Have you changed your address or other membership information? Notify Headquarters

e-mail: nmrahq@nmra.org
Phone: 423-892-2846 (8am–4pm ET)
Mail: P.O. Box 1328
Soddy Daisy TN 37384-1328
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP Certiﬁcate Report
July 2015
Golden Spike
Northeastern Region
Lucien Champagne, Kennebunkport, Maine

Pacific Coast Region
Thomas Blinn, Livermore, California

Master Builder — Structures
Pacific Southwest Region
Bruce Petrarca, Goodyear, Arizona

Southeastern Region
Charles Lampman, Hueytown, Alabama
Jerry Michnewicz, Marietta, Georgia

Master Builder — Scenery
North Central Region
Scott Kremer, Northville, Michigan

Mid-Century Region
Richard Lach, Beavercreek, Ohio

North Central Region
Scott Kremer, Northville, Michigan

Northeastern Region
Thomas Oxnard, Exeter, New Hampshire

Mid-Century Region
Arthur Ellis, Bedford, Massachusetts

Australasian Region
David Faussett, Tacoma, Washington
David Yadock, Renton, Washington

Pacific Northwest Region
Bruce Petrarca, Goodyear, Arizona
Gary Robinson, Escondido, California

Southeastern Region
John Stewart, Hoover, Alabama

Model Railroad Engineer — Electrical

Model Railroad Author
Australasian Region
Robert Best, Blaxland, New South Wales

Pacific Coast Region
Mike Blumensaatd, San Francisco, California

Master Model Railroader
Robert Best, Blaxland, New South Wales
MMR 564
Thomas Oxnard, Exeter, New Hampshire
MMR 565

AP QUESTIONS

If you have questions about the Achievement Program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Frank Koch at fjkoch@hotmail.com. If you prefer to write, contact Frank at 4769 Silverwood Drive, Batavia, OH 45103.

MMR GROUP

All Master Model Railroaders (MMR) are invited to work with other MMRs by contacting C.J. Riley, MMR, at cj Riley42@yahoo.com.

MMRs: Master Model Railroader shirts and extra patches are available by contacting HQ in Soddy Daily, TN

FROM NATIONAL HQ

2015 Awards and Honors

Pioneer Award

Each year, the National Model Railroad Association presents one or more Pioneer of Model Railroading Awards to individuals who established “an impeccable record of integrity and respect as well as a history of service to the model railroad industry.” Awardees must have played a prominent role in promoting our hobby, developed a unique manufacturing process that significantly impacted the industry, or innovated in product marketing or development.

Times change, our hobby changes, those who help set scale model railroading on its course as the World’s Greatest Hobby make their mark and perhaps fade from memory. Our goal here is to ensure that we don’t forget those who made the hobby what it is today: a pastime that offers so much enjoyment to so many.

Avery “Swede” Norlen

For 2015, it is my honor as chair of the Pioneer Award committee, with fellow committee members Allen Pollock, Mike Brestel, and Dave Thornton, to cite the work of Avery “Swede” Norlen of Tomalco.

I have previously observed that the model railroad hobby could have survived quite nicely had we been restricted to two scales: TT (halfway between HO and N) and S (halfway between O and HO). That’s not how the storyline played out, but under the Tomalco banner, Swede Norlen certainly did more than his share to supply S and Sn3 modelers with key components, notably track. Tomalco was founded by Tom A. Lindholm in the 1940s. Swede became the sole owner of Tomalco around 1964.
Swede is generally considered the father of Sn3, which is an ideal scale for narrow-gauge modeling. He imported the first locomotives in conjunction with Pacific Fast Mail. Sn3 authority Peter Smith recalls that they were Rio Grande C-16s in both Sn3 and Sn42 (or Sn3½); the latter would run on HO track. Pete purchased the Tomalco line from Swede in the early 1990s; Bill Peter of PBL markets the Sn3 track. Swede produced a line of HO, S, and O scale narrow-gauge car kits and a line of brass investment castings for cars and locomotives plus the all-important S and Sn3 track.

The NMRA is delighted and honored to recognize the late Avery Norlen as a Pioneer of Model Railroading.

Eberhard and Wolfgang Richter

Our next honorees for 2015 are two brothers who have done more than anyone else to confuse the terminology we use for large-scale model railroading. At the same time, they resurrected a previously popular track gauge.

Model railroad gauges and scales were once numbered: auht or zero, one, two, and so on. A printed auht standing alone looks a bit odd, so it became O scale. A scale about half that size became HO. The next larger scale was No. 1, with a 45mm track gauge.

Eberhard and Wolfgang Richter of Lehmann Garten Bahn, or LGB, explored the O scale market, decided it was already saturated, and instead looked to No. 1 scale’s 45mm track. They used No. 1 scale’s 45mm track gauge but treated that as meter gauge, resulting in large-scale, narrow-gauge models of 1:22.5 proportion. What they called G gauge became very popular with garden railway enthusiasts, as the equipment was far too heavy for the squirrels and mosquitoes to carry off.

Then, they decided to produce some U.S. prototype narrow-gauge equipment, and this started a rash of confusing terminology that we haven’t resolved to this day. Our stuff doesn’t run on meter gauge but rather on slightly narrower 36-inch gauge. So, if we use 45mm track for three-foot gauge equipment, the proportion changes to 1:20.3. That’s properly called F scale.

Competitors picked up on that gauge/scale discrepancy, but LGB carried on with G gauge. Still other firms decided to join in the large-scale renaissance but with standard-gauge models running on 45mm track, which brings us back to No. 1 scale and gauge. But two major manufacturers decided the 1:32 models looked too small, so they bulked up their models to 1:29, yet retained the 45mm track gauge.

Despite this headache-inducing terminology and mathematical gobbledegook, we can’t deny that the Richter brothers started a revolution that continues to this day. The NMRA is therefore delighted and honored to recognize them as Pioneers of Model Railroading.

Bill Wischer

The last Pioneer Award for 2015 is especially meaningful to me personally. Back in 1961, I became one of the inmates at Purdue University and, stumbling along in the footsteps of track-planning guru John Armstrong, joined the Purdue Model Railroad Club. Over the years, I met a number of fellow inmates who became lifelong friends. Among them was Bill Wischer.

Bill’s parents were champion model airplane builders and fliers, but they also had an interest in railroading. They were friends with Bill Walthers, and I’m sure that influenced Bill Wischer’s choice of career at Wm. K. Walthers, Inc. Bill commented that Walthers hired him because no one else would.

In the 1960s, Bill worked in the warehouse, did purchasing, and then moved to manufacturing as what Phil Walthers dubbed a jack-of-all-trades. “When we started importing European products,” Phil noted, “Bill knew nothing about them. But in short order, he was traveling through Europe — by train, of course — and became an expert.

Almost all of us have been directly affected by Bill’s accomplishments at Walthers. He has an encyclopedic memory of details relating to all things railroading, both models and full-size. He understands how to lay out tools for the most efficient production.

His knowledge of the company’s tooling library has enabled him to figure out modifications that extend the life of the tools while creating new products that would otherwise not be possible. Bill was the key player in the integration of Ulrich, Silver Streak, Train Miniature, and Life-Like into Walthers’ portfolio. Bill started the Cornerstone line; the first kits were Magnuson cast models converted to plastic.

Bill retired to part-time in 2012, but he is still active and contributing, not only to Walthers but also to your and my enjoyment of our hobby.

The NMRA is honored to name Bill Wischer a Pioneer of Model Railroading.

Fellow of The NMRA

The Fellow of The NMRA Award may be granted to those individuals in the NMRA who have fostered the organization and the hobby and have increased an advanced social interaction and the social benefits of the hobby.

Gerry Hopkins

Gerry is a pillar of the Australasian Region and of the NMRA itself. For at least 30 years, he has worked tirelessly for the Hobby and more particularly for the NMRA.

Gerry is a very well-known modeler throughout Australia and New Zealand and is a devoted supporter in every way. He has attended countless model railroad exhibitions throughout Australia over the years and has exhibited his own narrow gauge and standard gauge portable layouts. He has an outgoing personality, and through his efforts has attracted many, many people to the hobby and the NMRA.

Over the years, Gerry has held many roles for the NMRA. He has served the AP Chair for Australasia Region and as Deputy Chair to Frank Koch, MMR for AR. He encourages members to participate in the Achievement Program, and he has probably managed the progression to Master Model Railroader of three-quarters of the 22 Master Model Railroaders in the AR.

Gerry has held many executive positions including newsletter editor and web master, Ordinary Member of the Board, AP Chair, and Divisional Super. He is always available to the members on any number of railway and hobby-related matters. His life really does revolve around the NMRA.

Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award may be awarded to those who have, directly or...
indirectly, member or non-member, given outstanding service to the hobby.

Keith Wills

Keith wrote the “Collector Consist” column in Railroad Model Craftsman. He is one of the few who chronicled the history of the hobby, and he has been doing it very well for more than 30 years. For his body of work as perhaps the most published historian of the hobby, the Honors Committee felt he fully deserves this DSA. The committee found an interview he did for the old “The Model Railway Show” podcast back in January 2012 (the episode was sponsored by the NMRA, by the way), detailing his fascination and love of the early trains after visiting the Train Collectors Association museum in Strasburg, Pennsylvania.

Honorary Life Member

Honorary Life Membership is the highest honor the NMRA can bestow upon one of its present or past members. It shall be given only in recognition of outstanding elective or voluntary service to the NMRA.

Al Boos

In the spring 2014, Al Boos stepped down as AP Chairman in the Lone Star Region after about 16 years of service. Al proved himself as an extremely valuable source of information for many members in the region. He always made time to answer all questions and provide needed guidance and encouragement to those working on certificates. Al always gave a 100 percent effort to support the NMRA in everything he did as Region AP Chairman. He was a mentor to many members working on their MMRs. Many of the members who earned certificates owe a debt of gratitude to Al for his assistance. Al continues to be active in the Lone Star Region and is a strong proponent of the Achievement Program.

Ken West

Ken has been the decoder tester since the inception of DCC. He worked with Brian Barnt, Stan Ames, and several manufacturers to design a testing program for decoders. He also wrote the computer program that does this testing. The only thing that got in his way was his health. He had a severe viral infection that confined him to his bed and unable to walk ten steps before being completely exhausted. This went on for several years. Now that he has regulated his medicines, Ken has resumed his duties as the decoder baseline tester.

The NMRA now accepts PayPal®

- Renewals
- Memberships
- Books
- Donations
- Online store
- EVERYTHING!

Railroad History Comes Alive!

Not since the WWII years has the nation seen such an unprecedented number and variety of cars on the rails - until now!

NMRA®’s Postwar Freight Car Fleet hardcover book captures the beauty and historical significance of this prolific RR era so popular with today’s modelers.

Railroading history comes alive with Postwar Freight Car Fleet. Get your limited-edition copy today, before it, too, becomes history.

BOOK HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- 350+ B&W archival photos of freight cars from 1898 - 1947
- Historical car design texts from the first half of the 20th century
- Tables and graphs depicting company and private car ownership
- Authored by RR historians Larry Kline and Ted Culotta

$49.95 NMRA® members
$64.95 Non-members

Shipping: 8% in the U. S., 12% to all other countries. 9.25% sales tax applies for TN residents. US funds only. V, MC, AMEX, DISC & PayPal accepted.

Order by:
Online Store: www.nmra.org • Mail: P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384 • Phone: (423) 892-2846 • Fax: (423) 899-4869
© National Model Railroad Association