

TT scale is modeler's focus

Richard Taylor earns MMR #237

Richard E. "Dick" Taylor, 49, lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with his wife Denise, and until recently, son David, who is now in college. Dick is a graduate of University of Michigan in both Education and Environmental Science. Dick has been a teacher and an Environmental Education Consultant, as well as founding a very successful science education supply house, Arbor Scientific.

As with many other model railroaders today, Dick's father, Roderick Taylor, "kick-started" him on the path to this award. Since Christmas of 1948, at the age of 3, when he got his first Lionel train, Dick has been active in the hobby.

From Lionel tinsplate, he graduated to HO, then after college to N scale, where he became one of the pioneers in the scale, building one of the nation's largest N scale empires at the time, the Hempstead and Marysville Railroad, featured in the first edition of the Kalmbach N-Scale Primer by Russ Larson. In the late 1970's Dick became fascinated with the Copper Country of Michigan's Upper Peninsula and built an HO_{N3} model of the Quincy and Torch Lake RR. He is still active in this area of interest, and has been co-editing a newsletter with George Anderson for the Keweenaw Railway Historical Society.

Dick is the president and founder of RailTech, Inc., exclusive North American importer/manufacture of Scale Line™ track and turnouts, and Tillig TT, the world's largest maker of Table Top Trains. He is also in partnership with Tillig setting up U.S. manufacturing for ready to run and kit TT in North American prototype. He is active with MRJA and the NMRA TT SIG, and has begun a newsletter "The Table Topper" that will soon become the magazine TT Model Railroading for TT enthusiasts.

In an effort to remain close to the "heartbeat" of the hobby, Dick has continued active in the NMRA and his local club. In addition to being a board member and General Superintendent of the Ann Arbor Model Railroad Club, Dick is the Superintendent of Division 9 of the North Central Region, which is hosting a three-region invitational convention in Fall of 1996, Milepost 50, celebrating the 50th

anniversary of the NCR, and the Ann Arbor Club (Dick says teasingly his 50th year!). This will be a joint between the NCR, Mid-Central Region, and the Niagara Frontier Region. Dick said that he would like to put in a "commercial" on this convention for fans of the Ann Arbor Railroad. The 50th anniversary of the region is also the 150th anniversary of the "Annie", and a once-in-a-lifetime trip on the road from Ann Arbor to Toledo will be featured.

Dick states that he is concerned about the "graying" of this wonderful hobby, and as a result started Division 9 sponsorship of the "Great Pumpkin Train Show", during the Halloween weekend at a local mall last year. It's focus is to expose prospective modelers to the hobby, and in particular, give kids a chance to get hooked on trains. In an effort to get more boys involved with the hobby, Dick is also a Railroading Merit Badge counselor, as well as an Eagle Scout, and Scoutmaster of Troop 7 in Ann Arbor.

Dick states that without the support and encouragement of his wife, Denise, he would have not had the time to complete the requirements and documentation needed for MMR. He also said that it has always been his hope to get his MMR, but it would not be accomplished without the encouragement (if not prodding!) of Jim Kellow the NCR Achievement Chairman, and his long time friends in model railroading, the late James O. Williams, NCR Regional Trustee, and Dan McClary, Division 9 Achievement Chairman Dick states that he looks forward to continuing to be active in the NMRA and in promoting the hobby through the type of activities he has catalyzed in Division 9. He has hopes to see more people, young and old, introduced to the fun and satisfaction of model railroading. •

