



ANDREW J. CLERMONT EARNS MMR #508

I have been interested in the Rutland Railroad and modeling all my life. My dad passed along his interest in the Rutland to me, and he got me started in the hobby. Three generations of my family before me, including my dad, worked for the Rutland Railroad on section crews in upstate New York along the Canadian border. My Dad was also a model railroader and an NMRA member.

As a child, my dad and I, along with my younger brother, spent many days working on a layout modeling the Rutland's Ogdensburg and Lake Champlain Subdivision in the basement of our home in Plattsburgh, New York. This involved scratchbuilding structures unique to the railroad. Equipment was tough to find, but we managed to get a few Hobby Town of Boston RS-3s and USRA light Mikado's. We also spent many days railfanning along Delaware & Hudson in upstate New York — Rutland had gone out of business when I was very young, and D&H provided the only rail action in town.

I attended college at the State University of New York where I joined the Champlain Valley Model Railroad Club and then the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institutes Club in Troy, New York. It was at the RPI Club in 1986 that I participated in the founding of

the Rutland Railroad Historical Society, a group of people with similar interests. I made many friends at both clubs and in the Rutland Society. I still consider those members to be my best friends today.

I started "my" first layout when I bought a house with my wife in Troy in 1988 not far from the RPI club. Although I liked being a member of the club and learned valuable information on modeling and the prototype, I wanted to get back to modeling the Rutland. The arrival of children slowed my progress on this layout, and I never finished more than a quarter of what was planned. It wasn't until 2000 when I moved to Colonie, New York, a suburb of Albany, that I began making major progress. I moved the model railroad I had started in Troy and began building my dream layout. It was also about this time that I got involved in the NMRA.

I joined the National Model Railroad Association when a friend, Mike Evans, from the Champlain Valley Club invited me to go to the Northeastern Region convention in Stamford, Connecticut, in 2005. With his urging, I entered models in the contest and earned my first points toward my first Certificate. I have enjoyed every aspect of earning my MMR, especially the friends I have made. I have to thank Mike, Glenn Glasstetter, and Bob Hamm for leading me down the track to Master Model Railroader and my wife, Susan, for agreeing to grow old with a "want to be" Rutland employee!

Andy earned the following Certificates: Master Builder—Cars, Master Builder—Scenery, Master Builder—Prototype Models, Model Railroad Engineer—Civil, Model Railroad Engineer—Electrical, Chief Dispatcher, and Model Railroad Author.