

The Switch Tower



Seacoast Division of the Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Assoc.



Deadline for the next issue is

JUNE 1, 2009

Send your article & photos to:

tpking@roadrunner.com



REMOTE CONTROL TURNOUTS

Save Details by Remotely Locating Turnout Ground Throw

On my Potomac Valley Railroad I like to use hand thrown turnout for local sidings and other switching locations which would be handled by local train crews. On mainlines with route control, which are more likely controlled from the switch tower, I use powered turnout actuators such as solenoid relays, or switch motors. I believe this provides more realistic logic for train operators, especially when they are assigned a local freight with switching assignments.

One drawback of manual ground throws is that the operators fingers and hands are full size where the turnout and nearby detailed scenery is 1:87 scale or other scale being modeled. In some cases, especially urban areas, buildings, sidewalks, with miniature citizens are close by, with ever present danger of being knocked over by the full size operator. See the attached photo for such a situation, near Viaduct Junction, which is recessed within a shelf, further limiting the possibility of using an under the table powered actuator.

The solution was to relocate the manual ground throw, in this case a Caboose Industries 208S, which I use with my Atlas Mark-3 turnouts. This is a sprung ground throw with a maximum travel of .280". I had anticipated this relocation by cutting a shallow V-groove in my Homasote roadbed under the throw bar. It is my nature to plan ahead, often drilling the hole for an under the table switch machine, just in



Photo provided by Rich Breton

case some day I may want to switch from manual to powered control. I extended this groove, and then placed a short length of .060" brass tubing. In this tubing I ran a .020" music wire, which I bent the two ends creating short 90 degree bends. One end was guided into a small hole in the turnout throw bar; the other end was placed in a small hole drilled in the ground-throw bar. The ground throw assembly was located per the instruction sheet. The switch points being centered with the throw bar arm in the vertical position.

This ground throw can now be safely actuated from the edge of the layout. I was then able to add in a few

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RAILRUN 2009

Over the weekend of March 27-28 I had the pleasure of joining Railrun for the twenty-first year of operating on several outstanding model railroads.

Railrun was begun by a group of modelers known as the B&M Operators located in eastern Massachusetts loosely around the Boston area... This group, of which I belonged for nearly twenty years before moving further north deeper into the wilds of Sandown, NH, comprises modelers interested in the prototypical operations of trains. The railroads are all different in scope, era, locale and size but share a common oper-

ating scheme of car cards and waybills so it is easy to move from one operating session to the next without having to re-learn how the railroad operates.

Friday night my friend Dick Lord and I went to Ace Cutter's Atlantic Coast & Eastern where I was assigned to the xxx yard. Saturday morning found us heading to Lynn, Mass. and Harvey Robinson's Essex & Lakeside where I was assigned to work the yard at Essex. After a lunch stop we arrived at the Tech Nickel Plate club at MIT in Cambridge, Mass. Again, my assignment was in a yard. In all there were ten

MINUTES

Seacoast Division Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 2009

Members Present:

Paul Lessard
Manchester, NH

Michael Grahame
Stratham, NH

Ian Crawford
Cape Elizabeth, ME

Peter McKenney
Cumberland, ME

Ron Palmquist So.
Portland, ME

Brad Thompson
Cape Elizabeth, ME

Scott Berry
Cape Elizabeth, ME

Dick Anderson
Kennebunk, ME

Dale Darling
Portland, ME

Thomas A. Coulombe
Lewiston, ME

Neil Falby
Wells, ME

Bruce Robinson
Sandown, NH

Larry Cannon Au-
burn, ME

Joel DiTrollo
Hollis, NH

Ken Faulter
Phippsburg, ME

Tom Jones
Brunswick, ME

Clayton Carl
Barrington, NH

Rich Breton
Rochester, NH

Larry Cannon began his presentation on kitbashing pulp wood cars and several buildings. He also discussed how to make signs using Word.

Paul Lessard was the next presenter and followed up on his rolling stock presentation from October's meeting with a presentation on buildings. He noted that many projects can be created very economically. Paul reviewed his Union Chapel, CVS Drug Store, and Ward Hill Station. (These buildings started as either Bachman or Plasticville products.)

Mike Grahame reviewed how he uses polyurethane for scenery. He made sure to remind the group to use water-based satin urethane. Mike pointed out that he uses an alcohol/water mixture as a wetting agent.

Neil Falby demonstrated a project that he worked up from a Life-like kit. It was Neil's first kit presentation.

Dick Anderson discussed his models of the CB&Q stock cars. Having grown up in Iowa, Dick has been modeling the CB&Q for many years.

Bruce thanked all the presenters and reminded the group of the standards on car weight, clearance, etc. developed by the NMRA. The group recessed for a brief break.

When the group reconvened, Bruce began the business portion of the agenda.

Tom Coulombe, Treasurer, reviewed the annual treasurer's report for year ended 12/31/08. The report was moved, recorded and approved unanimously.

The newsletter report was made by Bruce in Terry King's absence. The Web Master was not present at the meeting to give his report.

The Secretary's minutes of the October 4, 2008, were reviewed and approved unanimously.

Under old business, it was noted that NER is looking for people to man the booth at the Springfield show this month.

Bruce updated the group on his discussions with Ken May on the upcoming National Convention. Bruce viewed the event as an opportunity to promote membership in the Seacoast Division.

Bruce also brought up the possibility of the Seacoast Division hosting the National Convention in either 2011 or 2012 in Concord, NH, and the need for a planning committee if the division were to host such an event. After discussion, it was agreed that Bruce will discuss the appointment of a Convention Committee with potential volunteers. He will also examine the material from NER on what is needed to organize a convention.

Under new business, Bruce discussed the "Introduction to Model Railroading" program to run from March 3 to April 21, 2009. He also discussed the train shows he and Rich Breton attended on behalf of the Division.

A lengthy discussion was held on reaching Division membership. Tom Jones proposed that the newsletter should be sent to all members once a year even if they do not subscribe.

Joel volunteered to update the Division e-mail list for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Joel DiTrollo, Secretary



"Bruce updated the group on his discussions with Ken May on the upcoming National Convention. Bruce viewed the event as an opportunity to promote membership in the Seacoast Division."

The meeting was called to order by President, Bruce Robinson at 10:30 AM with 18 attendees including 6 officers. The meeting began with clinics & presentations.

Presidents Corner by Bruce Robinson

Promoting the Hobby

While Rich Breton and I were manning the Seacoast Division display at a train show in Haverhill, Massachusetts we were “accosted” by James Bester. James is the owner of Model Tech Studios and was at the show to display his kits, parts and other wares for sale. This is a small show that we display at because of a long friendship with the organizer and Haverhill is a border town to New Hampshire.

James began by deriding the NMRA for not keeping him “informed” and “they” should be doing more to promote the hobby. If we don’t promote the hobby the market will shrink and James’ business will not be as successful as he would want it to be.

When James was asked if he was a member of the NMRA he said “no”. Umm....I guess that means he didn’t receive all the information regarding the Hartford National convention included in the copy of Scale Rails.

Then we got on to the “promotion” part. Let’s see, Rich Breton, Paul Lessard and I take the Seacoast Division display to

seven shows a year in Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire and hand out information and chat with anyone who approaches the display. The Seacoast Division quarterly meetings are open to non-members and they are encouraged to come.

For the last sixteen years I have organized Tour de Chooch which is an open house layout tour in Southeastern New Hampshire and Northeastern Massachusetts. Last year sixteen hosts opened their layouts to anyone who wanted to come. I guess the 130 plus visitors that went through my basement weren’t aware that we were promoting the hobby.

Another event that I was involved in was Trainfair in 1977-1979 in the Merrimack Valley area of Massachusetts. I guess the 1200 attendees to the 1979 show I chaired didn’t know they were being lead down the “promotion road” either.

The way I view my position with Seacoast Division is to provide as many member services as possible, promote the hobby and Share the Fun of Model Railroading. If, along the way Seacoast Division hosts a Regional Convention in the years to come and Model Tech Studios is invited to sell his kits

and does well with large sales then I guess Seacoast Division has done its job of promoting the hobby.

Tomorrow night is class night number four at Timberlane High School in Plaistow, NH. I will have to be sure those thirteen students enjoying the eight week Introduction to Model Railroading course being put on by seven Seacoast Division members are aware they are being the recipients of our efforts in promoting the hobby.

So, every NMRA member must do his part to promote the hobby so we don’t lose another manufacturer to a shrinking market. (Psst....if you need any flyers or other promotional material just let me know and I’ll be sure to provide as much promotional material you can handle.)

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RAILRUN 2009 CONTINUED

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model railroads hosting nearly a hundred guest operators. This activity is what the B&M Operators call “Op to you drop!” After all that train running you get tired and hungry. The next stop on this whirlwind is the banquet in Methuen, Mass. Most of the operators come together for some serious socializing, a great meal and lots of door prizes. I was asked to present this year’s Bill Borrelli Award, given to a worthy modeler that is reconigned by this group in their efforts in promoting the hobby. I was the first recipient of the award four years ago and now it was my turn to present it to an outstanding and tireless modeler who has devoted many years to the greatest hobby. I was honored to present the Bill Borrelli Award to fellow NMRA member and long time HUB Division member, Director and Show Chairman Gerry Abegg (Gerry is also a member of the operating crew on my own Valley Junction Railroad).

The final operating session of the weekend was hosted by the North Shore Model Railroad Club in Wakefield, Mass.

The dynamics of a model railroad operating session add a new dimension to the “running trains” on our railroads that adds so much more to the part of the hobby we call “fun”.

Anyone in the Division’s area doing operating sessions and would like to open their sessions to other members of the Division? Let us know and perhaps we could put our own weekend event together.

by Bruce Robinson

GROUND THROW CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

more details without worrying about them being knocked down during train operations. See the second photograph for a near complete scene; well maybe I will add a few weeds, some newspapers, a fence . . .

NOTE: Our next Seacoast Division meeting will be Saturday May 16th in Rochester. I will be hav-

ing an open house after the meeting, so please stop by and see the progress made during the winter modeling season. Share the fun of model railroading.

By Rich Breton



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Model Railroading is fun!

The Switch Tower On Line

Seacoast Division Home Page

[http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/NER
Home Page](http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/NERHomePage)

[http://pages.cthome.net/kenmay/NERHOME.HT
ML](http://pages.cthome.net/kenmay/NERHOME.HT
ML)

NMRA Home Page/Web Site

<http://www.nmra.org>

Deadline for the next issues is July 1, 2009

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, N.M.R.A.

~ Chartered Nov. 17, 1963~

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The Switch Tower

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CALENDER OF EVENTS

4/18/09 Train Show Sanford Me 10:00 to 3:00 p.m.

4/25/09 Spring Train Show, Mount Ararat High School, 73 Eagles Way, Topsham, ME 04086

10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

5/16/09 Seacoast Division meeting, Rochester NH 1:00—4:00 p.m.

July 5 thru 11, 09 National N.M.R.A. convention Hartford CT.

7/18/09 Seacoast Division Meeting, Auburn ME 1:00—4:00 p.m.

10/ 3/09 Seacoast Division meeting , Concord NH 1:00—4:00 p.m.

11/7/09 Train Show, Auburn Me 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

NO MORE EXCUSES!

The NMRA's National Contest
has expanded into a

**Celebration of Models,
Photos & Crafts.**

with a greater choice of events!

NEW

- Kit Build Contest
- An afternoon of "Meet the Entrants"
- People's Choice Award (Popular vote)
- Model Showcase - non judged "show & tell"

Plus, all the normal contest events.

It's fun and a great chance to improve your skills.
If not now, when?

Visit the National Model Railroad Assn.'s website/contest page for details!
<http://www.nmra.org>

Hartford National
NMRA 2009
Convention 2009