



The Switch Tower

**Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association**

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



Volume Fourteen

Second Quarter, 2007

Number Two

President's Message

Seacoast Division Activities vs Mother Nature – March 17, 2007; Operating Sessions Tested by March Snowstorm

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

We had a fun day planned for Seacoast Division members and guests on Saturday March 17, but Mother Nature had plans of her own. With about 10-12 inches of heavy wet snow covering the area into the middle part of Saturday our activities and attendance numbers were greatly diminished. We still had our meeting at the Bethany Covenant Church in Bedford NH but with only four members and two guests in attendance. We carpoled to pick up sandwiches and ate while reviewing a clinic on weathering techniques including some hands on experimenting.

HOME VISITS

We assessed which layouts could be visited, using our cell phones to let the host know how many were coming and at what time. We did maintain two operating sessions, one at Bruce Robinson's and one at Joel DiTrolio. I went to Joel's and had a very enjoyable afternoon, quickly forgetting the bad weather, and becoming totally engrossed in the railroad operations. As with most layout visits, I returned home inspired to try out a few of the ideas picked up at my host layout. I have yet to visit a layout without getting some inspiration to make some improvements on my layout.

DISPATCHER BITES THE DUST

Since we only had about six to seven people to operate Joel's layout, Joel suggested we go without use of a dispatcher. I expected this to quickly become a time keeper's nightmare, but this arrangement ran surprisingly well. Trains were near constantly running with passenger trains on-time and self regulated. A few tricks helped,

including use of egg timers to control duration of station stops. The operators keeping an eye out for passing sidings and close coordination of passes and holding the siding until mainline trains could pass. Time passed quickly with a most enjoyable afternoon.

I'm sure the group that went to Bruce's had a similar experience. Thank you to our four hosts for offering visits to their layouts. Thank you to Bruce and Bill for setting up the meeting and the days activities. One of our guests by lunchtime made an inquiry on how to join and looked forward to other division upcoming events.

YAHOO

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, let's bring some fun back into our organization. At both the January meeting and the March meeting we discussed some possible activities, but need your help to pull this together. This could be as simple as hosting an open house or arranging a group visit of a local museum or a train ride. Think about how you can share your talents and help other people learn more about this hobby. We now have a Yahoo Seacoast Division group set-up to more easily communicate and exchange ideas.

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual business meeting in Portland, Maine, on January 13, was well attended with good active participation. Congratulations to our new elected officers; Bill Truehart, Bruce Robinson, Larry Cannon, and Tom Coulombe. We had several interesting presentations and clinics.

On30 Alive and Well in Bangor, Maine



by Bill Benysh (photos by the author)

The Ohio River and Western Rwy. is alive and growing in Bangor, Maine. My rendition of the OR&W is under construction in On30 to utilize Bachman equipment, much of which is patterned after rolling stock used by the prototype. When "complete" the layout will occupy an area of 16' by 30' in our basement.

My layout begins as the prototype did in Bellaire, Ohio, along the Ohio River. It then proceeds westerly through a flag stop at Key, over an "S" trestle and into Captina Mines (the largest coal mine the railroad owned). The railroad turns south and passes through the towns of Armstrong Mills and Alledonia before turning west again on its way to Woodsfield, Ohio. While Woodsfield is the end of the modeled portion, the town was the headquarters and was almost midway on the 112 mile, 3-foot gauge railroad.

The prototype utilized 4-4-0, 2-6-0, and 2-8-0 loco types with most being the 2-6-0 moguls. I am pushing modelers license by planning a sawmill operation at the end of a 'long' siding serviced by either a little Shay or Climax.

Construction incorporates rigid expanded foamboard and conventional "L-girder" techniques. I have been mixing up my building sequence by starting scenery before

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Share the Fun of Model Railroading

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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

9 Riverside Dr., Rochester, N.H. 03867

E-mail: rbreton@worldpath.net

Bill Truehart, Vice President

Terrence P. King, Secretary

Tom Coulombe, Treasurer

**Directors: Rich Breton, Tom Coulombe,
Larry Cannon MMR, Terry King, Paul
Lessard, Ron Palmquist, Bill Trueheart,
Sandy Roberts, Bruce Robinson**

**Achievement Program Chairman - Education
Committee Co-Chairman**

Larry Cannon MMR

Model Contests - Dwight Smith MMR

Seacoast Division Home Page

<http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/>

Rob Carignan, Webmaster

rcarignan@mac.com

Northeastern Region, NMRA

Kenneth H. May, President

71 Buff Cap Rd., Tolland, CT 06084-2605
860/872-3441, e-mail

kenneth.may@comcast.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

Paul Allard MMR,

Regional Achievement Program Chairman

53 Rollin Irish Road, Milton, VT 05468

Phone: 802/893-2228

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

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

The Switch Tower

Ron Palmquist, Editor

16 Glen Avenue Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107

207/799-1761

E-mail: Musicnw@maine.rr.com

**Deadline for articles and
other submissions for the
next issue of The Switch
Tower is June 1, 2007.**

From the Editor's Desk

Along the R-O-W

by Ron Palmquist, Editor

Top Dog

Alan Kument, Amtrak CEO, will be in Maine next month speaking to the annual meeting of Trainriders Northeast. It will be held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland. FMI: **E-mail:** info@TrainridersNE.org



Amtrak photo

SCALE RAILS

Readers of the redone NMRA magazine, *Scale Rails*, will be interested in the convention issue that reached homes during the last week in February. Most of the issue was set aside for convention planning, with a pullout center section for elections. If you haven't sent in your ballot, do so now. Deadline is April 10th for mailing, and April 15 for receipt by Ballot Committee, 2314 Route 59, #197, Plainfield, IL 60586.

Rob's Blog

Our WebMaster, Rob Carignan, has started a "blog" with pictures of his layout construction. Here is his Website info: <http://web.mac.com/rcarignan/iWeb/Layout>

MUSIC TRACK

As readers of this column may remember, George Gershwin wrote his famous piano composition *Rhapsody in Blue* on a New York to Washington train some 80 years ago. A bit earlier, New England poet Julia Ward Howe rode a train to Colorado where she penned the lyrics to the celebrated hymn, *America the Beautiful*. She, too, was creatively influenced by a train ride - across the America's fruited plain where she witnessed amber waves of grain en route to mile high foot hills, and then climbed a 14-thousand foot high mountain - Pike's Peak - to view those illustrious purple mountains majesty. Wonder what would have happened if Ms. Howe had ridden to the peak on its cog railroad?

NARROW MINDED

The attention of the narrow gauge modeling world will be focused on Maine later this year as the 27th Annual National Narrow Gauge Convention is held in Portland Aug. 29 through Sept. 1. The convention hotel is the Holiday Inn by the Bay on Spring St. in Maine's largest city, with conventioners also housed at the Eastland Hotel a block or two away on High St. More information is available from Martha Sharpe at www.27thnarrowgaugeconvention.com. Listed as highlights are clinics, modular layouts, layout tours, manufacturer/dealer show, model and photo contests, narrow gauge steam railroading, museums and shopping with boat tours and lobster. Sounds good to me - I've always been narrow minded - how about you?

MORE VISITORS

The Amherst Railway Society reports 20,799 people attended its Railroad Hobby Show earlier this year. The dates next year - 2008 - are January 27 & 28.

RARE MILEAGE

The Amherst Society and Mass Bay RRE will sponsor a Green Mountain Railroad excursion from Rutland to Burlington, Vermont in May. FMI: 413/584-6168, or e-mail at tlowry@smith.edu.

MORE RARE MILEAGE

On Saturday May 19, the 470 Railroad Club and MRG, Inc./DownEast Rail will jointly sponsor a special Maine Eastern Railroad train from Rockland to Lisbon Falls and return, with a stop in Brunswick. FMI: email an inquiry to info@470rrclub.org or write to The 470 Railroad Club Trip Committee, 37 Longwood Drive, Portland ME 04102.

AND, THE WINNER IS . . .

Two readers submitted the correct response to the mystery "Maine" photo in the last issue. Stan Jordan says "Maine is a location on the BNSF's main line in Arizona about 14-15 miles east of Williams, Ariz. - a crossover (probably between the double-track main tracks)."

Dwight Smith says: "MAINE is a crossover on the BNSF (former ATSF) Chicago to Los Angeles double-track mainline. It is located in Arizona on the Seligman Subdivision at Milepost 362.5 about midway between Flagstaff and Williams Jct. 'Maine' can be reached by highway at Exit 178 on I40."

Each has been suitably rewarded. And, thanks for participating.

On3 alive and well in Bangor, Maine

(Continued from page 1)



benchwork and track are completed. This way I take a break from benchwork to lay some track and then break from that to rough in scenery.

The photos are taken in the Captina Mines area which is where construction began.

Any modelers in the Bangor area interested in forming a "round-robin/work group" for HO, O or other scales please contact me either by phone (207-942-0099) or email (mainebp@msn.com).



Division Business-

Maine Storm Impacts Seacoast Meeting in N.H.

Meeting began at 10:50A.M. Attendance: 4 members, 2 non-members (snowstorm forced many to change their plans). We have about 180-190 NMRA members from Maine and NH who are members of the Seacoast Division.

Reviewed last meeting minutes, motion made to accept the minutes from last meeting with changes noted.

No treasurer's report at this time

Communication read; Paul Allard E-mail about the great division work given for the past conventions. The E-mail was in reference to establishing layout tour guide standards.

Interest and activities suggestions made:

- Model contest;
- White Elephant;

Bring spouses with to the meetings; consider coordinating with a companion event such as quilt show or knitting;

Have a work session, at an individual's home, club layout or Community Center;

Multiple small programs to cover a larger area;

Layout tours after the meetings;

Workshop or clinic day, include a lunch prepared by a small group (church, school, etc) as their own fund raiser;

Learning on non-rail group projects / or a hands on projects to work upon, such as "build a kit".

Good location for meeting is Conway area to cover north central area.

Find new areas for meeting in each quarter; make assignments in each geographical quadrant.

Rail fan activities or museum visits for more family fun activities.

Visit to Washicum Live steam could be arranged.

The business meeting ended at: 11:57A.M.

SHOW/TELL:

Rich Breton talked about weathering

Layout tours: Bruce Robinson, Joel DiTrolio, John Newick, Michael Grahame Layouts

Robbie Breton, secretary pro-tem, 3/18/2007

Division Business

Minutes of Nov.6, 2006 meeting held in Bedford N.H.

The meeting opened at 2:05 p.m. with six members present. A letter was read from the *Bedford Boomers* welcoming us to their show. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the *Switch Tower* with out change.

The nominations presented by the nominating committee were read. They are as follows;

- Tom Coulombe – three years
- Larry Cannon – three years
- Bruce Robinson – three years
- William Truehart – one year

The one year term is part of an expansion of the board of directors from seven members to nine members as mandated by our constitution because of membership growth. After this election, there will be three board members up for election each year.

Nominations were opened to the membership. As there were no further nominations they were closed until our annual meeting. Nominations will be reopened at our annual meeting, just before the elections.

Hosting a Northeastern Region convention next spring was discussed. The Region has an open date and was wondering if we would want to host a scaled down convention. It was felt by the membership that this would be hard to do on such short notice. No action was taken on this idea.

Our annual meeting was discussed and it appears that we will have to rent a place to hold it. A motion was made and passed to spend up to \$100.00 for a location for this and future annual meetings.

A motion was made and passed to allow the secretary to purchase envelopes to notify N.M.R.A. members in Maine and N.H. of our annual meeting.

The president suggested that we have a Rail Fun Group. This group would supply the membership with ideas for rail fun events that we could do as an organization. Bill Gaver will help with this project.

A book was donated by Rich Breton. The title is Track Side Scenery.

The meeting closed at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Terry King, Secretary

Thank You!

..... to those who contributed to this issue of *The Switch Tower* : Rich Breton, Terry King, Bill Benysh, Robbie Breton, Stan Jordan, Dwight Smith.



Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA

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



Address Service Requested

Share the fun of Model Railroading!

Division Business

MINUTES OF SEACOAST DIVISION MEETING of JANUARY 13, 2007 *(revised)*

The meeting opened at 1:20 p.m. in at the First Congregational Church in South Portland, Maine, with 17 members and guests present. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as printed. The treasurer's report was accepted as read.

President Rich Breton opened the meeting by discussing the future of the division.

The Editor reported that he is printing 125 copies of the *Switch Tower*, and mailed 106 copies. His report was accepted, as read.

There was a discussion on our web site. There is a link to it from the N.M.R.A. site.

Mailing for the annual meeting was discussed and we need to keep the material to three pages to stay under 1 oz. We receive 75-cents per member each year, which will pay for this mailing.

The Adult Ed course at Timberline Regional High School in New Hampshire has earned the Division \$288. Expenses should be under \$100.00.

Nominations were opened and there were no further nomination for officers. It was move and seconded to elect the proposed officers by popular acclaim.

The elected officers are;

Tom Coulombe, Larry Cannon, and Sandy Roberts.

The meeting was recessed and the Board of Directors meeting was opened. Richard Breton was reelected president and all of his appointments from last year were reappointed. With that done the B.O.D.'s meeting was closed and the annual meeting was re-opened.

There was a discussion on assisting new M.N.R.A members who relocated in this area with finding fellow N.M.R.A. members.

Our next meeting will be on March 17, in Manchester NH and will feature operating sessions after the meeting. There will be a white Elephant table as a back-up.

Rich Breton donated a book on styrene modeling by Evergreen Scale Models for a door prize at a future meetin.

After the meeting we had a clinic on open car loads.

Bruce Robinson did a clinic on scenery using a 2-ft by 2-ft display.

- *Terrence P. King, Secretary*

Calendar Planner

April 14, 2007, Sunday, Sanford Lions Club Annual All-Gauge Model Railroad Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. FMI: Bill Cataneuse, 207.636.3842.

April 22, 2007, Sunday, 12th Annual Model Railroad Show, sponsored by the Lions Club. Hoocksett Cawley Middle School, Rte. 27, 3 miles north of I-93 Exit 9N. FMI: 603.627.4662.

April 28, 2007, Saturday, Spring Model Railroad Show. Mt. Ararat High School, U.S. Route 201, Topsham, Maine. Sponsor: Great Falls Model Railroad Club. FMI: 207.933.2477.

May 5, 2007, Saturday, 30th Annual Model Railroad Show, sponsored by the Ammonoosuc Valley Railway Ass'n. Haverhill Cooperative Middle School, off N.H. Route 116. FMI: Bill Driscoll, 603.747.3492.

August 11, 2007, Saturday. Gorham, N.H., The Gorham Historical Society will stage several events to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the town's Grand Trunk Railway station. FMI: Mary Jane Ames at 603-466-2085.

October 18-21, 2007, Thursday - Sunday. Northeastern Region Convention in Albany, N.Y., sponsored by the Hudson-Berkshire Division.