

The Switch Tower

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association
Larry Cannon, *President* • Richard Breton, *Vice President* • Terrence P. King, *Secretary* • Tim Byrne, *Treasurer*

Volume Seven

Fourth Quarter 2000

Number Four

Seacoast directors OK hosting Spring 2002 NER convention

President's Message

"...no such thing as too many volunteers."

by Larry Cannon, MMR

In case you haven't noticed, the Seacoast Division has become active to the point that it could be considered more than a Division in the process of being re-activated. We are conducting all of our meetings as public meetings, and clinics, layout tours and the like are part of the regular agenda. We try to schedule our meetings in some variety of locations to encourage participation. Small efforts on the part of a number of people have helped improve our activities to a more recognizable level.

It is important to our vitality as a Division to do interesting things that attract and hold people's interest. Cumulatively, small efforts are more impressive than a major splash. Given enough small events, several are bound to be popular and memorable. A major event might be largely memorable for reasons you would rather forget. Small activities tend to be less intimidating and encourage participation.

This is also true of the Spring 2002 NER Convention we are planning to sponsor. Individually, we probably don't have a lot of experience in this field, but we do know the parts of conventions that we have attended that we have enjoyed. Collectively, we can put together a convention that is a series of enjoyable experiences that will be well received. This may require more people's involvement, but it is a lot less daunting than planning an occasion based on one or two major events.

Through this entire process, I will not stop

(continued on page 3)

Mark your calendars for May 17-19, 2002

The Sheraton Tara Hotel in South Portland, Maine has been contracted for the May 17-19, 2002 Spring NER Convention. Four clinic rooms, rooms for registration, video theatre and socialization, the banquet hall and up to 75 overnight rooms have been set aside for us. Estimates for possible transportation for layout tours, non-rail tours and fan trips have been requested.

Larry Cannon, convention chairman, Terry King and Ron Palmquist have viewed the convention site. The convention meeting rooms are all on the ground floor close to each other, and there is ground level free parking for almost 350 vehicles. The location is convenient: The hotel is about 250 yards across the street from the Maine Mall shopping center in South Portland.

At the January meeting, we will be able to go forward with our planning knowing we have an ample site. The Portland Convention and Visitors Bureau will assist in the planning and publicity, which has been most helpful to date. Publicity and locking up arrangements for the fan activities will be an important part of our efforts before the spring 2001 convention in Cromwell, Conn. Early advertising and promotion helps guarantee success. I hope that those of you who are interested will attend our next two meetings or communicate with the officers and directors. —Larry Cannon

Seacoast Division NMRA
1:00-3:00 p.m. Jan. 13, 2001
Rochester Community Center,

New Hampshire

MEETING AGENDA

- I Welcome, Opening Com ments
- II Reports
 - a. Treasury
 - b. Secretary
- III Old Business
 - a. NER Convention Site
 - b. E-mail Communication
 - c. Other Old Business
- IV New Business
 - a. NER Convention Publicity
 - b. NER Convention Organization and Planning
 - c. Other New Business
- V Schedule Future Meeting(s) & Adjournment
- VI Clinics

Info: Terry King: 207/933-2477,
E-mail: tking@megalink.net

Sheraton Tara Hotel
363 Maine Mall Road
South Portland, ME 04106
207/775-6161



Happy New Year!

The Switch Tower

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From the Editor's Desk



Athearn on the Road

One of the nation's largest manufacturers of HO gauge locomotives and cars is Athearn of California. A recent E-mail from their promotion department announces that the company will soon begin a program to personally meet its customers at hobby shops throughout the country. Asked whether there is any chance the firm will take its road show to the "great northeast," Athearn replied: "Working on it for 2001."

Seacoast Trivia

Here's a bit of trivia from our Division archive. What happened on Saturday, November 5, 1983? The answer later in the column.

Website

I hope many of you have taken advantage of the opportunity to visit the NER Website. It's loaded with information about the region's Divisions. Because the Northeastern Region is truly "international" in scope—its members are from the six New England states, eastern New York and New Jersey and from Quebec and Atlantic Canada—the home page is available in both English and French. There are links that are bilingual as well, and there are listings for the various departments and contact information. From the Convention section, I learned that the Spring 2001 meeting in Cromwell, Conn., will be held at the Radisson Hotel & Convention Center (It's not too early to make your room reservations.). In the Publications section, I discovered that the *NER Coupler*, our quarterly regional newsletter, has digests — summaries — of previously published articles for those who might have missed the original issues. Looking up <http://www.ner.com> can be a productive way to spend a few minutes while surfing the net.

Trivia

On November 5, 1983, the Seacoast Division NMRA held its 10th Annual Fall Model Railroad Show at the Haxty Community Center in Auburn. According to a flyer insert in the 470 Railroad Club Newsletter, the show had dealer tables, operating layouts and a switching layout from a model railroad club in Massachusetts. I'm sure Allen Thurston, one of our directors, remembers these shows as he

was a member of the planning committee. Tell us all about it, Allen!

"New" Maine Central Power

A group of 20 Canadian National GP40-2LW and GP40-2W units has been acquired by Guilford Rail System. The used 3,000 horsepower locomotives will be delivered to Guilford in Buffalo, N.Y., where Ebenezer Car Co. will paint them in the GRS scheme. New locomotive numbers will be 500-519, and the units will be Maine Central-owned. The CN GP40s are the first to be painted off-line since the former D&H 7600-series GP39-2s were rebuilt and repainted by Morrison-Knudsen in the early 1980s. Our thanks to Jack Armstrong, *RailPace* magazine columnist for the details.

Edaville Reborn

Seacoast member Roger Wilson of Cape Elizabeth and Maine Narrow Gauge authority Bob MacDonald of Gray visited Edaville recently. Bob E-mailed the following information: "Though not so much Maine Narrow Gauge, per se, now (Edaville) is actually bigger than ever—more lights, exhibits, and things for kids. Plans for much more, too. Jack Flag has a 'thing' about cabooses. There must be a dozen or more around the grounds. (He) has a Santa Fe diesel, I think an F-7 (whatever) with the Santa Fe warbonnet design. The engine might be a B&M in Santa Fe colors. All the old-time signals around the loop are functional. Worthwhile seeing." Thanks for the report, Roger and Bob.

Prototype Railspotting

There were some interesting freight cars waiting to be loaded at Portland Terminal Co. Yard 8, Commercial St., Portland, in early December. Seven triple hoppers, painted black, were lettered MEC (Maine Central): 2016, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2011, 2010 and 2014. Last in line was B&M 1155, one of the smaller triple hoppers that hauls coal from Merrill's Wharf in Portland to the paper mill in Rumford. The MEC cars had new stencils. Any idea about a former owner?

And, on Christmas Eve, two of the new MEC-owned ex-CN GP40s (see above) visited Rigby Yard, So. Portland. A helpful engineer separated the bright, shiny wide-cab 506 and 513 from a string of six diesel units that had arrived earlier in the morning on an eastbound freight. We'll have modeling tips in the next issue.

—Ron Palmquist

President's Message

(Continued from Page one)

soliciting your help in small ways. If you want to help in larger ways, I surely will not stop you (except for health reasons)! We need judges, raffle ticket sellers, transportation coordinators (drivers and seekers of the lost), layout tours, advertising, clinics, people to coordinate facilities and equipment and most of all people to work with other people. Ideally, if every one gets a taste of doing several things, no one will overdose on any one thing.

The next two to three Division meetings are very important as far as the planning and organizing process is concerned. We need to pick crews, crew chiefs and an alternate crew chief so that each area functions as painlessly as possible. If you have a strong interest don't wait for the meetings. E-mail me at ruthcannon@ime.com or call me, 207-786-3929, to let me know your interests.

GARDEN RAILROADS SIG

An SIG (Special Interest Group) for garden railroads that is not affiliated with NMRA is attempting to form a very informal group centered around a monthly newsletter, layout visits and some level of public displays. Douglas Johnson, P.O. Box 355, Hollis Center, ME 04042 (207-929-4015) drj1me@loa.com is the primary contact.

At least two Seacoast members belong to the Vermont Garden Railway Society, which Doug helped organize. Doug has moved back to Maine, sold insurance to the forest products industry prior to retirement and formerly lived in the Portland area. The group most likely will appeal to all ability levels and will emphasize horticultural as well as modeling interests. Please share this with your spouse and friends in case they are interested.

Division Business

Minutes of Seacoast Division meeting on October 21, 2000.

The meeting of the Division opened at 1:30 p.m. in Rochester, N.H., with four trustees and seven members attending. Membership now is 57, including two new members.

Our treasurer, Tim Byrne, has resigned because of personal reasons, and all funds and records have been turned over to the president. Pres. Larry Cannon has opened a new account that has a balance of \$816.79; outstanding bills are around \$180.00.

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read.

Larry Cannon and Dwight Smith were nominated for re-election to the board, and as there were not other nominations, they were elected.

The regular Director's meeting was recessed.

Pres. Larry Cannon picked Richard Breton as Vice-President, Terry King as Secretary and Tom Coulombe as Treasurer. The Board of Directors accepted these presidential appointments.

The regular meeting resumed with a discussion about the Division hosting a Northeastern Region convention in Portland, Maine, in the spring of 2002. A number of volunteers have been recruited so far. A number of hotels in Portland have expressed an interest in hosting the convention. The convention will be a little different as there will be no fan trip. There will be mini-trips to places like the Seashore Trolley Museum, The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum and the WW&F Railroad in Alna, with other places being considered, too. A non-rail tip

could be a shopping excursion to L.L. Bean's in Freeport and/or The Old Port Exchange area of downtown Portland.

Good clinics will be a strong point of the convention, as it was in Lyndonville, Vt. last spring.

A motion was made, and passed, to go ahead with the convention.

Paul Lessard will write the clinic descriptions. Larry Cannon will be the convention chairman, and Sandy Roberts will be in charge of transportation. It was voted to let Larry Cannon handle the site selection.

The next meetings will be on January 13th, 2001, in Rochester, N.H., March 10th, 2001 in Lewiston and in North Conway/ Intervale in May.

Respectfully submitted,
Terrence King, Secretary

Division Member's Report

Not Just Another Train Show

The 18th Annual Bedford Boomers Exhibition by Paul G. Lessard

A few weeks ago, on Nov. 5, 2000, I was a participant in the annual Bedford Boomers Exhibition that took place at McKelvie School In Bedford, N.H. Approximately 2,300 people attended this event.

For those who are not familiar with this event, let me say that it is not just another train show. This exhibition is strictly non-commercial (no vendors are allowed) and has been throughout its entire history. It's main purpose is to introduce to the public the many varied railroad activities of this great hobby. There is no fixed charge for admission, but a modest donation is requested to cover expenses.

Several model railroad clubs operating their modular layouts. Many interesting clinics are scheduled throughout the day. And, there are things happening outdoors as well, including live steam trains and track speeder displays. Children are encouraged to participate in the you-run-it toy train layouts.

In my initial involvement with this event, I assisted the Amherst Railway Society with train operations. The following year, I conducted a demonstration in scratchbuilding with styrene and have been doing so every year since. The exhibition's organizers are always looking for new participants and different activities. I have enjoyed immensely my time spent at this show, and look forward to next year's exhibition in early November.

Rail Clinic 2001

March 17, 2001

\$8.00 advance sale, \$10 at the door

10 a.m. to 3 p.m., United Methodist Church, Auburn

Info: 207/933-2477

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Sponsored by The Great Falls Model Railroad Club

The Switch Tower

2001 CALENDAR

There are a number of upcoming events that may be of interest to model railroaders living in the Seacoast Division, NMRA territory. Please contact the editor if you have an event to publicize in our Calendar.

January 13 -- Seacoast Division Meeting, Rochester, N.H. (For detailed agenda, see newsletter page one.)

February 3-4 -- Amherst Railway Society, Big Railroad Hobby Show - 2001! Better Living Center, Young Building, Stroh Building, Eastern States Exposition, Memorial Dr., West Springfield, Mass. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. both days. Two-day admission \$10. Daily admission: adults \$6, under 12 \$1, under 5 free. Nearly five-1/2 acres of railroading. Manufacturers, displays, dealers, flea market, live steam, museums, railroad companies. Over 35 layouts. Info: ARA, P.O. Box 718, Warren, MA 01083-00718. Web: <http://www.AmherstRail.org>

February 10 -- Whitefield Lions Club Dollhouse & Train Show, Augusta Armory, Western Ave., Augusta, Maine.

March 10 -- Seacoast Division Meeting, Lewiston, Maine. Info: Terry King, P.O. Box 188, East Livermore, ME 04228-0188, telephone 207/933-2477, E-mail tking@megalink.net

March 17 -- RAIL CLINIC 2001, United Methodist Church of Auburn, 439 Park Ave., Auburn, Maine. Clinics all day — 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; no dealers, just model railroading. Sponsored by the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. Admission: \$8.00 advance sale, \$10.00 at the door. Info: Terry King, P.O. Box 188, East Livermore, ME 04228-0188, telephone 207/933-2477, E-mail tking@megalink.net

April 21 -- Downeast Railroad Club Train Show, Atrium Inn, Cooks Corner, Brunswick, Maine. Model trains (new and used),

art, books, videos, photos, white elephant table. Operating model railroads. Admission: \$3.00, kids under 12 free, family max \$9.00. Food & drinks, too. Info: Bonnie Bergeron, 207/729-58716, or, evenings, Ron Golek 207/443-6869.

April 22 -- Hooksett Lions Club Annual Model Railroad Show, Memorial Jr. High School, Hooksett, N.H. Info: Bill Driscoll, 603/747-3492.

May -- Seacoast Division Meeting, Intervale, N.H. Info: Terry King, P.O. Box 188, East Livermore, ME 04228-0188, telephone 207/933-2477, E-mail tking@megalink.net

Summer -- NMRA National Convention, St. Louis, Mo.

September 22 -- 2nd Annual Train Show sponsored by the Portland O-Gauge Model Railroad Club, Southern Maine Technical College, South Portland. Info: John Sholtis, 883-7400.

October 27 -- Ammonoosuc Valley Railway Association Train Show, National Guard Armory, Littleton, N.H. Info: Bill Driscoll, 603/747-3492.

November 11 -- 19th Annual Bedford Boomers Model Railroad Show, McKelvie School, Bedford, N.H.

NMRA Bulletin Delayed

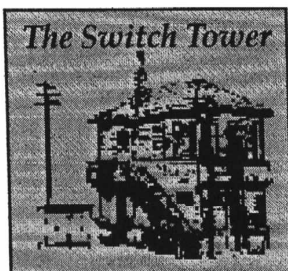
Where is your copy of the NMRA Bulletin? Well, the Customer Service Department of the NMRA sent me the following explanation:

"We changed printing companies a few months back and it is taking a little time to get caught up. We are hoping that by February they will have everything back on schedule. The November Bulletin was mailed out from the printer Dec. 18, 2000, but because of the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it may be delayed a day or two by the post office. The December Bulletin should be mailed out before New Year's Day and you should see it within 7-10 days after it is sent from the printer. Our 2001 calendar has also been mailed out. We received notice that it was sent out Dec. 24, 2000. You should be receiving this as well. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. Thank you for supporting NMRA and the hobby of model railroading"

— Editor

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