

# C&O's Cabin Creek line is modeling focus

*Don Eastman earns MMR No. 224*

**I** am 54 years old, married 31 years to Anne who is a high school guidance counselor. I am the father of two sons, Paul and Michael.

I am a self-employed specialty cabinetmaker and also restore wood on antique automobiles.

Back in the early sixties, I devoted my spare time to building model cars and trucks. Some were actually made of wood, 1" to 1' scale. Eventually I decided that I needed another challenge and so I put my efforts into model railroading.

It seemed to have so many more possibilities for a model builder since model railroading involved laying out a track plan to suit my facilities. Along with this plan came opportunities such as construction of scenery, roads, bridges and buildings. The electrical side of it made it come alive. Model car building couldn't match this!

From 1967-1980 I had a HO layout. It was called "The Green Mountain Railroad" and was freelanced in the steam era. I had approximately 100 scratchbuilt and kit-built rail cars on the layout. The scenery was completed in a New England-to-the-sea style.

Eventually when I came to the point of feeling that I had run out of room and new things to do, I decided to disband the layout, and for a while I pursued some other interests.

But in 1988 I began construction of a O-scale layout based on the Chesapeake and Ohio's Cabin Creek Line. This branchline ran south from the C&O mainline, 16 miles into the coal fields of West Virginia. The last coal train ran in 1951. Today Interstate 77 runs up the "holler" on its way south from Charleston to Bluefield. I have duplicated this line with an around-the-wall layout. There is a turntable at each end for turning locomotives.

Since I am in the woodworking business, all of my stripwood is cut in my wood shop on a special wood cutting arrangement. Thousands of scale feet of basswood have been made to date. There are presently no kit-built structures on this layout.

I have hand laid 140 feet of track, complete with tie plates on each tie. There are several coal tipples worked into the mountainous terrain. All coal hopper and log cars are scratch-built. Power is a RS-3 and a three-truck Willamette Shay. •



**Don Eastman**