

"Training" started with Galloping Goose

John Sigurdson earns MMR #236

I joined the NMRA about three years after taking up model railroading in 1978. Most of the modelers I've read about seemed to have started with their Lionel set when young boys. My train experience started with waiting for the Galloping Goose, a big black steam engine, probably an 0-6-0, to come rumbling over the one and only small trestle over our local creek in my home town of Bottineau, North Dakota. We skipped late afternoon high school classes, bought some "Bismark" pastries and sat in the shade of the old trestle, kicking our feet in the creek and downing an ice cold Coke while waiting for the "Goose". Once in a while putting a penny or nickel on the tracks to make a necklace, but mostly hanging out with the boys and listening for the train

The "Goose" was a branch line of the Great Northern running from Rugby to Antler. Lawrence Welch country

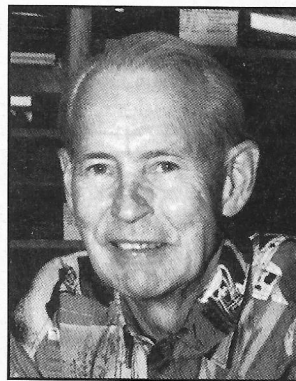
I graduated in Architectural Engineering from North Dakota State University at Fargo, then known as the "Cow College", in 1951, and promptly married my girlfriend, "Joanie", and took off for California and the Navy. During my three year tour of duty as Engineering Officer on the USS Hickman County, LST 825, I took part in the Korean Conflict

Following my discharge as a Lieutenant, I went to night school to

earn my Architectural Professional License to practice in California, New Mexico, Arizona and nationally

One day in San Marcos, California, I ventured into our local hobby shop and decided to take up a hobby to combat the hectic business of construction and the rigors of a practicing Architect, and purchased a radio controlled airplane. In a couple of months I took it back and traded it for my first Bachmann N-Scale train set. The first engine was a 0-6-0, which I still have. This was in

1978, and I was fascinated with the unlimited color schemes available in rolling stock. After buying nearly everything made in N-Scale I met my good buddy Mel Vineyard who quickly brought the meeting to order and put me on the right track of selective road names and equipment. This led to the abandonment of the huge layout with 8 loops and 96 switches, and to a more realistic layout known as the Dakota & Northwestern Railroad, which was featured



in the December, 1986 MODEL RAILROADER. I also built an outdoor O- Scale pike, the Rockgarden & Sunshine Railroad, which was featured in the October, 1988 MODEL RAILROADING

During the layout building days of '78 to '82, I met Jim Fitzgerald and N-trak

Along with Jim Gordon, we built and revised over 30 modules for our club, the Gandydancers of North County. That club joined with the San Diego Society of N- Scalers in the Model Railroad Museum in Balboa Park. My contribution was serving as Super one year and the painting of the 3 ft X 100 ft backdrop. I am still active as the museum Architect in the ongoing development of the museum

I officially retired in January of 1995 and hope to be able to wrap up all the on- going projects and get into retirement soon. Joan and

I would like to do a little traveling around this great country of ours

Through NMRA and the conventions I have made many friends all over the country, and we plan on these great layouts as we travel. Joan and I have four great kids, who are spread out from San Diego to Denver. My wife and all the kids, although not in model railroading, are extremely supportive and that makes the difference

This past year I was Chairman of the PSR Regional Convention in San Diego, and this year I am the Contest Chairman of our division. Recently I redesigned, as we always do, my shop to accommodate a 50 ft O-Scale loop. To keep it challenging my helper and railroad designer Paul Ducharme and I built it with On3 dual gauge track. •