

WEATHER

Muggy; followed by Tuegy, Wedgy and Thurgy.

ALMANAC

Sunrise: Of course.
Sunset: Naturally!

THE COUPLER



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

FANTRIP HIGHLIGHTS SPRING CONVENTION

A one-hundred-mile circle fantrip was the main attraction at the NER Spring Convention in Stamford, Conn., on May 19-21. The first lap was along the Shore Line to Devon whence, following a forty-minute picture stop, the train proceeded north to Derby Junction and west on the Maybrook line through Botsford to Danbury. Of particular interest on this section of the ride were the Stevenson Dam and a meet with eastbound freight OB-2 at Botsford. A second picture stop at Danbury was followed by a high speed run to South Norwalk where the train returned to the main line into Stamford. Six lucky persons were privileged to ride the locomotive cab; two over each of the three segments of the trip. Although the sun played hide-and-seek with the photographers, many pictures were taken at each of the two stops. The ride was enjoyed by all of the more than 180 aboard. Accompanying the train were Trainmaster Joseph Gilson and Road Foreman of Engines William Burr. The crew consisted of engineer Peterson, fireman Burke, conductor Vlahakis, trainman McCormick and flagman Moore.

SPRING:- Page 7

HUB DIVISION LITTLE CONVENTION

More than eighty model railroaders from various points in the Northeastern Region congregated in East Weymouth, Mass., on April 29 for the Hub Division's "Little Convention". Although plagued by inclement weather and difficulties occasioned by the kitchen being out of service, the afternoon and evening meeting was enjoyed by all who attended.

Two afternoon clinics, one on photographing models and the other on weathering locomotives, were presented. Each was given twice so that everyone would have a chance to see them both. The clinics were ably conducted by "Limex" Lalime and John Pryke and were well attended. Accompanying exhibits aided in understanding the techniques demonstrated by the two and their assistants. The clinics were clearly presented and provided much useful information.

HUB DIVISION:- Page 2

? THE FUTURE N.E.R. CONVENTIONS ?

The NER conventions probably constitute the Region's greatest asset. To me, it is a pity that so many members fail to take advantage of attending as they can so easily broaden their model railroad knowledge and contacts, also expand their personal circle of true friends. The organization is entitled to take great pride in these gatherings, and it does. I know of no better way for our new members to become acquainted with the advantages of membership.

Unfortunately, there has appeared a definite problem in regard to convention production which I doubt many members realize. For the past two years I have been personally concerned over this problem and the future of the NER conventions. Discussions with several officers and members of the Region during the recent weekend at Stamford, Conn., have confirmed my opinions. It would appear that serious consideration should be given to the matter - and SOON! Perhaps a brief review would be in order.

FUTURE:- Page 3

THE ART OF SCRATCH BUILDING

I remember once seeing in one of the model magazines a letter to the Editor asking where one could buy "scratch" for model building. This may seem like a very silly question to a lot of the old-timers in model railroading, but when you stop to think of the hundreds of new people entering this hobby it is not quite so silly after all. I do not know just where the term "scratch" originated; maybe it started from some model builder scratching his head over what to build next, or maybe it refers to the habit of scratching around, like a chicken, in one's scrap box for spare parts and pieces.

The term "scratch building", as used in this hobby of ours, refers to making a model not purchased as a kit. It can be any model that a person has made as long as all the parts did not come in a box ready to assemble. You can, however, make a scratch model from commercial plans and using mostly purchased parts.

The real reason for most scratch building is that the modeller wants something different from what others are making or wants a model that is not available as a kit. If you will stop for a moment and think of other layouts which you have visited, just try to recall how many of them had the same model buildings which you have on your own layout. I have nothing against kit buildings, most of them are very good, and I have some on my own layout, but I have changed mine by using a different paint scheme. Now, if this sameness of structures bothers you, this is the article for you.

SCRATCH BUILDING:- Page 8

MONADNOCK STEAMTOWN & NORTHERN RAILROAD

Steam locomotives are expected to begin arriving at North Walpole, N.H., before the first of July for operation between that point and Keene on New England's newest railroad. Mr. F. Nelson Blount, owner of the Edaville Railroad, has purchased the 22-mile section of the Boston & Maine Railroad's Cheshire Branch for operation in connection with his proposed Steamtown, U.S.A. museum. Trains are expected to be running this Summer over the 10.45 miles to Westmoreland. At a later date a turntable will be placed at this point, but for the present the locomotives will just run around the train.

Tentative plans call for the erection by the State of New Hampshire of a million-dollar museum plant approximately two miles west of Keene. Included will be a 34-stall roundhouse for the non-operative engines, an exhibition building and a station. Some forty to fifty locomotives are now on hand or under option awaiting construction of storage facilities before being moved to the site. Among these are several now in Engine City at Pleasure Island amusement park in Wakefield, Mass., as well as others from the Pennsylvania, New York Central, Canadian Pacific, Maine Central and several industrial lines. It is not planned to move any of the ones now at Edaville because of the cost. Operating headquarters and repair shops will be maintained in the former Boston & Maine facilities at North Walpole.

STEAMTOWN:- Page 2

THE COUPLER

NORTHEASTERN REGION
Of The
NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

EDITOR

Donald S. Robinson...408 Davis St...Greenfield, Mass.

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If your copy is stamped on the front page in red: "This is your last copy until membership is renewed", please take heed and forward your buck to:

Northeastern Region NMRA, Inc.
12 Glendale Dr.
Danvers, Mass.



STEAMTOWN:-

The first locomotive to be under steam is now expected to be Canadian National 2-6-4T No. 47. She will later be joined by two or three Canadian Pacific 1200 Class 4-6-2's all of which have recently received full shopping. In addition to the passenger service to be offered during the Summer months the line will also handle the half-dozen cars a week consigned to Walpole and Westmoreland. Charter trips will be run for organizations which may wish to hire them. No rates have been announced at this time.

The Hostler says:

Perhaps it sounds a little odd for me to be saying "Thanks a lot for making me work", but that is exactly the way I feel. Although it has taken a bit of pushing, I think I have finally begun to make visible progress. However, I would like to see the number of contributors increased even further. NER takes in a lot of territory, but, with one notable exception, all of my material comes from the densely populated section of the Region; southern New England and metropolitan New York. It has been suggested that The Coupler run a picture feature, similar to the ones in the model railroad magazines, showing pictures of the layouts owned by the members of NER. I can think of no better way to begin than with photos from some of the more remote parts of the Region. How about it, you fellows in northern New England, Quebec and The Maritimes? Let the rest of us in on what you are doing. Just a couple of photographs is all I am asking for, although if you feel like writing an article I will be very glad to publish it. Club Notes are also invited whether your club is large or small and whether or not it has a separate layout.

There are in this issue in addition to reports on conventions several comments on the subject. All members should weigh these carefully as they affect the future vitality of the Region. I think most of you will agree that the present situation cannot be allowed to continue. The answer, however, MUST come from the membership for it is upon your attendance that the success of any convention depends. We know that there are very few who can attend every one and such is not the point. What we DO want to know is how we can best serve ALL the members of the Region so that every member will have a chance to participate in its activities. Send your comments to the Convention Coordinator or any member of the Board of Directors and we will see that they are given careful study.

Beginning with this issue another regular feature makes its debut. Trolley Sparks by John Heegle will provide both construction and operating information for the juice fans. Although primarily concerned with systems using overhead wire, third rail will not be entirely neglected. Prototype information also will be furnished from time to time.

Someone once said that the road to Hell was paved with good intentions. It was my intention to keep this column short. In fact, I even had an idea that I might eliminate it altogether for this issue, but that was soon squelched. Oh, well, c'est la vie! Have a pleasant Summer.

Deadline for the Fall issue is September 18.

DON ROBINSON

HUB DIVISION:-

Following the dinner, the delay to which was in no way the fault of the convention committee, a slide show "story" of a model railroad was presented by "Limey" Lalime which demonstrated the results which can be obtained through the use of the equipment and techniques discussed earlier in his clinic. An auction under the able hand and voice of Len Frankel, and operation of the South Shore Model RR Club layout completed the program.

In view of the large response to this gathering, the question has been raised as to whether such a program should be substituted for one of the two semi-annual Friday to Sunday conventions. The main attraction is cost since, aside from travelling expenses, only the price of the dinner is involved. There has been a great deal of adverse comment in the past over the expenses incurred in attending a convention despite the efforts made to keep them as low as possible. Perhaps this is the answer. Further comment on this idea is solicited including whether, if adopted, it should replace the present Spring or Fall convention. If sufficient interest is expressed, a summary of the replies will be printed in the Fall issue of The Coupler.

DISPATCHER'S TOWER



Within a period of one month the NER has had two meetings, one a full-sized convention and the other a one-day division meeting. Both of these were sponsored by NER divisions; Nutmeg and Hub. The members of these divisions have my heartfelt thanks for a job very well done. I have found it a real pleasure to attend these NER meetings and to have once again the chance to greet old and new friends as well as to learn something at the clinics which are always well produced and informative.

As you should all know by now, our next convention is to be held in Pittsfield, Mass., this coming October, and I hope that we will have a record attendance. Those of you who have never attended an NER convention should make every effort to do so and see what a good time you have been missing.

June is VOTING TIME for NMRA, and I sincerely hope all members will take five minutes to fill in the furnished ballot and return it by June 20th. NMRA members have been very lax in the past in this business of returning their ballots, so let's set a new record this time and show the National group that we in NER are interested in the affairs of our organization. DO IT NOW!! Don't wait for tomorrow.

The only thing with which I can find fault in our conventions is the participation in the Model Contests. At Stamford there were some very fine models, but hardly enough of them. There was only one scratch-built locomotive and three detailed kit locos. There was not a single entry in "O" Gauge. The big play came in the scratch-built car class, with structures next. It would seem to me that model railroading has become more sociability than modeling. I would hate to think that we are becoming a group that will eventually be called Social Railroaders. I know that there are a lot of you who think your work is not up to what others are doing. This MAY be true, but still you might be surprised at how well your work DOES compare. I know that the owner of a first-prize winner at Stamford never thought he had a chance to win; and this happens time and time again.

Something new has been added to NER. By a vote of the special business meeting at Stamford a Nominating Committee has been established. In the past all nominations for NER directors have been made from the floor of the Annual Meeting. Many times a person has been nominated who had not been consulted as to whether he could or would serve if elected. Now this new committee will try to present a slate of nominees who have been consulted and advised of the duties they would be required to perform if elected. YOU have a part in this committee, if you like, but you must act now to help to get qualified people to run NER. If any member has in mind someone whom he would like to see run for office, our new committee will give every consideration to him in choosing those whom they think are most qualified to hold office. Of course, you still have the right to nominate from the floor of the Annual Meeting. Anyone having a person whom he would like to recommend for office in NER send this name and qualifications to me, and I will forward the information to the Nominating Committee. Send all letters on this subject to: Doug Smith, 33 Gabb Rd., Bloomfield, Conn.

DOUG SMITH

FUTURE:-

With the single exception of Elizabeth (Fall 1960) each convention following New London (Spring 1959) has been a forced and hurried proposition. During 1959, I was the NER Convention Coordinator. Within the short period of one hour at New London the officers and I were informed that the plans for the two following conventions had suddenly collapsed. Naturally we were much concerned, and a special meeting was immediately called in an attempt to provide substitutions. There was only a six-month period in which to do a two-year job; and no prospects. Omitting details, it was the sincere loyalty of Watty

House, to whom I personally appealed for assistance, that the members of the Nutmeg Division quickly offered their support and provided the excellent program the following Fall at Hartford. Also, within a week, I had selected a possible location for Spring of 1960 and sent out letters appealing to a group of friends for assistance. This finally resulted in the meeting in Elmira, although they had only about nine months to complete the necessary arrangements.

At this time, I wish publicly to express my appreciation to the sponsors of the Hartford and Elmira conventions and to Watty House for their prompt and wholehearted cooperation which they gave to me as Coordinator in particular and to the Region in general.

To continue: the bid for Elizabeth was made and accepted early enough to make the necessary arrangements in the normal length of time, but the startling fact is that this last convention in Stamford was planned and executed by the Nutmeg Division in the amazingly short period of THREE MONTHS instead of the normal 1½ to 2 years. True, the Nutmeg Division has had good experience in the past two years and has plenty of man-power available. However, no group should ever be placed in this position, no matter how willing they may be.

I have absolutely no doubt that the Nutmeg group thoroughly enjoyed the work, and especially, the satisfaction of doing such an excellent job in so short a time. They are to be heartily congratulated. BUT, IS THIS SITUATION FAIR? As an individual, I do not think so. What has occurred to create the evident apathy among the members of the Region regarding bids for conventions? Why don't they continue to have the interest in the Region and its conventions that was evident prior to 1958? For myself, I can only guess. Definitely, it is not any fault on the part of the officers of the Region for I know they have begged, cajoled and pleaded for bids for future conventions without results. No group of officers has worked harder for the organization than those of the past two years. As evidence, witness the recent fantastic growth of the membership. The problems facing the committees today are no different from those of former years with the exception of arranging for fan trips on the railroads. Granted that this is becoming more and more difficult; where DOES the trouble lie? I wish I knew!

However, for all practical purposes the former practice of inviting bids for conventions from clubs and other interested groups has become a thing of the past. Without bids the Region has only one alternative; to go out and BEG. Actually, this is what has become necessary for the past two years, and it is NOT a healthy situation.

As all the Region members should know, there is a Convention Coordinator whose duties are to assist and advise the various committees in the planning and execution of the conventions. We also have a tried and tested manual for the use of the committees which has been accepted with genuine gratitude by several committees.

After much consideration of this situation, I propose the following: that the Convention Coordinator be replaced by an NER CONVENTION COMMITTEE, probably of three to five members. This committee would act as follows:

1. Select geographic locations which will give most members, who find travel difficult, a fairly local convention at reasonable intervals.
2. Outline all basic programs according to general practice and local conditions.
3. Handle all financial matters.
4. Arrange and provide all necessary guarantees.
5. Contact and arrange local assistance to do detail work and such other work as can not be done at long range. (These local assistants to be temporary committee members for each convention.)

I would suggest that this committee be semi-

WELCOME!



To these new members the officers of the Northeastern Region extend a most hearty welcome. We hope that we may long enjoy your company among us and trust that we will see you often at the conventions.

Connecticut:

James E. Anderson, Old State Rd., Andover
Frederick Blake, 46 Spring St., Glastonbury
Ralph Carver, 329 Woodrow Ave., Bridgeport
John A. Cusati, 290 Park Ave., East Hartford
Donald J. Cutler, South Woodstock
Lloyd Dearborn, Goshen Hill, Lebanon
Roger Dunn, 10 Morningside Dr., Norwalk
Robert D. Falt, 895 Asylum Ave., Hartford
Gerald P. Lawlor, 581 Connecticut Ave., Bridgeport
Ernest J. Martin, 255 Dayton Rd., Bridgeport
Richard Moore, 130 Wormwood Rd., Fairfield
Ronald E. Pothier, Chittenden Rd., Deep River
Rev. Richard Thomas, 1231 Stratford Ave., Bridgeport
Alexander B. Timm, Jr., 101 Captain's Walk, Milford

Massachusetts:

William J. Alfonso, 43 Clinton Ave., Pittsfield
Pvt. Marshall R. Church, R.A. 14756428,
Co. E, USASA Tr., Fort Devens
Horace F. Cutler, 86 Mooreland Rd., Melrose
Frank H. Doane, 35 Spruce Hill Ave., Florence
Herbert Forgey, 243 Green River Rd., Greenfield
James T. Ickes, 52 Library St., Chelsea
Jacques Marcq, 7 Victoria Ave., South Braintree
Edward Tibbetts, 57 Richardson Rd., Lynn
Richard Tinkham, Long Pond Dr., South Yarmouth
George F. Whalen, Jr., 315 North Ave., Abington

New Hampshire:

Edwin D. Hanson, Caverly St., Meredith

New Jersey:

Anthony Cavanna, 9 Halleck St., Newark
Edward McKitta, 26 Lincoln Ave., East Paterson
Fred F. Ritterbusch, 1403 Sussex Rd., West Englewood
Elton L. Smith, 323 Trench Dr., New Milford
George R. Smoluk, 28 Greenwood Ave., West Orange
Herbert Treat, 77 Bennett Rd., Teaneck
George Vehmkuhl, 56 Normal Ave., Upper Montclair

New York:

Rodney J. Brennan, 220 Maple Dr., Oneida
Robert Hudak, 611-22 Saunders St., Rego Park
J. Albert McGeehan, 126 Butler Ave., Staten Island
Jack Menaker, 2215 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn
Robert Morgan, 2280 Andrews Ave., New York
Morton Morris, 344 West 72nd St., New York
Frederick T. Oltmann, Jr., 23 Ingersoll St.,
Huntington Station
Alvin Overton, 170 Chester St., Brooklyn
Joseph C. Post, 158 Johnson Ave., New York
Leonard Rohmer, 68 West 238th St., New York
Jack Stuppler, 2680 East 19th St., Brooklyn
Glenn W. Wolcott, 306 Highland Ave., Syracuse

Pennsylvania:

James A. Klinger, Tobyhanna

CAR BUILDING WORKSHOP

A workshop on the scratch-building of cars is being formed in the greater Hartford (Conn.) area for a small group of interested modelers. The purpose of this workshop is to promote scratch building techniques and encourage fellowship among model railroaders. One evening per week for approximately six weeks will be spent in the construction of a freight car or cars using tested, time-saving jigs. The basic materials will be furnished. Admission requirements are membership in NMRA (applications available) and a desire to build the finest model you can conceive. For further details contact Scott Neilson, 434 Main St., Wethersfield, Conn., phone JACKSON 9-6073, or Earl Smallshaw, 49 Rogers Rd., Middletown, Conn., phone DIAMOND 7-6789.

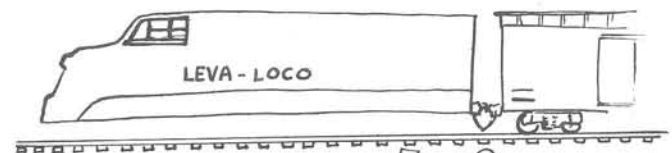
FUTURE:-

permanent; i.e., one or two members being replaced at about three- to four-year intervals. This is to keep a majority of experienced members on the committee and to allow adequate time for the training of new committee members. All members of the committee should be appointed by the Board of Directors. Perhaps at least one of the committee members should also be a member of the Board of Directors although the tenure of the director's office probably would preclude this. The committee should report formally at all meetings of the Board of Directors.

If such a committee be established, they could adopt a two-year plan in which to provide any single convention. This would allow six months to make contacts in the local area and secure a definite assurance of a convention being held. Then, having a background of experience, 1½ years should be ample to complete the planning, arrange for early announcements (late announcements being at present a deplorable situation) and arrange for suitable financial assistance which is frequently necessary. In the past there have been one or two extremely independent local committees who have disregarded the NER convention regulations. These situations have been quietly handled and corrected by the Region officers, a duty which they should NOT be called upon to assume. A permanent convention committee would eliminate this problem which, although not frequent, has been costly to the Region in the past.

This is not an impossible situation. Providing corrective action is taken in time, there is no reason why we cannot continue to enlarge and enjoy these gatherings. I, for one, sincerely believe they will continue and in fact become even better. I am only an individual member who happens to have convention experience, and it seems to me it is my duty to the Region to enlist support in an effort to forestall any possible deterioration of a magnificent opportunity to further our enjoyment of model railroading. Please give this serious thought and, if you think you have any better solutions, communicate with any of the officers of the Region. They depend upon YOUR help to make NER grow.

JIM SEE



I SUPPOSE WE COULD CALL
IT "TYPE O-O-O"

LEGAL NOTICE

The following motions were entertained at the special business meeting at Stamford and will be acted upon at the Annual Business Meeting at Pittsfield in October.

1. Constitution; Article IV, Officers and committees: To add Section 7 - An Office Manager shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

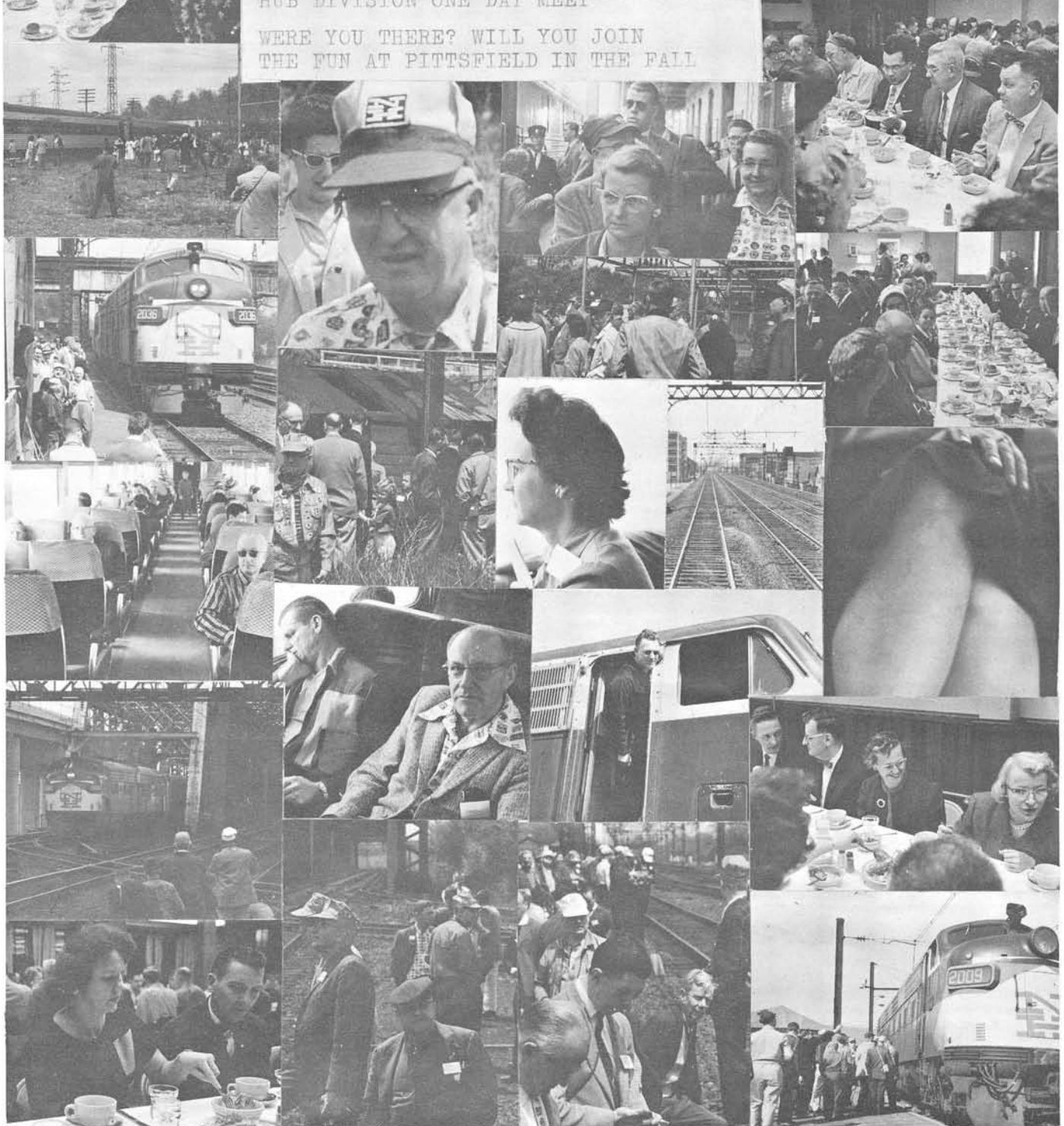
2. By-Laws; Article I, Duties of Officers: To change Item c to read - The Secretary shall keep records of all meetings of the organization. The Secretary shall file an annual report with the Secretary of State of New Jersey. The Secretary shall serve without salary and shall be exempt from dues.

3. By-Laws; Article I, Duties of Officers: To add Item e - The Office Manager shall keep a roster of the members and shall have the duty of advising a member when his membership is about to expire. It shall be his further duty to notify a member of his delinquent status. The Office Manager shall make all regular and special mailings to the membership of The Coupler and such other mailings as the Executive Committee shall direct. The Office Manager shall have charge of maintaining the supplies of the Northeastern Region NMRA, Inc. The Office Manager shall record renewals and new members and transmit all funds to the Treasurer with a record of the type of income. The Office Manager shall be exempt from dues.



SCENES FROM.....
NER SPRING CONVENTION AND
HUB DIVISION ONE DAY MEET

WERE YOU THERE? WILL YOU JOIN
THE FUN AT PITTSFIELD IN THE FALL



Right at the outset many of you will say, "Who in blazes is interested in THAT railroad???" Judging by the mess that the NYNH&H is now in, it does seem that one must be some kind of a nut to want to model anything about it. However, "love" for the old New Haven, mismanaged as it may be or has been is deeply rooted in a surprising number of model rails and rail fans throughout New England. The trouble is that few of these fellows know each other and further mutual enjoyment of what they have in common goes down the drain. This dissertation is an attempt to gather together all possible loyal followers of the NYNH&H into an informal correspondence and/or data exchange group. We hope to hear from model railroaders, young and old, living close by the New Haven and modeling same; from old-timers who have had some connection with the NH (such as Jack Schaff of NHSME); from railfans specializing in fan trips and photographing the NH; from those knowing the historical background of the NH; and from former employees of the NH.

What do we propose to do with all this? Well, quite a few model railroaders who have seen my "O" gauge models of New Haven equipment have asked me if I knew where to get information and pictures of NH rolling stock. I am sure that the boys in the New Haven Society of Model Engineers and the Stamford Model Railroad Club have had similar requests. The reply here was always negative as my own meager information comes from memory and out-of-focus snapshots of the NH gathered in my 25 years of living along the Providence-Worcester Branch. But someone, somewhere, must be able to help all of us loyal fans.

The railroad itself is uncooperative, as you may have discovered, since its present financial state does not even allow it the postage to answer our mail. The railroad police, known as "train dicks" on the NH, are equally uncooperative. They have chased many a camera-fan away from taking decent pictures for posterity. Pleas to magazines are of little help as they can't even tell us the color schemes of the latest NH diesels! At one time, the NH published a magazine called "Along The Line" for its employees, friends, and railfans which was an excellent source of information. Like everything else on the NH, that magazine was cost-reduced out of existence.

But, again, there MUST be some buried useful information somewhere lodged with a multitude of fellows who do not realize its value or its demand by other interested people. Let's get it together, despite the lack of cooperation from the railroad itself, in an effort to help each other out in any way possible. This is especially directed to members of the New Haven, Stamford and Boston clubs, but if there are any NYNH&H fans in Hartford, Springfield, Worcester, or any other place, I would like to hear from them, too.

I will volunteer to do the pen work if you are willing to cooperate. Help us to form an information group on the NYNH&H. Perhaps in the process we can devise a SPCNHRR --- "Society for the prevention of Cruelty to the New Haven Railroad!" If you are in any way interested in the NYNH&H, send a letter or post card to:

Paul B. Boivin, Jr.
319 South Orange Ave.
Livingston, N.J.

Mr. Alpert is also welcome to drop us a line!

TROLLEY SPARKS

Greetings from the old motorman to the rest of the trolley-happy fraternity. After reading the heart rending appeals from our beloved Editor (Plug), I wrote to him asking why, of all things, wasn't there a trolley feature in our small but well-known paper. The resulting (or was it insulting?) answer got me drafted to write this column to be known as Trolley Sparks. So, fellow trolleyman, this is what we have been waiting for; I hope a little column of our own just for trolley cars. Seriously, fellows, this column will be set up for our part of the hobby. It will deal with trolley models of all scales, the modelers and the prototype. If you hear of any big doings or wish to pass something on to us, just drop me a line at 570 South Broadway, Yonkers, N.Y., and I'll put it in Trolley Sparks.

Well, Spring is in the air and Summer not far behind so everyone will want to get out into the open air. For the Summer trolley-fan there is below a small list of places where you can still ride and photograph trolley cars.

1. Branford Electric Railway Association: A pleasant ride down Memory Lane. There are over twenty cars in the museum, and operation on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Branford is located just off U.S. Route 1 and the Connecticut Turnpike east of New Haven.

2. Connecticut Electric Railway Association: This trolley museum has over a dozen cars and a steam locomotive in operation on about one mile of track. Cars run on weekends and holidays during the Summer. It is on Conn. Route 191 at Warehouse Point just east of U.S. Route 5 and Interstate 91.

3. Newark, N.J.: This line is usually called the "subway", but don't let the term fool you. Only the first part of the 4 1/2-mile route is underground, the rest is above ground on private right-of-way. It uses PCC cars and is the last trolley line in the New York metropolitan area.

4. Boston, Mass.: This city is now the trolley man's Mecca with subway, elevated and suburban running. This is the only city in the U.S. which is expanding trolley operation.

5. Philadelphia, Pa.: This city ranks second to Boston for trolley operation. PTC still has a few surface lines; PST (Red Arrow) has broad-gauge suburban routes and also operates standard-gauge former P&W third-rail interurban line to Norristown. Several types of cars may be seen.

6. Washington, D.C.: This city is going to discontinue all trolley service at the end of this year. Now is your last opportunity to get these cars on film. So far Capitol Transit has sponsored three fan trips over the lines using both old horse cars and modern equipment. Regular operation is with PCC cars and most lines use conduit power supply.

7. Seashore Electric Railway: This is New England's original trolley museum. It is presently in two sections, operating and shops, which eventually will be connected. Both domestic and foreign cars are included in the exhibition. Operates daily just north of Kennebunk, Me., on U.S. Route 1.

Well, that's it until the next issue. This Summer you will find me in Washington with Leica and Rollei taking the last of the trolley operation in that city. And now it is time for me to run the old Birney down to the depot to meet No. 15. I will return in the next issue and also hope to see you at New Haven in the Fall.

JOHN HEEGLE

COMMENTS ON THE "MYSTERIOUS" VARIABLE TRANSFORMER

Considering two of the many synonyms for "mysterious", incomprehensible and inexplicable (that which does not lend itself to explanation), it is quite obvious that the variable transformer can not be called mysterious since Mr. Landesco has himself explained it. It would seem unwarranted to assume that the average model railroader does not have sufficient comprehension to follow a simple explanation of volts, amperes, watts and ohms, or of rectifiers and transformers, variable and otherwise. A little mental effort may be required, but knowledge has its price as does everything else.

For the record it may be said that the Variac, Powerstat and Adjust-A-Volt are continuously variable "auto-transformers". This is a generic term for devices similar in appearance, design and operation in which the input and output have a common winding. The transformers used to supply the current for trains driven by AC motors, such as the Lionel, have two windings electrically isolated from each other; one of which is supplied from the house current and the other made continuously variable by means of the control knob.

It should be noted that the combination of elements shown in the diagram in the Spring issue of The Coupler constitutes a "power pack" and differs from the many commercial model railroad power packs only in the substitution of a variable transformer

SPRING:-

The speaker at the banquet was New Haven engineer Joseph Bready of Springfield. His topic was "Railroading Through The Hogger's Eye" and included reminiscences from his years of railroad experience. Mr. Bready's regular run is the Montrealer (or "Boot-legger"), and it was of this train in particular that he spoke.

Other features of the Saturday program were the Model Contest (see below), clinics and auction. Consecutive 45-minute morning clinics on Scenery and Car Building were conducted by Earl Smallshaw and Scott Neilson. Earl's clinic on the formation and painting of terrain and trees will be published in a future issue of The Coupler. Scott's clinic on scratch building was directed toward those who have been afraid to tackle this fascinating method of construction. Question and answer periods followed both. Russ Cox presented an evening clinic on wiring including the construction of and operation from catenary. At the same time Paul Mallery demonstrated his new design of magnetic coupler and the ladies enjoyed a social hour. Bidding was slow at the auction which wound up shortly after midnight.

Open house at the Stamford Model Railroad Club, a huge and magnificent "0" gauge layout, and slides and movies at the hotel entertained those who came Friday evening.

The business meeting following the Sunday breakfast lasted exactly five minutes. All of the By-Law and Constitutional amendments were passed unanimously.

The convention committee were: Kenneth Hyslop, Chairman; Clark Benson, James MacDonald, Russell Cox, Thomas Hayes, Gerald Lawlor, Bruce Meulendyke, Louis Pichette and Richard Thomas, Jr. All deserve hearty congratulations for providing an excellent convention on very short notice.

MODEL CONTEST WINNERS

All winners were in the OO And Smaller classification. Judges for the contest were James See, John Johnson and Harry Schopper.

Best In Show: HO 2-stall enginehouse
Earl Smallshaw, Middletown, Conn.

Structures and Scenery:
1. Earl Smallshaw, Middletown, Conn.
2. Earl Savery, Staten Island, N.Y.
3. Vincent Vasta, Staten Island, N.Y.

Scratch-Built Cars:
1. Scott Neilson, Wethersfield, Conn.
2. Thomas Vollmer, Elmhurst, N.Y.
3. Alfred Prange, New York, N.Y.

Scratch-Built Locomotives:
1. Clark Benson, Stratford, Conn.

Kit-Built Locomotives:
1. Donald Robinson, Greenfield, Mass.
2. Donald Robinson, Greenfield, Mass.
3. Philip Williams, Rego Park, N.Y.

VARIABLE:-

for the rheostat. The superiority of the continuously variable transformer speed control over rheostat speed control is generally recognized. However, in any case, whenever more motor current is demanded, whether up-grade or around curves, there will be a decrease in speed unless the control is adjusted to supply more voltage, although the decrease in speed will be proportionally less with a variable transformer than with a rheostat. The variable transformer, whatever its merits, is not a cure for rough starting. The remedy for jerky starts is an overhaul.

To realize the full benefit of the variable auto-transformer control it is better to connect it between the house outlet and the tinplate transformer and then connect the rectifier to the secondary winding of the tinplate transformer. A 1.25 ampere variable auto-transformer, when properly connected, is more than adequate for any power supply having an output of up to 5 amperes.

C.E. STAMM

SWAPPER'S CORNER BY Klave

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SALE: Steel panels from Army Surplus AC-DC converter units. Contain 13 rectifiers, 2 transformers, 4 capacitors, terminal strips, variable resistors, wire, hardware, etc. Panels ten dollars each F.O.B. Albany. Win Curtis, 3 Gracemore St., Albany 3, N.Y.

A preliminary meeting of the Committee To Form A Metropolitan Model Railroad Club Council was held at Stamford on May 20. The following suggestions were made for the possible functions of such a council:

- 1. Act as a clearing house and information exchange.
2. Run a clinic to help and advise club officers.
3. Run a series of public meetings to build interest in model railroading and clubs.
4. Get more publicity for clubs, shows, trips, etc.

This proposed Council could benefit all member clubs. Discuss it with your members and decide whether you would like to join this project. An organization meeting will be held in the Fall. Write or phone George Fitterman, 162-31 9th Ave., Whitestone 57, N.Y. HI 5-5751 (home) or YU 9-2929 (office).

"THERES ONE IN EVERY CROWD"



A tearful matron called a reducing salon, wailing that her hubby had just given her a birthday present but that she couldn't get into it.

"Don't worry, Madam," the operator said as she made the appointment, "we'll have you wearing that dress in no time."

"It's not a dress," sobbed the woman, "it's a Volkswagen."

SCRATCH BUILDING:-

Often in your travels you will see some railroad building which you wish were available as a kit as this particular structure is just what you need to fill a vacant space near your station; or maybe it is a station that you need, but haven't found in kit form. If this is your problem, then the only answer is to try your hand at scratch building.

What do we need for scratch building? First of all, an idea; something you WANT to build. I am going to confine this article to structures as I think the greatest need on our layouts is for more special buildings than are available as kits. The best place to start looking for ideas is on your own railroad. Where do you need more buildings? How about a small freight house alongside your station; a crew shanty in the yard; a signal tower? Whatever you need, you can surely make one. In looking over your railroad you can find a need for some structure you do not have. Make a list of these missing buildings and at the same time note the size of the space that will be available for them.

In making up this list of structures and the size of the available space, get used to thinking in scale feet, not inches. Let's say, for example, that you want a small freight house and that you have on your layout a space about four by six inches where it would look good. This 4x6 information is all well and good on your layout, but what good will it do when you are out seeking an appropriate prototype? If you think of inches as scale feet, then our 4x6 inches becomes 29x43½ feet. It is not necessary to memorize the conversion of inches to feet; in HO just remember that 3 inches = 20 feet, 6 inches = 40 feet, 9 inches = 60 feet, and 12 inches = 80 feet. These conversions are, of course, just rough, but they are a big help in the field when looking for some structure to use as a model.

When you come across a building which you think will do, pace off the length and width. Figuring that each step is approximately three feet, you now have a rough idea of the dimensions of the building. If you have already converted inches to scale feet, you can quickly determine whether this prototype structure can be adapted to fit your layout. If it will fit in scale, then you are ready for the next step.

In hunting for subjects to provide ideas for scratch building you should have the following equipment: camera, pencil, pad of paper and tape measure. Any camera will do, but DON'T use a wide-angle or a telephoto lens when photographing buildings that you are using for plans as these lenses will distort the image. Black and white film of a medium or slow speed, such as Verichrome Pan or Plus-X, is best for this purpose. When you find the right subject for your intended model, grab the camera and USE film; shoot a whole roll on the one building. Photograph each of the four sides making certain that the building just fills the viewfinder image in the camera. Don't get too far away. After shooting the four sides, use the rest of the film photographing the details: windows, doors, platforms, downspouts, signs, siding material, foundation, etc. It is much better to use film now than to have to go back later. Perhaps you will not have the opportunity to return or, when you do, you find that the structure is gone and a good subject is lost forever.

When photographing the four sides of the building it is essential to keep the camera level. Tilting the camera often produces a photograph in which the building appears to be falling over backwards. This usually can not be avoided when photographing the roof details, but here it does not matter.

After the photographs have been taken get out your pencil, pad and tape measure. Having a buddy along to assist you will help at this point. Measure the length and width of the building and the width and height of doors and windows. These are all the measurements that you will need as, due to the wonders of photography, we can later take the others that we need directly from the photographs. When your negatives are developed, if you don't do your own, have jumbo prints made first. Take the jumbo prints of the four sides of the building and paste these to separate pieces of paper. Then draw two lines, in black ink, on the white paper so that the two lines are vertical and point to the bottom outside corners of the building in the photo. Between these two vertical lines write in the size to which you want the negative enlarged. Let us say that your building is 36 feet in length; in HO you would write in 5 inches and in O you would write 9 inches. Take these marked prints with their respective negatives and have enlargements made of the four sides of the building. The photos will now be in scale, and from them you can take all the other measurements needed in making your model.

Now that Summer is here and the vacation period upon us, most of us will be spending more time out of our cellars so it will be a good time to look for subjects to photograph and measure. In the next installment of this article I will discuss the methods to be used in actually building structures from scratch. Do some wandering this Summer off the beaten paths and visit some of those little towns through which the railroads pass. Photograph the smaller buildings so that next Winter you will be ready for the most interesting aspect of model railroading; scratch building your own models.

DOUG SMITH

(TO BE CONTINUED)

MODEL RAILROAD SUPPLIES - TINPLATE - SCALE

(TT - HO - OO - O)

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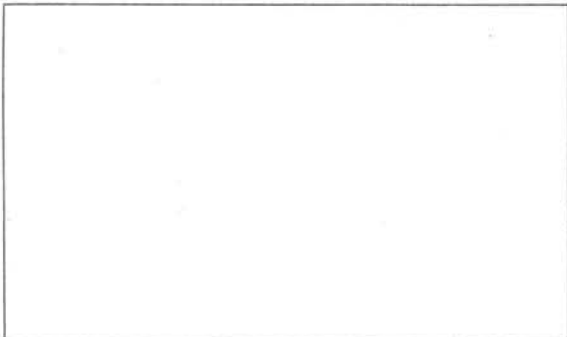
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