



**Bill Wilt**

## **MASTER MODEL RAILROADER #145 WILLAM A. WILT**

MMR 145 is Bill Wilt, 71, of Nyssa, Ore., of the PNR. Bill is retired after working for the Bell System for over 40 years. He and his wife, Betty, have been married 41 years and have a grown daughter. He joined the NMRA in the late 1930's.

The railroad bug first bit on Christmas 1923 when Bill received an Ives standard gauge electric locomotive and three cars and a loop of track. He added to the initial equipment through the '30's until it filled an entire room. In 1936 he sold everything and used the proceeds to finance the building of the O scale South Side Lines, an electric inter-urban railroad. The war brought a halt to railroading, and it wasn't until 1953 that the South Side Lines got a permanent home again. It is an 11' x 25' layout with over 260 feet of track and trolley wire. Since January 1955, over 5,000 hours and a great deal of money have gone into the fully scenicked layout. Roster of equipment includes 42 powered units and 225 cars of various types.

Bill enjoys scratchbuilding and kitbashing. There are several powered units that began as diesels and ended up as modified into electrics. Structures, too, have been kitbashed. There are many mini-scenes on the South Shore Lines that visitors enjoy. The "Official Train Register" has over 4,100 signatures from every continent except Australia.

Bill says that model railroading is a great hobby, but it is the people who they've met through the hobby that make it great.