

Train museum detours marked vacations

Roy D. Tritt earns MMR 235

Family history relates that the first words I could speak were "Santa Fe." I remember the weekly trips to the passenger depot in San Diego to see the trains resplendent in their Warbonnet Red and silver. The only disadvantage of being born in 1949 and growing up in San Diego was the premature departure of steam from the local scene. It wasn't until I was over 30 years old that I actually saw steam in operation courtesy of the Southern Railway steam program.

Model railroading has been a part of my life since I received my first American Flyer train set at the age of seven. I became an HO modeler when I was 11 years old and began by building Athearn models, many of which I still have. I maintained an active interest in modeling through high school. My high school graduation present from my parents was a PFM NKP 2-8-4 which was acquired by my parents from the personal collection of Dr. George Horton who taught at the University of Georgia with my father.

My railroading was limited to magazine and book reading while I was in college and law school at the University of Georgia.

I re-entered the hobby in 1974 in Augusta, Ga., with a home layout. Imagine my new wife's surprise to find out the intended use of our apartment's spare bedroom. Each subsequent housing move was dictated by the conflict between our growing family and my growing railroad collection. Our current home has space for two children, a layout, a work room and a room to display my railroad collection.

I rejoined the NMRA in 1974 and became a life member in 1976. I became a member of both the Legal Counsel Committee and Estate Planning Committee of the NMRA. There was little organized division activity in Augusta until Joe Nichols, Jr. came to town in 1983

to attend medical school. Joe brought with him the knowledge of the NMRA and SER and an active division with emphasis on modeling was formed. About the same time Mark Stone (current AP Executive Vice-Chair) became active in Augusta as Division and later SER AP chair and modeling and improvement of modeling skills became topics of discussion in our 14-member division. My first intense involvement in Region affairs came when I served as the Chair of the convention committee for the 1986 SER convention in Augusta. I followed Mark into region administration filling out his unexpired term as director when his job caused him to relocate outside the division, thereafter serving another term as director. I am completing my second term as SER Treasurer.

In addition to the many people who have taught me the modeling techniques I now use and the many good friends that I have made, the ever-increasing tolerance of my wife, Linda, is not to be discounted. Some recognition should also be given to my children who, at an early age, discovered the peculiar routing of our vacations. The phrase, "Oh no Daddy, not another train museum!" is a family joke based on fact. Of course, it is appropriate to thank my parents for my first train, and my wife for tolerating and sometimes enjoying layout tours and for letting model railroading be such an important part of our lives. •

