

The Switch Tower

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association

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



Volume Eleven

Third Quarter, 2004

Number Two

Share the fun of Model Railroading!

Division Business



Here's a progress report on the construction of the Acadian Railroad of Stan Jordan in his basement in So. Portland, Maine. Photographed by Marie Jordan, his Director of Topography, Stan explains that she fabricated the background/backdrop behind the staging yard by taking some digital photos she shot along the Fore River between So. Portland and Portland, printing the photos, carefully splicing them, and gluing them on the backdrop.

Minutes of May 02, 2004 Seacoast Division Meeting

Rich Breton, the president, opened the meeting at Hartmann's Railroad Museum and Iron Horse Hobby Shop in Intervale, N.H., at 10:10 AM. He introduced host Roger Hartman as the guest speaker for this meeting. Roger starts his talk by stating that a group from York, England had been meeting at his location for the past 5 years. One reason that large scale especially G gage in Europe, is that space is very limited in homes. He discussed those problems with manufactures about pricing and delivery requirements. He reiterated the zoning ordinances about his amusement park. He fully supports club members by offering a 10 percent

(Continued on page 3)

President's Message

Many Commitments

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

First, I would like to apologize to our dedicated Switch Tower editor Ron Palmquist. He has worked hard at getting our newsletter back on a regular schedule with established deadlines. Due to many family and work commitments, I was not able to get my newsletter information to him in a timely manner. Hopefully this has not caused Ron exceptional extra burdens and delay in publication.

I do not want to bore people with non-rail related news; such as our son and daughter graduating from high school and college; loss of my mother and her sister; or changes in the company where I have worked for 27 years which is in the process of being sold. Yet, with all these other activities in our lives we stay committed. As I have stated in past newsletters, our hobby can help us by providing an escape to our miniature worlds, and with friends to share it with.

Showing this commitment, we are plan-

ning to host the NER spring 2005 convention in Nashua, NH, at the Marriott convention center. This will be held May 13, 14, and 15, with layout tours being lined up, a fan trip on the Wilton Scenic Railroad, a slate of clinics, and other activities, some especially for beginners. If you can help please let us know. As stated at our last meeting, we again would like to hold our annual Seacoast Division meeting in November during the Bedford Boomers annual model railroad exhibition, which will be held Sunday November 7th in Bedford, New Hampshire. We still need to confirm this with the Boomers and more details will follow.

Thanks, Bill Gaver

We have many dedicated and committed members in the Seacoast Division. We are still reaping benefits from the hard work of Bill Gaver on the wonderful four-week model railroad program held last fall in conjunction with the Wolfboro Public Library. This program

was geared towards beginners and was well attended. Several people have since contacted us with suggestions and request for help with their railroad related projects. Thanks again Bill for all your effort. I regretfully must announce that Bill Gaver has sent me his letter of resignation as vice president. He still actively supports our organization, but must throttle back at this point. We understand and thank you for your active service as vice president for the last two-years, you have been a big help.

Many interesting contacts have come up since we held this program. To mention just a few, I have visited a gentleman with bone cancer with model building interest and even with limited physical abilities runs a basic train set in his apartment. I have also visited two elderly gentlemen who both have extensive train collections; we had pleasant discussions, and shared our different aspects of the hobby. I have recently been contacted by a local historical society, which would like help in planning a model railroad oriented display in their building. We have much to share even with our many commitments. Share the fun of model railroading.

Mark Your Calendars

May 13-15, 2005

**NER Spring Convention,
Nashua, N.H.**

Host: Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA

The Switch Tower

Volume Eleven, Number Three, Third Quarter 2004

The Switch Tower is the official publication of the Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, and is published four times a year. Your subscription is a benefit of membership in the Seacoast Division. Annual dues are \$8.00 for the first year (includes a Division patch), and \$5.00 a year thereafter. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Seacoast Division, NMRA, and submitted to:

Terrence P. King, Secretary
Seacoast Division, NMRA
P.O. Box 188
E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188
Phone/Fax: 207/933-2477
E-mail: tking@megalink.net

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, NMRA

- Chartered Nov. 17, 1968 -

Richard Breton, *President*

Terrence P. King, *Secretary*

Tom Coulombe, *Treasurer*

Directors: Rich Breton, Larry Cannon, MMR,

Tom Coulombe, Terry King, Paul Lessard,

Ron Palmquist, Sandy Roberts

Achievement Program Chairman -

Larry Cannon, MMR

Model Contests - Dwight Smith, MMR

Northeastern Region, NMRA

Kenneth H. May, *President*

71 Buff Cap Rd., Tolland, CT 06084-2605

Phone: 860/872-3441, e-mail: kmay@casualcorner.com

Stan Ames, *Regional Trustee*

8 Higate Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824

Phone: 978/256-3062

Paul Allard,

Regional Achievement Program Chairman

53 Rollin Irish Road, Milton, VT 05468

Phone: 802/893-2228

Joseph J. Popecki,

Editor NER Coupler

33 Woodridge Drive, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: 802/863-4121 E-mail: popecki@globalnetisp.net

Terrence P. King,

Northern New England Director

P.O. Box 188

E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188

Phone/Fax: 207/933-2477

E-mail: tking@megalink.net

NER Home Page:

<http://pages.cthome.net/kenmay/NERHOME.HTML>

National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

Headquarters Office

4121 Cromwell Road

Chattanooga, TN 37421

Phone: 423/892-2846 Fax: 423/889-4869

Webb Site: <http://www.nmra.org>

The Switch Tower

Ron Palmquist, *Editor*

16 Glen Avenue

Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-1022

207/799-1761

E-mail: Musicnw@maine.rr.com



From the Editor's Desk

Along the R-O-W

Conventions

One Northeastern Region (NER) NMRA convention has been held this year, and two others are worth mentioning in time for you to enter the dates in your calendars. In September, the NER Fall Convention is scheduled for North Conway, N.H., and has a couple of interesting attractions that might be attractive to you. The Saturday night banquet will be held on board a dinner train on the Conway Scenic Railroad. The traditional awards portion of the event will happen at breakfast the following morning at the convention hotel. See the *NER Coupler* for details, and check out the NER Convention Website, <http://www.nmra.org/convention/regional>

Spring 2005

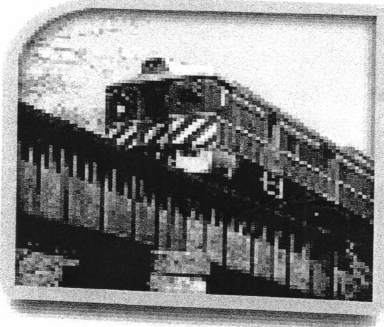
Our Seacoast Division will sponsor next year the NER Spring Convention in Nashua, N.H. According to Seacoast Pres. Rich Breton, the convention chairman, planning is on schedule. Seacoast's directors are involved with various convention activities: Paul Lessard (outside activities), Larry Cannon (clinics), Ron Palmquist (publicity) and Terry King. Use the website mentioned above for up-to-date information and check future issues of the *NER Coupler*, *The Switch Tower* and other publications.

Trivia

For many years, rolled steel rail was manufactured in 39-foot lengths. Why?

Budd Cars

Former BCRail Buddliners are operating in New Hampshire on the Wilton Scenic Railroad. The 2005 Spring NER Convention fan trip will offer a ride on this line. "Boarding point will be at the Wilton Post Office on Main St., just west of the railroad station," says Paul Lessard, who is director of out-



side activities for the convention. "The destination is Greenfield State Park, a ride of approximately 10 miles one way. I have ridden this line several times; (it's) quite scenic, following streams, crossing several bridges and passing through small towns. The equipment, (the former BC Rail Buddliners) is in good condition and should provide a pleasant experience for the riders." More information will be available in *The Switch Tower*, the *NER Coupler*, in the NMRA's *Bulletin/Scale Rails* publication and in the popular model railroad magazines.



New Maine Central Boxcars

In late June, I photographed some "new" Maine Central boxcars - Guilford gray with white lettering - on a westbound freight headed through the Wells, Maine, Amtrak depot. The 470 railroad club newsletter indicates GRS has two orders being processed - 300 TTX Plate F boxcars and 114 Plate C boxcars (see above), which are being re-bathed at GE's Juniata Shops in Pennsylvania.

Paint Balls

Finally - a modeling tip; one that I'm sure you've heard many times, in many ways. This past week, I bought a couple of bottles of Polly Scale model railroad paint. Upon arriving at home, I took the bottles to my work area, opened my tool kit and retrieved a container of "Quick Silver" BB Cal. (4.5mm) Steel Airgun Shot. I took two BBs and placed them in the newly opened bottle of paint, recovered it, then started to shake it. (My wristwatch is a non-battery, self-winder, so double-duty prevails.) Holding the bottle close to my ear, I listened for the shot to rattle around in the bottle, giving me a pretty good indication that the paint inside was mixed. You can imagine - one 350-count container of BBs will last a lifetime!

Trivia Answer

The odd 39-foot rail length was set so that it could be shipped in 40-foot long gondola cars. Now, there's an idea for your model railroad - a gon loaded with 39-foot lengths of nickel silver or brass model rail.

- Ron Palmquist -2-

Highway Vehicles for more Modeling Opportunities

By Paul G. Lessard

Having just observed my 40th anniversary in the model railroading hobby, I can't help but reflect on the scores of technical improvements in the hobby during that period of time.

I'd like to discuss one category, namely highway vehicles, a segment of the hobby that has seen tremendous improvements in both selection and quality during that 40 years.

Going back to my early days as a teenage model railroader, I can remember that there were few choices when it came to populating the streets of our model cities and towns. I believe the majority of model railroaders had a different attitude back then: Modelers bought ready-made cars and trucks, plopping them down with little

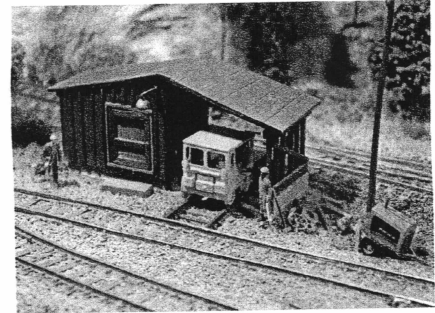
thought as to their accuracy or their quality. It was simply another "detail." Like adding power poles, signs, figures, etc. To be sure, there were exceptions, such as the long-lived Jordan line of vehicles, and Viking in the ready make category. The Lesney vehicles, though mostly British prototype, were also popular.

Fast-forward to 2004, and see the difference. Modelers have become much more sophisticated in all aspects of the hobby. One only has to look at the vehicles section of the Walthers catalog and see the tremendous selection available. Not included in this catalog are several manufactures of cast resin vehicle kits, which also add to the variety.

The new status and importance of highway vehicles has manifested itself in a new SIG (Special Interest Group), the 1/87 Prototype Vehicles Group. It's literally a hobby within a hobby.

In O and S scales, there are die-cast vehicles with surprising quality. Many are inexpensive and available from such stores as Toy World and Toys-R-Us. Thankfully, there are many manufacturers of detail items, figures and decals to enhance the quality of vehicles, or to change their appearance.

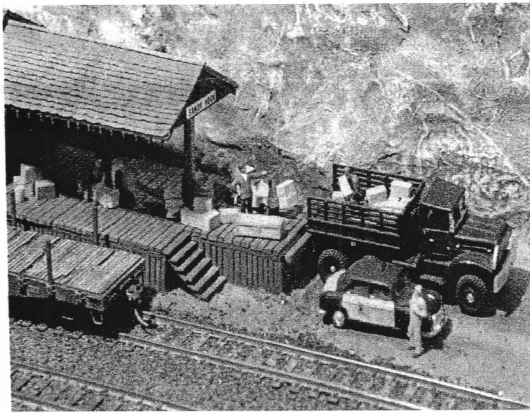
Of course, with any modeling project, one needs good research sources to create credible results. One good source is the Classic Motor Books catalog. There are books of automobiles, trucks, tractors, motorcycles, construction equipment and other transportation items, too. Some books are categorized by make and era. Barnes & Noble and other book stores usually have good transportation sec-



tions at reasonable prices. If that isn't enough, check a the AAA guidebook for museums with transportation displays..

Most of us take photographs of a favorite railroad structure or piece of rolling stock when we are out railfanning. Perhaps you may spot an abandoned vintage vehicle in a field. Snap photos now before the vehicle is consigned to a junkyard. (See *The Switch Tower, First Quarter 2004 issue*, for an article on Brad Thompson's model trucks. - Editor)Keep a file of the photos that you can use for future reference.

Even if your vehicle project is simply the addition of license plates, mirrors and weathering, it will still approve the appearance of the vehicle and add to your personal satisfaction. With more experience, you will gain the confidence to tackle more ambitious projects and produce some really distinctive vehicles.



Photos by Rich Breton from his Potomac Valleu Railroad.

Division Business

Minutes of April 2, 2004 Meeting

(continued from Page 1)

discount, as as long as they have proof of membership in a club. He also talked about the future of trains in the United States.

The Secretary's report was accepted as published and the Treasurer's report was accepted as was read. Ron Palmquist reminded everyone that the deadline for newsletter articles was June first. Rich Breton talked about the 2005 NER Spring convention to be held in Nashua at the Marriott hotel. The officers for the convention are: Chair, Rich Breton; Publicity, Ron Palmquist; Inside Activi-

ties, Larry Cannon; Clinics, Larry Cannon; Raffle, Terry King; Outside activities, Paul Lessard; Railfan trip, Paul Lessard; Layout Tours, Bedford Boomers. It will be a joint convention sponsored by the Seacoast Division, Bedford Boomers and the New Hampshire Garden Railway Society. It will be held at the Nashua Marriott on Route 3. The name and logo is *Granite State Flyer*. Tom Coulombe and Terry King will make a Powerpoint presentation of the Convention at the Spring NER convention in Fishkill, NY on June 12. A nominating committee of Sandy Roberts, Terry King and Tom Coulombe was selected to nominate (members for) two openings on the Board.

The next meeting will be in Lewiston at the Great Falls Railroad club house on August 15th. Respectfully submitted,

Tom Coulombe, secretary pro tem

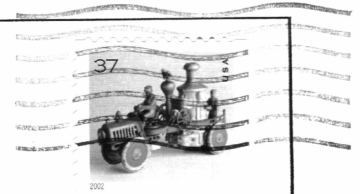
New Member

Rene Albert
63 Androscoggin Bluffs
Livermore Falls Me 04254

Thank You!

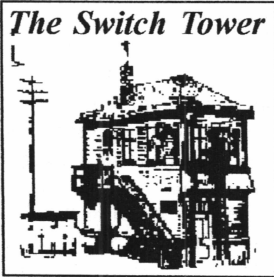
..... to those who contributed to this issue of *The Switch Tower*:
Rich Breton, Tom Coulombe, Paul Lessard, Stan Jordan, Terry King.
Your contributions are welcome!

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

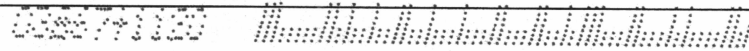


Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA

c/o Ron Palmquist
16 Glen Avenue
Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-1022



Address Service Requested



THE SWITCH TOWER CALENDAR

Got a model railroad or railfan event you believe would interest Seacoast Division members and friends? Contact the editor at Musicctw@maine.rr.com

August 7, 2004 - Saturday

Model Train & Hobby Show, Troy Howard Middle School, Lincolnville Ave., Belfast, Maine

August 15, 2004, Sunday

Seacoast Division meeting, 1-3 p.m., at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, Lewiston, Maine. FMI: Terrence P. King, Secretary, P.O. Box 188, E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188, Phone/Fax: 207/933-2477.

E-mail: 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 NER Convention page or Jim Harter, 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.deferndepot.com

September 25, 2004, Saturday

Open House at Dwight Smith's HO Northern Vermont Railway at 598 Intervale Crossroad, Intervale, N.H. 2-7 p.m. Light refreshments, guest engineers. FMI: 303-356-3416.

November 7, 2004, Sunday

Seacoast Division Annual Meeting held during the Bedford Boomers Show, Bedford, N.H.

Jan. 29-30, 2005, Saturday-Sunday

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

Mystery Photo



This is a railroad terminal somewhere in New England. If you know where it is, and the railroad it served, contact the editor who will publish your name in the next issue of the newsletter. (Photo courtesy Stan Jordan.)

Plus: Ye Olde Armchair Superintendent will discuss TellTales and their use on prototype and model railroads. And, Seacoast's Bill Gaver has accumulated a sheet of Website info that will be of interest to modelers in the next *Switch Tower*.