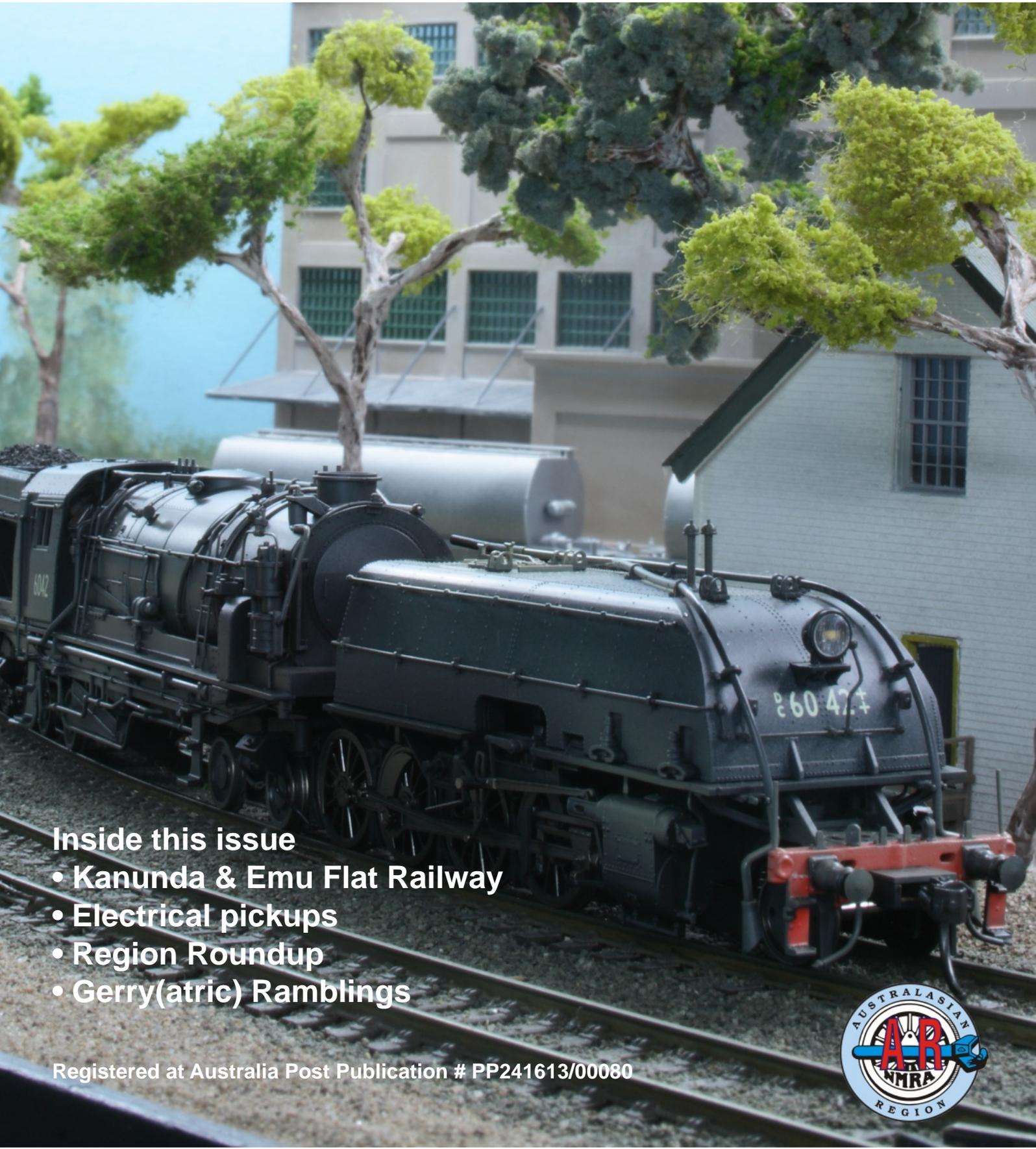


MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Inc - Australasian Region

Summer 2006
Volume 23 No. 4



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- Electrical pickups
- Region Roundup
- Gerry(atric) Ramblings

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Wishing All
 our Readers and Members,
 Merry Christmas
 and a
 Happy and Prosperous 2007
 From the
 National Model Railroad Association
 Australasian Region Committee



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Advertising: is limited to the back cover
of the new look Mainline Magazine. This
change has been made to allow easy
access as a retailer Directory for NMRA
Members, and reduce costs to retailers.,
following the lead of our parent
organization's magazine (ScaleRails).
Retailers who wish to be listed in Mainline
will be charged a nominal annual fee
covering four issues of Mainline with their
advertisement. For more information
contact the editor.

NMRA Inc.

Advancing the global model railroading
community through advocacy, standards,
education and social interaction

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Front cover - NSWGR AD60 Garratt by Eureka Models on Sam and
Rowan Mangions Buff Point Railway

Centre photo - NSWGR AD60 Garratt on Sam and Rowan Mangions
Buff Point Railway

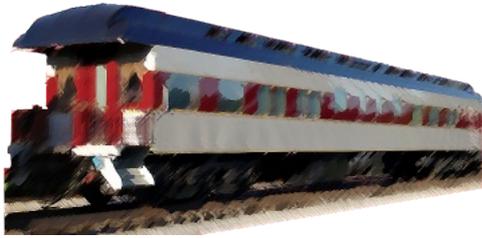
Photos by Joshua Loyd

Back Cover

Dan Pickards O Scale Machine Shop

Steve Cullens New Bellbird Wharf

Photos from Division 3 Victoria



From The Business Car

Presidents Report

I would like to wish all our members and their families the compliments of the season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

On a sadder note, Ian Hopkins, a very dear friend and one of our long serving members, passed away suddenly from a heart attack at work on the 31st of October. Long time NSW members will remember our wonderful Christmas party in the garden of the house he shared with Peter Bone at Thirlmere a few years ago. Our sympathies to Peter and all the members of Ian's family. It reminds me of our fragile hold on the world and how important is the friendship and fellowship that we share through our common interest in trains. Two of our members have been unwell recently:- John Baker and committee member Marcus Amman and both have spent time in Hospital. All the best for a complete recovery. It does seem to me that our hobby is not just about trains. It is much more about the people and friends we make on our journey through life. When people ask what do I get out of the hobby and especially being involved in the running of the NMRA, it is the friendships I have made, not the model trains I've seen. The trains are the added bonus. Let me know if you have members in your divisions that are unwell and I'll include them in my next article.

We have had a good response to our members survey on what you find important about membership to the NMRA and in the next issue of MainLine I hope to have the results tabulated and I'll pass on to you the findings. I trust you enjoyed our special catch up edition of MainLine and Motive Power. As I have not yet been inundated with abusive phone calls I'll take the silence as being an endorsement. We have a new Editor of MainLine, Kelly Loyd, and I take this opportunity of wishing him well in his new role. Also I'd like to thank our recently retired editor John Arrowsmith for his excellent work with the last two issues.

You may be aware that the Association provides, as a member service, Public Risk cover to our members who are holding a public exhibition and require the cover. At our last Committee meeting it was decided that we would like these members to assist in the promotion of the NMRA at these events. To that end we will in future be requesting that our logos and a small mission statement be attached to the layouts that are exhibited. These items will be in the hands of the Divisional superintendents at about the time this is published. These items will be supplied with your certificate of currency. We ask all members availing themselves of the insurance to display these on their layouts and where possible promote the NMRA. If you are going to exhibit your layout in your local area please contact your Divisional Superintendent who will arrange the details for you.

On a final note please take special care during the busy holiday season and my best wishes to you all.

Sowerby Smith

Pacific Directors Report

I have been in this role for nearly six months now. It is without doubt an interesting and exciting position. The NMRA Board of Directors has a broad mixture of skills and experience that provides insightful perceptions across most issues. The one thing they all have in common that certainly stands out is their dedication and commitment to the NMRA to ensure that it is an organisation that provides the benefits and environment for each member to enjoy this great hobby.

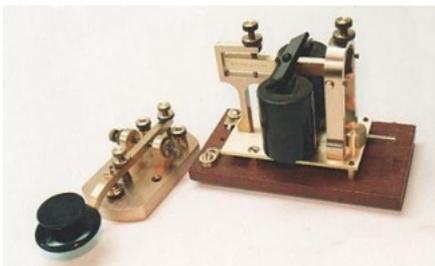
The actions and discussions are not just formal, twice a year meetings. We meet and discuss an amazing range of issues electronically on a daily basis.

I am sure most of you would have seen the new Scale Rails. From all areas it has been considered a great success after just three issues. The magazine is now equal to any in the hobby, and it will continue to grow and improve further. If you have not had the chance to read it, make sure you do, as you will be pleasantly surprised.

The NMRA standards would be one of the key contributions we make to the hobby. There are changes happening that will make it much easier for manufacturers to gain certification of their products and we should expect more vendors to embrace this important program.

In the 25 years of the Australasian Region's existence, it is interesting to note that I am just the third Director (previously Trustee) from our Region. One must pay tribute to my predecessors John Saxon and David North. The NMRA certainly knows and remembers both for their contribution and dedication to the organisation. They are hard acts to follow.

Peter Jensen



Off The Wire - Editorial

Welcome to the first MainLine from your new Editor. I am attempting to keep the style simple and clean. I would like to offer a good mix of Australian modeling and prototype content with some overseas - e.g. U.S. / British prototype modeling. The quality and quantity of Australian modeling is world class and as the Editor, I am lucky enough to see lots of photos of our local modelers' work.

I wish I could put every photo I receive into the magazine, but that would make it about the size and weight of the Walthers Catalog! We are receiving some good articles from a few members.

I would like to encourage members to share their modeling experiences or some prototype information. There is a wealth of information and knowledge in our member base. It would be great if we could preserve some part of that in print.

If you would like to submit an article, but aren't quite sure how to start, why not just put down a few sentences and send them in? I would be happy to offer advice and guidance. If it is about Railroads - Prototype or Model - we will probably accept it for publication!

If sending electronic material for publication, please send photos separately to Word documents. Microsoft Word loses photographic detail once images are embedded.

This issue has Ken House telling us about his Kanunda and Emu Flat Railway and Laurie Mclean is sharing some advice on brass locomotives with DCC and electrical pickup.

Next Issue - March 2007

Look out for the next issue of MainLine. We will have a decoder installation in an Atlas S2 from John Parker and a short story of David Latham's new Fanta Se layout. Plus all the usual Region news!

Kelly Loyd

The Kanunda and Emu Flat Railway

By Ken House

I began railway modelling in 1984 after twenty five years building and flying control line model aircraft. To learn more about both model railways and railways in general I joined the Adelaide Model Railway Society. The AMRS's club rooms were in the Mt Lofty railway station. As well as being able to learn from the club's large layout I was able to watch the Australian National and V-Line engines on the trains that passed through the station.

This kindled my interest in AN and V-Line as a prototype to model. Also I have chosen 1984 as an era to model as it allows me to run a great variety of liveries. As well as AN's green and yellow there was still a lot of engines in the SAR red and silver or mustard pot liveries and although V-Line had introduced it's grey and orange livery there were still many engines in the old VR blue and yellow on trains passing through the Mt Lofty station. The same thing applied to rolling stock as well. I felt that this would create an interesting mixture on a layout.

Concept



General View of the layout

The HO scale Kanunda and Emu Flat railway is a fictitious section of the main line somewhere between Adelaide and the Victorian border. The fiddle yard represents both ends of this section of line. The ends of the fiddle yard are named Cooper and Foster. Trains departing from Cooper are said to be coming from Adelaide or the metropolitan area while trains arriving at Foster are said to be heading off toward Mt Gambier or over the Victorian border. Wooldowie and Emu Flat are typical small S.A. country stations while Kanunda is a larger centre with several industries. Trains for the branches to Maranalgo and Myrtle Springs depart from Kanunda. The limestone quarry at Penstone also provides traffic by way of the daily stone train to the

ICI chemicals plant at Osborne via Cooper.

Construction

I started building the K&EF in early 2001. First I removed all the track scenery and roadbed from my old layout leaving only the L girder bench work in place. Since I now had about 75% of the track, turnouts and switch machines I would need for the new layout I decided to build the new layout in modules. There are six modules ranging in size from



840 shunts Maranalgo

the largest being 1300mm by 2400mm to the smallest 600mm by 700mm. Each module has a 16mm particleboard top with a framework made of 70mm by 19mm pine. Heavy but cheap. I glued three mm cork roadbed on to the particleboard with contact cement then laid the track on that making sure to use plenty of track pins. The track was laid to about 150mm from the end of each module. Feeder wires were soldered to each piece of track. Once the track was laid on each module it was turned over and the bus wires for the switch machines and command control were stretched over the length of the module. While the modules were upside down the switch machines were added. Also the track feeds were soldered to the control buses for the command control This method of construction saved me from bumping my head on the bench work and dropping hot solder on myself while soldering upside down under the layout.

Risers were put on the L girders in suitable places to support the modules. Then the modules were lifted on to the risers and butted and screwed together in some areas. While in those places where there was a grade between modules, roadbed of 16mm particleboard was used in the normal way on the L girder bench work. Short sections of track were used to join the track up over the joins. The bus wires were connected using screw connectors. The 3mm MDF fascia was then added. Sockets were put in the fascia for the command control cab bus and walk around handpieces. The controls for the

turnouts were also fitted to the fascia as close as possible to each turnout. No control panels are used as such. Early in 2002 this method of construction proved it's worth because I had the chance to retire from work after which my wife and I decided to move house. The new house we found had a large fully lined double garage, which had room for a slightly enlarged layout, work area and still have room for our car. This garage has proved to be a much better environment for the layout than the freezing in winter, boiling in summer galvanised shed at our old home. The modular construction made it easy to sectionalise the layout for moving as well as making it easy to add two 400mm sections to lengthen the layout. The extra space also allowed me to add the branch line terminus at Maranalgo.

Scenery

Scenery construction is plaster hard shell. Some



938 and 603 trundle through the truss bridge over Bindieye Creek with a loaded stone train

has been done using paper towels over chicken wire. In the latest area I have stretched calico over screwed up newspaper and painted it over with three soupy coats of plaster. I have found this to be less messy than soaking paper towels in plaster. All the plaster has been tinted with a mixture of brown and sandstone oxide colouring. It does not matter if the colouring is a little uneven because the unevenness does not show through the ground cover when it is applied. Also if the ground cover is a little sparse in places the light brown plaster is much less obvious than brilliant white plaster. For ground cover I have used sieved sawdust died with Dylon leaf green fabric die. As yet there are only a few trees on the layout. Some of them are commercial trees others are made with twisted copper wire and cushion wadding. Water in the creeks is two-part epoxy gloss medium.

Structures

Many of the structures on the layout are temporary. Some I have bought at swap meets as near enough for the time being. Others are English Superquick card structures and temporary card

structures that I have constructed myself. Others are the final structures made from plastic, card and resin kits as well as scratch-built models from balsa and card.

Control



Alco 840 shunting at Maranalgo

Originally the layout used Infocom command control. Because of Infocom's limitations with consisting and to save money on decoders I started double heading using dummy engines. In 2004, I purchased a Lenz compact DCC set and three LH30 hand pieces. At first I used both Infocom and Lenz on the layout by adding a fourth wire to the cab bus and plugging the cab bus in to either the Infocom master unit or the Lenz compact depending on which system I wanted to use. Now that all my engines have DCC decoders in them only the Lenz compact is used. I have now bought a LH90 as a fourth hand piece. To make more power available for the heavy work the layout is put to at times the compact uses a LV102 5amp amplifier. The layout has been divided into three electrical sections using an NCE EB3 circuit breaker so that a short in one section will not shut down the entire layout. I am still using the dummy engines but these may be gradually phased out as I can afford new engines. Various Lenz, TCS and NCE decoders are used in the engines.

Rolling stock



Alco 704 with the daily roadside goods arrives at Wooldowie
The diesel engines used on the layout come from

a variety of manufacturers. Austrains, AR Kits, Lima, Powerline, Train O Rama, and two Athearn SW1200s kit bashed to near enough 500-class diesels. The one steamer is a Mehano Pacific decaled as 609 which pulls a set of Bachman old time cars on steam excursions. Occasionally a Hornby Flying Scotsman makes an appearance with a rake of Powerline cars. Rolling stock is from BGB, Steam era, Lima, Powerline, Train O Rama, AR Kits and a few kit bashed American cars.

Operation



930 class engines 949 & 938 wait with the daily stone train while the Melbourne Jet crosses it at Wooldowie

The layout can be operated with a crew of one to nine people, with six being the optimum number. An eight to one fast clock is used. The usual crew consists of Controller, Hostler (in charge of the fiddle yard), two mainline crews, and a shunt crew at Kanunda. Two man crews can be used for each job except for the controller. Trains are dispatched using timetable and train orders. A computerised panel, made by Kelly Loyd, is used by train control to aid in dispatching trains over the railway. Cars are routed using car cards and waybills. During a two and a half hour operating session twenty or thirty regular trains are run as well as about four extras.



705 crossing Five Mile Creek with the up Mount Gambier goods

The double-ended fiddle yard allows the same consist to be used several times as different trains. We try to change the power on these recycled trains

to make them look different, but this is not always possible due to time constraints.

Conclusion

The Kanunda and Emu Flat Railway is still very much a work in progress. I expect that it will keep me busy and interested for many years to come. At present the basic scenery covers only about one third of the layout, this will need to be finished and detailed. Many structures are yet to be built. More rolling stock is needed and what is on the layout needs to be weathered and have some more detail added. Also sound and signals may be included at a later date. I do not plan to be completely faithful to the prototype or to super detail any item on the layout to the extent that I would be afraid to have people handle the models. However I hope that through the K&EF railway I can convey a general impression of what country South Australia and its railways were like in the early 1980s.

The most enjoyable part of the hobby for me has been being able to have friends over to share the layout during operating sessions. Finally I am not sorry that I have made the change to railway modelling from aero modelling.



RX reefer being set out at Athol Freezer's cold store at Kanunda by English Electric diesel shunter 503

Specifications

Scale	HO
Area	7.6m X 3m
Height from floor	1300mm – 1360mm
Track	Peco code 100
Mainline turnouts	Peco curved
	Peco medium radius
Yard and industry turnouts	Peco small radius
Point motors	Peco
Minimum radius curves	600mm for mainline
	500mm for industries
Maximum gradient	2%
Control	Lenz Compact DCC

Region Roundup

Division 1 - Queensland

By Ian Venables

September 2006

Visit to the Shasta Pacific of Ken Leitch



Ken Leitch enjoying watching this SP diesel set with passenger train on his Shasta Pacific.

About 23 modellers attended the July 10th meeting at Ken Leitch's model railroad, the Shasta Pacific at Beerwah. There was the usual "show and tell" which included Phil Perry's DCC equipped N scale Burlington Zephyr and Ross Evan's selection of US timetables.

Glenn Stevens urged us to consider Hundman's CTC Board magazine as a source of scenic details and colours. Bob Brown showed his On30 2-8-0.

Others showed trees from grape stalks and mentioned methods that make life easier for us modellers.

Bob Cuffe's Overland SP dormitory coach in two-toned grey with quite a story attached to it was shown. When Bob with two other Brisbanites visited the US in 1999 they wondered if they would get a chance to see this car and compare it to their own detailing and painting efforts. They were convinced that their painting was probably "not quite the right shades of grey". On being lucky enough to ride that very coach, they managed to meet the actual owner of that coach himself.

Naturally they asked him about the veracity of the colour. His reply floored them, "I just got paints mixed up to match the Floquil colours!"

After a session on the layout and a wonderful afternoon tea, Glenn announced that he would have to step down as the co-ordinator of the Display Layout SIG for 6 months due to work pressure. He

also urged us to look for an alternative place to work on the layout as Bob Brown must by now want his garage back! Bob suggested that if we organised ourselves we could probably almost finish the scenery on the layout in two full weekends and he would be amenable to that being done at his place.

Electrical

At our meeting at Ken Leitch's, someone showed mini PCA plugs and sockets that will fit the standard NMRA DCC concept. These are also excellent for loco to tender electrical coupling and have many other uses in model railroads as they are very small. This is not an advertisement but a service to members. These are available from Prime Electronics, 22 – 26 Campbell St., Bowen Hills, Brisbane.

Answers to Last Issues Quick Quiz

1. Texas then Illinois.
2. A temporary RR track used to detour traffic while the permanent railway is being repaired, reconstructed or is obstructed, preventing its use.
3. A stretch of 78.86 miles on the former Seaboard Air Line.
4. In some hilly regions wire fences are electrically connected to the signal system so that if the fence is pushed out of line or broken, the signals are set to permit the train to proceed at a restricted speed prepared to stop short of obstructions.
5. The 12 mile pile trestle forming part of the Lucin Cut-off which carried the former SP across the Great Salt Lake.
6. The 7.79 mile Cascade Tunnel of the former GN in Washington State.
7. The Frenchman, Nicholas Cugnot.
8. The NYC No.999 at 112.5mph in 1893 near Batavia, NY.
9. A 4500hp coal-burning steam turbine electric locomotive of the N & W placed in service in 1954.
10. 1945 on the Burlington.

Another Ten Questions for You

1. What railroad herald was a simple "S" in a circle?
2. In railway terms in the US, what is dunnage?
3. What does l.c.l. stand for?
4. Did American RR units operate any railways in Australia during WW II?
5. What is the highest altitude reached by any railroad in the US?
6. What is the lowest point reached by a RR in the US?

7. What RR used to have a "Minute Man" on its herald?
8. What was the nick-name of the Ontario and Western?
9. On what type of freight car would you see the reporting marks UTLX?
10. What does PCC stand for in relation to the famed streetcar?

Where's the Emphasis

There is no doubt that locomotives are attention getters. For my own part and I know for many others, if it's steam, it's even more so. When you try to research some RR subjects, it can be annoying to find all the photos available of a certain line are all locomotive photos. Over the years they have certainly caught the interests of photographers. The other elements of a model railroad rarely seem to get as much attention as the locomotives. So on models we see locos with very fine detail but set in scenes of lesser detail, pulling rolling stock of lesser detail and often operated with lesser authenticity. Why not improve these aspects a bit at a time? Look around your layout and think of where people would take a short-cut when walking to your stations or around the engine yard. Model the track they would leave by lightly spraying your short-cut a lighter shade of the base colour. Don't have rough texture here as it would be worn smooth with the passage of feet.

While you have that airbrush out, darken the pale colours on buildings around door knobs and where the doors are sometimes kicked in to open them.

Use paler shades on dark buildings. Use some "I" section brass to make a rail crane at your loading docks. Nothing flash, just a short piece coming out of the door with a clobbered up pulley made from a couple of bits of Evergreen styrene with a rope (linen thread) going through this pulley.

Another modeller might place a lot of emphasis on bridges, or natural scenery. I've seen some beauties with forced perspective by having buildings smaller as the get closer to the backdrop. A most effective ploy is used to emphasise the distance by spraying background scenery very lightly with a pale grey. This is particularly effective if the spray is increased slightly as the scenery gets further away from the viewer.

We all know modellers who like to emphasize their bridges. They do a wonderful job choosing the right bridge for a particular location and manage to use several different types along their right-of-way.

Bridges can make an interesting scene divider that eases one's interest ever so gently from one scene to

another.

We are seeing more modellers place their emphasis on operation. Usually this happens when many other aspects are well on the way to completion. Operation is the culmination of all of the effort of building a model railroad. I don't think there are too many of us who don't enjoy a good operating session. But how much more enjoyable that would be if a few things were explained first. A map of the layout is a good start. Our layouts, with all the best designing in the world, still criss-crosses themselves in a bait tin fashion which can be very confusing to a new operator. Also, what are some of the operating rules of your layout? When do trains need a caboose? Are switchers used only for switching or do they occasionally make mainline runs as way freights over short distances? Is time expected and allowed to make brake tests? Before a session starts these things should be explained to operators and this can be done a few days ahead or on site before the clock starts.

It seems to me that those with the best layouts are people who can shift their emphasis from one aspect to another. This is a pretty handy talent as it prevents boredom and it gets everything up to scratch eventually. Besides, it makes running on your layout a special pleasure.

Display Layout

After the Toowoomba show our display layout was packed up while we had a slight break then the working bees started again sorting out the things we learnt in Toowoomba and progressing further towards its eventual completion.

The under bench wiring has been stapled up to minimise any wires being broken. Sharp edges and screw and nail points have been dulled to prevent injury. The super-elevation has been removed on the corner modules. This was causing some lifting of outer wheels on pulled rolling stock and the transition area into flat straight track caused a problem with some locos, particularly with 6-wheel trucks. The super-elevation looked good but it was too high on the outside of the curves. We also thought that the effect was lessened by the fact that the two tracks were spaced quite some distance apart. We had used strips of 1/16" balsa under the outer edges of the ties but probably should have used a length of jumper wire or something about 1/32" or a little less.

Paul Skehan is now co-ordinating work on the display layout and it is presently stored at the same premises as the UP Club. This has been the location

of the two working bees we've had since Toowoomba. These working bees are for the moment, every three weeks and the next one is scheduled for Sunday 17th September. There's still a lot of work to be done so anyone wishing to contribute will be welcome to turn up. Bring your own morning tea and lunch.

Possible Weekend Outing

Like most state based clubs, our Division 1 is based around Brisbane. This gives us a feeling of "the guilts" about how we can better serve our country members. Glenn and Denis made a trip to Innisfail to see member Bert Toogood a couple of years ago and it's about time we considered another far reaching trip. John Lebsanft of Bundaberg has invited us up to see model railroad layouts, look at their railway museum and take in railway features in the area. It's a reasonably pleasant drive to Bundaberg through beautiful Childers or you could go by Tilt-Train. Just after Childers on the left is the Apple Tree Creek band rotunda. Now there's a structure just calling out to be modelled and it would be just as reasonable on an American layout as on an Australian one. If sufficient interest is shown we will organise it for next year.

Plea for Articles

I know that most of you are doing some research to better present your model railroad. If you think any of this is useful to other members, please send in an article so that I can publish it and other members will benefit. For example, we buy Walther coaches that have sheets of decals in them with the numbers and names of coaches. But how do we get the right decals in the right place? You search your library of magazines and books. It could happen that someone else is looking for the same information. Here's your chance to publish what you have found. It could be useful to others.

Likewise, you may be in a quandary about which decals to put on your coaches. Try asking other members through this Newsletter and you may get the answers or you may be pointed in the right direction. All of us have junk boxes. These are 'goldmines' of material we hope to use some day. Or will we? If you need some obscure bit try asking other members here. You could be lucky. I'll start off by asking members if they have any Peco ties from flex track they don't want? We need some for the display layout. Besides helping your colleagues you are experiencing one of the great advantages of being a member of NMRA.

Congratulations

It's time for some congratulations. Each month I peruse the Bulletin Board in Scale Rails to see how our Australasian Region members are doing on the world stage. It's not very often that we see someone's name from our local group there.

However in the latest August issue it's pleasing to see not just Australasian Region member's names but Division 1 of Australasian Region people being officially recognised for their skills.

Golden Spike Awards have been handed out to:

Bob Brown

Denis Lane

Master Builder – Structure Award to:

Denis Lane

Master Builder – Scenery Award to:

Denis Lane

Mark Ward

One other I must comment on is Master Builder – Structures and Scenery to Rodney Smith in Division 7 because I have had the good fortune to see this wonderful layout thanks to John Saxon. This is a layout where all aspects of modelling fit and the whole appears so believable.

Please keep us informed of changes of e-mail address so that we can better get this Newsletter to you.

November

Report on Visit to All-Gauge

On 9th September, upon an invitation, we NMRA members visited the All Gauge model Railway Club at Carina. Division 1 Superintendent Glenn put up a proposal that we host a convention in September 2007. This was later changed to September 2008 as Sydney has already got a convention at the proposed time. Like most conventions ours will have clinics and contests on the Saturday, a social gathering on Saturday evening and layout tours, probably drive yourself, on the Sunday. Ideas are sought and eventually a committee will be appointed to plan this. Show-and-tell was a bit light this month but Phil Perry had some good work to show. His N gauge DCC and sound equipped UP E-7 and his Canadian cast FP-45 shell were well received.

However his DCC Shay in which he found room for added weight was amazing. Bob Deakin showed photos from his recent Melbourne trip and of particular interest were those of a PRR K-4 live steamer in the making. Bob reports that the Melbourne NMRA members treated him royally.

After afternoon tea we all had a good look at the layouts belonging to All Gauge. These all seemed to be very well executed with good scenery and track

conditions. I was struck by the cleanliness of the whole area especially the layouts. The club rooms are a credit to the members and the concept of using city council buildings in the middle of a sporting complex balances the diverse usage of this area.

Convention 2006

Five Division 1 members attended Convention 2006 at Niagara Park, a suburb of Gosford, NSW. We arrived during a heat wave but I'm sure all found the presentations enlightening and interesting. There were three talks given at each session so it was impossible to hear everything. Featured conspicuously were DCC, scenery, lineside accessories and rolling stock.



Four of the Division 1 attendees having eaten their dinner plates clean, at the Niagara Park Convention.

On the Sunday there was a drive-yourself tour of layouts. I saw some beauties modelling NSW, US and Britain. Most were excellent operating pikes and a few featured remarkable ingenuity. Over the coming months I will probably mention some of the things I saw and heard but I will credit those from whom I learnt. Our own Ted Freeman from Toowoomba donated a set of free decals to every participant and is following that up with a modelling contest using those decals. I visited John Parker's Santa Fe layout rather late on Sunday and he was still sparking and enthusiastic after a whole day of visitors. John is full of innovative ideas and a visit to his web-site at www.users.bigpond.net.au/jfparker might be useful. I hope that John puts some of his great ideas into Mainline as there is so much of clever use for us all. Gerry Hopkins, helped by his wife Lauris and others, was the organiser. Although I did hear it was rather a one-man band, he/they did a wonderful job and probably slept all day Monday. Gerry's Great Northern was kept going all day Sunday – thank God. Wonderful operating possibilities are a feature of this layout. John Saxon's Cedar Valley Lines based on Tony Koester's

Allegheny Midland had nearly 60 guests so that gives you an idea of the scrutiny layouts get. John's features coal and through operations in the east.

One layout of immense promise is David Swinfield's modern Burlington Northern.

Modelling 22 miles between Las Vegas and La Junta, he managed to get 4 scale miles of mainline which takes over 10 real minutes to negotiate. In an area so full of DCC it was refreshing to see that David Lord ran his old British DC locos with the same smoothness as the best DCC locos on other layouts. Super tuning paid off with some very old three pole Triang motors. I saw two NSW layouts one belonging to Denis Clarke with jewel-like DJH locos in typical scenes and the other Jack Parker (not to be confused with John) with exquisite scenes that I was sure I had seen during my drive south.

Jack also showed a few of his remarkable photographs of NSWGR and they really are up there with O. Winston Link and others. There is a lot of hand-laid track including points in this area. Some modellers use very fine rail. Sadly I did not see the other layouts that were open but I came away realising that this Gosford group have been able to learn so much from each other and that their contribution to model railroading in Australia is immense. I just hope that this Convention gave them all the thanks they deserve by our enthusiasm for what they have achieved. Twelve layouts were open and each property was marked with a white cross-buck on the footpath at the entrance. I must thank all of the presenters, organisers, officials and hosts for their help and friendliness and the trouble they went to ensuring that we got a lot from this Convention. John and Toni Saxon were as always wonderful hosts and introduced us to many people as well as ensuring we were well looked after.

The Display Layout

While our display layout made it to the Toowoomba Show, there are many things we now know could have been done differently. These improvements and further work to finish the layout have been progressing slowly but with good purpose. We are now ensuring that the rail near module joints is flexible enough for good alignment. Slide switches are being installed to operate and electrically switch the yard area. Dangerous sharp edges and screw points have been removed from under the layout. New ties have been placed where we broke some on our first outing. But most of all we are enjoying each others company and learning a lot as we go. We haven't got into the scenery yet

but that will be done once the fundamentals are done. Some of the methods discussed at the Convention should make things easier, lighter and stronger here. Doing a job like this gives us a chance to learn each others strengths and that will help us all in future endeavours. At this stage I don't know where the next outing will be but it seems that the layout will go together faster than it did last time.

Promoting This Hobby

What do you do with your old model railroading magazines, catalogues and such things? Rather than throw them out leave them your local doctor's or dentist's waiting rooms. Usually these are overloaded with New Ideas and Womans Weekly so you have male patients sitting there eagerly wanting something to read. Imagine the interesting new world you can conjure up for somebody if they are looking through your old Walthers Catalogues. You could start them on a new hobby and that's got to be good for all of us.

Comment

Somewhere, there must be one heck of a big pile of model dirt. If I could find it, I would make a fortune selling it for fill and extracting the minerals from it. How do I know that this great mountain exists? Because most model railroads have lots of cuttings and tunnels but no fills! We like to model the dramatic. So cuttings with erosion furrows and strata rocks and overburden are fun to make and happen to be one thing most of us can play God with reasonably convincingly. Let's face it they do look good. On the prototype, the earth removed from these features is mostly used to fill gullies and depressions to keep the track as level as possible. But they have one drawback from the modellers point of view. Fills are pretty ordinary.

Just trying to think where I saw one leaves me wondering if I've ever seen one at all on a layout. We have areas with single sided cuttings where you could say the dirt has been used to prop up the line but these hardly qualify. When we come to a depression, bridges are favoured because once again, they can look dramatic. And there are so many types of bridges we can model. Besides this, you can see beyond the bridge. How then can we come to consider fills? Trees and shrubbery go well as do scree slopes and wood cribbing and sometimes a culvert or pipe drain are used. These are normally on the facing side but what happens on the other side and that side usually beyond the track? If you want a culvert/pipe on the viewing side then a

stream or pool of water is appropriate for the higher side. If there is no water coming out of the pipe on the lower side then this pool will be stagnant and a lower level than the pipe inlet or just dry. Try a pool of bright green algae or a pool with floating growth. But for something completely different, have the viewing side also the higher side so that you look down on the track. This is often the way we look at real railroads and more in keeping with the way we view, somewhat downwards, upon our model railroads.

Perhaps - the Last Ten Questions!

1. Which steam locomotive holds the world's record single loco haulage record of 18,000 tons?
2. What railroad was the first transcontinental railroad in North America?
3. What was the number of the ex-Southern Pacific GS-4 4-8-4 that pulled the American Freedom Train during 1976?
4. What was the name of a "fallen flag" railroad once named after a race horse?
5. On what line was the Whyte designation for a 4-8-4 called a Pocono?
6. On what line was the Whyte designation for a 4-8-4 called a Glider?
7. What railroad pioneered ditch lights in North America in 1956?
8. What railroad was known as "The Old Reliable"?
9. In 1901 an Atlantic Coast Line train averaged over 100 miles per hour for 5 miles near Little Satilla River, Georgia while in a contest with the Seaboard Air Line for the Cuban mail contract. What was that average speed?
10. What famous train hired an Indian chief in full regalia to tell children stories en route?

Answers to Last Issues Questions

1. New York Susquehanna & Western.
2. Dunnage is shelving, blocking, bracing, padding, partitioning, sawdust, straw and other portable loose material used to protect shipments in transit.
3. Less than carload.
4. No, but they did in almost every other country involved.
5. Pikes Peak, Colorado at 14,110 feet.
6. Near Salton and Imperial Valley, California on the former SP at 199.2 feet below sea level.
7. Boston & Maine.
8. The "Old and Weary".
9. Tank car – Union Tank Line.
10. Electric Railway Presidents Conference

Committee which determined the need for such a car in 1929. The plans were completed in 1935.

Air Brakes

I received the following information from Glenn which may be of use for those interested in anything railroad and for those wishing to run trains in a prototypical manner.

“Tons per operative brake” (TOB) is calculated by dividing the total tons by the operative air brakes in the train. For instance, if a vehicle train has 70 cars and it weighs 5590 tons, then it is 79.8 TOB (5590 divided by 70) and the train qualifies for 70mph. If the train had one of the air brakes cut out on a car, then it would only have 69 operative brakes instead of 70 and the TOB would be 81 instead of 79.8 and the speed would be reduced to 55mph if all the cars are loaded. If they are all intermodal trains or trains with auto racks, then the TOB is raised to 90 TOB for qualifying to run 70mph. If the vehicle train has boxcars in it, then it falls under the 80 TOB guideline. Intermodal cars are different for figuring operative brakes. A five pack car has three brake valves, so it is considered as three cars. Most three packs have two brake valves, so they are considered as two cars. If the cars are non-articulated, like TTEX cars, they also have two brakes valves and are two cars. If the train is a solid double stack train, then it can be up to 105 TOB and still run 70mph.

From Keel Middleton – BNSF Engineer, through Lindy Rhodes.



Dennis Clarke's collection of DJH and Lloyds kit locos he has assembled and painted.

Our 2008 Convention

The 2008 Convention is a long way out but lets all give it some thought and be prepared to think and plan and give your contributions. We can make this a memorable Convention. If you think there is some job that you will be good at or that you are willing to do, put your hand up now. At least by being

involved you will meet more attendees, people who in the future might be of great help to you. But help them now with your ideas, your labour, your enthusiasm, your interest and your friendship. Now is the time for us all to help each other and pull together so that we can collectively give all of our visitors a wonderful experience. It's a long time before the Proposed Convention but give Glenn a month or so to finish off his exams then let him know how you can contribute.



David Latham's contest winning Santa Fe Turntable - Entirely scratch-built.

Division 2 - ACT

The August Division 2 meeting was held at Rob Anderson's house, and was very well attended. The meeting location was changed to accommodate Viv Brice's absence, but his business trip was cancelled at the last minute.

He apologised for his unneeded apology (you had to be there). The meeting began with a show-n-tell, and ended with a swap-n-sell. In between, Rob made a valiant effort to persuade us all to switch to modelling Australian prototype (preferably Victorian) in HO. He pointed out the wide range of attractive liveries that are now to be seen, thanks to privatisation. He also noted that locomotives and rolling stock are generally no longer confined to their home state's rails (assuming they are standard gauge, of course) but can be found virtually anywhere.

No photos this time.

Jess Brisbane





Eureka Models NSWGR AD60 Garratt
Shown on Sam and Rowan Mangions Buff Point Railway
Photo by Josh Loyd
Be sure to see this layout at the March 2007 NSW meeting.

Division 3 - Victoria

July Meeting

The July 2006 meeting took place on Sunday 16, at the home of Steve & June Cullen, located in Melton to the West of Melbourne. Melton is a good location as it draws participants from the south & west of the state. It was great to see members from the provincial towns of Ballarat, and Geelong in attendance. The meeting was well attended with 23 people signing in.

Steve Cullen is the proud owner/builder of New Bellbird. I think this is at least the third creation of Bellbird, and represents a synopsis of the Steve's modeling ideal. Bellbird provides a backdrop for Steve's modeling skills, and is an operating switching layout based on the logging industry.



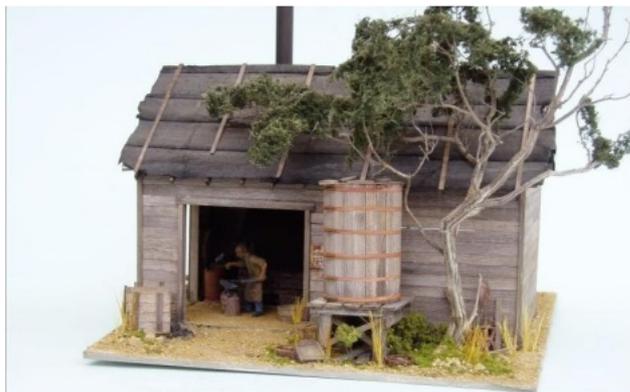
Participants were treated to a huge array of show & tell items from HO, O and G scales/gauges, and a weathering clinic. Bob Backway explained how his Direct Wireless DCC (DWiDCC) operated on his G-scale loco. Bob said that if "Bluetooth" technology could be included in the DCC decoder chips, control of DCC would become simpler, easier and cheaper.



Laurie Green brought along a beautiful O-scale model of "Dolores" Depot, Paul Dundas had a mockup of his new structure, Hillside Halt, while Barry Pate showed of his first O-scale laser cut building, Markinsburg Mine. There was an assortment of rolling stock in HOn3, HO, OO, O

and G including Peter MacDonald's O-scale Climax which features in the current edition of AMRM and a HOn3 Climax by Bob Jensen.

Rod Hutchinson presented some weathering examples performed on a Roco ZIS-5 truck, OO Midland Railway short brake van and a bus shelter. Dan Pickard, Grant McAdam and Laurie Green produced an assortment O scale detail items. Paul Richie brought along some model palm trees, a HO motorised chassis and some extremely tiny LEDs. A rare Show & Tell item was a tinplate coach in 7mm scale brought along by Robert Powell.



Geoff Trueman showed off his Austrains T Class and examples of G&E models, AV & BV vestibule passenger cars. Michael Holian brought an O-scale tank car, while a small assortment of magazines kept the readers happy.

Michael Holian: one of our few young members, presented a weathering clinic. Using spray paint, shoe dye stains, a bit of sandpaper and weathering powders, Michael showed all the oldies how to undertake aged weathering on your timber structures. His techniques would be a great introduction to young and old modelers alike who have yet to take the plunge into the art of weathering models.





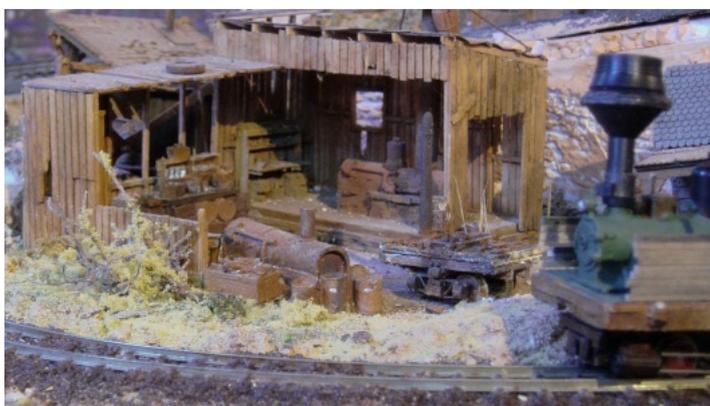
A cool day was made pleasant with a great barbecue followed by an assortment of cakes. Grant briefly mentioned progress with the next Narrow Gauge Convention to be held at Noble Park, Melbourne during Easter 2007

<http://www.users.bigpond.com/nawlins/ngconvoz.htm>

As the sun struggled to shine through the overcast, Steve and June were thanked for opening up their home once again and presented with a thank-you plaque.

August Meeting

16 attendees made the August 2006 meeting on Sunday 13 at the home of Paul Dundas, located in Upwey in the Dandenong Ranges, not far from the famous Puffing Billy Railway.



Paul has designed and been scratch building O and HO versions of a structure called Hillside Halt.

Progress of his work may be found at http://www.railroad-line.com/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=12804&whichpage=1

Paul is also working on a small HOn30 layout.

Participants were treated to a large variety of reading matter particularly from the USA and the UK. John Dennis brought along a book on horse drawn vehicles published by the Cobb & Co Museum, Toowomba Queensland. This book would be an excellent reference for modelers. John presented some Sn3½ etched brass four wheel underframe and brake gear by Southern Cross

Models. Laurie Green showed off two run down O scale box cars to be used as sheds. Peter MacDonald presented us with his kit built chassis of the O scale Bundy Fowler. Rod Hutchinson brought along two catalogues of scratch building material; Eileen's Emporium in the UK and Precision Sale Model Engineering from the USA. Bob Jensen brought a sample of the Edco wonder cloth which was of the basis of an article on grass in the recent edition of AMRM.



A beautiful sunny day was made pleasant with a great barbecue. Grant provided an update with the Narrow Gauge Convention to be held at Noble Park, Melbourne during Easter 2007

<http://www.users.bigpond.com/nawlins/ngconvoz.htm>

Rod Hutchinson advised that the Light Railway Research Society is running a railway related walking tour of the Erica/Walhalla area on the 18/19 November 2006. Any one who would like details please contact Rod Hutchinson via Division 3 superintendent for information. As the sun began to set Paul was thanked for opening up his home and presented with a thank-you plaque.

October Meeting

The October 2006 meeting held on Sunday 15 at the home of Geoff & Di Truman, at Hoppers Crossing, West of Melbourne. 21 people attended on a day that promised much needed rain, but did not deliver.

Models on display

Peter MacDonald: a ford pick up truck and rail car again, probably hoping to get the same picture in Mainline twice; Paul Ritchie: had a work in progress On30 Porter being kitbashed into a Forney, and a Colorado & Northern Stock Car; Michael Holian: presented a beautiful scratchbuilt VR NH narrow gauge car; Laurie Green: a partly constructed O scale winch and Gavin Hince: a beautiful S scale motor garage.



Reading matter

Rod Hutchinson: Light Railway Magazine 1980, with an article on the Britannia Creek distillation works near Warburton VIC, Grant McAdam: a book on the horse drawn vehicles at Sovereign Hill, which is very useful reference for the modeller, and Narrow Lines magazine, Laurie Green: a two DVD set on casting rock walls. Bob Jensen brought along an NCE DCC controller and an assortment of manuals, whilst John Cracknell showed off a butane torch, and a casting kit. Paul Ritchie an assortment of reading matter with an American flavour.



Grant provided an update with the Narrow Gauge Convention to be held at Noble Park, Melbourne during Easter 2007, http://www.users.bigpond.com/nawlines/convention_home.htm. A Light Railway Research Society, walking tour of the Erica/Walhalla area is being held on the 18/19 November 2006 and the 2nd Victorian "Prototype Modeller's Meet" will be held on the Sunday October 22nd. Contact Division 3 superintendent for further information.

Grant thanked Geoff & Di for opening up their home, putting on a lovely spread of food, and presented with a thank-you plaque

November

The November 2006 meeting was held on Sunday 12 at the home of Dan & Carolyn Pickard located in Geelong West. 18 persons signed the attendance book on a warm and windy day.

Models on display

Laurie Green has been working on another building; an O scale "Alby's Boatyard", a three kit collection laser cut buildings from Stoney Creek Designs and an On30 RGS Ditcher. Michael Holian has been busy working in On30; a Krauss and scratch built VR Narrow gauge NC van, while Paul Ritchie showed his progress with his On30 Forney and flat cars. Stewart Mitchell brought a "Fast Tracks" point jig, and Peter MacDonald displayed the SAR T Class production etchings from Broad Gauge Models. John Dennis has been scratchbuilding a lovely On30 4 wheel firewood wagon from the Irvinebank Tramway, and Rod Hutchinson displayed two HOn30 VR NQ wagons weathered with Gouache paints thinned with Micro Sol and talcum powder added for a crusty rust. Dan Pickard displayed a magnificent O scale machine shop diorama, and Peter & Alistair Keddie showed samples of CNC milled VR rolling stock.

Reading matter

Grant McAdam; 2007 Narrow Gauge Annual from Finescale Modeller and Narrow Gauge and Industrial Railway Modelling Review, and Paul Ritchie; Maine 2 Foot booklet

Grant provided an update with the Narrow Gauge Convention to be held at Noble Park, Melbourne during Easter 2007, [HYPERLINK http://www.users.bigpond.com/nawlines/convention_home.htm](http://www.users.bigpond.com/nawlines/convention_home.htm). A Light Railway Research Society and the walking tour of the Erica/Walhalla area is being held on the 18/19 November 2006. Contact Division 3 superintendent for further information.

Grant thanked Dan & Carolyn for opening up their home, and were presented with a thank-you plaque

Next Div. 3 meeting venue will be at the home of our Superintendent, Grant McAdam, 10 December 2006.

Rod Hutchinson



Division 4 - Western Australia

August 29, 2006 and just a couple of days since our last meeting and I thought I would do a report on how we have gone over the first twelve months of my being the Division Superintendent. Strange you might say, well, let me put it this way and you might get a better understanding.

Come with me to a building site, just after the brickies have finished and you see a truck load of timber, would you know what to do with it, and more importantly, where it goes, what lengths to cut the timber and how to make that load in framing, skirting, trusses, barge boards etc? I do, but at the beginning of my year as Superintendent my knowledge of the computer was less than minimal and the only way to get ahead was to learn, and learn fast. And that started with the keyboard and finding all those letters jumbled everywhere and spelling was never my strong point. So from very humble beginnings and a awful lot of phone calls to the kids, and an equal number of mistakes (thankfully pointed out to me by the WA members), my skills have improved and I am sure I am heading in the right direction now.

“So what”, you say.

Well, that’s what the keyboard on the computer looked like to me when I first started.

Twelve months later I feel I have achieved something. I can spell better for a start, also the use of two finger typing has been an achievement but never the less, communication with the East has been lot easier being able to use emails, scan items and setup mail boxes to make it all easier.

So, what have we achieved?

We here in the West have increased the membership by 3 people. That’s not a lot you might say, but that’s a hell of a percentage for a small out post!!!

The meetings are strong and reasonably well supported as the ‘sign in’ sheet shows and generally don’t change unless there’s a real problem.

Topics have been varied and interesting. We have had talks on Hamersley Iron operations from a train drivers’ point of view; a talk on ‘geared locomotives’; on scratch buildings; on ‘Potlatch’ which supplies timber for the paper industry; and many other interesting topics. The members have been eager to open their homes for meetings and to date we have not yet visited all our members’ homes.

Interest in the Achievement Program has been renewed and Frank Godde received his “Golden Spike” award after being tested at the 2006 AMRA

exhibition and I know there is another application being sent soon for the “Golden Spike” award, and interest in other certificates within the program has been rekindled. To have a few more MMR’s in WA would be something I would like to work towards.

We had a tree making workshop some months ago which was quite popular (make what you like and take it home), so there will be more of those Saturdays for sure

Members are working on their layouts just to show them off for the meetings.

This year I would like to do some members profiles with photos of their layouts and also hopefully an annual newsletter, which could possibly be printed in the “MainLine”

So this year we have helped members get started with scenery, visited new members and connected them to the WA link, and encouraged them to bring a friend to our meetings.

I do look forward to the next 12 months with some WA content being published in the “MainLine”

August

The August meeting was held at Dr Jim Anderson's place, a pleasant day and a good turn out for WA. We sat down to discuss the business of the association. Anyway, after the great afternoon tea put on by Jim's wife Anne, we sauntered over to the hobby room. Jim is a very neat person and so is his room, he models "Hamersley Iron" in N scale. He also tells me that he's colour blind but has done well with the colours on his layout which are the same as per the northwest of WA. While we were there a great video on the ore trains of the northwest ran on the small TV fixed to the wall. Jim still has a lot to do on the layout but no doubt that will continue in the next year or so.

By the way, the photos in the magazine "Motive Power" don't do justice to the excitement of actually being there when these monsters appear on the track in front of you. The tourist centre in Port Hedland has train movement times for the week up on the board outside the office, which is a really great innovation.

October

For the October meeting we all went to Phil Knife's (MMR). This was held on a Friday night, and we were directed to his railway room. Phil has an end to end incorporating two gauges, HO and HON3, with track work combined. Quite an impressive little layout with all hand-laid track on a double layer of cork and lots of electronic gadgetry. He uses light cells to kick the electronics into action.

Various loco drive assemblies were noticed on the shelves above the work bench and a 2-8-0 body was awaiting work so a chip could be fitted.

After a cuppa, I spoke on the benefits of "Micro Mark" and showed all present the latest catalogue.

This was then followed by a quick talk on making crates and boxes, the ideas came from an article in "Narrow Gauge and Short Line Gazette"

Our next meeting will be our Christmas meeting at Alan Perry's home, with a change of date to 8 December 2006

Frank Godde

Division 6 - South Australia

October

The October 2006 meeting of Division 6 was held at the home of Geoff Chatwin and 14 names appeared on the Attendee's list. The day was warm but pleasant.

The formal part of the meeting included advice about the new Mainline Editor and the interim Mainline Issue being the Motive Power magazine with a few insert pages; the forthcoming NMRA Convention in NSW; the state of our Divisional finances and the next meeting.

One other point raised carried on from our last meeting in that we may offer to host an NMRA Convention in 3-4 years time. It has been decided that our Division does not have the member base to do this so accordingly advice to the Regional people will be that we withdraw our offer to consider hosting a convention. One of the aspects was that with our proposal for a Convention here in 2010, how many members would we still have in this Division and I raised the point that I will not stand again as Div Super in the 2008 elections.

Raffle prizes for future meetings - Graham will follow up Graham's Corner and Ron will talk to Terry Watson. The last few gift certificates have been donated by Junction Models and we do not want to spoil a good thing.

With this part completed, then attention was turned to the modelling side of the day.

Scott presented some workshop tips such as using old guitar strings for keeping glue tubes free; use as hawsers/ropes and the parts of the old springs for pulleys, etc. He then showed the use of Switch stands fitted to Peco points and the methods of achieving same.

Ray then presented his Building Jig made from metal sheet and being able to use magnets to hold

building sides square while glueing. A tool he obtained from USA in being a Truck/bogie tuner allows the cleaning out of the axle boxes to allow free running wheels.

The use of old mobile phones parts such as the miniature motor used for the vibrating alert for such models like se-saws, etc that do not require much power and work off 1.5 volts.

Geoff related the story he was told in that to remove acrylic paint, use a window cleaner like Windex and he found that Cloudy Ammonia works well as a Acrylic paint remover.

Various points were raised about DCC and the many varieties of decoders, etc that exist.



Al then gave a talk on another way of creating and colouring rock faces using polystyrene and plaster bandage.

Geoff had some printer cartridges for disposal with any money raised to go to our funds.

The raffle being a Gift Voucher from Junction Models was won by Ian.

Refreshments, nibbles and good discussion finished of the day with Geoff being presented with the Meeting Host plaque.

Next meeting December 2 will be our Christmas family get-together BBQ at Ray Brownbill's home at Forreston. The cost will be \$5 a family, bring chairs and your favourite beverage. The Division will provide soft drinks, tea, coffee and BBQ . Let Ray know by Wednesday Nov 29 if attending on either 8389 1045 or 0417 849 630.

Remember that this meeting will also be a model judging meeting.

What follows is an extract from the last meeting--
 "Geoff then presented to the meeting an idea that a few of us had discussed in that having talks such as the ones today to be presented by Ian, that if members bring to the following meeting a model or two that they have made/kit-bashed, etc., based on the talks, they will be judged by the talk presenter and awarded a \$10 gift voucher.

The Christmas BBQ is to have an overall modellers competition in which members bring their favourite models that they have scratch-built / kit-bashed and be voted by all present and the winner is awarded a \$20 gift voucher."

The first part of this had been deferred to the December meeting as the judge, namely Ian was not available for the October meeting.

We need to have at least two entries in both the weathering and the casting of and colouring of rocks to be able to obtain a winner.

Planned South Australian Events for 2007

April 27th – 29th Rail Show 2007 by South Australian Railway Modellers Association

The exhibition is going to be run from 5pm on Friday April 27th to 9pm

Saturday will be from 9:30am to 5pm

Sunday will be from 9:30am to 4pm

June 9-11 - AMRE Exhibition - Greyhound Racing Club, Angle Park, Adelaide

Oct 11-15 BRMA Convention:-

Oct 11 Wine & Steam Tour

Oct 12 PM Presentation by Tim Shackleton, Editor of MRJ

Oct 13 Convention day & Dinner

Oct 14 Layout tours

Venue: Tea Tree Gully Recreation & Arts Centre
 The Golden Way Golden Grove

Ron Solly

Division 7 - New South Wales

August

A warm late Winter's day welcomed 68 members to the home of Phillip and Laurel Anderson at Gladesville.

Phillip's layout is in a quaint little shed at the end of the garden path. His layout is about half finished with trains running and some scenery. Phillip runs HO standard gauge Canadian. Most of his locomotives are diesel.

After the formal part of the meeting Stuart Sharp enlightened us on the current and future history of the New South Wales Railways. Stuart, who only weeks before, had been involved in the organization of the 100 year festivities for the opening of Central Railway Station.

As part of the show and tell for the meeting, John Eagles brought along an assortment of very nice scratchbuilt HO Narrow Gauge buildings. Keep up the good work, John.

A very nice afternoon tea was provided by Laurel and the other ladies.

The meeting concluded at 4.30pm.

September

On a cold and very wet day 40 members made their way to the home of John and Shirley Martin at Oak Flats for the September meeting.

John surprised a lot of people by having two sheds which contained a total of three layouts. All were HO modern diesel era. He also had a mixture of US and NSW locos and rolling stock. The NSW era belonged to his son. Many of the members were very impressed with the way John has incorporated so much detail into such small layouts.

It was also very obvious that John is a modeller as well as was demonstrated by the weathering on his locos, rolling stock and lineside buildings.

Considering it was a wet and cold weekend, just as most members arrived the sun broke through and we had a relatively dry meeting. During the course of the meeting our new editors, Kelly Loyd and his son Joshua were introduced to the members. We wish them well in their new endeavour.

Gerry Hopkins reported on the upcoming Convention where plans are in place for an exciting weekend. He advised the members that there were currently over 80 people registered for the Convention and 28 wives for the bus trip.

As Divisional Super I was very pleased to see a large number of wives attend the meeting which has not happened for some time. I was also pleased to see so many members make the effort to travel to Oak Flats to support a fellow member.

The Association's thanks go to John, Shirley and Jennifer, their daughter, for a wonderful afternoon tea and the hospitality they provided to their visitors.

John Montgomery

Division 8 - Northern Rivers

Well, what an interesting couple of months. Firstly, our August meet was at the Newcastle hobby show. The old layout ran perfectly and all had a great time. We had decided that we should see what interest we would get if the layout was put up for sale. With a suprising amount of interest we were almost positive the layout would be sold. Several parties seemed dead keen and details of the sale were given out. However nobody came up with the cash.

September we held our normal running day at the hall mainly to go over the layout and check for any faults. General chit chat and further discussion on the new layout.

The layout then left for the Sydney AMRA show the following weekend. After a really bad start to the weekend, I left the all important curtain at home, The layout again went together without a hassle. Charlie had to buy another 60m of curtain from some little shop in Hurstville. We all seemed to have an enjoyable time both at the show and the Club afterwards. Again For Sale signs were placed around the display. A few little niggers but no one real serious. By Sunday afternoon we thought all hope was lost until one guy came and said "This would fit in my dining room". Well it wouldn't fit in the dining room but he did bring his wife in the next day and by lunch time the deal was done. YES the Coffs Harbour layout was sold. We finished out the weekend and prepared it for delivery to Kellyville early the next morning. The guy had purchased the modules only, with backdrops, buildings, stands and

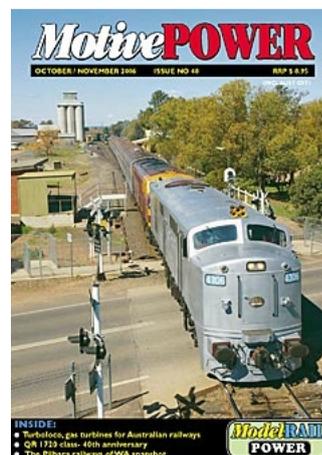
EasyDCC system. We will be using the rest on the new display.

The plan now is to work hard to get a final plan as to which way the new layout should go. Construction should start early in the New Year. We are in the process of purchasing selected buildings and will start a building workshop over the next few months where we can build these and repair, fix, weather and install decoders into equipment.

Stay tuned, I will keep everyone up to date.

Ian Phemister

Advertisement



If you enjoyed the Motive Power magazine from the last MainLine supplement, why not pick up the latest issue from your newsagent or local hobby shop?



Brett Paynes Durango Station

Narrow Gauge SIG Report

On Sunday 29th October the Siggers had a gathering at John's place in sunny Shalvey, where we kicked off with a cracker of a BBQ. Special thanks go to Nat and John for putting on such a great spread.

At about 2pm the rest of the Siggers, about 12 in total, turned up for a number of varied discussions. Most Siggers brought along different models and samples. Ray brought along some nice O and HO castings, all ready for that engine house workshop he has planned- very realistic. All they need is some paint, a bit of weathering and fitting into the model workshop.

The meeting started with the insurance question and after some debate it was decided to leave it as is.

Afterwards, we were shown a demonstration of a Soundtraxx equipped Shay. We were all impressed with the quality of the sound. Mark then showed us his fine collection of very narrow O gauge models. Nice work Mark.

Tree making came up again when Michael showed us the nice looking trees that he had made. He must have caught the tree bug from a previous meeting as he is getting better at this activity all the time.

Elsewhere there were other conversations going on in the background that the author did not hear. I can't be everywhere at once! One discussion was centered on how Soundtraxx fitted their Tsunami decoder into a Shay. I am not sure if the lads worked it out but it sure is a neat fit. My guess is that it is not a standard Tsunami decoder but a type of a decoder specifically made for the Shay. I have been informed that these special Shay decoders are not available at this time.

Mike also ran his 2-8-0 so we had plenty of DCC sound on the day. Great to hear.

John ran his layout for us showing off other people's DCC locos pulling his rolling stock.

The next meeting will be our Christmas party at Geo Paxton's residence on the 3rd of December. He tells me he has made some changes to some areas of his layout.

Some late news for the On30 people; the Bachmann Forney has been sighted at a show in the States with Soundtraxx sound fitted. The Forney looks very nice, similar in flavour to the 2-8-0 but somewhat smaller. There is a short movie available on the Forney. To see it, or for pictures of the Forney, email me for the details. Looks like DCC sound will be happening with Bachmann locos from

now on- a great improvement!

The Narrow Gauge SIG meets with the O gauge SIG. I thought it might be helpful to also add a DCC SIG, as most of us O scalers are DCC users as well. Not all of us Siggers are into O scale; about half of the Narrow Gauge SIG are HO modelers.

The idea would be that as these other extra groups become larger they can break away and form a group in their own right. Until then they could meet with the Narrow Gauge SIG until interest levels increase.

That's about it. See you in early December up at Geo's layout.

Regards

Steve Chapman

memberaid@nmra.org.au



Convention Report CC06

by Gerry Hopkins MMR

On a warm/hot day in the middle of October the Australasian Region held their annual Convention on the beautiful Central Coast an hour's drive north from Sydney.

The convention was held at the Niagara Park Community Centre. The hall was only 100 metres from the railway station and a number of members came up by train. We had visitors from Bahrain, Winnipeg, New Zealand and all states of Australia. In all we had 165 people (including partners) at the convention.



There were three clinics held at any one time – had I known we would get that many people I would have hired an extra room for one stream of clinics instead of having two in the “great hall”.

On display in main hall were a number of very large photos of NSW railways taken in the 60's by Jack Parker. Many of them were taken in the local area – known as “The Short North” long before the population boom in the area. Fifty years on and the diesels are still the same but there are now many houses and much industry in the area.

We had four commercial stands in attendance, Gwydir Valley Hobbies, The Model Craftsman, The Railcar and the N Scaler. Each of the shops donated gift vouchers for the door/raffle prizes. Although not in attendance, Tom's Hobbies / Trainorama donated a loco and 3 pairs of brake vans for the raffles. All those attending received a set of “Convention Decals” donated by Ted Freeman of Toowoomba.

While the men “played trains” the ladies went on a sight seeing tour of the Central Coast aboard a Red Double Decker Bus. They left at 10.00 and arrived back at 5.00 – I believe they had a great day.

The James Family from “Frog Acres” slaved in the kitchen all morning to supply us with a terrific lunch. They also kept the tea and coffee flowing

throughout the day and supplied the finger food in the “Happy Hour” before dinner.

There were a number of good clinics, many given by “new” presenters. The clinics were arranged in accordance with the results of the web poll held earlier in the year. One presenter had to drop out at the last minute – but he was forgiven, he rang from his hospital bed. He is on his way to recovery.

During the lunch hour, the Gosford Model Railroad Club opened the doors to their layouts housed under the community centre. Many of the attendees visited the layouts and spoke very favourably about them.

At the end of the day, the hall was re-arranged for the “Banquet”. 108 people ate their fill between 7.00 and 9.00. During the evening our guest speaker, Ron Drummond, gave an illustrated talk on the history of Clyde Engineering. Even the NSW modellers gained a lot of information.

The lucky seat prize was won by Beth Payne from Wadalba. It was a painting donated by Gwydir Valley Hobbies.

On the Sunday 60-70 people toured the Central Coast visiting layouts. Many of the layouts have not been seen by members before. There were 14 layouts, 50/50 American and Australian with two British Layouts for variety.

Electrical pick-up on brass steam locomotives with DCC decoders fitted - tender problems

By Laurie Mclean (NMRA Member Australia)

I would like to share some interesting information I have found in fitting Soundtraxx Tsunami Sound Decoders to my HOn3 Brass locomotives.

In particular, this article deals with the locomotive tender and its electrical pick-ups.

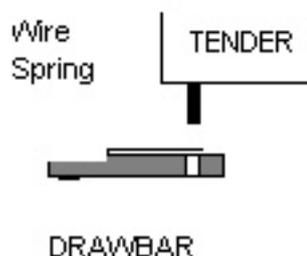
I use a white dot placed onto the underside of each tender truck and a corresponding dot on the tender floor. These dots represent the electrical pick-up side on the tender and helps identify replacing the trucks correctly for maintenance. The electrical pick-up is usually on the LEFT hand side of the tender that is the LEFT side when facing forward on the track.

Problems encountered with brass loco tenders

I start by checking how the tender sits on a level piece of track and move it along by hand paying particular attention to the wheels rotation. They

must all rotate and any that don't need to be addressed by adjusting the truck frame. Look at both sides.

The Drawbar



I check the connection of the drawbar and have found this to be a major problem often overlooked by modellers. The standard drawbar used by most manufacturers and fitted to the rear of the locomotive has a wire spring soldered to it to provide side pressure onto the tender pin. This standard type drawbar does not always suit the tender pin diameter and I have found differences with various models – the pin does not always suit the drawbar hole.

The diameter of the drawbar hole compared to the diameter of the tender pin may be very close in tolerance that it inhibits the free movement of the tender and can prevent the tender sitting freely on its frame and trucks. If the tightness of the linkage of the drawbar and pin is too much it may hold the tender to one side or the other and prevent good electrical pick-up and tracking generally. In addition, if there is tightness between the drawbar and tender pin the tender may be “locked or held” into a position where it sits low or high preventing one or the other tender trucks to not be able to sit under its own weight onto the track rails. This will inhibit good electrical contact, something we are trying to achieve.

I have found that a free standing tender, once coupled to the locomotive, may have a “set” caused by the drawbar being too tight and holding the tender against its normal stance on the track.

For the fitting of a DCC decoder the electrical connection is not required through the drawbar as the wire (Black) is soldered directly onto the tender frame. I am assuming the decoder and speaker are being fitted inside the tender.

To correct this problem on the drawbar I open the hole out half a millimetre larger so that the tender pin can rotate and rock freely yet still is firm enough to be held in place. I also move the wire spring to

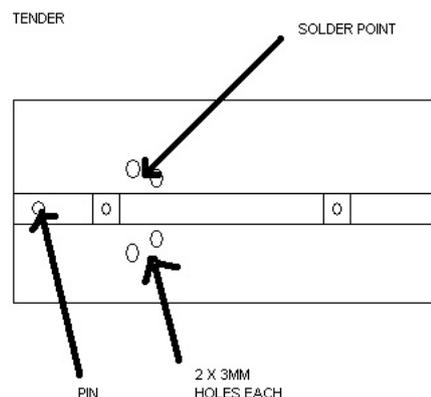
just be able to slightly “grab” onto the pin.

Solder connection on tender

The next problem is getting a good solder connection on the tender frame for the BLACK Decoder wire.

I do this by drilling 4 x 3mm holes through the brass floor plate which allows the sound an outlet from the speaker. Place 2 holes either side of the centreline allowing 2mm between. The holes are in a close pattern directly above the front trucks rear set of wheels. The 2mm distance between the 3mm holes allows the “tinning” of the brass tender frame as it is only a small area to heat up and will take solder using a high temperature on my adjustable iron.

As a side note I have found that 2 or 4, 3mm holes are more than enough to allow the sound out from the speaker and always fit an enclosure on the speaker.



Electrical path: from rail through wheels/truck/body

The next problem is getting reliable electrical connection from the track through the wheels and brass trucks and onto the tender body frame.

This electrical path is one whereby the rotating wheels have a tiny surface contact with the track and again a tiny surface contact with the axle to the truck frame and the truck frame has a rubbing contact with the tender frame. There are no true electrical joints in this path and the reliance is upon metal to metal contacts only!

All of this calls for cleanliness and good alignment. It is good to spray an electronic degreaser such as that available from Dick Smith's or similar to the trucks and especially getting it into the bearing boxes where crud can build up at the axle ends. The use of a multimeter with an audible sound setting allows for positive checking of and electrical path. I use my meter for just this on my

checks all over on brass locos and tenders and find it invaluable to problem solving shorts or checking electrical connections / continuity as in this case.

Once the wheels are clean the next thing to check is the bolster. I use a wooden ice-cream stick with 400 grit wet-&-dry glued to it to polish the bolster and the truck mating surface to ensure that the surfaces are clean and flat. Remember this is part of the electrical path and must have a good contact. Check the wheels are in gauge by using the NMRA HOn3 gauge too!

The free movement of the truck is usually determined by the spring tension on the screw holding the truck to the frame. Too much tension and the truck will be stiff and derail especially on curves and turnouts. Too little and the electrical contact is made worse. Finding the happy medium is not that hard.

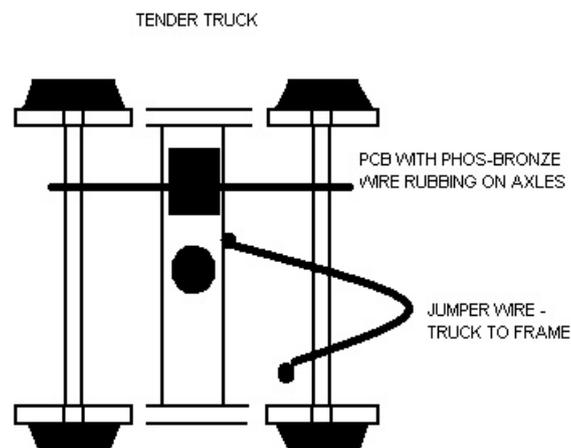
I cut the springs on each truck so that they have a LIGHT tension and I also add weight to the tender using lead to provide weight onto the wheels for better contacts. The springs need to fit loosely on the screws and must have the end of the wire turned over so it does not dig into the screw head or truck frame – this is very important to note.

The screws are designed to accommodate the springs and also fit through the centre hole of the truck without binding. To check that the screw doesn't clamp onto the truck cross plate, lightly push the screw through the truck when assembling it and then check it will freely move and tilt a little. This movement is to allow the truck to maintain contact with the track even if there are some uneven sections.

The next thing is to recheck the trucks have just enough free movement to rock from side to side a tiny bit. If they are too stiff then electrical contact and operation will suffer. Of course don't make them too loose or the tender will wobble.

The next thing is to add extra pick-ups if the electrical contact supplies are erratic. This is done by super-gluing a small piece of printed circuit board to the inside of each truck frame and soldering a piece of phosphor-bronze wire to it so that it wipes in the axle or back of the pick-up side wheels. In addition to this, a tiny wire can be soldered from the PCB to the tender body to assist in creating a better electrical path.

A further improvement is to solder a tiny wire from the brass truck to the frame allowing free movement – I use decoder wire and place a small S-bend in the wire.



The above figure shows the added Printed Circuit Board (PCB) with the phosphor-Bronze wire soldered to it and rubbing against the axle. A jumper wire has been added being soldered to the truck and tender body.

Adding weight to the tender:

The addition of weight is sometimes needed to provide enough “downward pressure” to the tender upon the trucks to permit sufficient metal-to-metal contacts in the trucks.

It should be noted that this may inhibit the amount of rolling stock the locomotive can pull so go a bit at a time.

A good test is to get some lead fishing sinkers of different sizes/weights and place them on the tender and run the loco before fitting a decoder. I have a timber length with 2 pieces of flex-track on it for testing purposes and an old 12v supply via a transistor throttle. It is amazing the difference weight on the tender makes to brass locomotive (and also the loco too!). If the pick-up improves with weight it may be that the axle to truck frame is a poor connection or that the truck to tender through bolster has a poor surface connection or both?

To remedy this you may swap a tender from a known locomotive you know onto the new loco and test them together – it is a process of elimination – finding the fault and learning more along the way.

Another way is to replace the tender wheels or trucks completely with good quality replacements.

I hope this helps you solve the electrical pick-up problem/s on your loco. Don't forget to clean the wheels too.

Gerry(atric) Ramblings

Well, the Convention is out of the way for another year. There are two conventions next year. The first is the Narrow Gauge Convention at Noble Park, Melbourne held over Easter. The second is the Regional Convention at Dence Park, Epping held in the middle of October.

Conventions are a great source of information about anything related to trains and their models. Beside which, you can catch up with a lot of old friends.

At the convention or during the layout tour I was asked a few questions about totally unrelated things, so I thought I would use these 'thought' as a start for this instalment of my ramblings.

Number One – Delayed Uncoupling.

I was demonstrating some switching at Great Falls and used a 'twisle stick' to uncouple a flatcar. I then pushed the flat car to a location set out on the waybill. I was asked why the car did not re-couple when being pushed to the spot.



Image One shows the coupler being separated. This can be done with 'twisle stick' as shown or with magnet.

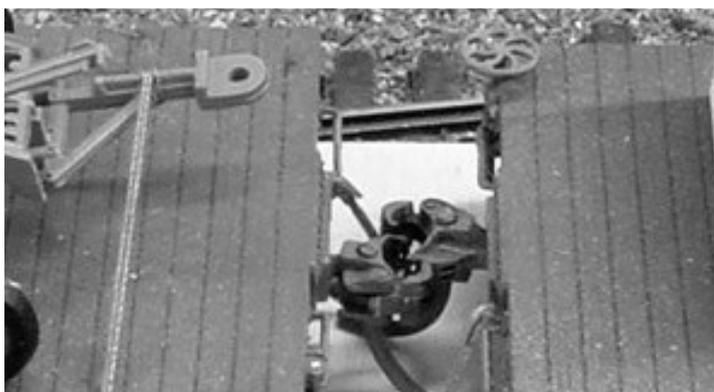


Image Two shows the couplers being pushed together while spread. As you can see they do not couple and you can push the car to its location. Once you pull away, the couplers return to their correct position ready to re-couple.

Number Two – Track Indicators

This one is "stolen" from John Parker of the Barren Creek and Santa Fe.

In staging it not easy to see which tracks are aligned, so what a few of us are doing is using an LED in the centre of the track to show which track is aligned. Here there are two methods, one is to use an LED to show which track is live and the other is to use red & amber LEDs as you would signals.

The LED is mounted between the rails and shows above the ties. A 5mm LED is best (and cheapest) as it can be seen from numerous angles.

Of course, you will need some form of switching at the turnout to show which track is selected. It can be through the contacts of the turnout motor, slide switch, or micro switch.

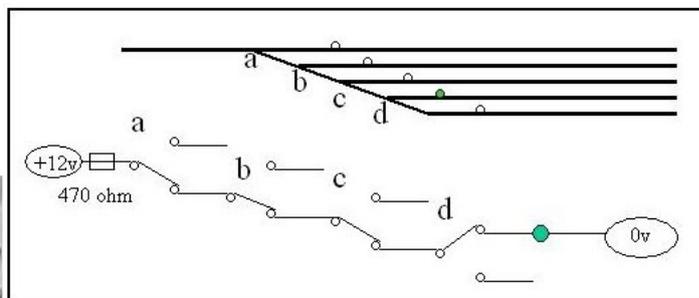
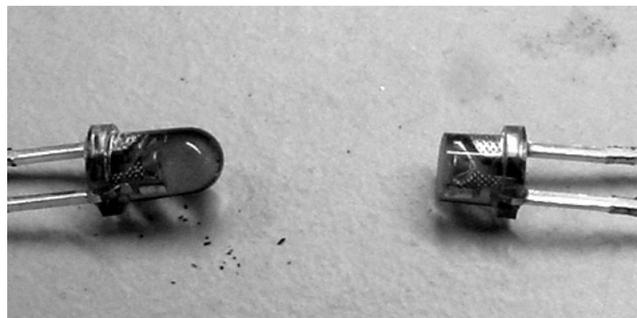


Image Three shows a simple method of wiring the switches to give the required effect.

Number Three – Golden White LEDs

There are two types of White LED. The original one has a blue tinge to it, much like a halogen light. The other is the Golden White LED. This is ideal for steam and early diesels. Some people like their headlights to be "a whiter shade of pale". To make the Golden Whites whiter, just grind down the lens end of the LED as shown below.



Number Four - Shingles

Applying wood shingles to the roofs of models can be quite simple and very rewarding. Most modellers know of the Campbell's brown tape shingles. They have been around for many years and

they look great when applied properly. There are also shingles from Builders in Scale and now the laser cut shingles from Paper Creek Models.

All these shingles require that you apply glue to each and every row and apply the rows one at a time. You can try different glues that have different setting times – or – you can be very lazy – like me, and step into the 21st Century.



This photo shows Campbells' Shingles applied in 1988 on a cardboard base.

I use double sided sticky tape, not the thick foam stuff but the stuff they use in arts and crafts. It come in a range of widths and most importantly is acid free. I use 5mm wide tape and lay the strips across the roof section making sure to keep them together. Next lay the first row of shingles at the bottom edge of the roof so that they overhang by about 1 or 2 mm. Lay the second row so that it overlaps the first, when you are happy that it is straight press down firmly. Peel off the backing of the next section of tape and add more rows of shingles until you get to the top.



This photo shows Campbells' Shingles applied in 2004 again onto cardboard.

This method works for all types of shingles (except the virus) and gives a great finish. The tape can be purchased at any good arts & crafts shop, just make sure you get the acid free type. It is about a dollar a roll more.

Number Five – Standards

On the layout tour on the day after the convention each of the layouts had numerous visitors. The visitors went around the layouts in whatever order they chose. Numerous comments have come back to me about track and rolling stock choices.

The obvious one was about the different track on each layout and why different track was being used. This led to the question – which is the best track? The answer is – the one that best handles your locos and rolling stock.



Photo shows C70 at the back & C55 at the front with US tie spacing.

If you have new (less than 5 years old) US locos and rolling stock then Peco code 83 or Atlas code 83 would be a good choice. If you can build your own turnouts the Micro Engineering code 70 or 55 would be a good way to go. Brett Payne gave a great clinic at the convention on all the options for building your own turnouts.

If you have old locos and rolling stock with big flanges, either US or Australian, then you are stuck with code 100 track.



Left to right: Lima cookie cutter flange, unknown, and RP25 flanges found on current US & Australian wheels. (Lima 38 class flanges are bigger still).

For those that are starting out with current Australian locos and stock then Peco code 75 would be a great choice. This has wider sleeper spacing than the C83 and is more suited to Australian track.

Gerry Hopkins MMR



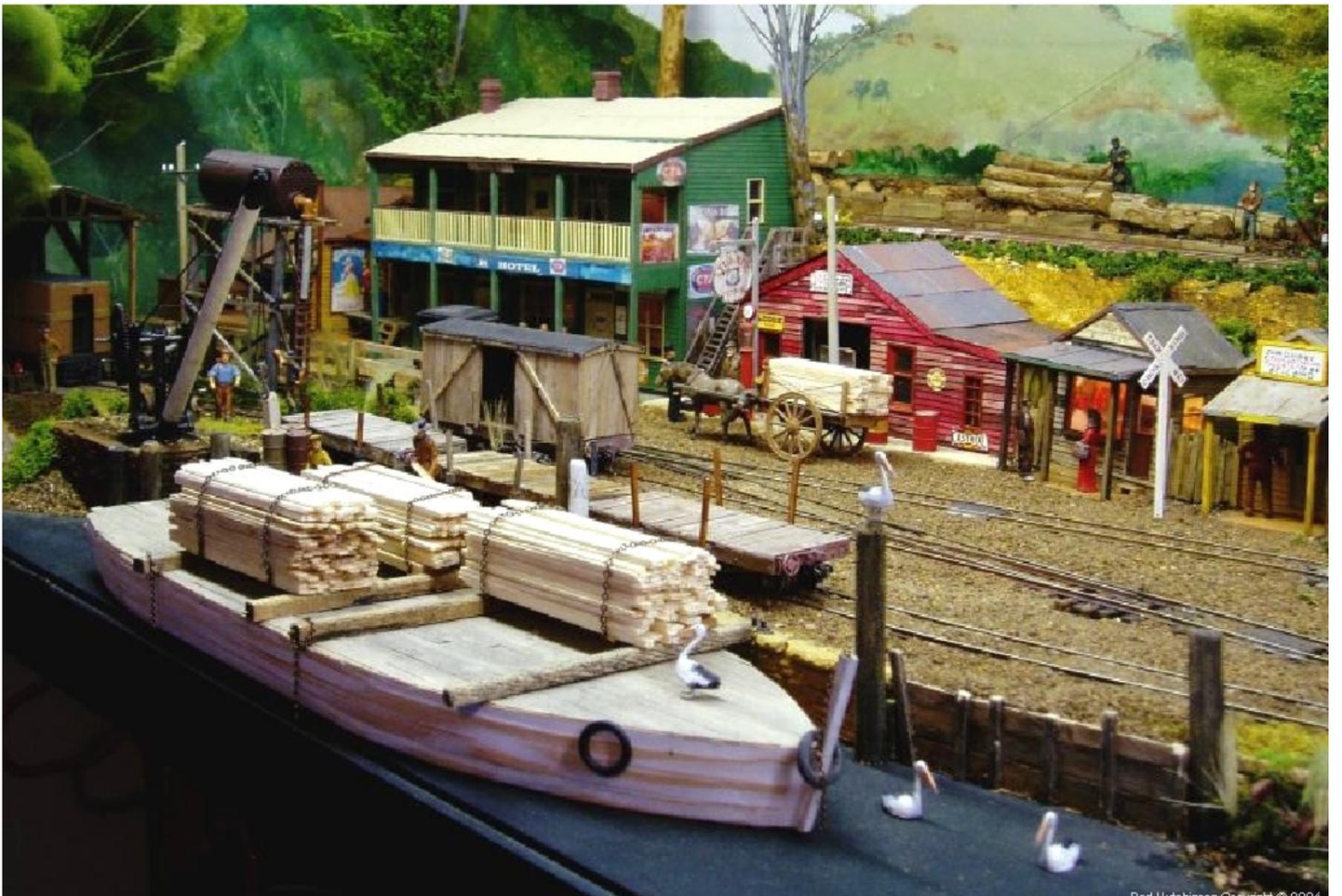
One of the fine models in the contest at the Convention

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