

# MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Australasian Region

SPRING 2013

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# Train watching around Sydney 2013

*Rod Tonkin*

I travelled to Sydney for the Regional Superintendents meeting on the New South Wales central coast in July this year. To get a reasonable price plane ticket I needed to stay in Sydney for a week. My daughter kindly put me up for the week. Allowing for family commitments I had a few days spare to watch trains. Previous trips to Sydney had shown me the Bankstown line from Marrickville to Canterbury provided plenty of freight traffic. After a look around I chose Hurlstone Park. Platform two at Hurlstone Park has an unobstructed view of the goods lines in both directions. There are signals on both tracks showing the state of the line ahead. The platform has a fence to keep you safe from train operations. In addition to clear views unobstructed by catenary masts, curves on the line near Hurlstone Park limit train speed, making photography easier.

You need a little luck watching freight trains. What you see depends on the time of day and traffic requirements. First up was a west bound container train lead by Green Train RL304 leading Independent Rail's 1445 and Green Train RL303. Next cab off the rank was a west bound empty hopper car train lead by Pacific National 8109 leading Pacific National 8123. The graffiti on the hopper cars is impressive. The following west bound train was an empty coal train lead by four of Pacific National's 82 class numbers 8207, 8211, 8245 and 8228. The graffiti on the coal wagons was awesome. Shortly after the coal train had cleared the section a west bound container train headed by QUBE 1103 and 1102 appeared. I was beginning to think the east bound line was out of service until a container train led by CFL EL 63 and GL 111 passed by headed east. The west bound parade continued with another container train lead by 442s5 and 804 rolled by. The light had got so bad by this time the FREDs on the end of the trains were flashing so I decided to call it a day. En route to town we passed the east bound container train at Marrickville waiting on a clear run to Botany. All my photos were taken from the safety of the platform. Modern trains are quiet. They can be on top of you before you realise, be safe and stay out of their way. I had an experience of this a few days later at Parramatta. I was standing on the platform waiting for a train back to the city. A loaded coal train headed by Pacific National 8234 appeared out of nowhere. The train passed through Parramatta station at a considerable speed. The station public address system gave no warning of its approach.



Pacific National 8207 plus three compatriots leading an empty coal train over taking a non air-conditioned suburban set at Hurlstone Park



Green train RL304 leading a container train at Hurlstone Park



442s5 and 8044 on a container train at Hurlstone Park



8109 at Hurlstone Park

***Photos: Rod Tonkin***



## CONTRIBUTIONS:

All members of the NMRA are welcome to submit articles of a railway nature that are suitable for inclusion in Main Line. Contributions can include photos, drawings, modelling tips and historical information that would be of interest to fellow members. Please ensure that the material supplied is not bound by copyright or that written approval has been gained by the author to use any copyright materials.

Submissions should be in an electronic format ie: Word or PDF and photos must be original size and uncropped. Hand written or type written documents are also acceptable but should be legible to assist us in converting them to electronic format.

## Cut Off Dates for Submissions and Advertising:

- \* Winter 2014: 11 May 2014
- \* Spring 2014: 10 August 2014
- \* Summer 2013: 9 November 2013
- \* Autumn 2014: 8 February 2014

Submissions and advertising copy can be emailed: [editor@nmra.org.au](mailto:editor@nmra.org.au) or mailed to: 77 Englefield Rd Oxley QLD 4075

## Advertising:

The National Model Railroad Association Australasian Region is happy to accept advertising in this magazine. For advertising rates and enquiries please contact the Editor.

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## Cover Photo

By late afternoon, NYC SW& #8880 has reached its destination in Saranac Lake with its heavy load of unprocessed timber, as it passes through town on its way to Saranac yard. Workers at Tylick Tool can be seen hard at work rushing to complete an order for shipment the next day .

*Photo: John Diamond*

## SIGNIFICANT MOTIONS

By Peter Burrows

Below is a table of significant motions past by your current ARC in the past year. These are motions that modify or create services, fees or other things that may impact the general membership. They may also involve the expenditure of AR funds to purchase equipment, fund a convention or reimburse a Division for holding a local event.

### NMRA ARC - Register of Significant Motions

11/08/12 Accept proposal for the Formation of a Narrow Gauge Convention SIG.

11/08/12 Produce the MMR plaques locally to be assembled by Gerry Hopkins, components supplied from Head Office.

17/09/12 ARC to acquire a full duplex teleconferencing phone for 10 users and set up a teleconferencing account with iVision.

17/09/12 A Thank You letter to be issued to all new and renewing members (annually)

17/09/12 Modify the Divisional boundaries of Divs 8, 9 and 2 to better capture the demographics of our regional members. (Deferred until reviewed by Div Supers impacted)

29/10/12 ARC provide an information package for estate disposal guidance and also provide spread sheet to assist with cataloguing items.

29/10/12 The Secretary will maintain a list of motions carried/lost/deferred in tabular form starting with the beginning of the last AR committee.

29/10/12 Approve reimbursement up to \$200 for costs incurred by Division 4 in promoting NMRA at exhibitions. Moved KS, Second JW. Carried

10/12/12 ARC approve the bid for National Convention 2017 and that it be presented to the National Board at the next Board meeting, 6 Feb 2013

10/12/12 Create a John Baker Award to be awarded to the Highest Scoring Model of an American Prototype at AR Region Convention Contests.

10/12/12 Adopt the new Division Boundaries as set out by Sowerby Smith with the proviso that Members may specify the Division they wish to belong to by advising the Membership Officer.

10/12/12 Renew term deposit with National Australia Bank for 12 months at 4.4%

21/01/13 Executive Handbook - Section E.5.3.K be added to accommodate Junior members of 100% clubs

21/01/13 Executive Handbook - Section C.1.7 to be added to clarify Annual dues structure.

11/03/13 50 Year awards to be given to members achieving the 50 years of continuous membership

- End -



# NMRA (AR) 2013 AGM

By Peter Burrows

Held Sunday 16 June 2013 at 15 Narara Cres. Narara NSW 2250.

Meeting commenced at 3pm with one minutes silence in remembrance of recently deceased members Geoff Nott and Peter Web.

**Present** – 75 members/partners from Divisions 7 and 9

**Minutes of 2012 AGM** – read and accepted. These minutes recorded by Peter Burrows.

**President's Report** – Ken Scales summarised the past year's acknowledgements and activities as follows:

- Thank you to the current ARC, Divisional Supers, volunteers and wives for their support
- Thanks to Julie Baker and Beryl Quince for their generous donations to the video library.
- Thanks to Gerry Hopkins for his continued good work with the AP.
- Congratulations to new MMR's Kelly Loyd and Paul Marrant
- The video library has been streamlined and improved thanks to Paul Marrant
- The ARC and Div Supers will meet on the Central Coast late July for the annual Div Super's planning meeting where a revised Strategic Plan and operational issues will be resolved
- The bid for the 2017 National Convention has been withdrawn due to cost blow outs by the venue provider at Sydney Olympic Park. No other affordable venues are available.
- An audio conference unit has been purchased to include Div Supers in ARC meetings.
- A John Baker Award has been created for the best U.S. prototype model in show.
- There are also plans to create something in memory of Geoff Nott.

**Treasurer's Report** – James Wyatt summarised the financials for the FY 01 JAN to 31 DEC 2012. Details will be available on the AR web site.

- Incoming \$42,050
- Outgoing \$35,730
- Surplus \$6,320
- Cash available in Bank \$39,310
- The Association's finances continue to be healthy with no issues forecast.

**Achievement Program (AP)** – Gerry Hopkins reported on the year between AGM's.

- New MMRs – Paul Marrant
- One MMR pending in Div 2 and two others close.
- 22 APs and 7 Golden Spikes awarded.

**Motion** – That these minutes and future AGM minutes be reviewed and accepted at the next available ARC meeting. Moved Gerry Hopkins, Seconded Rowan Mangion – motion passed.

Meeting closed at 3:15 pm.



Climax locomotive number 22 hauls a load of logs on a Layout at the Toowoomba Model Railway Show  
Photo: Bruce Kerslake

One of the biggest benefits of our Association is the fellowship that emerges from a group of likeminded people sharing a common interest. For some, this is the only social network they have apart from family. This is especially true of retirees who having left the work place find the well-meant “let’s keep in touch” and promises of phone calls and emails soon fade as past workmates get caught up in their careers and the everyday issues of their workplace.

Our Divisional meetings are held monthly and this suites some but for those who are not members of a “bricks and mortar” club, a SIG or a “Round Robin” group who meet more frequently, Divisional meetings alone are not a substitute for a good social network of friends who can offer help and support in your chosen pastime. Therefore I strongly recommend that members “hook up” with another modeller or modellers and develop some “Modelling Mates” who are (but not necessarily) NMRA members and can form an informal round robin group with no rules or formalities but just a few blokes meeting weekly or fortnightly to talk trains over coffee or help with a layout. You will be amazed how quickly this will develop your interest in the hobby and your skills just by swapping information, techniques and ideas with your modelling mates.

For those members who sponsor or introduce a new or potential member at a Divisional meeting, please remember your obligation to introduce the visitor around the membership and not leave them standing like a “shag on a rock” wondering who’s who and what’s happening. This is a critical point of introduction to the Association and first impressions must be positive if we are to acquire and retain new members. Make a point of introducing the visitor to those members who live in the same general area and may even have a round robin group they could join.

Those members who live in remote areas would have difficulty participating in a weekly or fortnightly catch up where the nearest modelling mates may be a two or more hour drive away. But consider using Skype or if your internet service is a bit “ordinary” maybe a telephone call is a way you can have a chat about modelling and what’s happening around the traps. And do not hesitate to call your Divisional Superintendent if you have a question about modelling or the Association.

In summary, above all things the NMRA is facilitator of fellowship amongst those with a common interest – model trains. Let’s get the most out of this fellowship by assisting new members in finding Modelling Mates through sponsorship and proper social introductions. There have been some great friendships formed within our Association and with a little bit of effort from everyone, many new great friendships will continue to be formed.



- End -

## NMRA AR STRATEGIC PLAN 2014

Considering the activities currently in place and the 2018 NMRA National strategies being developed, the AR will adopt the following strategies going forward into 2014.

This strategic plan has been ratified and adopted by the Divisional Superintendent's Conference held in July 2013 and several actions and projects have been assigned to support it.

1. Increase Membership
  - a. Continue the 100% club program
  - b. Demonstrate value to prospective members
  - c. Develop a more effective publicity campaign
  - d. Leverage social media to reach more prospective members.
  
2. Retain Members
  - a. Ensure new members have a sponsor/mentor
  - b. Nurture fellowship and have fun
  - c. Provide value to members
  - d. Develop Members modelling skills
  - e. Communicate, communicate, communicate
  
3. Develop the Education program
  - a. Link the Education Program to the Golden Spike and Achievement Program
  - b. Develop a wide range of practical "hands on" clinics and presenters
  - c. Develop a "Train the Trainer" program to ensure clinics are delivered efficiently
  - d. Educate Members in the Prototype
  - e. Conduct "Modelling with the Masters" clinics at all Conventions
  - f. Promote the video library
  
4. Continue the Achievement Program (AP)
  - a. Ensure we have proactive AP Deputies in all Divisions
  - b. Provide clear guidelines for each AP category
  - c. Provide appropriate mentors for members working towards AP awards
  - d. Celebrate successes

Peter Burrows  
01/08/13



SP 1277 (0-6-0) Used in 1940s to shunt the early new streamliners at Oakland terminal *Photo: Bob Deakin*

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
UPDATE - JULY 2013**

I am pleased to announce that the Beginner Training course is now live on our AR Web Site. A big thank you goes to Gerry Hopkins for his assistance with the web site and those who provided feedback on the drafts. Our objective is to provide good access to Model Railroading (MR) information for beginners and experienced modellers alike.

The course will lead you through a MR training program and direct you to clinic and other presentations on a wide range of MR subjects. All reference material will be kept current by updating from time to time.

Our first offering is a Beginner's program of 10 modules sourced mostly from the NMRA US web site. We have added some supplemental notes and references where we felt a little more information and updating was necessary. If you wish to go through this program it is free of charge to members and non-members but we ask that you do two things:

1. Register at [education@nmra.org.au](mailto:education@nmra.org.au) providing your name, address, phone number, email address, age group and if an NMRA member, your membership number and Division.
2. Do the pop quiz at the end of each module (no one sees your score).

These two actions will help us improve and maintain the program by:

- c) Telling us how many people are doing the program and their age groups
- d) Provide demographics as to where they are from and how many are non-members
- e) Determine the effectiveness of the modules and determine necessary improvements
- f) Determine where and when we need to conduct practical hands-on clinics

Here is the link to the program, supplemental notes and all the associated references

<http://www.nmra.org.au/Learning/Second%20web%20page%20V0.1.html>.

**Please share this information with all your modelling friends and anyone that may be interested in the hobby.**

**Stop Press** – At the Divisional Superintendent's Conference held 27/28 July, the Education program was endorsed by all Divisions but with a request that it be tied to the Golden Spike Award (for Beginners) and the AP for more advanced modellers. This is a logical and beneficial amendment but will require a significant rewrite so instead of producing an Advanced syllabus we will be rewriting and restructuring the Learning syllabus to cover the Golden Spike and AP requirements so students can see how they can earn AP awards as they advance their skills with the program.

I am pleased to announce that Rod Tonkin (Div Super WA) has volunteered his services to assist me with the rewrite which will also eliminate our dependence on the US web site and create a more logical flow. This will take some time so in the meantime please use the current Beginner's course.

Peter Burrows

AR Education Chair

### **Achievement Program Certificates for 2013**

#### **Association Official**

432 Paul Marrant 28-Jun-13 NSW  
433 Rowan Mangion 03-Jul-13 NSW  
438 Kel Sherson 17-Jul-13 NZ

#### **Association Volunteer**

434 David Swinfield 10-Jul-13 NSW

#### **Model Railroad Author**

**418 Rob Barker 12-Feb-13 NSW**  
422 Peter Jackson 09-Apr-13 SA  
428 Stephe Jitts 15-May-13 ACT

#### **Master Builder Cars**

417 Paul Marrant 14-Jan-13 NSW  
**436 Stephe Jitts 10-Jul-13 ACT**

#### **Master Builder Motive Power**

429 Dennis Clarke 01-May-13 NSW

#### **Model Railroad Engineer Civil**

435 Ray Brownbill 10-Jul-13 SA

#### **Model Railroad Engineer Electrical**

419 Paul Marrant 14-Feb-13 NSW

#### **Master Builder Scenery**

421 Steve Magee 12-Mar-13 NSW  
423 John Brown 09-Apr-13 NSW  
425 Bill Black 29-Mar-13 Vic  
430 Barry Turner 13-Jun-13 QLD

#### **Master Builder Structures**

424 John Brown 09-Apr-13 NSW  
426 Bill Black 29-Mar-13 Vic  
**427 Peter Dinhan 24-May-13 ACT**

#### **Master Builder Prototype**

431 Dennis Clarke 26-Jun-13 NSW

#### **Master Model Railroader**

420 Paul Marrant 14-Feb-13 NSW  
437 Stephe Jitts 17-Jul-13 ACT



As most members will know by now Geoff Nott passed away recently. A very large number of NMRA members attended the funeral together with many of his other friends from the modelling fraternity. He will be greatly missed by all of us. He was one of the great innovators in our hobby and extremely generous in the time he devoted to helping his fellow modellers. He presented clinics at many of the NMRA and Narrow Gauge Conventions. He also gave clinics at local exhibitions and NMRA region meetings. Recently he put together a small group and started the Kids Clinics at the local train exhibitions which the NMRA will carry on. He never expected any return for all of this which he did for the love of the hobby.

As well as Lily Flat and his own great Leigh Creek layouts he was the inspiration and provided much of the leadership for the group layouts such as Red Stag and Muskrats Ramble. He also built joint project layouts with other modellers such as Charging Moose and Smugglers Cove.

The most important thing that always struck me about Geoff was his great perspective on the hobby. He often reminded me that model railroading is a hobby and it is all about having fun. Rules and regulations are only there to help us enjoy the hobby not to get in the way of having a good time.

The NMRA will ensure that his contributions to both the hobby and the Association are remembered. We will tread carefully in how we go about this, to ensure that what we do, provides a fitting memory of what Geoff meant to us all.

The Australasian Region has withdrawn the bid to hold the 2017 National Convention in Sydney. This proposal started when Peter Jensen was Pacific Director on the NMRA US BOD and David Howarth was President. The current ARC committee had worked closely with Peter and his committee to make this a reality. Circumstances changed because the Sydney Olympic Park Authority is rebuilding the venue and we were no longer able to develop a satisfactory cost and risk managed model.

The proposal approved by the current ARC required 700 full fare paying attendees. That was made up of 400 from North Americans, 250 ANZ members, and 50 non-members from Australia. If we could not make it work on these figures, we believed the risk was too high. Further, the planned model would be one that would encourage the spouse to attend. In the US, 10% of members would bring a partner. We felt that a much higher partner percentage (50-60%) would want to attend in Australia. This meant that we would be looking for many more hotel rooms than a normal US convention.

Around 20 venues were looked at and Homebush (Sydney Olympic Park) proved optimal for our requirements ... it is clean, modern, on the suburban train network, geographic centre of Sydney, a cluster of hotels (we were to have one CBD hotel on the list), a good shopping precinct, and was at the cross roads of a north-south and an east-west expressway road network. We believed that it gave us a 150 km range in any directions for bus tours (Newcastle to the north, past Wollongong in the south, and Lithgow to the west). Americans are used to up to 2 hours on a bus to get to the tour destination. This brought all the major prototype and model destinations within reach, along with the tourist destinations. This put all of the Sydney basin and the central coast layouts well within reach. Further, we had agreement from two of the largest model groups (SCRMA and the Hills Club), and were beginning to discuss with AMRA, of opening up their club and member layouts. SCRMA and the HILLS club were going to be supporters and also add volunteer labour to help run the event. We also planned to hold the event either before the large train show in June or the one in October (i.e. Liverpool). For this reason, we were going for the week before the October long weekend. We would have included attendance at Liverpool as part of the cost to register. Incidentally, the national BOD policy had a fixed date range to run the National Convention - they change those by-laws to allow for the October date.

We had a great proposal from SOPA (the Sydney Olympic Park Authority) for the convention. Our risk was manageable.

Unfortunately, because the Darling Harbour Convention Centre (which we could not afford anyway) is being pulled down next year, SOPA decided, at very short notice, to expand their facilities to take some of the Darling Harbour business. This tripled our cost meaning we need a minimum of around 1000 delegates ... increasing the NMRA's risk for holding the event ... The convention team thought this risk was not worth taking.

I would like to personally thank Peter and the committee for the huge effort they put in to the proposal submitted to the US. I am disappointed it had to be withdrawn.



Photo Rod Hutchinson ©2013

PeterMacdonald's HO Scale Overland Models Brass Loco

## REPORT OF

# THE PACIFIC DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Mike Bartlett- Pacific District Director

In July 2013 I attended the Mid Year Board Meeting of the NMRA and its National Convention in Atlanta. The Board meeting welcomed three new Directors, Kathy Millatt [our first female Director] from the Atlantic Region, Mike Yurgesc - At Large, North America Director and Mike Bestel, World Wide Director.

Frank Koch submitted his financial report which shows your Association to be in a strong financial position.

The review of The Executive Handbook is continuing and should be ready for review at the Mid Year meeting in February 2014.

The Howell Day Museum/Gallery Exhibit fundraising is continuing with the initial target of \$500,000US being reached and passed. With this result, tenders have been called to build the NMRA Exhibit in Sacramento. This means within a year or so we should be able to see the fruits of the fundraising come to life at this magnificent train museum.

The marketing team has come up with a plan with a group called Home Depot- very similar to Bunnings – where local modellers, using donated material, will build small layouts at various locations to try and encourage membership growth. This may be a concept we could use in our area.

The Convention in 2017 was awarded to Orlando, Florida.

The IT Department has been very active and has alleviated a number of problems in the IT system. They are also in the process of designing a new web site and have changed the NMRA website to a commercial site instead of the donated one which has been in use for some time.

The National Train Show was, as usual, excellent with a huge variety of new and old equipment on display, together with some huge modular layouts. One N-scale was 90 feet X 90 feet square.

I participated in a number of tours of layouts of various gauges which varied greatly in quality. I was comparing what I saw with what we have on display by our own members on our layout days and I can assure our membership that our standard is very high. I also attended 2 OPSIG meetings where I operated. The first was on a 1600 sq ft HO layout which was full of lovely scenery and proved challenging to operate. The second was a 13 acre live steam on 12 inch gauge. Here, we used way cards and chuffed all over this large area picking up and dropping off various wagons and operating the turnouts when required. Very much to the prototype and also very different. Both of these OPSIGS were excellent.

I look forward to seeing you all at our own National Convention in Canberra in September.

**Looking for information about your region?**

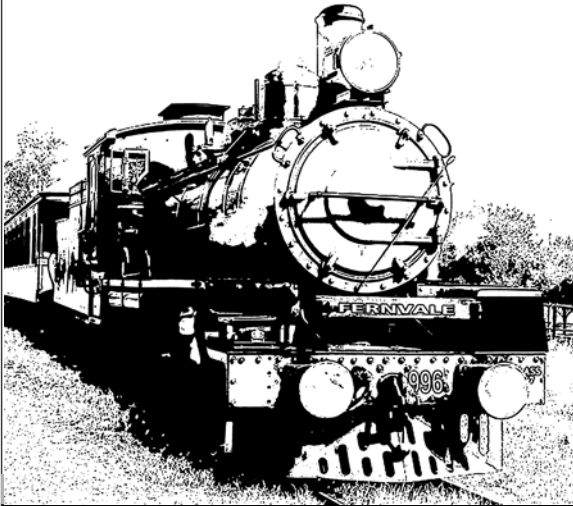
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and keep up to date with all the news.**

**nmra.org.au**

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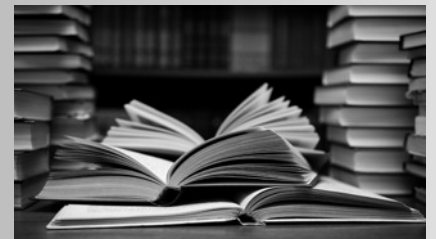
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**G - H O - N - Z - N A R R O W G A U G E**

## LIBRARY NOTES

By Paul Marrant



Hi members the library has been added to over the last few months with new titles of I think a wide scope of interests such as N scale, How to, O scale, H.O. Layouts Tours, Prototype and travel. I am renumbering some dvd's which over time have been catalogued incorrectly with two dvds of different titles having the same numbers, this has led to a considerable amount of confusion, so if it comes to your notice please inform me as to the titles and the #s.

I have in the past requested your input as to your comments/suggestions with regard to the type of dvds you would like to see in your library to date the response has been almost non existent, remember it is your library and I am only looking after it, if you don't tell me your wishes I can only assume that I am having a lot of lucky guesses.

A lot of my time is spent with the library in recopying dvds that are borrowed but fail to be returned by the borrower, when you think about this it is very ordinary and a serious lack of respect for your fellow members who are in a lot of cases waiting for some of those non returned titles, fortunately this is more the minority than the majority but still a serious problem. I realise it is only too easy to watch a dvd and then it gets put in a draw or cupboard and forgotten about so please have a look around and see what you can find. When a dvd is not returned I have to copy the new dvd, print the title description on the disc print a new dust cover and supply a new case, a lot of work (approx. half hour per dvd) and expense (approx. \$2.50 per item ) which would be better spent elsewhere . Hoping for your cooperation in these matters.

*Happy viewing Paul Marrant Librarian*

# In Memory of

I first meet Geoff and Jill Nott at the convention held in Victoria in the late 90's, I happened to walk into one of the other class rooms not being used for convention purposes. There on the class room tables was a stand of the most magnificent models of red wood trees I ever saw, also dioramas of waterfalls. I took my first pictures of all this work; and noticed the name on some of the items, just G Nott.



It wasn't until the clinic was over that a certain Jill Nott came over to talk with me over a question that I had asked that I noticed her name and followed her to where she was sitting with husband and I introduced myself, I complimented him on these trees I had just seen, all I got back was a little smirk.

Well during the convention we bumped into one another and you know how it goes in conversation "if you are ever in Sydney give us a ring and come and see the layout" "well I did and I went to see and it was truly an eye opener. In Melbourne for the flower show then up to Sydney for lunch at the Nott's and Hilary was introduced. We became good friends; I would fly to Sydney, take the train to Parramatta where Geoff would pick me up at the station and drop me off for the return. They went walking every morning through the bush; Geoff would point out the small weeds, twigs, sticks and stones that one could use in the art of scenery making, he said "look down Frank you're walking over the best parts"

It was a real joy to go over and photograph the new ideas and watch how the techniques were performed, I finished up with an enormous amount of photos of the various layouts and lots of new ideas. Geoff has been the biggest influence in my modeling life, it feels right, it looks good and the materials are cheap and readily available. Geoff was a show man not a train runner, all though there was all ways some thin running on the layouts. Presentation had to be right and that was all ways the way it was. Geoff had won many awards and was known all over the world, even George Sellios changed his open day just to meet Geoff Nott, we were all speechless when we saw his magnificent layout in Boston last year.

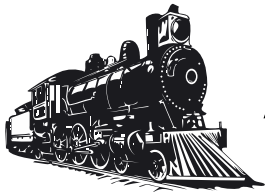
Geoff would take photos of everyone who visited his layout and I have got my own back with the photos I've just sent you; we had a lot of fun together, his work will live on in the many photographs around, and the layout presentation in a box is being used in most states and at their shows. Next year at the AMRA show in WA we are doing "G" scale in a box the name of the layout will be Knott's Lumber. I will miss him greatly.

**Frank Godde**  
**MMR # 422**

Recently I heard that Geoff Nott passed away and offer my sincere condolences to his family and friends. Geoff was an outstanding modeller who was inspirational in the quality of the scenery and structures he built. But more than that Geoff shared with others his ideas and techniques and provided both encouragement and help. He will be sorely missed.

Sadly, he is not the only loss to the hobby. This week Steve McCagnan also passed away. Steve's name will not immediately be recognised but although not a member of the NMRA he provided great support to both the Association and the hobby. Steve is best known as the producer of the series "Great Train Layouts" which filmed Geoff Nott's Leigh Creek and the Red Stag Lumber Company amongst others. That series created huge interest in the United States and helped create international interest in the quality of Australian modelling. But what Steve also did which is not well known was to use his production facilities to help build up the video library at a time when it was very costly to obtain VHS videos of trains and model railroads. This enabled David North to build up the library and provide members a wide range of videos which had not been available before at no cost to the Association. He did this to support the Association as he believed it was important in the growth of the hobby. Whilst VHS tapes have gone the way of the Dodo that service meant a lot at the time and should be remembered. The Great Layouts series continues on DVD and is still worth seeing.

**Geoff Hoad**



# A SMALL LAYOUT BUILT FOR OPERATION

*By James Stanford*

## Pre-history

From 2004 until mid-2011, I had a large-ish (maximum size was 20x10 feet, depending on available space) HO scale layout called the Chicago & South Forest Terminal RR (C&SFT) that was housed in the garage or large shed of whatever house we lived in. The layout at its maximum size had 3 staging areas, 2 branch lines, a thoroughfare track, and plenty of industries. Two or 3 operators could be kept busy operating it, with a variety of switch jobs, local branch freight, inbound and outbound transfer runs, and even the occasional railfan special. The layout was modular and could be set up in various configurations. Because we rented for most of that time and it was a landlord's market, the landlord could choose to ignore our requests to get the garage or shed roof fixed and often did. So there was often the threat of a shoddy roof allowing the wet stuff that falls out of the sky onto the layout.

During the time I had the C&SFT layout I started to become increasingly interested in the small layout idea, especially through the late Carl Arendt's Small Layout Scrapbook and associated website. I also joined a Yahoo group dedicated to the concept of designing and operating of small layouts and discovered an interesting and compelling alternative world of model railroading.

In 2011 the C&SFT layout suffered considerable water damage due to severe storms in the area we lived, which I (half jokingly) called the Deluge of '11. This effectively brought about the abandonment and eventual demise of the layout. In true abandoned railroad fashion the layout remained in place for a while before the C&SFT became a fallen flag. But before the railroad baseboards were un-ceremoniously taken to the tip, anything that could be re-used was removed from the layout and stored away. One module – a 4x1.5 feet section called Illinook – was also stored away, and was destined to later be made into a second small layout 8x1.5 feet in size.

## What to do?

Following the water damage to that layout, I considered what to do about a layout and my wife suggested I build a small replacement layout to fit along one of the walls in the lounge room inside the house. After trawling the internet for possible plans and using the Atlas Right-Track software to try out a few ideas I decided on a 6x1 feet 'Inglenook' style track plan, with a 'main' track, 3 east facing spurs, and 2 west facing spurs.

The 6x1 feet layout, called Dolton Industry Park (reporting mark DIRT), is now around 14 months old and my interest in operating it has shown no signs of abating. All the buildings on this new layout were recycled from the C&SFT. The scenery is more or less finished and has been for quite some time, but even so there are the occasional improvements to make to the layout when the mood takes me.

It may seem a drastic step to scrap a large layout in favour of a small one, but there was an operation and switching (my favourite type of layout operations) agenda which came into play.

## Designed for operation

From the outset, the layout was designed to be operated. While not long by most people's standards, the length of the spurs

allows for flexible operating, with more than one locomotive, and for some interesting east and west facing spur moves. Especially when the layout gets near its car capacity! Because the layout has no runaround, 2 locomotives are normally required to service the west facing spurs. This adds an extra element to operations, and give me an 'excuse' to have 2 locomotives on the layout at the same time!

It also had to be able to be operated as part of a group of layouts that 'virtually interchange' traffic between them, and are located throughout the world (mostly in the USA). The 'virtual interchange' of traffic is possibly the key to the continued operating interest on the layout and it is not uncommon to have all car movements for an operating session on the layout being related to virtual interchange car movements.

## The era, location and connections

The era and location the layout represents is in the south Chicago area near Dolton Junction near the Illinois / Indiana state line in the United States, in the 1970s-90s era. The era and location were chosen to best fit my rollingstock and motive power roster, to allow maximum access for other 'virtual interchange' layouts and because it would be able to realistically be home to a wide range of industries allowing for maximum variety of car and motive power movements. The connecting railroad to the Dolton Industry Park is the Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB), and a number of other railroads including C&NW, BN, B&O/Chessie, and BRC can access the industry park via IHB metals as required. Some of the other virtual interchange layout owners also 'deliver' cars directly to the layout from time to time.

## Industry mix promotes variety of car moves

There are 11 industry spots on the Dolton Industry Park layout, servicing 6 industries, plus a refuel point and yard office. All the industries handle more than one type of car, and one industry has 1.5 spurs available for cars servicing it. The industries are:

- Midwest Foods – Frozen and refrigerated foods manufacturer. The biggest user of cars, it receives boxcars, tankers, covered hoppers and reefers in. And sends reefers, insulated box cars and standard box cars out.
- South Chicago Flour and Grains – Flour mill. Receives covered hoppers and grain door box cars in, sends box cars out.
- American Electric – A electrical products and parts wholesaler and warehouse.
- Team track – Anything and everything can go through this industry so just about every conceivable type of car can find an excuse to be used by this industry!
- Petra Aggregates – A stone and sand merchant, which also occasionally receives coal. Uses gondollas and open hoppers for in and out loads.
- Cook County Freight Forwarders – Mostly sends and receives box cars, but other types of cars can be used by this industry as well. This industry is on the main track, and can only be switched at the start and end of an operating session before the first transfer arrives in

for the 'day', or after the last transfer departs out for the 'day'.

- Refuel point – receives tank cars of diesel fuel.
- Yard Office and RIP facility – Receives box cars of car and motive power spare parts

#### A typical operating session

A typical operating session starts with virtual interchange moves being allocated to the switchlist for the train or trains and then the switchlists and car movements sheets printed out. The actual operating of trains lasts around 40 minutes to an hour, especially when everything is done 'by the book' – slow speeds being the order of the day, and plenty of stopping and starting to allow train crew to change turnouts, etc. To start the layout operations a train 'arrives' on the main track using the '0-5-0' switcher or via an attached staging module, and the local switcher then proceeds to remove cars from the train and deliver them to the various industries, and pick up outbound cars at the various industries and prepare them for the outbound train. The inbound train's motive power may be required to position cars for the switcher to set cars on spurs that face the 'wrong way'. Then the outbound train is made up and the motive power attached to it. At this point the operating session itself ends, but the paperwork associated with the virtual interchange moves may take as long as another 30 minutes to complete depending on how much of them there are to update. All the virtual interchange movement updating is done via web based application I built especially for the purpose of generating and managing waybills.

#### What I learnt from building and operating the layout

All of our lives we are learning something, and building and operating our layouts is no exception. I had some mis-givings about going from a large-ish layout to a small switching layout, and wondered whether the new smaller layout would hold my interest. I needn't have worried, as I have found this layout to be a lot of fun to operate, and can even have more than one operator on it, although it's not really designed to be multiple operator friendly!

So here is what I have learned from having a small layout:

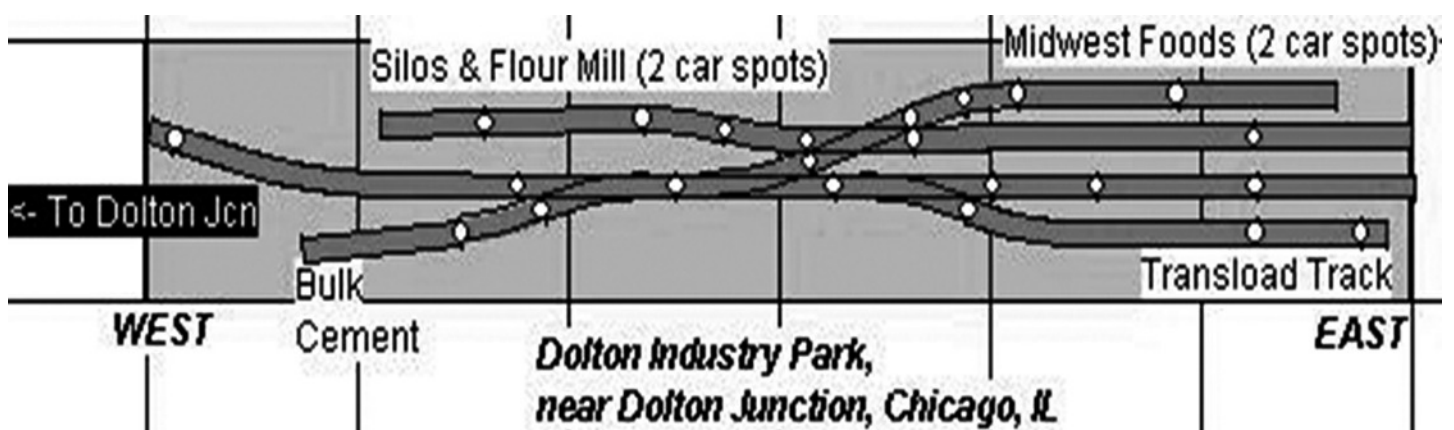
- Small means less costly, and more quickly operational. All of the turnouts were recycled from the previous few layouts, as were all the buildings, and a lot of the scenic material. While the larger C&SFT layout scenery was ok, only the best buildings and material from the old layout made it onto the Dolton layout.

- Small does NOT mean less fun! Size really doesn't matter. A quick search on the internet for 'small layouts' or 'micro layouts' will quickly show that a small layout as can be just as interesting or even more so than the large basement empires so often reviewed in the model railroading press.
- Giving the railroad a real purpose (in my case it was virtual interchanging traffic with other layouts) goes a long way to holding one's interest once the layout has been 'completed'.
- If a small layout track plan is carefully chosen, there is always the possibility of expansion later – the Dolton Industry Park can be expanded easily to the left or right, making it a good candidate for being part of a modular layout later on.

So if you rent, or have limited space, or you have a limited budget (lets face it, more of us fall into that category every day in this day and age of shrinking nest eggs and growing unemployment), or you just don't want to spend a lot of time building and maintaining a large layout, why not give the small layout concept a try? I did, and can honestly say it opened up a whole new world of layout operation for me!

#### About the author

James lives in Corowa, in southern New South Wales, and has been interested in trains since an early age. He grew up on a property which has a steam tourist railway running along one border, and has vivid memories of sitting next to the kitchen window or running down into the paddock to see and hear the steam trains pass by as they laboured up the grade with a heavy train of passenger cars, wheels often slipping on the slippery rails in the early morning. Since the age of 7 when he purchased his first model train set, a Lima set, he has modelled in HO scale except for a short time with an N scale model railway. His early interests were Australian outline, but when introduced to the all wheel drive all wheel pickup Athearn models of the 1980s he decided to start modelling American outline instead. While he enjoys building layouts, his main interest is operation, especially switching. He has a model railroad related website : <http://www.stanfordhosting.net/jimsjunction> .



### *A Plan of the Layout*



*Eastern half of the layout*



*Flour Mill*



*Petra Aggregates*



*Track Arrangement near Flour Mill*



*Flour Mill unloading shed*

# DIVISION 6 PHOTOS



New member, Michael Robinson, ordering lunch with other members to the side



Meeting Underway at Bob Bevan's



Ray Brownbill receiving his AP Certificate for Civil Engineer



Woolshed layout in Bob's new shed

# DIVISION 2 PHOTOS



*Above:* One of Ross Balderson's scratch built N scale horse drawn vehicles



*Above Right:* From L to R: John Gillies, Stephen O'Brien, Mal Risby, Fran and Brian Thomas, and Wal Pywell enjoy a lighter moment at Stephen's meeting in June this year.



# DIVISION 3 PHOTOS



Building photos from the Warrnambool Exhibition



Warrnambool Exhibition



Meeting at Warrnambool



Scott Whitaker's Marlee Junction



# DIVISION 4 PHOTOS



Alan's module before the show



Alan's module on show



Frank's downtown module



Garth's rural module



Garth's weathered shay

# AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION REPORTS

## NMRA Meeting Report for Division 3

### January 2012

*The meeting was held at the home of John Droste & Andrea Lane in Woodford to the north of Warrnambool in SW Victoria. The meeting coincided with the Warrnambool Model Railway Exhibition. A few Division 3 members attend a number of regional exhibitions with model making displays and layout dioramas. John Droste is an O scale modeller focussing on dioramas and structure building.*

*The theme of meetings which coincide with a regional model railway exhibition is a Saturday night dinner at the host's home. About 15 members and guests enjoyed a wonderful dinner making pronouncements about the Warrnambool Exhibition and the joys of model railroad modelling in general. There were two dinner functions that evening; the NMRA meeting and the Warrnambool Model railway Club hosted a dinner for show exhibitors. Division 3 members were spread between both functions.*

*Items for display;*

*John Droste – 1:48 Ferry Terminal and Depot building*

*Rod Hutchinson – HO structures; Aus-Scene Cottage and Bakery, Outback Models “Dawson Motors”, Banta Modelworks Petrol Station*

*Grant McAdam – 1:48 Outback Models Flower cart*

**March 2013** Narrow Gauge Model railway Convention. Reports are available in:

Narrow Gauge Downunder magazine, July 2013, Issue 50

Mainline magazine, Winter 2013, Vol 10 No 2

### May 2013

The meeting was held at the home of Scott Whitaker and “Marlee Junction” in Wandong, about 71 km north of Melbourne along the M31 Freeway. “Marlee Junction” has featured in the October 2011 edition of the Australian Model Railway Magazine. “Marlee Junction” is an extensive HO Australian layout. It takes up an extensive area in a purpose built shed which includes a comfortable sitting area.

Scott's home is on a few acres of land surround by a box-ironbark forest on the northern slopes of the great divide. The outlook makes for a wonderful setting for a barbeque lunch and around 15 members and guests took in the beautiful forested surrounds of Scott's home.

Items for display

GrantMcAdam: 1:48 Hotel

Laurie Green: HO Outback Models School prototype

Peter Macdonald: 1:48 Veteran models MM wagon

Robert Gosling: 1:48 Store including internal timbers using photocopied images

Scott Whitaker: HO layout “Marlee Junction” in all its glory

### June 2013

The meeting was held at the home of Gavin and Louise Hince in Clifton Hill, Melbourne. Gavin's On3 “North Coast Narrow Gauge” was the previous incumbent railway until its recent demise. Photos maybe found at [http://www.nmra.org.au/Layout\\_Tours/Gavin/index.html](http://www.nmra.org.au/Layout_Tours/Gavin/index.html). The railway's loss is the families gain particularly as the railway room now boasts an all weather connection to the house. A phoenix is arising from the ashes and a new railway will take its place; something for all of us to look forward to.

Gavin Hince is the editor of the Narrow Gauge Downunder Magazine which is devoted to all things in narrow gauge railways; <http://www.narrowgagedownunder.com/>. Gavin welcome articles with a narrow gauge railway flavour though I have noticed non narrow gauge items creeping in, particularly if they are associated with rusty bits of metal.

Being quite central to Melbourne many members make the pilgrimage to Clifton Hill with around twenty members and guests attending; some as far afield as Warrnambool 273 km to the SW.

Items for display

Bob Jensen: HO, VR – M, RY, QF & M wagons, On30 narrow Gauge NBC car

Geoff Truman; VR HO Broad Gauge Models Kclass loco

Peter Macdonald: 1:48 Veteran Models, MF & M wagons, HO Overland Models loco

Robert Gosling: 1:48 Store including internal timbers using photocopied images

Rod Hutchinson: HOn30 white metal Australian logging bogies.

Grant McAdam; 1:48 BantaModelworks-Depot

Grant presented each of the hosts with an NMRA thank you plaque for opening up their homes and allowing members a venue in which to get together and enjoy the camaraderie that is model railways.

Rod Hutchinson,  
Mooroolbark, Victoria.

# AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION REPORTS

## Division 6 Meeting

10 August 2013

Following two DECCA SIG meetings in previous months, NMRA members met at Mallala – about 60 kms north-east of Adelaide. Bob and Bev Bevan built a new home there and moved in about 9 months ago. Not surprisingly, Bob arranged for the ‘train shed’ to be constructed well before the house came along! Mallala is located on the mainline out of Adelaide heading west and Bob’s new home is situated such that he can readily engage in daily train spotting from his front yard.

We were blessed (at last) with some early spring weather which enabled the large group to meet outdoors and enjoy the sunshine after a very wet July and early August. About 15 members enjoyed lunch at the Mallala Hotel and then progressed the short distance to Bob’s for the meeting. There we were greeted by another 5 members and a further 6 visitors who had come along to attend the meeting and see the Woolshed layout go through its paces.

Bob has been a member of a group called the ‘Woolshed Boys’ for quite some time and had arranged for their modular layout (developing very slowly) to be set up in his shed for us to see and for the group to continue working on thereafter.

Ray Brownbill proudly received his 5<sup>th</sup> AP Certificate – this time for Civil Engineering and Peter Jackson received an AP Certificate for Model Railroad Author.

Not a lot of formal business conducted during the afternoon, but it was great to see such a large turnout for this meeting and everyone appreciated the opportunity to catch-up and socialise. Bev had arranged for a very nice afternoon tea. Many thanks to the Bevan’s for inviting us to their new home and for their generous hospitality.

The photos that follow were taken during the day by Max Wright – thanks Max.

Peter Jackson

Divisional Superintendent

Division 6

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## Division Four Meeting Notes August 2013

Rod Tonkin

The major effort over the last few months has been preparing and exhibiting our free-mo modules at the 2013 Perth Model Railway Exhibition. We exhibited four individual members’ modules connected by Frank Godde’s 180 degree return bends in an oval layout for the exhibition.

Each of the four modules had a different theme. Frank Godde’s module is a down town urban theme, Peter Scarpe’s module is an outer suburban theme, Alan Burrough’s module has a gravel processing plant and Garth Caesar’s module is a rural scene. The module structure clearances allow operation of HO scale standard gauge models or On30 narrow gauge models. Operation of either scale models alternated during the long weekend.

In addition to our module display we presented a static display of some member’s rolling stock. Garth Caesar’s 45 mm gauge narrow gauge shay that Frank Godde weathered came in for a lot of favourable comments.

The photos show Garth’s weathered shay and our modules under development and on show.

## Division 2

An interesting quarter, with meetings at John Gillies, Stephen O’Brien, Brad Hinton and John Bullen and a big effort being made to organise the Region’s convention here in the ACT in September (see the NMRA AR website for details). We look forward to seeing you all.

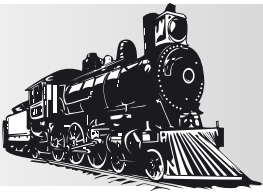
Our usual meeting format includes a Show ‘n’ Tell session followed by a presentation by the host on a rail related subject. John Gillies gave us a fascinating discourse on the compromises modellers have to make when modelling a specific prototype. Now that he’s retired (again), John has started serious work on his layout of the Burlington Northern in the Sandpoint, Idaho region and thus had some very specific examples of such compromises. Stephen talked about the future of our HO exhibition layout, currently taking up most of his garage. Our problem with this layout is that we have nowhere to keep it on a regular basis and each time we have a working bee, we have to set it up and then take it down, not only time consuming but damaging to the layout.

Brad had recently attended the NMRA Thousand Lakes Region convention in Minneapolis and gave us a talk about it. With our own convention looming, the members of the committee that were present paid very close attention and took notes! John Bullen gave us the history of the Orient Express complete with models of typical locos and cars plus interesting reading on the several films made about it, including of course, *From Russia with Love*. John’s reading matter here was a book on all of the Bond girls and believe me, that took a long time to work its way around the male attendees!

On the modelling front, Ken Macleay has disbanded his O scale switching layout and started buying up big in Victorian Railways in HO, preparatory to his move North later this year. Our loss will be Division 1’s gain. Ross Balderson has continued his follow on the Sydney Central with a recreation of the Newcastle central waterfront around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We have followed his drafting efforts into the scratch building first of the Customs House and now some of the early railway carriages and horse drawn vehicles. Jess continues her efforts to revive a Maine two footer and Rob Nesbitt continues to show us a new model almost every month.

For more detailed reports on our meetings, see *The Flimsy* on the NMRA AR website.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to congratulate Division 2’s first ever Master Model Railroader, Stephe Jitts. Well done Stephe.



# IDEAS FROM OUR NEW ZEALAND MEMBERS

By Allen Hare MMR

## THE USEFUL BALLPOINT PEN AND PHONECARD

Don't throw away that old used ball point pen, pull it apart. The plastic tube that was once full of ink and now empty is a useful scale N – HO –O length of pipe for that flat car load or any type of pipe found on fuel depots, factory down pipes to scrap loads. If you work in an office environment where used pens are thrown out daily just collect them and soon you will have a good supply of scale pipe. If not just ask around and get friends or work colleagues to keep them for you.

When you have a good supply just paint, weather and assemble them into a realistic pipe load. Don't forget the scale-chain or rope to tie it all down.

How many phone cards once used have you thrown away? They can be used in a number of ways to make small buildings – help detail larger structures or cut up and use as angle strengtheners to brace large building corners. Saves you having to cut up big sheets for that smaller job.

## IN REPLY TO TOM BOYD'S ARTICLE

I read with interest in the summer issue of Mainline Tom Boyd's article on early ground cover and how it was applied to layouts and his experiences of losing detail and bushes up the vacuum cleaner as he was dusting down his layout.

Most of us have at sometime taken a soft brush and the vacuum cleaner and cleaned parts of our layouts only to find small detail parts and the local residents disappearing up the vacuum pipe. We all know what it's like to try and find that small missing part embedded in the vacuum cleaners dust bag where at times it is never seen again no matter how hard we look for it.

I read an article by the famous John Allen on how he fitted the bottom of a nylon stocking into the end of the inlet pipe of the vacuum cleaner, pushing it down about 6" and then taping the loose end to the pipe. As you vacuum any small parts would go into the stocking instead of down into the dust bag. All one needs to do is pull the stocking out to get the part and at the same time shake the dust into a bin. Push the stocking back into the pipe and continue cleaning. One thing I found is it is better to use a vacuum cleaner where you can turn the suction down.

## NOT THE LAST STEAM LOCOMOTIVE MADE

A while ago I watched a programme on TV on Great Railroad journeys. These programmes have been on Sky TV for a few years and are a rail fan's delight, and yes I have taped them all.

One of great interest was the programme on the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad in Iowa and their Chinese made steam locomotive, which was said to be the last Chinese steam locomotive ever made.

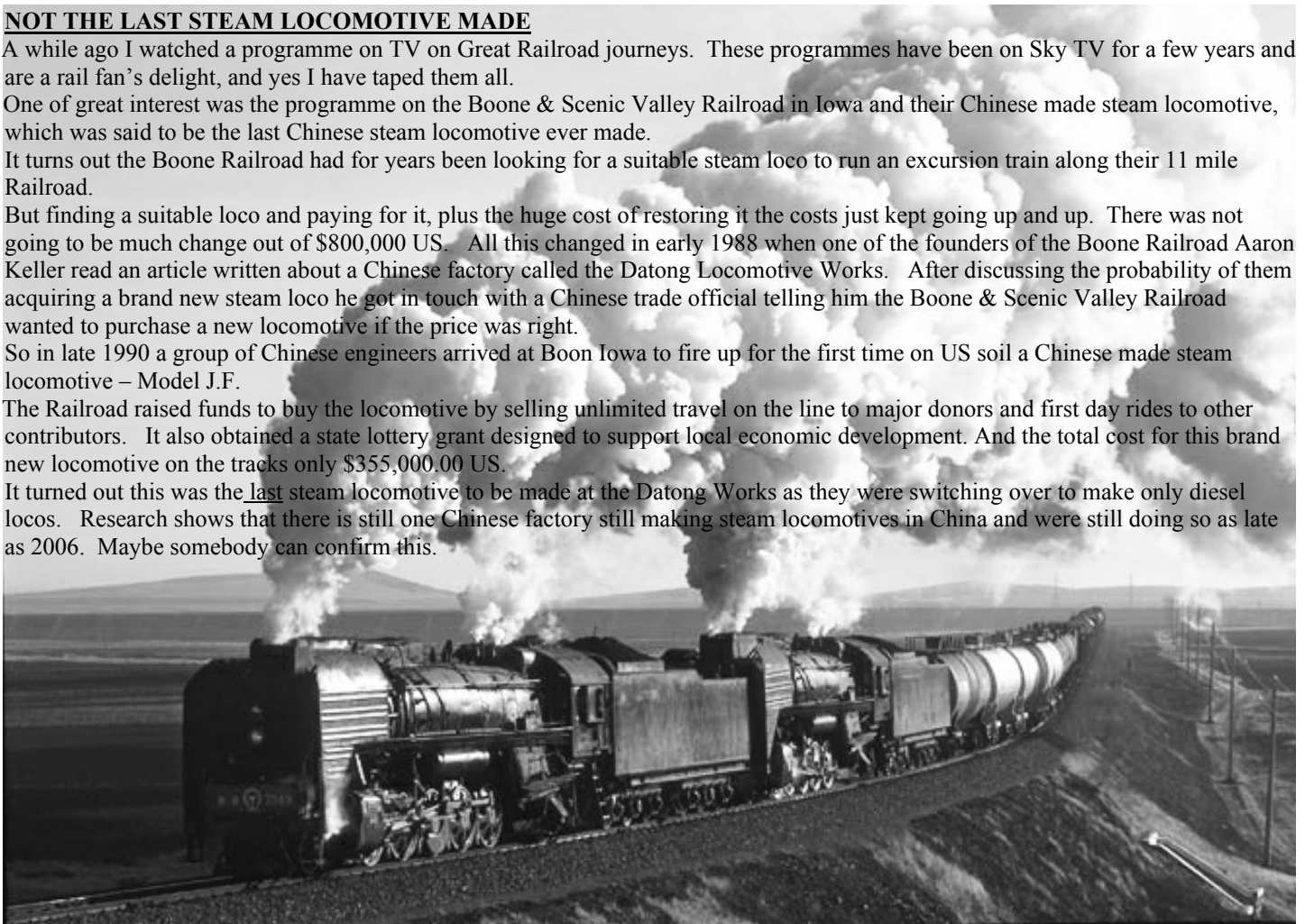
It turns out the Boone Railroad had for years been looking for a suitable steam loco to run an excursion train along their 11 mile Railroad.

But finding a suitable loco and paying for it, plus the huge cost of restoring it the costs just kept going up and up. There was not going to be much change out of \$800,000 US. All this changed in early 1988 when one of the founders of the Boone Railroad Aaron Keller read an article written about a Chinese factory called the Datong Locomotive Works. After discussing the probability of them acquiring a brand new steam loco he got in touch with a Chinese trade official telling him the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad wanted to purchase a new locomotive if the price was right.

So in late 1990 a group of Chinese engineers arrived at Boone Iowa to fire up for the first time on US soil a Chinese made steam locomotive – Model J.F.

The Railroad raised funds to buy the locomotive by selling unlimited travel on the line to major donors and first day rides to other contributors. It also obtained a state lottery grant designed to support local economic development. And the total cost for this brand new locomotive on the tracks only \$355,000.00 US.

It turned out this was the last steam locomotive to be made at the Datong Works as they were switching over to make only diesel locos. Research shows that there is still one Chinese factory still making steam locomotives in China and were still doing so as late as 2006. Maybe somebody can confirm this.

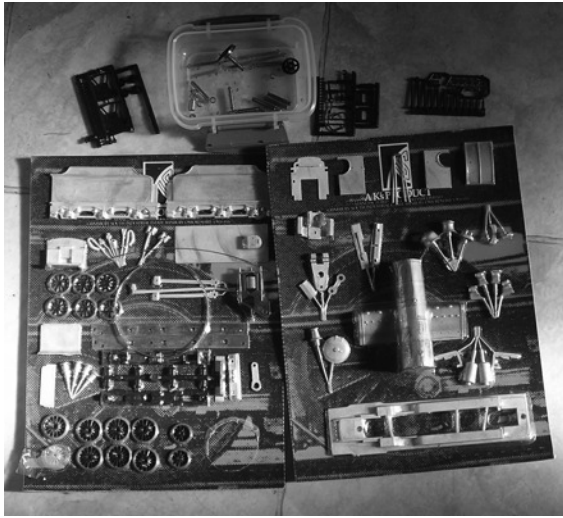




# The Keyser ROD Saga

By Rob Nesbitt

“Little did I know what was in store for me.”



I am not sure what came first – my love of building whitemetal kits, or my need to challenge my skills in railway modeling. In any case, a few years ago, appearing on Australian ebay, there was an unbuilt, still in original packaging Keyser 2-8-0 ROD kit. The model was a deceased estate find, and the seller said it was complete. The photos showed blister packed parts on cardboard, so I thought I would take the plunge, and bid a modest sum. My bid proved successful.

I had always wanted to build an early production whitemetal kit, particularly the Keyser brand. Call me somewhat silly, but having successfully built around two dozen whitemetal locos of Australian prototype, I really wanted to try something out of my comfort zone, and as a result, improve my knowledge.

Little did I know what was in store for me.

The kit duly arrived. Opening it, I was somewhat dismayed to discover that the instructions were missing. An enquiry back to the seller proved to be a waste of time, so I placed the kit in the cupboard, and I began a (long) search.

## Where does one find instructions?

Perhaps naively, my first thoughts were towards the world wide web. I know that there are some people out there that keep copies of kit instructions on the web, but no-one seemed to have the Keyser ROD.

The next option was to check ebay. With around 100,000 model train auctions every week, given a few months, surely one would be a Keyser ROD. I could make contact with the seller, and perhaps get a scan of the instructions from them, failing that place a bid. Well, a year went by, and a Keyser ROD auction proved elusive.

However, ebay did give me a lead. After winning a US outline brass loco from a seller in Townsville, I noted from his feedback, that he was a frequent purchaser of Keyser kits. Whilst he did not have a ROD kit, he sent me a scan of the Keyser Stanier Class 5 4-6-0 instructions.

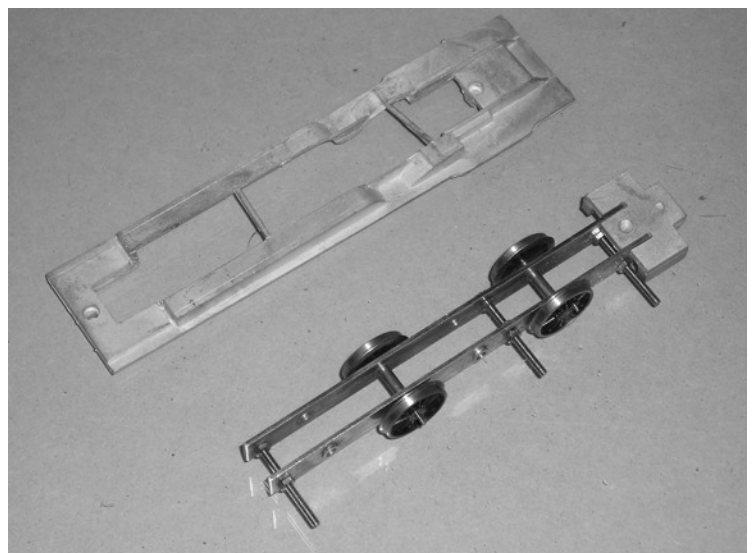
The Stanier instructions showed there were many similarities with the ROD, namely the tender construction. But, to my continuing disappointment, I also discovered that the Stanier chassis used a number of spacers, and screw hardware that were missing in my kit. Also absent were all the axles for the pony, and tender wheelsets

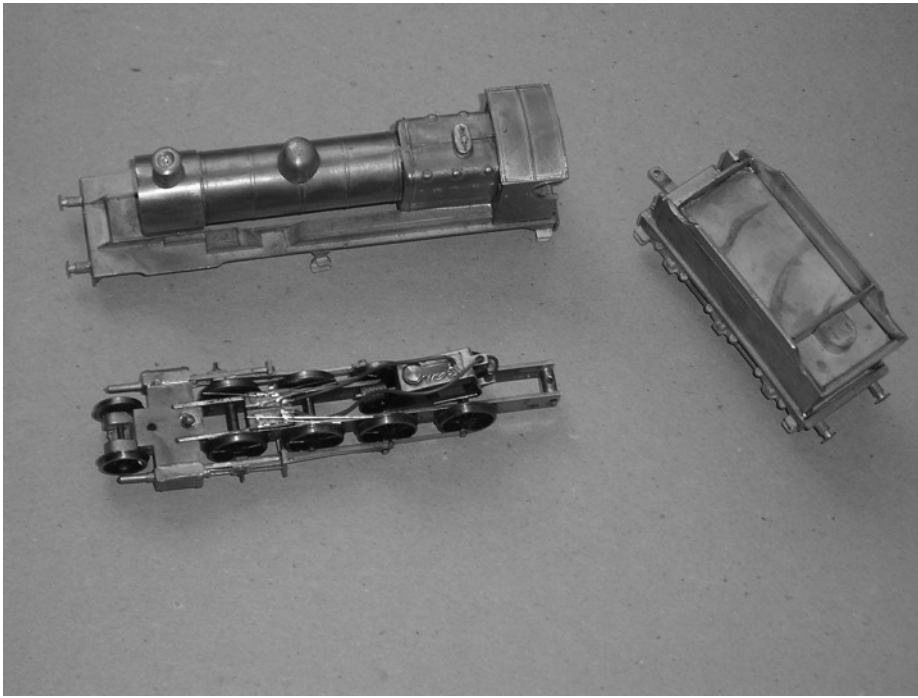
Fortunately for my story, and my kit, this was not the end.

During the year of watching ebay, I had approached the Australasian NMRA region, in the hope that they would be able to run a “wanted” advert on their website. Not surprisingly, this lead to nothing. However, I considered that perhaps I was asking the wrong region, and an inquiry to the British NMRA brought me into contact with Mike Carr. After some very interesting correspondence, Mike was able to locate the Keyser ROD instructions, scanned them, and forwarded the PDF to my email account.

## Construction of the kit.

Mike’s instructions showed the ROD loco in exploded view, but many things were different. My kit had a number of sol, where





Mike's supplied instructions showed separate parts. There was little information on the tender build, but this was covered nicely in the Stanier instructions. Some information concerning driving wheels indicated that there was an insulated and live side, but all my wheelsets were insulated. In any case, I felt I had enough information to start construction.

#### *Chassis*

The biggest problem was concerning the width of the chassis frames. Looking at the diagrams, I needed to fit the gearbox between the frames, and this gave an internal dimension of 9mm. This dimension also corresponded with a whitemetal block that fitted between the front ends of the frame. To make the spacers, I cut three 9mm long lengths from a suitable K&S tube, using the K&S tube cutter.

After tinning the frames and tubes with 145 degree solder, these were soldered together.

Please note, that this step is critical to a good running loco. My method is shown in the attached photo. I secured the tubes within the frames using 8BA bolts, and prior to soldering, confirmed that 2 driving wheel axles and wheels at either end of the frame did not rock, and were square to the frame.

I wasn't out of the woods yet. The main driving axle according to the Stanier instructions needed to be a "D" profile, and this corresponded to the axle hole in the main gear wheel of my kit. Well, all my axles were fully round. Careful machining with the Dremel fixed this on one axle. A further impediment to my progress was that I only had one wheel with the long crankpin, needed for the cylinder driving rod. I got around this by soldering a thin brass tube onto the shorter crankpin of another wheel.

The chassis assembly after that was fairly straight forward, although quartering the wheelsets, and fitting of the pickups was a bit tricky. Finally, testing the model on the workbench showed a smooth running mechanism.

#### *The body*

I suppose I should have known, the lumps of whitemetal supplied could be guaranteed to not fit properly. Perhaps this was due to casting shrinkage, and the Keyser brand, being a pioneer in the kit making industry, would be learning the art. In any case, after much filing, low-melt soldering and filling (plus time spent), I have a reasonable representation of the ROD. The only main deviation I made was to substitute straight brass wire for the curved wire supplied? I probably should have also replaced the plastic handrail knobs with brass ones, but I thought I needed to keep some things original.

#### *The tender*

Apart from the need to source axles for the wheels, the Stanier kit instructions were followed.

#### Final assembly

Maybe I made some mistakes during the build process, but when the footplate was secured to the chassis, I found insufficient clearance for the front pony wheel, and it promptly shorted out on the track. I could have filed the flanges down, but it seemed easier to add a small washer as a spacer. Unfortunately, the loco still didn't run properly. Investigation showed that the rigid chassis to be less than satisfactory for electrical pickup from the driving wheels. This not helped by extensive pitting on the back of the wheels, caused by rusting whilst on original blister pack card. Fitting pickups to the tender wheels, and connecting wires from these pickups direct onto the motor terminals cured the erratic running.

#### Painting.

The loco was disassembled, and carefully cleaned. I airbrushed self-etch black primer, followed by Tamiya semi-gloss black for the boiler jacket, cab, and tender. For the livery, I chose one of thirteen that existed here in NSW, that being for J.A Brown's Richmond Vale Railway, in the NSW Hunter Valley. J.A. Brown RODs had little adornments, and lettering; besides the red buffer beams, the only numbers that I can find in photos are cast brass plates on the loco sides, and tender rear, which I have simulated with a printed number on shim brass. Please note that the coal load is industrial sand blasting grit.

Still to do is heavy weathering, and couplers. But being a OO scale model, and not HO that I model, the ROD loco is destined for the display case.

### In conclusion

Whilst I had problems with the missing instructions, axles, and some chassis parts; the missing D axle, and wrong crankpin length were a failure of the original kit packaging. But even without these problems, I doubt that many first time builders would have had success with this kit.

However, I have now gained an appreciation of whitemetal kits produced recently. Sure. They may cost more, but the end result, and the time saved in having accurately fitting parts, is certainly worth the money. And I find them generally simpler to build.

I am pleased that the loco is now constructed, and that I have made contact with very helpful NMRA members. And the lessons learnt? Maybe there are a few.

- a) Don't leave kits unbuilt in the cupboard. Improve your skill, and build them
- b) Ancient kits may have missing or faulty parts. If you are buying them for retirement, or a rainy day, carefully inspect the contents prior to storage. Manufacturers do make mistakes, but you are on your own if the kit has a problem which you do not find until the firm is out of business
- c) A cheap kit does not necessarily mean a good kit.
- d) Whitemetal appears to be a stable metal, and does not turn to powder in over 40 years since the kit was first marketed.
- e) Buyer beware on ebay. You can never ask too many questions

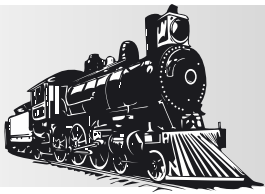
I wish to thank Mike Carr, and the British NMRA for providing me the means to complete this model.

Rob Nesbitt  
NMRA #87748  
alco4801@yahoo.com.au



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British NMRA for providing me  
the means to complete this model.





# Reminiscing about the Railway Refreshment Rooms

By Michael Avery

When I was reading the Autumn 2013 edition of your magazine and came across the article and photo's of the Railway Refreshment Rooms at Casino Station my heart jumped a beat and memories started flooding back of my life when my Father and Mother were the Managers at Casino R.R.R from 1957 till late 1960.

The photo's represent exactly what it was like at the time I was there as a 9 to 12 year old.

The main Dining area was combined with the Service Counter as one long hall with a removable barrier between the Dining area and the fast servery counter.

The door you see behind the sideboard led into the huge kitchen with coal fired ovens, the other door at the far end with the letter B led into the Bar, every main line station had a Bar that that opened when the trains arrived and in this era was the only Bar allowed to be opened on a Sunday in most towns, this pleased the locals who would wander in just as the train arrived and disappear as soon as the train left, all they needed was a Station Ticket.

The table in the upper right hand corner is a four setting reserved for the Manager and his family and this is where as a family we dined for tea every night with a full silver service and waited on, very unusual upbringing.

The flowers were changed every couple of days and the flower stand doubled as a fresh fruit bowl. The table cloths were pure white, starched and ironed and had a lace pattern, these were changed for every train.

All the Silverware was EPSN and highly polished.

As you mention in your article, the speed at which the passengers had to be served was amazing as trains usually only stopped for 20 to 30 minutes so many people did not get to enjoy a sit down meal, most meals were served to people waiting for a train to arrive.

Coffs Harbour Station had a longer stopping period so its dining room was much larger and catered for main meals, their fish was the best on the coast.

The staff at the R.R.R were usually only advised 2 hours before a train arrived of the numbers on board and the break up of sleeper, first and second, it was called a CANA Message and my father had to determine what the break up of numbers was as the class of traveller determined the catering for the train, a full sleeper set and first class meant more sit down meals, the larger 2nd class meant more counter service and Bar service.

I spent from my the day of birth till I was 23 living on the railway with my Mother and Father and have lived at all the Main Stations in NSW doe on several occasions.

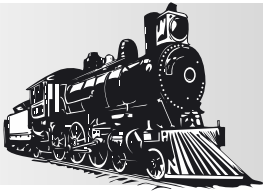
At one time we even lived on Newcastle Station as the Managers Residence was on the 1st floor and my bedroom window looked straight up Bolton st.

When I look back on my childhood now I feel very lucky to have had the wonderful experience (even though I went to 25 different schools) it was an unusual life style and you felt very protected from the outside world and its not every child who is actually allowed to play on the rails and have races with your mates up and down the platform pushing the trolleys.

cheers,

Michael Avery





# TREES- IS BIGGER, BETTER?

By Allen Hare MMR



Ok we in some way make or buy trees to fit on our layouts to make the scene come alive. Some modellers like me don't really worry if the trees we model are 100% correct for the area we model. I have the attitude that if they look good and blend in okay – then I am happy, hey it is my layout. But some of us must have our trees 100% correct even to the dead branches, that's good – hey it's your layout. But are they all the same or do they vary. Let's take a look at the Pacific Coast of North America, there are so many types of trees one would soon run out of room to put them. All sizes shapes and colours especially if we made them to "scale". There are the giant coastal Redwoods, the Mighty Sequoias of the Sierra Nevada Hills, the Plentiful Douglas Fir, dominant mainly in Oregon and Washington, then the huge Sitka Spruce found further up into Canada.

In between we have large stands of Hemlock, Oak, Poplar and the list goes on.

Most listed are now in large protected stands throughout the coastal states.

When we make or buy trees most seem to be 4" – 6" tall, some up to 9" tall. In HO Scale this is only 30 – 80 scale fit, but they look the part.

But if you model a certain area say in the late 1800's to 1940's your trees should be up to 250ft (in scale) – tall and up to 30ft in diameter at the base. This in HO scale would be around 3ft tall by 2 1/2" in diameter. Just hold a tape measure against your loco and freight cars to get an idea, then realise you can still go another scale 50ft tall.

Just imagine the size your layout would have to be to have a forest of scale size trees complete with undergrowth, a logging camp, maybe a small town with the local daily freight or passenger train running through.

"Big Trees" food for thought. So are your trees big enough?

Just a note of interest, as we all know the tallest trees in the world are the mighty Redwoods that can top 350ft plus and be up to 2,000 plus years old. But the biggest capacity living trees are the giant Sequoias of California, where one stands at over 250ft tall with a base diameter of 26ft and a volume of around 53,000 cubic feet and would weigh an estimated 6,200 tons.

Maybe a few of these in HO scale or whatever scale you model in would not look out of place on your layout. Food for thought? – just think “BIG”

*The photo shown below is a good example of the size of trees, a fact that we take for granted in our modelling. The small shrub in the foreground is nearly 6 feet high with the tree in the background approximately 36 feet and this is small compared to the height of some species of trees.*



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