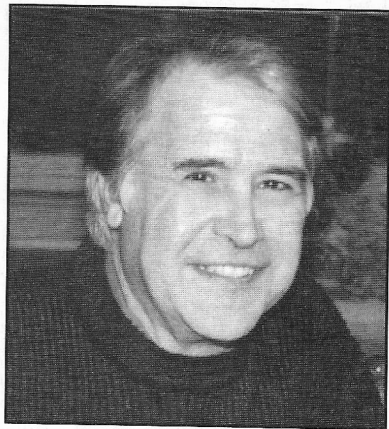


Idled present turned into hobby

SMITH EARNS MMR #185



Little did Santa Claus realize that Christmas morning in 1948, just exactly what he was starting when he left that Lionel train set under the tree. He delivered a life-long love of model railroads.

The train set was used for several months and then put away, supposedly until the following Christmas, but it never

really came back out again until high school.

Three things occurred simultaneously that turned Larry Smith from a train set user to a model railroader: a new friend, who was a model railroader; *Model Railroader* magazine; and HO scale. Larry had been building O scale models from *Model Railroader* to use with his Lionel train for two years, before changing to HO, so it was a natural transition to continue to do so in the smaller scale. The full transition took place when Larry met Frances

Adams and learned about operation of a model railroad using card order systems. It was Frances's influence that caused Larry to join the NMRA in 1963.

Over the next several years, Larry was in the U.S. Air Force, but that didn't deter him from being involved with model railroading. During that time he participated in clubs from Illinois to Japan. Larry and John Selkirk were instrumental in getting activity started in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, in 1962.

Returning from the service, Larry helped organize Division 9 of the Mid Central Region and became its first superintendent in 1966. Larry continued to participate in MCR activities, eventually becoming publicity chairman for the region. This activity earned him his first AP certificate, Volunteer, in 1973.

Moving south in 1978, Larry became active in the Southeastern Region and was eventually elected president and trustee in 1982. In 1983 Larry became the chairman for the 1988 national convention.

In 1988, Larry was elected Southern vice president. Since 1990, Larry has been a contributing editor for *Model Railroading*. His personal fulfillment came when he became chairman of the insurance committee that made it possible for members to insure their layouts through the NMRA. •