

Modeling began at an early age

John Wilkes earns MMR No. 206

John A. Wilkes, 43, is MMR No. 206. John lives in Winter Haven, Fla., with his wife of 16 years, Joyce, and four children, Mike, William, Johnny, and Renee. Other interests include motor-sports and offroad motorbikes.

John's interest in railroading began at an early age. His father was a traveling salesman and carried John and his sisters on many trips. Whenever possible the route taken on these trips followed the railroads.

John's grandfather was a physician, as well as a ticket agent for the L&N Railroad in Montgomery, Ala., during the great depression. He said the ticket agent job was needed to make ends meet because most of his patients paid with vegetables!

John's first train set as a youngster was a Marx HO set. He and his father built a 4' x 8' layout in the early sixties. He didn't get serious about railroad modeling until 1976 with the purchase of a home (and extra space). His present model railroad The L&N Railroad, Thornhill Division, is his fourth attempt. It occupies 75 percent of a 24' x 36' garage and represents the L&N's Kentucky and S.W.

Virginia coalfields.

John joined the NMRA and Sunshine Region in 1980. His pursuit of the MMR certificate began with his first entry in the model contest at the 1988 national convention in Birmingham, Ala. John attained the MMR Certificate in 1993. John has AP Certificates in Engineer — Civil, Engineer — Electrical, Scenery, Cars, Structures, Author, and Association Volunteer.

John also belongs to the Ridge Model Railroad Club in Winter Haven, and is a member of the workgroup at the Cypress Gardens Model Railroad, and the L&N Railroad Historical Society. •

