces of them, remain and some are gone forever. Take the New York Locomotive Works, for instance. Although this firm never reached the size and stature of Baldwin and Schenectady (Alco) it never-the-less turned out some beautiful machines which were considered masterpieces in their day. One reason for this was a mechanical genius by the name of Encrease Personette Gould, of the Hudson River Railroad, who was persuaded to come with them as Chief Mechanical Engineer in the summer of 1853.

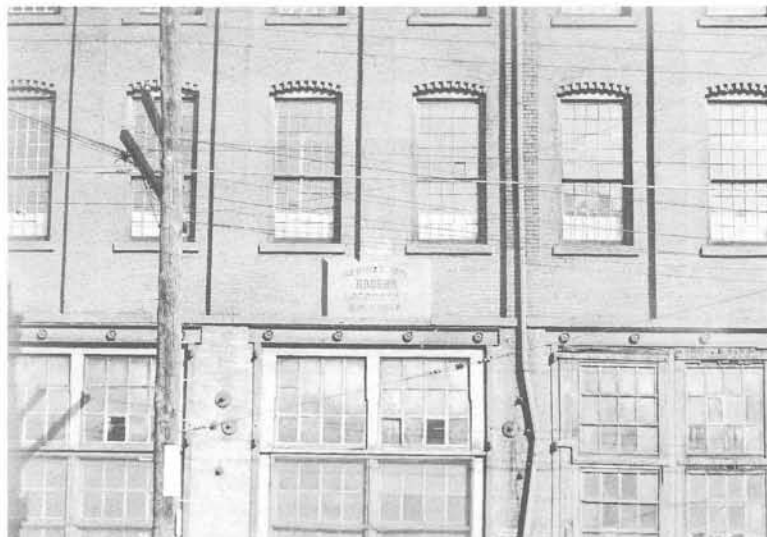
In October, 1851, the Hudson River Railroad was completed between New York City and East Albany (Rensselaer) and Gould, who was master mechanic, had the distinction of running the first train between the two cities. By 1852 he was Superintendent of the line, which today is the New York Central.

One day I ran across an old map of Jersey City which showed the location of the original buildings of the New York Locomotive Works. It occupied practically the whole block surrounded by Warren, Morgan, Steuben and Washington Streets. Just two blocks away was the site of the New Jersey R.R. Station (now Pennsylvania) and the Paterson & Hudson River R.R. And just one block away, on the other side of Washington Street, was the old Cumming & James Car Works. I feared nothing would be left and I was right, because this area comprises one of the most busy sections of Jersey City and has undergone countless changes. There is still the ferry slip at the foot of Montgomery Street but the old landmarks are no longer existent. In their place are apartment buildings, stores and industrial hodge-podge. My only satisfaction was trying to visualize what the place looked like, the enormous buildings and high chimneys, and what happened here, 105 years ago.

My next venture was more successful when I made a trek to Paterson, the City of Locomotive Builders.

(On the way I stumbled across the old Hoboken car barn on the outskirts of Secaucus, now given over to a bus terminal). Down in the lower, quieter, part of Paterson, near the banks of the Passaic River, are still the red-brick buildings of the Rogers Locomotive Works, in a well preserved state. Thomas Rogers left an imprint on railroading that will never be obliterated. And one can't but help get a thrill out of wandering among the machine shop, boiler shop, foundry, and others, and realize that within these musty, old buildings were fabricated the most beautiful machines of all time.

Most of the structures are occupied, today, by knitting firms, hosiery mills, shipping and trucking firms. One of the largest shops still proudly displays (see photo) an aged and weathered stone upon which is carved: REBUILT 1871 - ROGERS LOCOMOTIVE & M. WORKS.

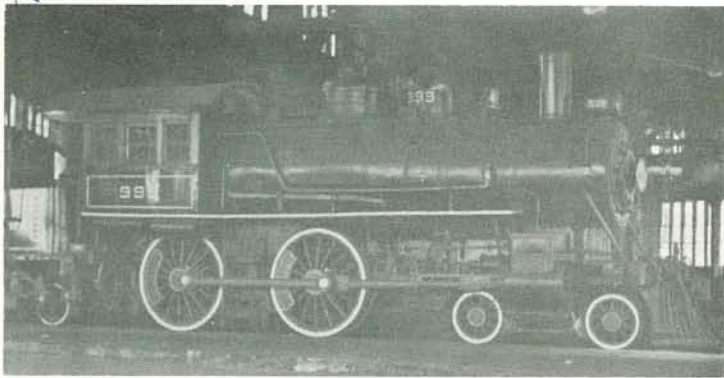


Another item of interest came to light just before World War II. I had heard there was a Forney engine, the type which used to pull the elevated trains in New York City in the days before MU electrification, still hidden away in one of the storage yards. Further investigation carried me up to the Bronx and, after considerable search, found it in a far corner of the yard underneath a canvas tarpaulin. By lifting it here and there I was able to see most of the undercarriage and cab. It was in a sad state, rusty and worn. And not long after that, it disappeared, the last Forney where there were literally hundreds. I guess it was melted down for armament. But it seems a shame this one engine could not have been preserved for posterity. I recently ran across the photo shown here and for all I know, it might be the same engine.



Continued on page 11





World famous speed record maker #999. To be seen at Selkirk Yards during Albany fan trip. Photo by D.F.

ALBANY MEET...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

There will be 24 categories to be judged as follows:

- I. TT, HO, OO.....II. S, O.
  - A- pure kit (contents of box)
  - B- modified kit (predominantly commercial OR DETAILED parts)
  - C- scratch built (major items made by modeler)
    - 1- motive power
    - 2- individual units (box cars, etc.)
    - 3- multiple units (two or more cars as one entry-circus or M/W trains.)
    - 4- scene and/or structure.

Example of categories: IAL (HO, pure kit, motive power)  
IIC3 ( O gage, scratch built, circus train (3 flats with loads)

All entering are encouraged to submit a 3" x 5" file card with each model. This card should contain pertinent information on the model as to material used, scratch built parts and time spent on model. Though not required, this card would be of great help to the judges in determining the relative merits of the model.

First prize winning models from other regional or national contests are ineligible. Contestants may enter any number of models.

Judges have the right to withhold awards if no suitable model is available. They also may combine categories that do not have enough entries.

Motive power entries do not have to operate since they might be display items.

The model contest is being judged Saturday afternoon with the awards being announced at the banquet so that the models may be on display that evening and Sunday morning with the owners name attached.

There will be a social hour from 6 to 7 to allow those attending to get together with their friends for chats.

- The dinner, to be held at 7P.M., will consist of:
- Supreme of Fresh Fruits
  - Garden Vegetable Soup
  - Roast Stuffed Turkey, Cranberry Sauce, Potato and Vegetable
  - Salad with French Dressing
  - Apple Pie with Sharp Cheese
  - Coffee

The after-dinner speaker will be Allan Shepherd of the Boston & Maine Railroad who's topic will be "Development of the Steam Locomotive".

There will be four activities to choose from after the dinner, all starting at 9:30.

First, there will be five clinics on various phases of our hobby. Jim Shaughnessy will conduct one on "How to Photograph Trains". Jim is a well-

known professional railroad photographer, having pictures appearing very frequently in Trains, etc. He will have a display of his pictures, taken all over the country. This clinic may well be the "dark-house" hi-lite of the meet.

A "Traction Clinic Discussion" will be held by Dave Waddington, an O gage trolley modeler, who has been the author of several Model Railroader articles. This month's issue has some plans of his on prototype traction. This clinic will include tricks of modeling using displays and discussion.

Glen Wagner will hold forth on "Easily Made Scenery". Being a "craft author" with articles in Boy's Life, etc., Glen is a professional in the making of model scenery, having developed a means of reproducing model structures photographically. An O gager, he will illustrate his clinic with a step-by-step colored slide sequence.

O gager George Hockaday, who showed his worth at the Springfield meet, will hold a clinic on "Spray Painting of Models".

The fifth clinic will be held by the Convention Chairman, Dave Finnegan, who has to be humored as he is the boss. The clinic will be illustrated with models and a portable workshop, suitable for almost any size apartment will be on display. The workshop is 12" x 35" and is equipped to do almost anything that a modeler might desire.

There, indeed, is a diversified line-up of clinics that should keep every one happy.

There will also be an auction of model railroad equipment. Bring what you have to sell. There might be a buyer for that car or turnout you are thinking of tossing out. Win Curtis will be auctioneer, with 10% of the purchase price going to the District.

For those not interested in the clinics or auction, there will be movies and slides and a place set aside for "bull-sessions".

All-in-all, an evening that should and will keep everyone busy.

Breakfast Sunday morning will be at 8A.M. and the following will be served:

- Chilled orange juice
- Scrambled eggs and bacon
- French fried potatoes
- Danish pastry and jam
- Assorted rolls, butter, orange marmalade
- Coffee and cream

This will be followed by the Annual Meeting at which the election of officers for the coming year will be held, as well as standing committee reports and other business of the Region transacted.

After the business meeting, there will be visits to home pikes in the area as well as a visit to the D. & H. R.R. ATC Center. Lunch (on your own) at 12. Then, for those who have the time, a visit to the Tri-Village club in Delmar.

There is a convention that should satisfy the most discriminating persons, enough diversified activities to keep all attending happy and busy.

It should be noted that with the rising cost of living (wages), food, etc., makes the cost of the meals in a large city somewhat higher than usual. Considering the package price for registration, trip, dinner and breakfast, \$8.50 is still within reason and with the full program the price is a fair one. Though the breakdown is different, the total package price is comparable to other conventions.

Besides all listed, there will be give-aways, photos, gifts and literature. A list will be given to all registering showing locations in the area for taking railroad photos.

This shapes up as one of the best conventions in NER history. Plan now to attend. That's the 12-13 of October in Albany, New York. Convention Headquarters will be the Sheraton-Ten Eyck Hotel on State Street. Come early -- stay late.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Cash Balance November 1, 1956: \$410.62

Cash Received:

1 renewal	\$ 1.00	
361 renewals (57)	361.00	
214 new members	214.00	
7 lapel pins	10.50	
37 convention badges	9.25	
Concord convention	94.25	
Springfield convention	60.00	
		<u>750.00</u>
		\$1160.62

Paid Out:

Coupler Issue #40	\$ 84.50	
#41	92.50	
#42	125.00	
#43	110.00	
Mailing: Postage	53.09	
Supplies	49.89	
Promotion: Ivon Preble	22.03	
Irwin Lloyd	59.95	
Misc: Coupler Editor	32.00	
Secretary	13.16	
Directors	17.50	
Printing	24.05	
Bank charges	6.71	
* Albany advance	150.00	
		<u>840.38</u>

Cash Balance September 10, 1957: \$20.24

\* Loan to convention committee  
 Advance Dues \$157.00  
 Special Account 3.00  
 Assets: 284 convention badges 71.00  
 45 lapel pins 67.50

Note: Both the mailing office and secretary have stamps on hand. The Region has a good supply of stationery, and mailing envelopes.

Respectfully signed,  
 ROGER MARBLE  
 Secretary-Treasurer



Unloading box car of grain at the grain elevator at the Port of Albany. To be seen on fan trip at Albany convention. Finnegan photo

DISTAFF....Continued from page 8

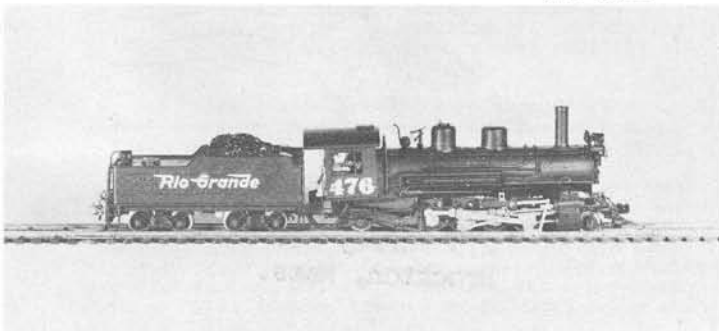
I sincerely believe that if a husband considers his wife's attitude toward railroading, he can at least make her cheerfully tolerant, if not down right interested.

To those wives who are not fond of model railroading as a hobby, may I say that we all have our times when we may feel cool toward it for one reason or another, but it might help to remember:

- For the want of wifey's interest, hubby's hobby did suffer,
- For the want of understanding, hubby's happiness suffered,
- For the want of husband's happiness wifey did suffer,
- And for the want of give and take, the marriage did suffer.

So you see, it's the little things that count. I do hope that you will give model railroading a second look.

ANN OGREN



Outside-frame 2-8-2 slim gage loco of Don Robinson, Springfield, Mass.

TJ....Continued from page 9

Well, before you shove off, let me warm up that coffee of yours as I have a suggestion to make. I mentioned some time ago that the toughest problem to lick in HO is keeping the track clean. With O gauge it isn't the bane of existence as it is with HO because of heavier equipment and the almost universal use of steel rail, which tends to improve (by shine) with operation.

If you'll recall, I mentioned a few tests we had made and our findings to date. Meanwhile we are still at it, and are experimenting right now with a trick formula that is supposed to "work". This remains to be seen. As we see it any method, whether it be liquid, mechanical or what have you, has to (1) get the track clean, and (2) keep it from oxidizing. Apparently it isn't the dirt, as much as it is oxidization, that ultimately breaks down train operation. So let me suggest we establish a symposium wherein any ideas worth merit will be published. If you have a method which you think really does the job be sure to drop a line to your Editor. Then in the next issue he will print all such replies. Also, we'll be able to give you performance results on our new-found "formula".

Remember, your idea may be the long sought secret and you will have thousands of model railroaders singing praises to your discovery -- if it works. Of course, we're talking about brass rail. Sure, nickel-silver doesn't oxidize as readily as brass. But whaddya think all those guys who already have brass rail down are going to do? Rip it up? Not a chance. Brass rail is going to be with us for a long time to come.

GEORGE ALLEN

### CLUB NOTES

The first meeting of the Franklin County (Mass.) Model Railroad Club was held September 20th at the home of Charles Ogren. Six members were in attendance and the whole meeting was devoted to the writing of by-laws. Charles Ogren was named Temporary Chairman, as the election of officers was deferred until the club's membership is larger.

Arthur N. Patten, Secretary-Treasurer of the Berkshire Model Railroad Club attended and spoke on some of the problems that faced the Berkshire Club on their formation and also some of the problems that have arisen since their start. As the representative of the Berkshire Club, he presented the new group with an electrified caboose marker lamp to be used by the club to indicate the house of the next meeting. The host member for the next meeting takes the lamp with him and on meeting night, hangs it in a prominent place in front of his house so that members may find the house with ease. Actually the lamp was loaned to the Franklin County club as the Berkshire club uses a locomotive classification lamp owned by Charles Ogren, for the same purpose.

In setting up the dues for the new club, membership in NMRA and NER is included. By January 1, 1958, the club will be 100% NMRA and NER.

### ALONG THE DIVISIONS

The Nutmeg Division, NER, held a meeting at the plant of the American Brass Company in Torrington, Conn on Friday evening, September 20th.

The meeting was open to Division members only and gave the group an opportunity to see the night shift at work in most departments. Special attention was given to the Rod Shop where "T" rail for model railroad track is drawn. Competant guides were on hand to explain the various operations.

-o-

HUB DISTRICT....Continued from page 1

For further information on joining the Hub District, contact any of the following:

David C. MacDonald  
19 Fairmount Ave.  
E. Weymouth 89, Mass.

Frederick F. Kearns, Jr.  
101 Magazine St.  
Cambridge 39, Mass.

Lyman B. Hurter  
36 Marshall St.  
Somerville 45, Mass.



View from the top of the hump at Selkirk Yards showing retarders, tower and part of yards. See all of Selkirk during fan trip at Fall '57 Meet. Finnegan photo

Will jobs in railroading always be attractive to the young? Paul Hume, famed music critic for The Washington Post, thinks so. Recently a music loving lady came to call on the Humes, and Pop introduced her to his eldest, Paul, Junior, age three.

"What are you going to be when you grow up?" the visitor asked.

"A conductor," little Paul replied. Big Paul, who eats, sleeps and writes about music, beamed.

"Oh my," exclaimed the visitor. "Are you going to replace Howard Mitchell as conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra?"

"No," explained Paul, Jr., patiently. "I'm going to be the conductor on the 'Capitol Limited'."

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**NORTHEASTERN REGION**  
OF THE  
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION, INC.

12 GLENDALE DRIVE  
DANVERS, MASS.

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