

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 Fifteen

First Quarter, 2008

Number One

President's Message

New Year, New Beginning, New Ideas *Seacoast Division Annual Meeting at First Congregational Church, South Portland, January 12, 2008*

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

The holidays are quickly here again; time to share some quality time with family and friends. Best wishes for a happy, healthy, productive and fun-filled New Year.

The next Seacoast Division meeting is our also our annual meeting, with election of officers, will be held on Saturday January 12, 2008.

NEW MEETING FORMAT

At our last meeting we decided to change our meeting format to start with our fun activities first. So, beginning with our January meeting we will first have clinics and show-n-tell opportunities, and then go into our business meeting.

I have developed a new clinic entitled "Bring Your Railroad to Life: Details Make the Difference," which was a lot of fun to prepare, as this is probably my favorite part of the hobby. I'm looking forward to sharing this presentation with you, which will



include modeling tips for low cost details, creating realistic scenes, painting and weathering techniques to use on figures, parts, and vehicles.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

I want to thank all of the people which helped me with the two day introductory

model railroad presentations held at the Rochester NH Public Library. We had a great turnout on the first Saturday with 33 people in attendance including a few Seacoast Division members. The second Saturday had about 15, mostly due to several conflicting activities in the area. The second Saturday was almost a "mini train show" with ten tables setup displaying equipment in all scales, including two modules, and two operating display layouts. I want to especially thank Stephen Martelli for his extensive G-scale display, including numerous pieces of rolling stock and motive power; Sandy Roberts for his O-scale Lionel operating layout; Bruce Robinson for his DCC operating HO scale module; and Paul Lessard for helping transport, answering questions and setup all the equipment. The attendees found the two sessions very informative, with several positive comments, including some indicating this would help them take their trains out of storage and get started again.

MMR INFORMATION

Check out the latest January 2008 issue of *Scale Rails* for the first installment of a series of articles on the Master Model Railroader Achievement Program. This first article is written by Paul Allard, MMR, and Larry Cannon, MMR, introducing the overall program, and going into more details with examples for the requirements for motive power. The article was well written and truly inspirational. This program is an important part of your NMRA membership and something we can all work towards, with the life-long learning experience of this exciting hobby.

Please make plans to attend our next meeting . . . and "*Share the fun of model railroading.*"

New Directors to be elected at South Portland Meeting

Three candidates make up the proposed slate of directors to be elected to three-year terms at the upcoming So. Portland meeting.



PAUL G. LESSARD

Paul has been in the hobby for more than 43 years, and has been a member of the NMRA since 1972. HO is Paul's

preferred scale and recently become interested in G and S scales. Other activities include railfanning and photography.

BRUCE ROBINSON

It was a 1958 Christmas gift - a Marx HO train set - that got Bruce started in the hobby. Now, his HO Valley Junction Railroad occupies a "basement with a house on top" in Sandown, N.H. He is the major-domo of the annual Tour de Chooch self-guided layout visits each fall and other activities to promote the hobby.



TERRY KING

Terry has been interested in model railroading since he was 15. An HO modeler, he is a charter member of The Great Falls Model Railroad Club in Auburn, Maine, and serves as the club's treasurer. He is an NMRA Life Member who is secretary of the Seacoast Division. He has been elected to serve as the Northern New England Director of the association's Northeastern Region.



The Switch Tower

Volume Fifteen, Number One, First Quarter 2008

The Switch Tower is the official publication of the Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, National Model Railroad Association, and is published four times a year. Subscriptions are \$5.00 a year. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Seacoast Division, NMRA, and submitted to:

Terrence P. King, Secretary
Seacoast Division, NMRA
P.O. Box 188
E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188
Phone/Fax: 207/933-2477
E-mail: tking@megalink.net

Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, NMRA

- Chartered Nov. 17, 1968 -

Richard Breton, President

9 Riverside Dr., Rochester, N.H. 03867

E-mail: rbreton@worldpath.net

Bill Truehart, Vice President

Terrence P. King, Secretary

Tom Coulombe, Treasurer

Directors: Rich Breton, Tom Coulombe,

Larry Cannon MMR, Terry King, Paul

Lessard, Ron Palmquist, Bill Truehart,

Sandy Roberts, Bruce Robinson

Achievement Program Chairman - Education

Committee Co-Chairman

Larry Cannon MMR

Model Contests - Dwight Smith MMR

Seacoast Division Home Page

<http://www.trainweb.org/seacoastdiv/>

Rob Carignan, Webmaster

rcarignan@mac.com

Northeastern Region, NMRA

Kenneth H. May, President

71 Buff Cap Rd., Tolland, CT 06084-2605

860/872-3441, e-mail

kenneth.may@comcast.net

Terrence P. King,

Northern New England Director

P.O. Box 188

E. Livermore, ME 04228-0188

Phone/Fax: 207/933-2477

E-mail: tking@megalink.net

Paul Allard MMR,

Regional Achievement Program Chairman

53 Rollin Irish Road, Milton, VT 05468

Phone: 802/893-2228

NER Home Page:

<http://pages.athome.net/kenmay/NERHOME.HTM>

National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

Headquarters Office

4121 Cromwell Road

Chattanooga, TN 37421

Phone: 423/892-2846 Fax: 423/889-4869

Web Site: <http://www.nmra.org>

The Switch Tower

Ron Palmquist, Editor

16 Glen Avenue Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107

207/799-1761

E-mail: Musiccnw@maine.rr.com

Deadline for articles and other submissions for the next issue of *The Switch Tower* is **March 1, 2008.**

From the Editor's Desk

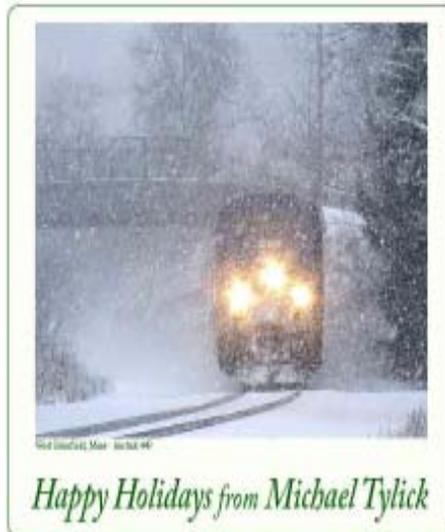
Along the R-O-W

by Ron Palmquist, Editor

Happy New Year! The year 2008 came upon us very quickly, just like the six snowstorms during December and the two we've just had in the new year. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for contributing to the newsletter during 2007, and for the past 10 years. Special thanks to Rich Breton, Terry King, Stan Jordan, Bill Truehart, Paul Lessard, Dwight Smith, Tom Coulombe, Bill Benysh, Rob Carignan and the others who have prepared material for our quarterly publication. I look forward to 2008 and hope you'll join me in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the chartering of the Seacoast Division, Northeastern Region, NMRA.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

Mike Tylick's e-mail greeting was one of the best I have ever seen. Oh sure, there are snow pics and foggy pics and night shots and sunny sky photos. But, Mike's photo looks just like a Christmas Card scene. So, in fact, it was. Thanks, Mike.



GOOD OLD DAYS?

Had enough snow so far this winter? Well, snow - lots of it - was often the enemy of the 2-foot-gauge railroads. Linwood W. Moody, in his book, *The Maine Two-Footers* (Berkeley, Calif.: Howell-North Press, 1959), relates that one late 19th-century blizzard was so heavy that, even with three locomotives, a Franklin & Megantic train couldn't make headway and had to keep dropping cars. By the end of its 14.5-mile run to Kingfield - which took 12 hours - only the locomotives were left, with all the passengers jammed into them.

Division Business

November 4, 2007 meeting minutes

Present Richard Breton opened the meeting, at the Bedford Boomers Train Show in Bedford NH at 2:17 p.m., with six members present.

Director Ron Palmquist moved that the minutes of the September 15 meeting be approved as published in *The Switch Tower*. Seconded, Bill Truehart, approved.

The treasurers report was accepted as read by Rich Breton.

Newsletter Editor Ron Palmquist noted that the deadline for the next newsletter is December 1. He also noted that 2008 will be our 40th year.

Bruce Robinson suggested that we provide a biographical summary of candidates for office and directors.

Paul Lessard attended the fall NER convention and reported on problems of Division officers and directors not being members of the NMRA. It was agreed that we would submit a letter to Ken May confirming that all of our officers and directors are current NMRA members. Paul also reported that the NER is forming a committee to investigate if NER should have only one convention per year.

Bruce Robinson suggested that we have an NER/Seacoast Division presence at the West Springfield Hobby Show.

Rich Breton has completed plans for the Model Railroad presentations at the Rochester, N.H. Library on November 10 and 17.

Bruce Robinson has completed plans for the next Adult Education course at Timberline Regional High School in Plastow NH. The course will start week of Jan 21 and continue for 8 weeks.

The next meeting will be held on January 12, 2008 at the First Congregational Church in South Portland. The program and clinics will be held first followed by the business meeting.

The meeting closed at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Sandy Roberts, acting secretary.



The 2007 Tour de Chooch *by Stan Jordan*

Here I go again, walking where angels fear to tread as I risk offending someone by not giving full accolades to every layout owner. On Saturday, November 24th, a fellow modeler, Bob Morse, and I ventured forth to partake of the 2007 edition of the famous “Tour de Chooch”. We had decided to visit layouts only on Saturday because of other commitments which in turn meant that we would be seeing only layouts in the Granite State. We also limited ourselves to six of the twelve layouts available so as to have sufficient time to carefully check out the chosen layouts.

We began by meeting another modeler, Dave Peakes from New Ipswich, N.H. at the HO scale layout of Sam Novello in Atkinson, N.H. which was a layout new to us. Sam did a great job of modeling buildings of various styles resulting in a fine looking city and layout.

Next stop was at the HO layout of the “Tour’s” founder, Bruce Robinson in Sandown, N.H. Bruce has a nice layout with operating signals and a separate room for a dispatcher who mercifully can’t see the trains in operation. Bruce let the author operate a freight after which the layout dispatcher was sent into deep therapy.

Our third stop was at the HO layout of Tom Oxnard in Exeter, N.H. We had not seen Tom’s layout before and were pleasantly surprised again to see a beautifully detailed layout ranging from a very attractive harbor, to a multi-building city, to a mountain, and to bridges and trestles. Tom, like Sam, made us all jealous of his patience and modeling skills.

Moving right along, we traveled to Stratham, N.H. to see Mike Grahame’s HO layout. We were treated to the sight of a very attractive city, a fine engine servicing facility, intermodal trains on the move and a realistic looking container-handling facility.

A visit to Dave Kotsonis’ HO layout in Greenland, N.H. was next where the affable host provided us with scenes of a quarry, the famous Man of the Mountain and the rumbling of freights across his empire.

Our last visit was to the N scale layout of John Newick, in Newington, N.H. As you enter the room, you see no one with a throttle in hand controlling train movements! The trains are running themselves through the clever implementation of a computer-controlled setup! John seems to have almost as many MEC and BAR locomotives as the prototypes and he even has stretched his sanity by building a helix!

All in all, it was a day well spent visiting with some old friends as well as making some new ones. Modeling ideas abound for those seeking such. The owners are all gracious and most-willing to answer questions.

Next year, why not plan to ‘take the “Tour” ‘yourself?

More Fun

Craftsman Structure Show Debuts

by Paul G. Lessard

On Nov. 3rd, I traveled to the Holiday Inn in Mansfield, Mass., to attend the first annual Craftsman Structure Show. As the name implies, this event specializes in structure kit-building, scratchbuilding and kitbashing. There were 12 clinics presented by such well-known modelers as George Selios, Dave Frary, Mike Tylick, Scott Mason and others. Activities included a model contest and a trade show by dozens of manufacturers in the structure kit business. As this was a two-day show, it was not possible for me to partake of the first day’s

Dave Kotsonis’ Old Man of the Mountain may well be the lone remaining depiction of this former New Hampshire landmark.



John Newick’s N scale layout in Newington, N.H. is run by computers—arranging meets and all! It can be run manually as well.

Sam Novello in Atkinson, N.H. did a great job of modeling buildings of various styles resulting in a fine looking city and layout.



Mike Grahame of Stratham, N.H., models in HO. Visitors were treated to the sight of inter-modal trains on the move, and a fine engine servicing facility. If you look closely, you’ll see Chicago & North Western Railroad yellow and green. Those are the colors of the

upper midwestern fallen flag that operated high-horsepower similar to the unit you see at the feeding trough.

Stan Jordan photos

activities. Nevertheless, and from what I did see, this was really a worthwhile trip. The models and dioramas were first class, really superb quality. From the large number of modelers attending, I believe the show to be a great success. I am looking forward to next year’s event where I can spend more time enjoying the clinics.

The Switch Tower



Seacoast Division, NER/NMRA

c/o Ron Palmquist
16 Glen Avenue
Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-1022



Address Service Requested

Calendar Planner

January 12, 2008. Seacoast Division Meeting at First Congregational Church, 301 Cottage Road, South Portland, Maine, 1:00-4:00pm

January 26th and 27th, 2008. Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show, Big E grounds, W.



Springfield, Mass. FMI: www.amherstrail.org

February 19, Tuesday, through April 8, 2008. A Fundamentals of Model Railroading Course, Timberlane High School, Plaistow, N.H. Classroom hours are 6:30-8:30pm. (Details in adjacent column.)

April 20, 2008. Hooksett Lions Club Annual Model Railroad Show, Hooksett, N.H., 10am- 3pm

January 24th and 25th, 2009. Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show, Big E grounds, W. Springfield, Mass. FMI: www.amherstrail.org

MODEL RAILROADING COURSE STARTS IN FEBRUARY

The beginning of a great hobby

by Bruce Robinson

The Seacoast Division of the National Model Railroad Association will be sponsoring an eight week long course in the fundamentals of becoming a model railroader at Timberlane High School in Plaistow, N.H.

The course will cover how to select locomotives and cars, building bench work, track planning, track laying, scenery, wiring, kit building, operating a model railroad with a purpose and how to have fun in a great hobby.

During the course guest speakers will be joining the class to share their knowledge in their areas of expertise in this multi-faceted hobby.

Materials will be provided to create a miniature railroad each student will work on and take home with them.

CLASS LEADERS

Volunteers are needed to staff the course. If you would like to be a part of this great experience of bringing the hobby to others and can teach one of the basic subjects of the hobby please join the team.

The course begins on Tuesday, February 19 and runs through April 8, 2008. Classroom hours are 6:30-8:30pm.

For further information and a course outline contact:

Bruce Robinson, (603) 887-5922, brobinson85@comcast.net

Share the Fun of Model Railroading!