

MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Inc - Australasian Region

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- Tupper Lake and South Junction RR
- Handy Scenery tips
- How to Scratchbuild flat cars

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Milwaukee Road Kansas City Subdivision - On the layout tours. Photo by Kelly Loyd



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Any submissions can be either emailed or
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Photo Credits

Front cover

Denis Lanes Allegheny Midland

Photo by Kelly Loyd

Centre Photo

Tupper Lake and South Junction RR

Photo by John Diamond

Back Cover

Gavin Hinces ON30 Logging Layout

Sowerby Smiths Shasta Subdivision

Photos by Kelly Loyd

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19 September

21 November

Justin Walker

Ian Wellings

Division 2 - ACT

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10 Oct John Gillies

7 Nov John Sands

5 Dec Stephen O'Brien

Division 3 - Victoria

Meetings Start at 2.00pm

11 Oct Gavin & Louise Hince

15 Nov John & Linda Dennis

6 Dec Grant McAdam

Division 4 - Western Australia

Meetings Start at 2.00pm

For details Contact Frank Godde on 0892 930 665

Division 5 - New Zealand

Contact Kelvin Sherson on (04) 234-8577 or email div5sup@nmra.org.au

Division 6 - South Australia

Meetings Start at 1.30 pm Contact The Divisional Superintendent for Details

24 Oct Ron Solly 08 8522 2536

5 Dec Ray Brownbill 08 8389 1045

Division 7 - New South Wales

2 - 5 October 25th Anniversary NMRA Convention Oak Hill College, Castle Hill

14 Nov Bob & Carol Best

12 Dec Christmas Party

Division 8 - Northern Rivers

Meetings Start at 2.00pm Contact Ian Phemister on (02) 6658 9871 or email div8sup@nmra.org.au

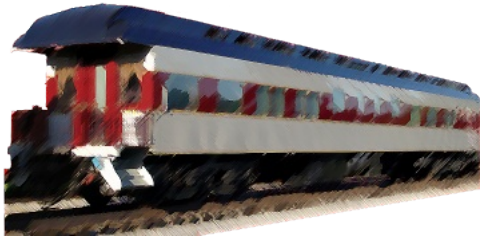
Division 9 - Mid-North Coast

Meetings Start at 2.00pm

Contact Mike Bartlett on (02) 6553 6227 or email div9sup@nmra.org.au



C&O Allegheny 1633 passes Silver Springs Junction (Tower SJ) on John Saxon's Cedar Valley Lines. Photo by Josh Loyd.



From the Business Car

As we approach the anniversary convention the pace has been ramping up. Your committee has been finalising the hundreds of details that make or break a convention. From name badges to catering, tables, table cloths, glasses,

chairs, endless program fine tuning, signage, transportation, venue arrangements etc.etc. and the list goes on. Our ladies program has been endlessly fine tuned. Hundreds of details, hundreds of hours of work by the committee and their helpers. Additionally there is the key part of the convention and that is the actual presentations. Approx 30 different presentations amounting to hundreds of years of experience and countless hours of preparation. Several months ago the work started with preparation of the written content for the program by each presenter. Hundreds of pages of text pictures and Power Point slides. So big in fact the only way we could afford to bring it all to you is on CD. The printed program contains a very brief indication of the notes on each clinic. Now think of the work by our program chair who has to put together not just a printed hand out the size of MainLine but also prepare the content of a CD equivalent to over 200 pages of a printed publication. That is greater than to two years of MainLine. It's just a CD! Check it out it is a goldmine of information.

I haven't even mentioned the personal costs of our guest presenters Charlie and Tony and all the attendees from interstate and overseas. Think of the work done by our layout hosts. The time they are prepared to commit in the days following the convention so attendees can visit and round out their experience of the event. Even if you are a local and think you saw some of them last year. All will be different and improved with very high quality. Do yourself a favour, make the effort to visit as many as possible.

My point in bringing this to your attention is to remind you of the commitment and enthusiasm shown by all involved. Please embrace and enjoy the fruits of our labours and make a special effort to visit the layouts that are open. If something during the convention is not to your liking or does not function in the way you want please remember they have made the commitment to enrich your hobby through their love of the hobby. Have you?

Bob Williams one of our Region Committee members has been very seriously ill in hospital for several weeks following surgery and is slowly recovering and I am sure we can all join in wishing Bob a complete recovery. My condolences to John Montgomery our Div 7 Super for the loss of his brother in late July and to Peter Jensen our Pacific Director on the loss of his brother in late August.

I just received my copy of Scale Rails and in the back of the magazine are the Association minutes and reports including the one on the Achievement Program. I must congratulate our members, we have in July achieved the largest number of Awards and Golden Spikes of any Region in the Association irrespective of the size of membership in the Region. Two more than our nearest rival but who's counting!

You may not be aware but one of the big jobs in the Association is that of Editor of MainLine. You will see elsewhere in the Mainline that Kelly Loyd, our editor for the last 3 years, will as of next January be pursuing further educational opportunities. Consequently, he will be unable to devote the necessary time to the MainLine and he will be stepping down after the next issue published just prior to Christmas. I would like to thank Kelly for his dedication and enthusiasm to the task, the excellent MainLines he has produced and also the way in which he has allowed for an orderly transition. With Kelly in the near future no longer heading up Mainline there is now an opportunity for one of our members to enter the wonderful world of magazine editorship and electronic age publishing. Yes the successful candidate will need moderate computer skills and a good "eye" and can live anywhere in the Region no matter how remote as long as you have broadband internet access. That is one good thing with today's wired world our production process is entirely electronic until the toner hits the page of the final magazine. Kelly and myself will be more than happy to help with the transition and publishing support. So now is the time to think it through and look upon it as a rewarding challenge. Contact me or Kelly if you are interested in becoming our MainLine Editor.

Sowerby Smith

President NMRA AR

Pacific Director's Report

By Peter Jensen

The 2009 Hartford Convention has come, and gone. It was a great spectacle, with over 1100 attending the event. A lot of great layouts, and a lot of superb clinics. Without doubt, the highlight of the event (for me) was to have the opportunity to see George Sellios' Franklin and South Manchester RR. I am yet to see a photo of this layout that does it justice. The attention to detail and the quality of every part was just ... unbelievable.

Hartford showed the advantages of having the National Convention in a smaller city. The city supported the event with buses and other incentives. Local TV even interviewed the crazy Aussie who would travel all that way to "play trains". The train show was one of the best in years. A lot of smaller vendors (especially eBay stores) were in attendance. Planning is well underway for the 75th Anniversary 2010 Convention in Milwaukee.

BOD news is quiet at the moment. In July the Treasurer Tom Draper's tenure ended and was replaced by Kevin Feeney. Kevin plans to have a non-profit accounting package in place by the end of this year. This will certainly help the transparency and reporting of the financials of the organisation.

Congratulations to David North. David was awarded an Honorary Life Membership (HLM) by President Brestel for his work on the ABC program at Hartford. This, I believe, is the most significant change for our region since it started 25 years ago and has been important for our growth over the past few years. Well done, and thank you, David.

See you all at the Sydney 25th Anniversary convention. This will be a beauty.

That's all for now.



David Howarths Beaumouth O Scale Layout

Highball! - Editorial

The end of an Era...

Readers will have noted the announcement in the Presidents Report that I will be stepping down as the Editor of our Australasian Region magazine, MainLine, after I produce the Summer edition (The next issue). It has been a rewarding and challenging time and we have seen a few advancements in the electronic publication of our magazine to the world wide web and also the streamlining of delivery to the printers via electronic transfer. I believe that our next Editor will have an easier time, as the format is setup and we are now very familiar with the process. We have been using no-cost open source software tools to produce the magazine, meaning that we have saved the Region licencing costs associated with software.

If you wish to take up the role, please contact myself or Sowerby Smith to find out the details. We are ready to teach you the process. You will need a good eye, patience and a modicum of skill, er, wait... That's the skill set for a model railroader! Well, what do you know? The person who takes up the Editor's role will also qualify for the Volunteer AP award. If all you do is edit the MainLine for 3 years, you will be able to claim enough points for the certificate, even less time if you volunteer to serve on NMRA layouts during shows or open your layout for a meeting or layout tour, or give a clinic. It helped me to earn my Volunteer AP.

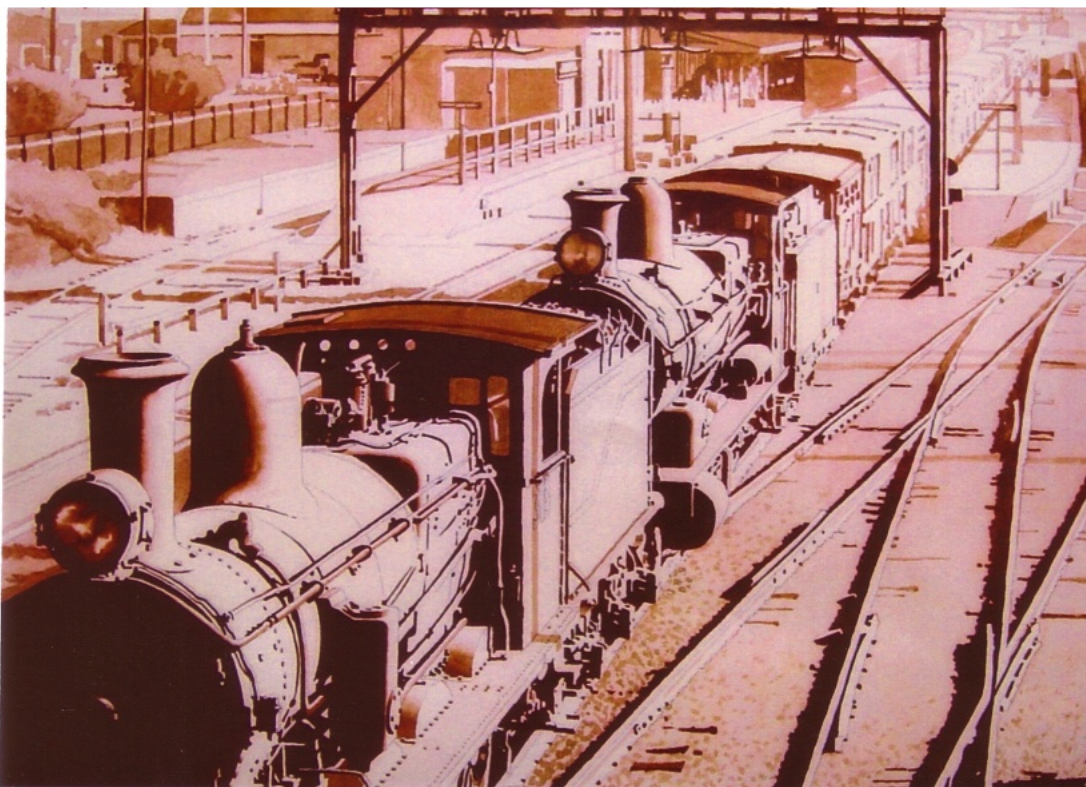
You will be receiving the MainLine at our 25th Convention for those of you who are going. I hope to see you there and also hope you will be able to call in for a visit during the layout tours. My layout is on the list and will be open. Have a great time at the convention!

Kelly



Direct from the artist –signed and numbered high definition A3 sepia toned laser prints '3104T and a 50 class with a stock train depart Junee, NSW, c1950s'

High definition A3 colour laser prints from my original sepia toned watercolour illustrations evoking memories of the bygone era os team on the New South Wales railways. Produced on 120 gsm stock the prints measure 420 x 297mm. Only 25 prints are available signed and numbered by the artist for \$35.00 each plus postage \$4.50 within Australia (the prints will be dispatched in AustPost mailing tubes). Payment can be made by personal Cheque, Bank Cheque or Money Order made out to Terence Fowler, posted to: 140 Boundary Street Roseville 2069 NSW



This is the first in a series of different aspects of steam locomotives on NSW railways I am proposing to issue.

Please note: The black and white reproduction shown here is representative only in terms of quality.

For enquiries please phone me on 0438 914 714 or by email at tjf17@bigpond.net.au

The new Tupper Lake and South Junction RR

by John Diamond



This is a view of South Junction Yard. NYC Hudson 5324 is waiting in the hole for it's next assignment. Vermont Railway RS3 #603 is about to make a run to the township of Tupper Lake, but FA7 #4126 is about to take the crossover to clear the track.

The Layout.

A change of address saw the tearing down of the double deck South Junction and Tupper Lake RR, a 10-year project. You can see it at www.nmra.org.au, Australasian region; go to layout tours run on DCC. The move was to an apartment - no grass to mow but instead of 12' x 15' the new layout is in a room 10' x 12' taking over the lounge room was vetoed.

I always wanted to build a dream layout in a room 20' x 30' but I have found over the years if you plan carefully you can fit a lot of railway in a small room. Gaining height in this space for a double deck railway seemed optimistic so one deck was the way to go. I thought I would try the domino principal of bench work that David Barrow has shown works well. Six of these 4 ft long by 3 ft wide filled my space nicely. In some places the width has gone to 3 and a half ft. This is a bit of a stretch but my reach is 33" so standing on one step for track and scenery work meant wider vistas.

Location.

The railway is still set in the Adirondacks upstate New York, running almost to the Canadian border ending at the township of Chateaugay. The rails are owned by the New York Central. The home road is the Tupper Lake and South Junction a short line railroad. Trackage rights are granted to the Vermont Railway, Delaware and Hudson and the Canadian Pacific, which comes in from Chateaugay. So a lot of interchange takes place.

Plan.

The plan was to have the yards running on the outside of the layout and has worked quite well. It goes from two lines to three in some places which is adequate as I run short trains of three or four cars. The plan for this railroad with modifications came from Great Model Railroads magazine about five years ago.

The roadbed is half-inch plywood, which is good and solid to lay canite on top. On the main I use 3mm cork.

The rail is laid directly on this sandwich and is not really open grid.

Depressions for bridges and lakes are made by using the cookie cutter method. There are no risers as such expect to support the sheets of plywood to level the track in places that are needed. I have three staging yards, most are three tracks, there are no grades expect at the coaling site. The height of the layout is 47" high which I find as I am getting older kinder on my back.

Track.

Derailments drive me crazy, so a lot of time is spent getting the track reliable. All points and rail are chamfered and soldered, gaps are left at the rail joiners for expansion I know a lot of modellers don't like soldering rail, but I have never had a problem. Micro Engineering is the rail of choice, I use code 83 on the mainline and passing loops and code 70 on all other tracks. All the turnouts are DCC friendly by using short dead frogs. The point blades are wired to the stock rails. The track is pinned down every sixth tie with short



South Junction wharf is a busy place as Vermont Railway RS3 #603 passes on a milk run.



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headed track pins. Easements are put in on all curves except in yards. Every three feet of track is wired and tested as we go. With DCC only two wires are needed. A locomotive is run to test the point and track work. The NMRA wheel gauge is used to check all spacing. Plastic wheels are replaced with metal ones.

System.

I am using The NCE DCC system both tethered and radio throttles which have worked very well. Sound is being added to most locomotives, but as I have been collecting motive power since the late seventies I am taking my time doing this. Ten have been converted with another twenty to go. I had better get a night job. The turnouts are powered by hanks craft display motors which never stop turning but stall at the end of travel, so a good connection is always made. These motors do not have any switches so to wire around turnouts I use DPDT centre off switches. These have been described before and it is not rocket science. As the turnout turns throw the switch to the centre off position, when the throw is complete switch to the other side. The upside is no make before shorts. All turnouts are signalled and

operators have to keep an eye open not to run a red light .

Because the New York Central owns the tracks a lot of their power is seen. As the layout is set in the 1940s early 50s we see Hudsons , Mikados RS1s RS3s, Trainmasters, FAs, GP 20s and 30s, S2 and SW7s do the yard work. Passenger coaches and Cabooses have been fitted with the very good interior lights from Miniaturics, which pick up power from the rails. Cabooses have been fitted with end lighted marker lights from Tomar Industries. They get power from one AAA battery with a micro switch underneath. Coaches with passengers and cabooses with their interior lights on, and marker lights on running with the room lights off is magical.

Operation.

I am only now thinking about serious operation, as all my energies have been focussed on getting the layout to a finished state. The starting point of the railroad is the yard at South Junction where three railroads meet. The Canadian Pacific, Delaware and Hudson, and Vermont Railway. All interchange with the New York Central and my home road, the Tupper Lake and South Junction.



NYC C Liner #5006 with a consist of lighted heavyweight cars, crossing two Campbell bridges and passing a Bar Mills freight house en route to Chateaugay. The animal and bird life don't seem to mind.

There really was such a railroad running in the Adirondacks but long since abandoned. There is a long tunnel under the township of Chateaugay which has two lines. So trains entering the tunnel on their way to South Junction and New York can layover soaking up a lot of time and reappear when the other railroads have done their work. Detection circuits built into the rails keep track of their movements. Signals change with the turnouts through a DDPDT electronic switch, sold by Dick Smith but no longer available. Repeater leds on the fascia make it possible to run trains at night, without looking at the position of turnouts. As the old layout was pulled down, many buildings were managed to be saved. So as the new layout evolved industries and towns were added and one man operation could begin. Car cards are used, but I am now writing route cards which lists which engine is assigned which staging yard it starts from, and all the towns and cities where cars are to be dropped off and picked up. I can operate with one person - that's me or three. Lately neighbours have dropped in after hearing about something going on in a room at number 36 When they do, I get them running a train and they are hooked .

Scenery.

The scenery is about 90 percent complete. The base is the tried and true method of a lattice work of cardboard strips hot glued together, Paper towels are glued on top with white glue, the messy plaster is eliminated. I have made extensive use of ground goop described in Alan Keller's Great Model Railways Vol. 23 of Lou Sassi's layout .It consists of papier mache, permascene, earth coloured acrylic paint and white glue. Permascene is no longer made but you can obtain Vermiculite from good garden shops. This comes in granules which should be blended to a fine powder. Empty it into an old mixer not your wife's good one, I learnt this too late to my cost, it can scratch the mixer. Rocks and mountains are made in rubber moulds from plaster or hand carved. I have scratch built a few buildings but most are from craftsman kits. I have built half the village of Chateaugay out of Bar Mills Scale Models kits which go well with my era. I make use of a lot of natural materials for swamps, rivers, and shore lines . Woodland scenics ground foam is used extensively. I use animation for my towns and cities. Nearly all my towns have neon signs in windows and on top of buildings.

When these lights come on in buildings at night it's quite a show. If you go to New England like I have, what strikes you is the abundance of forest, particularly Douglas firs. To replicate this I use balsa square strips shaved down all sides with a knife, then scored with a razor saw. This is then stained and holes drilled into the trunk and selected Caspia branches inserted with white glue. First spray your Caspia with a suitable green paint. I use Hunter Green. While the branches are still wet, sprinkle on ground foam, I use Woodland scenics green blend. Although this process can be very tedious in the

end it makes a very good replica of a fir tree. Dried Caspia has been declared a noxious weed in Australia and is no longer available. If any modeller knows a source of dried Caspia I would love to hear from you. I started this layout five years ago and am still at it, but it is a lot of fun

Layout At A Glance.

Name - Tupper Lake And South Junction RR

scale- HO 1:87 Size - 10 x 12 feet.

Prototype - New York Central.

Locale - New England and the Adirondacks.

Era - Steam to Diesel.

Mainline run - 160 feet.

Minimum radius - 24" Minimum turnout - No 6.

Maximum grade - none.

Benchwork - domino principal.

Height - 47"

Roadbed - 1/2" x canine on 1/2" plywood.

Track - ME C83 mainline ME C70 branch and yard tracks.

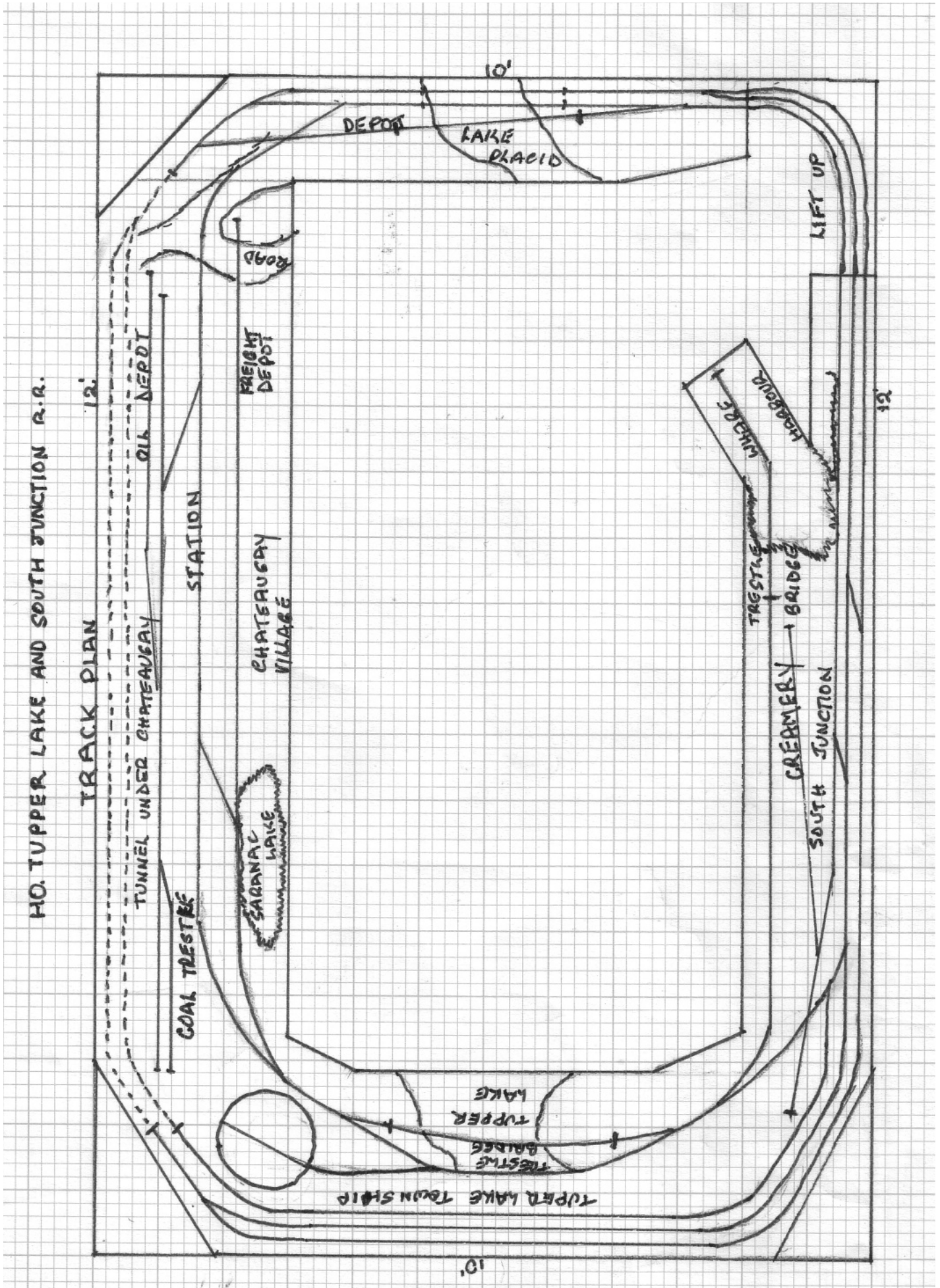
Scenery - paper towels glued on cardboard strips.

Operating system - NCE DCC cab control with tethered and radio cabs.

Photography - John Diamond.



General Store by Laurie Green, Division 3



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MASTERCARD

Three handy scenery articles

By Allen Hare

Making your plastic flexi track look used?

So you have spent hours laying your wooden tie flexi-track, glued down the ballast, stood back and the first thing you notice is that it all still looks like shiny new flexi-track. So how do we fix this common problem when we suddenly realise that ballast alone does not hide the plastic look of the common flexi-track that we all seem to now use.

I have read many articles on laying flexi-track and after a bit of trial and error have stuck to the following which is a number of ideas put together.

When you are hand laying track you first stain your ties, paint your lengths of rail, lay them, then glue down your ballast, and if done right it should all blend together. So how do we do the same to flexi-track to get rid of that plastic look?

If you spend a bit of time preparing your flexi-track before you lay it then after the ballast goes down you will be more than pleased with the results.

First take a length of track and detail it by cutting around 1/32 to 1/8 off the ends of some ties, say the fourth or sixth one with a single edge razor blade. do this to both sides but not to the same tie. Remember in the real world all ties are not the same length. keep in

mind that sidings and spurs usually have more uneven ties due to the lack of maintenance.

When we are happy with the look of the ties we mix up a 50/50 mixture of Floquil rust and roof brown and air brush the rail on both sides. At this point I cannot emphasize on how simple an air brush is to use. The things you can do on a model railroad are endless. If you do not have an air brush just run down the sides with a fine artist brush. then take Floquil rail brown and holding a piece of card or styrene against the rails air brush the ties or hand paint.

Leave the track to dry and then come back and very lightly dry brush a few of the ties with any Floquil medium grey and rust. You may also use oil based paints for this such as raw umber and a medium grey. Just blend the two colors to produce a wood like texture don't worry if it looks unrealistic at this stage as the ballasting and final weathering will make it more natural. Before I lay my track I paint the road board base with any old brown latex paint. This stops any light color, ie cork or pinex showing through the ballast.

Just lay your track as normal. I never glue my track down, I just pin it as the ballast and matte medium glue holds it all together. Note I only use matte medium, i.e.; Woodlands Scenics or Scenic Express, as I have found white PVA glue can leave a shine to the ballast.

When the ballast is dry, lightly air brush Floquil grimy black between the rails over the ties and ballast and then air brush Floquil rust along the out side, keep this subtle but continuous. But make the main track a bit darker




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LEDs available from 1.6mm to 1.8mm to 2mm and 3mm and 5mm in red/yellow/green/warm white and flashing red and bi-colour

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than the sidings.

This is now a good time to fine detail the sides of the track with coal-sand-grain spills and odd bits of wood, and weeds, what ever takes your fancy that you may have seen by the side of the track.

When dry gently run along the railhead with the edge of a steel ruler and then do the final clean up with a track rubber.

I have found these ideas work for me and hope they may help in laying your track to get it looking more realistic.

Machinery Gears and Industrial Junk

One thing that catches ones eye when looking at layouts is the work that went into the detail on and around each building or mini scene. Super detailed scenes do not mean they cost a super price to achieve. Look closely at some and you can find detail that will cost very little or nothing if you know, where to look for the detail needed.

There are 100's of detailing parts in the home, you can pull apart old radios, clocks, old weighing machines, and ballpoint pens even the odd car parts. The best items for industrial junk have to be watches and clocks. The availability of parts from these is endless, gears rods screws small bars etc. some of the gears can be used as circular saw blades and pulleys just pull one apart look at the bits and think what you can do with it.

The blue black and white binding plastic strip used to tie packaging up, when cut into small bits and painted, looks like steel checker plate. Scrap pieces of strip wood when cut to scale lengths and then either stained or left in there raw state make good looking wooden crates. Bits of old steel brake pipe cut to any size and painted in rust coloured paint make good piles of rusty old pipe. Just look around you will be surprised as to what you can make from what is lying in the junk box. All that is needed to prepare your detail parts is first clean of all the grease and dirt give them a light coat of primer and paint them in good flat black paint. (I prefer to use Floquil grimy black). The parts can then be aged with rust coloured paint washes. I mix a 50/50 mixture of Floquil rust and roof brown and brush this over them. When dry I dip the end of a stiff medium artist brush into a small amount of isopropanol (rubbing alcohol) then dip into a range of brown and rust coloured powered pastel chalks and dab over the parts. Just blend the colours together: when dry they will give a nice old rusty effect. After a few hours you will have a nice range of cheap junk to detail the scene on your layout.

What does your ROOF look like?

Most model railroads broads are usually viewed from above. We tend to make sure that the ground work is well detailed and looking as real as we can make it, but most of us fail to detail one of the most important parts of our railway empire the well looked at ROOF.

The roof provides an open canvas of opportunity for you to detail parts of ones layout, which would normally

be forgotten about.

Lets take a look at the everyday plastic shake the box kit with a flat roof. We always have this roof that really does not look like a roof, even after we have painted it black or grey or what ever colours takes your fancy it still looks plastic. Try first painting it with full strength white glue and sprinkle fine sand over it and leave this to dry. When dry, shake off the excess and paint it with Floquil grimy black. Let this dry then glue in place. The first thing that you notice the plastic look has gone and we have a nice looking tar and sand roof.

Another method used is to cut out a card board roof traced from the plastic one and then glue over this a piece of 600 grit black auto motive sandpaper, then all that is required to do is glue it into place then spray it with dull coat or you can kill the shine with black or dark grey powdered pastels which you lightly dust on.

Let's look at tarpaper roofs these are easy to make if you have the right items at hand. These are good for doing away with the sloping plastic roofs found in most kits. As with the sand paper covered roofs, first glue to the building cardboard roofs cut to the right size. Next paint say a 150mm sq sheet of thin white paper with Floquil grimy black on both sides, also paper from a normal printer will work fine. A fast drying can of satin black automotive paint will also do. Leave this to dry well. In a small jar mix 80% ISOPROPANOL Rubbing Alcohol with 20% acrylic white (I use Polly scale), mix this well, this becomes our tarpaper. Take the black paper and spray one side with dull coat leave this to dry for a few minutes powder a little grey and white pastel chalk over the tarpaper. Just a few random sprinkles here and there the more you use the more weathered it will be. Now with a soft round brush apply the wash going up and down the pastel covered paper. Do not go across the paper this way the brush strokes are only visible in one direction. Do not saturate just net and allow to dry. If done right you should have a stripy dirty looking paper. When dry cut the paper into 15mm strips, cut these perpendicular to the brush strokes. Mix these up, now all that is needed is to add a thin bead of glue to the back of-the tar paper strips and starting at the bottom of the roof glue them on over lapping them by 2mm as you go. After you have done both sides make up a cap by folding a piece in half and glue over the ridge. Dust with the white and grey pastels and add roof detail like a chimney.

Now let's look at how we can add detail to our roofs so they don't look dull. With roofs anything goes as every roof has its share of vents - chimneys - access hatches, even water tanks you can add scrap lumber - ladders - clotheslines, old bits of pipe broken glass even puddles of water. Also don't forget pigeons and the odd cat. Just use your imagination there could sunbathers hiding behind billboards TV antennas. Another good detail is to have maintenance men at work, just sit down and think as to what can go on that undetailed boring roof you have on your layout. Good roof detail will add a new dimension to your layout and will be another talking point for your visitors, as they say the sky is the limit.



It's very rough on Tupper Lake, but the fish seem to be biting.
Photo by John Diamond



ing as D&H RS3 #4121 passes on a caboose run.

Region Roundup

Division 1 Queensland

By Ian Venables

JULY 2009

Toowoomba Train Show

As always, many of us were eager to be part of the Toowoomba Train Show organised by the members of the Darling Downs MR Club. Our module group took their lengths of industrial switching yards to be once again joined together for some operating fun and to explain to the public what we were doing and the advantages of the NMRA.

The system was joined and running in very quick time which gave us a chance to help others and to just socialise. The Toowoomba Show is a very friendly affair and the DDMRC people are excellent hosts.

The Saturday night dinner was as always, top-class and at this event the dedication of the new Club rooms within the show grounds, was made by the local MLA, Mike Horan. This year we missed out completely in the trivia competition so next year we had better do more reading and less modelling!

Our modules ran well all weekend, they drew much interest and hopefully enough to get some more people interested in this great hobby.

Cross Purposes

One of my other interests besides MR is ornithology, the study of birds.

What does this have to do with trains?

As I said in the last Newsletter, my father was a Q.G.R. sign-writer and as such he had to know what lettering to put onto each type of wagon, carriage and locomotive within the system.

In the years following World War I and leading into the Depression years, many men made a living by making ant-bed tennis courts. When I was a kid there were hundreds of these around Brisbane and other areas.

Most in the cities, have been since sold for housing allotments.

It seems that there was sufficient business in this ant-bed material for a special wagon although they weren't numerous but were allotted a class designation.

Paradise Parrots nest in termite mounds and these mounds were considered excellent material for tennis courts.

Q.G.R. in fact had a special classification for wagons that used to be used to bring termite (ant-bed) material from the Gayndah area to Brisbane. They weren't numerous but my father had the alphabet letter classification in a notebook. Unfortunately, I can't remember what that designation was.

Nests must have been destroyed and along with habitat destruction, predation by feral animals, etc. this most

beautiful of parrots became extinct.

One of the great disappointments in Australian ornithology, is that the Paradise Parrot only became extinct in the 20th century.

Ornithologists have wrestled with the reasons why this happened. The last authenticated sighting was in 1923 with one or two possible sightings in the late '20's.

In this way we can probably say that the making of tennis-courts from materials carried by the railway contributed towards the demise of this beautiful Paradise Parrot.

Comment

To weather or not to weather - that is the question. You spend buckets of money and/or hours of valuable time building or buying as close as possible models which generally arrive home in pristine condition.

It is hard at the start to now get this wonderful thing out and go over it to make it look used and grungey.

But there is no doubt about it, unweathered equipment often looks toylike or plastic-ie.

You need to develop a mentality that says, "It isn't finished until the thing is weathered then Dullcoted". At first this is hard. So try making the item or buying it and then displaying it in your house. Put it somewhere that it will be seen often and do so without weathering.

Hopefully, it will only be a couple of weeks before you will start to notice that something isn't quite right.

That deficiency might well be weathering. Allow yourself to get blasé about this model if you can and then bite the bullet and do something about it.

There have been numerous articles in the modelling media about this facet of our hobby. One nice thing, you don't have to be too finicky. I have read articles on what shape and form the weathering should be done for various models but even a thin blast in roughly correct places looks a lot better than no weathering at all.

If you are like me you build things in fits and starts.

That often means that when you come back to something after a spell away from it, you have to think or make a list of the work that needs to be done to complete the model.

Always ensure that weathering and Dullcoting are the last two requirements before you list this model on your inventory.

I have found it best to Dullcote last as that way you don't leave finger marks in the weathering which look even worse than the untouched model.

If it is still hard to do, just try a very diluted coat on appropriate places and leave it at that. This might be a fine weathering that can only just be detected when comparing an un-touched model. Fair enough, there are good reasons why a model may have light weathering. I still think that it looks better than to do nothing.

A word of warning though. I have seen models that are too overdone and these aren't pretty sights. So it is safer to start with the light touch.

We usually think of rolling stock in this regard but

structures should be weathered too. The easiest here is the roof of structures that are lineside. They would soon get a coating of coal or diesel black on them in the real world. Buildings further from the track would have less black on their roofs but now the rust or other weathering would show through.

There is nothing that makes your buildings look more anchored to the ground than the light spray of your particular earth colour around the base of the building's walls. Mud is splashed up by raindrops and even building surrounded by concrete show some form of "ground" blending here.

Buildings in dry areas would show less than those in wetter areas.

Think about it and consider doing signals, bridges, rails, industries, etc.

Finally, nothing needs weathering more I believe, than the vehicles we decorate our layouts with. How incongruous they look when all around them is flat and well weathered. I admit that most cars receive an occasional clean and that car manufacturers put as shiny as possible finish on their cars. But the fact remains that in a model this shininess duplicated by model manufacturers does look out of place. So here it is often preferable to spray your vehicles with a semi-flat coating if you wish to represent a well-cleaned car.

Semi-flat finishes can be got in various degrees by mixing Dullcote and Glosscote together.

By now your railroad will be starting to really blend in a prototypical manner. After you think you have finished go over it again with a very critical eye and weather or dull those bits that you missed out on.

All of this should go a long way to your own more satisfied feeling about your models. It will also elicit favourable comment, but your commentators may not realise what it is that makes your railroad look wonderful. That may be the ultimate accolade for your model display – to admire but not be sure why it is admirable.

Laurie McLean's

Very Tiny Brakeman's Lamp

With modern electronics model railroading can go to many places not previously thought possible. Our own Laurie McLean is one who is often raising the bar on the standards of model-making once only in our dreams.

Take a look at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azOKvvZBQ8s> I'm sorry, another of those long and complicated address but I suppose that's the price we pay for having a universal clientele on the web. Be sure to turn the sound on too. [*Laurie's Channel Address:*

<http://www.youtube.com/user/scoopmmr> - Ed.]

Modules

With the success of our Division 1 modules we have had several requests for rules and standards so others can participate. Our Module Co-ordinator, Paul Skehan

is putting together a formal list of Rules and Standards and when that is complete we will publish them in Newsletter.

We modeller railroaders are dreamers (sometimes more than doers!) so if you could be tempted, start dreaming what your module might look like. Remember, it is a point-to-point industrial switching layout so that gives you quite a wide scope.

We have so far a couple of oil depots, an l.c.l. type storage shed, a warehouse, passenger station for commuting workers, a pickles works, a jam factory, a candy factory and a canning plant. There is one "fiddle yard", one interchange and a couple of team tracks.

I have given you these industry functions in case you don't want to duplicate and to give you an idea of what you could consider as an industry to work in with one of those mentioned. For example, a sugar refinery, or an abattoir or a chemical plant producing refined salt or vinegar. There are still hundreds of possibilities not considered here that may appeal to you.

My own module reflects a preference for certain types of rolling stock. I use boxcars to bring in raw produce, sugar for jam, etc. and to take out manufactured food items. I even have need of ventilated boxcars.

Refrigerator cars also bring in fruit for jam, vegetables for pickling and beef carcasses for canning.

When you plan your module think also that you may need hoppers for coal to keep steam plants operating, gondolas to take out ash, tank cars to bring in cleaning fluids and maybe the odd flat car to bring in replacement plant, etc.

A cement works might have need of covered hoppers.

The possibilities are numerous and you could design your module so that it too uses the type of rolling stock you like.

After two shows now, one thing we have found is that you don't need a vast number of freight cars. A few cars and a switching loco is all that is necessary. Extra cars may be brought along but used mainly to vary what you use after taking your original batch off the layout. You would be surprised how quickly yards can get jammed up with superfluous freight cars.

For we participants, there are many advantages. We are getting some running on a layout that could possibly be used at home. That's an advantage for those who don't have a layout at the moment.

It gives us a chance to try out techniques before they are implemented in the home layout.

We are all talking railroads a lot more and learning from each other.

We are ensuring our equipment operates well as we don't want to be caught out in front of spectators.

Interchange Operations

One of the best operations to have in MR is the interchange. This can be a simple single line connecting two lines of different ownership or a complicated affair as you would expect at a large terminal.

Large terminals are out for most of us so we would generally be more interested in smaller interchange set-ups. One of the best articles I have read in recent years about this form of operation was in Railroad Model Craftsman March 2009 in an article titled "The Litchfield interchange". Here four Class 1 railroads are involved with a shortline and an interurban.

Imagine the plethora of RR equipment that might go through this junction yet it is only a few sidings and connecting tracks. All of its functions could be easily modelled on a medium sized (for Australia) home layout.

For those interested in operation or considering an interchange, I suggest you read this article first. There are operations that seem devoid of efficiency and that are rather, efforts by enterprising competitive operators to make a few dollars for their company.

This gives the modeller a chance to have unexpected freight cars and motive power on their layout. As they so often say in the magazines, "Somewhere, every possibility has been done on the prototype".

Much of this article is appropriate for our modular layout as we do have one interchange module at the moment and the fiddle yard could handle some of it as well.

Even better, if we assume that our modular layout is somewhere in Illinois, then the small city of Lichfield is only 240 miles south of Chicago and so influenced by the 'railroad capital'.

Fresh Ideas

The editor would like to hear any stories about how you became interested in model railroading. Please send your story in for future publication. I'm sure other members will be intrigued.

Division 2 - ACT

By John Bullen

So far this year Division 2 (ACT) has had six monthly meetings, each at a different member's home.

Each meeting usually attracts a keen crowd of somewhere between 10 and 20 members, usually nearer 10 than 20. The colossal attendance record of 25 still stands unchallenged. This all-time record was achieved on 17 January 2004 by the cunning expedient of holding the meeting in one of Canberra's outermost suburbs, namely Cootamundra. There are some obvious conclusions to be drawn here and, five years later, we're still working on them.

We haven't been back to Cootamundra since, but we've found another outlying suburb now that Stephe Jitts has moved to Yass. So we will be trying for a capacity crowd when we meet there next year.

This year got off to a flying start with a crowd of 17 in the home of Malcolm Risby. This was more than 50% of our membership, thus scotching the scurrilous

allegation that 100% of Canberra moves to the coast during January and proving (if any proof is needed) that there are far more important things in life than salt water and sunburn.

A Show And Tell session revealed that several of our members are particularly knowledgeable on railways in war, especially WW1, and Jess Brisbane's recently acquired book on 'The 60 cm Military Railways of WWI in France', by Dr. Christian Cénac, greatly impressed those who were glad they hadn't had to pay for it.

The meeting adjourned to Malcolm's N scale layout which fills his very large two car garage. This diesel era double track American layout is over 8 metres long, offering long runs for long freight trains, with extensive staging yards around the back. The well-laid track is reliable in operation and scenery construction is now under way.

Realism was slightly damaged by the appearance of Peter Dinham's Union Pacific Big Boy and Rob Anderson's Shinkansen on the layout. Even in N scale, the Big Boy's sound was particularly good. The brand new Shinkansen ran very well, remarkably so for an electric loco with pantograph up to catch the current and no overhead wire to draw it from.

The February meeting was at Tony Payne's where we again adjourned to Tony's HO layout in its purpose built shed. A more complex layout here, with separate Burlington Northern and Union Pacific tracks and yards. Scenery here is complete and realistic. But running is not as exciting as it used to be, now that the level crossing of three tracks (without signals) in an inaccessible tunnel under the mountain has been eliminated by the construction of grades and bridges and the installation of signals. Safety has been vastly improved, but there are those among us who still miss the excitement.

March was at Jess Brisbane's. Jess is in between operating layouts at the moment and is currently working in On scale with a preference for mine railways and other improvised rolling stock. Much of Jess's scratchbuilding in this scale is very impressive.

In April we were watching Viv Brice's Pennsy HO layout in operation. There's much more still to be built, but enough has now been done for continuous running of trains. The use of video cameras for safe working in blind areas was much admired. Likewise the magnetic hatch covers for access beneath the scenery. This layout has great potential and we await next year's visit with much interest.

In May, John Prattis treated us to the Rocky Mountaineer in winter - a truly fascinating experience. John and Julie are old hands on the Rocky Mountaineer and must now be near qualification for life passes.

After safely negotiating the Canadian Rockies we went downstairs to negotiate John's HO scale Blue Mountains Zig Zag for the last time. John and Julie are moving

house so we look forward to a new layout - this time with wide enough curves to enable John's HO scale Rocky Mountaineer to make guest appearances in the Blue Mountains, hopefully with better luck than the Indian Pacific had at Glenbrook in 1999.

Our June meeting was at fairly short notice switched to John Gillies's home where we were treated to the finer points of freight cars to be seen on the Burlington Northern, thanks to John's encyclopaedic knowledge of the subject and the documentary and image resources he has accumulated from many years study of this vast subject.

But we've been active in other areas than just holding monthly meetings. In April, our module group assembled and exhibited our club module HO layout at the annual CMRCI exhibition in the big indoor sport centre at Lyneham.

The new lighting, thanks to Viv Brice and his son, made a tremendous difference to the appearance of the layout and we attracted lots of visitors. As usual, ours was the only layout which invited children to drive quality model railways themselves (as distinct from belting around the track in O scale tinplate with huge wheel flanges to hold trains on the track at scale speeds of over 200 kph - exciting, but less realistic).

We operated on the usual basis - children most welcome to drive, and adults could also drive if vouched for by a responsible child. Once again, we trained lots of enthusiastic young drivers, a few fathers and one mother (who was seriously and genuinely interested).

We had a major crisis here, with not enough crews to man the roster, but by ignoring OH&S considerations and the union, and by working double shifts (for the same pay, incidentally), we managed to get by.

Our module group is now preparing to exhibit at the Malkara Exhibition on 1-2 August, when more drivers will no doubt be trained.

Our operating group has been meeting once a month for operating sessions. For several years now, Ken Macleay, Rob Anderson, Tony Payne and John Prattis have regularly made their layouts available for this purpose. Changes are about to happen now that Ken Macleay's N scale layout has been dismantled and John Prattis is moving house.

The activist group protesting against the demolition of Ken Macleay's beautifully running layout has been mollified by much of it going to Steve Walker and Ken getting ahead with his new O scale layout, mostly C&O and Chessie System.

Quite apart from our railway activities, John Bullen's book 'Captain Bullen's War' is now in the bookshops and has been nominated for the 2009 Walkley Award for Best Non-Fiction. It is of course compulsory reading for NMRA members since it contains one railway photograph.

Division 4 - Western Australia

By Jim Anderson, Secretary

Division Meeting 30 August 2009

Les Hodgson hosted the meeting at his home & train room at 55 Jubilee Street, Beckenham. Frank Godde asked that members bring items for a show and tell session following the business meeting.



Attendance: Frank Godde MMR (Superintendent), Jim Anderson, Alan Burrough, Les Hodgson, Bob Kollwyn, Allan Perry, Peter Scarfe, Rod Tonkin.

Meeting Business: From the chair Frank made mention of Martin Canteros-Paz from Katherine in NT as a new member by correspondence of the WA Division. Les took photographs of the members around the discussion table to send to Martin. Martin is attending the Sydney Convention and will meet those of our members who are attending. There were favourable comments on the modelling of the MOW vehicle, pictures of which Martin had sent to Frank who passed them to Division members



Frank stated that he will be standing down as Superintendent in December and asked for expressions of interest to take on the role from members around the

table. He explained that the task was primarily one of coordination of meetings and relaying messages. There were no volunteers.

Jim advised that he had corrected the draft report of the July meeting and forwarded it to Gerry Hopkins. Frank said that Kelly Loyd was the editor and the reports should be sent to him. There was discussion on contributions to Mainline especially concerning Rod's layout in a cupboard. Members wondered what went on behind the cupboard door and whether Rod would be coming out soon. Rod promised to write an article on his closet modelling.

Peter raised matters on the Convention response to questions on travel arrangements from the airport or railway station to the Hotel Ibis. The response was unsatisfactory for someone foreign to the Sydney transport system. Frank and Bob suggested that they contact the Hotel Ibis direct for information on getting to the hotel from the transport hubs. There was general discussion on Convention matters especially layout visits and clinics.



Alan B's Spectrum 4-6-0 Baldwin

Allan P advised that he cannot host the November meeting because it is the weekend of his daughter's wedding. The remaining meetings for 2009 are therefore at Bob Kolwyn's for October, Frank Godde's for November, and Peter Scarfe's in December. Allan Perry will have the first meeting for 2010 in January.

Jim has been asked by the Hillview village community to display his Callumryan layout at the first anniversary of the opening of the village clubhouse in October.

Show and Tell: Frank has constructed 10 buildings since finishing the motive power for Dolly Varden Railroad and brought with him the basic structure and some of the internal machines for the Stillwater Timber Mill. He has exchanged photographs and scenery materials with Walter Reid, a friend who introduced him to the book 'Steel Rails', who asked how Frank could model such realistic logs. They were branches from WA Callistemon (bottlebrush) bushes so were real logs of

model size. He also showed photographs from the Sierra west website of mill machinery on which his models are based.



An example of the Atlas MP15DC.
Kelly Loyd's Atlas MP15DC on his layout.

Peter showed his recent purchases of an Atlas HO KCS MP-15 and Arkansas & Missouri Alco C420 Phase 1. They were later demonstrated on the host's layout. Peter also mentioned his construction proposals for his new layout using steel frames. He has drawn his track base on cardboard and is cutting plywood to the cardboard pattern. He plans double track with 28 and 26 inch radius curves.

Les showed two Roundhouse HO SW1500 kits and a Model Power HO Southern Pacific F2A which he found was too light to manage more than five coaches on the incline on his layout. The model has eight wheel drive but is too light to cope with a reasonable load. He also distributed copies of material on SP GS4 4449 that he prepared for the July meeting that he could not attend.

Jim said he had ordered but not received KATO N Southern Pacific PA and PB to supplement the GS4s he showed at the last meeting. This allows modelling the SP steam/diesel transition.

Rod told of his research into a Brazilian 75 tonne iron ore wagon that runs on metre gauge and is part of the world record Brazil annual iron ore production. WA must produce a lot more to match Brazil.

Allan P showed a 240 volt 16 watt fluorescent light (Crompton, available from Bunnings) that would fit well behind a valance for his layout. The lights can be joined in banks of six through connecting leads.

Alan B showed his Spectrum HO 4-6-0 Baldwin with full sound and ran it on the host's layout.

Bob mentioned he has ordered some back scenes based on photographs he supplied from Melbourne. He will show them at the next meeting and give full details of the supplier.

Division 6 - South Australia

By Al Harris

The April Division 6 meeting saw 14 members and 1 guest assemble at the Aldgate Railway Station with hosts, Geoff and Lorraine Chatwin. The group welcomed Peter Jackson, to his first NMRA meeting, and Alan Wirth from the Marklin Group.

The main agenda item of the afternoon was discussion of the ARC's Strategic Plan 2009. Some areas of the Strategic Plan are already incorporated into the activities of the Division eg. Show and Tell, promotion of the AP, running workshops at meetings and encouraging members to pass on skills.

Geoff battled with the technology gremlins to give his presentation on JMRI, however, the guest speaker Geoff had organised to present his Model Railroad Automation using Railroad & Co Software tendered his apologies as he was called away for work.

To complete a rather full agenda the "Show and Tell" segment still had a number of members giving a small talk and or demonstration. Scott Taylor demonstrated the progress he has made to his scratch built narrow gauge G scale Industrial Loco. Max Wright gave a demonstration on a couple of circuits he had purchased to give simulated welding flashes. Our new member Peter Jackson showed some of the photos he had taken of structures and dioramas he had built and then showed how he had incorporated them into layouts. Geoff Chatwin completed the formal part of the afternoon when he demonstrated a small T track module he built using Kato track.

At this point the members partook of afternoon tea featuring freshly baked cakes. This meetings "lucky envelope" raffle was drawn during refreshments and was won by Max Wright.

Unfortunately the 12 inch to the foot modellers let us down considerably with no trains to watch during the afternoon. Unless you happened to stay on for a little observe the Overland on its way to Adelaide.

The June Division 6 meeting saw 12 members assemble at the home of host, Graham Capper.

The agenda for the afternoon included discussion on holding monthly meetings, meeting hosts and host details for publication in 2010. The subject of Div 6 joining AMRE was discussed with a decision to seek more information on application, cost and frequency of meetings to be sought to facilitate further discussion.

The meeting also discussed the possibility of Div 6 having some form of presence at the AMRE 2010 exhibition with either an information stand on the NMRA and/or a scenery demonstration. More discussion will be held on this at the next meeting so that a decision can be reached to enable an application to be forwarded to AMRE before the 1 Nov 2009

deadline for exhibitor applications.

From Ray's AP desk we had an AP award to make but this had to be deferred as the member wasn't present.

Discussion was held on some of the requirements for the judging and awarding of AP certificates which often appeared quite complex when perusing the AP category requirements on the NMRA website. Ray is to source the articles on the various AP category requirements which appeared in recent editions of Scale Rails for possible distribution and further discussion.

To complete a rather full agenda the "Show and Tell" segment still had a number of members giving a small talk and or demonstration. Ian Wade gave a demonstration of his method of ballasting track which included his home made styrene ballast spreader. Ken House showed the group his latest venture, a car card/waybill holder which followed on from his previous item on car cards and waybills. Our Div Super gave a short presentation on his last scratch building project – a wooden trestle road bridge which is to be included on the new Woolshed layout. Al also had printed off copies of the car cards and waybills from the NMRA website which were passed around the group.

At this point the members partook of very sumptuous afternoon tea. This meetings "lucky envelope" raffle was drawn during refreshments and was won by the Div Super again!

Following refreshments Graham hosted a tour of his layout. Though still a work in progress one couldn't miss the fine dioramas that Graham had so meticulously constructed and demonstrated at previous meetings which were now scattered throughout his layout.

Graham couldn't resist showing off some of his trainer presentation skills with a fine discourse on how he makes his roads from \$2 (for 10 sheets) packs of fine grade (180-240 grit) sandpaper which he covers and/or colours with ground coal briquettes and printing inks.

Division 7 - New South Wales

By John Montgomery

May Report

Lawrence and Irene Nagy were the hosts for the May meeting. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting at North Rocks. The weather, thankfully, put on a beautiful Autumn day.

Lawrence has an N scale mid western layout. The layout is DCC equipped and ran flawlessly all afternoon. Since the last visit a number of years ago Lawrence has extended his layout to encompass 3 sides of his garage. He has also undertaken a lot of scenery work on his layout.

During the formal part of the meeting the upcoming

25th anniversary convention in October was discussed. Gerry Hopkins presented a number of achievement awards. The convention in New Zealand was mentioned and attendees were advised that Sowerby and I were attending along with a number of other members.

Some very nice models were shown on the display table. This is an opportunity for members to bring along a project no matter whether it is completed or not so that they can talk about what they are doing in the hobby.

The ladies provided a wonderful afternoon tea which was greatly appreciated by the members.

I would like to thank Lawrence and Irene for being great hosts on the day.

August Report

The August meeting was held at John and Shirley Martin's place in Oak Flats. It was a beautiful day to travel to the South Coast and I am sure that all of those who travelled from Sydney or the Central Coast enjoyed a wonderful day out.

Since our last visit John has dismantled one of his previous layouts and built a new HO American layout. This new layout is based on an industrial Midwest location. The layout ran flawlessly all afternoon and a number of members enjoyed driving trains. In his smaller shed is a great example of how a small layout can be built and still be a functional and interesting railway.

Paul Morant brought another wonderful building of an Australian bushman's slab hut for the show and tell table. He had just completed this model and it was obvious to all that he had put a great deal of work into the effort as it was spectacular.

The Christmas party was announced and promoted. A report of the upcoming was 25th convention was relayed to the members and both of these functions are moving forward.

Afternoon tea was provided by Shirley and the other ladies.

I would like to thank John and Shirley for their hospitality in hosting the meeting and their company on the day.



Peter Macdonald's ON30 Van - Division 3

Reflections on expanding my layout

By Ray Lucas

I built a layout that pretty well encapsulated my dream. I loved the track plan I designed, and was largely satisfied with most aspects of it. However, because of the narrowness of the garage in which it was housed I couldn't get the fiddle yard to operate successfully no matter what I did. Also the narrowness of the aisles made it difficult for operators to work in.



I converted it to DCC and was rapt in its running, apart from that nuisance of a fiddle yard. You can see my efforts in the NMRA layout tours. I love the era I chose, I'm a diesel fan thru and thru and am crazy about mountain scenery.

I dreamed of a wider garage and a larger layout, and after much negotiating--happy wife, happy life, and so it turned out to my advantage as well as hers. I'd been retired for a number of years and we decided to make some changes, my wife wanted a new kitchen while I wanted an extension to the garage. If there's one fundamental rule that applies when you dream of going bigger, you've got to have your partner on side.



The layout space I had was approximately 12' 6" by 35' [interior space], the extension was greater than I hoped for. It now was approximately 27' by 35', around 945 square feet area. Big enough! Apart from the concrete slab and the electrical work by a fellow modeller, the rest I did myself, saving me thousands of dollars, otherwise it would have remained just a dream.



I recently was watching the layout tour by Allen Keller of David Barrow's Cat Mountain and Santa Fe and it was interesting hearing Allen ask relevant questions about building large layouts. Most of David's responses make a lot of sense and are self evident, these factors being money, time, skill and determination. There is however one factor that he overlooked which because of my age I consider critical. Your health. I'll be 69 at the end of the month and take particular care of my most precious earthly possession. Too many men have had their dreams shattered because of poor health. We as modellers will invest a lot of money in our hobby and dare I say it, our cars, but we neglect to care for our bodies and pay a terrible price for so doing. A large layout necessitates a lot of work, time and effort. No use starting something you'll only half finish!



Money.

Fortunately I live in the country and housing and costs generally are lower. I've sought to save costs without



jeopardising quality when building a layout, and before embarking on this project I bought up most of my rolling stock, locos, buildings and rail. I also got much of my dcc equipment in advance, [can you ever?] I'm still buying it. Points presented me with an issue until I bought Fast Tracks equipment second hand. Here I believe, I've managed to save a lot of money seeing that I possibly will have some 70 of them in code 83 and 75. I've usually found most modellers have far more locos and rolling stock than they'll ever need, at least on a large layout they get used. I was also fortunate that much of what I did purchase was done when the Aussie dollar was high.



Time.

Being retired time is less of an issue, and more so in the country. No heavy traffic to battle with like those who work in the city. Nevertheless you still need to manage time well to accomplish anything worthwhile and our hobby can become time consuming. Making bench work and the like I looked upon as benefitting my health, having to use muscles that haven't seen so much action for a long time. Sawing, hammering, lifting etc are part of the blessings that come from exercise, don't knock it! Also when planning this new layout I had no intention of completely tearing down the old one. This has saved



what I'm trying to achieve. Even on a big layout you can end up still having a spaghetti bowl full of tracks and yards everywhere or the opposite extreme, just tracks, no scenery and little realism or worse still a large untouched space.



me time. I've widened the old aisles [had to, too narrow for operators] pulled up all code 100 track, though that did mean greater expense, but retained the basic former track plan [I liked it so much] and will be modifying some of the scenery.

Enthusiasm.

Well I got the biggest introduction to enthusiasm when I went on an nmra layout tour just a couple of years back. Here I met a member who was 80 at the time building a quite large ATSF layout. I'm sure his first name was David. What enthusiasm! If we all had some of what he had we'd reach our goals. Big projects necessitate enthusiasm, bags of it in fact. I enjoy the challenge that layout building provides me with and tend to be goal oriented, both of which help.

Do I regret what I've started? No way!



Skills.

A number of modellers have grandiose ideas, me included, but you've got to have the skills to make those dreams a reality. One of the things that bothers me is the individuals who are reticent to learn new things, to try and attempt something they feel unskilled in. When I first attempted scenery it was a disaster, but I kept on persisting and while there's plenty more for me to learn in this area, it has become one of the keynotes of my modelling. And you're never too old to learn! Have a go! While this may be considered part of the skills component, the type of layout you intend to make will also affect factors like time as well. My desire has been for a freelanced layout this presented me with less restrictions. I didn't want to follow a prototype slavishly. Also I didn't want my layout to be so meticulous that it would take eons of time to build. It is designed specifically for operation yet as I envisage it to show long consists traversing thru' mountain scenery. As always there has to be compromises and I believe that is

Scratch Building your own Flat Cars

By Frank Godde



I came across an article in "Scale Rails" December 2005 entitled "Build a Fleet of Flat Cars" by Chuck Lind. It caught my eye and my imagination, "Gosh," I thought, "I've never done any of this sort of work before", could I make rolling stock like this? Well it's only basic wood work and we've had a go at that sort of thing, so why not try.



My imagination started to run away with me, for I knew that I would add things to the basic designs, thus enhancing the overall appearance. A Sway back wagon would look really good with the rest of my ON30 gear, and most prototype flat cars were old and run down and held together with bolts and fencing wire, so this is how I went about building these cars.

Materials.

I use Red Wood for every thing I build because it is soft, strong, easy to distress and stain; I cut it from old doors, or garden furniture to various sizes making beams, planks and other sizes required in the making of buildings. I also have a small hand plane which I use to reduce the timber to a smaller size. The plan provided with this article shows the size of the unit, use your scale rule to work in your scale, make a jig to keep it square. Cut the out side 6"x12", distress for visual effects and notch as per drawing, I use PVA glue to glue the components together.

When the frame is dry, I start on the floor boards, leaving the internal beams until the floor is finished. Then fitting and gluing the internal beams and placing a little weight on the lot till dry. This gives you the basic shape which is quite strong. Now it's time to make up your mind as to what's its going to be, if it's a only a flat car the floor boards should over hang by a couple of millimeters, but should you be building a box car etc, the floor boards should be flush with the frame. This will allow the frame to fit inside your car.

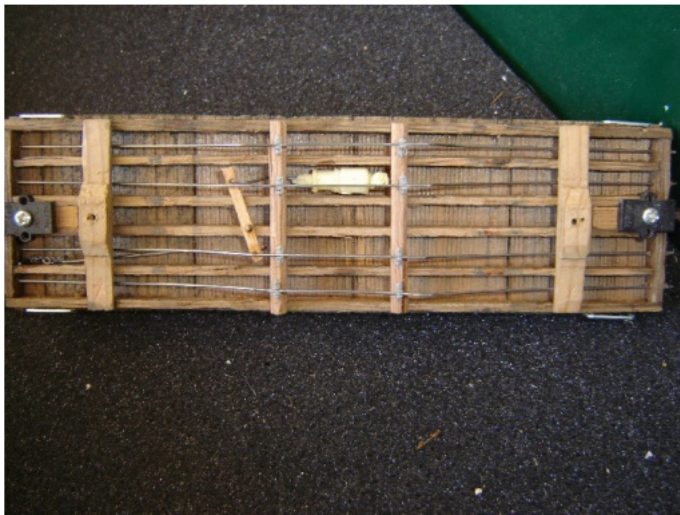
Now it's time to think about the type of braking system to use, for it is a lot easier to work on it now than later in the process of building. The "NMRA" standards will tell you the type of system used in that era. So with piano wire and small chain and a little CCA (super glue) rods and leavers are fitted .By the way, I have a rubber mould for brake cylinders which I make out of plaster and add to the later braking systems.

The wagon is weighted by its load, but if you are only building flat cars to run empty, you will have to build in some weight under the floor. That means you will have to rebate the floor beams so that the weight is hidden and the thickness of the wagon is kept to a minimum.

Queen Posts.



I use "Grandt Line" products for my models as they are purpose made for scratch building which makes it so much easier than trying to do these components yourself. There are various types of Queen posts. They have 'all in ones' and the 'individual ones' that you glue into 4"x12" beams. Using piano wire as truss rods, tape the four together and bend into the required shape.



Don't forget to drill out the turn buckles and glue them into place with a little CCA. The rods are pushed through the end beams and then glue nuts and washers on the ends. The bolsters are shaped and glued in place. Drill hole for bolster screw and add more side bolts as per drawing. Trim for coupler and test for coupler height, to the gauge, by sitting on boogies. I use "Bachman" and "Boulder Valley" trucks and usually stock up at the annual conventions, as often I find I can't buy these parts in the West Australian hobby shops.

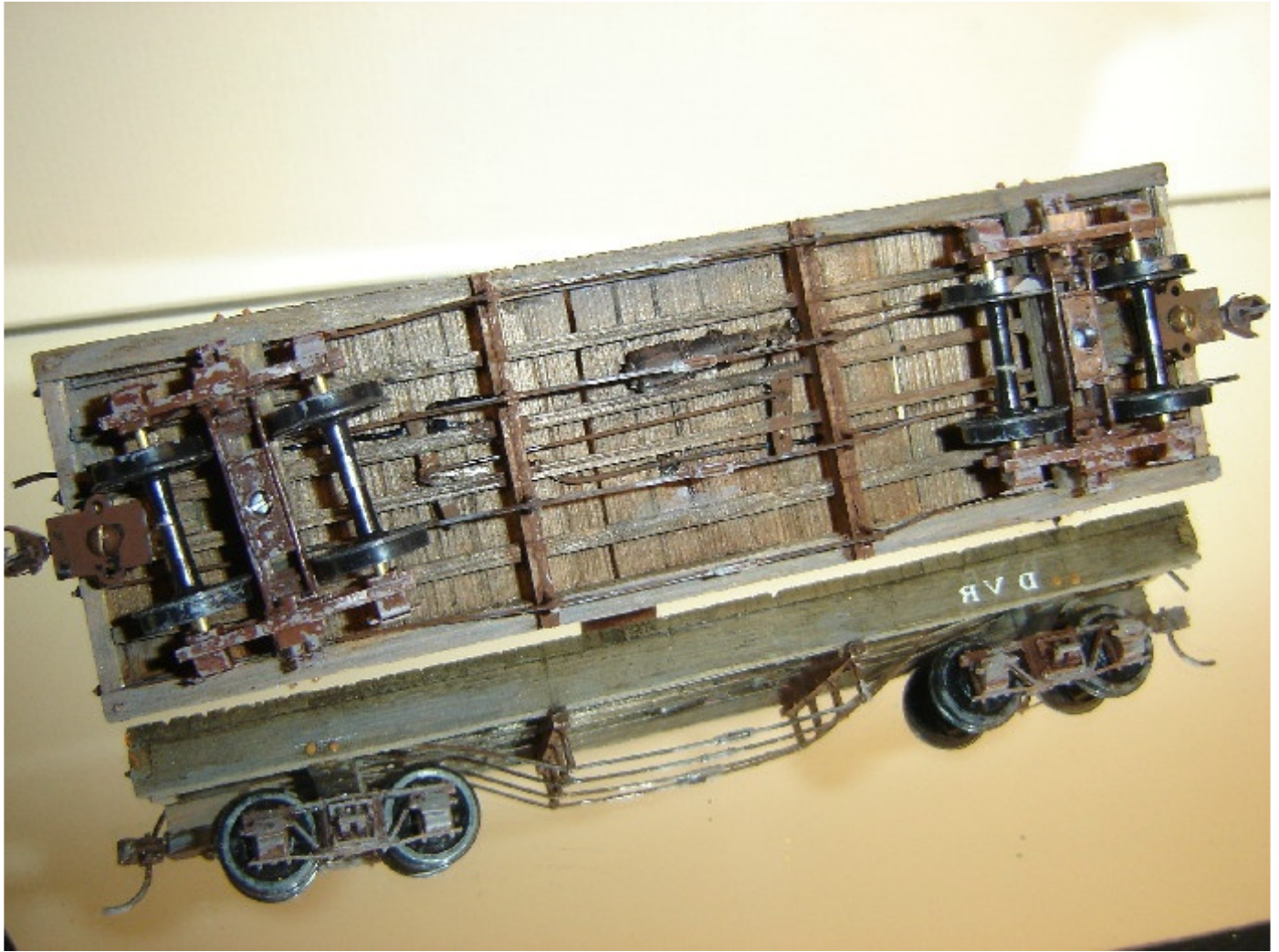
Once every thing is finished I apply the alcohol stain to the wood, black paint to the rods and braking system,

weather the trucks and add rust to where it's needed.

It is an exciting way to build rolling stock as the pictures will show and the more you do, the easier it becomes and it is also great for the "Cars" certificate if you are involved in the "Achievement Program".

These flat cars are used as the base for building up other rolling stock as the photos will show you; some units are built on top of the cars, as they would have done in those times.





Underframe Detail



Work car built on flat car frame.

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Gavin Hince's ON30 Logging Layout



Sowerby Smith's SP Shasta Sub.