



The Switch Tower

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Seacoast Division NMRA www.seacoastnmra.org



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Join the Fun at Quarterly "Events"

Join fellow members of the Division on **Saturday, January 10, 2015**, for a fun **event**. Once each calendar quarter, the Division plans an "event" for its members. They have been called "meetings" in the past, but borrowing the suggestion passed on by NMRA President Charlie Getz in the December issue of NMRA Magazine, let's think of them as "**events!**"

True enough, there may be a few minutes devoted to "business," but the vast majority of these events are dedicated to fun topics such as clinics on how to model, plus show, tell, and ask so there can be interaction by all of the attendees,

and often a layout to tour or operate on. PLUS, you get to meet and socialize with



Sample scenes from Norm Poulin's O-scale Moose River Valley Railroad. As the layout room lighting dims, lights come on in and near the structures. Note the custom painted background below.

fellow modelers and use those new relationships to your advantage in your modeling pursuits.



The Winter Meeting./ Event (details on page 14) will follow the above model, far more time for fun than "business." A special treat will be a visit to the attractive layout of Norm Poulin in S. Casco.

Join us
January 10, 2015
10am-2pm
301 Cottage Road
S. Portland, ME

Enjoy a trip through the [Seacoast Division's Web Site](http://www.seacoastnmra.org).

The President's Lantern by Peter McKenney

Members of this Division are blessed to have a growing corps of capable volunteers involved. I start with Tom Coulombe as a great example. Not only has he served well as Division Director and Treasurer for many years, read on the next page about his winning the Spate Award! Tom will be stepping down as Division Treasurer, but he will remain as a Director and great supporter of the Division's program. Bill Gaver has lead the effort to develop a youth model railroad camp in Union, NH, for this summer. John Tyndall stepped forward to become the Switch Tower editor and brought great skill and creativity to the position, only to be knocked "off track" by a malady. John's withdrawal dumped a load on Assistant Editor Geoff Anthony and he is doing a super job. Witness this issue. Bill Poor found time in his extremely time-consuming profession to enhance the Division's website and keep it up to date, plus he coordinates the highly successful Derry Model Railroad Fun Nights. I hear from participants how delightful those evenings are. Dave Sias, Chip Faulter, and Larry Cannon, in particular, have been great ambassadors for our Division in recruiting and welcoming new members. I do not have space to acknowledge everyone, but all of the Directors, officers, meeting managers, and committee members and chairs accomplished great work last year. The Directors and chairs have a great routine for making Board meetings extremely efficient and effective, i.e., shorter! Thanks to all who have served and welcome to new volunteers this year.

Mike Grahame and Erich Whitney managed a great Fall Meeting (details on pages 4-6) and the Winter Meeting on January 10 promises to be interesting, also. See details on page 14. This is the most important meeting of the year because you, the Members, have the opportunity to elect three people to serve three-year terms on the Board. Thanks to Tom Oxnard for leading the effort to recruit candidates for those positions. If you or someone you know should be added to the slate of candidates, come to the meeting and nominate them from the floor. Also, bring to the meeting a non-member who shows great interest in the hobby and the NMRA. They may be eligible for a limited number of free Railpass

memberships in the NMRA. While the meeting program will be great, plan on visiting Norm's O-Scale shop in Casco, ME, after the meeting. Norm has a well-stocked shop with items also in N, HO, and G scales, AND he has a large, drop-dead gorgeous, O-scale layout with scratch-built structures and professionally painted backdrop. Norm has offered to give a discount on January 10 to Seacoast Division NMRA members who drop by.

The Board has made a major commitment that should make 2015 even more interesting to Division members. Up to \$1,000 is available to support new or expanded programs for the Division. 2015 likely will present a new experience for model railroaders. Twelve organizations, including the Division, are working collaboratively to sponsor a layout tour program in Maine in September! More work needs to be done, but a program schedule hopefully will be ready by the middle of June so you can plan your routes. I hope that everyone reads and understands Larry Cannon's ten rules of etiquette. Otherwise, layout owners will not host another tour. I am really excited that the Division will co-sponsor the 2016 National Narrow Gauge Convention. I attended the Portland, ME, NNGC in 2007 and assure you that the program in Augusta, ME, will be to your liking. Be there, and volunteer! PLUS, the Maritime Federation of Model Railroaders will hold a convention in St. John, NB, May 19-26, 2016!! Another great opportunity adjacent to the Division. The NER has been invited to co-sponsor this convention as it did in 2010.

Turnover report: Rich Breton has decided that 15 years as a Director are enough. He will leave the Board when his 5th term ends in January, but he will continue to serve the Division in many ways. Rich has been a dedicated, key leader and I hope that everyone thanks him. Similarly, I committed to leading the Division for two years and I will stand down in January as President. It has been a fantastic experience but I do not wish to hog all of this fun. I will continue to serve on the Board, if re-elected. VP Erich Whitney will seek election as president in January and I know that he will do an excellent job and I will strongly support his efforts.

This "lantern" shines on a lot of good news. Enjoy 2015 and see you at the Annual Meeting on Jan. 10!



TOM COULOMBE RECEIVES NORTHEASTERN REGION'S ROBERT W. SPATE PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD by Larry Cannon

On Saturday, October 18, Tom Coulombe was presented the 2014 Robert W. Spate Public Service Award on behalf of the Northeastern Region NMRA at the quarterly meeting of the Seacoast Division of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA).

Tom has promoted the value of our hobby by sharing his life-long interest in railroading and model railroading with people of all ages. Those interactions include the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), the membership and visitors of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club of Auburn, Maine (GFMRRRC), the Seacoast Division NMRA, attendees of Operation Lifesaver International presentations (OLI), and others personally and publicly.

Tom has been involved with BSA in the Lewiston/Auburn area, Pine Tree Council, and Jamborees in various states. He has had a high level of involvement with the Railroading Merit Badge locally and regionally, for the Council, and for at least five national Boy Scout Jamborees.

Tom has a long history with the GFMRRRC and is currently Treasurer and Station Manager in his capacity as the facilities manager for the club's 40-foot by 75-foot two-level building. He is a past President of the organization and is active in the club's shows, open houses, and public displays, such as the one at the Amherst Society's Springfield Show where the club won the Best in Show Award this past winter.

Tom participates as an instructor in the club's

long-established eight-week Model Railroading class held twice a year. While advertised and promoted as one of the Auburn Adult Education programs, about half of each class consists of children who have an interest in the hobby and are accompanied by adults.

Tom is also a videographer for the GFMRRRC's half hour television program "Train Time", which is available and utilized by public access cable television stations throughout the United States. As of this time, 247 episodes have been produced and the library of programs has been accessed by 85 stations in 25 states.

Tom also serves as a presenter for Operation Lifesaver International (OLI), is a director and Treasurer for the Seacoast Division of NMRA, and is active in other Division activities.

The Robert W. Spate Public Service Award was started through a donation of \$1,000 to the Northeastern Region NMRA from the Great Falls Model Railroad Club in 2001. Robert Spate of New Harbor, Maine, was a life member of the HUB

Division of the Northeastern region, and actively shared his model railroading with young people and others interested in learning about the hobby. The estate of Robert W. Spate gave the Great Falls Model Railroad Club a very large donation of all of his model railroading materials, tools, and layout. This award honors Bob by recognizing others who share this spirit.

Congratulations, Tom, for being presented



2014 Fall Meeting Summary



Before the Fall meeting began on October 18, 2014, in Stratham, NH, the Division's Board of Directors met for a routine quarterly meeting of 46 minutes to check on progress of the Division and make some new decisions. See summary on page ___ and the full minutes of the meeting on the Division's website.



Erich Whitney brought his modules to demonstrate how he had just earned a Golden Spike Award, an introductory award in the NMRA's Achievement Program. Erich demonstrated how he met all six of the requirements using just the items on the top of these modules.



Chip Faulter dispenses door prizes to lucky attendees. Paul Kilian has his hands full of prizes.



Tom Oxnard's Show and Tell involved his research of an actual building and how he scratch-built a model of it for his home layout. Tom likes building structures and was stimulated to build more while he earned his Master Builder—Structures certificate. He is within one certificate of becoming a Master Model Railroader!!



The Fall Quarterly meeting was another well-attended Division function. Attendees listened to a number of clinics, participated in Show and Tell, heard about the home layouts that they were going to visit in the afternoon, and had plenty of time for socialization. Another great Saturday in the life of model railroaders.

2014 Fall Meeting Summary con't.



Erich Whitney and Mike Grahame were in charge of organizing the activities for the Fall Meeting. They chose to focus on layout design and operations. Erich introduced layout owners who would open their layouts in the afternoon for touring and operations, if you cared to accept a throttle. In the above photos, left to right, Erich watches Mike Grahame describe his layout and how he orchestrates realistic operations on it. Mike's layout has Union Pacific with a New England flavor! John Newick had a great time describing his three-level N-scale layout which is based on the Maine Central and Bangor and Aroostook Railroads. John's layout has many remote controlled turnouts and a dispatcher panel that can track trains as they move across his layout. Tom Oxnard introduced his railroad by giving a brief history of the several phases of the building of his fine layout, and his evolving vision for it. Dick Fralick also opened his New Haven-based layout for touring. Dick's layout was particularly interesting for new layout modelers as he showed more of the active layout construction facets of the hobby.



Chip Faulter and Dick Fralick having a fun conversation as they share ideas on how to make their home layouts more satisfying. Dick enjoys realistic operations on his layout even before all areas of it are scenicked and populated with structures.



John Newick's Central Maine and Aroostook Railroad has great realistic operating sessions with long runs between stations, thanks to having three levels of N-scale model trains. One challenge in visiting his layout is to find a good location to take a panoramic photo. Note in this photo the good lighting that John has installed.

2014 Fall Meeting Summary and "Show and Ask"



Above: Fascinated visitors pummel Tom Oxnard (blue shirt on far right) with questions and comments during their visit to his layout. Immediately behind Tom is the bulging gate Tom built to hide a furnace. Read about it in the December 2014 issue of Model Railroader, pp. 68 –70!



Show and Tell generates lots of discussion during the quarterly meetings. Starting below on the right and going clockwise: Rich Breton shows a photo of an historic building that he built a model of; Neil Falby uses a news story of a local train challenged by bad weather and the consequences of it; Larry Cannon has converted his layout to DCC and shows off some ancient electrical devices he will never need again, which many never knew existed in the first place; and Dave Spritke tells about modifying and detailing a GP-35 into a Utah Railway GP-38. There were many activities for the day and everyone had a smile on their face on their drive home.



Profiles of Candidates for Board of Directors

Peter McKenney

Although I am nearing the completion of my first three-year term on the Board of Directors of Seacoast Division NMRA, this is my first bio published to support my candidacy for the Board. Reason? At the Annual Meeting in January 2012, I had no intention of serving on the Board.

One incumbent chose not to be a candidate for a second term, however, and President Bruce Robinson asked for another candidate from the floor. There was a very long pause and no one showed any sign of volunteering. Finally, I

succumbed to the situation and indicated that I would be a candidate. Now, I am very grateful that I have had the chance to serve. I have gained many more acquaintances, feel proud of what has been accomplished by the Board in the past three years, and I look forward to the chance to serve another term, if elected.

After one year on the Board, I was elected to serve as President and I am about to finish my second, and final, year in that position. While I am proud of what has been accomplished in the past three years, I feel that the Division can do even more to help NMRA members in Maine and New Hampshire and I want to serve on the team to help make that happen.

For those who do not know me, I joined the NMRA in 1998. I have a long-term goal of building an HO-scale layout based upon the Fort Fairfield Branch of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad. I like researching the history of railroads and using that information to help me plan for realistic scenes. I like attending model railroad conventions and I am especially fond of participating in realistic model train operations.

I hope to participate with other directors, officers, and committee members in developing more opportunities for Divi-



sion Members to enjoy our great hobby. The Board is a policy setting body. After the policies and direction have been set, someone needs to volunteer to enact the newly chosen programs. That is what I hope to do during the next three years. In particular, I hope to use the information that we have been acquiring and assemble the resources so there can be more "Model Railroad Fun Nights" in Maine and New Hampshire, more operating sessions, a re-activated modular group, and more interaction with model railroad clubs and groups. It will take a team to do this, but I see more people willing to lend a hand. Together, we can enhance the Division's level of performance.

Chip Faulter



My name is Chip Faulter and I am volunteering for another term as a Director of the Seacoast Division NMRA. I have been a model railroader for nearly 50 years, and a member of the NMRA since 2002. I have served one term as a Director and the Division recording secretary. I live in Phippsburg, ME, have a modest layout, and enjoy all aspects of the hobby including layout planning and construction, electrical and electronics, modeling, operating and collecting. I am an avid Pennsylvania Railroad fan and belong to the Pennsylvania Railroad Historical and Technical Society. I believe that the NMRA has made, and will continue to make the hobby stronger but the only way that will happen is through the work of volunteers like us. I have served, and am ready to continue to serve as one of your Directors. Best, Chip

Bill Poor



I joined the NMRA only two years ago, but I have had a love for model railroading since I was a boy with a paper route and money to build my railroad empire. I started building the Still River Railroad when I was about 10 years old, learning the techniques of hard-shell scenery and zip texturing and taking over half of my parents' basement. I got almost all of the track laid down and about half of the scenery done when college, career, wife, family, and drag racing pulled me away. Now that many of those other "projects" are nearing completion, and the race car has been sold, I have returned to model railroading. My current layout is a modular switching layout based on the yard and industrial area of downtown Portsmouth, NH, set in the early to mid-1950s.

I am a candidate for Director of the Seacoast Division NMRA because I believe I can help to carry out its mission of promoting the hobby. I am currently the coordinator of the Division-sponsored Derry Model Railroad Fun Night program and Webmaster for the Division's web site. I am also a member of the Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club and frequently serve on the operating crew of Bruce Robinson's Valley Junction Railroad

NER News Brief By Peter McKenney

The Board of Directors of the Northeastern Region NMRA met online via JoinMe.com on October 30, 2014, for almost two hours. President Youst appointed an ad hoc Division Superintendent's Committee with VP Doe-

hing as its chair. Paul Hoffman has been appointed chair of the NER Nominations Committee. Paul wants a committee member from every active division. New England Diamonds, the 2014 NER convention, produced a tentative profit of \$1,805. In the absence of an NER convention in 2015, the NER will support the Mid-Eastern Region's convention which will be held in Mount Laurel, New Jersey, October 22-25, 2015. Also, NER Canadian Director Steve McMullin invited the NER once again to co-sponsor a convention of the Maritime Federation of Model Railroaders. The convention will be held in St. John, NB, May 19-22, 2016. The NER co-sponsored a convention with the MFMR in St. John in 2010 and it was a great convention. Seacoast Division NMRA members should strongly consider attending this convention. St. John, NB, is an economical place to visit for a weekend and the modelers in the Maritimes are very gracious and talented. President Youst will represent the NER at the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show January 24 and 25, 2015. If anyone wishes to assist him at any time at the display table, just drop by. The BOD agreed to undertake a strategic planning exercise. President Youst asked Steve Erickson to lead the process. The next meeting of the Board will be on January 30, 2015.

Musings at the Museum by Geoff Anthony

I recently participated in my club's (Eastern Maine Model RR Club) module display for the holidays at the Woodlawn Museum in Ellsworth and wanted to share some thoughts. We ran trains for the three weekends before Christmas and had lots of visitors including two of the local television stations. When I was there we actively encouraged kids and adults to take the throttle and run the trains. The smiles that we received were worth any effort on our part. We also answered a lot of questions about the hobby.

This was exposure and publicity for Woodlawn and our club in the community that we could not have gotten any other way. It also was a great way to introduce the hobby to new and younger faces. This event has already had an effect on the club. The museum is thinking of having the club build a layout for them to run at Christmas. The museum saw an increase in their attendance on the days we were there. The club may see an increase in membership. The most important things I gained were seeing the joy that we were able to bring to the season and talking to new faces about the hobby. I know that we made an impact on the community. I encourage others to avail themselves of similar opportunities. Going beyond the train show is important for the hobby. The rewards are great and the costs are minimal.

Researching a Prototype by Larry Cannon

Background

Approximately two years ago, I decided to expand my two level layout with two large reverse loops to expand the options for two of the three large yards on the layout. The loops each incorporated two hidden staging tracks to take the pressure off the yards and added operating potential. The lower loop became the Canadian Pacific Connecticut River line between St. Johnsbury and Wells River, VT and the upper level with a partial model of the Rutland/Grand Trunk trestle across Lake Champlain became Rouses Point, NY.

One of the signature railroad buildings in Rouses Point was the Canadian National/Central Vermont freight house that was parallel to the tracks off the trestle that was used by Rutland and CN/CV on a gauntlet track.. It was a two story affair with a telegraph operator's office and other offices on the second floor.

Pictures existed of the South and East sides of the building, but the building was demolished approximately twenty-five years ago, and if there are plans for building, they are in images in Canada that apparently are not cataloged or imaged. There may also be information in the National Archives outside Washington, DC.

My Approach

As a result of living in Vermont and the friends I have made in the NMRA, I knew a number of people who I asked about sources of information. I also met with the local historian, consulted with both the Central Vermont and Rutland historical societies and added more names of people besides those I already knew.

As a result, I talked with between a dozen and a dozen and a half people, researched the books I had on Rutland, Delaware and Hudson, Central Vermont and the Grand Trunk that owned Canadian National real estate in the United States. I talked with a lot of people who did not have any more information than I did, but some of the incidental information they had helped me to understand how the interior of the building was arranged or were hints on window placement on the two sides that photographers appeared to have ignored.

Results

After a year and half of research effort, numerous phone calls, e-mail messages and two or three visits to Rouses Point, I was preparing to model the building despite the fact that on my layout the two most visible sides were the ones for which I had the least information.

I had been stalling on the project because past experience has been that within a year of when I modeled something in

this manner, a picture would show up and my guesses would turn out to at best be partially correct. At that point, the fateful e-mail arrived just in the nick of time.

One of my friends who is a member of the Rutland Historical Society had located a 1970's picture his father had taken of the west end of the buildings and an aerial photograph of Rouses Point taken between World War I and World War II.

The west end shot jogged a memory of a similar shot taken twenty years earlier in the Rutland book of a Rutland steam locomotive - in the background was the second floor of the West end of the building - with older windows.

The aerial photograph was when the building had a different paint scheme. Instead of being red with white window sashes, it was the earlier "cream yellow" with red windows and doors.

Thus, I had a good idea of the window and freight door locations at that time. I started sizing the building and planning window and door locations and immediately had a

problem. The newer pictures showed a larger second floor, a little less than half the length of the building while the older, aerial photograph showed a second floor just over a quarter of the length of the building and a chimney in the single story section that was not in the newer photo.

Reconciling Research Information

There had to be an explanation.

Back to the newer south side pho-

tos. One of the photos appeared to show a vertical board in the siding. A second photo gave less of an indication of the board. The third showed nothing. Under magnification, the first photo showed the novelty siding on the two sides of the vertical board had a slightly different spacing. They had built an addition to the second floor between the aerial photo and the 1950's. My guess is probably for something related to World War II.

Upon further examination of the two west end photos, there is a very short chimney enclosed in the "new" addition that is shorter than the exterior chimney on the east end of the building.

I still have not found a "post addition" photo of the north side of the building, but plan to use the same type of window used on the south side of the addition. I doubt I will go to the work of modeling the embedded old corner board in the south and north walls on the second floor or the different sized novelty siding used on the addition.

Summary

Because of the missing measurements from a building plan and no firm knowledge of the window in the north side of the second floor, my model will not be



100% accurate. However, it will be more accurate than the models of the building that I know about. Most, including one in a Model Railroader magazine article, involved building the structure as a building flat to avoid dealing with the unknown. The moral to this tale is to take more photographs of things that generate a modeling interest. I did not have that option. In this case there were people still alive that told me stories that gave me hints on the information I needed and referred me to others who might have the information. Most of these people are older than I am, and some people have accused *me* of being older than dirt.

Maine Layout Tours in 2015 Being Planned by Peter McKenney

Model railroaders in Maine often have had to travel to New Hampshire or beyond to benefit from model railroad layout tours. A few local clubs have held their own layout tours, but usually just for their members and their members' guests. What has been missing for many model railroaders in the state is a broad-based layout tour program that is not so distant from their homes.

Understanding that unmet demand, 12 model railroad clubs, groups, and vendors started in October to find a way to meet the desires of Maine model railroaders. After three meetings, the coalition has chosen to aim for a tour program in Maine for a weekend in September, 2015, with a view of starting in the area of Maine with the greatest density of known existing layouts. In subsequent years, based upon experience and reported layout locations, the layout tour would be expanded geographically to other parts of Maine. Also, recognizing that a lot of work will be required to recruit layout owners who would be willing to allow visitors to see their layouts, the organizers will need a lot of volunteers to serve as ambassadors and liaisons. This layout recruitment effort will start in January and hopefully be concluded by June 15. At that time, the actual tour schedule will be designed and posted online so that members and friends of the tour organizers can see it and start to plan their itineraries. Current thinking of the organizers is NOT to make this a public tour program in the inaugural year so that the organizers and layout tour owners can learn from the experience and adjust the procedures and policies to make it even better, and more suitable for a wider audi-

ence in subsequent years.

In order to attract a wide range of modelers to the tour, the organizers' philosophy is to seek layouts of all scales and gauges, indoor layouts as well as garden railways, and all stages of layout completion. A layout owner who has just begun to build a layout is as welcome as another layout owner whose "completed" layout is of a quality to be eligible to be published in a national hobby magazine. Visitors can learn a lot from a partially built layout as well as learn what it takes to build a more finished product. To help visitors prioritize the layouts on the tour that they will visit in the hours available, the organizers will work with layout owners to draft a layout description for each layout.

Currently, the members of the coalition organizing the tours are: Seacoast Division NMRA, Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club, Great Falls Model Railroad Club, Maine N Trak Model Railroad Club, Maine Modelworks (Pete Apuzzo), Norm's O-Scale, Model Trains and Slot Car Shop (Mike Shipp), Maine Garden Railway Society, Sn2 Crew, Maine Narrow Gauge Modelers, Maine 3-Railers, and Sheepscot Scale Products (George Barrett). Other organizations and individuals are helping and likely will become "co-sponsors" in the future.

Layout Etiquette By Larry Cannon

Model railroading is a gregarious hobby and one where we often forget that everyone has different modeling likes and dislikes. Everyone's expectations are also different and there are as many approaches to using a layout, as there are layouts. Not every layout owner thinks the same way we do and more often than not, they have a different appreciation for their equipment and space than we might discern during a visit. How we use or treat their layout and equipment is important and there ought to be some rules to keep us from getting in trouble when we visit a layout that is not ours. There are, but they are not written.

If I were to translate the ten most common "unwritten rules" this is where I think I would start: Rule 1A is always assume that your host values his layout as much as he does members of his immediate family. Rule 1B is to *never* touch anything without asking or being assured that it is okay to do so.

Rule 2 is borrowed from the medical profession: Never cause greater harm. If an expensive locomotive derails, let the host or his crew deal with the problem unless told they want you to fix the problem. Rule 3 is to respect the rights of other visitors. Don't hog the host's time or converse at length on topics of your interest that "derail" the visit. This

(Continued on next page)

Layout Etiquette

is especially important when visiting time is limited.

Rule 4 is always be gracious: Thank the host. Sign the guest book. Thank the operating crew. Be sure to thank the spouse if that person is helping. It's their house too. Rule 5 is a modern variation. Don't be afraid to set other visitors straight about bad conduct. If you see theft, scream bloody murder! If you just see bad conduct, tell the offender what good conduct is. The host and his crew don't have eyes in the back of their heads and they shouldn't have to have them there – Period!

Rule 6 is that if you bring children or touchy-feely adults to somebody's layout, *you* are responsible for their conduct. Don't let their actions embarrass the host or his other visitors. Rule 7, don't be critical. If you know a better way of doing something or how to fix what you see as a problem, wait to be asked for advice. Share it with the host later and not in front of the crowd.

Rule 8 never take photos before asking or being told that it is okay. Some people feel this is an invasion of privacy or that you may thwart a publication effort with your pictures. Rule 9 is a corollary: try to stay out of the way of people who have been told it's okay to take pictures. Rule 10 is simple: Remember Rule 4.

The perfect guest is usually appreciated as much as the perfect host. Not only does this help keep model railroading an open hobby, it shows a sincere appreciation of the efforts of the host and his volunteers.

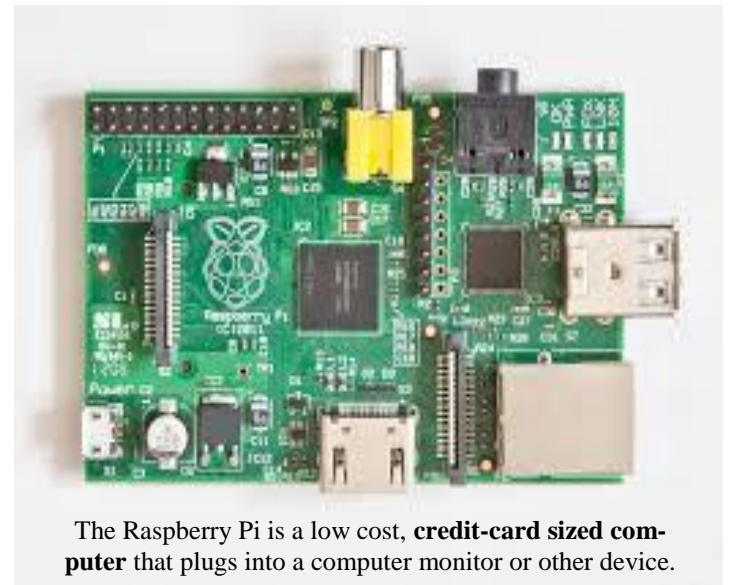
Driving Engines. Easy as Raspberry Pi! By Jonathan Miner

How many people walk into your train room carrying a wireless throttle? These days... just about anyone, in fact, the ladies might even have one in their purse! And these wireless throttles work with Digitrax, North Coast Engineering, and other digital command control systems, and users might not even know what brand of system you have under the benchwork.

Coming up in April, we're going to go into the details of setting up the Java Model Railroad Interface (JMRI) software, and using a Wi-Fi router to connect with Android devices, Apple iPods and iPhones. We'll cover using a Raspberry Pi computer to both act as a Wi-Fi access point,



and running the JMRI software. And if you attend the clinic at the **Hooksett Lions Club Train Show, Sunday, April 26**, you'll get to actually run trains on the Concord Model Railroad Club's sectional layout. Bring your own phone, and a DCC equipped locomotive!



Android users will want to install "Engine Driver", while Apple users will want to install WiThrottle; the "Lite" version is free, and functional enough for basic operations.

About the author:

Jonathan Miner is a past President of the **Concord Model Railroad Club**, and works full time as a software developer with a background with Linux systems and network operations. His Digitrax-powered layout has been featured on the Tour de Chooch, and the New England Regional Convention. Jon's email address is cp_n18@yahoo.com

News of Model Railroad Clubs Serving Maine and New Hampshire

On a space available basis, the Switch Tower will publish news briefs submitted by model railroad clubs and groups serving Maine and New Hampshire modelers. Submit briefs to the Editor. To learn more about these clubs, find links to their websites on the Seacoast Division NMRA website. <http://seacoastnmra.org>

(ME) Maine Garden Railway Society

The Club wrapped up another popular display at the Maine Mall for the Christmas season. Club members devoted a lot of hours to staffing the display. The shoppers, especially the young and young at heart, really appreciated the volunteers.



(NH) North Concord Model Railroad Club

With the tourist season over, the NCMRRC focuses on a few repairs and on informing its members about other model railroad activities in the area that might be of interest to them. The monthly newsletter, Notch Eight, contains a Coming Events section. Paul Hallett of the Conway Scenic Railroad also writes a column for it, "Wheel Report," which informs the readers of what is happening at CSR. Dwight Smith, MMR, a NCMRRC as well as Seacoast Division NMRA member, has been honored by the Mount Washington Valley Economic Council with its "Bob Morrell Award" for civic leadership. Dwight had a vision to transform the former Boston & Maine Railroad's North Conway to Conway line into a tourist railroad. The CSR celebrated its 40th anniversary August 4, 2014. Also, club dues (\$10) are due for 2015.

(MA) Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club The Club will have modules at the Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show in W. Springfield, MA.

(ME) Great Falls Model Railroad Club

The GFMRRRC has many activities every month. Of particular note, it has operating sessions on its large, 2-level HO layout, and the first session of its Model Railroad Class will start February 10. The Club will also have a layout set up at the W.

Springfield train show. Last year, the Club won a prize for its layout. Contact any member to learn more, or visit its website (find a link on the Division's home page).

(ME) Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club

The club is building a 16 x 8 foot addition to the club house to address some storage issues as well as to modify the existing track plan. Thanks to the Great Falls Model RR Club for ideas on how to deal with tracks and doorways. We are getting ready for Springfield by placing an order with Bowser for a B&M / Pan Am hopper as well as building more BAR chip cars.

Hope to see you all there.

(ME– NH) New Club

N Scale modular club looking for members

N-scalers, how does this grab you? NO DUES, NO PRESIDENT and NO CLUB PROPERTY! Single track main line, lots of switching and prototypical operation! Do I have your attention? If you are in the northeast and want to get in on the ground floor on what could be the greatest thing since the Atlas Trainman freight cars, get in touch! Rob Selberg rselberg@gmail.com (Maine/ New Hampshire-North) or John Doehring jddoehring@yahoo.com (Massachusetts/New Hampshire– South)

DIVISION WILL CO-SPONSOR NATIONAL NARROW GAUGE CONVENTION

by Peter McKenney

The Seacoast Division NMRA will co-sponsor the **36th National Narrow Gauge Convention** to be held in Augusta, Maine, September 7-10, 2016. The core organizing group for the convention reached out to the Division a few months ago and the Division Board of Directors approved the co-sponsorship at its meeting on November 9. Some of the members of the organizing group are also Seacoast Division NMRA members.

What does co-sponsorship mean in this situation?

The Division will help the convention's committee chairs to identify potential 1) model railroad layouts to tour, 2) clinic presenters, and 3) local attractions to direct convention-goers to. The Division will help publicize the convention and assist with the convention obtaining NMRA liability insurance coverage for the convention, a very substantial benefit at virtually no cost to the convention organizers. The Division will also recruit volunteers to staff various roles during the convention. Typically, these staff roles involve four-hour assignments and are rewarded with some concession from the convention, e.g., discounted registration fee. The Division will not be investing financially in the convention and is not at-risk for potential shortfalls. The Division will be recognized for its co-sponsorship on the convention website and its publications, further raising

the visibility of the Division to model railroaders in attendance.

National Narrow Gauge Conventions are very popular and well-attended. Expect to see fantastic models on display, great clinics, artistic modules, and a very large train show. During the convention, vendors of model railroad supplies will be in the main auditorium selling items of use to modelers of all scales.

In 2007, the national narrow gauge convention was held in Portland, Maine, and was a huge success. All who attended marveled at the examples of great modeling on display and the large number of vendors on site. The 2016 convention in Augusta will be a fantastic opportunity for NMRA members in Maine and New Hampshire to experience another thrilling modeling display. Mark your calendars for September 7-10, 2016, and definitely plan on attending. If you have suggestions on layouts for touring or individuals who can give good presentations on the history of Maine railroads or universal modeling techniques, please pass those suggestions along to a Division Director or other official. And, to save on the cost of attendance, please consider volunteering for a shift as a staff volunteer. You will be rewarded in many ways for such participation.

Seacoast Division Year End Statement submitted by Tom Coulombe, Treas.

SEACOAST DIVISION NMRA Financial Report for 2014

Income

Interest income	5
Net proceeds from Derry MR Fun Night	196
Donations to cover meeting expenses	198
Less costs of meetings	(200)
Net donations	(2)
Subscription revenue for Switch Tower	65
Less costs of newsletter	(68)
Net cost of newsletter	(3)
Share of profits of 2013 NER convention	2,872
NMRA Rebate Remittance through NER	356
NER distribution	487
Other donations	48
Sale of patches	29
Total	3,989

Expenditures

Postage	9
Promotional expenses	79
Equipment	1,353
Annual report fee	70
Award expenses	4
NMRA memberships	20
Engraved name tags	84
Total	1,619
Net change in cash	2,370
Beginning cash balance	4,015
Ending cash balance	6,385

2014 was a very successful year financially for the Division and its financial strength is capable of supporting expanded services in the years to come. In the fourth quarter, the Division acquired two display banners to use at train shows and public events for \$633 and engraved name tags for officers and Division leaders for use at public events for

Notice for Winter Meeting @ Congregational Church South Portland

Seacoast Division Winter Meeting
Saturday, January 10, 2015, 10:00am-2:00pm

**The First Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
301 Cottage Road, South Portland, Maine**
**The meeting will be in the first floor meeting room
with entrance from the rear parking lot.**

All NMRA members, their guests, and people interested in becoming NMRA members are invited to the winter meeting of the Seacoast Division NMRA in South Portland, Maine.

There will be a drawing for door prizes, too!

Clinics and Presentations:

Ed Leslie, Using the Geodesic Foam Model Scenery System. This Bragdon Enterprises product produces solid scenery that is stronger, lighter, and more flexible than plaster and similar products.

Rob Selberg, How to Make Open Loads. Rob will show how he made loads of pulpwood, scrap metal, lumber, I-beams, limestone, and pipe.

Panel Discussion on Modeling "Standards." Modelers sometimes are confused as to what standards are for home and club layouts, museums, contests and AP judging. Larry Cannon, MMR, Bill Gaver, Rich Breton, and Chip Faulter will contrast and compare different sets of standards that modelers may become involved with.

Bill Poor, Preparing Power Point Presentations and Managing Large Image Files. Bill will give some tips that all can use for sharing ideas in the future.

There is always the "bring it and show it" time, too. Members are encouraged to bring something they are working on or have built and share it with the rest of us. Ask your questions, too!

Between activities, meet and talk with other attendees to gain new ideas and resources.

Coffee and light nourishment will be provided on-site for a donation to offset costs.

Bring your own snacks or lunch if you would like.

The Annual Meeting of members will follow the clinics and is open to all NMRA members. At this meeting, the

annual election of Directors will take place. Following the Annual Meeting, there will be a **Board of Directors** meeting to elect the President and Vice President.

After the meeting, visit Norm's O-scale, 41 Roosevelt Trail (Route 302), Casco

Come to the winter meeting and **Share the Fun of Model Railroading.**

Summary of Two Board Meetings By Peter McKenney

The Board of Directors of the Seacoast Division met twice in the fall. For the full details of these meetings, see the approved and unapproved minutes on the Division's website (Meetings and Reports tab). The October 18 regular meeting in Stratham, NH, preceded the quarterly member meeting. It lasted 46 minutes and covered many routine items. John C. Tyndall, Sr. has volunteered to take over the editing of The Switch Tower, assisted by Geoff Anthony. A proposal to offer complimentary Railpass memberships to guests attending Seacoast Division events who show strong interest in the hobby and the NMRA was passed by the BOD. The BOD also approved the proposal by the Union (NH) Railroad Museum to host a summer model railroading program starting next year. Bill Gaver has agreed to chair the program implementation committee. President Peter McKenney also reported that discussions continue with Maine model railroading clubs and other interested people in regard to the feasibility of starting a layout tour program in Maine similar to the Tour de Chooch held in northeastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Finally, the terms of three Directors expire in January and the Nominating Committee has named Bill Poor, Chip Faulter and Erich Whitney as candidates for these openings, but any interested Seacoast Division NMRA member is welcome to become a candidate. If interested, please contact Tom Oxnard.

A special Board meeting took place on November 9 in Cumberland, Maine. The 3.25 hour meeting allowed the Directors to thoroughly review the Division's goal and objective setting framework and adopt new action items for 2015. The Board adopted a resolution to co-sponsor the 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention to be held in Augusta, Maine, September 7-10, 2016. The Directors also discussed ways to further increase the visibility of the Division and attract more modeling articles for the Division website and The Switch Tower. Based upon the financial strength of the Division and the many opportunities it has to enhance member model railroad experiences, the Directors voted to commit up to \$1,000 in 2015 for improving member services. The Board will vote on specific proposals to use these funds at future meetings.

Estate Planning for Model Railroads by Larry Cannon

What Your Relatives Need to Know About Your Model Railroad Collection

This is a rudimentary discussion of estate planning for a model railroad but could also help you if you ever have an insurance claim. There are three very basic assumptions I make before I start: 1) You do have a will and someone to manage your estate. 2) You have a relatively current inventory of your model railroad collection and at least an indication of the cost if not the market value of what you own. 3) Someone you trust knows where your will and your inventory are located.

That is the starting point and if you are not there yet getting there is highly advisable. The inventory also could help you if you ever have to file an insurance claim for a fire or theft loss. Replacement cost is a good thing to have in addition to cost for insurance purposes. If your inventory includes "collectible" items, specialized insurance like that available through the NMRA is advisable. Be advised that craftsman or contest level efforts seldom can be insured for what they would cost to replace.

For estate purposes you and that person who you have asked to manage your estate should mutually understand what you want done with your collection and have an idea of its value. That value is what someone else at a train show, E-Bay, or similar environment would pay for your items. Clearly this is not what you paid nor is it what it would cost to replace it with new or in similar condition items.

Another important consideration is if the collection is not being given or donated to someone or an organization. You should give the person disposing of your collection some advice on how to dispose of or sell the materials if a donation is not your plan.

Liquidating Model Railroad Collections

Unless your model railroad is dismantled and boxed for sale, someone will have to do this task. The chore often falls on friends and relatives with some knowledge of model railroading. This needs to be considered by you and the person who will manage your affairs. Someone with knowledge of how to dismantle a layout will leave more value than someone who does not.

Most spouses or relatives have limited interest in renting tables and traveling to train shows to liquidate your collections. This might achieve the greatest value, but involves the time and efforts of packaging the materials for sale, and transporting them to at least one show.

Consigning the material to an auction is quicker but, depending on the type of materials you have and what kind of auction dealer your estate employs, it might not realize much of the "market value" of the collection for anyone you wish to benefit. Even well-run specialized model train auctions depend on attendance and this can be a significant variable.

Selling a collection in bulk probably will not realize much of the value, unless you advise your executor or he or she can find a reliable and ethical buyer. This is a factor in a number of unfortunate stories.

If you have a layout that needs to be dismantled, generally there is limited value in bench work or wiring and track. The net value of turnouts and other fixtures is a function of how easily they can be salvaged. Many times the material salvaged barely equals the fair compensation for the person doing the salvage work. The "easy money" is in rolling stock, locomotives, structures and modern control systems, but these require careful handling and packing to keep the value.

Consignment sales with a reliable dealer or local club avoids some of the risks indicated above. The percentage of the sales that your estate can expect to receive is a function of the time and effort to prepare the materials for sales, transportation and table costs and how many shows it takes to sell the collection.

Planning the disposition of your model railroad or collection requires a number of decisions. Having the right person managing the process is a key factor. Having the people you leave behind have guidance on the process is one of the best gifts you can leave them. It does not matter if you gift or donate the collection, arrange to have it dismantled and auctioned or sold, or if a relative, friends, or your club or group is to sell it for your heirs, all involved should have your guidance that you can provide orally or in writing while you are still with us.

Assistant Editor's Tips:

Having been involved with the disposition of a number of collections, here are my tips. Write down what you want done with your trains and add it to your will. Make sure you have an inventory. Instruct the person that you have picked to dispose of your trains. You may have told your spouse or relatives how valuable your trains are, but your estate will not get more than 50 cents on the dollar, unless you have something extremely rare. Selling to a reliable dealer (they exist) may mean only 30 cents on the dollar, but the collection is gone. No wear and tear going back and forth from shows, no theft, all of which happens. EBay is an option but there are costs, which add up, like packing material and boxes, not to mention EBay and PayPal fees. EBay is a good place to sell the rare item you have, a brass Crown loco or a high end craftsmen kit. It is also a good indicator of current pricing. Check out sold listings for an item you have and take the average.

NMRA InfoNet News DIGEST October—December 2014

The official slate of candidates for the NMRA 2015 election

With nominations and petitioning now closed, the following is the official slate of candidates for the 2015 election:

President	Charlie Getz Jack Hamilton (By-petition)
VP Special Projects	Gerry Leone
VP Administration	Clark Kooning Dave Thornton
At Large North American Director	Bob Ferguson Vincent Gallogly Alan Saatkamp Paul Voelker Bob Weinheimer Peter Youngblood
Eastern District Director	Joe Gelmini
Pacific District Director	Mike Bartlett Kelly Loyd

NMRA Secretary John Stevens reports that there will be a new ballot distribution system this year, and that the election process is scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2015.

Education Department News by Bruce De Young, Department Manager

As we discuss the various programs within the Education Department, I want to devote this column to the Modeling with the Masters Program (MWTM). Clinics of all types and at all levels (Division, Region, and National) are at the core of our educational efforts, and the MWTM Program is our "flagship offering."

The program is coordinated by Clark Kooning, MMR, assisted by Fred Headon, MMR, and Peter Youngblood, MMR, and lets NMRA members attend a hands-on clinic with modelers who've earned their Master Model Railroader (MMR) through the NMRA's Achievement Program. These hands-on 'Make and Take' clinics are of-

fered at NMRA National Conventions and at various Regional Conventions throughout the year. Regions who'd like to have a MWTM Program at their Regional Convention should contact Clark at mwtm@nmra.org.

I had the opportunity to observe the program in Cleveland last July. It was obvious that the participants were making the most of their opportunity and asking modeling questions of these MMRs.



The photo gives you an idea of an MWTM classroom. Here Fred Headon is giving one-on-one attention to a participant. At the time, Peter and Clark were both doing the same. Learning to model with an MMR is like getting the opportunity to cook with a master chef or to have a golf lesson with a pro. *Why not give it a try?*

Switch Tower Submissions or It's Your News Letter Assistant Editor Geoff Anthony

The Switch Tower is a letter for members of the Seacoast Division of the NMRA. It can only be as good as the material submitted. We need your help in providing a great news letter to members. Submissions do not have to be just how to articles. Articles including club news, photos, proto-type news, tools and anything that you think would be useful to the reader will be considered. You do not have to be a great writer, ideas are more important. As a bonus, you can use the published article to work towards your AP certificate. Please send me an email with your ideas and thoughts for making this a great publication. My email is dahak@roadrunner.com

Model Railroad Shop Cleanup

By Ron Palmquist

16 Glen Avenue, Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107
207-799-1761; ron.cnw400@maine.rr.com

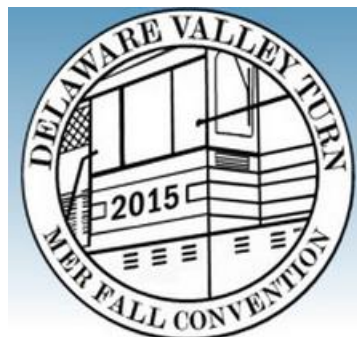
One of my New Year's resolutions was to not make new ones, because I have enough left over from years past. However, from the looks of my Model Railroading workspace in 2014, something had to be done with all the left-over kit parts, unused raw materials, extra track and spikes that, as we all know, are an extraordinary potential treasure trove. What to do?

Well, as I was in the kitchen preparing a supper meal for the family – retired military chefs always are in the kitchen – I reached in a nearby cabinet shelf for a plastic zip-lock sandwich bag for leftover salad makings when the proverbial light bulb over my head brightened considerably. How about storing model railroading bits and pieces in sandwich bags for storage, rather than dumping the lot indiscriminately in an old shoe box? To make the prospect even more inviting, the brand of plastic bag we use has an outer surface white space for notations with a felt-tip pen regarding its contents and the date it was stored in the cupboard, fridge or freezer.

I looked about at my current project – laying track for my Chicago Creek office shelf railroad – and soon half-filled my initial MR storage bag with short sections of track, rail, spikes, nails and crossies. I marked the bag "Track Parts," with no date needed as the valuable contents can be used at any time in the future. Another zip-lock baggie is marked "freight car parts" and is half-full of box car doors, coupler pockets and under-car brake system workings. I have a file cabinet drawer now set aside for a number of bags of my priceless parts that are easily accessible rather than a scrap carton to paw through to stumble upon what I am looking for.

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More Information Less Information



October 22-25, 2015

Mount Laurel, NJ

www.delawarevalleyturn.org

Timetable

Jan. 9	Derry Model RR Fun Night	Derry, NH
Jan. 10	Seacoast Division NMRA ANNUAL Meeting	S. Portland, ME
Jan. 24-25	Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show	W. Springfield, MA
Feb. 13	Derry Model RR Fun Night	Derry, NH
Feb. 21	29 th Annual Whitefield Lions Club Model Railroad and Doll House Show	Augusta Armory, Augusta, ME
Mar. 13	Derry Model RR Fun Night	Derry, NH
Apr. 10	Derry Model RR Fun Night	Derry, NH
Apr. 11	Seacoast Division NMRA Quarterly Meeting	Rochester, NH

Always check the Division's Calendar of Events on its website for more details and events.

New Members

Duane Baker, Topsham, ME
Bruce Campbell, Newcastle, ME
Robert Clark, Waldoboro, ME
Jim Seroskie, Amherst, NH
Robert Bennett, S. China, ME
Kathy Melvin, Readfield, ME
Barbara Schermerhorn, Saco, ME



<http://www.nmra2015portland.org/>



Seacoast Division NMRA Leaders

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The Switch Tower is the quarterly publication of the Seacoast Division NMRA. Past issues can be down loaded from <http://seacoastnmra.org>. Contributions of articles and other content are welcome and encouraged. Email them to editor@seacoastnmra.org 30 days or more prior to the one of the publication dates (January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1)



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