



The Switch Tower

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July 2022

Seacoast Division NMRA www.seacoastnmra.org



Seacoast Division Fall Event October 8 2022
Stratham Fire Dept . Stratham NH 10A.M. to 2 P.M.

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This spring / summer has been a blow to our membership. In the last year we have lost a number of members who impacted the division with their skills and leadership .

Larry Cannon's passing left a hole in the AP program as well his institutional memory. Larry's contribution to Model Railroading in the state of Maine will be missed.

Neil Falby passed on 2nd of August of 2022 . Neil was a past director of the division and a contributor to the Switch Tower. He will be missed at the Quartey meetings.

Matt Sharp was the former owner of Train and Trooper in North Yarmouth ME. He passed in June. Although Matt was not a member he was well known to members and imported brass for the Maine Narrow Gauge . Matt ran a great shop and the state was lucky to have him and his interest in the hobby and his passion for history.

Ron Palmquist was a former editor of the Switch Tower and long time member of the division who always turned out for meetings and could be counted on to contribute to the Switch Tower . Cont pg 10

The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

Hello Seacoast Members.,

The summer has flown by and once again I am late getting this letter out to you. I recently thought back to last winter, when I had planned several model railroad tasks that needed to be done in the warmer weather. Most involved rolling the table saw out on the driveway and slicing up sheets of plywood or Masonite. Fortunately I bought most of my stockpile before the prices jumped due to Covid. Unfortunately, that also tells you how far behind I am with construction. Regardless, I have not had the saw out yet. Before I begin I need to create my master "cut list." Once I know what I need, I can usually roll through it – the key is to not over think it. I'm guilty of doing that a lot. So the message here regarding building your railroad is – don't over think it – just do it!

As my layout progresses, I find that mixing up the tasks is helpful. After a lot of layout structure work, track-work, and wiring, I needed a change. Time for some scenery. I really admire the scenery created by Pelle Sjøeborg and Lance Mindheim. I think one of the reasons I like their styles is that they both model "modern" eras. I think most of their scenery style would fit in my 1975 era layout with the correct vintage of motive power, rolling stock, and vehicles. I chose a section of the layout to begin scenicizing that is 16 ft. long and one foot in depth with a backdrop. Just a double track mainline with a slight grade going through Illinois corn fields. I started the "landscaping" with Styrofoam insulation. I purchased a Woodland Scenics hot wire foam cutter which makes shaping foam so much easier and neater than using a knife and a rasp. Just make sure you have proper ventilation. I'll post some pictures as things progress.

Summer is not usually the time for train shows, however, the Concord Model Railroad Club puts on their show every year on the second Sunday of August (Aug. 14) at the Everett Arena in Concord, NH. This show is the best show in New Hampshire and the Seacoast Division will be represented. Stop by at our table and say hello. I look forward to seeing you there.

Eleven years ago, in 2011, I went to my first North East Region Convention – the Roger Williams Express – in Warwick Rhode Island. I was able to sign up for multiple operating sessions. Model railroad operations is one of my favorite aspects of the hobby. First, I was able to operate on a club layout (I don't remember the name.) on the way to the convention. I got to experience the dynamics of a club layout, which has to meet the needs of the many members. The second layout I toured was Don Irace's Providence & Worcester Railroad. Every aspect of the layout – multi-level benchwork, track, scenery, and prototype modeling- was very well executed. It was also the first layout that I have encountered to use JMRI Panelpro signaling and dispatching. Don's layout provided a lot of inspiration for my own layout design. I was lucky enough to operate on it again at the 2017 NER convention. Unfortunately, this layout was dismantled a few years ago when Don moved. Ever since that first convention, I have been signing up for as many operation sessions as possible at successive NER conventions. Seeing how other modelers have constructed and operate their layouts always provides me with new ideas.

This year I signed up for two layout tours at the Connecticut Yankee NER Convention in Windsor, Connecticut. I expect additional operating positions to become available prior to the start of the convention. Clinics are another big part of any convention. The Connecticut Yankee has 51 clinics available from Thursday thru Saturday. There are a lot more activities than I want to mention here. More information is available at ner-conventions.org/connecticut-yankee. I encourage every Seacoast member to attend the Connecticut Yankee Convention which runs from Sept. 15 thru Sept. 18. Enrollment is open!

The President's Lantern by Glenn Mitchell

Lastly, the Seacoast Division Fall Event is scheduled for October 8, 2022 at the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department. I want to thank Mike Grahame for providing the venue. Vice President Jay Ehlen will be organizing and running this even. Watch for the event notice.

That's all I have for now. Enjoy the rest of the summer and I hope to see you at the CMRRC Show or the Connecticut Yankee NER Convention.

Take care,

Glenn Mitchell, Seacoast Division NMRA President and Director

Tage Erickson Honored

During the NMRA National Convention in St. Louis, Tage Erickson was presented with the President's Award for Division Service. It is awarded by the NMRA President to one individual in a Division in each Region per year, who has done outstanding "beyond-the-call-of-duty" work to make his or her local Division effective, engaging, and welcoming to members.

Tage has been a Director and President of the Seacoast Division. Under his leadership, membership participation at division events increased and the division became a 501c3 nonprofit, embraced member voting through a remote process, and initiated Zoom meetings during COVID-19. Tage spearheaded the creation of the Chip Faulter Fund and leads the committee that oversees the fund, which encourages and supports young people in the hobby.



Congratulations, Tage!

Board of Directors Nominations Bruce Campbell Nominating Chair

Hello Fellow Seacoast Division member,

There will soon be an election for 3 positions on the NMRA Seacoast Division Board of Directors. Please help us continue the quarterly meetings with their technical content (now also online), the division presence at shows, the awards program, and above all the fellowship with other model railroaders.

Board of Director meetings are held online. This eliminates travel time for the directors, giving them more time for the all-important task of working on their layouts.

If you are interested in serving as a director, please respond to this email with a short biographical paragraph and a picture.

Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Bruce Campbell

Nominating Committee

Transfer Table at Derby Shops photo by Geoff Anthony



Ron Palmquist By Peter Mckenney

I remember first meeting Ron in person at one of my earliest Seacoast Division meetings that I had attended. Ron was a public figure in southern Maine by that time as he had served as a news anchor on WGAN-TV in Portland, ME, for parts of two decades. He had a silky smooth voice and conveyed a Walter Cronkite-type of authority as he reported news stories. If Ron said it, it had to be true. Until that Seacoast Division NMRA meeting, however, I had no idea that he was interested in railroads or model railroading. I soon learned how passionate he was about both.



As it turned out, when I first met Ron, he was serving the Division as a director and as the editor of its newsletter, The Switch Tower. One could not ask for a more talented and knowledgeable person to write a newsletter for model railroaders. Growing up in Chicago, he had become a C&NW railfan and remained so for the rest of his life. He travelled many miles railfanning and was immensely proud of his portfolio of rail photos. When his education and professional journalism career took him to Denver, he continued railfanning and expanded the prototypes he studied. He published many articles and photographs throughout his adult life.

Thus, when it came to editing The Switch Tower, Ron brought a global perspective to it. He would intersperse many current as well as historical items of the railroad industry with segments devoted to railroad modeling and the Division in particular. I just took a peek of the 1998 Fourth Quarter Switch Tower (which is available on the Division's website) to refresh my memory of his excellent work. Unlike today, the newsletter was printed and mailed to paid subscribers. It generally had only 4 pages. Besides editing contributed articles and news items, Ron had a quarterly column, "Along the R-O-W." That was for starters. Then he added random items of interest such as comments on train shows, both recent and to come, trivia questions and answers, comments on railroad stories from other publications, hobby shop news (sadly, not much of that these days), and flashbacks ("50 years ago").

Ron had started editing the newsletter in the late 1990s when he was asked to fill in for ailing Editor David Collinge. David was also the division president at the time for the recently rejuvenated Seacoast Division NMRA. Ron's last issue as editor of The Switch Tower was Vol. 15, 3rd Quarter, July 2008. Ron did not give up for lack of a solid reason, either. His computer crashed, wiping out his hard drive and his publishing program. Terry King stepped up as editor and he used Micro Soft Publisher, a much more capable software, from that point forward. Ron told us that he (aged 78) was not ready to learn how to use an entirely new and more complex publishing software. He continued as a member of the board of directors until the Annual Meeting on January 16, 2010. He still continued to submit articles and news and attended events over time.

The last time I saw him at a division event was at the Fall Event in Stratham, NH, on October 15, 2019. I saw him enter the rear of the room after the program had started and I looked forward to talking with him at the first break. Unfortunately, he had left the event by that time, and I never again saw him in person. But his kindness and generosity never stopped. During his later years, he donated many of his research materials, especially photos of prototype railroad scenes and

Ron Palmquist By Peter Mckenney

equipment, to various entities and individuals. I was witness to his donation of slides and a table-top slide viewer to the 470 Railroad Club. He knew that I was a fan of the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad and he shipped me several batches of research documents and images for my use. I know he did this for other railroad interested folks, too.

Ron Palmquist is a splendid example how railroad fans and modelers with various talents and motivations can combine in an organization like the Seacoast Division NMRA and make the “whole” much greater than the “parts.” Hopefully, the division will continue to benefit from wonderful and talented people who are willing to step up to help other members attain greater enjoyment in our hobby. I have missed Ron’s smooth voice and his kind and generous soul. Rest in peace, Ron.

Peter McKenney



Maine Central Jordon Spreader , photo by Geoff Anthony

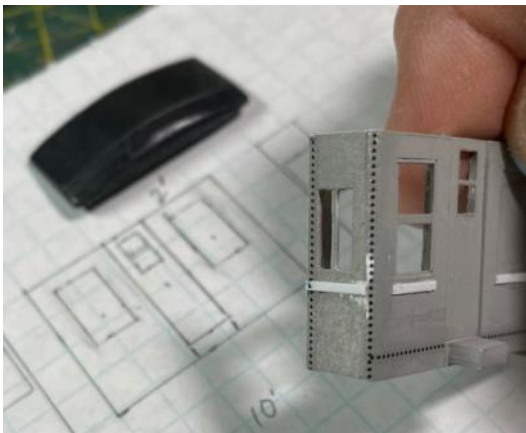
Boston and Maine Doodlebug

By Tom Oxnard MMR

Over the past year I detailed my old Bachmann Doodlebug. I collected several pictures of the B&M Doodlebugs with the help of Pete Magoun. I chose #195 and added front stripes, a front brass grill, a front door on the fireman's side, grab irons, new smoke stacks, and a whole new radiator. Then I added new roof vents, a new decoder, and sound. Pete enjoyed the challenge and followed suit with his upgrade, and went a step further with a new paint job and prototypical decals. You can see my construction article in the B&M Modelers Notes #182, March-April 2022.



We continued to find and share new photographs of the Doodlebug. Pete found a photo of the elusive back end in Wayland near where he grew up! Pete also found a data sheet showing the interior configuration with the Engineer's booth on the right back end looking backwards, and the bathroom on the left back end with its fogged window (seen in pictures). As we studied our pictures of #195 and #196 we could see the back end striping as well (something we had missed before). This confirmed that the B&M Doodlebugs travelled their routes back and forth without turning.



So this spring after buying some new Bachmann cow catchers Pete started detailing the back end by removing it and adding 3 feet of length. The back end has a large passenger diaphragm and door for a trailer that has to be removed. He first cut the roof, then cut off the curved end behind the door, and proceeded to detail it. I followed suit this time but instead of reusing the curved back end, I scratch built a new flat end as per prototype.

I started with .040" Styrene, laminated on .015" Styrene to create the recessed door and window, braced the corners for rounding, added 2 1/2 foot side extensions, and added mullions and Micro-mark rivets. I filed the roof to a blunt flat end, and added the roof extension. I added the rear LED light and horn, and an engineer on the right side. After painting I applied the Microscale 8" stripes

Boston and Maine Doodlebug By Tom Oxnard MMR

and lots of Micro Sol over 3 days to snug them down. I added grab irons, windshield wiper, rain diverters, and bumper.

Following Pete's lead we did not change the chassis, or the back door and steps. I epoxied on a new back floor and coupler box which fit cow catcher.

Its amazing type photo- I think this have a little on my rail-



I attached a Kadee (the perfect height) through the new

what some proto-graphs can inspire. Doodlebug will now more prominence road.



Importance of Safety

By Nelson Lemay

Attached is a photo of a couple of ceiling tiles located directly above my workbench. As you can see, something is embedded into the tile on the right. That 'something' is a piece of a 'cut-off' disk. I attach these discs to a nice hand-held, battery powered tool that accommodates all sorts of wonderful cutting, trimming and polishing attachments.. The disc in question is about the size of a quarter, made of some sort of a semi-rigid, composite; impregnated with a stone-like grit. Great for trimming metal flash, sanding, grinding, etc.

About 20 years ago while running that tool, I forced the tool to operate beyond its safe limits. The tool responded to my force, the disc did not. The disc exploded off the tool, firing the piece you see strait up, past my face, into the ceiling. That the piece in question did not imbed itself into my face or eye is a matter of divine providence, karma or whatever consequence meets your sensibilities. I've left that piece embedded in the tile and frequently point it out to visitors. I then point to a hanger above my workbench that has four pair of OSHA approved safety glasses. If you operate a power tool in my shop, you wear 'em; No brag, Just fact.



I offer the above text and picture for your consideration . All the tools in the world don't help you if 'ya can't see. Pretty simple stuff ain't it ? If one model railroader takes these words of heed to heart and can see t'morra because he wore safety glasses t'day then this old man has done a Boy Scouts deed for the day. Yeah, I'm old 'nuff to remember when Harry S. and his wife Bess left the Oval Office and handed the keys to Dwight David.....

Lucien L. Champagne

1945 - 2021

KENNEBUNKPORT - Lucien L. Champagne, who was born in Lewiston, April 9, 1945, passed away Dec. 15, 2021.

Lou was a Main-er. He loved his family and friends and gave back to his beloved state through serving as part of the Sugarloaf Mountain ski patrol and rescue services for over 20 years.

He was a member of the GRB Fire Company and firefighter on the Kennebunkport Fire Department and also was a dedicated coach all throughout both of his son's childhoods.

Lou graduated from Lewiston High School, salutatorian of his class, and went on to graduate from Colby College, which had a profound influence on his life's direction and lifelong friendships. Lou's career in pharmaceuticals saw many accolades come his way due to his admirable work ethic and drive to succeed. He retired from Pfizer.

Lou was especially grateful for his cross country



motorcycle trip as a young man, where he developed his love of mountaineering and climbing, and his passion for Yosemite and the Sierra Nevadas. He passed on this passion of the mountains and their sense of wonder and awe to his family through skiing and hiking in Maine, New Hampshire, Ver-

mont, California and Utah.

Lou is loved and remembered by his wife, Marilyn Joan; sons Alexander David and Noah Joseph; his brother-in-law, Lawrence Joseph Benedetto; and extended family.

Our lives have been blessed by his love and steadiness, his strong sense of duty and service, and his passion for the outdoors throughout many years of his life.

A private memorial service will be scheduled at a future date.

In lieu of flowers, please send contributions in Lou's name to the Maine Community Foundation, Portland.

Summer Event Poll

By Jack Lutz

What is the Status of Your Layout? and What is the Purpose of Your Layout?

At the NMRA Seacoast Division Spring Event on July 16, 2022, we asked those who attended in person to answer poll questions as part of an effort to learn more about our members' interests. Responses were anonymous. At this event, we asked about layouts. Figure 1 shows the poll questions.

[Figure 1](#). Summer 2022 Poll Questions

<p>What is the status of your layout?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. in planning stage b. under construction c. partially operational d. mostly/fully operational e. as complete as a layout ever is f. other 	<p>What is the purpose of your layout?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Showcase modeling skills - rolling stock, locomotives, structures, scenery b. Showcase a collection c. "Serious" operation using fast clock, car cards, switch lists, etc d. Just run trains alone or with family e. Detailed modeling of prototype scenes f. Other
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- 10 attending Seacoast Division members responded to the poll questions.
 - o This represents about 6% of Seacoast members
 - o Of those 10, two listed multiple statuses and two listed multiple purposes.
 - o This is a pretty small sample, so we should be careful about the conclusions we draw from it.

Summer Event Poll

By Jack Lutz

Figure 2 shows the results of the status question.

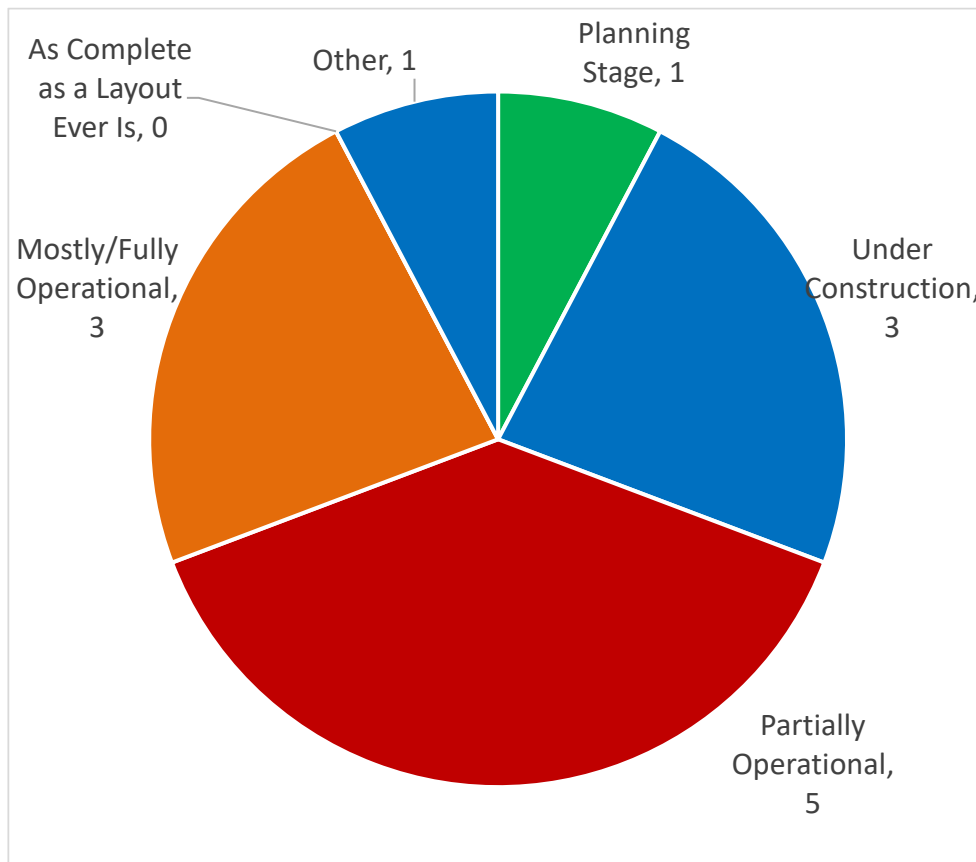
- There were 13 responses from 10 respondents
- 2 respondents circled multiple answers
- 60% have layouts that are at least partially, mostly or fully operational
- The response for the layout that is “in planning stage” was one of the multiple answers: parts of that layout are in the planning state, while other parts are partially or mostly operational.

The “other” response included a note that the layout was in a barn and “...squirrels got it”.

Takeaways from Figure 2:

- Since the one layout that is in the planning stage is also under construction and partly operational, it would seem we don’t need many clinics on planning a layout.
- Layouts are never complete

Figure 2.
2022:
the Status
Layout?



Summer
What is
of Your

Summer Event Poll

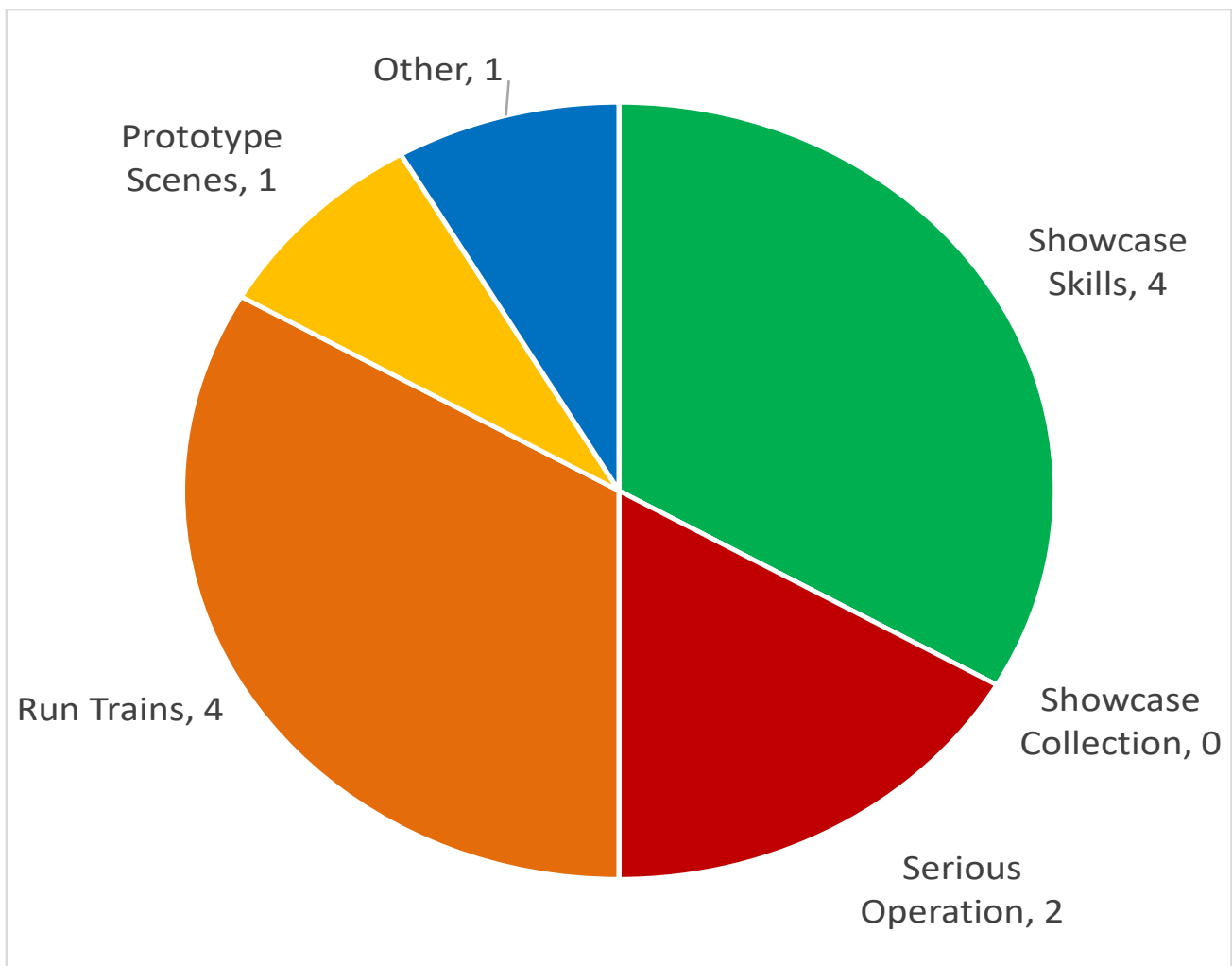
By Jack Lutz

Figure 3 shows the results of the purpose question.

- There were 12 responses from 10 respondents
- 2 respondents circled multiple answers
- None of the respondents are building a layout to showcase a collection

The “other” response included a note “Operating sessions 30 years ago”—so perhaps it could have been included under “c. Serious Operation.”

Figure 3. Summer 2022: What is the Purpose of Your Layout?



A.P. Report Tom Oxnard Ap Chair
Peter McKenney Associate Chair

Timetable

With the untimely passing of Larry Cannon , Peter McKenney has accepted the position of Associate chair of the program.. We wish all success to Peter in filling a slot that is important to the division.

Editor’s Ramblings

My apologies' for being so late with the Switch Tower. I have had back surgery twice in the last 3 months . I was unable to sit down in one place for any amount of time. Thankfully I am on the other side I believe .

Sad news all around for the division. We have lost so many in the past year who contributed much to the division. I know that I when I say my thoughts are with the family’s ,that the division is behind me. The division will need people to step up and contribute .

Nominations are open for three board of directors. A good chance to jump in and help. See the article on pg 4

Train shows are on the rebound and though I did not attend I heard that the Concord show was a success . I hope this is a positive trend for the future.

On my desk are a number of projects that I can start to get back to , re motor an old Hallmark HH1000 , 3 more Maine Central Chip cars and build some more BAR chip cars. Plus really to start to go through my fleet of cars and locos and whittle down the collection to what I need ,not what I like . Hope to see every one at shows .

Conn Sept 15-18 Connecticut Yankee NER Nutmeg division Regional convention Windsor CT

ME Sept 3-4 Model Railroad Weekend At Seashore Trolley Museum Kennebunkport ME

ME Sept 10 Greene Garden Railroad display Toot n’ chug lines Dick Clark 207-946-5304

Me Sept 14-17 Great Falls model RR club display Oxford county Fair

ME Sept 25– Oct 2 Cumberland Count Fair Maine 3 Rainers and 470 club

MA Sept 10 North Shore RR Club flea market Lakeside inn Wakefield

MA Sept 18 Old Colony Model RR club show Clarion Hotel Taunton

MA Southern NE Model RR Club open house Gardner www.snemrr.org

MA Oct 1-2 Railfair 22 Nashua Valley RR Association Boxboro Regency Hotel Boxborough

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