

NMRA BULLETIN

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**Have you changed your address or
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Region Secretaries: send all
changes in Region officer infor-
mation to the NMRA Secretary:
secy@nmra.org

2025 NMRA National Convention Dates and National Train Show Reservations:
July 14-19, 2025 – Novi, Michigan <https://nmra2025.com/>
Train Show Booth Reservations—Jenny Hendricks Registrar • P.O. Box 1328, Soddy Daisy, TN 37384-1328
423-892-2846 • ntsreg@nmra.org
• 2026 Chattanooga, Tennessee • 2027 Tacoma, Washington

rev 5/27/25

FROM HEADQUARTERS

NOTICE OF 2026 ELECTIONS

Mike Cummings
NMRA Secretary



The following NMRA Board of Directors positions are open for election in 2026:

Central District Director
Canadian Director
NMRA Canada President
NMRA Canada Vice President
Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Director

Please check Section E of the **Corporate Policies & Procedures Manual** located at <https://www.nmra.org> for the extent of the districts affected. Candidate Statements are limited to 400 words.

Thinking of Running for an NMRA Director or Officer Position?

Click “Organization and Structure” from the NMRA Resources section in the blue “footer” on each page.

Click “Board of Directors” listed in the blue “box” on the right side of the page.

Click “Thinking about running for an NMRA office”

Central District Director

Submission of candidates’ names for consideration for the position of Central District Director shall be submitted to National Nominating Committee Chair Jordan Kramer at nominations@nmra.org no later than October 1, 2025.

Canadian Director, NMRA Canada President, and NMRA Canada Vice President

Submission of candidates’ names for consideration for the positions of Canadian Director, NMRA Canada President, and NMRA Canada Vice President shall be submitted to can-nominations@nmra.org no later than October 1, 2025.

Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Director

Submissions of candidate statements for RAC Director shall be submitted to racnominations@nmra.org no later than September 1, 2025.

Candidates may wish to run for these positions by petition and not be subjected to the decisions of the appropriate nominating committees. Requirements for submitting by petition are contained in the CPPM. All submissions by petition shall be received by the NMRA Secretary at secy@nmra.org no later than December 1, 2025.

Members with questions about the election may contact the NMRA Secretary at secy@nmra.org.

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

NMRA AP CERTIFICATE REPORT

MAY 2025

GOLDEN SPIKE

Pacific Northwest Region

Colin Dover, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada

Aaron Lindstrom, Lynnwood, Washington

Pacific Southwest Region

Ron Hart, Peoria, Arizona

MASTER BUILDER - MOTIVE POWER

Australasian Region

David Whibley, Lismurdie, West Australia, Australia

MASTER BUILDER - CARS

Pacific Southwest Region

Carl Heimberger, Corona, California

Vittore S. Cavalli, Long Beach, California

MASTER BUILDER - SCENERY

Australasian Region

Maureen Kathage, Ebbw Vale, Queensland, Australia

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - CIVIL

Pacific Southwest Region

Jack Debolt, Tucson, Arizona

MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER - ELECTRICAL

Mid-Continent Region

John Averill, Indianola, Iowa

Mid-Eastern Region

James Fisher, Bel Air, Maryland

ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL

Midwest Region

Robert Perry, Avon, Indiana

David J. Mashino, Kokomo, Indiana

North Central Region

Michael A. Cipko, Traverse City, Michigan

ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER

Mid-Central Region

Keith Devault, Morgantown, West Virginia

Mid-Continent Region

Jason Wilson, Austin, Arkansas

Niagara Frontier Region

*Steven Cotton, Lockport, New York

North Central Region

Dan D. Shilt, Rochester Hill, Michigan

AP QUESTIONS: If you have questions about the AP program or requirements, start with your local or Region AP manager. If you still have questions, contact Ray Persing at achiev@nmra.org.

IAN BARNES

EARNs

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #791

I suspect that my journey to MMR is not too dissimilar to the 790 MMRs before me. It's the old story. My fascination with trains began with an early boyhood gift of a trainset. In my case, it was a Hornby Dublo 3-rail (OO), mostly cast metal and tinplate, and almost bulletproof. It was an excellent training ground for the "pull it apart and fix it/see how it works" instinct most of us had at that age.

A less-visited family friend in a nearby city had a small tabletop layout, fully scenicked with Hornby Dublo trains buzzing around the loops. I immediately felt a connection and surely vowed I would someday create the same.

Responding to my enthusiasm, our host took me to his neighbor's house where a number of American brass locomotives gleamed in their glass cages. I could hardly believe that someone could afford such marvelous toys. They appeared to be built in gold and silver! I was speechless.

Over the years, I dabbled and kept an interest. As a young exchange student on the USA East Coast in the late 1960s, I remember seeking out and finding a train hobby shop in New York. I tentatively descended the steps into the bright lights and showcases. Again, all those wonderful trains behind glass revived my interest.

I eventually became serious about the hobby through another interest, logging. As a freshly trained forester in northern New South Wales, Australia, I encountered the remains of logging tramways in the forests and became interested in the history. This led to the literature of the time and inevitably to the size, complexity, and sheer enormity of the Pacific Northwest. Roundhouse Climaxes and log buggies were soon clattering around my first "proper" layout.

A career move into aerial photography interpretation and mapping led to the next step. Between field trips, through the office window, was a level crossing of the New South Wales Government Railway north coast main line. I took an interest in the rolling stock that passed by, and that's when my principal interest in NSWGR modeling in HO-scale became serious.



Planets began to align. In the late 1980s, the modeling of Australian railways bloomed for 30 years, led by the one national magazine dedicated to the hobby, the *Australian Model Railway Magazine* (AMRM). AMRM became a reference work to those Australian modelers like me who lived in the "sticks," regional Australia.

Sourcing prototype information from AMRM, inspired by what others were reporting in its pages, and coupled with a growing supply of local kits from cottage industry suppliers, my construction skills began to improve rapidly. I got busy building layouts and kits of locomotives and rolling stock. The hobby had taken hold.

Like others, moving houses demanded layout rebuilds, each time better than the previous ones. Until recently, my Gradys Creek layout was an operational delight and was the focus of a local club, Eurobodalla Model Railway, which I helped form in 2001 and have mostly managed since then, writing and producing most of its monthly newsletters. The club circle provided interaction with other modelers, albeit at a very local level, and opened doors to the wider hobby community.

About 10 years ago, I retired, and the money-hungry chickens had finally left the

nest. Time and money shortages were no longer such a significant factor in modeling plans. Another (and what is hoped to be, final) house move meant the demolition of Gradys Creek (search for “model railway” and “chainsaw” on the web if you wish to be traumatized). This hiatus in the journey also meant a big conversion of the entire locomotive stable to DCC in readiness for the finale — the last layout.

A new house had to be designed and constructed. Intricate negotiations with those who have 51 percent of the vote blessed me with a green field opportunity in a 10x5 meter room. The East Coast Railway was born and construction began. I also joined the NMRA, and over the last few years, I have been fortunate to capitalize on the layout’s development by gaining some Achievement Program certificates along the way.

So that brings us to now. Of course, the layout isn’t finished but it’s enough to enjoy. You will find it in the NMRA’s Model Railroad Directory. Importantly, it was designed for operations. A monthly train-running session generates good camaraderie with fellow modelers. Twice a year, we make a weekend of it.

The final feather of NMRA achievement floated into view when I contemplated the Cars and Motive Power certificates. Using a styrene approach in building cars to O-scale gave me the confidence to build a small steamer in mostly brass to HO-scale. I surprised myself and, I suspect, my two NMRA AP Division managers, Ross Balderson and Stephe Jitts. Thank you for your support, gentlemen.

In retrospect, gaining an MMR kind of just happened. It resulted from personal challenge, not a contest. I’m thankful

it is peer-reviewed, and if my experience is any guide, the tyranny of distance can be overcome. Anyone can have a shot at it.

A final observation: although the AP got me to this point, it has also demonstrated where my modeling needs to go in the eternal search for excellence. An MMR also allows me to relate a story in the *NMRA MAGAZINE*. And I’ve just done that.

Certificates Earned Ian Barnes, MMR® #791

Chief Dispatcher
Model Railroad Author
Model Railroad Engineer – Electrical
Master Builder – Motive Power
Master Builder – Scenery
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil
Master Builder – Structures
Master Builder – Cars



PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

NMRA members can log in at www.nmra.org and click on the **Benefits** tab to view the **NMRA Partnership Program**. Please patronize all of our partners for some fantastic discounts as an NMRA member!

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CatzPaw Innovations

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East Coast Circuits

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Evan Designs

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Feight Studios

Fusion Scale Graphics

Gatorfoam

Golden Spike Hobbies

Great Decals!

Highways and Byways

Model Railroad Graphics

Hot Wire Foam Factory

Ipswich Hobbies

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MAC Rail, LLC.

Marker Tree Creations

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Forestry Museum**

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Model Train Catalogue

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Motrak Models

MrTrain.com

Mudd Creek Models

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Nick & Nora Designs

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NScaleWorks

Old Depot Gallery

Old West Scenery

**Precision Model Railroad
RailroadKits & Microlumina**

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Scale Railroad Models

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The N Scale Architect

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Tichy Train Group

Touch of the Brush

Model Weathering

Train Installations LLC

Train Show, Inc.

TrainTastic

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Trainz

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*[New partners in RED]

JIM KEHN

EARNs

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER® #793

There are photos of me as a two-year-old clutching a wooden train. Old home movies showed me holding an O-gauge covered wagon unit in front of my face, much to my parents' displeasure. On Christmas Eve 1957, I received a Lionel train set, from which I still have the steam locomotive No. 2037. I was five, going on six years old.

My first leap into HO scale in 1963 was a Revell Union Pacific train set. A move to Coshocton, Ohio, as a 12-year-old in January 1964 introduced me to two *real* railroads — the Nickel Plate Road and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

In my teen years, my interests changed to aviation, but about my junior year, a high school classmate invited me to see his father's home layout. The Rev. Robert Kleesattel operated the Beulah Land and Gehenna (Heaven and Hell) Railroad, and you had to climb three stories to his cramped and stuffy attic. Here, I saw my first *real* model railroad. I met several young men in my age bracket who liked trains, and I was introduced to "operations."

I can still remember Rev. Kleesattel calling out, "COMMUTER CAR!" and we had to clear the main line for the Athearn rubber band-driven RDC. I was hooked. One of the boys introduced me to railfanning prototype railroads, and we visited the Penn Central interlocking tower at Morgan Run outside town several times.

In the fall of 1970, I started at The Ohio State University in Columbus, and five quarters later, I was out of money. Back home, I worked at the local General Electric plant from 1972 to early 1973. Now, I had some money and a car, and the group of boys recruited by Rev. Kleesattel started a model railroad club called the Associated Model Railroad Engineers of Coshocton, or AMREC. Fifty-plus years later, it is still a very active club with a huge HO-scale layout in its own building on the Coshocton County fairgrounds.

With money in my pocket, I could buy more model trains and a decent



camera and shoot pictures of prototype railroads, which I did with several friends.

In July 1973, I decided I wanted a railroad career and was hired as a block operator on the Erie Lackawanna Railroad in Marion, Ohio. It was a short stint (two weeks), and I was let go. I did have a friend with Penn Central working at Morgan Run Tower who called me one day and asked if I was interested in an operator's job with the PC. I was hired in August 1973 and found that I was much better off working for the PC than EL. Sometimes, a bitter disappointment turns out to be a blessing in disguise.

By 1975, I had transferred to Columbus, Ohio, to work area towers and to learn train dispatching. In 1976, the PC became Conrail, and things were booming.

Also, in 1975, I joined NMRA because I wanted to become a better model railroader. My job only allowed me to be on the extra board, so I couldn't attend a lot of local functions, but I did meet a few of the members.

An extended furlough beginning in 1982 allowed me more time to participate in Division 6 activities, one of which was the massive Ohio State Fairgrounds exhibit that went from a temporary one to a building dedicated to a year-round display. I was still modeling in HO scale, but one of my furloughed operator friends

was an O-scale 2-railer, and he was building a portable layout to show the flag at our NMRA mall shows. He needed some help, and I met some other area O-scalers.

My friend's name was Paul Geiger, and he was an avid railfan and a great photographer. His photos have appeared in many books over the years. We took many railfan safaris together until I met this girl in 1977 — a dedicated nurse and seamstress who became my wife. Brenda (Susie) has been my biggest supporter.

Between 1984 and 1993, I was active in the Division 6 fairgrounds layout and other activities, including the 1992 DISCOVERAIL National Convention in Columbus. I served two terms as Division 6 superintendent between 1992 to 1996.

On November 1, 1995, I was hired out as a conductor on the Indiana & Ohio Railway in Lancaster, Ohio. For the next 17 years, I worked as a conductor and engineer and retired November 2, 2012. I retired on a Friday night and was in Cleveland a few hours later for an O-scale train show. What a way to start retirement! Best job I ever had!

Not long after retiring, the local Div. 6 superintendent, Richard Briggs, "vol-untold" me that I was on the committee for the 2016 Region convention in Columbus. My job was clinic chairman.

Also, after retiring, I was invited to join the local Tuesday night operating

group, where my real railroad experience was considered valuable, or maybe they just liked my stories.

O-scale 2-rail trains were my top interest, but I continued buying HO products I liked. Occasionally, I dabbled in O-gauge, since I admire older Lionel engineering. Other activities include helping build two award-winning On30 narrow gauge display layouts, starting an O-scale layout, writing a book for the Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Society, writing articles for several other historical societies (I belong to eight), being clinic chair for the 2023 PRRTHS National Convention, etc., etc. The best part of all this is the wonderful friendships I have made from all walks of life who love trains. I have been truly blessed.

My first experience with the Achievement Program was being awarded a Golden Spike for an HO modular display. The Volunteer certificate came after the DISCOVERAIL convention, and the Association Official after serving as superintendent. The first Master Model Railroader I got to really know was Marty Vaughn from Kansas, who

lived in Columbus for a few years. He was very active in the NMRA, and we had similar interests in modeling and history. Marty was always ready to help modelers and told me that part of being an MMR was agreeing to help others. I was impressed. It wasn't until 2017 that I decided to try for another certificate. With all the structures I had built, I chose that one to pursue. Dick Briggs was now the local AP chair, and he made the arrangements for judging. I was also asked to judge some of the work of Mike Wolf on his journey toward MMR. In 2023, I hung up all my certificates on a train room wall and added four hooks for the four I was short. Those bare hooks just ate at me. In 2024, I added three more certificates. Over the years, I had done most of the work required. Why not just finish the job? It wasn't that hard.

As Dick Briggs said, "If I can do it, anybody can do it," and he pushed me by arranging the judging and making me understand what was required. "Read the directions! *It's not that hard!*" Dick would preach.

For the last certificate, I chose Civil Engineering. The AP forces you to do things that are new and challenging. Step 1 in CE was to design a layout on paper. While I had started an L-shaped O-scale layout, I had NEVER drawn it out. Out came the rulers, compass, pens, colored pencils, erasers, White Out, and just plain imagineering. I probably would never have done this without it being required.

The goal of the AP is to make the modeler a better modeler. Just start with one certificate and hang an extra hook on the wall. You will be amazed at how much fun and challenging it can be. Best of all, there are some great friends who will help.

Certificates Earned
Jim Kehn, MMR® #793

Association Volunteer
Association Official
Master Builder – Structures
Master Builder – Cars
Chief Dispatcher
Model Railroad Author
Model Railroad Engineer – Civil

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And are you taking advantage of our other big benefits? Like 150+ national convention clinic videos. Or over 15 hours of "how-to" videos produced by the biggest names in model railroading videos. Or our directory of model railroad layouts all over the world that you can visit. The list goes on and on.

If you haven't visited www.nmra.org lately, you're missing out on some really great stuff. Starting with a boatload of discounts!



We make it more fun.