

NMRA BULLETIN

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MICHAEL ROSS

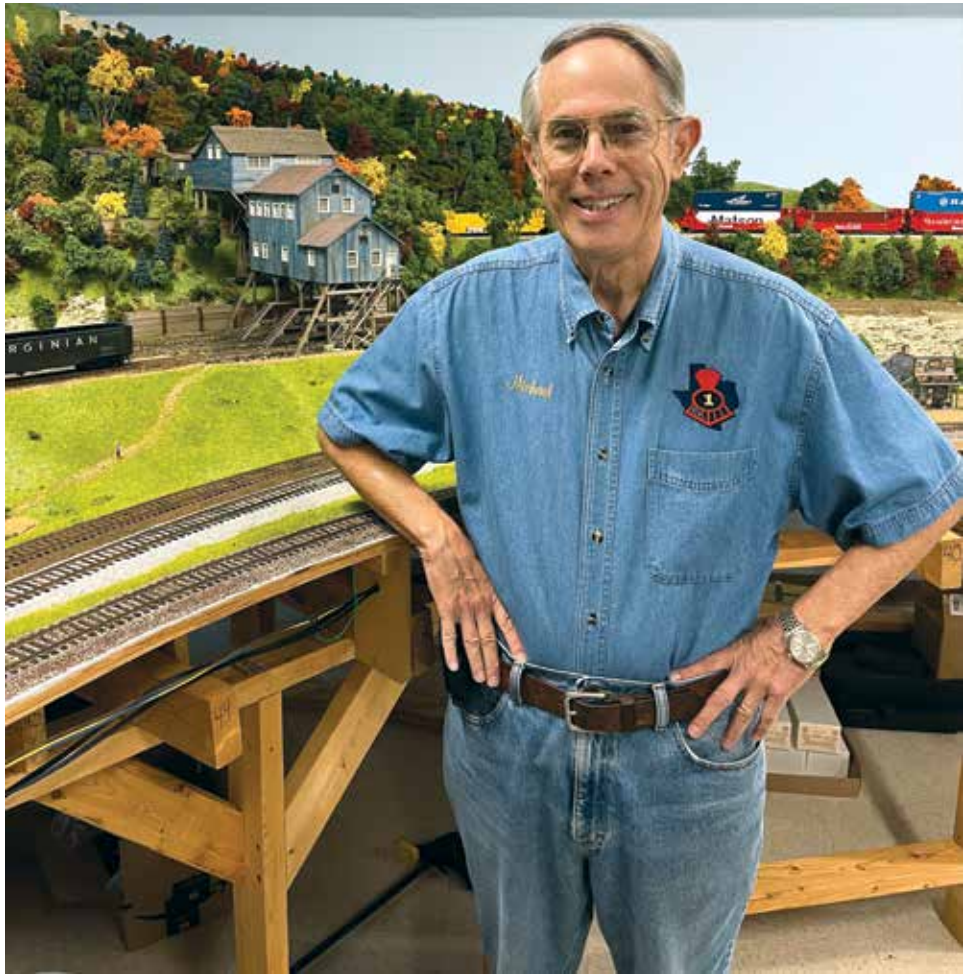
EARNS

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #694

I've chosen to begin this bio initially with notes of gratitude. Has anyone else been around the NMRA long enough to remember Bob Bast, the NMRA office manager — and only employee — in the 1950s and 1960s? To Bob goes my heartfelt first “thank you.” I learned about the NMRA in *Model Railroader*, saved my teenage lawn-cutting earnings, and joined in 1959. Bob lived in Canton, Ohio, just a few miles from my childhood home. He would pick me up and drive me to the local Division meetings. Bob taught me model railroading history during those car trips and mentored this young teenage modeler, gently explaining that my scratchbuilt pickle car did not score high in the model contest because it lacked underbody detail. Bob encouraged me to improve my modeling efforts. As a teenager I was, of course, unable to travel and attend the NMRA's 25th Anniversary convention (in California, if I recall correctly). Still, Bob carried with him to that meeting my scratchbuilt, four-truck, depressed-center flatcar with a utility boiler steam-pressure cylinder with a sign reading “more steam for the NMRA's future.” It ran at the convention in the 25th Anniversary train with cars from around the country.

In the basement of Bob and wife Dottie's modest home, all the NMRA membership records were kept on addressograph machine plates. Racks held all the small metal plates with names and addresses for printing mailing labels. Stacks of old *NMRA BULLETINS* filled parts of the basement. A 4x8 sheet of bare plywood had a loop of track on which Bob ran his only model railroad equipment — two HO trolleys.

A second “thank you” goes to the dynamic director of my local Division in Fort Worth, Texas, where I now reside some 60 years later. When MMR® Mike Mackey first visited my current layout, he emphatically exclaimed, “With all you've already done, why have you not started the process to qualify for MMR®? And I'm assigning you the job of Division membership chair to add to your volunteer hours! Now fill out the paperwork!”



Ye a a a yes sir! Mike puts out the effort and deserves an enormous “thank you” for getting myself and lots of others off our duffs, building models and, yes, completing the actually fairly simple paperwork.

Another sincere thank you goes to Duane Richardson, MMR®, the Lone Star Region Achievement Program chair. Duane tells everyone who will listen at every opportunity that the MMR® program will make you a better modeler. He's absolutely correct. Duane's gentle and thoughtful critiques, without question, improved my modeling. Modeling knot holes, taking the sheen off lettering with a faint overspray of the car or building color, the subtleties of weathering, or any of multiple other tips have truly made me a better modeler. From Bob Bast 60 years ago to so many past and current NMRA members whose modeling I've admired, copied, and learned from, and who so graciously welcomed my visits to their layouts, a sincere and genuine thank you to all.

And a special thank you goes to my dear, patient wife. My Beverly can't say

she didn't have some inkling of what she was getting into by marrying a model railroader. When we were courting, we lived in the smaller of the two bedrooms of my two-bedroom apartment. Stored model railroad stuff filled the larger “master” bedroom! My ever-understanding wife will concur women like marrying model railroaders because they can fix almost anything. She understands when I tell her that “the washing machine goes back together in the reverse order it came apart; I know it's been two weeks, but I'll get to it!”

If you've read this far and care to waste a bit more of your precious modeling time, I'll give you a brief overview of my model railroad career. As a very young child, I vaguely recall that there was a loop of track for standard gauge trains in my parents' attic (oh, how I wish we still had those trains!). My modeling began with a few OO gauge cars my father had built from kits during World War II. I made tracks of cardboard and pushed the cars back and forth. The turnouts I made

did not work so well. In high school, I built an 8x8-foot HO layout in our basement. A local historical society museum commissioned me to make a model of an area cement plant. That model was made in TT scale. The next 25 years were filled with reading model railroad magazines, dreaming, and occasional modeling while I attended college, medical school, internal medicine residency, Navy during and after Vietnam, specialty fellowship training in oncology, and starting and building an oncology group practice in North Texas.

With kids old enough not to necessitate (or want) constant attention, I put a secondhand desk in my home office to serve as a workbench and resumed building models. I retained an interest in OO (and still serve as the NMRA OO Special Interest Group representative). I started building On3 models because the track gauge is the identical 3/4-inch used for OO. I migrated to O standard gauge, and with kids gone, we built a smaller house (but with a bigger train room — that's the way it's supposed to work, right?!). An "empty" attic is now home to an O-gauge layout depicting the Virginian Railway, where long coal trains run through the colorful fall Appalachian countryside. Given the sometimes emotional stresses

of a career in cancer patient care, model railroading afforded a calming outlet and opportunity to work with my hands. Y'all are invited to visit the O-scale Virginian Railway at the 2023 NMRA National Convention in the Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, area.

My first "publication" was a model photograph in Bob Brown's *Finelines* magazine in 1971. In the early 1990s, I began doing product reviews for the now-extinct, *O Scale News*, eventually completing about 50 reviews. My articles have also appeared in *O Scale Trains*, *Model Railroader*, *Cowcatcher Magazine*, and the online *O Scale Resource Magazine*. I submitted my first certificate application (author) in 2014. Over the following eight years, with the encouragement of friends and fellow NMRA members, I gradually worked on and completed requirements for other categories. Far more significant than any plaque is the knowledge gained from correcting multiple modeling mistakes made along the way, learning new techniques (and improving old ones I thought I had already mastered), the confidence gained when I would first hesitate to start a new project requiring new skills and finally accomplishing the task, and becoming a better modeler in the end.

After finishing oncology training in 1981, we initially moved and settled for several years in the Rio Grande Valley area of South Texas. Looking in the NMRA directory (remember those?), I discovered Bob and Dottie retired and living close by in a small motor home. When Bob fell ill and passed away, Dottie trusted me with Bob's two HO trolleys. Dottie herself became ill shortly thereafter. Their daughter repaired and fired up the motor home and drove Dottie back to her home in California. In 2021, those two trolleys, and the ammo case in which Bob safely stored them, were donated to the NMRA archives.

Bob, if you're looking down from above, I hope you are proud of what became of that nerdish teenage model railroader you mentored so many years ago.

Certificates Earned
Michael Ross, MMR® #694

Master Builder – Scenery
Master Builder – Structures
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
Model Railroad Author
Association Volunteer
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Master Builder - Cars



ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT NOVEMBER 2021 GOLDEN SPIKE

Australasia Region

Pat Cagel, Queanbeyan, New South Wales, Australia

European Region

Bob Phelps, Champneis-el-Reilhac, France

Mid-Central Region

Bo Sis, Hebron, Kentucky

Mid-Eastern Region

Bob Halsey, Mooresville, North Carolina

Pacific Southwest Region

Kenneth Wolfe, Scottsdale, Arizona

Southeastern Region

Stefan Bartelski, Cumming, Georgia
Mark Bridgwater, Sandy Springs, Georgia
Ken Stinnette, Duluth, Georgia
Randall Watson, Suwanee, Georgia

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER

British Region

Mick Moignard, Aylesbury, Busks, UK

MASTER BUILDER - CARS

Lone Star Region

Michael Ross, Ft. Worth, Texas

Pacific Southwest Region

Bob Ginger, Phoenix, Arizona

MASTER BUILDER - STRUCTURES

Australasia Region

Craig Mackie, Parkinson, Queensland, Australia
David O'Hearn, Valentine, NSW, Australia

Pacific Coast Region

Howard Lloyd, Los Gatos, California

Sunshine Region

Beverly Farnham, Palm Bay, Florida

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

Mid-Central Region

Bo Sis, Hebron, Kentucky

Pacific Coast Region

Howard Lloyd, Los Gatos, California

Pacific Northwest Region

Bill Voogd, Spokane, Washington

Thousand Lakes Region

Kevin Dill, Fargo, North Dakota
Alan Ford, Asbury, Iowa
Thomas Gay, Fargo, North Dakota

MASTER BUILDER - PROTOTYPE MODELS

Sunshine Region

Kenneth Farnham, Palm Bay, Florida

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

Australasia Region

David O'Hearn, Valentine, NSW, Australia

Northeastern Region

James Fairbanks, Canandaigua, New York
Malcolm H. Houck, Maynard, Massachusetts

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

Northeastern Region

James Fairbanks, Canandaigua, New York

Pacific Northwest Region

Robert A. Deem, Spokane, Washington

CHIEF DISPATCHER

Pacific Northwest Region

Bob Parrish, Boise, Idaho

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

Mike Cummings

Secretary, National Model Railroad Association

In February, we will be holding our 2022 Board of Directors Elections.

The following positions are up for election:

AT-LARGE WORLD-WIDE DIRECTOR

ATLANTIC DISTRICT DIRECTOR

WESTERN DISTRICT DIRECTOR

All voting-eligible members worldwide will vote for the At-Large World-Wide Director.

Some voting-eligible members will also vote for the Director for their district.

Ballot packages are designed specifically for your district. Your ballot package will include candidate statements, the No Campaigning Policy, and the ballot. As we have for the last few years, the ballot will not be published in the magazine. Candidate statements are posted in the members-only section of the website.

All voting-eligible members worldwide with an email address on file will be invited to vote electroni-

cally through Electionbuddy, a secure online voting system. Your election invitation should arrive around February 1 and the election will close on March 1. All voting-eligible members worldwide who do not have an email address on file will receive a paper ballot via postal mail. Your ballot should arrive in late January. Completed paper ballots must be postmarked no later than March 1.

Questions about completing your ballot may be sent to the Secretary and the Elections Team at elections@nmra.org. Please take the time to vote and thank you for being a member of the NMRA.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Australasia Region

Duncan Cabassi, Sinnamon Park, Queensland, Australia

Northeastern Region

Jeff Hanke, Cheshire, Connecticut

Pacific Northwest Region

Bob Parrish, Boise, Idaho
Gary Thurow, Spokane Valley, Washington

Pacific Southwest Region

Richard Petrina, Scottsdale, Arizona

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Australasia Region

Ted Freeman, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia
Al Harris, Sandy Beach, New South Wales, Australia

Lone Star Region

James Knabb, Frisco, Texas

Mid-Eastern Region

Michael Dettinger, Exton, Pennsylvania
Scott Unger, Allentown, Pennsylvania

North Central Region

George Van Duyne, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Pacific Coast Region

Paul Deis, Paso Robles, California

Pacific Northwest Region

Greg Kujawa, Bozeman, Montana

Pacific Southwest Region

Joel Morse, Garden Grove, California
Richard Petrina, Scottsdale, Arizona

MODEL RAILROAD AUTHOR

Australasia Region

Ian Barnes, Batemens Bay, New South Wales, Australia
Duncan Cabassi, Sinnamon Park, Queensland, Australia
Malcolm Jenkins, Seven Hills, Queensland, Australia
Stephen Ottaway, Red Rock, New South Wales, Australia

Northeastern Region

Bruce Robinson, Sandown, New Hampshire

Pacific Coast Region

Paul Deis, Paso Robles, California

Pacific Northwest Region

Greg Kujawa, Bozeman, Montana

Pacific Southwest Region

Joel Morse, Garden Grove, California

Southeastern Region

Michael Cummings, Alpharetta, Georgia

Sunshine Region

Beverly Farnham, Palm Bay, Florida

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER®

MMR® #693 Mick Moignard, Aylesbury, Bucks, United Kingdom
MMR® #694 Michael Ross, Ft. Worth, Texas
MMR® #695 Bob Ginger, Phoenix, Arizona



DISPATCH

2021 #09

December 7, 2021

NMRA Digital Publications Update

You spoke and we listened. Following the end of our digital publications research, the NMRA Board of Directors voted unanimously on Sunday, December 5, 2021, to move forward with a digital version of the NMRA Magazine. This decision was based on research, feedback from almost 3700 members, and discussions with each Region's leadership, the CFO, and the heads of our IT, Publishing, and Marketing Departments. That research showed overwhelming support for a digital version of our magazine alongside the traditional print option. Therefore, the decision does not mean that the paper magazine is disappearing. Life Members will receive both print and digital versions of the NMRA Magazine, while all Full, Student and Rail Pass members will receive our digital NMRA Magazine with the option to subscribe to the print version.

The entire project team is grateful for your feedback. Below are some of the major points made by our members, which we incorporated into the project scope.

You told us that you:

- Didn't like the functionality or speed of our prototype magazine. We have therefore decided to move forward with another platform used by hundreds of digital publications with better functions, feel and speed.
- Wanted the ability to download and read offline. Our chosen platform will allow you to download and read offline, giving you the opportunity to take your NMRA library with you anywhere.
- Wanted to be able to choose how you viewed content. Our chosen platform offers options including adaptive text that will allow you to read each article like a book and a portrait layout which is much better for reading on mobile devices.
- Wanted to be able to search text and index articles. Our chosen platform will offer this feature.

The NMRA is now moving into the implementation phase of this project.

We will continue to communicate and share more details with you in the coming months as we move forward with this project. If you have UI or graphic design skills you would like to offer your support to the NMRA digital publications project, please get in touch.

Gordy Robinson, MMR

President