



The Switch Tower

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

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



Volume Fourteen

Third Quarter, 2007

Number Three

Midsummer Meeting to be held in Bedford, New Hampshire July 14

President's Message

Seacoast Division Activities Back On Track? Layout Tours and Operating Sessions Planned for July Meeting

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

We are repeating the fun day activities planned for Seacoast Division members and guests on Saturday July 14. The original March 17 event was severely impacted by a large snowstorm. We do not expect any snowstorms in mid-July. Our business meeting is planned at the Bethany Covenant Church in Bedford N.H. for 10:00 am with clinics planned.

LAYOUT TOURS

During the afternoon we have three layouts with operating sessions planned. You can sign-up to indicate your preference at the meeting, or in advance, so we can coordinate directions and numbers of operators.

The three operating sessions planned are at Bruce Robinson's HO scale Valley Junction RR, Joel DiTrollo's HO scale Rutland RR- Bellows Falls Subdivision and Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club. Hopefully we will also have two layouts in Southern New Hampshire open to visit as well, John Newick N scale layout and Mike Grahame's HO scale UP&SP Eastern Division. Thank you to Bruce Robinson and Bill Trueheart for again setting up the meeting room and the days fun activities.

MODEL RAILROADING FUN

I had a chance to look back at some model railroading nostalgia recently. A friend gave me a box of older kits, rolling stock, books and Walther's catalog from 1977. Also found some old VCR tape recordings of the well done 1987 NMRA sponsored television series "All About Trains". I was amazed to see how much our hobby has changed in the last 20 years. The biggest changes were in the controls area with extensive DCC control system availability,

the variety of accurate prototype models and the amount of "ready to run" equipment available. With all of this we can see the overall quality of layouts has improved as well. But let us not forget what got us into the hobby, the chance to design and build our own miniature operating railroad system, and to meet and share this with good friends. The spark and inspiration is still there.

Calendar Planner

July 14, 2007, Seacoast Division Meeting in Bedford, NH, 10:00 am Bethany Covenant Church at 1 Covenant Way in Bedford, N.H.

August 11, 2007, Model Railroad Show & Centennial Celebration of the Grand Trunk Railroad Station, 10:30 am – 4:30pm, Gorham Historical Society, 25 Railroad Street Gorham, N.H.

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

November 2,3, 2007, First annual Craftsman Structure Show 2007, Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Mass. FMI: info@css07.com

Thank You!

..... to those who contributed to this issue of The Switch Tower : Rich Breton, Terry King, Bill Trueheart, Robbie Breton, Stan Jordan, Rick Shoup.

**Share the Fun of
Model Railroading**

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**Deadline for articles and other
submissions for the Fourth
Quarter issue of The Switch
Tower is September 1, 2007.**

From the Editor's Desk

Along the R-O-W

by Ron Palmquist, Editor

CLUB NEWS

The Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club's latest fund-raising kit is Cherryfield (Maine) Station, located on the old Calais Branch of the Maine Central Railroad. If interested, contact the club at P.O. Box 745, Blue Hill, ME 04614.

GREAT FALLS DONUTS

What does the Great Falls Model Railroad Club in Lewiston and donuts have in common? Well, the club has just completed acquisition of a 6,000 square foot building that used to house a donut bakery in Auburn. Congratulations to the club members for thinking about the future of their fine organization. As viewed in the accompanying photo, the club will occupy the lower level with the upper level available for lease. Its address is 144 Mill St., Auburn, Maine. The club is conducting a fund raising drive. If interested, contact Terry King. His address is listed in the masthead at left.



TRIVIA

Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail services to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000-mile route system. What states are not served by Amtrak?

BAR CARS TO MEC?

After the Maine Central sold off its fleet of streamlined passenger cars, it continue to operate "Merchandise Trains" on passenger schedules. Probably mail contracts were involved, and express and milk. To handle the load, the MEC bought some equipment from the BAR. Could the cars have been the following RPO/Express/Baggage cars that cannot be accounted for?

Prewar: American Flyer cars

566 – Baggage-mail car; Blt Pullman-Standard July-October 1937, disposition unknown (MeC?)

567 – Baggage-mail car; Blt Pullman-Standard July-October 1937,

disposition unknown (MeC?)

568 – Baggage-mail car; Blt Pullman-Standard July-October 1937, disposition unknown (MeC?)

569 – Baggage-mail car; Blt Pullman-Standard June 1938, disposition unknown (MeC?)

Postwar: Lightweight passenger cars

531 – Baggage car, Blt. American Car & Foundry, Aug. 1946, disposition unknown (MeC?)

ANSWER TO AMTRAK TRIVIA

No Amtrak trains operate in Alaska, Hawaii, North Dakota and Wyoming.

MAT WILL BE MISSED

Our sincerest sympathies to the family of Mathew Rines who died in mid-April. Mat will be remember by railfans as a professional railroader, with 22-years at the Maine Central Railroad, and as a fellow hobbyist. At the time of his death he was membership secretary of the 470 Railroad Club of Portland and a frequent contributor to its newsletter. He also worked at the Conway Scenic Railway in New Hampshire. His smiling face and quiet demeanor were a welcome sight, especially at home games of the Portland Pirates ice hockey team. Mat will be seriously missed by all who knew him as well as by the organizations in which he was involved.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, B&MHL

"Not many short lines can make the claim they are more than a century old, but the Maine's Belfast & Moosehead Lake can - in fact, it celebrated its 140th anniversary this year. It was on Feb. 28, 1867, that Governor Joshua L. Chamberlain signed a charter for the B&ML. One of the oldest continuously operating railroads in the United States, the B&ML was originally intended to run from Belfast all the way to Moosehead Lake. Ultimately, the route ran 33 miles from Belfast to Burnham Junction, where it connected with the Maine Central. The B&ML Railroad Preservation Society was formed in early 2006 to focus on the restoration, preservation and operation of the B&ML. The society operates historic locomotives and other rolling stock formerly used by the B&ML, and a railroad history education center. The 140th year of the B&ML will include excursions for school children; the regular season began June 16, and runs through mid-October. For more information, visit www.unitytrainmuseum.org."(Thanks to a member for this informative e-mail. - Ed)

Along the Seacoast Line



Since the Acadian's CEO visited Texas, the railroad has started seeing loads come on-line from Texas roads such as MKT, T&P and KCS as shown in this photo of the cars being switched at Grand Haven. Having a problem with one of the cars derailing and found it was loaded with Mexican jumping beans.
- Stan Jordan

With the disaster that struck the California orange juice crop, the Acadian Railway's consignees acted quickly to secure a supply of fresh orange juice for their customers. Shown here is an extra, arriving in Grand Haven, hauled by Maine Central power bringing a string of Tropicana mechanical reefers loaded with orange juice from the Tropicana plant in Bradenton, Florida.
- Stan Jordan



Rich Breton (left) and Bruce Robinson present clinics as part of the Division's outreach program. (See page 4.)



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Share the fun of Model Railroading!



Scale Rails to Include More Product Reviews

by Pete Birdsong, MMR

Didrik Voss, Manager of Standards & Conformance, and Stephen Priest, *Scale Rails* Editor, are working on a program to have more locomotive and rolling stock product review articles in the magazine. The goal is to have at least three articles per issue. Two kinds of reviews are anticipated:

1. A Conformance & Inspection certification, which will provide the results of testing models against NMRA standards, Gauge, coupler height, weight and other items would be representative components of this review; the results would indicate whether or not the model meets the NMRA standards, and possibly result in the issuance of a Conformance warrant.

2. A more typical product review, consisting of prototype history, photographs of the model, evaluation of paint, lettering, general appearance, etc. and operational characteristics. The reviews will be conducted on new products provided by the manufacturers. After the reviews, it's anticipated that the products will be retained and auctioned off at the next national convention.

The manufacturers will benefit from the publicity for their products, the modeling public will benefit from the increased awareness of the NMRA standards and adherence to them by the manufacturers, and the NMRA will benefit from the proceeds from the auctions, and from the expected increased awareness of the Conformance and Inspection program by the manufacturers and the public.

Thanks for subscriber Rick Shoup for providing this article. - Ed

Division Outreach

The Rich and Bruce Show a Popular Attraction at Local Railroad Shows

We attended some model railroad shows in our division, and, again, had our information table and display.

We were at the Lions Club Model Railroad Show in Hooksett, N.H. on Sunday April 22, and at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club Show in Topsom Maine on Saturday April 28, 2007.

At the Hooksett, NH show we put on two clinics.

At 11AM, Bruce Robinson will present a clinic titled "You Built a Model Railroad. Now What?". This clinic and group discussion is on model railroad operations, how to operate your model railroad like the full size counterparts.

At 1PM, Rich Breton presented a clinic titled "Model Railroading Introduction: An Exciting Hobby for All Ages". This multimedia presentation demonstrates why this hobby is so interesting and exciting. This will cover the spectrum of detail scale modeling, collecting vintage toy trains, historical aspects, garden railroads, scales, gauges, and railroad operations.

We also attended the Milford, N.H. show, the Haverhill, Mass. show and the Sanford, Maine show. We got to meet some of you, made new contacts, helping us to set up some fun activities throughout our Division.

Check out our website, <http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/> or from www.nmra.org

We have set-up a Yahoo group specific to the Seacoast Division, which should be useful once we get more people signed up and involved.

Rich Breton, President- Seacoast Division NMRA