



# The Switch Tower

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Seacoast Division NMRA [www.seacoastnmra.org](http://www.seacoastnmra.org)



**Seacoast Division NMRA Zoom On-line Event**  
**Saturday, April 17, 2021, 10:00am-12:00pm**  
**On-line Zoom Event**

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Latest addition to Larry Cannon's layout, part of the Fairbanks Scale Company in St Johnsburry VT. The factory was built along a river and there were at least three covered bridges across the river so they could move stuff on carts between the sections of the factory. Photo by Larry Cannon

If you have photo's of current projects and would like to share with the members please contact me and I will use them in future issues.

## The President's Lantern by Tage Erickson

With the Winter of 2021 officially behind us, it appears as though warmer weather has finally started to reach all of us, here in Northern New England. I hope that this has been a productive winter for each of you, as you work on various layout or modeling projects. My helix is actually starting to take shape as I begin to lay roadbed and track on the approach from the lower level of my layout into the helix. If you have a specific project that you have been working on, I would like to ask each of you to consider sharing a few pictures along with some words with us, on our Division web site, regarding your efforts.

It is certainly great news that the Covid19 vaccination efforts have swung into high gear. By now, I am thinking that most of you have been fully vaccinated or have secured appointments to have that done. If you haven't done so, I would highly encourage you to get vaccinated.

### Board of Directors Meeting

On April 6, 2021, the Seacoast Division Board of Directors will hold our next virtual meeting. As a reminder, Seacoast Division Board of Directors meetings are open to all Seacoast Division members. If you have an issue or item where you feel the need to address the Board of Directors, or if you just want to listen in to one of the BOD meetings, please contact me and I will send you the meeting information.

One of the items the Board will be discussing is when we can safely return to holding "in-person" Quarterly Events. If you have any thoughts or opinions about this subject, please contact me prior to the BOD meetings and I will be happy to share your opinions with the Board members.

### NERx Convention

As most of you are aware by now, the NER will be hosting another NERx Virtual Convention. The convention will take place on April 10 & 11, 2021, from 2 to 6 pm and 7 to 11 pm eastern time on both days. There are some great clinics and layout tours that you can experience. The schedule of events is posted on our Division web site or you can go this direct link [<http://www.nerx.org/index.html#events>] to get the information. Please consider attending the NERx convention.

### Seacoast Division Virtual Spring Event

The Seacoast Division Virtual Spring Event will take place on Saturday, April 17, 2021. Similar to our past virtual events, we will start at 10:00 am and hopefully finish by 12:00 pm. We have 2 great clinics to present to you, one from Joe Linquata on "Creating Rigid Foam Scenery", and the other from Dave Emery on "Designing and Laying Out Scratch Built Structures." There will also be a video tour of John Newick's Central Maine and Aroostook N scale layout. Additionally, we will have a "What's On

## The President's Lantern by Tage Erickson

Your Workbench” session where some of you will be showing us your recent modeling efforts.

I will send out the Zoom meeting information on the day before the Event. I will also plan a “practice” Zoom session meeting for either Wednesday or Thursday evening the week prior to the Event. These practice sessions are a great way to become familiar with the Zoom log-in procedures and also are a chance to see and catch up on the latest goings-on with your train buddies that you haven't seen for a while. We have a lot of fun at these practice sessions! Please think about joining us!

### Request

I sent this out to you in my previous President's Message and I wanted to give this one more chance before I pull it. I received this email from a fellow model railroader:

*I found your email address on the Seacoast Division NMRA website. I am based in Bedford, NH and have a large collection of model train magazines. It contains a few decades of Model Railroader and others. Do you know of anyone who might be interested in such a collection? Thank you.*

If there is anyone interested in this gentleman's magazine collection, please let me know and I will provide his email address to you. Thanks for your consideration.

### Division Staff Openings

Our Division Webmaster would like to step down from his duties. If you are the type of person that is very tech savvy and would be interested in running and maintaining our Division website, if you have those skills, please contact me. Thank you! I am very happy to report that Seacoast Division member Ken Moller has volunteered to join the Faulter Fund Committee. Thank you, Ken!

That's all I have for you at this time. Please consider writing an article for our “Switch Tower” newsletter. All of our members would love to hear from any of you regarding your model railroading efforts or adventures. Please join us at the upcoming NERx Virtual Convention and our Spring Seacoast Division Zoom Event.

Best regards,

Tage Erickson  
Seacoast Division President

## **Seacoast Division NMRA Zoom On-line Event Saturday, April 17, 2021, 10:00am-12:00pm On-line Zoom Event**

All NMRA members and people interested in becoming NMRA members are invited to the Spring On-Line Zoom Event of the Seacoast Division NMRA.

### **A New Kind of Event – On-Line with Zoom**

Since Covid-19 continues to be a major health risk, especially to older people, the Seacoast Division Board of Directors has made the decision to cancel “in person” events for the foreseeable future. The BOD has also decided to help fill the void by holding on-line Zoom meetings. Many of you are already familiar with Zoom since other organizations are already starting to use it.

Zoom is one of several video conferencing applications available for use on your computer that is connected to the internet. For several years, lap top computers have been equipped with a camera that faces the user, a microphone, and speakers. The computer with the camera/microphone /speaker combination lets the user take advantage of the full capability of Zoom. If you don't have a computer with the camera/microphone /speaker you can still use your computer to view the event and you can communicate with everyone using a phone. Finally, a smart-phone can also be used to participate in a Zoom video conference.

New users will have to go to [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) and then download “Zoom Client for Meetings” if you use a computer, or download the Zoom Mobile apps for iPhone or Android from the APP store. You will not have to register for an account. The host of the Zoom Meeting, in our case Seacoast President Tage Erickson, will send out an email with a meeting invitation which includes a link to the meeting. The non-host attendees will click on the link a few minutes prior to the meeting to get connected to the Zoom meeting. The host will then accept you into the meeting and you will be able to see all the attendees that have cameras and you will be able to hear all the attendees that have microphones or have called in on the telephone.

### **President's Welcome by Tage Erickson**

Tage will address the members of the Seacoast Division.

### **Presentations**

#### **Creating Strong Rigid Scenery by Joe Linquata**

Joe will demonstrate how he creates strong rigid scenery using spray foam and screen material.

#### **Designing and Laying Out Scratchbuilt Structures by Dave Emery**

A great way to scratchbuild structures to fit a specific location is to start with a drawing of that structure, and adjust the drawing as necessary until the structure fits its location. The tools to do this are readily available. Dave will demonstrate how he uses PowerPoint to design structures, including using the computer to efficiently lay out sets of windows and doors, and using 'construction lines' to ensure the openings are set at the correct location on the structure. Additionally, Dave will briefly review the “Nehrich Scribe and Snap” approach, describing how to use the drawing to lay out subwalls.

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## Video Layout Tours

Since we can't tour member's layouts in person, we'll be doing the next best thing – seeing layouts on video. Seacoast members Bob Kotsonis and John Newick recorded a video tour of John's layout.

## Central Maine and Aroostook by John Newick

John Newick's Central Maine & Aroostook is a multi-level N Scale model railroad that is well known in the New Hampshire Seacoast and Southern Maine area. It depicts Maine railroading in the mid 60's to mid 70's running from the B&M at Rigby yard going north into well-known lines and interchange points on the Maine Central and Bangor & Aroostook. He has a great focus on rail operations and his operating sessions closely resemble the actual schedules and routes used by the B&M, MEC and BAR. Operations are supplemented by a unique method for managing car moves and the use of Railroad & Company software for computer aided dispatching and train routing. While his interest in operations is known, John has put long hours into the scenery and buildings that occupy the layout to keep the feeling of Maine Railroading alive and well.

## What's On Your Workbench?

We invite members to show a few photos, PowerPoint slides, or even a short video of what you are working on or a layout tour etc. Send me an email to sign up and describe what you will be presenting. Please limit your presentation to about 5 minutes in length. If you have a longer presentation, let me know and I can schedule it in a future Zoom meeting.

## Open Forum

Let's discuss what members would like to see in future Zoom Events.

**Next Event: Summer Event, July 17, 2021**

*Mark your calendar and save the date!!*

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



Here are a few things you can do related to NERx:

Watch Clinics, LCC: by Erich Whitney, Achievement Program Overview by Bob Brown , Modeling Vehicles by Jeff Hanke, The old woman in the new basement by Bill Schneider, Future of the hobby by Brenna Whitney, Model Railroad Control/Heritage Park Railroad Museum, Lightweight Modules for the ETE by Justin Maguire, Coloring wooden walls with chalk by Sue Osberg, Creating a Timetable for the AP certificate by Jim Homoki, B&M Passenger Station Holyoke MA by James Murphy and Building a DCC Power cab and programing station by Ed O'Connell .

Layouts Tours: Vermont Railway Bob Cochran, Colorod Narrow Gauge, Bob Brown, CSX Northeast Dave Martin, Canada, Spokane & Pacific Drew James, Rondemont & West Shore RR Ron Stacy,

Mohawk Salem & Kensington Tom Wortman, Lionel Four level layout Dave MacLeod,

Email questions in advance of the NERx convention for the two panel discussions. The first discussion is on Layout Command Control (LCC) on Saturday and the second covers the NMRA Achievement Program (AP) on Sunday. Information on these roundtable discussions and how you can submit questions for them is included in this email.

There will be a drawing for a \$50 gift voucher during the convention by [miniprints](http://miniprints.com). Information about the drawing is also included in this email.

Submit your entries for the NERx Model Showcase to [info@nerx.org](mailto:info@nerx.org) by March 31.

Keep checking the NERx website at [NERx.org](http://NERx.org). As information becomes available, the webpages for [Clinics](#), [Layout Tours](#), and the [Model Showcase](#) are being updated. Don't forget to submit photos and descriptions of the projects you have been working on.

To Find the Stream for this Event, Subscribe to the NMRA Channels on FaceBook and YOU Tube



## Foreground Trees by Tom Oxnard MMR

I hope you all got to participate in the NERx Convention in October. There were many clinics and layout tours done virtually. I was very impressed by the first clinic given by Jeff Gerow on how to build beautiful foreground trees. I was inspired enough to spend a month improving 45 of my trees using his technique. You can get on the NERx website and see his presentation and see how easy it is to do. But here is a short version of how he did them.

I started with Sage Brush tree trunks that I bought 20 years ago from Sweetwater Scenery from Casper Wyoming. You can now buy these from Scenic Express (EX0248). You also need Super Trees, matte medium, a hot glue gun, and leaf flock.

I start by cutting the Super Trees into smaller tree branches with at least a  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ " stem to accept the glue. I used larger branches as tree crowns and much smaller branches to fill in areas. Soak these in a matte medium solution (about 3 or 4 to 1) for a few seconds. This is very important because the branches are very brittle otherwise. I hang them on a clothes line with pins to let them dry for a few hours.

My original sage brush trees were made with Polyfiber covered with leaf flock. You can see from the picture that my example was fair but not realistic. I removed all the Polyfiber and with Xuron rail nippers I cut off extra stubby limbs and branches that were unattractive to shape the tree as I wanted. Some of the sage brush trunks are very asymmetrical and I have cut off those limbs and hot glued them to another position. Drill a hole and glue a nail or brass wire in the trunk bottom for planting.

Now for the fun part- the hot glue gun is what makes these trees so durable. Using your best artistic or forestry background glue the Super Tree branches onto the sage brush trunk. This can be at the ends of branches to extend them farther or into the crotch of the sage brush trunk to fill in spaces. Sometimes I put the hot glue onto the Super Tree stem, and sometimes on to the limb or crotch of the sage brush trunk. As you can see from the photo I used a large dense clump in the center to create a much taller crown. You don't have to glue branches to every limb. I like to be able to see through a tree.

Use scissors to trim the tree if needed to the desired shape. I lightly sprayed Camouflage Khaki paint onto areas that have glossily glue or green stems, and to make it a more uniform color.

Next set up for gluing on the leaf flock by laying out a sheet of newspaper. Jeff uses Tak E Glue but I did not have that so I used full strength white glue. Using a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " flat brush I painted white glue all over the ends of the branches as well as in between. Sprinkle on the leaf flock as you move the tree in all directions including upside down. I try not to overdo the glue as I want some transparency in the tree.

You can also give the tree a light misting of hair spray and sprinkle on some more leaves. Don't get hair spray on the trunk as you don't want it coated with leaves.

I thank Jeff for his inspiration as I think these trees are a big improvement from my last, both in shape and realism. Now that I have bought a lot more Super Trees I think I will try this technique on some of my old trees with plastic twisted armatures. The 45 trees only took 2 weeks to finish so it is worth a try.

## Foreground Trees by Tom Oxnard MMR



These photo's are by Tom Oxnard and follow clockwise his explanation of how he made tree's





## WHEN “OLD” BECOMES “NEW” AGAIN

by Dave Sias

I suppose no model railroader thinks about a layout's end date as we jump into the excitement of planning and start building, but inevitably that day comes for one reason or another. It is always heartening to hear the stories of layouts which do have new life beyond the original setting. I have participated in dismantling several layouts; some did not survive at all but several have gone on to new life in part or in whole in new layout construction. Here's a story about some with extended life in a “new” layout.

Fairly recent Seacoast member Butch Taggart is doing a wonderful job of blending two old layouts and some new construction into a really nice operations-oriented HO layout in Gilford, NH. Butch had been an O-scale modeler and was preparing his basement for an O-scale layout when he joined the NMRA and hooked up with the Meredith Area Ops Group. Seeing HO and the possibilities in operations he changed his focus.

At about the same time, two layouts in Meredith were dismantled due to the passing of the builders. Many Seacoast members had operated on or toured Bruce Reynolds' Zealand Valley layout, but another in Meredith, built by Dick Lasky, was relatively unknown. Bruce's wife asked the Meredith Ops Group for help in removing Bruce's layout and members of the North Conway Model Railroad Club removed Dick's. I participated in both; always a melancholy task.

But these layouts were soon to breathe new life as we carried the sections into Butch's lovely finished basement. Here are the pictures and story so far:



Somewhat of an overview of Butch's layout space with the familiar Lakeport section of Bruce's layout in the foreground. The upper left of the photo shows the track leading to the Bridgewater section from Bruce's layout which is also retained in its entirety.

## WHEN “OLD” BECOMES “NEW” AGAIN

by Dave Sias



Another iconic spot on Bruce's layout, Bridgewater, is in place with a new hill being developed in the background. Since Bridgewater is now located adjacent to Lakeport, the Lakeport Switcher job will be much busier that it was in the past. To add to the work, there is also a new small industrial area planned at Lakeport. Above photo .Explanation for below photo on next page





## WHEN “OLD” BECOMES “NEW” AGAIN

by Dave Sias

Dick Lasky's layout was an 8' X 12' rectangle with track going full circle around the circumference and incorporating a double-ended yard and engine service area. While the structure of the benchwork was retained, the track plan has been modified so that trains enter counter-clockwise from the right center, pass the station (The station itself is actually from another dismantled layout by Harry Decker; yes, Harry is still with us!), and enter the now single-ended yard. The hostler then moves the engines around to the engine facilities where the line now dead ends. This section represents Concord, NH and requires two operators to keep things going. Also note the lower staging level in the left center of the picture. This was originally Bruce's Woodsville staging. As you can see, Butch is doing a great job with the background and display shelves. Bottom photo previous page



Plymouth is another area from Bruce's layout that was retained. It was modified, however, so that now the Plymouth freight yard is behind the station. A new town center will be built to the right of this scene and will include several sidings serving small industries.

**WHEN “OLD” BECOMES “NEW” AGAIN**

by Dave Sias



Probably my favorite scene from Bruce's layout was the station and farm area at Winona. This we were able to save as well and although in a new location relative to other towns, it still has a prominent setting on Butch's layout. It will be added to the work of the Plymouth switcher. No pay increase by the way! More to come:

It really is comforting in a certain way to keep another modeler's work alive and well. Good memories are stirred and added to. There are other layouts in the Seacoast Division being built and in some cases, they include portions of previous layouts. In future issues of the Seacoast Newsletter it is hoped more stories can be told.



## Membership Siding by Lou Champagne

### Covid and the Seacoast Division: [HELP NEEDED !!](#)

Covid has had a negative impact on all of us as individuals and as members of NMRA's Seacoast Division. Fortunately, technology & Zoom have helped the Division stay connected with virtual meetings & events: this technology has proven to be easy to use and very effective. However, there is one area where the Division continues to be negatively affected ... the recruitment of new members. Pre-Covid, most new members came as a result of contacts made while exhibiting at trains shows, which have all been cancelled in the last year. It also appears that it will still be quite a while until they restart.

In order to stay strong and vital, it is important that our Division grows ... and our current members are the best potential source for that growth. We all have friends and acquaintances who are model railroaders, but not members of the NMRA. It's time to tell these folks about the benefits of membership and then invite them to check us out (or try us out with a RailPass membership). Get them involved with the upcoming NER virtual convention on 4/10-11 and with our April Event on 4/17. If every member of the Division approached at least three people, the impact could be tremendous !!

Let me know if you have questions or if I can be of assistance in any way, including promotional materials.

### New Seacoast NMRA Members: *Welcome Aboard !!!*

Maine:

Ronnie Ramsdell, Burnham; Bill Morgan, Sidney

New Hampshire:

Daniel Trefrey, Sandown

A young engineer at the Westbrook show on the Bar Mills module photo by the editor





## A.P. Report

Larry Cannon Maine

Tom Oxnard New Hampshire

## Timetable

You should check with the show presenter before traveling. Most shows have been canceled. Everybody please follow the CDC guidelines and stay safe so we can once again enjoy our hobby with our fellow model railroaders

No new certificates have been issued. Tom has stated that he has traveled to do some evaluation on models, so contact Tom or Larry if you have questions or models to be evaluated

### Editor's Ramblings by Geoff Anthony

So here we are one year plus into the pandemic. Our world has changed dramatically. I will not go through the list of what has happened. I want to focus on the positive. NMRA-X is amazing and many thanks to all who have done the work to put it on. It has provided me with hours of watching great layouts and clinics that otherwise I would have never seen. A shout out to those down under as well as their contributions can not be overstated.

Congratulations to the division and officers who have put together great quarterly programs that have allowed us to be together and participate in the hobby.

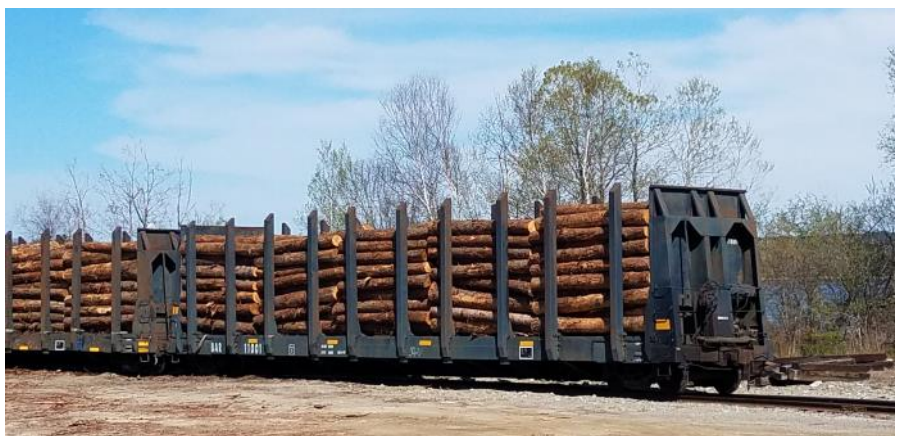
I hope by November that train shows will again be allowed and that we can be together in person.

I hope that all of you have remained safe and I will see you at future shows



Top photo at Waterville yard summer of 2018

Bottom Photo at Searsport Spring of 2017



# Seacoast Division NMRA Leaders



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