



# The Flimsy

The Newsletter of Division 2 of the NMRA AR

## OUR APRIL MEETING

Today's meeting was our first in Canberra's Far North since sometime way back in last year. Only ten humans and one dog fronted up today, raising the suspicion that the rest must have trekked yet again into the Deep South out of sheer force of habit.

The exuberantly friendly dog did his best to make up for the shortage of humans, being described by his owner as a "life support system for a stomach" (a Labrador!). Yes, he is a Large Dog. Excluded from the meeting (his NMRA dues are several years in arrears), the Large Dog stared at us reproachfully through the window, especially during afternoon tea.

The Long Distance Pilgrim Award for the day went to His Worship Rob Anderson, the Bold Bad Baron of Bemboka, though we suspected that he had actually come not from his Baronial Hall but from no further than his city residence at Chisholm. Rob's full title was debated at length, using several other words starting with "B". No prize for guessing them.

### Announcements

Leaflets for the Junee Railway Roundhouse Museum were handed around the meeting. See [www.roundhousemuseum.com.au](http://www.roundhousemuseum.com.au)

Our Fearless Leader drew attention to his Editorial in last month's Flimsy on the subject of the Div 2 sectional layout. After many successful displays over the years at Malkara and Kaleen, the layout now needed a fair bit of maintenance and improvement. But we've run into difficulties – a dwindling group of workers, not enough time, not enough storage space and no place available for complete assembly and operation. The few remaining workers have had other commitments since last December and have not met since then.

The big question is – where do we go from here? Suggestions discussed today included a schedule of meetings to be drawn up well in advance and for weekdays to be considered since all

concerned are retired (well, sort of). But the big problems remain. We do need more people involved and we desperately need adequate storage and layout space. Any thoughts?

*(Editor's Note: My problem as the Division Superintendent is that without that layout, we do not have a presence at any of the local exhibitions and this does nothing for us in attracting new members.)*

### Show & Tell

Jess Brisbane displayed a small module of natural

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Jess' heavy foliage with fireflies



Front: Jess; Back: Steve, Rob A, Ken, Rob N, Tony P; Bum: John B

scenery to go onto her Innsmouth On3 scale layout. Consisting of a small hilltop with dense tree coverage, it also featured fireflies glowing intermittently amongst the trees. This effect had been achieved with green LEDs mounted in the foliage, connected to a power supply and a chip to give apparently random flashes.

Jess finds it very convenient to model the landscape in easily handled small modules. They can be worked on more easily this way and then neatly dropped into the layout when complete.

Tony Payne showed us the chassis of a loco he is rebuilding. Made by Triang, this chassis has a 2-amp motor and needs a decoder capable of handling this current. John Bullen knows of an Uhlenbrock decoder with this capability, but he did not know its size or cost. It was suggested that the best approach would be to consult Tony's Train Exchange on <http://www.tonystrains.com/>. Tony (Payne, that is) has



Tony P's Triang loco looking for a very small DCC chip

checked the stall current and it would appear from a cursory look at Tony's Train Exchange catalogue that a number of N scale decoders would do the job. This is part of Tony's new layout utilising a lot of old British equipment that he's been hiding, sorry, storing, for some years. We look forward to seeing this in operation.

Rob Anderson displayed his latest purchase, a very nice NSW 82 Class diesel loco made by On Track Models. It comes in three livery variations and Rob has the FreightCorp version. The other two versions are Freight Rail and Pacific National. An interesting feature of this model is the ease of fitting a decoder. You simply lift a removable roof hatch and fit the decoder into place. The whole job took Rob about a minute. See <http://ontrackmodels.com.au/models/82>

Rob's now famous Eureka Models VR R Class loco



Rob A's new NSW 82 Class with easy install DCC

(bought in 2006!) has still not arrived. At the recent Kaleen show John Bullen spotted the Eureka Models trade stand advertising this R Class loco, so John innocently enquired as to the delivery date of a loco bought now. He was assured May 2013 or immediately afterwards so he emailed the good news to Rob, finishing with "There! Made your day, didn't I!". Highly unimpressed, Rob didn't seem to think so – based on having failed to receive an encouraging reply when enquiring on the same day as to the progress of his own R Class loco (fully paid in advance).

Wal Pywell showed us his recently acquired OO scale Melbourne W5 tramcar. It is an elegant model and in a handsome wooden box. Powered, it runs very smoothly and is equipped with internal lighting and bi-directional headlights. A much cheaper unpowered version is also



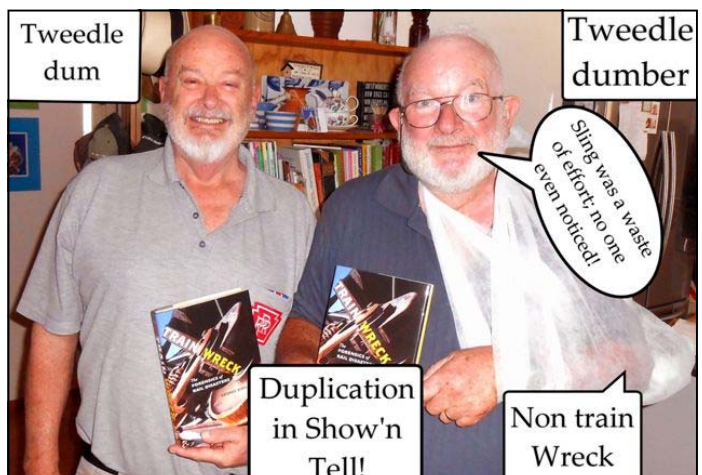
Wal P's OO 1:76 W5 tram intro'd 1935

available. The advertisement shows one of its trolley poles up for running, but Wal's model has them both down. Both poles are fixed in their low position on the roof and cannot be swung or raised. Maybe you're supposed to bend it up, but understandably no-one was prepared to risk a try. See <http://cooeeclassics.com/catalog/index.php> and click on "1:76 diecast & electric trams" in the Categories menu at top left.

Graeme Hodges the First passed his latest book around, namely "Train Wreck – The Forensics of Rail Disasters" by George Bibel, published by James Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2012. Our Noble Leader, an engineer in a former life, showed us his own copy of the same book.

George Bibel is Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of North Dakota and is also the author of a similar book on air crashes. Bibel's Train Wreck book is very different from L T C Rolt's well known text

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Tweedle dum

Tweedle dumber

Sling was a waste of effort: no one even noticed!

Duplication in Show'n Tell!

Non train Wreck

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“Red For Danger”, originally published in 1955 and since updated many times in successive editions (latest 2009). Rolt deals only in British railway accidents and analyses them in chronological sequence, illustrating how safe working developed.

Using a completely different approach, Bibel is more interested in CAUSES of accidents and his book is structured in text book style with chapters on runaway trains, bearing failures, metal fatigue, crash testing, collision dynamics and bad rails. He only looks at 17 accidents, using them as forensic investigation examples, while his focus remains on the main causes in full detail. This is a much more technical book than Rolt’s. For additional information on author and book, see <http://tinyurl.com/cw7b4b2> and for a thorough review, see <http://tinyurl.com/clsoapn>

Stephen O’Brien drew our attention to a good range of railway books currently in store at Book Lore Lyneham, the second hand bookshop at 94 Wattle St, Lyneham in the Lyneham shopping centre. For general information on Book Lore Lyneham, see <http://www.booklore.com.au>

Our Valiant Leader now formally presented today’s host with the official NMRA Thank You plate. Since the recipient was himself, he solemnly shook hands with himself and then handed the plate over from right hand to left. Somebody briefly started to clap – a nice gesture – but abruptly stopped when everyone looked round to see who it was.



### The Main Show

Using his large TV screen, Viv Brice now gave us a well prepared picture show on “Pigs, Stacks and Kangaroos”, using excellent photos to illustrate the historic development of railway movement of goods in wagons and containers.

Dealing first with wagons, Viv started with a Central of New Jersey farmers’ train in 1890, with farm wagons and other horse drawn vehicles loaded onto flat cars. From there we progressed to semitrailers (USA) and milk wagons (Britain) on flatcars in the 1930s and on to German army wagons in the 1940s. The inevitable

PRR photo gave us a view of a Horseshoe Curve Beer wagon from the Altoona Brewery and a PRR road trailer of the 1950s. Then we crossed the Atlantic to see Le Kangourou in France, this being piggyback haulage on depressed centre flat cars with their loads boldly displaying a large bounding kangaroo silhouette just to make sure the meaning of the word Kangourou was understood in Europe.

Then we changed subject from wagons to containers, beginning with people containers, ie horse drawn coaches hoisted into the air (presumably without anxious passengers inside) and lowered onto flat cars. Containers for goods began as small open boxes which soon became larger, being transported in the 1930s in gondolas and on flat cars. When the containers became larger still, only flat cars were used. In Britain we were shown photos of the LMS style and also an early GWR refrigerator container. Containers came into use for domestic house removals in the 1930s. With the Korean War came recognition in 1952 by the US Army of the need to containerise their stores, following excessive transshipment times and much pilferage. The result of this was the big steel Conex (‘container express’) container by USA, used until well after Vietnam and by the Australian Army also. These were ultimately superseded by the ISO containers of today, limited in size only by international agreement (influenced mainly by what will fit on a truck).

Altogether a fascinating pictorial trip through the history of moving freight by rail.

Afternoon tea followed, with the Large Dog against the window trying hard to make us feel guilty. He failed miserably with this hungry lot as we tucked in without conscience.

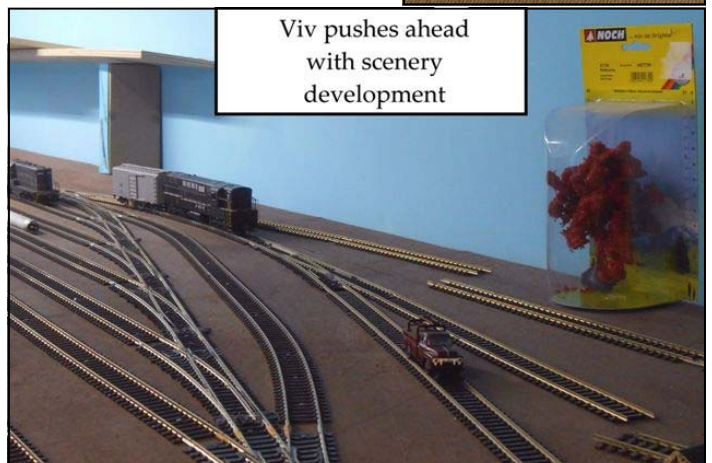
Finally, a trip was made to Viv’s train room to view the immense amount of non-progress there. While there, we gave Rob’s 82 class a good run—very smooth.



Still hanging around for food!



Viv pushes ahead with scenery development





Rob explains how things are done properly in Bemboka ... to an enthralled audience.



Wal  
Steam time  
Dreaming

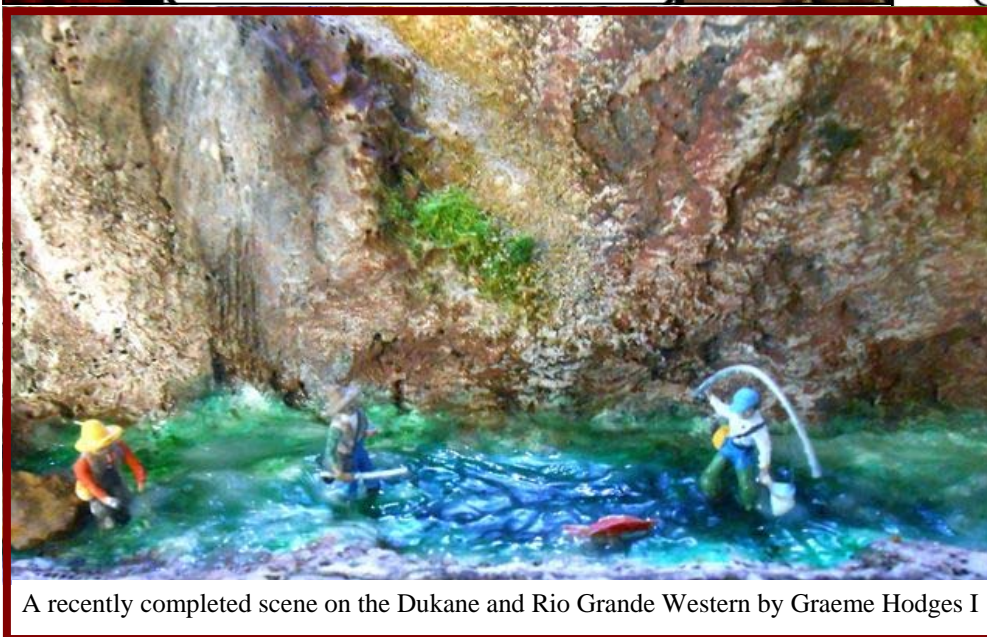


Locos making a test run

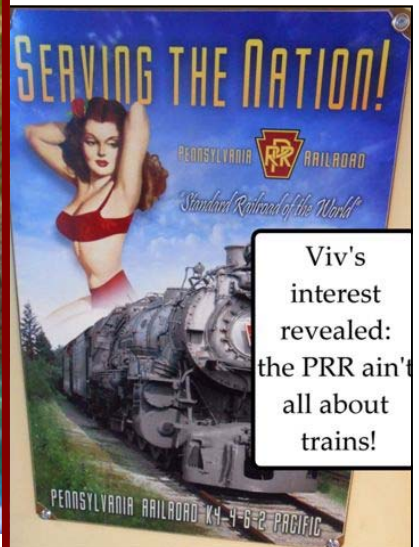


Rob N:  
I AM NOT  
a Cattle!

Rob A demonstrates his Cattle Calling



A recently completed scene on the Dukane and Rio Grande Western by Graeme Hodges I



Viv's interest revealed: the PRR ain't all about trains!

**From the Editor:**

*I don't know what I've done but the attendance at my meeting this year was as poor as it was last year. I must investigate further.*

*Guys, this is the NMRA and its primary benefit to all members is the camaraderie of model railroading. It doesn't matter what you model or when you model it, you don't even need to have a layout. Come along to a meeting and meet like minded people. We really are a happy bunch who are always able to give you help and advice, but you have to be there and you have to ask for it.*

*We still have members in this division who have never attended a meeting—come on, you really don't know what you're missing.*

Viv

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**National Model Railroaders  
Association Australasian Region—  
Division 2—ACT**

*Bringing model railroading to you*

**News**

- Next meeting will be at John Gillies place in Lyneham on Saturday, 11 May when he will talk about "Now, Then & Compromise" .
- The 2013 Convention here in the ACT will be held 21/22 September 2013. Called Canberra Rail 2013, it will be held in the University of Canberra High School (Kaleen Campus) (was the Kaleen High School).

**Disclaimer:** Any resemblance between characters in this newsletter and real model railroaders is purely intentional but no offence whatever is intended. Only the facts may have been altered to protect the guilty. Every reader has the right of reply and we look forward to publishing them!



Amtrak Cascades train 500 at Winlock WA on 14 October 2012

*(by John Gillies)*

