ECD Treasurer, Bill Turczyn (left), and ECD member, Brian Dingman (with hat), introduced a new style of module to the HO modular layout at the recent Saint John train club’s fall show. It includes a "back lot" staging area and an auto-reversing crossover to allow direct access to both main lines.

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President’s Message

Greg Williams (President, Eastern Canada Division)

Whoo! Whoo! (no not choo choo) it’s soon going to be Christmas. For most of us, Christmas is a busy time. We seem to get caught up in preparations, visiting friends and family and the hustle and bustle of it all. I think it is the perfect time to slow down and do some modelling or operation on your layout. Just when life seems to be the most hectic, we need an opportunity to slow down and enjoy the moment. What better way that to indulge ourselves in our hobby. Perhaps our spouses will appreciate a few minutes without us underfoot, so they can get on with their prep too. Whatever your excuse; get some bench time or throttle time and enjoy this great hobby.

Christmas means lists. Whether it is lists for things we want, lists of people to buy for or lists for groceries and other Christmas treats, we make lists. Recently I took the plunge to On30. Trainworld.com had a sale on a loco I couldn’t resist. Soon I acquired a roster of rolling stock at a great price and I was away. I might be crazy, but don’t we have to be to be in this hobby? Besides, there is a method to my madness because for all the years I have been in this hobby I never had a train under the tree. This is the year! On30 is a great scale because the models are a little larger than HO yet not quite as big as O standard or Lionel. The manufacturers of many Christmas village buildings often recommend On30 as the perfect size to go with the village buildings. So that’s my excuse. The one I am telling my wife. In terms of modelling, my excuse is that I want to do some scratch building for the Achievement Program (AP) and the larger size and fact that narrow gauge brings up thoughts of lovely dilapidated wooden structures make for the perfect scratch building opportunity. So, on my list are scratch building supplies in O scale.

No matter your level of involvement in this hobby during this busy season, it is my wish that it be filled with friends, family, love and of course... TRAINS! Merry Christmas.

As always, you can email the division or contact me directly with any questions or concerns.
gregw66@gmail.com or 506-279-2232

Call Board - the NMRA and the Region

The NMRA’s Achievement Program

The Achievement Program (AP) is one of the most popular activities in the NMRA. It is a means by which the NMRA recognizes a modeller's abilities and their service to the model railroading hobby. It also provides incentive to learn and master new skills, and covers not only building various types of models, but also constructing other things such as scenery, structures, track work, and wiring. It’s not a popularity contest; rather it uses standards set out by the NMRA to measure the level a modeller has achieved. Yes, there is a certain amount of documentation that has to be completed as part of the process to apply for an award, but the process helps ensure consistency in the evaluation and awarding of the recognition.

There are 11 categories in which a modeller can earn a program certificate. With the completion of each category, a modeller receives a certificate acknowledging their achievement. The ultimate achievement for a modeller, once they have reached at least 7 certificates in specified categories, is becoming a Master Model Railroader. Since the program's beginning in 1961, approximately 600 modellers worldwide have earned the designation of MMR. Dave Gunn of Tatamagouche, N.S. is one of those 600. He received his MMR in Great Britain before moving to Canada - a testament to the international recognition of the Achievement Program.
The 11 categories for Achievement Program awards in 4 categories are:

**Model Railroad Equipment:**
- Master Builder - Motive Power
- Master Builder - Cars

**Settings:**
- Master Builder - Structures
- Master Builder - Prototype Models
- Master Builder - Scenery

**Engineering and Operation:**
- Model Railroad Engineer - Civil
- Chief Dispatcher
- Model Railroader - Electrical

**Service to the Hobby:**
- Model Railroad Author
- Association Volunteer
- Association Official

This is a very high-level view of the Achievement Program. Details for each category can be found on the NMRA website:

https://nmra.org/categories

The NMRA also offers a great first step to the AP awards - namely the Golden Spike. As in all the other awards, there is a set of criteria that must be met. However, most people will not find the requirements to be daunting. Details are found here: https://nmra.org/golden-spike-award

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**Balloon Track - News around our Division**

Recipients of AP awards in the Northeast Region (including our Division) were announced at the NER convention in Mahwah, New Jersey. In our Division, this year’s recipients were:

**George Jarvis** - Master Builder - Scenery and Association Official

**Louis McIntyre** - Master Builder - Scenery
Subsequent to NER Convention, another Eastern Canada Division member, **Ron Grant**, received his Golden Spike. Shown here is Ron (Right) receiving his award from Division President, **Greg Williams**

If you haven’t already done so, consider the idea of applying for the Golden Spike. If you have a layout, even partially completed, or modules, you are already most of the way there.

**Great News!** Dave Gunn has agreed to take on the task of Division Achievement Program (AP) Chair. In this role, he will help with the evaluation process required while applying for an AP award. We'll have more details of how this will work by the next Hot Box issue.

**Podcast**

**More Great News!** We are excited to pre-announce that we are working on a podcast for members in our division. We will make the official announcement in the new year via the Hot Box newsletter e-mail group. Stay tuned!

**ECD Logo**

**And Even More Great News!** You may have already noticed from the front page of this newsletter that we are showing off our new logo. It was quite a challenge to come up with something that describes where we are geographically, our linkage to the NER and the NMRA, and to outsiders, the rail profile that will help describe what we are all about.

**Train Shows**

There have been 3 area shows since our last issue of the Hot Box:

The **Truro** show was held October 13 at the Nova Scotia Community College; they received excellent coverage in the Truro Daily News [https://www.trurodaily.com/living/video-model-train-show-in-truro-249893/](https://www.trurodaily.com/living/video-model-train-show-in-truro-249893/).

Also from the Truro show, there is a video of the show setup and a fun cab ride on the On30 Narragansett Bay Railway and Navigation Co. layout [https://youtu.be/NmzMYFcwEHU](https://youtu.be/NmzMYFcwEHU).

**Saint John** held their annual show on November 10 in Quispamsis. Visitors enjoyed displays in HO, N, and G-scale plus a very popular LEGO setup [https://sites.google.com/site/sjsmrclub/home/2-annual-show](https://sites.google.com/site/sjsmrclub/home/2-annual-show).
To round out the fall show season, the annual Fredericton show was held at Fredericton High School on December 1. [https://sites.google.com/site/sjsmrclub/fredericton-show](https://sites.google.com/site/sjsmrclub/fredericton-show)

We've had a busy Fall train show season and are having a bit of a break for a couple of months. Next on the train show circuit is the Moncton train show usually held on Saturday of Easter weekend. More details will be forwarded as they become available.

**Regional Model Shops offer 10% discount for members**
Both Don’s HO Service in Moncton and Maritime Hobbies in Halifax offer NMRA members a 10% discount (ask them for details).
- The password for Don’s HO is “DULSE”.
- The password for Maritime Hobbies is “NMRA”.

**Switch List**

**Interesting Links**
A go-to site often quoted by Facebook users and on forums when looking for older kit instructions, parts lists, etc.: [http://www.hoseeker.net/lit.htm](http://www.hoseeker.net/lit.htm)

If you are a Facebook subscriber, a great group is "Modeler’s Guild" with approx. 8500 members from around the world sharing their work in a variety of scales and themes, not just model railroading. It is a closed group, but access is readily granted by clicking the "JOIN" icon [https://www.facebook.com/groups/modelersguild/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/modelersguild/)

This next one is thanks to our Treasurer, Bill Turczyn. An Australian modeler has created a website with some neat tutorials ranging from static grass flowers to special electronic effects [https://www.bouldercreekrailroad.com/](https://www.bouldercreekrailroad.com/)
Tidbits and tricks - Realistic tree stumps - *Timber*!!!!

My Hampton & St Martins Railway represents an area near the Bay of Fundy that is heavily reliant on the lumber industry. As a result, the railway hauls a serious amount of both logs and sawn lumber, leaving behind large areas of tree stumps. Creating realistic-looking tree stumps from resin or lead castings had been a challenge for me....then I discovered I could create them from real wood.

I gather the small dead inner branches from spruce trees in my yard, looking for "knots" where two or more branches divide.

I cut what will be the base of the tree stump through the thickest part of the "knot".

The next two cuts are made about halfway through each side, one a bit higher than the other representing the back cut and the undercut. This results in a very realistic look and colour. No painting is required, but an older stump can easily be created by staining with a wash of india ink and alcohol.

Submitted by Lou McIntyre
Getting to Know You

Norman Guinard - Modeller in Madawaska

I am presently 81 years and 3 months of age, and I have been a railroad fanatic for 82 years. Yes, that's right - 82 years. That is not a typo - let me explain. When my Mom was 3 months pregnant with me, she became obsessed with the idea of going to the bridge over the tracks that passed near our home, to become enveloped in the smoke from the engine stack of the 4:15 P.M. local passenger train. She did this every evening in boiling sunshine, rain, sleet, hail, snow, high winds - you name it! She never missed a day!!!! The MD that looked after her said she would imprint (or mark) the baby with a love of trains - if he only knew!! Yes, I have been a railroad fan ever since I was conceived.

My Dad built my first Lionel train layout for me at age 4 and I literally lived in that train room. When I started to make a few pennies, from a newspaper delivery route, I spent every cent I could on model trains. By that time I had advanced to American Flyer because it was more prototypical - namely 2-rail track. Not long after, I met a couple of adult model railroaders who were into HO and operations. I REALLY became hooked and they were excellent mentors - it's been HO ever since. We lived not too far from a New York Central yard (Sandbank yard) in Scotia, N.Y. (Dad worked for the International General Electric Co.) and I made friends with one of the enginemen who had the 4 to 12 shift. At that time, there were not the strict regulations as we have today, so after school, I was able to spend many hours riding in the cab with him as they went about their duties. Needless to say, I got to know all the men there, especially the yardmaster. Through him, I was able to get a job as a yard clerk at 17 1/2 years old. Shortly after, I was sent to Selkirk yard to replace vacations. There I found that there were openings for firemen, so I applied for and was accepted into that group. Spare board was all I could hold, but not having the experience or seniority, I bid on every job that was posted. I did get the job on a local freight that ran on the Ottawa Division between Tupper Lake New York and Ottawa, Ontario. Very shortly after, the Canadian National bought the line and I ended up working for the C.N. I was grandfathered on that line, but it ended up being mostly abandoned with only the small Ottawa yard remaining. That yard worked only two days a week - not enough to live on, so I entered the regular spare board out of Ottawa where I put in a little over five years. At the same time, I attended the University of Ottawa and obtained a B.A. degree. After graduation, the C.N. offered me a promotion to Motive Power Controller with them in Toronto. I looked forward to eventually getting a position of greater importance, but that never happened and after being jumped over by two other men, I resigned from the C.N. and decided to return to University.
The only REALLY good thing happening for me in Toronto was that I met and married my FANTASTIC wife of 55 years. Unfortunately she left for Heaven a little over 2 years ago.

As I said, I went back to back to university in Halifax (Dalhousie University) where I became a Pharmacist. I graduated and was licensed in 1965 and practiced until I retired in 1999.

As for trains, I always had a small layout and continually built and collected locos, cars, buildings, etc. for that future day that I'd have a basement with a house on top. I got that place in Edmundston, N.B. and I still live in that house to the present. Needless to say, I started building my "empire" the WASHAGAMI & NORTHLAND, and this continues even until today as I am presently working on a 12ft. by 3ft. extension of the "Allagash Railroad" that comes off my Maine Central's Mattawamkeag yard

**Editor's Note:**

Visitors are always welcome, especially on those Friday evenings (usually once a month) that Norm hosts an operating session. You can contact him at norqui@nbnet.nb.ca or by phone at (506) 735-6084.
Santa will be arriving soon and we look forward to hearing what you find under your tree.

Speaking of which, Carl Layden, a friend in Newfoundland and Labrador, is taking the Christmas train under the tree to a whole new level with Raspberry pi, jmri, java interface, DCC++, arduinos, shields, 300-400 lines of code, IR sensors, and servos all controlled through a tablet.

At the time of writing, this new version of his railroad is still under construction, but he's been kind enough to provide a video of the operational layout on the workbench:

https://youtu.be/7juFTCl4vUY

Thinking about the random circuits and, of course, a jug of Moose Milk, two glasses and a game of fingers - you pick a train and if it "loops" around the tree 3 times - you drink 3 fingers of MM - if it loops 6 times - six fingers. Then when you get "looped" you can blame it on the 300+ lines of code. **Model Railroading really is fun!!!!**

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**ECD Facebook Pages, Website, and e-mails**

**Our e-mail:** easterncanadadivision@gmail.com

**Website:** https://easterncanadadivision.wordpress.com/

**Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/easterncanadadivision/

We need your input. If you have "Tidbits and Tricks", "Interesting Links", or any stories you want to share, send them to us at our e-mail address: easterncanadadivision@gmail.com

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!**

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