



THE SEACOAST DIVISION OF THE N.M.R.A.

# THE SWITCH TOWER

Chartered on November 17, 1963



**RPM REVS UP AT NMRA 75**



It's the Railroad Prototype Modeler's 25th Anniversary. It's the NMRA's 75th Anniversary. Let's party... together! Get revved up at ...

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## BOD Meeting

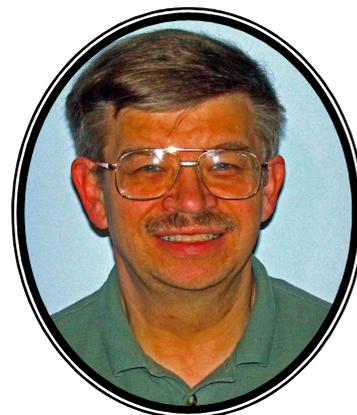
On Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, the Seacoast Division's Board of Directors met at the home of President Bruce Robinson to discuss coming events and to talk about how the Board can better serve the Seacoast Division and enhance member services.

Several ideas have been put forth in recent months by Division members, and the Board had a lively discussion on how to overcome the biggest issue facing the Seacoast Division: that is, the very large coverage area (Maine and New Hampshire) and the relatively decentralized membership. How does the Division engage its scattered members and provide them with activities that they might be interested in and in which they would be able to participate?

As a current form of outreach, the quarterly Division meetings are rotating among four different locations - Portland and Auburn Maine, and Rochester and Concord New Hampshire. The most recent at-

tempt to provide members with activities is the "Non-Stop Ops" event that is to take place in southern New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2010. All Division members should have received mail notice of this event. Any member who hasn't received this notice may contact Director Michael Grahame or any other Seacoast officer or director. This is a first attempt for the Division to be more proactive in hosting events for the members. The Board will be eager to get feedback after the event takes place.

Other ideas being discussed are development of a modular group (distance again a big issue) and possible sponsorship of a train event or show. Also discussed were the development of regional events such as a visit to the Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport Maine, a train trip (North Conway or Eastern Maine) or a visit to the Maine Narrow Gauge museum in Portland. Other locations were mentioned. Members



**Richard Breton**  
Northern New England  
Director

are urged to offer suggestions for events which the Seacoast Division might sponsor.

To get in touch with as many members as possible, the Board is discussing possible changes to the structure of the organization, in particular to regionalizing the elect-

## The Operating Schedule

"Present the drama of model railroading in which the tracks are the stage, the buildings and scenery are the setting, the trains are the actors and the operating schedule the plot"

Frank Ellison  
The Delta Lines

Non-Stop Ops Weekend- October 22 & 23

Mike Grahame and John Newick have been hard at work putting together the first Seacoast Division operations weekend for October 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the Valley Junction RR will be one of the five layouts participating in the event. If you are an old and crusty operator or are just beginning to explore this part of the hobby, this weekend event should provide plenty of experience in operating model railroads. Each of the layouts will have

enough experienced operators on hand to help and guide the guest operators, assuring a good time to be had by all.

### Valley Junction Railroad

The Valley Junction Railroad (VJRR) was begun in 1988 when the first "wants and desires" list was written. The primary goal was to build a model railroad that was "operations-oriented" with multiple



## NMRA NEWS

[Paid registrations to the Milwaukee convention topped the 1,600 mark](#), and all 345 booths at the National Train Show were sold. However public attendance at the Train Show was down from past years.

- Dave Thornton, 75th Anniversary Year Committee chair and current VP-Administration, announced that [Diamond Club donations were approaching the \\$70,000 mark](#) -- only \$5,000 short of the initial funding requirement of \$75,000.

Scanning of photos for [the Diamond Club project has already begun](#). The project is spearheaded by Paired Rail Railroad Publications and Historical Archive Solutions (a division of PRRP). Members can see how the NMRA's photo archives will look by visiting another PRRP/HAS website for the Santa Fe at [www.atsfry.com](http://www.atsfry.com). The NMRA's system is expected to go into beta testing in November, and initial posting of images will occur in early 2011.

- [An anonymous benefactor has promised to donate \\$250,000](#) toward the creation of a

tribute to scale model railroading at the California State Railroad Museum. This donation represents approximately one third of the funding needed, providing that the amount is matched by other fundraising efforts. None of the National Model Railroad Museum's exhibit costs will be funded by NMRA member dues or non-dues income. A mockup of the proposed exhibit is expected to be available for viewing at the 2011 convention in Sacramento.

- The Board approved a motion to create [sub-districts within the British and Australasian Regions](#), to serve emerging pockets of interest in NMRA membership.

- [A change was made to candidate nominating procedures](#). The Nominating Committee must publish its report and recommendations no later than the annual summer Board meeting. Nominations by petition will be accepted no later than 30 days after the publication of the Nominating Committee report, and election timelines will be adjusted accordingly. Allowable length for official statements of

candidate qualifications will be 500 words when published in *NMRA Magazine*, and 1,200 words when published by electronic means.

[Awards](#) given at the Milwaukee Convention banquet included:

[Honorary Life Member](#): Rutger Friberg and Robert "Bob" Brown (*Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette*)

[Distinguished Service Award](#): Aubrey Olson (Caboose Industries) and Stan Ames

[NMRA Fellow](#): Len Firth (British Region)

[Pioneer Award](#): Leo and Ruth Campbell (Campbell Scale Models), Bernd Lenz (Lenz GmbH), and W. Allen McClelland, DSA, MMR

[President Awards](#): Bob Amsler; Chuck Diljak; Gerry Leone, MMR; Eric Lundberg, HLM, MMR; Allen Pollock, HLM, DSA; Jim Sacco; Miles Hale, MMR; and James "Lumpy" Lupfer

[Meritorious Service Award](#): Ed McCaney and Ken West (Standards & Conformance Dept.)

By N.M.R.A. staff

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*[An anonymous benefactor has promised to donate \\$250,000](#)*

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## Schedule Continued

(Continued from page 1)

train operations. These included yard work, local and overhead (through) freight and passenger trains, interchanges with other railroads and control by a central dispatcher. A card waybill system was to be used to route all freight cars to their destinations at industries or interchange points. When the final track plan was drawn the railroad that was now committed to paper was a point-to-point system with yards at both ends, interchanges with three other railroads and enough operating scheme to keep a seven-person crew busy. Formal operations and regularly scheduled operating nights have been held since 1995.

Today the VJRR hosts three operating groups on a monthly rotating schedule.

The VJRR lies in eastern New Hampshire beginning at the east end in Portsmouth and running westward through the towns of Tiverton, Franklin, South Royalton, Canterbury and Northfield and terminating in Valley Junction (Essex Yard) on the west end. The VJRR interchanges freight and passenger traffic at Tiverton (Boston & Maine RR), Franklin (Valley Branch Lines) and Valley Junction (Central Vermont Railway). The VJRR is set in the decade 1955-1965 with all the locomotives and rolling stock being representative of the New Eng-

land region during this time. The track plan is point-to-point so there is no continuous running capability and all trains terminate in a yard where locomotives are turned on turntables for their return trips.

All trains are run per the schedule that is governed by a 6:1 fast clock. Currently there are 19 trains scheduled on the VJRR and another seven scheduled on the Valley Branch Lines (VBL). This makes enough traffic to keep the crews busy but not overworked, and makes for a comfortable pace at which to move the trains.

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**Who says 75-year olds forget names?**



Jack Burgess, Bruce Chubb, Bill Darnaby, Chuck Hitchcock, Tony Koester, Sam Swanson, Bill Schaumburg, Andy Sperandio, Tony Thompson, Wayne Wesolowski. Names we'll never forget presenting clinics you'll never forget. All at one unforgettable convention. Learn more at....

**[www.nmra75.org](http://www.nmra75.org)**

## President's Corner

### The Seacoast Division - Moving Ahead

I have been writing, "With the membership growing it is time to think about member benefits.", in my two last columns. Well, the Division has begun to answer this challenge. Your Board of Directors will meet monthly until the January 2011 quarterly meeting, to determine how the Division can provide better member service. Some ideas that have come to light range from holding a picnic to hosting another regional convention. If there is something that you would like to see happen in the Division let one of the officers know about it.

In April I presented a proposed re-organization of the Division's governing body. That effort is in the works and the results will be presented to the membership at the January meeting. At the heart of the plan is the direct election of the officers that are charged with the responsibility of running the Division, and how they relate to member services. Once again, if you have any ideas about this matter, please contact one of the officers and pass along your thoughts. There is no prize, but if the ideas are sound everyone is a winner.

Director Mike Grahame is well along in putting together the operations-oriented gathering for the weekend of October 22nd and 23rd. By the time you are reading this column you should have received your application in the mail, and may even have sent back your form. Available slots for the weekend event are limited so get your form to Mike soon, for a chance of filling one of the positions. This operations weekend is intended to be a yearly event. We hope to rotate it throughout the Division's territory.

The Great Falls MRRRC hosted the July meeting. We are pleased to have more of the members coming and participating in the clinics and the business meeting. We expect that the business part of these meetings will be getting shorter, as the BOD will be meeting more often. Everyone got to see the progress the Great Falls MRRRC is making on the construction of their new layout, and all enjoyed the lunch provided by the Club.

As this column is being written my thoughts are wandering to the weekend of September 9-12. The Northeastern Region Convention is in Burlington, Vermont, and several Seacoast members are planning to attend. I have a personal connection with the city

### NER Northern New England Director Richard Breton

Thank you to all Seacoast and Green Mountain Division members who elected me to the NER Northern New England Director position. I am pleased to be able to serve our region for the next four years representing NMRA members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Our first goal given to us by our newly elected NER president Scooter Youst, is to increase our NER membership; by ensuring

that has rewarded me for twenty years. I worked on the reconstruction of Church Street in downtown Burlington in 1980-1982. I hope conventioners take some time to walk down the bustling pedestrian walk and enjoy a pizza, sitting out on the paved street and watching the crowds of shoppers and students that throng to this area and make it such a pleasant place to be. I hope to see you in Burlington!

The next quarterly meeting will be hosted by the Concord Model Rail Road Club in Penacook, NH October 9<sup>th</sup> (10am-2pm). Bruce Stockdale will be our guest speaker and will be doing a presentation on DCC.

Until October 9th.....**Share the fun of model railroading!**

contact with new members, attending division meetings, and promoting benefits of the NMRA. We already had good positive discussion at the annual meeting in Burlington on September 12.

Seacoast Division has made a good start at this, with our newly appointed membership chairman Peter McKenney. Member attendance to Seacoast Division meetings has steadily increased; with attendance at or over 30 at our last three consecutive meetings. Thank you, and keep up the good work, providing interesting activities for our membership.

I have been an NMRA member for 26 years, serving as Seacoast Division President for six years and continue to serve as Director. I am a resident of Rochester, NH, married with three children and two grandchildren. I have a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Connecticut, and was employed at Goss International designing high-speed folders for web printing presses for 32 years. I am a member of the Baltimore & Ohio Historical Society. I have been an avid model railroader for 42 years, modeling the Potomac Valley region of the B&O in HO scale, in 1953.

We need to actively promote our hobby and the benefits of NMRA membership, with more emphasis on local, division and regional activities. We need to continue to make our conventions affordable, to make our programs available to more people, and to get people of all ages interested in this exciting educational hobby.

My motto which I use in my correspondence is "Share the Fun of Model Railroading". I believe fundamentally, that is the route to continued success and growth of our organization and the key to increased membership, with active member participation.

Share The Fun of Model Railroading

By Rich Breton

## Schedule Continued

(Continued from page 2)

The railroad operates by Dispatcher Command Control (DCC), while the trains are run by the other "DCC", using the North Coast Engineering (NCE) system with tethered and radio throttles. Communications between train crews and dispatcher are with radio headsets.

A crew of eight operators is required and assignments are as

follows: Three yard masters stationed at Portsmouth, Valley Junction (Essex Yard) and Thornton (Valley Branch Lines), four mainline train crews and a dispatcher. Here is what each crew member does:

Yard Master:

- 1 Makes up outbound trains
- 2 Breaks down inbound trains and

classifies cars by destination.

- 3 Pulls outbound cars from local industries.
- 4 Sets out inbound cars at local industries.
- 5 Moves locomotives to and from the servicing area.

Main Line Train Crew

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## THE SEACOAST DIVISION OF THE N.M.R.A.

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### *The Switch Tower on Line*

Seacoast Division Home Page  
[http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/NER\\_Home\\_Page](http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/NER_Home_Page)  
<http://pages.cthome.net/kenmayNERHOME.HTML>  
 NMRA Home Page/Web Site  
<http://www.nmra.org>

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ed Board of Directors so that each Director will be responsible to a particular area and will serve as a local “sounding board” for member ideas and issues. The Board also agreed to try to get the word out to more members through increasing the emailing of “The Switch Tower”. With the involvement of our new membership chairman Peter McKenney, the Board anticipates improved handling of mail and email lists of the almost 200 Seacoast members. Members can help by advising the Division promptly of any address or email changes or expected changes. The Board plans to meet again in September.

Concerning the accompanying photo, the Secretary tried to “Photoshop” the gray hair but the computer refused to cooperate. From left to right, Board members are Director Neil Falby, Vice President Paul Lessard, President Bruce Robinson, Director and Secretary Tom Jones, Director Michael Grahame and Director and Treasurer Tom Coulombe. Not present were Directors Rich Bretton, Larry Cannon and Terrance King.

Tom Jones, Secretary



**Dead Line For January Issue:  
 December 1, 2010**

### Seacoast Division Officers:

**President: Bruce Robinson**, 19 Hunt Pond Rd, Sandown, NH 03873 603-887-5922

**Vice President: Paul Lessard**, 74 Oakland Ave., Manchester, NH 03109 603-623-4093

**Directors: Richard Breton**, 9 Riverside Dr., Rochester NH 03867 603-332-8257. **Larry Cannon**, 516 Pond Rd, Lewiston ME 04240, 207-786-3929, **Terrence King**, P.O. Box 336, Monmouth ME 04259-0336. **Michael Grahame**, P.O. Box 163, Stratham, NH 603-778-3099. **Neil Falby**, P.O. Box 7, Wells ME 04090 207-646-1820. **Tom Coulombe**, 465 Pond Rd, Lewiston ME 04240, 207-784-5962. **Tom Jones**, 290 Simpson's Point Rd., 207-725-0712.

## CALENDER OF EVENTS

**October 9** Seacoast Division Meeting at the Concord Model Railroad Club, Washington Street School , 32 Washington St., Penacook, NH 03303.

**November 6** Train Show, Auburn Middle School, 610 Court St., Auburn Me 04210 10:00 to 3:00.

**November 7** Bedford Boomer Exhibition McKelvie Middle School, Bedford NH 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

**November 20** Train Show, the Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club Show will be held on November 20, 2010 from 10 am to 3:30 PM at Jeff's Catering 15 Littlefield Way in the Eat West industrial Park in Brewer Maine. Admission is \$4.00 for adults and under 12 free. There will be an operating modular layout, dealers of all scales and the Train Doctor will help you with trains for free . For more information call Geoff Anthony at 207-374-2786 or email [dahak@roadrunner.com](mailto:dahak@roadrunner.com)

## Schedule Continued

*(Continued from page 3)*

- 1 Picks up assigned train from departing yard. Receives waybills from Yard Master.
- 2 Calls the Dispatcher for permission to leave yard limits.
- 3 Makes pickups and setouts as described by train instructions and Dispatcher along route. Communications with Dispatcher is via radio headset.
- 4 Terminates train at arrival yard. Turns waybills over to Yard Master.

Dispatcher

- 1 Assigns main line Train Crews to scheduled trains.
- 2 Directs train movements according to the schedule.
- 3 Sets routes for train movements.
- 4 Maintains the train sheet.

Valley Branch Lines Operator

- 5 Handles interchange traffic with VJRR.

- 6 Classifies cars in yard at Thornton.
- 7 Works local industries at East Thornton.
- 8 Runs to Concord to work local industries.
- 9 Runs passenger traffic Thornton to Concord.

Enough different types of trains run on the VJRR to satisfy any operator's wants: local (commuter) passenger trains, local freight trains, trains running from end to end, overhead passenger and freight trains (running between “beyond-the-basement” destinations of Boston and Montreal) and specialty trains (those with duties to serve specific industries).

Some of the regular crew members have been operating the railroad for ten years or more and every session is different and fun. Your hosts on the VJRR are looking forward to the October Non-stop Ops sessions.

By Bruce Robinson