

by Tom Madden

MASTER MODEL RAILROADERS

MASTER MODEL RAILROADER #104 PALMER KLOSTER

Palmer Kloster has become the NMRA's 104th MMR. Palmer, 48, lives in Bradley, Ill., with his wife Janet, daughter Karen, and son Paul. With a degree in music education from Western Michigan University, Palmer has taught both vocal and band music at all grade levels for the past 22 years.

A Marx tinplate set for Christmas at age five first exposed Palmer to the hobby, but his introduction to scale model railroading was far from typical. A 1952 bout with polio left his right leg paralyzed, so Palmer persuaded his father to buy him a Mantua Shifter, some cars, and track. Palmer still has the Shifter and cars, and even some of the old steel track left from the 4' x 5' layout that resulted from those first purchases.

Palmer first joined the NMRA in the late '50's. He also joined the Kalamazoo Model Railroad Club while at Western Michigan, and in his ten years as a member served the club as secretary, vice president, and president. The responsibilities of marriage, family, and home caused Palmer to become much less ac-

tive in the hobby at this point, although he did start a layout.

Then, another misfortune. An accidental fall resulting in a broken left leg confined Palmer to a wheelchair for three months. He began serious scratchbuilding during this confinement and has been at it ever since, specializing in Victorian-style houses. He rejoined the NMRA after moving to Bradley and has remained very active. He has presented clinics, judged contests, served the Midwest Region as Director at Large for several years, edited the Division paper for over three years, and is Chief Clerk of the Calumet Division. His models have won several first prizes and a Best-of-Show at regional contests, and two third prizes at the national level. He won MODEL RAILROADER'S Model of the Month award in May 1982, and he has won photography awards at all levels. He's also the author of an NMRA tape/slide clinic on building a Victorian house. He holds achievement certificates for Motive Power, Cars, Structures, Civil and Electrical Engineering, Volunteer, and Author.

Palmer added a new dimension to his modeling when he put together a 2' x 4' portable trolley layout to display some of his models at a mall show in 1979.



Palmer Kloster

This "Victorian Street of the 1920's" display has proved so popular and given Palmer so much enjoyment, that it has been enlarged to three sections and measures 2' x 11½'.

Palmer feels we are losing members because our organization has gotten away from the principle of serving the needs of the membership. He has also noticed the national, regional and divisional organizations do not always work together for the good of the hobby, and could be more effective if tied closer together. Palmer has shown that a handicap can open up a new set of opportunities. With more members like Palmer, the NMRA would be assured of success.