



NMRA Inc

Australasian Region – Division Seven (New South Wales)

Hands On Scenery for the Kids

On the weekend of September 29, 30 and October 1st (2012) The Australian Model Railway Association (**AMRA**) held their 50th Model Railway Exhibition. This year it was decided to have a "**hands on clinic**" for the younger members of the public so that they could build a small section of scenery and take it home with them.

There was a rotation of members on hand to run the clinics as well as man the information stand. The "**diorama**" was a piece of urethane foam cut to size and painted an "earth" colour. The construction was "scripted" so that all those instructing would follow the same methods and enabled the hand over of instructors in an 'easy'? step. The original intention was for 3 work stations with one "customer" each - as you can see in the photos things got a little busier as time progressed.

One of our members **Geoff Nott** was responsible for most of the preparation for the clinics which was major task in itself. His latest layout was part of our stand and is also shown in the photos.

The stand was hosted by Division Seven of the Australasian Region of the NMRA but was assisted by members from other divisions (Div 3, Div 8, & Div 9 - one member travelled over 1100 km to be there) and by members of the Regional Board - any excuse for them to play with trains.



Before the doors opened!

Lauris – my wife, Paul (round guy in yellow) regional board member and librarian, and Rowan – Region VP.

This is the basic display, on the far left is Geoff's layout. In the middle (with the green cloth) is the main work table with 3 "instructors" waiting for the doors to open. On the right is a table with NMRA publications, our promotional flyer, photos of layouts behind, two of our roll up banners. We also had some video running showing layouts from around the region, 3-5 minutes of each and it ran for 2 hours then looped.

Just for interest, left to right Monty (with beard) a major player in setting things up, Ken – Regional President,

The Clinic

The intent is to show kids (of all ages) how to make a simple diorama using basic material that they can take away with them. Our diorama shows a small section of Australian Bush that all kids are familiar with.

The board is made of urethane foam ½" thick and approximately 5.5" x 8.5" in size. The board is painted a dirty grey/brown in advance of the day. Boxes were made with 4 compartments in each – 2 of the boxes were required for each work station. In these compartments were all the materials needed to build the display and made it easy to work from.



The photo above is of a finished display sample and takes a child about 15 minutes to build complete with old shed and the tree. The trees have been made before the event and the kids get to choose their tree.



This is one of the two boxes at each station at contained the raw materials. Right to left

- Fine foam (burnt grass colour)
- Coarse foam (medium green)
- Loose rubble from any garden
- Small twigs and branches.

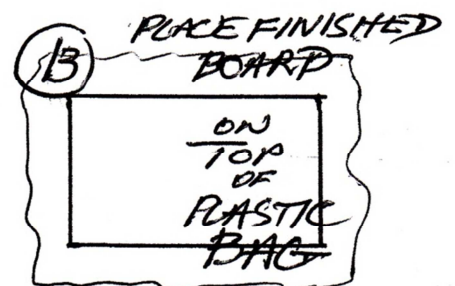
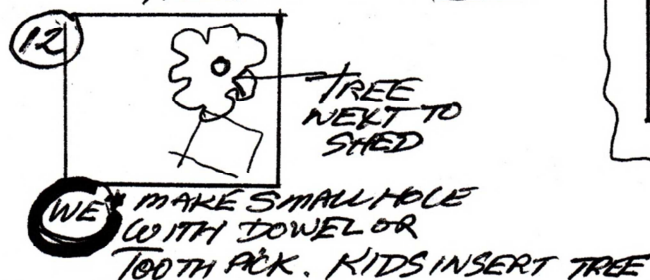
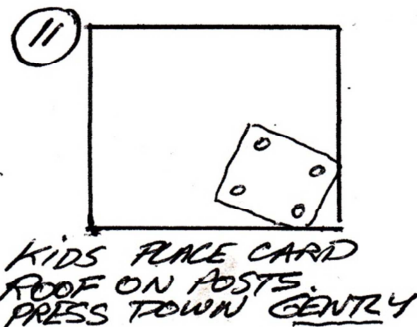
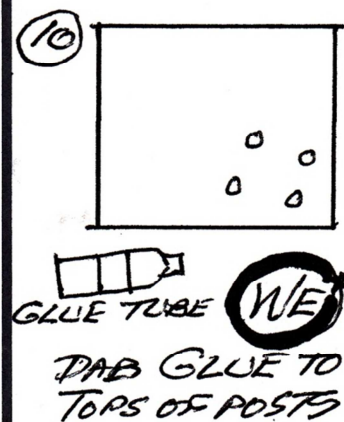
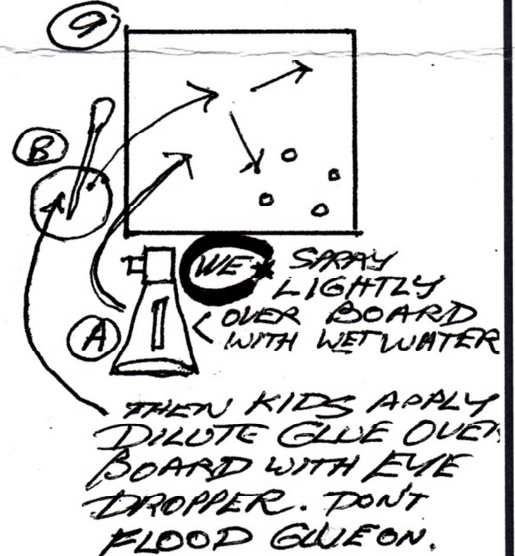
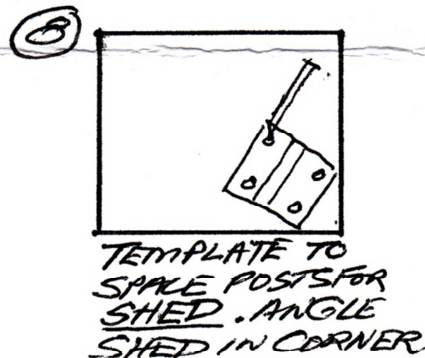
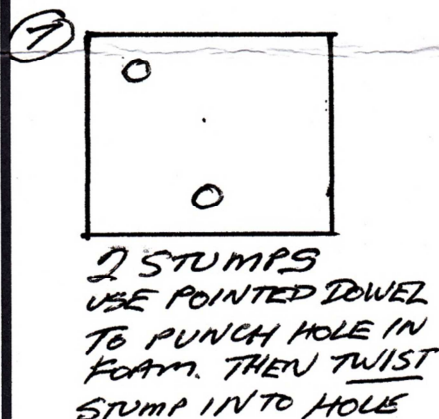
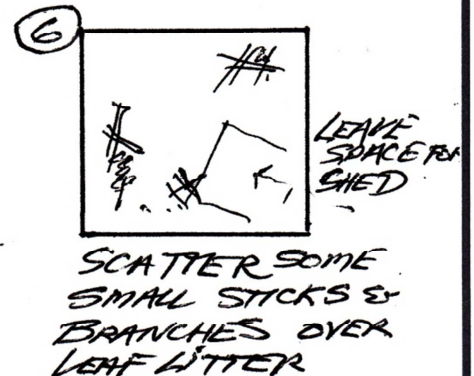
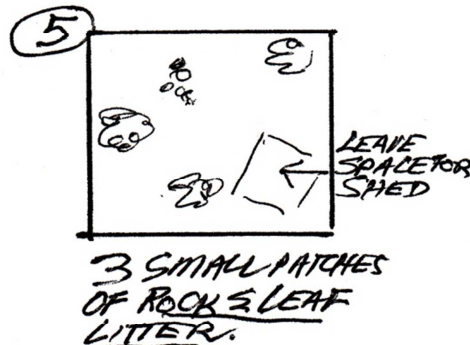
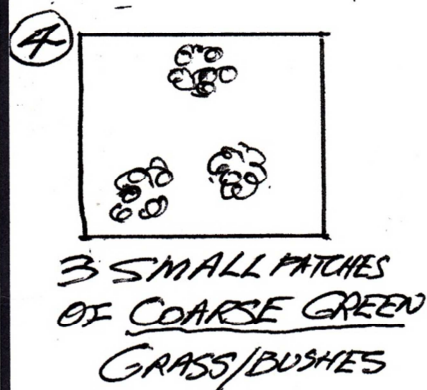
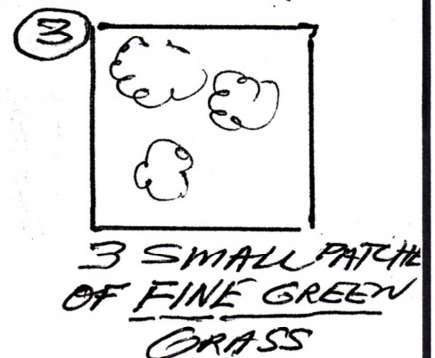
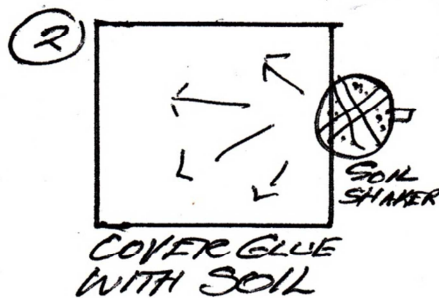
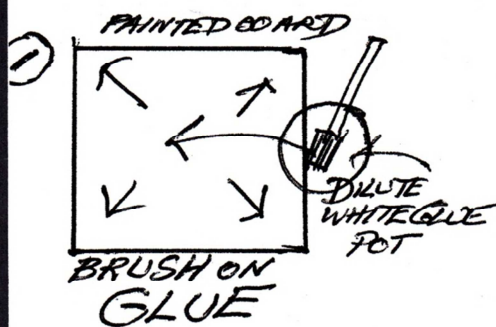
The second box in the lower right has the 'tree stumps', shed uprights, roofing material and the jig for the shed uprights.

Both foams were from Woodland Scenics but all the other loose materials are from any garden. The roofing material is a print of corrugated iron roof on thin card and cut to size for the roof. There were also some bits of card cut to represent single pieces of roof to go on the ground.

The next pages shows the "Cheat Sheet" used by all instructors so that they all did the same. The cheat sheet is explained on the following sheet.

KIDS CLINIC

ORDER OF APPLYING SCENERY MATERIALS



KIDS TAKE AWAY >>>

The Cheat Sheet Explained

1. Glue is painted onto the prepare foam board. *The glue is 50/50 diluted wood glue*
2. A “shaker” is used sprinkle soil onto the glue.
3. 3 small ‘pinches’ of fine foam are sprinkled onto the soil.
4. 3 small ‘pinches’ of coarse green grass/bushes.
5. 3 small pinches of rock & leaf litter.
6. Scatter some small sticks and branches over the leaf litter. Leave room for the shed.
7. The ‘kid’ marks where they want the 2 tree stumps, the instructor makes the holes with a sharpened dowel. The ‘kid’ then twists the tree stump into the hole.
8. Template used to place the uprights in the correct place. The ‘kid’ pushes the poles into the base. Cut from skewers and painted a ‘grey’ colour. Angle the shed in a corner.
9. Instructor lightly sprays ‘wet’ water over module. The ‘kid’ applies diluted glue over the board with plastic ‘eye dropper’ – enough to cover the added material but not flooded.
10. Instructor dabs glue to top of posts. *Adhesive such as “Liquid Nails” used here.*
11. ‘Kids’ place card roof on posts – press down gently.
12. Instructor makes small hole with dowel or tooth pick. ‘Kid’ inserts the tree – near the shed.
13. The finished module is placed on a plastic bag and the ‘kid’ can then take it away. After about 1 hour the module can be placed in the bag for further transport.



Things can get very busy at times but the results are worth it. We also gave each parent an “NMRA Flyer” with contact details and the URL for our Web Page. Statistics from the web site showed a big jump in hits for the 5 days following the exhibition.

The next Exhibition for Division Seven will be June 2013 but before then the clinic will be presented at a few of the monthly divisional meeting so that more members can become instructors – for use at future exhibitions. We have been invited to 3 such exhibitions in 2013. We ask for a “gold coin” donation for the modules but do not insist. All parents are very happy to donate (gold coin = \$1 or \$2 dollar coin).

The next clinic will be at our meeting on the 10th of November. At this time I intend to video tape the clinic and then put on Youtube. Any experienced modeller would know the steps in actually building the module but it does need at least 6 people to get the clinic up and running at any one time.

Gerry Hopkins MMR #177

Division Superintendent Division Seven