



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

The Switch Tower

Chartered on November 17, 1968

Tracks to Lakeport 2013 NER NMRA Convention by Erich Whitney



The Seacoast Division will be hosting the Northeastern Region's Convention at the Margate Hotel in Laconia, New Hampshire, October 17-20, 2013. This is just a year away and planning has been in process for nearly a year already. The convention hotel is on the shore of Paugus Bay which is the southern tip of Lake Winnepesaukee. This section of Laconia was the location of the Lakeport station shown in our convention logo. Weirs Beach, the MS Mount Washington, and the Winnepesaukee Railroad are close to the hotel and we'll be taking advantage of this proximity in our convention planning.

The hotel offers rooms with lake views and the convention facilities are comfortable and well-lit. There's an indoor pool and open lounge areas. This time of the year should be a beautiful fall getaway for you and your spouse to enjoy. We are currently planning to have on-site modular layouts so we can offer clinics on model railroad operations. You should start making plans to submit your models for assessment in the contest room!

Our guest speaker at the banquet will be noted author, photographer, and lifelong railroader, George Melvin. He and his wife Kathy own Melvin Photos. George has a personal connection with the Laconia area and he will give a narrative slide show from his vast photo collection. George has also offered to give clinics on other topics from his collection throughout the convention.

We are preparing train ride packages with the Winnepesaukee Railroad as well as area non-rail activities. Laconia is home to many outlet malls and Meredith is a short trip to places like Annalee Dolls. North Conway and Lincoln are both about an hour away where there are plenty of attractions for rail fans and non-rail interests alike!

We are working on the convention web site. See many photos at <http://www.seacoastnmra.org/Convention/Lakeport2013/Welcome.html>. We will provide more details as they get firmed up. We've got some other exciting things in the works. But we REALLY need members to step up and start helping

out. We need help on:

Publicity—Includes writing articles and announcements for advertising, helping create web content, and coordinating communications.

Non-Rail Activities—We need help coordinating non-rail activities such as a Winnepesaukee Lake tour on the US Mail Boat Sophie. There are SO many things to do in the lakes region but a little time on the web and the phone and we could have a really nice package to offer people.

"beautiful fall getaway for you and your spouse"

Staffing—We will need people to help staff the various activities inside and outside the hotel. Breaking up the work amongst many people leaves plenty of time for you to enjoy the convention!

Raffle—Organizing a good raffle is a very important part of the convention. ALL of the proceeds of the raffle goes straight to the Seacoast Division bank account! This is our ONLY fundraising source!

Modular Operations Planning—Our inside activities includes modular operations but we need help planning the spaces, groups, and schedules.

These are just a sample of the kinds of things we need help with. If you have participated in NMRA conventions in the past then you know how much fun they are to attend. You can have a direct impact on making our convention a truly memorable one!

Please contact: one of us: Erich Whitney, Convention Chair, (603) 537-1120, director8@seacoastnmra.org
Rich Breton, Outside Activities Chair, (603) 332-8257, director7@seacoastnmra.org
Larry Cannon, Inside Activities Chair, (207) 786-3929 director5@seacoastnmra.org

President's Corner by Bruce Robinson

The convention is coming! The convention is coming!

In the last issue, I wrote this paragraph in my column: *"There are some exciting happenings appearing on the horizon that will need support. The first and foremost event is the Northeastern Region convention hosted by Seacoast Division in Laconia, NH. A convention is a great way to see a lot of quality modeling, meet some terrific people and otherwise have a great time with this hobby of ours. A convention doesn't happen on its own. It takes a lot of people pulling together to carry this event off. It is time to look over what you can add to the event and contact the convention chairman Erich Whitney and volunteer to pitch in and help. The Publications Chairman position for the convention is in real need to be filled so if you have a knack for advertising please contact Erich. The rewards are in knowing you made a difference and contributed to the convention's success."*

We need help on several fronts to make this convention a success. I will not give up asking until every position, every task, every job has been filled with a member that really wants this Division to be successful. It's as easy as saying "I can help out. What do you need?" You will not regret it and the rewards are many. Who do you approach to offer to pitch in? That is easy. Contact me or any Director by phone, e-mail, US mail or just come up to one of us at the many shows we attend with the Division display table. Come to Fun Model Railroading Night in Derry, NH or the Quarterly Membership Meetings. Contact information is in the newsletter and on the web site <http://www.seacoastnmra.org>. I will be hearing from you soon, right? There is an immediate need for a convention publicity chairman. Please contact Erich Whitney if you can fill this critical position.

I began writing this column (yes, I am over my deadline date!) the day after returning from the

Empire Junction NER convention that was held in Syracuse, NY. Seven Division directors and three members attended the four days of great happenings. There were three members that I know of attending. If there were more they did not identify themselves and I missed the opportunity to connect with them. I am sorry. Convention activities began within the first three minutes of arriving at the hotel. A few steps away from the hotel check-in desk and the first of so many encounters with old friends began. It was like Old Home Week when fellow modelers came up to greet me with a big smile and a firm handshake. It didn't matter what Division you belonged to. We were all friends sharing great experiences. It wasn't long before Little Rhodie, Nutmeg, HUB and Green Mountain Division people shared that welcoming hand shake with me. The convention was off to a great start! I got in six clinics, an operating session (the part I enjoy the most), the bus tour to the Finger Lakes Railroad, spent time admiring the models in the contest room, attended the banquet and on Sunday attended the NER Board of Directors meeting before heading out to visit a great hobby shop and three home layouts. It was another great convention and a benchmark for Seacoast Division to meet in our efforts of bringing off a convention as good.

Derry Model Railroading Night meetings resumed in September. Erich Whitney has more on this great program. Keep the second Friday night of the month on your calendar and I hope to see you there.

I am delighted we have Bill Hodges stepping up as the new Editor of the Switch Tower. Please consider writing an article and submit it to Bill.

The next Division Quarterly Members' Meeting will be October 13th in Derry, NH. I hope to catch you there as well.

And, always.....**Share the fun of model railroading!**

Summer Meeting of Seacoast Division by Peter McKenney

Approximately 30 Seacoast Division members and their guests met at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club in Auburn, Maine on Saturday, July 14, 2012. They were treated to great clinics and the hospitality of the host club.

- Bob Willard and Greg Ouellette of the Maine Narrow Gauge Modelers Group, a 100% NMRA club, demonstrated a six-foot module with On30 track. It contained wonderful New England scenery including realistic trees and a painted backdrop so well-coordinated that one could not discern which visions were three dimensional (modeled) trees and which were painted. The module is very light, taking advantage of Styrofoam and thin plywood construction. Then they demonstrated how they use HO scale trucks and mechanisms within their



O scale rolling stock. Needless to say, kit-bashing is a very common process for them and they articulated their projects to the audience very well.

- Tom Oxnard impressed everyone with a picture story of how he conceptualized, designed, and then constructed a gorgeous New England riverbed and ravine to add to his home layout. Tom's story will be published in a future issue Model Railroader magazine, but we got to see his project step by step in much greater detail.
- Paul Lessard demonstrated his fleet of construction equipment he has built in HO scale. Paul finds "toys" or often inexpensive pieces and then kit-bashes or modifies them to make realistic trucks,

graders, loaders, etc., that would complement many HO scale railroad layouts. Before he starts, though, he does his research so that he can fit his equipment into the era he is focused on.

- Larry Cannon demonstrated a "perspective" building he would be adding to a layout. Its scale is between HO and N and would be placed in a background scene, looking deceptively farther away than it really will be. Larry used a sheet of "paper shingles" for the roof of this barn.
- Peter McKenney gave a "book review" of a recently published anthology by Richard Sprague. Mr. Sprague for 39 years helped produce the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad's Maine Line, a bi-monthly magazine distributed to railroad employees and friends of the railroad (1952-1991). The Past is a Different Place is almost 400 pages long, but it focuses most of its short articles on railroad employees' stories. While these would be interesting to many, the book as a whole is not a typical model railroader's reference book. The book can be acquired at Bangor stores and directly from the publisher, Furbush-Roberts Printing Company in Bangor.
- Erich Whitney demonstrated use of Google satellite images and a free CAD program ([xtrkcad](#)) for designing a replica of a prototypical yard. At the conclusion of the clinics and presentations, the Club's members provided lunch and refreshments to the participants for \$5. Also, they opened up the Club's HO layout for operations by Seacoast Division members in the afternoon.



Early Piggyback Equipment 1950's to 1970's by Paul Lessard



The embryonic period of trailers-on-flatcars began way back in the 1920's. In later years, more experimentation progressed rather slowly. It was not until the 1950's that this idea began to take hold and more railroads were participating in this venture. The early flatcars for this traffic were 40-ft. and 50-ft. standard units which were converted in company shops with bridge plates and tie-down gear. The Pennsylvania Railroad was the first company to design a purpose-built 75-ft. car to accommodate 2 of the longer trailers becoming popular in this era. In this same period, the Trailer Train Corp. was established to promote and provide equipment for this rapidly growing business. As the majority of trailers were being loaded in circus-style fashion (moved on flatcars by yard tractors one at a time) it was easy for even short lines to offer this service. The only facility needed was a ramp located at the end of a stub track. The major rail lines of course offered more elaborate facilities including multiple ramps, ample lighting and paved parking lots for trucks.

As for modeling, there is a wide variety of equipment and facilities available particularly in HO. It is possible to build such a facility using a modest amount of real estate as opposed to a modern intermodal business which requires an entire rail yard to model realistically. Tyco and Athearn both marketed 50-ft. flatcars with 24-ft. trailers and these are still available at train shows. Using styrene sheet and strip stock one can modify the trailers to more accurately replicate the specific units you wish to model. Also, the 89-ft. intermodal car by Athearn is perfect for the 40-ft trailers gaining acceptance in this era. A loading ramp can be built in short order with strip wood or cast plaster to simulate a concrete one. The easiest method is to take an old flatcar, remove one truck and place against your loading track as some railroads did in their yards. The only limit is your imagination and resources. In closing, please try the early piggyback era for your model pike. It will add a new traffic source and it will broaden your operations.

Status of Seacoast Division Bylaws Update Process by Peter McKenney

Members of the Seacoast Division will probably be voting by written ballots by the middle of October on amending the bylaws. Here is an update on the progress of this project:

- ♦ The Board of Directors at its July 14 meeting reviewed the task force's complete draft and made some interim decisions on unresolved issues,
- ♦ The task force updated the draft of the new bylaws consistent with the Board's decisions, and
- ♦ In September sent notices directly to all of the members of the Seacoast Division, instructing them on how to access the latest draft bylaws and seeking their input.

The task force has been receiving some very favorable feedback from members and a few comments or questions. By October 7, the task force will consider all of the feedback and input from members and decide on changes to the draft to recommend to the Board for its consideration. At the October 13, 2012 meeting in Derry, NH, members will have another chance to ask questions and make suggestions. Then, the Board of Directors will make final choices on the provisions to place in the proposed

bylaws to be voted on by members.

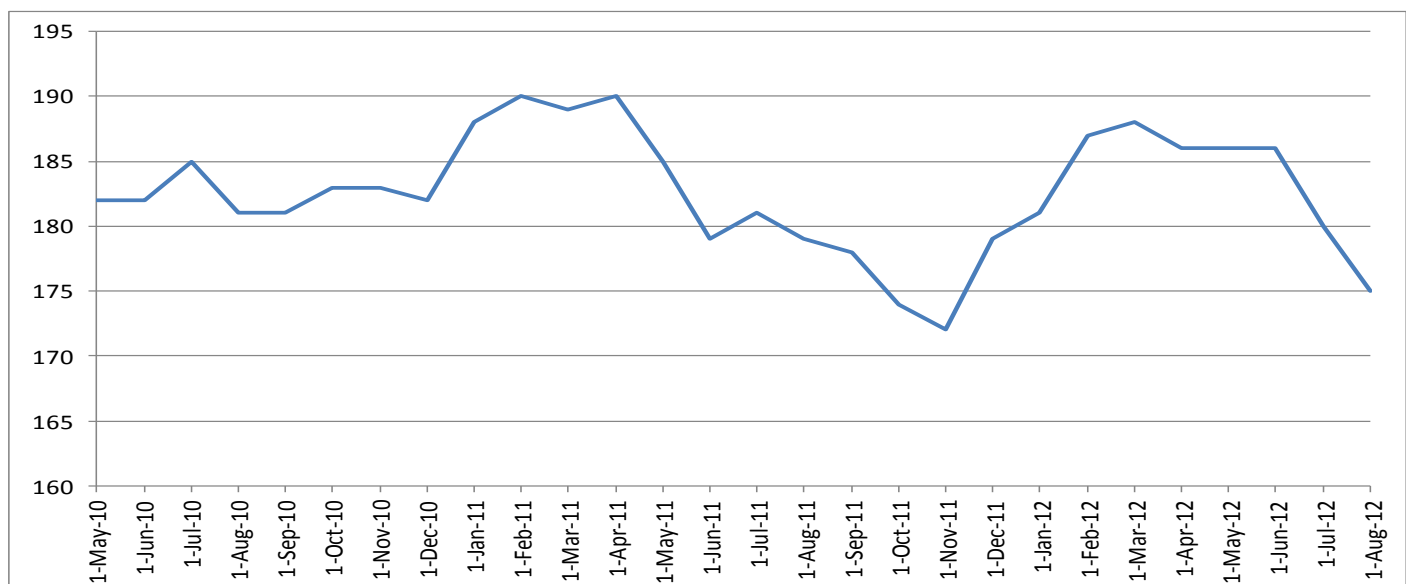
Following the October 13 meeting, the draft bylaws as formally proposed by the Board will be posted on the Seacoast Division website for all members to review once again. For members who do not have access to the website, other arrangements for conveying a paper copy of the proposed bylaws will be made. Ballots and a hard copy of the proposed bylaws with an explanatory letter will also be made available at that time for voting by mail with an expected closing of the polling period in early December. If two-thirds of the ballots are in favor of adopting the new set of bylaws, they will become effective. Otherwise, the current bylaws will remain in effect.



Keep alert to future messages on this important process.

Seacoast Division Membership Report by Peter McKenney

As of the end of August, 2012, the Seacoast Division membership stands at 175 members.



Results of the Seacoast Division Member Survey by Peter McKenney

Fifty-five Seacoast Division members (30%) responded to the recent survey request and have provided the Board with helpful suggestions on how the Division can serve its membership better in the future. The response rate for this survey was much higher than anticipated, indicating how important the Division's future is to its members.

The most popular model railroad activities rated by the respondents were:

- ◆ Building models
- ◆ Operating trains, and
- ◆ Adding scenery

Programs for future quarterly meetings will reflect this popularity, and more clinics will be hands on or provide participants with resources that they can use when they return to their local modeling activities, but this can only happen if sufficient presenters volunteer.

The respondents also signaled in many ways that they want to share the model railroad experience with other modelers, particularly those closer to their own homes.

One finding, however, that will need further attention is the level of volunteerism in the Division. The respondents' appetite for better and expanded services is greater than the current willing volunteers could support. The Division is going to have to be more successful in recruiting members to give a little more of their time and talents to meet program expectations. The Division will not flourish if only the current number of volunteers is maintained.

The survey data was carefully analyzed and a detailed report submitted to the Directors on

September 16. This report contained specific recommendations on:

- ◆ Improving the regular quarterly member meeting format,
- ◆ Supporting local "cells" of Seacoast Division members nearer their homes on a regular basis,
- ◆ Improving the content and educational value of clinic presentations,
- ◆ Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Board of Director meetings,
- ◆ Better support for the editor of the Switch Tower,
- ◆ Developing a program to encourage more volunteerism within the Division,
- ◆ Accelerating the development of the Division's new Free-mo Module Group,
- ◆ Continuing to nurture layout operating opportunities within the Division, and
- ◆ Developing mutually beneficial relationships with the model railroad clubs within Maine and New Hampshire.

At its September 29 meeting, the Board officially accepted the report from the member survey task force and committed to implementing the many suggestions contained in the report over time. The Board will prioritize the many actions and implement specific actions as time and resources permit.

The following Seacoast Division members who responded to the survey request won a Seacoast Division embroidered patch in the drawing: **Jay Barnum, Bill Erwin, and John McHugh.** *Congratulations and Thank You!!!*

We Need You! by Erich Whitney



The Seacoast Division NMRA needs more volunteers to come forward and help share the work load it takes to run our Division.

2013 Tracks to Lakeport NER Convention Publicity Chair: We are looking for someone

who can create the advertising we need to publicize OUR convention!

We can always use volunteers and you don't need to take on the world—the more people we get to help the less everyone has to do! If you're interested, please speak to one of the Directors or contact me, Erich Whitney, (603) 537-1120, director8@seacoastnmra.org. Thank You!!!

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2012

The meeting was called to order by President Bruce Robinson at 1:08 p.m.

Present: Bruce Robinson, Larry Cannon, Peter McKenney, Erich Whitney, Paul Lessard, and Tom Coulombe, being a quorum (6 of the 8 Directors). Excused: Rich Breton and Mike Grahame.

The Directors acknowledged the resignation of Director Tom Jones effective July 9, 2012, due to his changing his residence to Colorado. Per Article VII, Section 6, of the Bylaws, President Robinson will appoint a replacement, subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

The President called for submission of reports:

Treasurer: Tom Coulombe reported that the Division had received \$47.31 since his previous report (at the June 3 Board of Directors' meeting), had spent \$60, and had a cash balance of \$1,894.39.

Newsletter: Erich Whitney reported that a 13 page issue of the Switch Tower had been published and that he needed to hand off the editor role to another member very soon so he could focus on the 2013 NER convention.

Secretary: The President reported that he had not recruited a person to take the office of Secretary. The minutes of the June 3 meeting, however, had been drafted by Mike Grahame.

Membership: Peter McKenney reported that the membership of the Division continued at 186.

Webmaster: Rob Carignan was not present and had not submitted a report. Erich Whitney noted that there are some issues of access to the website with members using older browsers. Also, there continues to be a desire to improve the process for approving members who wish to use the Division's online forum.

Convention: Erich Whitney noted that Bill Hodges and Mike Tylick are working on a logo for the convention and Erich is pursuing attractive candidates for being guest speaker at the convention dinner. He still is in need of a volunteer to serve as Publicity Chair. He will also need many more volunteers to serve in various roles.

President: Bruce Robinson described the value of the NER "Superintendents" twice yearly meetings. He and the other NER division superintendents/ presidents exchange ideas and discuss common challenges, particularly relating to conventions and attractive activities for division members. He had no further specifics to report regarding possible transition of the Bedford Boomers Train Show operations; he advised waiting for more information. He and others of the Division participated in a Boy Scout Camporee held at Edaville Railroad, Carver, Massachusetts, focused on railroading and he thanked these volunteers.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (continued)

At the conclusion of all of the reports, Larry Cannon moved, seconded by Peter McKenney, to accept all reports. The motion carried unanimously.

NER Activities: Larry Cannon reported that the next NER Board of Directors meeting will be held at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on August 25. The deadline for reserving a hotel room at the group rate for Empire Junction 2012 (being held in Syracuse, NY) is August 6.

Bruce Robinson mentioned the train shows that he is planning on attending to represent the Division and display the features of the NMRA, NER, and Seacoast Division.



Nominating Committee: In the absence of Chair Rich Breton, Peter McKenney pointed out that a notice to all members interested in serving as a Director has been posted in the Switch Tower. Members with interest or questions are to call Rich. The following Directors will have terms ending at the Annual Meeting: Larry Cannon, Tom Coulombe, and Mike Grahame. Bruce Robinson has at least one candidate under consideration for appointment to replace Tom Jones and fill out his term.

Operations Activity: Bruce Robinson has assigned Mike Grahame to chair this activity again this year, but a date has not yet been chosen although October 27 is under consideration. Realizing that adequate advanced preparation and publicity is essential to making this activity worthwhile, Larry Cannon

moved, seconded by Erich Whitney, that the program design for this activity be completed and put into action no later than August 4. The resolution was adopted by unanimous vote of the Directors.

Seacoast FreeMo Modular Group: Erich Whitney has been in conversation with Bill Hodges and Fred Hessler to present at the Annual Meeting of the members.

Achievement Program: Larry Cannon and Bruce Robinson briefly discussed the benefits of developing a promotional initiative that the Division could pursue to attract more AP participants and generate issuance of more certificates.

Adult Education Course: The Division has not sponsored such a course for a couple of years. To resume it, a volunteer leader is needed. Assuming that a course would be offered starting in the February-March period, a leader will be needed prior to that date. It was moved and seconded to set a deadline for January 1 to successfully recruit a member to lead this activity or else this will be dropped as a potential initiative for another year. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The Directors then discussed in some detail issues raised by the task force assigned to propose amended bylaws for the Division. Peter McKenney moderated the discussion on the bylaws issues.

Authority to disburse funds. The current bylaws provisions regarding who is authorized to disburse funds (Article VII, Section 10) were felt to be too loose by some Directors. After substantial discussion, Larry Cannon moved, seconded by Tom Coulombe, to reduce the amount that two officers could authorize from \$500 to \$300. This motion did not pass. After further discussion, the Directors reached a consensus to leave the current provision substantially unchanged.

Special Member Meeting Quorum Rule Proposal: Mindful that inclement weather and other unpredictable factors could deprive a meeting of members of a regular quorum (the current quorum for member meetings is ten and the proposed new bylaws provision

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (continued)

for quorum is 10% of the Division's membership, which would mean 19 members as of this month), the Directors discussed a secondary quorum rule that could allow certain decisions to be made by the members in attendance while not being excessively liberal. After discussion, it was moved and seconded to direct the task force to reflect in the recommended bylaws that this special member meeting quorum could be no less than 5% of the Division members, including a majority of the Directors then in office. This motion was unanimously adopted.

Election of Officers and Terms of Office. Substantial discussion took place of the merits of the current process for electing officers by the Directors for one-year terms versus the merits of having direct election of officers by members using mail-in ballots or equivalent tools for three-year terms. Attributes of membership elections of officers for three-terms included more transparency and greater involvement by members, as well as more stability for pursuing program enhancements over periods longer than one year. Attributes of the current arrangement included shorter election period, less administrative burdens, no cost of mailing, easier to ask volunteers to serve for one-year commitments than longer commitments, continue to have a Board of no more than 9 individuals and no potential for terms of officers to end prematurely if they fail to continue to serve as Directors, and officers can be changed more quickly if there is a need to. Also, Directors pointed out the very poor percentage of NMRA members who vote for NMRA candidates (fewer than 9%) and NER candidates, even when there is more than one candidate for office. Further, the proposal for new bylaws will provide that the Nominating Committee also cover nominations for officers, not just for directors. After this discussion, Larry Cannon moved, seconded by Pe-

ter McKenney, to retain the current process for election of officers and their one-year terms. The motion carried.

Member Access to Board of Director Meetings. The current Bylaws do not provide that Division Members have a right to attend Board meetings, although that has been the policy of the Division for some time. The members of the task force had discussed adding a clear, permissive provision to the new bylaws, but it was an after-thought and not included in the Draft 2a which had been distributed to the Directors prior to this meeting. Some Directors pointed out, though, that there could be some sensitive issues that might need to be discussed by the Directors without members present to minimize embarrassment or even protect legal rights, e.g., allegations of misconduct by a Member, Director, or Officer. The three task force members concurred on the outline for this proposed provision and will reflect it in their upcoming Draft 3 to be distributed to the Directors.

No other issues regarding the bylaw project were raised. The task force will create Draft 3 and circulate it to Directors for comment. If necessary, they will refine the Draft 3 based upon further feedback of the Directors. They will then post Draft 3 on the Seacoast Division website and alert members that it is available for their review and comment. The Directors will discuss the proposed bylaws again at their October 13 meeting. Ultimately, the members will vote on amending and restating the bylaws by mail-in ballots.

There being no further business proposed for discussion, Erich Whitney moved and Peter McKenney seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was adopted and the meeting ended at 2:40 p.m.

September 29, 2012

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Bruce Robinson at 10:07 am at 77 Col-

lege Rd., Stratham, NH, the home of Mike Grahame. Present at the meeting were Bruce Robinson, President, Directors Peter McKenney, Rich Breton, Larry Cannon, Mike Grahame, Erich Whitney, and Chip Faulter (appointed to fill the Director position open

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (continued)

due to the resignation of Tom Jones). Excused from the meeting were Tom Coulombe and Paul Lessard.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve President Robinson's appointment of Chip Faulter to fill the Director position open due to the resignation of Tom Jones. After the vote, Chip participated in the remainder of the meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to also approve President Robinson's appointment of Chip Faulter to fill the open office of Secretary.

The President called for the submission of reports:

Secretary: The Secretary's minutes from the meeting on July 14, 2012 were approved without changes.

Treasurer: The Treasurer's report was approved without comment.

Editor: Bill Hodges has volunteered to take over the editor position of the Switch Tower after the October issue. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve President Robinson's appointment of Bill Hodges as the editor. Erich Whitney requested that Bill Hodges and Rob Carignan (Seacoast Division Webmaster) confer regularly and agree on what gets published on the website and in The Switch Tower. Peter McKenney suggested that a back-up editor be assigned but no action was taken on the suggestion.

Membership: Peter McKenney reported that Seacoast Division membership stood at 175 members and had declined the past two months. The Seacoast Division is out of copies of Scale Rails to handout at train shows. NMRA Headquarters will send additional copies for only the cost of postage. A motion was made, seconded and carried to authorize spending up to \$30 on postage to obtain additional copies of Scale Rails or past issues of the NMRA Magazine to use as handouts at train shows where the Seacoast Division is representing the NMRA.

Activities: There was no report from the Activities Chair as Paul Lessard was not present at the meeting.

President: Bruce Robinson touched upon all of the upcoming train shows. Of note, The Bedford Boomer's train show on November 4 will be their last after a run of 30 years. The Seacoast Division will have an entire classroom to host clinics including Bill Hodges' 3 Free-Mo modules which are under construction. Bruce also reported unsatisfactory coordination between the Northeastern Region and its Divisions, particularly regarding staffing an NMRA recruitment table at the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show in W. Springfield.

Nominating Committee: Rich Breton stated that he did not have any new candidates to fill the 3 Director positions coming open in January, 2013. However, Larry Cannon, Tom Coulombe and Mike Grahame have all indicated that they wish to stand for re-election for Director positions for another three-year term. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept this slate. Additional nominations will be solicited at the Annual Meeting before nominations are closed for vote. Peter McKenney suggested that the candidates provide updated bios for the benefit of the voting members to get to know them. Further discussion suggested that the bio focus upon what the candidate's vision for the Division is, i.e. where do they want to take the Division during their term. The bios will be published in the January Switch Tower, posted on the website, and hardcopies will be made available at the Annual Meeting on January 12.

Member Survey: Peter McKenney briefly summarized the recommendations made by the member survey task force in its submitted report. He noted that the survey received a good response, and that the content provided by the responders was valuable. There was concern that immediately tackling recommendations presented in the report on the survey would take too much manpower away from the effort required to support the 2013 NER convention. Erich Whitney, Chair of the Convention, emphatically countered that concern. Although the convention is

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (continued)

important, it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to run the business of the Division properly. If something requires its immediate attention, then it needs to deal with it appropriately. This does not prevent individuals who have the time, knowledge and/or ability to tackle an issue and recommendation presented in the report. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the survey report as written and to phase in the recommendations over reasonable time as deemed appropriate by the Directors. The report will be posted to the Division website.

Bylaws Revision Project: Peter McKenney led the bylaws revision project discussion. The Directors approved the following: 1) paper ballots and a paper copy of the proposed revisions need to be sent to all Seacoast Division members who are eligible to vote (excludes RailPass, family and sustaining members per NMRA rules), 2) the proposed bylaws document shall be printed with 2 pages of the bylaws per copy sheet, printed on both sides of the sheet, 3) a cover letter from the President of the Seacoast Division shall be included in the mailing package explaining the purpose of and highlighting the proposed changes to the bylaws, 4) the completed ballots should be mailed to the Seacoast Division secretary for collection and counting, 5) the voting members will have at least one month to vote, and 5) the budget for conducting the balloting is \$225. The ballot procedures will be implemented only after the Board has voted on the final form of the proposed amended and restated bylaws which vote, hopefully, will take place at the October 13 meeting.

Convention Planning: The Directors devoted a substantial amount of time discussing the ongoing preparations for the Tracks to Lakeport 2013 Convention. Erich Whitney stated that he has gained the commitment of the guest speaker, pending formal letter agreement, for the convention banquet. George Melvin is the author of several northeastern railroad books and is working on a new book. Erich provided a thumbnail of Mr. Melvin's topic for the banquet which sounds very interesting. Erich also said that Mr. Melvin would like to come early (Friday) to the convention to potentially present a clinic, sign books or otherwise participate in the convention activities.

Larry Cannon presented a draft of the convention budget. Larry noted that the Syracuse convention did not make a profit due to not selling enough hotel rooms, the cancellation of one of the key bus tours and obtaining 300 color layout tour books, an excessive number. The Directors discussed opportunities for the Division to mitigate those risks. Erich Whitney has not been able to obtain a signed copy of the contract with the hotel from NER officials in order to know exactly what the terms are. He encouraged Directors who were available to visit the Margate Resort in person to study the facility personally to aid them in completing their planning processes and that all of them prepare a list of questions for the walk-through that would be discussed with the hotel's staff.

Rich Breton presented options for some of the "outside" activities. There was considerable discussion about bus costs, the 4-hour foliage train event and several 2-hour train rides. Rich also presented some information about boat rides. Rich is continuing to work on these options. To aid the raffle, it is important to obtain donations from "in division" model railroad vendors (like Xuron, Bar Mills, Model Tech and Highball Graphics) as well as solicit donations from national vendors and Seacoast Division members.

In general, coordination of the major areas is proceeding but there is ongoing significant concern in regard to the amount of volunteer labor that will be required to execute the plan.

Modular group: Bruce will be talking with an individual who could provide more leadership to the Division's Free-Mo Module Group.

Next quarterly member meeting program: The Directors discussed at length the optimal format for the October 13 meeting in Derry, NH, because so many important objectives need to be met. First, the meeting needs to meet the expectations of members regarding specific clinic presentations previously advertised. Second, the Board wants adequate time for members to discuss the proposed bylaws changes. Third, the Board will need adequate time to continue convention planning and to resolve the

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes (concluded)

final form of the proposed bylaws to be sent out after the meeting for member voting. Fourth, the Directors want to start a series of clinic presentations to inform members on the attributes and functions of NMRA and NER conventions and explain volunteer opportunities. To fit all of these elements into a four-hour period is a daunting task. The Directors concluded that clinic presentations should be at the beginning of the program and last at least two-hours, and that the Board meeting should be at the end of the program. They also favored having refreshments such as coffee and donuts on hand for a donation, but not full lunches. Erich Whitney also asked for 10 minutes to update people on modules. Peter McKenney offered to assimilate these ideas

into possible program scenarios to accomplish these objectives and circulate them to the Directors for further comment and resolution.

Other comments:

Erich Whitney noted the efficiency of a Boy Scouts parents' meeting he recently attended. He hoped that the Seacoast Division could emulate that type of meeting.

A motion for adjournment was made, seconded and carried at 12:41 pm.

N.M.R.A. News

Here's the August 2012 InfoNet News eblast!

- ◆ **Charlie Getz became the new NMRA President** as Mike Brestel passed the reins to him at the Annual business meeting in Grand Rapids. Charlie has stated that his first order of business is to simplify the organizational structure of the NMRA.
- ◆ **Pacific Director Michael Bartlett (Australia) and Canada Director Fred Headon** became members of the Board in Grand Rapids. Michael replaces Peter Jensen; Fred replaces Clark Koening, who took over for Don Hillman after he retired for health reasons.
- ◆ Charlie appointed Western Director Jack Hamilton to head up the new **Strategic Planning Committee**, which will prepare a plan to help guide the NMRA into the future. He'll be making a preliminary report at the winter Board meeting.
- ◆ The Sacramento 21st Century Limited National Convention host group presented the Board of Directors with a check for \$7,500, to be donated to the Diamond Club. The Diamond Club funds are being used for the scanning and posting of archival photographs and artwork currently housed in the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library.
- ◆ Charlie Getz updated the Board on the state of

the "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" exhibit, to be housed at the California State Railroad Museum (CSRM). An anonymous donor has pledged **\$250,000 in matching funds**, and as of late July donations of at least \$160,000 were still needed to achieve the match. The funds must be received by the end of this year. Development of the exhibit is estimated to cost between \$500,000 and \$750,000. The "Magic of Scale Model Railroading" exhibit will be seen by approximately 600,000 visitors to CSRM annually.

- ◆ The **Marketing Department team** of Page Martin, Garrett Ewald, and Barrett Johnson were named at the convention. Each of these individuals has professional marketing experience, and is tasked with developing advertising and promotions aimed at retaining existing members, re-enlisting lapsed members, and attracting new ones.
- ◆ Ben Sevier of the Pacific Southwest Region has accepted the position of **Information Technology Director** for the NMRA.

Here's the September 2012 InfoNet News eblast!

- ◆ After several years of work by incoming NMRA Secretary John Stevens, **all U.S. Region boundaries are now defined by state and**

N.M.R.A. News (concluded)

- county boundaries**, rather than zip codes. This will help keep boundaries stable as the U.S. Post Office continues to redefine its zip code areas.
- ♦ Michiana Division co-founder Jim Six, a college professor and experienced education expert, has agreed to lead a team charged with **developing a standardized clinic format** that will help ensure consistency and uniformity for clinics being made available to Divisions and Regions. The format will be based upon the one currently in use in the Michiana Division of the Midwest Region.
 - ♦ Following the recommendation of Standards & Conformance Department head Didrik Voss, MMR, the Board directed that **all eight DCC-related Recommended Practices now become NMRA Standards**. Further, in the future the issuance of a Conformance Warrant is not to be influenced by Recommended Practices but will be based solely on adherence to applicable NMRA Standards.
 - ♦ President Charlie Getz appointed outgoing president **Mike Brestel to replace Larry DeYoung**, who retired as publisher of NMRA Magazine. Charlie also announced that Mike has also agreed to serve as assistant to the president to ensure a smooth transition between administrations.
 - ♦ Chief Financial Officer Frank Koch reported that the **attendance of the National Train Show in Grand Rapids was the fourth best ever**, and that Saturday's attendance exceeded Sacramento's of the same day. In addition, there were three more booths sold at Grand Rapids than Sacramento.
 - ♦ Looking ahead to next year's convention in Atlanta, **the "Peachtree Express" team** reports that it's putting the finishing touches on a series of short videos featuring selected layouts that will be on tour during the convention. The videos will be posted to YouTube and will be able to be accessed from links on <http://www.nmra2013.org/>
 - ♦ The Peachtree team is also proud to announce that there will be a number of **Civil War-related tours**—both rail-related and general interest — as well as a "Civil War track."
 - ♦ And it's not too soon to be thinking about the 2014 convention! The **Cleveland Convention's website is now up** and running and taking registrations at www.2014cleveland.org.

-Gerry Leone, MMR, NMRA Communications Director

Correcting Mistakes by Bill Hodges

I have read, and seen, that true craftsmen make mistakes, but what differentiates the most skilled is their ability to correct mistakes in sometimes simple, yet reliable, ways that are not seen by the casual observer. Starting serious construction of my Free-mo modules has me making mistakes which made me think of writing this article. At the rate I'm making mistakes, this could evolve into on-going column.

This article describes two mistakes that had their root cause in my selection of roadbed. I am hand laying track and wanted to use Homasote for module decking in the yards and industrial areas. For the mainline/ branchline, I decided to use California Roadbed's 60 degree branchline roadbed which is

nominally 1/8" thick. I vaguely remember when I ordered it I realized I would need to shim under the roadbed in order to make up 0.087" so that I will have the railhead at the specified 3/8 inch above the top of the endplate. The 0.087" is calculated by subtracting the thickness of the roadbed, ties & rail from 0.375" (3/8"). So $0.375 - 0.125 - 0.080 - 0.083 = 0.087$, or slightly more than 5/64".

The mistakes I describe here are where two modules join and the railheads were not at the correct height. On one I managed to get the module's rail too high- the other too low. The one too high was because I did not double check the thickness of the shim strips before I glued down the roadbed and

Correcting Mistakes by Bill Hodges (Continued)

ties. The rail was high by about $1/32$ ". The one too low was due to haste and forgetting the need to shim (the two were done weeks apart). It was too low by a little more than $1/32$ ". On this one only the roadbed was glued.

For the high one I considered sanding the ties, but since they are a scale 7" (.087") there wouldn't be much left of them. I considered removing the ties and roadbed so I could sand the shims, but felt like this would be reverting too far. Finally, I used a Japanese trim saw to cut a kerf along the bottom of the shims where they join to the sub-roadbed. These saws have a thin blade, $\sim .040$ ", and cut on the pull stroke.



They do not have a frame or a back as found on dovetail or back saws that cut on the push stroke. This allowed me to make a cut that extended about 6" in from the endplate. That and a little sanding of the ties will get the ties flat for the rails. Fortunately the shim was stiff enough that I could inject glue between the top of the endplate and the underside of the shim at the end plate. This produced about a $1/4\%$ grade which I actually want for this line running down to the yard near the waterfront.



In hindsight, removing 6 or 7 inches of ties and sanding the top of the roadbed would have been an alternative.

The second module, the one too low, was a bit more of a challenge because there will be a turnout with its points about 6" in from the endplate. I used the same saw to cut the joint between the roadbed and the Homasote sub-roadbed for about 10". I sanded a shim from a shingle to provide a wedge that I inserted in the kerf. The photo below shows the previously high roadbed on the left and the corrected low to the right.



I admit making the shim/ wedge was tedious be-

Correcting Mistakes by Bill Hodges (Concluded)

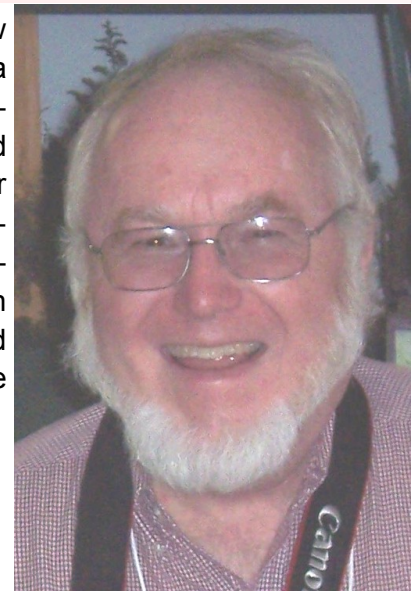
cause it needed to be long and thin and wonder if I should have used another method such as building a wedge between the ties and the roadbed using various thicknesses of stripwood to aid in making the wedge. I hope I won't have to report about that, but

will probably have the opportunity. One thing about the corrections as done is that once ballasted and scenicked, they should be unseen by the casual or keen observer.

On-line Achievement Program Advice and Assistance by Larry Cannon, MMR

In case you have not explored the Achievement Program page on the NMRA website lately, there are far more than program regulations, guidelines and forms there. If you are working on one of the program areas or considering attempting part of the program, check out the sidebar section for "Masters Series" and then select either the overview or reprints of the articles written by several MMR's in 2008 for Scale Rails' "Year of the MMR" which covered all eleven parts of the MMR program. <http://www.nmra.com/education/achievement/midx.html>. There is advice and suggestions that should give you a better understanding of any of the parts of the program and some interesting photos as well.

While this is not new information, it is a readily available reference that can be used by all and it is at your finger tips. My contact information is included elsewhere in the publication should you have any more specific questions.



Derry Model Railroading Night Fall Series by Erich Whitney

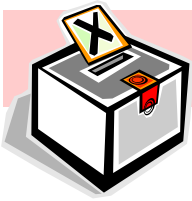
The Fall series of the Derry Model Railroading Night is in full swing. Friday, September 14th, James VanBokkelen gave an insightful presentation on building modular layouts based on his over 20 years of experience with the HUB Division's Modular Group.

The next meeting, Friday, October 12th will feature Fred Hessler presenting Free-Mo modules based on his experience showing with the Northeast Free-Mo Modular Group.

Friday, November 9th will feature Tom Oxnard and Bruce Robinson discussing the construction of basement layouts.

We will take December off for the holiday and resume again in January 2013.

If you have any questions or if you would like to contribute, please contact me, director8@seacoastnmra.org.



Nominating Committee Report by Rich Breton

The Nominating Committee was formed in July by the Board of Directors and solicited members who had interest in running for one of the three Director positions that will be filled at the Annual Meeting of the Members on January 12, 2013. Only three members have expressed an interest in running for these positions: Larry Cannon, Tom Coulombe, and Mike Grahame. They currently fill the positions and their terms end in January. They will submit information supporting their candidacies prior to the Annual Meeting. At the Annual Meeting, the President will call for further nominations from the floor. There is still time to submit your interest in one of these positions. Contact me if interested.

Treasurer's Report by Tom Coulombe

Since the last report as of June 1, 2012, the Seacoast Division's cash balance has increased 7% to \$2,039.69 as of September 24. The largest income item was an annual payment by the NER of \$1 for each of the 175 members who were in the Division at the end of August. There were also cash donations of \$29.55 and interest income of \$0.48. Postage and printing expenses of \$59.73 were the only costs of operations.



October Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Seacoast Division Board of Directors' Meeting

Saturday, October 13, 2012

Marion Gerrish Community Center
39 West Broadway, Derry, NH

Agenda

Committee Reports

- Secretary
- Treasurer

Old Business

- By-laws revision— final choices on what to propose to the Members for voting
- Tracks to Lakeport planning with focus on recruitment of volunteers

New Business

- To be determined

Adjourn



Directors deep in thought at the September 29, 2012 Board meeting. Top photo, left to right: Erich Whitney, Bruce Robinson, and Mike Grahame. Bottom photo, left to right: Larry Cannon, Rich Breton, and Chip Faulter. Excused for the meeting: Tom Coulombe and Paul Lessard. Photos by Peter McKenney

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

Editor: Erich Whitney ; Next issues: Bill Hodges, 179 Surry Rd., Ellsworth, ME 04605
editor@seacoastnmra.org.

The Switch Tower Online
Seacoast Division Home Page
<http://www.seacoastnmra.org>

NMRA Home Page/Web Site
<http://www.nmra.org>

**Deadline For
January 2013 Issue:
December 1, 2012**

Winter Meeting
January 12, 2013
South Portland, Maine

*Mark your calendar and
save the date!!!*

Seacoast Division Officers and Directors:

President: Bruce Robinson, 603-887-5922; **Vice President:** Mike Grahame, 603-778-3099; **Treasurer:** Tom Coulombe, 207-240-9913; **Secretary:** Chip Faulter, 207-443-3135
Directors: Richard Breton, 603-332-8257, Larry Cannon, 207-786-3929, Paul Lessard, 603-623-4093, Peter McKenney, 207-776-2033, Erich Whitney, 603-537-1120.

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Oct. 6, Derry, NH. Learn to Operate training session, Marion Gerrish Community Ctr.
Oct. 7, Pepperell, MA. Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club Show, Varnum Brook Elementary School.
Oct. 12, Derry, NH. Derry Model Railroading Night, Marion Gerrish Community Center
Oct. 13, Derry, NH. Seacoast Division Quarterly Meeting, Marion Gerrish Community Center.
Oct. 27. Fun Operations Saturday in New Hampshire. Contact Bruce Robinson.
Nov. 3, Auburn, ME. Great Falls Model Railroad Club Train Show
Nov. 4, Bedford, NH. Bedford Boomers Show, McKelvie Middle School.
Nov. 9, Derry, NH. Derry Model Railroading Night, Marion Gerrish Community Center
Nov. 17, Brewer, ME. Annual train show sponsored by the Eastern Maine Model RR Club.
Nov. 24-25, SE NH/NE MA. Tour de Chooch, Layout Tour Open House.

Fall Meeting Program

**Saturday, October 13, 2012 10:00am-2:00pm,
Marion Gerrish Community Center, 39 West Broadway, Derry, NH 03038**

Clinic Topics:

- **Three Part Modeling Presentation** by Rich Breton.
 - *Updating Rolling Stock for Performance*; metal wheels, knuckle couplers, and converting talgo trucks.
 - *Adding Prototypical Features*; brake components, etc.
 - *Decal Selection, Creation*, and Application; BAR example
- **NMRA Conventions– Why Should a Model Railroader Go to One?** by Peter McKenney
- **Modeling Early Piggyback Equipment (1950-1970)** by Paul Lessard.
- **Free-Mo Modules** by Erich Whitney. This will be a recap from Fred Hessler's presentation on showing Free-Mo Modules at Friday's Derry Model Railroading Night, and a pre-view of part of the Winter Meeting program

There will be a presentation to the Members on the proposed new bylaws , followed by a question, suggestion, and answer period.

Show and Ask. Participants are encouraged to bring examples of their modeling to show to other attendees for educational purposes (two-way) AND to bring their questions on model railroading topics to pose to the others. Take advantage of the cumulative experience of all of the attendees to make your modeling experience more enjoyable.

A Board of Directors meeting will follow the clinics, presentation, and members' discussions.

Coffee and donuts/ light snacks will be available for a donation. There will be a 15 minute break near noontime and you are welcome to bring your own snacks or lunch, if you wish.

Come to the fall meeting and Share the Fun of Model Railroading.