

# The Switch Tower

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region,  
National Model Railroad Association

Richard Breton, *President* -- Bill Gaver, *Vice President*  
Terrence P. King, *Secretary* -- Tom Coulombe, *Treasurer*



Volume Eleven

Second Quarter, 2004

Number Two

*President's Message*

## National Model Railroad Association - Much More Than HO Scale

*by Rich Breton, President, Seacoast Division,  
Northeastern Region, NMRA*

### **Think Spring – Think Garden Railroads**

One misconception I often hear when discussing NMRA / Seacoast Division, while hosting an information table for example, is that the NMRA devotes its attention only to HO scale. This needs to be corrected, much effort on new standards is towards the larger scales. One of the fastest growing parts of the hobby is garden railroading. I have seen very impressive garden railroads in the past few years. This scale also works on indoor layouts, as much detail can be built into models.

Our next Seacoast Division meeting will be at the Hartmann's in Intervale, NH on Sunday May 2 at 10:00 AM. The focus of this meeting will be on larger scales, especially on garden railroads. We will have clinics on large scales, including a session on maintenance by Scotty who is responsible for maintenance of the many trains at the museum. The Brass Caboose stocks many large scale model railroad products so you can have a chance to see the many options available first hand. Please support the Hartmanns who help us each year by letting us use meeting space and preparing a delicious hot lunch in their Glacier Café.

In preparation for our model railroad programs for beginners at the Wolfeboro Library program last November, I accumulated several models in different scales. While preparing for these presentations, I found I was learning much more about the other scales. I started developing a special interests in the popularity of the larger scales. I learned how fast S scale is growing, with several active companies promoting this scale, track and models are highly detailed. Similarly, there are many fine O scale products, visible

both in scale model layouts and classic toy train also known as high rail and scale models. More hobby options exist today with a large spectrum of interests and opportunities, than ever before. This flexibility gives opportunity to new modelers of all ages, and including the entire family.

Garden railroads attraction is the chance to involve the entire family. Often one family member has interest in gardening and landscaping, another may have interest in woodworking or masonry, and another trains. The trains impart motion into the garden. A special theme often develops, such as logging, narrow gauge, mining railroad, or western theme. This is clearly lots of fun and can involve younger children as the locomotive and rolling stock is durable and easy to handle.

Think Spring bring the trains to the outdoors, so enjoy the warmer weather.

## Dwight Smith, Master Model Railroader #329



Please join us in congratulating Dwight Smith (above right) of Intervale, N,H, the latest NMRA member in our area to receive the accomplishment of Master Model Railroader.

Dwight has been an active model railroader for many years, with lots of modeling, writing, and volunteer achievements. Dwight received his MMR from Paul Allard (above left), who is the NMRA Achievement Program Chairman for the association's Northeastern Region. The presentation was made at the January meeting of the Seacoast Division, held at the Portland Transportation Center, terminal for Amtrak's Downeaster train and Concord Trailways buses.

Dwight earned his MMR by completing work on seven of 11 basic requirements -

- 5/98 Golden Spike Award
- 5/99 Master Builder - Cars
- 8/99 Master Builder - Structures
- 9/99 Master Builder - Scenery
- 4/00 Model RR Author
- 5/02 Chief Dispatcher
- 10/03 Association Volunteer
- 11/03 Model RR Engineer - Electrical

Congratulations to Dwight for his efforts.

*(Article edited from a variety of sources.*

*Our thanks to all who contributed.)*

## Share the fun of model railroading.

### **You're Invited!** **Seacoast Division Meeting** **Sunday, May 2, 2004**

**10:00am-3:00 pm**

Hartmann's Train Museum, Route  
302, Intervale, NH

**Brief Business Meeting 10:00 am**

NER Spring 2005 convention

planning

Other business

**Clinics & Activities**

Maintenance of large-scale trains

Presentation on state of the

hobby business by Roger Hartmann

Show and Tell



# The Switch Tower

Volume Eleven, Number Two, Second Quarter 2004

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Terrence P. King, *Secretary*  
Tom Coulombe, *Treasurer*  
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Ron Palmquist, Sandy Roberts  
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From the Editor's Desk

## Along the R-O-W

### M&E Alco's Coming?

Maine's newest railroad is the **Maine Eastern**, operated by the Morrystown and Erie Railroad of New Jersey. "The M&E operates four lines in Morris County, all connected by trackage rights over NJ Transit. Freight is interchanged with Norfolk Southern at Lake Junction, and carried to customers over a 158-mile system of tracks," says the M&E website. "In July 2003, the M&E was named the interim operator of the Octoraro Railroad, which is located in Chester County, PA."

The Maine Eastern will run trains on the former Maine Central Railroad lower road from Brunswick to Gardiner, the former MEC Rockland Branch from Brunswick to Rockland and the Atlantic Branch of the MEC in Rockland. Previous operators of the 85.19 miles of state-owned track were Safe Handling of Auburn, and the Maine Coast Railroad. The Morrystown & Erie is known for using Alco locomotives. Any Alcos headed for Maine, you think?

### Digital Pics

A brave new world has opened to those of us who have been shooting railfan slides for many years. It's digital photography. On Sunday, March 14, a family outing took us to Burlington, Vt. During a brief pause at White River Jct., it was a pleasure to find a diesel locomotive idling on a side track near the depot. (See photo on insert page. Any ideas of the lineage of the Washington County GP38?) Shot a few pictures, and upon returning home, disc inserted into my computer slot produced the finished photos - no mailing film to Kodak and waiting a week. I'm hooked.

### Trivia

Before Amtrak began operating an AutoTrain to Florida, there was a private AutoTrain Corp. that ran colorful equipment for people and their cars from Virginia to Florida. When was their first trip?

### MeC Coach

I received an e-mail from Branchline trains about using their green, unlettered coach to model Maine Central heavyweight coach 219, as seen in the photo used in the last issue of *The Switch Tower*. "How did I miss this one?" I was told by Branchline's Bill Schneider. His recommendation is to use Eastern Car Works Co. four-wheel Pullman

trucks, part number 9005, for the trucks required to replace the six-wheelers that come with the coach kit. "I have a few cars on my layout running these trucks," he said, "and they work fine."

### Big RR Show "As Good As Ever"

The Amherst Railway Society reports that paid attendance at its 2004 Big Railroad Hobby Show was 18,211- and that doesn't include children under five, vendors and volunteers. The Society newsletter reports that the 2005 show will be held January 29 and 30 next year. For more info and photos, check out the society's website - [www.amherstrail.org](http://www.amherstrail.org).

### Open House

Seacoast's Vice President, Bill Gaver, reports that he has scheduled an Open House on Saturday and Sunday, September 11 and 12, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM at his Balboa Granada and Eastern Railroad. The BG&E is located at the Defern Depot in Brookfield, NH. A description of Bill's 1941-era operations-oriented, DCC-controlled freelance-prototype HO model railroad can be found at [www.deferndepot.com](http://www.deferndepot.com)

### Trivia Answer

December 6, 1971.

- Ron Palmquist, editor

Division Business

## Minutes of Seacoast Division meeting on March 6, 2004

The president Rich Breton opened the meeting, held in Rochester, N.H., at 1:10 a.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed.

Rich Breton explained the display that was set up at the Dover library.

Rich Breton thanked Bill Gaver for his exceptional work at the Wolfboro library.

The convention was discussed. Proposals from the hotels were shown, along with some proposed clinics. Paul Lessard will handle the outside activities, Terry King the raffle and Larry Cannon will handle the clinics. Rail fan trips were discussed as well as possible layout tours. We will try to have clinics for beginners early in the program. The Bedford Boomers will have their modular layout at the convention.

The long-range plan of the NMRA was discussed and it was noted that a ballot is in the Scale Rails. Members were urged to vote for it.

Emmons Lancaster was nominated for the Spate award.

The next meeting will be at the Hartmann Museum on Sunday May 2 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

-Terrence P. King Secretary -2-

## Lack of clearance planning can catch up with you

by Stan Jordan

The newspaper headlines read "Railcars Sideswipe on Curve" or "Double-stacked Containers Strike Bridge". What do they have in common? Railroad clearances. Because clearances are critically important to railroads, they are likewise of concern to model railroaders.

If you build a layout without regard to clearances, your operation of your layout will find the clearance problems for you, sooner or later!

What are clearances? Clearances are the dimensions, measured horizontally from the centerline of the track (midway between the rails) and vertically from the tops of the rails) to any object beside or above a track. A railroad will measure such objects out to a distance of at least 8' but not normally more than about 10'. It will also measure vertical clearances from the top of rail up to at least 22' but not normally more than 24'. This information is recorded in a convenient form for each segment of the railroad so that the dimensions of any future rail shipment along a segment of the railroad can be checked against the available clearances before allowing movement of that shipment. The checking process is more involved than is necessary to relate here. Fortunately, modelers have a simpler method of making sure that their layout has adequate clearances.

Modelers should focus primarily on 1) providing a 'clearance outline' along each track that will allow the locomotives, rail cars and loads on them to safely clear all objects beside and above each track and 2.) providing sufficient spacing between the centerlines of adjacent tracks (particularly on curves but also along straight track) so locomotives, cars and/or loads will not sideswipe (hit) as they pass each other.

For item 1), the easiest way to provide an adequate 'clearance

outline' of side and vertical clearances to objects along tracks is to use the NMRA Standards Gage by properly placing the Gage on the track and sliding it along the track past each object (overhead bridge, tunnel portal, rock cut, etc) to be sure the object doesn't hit the Gage. Today, railroads would likely require that any new structure built beside/over its track be at least 23 feet above the rails and have side clearance of at least nine feet. The HO scale Mark IV Gage provides a 'clearance outline' of 21 feet, nine inches above the tops of the rails and a side clearance of seven feet, six inches from the centerline of track. Some double-stack container cars measure 21 feet, three inches high so, be careful—some through truss bridges models will not clear a double-stack as they were based on bridges built years before double-stacks were used.

These clearances are primarily for main tracks and passing sidings. Clearances for other sidetracks can be reduced; such as for enginehouse doorways and doorways into warehouses.

For item 2.), as I intend to use 85 foot passenger cars, double-stacks and modern auto-racks which are long, I chose to lay pieces of test track to represent parallel tracks on curves of various combinations of radii to determine what minimum track center spacing would be acceptable to me for safely passing various types of long cars. In brief, for combinations of radii between 26 inches and 33.5 inches, I determined that the track center spacing should be a minimum of 2.25 inches with 2.5 inches being preferred. On tangent (straight) tracks, the minimum track center spacing should be 2 inches with 2.25 inches preferred.

These are some considerations to think about; however, you are the Chief Engineer of your railroad, so the final choice of clearances is yours.

*Stan Jordan is retired from the Maine Central Railroad where he was Assistant Clearance Engineer and Assistant Engineer of Structures. He is building a multi-helix model railroad, the Acadian Railroad, in the basement of his home in South Portland, Maine.*

Division Business

### Jan. 17, 2004 meeting minutes

This meeting was held at the Amtrak – Concord Bus station in Portland.

The meeting was called to order by President Rich Breton at 1:00 p.m. with 23 members and nine guests in attendance.

Paul Allard, the Northeastern Region Achievement Program Chairman, presented Dwight Smith with his Master Model Railroader award. This followed a Power Point Presentation by the president that covered some of Dwight's modeling career, his career with the Boston & Maine Railroad, and his involvement with the formation of the Conway Scenic Railroad.

Part of the Power Point presentation dealt with the Wolfboro Library project in November. Bill Gaver did a fantastic job organizing to displays and the lecture series. It was also noted that The Great Falls Model railroad Club also had a display at the Lewiston Me library in November.

-3- The 2005 spring convention for the North-

eastern Region was discussed. It is hoped that we will be able to hold it on May 20, 21 and 22, 2005. Rich is working on getting a package together to be sent to the area hotels and will have this information for the next meeting.

The NMRA's long-range plan was discussed. The president told of our experience of trying to obtain new members at the Bedford Boomers show in November. Once this is approved, membership recruitment should show an improvement.

Ron Palmquist, our Editor, will be sending out some test PDF files. He hopes to be in a position of E-mailing the newsletter by the time "one dues structure" is in effect.

The president presented Tom Coulombe with his life membership card.

There will be a swap meet after the next meeting. Members are encouraged to bring items that they have and would like to find a new home for.

The next meeting is in Rochester NH at

the Community Center at 1:00 p.m. We hope to be at Hartmann's Museum in Intervale NH on May 2. Rich will confirm this with the Hartmann's.

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

#### Show & Tell

Rich Breton did a presentation on a small building to fill a small triangle on his layout.

Larry Cannon displayed some photos of Rutland RS-2 locomotives with numbers that Rutland never had. It seems that ALCO wanted to sell some RS's to Rutland and had their art department make up some photos showing how they would look in Rutland colors. Rutland had RS-1's and RS-3's but never had RS-2's.

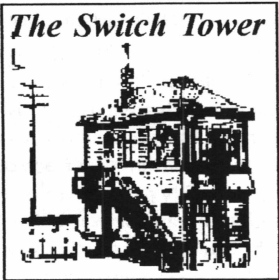
- Respectfully submitted,  
Terry King, Secretary

Deadline for articles and other submissions for the next issue of *The Switch Tower* is June 1, 2004.



**Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA**

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## The Switch Tower Calendar

Got a model railroad or railfan event you believe would interest Seacoast Division members and friends? Contact the editor at [Musicnw@maine.rr.com](mailto:Musicnw@maine.rr.com)

**April 10, 2004, Saturday.**

**4th Annual Sanford Lions Club All-gauge Model Railroad Show.** Veteran's Memorial Gym, Route 109, Sanford, Maine. FMI: Cliff at 207/636-3492.

**April 18, 2004, Sunday.**

**17th Annual Upper Valley Model Railroad Show, Lebanon High School, Lebanon, N.H.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m.. Tickets: adults, \$4, \$1 per child. For more information:

<http://cvrr.railfan.net/cvmrr/shows/show2004.htm>

**April 24, 2004, Saturday.**

**Great Falls Model Railroad Show, at Hooksett Cawley Middle school, Route 27, Hooksett, N.H.** FMI: contact Terry King, 207/933-2477(phone/fax) E-mail: [tking@megalink.net](mailto:tking@megalink.net)

**April 25, 2004, Sunday.**

**9th Annual Hooksett Lions Club Model Railroad Show, Bath, Maine.** FMI: 485-3881 or 627-4662. Terry King, 207/933-2477(phone/fax) E-mail: [tking@megalink.net](mailto:tking@megalink.net)

**May 2, 2004, Sunday.**

**Seacoast Division Spring Fling, Hartmann Model Railroad & Toy Museum, Brass Caboose Hobby Shop, Glacier Express Cafe, Route 16/302, Town Hall Road, Intervale, N.H.** Details from Terry King, 207/933-2477 (phone/fax) E-mail: [tking@megalink.net](mailto:tking@megalink.net)

**May 8, 2004, Saturday.**

**Railroad Show at the Fenton Chester Arena, Lyndon Center, Vermont.** FMI: Dave Camber, 802/626-9254.

**June 11-13, 2004, Friday-Sunday.**

**Spring 2004 NER Convention, "Empire State Express," Fishkill, N.Y., hosted by Hudson Valley Division, NER/NMRA.** FMI: Convention details in NER Coupler, or from Terry King, 207/933-2477(phone/fax) E-mail: [tking@megalink.net](mailto:tking@megalink.net)

**Sept, 10-12, Friday-Sunday.**

**Fall 2004 NER Convention, hosted by the Hub Division, NER/NMRA, at the Conway Scenic Railroad, North Conway, N.H.** FMI: contact Jim Harter, at [harter@newenglandcustomrail.com](mailto:harter@newenglandcustomrail.com)

**Sept. 11-12, 2004, Saturday-Sunday.**

**Open House at Bill Gaver's Balboa, Granada & Eastern Railroad in Brookfield, N.H.** FMI: Bill Gaver, 603-522-9007.

Check out Bill's Website at [www.defemdepot.com](http://www.defemdepot.com)

**Jan. 29-30, 2005, Saturday-Sunday.**

**Amherst Railway Society Big Railroad Hobby Show.** Mark your calendars. FMI: <http://www.amherstrail.org/calendar.htm>

## Convention Corner

June 11-13

### "The Empire State Express"

Spring 2004 NER Convention  
Fishkill, New York  
July 4 - 11, 2004

"PUGET SOUND EXPRESS"  
NMRA National Convention  
Seattle, Washington

Registrar: Dave Kreidler, (425)-831-5131

E-mail: [registrar@nmra2004](mailto:registrar@nmra2004)

September 10-12, 2004

Fall 2004 NER Convention  
North Conway, N.H.

BATH SATURDAY APRIL 24  
HOOKSET SUNDAY APRIL 25

# The Juice Train

By Stan Jordan

CSX's Tropicana "Juice Train" is the nation's only food-product unit train, according to the March 2000 issue of *Trains* magazine. Service began in 1970.

The Juice Train operates six days per week between Tropicana's plant in Bradenton, Fla., and the New York metropolitan area (the Greenville Distribution Center in Jersey City, N.J.) A second Juice Train was started in 1997 between Bradenton and Cincinnati, Ohio. Empty reefers may return in small blocks, however a southbound unit train of empties was seen in January 2004.

The cars are 57-foot mechanical refrigerators. The original paint scheme was white with large lettering – TROPICANA PURE ORANGE JUICE - along the top of each

side. Athearn has a ready-to-run model of this version, #7108, which still may be available.

Subsequently, the cars were repainted orange with the TROPICANA lettering in green. Athearn produced a series of kits of this version, e.g., #2905C, #2905H, #2905K, and a two-pack, #2319. These kits are now likely hard to find.

Most recently, the prototype Tropicana reefers are smooth-sided, white, with TROPICANA in green plus an orange with a straw in it. It's not known whether a model of this version is available.

Most cars are Tropicana-owned, and bear TPIX reporting marks. However, some of the newer cars have CSXT reporting marks.

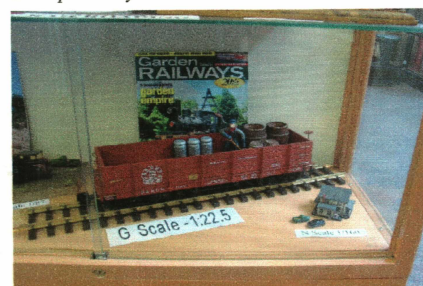


Above are photographs of the CSX Tropicana Orange Juice train northbound at Auburndale, Fla., last month (left) and of one of the new Tropicana orange juice mechanical refrigerator cars (right). "As to the size of the Juice Train: I saw one loaded train with 49 cars and another loaded NB with 55 cars," Stan Jordan recalls. "The empty SB Juice Train had 56 cars on it. It's reported that each loaded Juice Train has about one million gallons of OJ on it!" Below, Engine 802 is making up a cut of Tropicana cars on the Acadian Railroad to return south to a connection with CSX. The cars had been filled with orange juice products from the Tropicana plant in Bradenton, FL. Visible are several of the reefers with the familiar orange paint scheme; however, surprisingly, there is one white car in the original Tropicana scheme.

- digital photos by Marie Jordan



Washington County locomotive 202 was idling on a siding near the depot at White River Junction, Vt., on Sunday, March 14. Beneath the road number under the cab window are the letters VTR. Can anyone confirm whether this locomotive was the power for Burlington, Vermont's ill-fated Champlain Flyer?



Rich Breton, Seacoast Division president, photographed a model railroad display he put together recently for the Dover, N.H., Public Library. The display cases house Rich's collection of B&O box cars demonstrating the comparative size of the models in N, HO, S, O, and G scales (above), and showing a G scale gondola car (below). Thanks to Rich for shooting the photos.



## Thank You!

. . . . to those who contributed to this issue of *The Switch Tower*: **Paul Allard, Rich Breton, Terry King, Stan and Marie Jordan, Bill Gaver.** Look for an article in the next issue of *The Switch Tower* on useful websites. **Your contributions are welcome!**

And, we would like to thank the anonymous member who donated the cost of printing the color insert page for this month's *Switch Tower* newsletter.

If you would like to participate in a test of receiving *The Switch Tower* by e-mail, please submit your e-mail address to the Editor.