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the

# MainLine

magazine

the official journal of the

**National Model Railroad Association Incorporated**  
**Australasian Region**

# NMRA Inc - Australasian Region Directory

## REGIONAL COMMITTEE

President: Duncan Cabassi  
0424 844 807  
[president@nmra.org.au](mailto:president@nmra.org.au)

Vice President: Doug Wallace  
0490 928 334  
[vicepresident@nmra.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@nmra.org.au)

Secretary: Trevor Phillips  
0402 926 930  
[secretary@nmra.org.au](mailto:secretary@nmra.org.au)

Treasurer: Al Harris  
0412 608 817  
[treasurer@nmra.org.au](mailto:treasurer@nmra.org.au)

Pacific District Director: Robert Peterson  
(02) 9871 4157  
[director@nmra.org.au](mailto:director@nmra.org.au)

## MEMBERS

Member David North HLM  
(02) 9975 6436  
[david@nmra.org.au](mailto:david@nmra.org.au)

Member Phillip Sharpe  
(64) 2720 30428  
[phillip@nmra.org.au](mailto:phillip@nmra.org.au)

Member TBA

## PUBLIC OFFICER

Public Officer Doug Wallace  
0490 928 334  
[publicofficer@nmra.org.au](mailto:publicofficer@nmra.org.au)

## SUPERINTENDENTS

Division 1 QLD Duncan Cabassi  
0424 844 807  
[div1sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div1sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 2 ACT Stephen O'Brien  
0402 913 196  
[div2sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div2sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 3 VIC Peter Kendall  
0412 299 730  
[div3sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div3sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 4 WA Frank Godde MMR  
(08) 9253 3155  
[div4sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div4sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 5 NZ Kelvin Sherson  
(04) 234-8577  
[div5sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div5sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 6 SA David Orr  
0420 885 669  
[div6sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div6sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 7 Newcastle, Sydney Wollongong John Arrowsmith  
0411 400 049  
[div7sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div7sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 8 / 9 Northern NSW Ian West  
(02) 7903 0402  
[div8sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div8sup@nmra.org.au)

Division 10 Tasmania Pat Britton  
0417 625 278  
[div10sup@nmra.org.au](mailto:div10sup@nmra.org.au)

## REGARDING ARTICLE CONTRIBUTIONS

**A**ll members of the Australasian Region are invited to submit articles of a railway nature for publication in the 'MainLine' magazine.

I would appreciate all articles to be sent to me in an editable format, such as 'Word, Pages, text, email, but not pdf, and high resolution photos sized up to 2MB in size.

Please send your articles to [editor@nmra.org.au](mailto:editor@nmra.org.au)

# NMRA Inc. - Australasian Region Directory

(cont.)

## REGIONAL VOLUNTEERS

A.P. Regional Manager	David O'Hearn (02) 9097 9903 <a href="mailto:ap@nmra.org.au">ap@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager ACT	Ross Balderson (02) 6238 1003 <a href="mailto:apviceact@nmra.org.au">apviceact@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager VIC (East)	Bill Black (03) 5968 309 <a href="mailto:apviceviceast@nmra.org.au">apviceviceast@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager VIC (West)	Peter MacDonald MMR (053) 67-360 <a href="mailto:apvicevicwest@nmra.org.au">apvicevicwest@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager SA	Ray Brownbill 0417 849 630 <a href="mailto:apvicesa@nmra.org.au">apvicesa@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager QLD	Arthur Hayes MMR (07) 3345 7887 <a href="mailto:apviceqldsth@nmra.org.au">apviceqldsth@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager WA	Frank Godde MMR (08) 9253 3155 <a href="mailto:apvicewa@nmra.org.au">apvicewa@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager NSW	Dennis Clarke MMR (02) 4390 2527 <a href="mailto:apvicensw@nmra.org.au">apvicensw@nmra.org.au</a>
A.P. Assistant Manager Coffs Harbour	Ian Phemister (02) 6658 2626 <a href="mailto:apvicech@nmra.org.au">apvicech@nmra.org.au</a>

Librarian	David North HLM (02) 9975 6436 <a href="mailto:librarian@nmra.org.au">librarian@nmra.org.au</a>
Regional Contest Chair	TBA  <a href="mailto:contest@nmra.org.au">contest@nmra.org.au</a>
Editor - MainLine On-Line	Merv Bagnall (07) 4125 2360 <a href="mailto:editor@nmra.org.au">editor@nmra.org.au</a>
Web Master	Wayne Eagle (02) 9627 9892 <a href="mailto:webmaster@nmra.org.au">webmaster@nmra.org.au</a>
Web Administrator	Brad Anderson 0451 186 862 <a href="mailto:updates@nmra.org.au">updates@nmra.org.au</a>
Project Co-Ordinator - Web Upgrade	Duncan Cabassi 0424 844 807 <a href="mailto:div1sup@nmra.org.au">div1sup@nmra.org.au</a>
Education Chairman	TBA  <a href="mailto:education@nmra.org.au">education@nmra.org.au</a>
Social Media Manager	Martyn Jenkins 0407 637 607 <a href="mailto:ssm@nmra.org.au">ssm@nmra.org.au</a>
Convention Chairman 2021	Peter McGuire (02) 4861 4032 <a href="mailto:convention@nmra.org.au">convention@nmra.org.au</a>
Membership	Al Harris 7 Mahogany Avenue Sandy Beach, NSW, 2456, Australia 0412 608 817 <a href="mailto:membership@nmra.org.au">membership@nmra.org.au</a>

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Articles are provided by members for publication in good faith and the views expressed therein are not necessarily those of the NMRA Inc - AR.

## New Articles

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Charles Page has a long time of interest in the Pennsylvania Railroad and recently embarked on a major expansion of his model railroad. Charles outlines how his interest in model railroading developed in his early years and how it cemented a lifetime of interest in the large and unique locomotives that make the Pennsylvania Railroad.

*by Charles Page*

**17 What’s On the Workbench**

We don’t always get an opportunity to showcase our ‘*work in progress*’, yes there are show and tells at Divisional meetings, but getting to Divisional meetings for that exposure can be prohibitive to some. Arthur Hayes -MMR has commenced a new segment for all members, no matter what your forte is in the model railroading world, to show what you are building.

*by Arthur Hayes - MMR*

**19 A Place to Call Home**

Stephen Reeves has a purpose built shed in his backyard to house his model railway layout, of which is presently under construction. Stephen has ensured that the infrastructure was in place in his ‘Train Room’ to make the building a pleasure to be in, before he commenced building his layout and he has outlined the process that he followed to achieve the outcome.

*by Stephen Reeves*

**23 Configuration Variables**

Gerry sets out to demystify Configuration Variables, (CV’s), with an explanation which should go a long way to helping the vast number of DCC modellers in our association who would like to know a little more in-depth information about ‘bits and bytes’ & ‘programming methods’, but who may have been somewhat reluctant to ask their peers or who may not know where to go for more information.

*by Gerry Hopkins - MMR*

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## the Cover Photo

*Pennsylvania Railroad T1 Duplex No. 5511 is an early BLI model retrofitted with a Tsunami decoder, current keeper and a high quality speaker installed in the boiler.*

*Extra detail has also been added to 5511.*

*On a cold winter’s morning 5511 is departing Mount Loewy with a westbound train of RPO and express refrigerator cars.*



## Editor's Comments

This is the first edition of MainLine following the 2022 NMRA-AR Inc. AGM which saw the election of a new Australasian Region Committee (ARC) who will lead the association for the next two years. The names of the people who make up the new committee are shown on page 2 & 3. I congratulate all committee members who have taken on these important roles in our association. I congratulate our new President, Duncan Cabassi, and having personally known Duncan for a few decades, I can attest to his strong interest in progressing and growing our great hobby and I am certain he will strive to do just that in his position as President of the NMRA-AR Inc. For a new look and to assist in my operational and set-up needs, and by expecting that each report will most likely vary in length and arrive towards the later part of the month, it will be necessary for me to move the location of the President's Report, which will now be called the 'President's Communication', to a new location which will now precede the Divisional Reports. Duncan has advised that he will be giving an update of what is happening in the region in this column in each edition, so this will be the place to go to know the latest happenings in the NMRA-AR Inc. The first 'President's Communication' starts on page 34.

I was recently asked by a new AR member as to why there was not a Buy/ Sell/ Swap column in our MainLine magazine? Well, I couldn't give the member a definitive answer, but I advised that I would raise the issue in this edition to see if it gathers any traction (*pardon the pun*). I can't see anything in the editor's handbook that would prevent such a column, so I guess it would come down to whether or not the column would be supported by members? I would be interested in receiving comments from members, both for and against. If it went ahead then there would be strict rules to adhere to, such as a word limit, content, etc and the rules would be clearly documented. So let me know your thoughts and I will advise more in the next edition.

Our feature article this month commences on page 7 and comes from Charles Page who has a long time of interest in the Pennsylvania Railroad. He has recently embarked on a major expansion of his model railroad and in his article he outlines how his interest in model railroading developed in his early years and how it was cemented at that time for a lifetime of interest in the large and unique locomotives that make the Pennsylvania railroad, for which he outlines in his article titled '*History of the Lowey Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad*'.

One of the regular contributors to MainLine is Arthur Hayes - MMR. Arthur has made a very good suggestion for what could be a regular segment in MainLine, being a segment that will showcase what us modellers have been up to on the workbench, and we kick that off this month. We don't always get an opportunity to showcase our work, yes there are show and tells at Divisional meetings, but if you are a regional member, such as I am, then regularly getting to Divisional meetings can be prohibitive. Arthur's new segment commences on page 17. This new segment is a place for all members, no matter what your forte is in the model railroading world, to show what you are building.

Have a look at Arthur's article and you will see that it is only two pages in length, so it is not a long article, under four hundred words coupled with a half a dozen photos, but the

article is easy to read and informative reading, which may benefit some members. Subject matter can be whatever you are working on with your model railroad, so I look forward to receiving contributions from AR members who are keen to show what projects they have on their workbenches and I would like to aim to include one quality article in this segment in each edition if we get enough support for the segment.

Stephen Reeves has a purpose built shed in his backyard to house his model railway layout, of which is presently under construction. Stephen has ensured that the infrastructure was in place in his 'Train Room' to make the building a pleasure to be in, before he commenced building his layout and he has outlined the process that he followed to achieve the outcome in his article titled '*A Place to Call Home*', which commences on page 19.


Another regular contributor to the MainLine magazine is Gerry Hopkins - MMR. From page 23 in this month's edition, Gerry sets out to demystify Configuration Variables, (CV's), with an explanation which should go a long way to helping the vast number of DCC modellers in our association who would like to know a little more in-depth information about 'bits and bytes' & 'programming methods', but who may have been somewhat reluctant to ask their peers or who may not know where to go for more information.

A 100% NMRA - AR club, The Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc., have provided two reports of their activities and progress of the building of their club layout during both January and February, from page 27.

David O'Hearn has provided the 'Achievement Program Report' from page 32, which covers some very useful information for knowing how to get the most out of your experience with the Achievement Program. David also recognises those members who have achieved an AP certificate during the last two months.

The Divisional Reports commence on page 38 and there is a good amount of reading in the reports about the activities that has occurred around the Divisions in the Australasian Region.

Don't forget that the index on page 4 is always a good source to use for finding what page the articles or reports are located on, or for important information such as what are the '*Magazine Publishing Deadline Dates*'! To make my life a little easier, I have revised the '*Magazine Publishing Deadline Dates*' and they are shown on page 26, so it may be worth a look if you are looking to send in a report for the future edition of MainLine.

In last month's editor's comments I mentioned that "*the cupboard was bare*" with regard to articles of member's layouts which could be used as a 'Feature Article' in our magazine. Charles Page answered the call for this month's Feature Article, however the cupboard is still bare with no other articles received of member's layouts that I could use as a feature article. So if you are thinking about submitting an article or two about your layout, then now may be a very good time to send it to me, and you may find it in the pages of MainLine in the not too distant future.....

*Meru Bagnall*

Editor - MainLine On-Line

# History of the Loewy Division of The Pennsylvania Railroad

by Charles J Page

**H**aving a model railroad is like owning a pet fire-breathing Dragon, it can fly you to the heights of ecstasy and then turn around and set fire to your Derrière.

If I was a primary school student today and I wanted to know something about model trains, I would whip out my iPhone and in an instant an avalanche of information would appear. It was somewhat different back in the 1950s when I was in primary school.

As my Tri-ang diesel and some coaches ran around a loop of track on my bedroom floor, I was content, as the philosopher Thomas Gray said in 1768 '*ignorance is bliss*'. I didn't realise that what I had could lead to so much more. How could I? Information was not as readily available as it is now. In the rapidly expanding new suburban estates of Melbourne's western suburbs the only model train contact I had was my cousin, he lived up the road and had a Hornby train set running around a loop of track on his bedroom floor too.

Probably, that's how it would have stayed, until I got bored with it, there has to be a limit to how many times you can watch it go around.



Union Pacific 4-12-2 East bound at Mount Loewy. The sound of a three cylinder beat was impressive and unusual, as the Pennsy never had three cylinder power.



Arriving at Mount Loewy is a Chesapeake and Ohio M1 Turbine, a brass model by Division Point.

There is a much-used expression when an unexpected and important change happens in your life, 'the planets aligned'. Well, they aligned for me one day after school.

To put the current Loewy Division layout into perspective, I think it's important for me to explain what happened, because it still resonates today, every time I do something on the layout. I feel that I undertook an apprenticeship in model railroading without realising it at the time. How fortunate I was!



The Spotswood State School was built in 1910 and I spent 6 years there in the 1950s, it was draughty, cold and the desks had arrived with the first fleet, the seats were hard and uncomfortable. However, the education it offered was comprehensive if somewhat authoritarian, each morning the pervasive chant of the multiplication tables would reverberate around the school.

I still can't drink straight milk because of the magnanimous initiative of making sure every child drank milk each school day, pity that they left the crates sit in the sun until morning recess.

As a result of my time at the school I'm also needle phobic, a legacy from lining up on a regular basis to get yet another booster. Trapped in a serpentine queue, you shuffled towards your inevitable fate, the smell of the antiseptic, screams, crying, fainting and little gems like, "did you see Bill, the needle broke off in his arm and they're trying to dig it out" would ensure sweaty palms and palpitations.

As a welcome distraction, there were also persistent rumours amongst the students about a 'train set' that a kid's father had in a shed.



Only months before being streamlined by Raymond Loewy, K4 3768 rolls across the Merrick viaduct on the West Ely branch

As a welcome distraction, there were also persistent rumours amongst the students about a 'train set' that a kid's father had in a shed.



With an Eastbound passenger train, streamlined K4 3768 and unstreamlined K4 3760 begin the climb up the Pompeii Ridge grade

I don't remember exactly how or when David and I became friends, but we shared an interest in trains. The school was across the road from the Victorian Railway's reclamation depot and there were often steam engines in there, when he wasn't causing chaos in the school yard, we often shared a place on the fence to watch them trundling about.

While the school was the catalyst, David was the link, both were pivotal to giving me a vision of

what was possible and launching a lifelong interest in model trains; it eventuated that it was David's father who had the 'train set'. Eventually, David invited me to his place to see the trains. We walked down a garden path towards the shed, in the garden I noticed an abandoned elevated track bed, an O gauge railway that had continually suffered from dirty track, leaves and the deposits of the local cats. A decision was made to abandon it and move indoors with a HO layout.



I stepped through the door and fell in love, it wasn't just the scenery, even the smell of it was intoxicating, and then they started to run the trains! A diesel streamliner glided past a rock pool with swimmers and a waterfall and then disappeared into a tunnel to



As the sun sets, K2 1525 with a local train of MP54 coaches crosses the Merrick viaduct on the West Ely branch

emerge on a different level. It wasn't a particularly large layout, barely the size of a single car garage, and by today's standards the curves were rather tight, but it just didn't matter. The 'kid's father' was Frank, a delightful, generous and talented man, he was a tool and die maker who had produced the dies to stamp out the first pull top beer cans. But his skills were most impressive when applied to model trains. He was an inventor and an innovator. I think a highpoint was a fully operational

set of VR crossing gates and semaphore signals, all metal with exquisite detail, the four gates would swing shut against the traffic as a train approached and then magically open again after it passed. I looked underneath and the workings were very Heath Robinson, a conglomerate of motors, gears, wires and levers.

Not all projects were initially quite so successful, he designed an electrical system to replicate the transition from day to night, as the 'daylight' faded a 'moonlight' blue light would bathe the countryside, the effect was stunning. I'm not sure how it worked, but it did involve a container of salty water that seemed to fizz and crackle a lot. Another frequent visitor was Peter, who undertook most of the electrical work on the layout, his other interest was producing high quality



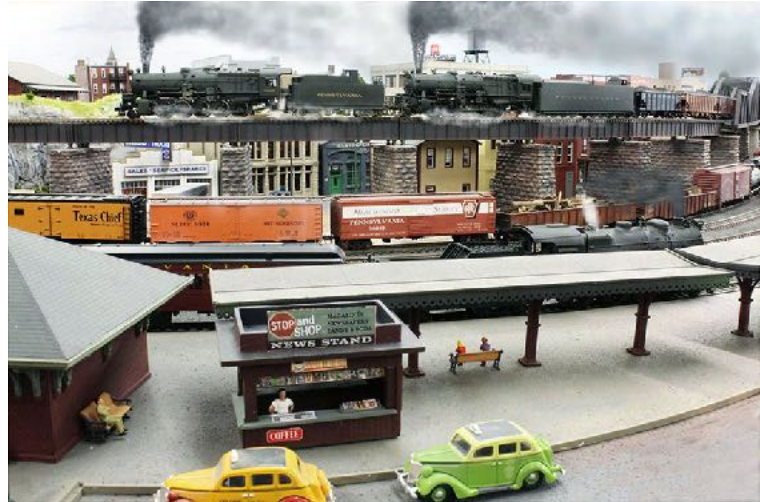
Two I1s decapods working hard with a loaded coal train at Wallistown on the West Ely branch

sound recordings, he still sells CDs of his train recordings. Peter was an electrician and upon seeing the new lighting effects immediately declared the system a death trap and disconnected it, he then designed a safer way to achieve the effect. As the layout and

rolling stock expanded, a dead-end holding yard was built across one end of the garage that was next to the layout room. However, rather than a fixed yard he built a type of cantilever system, so that when the storage tracks were full the entire yard would move out from the wall and rotate on its support through 180 and then fit back in so neatly that all of the trains were now ready to re-emerge onto the layout. Of course, the car couldn't be in residence when this manoeuvre took place.

This was the late 1950s and there were very few model train products available locally. Frank scratch built whatever he needed or imported it from the US via his wife's sister, who had married an American serviceman.

While the hobby still requires lateral thinking and innovative solutions, we now have countless options available when dealing with the inevitable challenges of tinkering with model trains; often, solutions are just an iPhone away.



As a G5 simmers in Mount Loewy station, double headed decapods rumble across the 3<sup>rd</sup> street viaduct.

My favourite experience running trains happened when Frank built an extension to the layout room, it included a branch line with a small yard at the end. The rheostat controller was on the control panel and clunky switches operated solenoid point motors,



Morning services in the church have just been drowned out by the roar of two decapods

but I loved running that branch. A tank engine and five or six cars and I was totally immersed, afternoons completely disappeared. After all this time it's still my most memorable time running trains.

I can see little influences in the Loewy Division that reference back to Frank's layout, and yet they would be meaningless to anyone else.

When the extension was built in 2013, I included a lengthy branch line, influenced of course by Frank's branch line. I really enjoy operating it, but somehow it lacks a certain innocence. Come to think of it, I do as well!



In the post-Frank era I've built four layouts, the first three didn't reach completion, my current layout will certainly be the last. Yet, I do find it intriguing that an experience from more than sixty years ago still resonates with me so intensely. I suppose it's like your first lover, you can never quite recapture that unique thrill.

Regrettably, Frank's layout no longer exists, demolished along with his house, replaced by the current 'fill the entire block' with a nondescript architectural box style.

I'd like to report that David and I remained lifelong friends. However, despite all of our



The Q1 is a 4-6-4-4 one off duplex designed for fast freight service, (notice that the second set of cylinders are rear facing). It is departing Mount Loewy, Eastbound

train chasing, operating the layout, going through primary and high school together and going to parties together when we were at different tertiary institutions, our friendship seemed to fade away in our mid 20's and we lost contact.

I value my time spent with Frank and David, and I'm comfortable with having those experiences still resonate, it's like any learning experience, it gives you a foundation that you can refer back to and build on. Of course, I'm now firmly entrenched in the current technology, DCC and sound moved everything into another dimension.

*Returning to the present.*

After more than thirty years the Loewy Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad is essentially complete. Reaching this point has not been a straightforward journey; more a wayside freight than the Broadway Limited.

When I set out to design the layout in 1990 there were several criteria that had to be adhered to:

- Curves with a minimum radius of 48 inches (on the main line)
- Super-elevated curves
- No.8 points on the main line
- A double track main line
- Switching, yard and line side
- Slow motion point motors
- Ruling grade not to be steeper than 1 in 120
- A high standard of track quality
- A staging yard



In 1943 the Pennsylvania Railroad bought six N&W Y3s, PRR Y3 3760 is one of those Locos. The articulated is moving out from under the Mount Loewy coaling tower.

After moving to Queensland in the early 1980s, I bought my current house in 1990, my choice was not based on a 'layout space with a house attached'. I liked the house on my first inspection, and I liked the area. So, was there actually space for a layout? Sort of.

The property is cut into the side of a hill, the original

design had a single car garage underneath and a similar area of concreted storage between the car space and a 1metre retaining wall under the house, all up an equivalent area of a two-car garage.

It sounds promising, but I also needed space for a good-sized darkroom and an office, they took care of the 'storage area', so I was left with a single car garage space for a layout. There was no internal access to this underneath area, so a spiral staircase was installed connecting it to the living area above, and this further encroached on the available layout space.

I started designing the track plan even before the conversion work began.

Quite simply, to satisfy my criteria a workable layout wouldn't fit. The best I could have would be an elongated loop of track with a spiral staircase inside it at one end. I also had to be able to access the office and darkroom, both of which were outside the loop.

Which brings me to my one totally non-negotiable position, no duck under. I had one briefly on an earlier layout, never again.

I finally came up with what I considered an interim solution until I could devise something better. The four running tracks would come together and squeeze around behind



This was the entrance to the loop under the house. The eight tracks, which are in the process of being reclaimed, split into four on the other side of this wall to form the loop.



the spiral staircase, thus putting it outside the loop, they would then form an elongated 'dog-bone' by going through the wall into my office, along the back wall and then through another wall. The tracks would then do a loop under the house, thereby at least giving me a reasonable run, while meeting most of the criteria. It wasn't an easy fix! It required cutting an opening through two block walls and the construction of an extensive timber 'conduit' similar to an air-conditioning duct, it was 30 cm wide x 15 cm high and had a removable top for access. In order to fit around some stumps, it was almost 15 metres in circumference. There were two running tracks and two very lengthy passing tracks (effectively staging tracks) that could easily hold two thirty car freight trains each.

Straight away a number of negatives to this solution become obvious.

There wasn't enough space to stand up, it was really a crawl space. If something goes wrong on a layout it's always going to happen in the least accessible place, on this layout it was inevitably going to be under the house. A freight train did have a head-on with a rat. Track cleaning was a pain, and you couldn't see the trains for half their journey

around the layout.



In 1956 the PRR leased 12 Santa Fe 2-10-4s. Parked alongside 5028 at the Mount Loewy locomotive depot is PRR Q2 duplex 6190; both were designed as fast freight haulers

I realise that it all seems rather obsessive, but, as I had no alternative at the time, I decided that I would enjoy what I had and put my energy into the visible part of the layout; hoping that one day I would get the layout that I really wanted.

Jump ahead almost twenty years.

With retirement approaching, I decided to re-visit the issue and try to find a way of getting closer to what I desired. I designed an 'ideal' track plan of what I wanted that also incorporated what I already had, without the hidden section of course.

After much deliberation, there was only one solution, extend the end of the house.

Complying with building regulations, the maximum I could extend out was 5 metres. So, combined with the width of the house, that would give me an extra 40 sq. metres. That would work.

We had always felt that our living area, which is above the layout, while not small, was a rather awkward shape, especially with the spiral staircase taking up so much room. What I thought it needed was an extension of around, say, 5 metres.....Now to 'sell' the idea!



PRR Y3 3760 crossing the Merrick viaduct

We have a coffee together on the veranda most mornings, so I casually suggested to Meredith that perhaps

we should think about extending the living area, with floor to ceiling windows we'd have a great view of the city and perhaps we could also get rid of that space absorbing spiral staircase!

"So, are you thinking of extending both levels, or just this level?" Meredith asked.

"Well, (pause for serious consideration), probably both, because the cost wouldn't be that much more, the construction would be easier, and it gives us a lot more space." I actually saw the living area extension as a distinct advantage of the master plan, and it turned out to be a great success. Fortunately, Meredith thought so too, but she was straight on to my slightly ulterior motive, "so that will also give you more room for the trains, is that the plan?"

The detailed plans for the new layout were in fact already completed, I'd been working on them for months and they incorporated all of my original criteria.

It took six months of building in 2013 to complete the two-level extension.

Before the builders moved in, I removed all of the Locos, rolling stock and any buildings that weren't fixed in place. I then wrapped the layout in plastic sheeting like a Christo sculpture, there was going to be dust! Then I tackled the job that I'd been waiting so long to do, I removed the 'temporary' under house section. Surprisingly all of the plywood and track was in excellent condition and subsequently used in the construction of the new layout extension. It was very liberating to know that I never had to venture under there again, except perhaps to evict some Possums.

I model the Pennsylvania Railroad, and that dictates some of those criteria. The PRR had some very large locomotives, 2-10-4 J class and the 4-4-6-4 Q2 Duplex for example. There was also the S1, a 4-4-4-4 Duplex that was larger than a Big Boy, I've never owned one and probably never will, but it had to be considered. There are two factors when

deciding what radius curves will be used, will your locomotives negotiate them and what will they look like while doing so. Whatever you choose will require compromises.

Manufacturers usually design their models to negotiate the tightest curves possible, because for various reasons smaller radius curves are not unusual.

I wanted larger radius curves, because it's easier for large steam locos. to negotiate them and they look a lot better doing it, especially with the tenders coupled closer to the cab. This was highlighted when a fellow modeller brought over a brass UP 4-12-2 with all wheels flanged, it had never run on a layout, even a club layout, due to its inability to negotiate their tight curves; and then the ultimate test of track-side clearances, another modeller ran a C&O M1 Turbine. Both performed flawlessly. (Ed: refer page 7 for photos of both locos)

Some of the track on the existing layout had migrated from a layout I had before moving to Queensland. In those days code 100 predominated, that in turn meant that I used it when I built the existing layout and simply acquired extra points and track as required. I also used some code 70 in the yards.



At twilight a T1 races across the Cassatt Bay bridge, Westbound with a passenger train

An advantage of modelling the Pennsy. is that some of their main lines were laid with 156lb. rail, which means that code 100 can legitimately be used, in fact it is slightly under size. I use Shinohara track, so when I'd finished the track plan for the new extension, I purchased the required number (plus a couple of extras) of original code 100 Shinohara No.8 points from Walther's, so I had continuity of design and functionality.

I used Shinohara code 83 on the branch line, it has 34 inch radius curves and No. 6 points. All points are operated by Tortoise switch motors, more than 90 of them; none have ever failed.

The existing layout was built during the DC era, originally with rotary switches to allocate a throttle to each block, when DCC arrived it was upgraded and the rotaries removed. While contemporary DCC wiring practices would be used on the extension, I took the opportunity to remove a lot of the old wiring from the original, although I did retain the blocks, mainly to help locate any short circuits that may occur.

When I came to scenic the new area, I was acutely aware that it needed to seamlessly blend with the original. I managed to do it, but it did show up some rather tired areas of scenery on the original part of the layout. I subsequently upgraded those areas, but I'm glad to say that it does retain some of the original scenery from over thirty years ago, and I like that connection. Scenery is crucial to the narrative of the layout, it is not there



to simply fill in the spaces between the tracks, each scene must have an inherent logical story that in turn contributes to the visual discourse of the layout. When you scenic a layout you become a storyteller in three dimensions.

I use plaster over bird wire with most scenic details individually sculptured, however some rock moulds were also used. I add vinegar to the plaster mix to extend the setting time, allowing me to carve the formations. There is nothing random about the scenery, it's based on set design, sight lines, textures and perspective, visitors don't realise it, but the way they view the layout is orchestrated. The trains are the actors moving through a set that compliments their performance. Like theatre, it's all about illusion really.



The young lovers are completely oblivious (as you would expect) to the J1 2-10-4 doing battle with the Pompeii Ridge grade

The backdrops are painted, and are a major contributor to the illusion, I prefer to paint them because I can infuse emotion, misty hills, an approaching storm. They are more post-impressionism than photo-realism. Of course, it's the backdrops that give the layout depth. I also use the backdrops as 'sight blockers' between the peninsulas, they are quite high so that when you walk into an operating space you can't see the rest of the layout.

Throughout the history of this layout no one else has ever been involved in its creation, which means that over the years I've had to learn all aspects of building a layout. Of course, I did start young and I had the advantage of my 'apprenticeship' with Frank. He never pontificated, but surreptitiously instilled in me a philosophy about how a layout should look and function.

Building the layout was always a very self-indulgent endeavour, at times it also functioned as therapy after I came back from documentary assignments in some rather dodgy war zones.

Until I joined the NMRA around ten years ago no one had ever seen the layout, and as I'm not keen on clubs, I just hadn't met any other model railroaders.

Thanks to the NMRA there is now a small cohort of fellow modellers who regularly operate the layout, although even now less than twenty modellers have actually seen it.

There is more information and photographs of the Loewy Division on my web site:

<http://www.charlespagephotography.com/model-trains.html> .....M



# What's on the Workbench

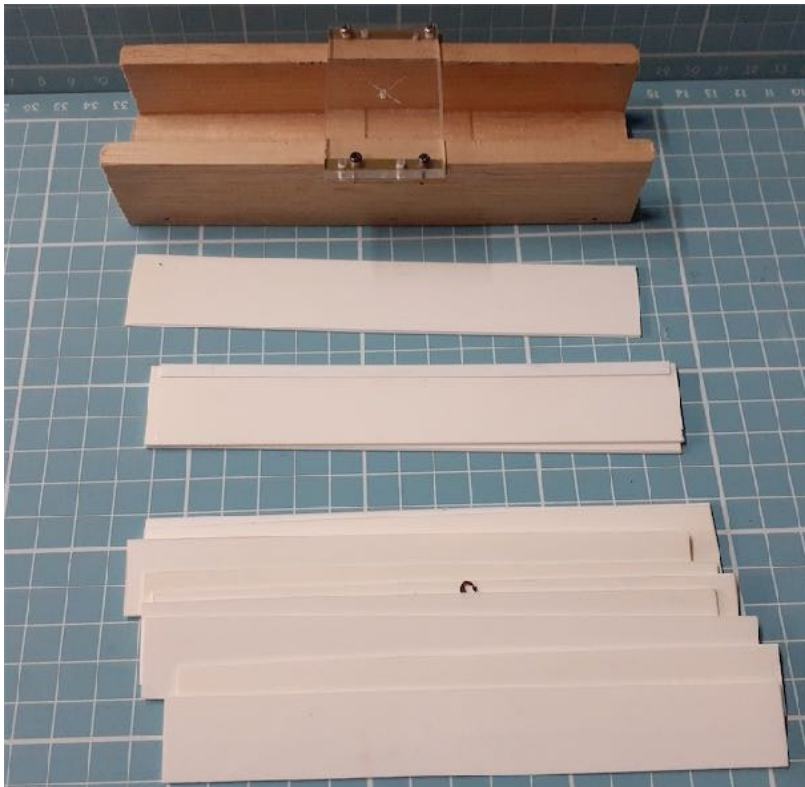
By Arthur Hayes - MMR

Members attending meetings can bring along their latest modelling project and in the Show & Tell / Bring & Brag segment of the meeting they can show off their master piece. Often a short summary of how it was achieved is given. These sessions often open doors for others in attendance by filling in that missing link on a project they would like to do. Overall, these sessions provide a huge amount of information in all scales and prototypes.

Many members for various reasons are not able to attend meetings and do not have an opportunity to show their modelling skills. I'm sure many of these modellers have a wealth of knowledge and skills that can be passed on to help other members as well.

Members are invited to send photos with a few words of their completed projects to the

Editor of MainLine for sharing with others. Let's make this a regular feature in our magazine. [editor@nmra.org.au](mailto:editor@nmra.org.au)



## Building Tank Cars.

This is a jig I built to help in the construction of tank cars. I wanted something that would give me a centre line square top and bottom, plus be able to drill holes square to mount the bogies. The styrene strips are packing to place the tank in the centre of the jig regardless of tank diameter.

Bitumen Tank Car before painting.

The tank is acrylic rod turned in a lathe to obtain the correct diameter.





Emoleum Tank Car.  
Underframe constructed using Evergreen styrene channel and strip.

Underframe on this tank Car was made using brass bar and mini strips.



Brake rigging and under frame detail was added to complete the car.

Mirotone Etch Primer was used to paint the tank car and Vallejo Model Air colours were used for weathering.

The tank cars were in service on Queensland Railways from 1962 to about 1993. The models are H0n3½ scale.

To form part of my operations sessions, a Classics Metal Ford fuel road tanker was modified/bashed into a bitumen spray truck, it marks the location in the siding to spot or place the rail bitumen tanker.



Trust these few photos of my work will encourage you to send in your modelling achievements. .... Arthur Hayes MMR.....





# A Place to call Home

## (Or how I prepared an area for Building & Housing my Layout)

by Stephen Reeves

**S**tarting at the very beginning,; In late 2013 we commenced construction of our present home in a beachside suburb east of Bundaberg in the Wide Bay area. During the planning phase we were able to afford to include a separate shed constructed by the same builder and completed at the same time as our house. The shed has external dimensions of 9.6m x 4.8m with a timber frame clad in corrugated colorbond. My plan was to utilise about half of the shed for a HO scale layout.

### **Making it comfortable - Part 1**

When discussing requirements with our builder I insisted upon having Sisalation or sarking under the roof, even though it's not a requirement in Queensland. I knew it



would be essential to prevent condensation under the roof, and to dramatically increase the comfort level, especially during summer. The walls were enclosed in wall wrap as well.

*Photo taken during construction of the Shed.*

### **More Power!**

I'm an electrician by training, (though I currently teach electrical apprentices at TAFE) and continue to practice my skills. I didn't wire my house; however, I did arrange with the electrician to have a supply run to the shed during the 'rough in' stage of the wiring installation. I fitted a small sub board into the shed with a light and two power circuits. I installed 6 double outlets in the layout area, split across the two circuits. I initially installed two 36W fluorescent light fittings in the layout area.

### **Making it comfortable - Part 2**

Around 2019, I began to install a ceiling area in the rear section of my shed. Before initiating the preparation for the ceiling, I lined the shed with 'fibro' or cement sheeting (sometime before 2019). Whilst installing the sheeting I added wall batts to further enhance the thermal insulation qualities of my shed. This was critical as the long side faces Northwest and therefore is exposed to sun for most of the day. A good friend of mine, who is a retired builder, helped me install the gyprock for the ceiling. I ran timber battens around the edges rather than trying to install cornice, and a PVC angle



moulding was installed to finish off the ceiling on the open side where it divides the shed.

*Photo taken showing installation of framework to support ceiling battens*



### **Shedding some light on the subject - Part 1**

From conversations with Merv Bagnall I wanted to ensure that I had adequate lighting in my layout area as once we modellers start installing buildings and landscaping our miniature worlds we start decreasing the reflected light from all the matte surfaces and dark tones of the terrain. Therefore, prior to the installation of the gyprock I installed 12 surface socket outlets ready for 12 downlights. I currently have very good lighting in my area, though this will change as I progress the building of my layout which will involve two decks around the walls and a large, approximately 2m x 4m double deck centre peninsular, with integrated helix and staging below both decks.

### **Keeping the Dust Down and Out**

Some more advice I received from Merv was in regard to minimising the dust that could enter into the layout area from the rest of the shed and potentially outside. I thought that it would be expensive, difficult and would restrict access and light if I installed a permanent dividing wall. Instead I researched and opted for the more “flexible” option of installing a strip or freezer curtain. I contacted some local suppliers in Bundaberg, but found a supplier in Yandina who was able to supply the curtain custom-made to my measurements cheaper, and available in kit form, to make transport economical, and installation easy. The curtain allows access across the width of the shed, allows me to move any size and shaped item in and out, and lets light in as well. Since I installed the curtain earlier this year I have found that even without my air conditioner running the

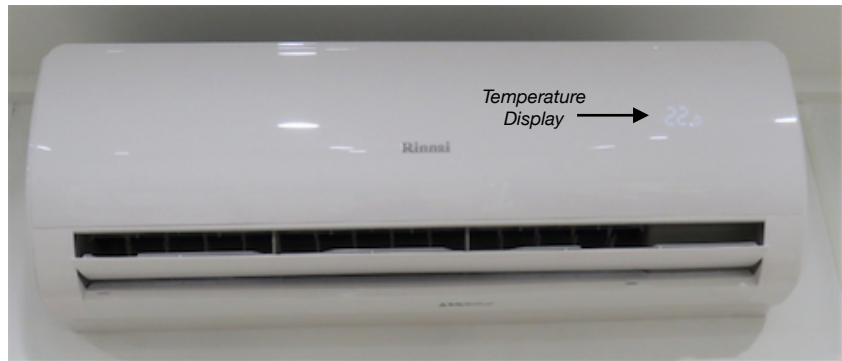
temperature is always noticeably cooler in the layout area of the shed. Also, the curtain acts as a sound barrier to some extent, which may mean that once my layout is up and running operating sound equipped locos and general conversations in the area will not disturb anyone outside the shed.



*Photo showing section of curtain and downlights beyond*

## Being Cool

Another piece of advice offered by Merv, to assist with keeping the dust down and to improve the comfort level of the area, was that I consider installing an Air Conditioner. I checked with a finishing electrical apprentice earlier this year, who had already completed his air conditioning and refrigeration trade, as to the size of air conditioner I required to be able to adequately control the temperature in my room. A 3.5kW split system unit was found to be suitable for the application. I priced units from a local electrical wholesaler and settled on a Rinnai unit as it cost less, and

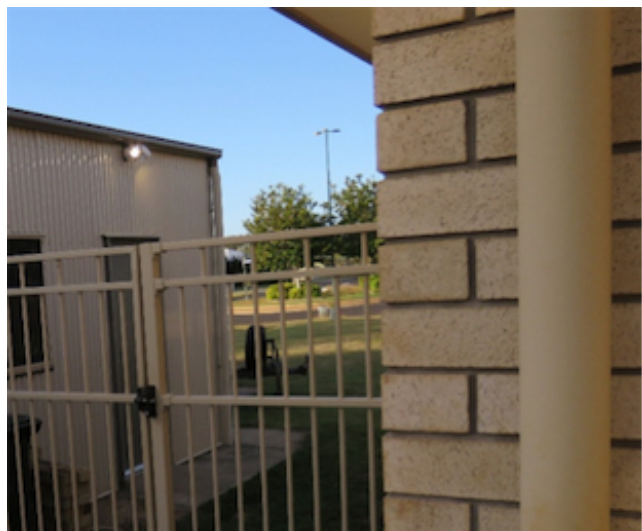


the indoor unit was "slimmer" than the comparative Mitsubishi system. Also the Rinnai unit displays the set temperature on the front of the indoor unit. The same ex-apprentice came and installed the unit for me during the mid-year school/TAFE holiday break. Due to the low current draw and high efficiency of modern AC units we were able to connect the unit to one of the existing power circuits.

## Shedding some light on the subject - Part 2

Lastly, as the shed is separate to the house, it can be a bit daunting and possibly dangerous navigating the way to and from the shed in the dark. Therefore, to improve the situation I bought a LED sensor security light and installed it in August. I have adjusted the light so that it will sense when I come past the corner of the house before I get to my gate. The light is also programmed to only operate after sunset. Having the light makes it so much easier to see to be able to lock my shed at night and ensures that I don't trip over anything or tread on something unexpected!


*Photo showing view of outside light from the back of my house*



### *Lighting Terms and Information*

- *When buying lights there are some important terms, information and choices that you need to be aware of, especially if you installing or replacing existing incandescent, or fluorescent lights with LED lights.*
- *Most LED light fittings now available allow you to choose your Color Temperature setting by moving a switch, this in turn affects the appearance of the light, e.g. Warm White, and how objects appear under the light (their colour rendition, i.e. compared with how they appear in sunlight), and the efficacy, (or efficiency) of the light rated in lumens per Watt.*
- *Try to obtain data on the lights you want and talk to your electrician if your requirements requires installing or modifying existing wiring. If replacing fittings speak to the shop assistant, or look up information on the internet to ensure you're buying the correct lighting for your situation and application.*

### **Closing Comments**

I hope that detailing the steps I've taken in my layout area preparation will assist anyone at the planning stage, and maybe those who are more advanced, but can still take some measures to upgrade the comfort levels of their space. If we make the area more restful it is more attractive and inviting to spend more time there; installing insulation means we can efficiently control the temperature in the area and saves energy, and therefore reduces electricity consumption; air conditioning limits humidity and minimises fugitive dust; and finally good lighting assists with building, maintaining and operating our layouts to make our activities easier and less stressful. If I can help anyone in any way from my experience so far please contact me through the MainLine editor.....

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# Configuration Variables Explained

By Gerry Hopkins - MMR

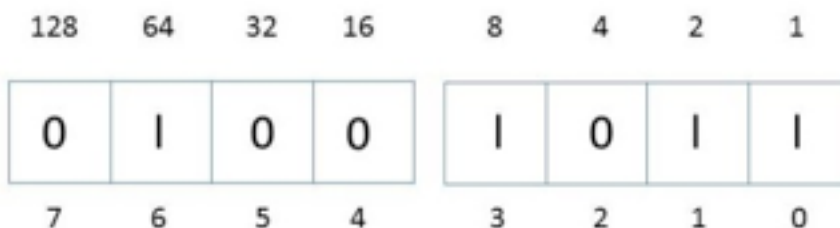
**W**hat is a CV?... CV stands for Configuration Variable. It is a term thought up similar to "electronic rodent" - your mouse. CVs allow you to customize individual decoder properties such as the address, momentum, throttle response, sound volume and much more.

With the large number of CVs available in a decoder, a first look at the available options may be confusing but I will try and make them easier for you. The smallest "part" of a CV is known as a BIT. There are eight BITS in a CV which is known as a BYTE.

Think of the eight bits of the CV as a bank of eight simple on/off switches. Each switch is identified by the bold number in the box. A value of "0" means the switch is off or in its default mode, a value of "1" turns it on.



A decimal number between 0 and 255 identifies a unique setting of every switch in the bank of 8. This allows you to turn on or off any possible combination of these 8 switches by entering the appropriate decimal number into the CV.



## **Bits and Bytes**

One of the most confusing aspects of programming a CV is figuring out what all the different bits, bytes mean. The problem is compounded further by differences in each command station manufacturer's user interface. For users unfamiliar with such terms, a short math lesson (ugh!) is in order before proceeding:

Each decoder CV stores a numeric value that can be represented in one of three forms:

**Decimal** - This is the form everyone is familiar with and we use in our day-to-day lives. Numbers are represented as a sequence of digits composed of the numerals 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, and 9.

**Hexadecimal** - Also referred to as simply "hex", this is a more specialized number representation that, in addition to 0 through 9, also uses the characters A-F. It has the advantage that a given decimal number can be more compactly represented. For example, the decimal number 127 converts to a simple 7F in hex (one less digit). This allows user interfaces with a limited number of digits (i.e., the LCD on your cab) to display a wider range of numbers.

**Binary** - Binary numbers get their name from the fact they use only two digits 0 and 1 called 'bits' and is the fundamental number system used by all computers including the ones found inside a digital decoder. Because there are only two bit values, it takes more digits to represent a number using binary. The decimal number 127, for example, is written as 01111111 in binary notation. A 'byte' is a binary number made up of eight bits. And a 'nibble' is half a byte or four bits. Really! We didn't make that up.

Coincidentally, each CV is made up from one byte or eight bits and can store any number between 0 and 255. Most of the CVs contain a single piece of data that can be easily represented in any of the three forms, i.e., CV 3, the acceleration rate, can be loaded with any value from 0 to 255 and it always affects the same thing - the acceleration rate.

On the other hand, some CVs use individual bits to control different features. This allows up to eight individual features to be controlled by a single CV and is done to conserve the number of CVs. As the bit variables can take on only one of two values (0 and 1) they are usually used for simple variables that are either On or Off, enabled or disabled or something similar.

Unfortunately, bit variables are difficult to represent in any form other than binary and still preserve any meaning. Because most DCC system user interfaces don't use binary representation, these numbers are the most difficult to work with and require a tedious series of additions to convert to the decimal or hex form used by most systems.

Hex numbers can be distinguished from a decimal number by noting a 0x prefix. Thus 0x10 is the hex version of sixteen and not ten as one might guess. Binary numbers are represented using a 'b' suffix. 100b is really the number four and not one hundred.

When working with individual bits such as in CV 29, I suggest the following procedure for determining the correct value to program. Referring to the CV description, write down the value desired for each individual bit.

Consider for example, the case of CV 29. We would like to set this CV so that speed tables are enabled and the 28 speed-step mode is in effect, we see that bit 4 and bit 1 should be set to 1 and all other bits are cleared to zero. Remembering that we are dealing with binary, write down the individual bit values and we get: the value in the following manner.

Reading from right to left, each bit has a decimal value associated with it, beginning with a 1 and doubling this value as you go from bit 0 to bit 7. This value is only counted when the bit is a '1'.

Looking at the figure below, you can see that using this method, bit 1 has a value of 2 and bit 4 has a value of 16. Adding these two numbers together gives the correct decimal value of 18.

### **Programming Methods**

There are two methods for changing the decoder's CVs:

**Service Mode Programming** - This programming mode usually requires the locomotive to be placed on a special programming track or connected to a dedicated programmer.


**Operations Mode Programming** - Sometimes called 'Ops Mode' or 'Programming on the Main', this programming mode allows the CVs to be changed while the locomotive is operating on the layout even when other locomotives are present. The neat thing about this mode is that the CVs can be changed in the middle of operation allowing the engineer for example, to increase the momentum rate of a locomotive after it couples to a train. The main disadvantage of operations mode programming is that the CV data cannot be read back to verify its value.

### **Reading CVs**

Most command stations also allow you to read a CV during Service Mode Programming, which is useful to verify its current setting. If you have trouble reading or verifying CVs, the problem may be due to the design of your command station and not the Decoder itself.

Most decoders communicate back to the command station using what's called an acknowledgment pulse, which is defined in NMRA RP-9.2.3 as "an increased load on the programming track of at least 60mA for at least 5ms."

Most decoders send the acknowledgment pulse by momentarily applying power to the motor. You can often visually verify that the decoder is properly responding to your programmer by observing a slight twitch in the loco. It is often recommended to disconnect any "Keep alive units" while reading a decoder.

Some command station have problems writing CVs properly to sound decoders, when this happens you need to get a programming booster. Some decoders now have over 2000 CVs to play with.....



# Special Interest Groups (SIG)

## Narrow Gauge Division 7

By Steve Chapman - MMR  
(NGSIG Regional Meeting Co-ordinator)

**G**reetings.....Our SIG meeting was held at Doug Wallace residence; 9 keen narrow gaugers showed up for a mini running session on Doug's layout. Really shaping up to a nice layout, looking forward to future running sessions once things have settled a bit.

Tried a virtual session but dropped out due to a different computer.

Meeting after discussed future SIG meets and it was decided to move from 2 months between meetings to 3 months.

The Next two meetings were settled on, in May and August with the final meeting for the year in November at my place.

We see how we go this year and maybe more changes next year.

Not much show and tell but plenty of discussions on other things.

Handed out a meeting plaque to Doug with many thanks.

Welcomed a new member to the group, nice.

Adjourned meeting about 4pm after a very fruitful meeting.....

### **Magazine Publishing Deadline Dates**

If any member wishes to submit **An Article** for publication in MainLine, your article may be submitted at any time and it will be included in a future edition, where the subject matter will allow for a balanced number of differing subjects to be included, and where the number of available articles will allow for that to occur.

If you are providing any type of report, then **All Report Types** can be submitted at any time with a deadline date being as shown below, which is 6 days prior to the end of the month of publication.

*This criteria is requested to ensure that the editor has sufficient time to complete the bi-monthly edition of MainLine in the required time frame.*

If you are providing a **Divisional Meeting Report**, please submit your report as soon as possible after each monthly meeting, with the deadline date being as shown in **All Report Types** below. If your meeting is scheduled after the deadline date, then the cut off date is the last day of month prior to publication.

*This criteria is requested to ensure that the editor has sufficient time to complete the bi-monthly edition of MainLine in the required time frame.*

**File Types:-** For all submissions, text files saved as MSWord, Pages or Open Office files are preferred with limited text and page formatting. Please don't send pdf files, they are unsuitable for use in this publication.

**Photo Types:-** For all submissions, photographs are preferred as jpegs or png file types and to be under 2MB in size. Should you prefer to send larger photo files, then please consider sending them via Dropbox or Google drive or a similar 'Cloud' storage program, or alternatively send a disk or flash drive via a postal service.

**The following are the deadline dates for the next two editions of MainLine;-**  
**May / June 2022**

**Deadline date for All Reports Types = 24th April, 2022**

**Date for Reports of Div Meetings that occur after the Deadline date = 30th April, 2022**

**Publish Date on Web = < 5th May, 2022**

**July / August 2022**

**Deadline date for All Reports Types = 24th June, 2022**

**Date for Reports of Div Meetings that occur after the Deadline date = 30th June, 2022**

**Publish Date on Web = < 5th July, 2022**

# 100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News

## Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc.

A 100% NMRA Club

By Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)

<https://adelaidemodelrailroaders.com>

I have not been at the club at all during January but I can report that a good running night was had, there being no problems encountered.

John Prattis has reported to me that he has been working on the two spur tracks in Houseman.

Christiaan Werk also let me know about the scenery he has been doing. He has spent a considerable amount of day time at the club rooms other than our regular Wednesday

nights to get these projects to the state that they are.



Christiaan has added grass, tree stumps, small trees and a dirt track leading up to the small mine (Frenda mine).



Over the Christmas break Christiaan set to work on the scenery gap between our old scenery in room 3 and the newer section of the layout in room 4. Above the shape of the new scenery taking place and getting colour into the scene. *(Photos by C Werk)*





The tunnel into room 4 and Phillips siding (viaduct)

(Photo by C Werk)



The completed scenery looking west (left) and East (right). (Photos by C Werk)


Christiaan's scenery work over the last two or three months has made a world of difference to the beginning of the newest extension of the layout. He is to be commended for all of his efforts. Christiaan has particularly excelled in his use of rock moulds and has coloured them exquisitely. A job well done. Thank you Christiaan.

A progress video from Christiaan Werk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hvqqdj0geaA>



Signs are important so that operators can identify industries. These signs are styrene backed. The

Rolanof Bros sign for the TOFC facility has been made to replace my original sign in which I spelt Rolanof incorrectly. My original card Kirkland Coal sign has warped badly so it will be replaced with a styrene backed sign. Kirkland coal is the retail coal dealer at Zieglersdorf. Atkins aggregates quarry is at the western end of Kingston. The Freda mine sign is for the small mine that Christiaan Werk has sunk in the new scenery just west of Werkendam.....



From Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)  
Club News February 2022:-

## WORKING ON THE SCRR

Tony Mikolaj has spent many hours working on the signals which are coming along nicely. Also he has built and installed two double power supplies for the booster upgrade, one at Hanes / Zieglersdorf which only had a single shared between two boosters and the other at Housman to free up some single supplies for the new add-on boosters. When the booster upgrade is complete the layout will have eight boosters three up from the current five boosters. Tony's work especially on the boosters is not as visible as the work being carried by others but actually is more valuable in that it will promote better running on the layout. Thank you Tony for your efforts.



Another member whose work is not readily apparent is Peter King. Peter has been quietly working away at home getting the club's locomotives up to scratch. He is currently working on the club's Tenshiedo brass GP9 and has it running beautifully on DC and is about to begin sorting out the club's Bachman Doodle Bug rail cars.

Shown to the right is Ippinitchie Creek FP7 number 790, which was placed in service on the club layout after Peter King rebuilt it from two damaged Atlas models.



John Prattis has laid a spur at Houseman that will hold two Doodle Bug rail cars. He has still to install the Micro-Mark Switch Tender switch machine.



Christiaan Werk, with John Prattis's help, has begun work on the terraced iron ore mine which is being made from layers of polystyrene coated in plaster.

Warwick Graham and Peter Kirkland have the track base ready to lay cork at Port Douglas. All of the turn outs in Port Douglas will be on this track base.



## FEBRUARY RUNNING NIGHT

Only three members ran trains on February 9. We did experience some problems running on the mainline from West Houseman and through Houseman. These problems will hopefully disappear when the extra boosters have been installed. I found a short dead piece of track in front of Werk's Ice Works at Kingston. We missed soldering droppers on this piece of track when it was laid over ten years ago. The more we run the more we will be able to find these anomalies and correct them before we begin more intense operating sessions.



Above we see Christiaan Werk running the two Ippinitchie Creek RR 2-8-0s, no 27 pulling and no 28 pushing a train of mostly billboard reefers.





Tony Mikolaj brought his loco cradle along to use while adjusting the sound effects on Christiaan Werk's Chesapeake & Ohio mallet.

*Photo C Werk*

Tony Mikolaj's ran his shay pushing John Prattis's camera car. The pictures from John's camera were streamed to the TV in the meeting area while the train ran around the layout.

*Photo: C Werk*



In the photos above, Ken House ran EMD F7 no 711 and the Ippinitchie Creek RR passenger cars as well as switching cattle cars at Kingston with Ippinitchie Creek RR EMD SW1500 no 156. Both locos ran well.

February running night on You-tube....[M](#)

Christiaan Werk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6CXLk-nydg&t=24s>

Ken House: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B08zzgNa4el&t=155s>



# NMRA Inc.-AR

## Achievement Program Report

March/April 2022

by David O'Hearn

**W**hy do the Achievement Program? When I first joined the NMRA many years ago, I thought the Achievement Program (AP) was a great idea that allowed our skills to be measured and quantified so that we learned and improved our skills as time went on. Then I became focussed on building my home layout and I did not want to divert time and effort from my home layout to the APs so I "cooled" to the idea of the APs.

I have now realised that by a bit of careful planning I can achieve both the APs and my home layout. I now have six APs and will finish my 7<sup>th</sup> AP shortly which will qualify me as a Master Model Railroader.

The trick is to read the AP requirements called Statements of Qualification (SOQ). You only have to demonstrate those elements that are required by the SOQ. This means, for example, that you may only need to present one section of your multi-deck super large layout for assessment. Many of you with home layouts or those heavily involved with club layouts may already have achieved most of the requirements for some APs. Talk to your Division AP Manager to get your efforts recognised.

If you have any questions or doubts, contact you Division AP Manager or me. Our contact details are on the NMRA Web Page Contacts List and at the front of this magazine.

### **What do you Gain from the Achievement Program**

The APs open your eyes to many things that make you a better modeller. Before undertaking the Structures AP, you tend to think of a structure as four walls and a roof. Now I consider window dressings (blinds, curtains, etc) guttering and downpipes, signage and street numbers, and so on. Hence my eyes have been opened to see and replicate in model form what I see in real life.

### **Evaluations for Merit Awards**

The Motive Power, Structures and Cars APs require you to earn a Merit Award on several items. A Merit Award means the model must receive 87.5 of 125 possible points (70%) using the AP Judging Guidelines for Motive Power, Cars and Structures. These guidelines are at the following link and are well worth reading:

<https://www.nmra.org/sites/default/files/education/achievement/pdf/2006-judging-guide-lines.pdf>

A read of the document at this link gives a series of points matrices for each judging category. You can see that a more complex model scores higher points than a simple model so a highly modified simple model may earn less points than a complex model with only simple details! This is worth knowing so that you can maximise your points score for the APs.

Over the next few editions of MainLine, I will go into the judging process with specific examples of how the judging is undertaken by addressing a different AP category each edition. I will also provide some tips and tricks to help maximise your scores. As an example, replacing a 15 rung ladder on a kit model with a scratch built ladder gives you 17 scratch built items if you count each rung and the two sides of the ladder!

## **Recent Awards**

I would like to congratulate the following members who have attained awards in the Achievement Program since the last issue of MainLine:

### **Golden Spike**

- Division 1: Adam Wuiske, Jandowae, QLD

### **Model Railroad Author**

- Division 1: Merv Bagnall, Hervey Bay, QLD

### **Master Builder - Structures**

- Division 8: Ian West, North Boambee Valley, NSW

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

- Division 1: Craig Mackie, Parkinson, QLD

### **Chief Dispatcher**

- Division 1: Craig Mackie, Parkinson, QLD

### **Master Builder - Scenery**

- Division 7: Peter Jensen, Narara, NSW

### **Master Builder - Prototype Models**

- Division 7: Paul Marrant MMR, Belmont NSW





# NMRA Inc.-AR



## President's Communication

by Duncan Cabassi

Now that the dust has settled from the recent AGM, it is time I introduce myself to you the members. My name is Duncan Cabassi, I live in Brisbane, and I am the new President of the NMRA AR. Previous to this I have been the Division 1 Superintendent taking over from Martyn Jenkins in August 2018.

Firstly let me thank those of you who voted at the recent NMRA AR election for president. Whilst our voting numbers were lower than where the executive committee and I would like to see, they were almost double the previous election voting so there are positives to take out of that.

For all members and those that did not vote I would like to think that over the next two years we can grow your interest in the inner working of the NMRA AR so that you become more interested in having a say. Your way of having a say is by voting at ballots and by answering and responding to surveys that will be issued in the coming months. To help with this process it is my intent in conjunction with the NMRA AR Committee (ARC) to make life easier for voting and answering surveys by making the supplied information technologically click and flick and more user friendly.

As your new President it is my intention to be communicative with all the membership by using all the available technology at my disposal: email, Facebook, YouTube, our very own NMRA AR website, and face to face. Feel free to reach out to me if you want to have a chat.

I would like to thank Graham Young, the outgoing president of the NMRA AR. Graham has been in the role for 4 years and has led the organisation through many achievements. I think perhaps the biggest being leading the organisation through an era that has had a Pandemic the likes of which none of us have experienced in our lifetime. This cannot be underestimated as a task in itself, and I think Graham deserves much accolade for getting us through this period unscathed. Thank you, Graham.

Our treasurer of the last two years, Geoff Chatwin, has stepped down from the treasury role. Thank you, Geoff, for your guidance throughout this period. You were a valued member of the team as all are and you will be missed.

I would also like to thank Les Fowler who has stepped down from his division 7 superintendents role. Les has done this role for a significantly long time and having been a division super myself I personally know how much effort and how taxing the role can be. Les will not be lost to the division responsibilities though as he is taking on a division treasurers' role.



As the NMRA has a policy of a maximum of a four-year terms for positions unless there are exceptional circumstances and the result of the AGM, there has been a shuffling of positions and a couple of new faces are welcomed to the committee. I would like to welcome both John Arrowsmith, Division 7 and Phillip Sharp, Division 5 to the NMRA AR committee. It will be great to have new eyes and fresh Insight into our committee workings. I look forward to the contributions that John and Phillip will make.

The New committee is outlined below:

<b>NMRA Key Positions</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>
President	Duncan Cabassi
Vice President	Doug Wallace
Secretary	Trevor Phillips
Treasurer	Al Harris
Division 1: QLD / Northern Rivers	TBA
Division 2: ACT	Stephen O'brien
Division 3: VIC	Peter Kendall
Division 4: WA	Frank Godde MMR
Division 5: New Zealand	Kel Sherson
Division 6: SA	David Orr
Division 7: Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle	John Arrowsmith
Division: Northern NSW	Ian West
Division 10: Tasmania	Pat Britton
Ordinary Member	David North
Ordinary Member	Phillip Sharp
Ordinary Member	TBA
Web Administrator	Brad Anderson
Public officer	Doug Wallace
Membership officer	Al Harris
AP Regional Manager	David O'Hearn

Over the next few weeks, I will be transitioning into the President's role and our reshuffled committee will regroup and then get on with the business of managing the AR proceedings. I would like you all to understand that as far as I'm concerned, we are all custodians of the NMRA brand. The committee itself is here to function as the decision-making arm of the AR. Whilst at times I'm sure not all decisions will be palatable by some, they will be made in the best interest of the NMRA Brand and the best interest of the membership.

This is not an association that is run by any one individual, it requires input from many parts of the association. The Division Superintendents are significantly important, and

they have volunteered their time and energy to coordinate events, gatherings, and many additional activities for their division members to enjoy membership and the hobby. For them to be effective in their roles they will need your help from time to time. I encourage all members out there to actively support your division superintendent by asking them if they need assistance to do things, and then perform any delegated tasks to the best of your ability.

From my perspective I will consult with the ARC committee and encourage the ARC committee to support new technology and give our division access to the tools they need to deliver additional value add to being a member of this association.

We will develop, communicate, and deliver a strategy for the longer-term future of the AR association. This process has commenced however we have a long way to go. New items such as using virtual meetings, the new website that is currently under construction are a result of strategy developed and agreed some time back. This is now coming to fruition.

Going forward to help us develop our strategy, we will issue surveys to get the necessary feedback from you the membership. This will be disseminated and used to help us shape the strategy.

Our strategy will be developed around the key drivers of the NMRA:

- Fellowship
- Education
- AP Recognitions
- Access to standards
- Access to innovative model railway / railroads
- Clinics
- NMRA X
- Special Events
- Mainline Magazine

It would be remiss of me not to mention and thank some supporting positions that sometimes go unsung within the organisation. These positions are:-

### **AP Regional Manager:**

I would like to thank and congratulate Gerry Hopkins for his many years of service in this role. Gerry resigned from the position during 2021, and David O'Hearn has taken on the position. David is doing a great job and has hit the ground running.

### **WEB Administrator:**

Gerry Hopkins & Lachlan McGuire have contributed significantly in the background to the current Website upkeep and now Brad Anderson is looking after it and running the

build of the new Website soon to be released. Thank you to all for your commitment on this.

**Web Hosting:**

A special thanks also goes out to Wayne Eagle for his ongoing contribution of managing all of the background IT issues we have. In particular with the current transition of the management committee emails etc.


**Mainline Editor:**

I would like to thank Merv Bagnall our very own AR magazine "MAINLINE" editor. Merv is doing an outstanding job of producing a quality magazine for us all to read every 2 months. Keep up the great work Merv.

**At Large World Wide Director:**

I would like to congratulate our very own Martyn Jenkins for becoming the at large world wide director in 2021. Martyn has been doing this role for 8 months now and in my opinion has done a fantastic job. The role is up for re-election and Martyn has my vote.

Last but not least, there will be many exciting things that will happen with the NMRA AR going forward. I'm excited about this association and the future. I acknowledge there will be challenges that lay ahead however I also believe we have the team to move forward and grow the association and add value to your membership. As members I encourage each one of you, in fact, you are empowered to promote the NMRA and the hobby. Together we will all grow the greatest hobby in the world.

Thank You for your time.....

Duncan Cabassi

NMRA AR President



# Divisional Reports

## **Division 1**

*From Duncan Cabassi (NMRA Inc.-AR Division1 Superintendent)*

February meeting:-

The monthly meeting was hosted by the Ipswich Model Railroad Club at the Masonic Hall in Ipswich and commenced with people gathering at 10am.

The Club had their very extensive N scale T Track layout on display which had substantially grown since the meeting last year. There were many outstanding small modules on the layout and some with some incredible detail. The Club should be congratulated for the standard

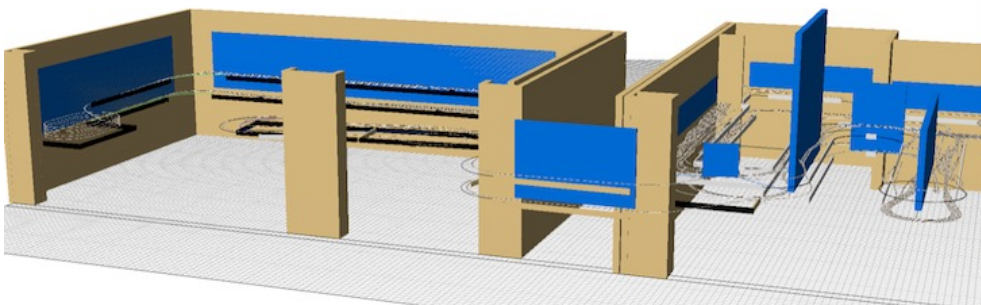


of the display. There were also some Lego trains on display including an impressive Garrett.

34 members were in attendance for the first face to face meeting for the year.

Bob Tisdall presented a clinic on 3<sup>rd</sup> PlanIt which is a CAD program especially for model railways. Bob was asked to do this presentation at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour and did an awesome job.

Bob demonstrated many features of the program and the showed how it was reasonably easy to use, however the end product and the virtual 3D



visualisation sets this program apart from its competitors.

Duncan Cabassi (Div 1 Super and NMRA AR President elect) spoke briefly about the recent AGM and that he was elected as President. He also thanked Graham Young for his efforts as outgoing President. Duncan also briefly updated the meeting on NMRA AR front:-

1. Work was being done on the national website and the testing should commence shortly
2. Update on the printed versus electronic magazine from NRMA and that Australia has decided not to take part in the scheme however members can pay an additional fee if they wish to receive it
3. There will be increased communication coming out from the NRMA ARC
4. Members encouraged to vote for the NRMA Director's role



Arthur Hayes then gave us some insights to some of the challenges he faces with the AP program and that he still needs to consult the guidelines from time to time to see how people can qualify for the awards.


Arthur presented Craig Mackie with three AP awards being for Civil, Dispatcher and Electrical. Congratulations Craig on achieving these.





Following the meeting, lunch was provided by the Ipswich Model railroad Club. As usually there was a fantastic spread and no one went hungry. Maureen and her team excelled themselves yet again.




Members were then free to enjoy the Club layout and socialise.....



## **Division 2**

Stephen O'Brien (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 2 Superintendent)

Regarding January & February meetings:-

There has been no report received for the January / February period from Division 2.....



## Division 3

From Peter Kendall (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 3 Superintendent)

February Meeting:- (Report Supplied by Rod Hutchinson)

On a pleasant summers day the first meeting for 2022 was held at the home of Kathy & Paul Ritchie in the rural city of Ballarat. Ballarat is located about 1¼ hours drive west of Melbourne on the highway to Adelaide. Meetings at Ballarat permit members from Western Victoria to meet with their city based colleagues. People drove up to 2½ hours to attend from, as far a field as, Warrnambool, Skipton and Mooroolbark. 10 members and 4 partners attended.

Paul Ritchie is a multi scale modeller, but his true passion is construction. Over the years he has built many rolling stock, locomotive & structure kits. Today's display was a feast of HO kits purchased over many years with some now no longer available.

The most prominent display was a very large 1:48 structure called Nott's Place. This building is Outback Model Company's tribute to the late Geoff Nott. Geoff was an extraordinary modeller with gift for the artistic side of the hobby. Many will know of his layouts such as Leigh Creek, Smugglers Cove & Muskrat Ramble. Geoff has been an inspiration to a legion of modellers and one of nature's gentlemen.

Peter Kendall, our new Div 3 Superintendent, thanked Kathy & Paul with the NMRA thank you plaques. A quick cleanup and all scattered during the late afternoon, some with lengthy journeys home.

### Items were on display included:

Peter Kendall - 1:87, Design Preservation Models kit bashed buildings.



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

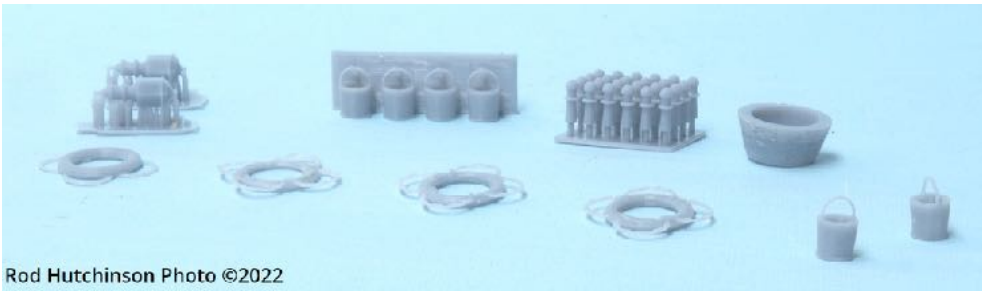


Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

Ray Lucas -  
1 : 1 6 0 ,  
Grain Silo  
and gate  
keepers  
hut



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Grant McAdam -  
New 1:48, 3D  
print products by  
Outback Model  
Company.

Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

Peter MacDonald - On30, Boulder Valley  
Dunkirk Class A steam locomotive.



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

Laurie Green - 1:48, 'Nott's Place'. Outback Model Company's tribute to the late Geoff Nott, in the form of a new structure.



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022





Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

Paul Ritchie - 1:87, 10 structure kits beautifully finished and some no longer available.




Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022

Rod Hutchinson - On30, Vintage RJ Models kit of a Queensland Railmotor 'Red Fred' under construction.....



Rod Hutchinson Photo ©2022



## **Division 4**

*From Frank Godde - MMR (NMRA Inc.-AR Div4 Superintendent)*  
Hopkins / Bones Award:-

Philip Knife receives the Hopkins /Bone .


My wife and I drove up to Dongara some 350 klms North of Perth to present Philip Knife MMR number 148 with the Hopkins/Bone award for his many years of service to the NMRA, on behalf of that group and division 4.

Phil who retired his position as assistant AP judge for WA said to me that living so far away does not do the position any good. He said that at the age of 82 it was time for some one else to take over. Frank Godde MMR #422 has taken over that position.

Philip who at 16 joined the Royal navy and remained there for some thirty years, making it all the way to the top as ship's captain. Taking charge of HMAS Yarra and in that position worked for the Americans at their San Diego base in California where he Joined the NMRA in 1973.

John Saxon in his wisdom started the Australian branch of the NMRA and asked Phil to be its secretary to which he was involved in writing up its constitution which we all use today. Spending some time teaching navel navigation at a university to older students and becoming involved in his church also becoming a reverend as we all know him.

I came face to face with Philips judging skills when I went for my MMR certificates and I tell you that he is no push over.

So justly deserved of this award and it was my pleasure to present this award to Philip Knife MMR #148.....



*From Frank Godde - MMR (NMRA Inc.-AR Div4 Superintendent)*  
January Meeting:-

This is our first meeting report for 2022. Meeting was at Frank's place which is the first one for the year, members present were Frank, Dennis, Peter, Alan, and Dave.

Apologies from Rod. Dennis mentioned that he had contacted Peter Flower on a new phone number to which we were told that Peter was still interested in joining the NMRA again. seeing that he was offered some N scale contacts.

It was also mentioned that div4 was trying to put together a zoom meeting for the country members and that members wanted to see some other layouts to which I will be working towards.


AMRA WA wants to run their annual show this year and has put out their expression of interest to which I have replied to on be half of div 4, so I am putting together some ideas

And have replied for an area and tables and chairs for us to work with.

I have asked the div 4 members to vote for either one or the other candidates for the president position.

Dave brought down his new barrel wagon with two Clydesdales at the front and told me of his latest article he has written to go to NGDU with photos.

Another photo by David Whibley is of his unweathered two truck shay which we will both address a little later in the year. The trestle bridge is one of his master pieces.


Our next meeting will be at Dave's place on Saturday the 19th at 2pm. The portable G gauge will be set up out side under the new pergola.....



## **Division 5**

*Kel Sherson (NMRA Inc.-AR Div5 Superintendent)*

Regarding January & February meetings:-

There has been no report received for the January / February period from Division 5.....

## **Division 6**

*From David Orr (NMRA Inc.-AR Div6 Superintendent)*

January meetings:-

The restrictions on numbers and the fact that some of us have coronavirus has resulted in January's meeting being cancelled. And it's not looking that hopeful for February.

Some Members have suggested that our meetings are becoming too formal and not focused enough on modelling and the meeting's minutes contain items that could be better advised through a report. After soliciting Members' opinions, and the fact that the January 2022 meeting was cancelled, I've written the "January minutes" as a report as a trial.


Ron Solly advises that the next AMRE meeting is Thursday, the 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022, so no changes since the last report.

Ray Brownbill advises no changes to Achievement Program within Division 6.

Michael Robinson feels that it is disappointing that more members don't make more use of the library considering the extra items that have been added. Borrowing and critiquing a DVD is very much appreciated. The November NMRA magazine has not yet arrived and I will need to chase it up even though we did receive the December one. Just a reminder that I am happy to post any requests to members if interested. Members are also reminded that we have 3 Regional DVDs available for loan. They are 6 of Allen Keller's Great Model Railroads, 2 per DVD. Vol 17, Cat Mountain & Santa Fe, Vol 18, Erie Railroad, Vol 29 ATSF Argentine Division, Vol 31 SOO Line, Vol 35 Santa Cruz Northern and Vol 36 UP Cheyenne Division.

Members would have received the latest NMRA eBulletin. One of the interesting items for Australasian members is the fact that, as requested to the Board of Directors by the Australasian Regional Committee, Australasian members will give up their access to the digital version of the NMRA Magazine in return for no rise in membership fees.

Ray Brownbill advises that he's made adjustments to the template and tested it out on both left and right sides of a module - with success.

Hopefully see you next month.....

*From David Orr (NMRA Inc.-AR Div6 Superintendent)*

February meetings:-

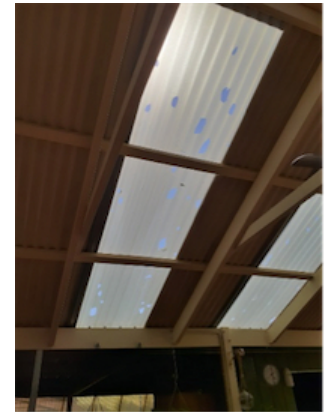
Nine members gathered at Ray Brownbill's for our delayed February meeting. Missing our usual photographer, Marcel van Eck and David Orr stepped up to the breach. Although the photos will not be as prolific, hopefully they'll pass muster.

After the suggestion that our meetings were becoming too formal and not focused enough on modelling, we tried a different approach with a brief "official" component and more discussion on members' modelling activities.



David Orr brought everyone up to date with ARC activities, Ron Solly advised the state of our finances and Ray Brownbill advised no changes to Achievement Program within Division 6.

Ray Brownbill welcomed everyone after having to cancel the November 2021 meeting due to the hail damage to his pergola roof and the continuing rain downpours. Ray took some pictures of the damage and his water collection, which he called "spot the drop".



Some members have questioned whether we need to continue with the meeting contributions and raffle. A discussion on these ensued and the meeting decided to continue as is.

Having finished with the "official" business, we then went round the members, finding out what each has been doing these last few weeks.

Hutch Hutchinson advised that Trev Seddon, one of our members now residing in Kadina, has been making spline roadbed using 3D printing.

Ron Solly has been working on Train Orders and Timetables on his home layout and with the P4 group on their O scale DC layout. Ron said how much he enjoyed working on the rolling stock couplers!

Bob Bevan has admitted that he has too much rolling stock (don't we all!) and has decided to downsize and sell a lot of Fleischmann rolling stock.

Ray Brownbill has been working on his signalling as well as a new scratchbuilt road overbridge at Blackspring (very nice Ray!) and told us he has trees, trees



and more trees to make.

Ray also advised that he's made adjustments to the module template and tested it out on both left and right sides of a module - with success.

Ray showed us Bondall water based turps, good for cleaning both acrylic and oil based paints, available from Bunnings.

Rod Stewart advised that he has his baseboards complete and track laid.

Marcel van Eck likes the scenery aspect of



model railroading and it shows! Marcel has been working on finishing the scratchbuilt buildings he showed previously. Marcel has also been building a trestle bridge and working on a mine ore dumping and processing area on his layout.

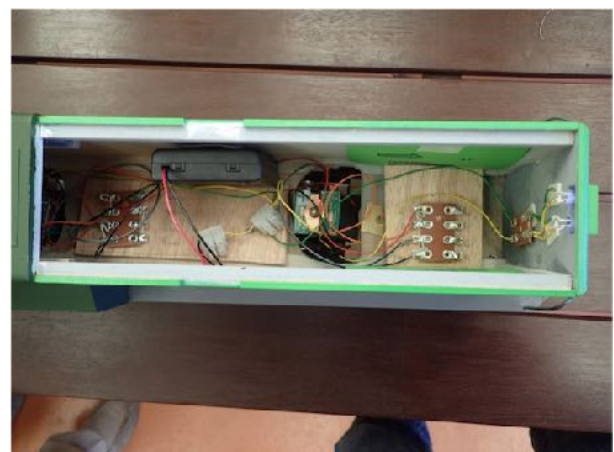
Vern Cracknell has been building and/or modifying freight vehicles in LGB. Vern has also been working on an unusual locomotive.



*"The diesel locomotive is of a South African Railways locomotive, from a laser cut MDF and 3D printed set of components from Bowaters Models in the UK. It was built as a way of using two power units which had been given to me by a modeller friend, who said that he would never get around to using them. Our understanding was that he would see a result running at an exhibition or photographs on a line.*

*There was a period of 2+ years between the gift and finding something which could use*

*the power units. Its scale is 1:19. It is too large to run on my K&CR or Running the Gauntlet lines, but it will suit the outdoor railway, running on DC. The kit had to be modified - holes cut in the floor to accommodate the vertical motors. Head lights have been fitted using a battery holder with a switch, resistor and leds. The painting used spray cans in the two colours with masking. The final air spraying used Tamiya acrylics. The cabin has a driver and assistant, with a control panel, fitted to a false floor which is removable."*







A short coffee/tea break and then Vern Cracknell proceeded to present a Powerpoint presentation on painting clouds which he called "Making Your Sky Live".

Vern used professional artists' work to explain differences.

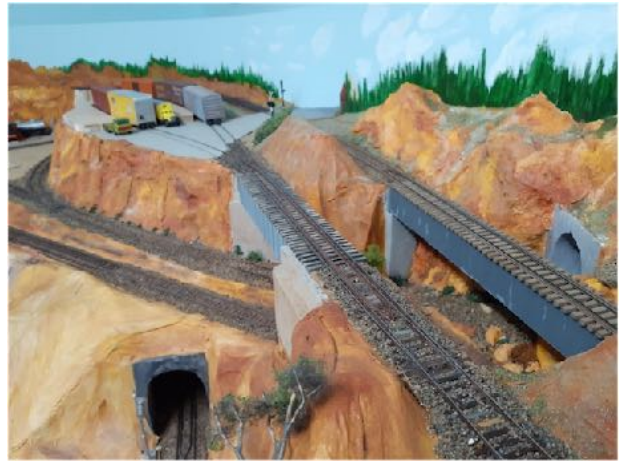
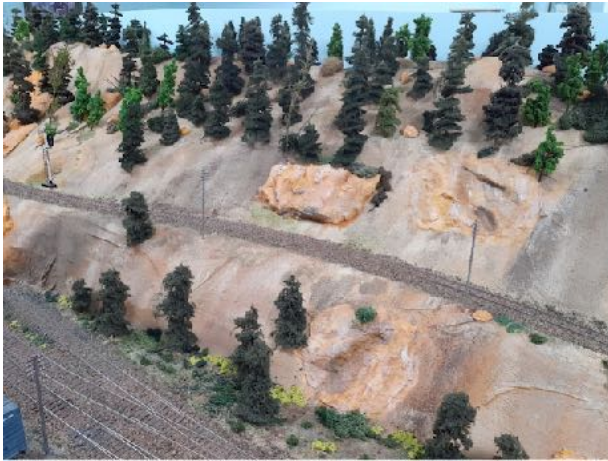
Note the creative use of the umbrella? The clouds were so realistic, we expected rain! Not really, it was to provide some shade so we could see the slides.




Vern then followed the presentation with a demonstration, painting clouds on one of Ray Brownbill's sky boards.








The meeting concluded with a look at Ray's 'Wild Creek Railroad' layout.  
.....

## **Division 7**

*John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)*

Regarding January & February meetings:-

There has been no report received for the January / February period from Division 7.....

## **Division 8/9 (Northern NSW)**

*From Ian West (NMRA Inc.-AR Div8/9 Superintendent)*

December meeting:-

We held our last meeting of the year at the home of Paul and Erica Baker. It was a damp day, but everyone enjoyed the company and the visit from Santa. A delicious lunch followed the meeting.



Members were told that carers would be covered by their work Public Liability but must be nominated the week before the meeting.

The issue of the NMRA magazine was covered.

Al Harris confirmed that he had applied for the sanction for the CCRMI group's exhibition. It had not been approved then but has been now. The exhibition will be on Friday night 7<sup>th</sup> January, to coincide with the night food markets in the



showground and from 9am - 4pm on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

The Epping exhibition and the convention were discussed.

### **2022 Meeting dates:**

20<sup>th</sup> February - Ian West's


17<sup>th</sup> April - TBA

19<sup>th</sup> June - Paul Baker's

21<sup>st</sup> August - TBA

16<sup>th</sup> October - Keith Morrison's

4<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas function. It was suggested that we contact Gordon Robbie at Taree and organise a lunch at Port Macquarie as this is between both towns.

The meeting closed at 11.40am followed by lunch.....



From Ian West (NMRA Inc.-AR Div8/9 Superintendent)

February meeting:-

Our first meeting of 2022 was held in our home on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February. I took the opportunity to officially open my railway which I have called, 'Westmond to Stinson Town'.

We were thrilled to have four of our members come from Taree for the meeting. They were very positive about my layout and suggested that I should apply for some more AP awards. Ian Phemister said that he is happy to go to members' homes to look at their layouts to assist with the process.



At the meeting Al Harris updated us on the new ARC committee. Duncan Cabassi is now President, succeeding Graham Young. Doug Wallace is the Vice President, and Al Harris is the Treasurer. Al also updated us on the issues with the American Postal Service.



It was a lovely day, and we were able to sit outside on the terrace to enjoy both our meeting and lunch afterwards. The members sat and talked for quite a while before the Taree boys had to leave.



Westmond Station



Hords and Co Flour Mill



Fisherman's Wharf





Stinson Town



Wild Dog Brewery



Stinson Town Station and Station Master's House


#### AP Awards:

Master Builders Structures: Ian Phemister presented Ian West with his certificate on the Thursday before the meeting as he was unable to attend our Sunday meeting due to other commitments. Ian Phemister took quite a few photos of the layout and told Ian to apply for more certificates as he has completed the work already.



Golden Spike: Col South was presented with his Golden Spike. Col now needs to liaise with Ian Phemister so that he can apply for more certificates. Ian is more than happy to visit as he wishes to encourage more members to obtain AP certificates. Chris Minihan echoed these comments as he said that applying for an AP certificate makes you try harder to improve your standard. Chris told the members that he has seven certificates.


#### Next Meeting:

We changed the date of our next meeting as we had inadvertently chosen Easter Sunday as our next date. Our next meeting will now be on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 11am at the home of Col South. Col lives at 135 Heritage Drive Moonee. It is asked that you bring a plate to share. Col will supply sausage rolls and party pies. Tea and coffee will be provided. A reminder will be sent out closer to the date.....

## **Division 10**

Pat Britton (NMRA Inc.-AR Div10 Superintendent)

Regarding January & February meetings:-

There has been no report received for the January / February period from Division 10....

### **What's in the Next Edition**

- *The cupboard is still very bare with regards to the availability of articles about MEMBER'S LAYOUTS, that could be used as the 'FEATURE ARTICLE' in future editions of our Magazine. So here is your opportunity to send in an article about your layout and see your Model Railroading Masterpiece, 'on the front cover', and shown between the pages of MainLine.*
- *Paul Marrant - MMR enjoys scratch building structures, but when he had the opportunity to build a large number of 'O' scale B.T.S. kits for a friend, he jumped at the opportunity. Paul outlines his approach to the project coupled with many photos of the completed scenes.*
- *A swamp scene on Marcel van Eck's layout needed to have a rail line crossing over it, so a wooden trestle bridge is now under construction to 'bridge the gap'. In this article, Marcel describes the method used to accurately construct the very realistic and super detailed bents, that will be holding up the rail deck which will soon cross his new swamp.*
- *You don't see many detailed HO Brass GNR Q1 class Baldwin 2-10-2 locomotives running around on a DCC layout very often, but Graeme Prideaux has supplied a few details on Bob Cuffe's Tenshodo loco, which was built in 1967 and which is seen operating on the Division 1 NMRA Modular Layout.*

*& there will be So Much more .....*