

The Switch Tower



**Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region,
National Model Railroad Association**
Richard Breton, *President* -- Bill Truehart, *Vice President*
Terrence P. King, *Secretary* -- Tom Coulombe, *Treasurer*

Volume Thirteen

First Quarter, 2006

Number One

President's Message

January Meeting to Help Fight Winter

by Rich Breton, *President, Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, NMRA*

This is the time of year where model railroading gets into high gear during the long New England winter months. Our next Seacoast Division meeting will help you get that layout started or help to inspire progress on your existing layout. We have several clinics lined up to show how other people have gotten their layouts underway, how to get your family involved; with scenery construction, including book-shelf layouts, table layouts, and modifications to larger layouts. Come to our next meeting; with an open mind for new ideas, and also to share some layout planning and construction ideas with others.

KUDOS, BEDFORD BOOMERS

Thanks to Bruce Robinson and other division members who helped out at the Bedford Boomers Model Railroad Exhibition on Sunday November 6. The show was extremely well attended with much interest in our new NMRA information display board and table displays. This is our third show this year; all have been a great opportunity to share our hobby interests, help people get started by answering their questions, and even get a few new members.

MR RESOURCES

Think about how you can share your talents helping people learn more about this hobby. Please continue to support our "Educational Resource Committee", by contacting Larry Cannon or Bill Trueheart with your interest of any kind to help pro-



I finally got around to building my "Under the Christmas Tree Railroad Table". The same idea could be used for any scale, I kept it fairly simple at this point. I'm running an O scale B&O F-3 with lighted baggage car, dome car, and observation car all in traditional blue/gray/black color scheme. Pretty limited detail for this first year, just a few 1950's Plasticville structures, figures on the platform, a K-line B&O pick-up truck, and even an original 1950's Lionel Styrofoam tunnel! A little departure from scale model railroading, but still fun. - Rich Breton (Photo by the author.)

mote the hobby.

Please try to attend our next meeting. We'll be meeting at the home of Rob Carignan in Portland. Rob's address is 91 Edwards Street, Portland. Edwards St. is located off Congress St.

Leave I-295 at the Congress St. exit onto W. Congress, says Rob; "go through two more sets of lights (on Congress St.) and pass St Patrick's Parochial School on your right. My street, **Edwards**, is the second right after the school. There is a computer business on the corner called Maine Networks. If you get to Westgate Shopping Center, you went to far."

Share the fun of model railroading.

Paul Allard, NER AP Chair, is MMR 358

Paul Allard of Vermont is one of the newest Master Model Railroaders of the National Model Railroad Association. Paul is the Northeastern Region's Achievement Program Chairman, and gives us his account of how the MMR happened.



I received a Lionel train set for Christmas in 1952. I was four at the time. I started scale modeling in 1975 after visiting the American Freedom Train in Burlington, VT. I joined the NMRA in 1988. I started working on Achievement Certificates in 1994 after reading a series of articles in the NMRA Bulletin. Since I was working on my home layout, the first few certificates came quickly. I have certificates in Motive Power, Structures, Scenery, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Chief Dispatcher, Volunteer and Author. The hardest certificate was Motive Power since I scratch built a brass Canadian National Ten Wheeler. I measured a 1 to 1 engine in Grand Rapids and drew my own plans. It took over two years to complete. With the Motive Power certificate, I had at least one certificate in all four categories and became MMR # 358 on November 12, 2005. Every NMRA member should consider working towards MMR. It is a great opportunity to learn new skills and become more involved in the hobby.

Inside The Switch Tower

✓ **Renew newsletter subscriptions for 2006 - see the Editor's column**

The Switch Tower

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Deadline for articles and other submissions for the next issue of The Switch Tower is March 1, 2006.

From the Editor's Desk

Along the R-O-W

by Ron Palmquist, Editor

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

The word is out that there is a new model railroad emporium in central Maine a hobby shop that specializes in trains. It's called Highrailer (Trains from the good old days.) and it's located in Waterville, Maine. I'm told that "owner **Jeff Bolduc** specializes in MEC and BAR stuff, lots of custom paint, etc.," according to an e-mail from a friend. Highrailer (Trains from the good old days) is located at 1 Spring Street Connector Waterville, ME 04901. Telephone: 207-873-1120. E-mail is service@highrailer.com and his Website is www.highrailer.com.

In New Hampshire, a Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA member is the new owner of Seacoast Hobbies, 493 Central Ave, Dover, NH 03820. He's **Mike Mennelle**. His store is open 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

FRIENDS ON LINE

Rick Shoup, one of *The Switch Tower's* readers in Florida, has a most interesting



Website that displays photos of the East Broad Top narrow gauge railroad in Pennsylvania. Check out www.sccmrrc.org/febt. Rick says the photos "came from railfans everywhere." For more information, contact Rick at rshoup@tampabay.rr.com.

A JOLLY BLOG

Speaking of the net - if you watch any amount of television in Maine and New Hampshire, you probably are familiar with "Jolly John" Pulsifer, the auto dealer located on U.S. Route 1 in Saco, Maine. He told the Internet page of the Portland Press Herald newspaper last October that he has a few favorite sites. For example; Refdesk, Williams-Sonoma and Food Network, plus www.Lionel.com and charlesro.com. It turns out that Mr. Pulsifer not only is interested in facts 'n food, he's also a model train buff.

"I have them (train, cars) in cabinets here in the office and a bunch at home," he told a reporter. (Charles Ro is the gargantuan train store near Boston.) Welcome to the club, Jolly John! Now, to paraphrase car and truck sales people everywhere - "what's it going to take to get you in that fabulous commemorative Lionel train set?"

DID YOU KNOW?

Channel 7 on Time-Warner Cable in the Portland area offers two of the *Becker* sit-com program at 10:00 and 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday nights. I mention this because the show's producer or its lead actor, Ted Danson (formerly of *Cheers*), must be a model train buff. If you watch closely, there appear to be standard gauge model train cars in the background on stacks of books in the doctor's office. And, New York City scenes used to separate locales of the show feature a lot of footage of New York subway cars operating on elevated sections of track in the Bronx. Check it out.

LET'S MEET AT DOC'S LUNCH

Bill Gaver of Brookfield, N.H. reports that his open house on Saturday, Nov. 26th, as part of the 2005 edition of the *Tour de Chooch*, was attended by nearly 200 visitors, including 135 who took the time to sign his guest book. The adults and children who viewed Bill's *Balboa Granada & Eastern Railroad (BG&E)* were from New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. They were a hungry bunch, says Bill, whose "Doc's Lunch" refreshment table served coffee, bottled water, Coke, 12-dozen cookies, 150 donut holes and 95 White Castle cheeseburgers. Children who were there were treated to a railroad hat or a coloring book with crayons. Bill and his wife, Nancy, are gracious hosts at Defern Depot.

FMI: <http://www.deferndepot.com/> (Thanks to Dwight Smith's writing in the *Notch 8* newsletter of the North Conway Model Railroad Club.)

RENEWALS

For those of you who like to receive *The Switch Tower* in the mail, it's time to renew for 2006. While the newsletter will be available free on the Internet some time soon, it will be mailed to those who prefer to receive a hard copy. Renewals have been mailed to all 2005 subscribers. This reminder: Send your checks for \$5 to our Secretary, Terry King, P.O. Box 188, E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188.

Happy New Year!

Layout Visits

by Stan Jordan

Rather than trying to be the 'fountain of all knowledge' yourself, consider visiting some layouts of other modelers. Each layout may not be exactly what you would do/build/like, but a careful observer should be able to pick up some ideas for his layout.

Some of the modelers have been at it for many years and practically all of them are delighted to have a visitor ask questions such as, what material did you use to build that rock cliff or that paved road? Who was the manufacturer of that great-looking building or those nice-looking switch stands and bumpers? Why did you choose that make of DCC? How do you handle car movements? For each of us to 're-invent the wheel' wastes a lot of time and maybe money. Someone not far away may have just the answer, technique or material that you've been looking for!

Okay, sounds good, but what am I supposed to do—invite myself into someone's home? You could, but there are options. For one example, here in northern New England, there has been an organized, self-directed tour of layouts for several years, often in late November. It's called "The Tour de Chooch". 15 to 20 layouts in NH and Mass. are open to the public over a weekend. The layouts are mostly HO scale with a few in N scale. Essentially all of them are fully scenic-ed and operational. Some layout owners have a couple of their local cohorts on-hand to operate the layout for visitors.

Another option is to visit a club layout—okay, fine. Where are the clubs? Of course there is the Great Falls Model RR Club in Lewiston—nice layout, good folks and they speak Downeast. For more info, visit their website www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org.

There is also the North Conway Model Railroad Club layout in the Conway Scenic's Freight House in No. Conway, N.H. They're open to the public Tues/Thurs/Sat during the months of July through Sept.

You might also consider visiting the Nashua Valley Model RR Club in Bolton, Mass.—another good layout. Their website is www.nvrra.org.

And if you like big layouts, check out the North Shore Model Railroad Club in Wakefield, Mass. I found this one somewhat by accident and was impressed with their splendid hand-laid trackage. Their website is www.nsmrc.org. I'm sure there are more fine layouts, but these are a start. So, what are you waiting for?

Maine Clubs

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club, Lewiston, Maine



The Great Falls club meets the third Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m., with two to three hour layout operating sessions following the meeting. Members and non-members are encouraged to attend, and to operate the layout. No Experience Necessary - Just Be There! (Edited from the club's Website.) Contact: Charles Blanchard, Pres., nopsb@adelphia.net

Officers Elected for 2006

Minutes of the annual Seacoast meeting held on November 6, 2005. This was held in Bedford, N.H.

The meeting was opened at 2:30 p.m. by President Richard Breton. There were ten members in attendance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without change.

The treasurer's report was also approved without change.

The deadline for the next Switch Tower is December 1, 2005.

Rich Breton reported that converting the Switch Tower into PDF files is progressing slowly, but steadily.

Rich Breton appointed the Education Committee. They are Bill Truehart for N.H., and Larry Cannon for Maine.

The annual elections were held. The nominating committee had nominated Sandy Roberts, Ron Palmquist and Rich Breton at the last meeting. As there were no other nominations, they were reelected for three year terms. Next year the terms of Larry Cannon and Tom Coulombe expire.

Bill Truehart thanked the Division on behalf of the Bedford Boomers for the donation that we made to them.

The annual meeting closed at 2:47 p.m. and as directed by our bylaws a Board of Directors was opened. Richard Breton was elected president. The president then appointed Terry King as Secretary and Tom Coulombe as Treasurer. He then reappointed all committee chairmen from last year to a new term.

The B.O.D. meeting closed at 3:05 p.m.

Tickets were passed out to all who were present and as the numbers were called off the ticket holder was able to choose a prize. There were enough prizes for everyone to win one. As we have a few items left, these will be given out at our next meeting in Portland Me on January 14, 2006 at Rob Carignan's home (see p. 1 - Ed.).

Before we adjourned, the President thanked the Bedford Boomers for allowing us to meet during their annual show.

New Hampshire Clubs

North Conway Model Railroad Club, North Conway, N.H.

President: Jack Ellis, East Madison, N. H.

Contact: Dwight Smith: geebud@ncia.net

Ammonoosuc Valley Railway Association

P.O. Box 48 Bath, NH 03740

Contact: Bill Driscoll, P.O. Box 48, Bath, NH 03740

E-mail: choochoo@Dartmouth.edu

Concord Model Railroad Club

Box 61, Concord, NH 03302-0061

Contacts: Jonathan Miner, Box 61, Concord, NH 03302-0061

(H) (603) 424-8491. E-mail: jonathan.w.miner@lmco.com

Thank You!

**... to those who contributed to this issue of *The Switch Tower* :
Terry King, Stan Jordan, Rich Breton, Rick Shoup, Dwight Smith.**



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Share the fun of Model Railroading!

THE SWITCH TOWER CALENDAR/PLANNER

January 14, 2006, Saturday

1 p.m. - Seacoast Division meeting at the home of member Rob Carignan, 91 Edwards St., Portland. (For details, see page 1.)

January 28-29, 2006, Saturday-Sunday

Big 2006 Railroad Hobby Show, sponsored by the Amherst Railway Society. FMI: www.AmherstRail.org.

April 29, 2006, Saturday

Spring model railroad show, sponsored by the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Mt. Ararat High School, Topsham, Maine. FMI: 207/933-2477, or on line at www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org

June 1-4, 2006

NER Spring Convention, Worcester, Mass.

July 2 - 8, 2006

Independence Junction, National NMRA Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. FMI: <http://www.nmra.org/2006/>

August 21 - 26, 2006

26th Annual Narrow Gauge Convention. Durango, Colo. Celebrate the 125th anniversary of the San Juan Extension formerly the Denver & Rio Grande Railway, now the Durango & Silverton, established in 1881. FMI: www.narrowgauge2006.com



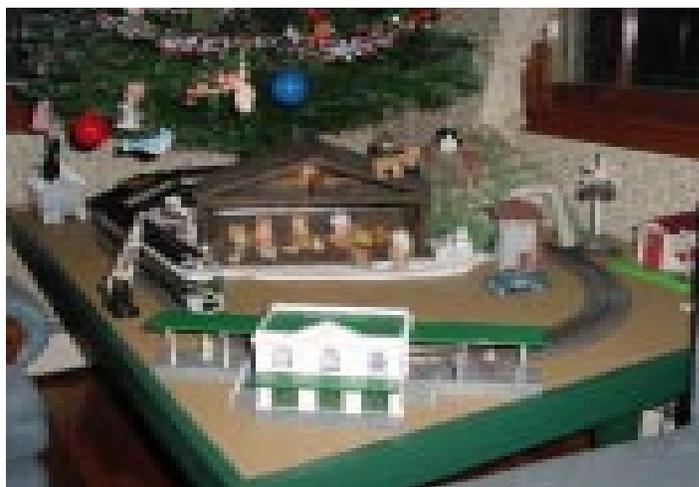
October 20-22, 2006..

NER Fall Convention, Parsippany, N.J.

Aug. 29 - Sept. 2, 2007

27th National Narrow Gauge Convention, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland, Maine. www.27thnarrowgaugeconvention.com.

Rich Breton's Christmas Tree Layout



Here's another shot of Rich's layout, described on Page 1. Check that B&O power hauling a mini-Congressional Limited.