

Hobby got its start in Venezuela

Glenn E. Owens earns MMR 227

It is quite standard for model railroaders to have their interest based on having received a Lionel train set as a child. Glenn was no different, except that he never treated the train set as anything but an active toy.

By the time he was about 14, he had lost all interest in it and fallen completely into the aviation fold. As part of his Boy Scout merit

badge program, he even spent a number of days measuring the then very simple East Boston, Mass. airport — now the massive Logan Airport — and built a model of it. He and his friends built many successful flying model aircraft and did quite well in winning contests.

Near the beginning of World War II, he enlisted in the Navy and then spent the next four years as a Navy aviation machinist's mate,

spending over two years of that time in the South Pacific campaigns.

During his last year, in California, he designed an electric cooling system (cowl flap control) to replace the poor-performing hydraulic systems then in use. It was quite successful and won him several Navy commendations.

Shortly after the war he married his wife Betty. His aviation interest continued, as it does to this day. His career in mechanical design engineering expanded and he eventually went into extended field design projects that found him and his growing family living in Connecticut, New Jersey, Washington state, California and Venezuela.

While living in Caracas, Venezuela, he discovered an American model railroad store. To his surprise, he was immediately hooked. He was enthralled with PennLine locomotives and Roundhouse cars and couplers.

He built an HO scale 6-1/2' x 9' layout in a spare room, using Atlas fiber tie-strip track. By the time brass locomotives came on the scene, he was deeply into advanced craftsman kits, scratchbuilding and super-scale track.

He had his family's final and permanent home built in 1959, where he and his wife still happily live today. By 1975, he had designed his final basement-size permanent layout and started construction.

Today, the HO-scale layout is quite complete, with all basic scenery finished and about 40 percent of detailed scenery done.

He has been very active in the Hub Division, NER and NMRA since 1972 — as a member of the BOD, office manager, clerk and editor (all Hub Division) and co-chairman of a number of Hub and NER conventions.

He was a member of the executive committee of the 1986 NMRA National Convention in Boston. He has for years been a life member of Hub, NER and NMRA.

His wife has long been a life member of Hub and NMRA, and a regular member of the NER and has performed much work for all three.

Glenn's certificates are: Master Builder — Motive Power, Master Builder — Cars, Master Builder — Structures, Master Builder — Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer — Civil, Model Railroad Engineer — Electrical, and Association Volunteer. •

