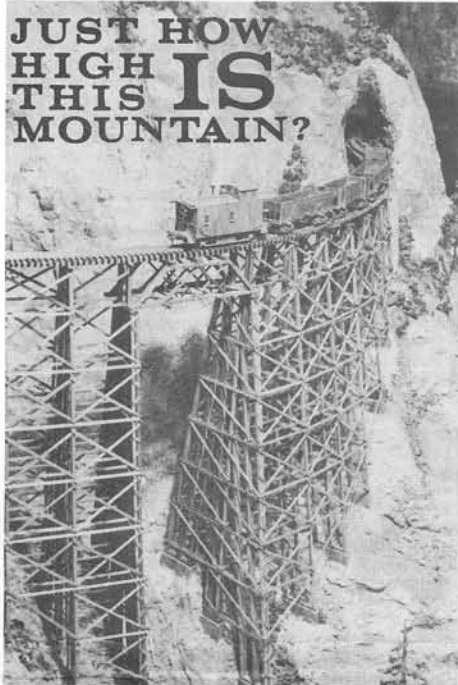


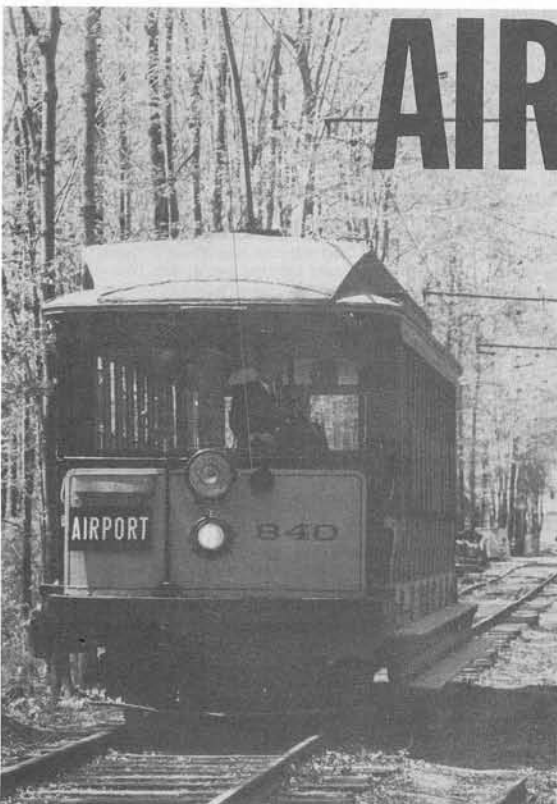
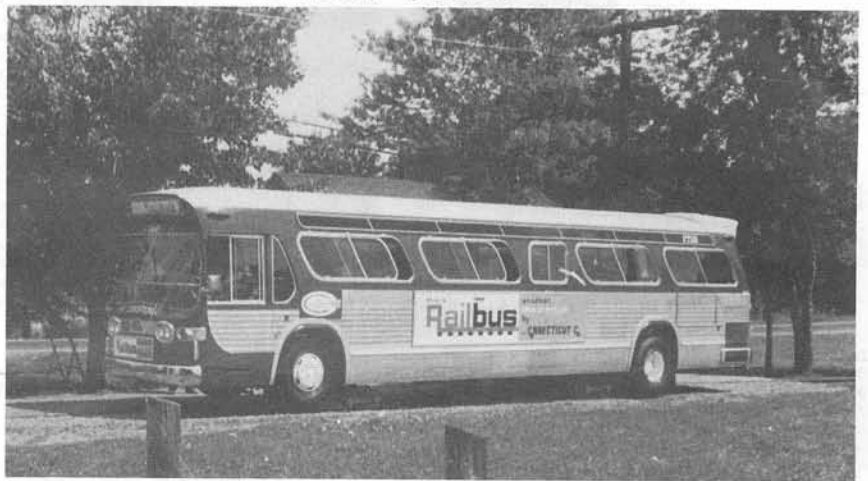
# NER <sup>83</sup> COUPLER



PICTURE YOURSELF  
ON A RAILBUS FANTRIP?



## NH PLANS



# AIRPORT?

Fall  
1968



TRUCKERS AT  
BEARTOOTH JUNCTION ?



ALL THIS  
BUT MOSTLY  
**RAIL!**  
AT THE MODERN  
HOTEL  
AMERICA  
HARTFORD  
OCT. 11-13



## BIG WHEELS

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

Subscription \$1. Membership renewals and changes of address to the Office Manager. If this issue is stamped in red, your dues should be on their way to Jack Brown. Make checks out to Northeastern Region, NMRA.

The next deadline is November 15. Exceptions allowed only with a parents' note.

CREDITS THIS ISSUE: Typography by Prange's Olympia; NH electric loco photos by - I'll let you know next month; Cover trolley and bus shots by R.K. Steele, trestle by Earl Smallshaw, truck and page 9 by Jeff French; page 8 layout pics by the Hartford gang; Hotel America and page 2 shots by Richard Towle; Pg 4,5 traction shots by R.K. Steele, New Orleans car by B.D. Johanson; No photos in this issue were by Norman Briskman.

*Glenn Wagner:*

During the early part of July, I was rummaging through the papers in my wallet and came upon my NER membership card. Incredible as it seemed, it had expired as of June '68. Here I thought I was a member in good standing, and as of July 1st I wasn't. Was my face red! And, being President, you will agree this was an embarrassing situation.

Let me hasten to add that when I saw Jack Brown, our Office Manager, a few days later, I promptly gave him five dollars for a five-year membership renewal.

Which brings up a point. A year passes so quickly and we're all busy with one thing or another that it is easy to forget our membership renewals. We THINK we belong, but in reality perhaps we do not. Of course, our congenial Office Manager is in the habit of sending us a renewal



editor off the hook

When Edna St. Vincent Millay said, "There isn't a train I wouldn't take, no matter where it's going," she undoubtedly had in mind broader horizons than mere train trippings. However, if you are literal - minded and prefer to take her delightful remark at face value, you still come close to understanding the varied adventures which accompanied the band of NERers who journeyed to the National 1968 Annual in San Francisco. Though the largest group (Irwin Lloyd's Frisco Jaunt) had a carefully planned itinerary, their arrival at the CB&Q Chicago starting point of the California Zephyr was via every known communication route - from the Broadway Limited to the friendly skies of what-you-may-call-it. At the same time, model railroaders from Atlanta, Georgia; Bessemer, Alabama; Lansing, Michigan; Marion, Ohio; and many other towns from out of the pages of the NMRA directory began aiming towards the sunset. Their paths sometimes crossed as they took devious routes, the better to ride the GM&O "Abraham Lincoln" KCS's "Southern Belle," Wabash's (alright N&W's) "Bluebird" and "Cannonball," IC's "Panama Limited," and whatever still survives the timetables. I started out on the "Spirit of St. Louis," had a roomette with a bullet hole in the outer thermal pane, and the resultant 4" of accumulated rainwater was my own spirit level which was accurately gradient-marked long before we hit the Alleghenies. I even caught sight of a "Broadway" bound HUB director in the North Philly waiting room loading his camera, but the "Spirit's" one hour advance time on the "Broadway" was too much for his slow shutter and he missed our head end, I know. I had him sighted through the bullet hole of course.

Conversations in the lounges which tended towards rail subjects soon betrayed rail fans, as did just too many rolls of film give away a vestibule addict as no ordinary tourist. Somehow, it was the Zephyr which attracted them all and for almost a week the westbound combined Burlington, Rio Grande, and Western Pacific fleet was besieged to keep the dome glass polished with lens tissue. Two usual train washings en route plus an occasional squall did do the job, but the rear observation window was more than once hand cleaned by a more demanding, non-union, photographer.

My own meandering via Kansas City and the Rock Island back to Des Moines to the Iowa State Fair (moo) had me racing across 70 miles of solid corn (and covered bridge incidentally!) country to Creston, Iowa to intercept the favored, westbound CZ, where three silver E-8's glided 18 cars

reminder. But, that takes his time (and those hours add up) and the Region's money in postage to send us first a reminder and then a membership card, to say nothing of the time it takes us to write a check and mail it in.

Which brings up another point. Sometime ago our membership chairman, Pete Huggar, remarked how much time and money could be saved if each member made his renewal two years at once, to which I add why not make it two to five years. If I have added it correctly, over a period of two years it would mean a saving of 18¢ postage per member, and for five years, after the first year, 48 cents postage for the Region and 24 cents for each member. Not a large amount, you say, but multiply it by a thousand members and see what you get. We're all interested in saving money, and this is one way we all would benefit. Working with only a dollar a year membership fee, we, as a Region just about break even. With two to five year renewals we could get a bit ahead. It is worth thought and consideration.

By the way, when is your membership renewal due?

to a twilight halt. Underway, I watched green boards drop until my eyes drooped, and the clear sky was smattered with stars when I looked up through the dome roof. We never even got an occasional yellow-board as the gyrating Mars light vainly tried to light up darkened Nebraska at a steady 90, though I couldn't see any mile posts to exactly verify the speed. The other four domes were also spotted with tilted heads, and somewhere between Omaha and Denver I realized I'd intercepted the second section "Lloyd Zephyr." I plotted filming their return from the Rio Grande narrow-gauge steam country when they'd reboard us the next day at Grand Junction, Colorado, where they'd disembarked from a four-day previous CZ. Well before Grand Junction I had the vestibule dutch door open, and I searched through the viewfinder coming into the turn, but no familiar face loomed as we zoomed into the D&RGW division point. I watched a switcher take off our observation car, drill it behind their 14 roomette, 10 bedroom sleeper and still no NER face. I wondered if the D&RGW narrow-gauge steam action so saturated their train-watching capacity that they were all sitting, jaded, in their seats. I got out for a close shot of the coupling, and the sagging signal bridge above almost scared me, when a second look revealed all those familiar NER faces overhead, obscured only by their clicking cameras.

And so it was all the way out, and back. All of which serves to point up how some of the incidentals to a convention, like getting there can be 7/8 of the fun, add up to a pleasant asset to model railroading. While approximately ¼ of our Region get to our semi-annual NER conventions, the remaining 750 of you shouldn't feel slighted if the Coupler covers in too much detail that which only a minority of us partake. Yes, convention socializing is almost a separate hobby to some, but as a background for greater enjoyment of the hobby, our every six-month get-togethers are hard to beat. If you have any doubts, come to centrally located Hartford, and see how much extra pleasure a closeup look at other modelers and other models can be. Oh -- bring along an empty address book; you'll make countless new friends.

The San Francisco BOT meeting settled an imminent headache for us by choosing Britain for the 1971 National. Not that we do not look forward to squiring a National, but a pair of bids for New York & Newark threatened to become a personality battle. Both gentlemen still adhere to the transparent argument that placid England might succumb to unforeseen international tensions. What riot-torn Newark and overpriced New York can substitute in the way of civilization is hard to see, and following the artistic success of the movie "Closely Watched Trains," I would suggest a more stabilizing alternate bid might be charming old Czechoslovakia.

# WHAT THE OTHER 927 OF YOU HAVE TO SAY:

Dunellen, New Jersey

Banquet Manager  
Sheraton-Palace Hotel  
San Francisco, California

My Good Sir;

Recently I had the good fortune to attend the National Model Railroad Association Convention at your hotel and had looked forward especially to the banquet at the famed Garden Court.

Expectedly, the dinner, service, and setting were found to be impeccable; the roast beef prime, and the Hollandaise first rate. Though the guests at our table would have preferred our room-temperature Pinot Noirs served slightly chilled, we were able to make do with a bucket of ice. However, we were mightily shocked at your strange custom of passing off brown coffee as demi-tasse. What might have been a perfect end to a memorable dinner, instead culminated in a dilute fraud more suited to Bunny's cafeteria than to the Sheraton-Palace.

No amount of sugar was able to erase the bitter taste this left in our collective mouths. May I have your assurance my next visit to San Francisco will not be similarly ruined?

Yours Respectfully,  
Peter C. Gray, III

Tenafly, New Jersey

To the Editor;

I have noted your recommendations for clearing up the NER Constitution, particularly in view of the fact that they are quite parallel to what I have been saying for a long time. I participated in the drafting of the original many years ago, and was also instrumental in having the Region incorporated, as well as the numerous modifications which have been considered since that time.

It is a common experience with those who draft documents that they start out on a cohesive entirety, but that in the course of years, amendments and addenda are inserted - each of which being entirely clear and praiseworthy when read by itself, can create havoc with the entire instrument when so many different portions of it are inter-dependent.

I publicly stated on numerous occasions that a piecemeal "pecking away" at the Constitution could quite possibly create a mess when interpretations of certain language became necessary -- and this is now exactly what is happening. In my opinion it would be wise to reconsider the entire subject; draft a very simple Constitution covering the basic fundamentals, and then have comprehensive bylaws to implement the functioning of the organization.

If it were then agreed that no individual sentence or paragraph could be amended out of context (i.e., the entire article of the bylaws must be rewritten for the purpose of clarity), the Region would end up on a much firmer foundation than the mish-mash that we seem to have now gotten ourselves involved in.

Cordially Yours,  
Stan Bradley

Brooklyn, New York

Your Editorship;

I like the pictures, and I like the writing, but in between the lines is even better.

Yours Truly,  
Andrew Martin

Bloomfield, Connecticut

To the Editor;

Congratulations on two counts: first, on the excellent job you have done editorially with your first two issues of the Coupler, and second, on getting the Summer issue to us with over three weeks to spare.

Having recommended you to the BOD as my successor, I feel that both of us came through your first effort bloody but unbowed. Since I was fully aware at the time I dumped the office of Editor into your lap last November that you possess an even greater latent talent for procrastination than I, you may be assured that my feeling of responsibility increased with every passing day prior to the appearance of Coupler No. 81 on the newstands. With No. 82 ahead of schedule I can relax and enjoy it.

Your complete breakaway from the stereotyped production which I foisted onto the membership is indeed refreshing. The liberal use of photographs, cartoons, and other artwork as well as the return to justified typing of the right-hand margin are improvements which add a lustre of high quality to the Coupler. I know where you found the space for all the photos - you used the pages I formerly had to devote to a., reprinting the Constitution and by-laws in their majestic entirety, b., publishing endless messages from the pike committee, and c., listing pike names and all our new members, all of which made for jolly reading. So please add my second to Mike Pearsall's comments anent the need for a touch of good-natured humor, ego pins, and ergo, anything that makes model railroading (as practiced in the NER) fun.

Sincerely,  
Jeff French

Brentwood, New York

To the Editor;

Just received issue #82. My congratulations on another excellent job. Your talents are putting the rest of us to shame.

It is unfortunate, though, that the general membership does not know of the time and effort you must put into each issue to make it a success. It takes a masterful control ability to bring together the contributions and ideas of many people into one coherent issue.

During the past six months, at least half a dozen pieces of mail have passed through my hands damning you and your handling of the Coupler. The prevalent comments seem to be "Dump Martin" or "Get rid of Kenny." The annoying point is that some of these letter writers show some highly developed talent. If they could only channel their efforts into some constructive outlet that would be beneficial to the Coupler, I'm sure both they and the general membership would be greatly improved in their attitude towards the Coupler.

So, as one editor to another, keep up the good work.

Yours Truly,  
David R. Marlowe

Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Kenny;

I have to tell somebody so I'm telling you that Irwin Lloyd is a great guy. All the work he put in on the NER Dreamliner to San Francisco was something. The correspondence, paper work, phone calls, and taking care of everything took a lot of his time just so we could have two full weeks on some of the finest major trains in the country & several narrow gauge trains; a boat ride in San Francisco Bay as part of the Bay Area Rapid Transit tour; cable car rides; trolley cars again, and trolley

busses; four great days in Frisco at the NMRA Convention; Chinatown, Playboy Club; boat rides in three different lakes in Glacier National Park; and on and on...!

I believe it was the best two weeks of my life insofar as seeing new places, meeting old friends and making new ones goes. I thanked Irwin for this and told him his efforts made it possible. We ought to strike a medal for him.

Have been very busy in my store all week and of course am hearing it from some of my customers for closing it up for two weeks.

Very Truly Yours,  
Frederick F. Hottin

Greenfield, Mass.

To the Editor;

The great furor which has followed the 3% budget cut made by the Board of Trustees at Pittsburgh has led me to some serious thinking about how we arrived at the point where such action became necessary. It is easy enough to shrug the matter away with the statement that outgo must not exceed income. In at least one case, more was being spent than had been budgeted, while receipts were less than estimated. Nevertheless, this still does not get to the heart of the matter. The nagging question of why we had nothing to cover such a contingency remains.

Just four short years ago we found we were unable to any longer provide the desired services to our members at the old dues rate of three dollars. So, it was decided to raise them to four. By a voting fluke, we found that they had been increased instead to five dollars. This bonanza was double that for which we had planned and was expected to defer the need for another dues increase for many years. Yet here we are cutting the budget because of insufficient income. Why? To be sure costs have risen considerably. This was not unexpected. We know that our funds have been neither embezzled or squandered. Where, then, has the money gone? The answer my friends, is "To the membership;" in a larger Bulletin, a bigger directory and in better services.

The plain fact is that, in answer to member demands and with a desire to give them their money's worth for the higher dues, we overshot the siding. Every single cent of estimated income was appropriated for some purpose, with NO provision for any cushion which would have allowed us to maintain a consistent level of membership benefit for a number of years. For example, instead of increasing the size of the Bulletin from sixteen to twenty-four pages (which I am sure would have satisfied almost everyone) we jumped at once to thirty-two. Now that we find it necessary to reduce it to twenty-eight, (which still is not really small), there is general alarm!

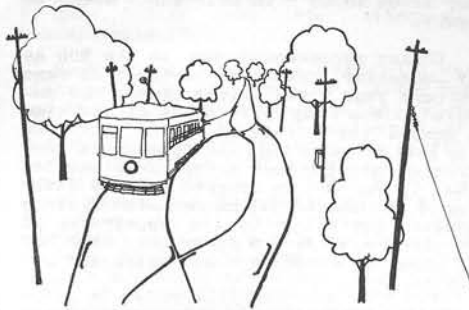
So, what of the future? Are we going to continually allot working funds in August, only to take them away again the following March? Must the Trustees make themselves unpopular with the membership by doing this and at the same time waste their energy to the detriment of other important matters by wrangling until all hours of the night about where the cuts are to be made? Is it not time for the Executive Council and the BOT to face reality and act accordingly? Experience has shown that it is not in the best interests of the NMRA to continue to act as we have in the past. We must be real stinkers just once - the sooner, the better; and cut our budget to a realistic amount which can accurately be expected to equal a certain percentage less than our actual projected receipts.

Yours Truly,  
Donald S. Robinson, MMR  
Eastern Vice-President

# BIG WEEKEND FEATURES BUS?

## BUT WHEN IT LOWERS ITS WHEELS YOU KNOW YOU'RE ON THE TRACK

Northeastern Region model railroaders will have the unique opportunity to ride for the first time - the new Connecticut Company's RAILBUS, a land kind of amphibian which merrily travels down the highway whilst being equipped with dual sets of wheels - enabling it to even more merrily romp down the rails. This highlight of the fantrip on Saturday afternoon to the Trolley Museum at Warehouse Point is a great chance to be in on a first in a new concept in road-rail traffic. If you prefer to be one of the last to try out a mode of transportation, a steam 0-4-OT (former Hartford Electric Light Co.) will pull an 1880 coach around the more than 40 trolley cars which comprise the Museum collection.



New Orleans Public Service car # 836

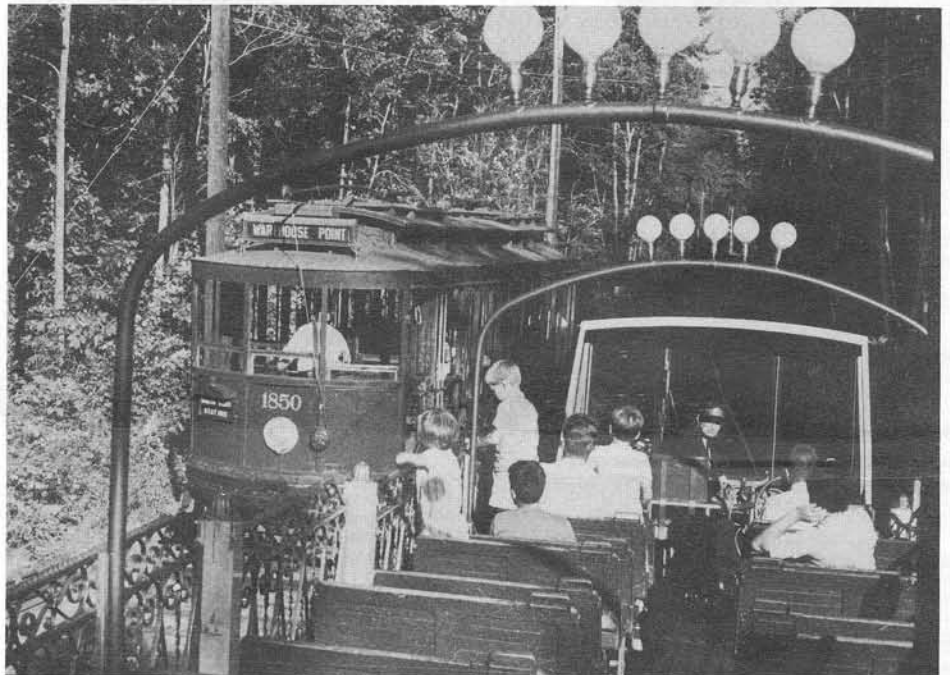
With high arches of dramatic overhead bulbs, the Montreal touring car passes a more ordinary trolley at the museum.



The Fall 1968 NER Convention takes place at the Hotel America on Constitution Plaza in downtown Hartford. The new, modern hotel offers a special setting for the three day weekend, beginning on Friday night when the registration desk officially begins operation at 7 in the fourth floor lobby. Freddy Hottin's hobby shop will be open late, and home layout visits also are



Freddy Hottin's Hobby Shop at 222 Pearl Street, Hartford, will remain open until 9 on Friday for your shopping convenience.



## YES, VIRGINIA THERE WILL BE A MODEL and PHOTO CONTEST

Model builders and rail photographers who automatically prepare semi-annual entries for the model and photo contests at our NER conventions, and who were temporarily thrown into a disarray when no mention of their October 11-13 weekend favorites appeared on the Hartford flyer, may take heart in the contest chairman's announcement that this regular feature WILL, naturally, be on the program.

Entries will be accepted at the contest room from 9 AM to 11:30 AM on Saturday. Both photo and model entry blanks will be available at the desk. Photocategories are: Prototype - black and white; Prototype - color; Model - black and white; Model - color. Certificates will be presented.

The model categories are limitless - at Montreal a tug and a full size trolley controller found their way into a class. So, if it isn't nailed, riveted, glued or screwed to your layout, bring it along to subject the judges' abounding taste to a tough workout. Prizes including firsts,

seconds, thirds, and honorable mentions will include merit awards this time for models with sufficient points not otherwise achieving distinction. Motive power, structures, traction, maintenance of way, cars, and dioramas will satisfy any variety of model.

The appointment of Gordon Teel, of Chateaugay, P.Q., Canada, as Associate to the Model Contest Chairman will bring to the NER the quiet, unassuming smoothness he imparted to the Montreal contest this spring.

The model railroader with the top points across the board wins the Delaware Trophy, for Best-in-Show. Second best gets the HUB Runner-up trophy. A first contest entrant with the highest score wins the Sunrise Trail New Modeler Award. In addition to points, certificates, ribbons and trophies, you will receive the overwhelming accolade from your fellow modelers when you storm back to the hotel from the fan trip and find yourself in first place!

scheduled for Friday evening (see page 8). Some of the finest model railroads in the country are located in the Hartford area, and this convention offers an excellent chance to view them in person. From seven until nine PM the girls will have the Rail-ette Hospitality room open.



Registration continues on Saturday in the morning from 9 AM until 12 noon. The white elephant table will be open then and all items will be priced - if you like it you buy it. The manufacturers' displays will be open all day Saturday from 9 AM. Five new exciting clinics are offered and will be in operation continuously all morning. These are: Control Panel Wiring, by R. Van Cleef which will help untangle you from under the layout table. Scenery details and techniques will be explained by the master of the east coast - Earl Smallshaw. A different clinic in a guage not usually given coverage is "S Guage Questions and answers by J. Scales. Magnetic Waybill Systems will be covered by W. Doran, and Dick Towle will show how easily it is to develop color films in the convenience of your home. As proof, he will shoot a roll of film Friday night at the home layout visits, and will develop it in his hotel room Friday night. (Mrs. Towle is unaware of this development). On Saturday we shall see how successful he was.

Contest entries will be on display in the contest room as entries are received. Transportation for the fan trip will leave from in front of the hotel at 1 PM after a luncheon on your own.

The Social Hour from 6 to 7 will be followed by a banquet in the Plaza Room after which a film program is scheduled. It is tentatively planned to also hold the NER business meeting after the banquet. It is presumed that the short amount of business will take little time (actually the Staten Island amendment - where the constitution is up for amending to allow Staten Island to belong to the Garden State Division - according to the wishes of the majority of Staten Islanders - is the only major item on the agenda). Notice of the actual time of the meeting will be posted at the Registration Desk. Originally the meeting was planned for Sunday morning, but it is possible a showing of slides and film from the San Francisco National may be scheduled for Sunday morning.



Illinois Terminal #451, apparently a airport shuttle. Note coke box in foreground.

## go by train :

Unofficial trips to Hartford on the NH are tentatively planned by various groups from out of New York to arrive in the Connecticut capital early Friday evening. One contingent, intent on intercepting a train with a diner, aim to ride 172, The Senator, out of Pennsylvania Station at 2:10 PM (leaves Newark 1:35). A train change at New Haven (ar 3:40 lv 4:25) with a Hartford arrival of 5:05 is planned. The connection leaves from Grand Central Station at 2:00 PM. A 4:01 out of GCT arrives at 6:38 and the Connecticut Yankee (with grill and parlor cars) leaves NY 5:04 and arrives at 7:29. All-Americans might prefer the Nathan Hale out of Grand Central at 6:05 (with grill car) due in Hartford at 8:49 or catch the Patriot (parlor and diner) out of Penn Station at 6PM, and change at NH for the Nathan Hale, allowing you to ride two name trains with an in-time arrival at Hartford to still catch the layout visits.

The best early morning Saturday train departure leaves GCT at 7:00 and hits Hartford at 9:46 AM, or 5:50 AM gets you there at 8:48 with time for a Connecticut breakfast. Best bet is to check the NH schedule for any late changes.

Returning arrangements on Sunday are ample and some late, late Saturday night returns are on the timecard if you absolutely can't sleep without clickety clacks.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### FRIDAY:

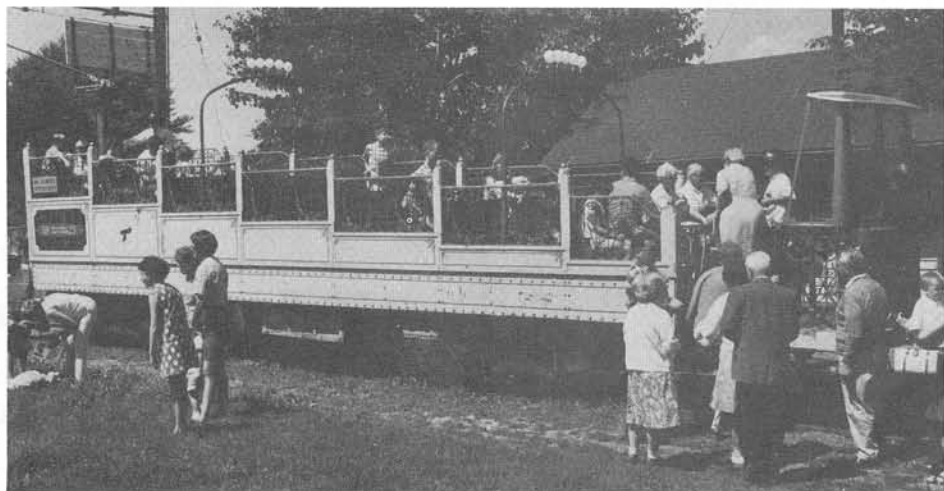
- REGISTRATION - 7 PM, 4th Floor Lobby
- HOSPITALITY ROOM - 7 PM to 9 PM
- HOME LAYOUT VISITS - See Bulletin Board
- FRED HOTTIN'S HOBBY CENTER - to 9 PM

### SATURDAY:

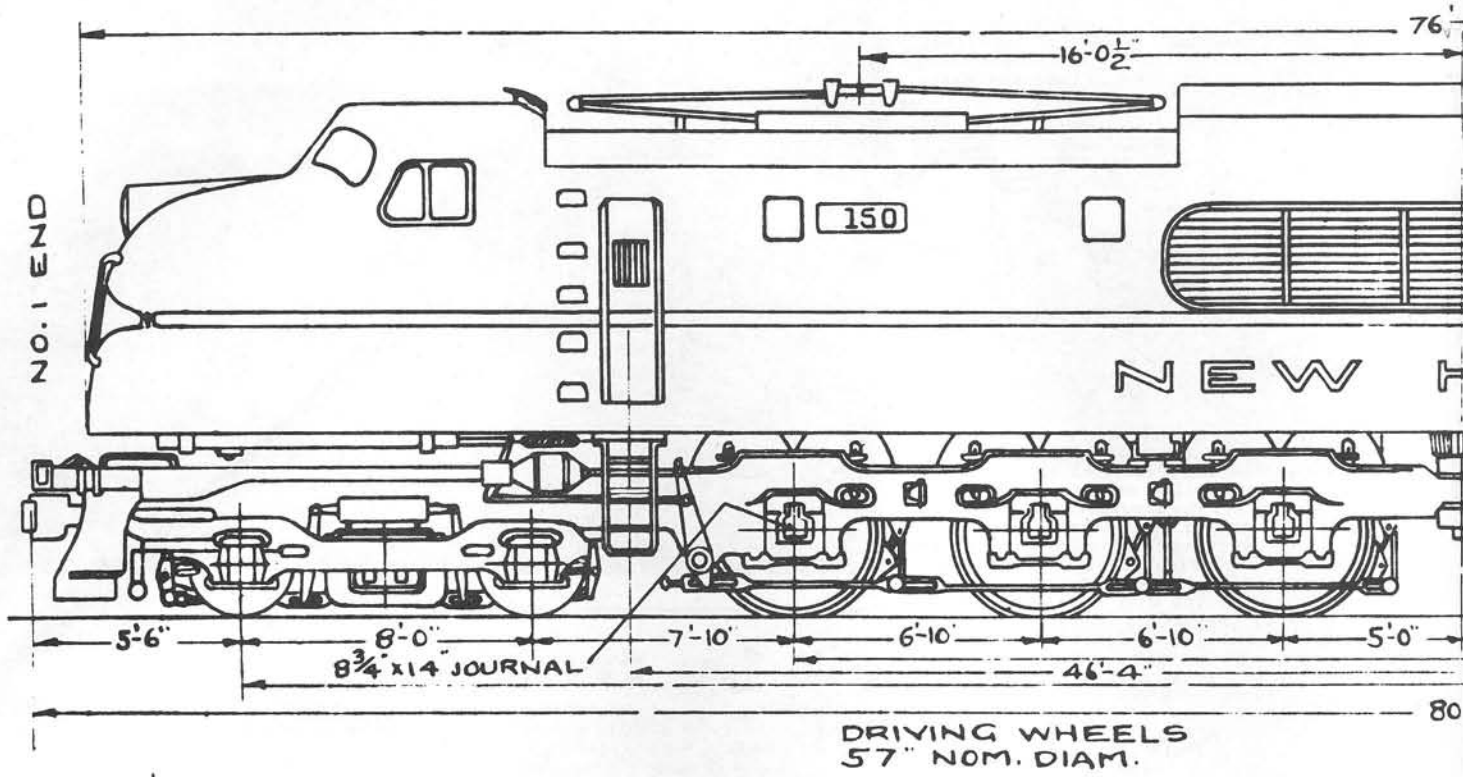
- REGISTRATION - 9 AM to 12 Noon
- WHITE ELEPHANT TABLE - to 12 Noon
- CLINICS - 9 AM to 12 Noon
- MANUFACTURER'S DISPLAYS - All Day
- LUNCH - On Your Own
- FAN TRIP - To Trolley Museum
- SOCIAL HOUR - 6 PM to 7 PM
- BANQUET - 7 PM PLAZA ROOM

### SUNDAY:

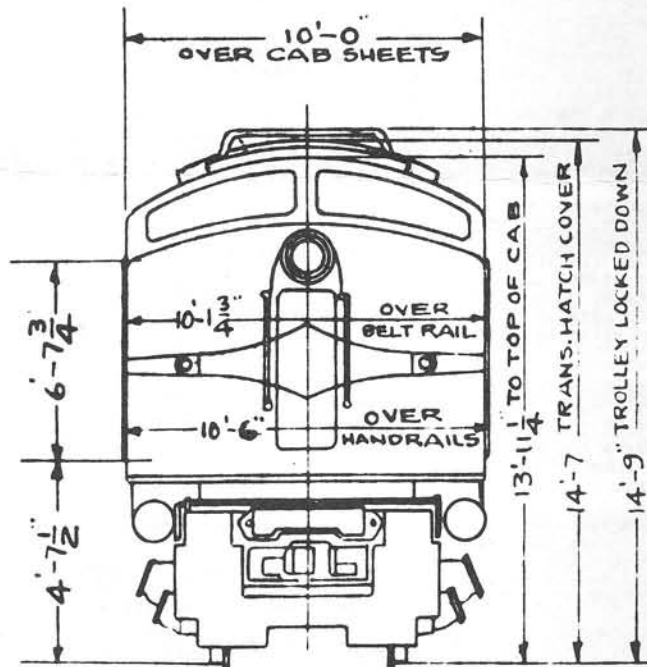
PROGRAM IS NOT DEFINATE AT THIS TIME.



Montreal open touring car #4 is always a big favorite at the Warehouse Point Museum.



DRIVING WHEELS  
57" NOM. DIAM.

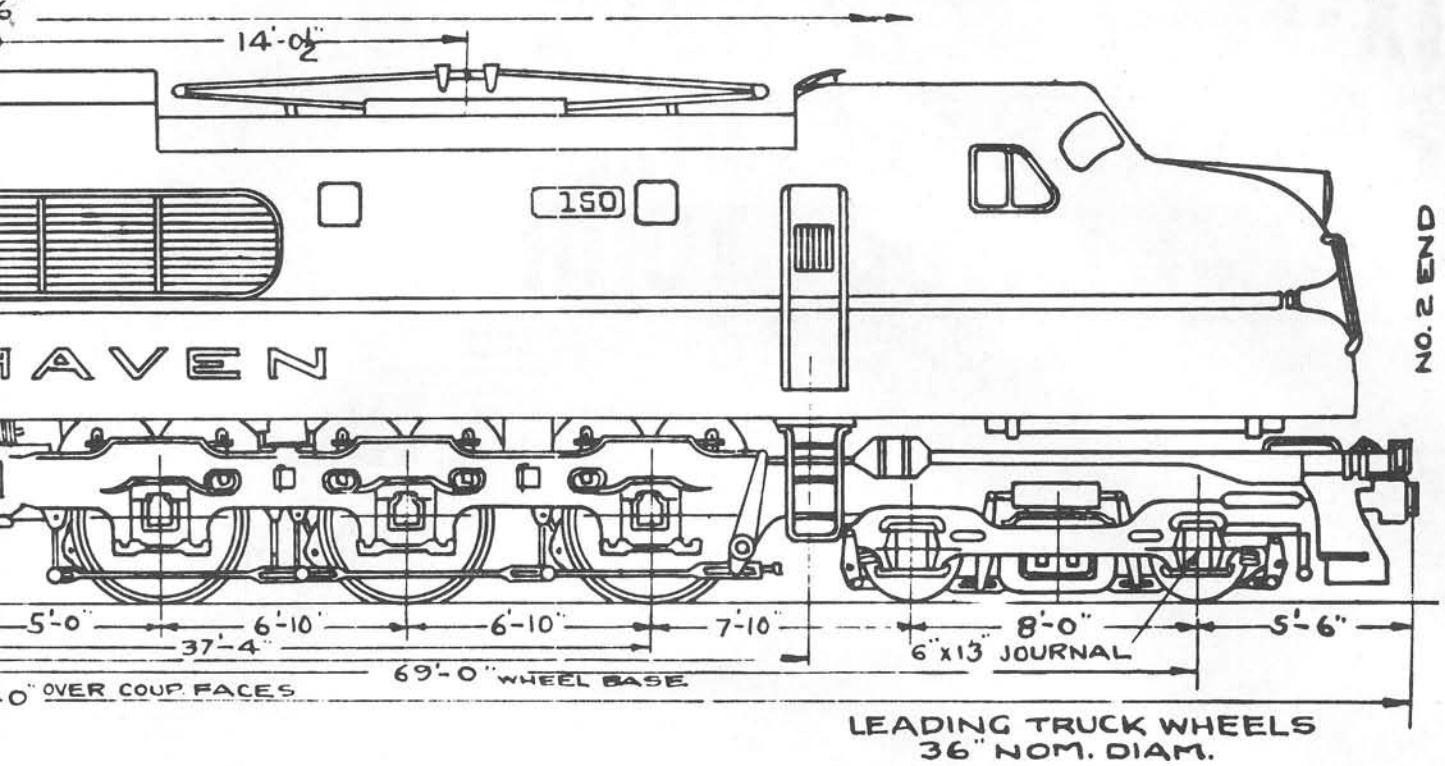


**N  
Y  
C**  
**EF-3**

PLAN SHOULD BE 3/16" = 1', OR 'S' GAUGE

LOCOS.	CLASS	BUILDER	DATE	TRAC. MOTORS	WT. ON DRIVERS LBS.	TOTAL WT. LBS.
150-154	EF-3b	BALD. WEST.	1942	427-N	360000	492000
155-159	EF-3a	G.E.CO.	1943	G.E.A.627-N	360000	493000

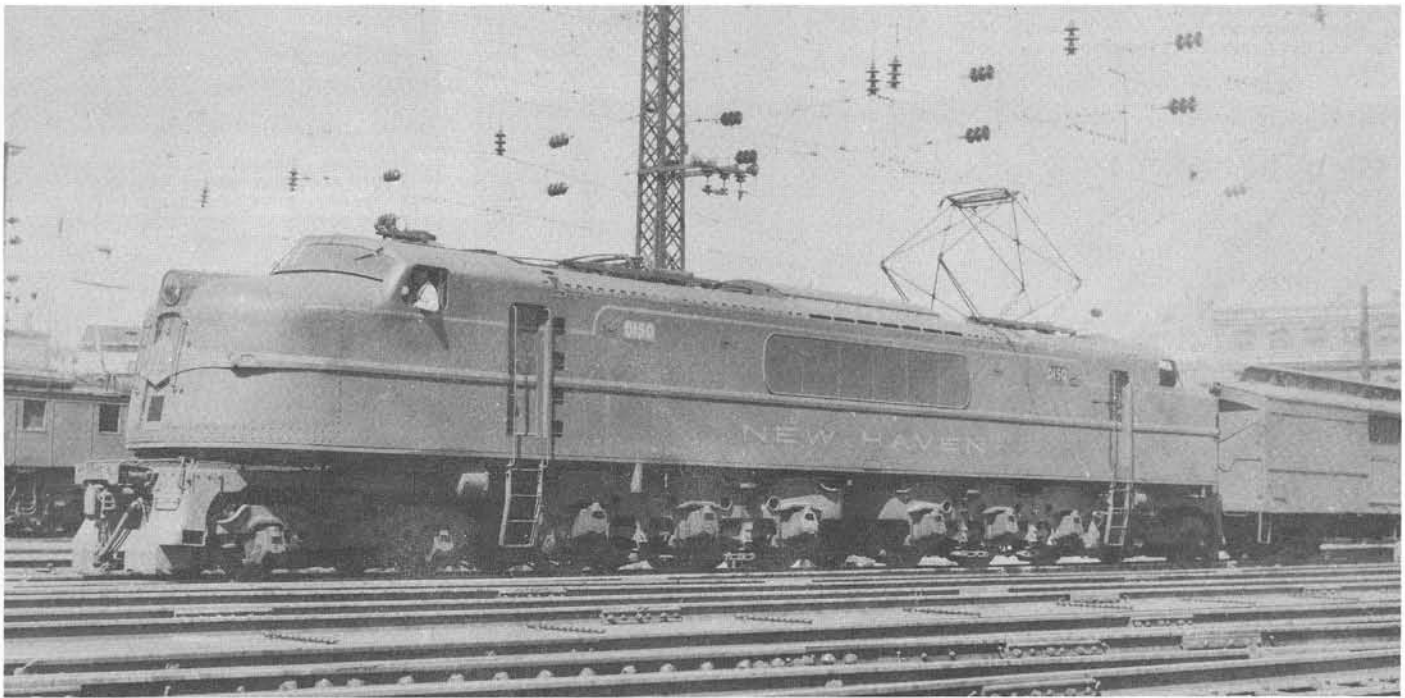
NOT USUALLY  
IN PASSENGER  
VICE, EF-3  
HANDLES A H  
END CONSIST. S  
BOILER SAFETY  
BE SEEN DIRE  
OVER THE FIRE



SERVICE AC FREIGHT AND PASSENGER  
 TRACTIVE EFFORT 90,000# MAXIMUM AT 25% ADHESION  
 28,000# CONTINUOUS AT 65 M.P.H.  
 CONTINUOUS RATING 4860 HP AT 65 M.P.H.  
 VERTICAL CENTER OF GRAVITY 64.7"  
 MINIMUM CURVATURE 20°  
 MAXIMUM DESIGN SPEED 65 M.P.H.

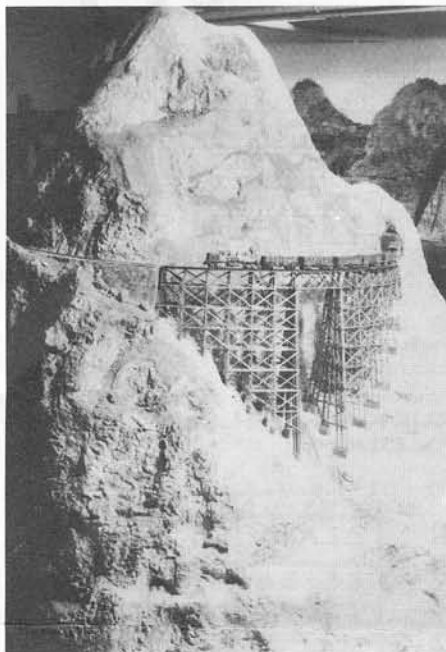
CLASS	ELECT. LOCOS.
EF-3b	150-154
EF-3a	155-159

LOCOMOTIVES 150-154  
 HEATING BOILER:  
 FEEDWATER 2080 GAL.  
 FUEL OIL 475 GAL.



USED  
 SER-  
 #150  
 LEAD-  
 TEAM  
 CAN  
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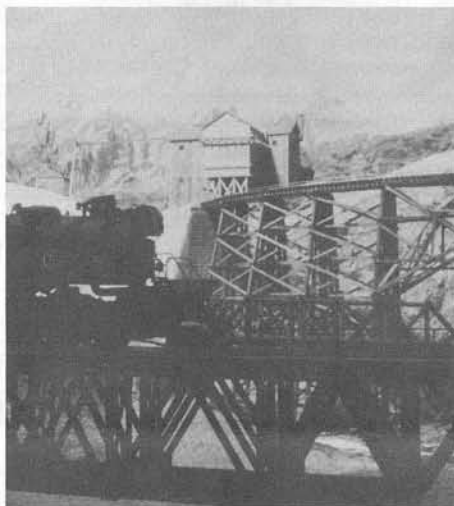
# SIX-FOOT HIGH HUNK OF PLASTER FEATURED IN HOME LAYOUT TOUR



The Smallshaw Colossus, a 6' high mountain soon to be featured on a color cover of Model Railroader, will very likely be the highlight of the home layout visits at the NER Hartford Fall Convention. The October 11-13 weekend will feature layout visits on Friday night to the four "Hartford Workshop" layouts - those of Harold Horner, Earl Smallshaw, Don Clerke and Al Kalbfleish. In addition, on Sunday, the well known Connecticut Midland Railroad of Watty House will be open as will Jeff French's Red Lodge & Yellowstone Railroad.

## GREAT REASON TO ARRIVE ON FRIDAY

Al Kalbfleish's D&RGW L-125 forward cylinder steam supply pipes silhouette against his narrow-gauge mine & trestle.



The excellent quality of the Hartford layouts makes it almost imperative that your plans allow time to appreciate this attractive exhibition. While Earl's mining railroad will more than satisfy your appetite for spectacular scenery and great bridges, his standard and narrow-gauge operation centers around his Mystic Mine #1. This fine superb model won a Second Prize at the NMRA National in Montreal.

A Varney 4-6-0 winds its way through Don Clerke's treacherous rubber molded rocks on his W&W Railroad.



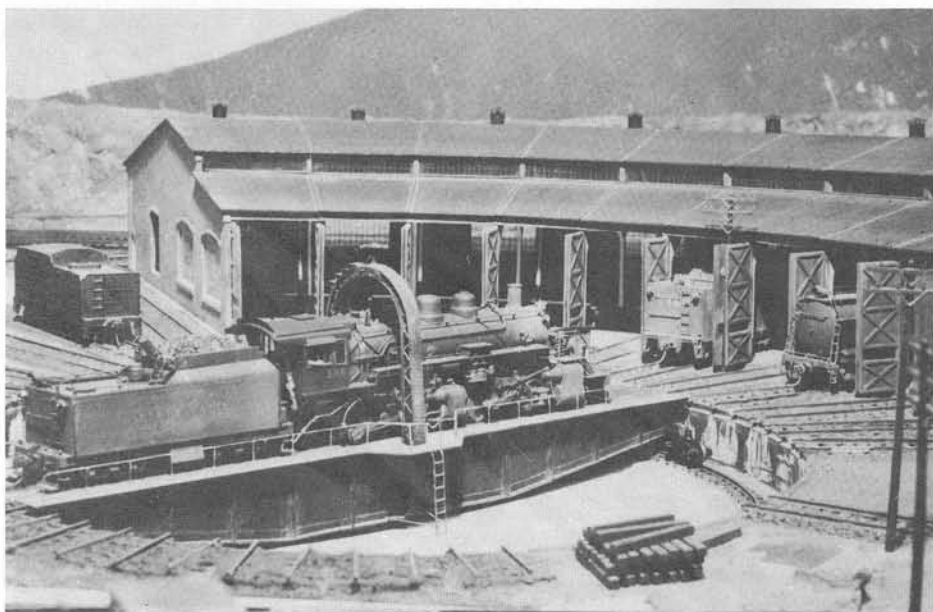
If signaling is more your preference, Don Clerke's Wapping & Wicasset Railroad features automatic block control by the use of relays. His 1910-1920 era pike has a moderate amount of scenery, notable for its use of rubber molds. Al Kalbfleish's extensive layout, planned around the Denver and Rio Grande RR's standard and narrow gauge operation outdoes the prototype in its use of the neatest dual gauge trackwork this side of the Rockies. Though only 25% of his planned benchwork is up, much of that is scenedicked, and is nicely set off by a hand-painted, beautifully realistic backdrop. NER regular convention goers will remember Al's first prize at the Bellows Falls meet won by his elaborate HO scale mine.

Though Earl's narrow gauge passenger local knows where it's going, brass locomotive gets lost in the scenery! Another reason why you should paint those engines! Most modelers will feel right at home with the unfinished lower lake area catch-all basin.



The most complete of the four layouts is Harold Horner's Sleepy Valley Railroad. That drowsy pike name must refer to the only ten percent of the railroad which is as yet unscenedicked, and is a rare ratio for any model railroad. Harold's layout dates back many years and he is currently bringing the scenery, structures and rolling stock up to today's standards. If his September 1968 Model of the Month award in the Model Railroader is any indication of Harold's up-to-dateness he must be all ready for the NER Fall Convention visitors. That HO scale American Coal Company bunker will be an extra attraction on the steam era pike: circa 1935-1940. Traction as well is featured, although diesels have taken their demonstrator runs elsewhere.

Further information on layout visiting will be available at the registration desk in the 4th floor lobby of the super-modern Hotel America. Arrive early Friday night!



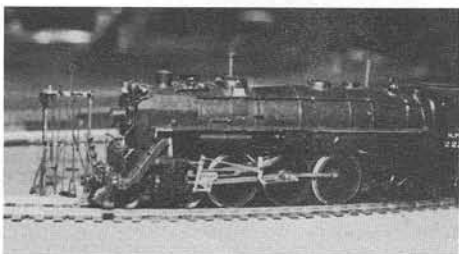
Harold Horner's prize winning Sierra (New London Spring 1967 NER Model Contest) takes a spin around the grease streaked turntable pit before selecting a spare stall in the large roundhouse. Note neat stack of ties.



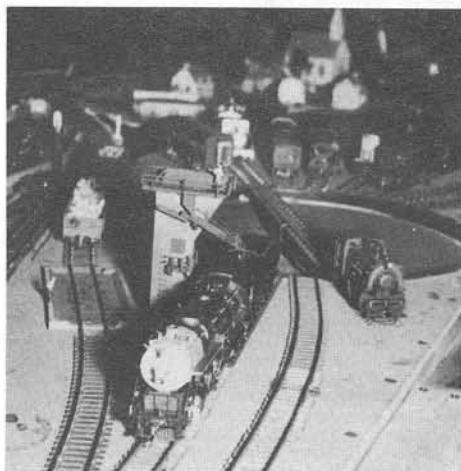
## JEFF FRENCH'S RED LODGE & YELLOW- STONE RR (INCLUDING THE FIERCE) (BEAR TOOTH JUNCTION!) OPEN for VISITING OCT. 13



NP Pacific eases into Red Lodge, Montana with a string of varnish and a tender.



Closeup of the smoke-earred pacific, 2254



Big RL&Y RR power coals up while the B&O Little Joe sneaks out onto the turntable.



Two RL&Y RR hacks sandwich one NP crummy.



Microscopic locomotive tool rack was featured in a Model Railroader article and accumulated more Author Achievement Award points than all of Jeff's years as editor according to the program's point scale.



Ex-Coupler editor exercises editorial restraint and performs a delicate turntable centering calibration with fine honed tool.

## OVER 1000 NMRA-ers make the groovy scene in hip Frisco

When model railroaders get together the talk sometimes is about trains and when you pack over a thousand of them into one city you're sure to hear the conversation drift to one favorite subject. Cosmopolitan San Franciscans, long accustomed to the bizarre in attire (and the lack of it), similarly found that the strange railroad hats and the emblem studded jackets also stirred them to conversations, though whispered. But, the talkative visitors had the last word and refused to forget the enchanting charms of the famous California city.

Cable cars, PCC trolleys, trolley busses, a narrow gauge Shay and Heisler steam fan trip, a lively Southern Pacific terminal in midtown Frisco and four days of model railroad events all competed to be the big highlight of the 1968 NMRA National. Though most of the NERers many who now qualify as Deadheaders (NER members who attend a National Convention outside of our Region) came by train, a few disloyal railfans used other nameless means of transportation. Most converged on San Francisco by Wednesday and after a long night riding the "half-sideless" cable cars, and other distractions, they began to bleary-eyed cram a busy schedule into a Thursday which somehow only had 24 hours. The main attraction on the Sheraton-Palace main floor was the extensive manufacturers exhibits where everything from a 1½" gauge Bettendorf truck with full brake rigging rubbed journals with the new N scale timber trestle kit by Cal-Scale. It was to become the meeting place for the next 3 days of those whose unfulfilled requests for new products brought them face to face with manufacturers. The thorough exhibit also became the favorite haunt of those who appreciate a first look at new products. PFM's new Pennsy I-1 decapod and Frisco Mountain almost out-attracted Hallmark Models' sparkling new FT A&B, while the Trains, Inc. display of each of their cars and engines super-professionally painted and decalced was a big surprise to those

customers whose brass models sometimes never get a coat of anything but oxide. Alco Models' pilot model of the PRR DD-1 drew heavy attention, as did their display of painted diesels, a big favorite of NER conventions. The many new craftsman car and building kits looked as great built up as the brass did painted. New Yorkers were pleasantly surprised to see the very charming Carmen Webster of the Model Railroad Equipment Corporation ("45th Street") enjoying the exhibits. A behind-schedule modeler who hurriedly was completing an entry for the model contest asked if she had brought along any basswood, preferably 1/64 of-an-inch square, but she good naturedly referred him to a local shop.

The model and photo contest entry rooms began to fill early Thursday and all day bus departures to the cable car barn kept everyone running into each other on their way to or from somewhere. A 12 noon San Francisco Cable Car Bell Ringing contest nicely coincided with the NMRA meet and the conventioners rushed over to see and hear the cacophony. Bus trips departed to the Muir Woods, and for the Rallettes to the Presidio at 1 PM. All morning clinics by John Armstrong, John Allen, Linn Westcott, Jerry White, John Pryke, Al Armitage and others continued on until Friday night, and in the evenings busses departed to some of the famous California clubs. Train fans who up until then quietly accepted the necessity of riding rubber-tired vehicles, found great cause to complain as the unguided, trackless busses, aimless and without any accurate idea of destination wandered across and back the heavy-trafficked SP Coast Division in the trying search for each club. This was the first in a series of uncomfortable travel arrangements which detracted from the appreciated assets of the convention, although the layout visit detours did provide some added train watching as SP Trainmasters with high level commuter cars raced south against a mountain-silhouetted sunset of immeasurable tranquil beauty.

A special tour of the Bay Area Rapid Transit facilities (including a Bay boat ride) on Friday occupied many, while others indulged a preference for seafood at Fisherman's Wharf, or visits to Chinatown or just plain cable car riding. As the night came along, trips to downtown Frisco's Purple Onion, Pinocchio's, Big Al's and the Hungry I were a big favorite, but the

cable cars continued to be the best attraction as their flexible rules about hanging out the sides, haphazard fare collection, and settled-before-hand discussions with automobiles about who had the right-of-way imparted a peculiarly San Franciscan atmosphere of appeal for those more used to rigidity.

In Saturday morning, while awaiting an aggravatingly disorganized bus boarding, the favorite news was about a discovered \$2 "topless" shoe shine parlor, and an eastern skeptic asked if the \$2 was for both shoes. The bus trip finally departed for Felton, the site of the Roaring Camp and Big Trees narrow-gauge 6 mile lumber line through dense redwoods and at grades up to 5%. The bright sun and clear sky made the camera fans happy and the alternate runs of a Shay and a Heisler hauled open gons, and a side-door combination caboose up to Bear Mountain. Most spectacular part of the trip was a complete loop trestle which bent over itself and many camera fans left the train here to film the second section and ride back on the third. An afternoon outdoor barbeque under the cool shade of tall trees preceded the bustrip back to the Sheraton-Palace where a very social cocktail hour introduced a rather interesting dinner at the Garden Court. NERers occupied tables in the North East corner of the room.

They almost had to renew acquaintance with each other so diverse were the three days' previous activities. Unending contest awards were presented and NER's Norman Briskman who entered 4 photos won - yes, 4 prizes. His first prize Black and White; Model; a facing shot of Frank McKenna's HO tug, also was featured in the summer Coupler.

A late night showing of "The General" with Buster Keaton to the accompaniment of a live "organ-music" score capped the week's events, although a post script of live-steam was planned for a full day on Sunday at Oakland, where extensive 1½" and 3/4" facilities are located. Some planned to accept John Allen's Open-House invitation for Monday at Monterey, after which time new and old friends exchanged greetings, and departed for those places back in the NMRA directory from where they came.

For those who were to leave by train, the adventure only half began!



**RAILROAD**

**BOOKS**

NERers who have been recently besieged with chances to begin Volume 1 Number 1 subscriptions to a number of railfan papers are out in front again. A high quality, slick paper, full-cover cover, 36 page quarterly - aimed primarily at collectors - has entered the publication field. TOY and TRAIN QUARTERLY No. 1 (dated Summer 1968) has in its ambitious first issue covered "Fascinating toys from the past", "Collecting miniature cars," "Lionel errors, catalogued and un-catalogued," and of special interest to HO-guagers, "Are HO limited run kits collectible?" Regular columns include "Collector's Cues; Dealer Doings; and Antique Alley." One especially interesting feature on Jerome Secor, (a sewing machine manufacturer influenced by Harry Ives, the founder of toy trains) who produced the first clockwork driven cast iron engine made in the United States, is of strong historical interest.

Liberal use of full color photographs (though primarily of automobile models) makes the \$1 per issue (\$4 annual subscription) a reasonable buy. The company also offers a sturdy pocket size Lionel checklist (one 1947 to date, 0 and 0-27 gauge; and the other, prior to 1947). These also list completely almost every Lionel model and variation plus relative scarcity of each and should be a boon to collectors and other bandits.

Both items are printed by the Ladd Model Works, P.O. Box 1142, Evanston, Illinois, 60204.

A series of 6x9, spiral bound offset printed books published by the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society are highly recommended. "Railroads in the Lehigh River Valley," contains 130 photos, 104 pages, includes a map diagram, and the concise text lists 12 railroads (two now defunct) which serve the Lehigh River Valley of eastern Pennsylvania. The period covered is from 1826 through the age of steam right up until dieselization. The moderate price of \$1.50 (postpaid) makes this thorough, revised edition a must for book lovers and train fans. Traction buffs will want copies of "The Liberty Bell Route's 1000 Series Interurban Cars;" a 78 photo, 84 page study of the famous lightweight, high-speed luxurious electric cars which the Lehigh Valley Transit Company operated over the famed Liberty Bell Route between Philadelphia

and Allentown. Only \$1.50.

A pair of larger books at \$2.00 each explores the "Short Trolley Routes in the Lehigh River Valley," and the "History of Lehigh Valley Transit Company Railway Operations." Both are also profusely illustrated.

Checks or money orders (cash in the mail is risky) should be made out to Randolph L. Kulp, 602 St. John Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18103.

Heavyweight passenger car fans will delight at the new Passenger Car Catalog put out by Kratville Publications. The tremendous full catalog of EVERY Pullman-Standard, Pullman-operated heavyweight passenger car from 1912-1949 includes all new, rebuilt equipment, and includes PLANS for every single type. Year built, number built per order, who for, car names, and road assigned provides a really complete list of data. Besides the amazing vast amount of photographs of car sides, many detail shots of air conditioning, battery boxes, steam lines, air brakes, water systems, windows, interior details, and special cars plus end views of diners, observations club-baggage and sleeping cars, just run on and on for page after page to complete what possibly is the one most accurate, single reference guide for detail fans. \$7.50 from Kratville Publications, 2566 F Farnum Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68131.

In addition to a new 4th edition of "Steam, Steel and Limiteds," and a number of books on the power of the Union Pacific, Kratville also lists a Pullman plan pack of full HO scale drawings of basic heavyweight Pullman cars from old wood to modern streamlined varieties. A HO plan pack of every UP basic type steam, diesel, turbine, electric and narrow gauge loco on the system is also available. Either pack is \$3.00.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR '69 HEADED BY GSDer AL WESTERFIELD**

The odd numbered election years according to our new voting schedule calls for five Directors to be elected on an area basis. Each NER member will vote for only one Director in his own area. In advance of the election, Glenn Wagner has appointed a 5 man Nominating Committee to recommend candidates and receive petitions. Chairman Al Westerfield (representing New Jersey), will preside over the group. Darryl Townsend for Canada; Earl Smallshaw for Connecticut and Rhode Island; David MacDonald for Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine; and John MacIntosh for New York State are the President's selections for the 1969 Committee. The next issue of the Coupler will include a procedural statement from the Chairman. We look forward to a large slate, boys!

**SCHEDULES**

Newark, N.J. ....	10 40	10 40	1 35	1 35	5 24	7 30	6:30
New York, Pennsylvania Sta. ....	10 55	10 55	1 50	1 50	5 40	7 35	6:45
New Haven, Conn. ....	11 20	11 20	2 10	2 10	6 00	8 15	8 15
Hartford, Conn. ....	12 51	12 51	3 40	3 40	7 30	10 00	10 00
change	change	change	change	change	change	thru	thru
New Haven, Conn. ....	2 38	2 33	4 05	4 10	7 55	10 20	10 20
Middletown, Conn. ....	2 52	2 59	4 33	4 41	8 24	10 57	10 57
Berlin, Conn. ....	3 02	3 09	4 43	4 53	8 33	11 09	11 09
Hartford, Conn. ....	3 14	3 21	4 56	5 06	8 49	11 22	11 22

BELLOWS FALLS, VERMONT - October 4, 5. 3rd annual Vermont Fall Foliage excursion from Bellows Falls behind CPR 1200. 240 miles by rail to the Shelburne Museum, Proctor marble exhibit, and a sunset cruise on the Lake Champlain ferry. All inclusive fare is \$37.50 (includes motel but not food). Students 9 to 16, \$16. Children under 9, free. The Vermont and Green Mountain Railroads will be covered. Information from Rail Associates Corporation, Box 406, Bellows Falls, Vermont 05101.

HUNTINGTON STATION, LONG ISLAND - October 5, Sunrise Trail Division meet at the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 22 East 18 St.

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND - October 9, 7:30 PM Little Rhody Division meeting at the Trinity Union Methodist Church, 375 Broad Street; and subsequent second Wednesdays of each month thereafter.

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY - November 1, 3, 8, 10. The Newark Model Railroad Club announces an "Open House" to be held on the first two weekends in November. Times are: on Fridays 7:30 to 10 PM and Sundays 2:30 to 6 PM. Though operation is limited, a large O gauge model railroad is under construction. No admission charge. 3rd floor, 337 Fifth Street, Newark, off Park Avenue. Contact Paul Boivin, Jr., 319 So. Orange Ave., Livingston, N.J. 07039 for details.

HACKETTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY - November 2. Garden State Division meet at the Hackettstown Recreation Center on Main Street. Club visit plus clinics. See Division News for more details.

ASTORIA, NEW YORK - November 3, 1968. No more disquieting sound for a Sunday afternoon can you imagine than the gavel of an auctioneer, especially on a table of cars, engines, trucks, and structures. Still, that is the raucous schedule planned for the Turn Hall, 44-01 Broadway, Astoria, N.Y. when Hal Fletcher, the knowledgeable one, pounds his hammer beginning at 3 PM. From 12 noon until then, unrestrained trading, selling, and buying is the pandemonium of the day, and low registration numbers will receive first priority at the auction table for the sellers. Free use of display tables for the earlier chaos is one bargain of the \$1 Donation-admission; and it's the old Roundhouse, Athearn, and Globe metal cars which somehow show up here. Red Ball also appears, as does pre-war Varney engines, early PFM, old Megow, ancient Mantua and long forgotten Railmaster. A fun jamboree all around. Door prizes (including a brass locomotive again). Information from Hal Fletcher, 42-64 65th Place, Woodside NY IL 7-6236 (212).

NEWFIELDS, NEW HAMPSHIRE - November 15. Seacoast Division Meeting. 8 PM.

DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE - January 17, 8 PM. Seacoast Division meeting at the Cocheco Valley Model RR Club.

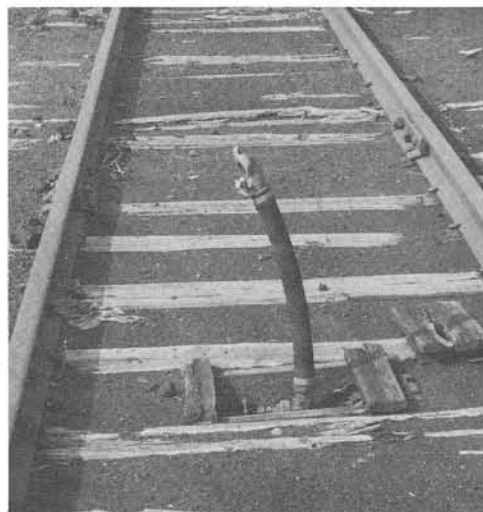
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK - January 19, 1969. Sunrise Trail Sunday meeting. Temple Sinai on Arlington Avenue and Bradford Street; 1:00 PM, pre-meet lunch.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA - August 14-18, 1969. Start saving now for the indescribable grand time an NMRA National can be. Round trip coach fare of \$94.07 or first class \$156.40 (from New York) allows you to ride the incomparable Empire Builder out of Chicago - or you might prefer the Hiawathas on the CMST&P. Similar prices, same great time. Say yes, you're coming along!

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - August 1970 NMRA Convention. Plan ahead.

**WHAT IS IT?**

Seems like the AAR is one up on the NMRA Clearance Gauge Answer over.



Walter Olevsky's camera found in the Erie-Lackawanna Secaucus yard. He declined a guess at first, but later admitted it might be a "yard-air" connection; best not modelled.

# DIVISION NEWS

## LITTLE RHODY

Rather than call it quits for the summer, the Little Rhody Division decided to have informal meetings at the homes of various members. The first of these was held on Sunday July 14th, at the mobile home of Harold Ferguson in Middletown, R.I. Everyone had a fine time examining the large and varied collection of O Gauge locomotives and rolling stock which were enclosed in a small steel structure behind the trailer.

On August 11th, another Sunday afternoon social was held at Bill Chandler's country home in Greene, R.I. The girls served goodies as Bill proudly traced the progress of his new layout which promises to be a winner.

Dr. John Diaz hosted the September 15th meet at the New Bedford Society of Model Railway Engineers' Club. While attendance at these summer meetings was lower than usual, it was felt that this type of activity helps to strengthen the bonds of good fellowship that are formed during the winter months. The first regular meeting of the Fall season will be held on Wednesday evening, October 9th at 7:30 PM at the Trinity Union Methodist Church, 375 Broad Street, Providence, Rhode Island. Subsequent meetings are tentatively scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month at the church.

Little Rhody Secretary - Michael Antoni, 37 Knowles Drive, Warwick, R.I. 02888.

## HUB

The HUB BOD will huddle on September 28 to plan the Fall program and determine why the August Lobster Feed at Kennebunkport



and Goose Rocks drew so few. For the November meet date see the HUB Headlight.

HUB Secretary - Harold I. Clark, 3 Frederick Street, Worcester, Mass. 01605.

## SEACOAST

The July 21st family outing day and supper at Hedding, New Hampshire was attended by about 20 persons. The group enjoyed swimming, the food, games, and a short hike in the woods (?). A September 28 Saturday meeting (next summer, Division Boards are advised to plan their early Fall meets sufficiently far in advance to insure adequate publicity via the Coupler) is scheduled for Portland, Maine, at the home of the "470 Railroad Club." The 7:30 to 9:30 PM meeting will feature movies of steam in New England, and slides of Colorado narrow gauge in 1968.

November 15, a Friday night meet at 8 PM is scheduled at the home of David Collinge, Main Street, PO Box 42, Newfields, New Hampshire 03856. Election of Officers, clinics, bull-sessions and coffee are on the agenda.

In January, the new division plans a get-together on the 17th at 8PM in Dover, New Hampshire at the club room of the Cochecho Valley Model RR Club on Central Avenue. An operation clinic is planned.

Friday evening, March 14 a "pot luck" program of slides, movies, recording tape, or what; & bring a model for operating on the Decker layout at 20 Reo Road, West Peabody, Massachusetts 01960. (Didn't I just say something about adequate advance planning? - ed.)

Seacoast Secretary - David S. Decker, 20 Reo Road, West Peabody, MA 01960.

## SUNRISE TRAIL

On Sunday, August 4 the Sunrise Trail Division's Board of Directors met at the Route of the Lone Wolf and Independence Division of the Penn-Central Railroad, located at the home of the STD "Cannonball" editor, Dave Marlowe. The first item on the agenda was a barbecue. This was followed by an unveiling of the Sunrise Trail's banner by the Division Betsy Ross, Toni Marlowe. A complete tour of the LW&I was next conducted at the request of the "new breed," followed by the "old breed." (What steam power exists on the all-diesel pike is confined to a "museum" section.) After the impromptu railfan tour, a Board meeting commenced outdoors, illuminated by the full power of one 100 watt bulb, hanging from a full scale tree. Whilst fighting off bands of local flying ferocious insects, the Board discussed: the divisional model contest; the switching problem contest; and an author's contest with a prize for the best story on rail-roading of about 1,000 words in length.

About the time this Coupler will be in the mail, the Sunrise Trailers plan to compare mosquito bites on October 5 at 1:00 PM at the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church 22 East 18th Street, Huntington Station, Long Island (naturally). A pre-meet luncheon is scheduled for 11:30 AM at Bickford's Original Pancake House, 179 Walt Whitman Road, at the Walt Whitman shopping center on Route 110. The program for the day is the usual Long Island: tape-slide clinic, and films.

The first Sunrise Trail meeting for 1969 will be on Jan. 19 in Brooklyn - a STD first - at the Temple Sinai (another first) on Arlington Avenue and Bradford Street at 1:00 PM. Members should note this is a Sunday, of course. The site of the pre-meet luncheon has not been determined as yet (You want I should suggest Chinese?).

STD Secretary - Bob Sewall, 564 Forest Avenue, Massapequa, New York 11758.

## HUDSON VALLEY

The newly formed Hudson Valley Division has planned their first meet for 12 noon, Saturday, September 28th. While the Coupler deadline unfortunately makes the notice of this meeting too late for broad NER publicity, numerous flyers will be placed in area hobby shops. The site for the interesting afternoon will be at the New City Park clubhouse and features live clinics on Building and use of Cranes, & Building Solid State Power supplies. Home layout visits are planned as are movies and slides. Refreshments available at the site and the meet goes rain or shine.

The HV steering committee under Charlie D'Elia has drafted a simple constitution as a first step towards their charter.

Hudson Valley Secretary - Lee Hastings, 45 Hall Avenue, New City, N.Y. 10956

## NUTMEG

The Nutmeg Division, primarily engaged in preparations for a great Fall Convention at Hartford, found time out this summer for an annual picnic on July 14th. The particularly warm weather attracted over 80 members and their families. The popular Gillette train ride around Lake Compounce was an especially favored attraction. The November meeting date is still up in the air at this writing, but the annual meeting is planned for Tolland, Connecticut in January at a date to be decided later.

One of the Nutmeg State's better known modelers, Don Peck, was seriously injured in a May 31 automobile accident. It is expected that he will be hospitalized for several months, and his family is sure he would appreciate receiving cards from his Northeastern Region friends. These should be sent to his residence at 49 Foot Hills Way, Bloomfield, Conn. 06002

Nutmeg Secretary - Ed Pasko, 63 Hoffman Street, Torrington, Conn. 06790.

## HUDSON-BERKSHIRE

On September 29, the Hudson-Berkshire Division plans its annual dinner meeting at the Crossroads Restaurant in Latham, New York. Election of Officers for the coming year is scheduled; and some movies will be shown. For more information contact John Hollner (address below) or Dave Messer, 16 Hillview Court, Wyantskill, New York 12198.

It is hoped that the November meeting will be at the new home of the RPI Model Railroad Club at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. Also in November, the Hudson-Berkshire Division will have a booth at the Harlem Valley Railroad Club's 3rd Annual Mini-Convention, at which the Division will promote NMRA and NER membership. That date will be November 17, and the place will be the Morris Memorial, Park Row, Chatham, N.Y.

Films scheduled for the Sept. 29 dinner meeting (on the outside wild chance that the Coupler will be in the mail by then) are, "Last of the Giants," a Union Pacific color film on the Big Boys, and, "Last Run of the Shay," from the St. Regis Paper Co. The first thirty registrants for the dinner will receive a copy of the latest and perhaps last D&H timetable to be issued under their own name. Dinner is \$3.75 to Jack Schramm, 28 Leto Road, Albany, N.Y. 12203.

Hudson-Berkshire Secretary - John Hollner, 12 DeVoe Drive, Albany, N.Y. 12205

## ALOUETTE

The Alouette Division June 28 meeting was held at the Royal Canadian Hussars Armory on the Cote des Neiges in Montreal. It must have been target practice night for the Hussars because no word has been heard from the Division since then.

## GARDEN STATE

No summer activities were planned by the Garden State Division since the June 8 meet which drew 50 people. During the lull, two of the GSD Directors who were originally scheduled to present the GSD Newark 1971 National contingency bid, somehow became waylaid in the East and never made it to San Francisco. At the same time, Paul Mallery (under whose editorship the Whistle Post always appeared punctually) found himself stranded behind a train wreck in the wilds of the Yucatan. Trapped by the indifferent tropics, and aided only by that special Mexican kind of urgency, he arrived in Frisco one day after the BOT meeting which decided for Britain.

The Garden State Fall activities were kicked off with the annual picnic at the New Hope and Ivyland RR in Pennsylvania. The September 21st popular event is expected to draw a large crowd. An official GSD train was scheduled to depart at noon, and a 10% discount for the group had been obtained. The company also reserved tables in the picnic grove, and promised a private car on a siding for toilet facilities. (The new Seacoast Division, with somewhat less style, just takes walks in the woods).

Membership cards, in response to suggestions advanced at the Spring annual Little Convention, are being printed. They will be kept on hand to be given out to regulars at future meets. New members will have theirs made up and mailed. The new card is yellow with the state emblem in green. At present, almost all the Northeastern Region Divisions now have membership cards.

The next GSD meeting is planned for Hackettstown, New Jersey, on November 2. A visit to the Hackettstown HO Model RR club, plus many informative clinics are on the agenda. Registration \$1. Meeting site is the Hackettstown Recreation Center on Main Street. More information from Bob Pool, 2 Loew Avenue, Fairlawn, N.J. 07410.

Garden State Secretary - Al Westerfield 13 Carolyn Terrace, Roselle, N.J. 07753.

# YES, LUCIUS, THEY STILL DO

BURLINGTON · RIO GRANDE · WESTERN PACIFIC

ABOARD THE VISTA-DOME *California Zephyr*

If you remember reading from the pen of Lucius Beebe how fresh Colorado carnations graced the dining tables of years ago trains, and how fresh mountain trout was loaded aboard each morning through the Rockies, you might have found it a large surprise to see those flowers on the CZ in 1968. The listing right at the top of the menu of Rocky Mountain boneless trout really would have brought you back in between the pages of Beebe, but if you dared to ask the waiter if the fish was brought aboard fresh at Denver, he would have told you, no; the fish was taken on at Orestod-Bond, nearer the Colorado River.

Adherents of the cry that passenger rail service is slowly on the way out might not want to take too much comfort from those little delights, but for the discerning eye, no end of exciting railroad action still takes place where steel rails guide flanged wheels, and, if you have cause to please Mr. Beebe's ghost, follow west the route of the California Zephyr.

What more colorful junction name might you expect than Orestod but Orestod spelled backwards - Dotsero: name of the Rio Grande 40 mile cutoff connecting the Moffat Tunnel and the Royal Gorge Route, and the place where the Eagle River joins the Colorado. A survey of the Colorado River began here in 1885 and it appears on the record as ".0" - Dot Zero. Relay tower names on the minus side of the dot had included Gore (for the 1,500' high jagged rock canyon of the same name), and Troublesome (for who knows what, but that maybe a low hanging X2F caught on a high crossing board). West of Dotsero steep walls of red rock lined a chasm of tall evergreens and impressive strata formation, as the five dome cars suddenly filled to capacity. Though the altitude was almost 4,000 feet less than the 9,239 maximum through the Continental Divide at the Moffat Tunnel, the five Rio Grande F units glided along with a certain strain to keep the 19 car consist on the timetable. Large acres of Colorado fruit orchards and endless miles of flower beds competed with canyon walls for color brilliance as the per minute photo rate (camera clicks times dome seats divided by exposures per roll) rapidly went up.

Firemen on eastbound freights systematically waved to the dome passengers, and enjoyed the camaraderie with those who also knew what the view was like straight

ahead. The sideways glancers also had an intriguing look at a Washington, D.C. bound freight which rumbled along with three flats of nine south-pointing howitzers aimed at nine north-pointing howitzers on three other flats. The six cars were separated by an ancient, solution-empty gondola which not so much rattled as trembled. The late afternoon sun sidelighted the silver cars ahead, as they leaned into a left curve, and then a right curve as terrain was attacked with little thought given to tangency. Well past Utahline into the Salt Lake State the dazzling scenery started to hypnotize. Suddenly, out from behind an only ordinarily interesting stacked mountain of rocks, there appeared a scene familiar to almost all - the wye at Helper; where westbound freights receive pushers (or rather helpers) for the climb up to Soldier Summit at the top of the Wasatch mountains. Here, black drop-bottom gons filled with coal and carefully labelled on yellow blocks "for sugar beet service ONLY" served notice whether Utah's coal fields rate priority over mere stencilled notations.

Attempts to shoot the sunset from inside the diner failed as the high mountains brought a quick end to the long day, and cameras were traded for silver, crystal, heavy tablecloths, great service, magnificent food, and not impossible prices. Even California wines came across with quality as Nevada neared.

Early risers raced back to the delightful diner for breakfasts like poached eggs and Canadian bacon on the hard-to-pick-from list, or western omelets in a tribute to the train's direction. The rush for first place in the dome in anticipation of the trip's biggest highlight, the canyon of the Feather River, was in vain as news of the California Zephyr's all-night second-place delay behind a westbound fast freight set back the schedule much more than the one hour change from Mountain to Pacific time.

But the leisurely pace was no discomfort to the wide-awake viewing audience as scenery of a new kind unfolded each hour to be outdone the next.

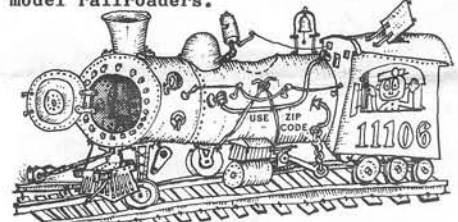
Somewhere near Frisco, at a conditional stop deep in lumbering country, a dark-haired 8-year old boy upheld the train watching tradition as he asked down from the high safety of a loaded wood chip car if the train was the same one that passed through yesterday? He refuted an affirmative answer with a list of a different consist and not the same diesel numbers in his own kind of prototype quiz. He was catching on early that the Route of the Zephyrs was much more than a faded slogan of streaky white on an oxide red box car.

# SPECIAL LOCOMOTIVE ZIP CODE CONTEST

Beginning with the Bellows Falls Spring 1969 NER meet, and continuing a disruptive course until ideas run out, a special, separate contest will enhance (?) our semi-annual conventions. The Spring contest, announced here for the first time, will receive locomotive entries - EITHER a model or a drawing or an engineering plan - the wheel arrangement of which must be based on the entrant's ZIP code! Candidates will not be permitted to change their address to obtain a more plausible 5 digit guideline. The first prize award will include one share of prototype Railroad stock of a value about \$25. Second prize will be a mint sheet of U.S. postage stamps depicting trains, and third prize will be 100 Zip-code stickers.

Special prizes for Raliette entries will also be an attraction of this inane contest. Allowing as how the girls may never get near the hobby workbench, all Raliette entries of a locomotive design (Zip code wheel arrangement again) will be accepted as a pot-holder design, embroidery, pink and lace locomotive model, or whatever handiwork the ladies care to engineer.

Drawings (or any entry) must show all wheels, although the model will not be required to run or even appear that it might. Imagination and ingenuity will rate high, and the Contest Chairman thinks he knows a few judges whose lack of mechanical skill guarantee a safe chance for the less stable entries. This may be necessary as the Postmaster General failed to consult the Whyte locomotive wheel classification guide before assigning ZIPs to model railroads.

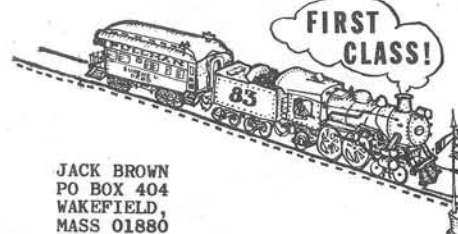


Future contests may cover "model scene from a prototype photo," "open car LOAD" contest and who knows what else? So as not to be accused of encouraging this distraction, the prize donors wish to remain unidentified. The winning entries will be featured in the Coupler.

# NER 83

# COUPLER

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