



# *The Extra*

## Division Seven Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 4  
9 April 2016

## *From the Editor...*



Welcome to the April edition of The Extra for 2016.

We are now into the nice days of autumn where it is pleasant doing modelling and the glue and paints still dry quickly. This will soon change when the colder weather of winter hits us so now is the time to get into modelling.

Like all magazine editors, I am always desperate for new articles and items of interest. As you can see, this issue is a little light on detail so please send to me any articles, either your own or even good articles found in magazines that you think others would be interested in reading. I am always seeking contributions for *The Extra* so please pass contributions to me at meetings or email them to me at:

[dohearn@internode.on.net](mailto:dohearn@internode.on.net)

All contributions will be gratefully accepted.

-by David O'Hearn

## *April Meeting*

**April Meeting**—On Saturday 9th April 2016 commencing at 2:00 pm at Sam Mangion's place at 164 Buff Point Avenue, Buff Point NSW 2262. Sam has a great NSWGR-based HO scale layout called the Buff Point Branch. There is a video of Sam's layout on our NMRA web site at:

[http://www.nmra.org.au/Layout\\_Tours/Sam%20Mangion/indexB.html](http://www.nmra.org.au/Layout_Tours/Sam%20Mangion/indexB.html)

## *Next Few Meetings*

**May Meeting**—On Saturday 14th May 2016 at 2 pm at the Hills Model Railway Society, Building 8, Balcombe Heights community Building, Seven Hills Road, Baulkham Hills. Bring your own trains to run on their layouts. They have HO and N scale, Dc and DCC layouts.

**June Meeting**—On Saturday, 18th June at John Montgomery's place at 12 Lindwall Place, Shalvey commencing at 2:00 pm.

**July Meeting**—On Saturday 9th July 2016 at 2 pm at John Saxon's place at 186B Davistown Rd, Yatalunga 2251. Parking in John's driveway is limited so it is best to park on the waterfront and walk across the grass to John's place.

## *Other Notable Dates*

- Epping Model Railway Exhibition at Brickpit, Dartford Rd, Thornleigh on 11-13 June 2016
- NMRA AR Mini-Convention on Sunday 11th September 2016 at Berowra Community Centre. Register on our NMRA.org.au web site which links you to the [Trybooking.com](http://trybooking.com) site
- AMRA Exhibition at Liverpool on 1 to 3 October 2016

## *Division Seven Roles*

Superintendent	Les Fowler
Treasurer	Sam Mangion MMR
Hospitality Manager	Jack Parker
Editor	David O'Hearn
Presentation Manager	John Sterland
Moose Wrangler	Paul Marrant MMR

## *Division Seven Meeting*

### *April—Peter Jensen*

### *at Narara*

On Saturday, 12th March everyone met at Peter and Barbara Jensen's residence at Narara. It was a typically warm March day. Peter displayed his progress on his home layout featuring the Vermont region of the



**Les Fowler conducting the Div 7 Meeting**

USA. At 2:30pm, Les Fowler conducted the general business part of the Div 7 meeting. This was followed by the Australasian Region Annual General Meeting. A great afternoon tea was then had by all.

The contents of the AGM are published in full in the March edition of MainLine Magazine which is readily available on the [NMRA.org.au](http://NMRA.org.au) web site.

At the Div 7 meeting, Gerry Hopkins presented AP certificates to Lyndon Spence and Trevor James. Photos of these presentations are:



**Lyndon Spence receiving Model Railroad Author AP**



**Trevor James receiving the Chief Despatcher AP**



**Trevor James receiving the Association Volunteer AP**



**Trevor James receiving the Model Builder –Scenery AP**

David O'Hearn then presented 25 year membership plaques to Michael Flack and to Lyndon Spence.

## *Division Seven Meeting*

### *April—Peter Jensen at Narara (Continued)*



Michael Flack receiving his 25 year membership plaque



Lyndon Spence receiving his 25 year membership plaque



Some of the attendees enthralled by Les Fowler's talk

After calling for volunteers to host the May Div 7 Meeting and receiving the usual deathly silence, Les closed the meeting by advising that the Hills Model Railway Society will host the May meeting. The May meeting was originally going to be hosted by the late Donald Davis.

Our thanks go to Barbara and Peter for hosting the day and for the huge spread they put on for afternoon tea.

---



The National Model Railroad Association

Australasian Region

Presents the

32nd Annual Convention

"Modelling the Perway"

9am ~ 4pm 11th September 2016

Berowra Community Centre

1 The Gully rd, Berowra NSW

Clinics, Bring and Buy

<http://www.nmra.org.au/>

<http://www.nmra.org.au/Convention16/convention16.html>

## Use Vacuum Tubes to boost your DCC Signal

*The following article is copied from an article by Hal Miller in the April 2015 issue of Model Railroader.*

Digital Command Control has been one of the best things for model railroading since the invention of nickel silver rail. I've been using DCC for years and I'd be a fool not to with the level of control it provides my O scale layout. Last April, I expanded my layout and discovered my locomotives weren't responding instantly to the commands sent from the hand-held throttles. The simplest thing to do would have been to add a DCC booster to serve the added layout section. However, I came up with a different plan. What the DCC command station needed was more "volume" for the signal, in a manner of speaking. Another one of my hobbies is restoring vacuum tube radios and building guitar amplifiers, so into my head popped a decidedly analog solution to a digital problem: I'd amplify the signal using vacuum tubes. Not only would I be able to vary the DCC signal's intensity and make it stronger, but I'd also be able to "smooth" it with what amounted to a "tone" knob. Thanks to the Internet, schematics for many old radios and amplifiers are readily available from a variety of sources. I found one for the old RCA Victor Co. chassis I had on hand and started modifying it for my purpose.

My first plan called for one power tube. Doing the math, I thought it would be sufficient, putting out



about 5 watts of boost. Then I thought, "What if I expand my layout again?" I wadded up that plan and revised the schematic to use two power tubes, which would give between 12 and 15 watts of punch. With that much power, the locomotives at the far reaches of my layout would never miss a command, plus I could control other items like turnouts if I wanted. Over the span of a few nights, and with considerable soldering, I put my booster together. I really wanted it to have a vintage feel, so I used seven vacuum tubes where I probably could have used four. As these tubes give off light and warmth in operation, I figured more is better, as this device will also serve as a guitar amplifier and possibly a space heater. It gets chilly in the basement during a Wisconsin winter. Connecting the booster amp to the DCC system was easy. I just stripped the ends of a piece of two-conductor lamp cord and attached a phone jack to one end. I attached the bare ends to the output terminals of my DCC command station. Then I connected a pair of wires from screw terminals on the rear of the booster amp to the rails. I initially tried this with three connected pieces of sectional track. Of course, I couldn't resist turning

the boost all the way up. I'm glad I tried it without the locomotive, because when I turned it off the sections were welded together, and the alligator clips had become part of the rails. Oops! A little too much boost. After using a rotary tool to remove the remains of the melted alligator clips from the rails, I tweaked the design, and tried the booster amplifier with a locomotive. I found when I kept the boost low, the engine ran smoothly, but when I turned it up toward the limit, it tended to shake and chatter a bit, as if the signal was distorted somehow. It even seemed to run faster, as if in overdrive. After a few tweaks, I connected the booster to my DCC system, then the system to the layout. I ran a locomotive as far away as possible, then sent some basic commands, such as turning the headlight on and off. The locomotive practically leapt at each command, and the blue sparks coming from the wheels looked really cool! The only issue I had was a hum, like you hear standing under a high-tension power line. I just turned the sound on my locomotives up and that pretty much hid it. My vacuum-tube booster amplifier worked so well that I'm now designing a wireless cab-control system using a tube transmitter. As long as I keep its output under 50 watts, I won't be getting a letter or visit from the Federal Communications Commission. You can download a schematic of my vacuum-tube booster amplifier at [www.mrmag.com/aprilfoolhaha](http://www.mrmag.com/aprilfoolhaha).

# Donald and Janette's Tour of the USA

## Sacramento

**Sacramento CA 28 /9/2014**

Railtown 1897 State Historic Park is also part of the California State Railroad Museum since 1992

This morning we are heading for Jamestown and then onto Monterey. This article is about the Railtown 1897 State Historic Park at Jamestown which is also a tourist railroad.

First of we went for a train trip, this was a 6 mile 45 minute roundtrip into the hillsides passing an old mine site as you leave the station you go past the water tower that was in the TV show " Petticoat Junction" we actually rode in the caboose cupola for the trip which gave a good view of not only the train but the country side..

The Sierra Railway connected with the ATSF &SP in Oakdale transporting Gold, minerals and lumber. The line was also used to supply freight and equipment for several dams being built in the area, as the freight traffic died off the line and steam equipment were used in the making of over 200 movies. In the 1970's a group bought the Jamestown site and all the equipment, and in 1982 the site and some trackage were sold to the state of California to form Railtown 1897 State Historic Park.

There is a guided tour of the site where you are shown all the equipment and locomotives. They are restoring the Sierra Railways No.30 in house also several passenger cars.

In one of the many sheds are artefacts from several movies that have been made using railroad equipment on this site. All the buildings are as they were in the 1800's which gives a good insight on how the buildings were constructed. Well worth the trip from Sacramento.



**Jamestown Station**



**View of Petticoat Junction water tower**



**Sierra Railway 1265 RS-4-TC**



**Sierra Railway 613 ALCO MRS-1**



**Sierra Railway No.3 Rogers 4-6-0**

# Sacramento Railtown

*(continued...)*



Sierra Railway No.2



Hetch Hetchy Railroad No. 19



(Previous column) Jamestown Roundhouse

### Locomotive History

Sierra Railway 1265 RS-4-TC, Built as USAX 1265

Sierra Railway 613 MRS-1, US Navy No. 65-000613, Built as Alco No. B2063

Sierra Railway No.3 Rogers 4-6-0, Built as Prescott & Arizona Central Railway No.2

Sierra Railway No.2 Lima 3 truck shay, Feather River Railway No.2. Built as Hutchinson Lumber Co. No.2

Hetch Hetchy No.19 Built in 1920 on ¾ ton white truck chassis

- story and photos by the late Donald Davis

*A little bit of humour for those with a death wish...*

