

# *Fall 2014 Baldwin Trophy Winner Richard Walz's South River Siding*



I first heard of Bill Hoffman from one of the dedicated guardians of Northeastern Region history, Ken May. Ken told me that back in our salad days - back when the world and the NER were young - Bill cranked out one magnificent passenger car after another. In doing so, he won the Baldwin Trophy a record five times.

I joined the NMRA in 1998, six years after Bill's last win. I never met him and I never got to see his models. But, as with the other Baldwin winners over the past forty-one years, Bill earned a permanent place in my heart.

After some stumbling, my own contest entries began doing well-and I suddenly found myself tied with Bill's five wins. Maybe that success awakened in me some of the human desire to move forward, to do something not done before, to push against the envelope. Or maybe it inspired that equally human desire for overarching self-aggrandizement. In any case, I was definitely pleased when my South River Siding diorama won a sixth Baldwin.

Apart from whatever they may have done to my previously unbesmirched personality, the contests have had a good effect on my model railroad. The prospect of building a whole railroad might have scared the fertilizer out of me. But instead, the contests have directed my attention to one small, manageable part of my railroad at a time - the few square feet of a diorama. A few feet? That I can handle! For that small space, I can try to do my very best work. For that, I don't have to worry about any half-baked "good enough" rationales.

After the diorama's sojourn in the contest room, it bundles off to its permanent home on my Portsmouth and Androscoggin RR. There, an oasis complete in an incomplete world, it becomes a solid foundation, a touchstone pointing the way for the layout that will eventually grow around it. Anyway, that's the plan.

Wish me well!