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the

MainLine

magazine

the official journal of the

**National Model Railroad Association Incorporated
Australasian Region**



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Read more about the NMRA Inc. Australasian Region National Convention on page 26

NMRA Inc. - Australasian Region Directory

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All 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

NMRA Inc. - Australasian Region Directory

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All comments made in this magazine are the comments of the author and not the views of the NMRA Inc. - AR.

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

6	Introducing Opps Sessions to the Adelaide Model Railroaders After a rebuild of their Club layout, the AMR introduced operating sessions. In the first of this two part article, Ken House outlines how the AMR achieved this for the enjoyment of both the novice and experienced operator. by Ken House
18	My Road to MMR There is no set order in which members can tick off the required number of modules needed to achieve the title of MMR®, and in this article, Gerry Hopkins MMR® outlines the order in which he accomplished this task. by Gerry Hopkins MMR® FNMRA
21	Short Circuit Warning Horn When a short circuit occurs on your layout you need to know about it. Erik Bennett has devised a simple warning horn which sounds when a short occurs... by Erik Bennett
24	Green Stuff Epoxy Putty David O'Hearn MMR® describes the use of a very handy Epoxy Putty which is easy to use and which has many uses for the Model Railroader. by David O'Hearn MMR®
26	Convention Newsletter All the information that you need to know about for the 2023 Australasian Region National NMRA-AR Inc., 'Rails @ Rosehill' Convention, is referenced in this newsletter. by the NMRA Inc.-AR Convention Team
27	Nine Years on the NSWGR This is the Final part of a four part series, where ex NSWGR Fireman / Trainee Driver Ted Freeman, recalls some of the high and low periods during his time with the NSWGR. by Ted Freeman

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the Cover Photo

Ippinitchie Creek GP7 number 905 emerges from the Ippinitchie branch via a tunnel on the AMR club layout.

The tunnel is the entry to a hidden staging track that holds a Loco and about seven cars.

Editor's Comments

At the time when I became MainLine Editor a little over three years ago, I was seriously concerned that there may not have been the support in the Australasian Region of the NMRA Inc., to have enough material available to put together a magazine of between 20 to 40 pages in length at regular 2 monthly intervals, as is required and stated in the NMRA Inc.-AR Executive Handbook.

My first edition published was 28 pages long, with 16 pages of articles and (0) zero Divisional Reports to read.

But how wrong I was!

With the great support of AR members, this present edition is the first edition that **we have had at least one Divisional Report from EVERY AR Division**. That is a great achievement and a testament to the fact that members are keen to let other divisions know what is happening within their patch.

In fact, many divisions have had multiple reports published in this edition and we have exceeded all expectations by including **23 reports** from Divisional meetings/activities, and from 100% clubs, which make up 98 pages. Surprisingly enough, some of the reports that are regularly included, are not available for this edition. There are also 6 articles included.

This edition has eclipsed the length of all others and is **138 pages long**. Well done to all those who provide the information for publishing, whether it be a report or an article.

I don't expect future editions to be this long, and yes, while it is a time consuming process, I will continue to publish the reports as they come in, provided that they are received within the deadline date time frame that is stipulated in each edition.

In this edition Ken House outlines in this first part of a two part article from page **6**, about how, after a rebuild of their club layout, the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc. introduced operating sessions into their club for the enjoyment of both the novice and experienced operator.

Gerry Hopkins MMR® FNMRA is no stranger to anyone in the NMRA Inc., and from page **18**, Gerry outlines how he achieved the title of MMR® and the process and time frame it took to become a Master Model Railroader.


When a short circuit occurs on your layout you need to know about it. Erik Bennett has devised a simple warning horn circuit which sounds when a short occurs and you can read about how to make your own circuit from page **21**.

David O'Hearn MMR® describes the use of a very handy Epoxy Putty from page **24**, which is easy to use and which has many uses for the model railroader.

The latest 'Rails @ Rosehill' newsletter can be found on page **26**.

The last instalment in the 4 part series from Ted Freeman, ex NSWGR Fireman / Trainee Driver, continues from page **27**, where he recalls some of the high and low periods during his time with the NSWGR.

There are reports from two 100% clubs, being the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc. and the Wide Bay Burnett Model Railway Club Inc. from page **40**, and Divisional Reports commence on page **44**. As you read the 100% club news and Divisional Reports, you will read that there has been plenty happening from around the Australasian Region during the last two months.

As mentioned last edition, my stock of articles that I have available for MainLine is rapidly declining, so we will need to replenish the number available very soon to ensure that we have quality articles available for our members to read. A big thank you goes out to all members who have provided articles in the past and to those who are looking to provide articles in the future.....

Meru Bagnall

Editor - MainLine On-Line

Introducing Operating Sessions To The Adelaide Model Railroaders

by Ken House - Part 1 of 2

Through out their 75 years the Adelaide Model Railroaders have moved premises several times. In 2002 the AMR moved into the Outer Harbour railway station, Adelaide, South Australia. The station was built in 1925 replacing an older station closer to the wharves. Although still the terminus of a suburban commuter line, the station has not been manned since 1975. The interior of the station building had been neglected. Ceilings fallen in, no electricity or water, and walls covered in graffiti, but it gave the AMR a space 100 feet by 16 feet in which to build a layout, provided we knocked openings through three of the walls. There are five rooms which were not all interconnected. A double level point to point track plan was designed with operating sessions in mind. Construction began in 2004. The proposed layout would be U.S. transition era and called the Southern Central Railroad. Adelaide being near the centre of Australia's southern coast.

In 2021 the AMR finally completed the SCR's mainly single track mainline. The AMR still has scenery to do and track to lay in a port and a steel mill, but plenty enough done to operate on. Also in 2021 the AMR inherited two consolidations and a roster of about two dozen first generation diesels, all lettered for the Ippinitchie Creek RR, the late member John Holland's free lanced model rail road, plus appropriate rolling stock.



Above: An Ippinitchie Creek Alco Fa leads the reefer express out of tunnel 4. The first reefer is also lettered for the Ippinitchie Creek RR.

Above: Where the hell is Ippinitchie Creek? Ippinitchie creek runs through the Wirrabara forest reserve a few miles west of Wirrabara in the South Australia's upper north. There are a number of campsites along the Ippinitchie Creek. John Holland worked for South Australia's Woods and Forests department for many years and liked the name Ippinitchie creek and so named his layout.



So, in 2021 the AMR decided that operating sessions on the Southern Central could begin. The AMR's layout is about 100 feet long and has about 400 feet of mainline running through five rooms. There is no communication system eg, walkie talkies or telephones. The SCRR uses NCE DCC and trains are controlled using NCE tethered handpieces or mobile phones using Wifi and JMRI. All turnouts are powered using Micro Mark switch tenders operated by toggle switches set in the layout fascia near each turnout. Operators set the turnouts using the switches as they walk around the layout. So far the only signals are three blocks of automatic block signals to the west of Kingston. Eventually automatic block signals will be installed over the whole layout but they will not be wired into any sort of control panel.

Being an OPSIG member, holder of the Chief Dispatcher NMRA achievement award and, having operated my home layout since 2005, I was asked to design an operating scheme for the club layout, taking into account that some of our 20 members were not interested in operations and others had no experience in model rail road operations. As club newsletter editor I decided to write a series of articles to inspire and educate the members of the AMR toward operations. What follows is excerpts from those articles published in the AMR's newsletter "The Booster".

<https://adelaidemodelrailroaders.com/newsletters/newsletters.html>

TOWARD OPERATING THE SCR *PART 1 Published September 2021*

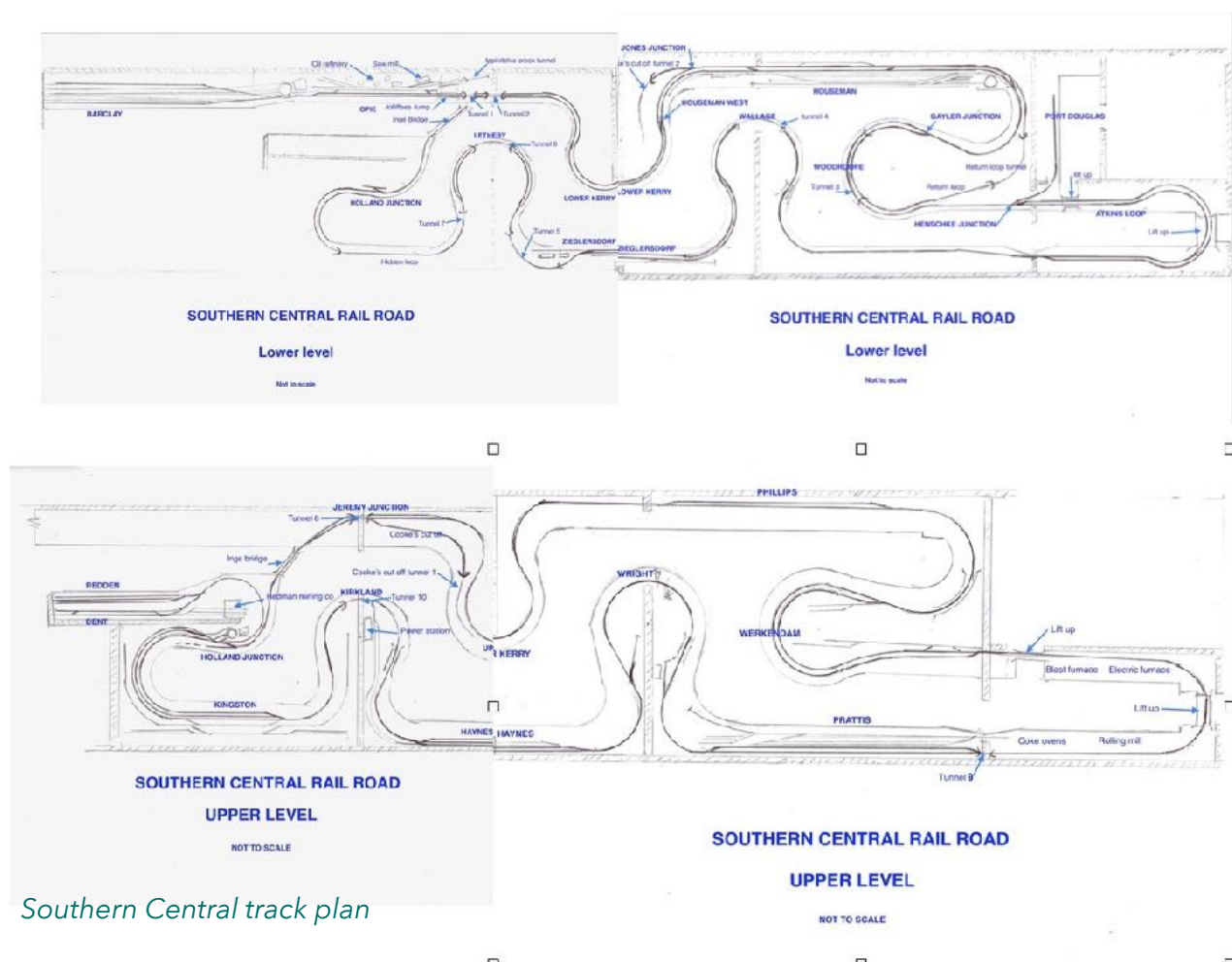
Operating sessions also known as prototypical operating, realistic operating, immersive operating or formal operating sessions are designed to mimic, in scale form, what railways do in real life. In other words railway modellers engaging in operating sessions are actually modelling the operations of the real thing just as much as building realistic structures, scenery and track work or building and collecting realistic locomotives and rolling stock is realistic scale railway modelling.

Railway modellers have differing aims when building layouts or collecting model railway equipment. Some are just happy to stand back and admire their efforts, some just like to watch their trains run round and round on a layout with or without scenery, (rail fan), yet others are in the hobby to show off their efforts at exhibitions etc. Others like myself think that the purpose of a layout is to replicate the operations, in miniature, of the

prototype we choose to follow. To me realistic operating sessions give a layout a purpose. To be fulfilling and enjoyable, when operated, a layout must have a cohesive sense of purpose.



Left: Matt Redden, switcher crew, Ken House yard master, and John Haynes, road crew, work together to operate at Davidston on the Ippinitchie creek RR.



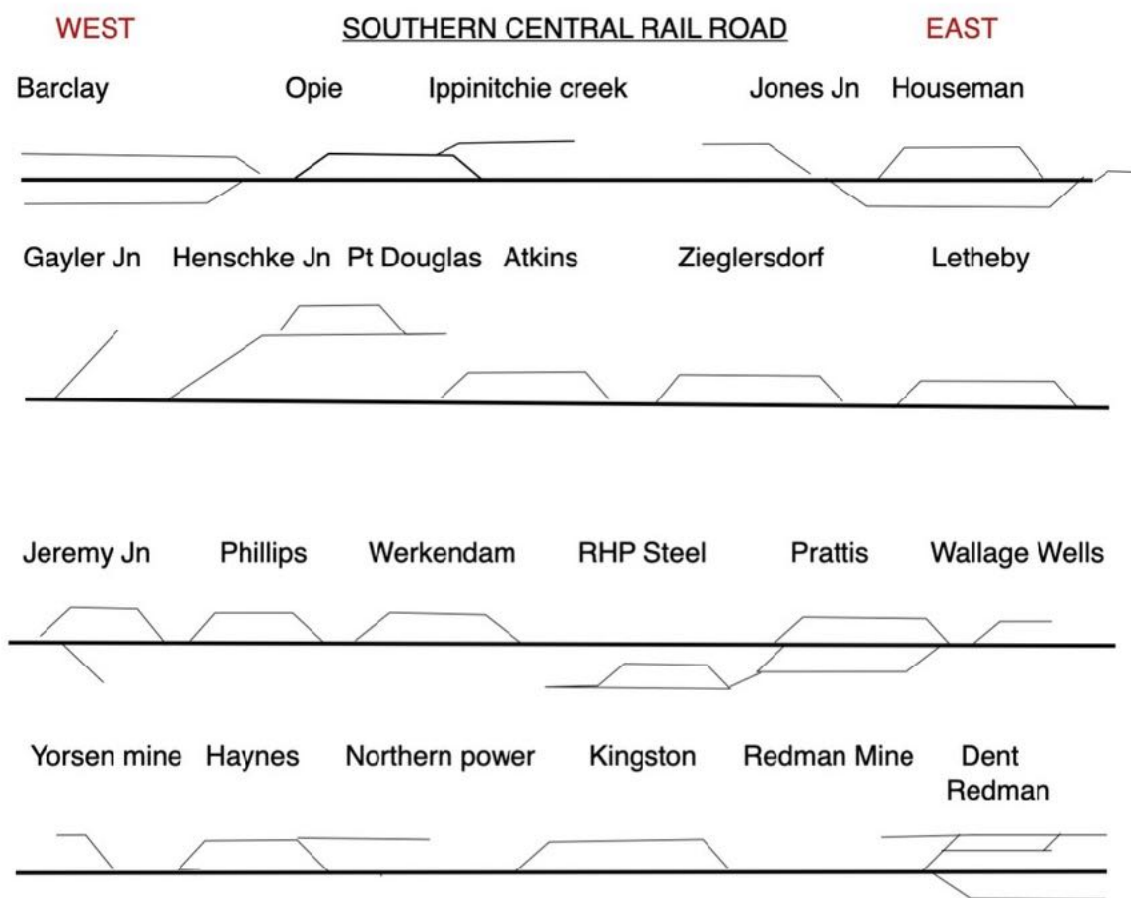
The Southern Central is coming together as a realistic layout with a purpose. It can be operated point to point as a bridge route. That is, a railroad that connects other rail roads through difficult terrain or an isolated area. On it's way from Barclay to Redman the route passes through several towns which have industries of varying types and complexities. There are two branch lines, one to a small coastal port, as well as connections to class one rail roads.

During operating sessions, a group of modellers band together as a team to move rail road traffic across the route modelled using methods, varying from Train order and Timetable using radio headsets or telephone systems and full central traffic control panels, down to simple hand written track warrants and switch lists. Whilst ideally the layout should be fully scenicked and all locomotives and rolling stock era and prototype specific, many operating layouts are “plywood pacifics” with a mix of prototype rolling stock but still are capable of supporting enjoyable operating sessions. Usually the layout and rolling stock is gradually being brought up to a more prototypical standard just as the Southern Central is. Members will get more out of the layout once we begin operating sessions. As well as the challenge involved in moving trains over the layout in a prototypical manner members will enjoy the camaraderie of being part of the team following a sequence of prototypical train movements. Our operating system will need

to be fairly simple to begin with and have trains of varying types to cope with the abilities and preferences of the various club members. Operators will be able to be involved as much or as little as they like. There is a saying among operators in the USA that says "If you build it they will come". If we can get an operating system up and running at the AMR and publicise it, we may be able to attract more members.

TOWARD OPERATING THE SCR PART 2 Published October 2021

The first thing we need to do is consider what is the purpose of the Southern Central. The SCR is designed to be operated as a point to point rail road. (Refer to Southern Central Track Plan on the previous page)



NOTES:

The main line is double track as far as Houseman single for then on.
 Ippiniche Creek branch line branches off over a trestle bridge at Opie
 Jones Junction is the lower connection of Cookes Cut Off
 The return loop returns into the eastern end of the double track at Houseman
 The return loop branches off to the left at Gayler Junction
 The line to Pt Douglas branches off to the left at Henschke Junction.
 Cokes Cut Off branches off to the right at Jeremy Junction.
 RHP Steel can only be accessed through Prattis yard.
 Yorsen mine and Northern Power are switched at Haynes.
 Redman mine is switched from Dent.

Above: This string diagram illustrates how the SCRR runs west to east point to point from the west end staging at Barclay to the east end staging at Redman.

Let's consider the SCR to be located somewhere in the southern half of the USA's mid west and, even though it is about 90 miles long, (our modelled portion is not much over 50 miles long) it connects two or three class 1 western railroads at it's western end, with a similar number of eastern class 1 railroad connections at it's eastern end through some difficult territory. Being able to allow various railroads to route trains across its rails means that the SCRR is a Bridge Route and as such allows for various rail road's trains to pass through.

Right: This NYC mikado and train departing from Barclay is an example of a bridge route train.



The staging at either end of the SCR represents the rest of the country. Trains coming from the west of the USA enter the SCR at Barclay's west end staging yard. Trains coming from the east of the USA enter the SCR at Redman the east end staging. These trains are considered to be coming on to the SCR from "off line". Bridge route traffic comes on line at either Barclay or Redman and travels over the layout then goes off line at either Redman for east bound or Barclay for west bound. However a considerable amount of traffic is generated by industries in the various towns and locations along the modelled portion of the SCR and this traffic will go to other industries on the modelled SCR, on line, or it will go off line, that is to staging, (somewhere else in the USA).

To get a clear picture of what traffic and how it moves across the 50 miles between Barclay and Redman we will examine the line and the industries in the towns and locations on the SCR.

The SCR has only three dedicated staging tracks at either end. While sufficient for informal running these six tracks will not sustain the more intense running of an operating session as indicated above. Extra staging is available at Barclay (west end) if we use Barclay yard as staging rather than switching. Giving us another five tracks for staging. Other trains can be staged at various points around the layout.

Barclays 3 staging tracks can hold three bridge route trains that would travel to Redman. These trains will be a through freight, a reefer express and a passenger express. Some bridge route traffic will pass through Barclay as an eastbounds, goes round the return loop and return through Barclay as westbounds. The next four tracks will hold those trains. Two are through freights that stop and set out or pick up at Housman, a TOFC train that stops at Houseman to exchange TOFC cars, and a passenger express. Track eight will hold the Petrol train which comes in off line proceeds to the Opie oil refinery to pick up ten or so tank cars then proceeds to Jeremy Junction where it goes off line down Cooke's Cut Off and will stay for the remainder of the session.



Left: The two main staging yards. On the left the three lower tracks are Redman the east end staging. The two upper tracks are the switching loop at Dent which service the coal mine. To the right is Barclay. Seven tracks in Barclay serve as the west end staging.

To complete our look at the SCRR's bridge route traffic we need to skip to Redman at the eastern end of the modelled

portion of the SCRR and its three dead end staging tracks. The actual SCRR is imagined to go about another 20 miles after Redman before reaching the end of the SCRR where it will connect with the eastern rail roads. Three west bound trains can depart from Redman with careful scheduling. These will be two through freights and a passenger express all of which will travel to Barclay only stopping for possible meets.

These 11 trains, along with others that cross the SCRR at other times, earn revenue for the SCRR while they cross the SCRR. They can use SCRR locos and crews or home locos and crews.

Next month I will discuss "on line" trains and traffic and have a look at how the industries along the SCRR support those trains.

TOWARD OPERATING THE SCR

Part 3 Published November 2021

Last month we looked at the through trains (bridge route traffic) and the connections on the SCRR to the rest of the USA. The AMR's layout, a freelanced layout, is considered to model fifty miles of the fictional ninety mile long Southern Central. In the fifty



miles modelled there are twelve locations with industries that either generate or receive traffic. This month I will describe, in detail, those locations and their industries location by location. Barclay will be used as west end staging.

Above: The yard at Barclay at the end of an operating session. Some trains have completed their run while others will depart next operating session.

OPIE

The main industry at Opie is the OP oil refinery which ships out oil tank cars from the oil loading platform which holds 10 or 11 tank cars. I am ignoring the big LPG tank because I am unsure of LPG during transition era. The saw mill is capable of shipping four flats or gondolas of sawn timber and the cattle pen can ship four cattle wagons.

The Ippinichie Creek branch joins the SCR at Opie. Coming out of hidden staging the Ippinichie Creek branch can send and receive pretty well what ever cars we need it too.

Right: Ippinitchie Creek GP7 number 905 emerges from the Ippinitchie branch via a tunnel. The Ippinitchie Creek branch is a short dead end that holds a loco and up to about seven cars. The Ippinichie Creek branch is hidden staging.



JONES JUNCTION

Jones Junction is the junction where the bottom end of Cooke's Cut Off joins the mainline at the western end of Houseman. Because of the direction of the track leading up Cooke's Cut Off at Jones Junction it is an ideal place for a westbound from anywhere east of Houseman to run into the hidden staging (off line) in the lower Cooke's Cut Off tunnel.

HOUSEMAN

Right: Locomotives in the ready tracks in Houseman yard

Houseman yard is second in size to Barclay and is the marshalling yard for all the on-line traffic that needs to be marshalled. There are a number of industries at Houseman including locomotive ready tracks, loco fuel, coal water, sand, turntable, and caboose track



all at Houseman's eastern end. Across the mainline from the yard at Houseman Matthews Machine Co ships and receives box cars, Orr limited's warehouse ships and receives box cars, the grain elevator ships grain in box cars and adjacent to the passenger depot there is a railcar siding.

At the western end of Houseman the main industry is Rolanof Bros Transport. Rolanof Bros have a trailer on flat car (TOFC) facility that holds about eight TOFC flat cars and a team track with crane and loading ramp which handles gondolas, normal flat cars and even box and tank cars. Next is the freight station which handles less than car load traffic which comes and goes in box cars. Then we have the cattle yard which sends out two loaded cattle cars at a time.



Above: The west end of Houseman. TOFC tracks, team track with overhead crane then the Houseman freight house and cattle pens in the distance.

ZIEGLERSDORF

Zieglersdorf is another town that has a passenger depot.

Kirkland Coal west of the passenger depot is a retail coal dealer that receives coal in three two bay hoppers at a time. To the east of the passenger depot we have K. Peters Packing company which packs various types of fruit and berries which are exported in reefers. There are two spots at K.Peters. Next door is Amy's pickles which exports one car of pickles at a time in specialised pickle cars.

A spur at the eastern end of Zieglersdorf leads to the cattle pens which send out two loaded cattle cars at a time and the grain elevator which exports grain in box cars three at a time.

There is a water tank and coaling stage for steam locomotives at the eastern end of Zieglersdorf.

Right: The west end of Zieglersdorf has a retail coal dealer.





Left: Looking east at Zieglersdorf the coal stage and water tank then the fruit packing shed , a repurposed feed mill, then the pickle factory and on the distant spur cattle pens and grain elevator.

JEREMY JUNCTION

At Jeremy Junction, which sits at the top of Cooke's Cut Off, there is a small passenger depot. Cooke's Cut Off can be used to stage an east bound train in the upper tunnel.

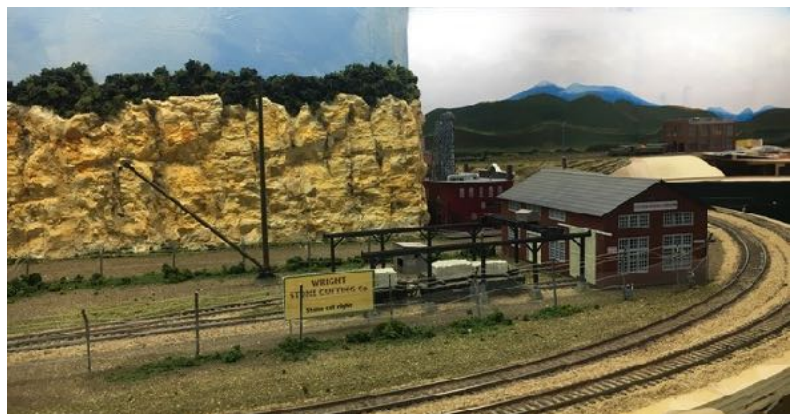
Right: Jeremy Junction: Cooke's Cut Off branches off in front of the Santa fe F3.



WERKENDAM

As well as a passenger depot Werkendam has facilities to coal and water steam locomotives.

Immediately to the east of Werkendam is Frenda mine, a small mine shipping the occasional hopper of silver ore. Next is the Wright Stone Cutting co which ships two special short flat cars of cut stone at a time. After the passenger depot is Kerry and sons canning co which receives fruit in a reefer, sugar in a covered hopper and exports canned fruit and jam in box cars. Next door to Kerry canning is Henschke Wursthau which receives meat in reefers. On a spur at the western end of Werkendam is a grain elevator which ships grain three boxcars at a time.



Above: Wright stone cutting is at the western end of Werkendam



Left: The eastern end of Werkendam. Kerry and son canning has three spots no 1 for a reefer no 2 for a box car no 3 for a covered hopper. Then comes Henschke Wursthause which receives meat in reefers and finally the grain elevator.

PRATTIS

Prattis has a passenger depot and has a large yard which supports the nearby (yet to be finished) Redden Holland Prattis Steel co steel mill.

It is planned to model the internal rail operations of the steel mill as much as possible. The internal steel mill operations will be like an operating session in their own right, separate but interacting with the SCRR operations.

A Southern Central operating session will only concern itself with freight exported, slab steel, coke and coke-plant by-products and crude oil from nearby Wallage Wells and freight imported, iron ore, coal, limestone, scrap metal, fire bricks and spare parts for repairs. All of which will go through Prattis yard.

HAYNES

The three track yard at Haynes is used to switch Yorsen mine the iron ore mine to the west of Haynes and Northern Light and Power's power station to the east of Haynes. A spur at Haynes provides space for a locomotive and caboose to layover.



Above: A doodle bug is on the main line as it passes Yorsen Mine iron ore mine.

KINGSTON

Kingston is the terminus of the modelled portion of the Southern Central and has a passenger depot, a turntable, round house, and servicing facilities for both steam and diesel locomotives.

The industries at Kingston starting from the western end are Atkins Aggregates limestone quarry which exports four hoppers of limestone at a time, then Murray Milling which receives 11 or 12 box cars loaded with grain.

Right: Murray Milling, a feed mill, Davenport Ltd, an engineering business, and Mikolaj Fuel and oil are all at the western end of Kingston.



Davenport Ltd, a manufacturing plant, exports box cars loaded with bearings seals and other components. Mikolaj fuel and oil receives petrol in tank cars and drums and cans of oil and grease in box cars. Then Golden Valley Canning co exports canned meats in box cars. Werk's Ice Works sends out reefers loaded with ice as well as reefers of meat from Jefferson Abattoir that have been iced at Werk's Ice Works' icing platform. The final industry in Kingston yard is Jefferson Abattoir, which receives cattle in cattle cars at its cattle yards, eight cattle cars at a time and exports meat in reefers. A spur at the eastern end of Kingston leads to the Warwick Chemical Company which has three loading/

unloading spots, receiving box cars at the main building and chemical tank cars at the tanks and exporting product in covered hoppers loaded from an overhead bin.



Right: At the eastern end of Kingston is Golden Valley canning, Werk's Ice Works, an interesting looking industry that is not rail served, and Jefferson Abattoir Ltd.

DENT

A short branch off to the left before the line leads into Redman, the three track eastern staging yard, goes up grade to Dent. The loop at Dent is used to switch Redman coal mine which can hold 24 hoppers, both two and three bay. Dent has a spur to hold a locomotive and caboose.



REDMAN

Redman is east end staging.

Left: Redman Mining co at Dent

Next month I will begin putting all of this together into an operating sequence...M

The second and final part of 'Introducing Operating Sessions to the Adelaide Model Railroaders' continues in the next edition of MainLine.

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 10 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 5 days prior to the end of the month as shown.

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;-
November / December 2023

Deadline date for All Report Types = 21st October, 2023

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My Road to MMR

by Gerry Hopkins, MMR® FNMRA

I really had to search my memory before I sat down and wrote this “travelogue”. Back in 1982 I moved my interest to narrow gauge, HOn30, after a trip to Tokyo for my company. I acquired some brass kits from Rio Grande Miniland – that was my downfall. Being a rare narrow-gauge format, I had to learn a lot of new modelling skills. I had already learnt a few basic skills with my N gauge ventures such as hand laid turnouts and some scratch-built buildings.

All this was before the NMRA had started in Australia. I was involved in a group of four modellers who all had different skills – hand laid track, scenery techniques, structures and



I taught them soldering and wiring. Our first layout was an exhibition layout – 1m x 2m of the **Rio Grande Miniland** items. Within a year I had started to build my own layout based on the Maine Two-Footers. This was a sectional layout – all new skills to be learnt!

I had to read a lot of reference material on the Maine Two-Footers. This was not too hard as I had been brought up in Wales – plenty of the ultra-narrow stuff.

The “new” layout had its second outing in 1983 at a large exhibition. At this exhibition the NMRA had a stand, so, I joined up as a member of the **Australasian Region**. I started reading about the **Achievement Program** and set my sights on a few of the modelling certificates.



Over the next five years I learnt a number of new skills and improved some I already had. I was always willing to learn from other modellers – many are not willing to learn.

In 1989, on a winter's day, pouring with rain, our Division went on a train ride behind our legend 3801 assisting a little foreign loco called **Flying Scotsman**. A memorable day for our Division. When we got to the train museum, we moved to a separate coach for the official part of our meeting - presenting AP Certificates. This included the first Australian Master Model Railroader - **Rev Phil Knife MMR**. At this time, I also received 5 certificates. These were Scenery, Prototype, Structures, Civil and Electrical.

By this time, I was also a Contest Judge and helping with the judging of models for the AP. This is where I learnt a lot of extra modelling tips and some improved skills. At the end of 1989 I had to slow down a bit due to throat cancer. Well, I'm over that now and have not had time to get Covid 19.

I wrote a number of assorted articles for the regional magazine and a few others. This was enough to get me the Author Cert in October 1990. Over the years I had also scratch built all the freight cars for the **Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes (SR&RL)** - I love scratch building! These got me the Cars Cert in April 1991.

By August 1993 I had clocked up enough points for Volunteer Cert. Then in October 1995 I had enough for Official. I can never say no to people!



Throughout the journey I have greatly improved my skills. These include hand-laid track and turnouts, mostly Railcraft Code 55 and Code 40. Railcraft became Micro Engineering and my current HO layout uses Code 70 and Code 55 with a little bit of Code 40.

In the last 25 years I have been editor of our regional

magazine for a few years and web administrator for 20 years. I was also Regional AP for 20 years.

Skills Learnt have given me a lot of enjoyment. Among these skills is the reliability built into the hand laid turnouts. To me, the track is very important on a model railroad.

Besides running properly, it must look right so hence the smaller track. I had seen many different methods used over the years and then picked the one I was most comfortable with.

Some of the important things learnt in the past on the N gauge locos were used on the narrow-gauge locos - extra pickups have always been a "must" as well as being the correct wheel gauge.

There were numerous skills learnt about building structures and their weathering. I build in styrene and wood, depending on the finish I require. Some of the scratch-built buildings are still in use on my current Great Northern layout - and there are still some stored in boxes, not sure why!

While learning and building, I was awarded my **MMR #177 plaque** in June 1991. In February 2005 I got my Dispatcher Certificate. The only one I still have to get is Locomotives to make the full set.

On the assortment of exhibition layouts, I got to refine my scenery skills. Different methods of making and colouring scenery and making



backdrops and painting on them. Since I started building layouts the techniques and materials have changed a lot.

Travelling around the country to view and judge models for the AP was a great experience. In Australia our smallest State (Victoria) is the same size as England, Scotland and Wales together. A lot of travelling was with the exhibition layouts and my very supportive wife. I have met many people and many are still great friends. Covid 19 slowed the AP program down for two years but it is starting to get back on its feet.

Anybody going for their MMR should ask plenty of questions and listen to the answers without arguing. We all have different skills/ideas and there are plenty of answers to our questions.

Ask your AP manager about the details on the forms, write a good answer to each section - without a lot of fancy fluff.....

Gerry Hopkins MMR 177 FNMRA

WebPage <https://greatnortherndownunder.com/>

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhjV1L8A2dw&t=18s>

Short Circuit Warning Horn

by Erik Bennett

The worst thing that can happen on a DCC layout is you get a short circuit – when a train derails or runs into a point, or some other reason – because a lot of current can flow which can damage your booster and/or your trains.

My layout has two power districts, so if I get a short on one side of the layout and I happen to be looking at the other side, I may not notice the short because I don't see or hear the train stop.

So I decided to rig up a buzzer system on each power district, to sound if there is a short. I bought piezo buzzers from Jaycar and installed them but it turned out the frequency of the buzzer was about the same as my tinnitus, so I couldn't hear them when they went off.

So I bought the loudest horns/alarms that Jaycar sell and installed them. I bought two different types, so not only do I hear them, I can tell which power district the short is on.

Principles of Operation

In the simplest terms, you connect your track DCC to the primary of a relay, wired to hold the power to a loud horn off as long as the relay is energised. So, when DCC is normal, the horn does not blow.

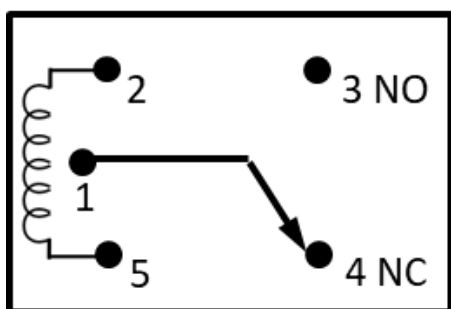
If a short circuit occurs, the booster drops DCC from the track which de-energises the relay. Its normally closed contacts now connect power to the horn, which gives a warning sound.

When the short is removed, DCC returns to the track, the relay is re-energised, the normally closed contacts open and the horn stops blowing.

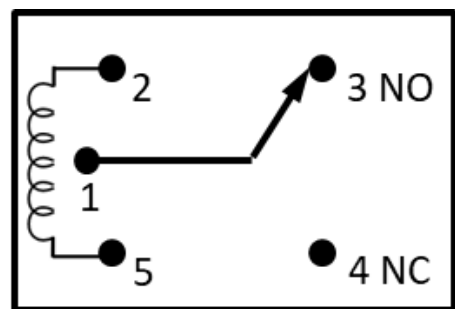
The components are:

A 12V single pole relay, Jaycar Cat No SY4066, \$4.45

This is a type JS1 relay and Figure 1 shows the leg numbers and the internal switching. This view is looking at the legs, ie, the bottom view.



Un-energized



Energized

Figure 1

A W04 bridge rectifier, Jaycar Cat No ZR1304, 95c, converts DCC, a pulsating voltage, to a DC type voltage to supply the primary of the relay.

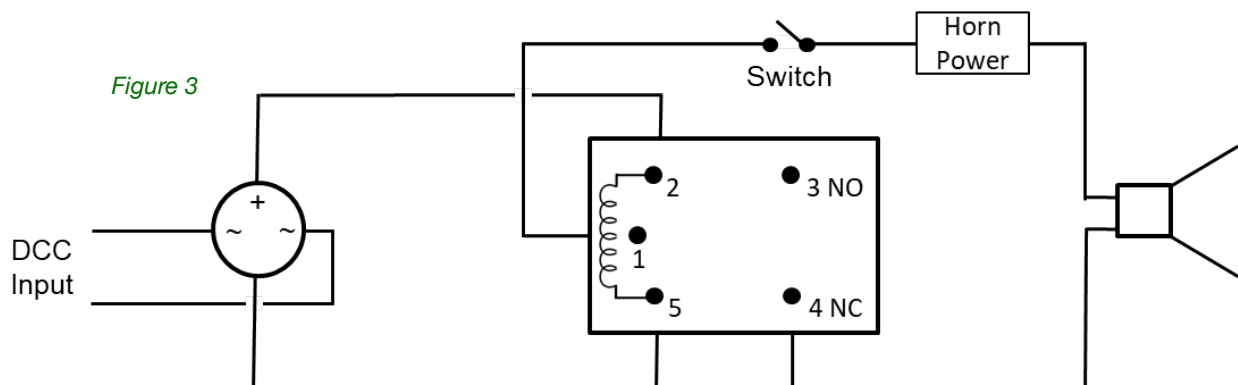
The rectifier has four leads, as shown in Figure 2. Two are for input and are marked with ~ (AC). The other two are the rectified output and one is always marked with a plus sign +; the other may be marked with a minus sign. In this project, the polarity doesn't matter.

You need a small piece of Veroboard and some hook-up wire.

You need any loud horn or siren, such as Jaycar Cat No LA8904, \$9.95. You need a power supply to run the horn and a switch. I had a spare 12V wall wart type power supply. I plugged it into the double 240V outlet used for the DCC system, so I had a handy switch.

Circuit construction

Figure 3 shows the circuit diagram.



Use a suitably sized piece of Veroboard. See the example in Figure 5 and the composite in Figure 4. The composite shows the components on the insulated side of the Veroboard and also shows the tracks on the underneath - the side you solder to.

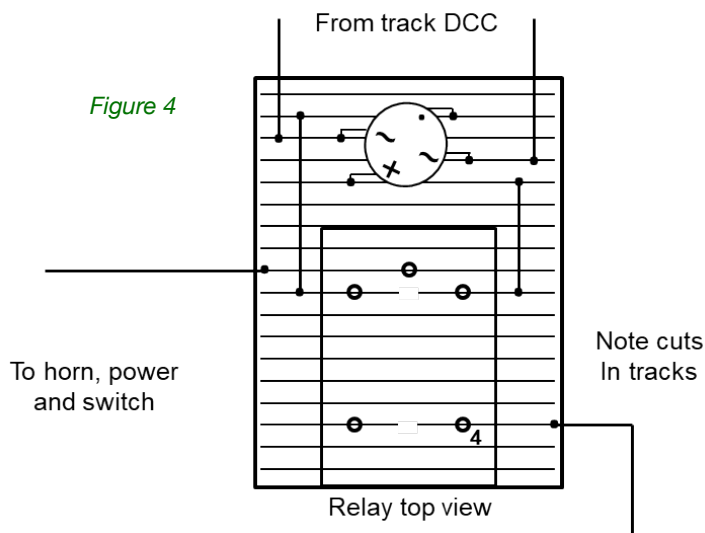
The view of the relay is from the top, so legs 5 and 4 are on the right. The spacing of the legs enable an easy fit into holes in the Veroboard. You need to make a cut in the tracks between legs 2 and 5, and 3 and 4.

Gently bend the legs of the bridge rectifier and rotate it to fit holes in 4 separate tracks. Solder the DCC inputs to the ~ tracks and solder short pieces of wire from the other two tracks to the relay 2 and 5 track (separated by the cut).

The horn power is connected to the common 1 and the normally closed terminal 4 of the relay. It doesn't matter which way around on the relay but observe the polarity of the horn with respect to its power supply.

Figure 2





Mount the Veroboard and horn under the layout and position a horn power switch in a handy location.

Operation

There are a few circumstances when it is valid for DCC not to be on the track:

1. When you power up the DCC system, there is a slight delay between switch-on and DCC being on the track. If the horn power supply is in the same 240V circuit as the DCC system, the horn will blow for a second or two until DCC is stable on the track.
2. When you use the programming track, DCC is removed from the main track. The horn will blow.
3. If you press emergency stop, the DCC is removed from the track and the horn will blow.
4. When you switch off the DCC and horn power together, a small amount of energy is retained by the horn power supply until the capacitors discharge. There will be a short tail-off from the horn.

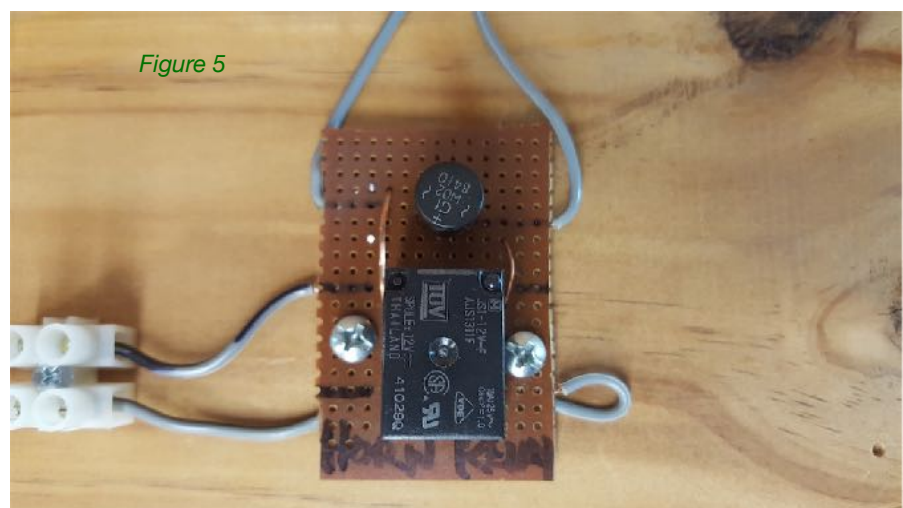
The purpose of the horn power switch is to cater for these situations.

After a few operational cycles, you will develop the procedure that best suits your modus operandi. If you are hard of hearing, like me, you will quickly appreciate the horn(s). However, it's worth

warning visitors with acute hearing of what they might expect. Perhaps let them hear the switch-on sound (1. above).

Happy running!

bennettedm@optusnet.com.auM



Green Stuff Epoxy Putty

by David O'Hearn, MMR®

Green Stuff is a two-part **epoxy putty** used by hobbyists and modellers to sculpt with. It's technical name is Kneadatite. It is sold in long two-colour strips on eBay, Amazon and other sources (found on Google). It is priced by length.

The benefits of Green Stuff

Green Stuff's consistency eliminates drips and runs for a 'no mess' application:

- No tools are required to mix Green Stuff – just knead it by hand
- It mixes within minutes
- Green Stuff has a long work life of between 90 minutes and 2 hours with a cure time of 4 to 5 hours
- It is paintable and once cured, solid enough to glue other components to
- Green Stuff does not shrink and is solvent and VOC-free
- It cures underwater

How to use Green Stuff

Slice the desired amount of yellow (filler) and blue (hardener) from the long clear plastic tubes. Then remove the yellow and blue from the clear plastic and mix thoroughly by rolling into a ball like you did as a kid with play dough and plasticine. When thoroughly mixed your ball is a green colour. Green Stuff is stickier than most modelling putties, so many model makers will wet their fingers to prevent it sticking. Water is fine for this, but when it comes to lubricating your tools for the cutting and carving of the curing putty, then you may want something a little more heavy duty.



There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to what lubricant you should use – it's often a case of trial and error, personal preference and finding what works best for you.

Water, olive oil, vaseline, petroleum jelly, saliva and even sweat have all been used by model makers in the past.

Green Stuff can be applied to plastic, resin and metal materials and then moulded into shape or carved.

To carve and sculpt it you will need a set of blades or tools to carry out the job. There are a whole range of different craft knives and blades available on the market, each offering a different cut or finish.

The working time of Green Stuff

The working time of Green Stuff is dependent on several factors, including the mixing ratio and the temperature in which you are working with the modelling putty.

Generally, a 50-50 mix gives a working time of between 90 minutes and 2 hours. Curing time is 4 to 5 hours and it will reach maximum hardness 20 to 24 hours after mixing.

After Green Stuff has cured

Once fully cured, Green Stuff is solid enough to have other components glued to it and it can be painted over.

How to store Green Stuff Modelling Putty

When not being used, Green Stuff should be kept in an air tight container. Otherwise, it can go off after a long period of time, becoming hard and difficult to mix.

Model Train Market Place

On the NMRA Inc.-AR Web site, you will find a link in the 'Members Area', where any financial member who wishes to Sell, Swap or Give Away any Model train related items from their Private collection, can advertise those items.

The link to the location is as follows: <https://nmra.org.au/market-place/>

Should you wish to make use of this member service, then the procedure and rules that will apply for advertising your items, are located on the Web Site.



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John Arrowsmith
Convention Host / Div 7 Super

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- ♦ **Convention Dinner*:** Saturday evening three course dinner and lots of time for fellowship! Book at the same time you book your Convention tickets.
- ♦ **Bring Your Grandkids*:** Huge opportunity for Convention Attendees to be with their Grandkids 'playing trains' for an hour on Sunday morning and catching up over morning tea! A Registration will be required, more details coming—but first of all, get this into their (and your) diary! (*Restricted to under 18's*).

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Nine Years on the NSWGR's

- 'Teditor's' Tales - Part 4 of 4

by Edward (Ted) Freeman

The other aspect of the job was to pull the empty's, not quite as daunting, but eerie nonetheless. On the receiving end of the coal, once fuelled up and ready to go you would wet down the fresh load to keep the dust down as you completed the next element of your journey. If heading to Sydney or Darling Harbour, the next adventure would be a trip through the "Dive".

The Dive was a single track tunnel that did as its name indicated, it 'dived' down under the suburban and mainline tracks as it took you from the loco depot to the opposite side of all the tracks to gain access to the main line to Sydney. This steep incline in, twisting narrow tunnel under and steep climb out to daylight again was another hair raising adventure.

Gaining entry to the Dive was by permission granted by a semaphore signal that guarded the entry to the tunnel, a single yellow light with a 45 degree slant on the blade allowed a light engine to enter.

At the other end was a very unfriendly 'derail' that prevented exit onto the mainline unless the signal was cleared, more often than not, you would be brought to a stand and have to await an opening in traffic before being able to proceed. The grade here was very steep indeed, so keeping an eye on the water level was imperative and more often than not, screwing on the handbrake wasn't such a bad idea either, just to assist in holding the engine on the grade.

Starting the locomotive was another challenge, as you would inevitably be running tender first, there was no sand to be had and the chance of slipping the drivers and sliding back into the hole was all too prevalent, especially when conditions were less than dry. Locomotives like the 38 class could be an extreme handful under less than perfect conditions.

Diesels, on the other hand, just took it all in their stride, instead of plunging into a black hole, you had a nice bright headlight to take in the view of the beautiful soot covered tunnel walls and roof. You could trundle through at a relaxed pace, knowing full well that to stop and restart was no problem.



When the Southern Aurora and Spirit of Progress moved into the new ACDEP servicing facility within the Eveleigh complex, then yet another hand was added. In this instance, you would pull up at the signal protecting the 'Dive' and inform the signaller that you had either the Aurora or the Spirit in tow. Reasoning behind this was, that until you received an all clear green signal, you stayed put, once the green was shown, you had to make your move and fit into the available window, else the signaller take the road back off you.

First problem, get the train moving, second problem - NOT TOO FAST - as swinging the long passenger trains down through the tight confines of the hole was indeed a delicate balancing act. Of course, the exit was then a FULL THROTTLE affair to lift the heavy train out of the deep ravine whence you came, having the confidence that you entered the tunnel on a green,



ensured you would have at least a yellow to exit. WOULDN'T IT?

The southern aurora was the most prestigious train I worked on, with the Spirit of progress a close second, on the previous page, the Sydney end of the Loco Dive was a daunting prospect with these heavy trains, you HAD TO have a clear run as there was no way to start the trains on the steep exit from the Dive.

The 48 class Alco diesel locomotives on the NSWGR's were (and still are) an important part of the motive power pool, known affectionately as half a locomotive due to their meagre horsepower rating of around nine hundred from their inline six cylinder diesel engine, these locomotives were virtually unstoppable, their 900hp going into six traction motors designed for much more powerful locomotives (ie; 44 class).



The South Coast line to Bomaderry was an early stronghold for these locomotives, their low axle loadings, and small physical size allowed them to venture anywhere on the lines



and if more power was needed, just multiple unit two, three or more and tailor the locomotive to what you needed whilst still keeping the low axle loading.

I can still remember one of the tactic's needed to run the South Coast all stoppers to the timetable, jobs originally held down by the P class 4-6-0's, or 32's as they were numbered.

After stopping at a station, the driver would anticipate the right-o-way, and open up the throttle of the loco to eight notch, slow to load up, the loco would start to belch black smoke, the right-o-way would be given, brakes released, and kicking and bucking like a wild bronco, the 48 would slowly find its feet and get underway, a bit of sand would help eliminate any likelihood of wheel-slip (not that there was a real big

chance of that happening). These remarkable locomotives would take this treatment in their stride, day in and day out.

Because of the low horsepower available (by usual mainline standards), a driver would have to anticipate hills much more vigilantly than if the engine was a 44 class or such with around double the horses. This could lead to another interesting event, collecting a staff. The station name eludes me, but just out of Wollongong, after the Port Kembla line deviated, the line to Bomaderry became staff and ticket single line working. A staff was (rarely is these days) a metal tube with circular rings around it at various spacings, there were miniature staffs (secured in a bamboo/leather hoop) and the standard size staff.

In general, the miniature staff in the hoop was easier to exchange, the fireman/observer (usually) would take position behind the driver outside the cabin door and brace himself against the short railing. At this particular station, only the pick-up of a staff was required, straightforward enough, and no problem with a passenger train, because you were stopped. But with a full load on a goods train or milk train, most drivers would get a run-up for the grade that begun just beyond the platforms end.



I full remember one day as I stepped out onto my perilous perch, the 48's exhaust crackling behind my head with a pawl of black smoke streaming skyward - terror - I can't do this, I said to the driver, it's too @#\$%^&* fast.

With the throttle still in eighth notch and momentum building up, the driver ushered me out of the way and took position in readiness to collect the staff. With his arm outstretched, the hoop went over his arm in a beautifully executed catch, both the speed, and hence force, of the manoeuvre, flung him around and the staff could be heard plain as day above the cacophony of the roaring diesel - kawump! As it struck the side of the locomotives long hood.

Stepping back into the cab, see - nuthin' to it! He shakingly stated, I don't know what the actual speed was, but it sure as hell felt like a hundred miles per hour, whatever it was, I never faced quite the same pace to pick up the staff at that station with that driver again!

One Easter Weekend, I worked the milk train from Sydney to Bomaderry, power on this occasion being one of the more powerful 44 class diesel locomotives with quite a bit more horsepower at hand. Being Easter, several additional passenger trains had been scheduled to the South Coast as all along the route was beautiful beaches and the end of the line at Bomaderry was a real tourist attraction.

Having started sometime after midnight on the Friday, our arrival in Bomaderry was relatively early in the morning, we had pulled into the station and were receiving instructions from the guard as to our shunting moves. The guard, on my side of the loco related the moves required, stating that when we pulled forward onto the old wooden trestle in readiness to set-back to the dairy, be careful - as due to the Easter extra's, there were a couple of trainsets stored on the other side.

I turned to repeat the instructions to the driver, but he was right behind me - did you get all that, I quipped? Yep! No problem - and away we went. We were on the No 2 end of the Alco and visibility couldn't have been better, except we were both looking back for the guard as we stepped out onto the creaking old timber trestle.

I looked around to check our position and noticed the driver with his head out the window intently watching the guards signals, then they caught my eye - just off the bridge, the old wooden car set loomed up, I summonsed the drivers attention, but it was too late, with the brakes in emergency, the 100+ tonne locomotive pushed by several milk vans careered into the end of the carriage and commenced to manufacture matchsticks. It wasn't the all-mightiest crash in the world, and as far as the 44 class was concerned, it was just a love tap - the old wooden coach on the other hand looked like Mohamed Ali had taken to it!





Did you forget about the carriages I asked of the driver, "I didn't know anything about them, he replied!", But! But! I stuttered back!

The inquiry found me at fault because I hadn't relayed the message to the driver word for word, his - OK! - meant nothing.

The first installment of Teditor's Tales was

originally published in the September 2003 issue of Train Talk, the stories were run again as many were not involved with us at the time and we have a much larger audience now. Over the past twelve months, I have covered quite a few 'happenings' whilst serving on the New South Wales Government Railways, from the instigation of my employ through many peculiar incidents and some rather different, but always interesting occurrences.

It was interesting to hear recently, a comment that I was repeating myself in some stories, looking back through the items thus far published, I was unable to come up with the same conclusion, but! The comment prompted me to check my credence and that in no uncertain manner was a good thing.

There have been some quite positive comments on the Teditor's Tales series, and for these I am most grateful, unfortunately, my time on the railway was too short to be classified as a lifetime, and it may not be all that long before I run out of 'Tales' to tell. Of course, I will endeavour to prolong the agony of my story telling as long as feasible. Whatever! Please do not hesitate to let me know if you enjoy or otherwise what I put to paper - any comment is a worthwhile one!

Lets head off to a small depot for this tidbit, for six months I was 'displaced' to the Western Branch Terminus known as Richmond, this line was a busy one with constant commuter shuffles to and from Richmond to Blacktown, the Sydney connection to the Richmond line where the electrification ended for this scenic addition. The main west line continued on through Penrith and into the picturesque Blue Mountains where the electrification went right through to Lithgow.



The Richmond line had some unique operational problems, home to several 'S' class 4-6-4 Tank engines and CPH Railmotors, the lines main livelihood was the transport of passengers to and from Sydney connections at Blacktown. Peak traffic in the morning saw passengers heading into the big smoke for work, and in the afternoon, the reverse shuffle took place.

The 30 class tank locos generally handled the morning and afternoon peak hour rushes, while the tiny CPH Railmotors shuffled back and forth throughout the day handling the shopping traffic to and from Blacktown.

One train each morning went right through from Richmond to Sydney, usually headed up by a 'P', (32 class) 4-6-0 tender engine, with a mirrored return in the evening. This was of course "THE" express, and only a few selected stops were made along the way.



The 30 class tank locos were limited in their coal and water capacities, the water was no real problem, as the tanks would be topped up at each end of the line, an engine might do two round trips during a peak session, and the limited coal capacity created an unusual situation to get the best utilization out of the engines and make the 'fuelies' job a little more comfortable.

The Fuelie? He was the poor soul that had to hand shovel coal from S trucks into the tank engines bunkers, the scenario of the trips meant a call to the coal loading facility every trip - unless!

Innovation and co-operation on the part of the Fuelie and the loco crews came up with a unique cure to this restrictive nature of the tank locomotives so revered on the Richmond Line.

The 30 class versatility of being able to run equally as well in reverse as it could running forward was the main characteristic that kept these engines viable on such jobs, with no locomotive turning required, the trains turnaround time was quite quick, except for the recoaling delay at the Richmond end.



The solution, load extra supplies of coal on board to eliminate the intermediate coaling. The way this was achieved was little short of astounding. You have probably heard of "Hungry Boards", these were usually additions to the top sides of the coal bunker on a tender to increase the coal carrying capacity. The 30 class had a similar thing in extra height of the coal bunker through the addition of metal strapping secured above the original hopper, this gave a little more coal to be used. The "Hungry Board" theory was extended at Richmond by the addition of two boards wedged between the handrails and the tank of the locomotive. These would allow the fuelman to fill the cab with coal to a height basically level with the firebox door.

Although somewhat inconvenient for the driver and fireman in some ways, the discomfort soon paid dividends in the extra rest time the crews, and the fuellie, were able to get between turnarounds on the Richmond end of the Journey.

The initial firing of the engine would mean basically scraping coal along into the firebox until the level was down enough to fire in the conventional manner off the floor. With their 4-6-4 wheel arrangement, the tanks engines versatility really shone on this line, timetable running was comparable in either direction as the locomotives performed equally well smokebox or bunker first.

The 32 class headed 'express' would stable at Richmond overnight and the engine would be serviced, and turned ready for its morning departure. This was an exciting journey for the crew, the run from Blacktown to Sydney affording the chance to 'pace' and/or 'race' the suburban electrics over a good part of the distance. It was an exhilarating feeling to be perched on the handrail of the bucking 8 wheel tender, arm firmly embracing the handbrake lever, looking like the ultimate hero as close to a mile a minute went by.

On a more mundane note, the Richmond line also had a major industry in the Riverstone Meat Works where usually a humble TF 50 series 2-8-0 goods engine would serve duty. The amount of shunting at the meatworks would keep these jobs well and truly busy with the early hours of the morning usually seeing the inbound loads delivered and the afternoon/evening handling the outbound finished products. The loads created by this industry could be quite large at times, taxing the 50's to their limit on the undulating branch line.





Through the middle of the day, the CPH Railmotors, single, tandem or even tripled would ply their trade back and forth until it came time to make way for 'the rush' of the locomotive hauled trains.

At the time I originally wrote these stories there was not anywhere near the amount of NSWGR's models as there are now, modelling the likes

of the Richmond line in CPH Days is now very easy with sound equipped Ready To Run models available.

The 40 class was one of the first mainline diesel locomotives to ply the rails of the New South Wales Government Railway system. Introduced on the 30th



Eureka HO Scale CPH and Trailer



A Slightly Weathered Eureka 4011 at the head of a five car HUB set.

November 1951, the Montreal Locomotive Works in Canada built engines, were basically a slightly modified version of Alco's RSC-3 Road Switcher series. With an Alco 'V' configuration 12 Cylinder 244 series diesel prime mover rated at 1650 traction horsepower, the engines were quite versatile.

Modifications for the Australian purchaser included a lower profile cab with the upper sides curved inward, buffers and mounting steps beside the buffers as opposed to on the sides of the locomotives. With an A1A-A1A power configuration to the wheels, the 40's proved to be a bit slippery as the powered outer wheels would wear due to tractive

forces, whereas the centre idler wheels in the trucks would maintain their full 40" diameter almost indefinitely. The resultant imbalance of wheel diameters in the six wheel trucks did not take to exerting maximum tractive force kindly.



Nonetheless, these were a versatile locomotive, but due to a manual 'transition' (read - gearbox!), the units were incapable of multiple unit operation with other classes of "automatic" transition locomotives. If used with other engine types, a crew was required on each locomotive, in effect creating a double header situation, 'not' a multiple unit consist.

At left, the 40 class could MU with another 40, note the MU Jumper receptacle.

changed into the 2nd position, 2nd 'gear' propelling the locomotive to a speed of 27mph, where once again the driver would 'change gear' with the selector handle selector position 3 would be good to 55mph where selector position four would then be chosen to take the locomotive to its maximum road speed allowed of 70mph. This would of course depend on load and track conditions as well as the type of service the locomotive was in at the time.

Alco's were renowned for their Turbo Lag Black Smoke and were often tagged as 'Honorary Steam Engines'.

Goods trains of the time were typically limited to 35mph due to the 4 wheel rolling stock still in use, in these situations, the driver would have to use just 1 and 2 selector positions whereas the throttle settings would be set in notch eight to achieve maximum revs of 1000 and subsequent full traction horsepower.

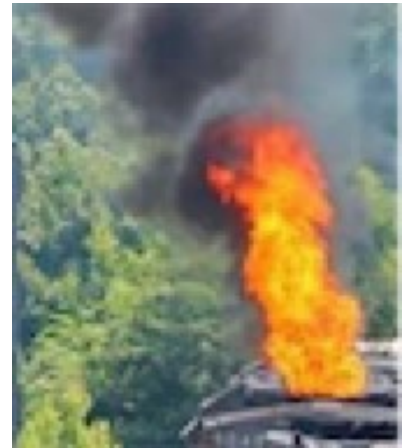
I don't recall a lot about working on these engines except for one extremely memorable trip on the main southern line one time. It could have been the Southern Highlands Express from Sydney to Goulburn on a Saturday, regular working for the 40 class, I do however remember that it was a single 40 class on one of these afternoon rushes south from Sydney.



All had been going well and we were running to time, although this could be a tough call for these engines. We were at Moss Vale and about to enter the last leg of the run to Goulburn. This section of the trip was a sprint of kinds, but there were a few intermediate stops to be made along the way.

Leaving Moss Vale was no drama and went as expected, transition up and get the ball rolling in readiness to tackle the stiff climb into the next station - Exeter.

Then all hell let loose, into the grade, the chant of the four cycle Alco suddenly changed to an explosive crescendo as a thick cloud of black smoke accompanied by white hot metallic fragments belched high into the cold early night air, alarm bells started to ring and then silence from the once roaring engine as the revs died down to a sickly idle, the crescendo from the bells deafening as they retorted there disgust at the V-12's failure to function.



Quickly rolling to a halt on the steep grade, the driver set the brakes to stop the train from rolling back, we were just out of the platform and the station staff were watching in bewilderment. The 40 class turbo charger had let go in a big way, we weren't about to go anywhere in a hurry.

Communications were made with the station master and it was decided to pirate a 44 class off a goods train heading to Enfield that would be along shortly.

The 40 class finally got to double head with another Alco, but it didn't contribute anything to the rest of the trip other than a dead weight of 100 plus tons of broken engine.

4001 resides at Thirlmere Railway Museum in Sydney as an operating memento now capable of being Mu'ed with Auto Transition Locomotives, two exist in the Pilbara's, one

converted to a Bo-Bo configuration, these latter engines are non-operational.



The NSW Rail Museum preserved 4001. It was returned to traffic in October 2010 painted in the blue livery it received in 1954 to haul the Royal Train.

Robe River Iron Associates purchased 4002 and 4006 for use on construction trains

and later as shunters in the Pilbara region of Western Australia where they were renumbered 9405 and 9401.

These were withdrawn in 1979 with 4002 donated to the Pilbara Railways Historical Society and returned to working order while 4006 was donated to the Wickham Lions Club and placed on a plinth at the tourist information bay.



In the days I was on the NSWGR's and we were working on a steam locomotive, it was common practice, when passing a freight train going in the opposite direction, to stand in the middle of the cab with your back to the firebox and observe over the tender, the loads of the wagons as they went by, keeping an eye out for flailing tarpaulins, loose timber etc.

Working to Moss Vale on the main southern line wasn't easy, the climb from Picton to Bowral keeping you busy just about all of the time, you wouldn't even realise a train had passed the other way until it was all but gone, such was the angle of your body whilst firing profusely to maintain steam pressure (bum up-head down).

If the job entailed turning around at Moss Vale, the exciting adventure of turning the loco on the Armstrong turntable cast off to one side of Moss Vale yard was to be looked forward to.



With an afternoon stopping train to Moss Vale headed up by one of the 4-6-0 C36 PIGS and a promised return on a local goods to Enfield, you knew that the Armstrong was in waiting.

Stabling the passenger consist in the storage sidings in readiness for a morning return trip, we would cut off the 36 and proceed to the table. If memory serves me right, the turntable had a lead track and nothing else, the opposite

side being exposed to a shallow hillside, this turntable was meant to turn a locomotive and send it on its way. Balance was a critical factor on these 75 Foot Armstrong tables (the 36 class around 65 feet), and the drivers skill in manoeuvring the locomotive to the exact balance point rewarded you with a relatively easy turning job, or a darned hard one.

After turning the Pig and coupling up to our goods train in readiness for the UP journey to Sydney, we would usually get a 20 minute 'crib' break, timetable departure

depending on the volume of traffic prevalent at the time, after all, we were a lowly steam hauled goods train with little priority.

The UP trip to Sydney from Moss Vale is contrary to what it sounds, it is basically all downhill, a far cry from the sweat inducing labour needed to travel 'down'.

After exiting a tunnel before Picton, I had checked the fire and put the injector on to maintain the water level in the boiler, then, noticing an opposing train, I did my duty and took a stance in the centre of the cab to observe the loads on the passing train.

After the last vehicle passed (a brake van in those days), I swung around to resume a seated position (the 36 had a padded seat to sit on, as well as a padded arm rest, talk about luxury). As my derriere came into contact with the welcoming cushion, I noticed a ganger waving to me, ever polite, I graciously waved back, acknowledging what I thought was his joviality.

The downhill run was uneventful, keep an eye on the water level, make sure and keep the fire hot without lifting the safety valves and observe the signals, the driver skilfully maintaining train speed within limits through judicious and skilful use of the train brake (no dynamic brake luxury here as on a diesel).

It was as we arrived at Picton that things didn't quite seem right, the distant signal was showing caution and the home signal was at stop, staff were mingling around our envisaged stopping point.



Coming to a stand just short of the platform, the Station Master approached us - you just killed a ganger on this side of New Main Tunnel, the foreman waved to you to get your attention, but obviously you didn't see him! - I waved to a worker at that site, I thought he was just being friendly - was my answer

- the driver oblivious to there even being a track gang as he was on the left hand side of the engine and the gang was working on the "Down" main.

After being placed in the refuge siding to await interviewing, we found out some of the facts about the incident. The worker fatally injured, was apparently using a jack hammer and had stood clear of the down train as it approached. Upon its passing, he swung



around to resume work on the track and was apparently struck by the buffer beam of our 36 class, catapulting him across the field and killing him instantly. As I was just swinging back into my seat after the opposing train cleared, I was not aware of the tragedy, the foreman's wave meaning nothing other than a goodwill gesture at the time.

At the time of the accident, it was not practice to protect the opposing line to that which the workmen were actually working on, hence our arrival on the scene from behind the down train was a complete surprise to the gang, this unwary soul taking the ultimate sacrifice for the lack of safe working practice.

I was fortunate, 'if you can call it that', in not having seen the event.

Coroners court was held at Picton, and for the first time, my driver and I had to confront the man's family, he was a Yugoslav and his wife showed up in court grieving in traditional black having very little grasp of the English language.

The driver and I underwent extensive questioning, because the accident happened on 'my' side of the locomotive, the driver was relinquished of any blame, myself on the other hand, was literally crucified by the defending lawyer. In a strange quirk of fate, the judge eventually stood up for me, and stated the obvious, what could I have possibly done? Swerved! Not likely! Because I didn't acknowledge the foreman as he intended would have made no difference to the outcome, the ganger was already deceased.

Safe working practices were reviewed after this accident and from then on, both directions were 'flagged' on double track even if work was only being performed on one track. Me, I became a criminal of sorts- being charged "as a formality", with involuntary manslaughter - somebody 'had' to be blamed, and it was my side of the engine after all!

After more than twelve months of Teditor's Tales in our club magazine Train Talk covering my nine years of service on the New South Wales Government Railways, this final, traumatic event brings to a close the memorable occurrences during that short career.

True, there are other stories to tell, some better left in the closet, and some that may surface from time to time, but not everyday was as exciting and memorable as the events that I have dictated over the last twelve months or so.

I hope you have enjoyed reading Teditor's Tales as much as I have enjoyed bringing them to you.

My Father - Norman Clarence Freeman was quite an artist, he was commissioned to do illustrations for a book, apparently it never went ahead, but I still have the photo's he was supplied with to work from.



This is a painting of his that I still have, painted in 1942.....

100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News

Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc.

A 100% NMRA Club in Division 6

Club News - Operating Session & Running Night **July** 2023

By Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)

<https://adelaidemodelrailroaders.com>

JULY OPERATING SESSION:

The July operating session proved to be an excellent one, mainly due to the fact that we had eleven operators turn up, the most so far. Tony Mikolaj was yard master at Houseman and Paul Wright Kingston yard master. Paul Atkins and Wayne Hoskin were a two man road crew so were Mark Whibley and Warwick Graham. John Gayler assisted Christiaan Werk for one train. Leaving Billy Page and Peter Kirkland to be one man crews thus making five road crews. Ken House was dispatcher/train master.

Five road crews meant that trains were circulating continually causing many meets and passes. A few times crews had to wait in a siding till another crew had cleared the town in which they were working. All making for an interesting operating session.

The first mainline loco in Southern Central livery, GP 7 number 478, worked the Houseman turn with Paul Atkins and Wayne Hoskin in charge. 478 is the first of several locos to be painted in the "black crow" Southern Central livery. These locos will give the Southern Central it's corporate identity which is lacking at present.



Left: "Black crow" GP7 number 478 leads the Houseman turn west into Werkendam where it will set out a reefer at Henschke Wursthaus and pick up a boxcar and covered hopper from Kerry Canning co. and two flat cars loaded with cut stone from Wright stone cutting. The turn will next work at Zieglersdorf before it reaches Houseman, it's destination.



Left: Mark Whibley, Christiaan Werk, and Wayne Hoskin operating in the former ladies waiting room.

Right: The West Wind west on the upper level is passing through Werkendam while on the lower level the Houseman turn east goes by on the main line on it's way back to Kingston after picking up a new consist of freight from Houseman. Next stop Zieglersdorf.



Left: SCR 478 arriving at Zieglersdorf where it will set out the reefer behind the loco at Peters Packing co.



Left: An Ippinitchie creek Alco Fa on the reefer express is almost through it's eastward run from Barclay staging to Redman staging.

JULY RUNNING NIGHT

Was an all Australian affair. Billy Page ran a NSWGR 38 class with passenger cars, a Pacific National BL container train and a ANR 900 class. Paul Wright ran a NSWGR 42 class hauled goods and Peter Kirkland ran a goods behind his Australian National CL class.....

Right: Paul Wright's 42 class passing the OP oil refinery.



Left: Billy Page's Pacific National BL class ready to depart Barclay.

100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News

Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc.

A 100% NMRA Club in Division 6

Club News - Operating Session & Running Night **August** 2023

By Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)

<https://adelaidemodelrailroaders.com>

On Saturday August 12 the AMR hosted the monthly meeting for Division six of the NMRA-AR. Thanks goes to Tony Mikolaj for organising the afternoon.



WORKING ON THE SOUTHERN CENTRAL RAILROAD

These photos below were all taken on Wednesday July 26. A lot of progress has been made by a few members and some things are now starting to come together.



Above left: The track into Pt Douglas has now been laid by Tony Mikolaj, it can be seen curving away to the left and around the corner. The Henschke Junction turnout will now be in a tunnel to allow for a better two track tunnel.

Above right: Tony Mikolaj ran the first locomotive into Pt Douglas on 26-7-23.

Right: Mikolaj Junction? Tony is working quietly away at extending the Ippinitichie



Creek line about 5 meters (all hidden track) under the layout to come out here on Cooke's Cut Off.

Right: Peter Kirkland screwed the coke ovens in place and glued the coal bins and conveyors into their final positions. He has put the unloading track, which still has to be pinned down, in place.



Left: Ken House has extended the track on to the second steel mill module. The first turnout has been pinned down while the second one, although working, has not been pinned down as yet.

Manual point control ,using slide switches, is being used here because this portion of the SCR double decked. Christiaan can be seen in the next room working in the slag dump area.

Right: Christiaan Werk has built and installed the tank car loading platform at Wallage Wells.





Left: In this area, immediately west of Werky's Gorge, Christiaan is beginning scenery at and around the steel mill's slag dump.

The August Booster is more up to date than I expected because both Christiaan Werk and Tony Mikolaj have sent photos of their most recent work on the SCR.



Left and Above: Christiaan Werk is moving along with the scenery at and around the Steel mill slag dump. He has used the actual slag that John Gayler was able to obtain from the Whyalla steel works here in South Australia.

The way this slag dump is intended to operate is that a train of slag cars will be pushed up

along the top of the slag dump where the slag will be tipped down into the dump. Once cooled, the slag will be crushed into manageable lumps using a bulldozer. Then a front end loader will load the lumps of slag into dump trucks to be taken away along the road heading off into the background. Slag from steel mills can be used, among other things, as road bed, railway ballast, and in cement making. Photos C Werk

Right: Tony Mikolaj's work on the branch line into Pt. Douglas: The single line tunnel, installed by



Christiaan Werk, at the left is on the return loop. On a slightly lower level a number eight turnout is the beginning of Atkins, a long passing loop that continues the mainline run through the complete length of the lower deck of the double decked part of the Southern Central. Henschke Junction, a number four turnout just inside the double track tunnel, is where the line to Pt Douglas branches off.



Left: Atkins passing loop exits through a double track tunnel portal just before the lift up to Pt Douglas after passing through the wall between the ladies waiting room and the corridor room.

Right: The single track tunnel portal leading from Pt Douglas back to the mainline via a branch line and Henschke Junction. Photos: Tony Mikolaj.



AUGUST OPS SESSION

Story: Tony Mikolaj Photos: Christiaan Werk

Dispatcher/Train Master; Tony Mikolaj Houseman yardmaster; Tony Mikolaj
Crews; Peter Kirkland, John Gayler, Wayne Hoskin, Billy Page, Christiaan Werk

There wasn't much to do at Kingston so we went without a yardmaster.

Most trains ran well, the steel train loco had a bit of dirty wheels problem, once cleaned it ran fine. John had some trouble with a passenger, his controller got switched to yard mode where stop is in the middle and forward/reverse is on each side. We did a controller swap to the bigger "T" shape and he ran fine after that.

There were a few minor derailments and one train going the wrong direction.

We finished one train that was leftover from last session and completed 11 others, the last of these was the first Houseman to Port Douglas and return. It worked well but I messed up the blocking by putting the flatcar on the wrong end and had to do some extra shunting which was a bit awkward as not all the track has been laid yet, so didn't leave much room for the extra work.

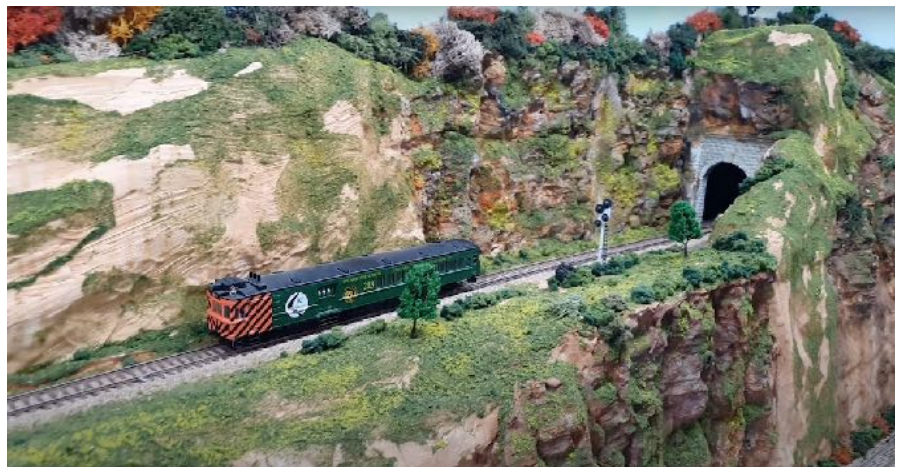
All had a good time.

Right: Wednesday 9-8-23. John Gayler is in the corridor room running the West Wind west, a passenger train, on the mainline which travels around the back of the yet to be finished steel mill using the big "T" shape hand piece.




Left: The only train not to complete it's run last session was the Houseman Turn east. Southern Central GP7 number 478 arriving at Kingston, long hood forward, has the Houseman Turn east. Kingston is the end of it's run having travelled to Houseman and return.

Right: The doodlebug is travelling through the wilds after departing Phillips.



Left: A manifest freight with a F7 at the front passes by Christiaan's latest scenery as it goes over the lower Werky's Gorge bridge.

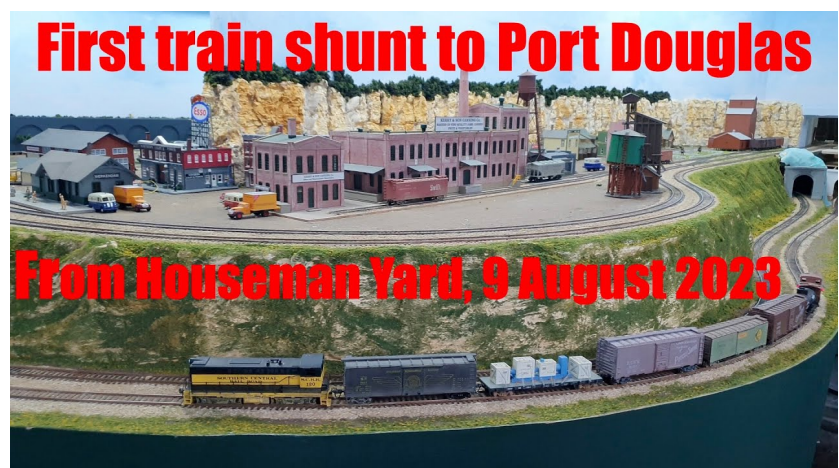


Above: What we all have been waiting for. The first working into Pt Douglas during an operating session. Although there is more track to be laid Tony Mikolaj was able to switch Pt Douglas. He successfully made use of the uncoupling magnets installed by Warwick Graham. Pt Douglas is a switching puzzle and will be a sought after job by those who enjoy switching operations. See the videos below.....



Left: July running night. Billy Page's NSWGR 38 class pacific emerging from tunnel number 2.
By Ken House

Right: SCR 120 is on it's way back to Houseman after completing it's work on the new trackage at Pt Douglas.
9-8-23 By Christiaan Werk



100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News

Wide Bay Burnett Model Railway Club Inc.

A 100% NMRA Club in Division 1

By Stephen Reeves - Club President

Club and Layout Construction Update **August** 2023


We decided to hold another working bee on Saturday 29th July, prior to our regular committee meeting (coincidentally July was a rare “blue moon” month for us in that we had a meeting on the 1st and the 29th of July!). On 29th we commenced applying the tinted undercoat to our modules, applying metal primer to our steel support pieces, as well as enlarging the “portals” on the end modules to allow for our envisioned double track mainline spacing and overhead clearance. We also measured and cut the matching opening into the coved plywood backdrop for one of the end modules.

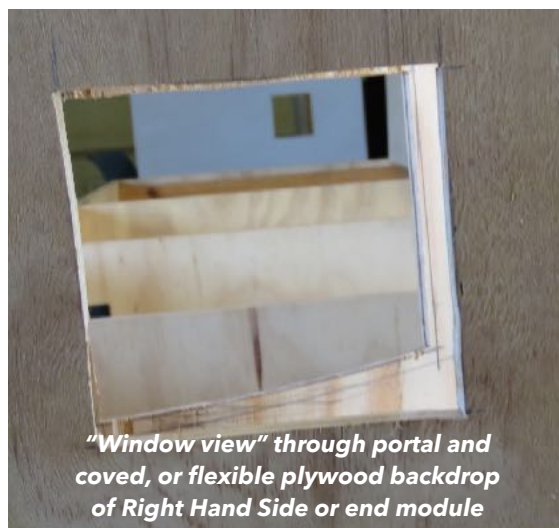


We decided that as we were unsure of our next opportunity we planned to hold another working bee on Saturday 5th August. On Saturday we completed undercoating the intermediate, or centre module and started painting one of the end modules once I had attempted to “straighten” the opening by filing the edges of the portal after enlarging it using a jigsaw. Cutting with the jigsaw base in the vertical plane, rather than horizontal makes it



more difficult to get a straight line! I then cut the opening in the other end modules’ coved plywood backdrop. Please see photos below. Lots more painting to do, as well as further bracing to improve the rigidity of our modules will be next on the agenda.

Hopefully some new prospective members may be able to attend future working bees.....



Divisional Reports

Division 1

Paul Rollason (NMRA Inc.-AR Division1 Superintendent)

20th May & 17th June 2023 meetings:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

May, at Bob Perrens Home:-

33 members

2 On-Line (Zoom)

9 Apologies

1 Guest

June, Southside Layout Tour:-

32 members

12 Apologies

ARC Report:

Nil, apart from advertising the convention

QLD Membership:

367 current members, 11 new members.

Clinics:

1. Getting the little people to help your railroad tell stories" – Alistair Wright
2. Building an 8 wheeled timber framed wagon – Arthur Hayes MMR

Excursions / Visits:

1. Mid Year Social Function – Sandgate Post Office Hotel – 10/6/23
2. Brisbane Southside Layout Tour – 17/6/23

Division 1 Feedback:

Division 1 decided to build a Freemo layout for promotions (both general membership and STREAM program)

Next Gathering:

Report:

NMRA AR Div 1 May Gathering. This gathering was kindly hosted by Bob and Betty Perren's residence at Zillmere on 20th May 2023.

Clinic 1:

Prior to giving the first clinic, Alistair Wright gave an update on the progression of the STREAM (Science Technology Research Engineering Arts and Maths) which then made a nice segway to his clinic entitled "Getting the little people to help your railroad tell stories". This was an outstanding presentation and delved into how you can make your layout come alive and tell a story using figures. Simply by taking a slightly different

perspective in selecting and positioning figures on our layouts, we can actually introduce a stronger element of artistry.





Clinic 2:

As has become a part of our presentations at gatherings, Arthur Hayes MMR gave us some insights to what is involved with doing the Master Railroad Engineer "Civil" certificate as a part of the AP Program.

Arthur's advice was that the requirements may look long and complicated, but they offer choices. He made it clear to not read more into the requirements than is there.

- 1). Make a Plan
- 2). Construct a Layout that works
- 3). Scratch build 3 types of track work to Merit level. (Needs to work)
- 4). Valuation and SOQ.

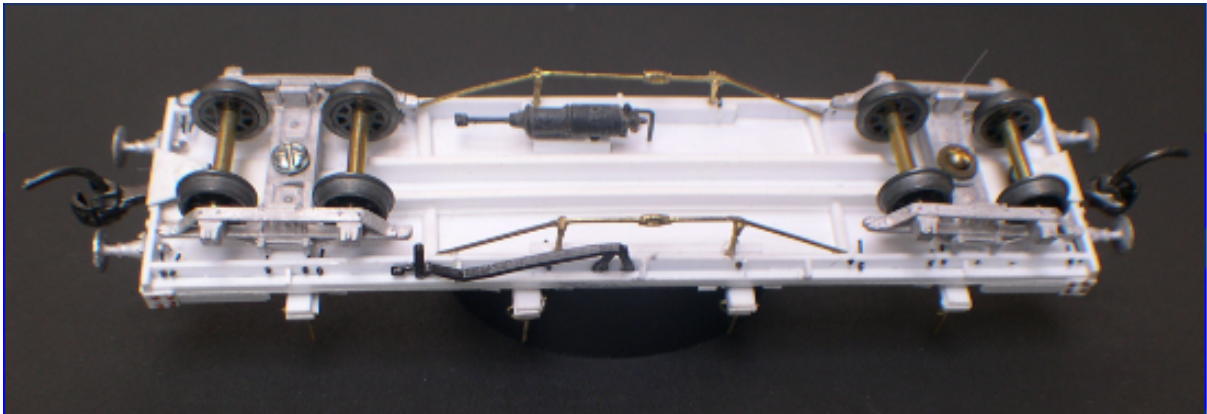
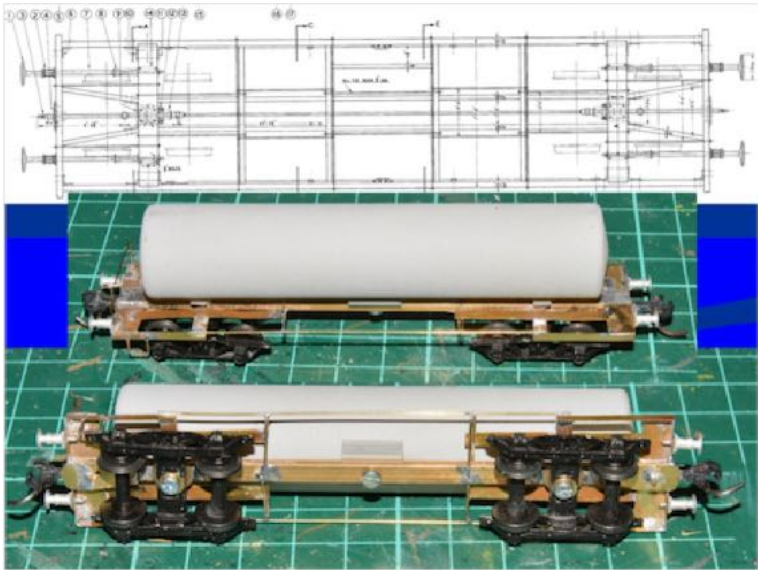
Arthur's continued guidance and encouragement to take part into the Achievement Program is simply outstanding and we thank Arthur for his efforts that he goes to ensure each modeler has a chance to accomplish these certificates.

Clinic 3:

Our third clinic was graciously given by Arthur Hayes at very short notice due to another presenter having to pull out at the last minute. Once again Arthur had us all dribbling at what he achieves and yet he is always modest and says "anyone can do it". Whilst that might be true, you can't go past that vast amount of experience and precision Arthur has to making his models.



Arthur's clinic was on "Modelling a 8 wheeled Wagon/ Freight Cars. Arthur's attitude is, "if you can't find one in the model shop or you need one for a special need, then make your own special car". His secret is "the more detail the better and the more weight the better."





Lunch:

Members had time to socialize and catch up with fellow modelers during lunch as well as viewing Bob Perren's layout.

Division 1 Update:

1. Div Super Report

- Thank you to all those members that assisted at the Brisbane Model Train Show
 - Clinicians – Al Wright, Clinton Hall, Keith Waples, Chris Paterson
 - Ambassadors - Steve Travers, Geoff Cosgroves, Kyle Martin, David Skelton, Jeff Grenfell, Al Wright
 -
- STREAM committee
 - Had 6 meetings
 - Al Wright now coordinator
 - Members, Al wright, Anthony Palmer, Bob Perren, Martin Dixon, Duncan Cabassi and myself
 - Pilot program/Proof of Concept is 1st July 2023
 - Will need 6 youth members and accompanying parents (have got 2 applications from AMRA show with 2-3 strong leads that not eventuated as yet so need 4 more before 2 June 2023)
 - Expression of interest open
 - Program now set
 - Please promote to family and friends
 - Sponsored by Modeller's Warehouse and Hobby One
- FREE-MO layout
 - Sponsor is Aurora Trains (for first 4 modules)
- New shirts and jackets have arrived. Next batch ordered
- Track Gauges (in transit)
- Calendar out for 2023 is on the website
 - Social Function – 10th June – Sandgate Post Office Hotel
 - Changes to calendar
 - 17th June – Layout tour of Brisbane South side (base at Archerfield)
 - 18th November – Layout tour of Brisbane North side (need layouts)

2. AR Report
 - NMRA AR Convention – 29 Sept to 2nd Oct 2023 – Rydges Parramatta NSW
3. Membership
 - 352 current Qld members
 - 3 new members – Andrew Spicer, Martin Brian and Daniel Woods (coming from Division 7).
 - Guests – Chris McCutcheon (interest from AMRA show)
 - 0 resignations
 - 0 Gone Home
4. Awards
 - Nil
5. AP Report / Awards
 - Nil
6. Events for the Year
 - Hervey Bay – 21-22 Oct 2023 \$175pp twin share
 - o Coach ex Brisbane
 - o Accommodation
 - o Dinner at Boat Club
 - o 5 layouts
 - o Gathering
 - o Partner's program
 - Other future events
 - o Hervey Bay 21-22 Oct 2023
 - o Casino and Lismore March/April 2024
 - o Bowen Oct 2024 – Whitsunday Tour (Scott Whitakker – O Scale hand built Victorian
7. Future Gatherings
 - 2023 calendar done and on website
 - Seeking people to run clinics for 2023

Show and Tell:

Several members got up and spoke about projects that they were working on or tips bits to make life easier for themselves.

The remainder of the afternoon was time for members to socialise and catch up with fellow model railroaders.

SOCIAL GATHERING – 10th June 2023

Division 1 continues to hold social gatherings at least twice a year so members can gather and have a meal together and share stories over a meal and a beer. These occasions are also an opportunity to have partners join us in the NMRA Division family. We endeavour to have the one in June on the Northside of Brisbane and the Christmas function on the Southside of Brisbane.

On this occasion we met at the Sandgate Post Office Hotel for a wonderful meal and comradery. 26 members and partners joined us for lunch and a good time was had by those who attended.

REPORT:

NMRA AR Div 1 June Gathering

There was no gathering for the month of June as we decided to change things up a bit and have a layout tour to 4 NMRA member's layouts. The plan is to have 2 layout tours a year and see different layouts and not necessarily just NMRA member layouts.

At the outset I would like to sincerely thank Malcolm Jenkins MMR, Anthony Palmer, Dennis Lane and David Skelton for their generosity and opening up their homes and their layouts for members to enjoy. Equally I thank Bob Tisdall and Tisdall Aviation for allowing us to use their hangar as a central meeting point and providing a BBQ lunch (thank you to the lovely lady who cooked our lunch).

Layout 1 Malcolm Jenkins, MMR® (*Seven Hills*)

Malcolm's N scale South Australian prototype layout is based around the Belair & Murray Bridge Railway and models the Adelaide Hills. His operations are by timetable and fast clock.





Layout 2 Anthony Palmer (Wakerley)

The Border District: is a proto-freelanced H0 scale layout that models a fictional, prototype-inspired fourth interchange point between the South Australian Railways (SAR) and Victorian Railways (VR). The imagined main line links Naracoorte in South Australia with Balmoral in Victoria, with an SAR branch line reminiscent of lines to Millicent and Kingston. A small amount of SAR narrow gauge, modelled using 10.5mm track, is also present. The layout originally sought to recreate the SAR and VR as they were in circa 1976, with recent efforts seeing changes made to accommodate an earlier period of 1959-60. The layout is DCC controlled and features prototypical coloured light



signalling throughout. The layout is focussed on operations and uses the Adelaide Branch Line Operators (ABLO) car card and waybill system. Regular operations commenced in 2015, and the layout and crew recently celebrated 50 operating sessions.

Blog: <https://borderdistrict.wordpress.com/>



[Layout 3](#) Denis Lane (Springwood)

Dennis' Layout is called the "West Ridge Railroad", and is set in West Virginian coal country, around about 1960 . A card system is used on the layout and a 26 train sequence is followed which takes about 5 to 6 hours to complete. The layout is fully "sceniced" and was inspired by Tony Koester and Allen McClelland .





[Layout 4](#) David Skelton (Springwood)

David's layout is a depiction of Southern Pacific's line from Bakersfield to Tehachapi. It is a mountain grade with long trains and helpers. It contains many signature scenes and models the difficulties of running a




railroad in difficult terrain.



Next Gathering:

Next gathering will be held on **15th July** at the residence of Glen and Vesna McCarley at 7 McPherson Road, SINNAMON PARK.

Gatherings for the rest of the year include:-

- 19th August 2023 - Darren Lee 36 Galen Crt., CEDAR VALE
- 16th September 2023 - Darren Starkey 2-14 Glenlogan Cres., JIMBOOMBA
- 21-22 October 2023 - Bus tour to Hervey Bay (partners welcome)
- 18th November 2023 - Brisbane Northside layout tour
- 2nd December 2023 - NMRA Christmas function (partners welcome)

[Turn to Page 105 to read the Division 1 Report for the July 2023 meeting](#)

Division 2

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

June 2023 meeting:

This is the third year the Eurobodalla Model Railway Club EMRC 100% has hosted the June meeting at the Malua Bay Community Centre on the south coast of NSW.

This a weekend event starting early on Saturday morning with the formal NMRA meeting in the afternoon. Layout visits and operating sessions carrying on to Sunday.

The EMRC layout was on display for members to run trains or try out that purchase from the sale tables of which there was good selection.

A number of questions were asked by the members but unable to be answered by the superintendent.

Does Australasian Region have a promotion/publicity pack ?

Why are the Australasian Region 100% Clubs not listed on the National website ?

These questions were emailed to the ARC members for possible answers.

Long time Division 2 member and MMR Ross Balderson told the meeting he will be selling his Bungendore home. Ross and his wife Cheryl will then be moving to Queensland.

Division 2 members have been privileged to see Ross's modelling first hand from initial project research to modelling progress and the completed models.

N scale seems to be the preferred platform for Ross and he is a dab hand with styrene and creating fine metal etches using Corel Draw. Other members have benefited with custom etches for their modelling drawn by Ross.

Division 2 's loss will be Queensland's gain, seeing what new project will be undertaken. It would be interesting to see what Ross could achieve in a larger scale !

The Division 2 Achievement Program Assistant Manager will become vacant.



Show n Tell, a number of modelling efforts by members were presented to the meeting.

The June issue of The Flimsy will have more detailed submissions and pictures.

The meeting closed and afternoon teas was available before the packing up of the layout.

Thank you to the members of the EMRC for hosting the weekend which may be on again in 2024.....

Division 3

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

(Report provided by Peter Kendall & Rod Hutchinson)

July 16th 2023 Meeting:-

Report:

The July 2023 meeting was held at the home of our Superintendent and his wife, Peter and Julie Kendall. A cool but sunny day prevailed and an excellent attendance. Four new members came along, bringing with them fresh aspects to our hobby. On behalf of our Superintendent and the NMRA at large a warm welcome to Noel Purdy, Andy Spencer, Ian Taylor & David Standen.

Peter likes to build layouts most suited to exhibition work. Some of you will have come across "Mystic Mountain" (HOn30) and "Apple Cove" (On30). A new layout with a Ceylonese flavour is work in progress. Peter has a purpose built room which enables a HOn30 home layout to provide him with operators time and a work space to build those never ending display layouts.

Models on display was both varied and outstanding examples of craftsmanship in the small and larger scales. A HOn3 Porter was presented which included a ZIMO decoder and sound; amazing miniaturisation.

A great day was held with hostess providing hot pumpkin soup, a barbeque style lunch for most, or cold for the remainder. Cakes galore were available and the most ravenous was unable to consume all that was on offer.

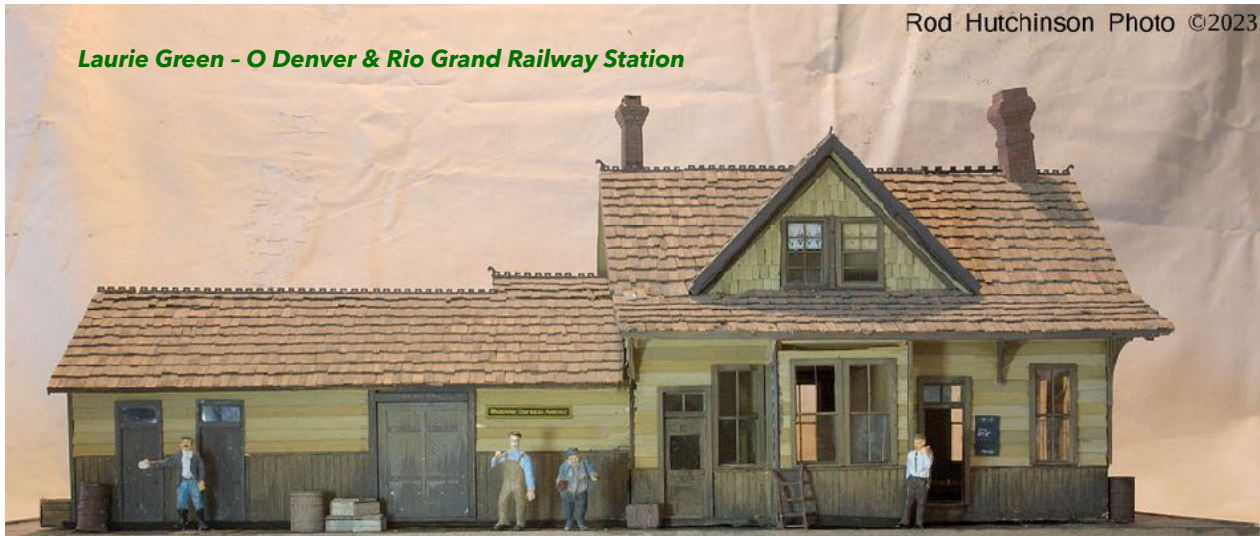
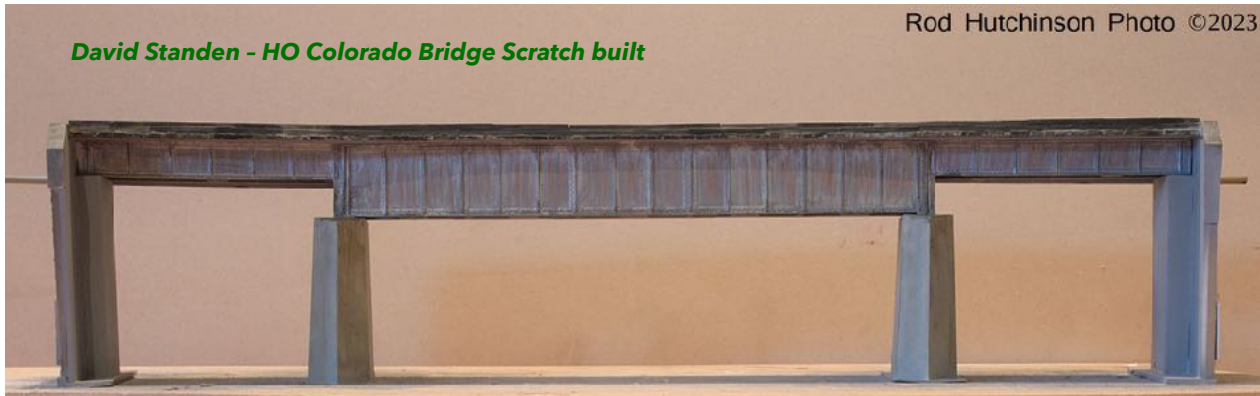
As is becoming a Div3 tradition, the NMRA thank you plaque was presented to the hostess for all the work she has done in ensuring the visitors were well fed and watered.

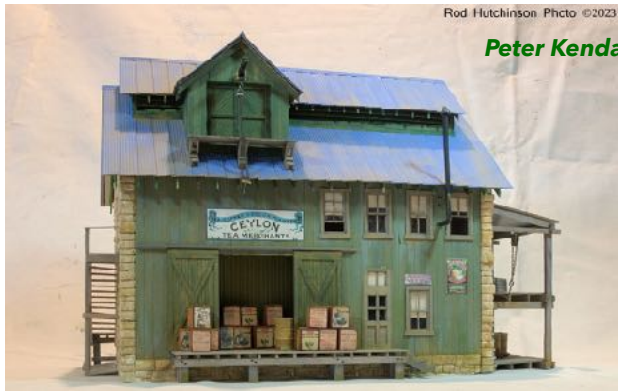
Next Meeting is at the home of Laurie and Rosemary Green on the 20th August 2023

.....

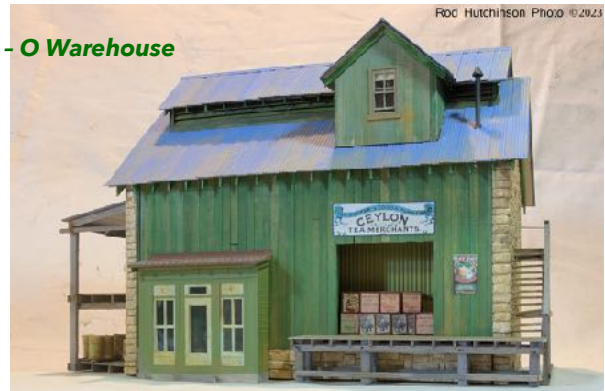
Models on display:







Peter Kendall - O Warehouse



[Turn to Page 114 to read the Division 3 Report for the August 2023 meeting](#)

Division 4

From Frank Godde, MMR® (NMRA Inc.-AR Div4 Superintendent)

April 23rd Meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

6 members

3 Apologies

ARC Report:

Frank told the members that the NMRA membership fees were going up next year.

Awards:

Frank presented Alan Burrough with his Volunteer AP certificate (*right*) for the work he did as assistant editor working with Rod Tonkin. Alan now has two of these AP awards.

Report:

This meeting was held at Dave Whibley's place who had all his trains running.



Frank called the meeting to order and thanked all the members by name for their welcomed help at the AMRA show which was held over the June long week end.

He suggested that Matt Brooks be made modeller of the remaining year for his effort to keep the trains running

throughout the AMRA show.

We represented the NMRA with our display (see photos) We printed 200 fliers and these were available for the interested folks to pick up, and there weren't many left at the end of the weekend.

Good comments were received about the display BUT AMRA didn't class it as a layout and there was no voting in that class which to me was really stingy.



Interested Show Goers



Show Display

Next Meeting:

There will be no meeting in July as Frank will be overseas.

The next meeting will be on 20 August 2023 at the AMRA Clubhouse, 24 Moojebing St, Bayswater at 2.00pm...[M](#)



Franks Trestle Bridge

Division 5

From Philip Sharpe (NMRA Inc.-AR Div5 Superintendent)

Activities for June, 2023:-

Superintendent's Car

The American Central Model Railroaders group, the AMRA and mini AMRA conventions, the City of Sails Model Railway Club, and Division 5 have several features in common.

An obvious feature is a strong emphasis on American prototypes and modelling them. A less obvious feature is simple administrative processes. No following of Robert's rules for the order of meetings, no long annual meetings, few administrative documents to write and review, and no involvement of lawyers.

Simple administrative processes offer a very important advantage compared to the use of more formal processes.

A modeller will spend more of the time they devote to the hobby actually participating in the hobby. This means more time to run trains, work on a layout, build models, attend conventions, and chat with friends and new acquaintances alike.

This greater participation will mean the modeller gets more enjoyment from the hobby. This is good for the modeller. This increased enjoyment will in turn likely mean the modeller remains in the hobby for longer. This is good for the hobby.

Those of you who attended the banquet at the recent AMRA convention will have heard Duncan Cabassi announce the Australasian Region (AR) will soon introduce a partnership program with retailers. Duncan also announced Jaycar will be one of the retailers. Jaycar will offer a 10% discount to NMRA members.

The partnership program is another reason to join the AR.

I will make a day trip to Christchurch on July 22nd to attend the first day of the Skillwise USA modular meet. As well as running trains, I would like to talk to modellers, both NMRA and non-NMRA members. I hope to see some of you at the meet.

Calendar of Events

The dates for the overseas events in the calendar of events below are local dates. If you know of other events you think should be added to the calendar, please email me the details of the events or the URLs to them.

22 - 23 Jul. USA modular meet. Old City Church building, 344 Manchester Street, Chch. See the Details of Events column. Stan Agar stan.Agar@skillwise.org.nz.

18 - 20 Aug. AMRA area meet. Garden City MRC Inc, Ferrymead Historic Park, Chch. **See the Details of Events column. John and Brent** chch23miniamra@gmail.com.

20 - 27 Aug. Texas Express. NMRA National convention and National Train Show, Grapevine TX. <https://www.2023texasexpress.com/>

15 - 18 Sep. Free-Mo meet, Morrinsville event Centre, 4 Ron Ladd Place, Morrinsville.

See the Details of Events column. Steve Waugh gnrailfan@gmail.com

29 Sep - 2 Oct. NMRA Australasian Regional Convention. Rydges Paramatta, 116-118 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW.

15 - 17 Mar, 2024. Mini-AMRA. New Plymouth.

26 - 28 Apr, 2024 (TBC). NZAMRC convention, Auckland.

4 - 11 Aug, 2024. SurfLiner. NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Long Beach, CA. <https://www.surfliner2024.org/>.

30 May - 2 Jun, 2025. AMRA. Porirua.

Club and Group News

American Central Model Railroaders (ACMR)

The highlight for the ACMR members over the last few weeks was the celebration of Ray Matheson's ninetieth birthday, see Highball #356.

Ray has been a stalwart of the ACMR and had a long tenure as the *Highball* editor. Not surprisingly, there was a good attendance by ACMR members at Ray's birthday party in Levin (south of Palmerston North). Ray was presented with a large print of a photograph he had taken of Steam Incorporated's JA1271 at Forest Lakes. He was also presented with a t-shirt and a framed piece of track he had applied too much heat to with a soldering iron. The photographs in Highball #356 show the birthday party was a very enjoyable event.

Highball #356 also contains a report on each of two other ACMR activities.

The ACMR held an operating session at Kel Sherson's layout mid-May. Kel has been doing a lot of work recently installing a signalling system. The operating session provided a stress test of the changes he has made. The changes passed the test.

The ACMR had planned to visit Marcus O'Reilly's large, multi-deck N scale layout. The visit was postponed and just Alan Davidson was available to visit on the new date. Highball #356 has photographs of recent work on the layout. There have been significant changes to the layout since I last visited several years ago.

City of Sails Model Railway Club (CoSMRC)

The CoSMRC held its June meeting at the Western Districts MRC (WDMRC). Seven club members (out of 13) and one non-NMRA member attended. The meeting had an electronics theme. I believe electronics will be used more in model railways in the future, although I expect the more traditional electrical hardware will remain in great use.

Alex Shepherd began the meeting with an introduction to DCC-EX's [1] EX-CommandStation [2] and EX-Rail [3]. Alex had recently purchased three DCC-EX 5A EX-MotorShield8874s and had added one of the motor shields to an Arduino Mega to give an EX-Command Station. Alex answered many questions about what he had done. The photograph below, taken from the DCC-EX website, is of the motor shield.

Alex then used the EX-CommandStation to demonstrate EX-Rail. EX-Rail is one of four existing addons to EX-CommandStation and is intended for automation and animation. Alex used EX-Rail to simulate a shuttle running to and fro on a section of track, and a train that went from the main line into a spur and back out on to the mainline.



Gary Snow then gave a presentation. This included a brief history of the development of the electrical and electronic systems on the layouts at the WDMRC. He also spoke about changes being made to the electrical and electronic systems on the layouts. One change was to the way push button panels were wired. Gary had earlier provided insight during Alex's presentation.

Alex's presentation indirectly illustrated how congested the Auckland traffic can be. Alex lives in Hamilton. The 130 kilometre drive to the WDMRC typically takes him 90 minutes. This time Alex left Hamilton at 2pm as he had a work meeting on the way. Sadly, there was a fatal accident on Auckland's southern motorway in the morning. The motorway was closed for a few hours. This led to severe congestion on the service roads. Alex had to postpone his work meeting to a future date and go directly to the WDMRC. He arrived at the WDMRC two minutes before the start of the meeting. The trip had taken him five and a half hours, making his average speed 24 kilometres per hour.

Alex's membership of the CoSMRC shows NMRA members outside of Auckland can gain from belonging to the CoSMRC, traffic excepted.

[1] <https://dcc-ex.com/>

[2] <https://dcc-ex.com/ex-commandstation/index.html>

[3] <https://dcc-ex.com/ex-rail/index.html>

AP Column

By Kel Sherson

AP Certificate - Master Builder - Cars

In recent articles I've written on AP Certificates I've included examples of my applications and supporting evidence. No so this time, as this Certificate is one that I'm currently working on.

Got to add it's one of the more enjoyable Certificates to do as you see the results of your work immediately. A bit like Scenery - but that's another topic for another day.

Master Builder Cars requires you to build 8 Cars; one of which must be a Passenger Car. The latter is open to a broad interpretation in that, for example, Combine Cars can be classified as a Passenger Car under this requirement. Adding interior detail will help for any passenger car.

Within the 8 cars, there must be 4 different types. Four of the 8 must be scratchbuilt and the remainder superdetailed. This means the 'non-scratchbuilt' cars can be kits with further detailed added; for example, a non-decalled kit which is assembled, some more 'details' added (Flatcars and Gondolas are ideal candidates), painted, decalced and weathered. Remember, under car detail is an area to address. We don't look at it much as a train is rolling past, but it's an area to score 'points' for scratchbuilt cars.

Commercial parts such as motors, gears, wheels, couplers, marker and classification lights, basic wood, metal and plastic shapes, and commercial paints and decals can be used on 'scratchbuilt' models.

Only the scratch-built cars must be able to attain a score of 87.5 out of a possible 125. These don't have to be entered into a competition to be judged. They can be evaluated on their own.

As far as 'earning points' are concerned, it's not too onerous - as follows

Category	Description	Points
Construction	Workmanship	0 - 40
Detail	Quality & Amount	0 - 20
Conformity	Prototype Appearance	0 - 25
Finish & Lettering	General Appearance	0 - 25
Scratchbuilt	Amount of Parts Built by the Modeller	0 - 15
Total		Max 125

Have a look at the table, a pretty decent scratchbuilt model with quite a bit of detail that looks like a prototype 'Car' and has been appropriately painted, decalced and weathered, will qualify. Right?

And you'll have the satisfaction of saying, "I built that".

So, practice what you preach? For the scratchbuilt part of my Cars Certificate, I'm using the NKPHTS book, written by my friend Bill Harvey from Cincinnati as my start point, and the Gloor / Ambroid kit build sheet (for dimensions) together with three HO brass Cabooses as inspiration. These are being replicated in O Scale. Two will be 1000 Series Cabooses, with one each of a 100 Series and 200 Series Cabooses. Remember you can build 4 of one type of car.

Floors are bass wood; interior, sides, ends, and roof are styrene; piping and handrails are various sizes of brass piping. Trucks and Couplers are 'commercial'. I'm at the point of decaling and adding handrails, then these will be done.

Have to say with all the other projects, AMRA, Highballs and other 'stuff' going on it's taking a while. But the neat thing is you can easily pick it up from where you left off. Keep chipping away at it and before too long you can indeed say, "I made that". Have fun

A 2010 prediction of the NMRA's future

In 2010, the NMRA's Central District Director Dave Thornton wrote an article entitled "The NMRA at 75 Years A Look Back, A Look Ahead". The last section in the article contained predictions by the author on the future of the NMRA.

Here is this last section, sans the introductory remarks. I will leave it to you to decide how good the author's predictions were.

The NMRA will become a lot more of a web based, electronic organization. Communication will transition away from paper and postal mailing. The magazine may eventually cease to be printed on paper. On line membership information will soon be the normal way to do things. The Kalmbach Memorial Library, once it is digitized and joined with the California State Railroad Museum, will become a very well used resource for members. Information on subjects of all kinds pertaining to model railroading, real railroading, and the NMRA will be quickly available through the internet. The Howell Day Museum of Model Railroading will be fully developed and become a major tourist draw in itself at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, California.

The membership in the NMRA will grow strongly outside of the US. Mexico and continental Europe will grow to the point where they will have their own regions.

The growth of DCC will bring on additional uses of electronics in model railroading. Live, real-time views from the cab, caboose, or passenger car on the model railroad will become commonplace. Sound, which is already making big inroads, will be normal for almost all model railroads. Electronics associated with DCC will become smart enough to do diagnostics on the motive power and layout.

Battery technology may progress to the point where the trains no longer are powered through the rails. Imagine building a layout and not having to wire the tracks, except possibly to get the signals to work, and maybe not even for that.

Prototype modeling will continue to grow in popularity as will prototype based operations. SIGs will grow in popularity, but as they grow in size, they will begin to have some of the same organizational issues that the young NMRA had in the 1930s through the 1950s. At some point, the growing fragmenting of the hobby will result in many groups looking to gain the economy of scale become more closely affiliated with the NMRA in a symbiotic relationship.

There will be a continuing development of both smaller and larger scales. Scales smaller than Z will come on the scene and large scale will have a growth in finer scale modeling.

Virtual model railroading will become a reality and a part of the world of scale model railroading.

One thing will probably not change, and that there will always be a core of fine model builders that will find the NMRA offers an outlet for their skills and abilities.

Finally, the NMRA will continue to be a place where friendships are made and nurtured and good times will be had by model railroaders from around the world.

North Shore MRC layout: Part 1

A few weeks ago, Max Whitehead [1] whom I have known for about 20 years contacted me. One of Max's hobbies is videography. He was interested in filming a local layout from a train going around the layout. Max's goal was to create a video for free that could be used to promote model railways.

Max and I made a brief visit to the North Shore MRC (NSMRC) one Monday morning to enable Max to see how small the camera needed to be. Max then bought a Nextech Miniature DV Camera QC8100 and a 32 GB microSD card to go with it. The QC8100 is a digital video camera 23mm x 23mm x 23mm. It can record either 1080p or 720p video. The camera easily satisfies the NMRA's HO clearance gauge, unlike some GoPros for example.

We tried the camera on my embryonic home layout. We found there is no light to show the camera is recording. The operator has to rely on getting the sequence of button pushing correct.

Max practiced at home with the camera and was confident he knew how to record using it. The following Monday we were back to the NSMRC club. The mainline on the NSMRC layout is over 150 metres long. We ended up with 41 minutes of video. Some was made using a handheld smart phone. Most was made using the QC8100. The photograph below shows our train with the camera near the top of the Waimarino spiral on the layout.



Max was not satisfied with some parts of the recording and we went back to the club last Monday for more filming. Max was dissatisfied with parts of the new recording and we will be back again.

[1] <https://whiteheadgroup.co.nz/about/>

Videos

Video 1. "Model Railroad Free mo Layouts" by Ron's Trains N Things [1], 20:51.

Ron attended the 2021 Free-Mo event in the town of Deshler, Nebraska. The lead sponsor for the event was the local shop Spring Creek Model Trains.

According to the Wikipedia page for Deshler, the town had a population of 739 in the 2020 US decennial census, down from a peak at census time of 1,177 in 1930. The town was established in 1887 when the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad was extended to that point.

In the video, Ron interviews a co-owner of Spring Creek Model Trains and two modellers with modules at the event (one modeller refers to the NMRA). The question of how a model train shop in a small town can be successful is partly answered in the interview with the shop co-owner.

Much of the remainder of the video is of the modules on HO and N scale layouts at the show. Some modules were well scenicked.

Video 2. A mystery video [2], 3:15.

[1] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2csgQfCeXc>

[2] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIVYfTA1IEI>

Details of Events

23 - 23 Jul. USA modular (Free-Mo) meet.

SkillWise, 344 Manchester Street, Christchurch.

The follow information is taken from an email Stan Agar sent to modellers on June 6.

This is an invitation only event but feel free to pass on the information about the meet to potential attendees. The meet is for all types of trains, not just American. The only requirements are DCC and 16.5mm gauge.

If you plan to attend but have not let Stan know, contact him ASAP on 021 0823 6490 or stan.Agar@skillwise.org.nz, especially if you plan to bring modules. The venue opens 9am Saturday for visitors to set up their modules. Train running is from about 10:30am to 4:30pm both days. Set up is possible on Friday afternoon; ring or text Stan at 021 0823 6490 beforehand.



Digitrax wireless DCC will be used. If you have a throttle, please bring it along. Some throttles will be available for use. Digitrax LNWI Wi-Fi will also be available. If you have the Engine Driver app on

your phone or tablet you can use it to drive trains.

The photograph below, courtesy of Stan Agar, shows the layout for a previous Skillwise meet.

18 – 20 Aug. AMRA area meet

Garden City Model Railway Club Inc, Ferrymead Historic Park, Christchurch.

The registration form and information sheet for the meet is attached to this issue. The registration fee of \$65 includes two lunches. The meet dinner on Saturday night is extra. When you pay your registration fee, you will need to make a \$20 deposit towards the dinner.

Four clinics are planned. **As of June 23, the meet organisers still needed clinicians.**

Draft timetable

Friday 18 August 2023

10.00am - Venue open for registration, meet & greet, buy/sell and operating on the club's layouts.

Saturday 19 August 2023

All day - Venue layouts open, trade displays/stands, buy/sell.

8.00am - Venue open for registration, tea/coffee.

9.45am - Short greeting / announcements.

10.00am - Tour of Ferrymead Historic Park. Guided tours of National Railway Museum, Hall of Flame, Rural History Museum.

12 noon - Collect lunch.

12.30pm - Layout tours.

6:30pm - Happy Hour at Village Inn, Heathcote.

7.30pm - Dinner.

Sunday 20 August 2023

9.00am - Venue opens, tea/coffee.

9.30am - Clinic Session 1.

10.15am - Tea/coffee break.

10.45am - Short discussion on NZAMRC & NMRA.

11.15am - Clinic Session 2.

12.00pm - Wrap up & Farewell.

12.15pm - Collect Lunch.

12.30pm - Buy/sell, operating, or chatting.

15-18 Sep. Morrinsville Free-Mo event

Morrinsville Event Centre, 4 Ladd Pl, Morrinsville. Access to the centre will be from 1200 on September 15. The centre cannot be entered earlier.

The follow information is taken from an email Steve Waugh sent to modellers on April 18.

This meet is not open to the public. If you are interested in attending, especially if want to have modules in the layout, email Steve Waugh at gnrailfan@gmail.com


The cost of the venue hire, minus any donations, will be divided equally between module owners.

Steve will email prospective participants early August requesting confirmation they are coming and what modules they are bringing.

Next ARC Meeting

The next ARC meeting is July 10, 2023. If there are any points you want me to raise at the meeting, please email me by 5pm on July 7, 2023.

Author, contacting

Unless stated otherwise, all articles were written by Philip Sharp, the Division 5 Superintendent. You can email Philip at nmrasharp@gmail.com or pwsharp101@gmail.com

Division 5

From Philip Sharpe (NMRA Inc.-AR Div5 Superintendent)

Activities for July, 2023:-

I'm proud to be a railway modeler. It means more to me to be on the cover of Model Railroader than to be on the cover of a music magazine. - Rod Stewart.

Superintendent's Car

The latest ARC meeting was held on Monday July 24. Several members of the organising committee for the 2023 AR convention attended the meeting and reported on the convention.

As of Sunday July 23, 67 people had registered for the convention, with most registrants being from Queensland or New South Wales. If no more people register and there are no unexpected sources of income, the convention is projected to make a loss of \$3,500. The loss is about AUS \$4.20 per AR member.

However, more people are likely to register for the convention during the next two months. And as happened at the 2018 convention, additional income can be made by running raffles during the convention. If either or both of these two actions occur, the

convention loss will be less than \$3,500. The 2018 convention made a profit and it is possible the 2023 convention will make a profit.

The ARC agreed unanimously to hold the convention even if the projected loss remains at \$3,500.

The convention committee has made a very good fist of advertising the convention. Seven convention newsletters have been emailed to AR members and an eighth newsletter will be emailed soon. The convention has also been advertised on websites and social media. Nevertheless, division superintendents have been asked to further promote the convention. Most of you would have decided by now if you are going to attend. If you are unsure if you will attend, you can contact me for an opinion or insight.

The meeting also discussed what autonomy division superintendent should have when promoting the NMRA. The previous ARC meeting had decided, subject possibly to approval from the AR members, that each division receive \$2 per division member from the AR to use to promote the NMRA as they see fit.

This decision was queried by an ARC member who was at Monday's ARC meeting but not the previous ARC meeting. This member said the ARC has a legal obligation to ensure any promotion of the NMRA is suitable. Hence, any promotion material such as a flyer a division plans to use, needs to be approved by the ARC before being used. This approval process can be broadly likened to businesses protecting their branding by having control over how they are promoted.

The resulting discussion ended with the ARC re-affirming its decision from the previous meeting.

The possible vote for the approval or disapproval by AR members of the \$2 per division member will be held at a general meeting. The date for this meeting has not been set.

The meeting was one and three-quarter hours. This was longer than normal and meant it finished 11:15pm my time. Nevertheless, the time was well spent.

Calendar of Events

The dates for the overseas events in the calendar of events below are local dates. If you know of other events you think should be added to the calendar, please email me the details of the events or the URLs to them.

18 - 20 Aug. AMRA area meet. Garden City MRC Inc, Ferrymead Historic Park, Christchurch. **Brent Hopley and John McIntosh** chch23miniamra@gmail.com

20 - 26 Aug. Texas Express NMRA National convention and National Train Show, Grapevine TX. <https://www.2023texasexpress.com/>

15 - 18 Sep. Free-Mo meet, Morrinsville Event Centre, 4 Ron Ladd Place, Morrinsville. gnrailfan@gmail.com Steve Waugh.

29 Sep - 2 Oct. NMRA Australasian Regional Convention. Rydges Paramatta, 116-118 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW.

3 - 5 Nov. 9 Mill Gathering. Havelock North Wanderers Football Clubrooms, Guthrie Park, Brookvale Rd, Havelock North. bernieofthebay@extra.co.nz Paul Berntsen.

15 – 17 Mar, 2024. Mini-AMRA. New Plymouth.

26 – 28 Apr, 2024 (TBC). NZAMRC convention, Auckland.

4 – 11 Aug, 2024. SurfLiner NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Long Beach, CA. <https://www.surfliner2024.org/>.

30 May – 2 Jun, 2025. AMRA. Porirua.

13 – 19 July, 2025. Station No. VI. NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Novi, MI. <https://nmra2025.com/>

Skillwise's FreeMo Event

Skillwise is based in central Christchurch and provides a very supportive environment for specific adult learners.

One regular activity at Skillwise is building and using FreeMo modules. This activity is coordinated by Division 5 member Stan Agar.

As part of this activity, Skillwise holds FreeMo weekends. The fifteenth such weekend was held in the Skillwise building on July 22 and 23. I flew to Christchurch for the day on the 22nd and spent six hours running trains, talking to people at the weekend, and taking notes and photographs of the layout. The rest of this article is about the layout. Most, but not all modules in the layout belonged to Skillwise.



Although there is a long list of improvements Stan would like made to the Skillwise modules, the modules are in mature state. In particular, many are well scenicked, as illustrated in the photograph above.

The photograph also illustrates two other important characteristics of the modules: a double tracked mainline and the use of corner modules to incorporate branch lines.

A double tracked mainline, while not prototypical for many railroads, makes it easier than a single tracked mainline to have trains frequently passing a fixed point on the layout. This makes the layout more appealing when it is displayed at a train show.

The corner module in the above photograph is the module with the MKT locomotive. At the FreeMo event, there was a branch line of six sections that extended to the left of the photograph. The start of the first section is seen in the bottom left of the photograph.

Another feature of the layout was the extensive use of yard tracks. The photograph below shows two sections of a module. In addition to the two mainline tracks, there are six yard tracks. The eight tracks have butted together well. There was at least one other good-sized yard in the layout. The branch line had yard tracks.



The Future

Stan Agar announced on the Saturday of the FreeMo event that he would be retiring within the next year. This raises the question of what happens to the Skillwise FreeMo modules and weekends. Stan hopes to be involved with some of the Skillwise activities after he retires.

After Stan made his announcement, there was a short discussion about what could be done with

the Skillwise modules *if* Skillwise decides to relinquish ownership of the modules. There was an offer of storage space in a large shed. There was also the suggestion of asking the Garden City Model Railway Club if they would store the modules at Ferrymead.

There was limited discussion about the future of the Skillwise FreeMo weekends.

I hope the Skillwise modules continue to be used and Christchurch continues to have regular FreeMo weekends.

New Members

Two modellers have joined Division 5 since the 2023 AMRA convention in Palmerston North.

First to join was Tony Owen. Tony is an experienced member of the American Central Model Railroaders. He models the Santa Fe in the 1970-80s in HO scale and uses Digitrax. His layout regularly features in *Highball*, as does the layout of most other members of the American Central Model Railroaders.

Brent Hopley joined three and a half weeks after Tony. Brent is a former president of the NZAMRC and is one of the organisers of the area meet in Christchurch next month. Brent's interests in the hobby are varied and include modelling NZR and American prototypes, and the O and 9mil scales.

To use an obvious metaphor, welcome aboard Tony and Brent.

A new 100% NMRA club

There are now more than enough NMRA members in the greater Christchurch area to form a 100% club. Several weeks ago, I asked John McIntosh if he would form a 100% club in the area. He said yes and has begun forming the club. This should be a simple process.

I believe the existence of the club will lead to more NMRA members.

When Paul Hobbs and I formed the 100% NMRA City of Sails MRC late 2018, we began with five members. The club has grown by eight members to 13 members. Five of the eight members were new full NMRA members. I believe the existence of the City of Sails MRC led to some of these new members. I hope the same effect happens with the Christchurch club.

Timaru Train Show

By John McIntosh

Editor. The 2023 Timaru Model Train Show was held 8-9 July in Roncalli College Gymnasium, Timaru. John McIntosh attended the train show and promoted the NMRA while there. The article below is his report on what promotion he did. John can use his article to help meet the requirements of his Author Certificate.

I joined the NMRA in 2016 with the intention of taking in a National Convention as part of a trip to Canada and USA. This I achieved, when as part of a 42 day "train journey" across Canada, USA and Australia, I "HIGHBALLED to INDIANAPOLIS". What an experience that was and it made me appreciate the worth of belonging to the NMRA.

Now the NMRA does not have a large membership base in New Zealand, let alone in the South Island. It seemed to me that perhaps I was in a position to help in this regard and that I should give a little back to the association.

The club I belong to, *(and for my sins, am currently serving my third term as President)*, Garden City Model Railroad Club, based at Ferrymead in Christchurch, (www.gcmrc.nz), has a sales table operation, which sees us set up tables, selling used modelling paraphernalia at Model Train shows throughout the South Island. (This activity produces revenue to fund the clubs operations!).

What if I was to 'high-jack' an area on the end of a table and set up a small display promoting the NMRA.

So, with the guidance and assistance of fellow Christchurch NMRA member Brent Hopley, I set to, preparing a flyer and a promotional power point presentation. I drew on material available from the NMRA & Australasian NMRA websites, and with a few adjustments to make the material relevant to NZ, came up with a simple handout, and an audio-visual presentation, highlighting many of the benefits of belonging to the NMRA. *(To appease GCMRC club members, I tacked in a piece about club membership as well!)*

I got the opportunity to speak to several folk in depth about the NMRA, and gave out several fliers. I was also approached by a trade vendor, who took some fliers and a



poster to place in his shop. A good start, and for the experience, I'll be better prepared for future shows and events.

The photograph below is of the NMRA display John had at the Timaru Train Show.

Club and Group News

American Central Model Railroaders (ACMR)

The AMRC held two operating sessions during the last month. As in previous issues of *The Bridge*, I will give just a brief report on these sessions because they are fully reported upon in the *Highball*. If you are not on the email list for the *Highball*, I encourage to join the list.

The first operating session was held the first week of July at the layout of Steve Thomas (*Highball* #360). Steve reports that when he powered up his layout a short time before the start of the session, he heard a strange sound emanating from some servos controlled by an Arduino Mega. Steve did not think anything of it until Karl Morris noticed that two of the double slips in Grainger yard were not working. This meant the two double slips had to be thrown by hand, an easy work around. No more electronic faults occurred during the session.

The second operating session was held at Kel Sherson's layout (*Highball* #361). Kel said that during the previous two ACMR operating sessions on his layout there were difficulties with the throttles holding the Duplex Radio Channel. They would work for a while, then drop off and have to be reattached. After the last operating session, Kel realised that "we'd a couple of changes in the neighbourhood, with new neighbours moving in on one side and our very techno-savvy neighbour across the road installing more Wi-Fi based 'video security'". Kel switched channels for the recent operating session and this greatly reduced the number of times throttles were dropped.

City of Sails Model Railway Club (CoSMRC)

The CoSMRC held its July meeting last night at the home of Philip Sharp. More than half the club attended the meeting - a good attendance given one member is visiting Switzerland and another member is studying for high school tests and exams.

The meeting began with Michael Hill giving a clinic on his experience using the Cricut Cutter [1]. Michael has had the cutter for several months and used it mostly for cutting styrene. He showed photographs of windows with many grilles that he had cut using the Cricut. His conclusions about the cutter were that it was very useful and saved considerable time when the same type of cut had to be made many times.

Alex Shepherd then showed and discussed two Aduino-based layout controllers he has recently assembled. These controllers use the Arduino Mega and Uno chips. One controller also uses the DCC-EX Releases 5amp EX-MotorShield8874 [2] and is a close equivalent of a Digitrax Chief [3].

The presentations of Michael and Alex both generated a lot of discussion.

Philip had recently received two full and detailed sets of HO scale AB brake components with a regulator he had ordered from Shapeways [4]. Philip asked the meeting how feasible it would be to 3D print personal copies of the components. There was

agreement that once the measurements of the components were known, it would be straightforward to design and print the component. It was at this point that Philip, while handling the components, broke a bit off. It seems that although the components can be 3D printed they might not be strong enough for use on a layout. They could well be strong enough for freight cars used for display only.

The meeting continued over supper for another hour with several informal topics been discussed.

[1] <https://cricut.com/en/>

[2] <https://dcc-ex.com/news/posts/20230515.html>

[3] Google "Digitrax Chief"

[4] Google "Shapeways ab brakes".

The origin of the Australasian Region

The Australasian Region (AR) will have its 40-year anniversary next year. In this article I gave a brief history of the AR's origins. The information for the article is taken from John's Saxon president's report in Issue 2, 1984 of the *Mainline* [1].

For many years before the AR existed, there was a local NMRA region called the Southern Cross Region (SCR) that served the NMRA members living in Australia and New Zealand. In 1967 the SCR officers announced in the SCR's *Bulletin* they had replaced the SCR by an incorporated organisation called the Southern Cross Model Railway Association (SCMRC).

This change was done without consultation with the NMRA. The lack of notification combined with other actions not specified in John Saxon's report led, in the end, to the NMRA not recognizing the SCMRA. This meant regional representation was lost.

John Saxon goes on to report that as part of the SCMRA's 1976 ballot, members were asked if the annual subscription for "foreign" members be increased to \$10. (I have been unable to establish for certain what was meant by a foreign member. Does anyone know?)

John said that he saw red and sent a scathing letter to the then *Bulletin* editor asking what the SCMRA was doing for us foreign members other than providing copies of the *Bulletin*. John received a reply from the Eastern Director. The director asked John what he was doing for the NMRA other than paying fees! The director suggested John do something about starting another local regional.

The rest is history. John and others worked doggedly over eight years and the new region was approved March 1984.

The SCMRA still exists [2] and describes itself on the homepage [2] as "a forum for the ideas and a meeting ground where you can learn and develop skills and eventually pass on your knowledge and experience to others."

[1] <https://nmra.org.au/> Look in the membership area.

[2] <https://www.scmra.org.au/>

On-line auction

The following email was posted to the ARC members yesterday afternoon by John Arrowsmith. He is the Division 7 superintendent and posted the email on behalf of the Saxon family. Tanya is a daughter of John Saxon.

The collection of Dad's brass engines, train books, and model cars is up on the Lawsons Auctioneers website. It is an online auction, and is titled the John Saxon MMR Collection. Please find the link below:

https://www.lawsons.com.au/asp/searchresults.asp?pg=1&ps=100&st=D&sale_no=9775T++

We would be grateful if you could forward the link to others who may be interested. The auction is timed to finish on 4/8/23 at 3 pm Sydney time.

Thanks everyone again.

Tanya

The auction is open to anyone and not just NMRA members.

Jaycar Discount

All of you should have received an email from Duncan Cabassi, the AR president, about a discount being offered by Jaycar to NMRA members in Australia and New Zealand. If you did not get the email, please let me know and I will forward you a copy.

To receive the discount, all you have to do is quote the account number given in the attachment in Duncan's email. The discount should be available at all Jaycar stores in New Zealand. You probably know where your nearest Jaycar store is. If not, you can find its location on the Jaycar website.

As you might expect there are some restrictions on when the discount is available. For example, it cannot be used on items that are already on sale.

If you have any difficulty using the discount, please send me email with a description of what happened as soon as you are reasonably able to. I will forward your email with support to Randall Jones. He was the ARC member who worked with Jaycar to get the discount.

Some of you may already be a Jaycar member and receive a credit that must be used within six months. The discount for NMRA members is different in that it is received immediately.

Randall Jones told the ARC meeting on Monday that the more NMRA members use the discount, the more likely Jaycar will provide further support for the AR. That was one of the reasons why last night I emailed out the announcement about the upcoming Jaycar Carpark Sale.

Details of Events

This article is an elaboration of some items listed in the Calendar of Events.

Area Meet, Christchurch

This will be held at the Garden City MRC, Ferrymead, Christchurch from August 18 to 20. The second newsletter for the convention was emailed out yesterday. This newsletter includes a registration form. If you did not receive the newsletter, you can get a copy by sending a request to the organisers Brent Hopley and John McIntosh at chch23miniamra@gmail.com.

The core part of this area meet starts Saturday morning and ends Sunday lunch time. You could fly or drive to Christchurch on Saturday morning and fly or drive back on Sunday morning and still participate in most of the convention.

The convention goes by three names: mini AMRA, AMRA Area Meet, and Area Meet.

2023 Texas Expression NMRA National Convention

This will be held August 20 - 26 in Dallas, Texas and includes the national train show. There is still time to register for this convention. I know at least one Division 5 member is attending. The venue will be well air-conditioned.

Free-Mo meet, Morrinsville

This will be held September 15 - 18 in the Morrinsville Event Centre. The first and fourth days will be set up and take down days respectively. The second and third days will be running days. There is no access to the venue on September 15 until noon. This should give you enough time to drive or fly to the venue on Friday before the venue opens.

The event coordinator expects there will be more modules than last year. There will also be trials of new electronics. I will be at the venue on Friday afternoon as I am interested in viewing and helping with the setup.

NMRA Australasian Regional Convention

This will be held September 29 to October 2 in Rosehill NSW. There are over 30 layouts available for viewing. Subject to availability of the owners, the layouts can be viewed at any reasonable time during the convention. The Saturday and Sunday of the convention are devoted mostly to clinics; the ARC anticipates most viewing of the layouts will be on week days before and after the weekend.

9 Mill Gathering

This will be held November 3 - 5 in Havelock North. I anticipate there will be a 9 mill layout at the venue and a good selection of models. I plan attending the gathering as part of a road trip.

It may seem out of place to advertise what is predominantly an NZR event in an NMRA publication. I have done so because although most NMRA members are American modellers, the NMRA supports modellers of all prototypes.

2024 SurfLiner NMRA National Convention

This will be held August 4 - 11 in Ocean Beach, California. A convention on the US west coast has the advantage for New Zealand NMRA members of being cheaper to fly to than conventions towards the US east coast.

Two members of the City of Sails MRC plan to attend the convention and a third member is thinking of attending. The venue is close enough to the coast to be cooled by the Pacific Ocean.

2025 Station No. VI NMRA National Convention

Paul Hobbs told me about this convention last night at the City of Sail MRC meeting. The convention will be held July 13 – 19 in Novi, Michigan. As yet there is no information on the website for the convention.

Novi is a suburb of Detroit and is approximately 40 kilometres northwest of downtown Detroit. For history buffs, the short-lived Holly, Wayne and Monroe Railway passed through Novi in the 1870s.

2026 National Convention

Up to about five years ago, it was usual for the location of the NMRA's national conventions to be made known at least four years in advance. This no longer appears so and the location of the 2026 National Convention has not been published.

Many reasons could be espoused for this reduced interval of advanced notification. These reasons include the following

- The NMRA, its regionals and divisions are still bouncing back from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The reduction in the number of NMRA members means regions have fewer members to organise and hold a convention.
- Regions that hold conventions have more legal responsibilities than they did five years ago and potential organisers are less willing to accept this responsibility.
- NMRA members have less disposable income than they did five years ago. This reduces the number of attendees and it is more difficult to avoid making a loss when holding a convention.

Whatever the reason, I believe the future of national conventions is less rosy than it was five years ago.

How many decks?

While in Christchurch for the recent Skillwise FreeMo event, well-known modeller Pono Te Aho Blair kindly invited me to his place to view his layout. Pono models UP.

Pono has two two-car garages end on end. His layout is in the back garage. Pono has made a provision to extend the layout into the front garage using his FreeMo modules.

Like most layouts, Pono's layout is



incomplete. This led me to ask Pono if he planned to have a double deck layout. Pono replied that he was already past that. He then took me out to the layout.

As the photograph above shows, the layout will have five decks in places when finished. The bottom two decks, annotated with '4' and '5' in the photograph will be a mixture of staging and mainline tracks.

In addition to the five decks, the photographs shows that the middle deck at this point in the layout is a split-level deck. The use of split levels occurs in other parts of Pono's layout.

Electronics

Computer software is used extensively in model railways. Most modellers can quickly learn how to use this software because they use computer software in their daily lives. This daily use includes operating the remote on a smart TV and many types of operations on a smart phone.

As suggested by the reports on the club and group activities in this issue of *The Bridge*, electronics are used extensively in model railways.

Much of the electronics that is used comes in commercial products such as command stations. Modellers can typically rely on their experience with using computer software to help them to quickly learn how to use the commercial products and to troubleshoot difficulties that arise.

The other type of electronics used is that built by the modeller. A good example of this type is the controllers briefly described in the report on the July meeting of the City of Sails MRC.


Electronics product built by the modeller have the advantages of often being cheaper than commercial electronics, and easily fine-tuned to the modeller's use. But this type of electronics has the disadvantage that most modellers do not build electronic products in this daily life. Hence, unlike computer software, modellers do not have this experience to aid them in building products.

I believe opportunities abound for modellers who are able builders of electronic products to aid the hobby by providing instructional material and running hands-on clinics.

Question

The Achievement Program has 11 certificates. If you had to add a twelfth certificate and you could make no changes to the existing 11 certificate, what would the twelfth certificate be on?

Author, contacting

Unless stated otherwise, all articles were written by Philip Sharp, the Division 5 Superintendent. You can email Philip at nmrasharp@gmail.com or pwsharp101@gmail.com

[Turn to Page 118 to read the Division 5 Report for the August 2023](#)

Division 6

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

July meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

8 members

1 Guests

AP Awards:

Nil

ARC Report:

See comments in report.

NMRA Regional Feedback:

See comments in report.

NMRA Division 6 Feedback:

See comments in report.

Next Meeting: 12 August 2023, AMR Clubrooms, Outer Harbor Railway Station, Oliver Rogers Rd, North Haven.

Details:

8 members and 1 visitor gathered at Ron Solly's for our July meeting.



David welcomed all to the meeting and presented Ron with the Host Plaque.

Finance:

Treasurer, Ron Solly, advised the meeting of our current financial state.

Achievement Program:

AP Asst Manager, SA, Ray Brownbill, advised the meeting the Achievement Program has been very quiet for the last 6 months. No new requests for AP assistance had been received by Ray. Ray advised the meeting that National is keen to promote the Golden Spike. So, for the benefit of members, and our guest, Ray explained the requirements and process to achieve the Golden Spike.

Library Report:

As the members at the May 2023 meeting decided to discontinue the Division 6 library, a number of original DVDs were offered at the July meeting for purchase. Some members took up the offer. It's intended that the remaining DVDs will be offered at future meetings.

ARC:

David relayed to the meeting;

- That the ARC was in discussion with our Insurer regarding "car boot sales" coverage.
- That the stock of NMRA AR stickers and back issues of NMRA Magazine will be used at the Rails @ Rosehill Convention.
- That the process to create a private Youtube site with AR DVDs hosted thereon has been deferred until after the Convention.
- That there will be a fee increase imposed by National and AR is planning to propose a \$5pa fee increase for AR.

NT Junction:

David advised the meeting that NT Junction performed very well at the Adelaide Model Railway Exhibition and all turnouts have been converted to digital, i.e. using a finger.

AMRE:

Ron Solly, our Host and Treasurer, is also the Layout Coordinator for the Adelaide Model Railway exhibition. Ron advised the meeting that it's been reported that the 2023 show has resulted in the best ever attendance figures. There has been some concern with some exhibitors requesting more space and then not using it. Steps will be taken to address this. There was also an issue with exhibitors requesting seats at the Sunday night dinner and not showing up. This also will be addressed.



Round the group:

Ron Solly

After building his new panel for Marabost (see May report), one of Ron's operators suggested Ron needed another panel to tell his operators which tracks were set for arrival or departure in one of his staging yards. So Ron's now building yet another panel. *(see above)*

Ray Brownbill

Ray has been busy ballasting 50' of track, building forest and servicing locos. He now believes he's found the answer to dirty track. After using a small amount INOX M3 on a cork rubbing block, he's had no pickup problems for weeks.

Bob Bevan

Bob reports he's also now using INOX M3. He has only 1 track left to lay to finish all his track-laying. But rodents in his train room are causing him some issues.

Ainslie Brittain

Ainslie has been fitting decoders to locos. He successfully fitted an ESU decoder to an E7 loco and did some speed matching. Another decoder was successfully fitted and tested but when he changed the decoder address, the decoder failed. It would only respond to address 3! Ainslie recommends testing all aspects of a decoder on a test rig before fitting to the loco. Ask him how he knows!

Jane Robinson

Jane tells us that the garden railway now has some plants.

Michael Robinson

Michael has purchased some more G scale (LGB) rolling stock for his garden railway. A friend, Paul Tilden, has been converting some of Michael's garden scale locos to battery and remote control.

Rod Stewart

Apparently Rod has been too busy with painting and decorating to get any work done on his layout. Priorities Rod!

Paolo Arman

Our guest, Paolo, told us that he's a teacher, models HO SAR, steam and diesel in a 6m x 6m space in his double garage and is now completing the 2% grade between the levels of his layout.

Next meeting will be at Adelaide Model Railroader's clubrooms, Outer Harbor Railway Station, Oliver Rogers Rd, North Haven on 12th August 2023,

The meeting concluded with afternoon tea and a look at Ron's Devan and Summersett layout.

PS, our guest, Paolo, enjoyed the welcoming nature, friendliness and camaraderie of our group that he joined NMRA later that day. Welcome Paolo!

[Turn to Page 127 to read the Division 6 Report for the August 2023 Meeting](#)

Photos: Some photos of Ron's Devan & Summersett Railway.....



Division 7

John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)

June 2023 meetings, What's Happening in Division 7...:-



RAILS @ ROSEHILL

Open to ALL Modellers
Pre-Registration Essential

Australasian Region National Convention 2023

29 September—2 October 2023
Rydges Parramatta, 116-118 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW 2412

Featuring Clinic streams to suit the beginner, the more experienced, and all modellers interested in emerging technologies.

For more information: www.nmra.org.au/railsrosehill
Email Enquiries: rails@rosehill.org.au

including:
DC / DCC
O / HO/OO / N / S
AU / NZ / USA / CA / UK / EU
Prototypical / Non-Prototypical

On-Site Layouts
Trade Stands
Layout Tours
Partners Program

- Bookings are now open. [Click on the link here.](#)
- For accommodation bookings with Rydges Parramatta availing of our NMRA discount, [click on the link here.](#)
- Please refer to our [latest Convention newsletter](#) for more information.
- I cannot stress enough: **Do not leave getting your tickets until the last minute.** Already more than **50%** of tickets are sold!

New Members in Division 7

I would like to give a warm welcome to our new members:

- Glen O'Connor
- Alan Birse

Looking forward to seeing you all at our turnouts, [online](#), on our [Division 7 Facebook page](#) and at our convention in October.

Special News Announcement:

Major Hobby Retailer Supporting the NMRA right across the Australasian Region.

I am pleased to announce that **Jaycar Electronics** has enabled all our NMRA Australasian Region members to receive a '**trade discount**' when shopping in-store at **Jaycar Electronics**!

Select the items you want to purchase, quote the following '**Account Code**' in [Australia](#): Email for Code and in [New Zealand](#): Email for code at the checkout to receive your *trade discount*.

- All purchases must be made in-store and paid for at the time of purchase.
- Your price is the 2nd tier in the 'bulk pricing' list of any specific item on the website.
- Some items already have a discount or a keen price already applied – no further discounts are available on these items.

But wait, there is more: a **'trade discount'** is available at **Road Tech Marine** as well! The **'Account Code'** to quote at checkout is Email for Code *Australia only*.

- All purchases must be made in-store and paid for at the time of purchase.
- Your price is the 2nd tier in the 'bulk pricing' list of any specific item on the website.
- Some items already have a discount or a keen price applied - no further discounts are available on these items.
- **Road Tech Marine** is a sister company to **Jaycar Electronics**.

You can check out these retailers and their range of products at their online stores using the following links:

- Ø Australia: [Jaycar Electronics | Components, connectors, switches, power, and more](#)
- Ø New Zealand: [Jaycar Electronics New Zealand | Components, connectors, switches, power, and more](#)
- Ø Australia: [Road Tech Marine | For the boating, caravanning and 4wd enthusiast](#)

Note: The pricing you will see on the shelf when in-store is the retail price. Your 'trade discount' is applied at the checkout.



June Turnout:

Our June turnout was at the Hills Model Railway Society club rooms, including a BBQ lunch. It was a beautiful sunny winter's day. The Hills group have two DCC HO Scale layouts, and N Scale DCC layout, as well as DC HO & N scale layouts. Members were offered the opportunity to run their own trains along side Hills club members. It was a great day had by all.

We had 33 members in attendance including our two newly joined members. As it was a successful event, we have rebooked for next year. The NMRA has also been invited to take part in the back on track exhibition being held by the Hills Model Railway Society in November.

Meeting minutes June Meeting

- Currently 213 Division 7 members. Increase on Nov 2021 of 42 members.
- Big thank you to the Hills Model Railway Society for hosting our meeting.
- Planning July & August meeting changes
- Convention news and question time
- General business

Planning the 2024 calendar is also underway with $\frac{3}{4}$ of the calendar already booked. We have quite an exciting year planned, visiting members' layouts, visiting clubs, hall meetings and prototype meetings, with lots of hands on and fun for all.











What's Coming Up

Date	Event	Details	Time
8/7/23	Epping Model Railway Club Open Day	Epping Creative Centre at Dence Park, 26 Stanley Road, Epping, 2121 NSW.	10am-2:30pm
8/23	Hall Hire - Working on the railroad day. Hands on for juniors	North Rocks Scout Hall	TBC
9/9/23	Hall Hire - Working on the railroad day. Hands on for juniors	To be confirmed	TBC
29/9-3/10	Region Convention	Rosehill	Refer convention newsletters
11/11/23	David Howarth	6 Uralla Road Dural	10:30am-2:30pm
9/12/23	Christmas Party	Kurrajong Kitchen	12pm-

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next turnout.

Junior Modeller Section:

In this newsletter, for our juniors we look at Getting Started in Model Trains. The World's Greatest Hobby link below gives you access to a downloadable magazine which is full of information for building your first model railway layout.



10 tips for beginner model railroaders

Tips for track, layouts, Digital Command Control, and more to help you get started in the model trains hobby.

Newcomers naturally have many questions about getting started in the model railroading hobby, so we've gathered some tips to answer the most common questions we receive year after year.

[<--- Click on the Logo to open the link](#)

1. Before you jump right in, you'll need to think about the physical size, or scale, of the trains that interest you. The most popular sizes are: HO (1:87.1), N scale (1:160), and O (1:48 scale), which is equivalent to the Lionel toy trains. Large scale trains are also popular. They come in a mixture of scales from 1:22.5 to 1:32 but share a common 45mm track gauge. The relationship between the major scales can be seen in the photo above. This choice determines the space that's required to build a layout.

2. Quality is important when you shop for model trains. Look for good value and check out the entire range of products available. You get what you pay for, so be sceptical of a train set that sells for half the price of a good locomotive. The better-quality trains are more expensive, but they deliver superior performance and will last for many years.

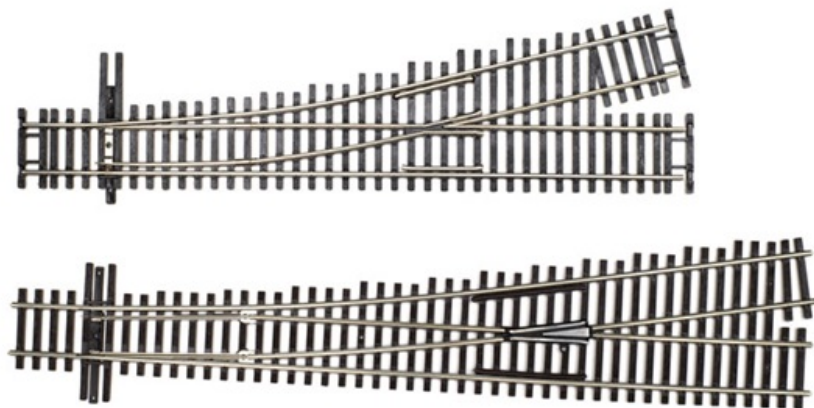
3. A little reading provides help from many experts in the hobby. Kalmbach Books publishes an entire library of how-to titles that cover all aspects of model railroading, including track plans, benchwork construction, track laying, wiring, and scenery. One group of books is especially for beginners. Descriptions of all the books can be found on our website at kalmbachbooks.com.

4. Settle on a time and place early on, as it'll help you choose the trains and related models you really want. Most modelers have a favourite railroad that they enjoy due to a family connection, or they simply like its paint scheme.



Model railroad scale comparison. These actual examples of model train locomotives show that each common scale is about half the size of the next larger scale. The locomotives shown here are in N (1:160), HO (1:87.1), and O (1:48) scales.

Model railroad turnout angles. Scale turnouts diverge at an angle, rather than through a sharp curve like toy trains. Note the difference in length between these typical HO scale no. 4 (1:4 angle, top) and no. 6 (1:6 angle, bottom) model train turnouts.



5. Follow NMRA standards for best results. The National Model Railroad Association was founded to establish engineering standards so trains from many manufacturers would be interchangeable. The most visible part of these standards is the sheet metal NMRA standards gauge, which is offered in many scales. This gauge is used to check and adjust the dimensions of track, turnouts, wheelsets, and couplers. While the hobby has never developed a truly standard coupler, the magnetic knuckle couplers made by Kadee (HO and larger scales) and Micro-Trains (N scale and smaller) have become the popular de facto standard couplers. In some cases, these couplers must be purchased and added

separately. Fortunately, both firms offer a wide range of special coupler sets for easy installation on almost any car or locomotive.


As the Kadee patents recently ran out, many clones have become available that appear on ready-to-run models.

6. Digital Command Control (DCC) is an electronic system that allows simultaneous independent control of multiple trains on electrically continuous tracks. Each locomotive has a receiver called a decoder that responds only to operating commands from a control "cab" that's electronically linked to it. Thus, many locomotives can operate at once on a single stretch of track on a layout. Many manufacturers offer DCC systems that are far more flexible and expandable than direct current (DC) power packs and block systems. Many veteran modelers still use DC, but in the long run the cost of both systems is comparable: DCC uses fewer but more expensive components, while the DC system uses many low-cost components that are purchased piecemeal.

7. Starting a layout is when the fun really begins. Most modelers start with a 4 x 8-foot layout, as that's the common sheet size for plywood. Model Railroader's February 2011 issue was devoted to layouts of this size (back issues are available). Keep in mind that the ½" thick intermediate grades of plywood will work fine for a layout. Wood screws and glue are recommended as fasteners. Plywood in grades AC or BC are good choices for our purposes. One side of the sheet is smooth and the other has its surface defects filled with plugs. Both sides are sanded smooth and even. Use good quality dimensional lumber for the bracing and legs, as it's less likely to warp and twist over time.

8. Use generous curves wherever possible. Most train sets come with tight radius curves for use with short cars, small steam locomotives, and four-axle diesels. The larger radius curves don't force the trains to their mechanical limits, so they'll run smoother. Most scale turnouts (switches) branch away from the straight route at an angle instead of the sharp curve found in toy train track. Scale turnouts are specified by a number that indicates this diverging angle: a no. 6 turnout has a 1:6 ratio, and a no. 4 has a sharper 1:4 ratio. See the photo above. Like the wider curves, higher number turnouts work better with long cars and large locomotives.

9. Try some scenery as soon as you have the track laid and wired. Perhaps the best part is any scenery you don't like can be easily changed or remodelled.

10. Take your time as the layout takes shape – this isn't a race! Building a model railroad takes time and effort, and doing a quality job will pay off in smoother operation and minimal derailments. As I began my career at Model Railroader nearly 40 years ago, editor Linn Westcott advised me "Never be afraid to try something, because even if it doesn't work, you've still learned from the experience." Have fun!.....

Division 8 / 9 Northern NSW

Ian West (NMRA Inc.-AR Div 8/9 Northern NSW Superintendent)

June 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

6 members

3 Apologies

NMRA Division 8/9 Feedback:

Nil

Next Meeting: 20th August at the home of Keith Morrison, 26 Manning Avenue Coffs Harbour at 1.30pm.

Report: Northern NSW Meeting Overview:

CCRMI Progress Report for June.

The team at CCRMI have been very busy over the last month making progress on their new club house. As we have said it is a long-term program and many of our members have put in the hours each Saturday morning to work on clearing out the shed. Once the shed is cleared the floor will need to be laid. The team are working towards getting a structures certificate (no scale is mentioned!).



A glass sliding door has replaced the corrugated iron door.



The mini orb dividing wall has been removed and steel beams have been installed to hold up the extension roof to make a larger space for the club's exhibition layout.

There are still quite a few poultry pens to be removed and taken to the tip and, as you can see, the wall above the sliding door will need enclosing soon.



Winter Projects:

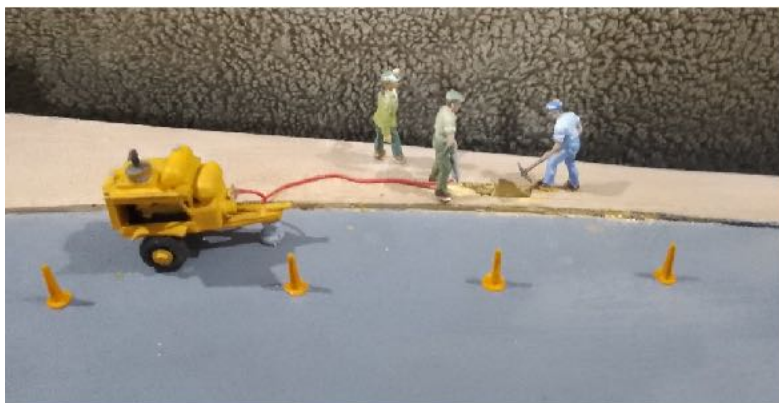
During the last few weeks, I have done some small building projects on my layout. Adding some signals, a grain bin to a truck, road repairmen and a television technician installing an aerial.



Signals: The signal gantry was bought second-hand at an exhibition. The signals were scratch built from brass and lit with 3mm LED's which were painted black with a small hole scratched in the paint behind the lenses. The lenses were made using coloured cellophane.

Grain Bin: I made a side delivery grain bin to fit into the silo scene of the layout. The bin was scratch built from styrene and fine wire. I made the grain load with fine sawdust, secured with 50/50 white glue.





Road Repair Team: a crack appeared in the plaster sidewalk of my layout. Rather than repair it I thought that I would let someone else do the work! I had three workmen suitable for the job and the mobile air compressor was built from scrap pieces of plastic.

Television Repair Man: My first job after leaving school was a television repair man and I spent many hours on roofs installing and repairing antennas. I used to drive a Combi van so when I looked through my old Matchbox toys and found a Lesney die-cast vintage Combi with dark blue paint that was almost gone I had an inspiration to relive my past. Not many Matchbox toys are the right scale but this one seems pretty close. I stripped the remainder of the paint off using acetone, removed the body from the chassis and painted it in the mint and cream colour-scheme of the Combi that I used to drive. I glazed the windows with clear plastic sheet and added roof racks and a ladder. I made a television aerial with scrap pieces of wire, added a ladder and a man on the roof. This certainly brings back memories.



PS: Looking up this Combi model on eBay I found that it is rare and worth over \$200!

NMRA Meeting:

We had our NMRA meeting this afternoon (25th June) with only four members in attendance. For two of the four it was their first visit to see my layout. We enjoyed running trains for an hour or so and then had a meeting while enjoying afternoon tea.

Members were told of the increase in NMRA fees from the US and the leaving of Taree from NMRA.

The new project of the CCRMI was discussed and Paul said that they all hope to get a Builder's AP Certificate for their efforts.

Next Meeting:

The next NMRA meeting will be held at the home of Keith Morrison on 20th August at 1.30pm. Keith lives at 26 Manning Avenue Coffs Harbour. I hope to see more of you in attendance. Keith has a great layout.

Happy modelling.....

Division 8 / 9 Northern NSW

Ian West (NMRA Inc.-AR Div 8/9 Northern NSW Superintendent)

July 2023 meeting:-

Report: Northern NSW Meeting Overview:

Super Swap Meet

The Coffs Coast Railroad Modellers Inc (CCRMI) held their first *Swap Meet* on the weekend of 8th-9th July. It was a steep learning curve for all members as we have a small group and many of the guys put in huge effort over the previous weeks, as well as over the weekend, to run a successful meet. It was worth the effort but, hopefully, we will have a few extra helpers next year. The *Swap Meet* will be bigger next year as the exhibition centre, which is currently under construction, is already booked.

We were fortunate to be donated a food caravan by South Pacific Lions Club of Coffs Harbour which is now known as, "*Bob's Tuck Truck*" after our wonderful catering officer. A small team worked very hard to have it ready for use at the Swap Meet, with a trial run the previous weekend at the CCRMI AGM. Bacon and egg sandwiches seemed to be the favourite food of the weekend.

As you can see from the photos we were fortunate to have excellent weather for the weekend.




CCRMI Shed Update:

The CCRMI, as reported in the previous report, are renovating a shed in the Coffs Harbour Showgrounds to retire their current exhibition layout and enable them to grow their membership. This will also mean that they will be able to work with different groups of model train buffs in our area. The Coffs Coast Autism and Abcare are two groups that are looking forward to this expansion.

The renovation is going to take a few years before it is fully completed but the demolition of the old poultry cages is well underway with our very own "Wreck-it Ralph" aka Jamie, on the job each Saturday. We did take a break to recover from our efforts with the *Swap Meet*.



Next Meeting:

The next NMRA meeting will be held at the home of Keith Morrison on 20th August at 1.30pm. Keith lives at 26 Manning Avenue Coffs Harbour. I hope to see more of you in attendance. Keith has a great layout.....

[Turn to Page 136 to read the Division 8/9 Report for the August 2023 Meeting](#)

Division 10

Pat Britton (NMRA Inc.-AR Div10 Superintendent)

June Report:-


Details:

On the weekend of the 22/23 July there will be a 2 day exhibition at Longford.

Tyler Meiklejohn and myself will be attending a promotional table at this exhibition as a promotional thing with the aim of getting people to join the NMRA Inc. AR Div 10.

This event is purely to test the waters and a meet and greet.

Our existing members will have flyers and we will be doing some modelling projects for the public to view and ask questions etc.

I have read Phil's email 'Why join the NMRA' and I found it very interesting. We will see how we go at Longford.....

[Turn to Page 137 to read the Division 10 Report for the August 2023 Meeting](#)

Division 1

Paul Rollason (NMRA Inc.-AR Division1 Superintendent)

July 15th 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

May, at Bob Perrens Home:-

37 members

3 On-Line (Zoom)

19 Apologies

2 Guest

June, Southside Layout Tour:-

32 members

12 Apologies

ARC Report:

Nil, apart from advertising the convention

QLD Membership:

372 current members, 5 new members.

Clinics:

1. "Flat Cars/Platform Wagons Prototype to Model" - Arthur Hayes MMR
2. AP Program Insights - "Model Railroader Engineer - Electrical" - Arthur Hayes
3. "What the NMRA website and what benefits the NMRA has for members" - Martyn Jenkins

Excursions / Visits:

Nil

Significant Events:

STREAM Pilot Program - 1/7/23

Next Gathering:

10am Sat 19th August 2023 - Darren and Kathryn Lee's residence, 36 Galen Court, Cedar Vale

Report:

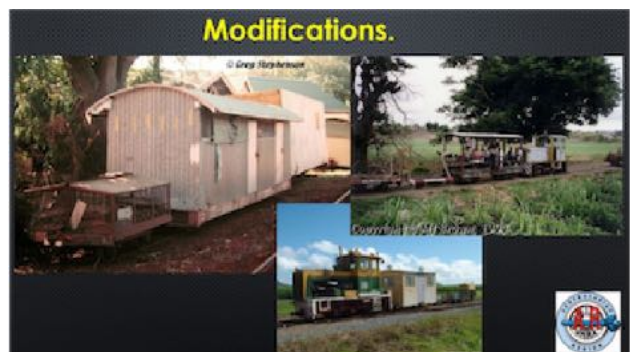
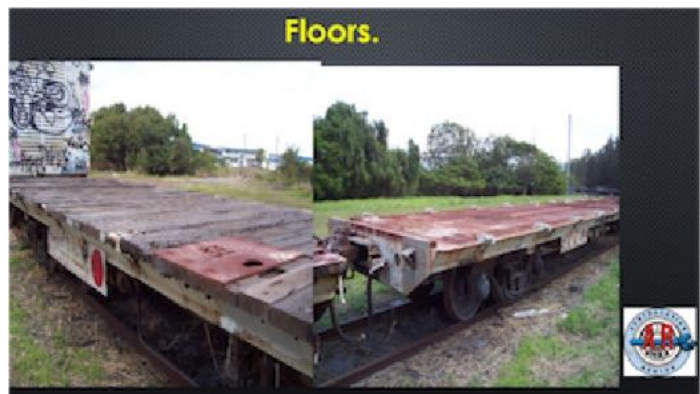
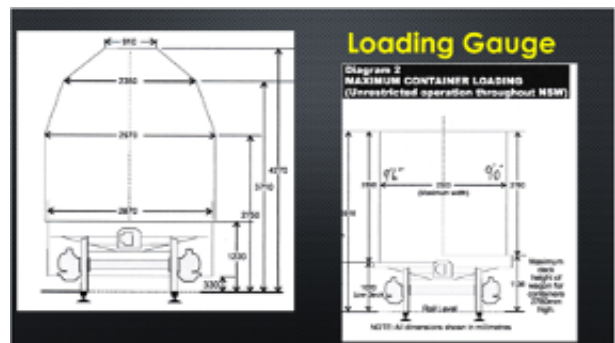
This gathering was kindly hosted by Glen and Vesna McCarley at 7 McPherson Road, Sinnamon Park.

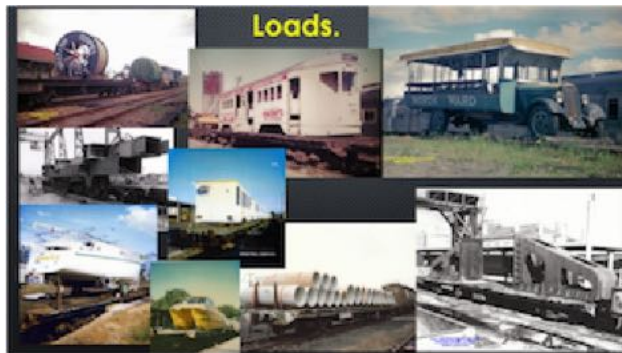
Clinic 1

Arthur Hayes MMR once again gave us an amazing presentation into "Flat Cars/Platform Wagons Prototype to Model". This is one of a series of presentations Arthur has given us in all aspects of scratch building models, what to build, what details to put on and his various tips and tricks. Arthur's attention to detail is outstanding and he never ceases to not only amaze us with what he has achieved but he also inspires a lot of people to think outside the box.

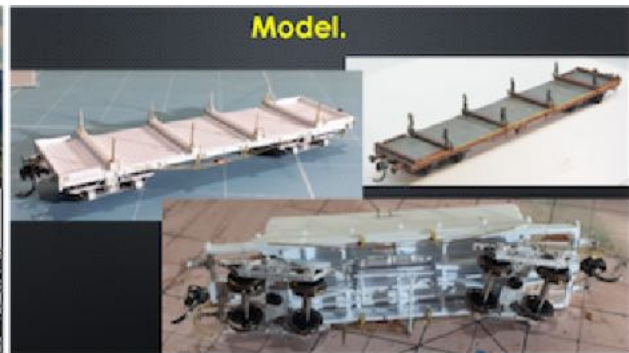
Things Arthur got us to think about include: -

- Development of flat cars over the decades
- What loads were carried?
- What track did they travel on, what structures and what clearances?
- Use of Structure Gauge, Rollingstock Gauge and Loading Gauge
- Construction of Flat Cars (timer, couplings, brakes/no brakes, 4 wheeled, 6 wheeled, bogies)
- How to load a wagon
- Frames on wagons
- Symmetrical and asymmetrical loading
- Wagon capacity
- Wagon modifications
- Long Loads
- Model construction (Plans, photos, materials, bogies, couplings, paint/decals, weathering, load)
- Modelling of the loads

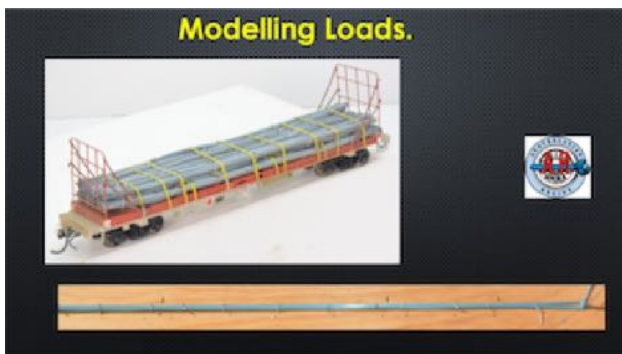




Loads.



Model.



Modelling Loads.




Modelling Loads.

Clinic 2

As has become a part of our presentations at gatherings, Arthur Hayes MMR gave us some insights to what is involved with doing the Master Railroad Engineer "Electrical" certificate as a part of the AP Program.

Arthur's continued guidance and encouragement to take part in the Achievement Program is simply outstanding and we thank Arthur for his efforts that he goes to ensure each modeler has a chance to accomplish these certificates.




MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER "ELECTRICAL" AP

The requirements may look long and complicated. But they are not really.


It offer choices.

Don't read more into the requirements than is there.


You don't have to do the work on a single Layout



Engineering
Club
Secretary
Chief Dispatcher





MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER "ELECTRICAL" AP




(C).

4). Engine terminal, including an electrical powered turntable or transfer table, a minimum of three stall tracks, and at least two blocked storage section of parking locomotives outside the stall area. (Five tracks – 3 in the shed and 2 outside) .







MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER "ELECTRICAL" AP




(E). Prepare a schematic drawing identifying the wiring and components of the six items under (B) and (C).





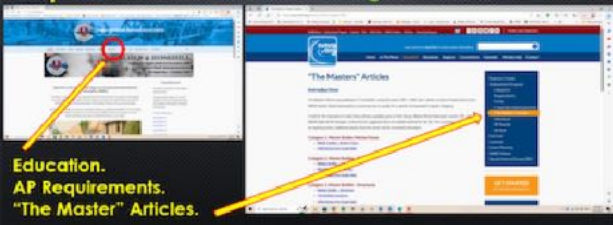
MODEL RAILROAD ENGINEER "ELECTRICAL" AP



Help !!!!!

Education.
AP Requirements.
"The Master" Articles.

NMRA Australasian Region Website



Clinic 3

Martyn Jenkins gave the gathering a tour around the NMRA website as well as explaining to members the benefits of being an NMRA member and what the NMRA has done for the hobby. He discussed things like:

- the NMRA Standards and how that has shaped manufactures to conform to these standards so that we have compatibility,
- NMRA X sessions
- AP Program
- Conventions
- Discord



Lunch

Members had time to socialize and catch up with fellow modelers during lunch as well as viewing Glen McCarley's NSW layout.

Division 1 Update

Div Super Report

- Ø STREAM Pilot Program
- Ø Conducted on Sat 1st July at Duncan Cabassi's
- Ø Had 7 youth booked (3 from outside the NMRA and 4 from NMRA family members)
- Ø James Van Heran and his mother Karen attended.
- Ø The other 6 participants cancelled, 4 NMRA families cited diary clashes (2 a week out and 2 the night before) and the other 2 non NMRA cancelled on the day (1 was ill and the other had a family emergency)

- Ø James and his mother got a lot out of it.
- Ø 6 NMRA clinicians – special thanks to Duncan Cabassi, Arthur Hayes, Al Wright, Martin Dixon and Darren Lee for being clinicians.
- Ø Huge amount of camaraderie and banter amongst those present and we ALL picked up tips from each other.

Ø Sponsored by Modeller's Warehouse and Hobby One

- Ø FREE-MO layout
- Ø Sponsor is Aurora Trains (for first 4 modules)
- Ø NMRA shirts and jackets. Taking orders for next batch. \$40 shirts and \$85 jackets
- Ø Track Gauges (arrived)
- Ø Calendar out for 2023 is on the website
- Ø Changes to calendar
 - 18th November – Layout tour of Brisbane North side (need layouts)

Ø AR Report

- Ø NMRA AR Convention – 29 Sept to 2nd Oct 2023 – Rydges Parramatta NSW
- Ø Accommodation at Rydges almost gone
- Ø Over 50% places filled – very poor numbers. Over a third of the numbers are from Division 1
 - Ø Division 1 may be the next host pending a review of the Conventions by the ARC

Ø Membership

- Ø 375 current Qld members (at time of writing the report)
- Ø 11 new members last month (previously reported)
- Ø 7 new members so far this month – Scott Moreton, Michael Laarhoven, Fiona Lambert, Mason Lambert, Mark Hourihan, Joshua Hourihan and Don Gough
- Ø 0 resignations
- Ø 0 Gone Home
- Ø Some members struck off as not paid their membership and 1x 100% club not paid to date

Ø AP Awards

- Ø Nil

Ø Reports

- Ø SIG – Modular SIG group

Ø 100% Clubs

- Ø Action MRC
- Ø Ipswich MRC
- Ø Gladstone and District MRA
- Ø Logan District MRC
- Ø Miniature Trains Gold Coast
- Ø Northern Rivers MRC

- Ø Southern Downs Steam Railway MTA
- Ø Wide Bay Burnett MRC

Ø **Events for the Year**

- Buy and Sell Day – to be held in Jan/Feb 2023 by NMRA (On Hold)
 - o Need a coordinator. Any volunteers?
 - o Venue – possibly Ipswich
- Shows
 - o Redlands – 26-27th August 2023 – Cleveland Assembly Hall, Cleveland.o
 - o Miniature Trains Gold Coast – 23-24 Sept 2023 – Bicentennial Centre, Nerang
- Hervey Bay – 21-22 Oct 2023 \$175pp twin share
 - o Coach ex Brisbane
 - o Accommodation
 - o Dinner at Boat Club
 - o 5 layouts
 - o Gathering
 - o Partner's program
- Other future events
 - o Casino and Lismore March/April 2024
 - o Bowen Oct 2024 – Whitsunday Tour (Scott Whitakker – O Scale hand built Victorian)

Ø Future Gatherings

- Next Gathering 19th August at Darren Lee's residence 36 Galen Crt., CEDAR VALE
- Sept Gathering – Paul Rollason's place (not Darren Starkey as he is unavailable)
- Seeking people to run clinics for 2023

STREAM Pilot Program

The STREAM (Science Technology Research Engineering Arts Maths) Program was kicked off with the Pilot/Proof of concept program on Saturday 1st July at Duncan Cabassi's residence.

We had 7 youth booked (3 from outside the NMRA and 4 from NMRA family members) booked in. Six participants cancelled, four NMRA families cited diary clashes (2 a week out and 2 the night before) and the other 2 non NMRA cancelled on the day (1 was ill and the other had a family emergency).

James Van Heran and his mother Karen attended. James and his mother got a lot out of it.

The day was structured around giving participants the basic skills to construct a layout and the goal was to construct a small module from a 600x300 foam board. The sessions on the day included:-

- Ø Welcome and what the NMRA is about
- Ø Creating a base board, marking track location, contours, building location
- Ø Adding contours to module
- Ø Weathering and laying track
- Ø Painting contours
- Ø Duncan showing his N Scale layout and different types of trains
- Ø Adding vegetation
- Ø Lunch including using Darren Lee's shunting layout
- Ø Scratch building a simple styrene structure
- Ø Ballasting track
- Ø Adding ground cover
- Ø Next Steps to model railroading

We had 6 NMRA clinicians on the day and a special thanks to Duncan Cabassi, Arthur Hayes, Al Wright, Martin Dixon and Darren Lee for being clinicians.

There was a huge amount of camaraderie and banter amongst those present and we ALL picked up tips from each other.

The event was sponsored by **Modeller's Warehouse and Hobby One**





Proud Sponsors of STREAM



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TREES

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Show and Tell

Several members got and spoke about projects that they were working on or tips bits to make life easier for themselves.

Four of those who got up to speak included (sorry if there were others but I forgot to write everyone down):-

1. Matt Wilson - Showed his 3D printed Hogwarts Castle with lighting
2. Al Wright - some small building models
3. Craig Mackie - Scratch built wagons going into the NMRA Convention competition
4. Paul Rollason - small mobile kart for moving under layout to hold tools.



The remainder of the afternoon was time for members to socialise and catch up with fellow model railroaders.

Gathering Recording

For those wishing to hear more or refresh themselves, you can listen to the gathering via the Zoom recording please click the following link.


https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/FN0p7K6ler4Q2NAI-Q2SSYGbZr_mxdWB3w7iCwbnjT1uYbM-J2s_ZeDrTingWoaO.z4XQ7nq46hneq1nd

Passcode: G@HdNCA0

Next Gathering

10am Sat 19th August 2023 - Darren and Kathryn Lee's residence, 36 Galen Court, Cedar Vale

Gatherings for the rest of the year include:-

- 16th September 2023 - Paul Rollason - 9 Greentree Crescent, Forest Lake
- 21-22 October 2023 - Bus tour to Hervey Bay (partners welcome)
- 18th November 2023 - Brisbane northside layout tour
- 2nd December 2023 (TBC) - NMRA Christmas function (partners welcome)....

Division 3

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

(Report provided by Peter Kendall and Rod Hutchinson)

August 20th 2023 Meeting:-

Report:

The August meeting was held at the home of Rosemary and Laurie Green (MMR). Laurie is one of the most well known modellers in the country. He has won many awards over the years for his superb models, contribution to the hobby and his kit structures made available to the public. His home layout is based on DRGW railway in the state of Colorado in the USA. His model room houses many of his dioramas built over the years.

His layout is a single track continuous loop. It acts as a presentation display for Laurie's very high modelling standards in his structures, rolling stock and locomotives. For any one remotely interested in quality dioramas, Laurie's "Model Room" is an Aladdin's Cave of fine model building.

The day was very pleasant sunny day with no wind, allowed the 17 attendees to chat and chew about most things to do with the model railway hobby. Models on display were down this meeting, however some may pique some interest.

TOMA Model Works have small N/HOn chassis in 9mm and 10.5 mm gauges which are sold as a "Slow Runner". <https://tomamw2.com/> riograndwestern on ebay has a number of items for sale for the HOn3 & Sn3 modeller.

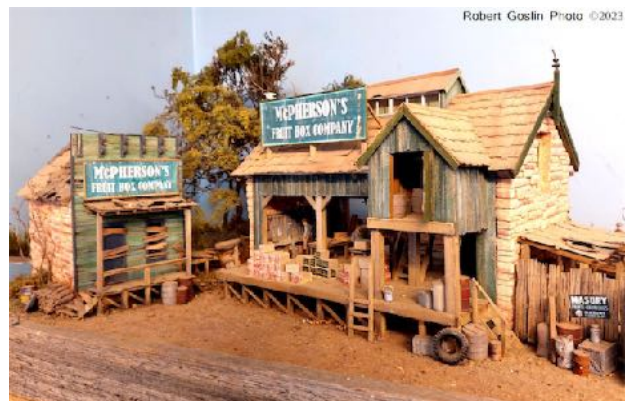
https://www.ebay.com.au/usr/riograndwestern?_trksid=p4429486.m3561.l161211

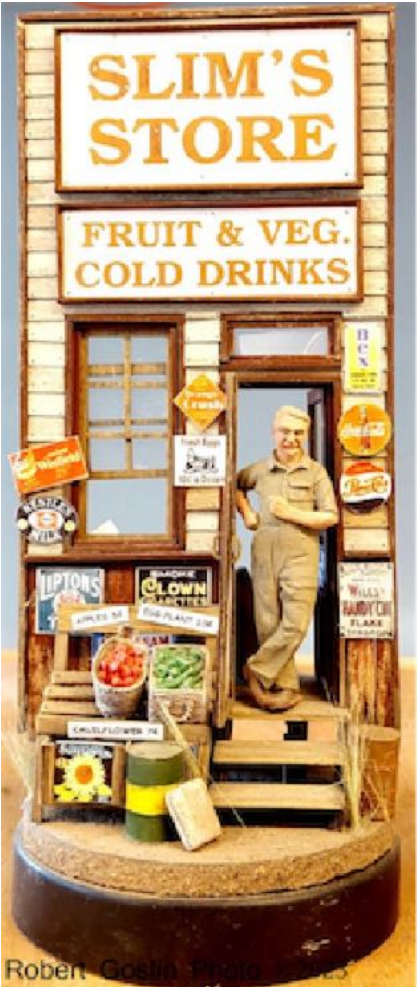
All in all a fabulous day with new and old friends. A thank you plaque was presented to Rosemary Green, as hostess, for giving up her day and looking after all attendees.

Next Meeting is at Geoff Truman's 17th September 2023.

Models on display:

Below: Robert Goslin: Photographs of Laurie Green's layout and dioramas on display.





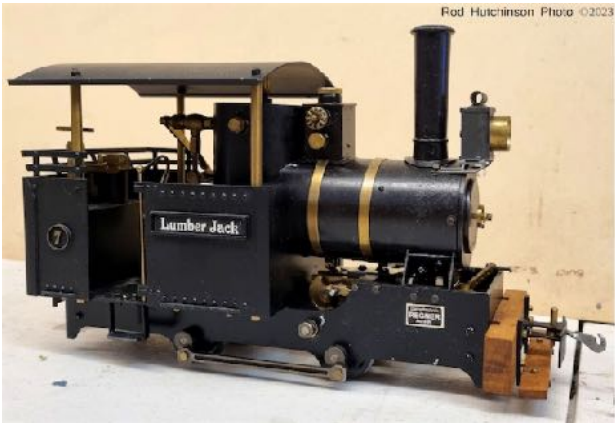


Right: Paul Ritchie: HOn3 4 wheel chassis by Toma Model Works, Japan.



Left & Below: Paul Ritchie: Sn3 DRGW Combine Coach and interior by riograndwestern (ebay seller).





Above: Bob Thornton: 2 G gauge 0-4-0 steam locomotives.



Bob Backway: Cutting Tool.



Attendees



Division 5

From Philip Sharpe (NMRA Inc.-AR Div5 Superintendent)

Activities for August, 2023:-

You can involve yourself in electronics, computers, puzzles... there's a lot of creativity and brain working. There's a lot to model trains that people don't realise. Gary Coleman.

Superintendent's Car

I attended the area meet hosted by the Garden City Model Railway Club at the Ferrymead Heritage Park on August 18 - 20. This convention was similar to a mini-AMRA.

The main organisers of the area meet were John McIntosh and Brent Hopley. John is the president of the GCMRC and Brent is the recently elected vice-president of the New Zealand Association of Model Railway Clubs. John and Brent are Division 5 members.

This last time an event of this type was held in the South Island was 25 years ago, and there was much uncertainty over how successful this year's meet would be. Brent had said that he would regard the meet as successful if there were at least 10 attendees. By this measure, the meet was very successful. There were 20 attendees, including three from the North Island, two from Nelson and two from Dunedin.

I believe at least three factors contributed to the success of the convention.

The registration fee and the cost of the convention dinner were low. This was achieved by having simple lunches, subway sandwiches in this case, using a hall instead of a hotel for the venue, and having the conference dinner at a local pub.

Although these ways of ensuring low costs are unsuitable for some conventions, they were very effective for this convention. The last Australasian Regional Convention, held on the Gold Coast in 2018, had simple lunches and used a community hall, as did the 2023 AMRA convention.

A second factor contributing to the success of the convention was the setting for the venue. The venue hall and the GCMRC clubrooms are in the Ferrymead Heritage Park [1]. Sixteen societies have facilities and displays in the park and there is much of interest for model railroaders.

Another factor, and something at least two people remarked on to me, is that the attendees were at the convention to have fun. And they did have fun.

The success of the meet led to discussions about holding more meets of a similar ilk in the South Island. One suggestion was to build on the interest generated by the current meet by having another meet in Christchurch in late spring, 2024. A second suggestion was to have a mini-AMRA in Dunedin in 2026. There is no mini-AMRA scheduled for 2026 as yet.

You may have noticed I have added the NMRA and AR logos and contact information below the banner photograph on the first page of this issue. I made these additions to

bring *The Bridge* in line with the NMRA guidelines and policies on promoting the NMRA.

[1] <https://www.ferrymead.org.nz>

Calendar of Events

The dates for the overseas events in the calendar of events below are local dates. If you know of other events you think should be added to the calendar, please email me the details of the events or the URLs to them.

15 - 18 Sep. Free-Mo meet, Morrinsville Event Centre, 4 Ron Ladd Place, Morrinsville. gnrailfan@gmail.com Steve Waugh.

29 Sep - 2 Oct. NMRA Australasian Regional Convention. Rydges Paramatta, 116-118 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW.

3 - 5 Nov. 9 Mill Gathering. Havelock North Wanderers Football Clubrooms, Guthrie Park, Brookvale Rd, Havelock North. bernieofthebay@xtra.co.nz Paul Berntsen.

15 - 17 Mar, 2024. Mini-AMRA. New Plymouth.

26 - 28 Apr, 2024 (TBC). NZAMRC convention, Auckland.

4 - 11 Aug, 2024. SurfLiner NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Long Beach, CA. <https://www.surfliner2024.org/>.

30 May - 2 Jun, 2025. AMRA. Porirua.

13 - 19 July, 2025. Station No. VI. NMRA National Convention and National Train Show, Novi, MI. <https://nmra2025.com/>

AP Column - Structures Certificate

By Kel Sherson

In my last article I wrote about an AP Certificate I'm currently working on, Cars. This time it's one that has been 'in progress' for quite a while but, like so much on my railroad, just needs a bit more time to complete. Truthfully, probably quite a bit more time because other projects keep getting in the way.

But again, it's a certificate that can be chipped away at. It's also one that you can immediately see the results of your efforts. The subject certificate is Structures.

You can build structures before, during or after you've completed your layout (yeah right, do we ever 'finish' our layouts?). In fact, you don't even have to have a layout to build structures. So, it's one of the easiest places to start as you go about working on certificates in the achievement program.

The core requirements of the Structures Certificate call for 12 scale structures of six different types, with at least one bridge or trestle and at least six scratchbuilt. The others must be detailed with scratchbuilt or commercial parts. The main difference between scratchbuilding and building craftsman kits is the origin of the plans and the materials.

Remember you're looking to get 87.5 points out of 125 on six of the models, the others don't have to be evaluated. A 70 percent passing grade. So, the model has to be 'realistic', not award winning in its own right (unless you deem to want to achieve that).

The recommended place to start is with the six 'kits. Build these to your schedule, add some more 'details' (signs, roof details, landings and ladders, fire escapes, 'internals', people and lights are good 'extras'), then add a bit of weathering. Oh, by the way; have a look at the kits you've already built. You've probably done 'those six' already. Almost certainly they're 80 percent there and all you need to do is add a bit more detail.

Now you can turn your attention to the thought of building six structures that didn't start out in a box. Don't let this scare you. After all, the award is for construction, not architecture! The models don't have to be huge structures. Think about what industries or bridges your 'layout' needs or will need. Look for inspiration in model magazines or on the Web by searching those industries. You'll get heaps of info showing plans, photographs and 'how tos'. Use these to guide your design and build. Remember it's your design, so you can use the 'floor plan' of the structure that suits your space / real estate on your layout. Enjoy the process of construction. It's what makes this great hobby fun.

There's a technique for achieving the 70% required. It's based on the old school examination approach that getting a lot of answers almost right is better than getting a few answers very right. Keep in mind that Construction (Workmanship) counts up to 40 points, Detail (Quality and Amount) counts up to 20 points, Conformity (Prototype Practice) counts up to 25 points, Finish and Lettering

General Appearance counts up to 25 points, and Scratchbuilt (Amounts of parts built by the modeller) up to 15 points. So, by including all of these aspects in your model you'll make it easier on yourself to get to the required 70 percent.

Now you can do the 'paperwork'. The easiest way to do this for the Structures Certificate is to use the NMRA contest entry form, even though your models are not in a contest. That form guides you, for each model, through each section so you can explain what you did, what you used and how you did it.

Because we need to do remote evaluation of the models, remember to accompany the form with photos showing your build process and photos of the completed model. Have fun.

Videos

In the June issue of *The Bridge*, I reported how Max Whitehead and I were producing a promotional video for the North Shore Model Railway Club (NSMRC). We produced two drafts of the video.

We used artistic licence with the first draft and the NSMRC committee, while respecting our artistic licence, thought the video needed to be more subdued. Our second draft had no artistic licence. The committee was pleased with this version and plans to use the video to promote the club by, for example, posting the video to the club's Facebook page. The video is approximately 75 seconds long.

Several weeks ago, I asked Max if he would like to produce a promotional video for Division 5. Max said yes. The video will likely be five to ten minutes long and include short interviews. Although some content of the video will be specific to New Zealand, I will make the video available to other AR divisions.

I welcome suggestions on possible content for the video. The first filming session will be on the first full day of the Morrinsville Free-Mo event. The video will not contain any material for which we do not have permission to use.

Report on the Area Meet

This article is a report on the area meet hosted by the Garden City Model Railway Club (GCMRC) at Ferrymead Heritage Park (FHP) August 18 - 20.

My wife, Paul Hobbs and I flew to Christchurch mid-day on the 18th. After picking up a rental car at Christchurch International Airport, we drove to Skillwise in central Christchurch. We were hoping to see Stan Agar but missed him. We then drove to the GCMRC club rooms in FHP. The rest of the afternoon was spent running trains on the GCMRC's HO layout and meeting other attendees.

The next morning, we were back at the GCMRC clubrooms. The official and short opening of the convention was at 9:00am. The rest of morning was spent on a private tour of the facilities and displays of four societies at FHP. The attendees split into small groups and rotated through the four societies.

My first tour stop was the Society for Rural History. Our guide was Heather. There are many exhibits on display. Some exhibits such as hand cranked butter churns and milk separators I recognised from my childhood spent on farms.

One distinctive exhibit was an electric car made in New Zealand in the 1970s shown in the photograph (right). I was surprised to learn that just one of the four wheels, the left rear, was powered. I had thought both rear wheels would be powered. The society expects to get the car working in the not too distant future.



The society does not have enough display cases for all its exhibits. One consequence and a sad commentary on humans is that some exhibits have been stolen. Fortunately, the amount of thieving is low.

My next stop was the Fire Services Historical Society. Our host was Graeme, the president of the society. The society has 58 fire vehicles. Twenty-eight are on display in the society's exhibition hall. The remaining vehicles are in storage. Compared to exhibits in a traditional museum, the vehicles in the exhibition hall are tightly packed.



The exhibition hall also has static displays, including a display on the fire in the Christchurch Ballantynes store 18 November 1941. Forty-one people died and the fire remains New Zealand deadliest fire. The photograph (*left*), taken from the Wikipedia page for the fire, shows firefighters fighting the fire.

My third stop was the National Railway Museum of New Zealand.

Our guide was Alan, president of the museum.

The goal of the museum is to display the history of New Zealand railways. Progress towards this goal has been slow, mostly because plans to erect a building have been thwarted twice by unforeseen circumstances. The museum has put aside plans to erect a building and is renovating an existing building in FHP. Well known NZR modeller Peter Ross has done a lot of work on these renovations.

The building will be a pop-up museum containing exhibits and prototypical equipment such as the ballast spreader in the photograph (*right*).



Out the back of the building, the museum has a turntable and eleven stall tracks. The photograph (*below*) shows the turntable. The locomotive DC4876 was donated to the museum by Kiwirail.



Some of the other rolling stock owned by the museum can be seen in the above photograph. The museum's ten-year plan is to complete the pop-up building and to build a roof over the turntable and the eleven tracks. A challenging goal.

Another exhibit in the museum is a short section of track with a 5' 3" gauge. See the photograph below.

My last society on the tour was the



Canterbury Railway Society (CRS). Our guide was David. He is an assessor for the certification of firemen (firepersons?) and engineers on steam locomotives.

Compared with many other railway historical societies, the CRS has a large collection of rolling stock. Two examples are a first - second combo passenger wagon, and the handyperson's locomotive special. See the photographs below.



I found the tour of the FHP highly enjoyable and plan to make a longer visit to the FHP.

The afternoon was devoted to a tour of four layouts.

My first layout was a Free-Mo layout at Skillwise. Stan Agar and Paul Hobbs were the operators for the afternoon. The layout was smaller than that I reported upon in the July, 2023 issue of *The Bridge*. The layout consisted of a reversing loop and a few modules that dead ended. The modules had several tracks, permitting the simultaneous running of several trains.

I then visited Richard Lang's HO Märklin Annekeburg layout. The layout represents a rural German branchline. The ruling gradient is three percent. The photograph below



shows the instrument Richard uses to estimate gradient. The next photograph shows a large station building on the layout. Richard built the building from a kit. He added LED lighting and a lot of interior detail to the lower level. Steve Pople of the Auckland Märklin Club told me yesterday that the station building is a model of the Hamburg Dammtor station building. There is a Wikipedia page for the prototypical building.

My third layout was the 7mm (1:43) Bodmin Station shelf layout of Ken Henderson. The layout uses DC and goes along two sides of a double garage.

The largish scale provides scope for detailed scenery such as Sago insulators on the telegraph poles, hanging baskets and potted plants, and sheaves of harvested grain.

The first photograph below shows two wagons on the layout. These wagons were made by Ken's father in the 1950s. The second photograph is of a three axle wagon. The final photograph shows the main bank of switches, taken from a Lancaster bomber, Ken uses for controlling the layout.



The last layout on the tour was Brendon Groufsky's HO scale Santa Fe layout set in Missouri. Brendon is a qualified electrician and this show. The wiring on Brendon's layout is the neatest I have seen in model railways and is very well documented.

After the completion of the layout tour and a break back at FHP, we moved on to the convention dinner at the nearby Village Inn.

Sunday morning was clinics and discussion. Paul Phillips gave a clinic on 3D printing. Paul made comparisons between filament and resin printing. He also spent time describing the potential difficulties with 3D printing such as bridge drooping and the toxicity of resins.

Next, Paul Hobbs gave a clinic on including work equipment in operating sessions. Paul made extensive use of photographs in his clinic. Many photographs were taken from the very large collection Paul has created over the five decades.

I then spoke for 10 minutes about the NMRA and presented good reasons for joining the NMRA. After my presentation, a former NMRA member said he would re-join. He said he had let his membership lapse because he was not getting good value for

money. The annual subscription rates have improved since then. Earlier in the weekend another attendee said he planned to join.

The convention ended with a discussion about the future activities of the NZAMRC and services it will provide (see the next article).

NZAMRC News

Positions, activities and services

The New Zealand Association of Model Railway Clubs (NZAMRC) held its 2023 AGM last week.

Several months ago, the future of the NZAMRC looked uncertain mainly because the majority of positions on the national executive were vacant and had been since the 2022 AGM. The future of the NZAMRC now looks far more assured. Most of the vacant positions were filled at the 2023 AGM. Brent Hopley, a Division 5 member and a former NZAMRC president was elected vice president. All area representative positions except that for Auckland were filled. The South Island now has two representatives and not just the one representative of recent years. James Kelso, another Division 5 member and former NZAMRC president, was re-elected as the NZAMRC treasurer.

In other good news for the NZAMRC, the number of clubs that are NZAMRC members has increased significantly since the 2022 AGM. As of two days ago, there were 25 members clubs, and others were in the process of joining. The NZAMRC decision to make membership free could have contributed to an increase in the number of members.

There was a discussion at the end of the area meet about the future activities of the NZAMRC and the services it will provide.

The NZAMRC is arranging suitable public liability insurance (PLI) that clubs can buy for their events such as train shows. The insurance will be more tailored to the needs of clubs than standard PLI, and the premium for the insurance will be two to three times smaller.

The NZAMRC will no longer publish the hardcopy magazine *The Coupler*. Instead, the NZAMRC will continue with the publication of the electronic newsletter the NZAMRC started publishing recently. The NZAMRC will, if asked, send newsletters from a member club to other member clubs.

2024 NZAMRC Convention

Several weeks ago, the local organising committee (LOC) for the 2024 NZAMRC convention selected the Colbans Estate Art Centre in West Auckland as the venue for the convention.

Free-Mo Weekend

Steve Waugh who is the coordinator for this year's Morrinsville Free-Mo event recently disseminated a draft of the track plan. A copy of this draft is appended to this issue of *The Bridge*. There are 186 metres of main line and branch line track.

The modules will be set up and tested on the afternoon and evening of Friday September 15. To help ensure this work is completed on Friday, the track plan has been divided into two, approximately equal parts, and these parts will be set up in parallel. Each part will start at a special module built by Division 5 member Alex Shepherd. This module is half way down the right edge of the track plan.

The use of the special module illustrates that collaboration between people making modules is often needed to ensure a Free-Mo layout works well. For the track plan in the Appendix, there are in addition to the special module, curved modules, turning loops, modules with passing loops, and a duck under.

August ARC Meeting

The latest ARC meeting was held last night.

The number of registrations for the AR convention as of August 21st is approximately 80 and is expected to increase. I used the word approximately because the convention committee counts the number of registrations in more than one way.

Eighty registrations mean the convention should break even. To allow for unforeseen expenses, the convention committee will run up to 10 raffles during the convention and use the profits from the raffles to increase the revenue from the convention. The convention committee is asking for donation of new goods as prizes for these raffles.

The ARC decided to issue more frequent updates about ARC activities. The updates are intended to augment the efforts by superintendents to keep division members informed of ARC activities.

The ARC was faced with a large increased in the premiums for the PLI it carries. The ARC has sought quotes from three insurance companies and will, not unexpectedly, take the best offer.


Getting more donations

Now that cash is little used in New Zealand, New Zealanders are unlikely to have cash to make gold coin donations. Clubs that rely on gold coin donations will need to provide another way for members of the public to make donations.

I was told during the recent area meet in Christchurch that the Garden City Model Railway Club has set up QR codes that are linked to a Give-A-Little account. Someone wishing to make a donation scans the QR code using their smart phone and makes a donation.

I believe more donations will be had from a smart phone than from gold coins.

Author, contacting

Unless stated otherwise, all articles were written by Philip Sharp, the Division 5 Superintendent. You can email Philip at div5sup@nmra.org.au

Division 6

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

August meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

19 members

AP Awards:

Nil

ARC Report:

See comments in report.

NMRA Regional Feedback:

See comments in report.

NMRA Division 6 Feedback:

See comments in report.

Next Meeting: 9 September 2023, Ray Brownbill's, 4 Acorn Place, Blakeview. .

Details:

19 members gathered at Adelaide Model Railroader's clubrooms for our August meeting.





David welcomed all to the meeting and presented Tony Mikolaj, AMR Cub Secretary, with the Host Plaque.



A special welcome was made to 2 of our new members, Paul Arman and Stan Hill. Our other 2 new members are Wayne Hoskin and Mark Sittars, both members of Adelaide Model Railroaders as well.

Finance:

Treasurer, Ron Solly, advised the meeting of our current financial state.

Achievement Program:

AP Asst Manager, SA, Ray Brownbill, advised the meeting the Achievement Program remains quiet. Ray distributed a sheet showing the number of certificates achieved over the 6 months to June 2023, both worldwide and Australasian Region. Ray also advised the meeting of the number of Association Volunteer time units accrued by members of Division 6.



Library Report:

The meeting was reminded that we still have a number of DVDs available for purchase. We also have 12 months of NMRA Magazine available to borrow. The meeting decided that if there is no borrowing activity of the NMRA Magazines, they will be given away, probably as incentives at model railway exhibitions.



Rails@Rosehill:

All members should have received the latest newsletter of the Rails@Rosehill Convention from the organisers. It appears that the current financial situation and the cost of the convention is limiting the numbers from SA attending.

ARC:

David relayed to the meeting;

- That the ARC discussion with our Insurer regarding "car boot sales" coverage has resulted in "car boot sales" coverage being included.
- Vern Cracknell attended the Grampians Model Railway Exhibition at Stawell on the 8th & 9th of July with his "Uphill Logging" layout.
- "That the NMRA-AR implement a formal risk management policy and procedures, which includes the creation of a risk register"

NT Junction:

NT Junction is currently stored at Ron Solly's. David Orr and Ray Brownbill have been discussing the wish to add a couple of staging modules to the layout and were hoping for involvement by other members when it comes time to build the modules.

AMRE:

Ron Solly, the Layout Coordinator for the Adelaide Model Railway exhibition, advised the meeting that the AMRE Committee reports that it was a very successful exhibition. AMRE is looking for another club to be part of the AMRE group and Ron advised that Noarlunga Model Railroaders Inc have applied.

Round the group:

Jeff Barklay

Jeff is the President of the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc and tells us that the club layout is progressing well. He seems to be the go-to person for repairing and decaling rolling stock.

John Gaylor

John is the Vice President of the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc and tells us he's the club gopher - go for this, go for that.

Christiaan Werk

Christiaan is also a member of the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc and has been very busy with club layout scenery (members would have noticed that Christiaan recently achieved his AP Scenery Certificate). He's also busy filming for his Youtube channel.

Tony Mikolaj

Tony is the Secretary of the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc and has been spending some time in the Port on the AMR club layout. He's now completed the wiring, designed some stock movements at the Port, re-laid track at the Port to avoid turnouts in a tunnel and has been building a rack in the workshop. Tony is the AMR club's electrical guru and Ray Brownbill, our AP chair in SA, has told Tony to "stop mucking around and get on with your AP Electrical Certificate".

Paul Wright

Paul is also a member of the Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc and has been building models for the AMR club layout and cleaning track. There's a lot of track in AMR's layout!

As it does, the mention of track cleaning brought forth a discussion on the various methods!

Ainslie Brittain

Ainslie has laid some storage tracks on his modules, using 12 turnouts to feed them. He's using a diode matrix and tortoise turnout motors, all controlled by a "red jigger".



Graham Cocks

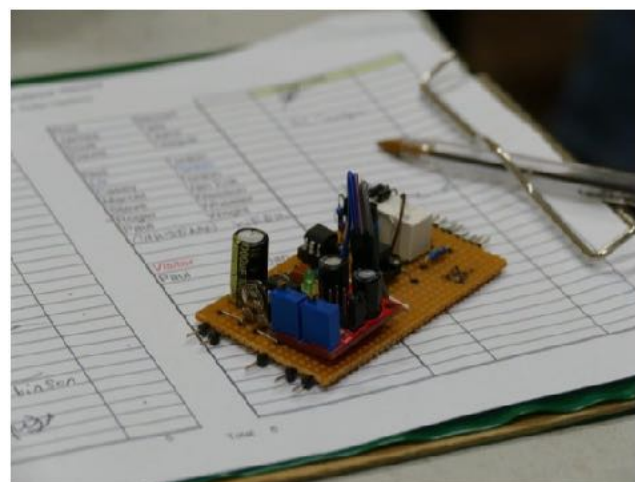
Graham has been ballasting, ballasting and ballasting!

Paulo Arman

Paul is our visitor from last month, now a member. Welcome Paul. Paul tells us he now has the benchwork done and is at the pleasurable stage of opening the boxes of all the stuff he's collected over the years and is trial fitting.

Ron Dunkley

Ron is the "master builder" of Michael Robinson's layout. He tells us that they've completed the mid level of Michael's layout. The twin tunnels have been divided into three blocks each with "Autostop" modules used in these hidden sections. They can be



used as 'straight through' main line or as six storage areas for assembled trains ready for dispatch. The double decker lift-up bridge is working well. Ron's been building eleven auto reversing modules to handle bi-directional running on the Upper level which is now being wired.

Michael Robinson

Michael has been searching for a company to do some 3D printing for him. He found PHRAXLASER to do this and now has a Pizza Hut & sign 3D printed. Unpainted at this stage, it's hard to make out the details in this report but watch out for the painted version - it's coming. Michael also tells us that they're at the stage of designing the fiddle yard for the lower level.



Jane Robinson

Jane has been painting a Federation building from Trakside Models.

Stan Hill

Stan is our newest member. Welcome Stan. Stan tells us that he models a freelance mining layout in HOn3. His is a DCC U shaped layout and he has the framework and roadbed down. He's been unboxing, scratchbuilding and kitbashing.



Scott Taylor

Scott has been busy! His efforts include;

1. 1:29 scale USA Trains GE44 Ton loco conversion to Commonwealth Railways / Australian National Railways project. The loco has been completely



disassembled, stripped of it's original paint scheme and undergoing some conversion to match a prototype now stored at the NRM. The finished loco will look like the era of ANR service.

2. The 1:24 scale CLTB project: Making CLTB underframes to produce a range of rollingstock used on the SAR / ANR / CR / CAR. The three frames show the development of scratchbuilding in styrene to developing accurate 3D printed items. The model will end up being a FRN class flatcar from the Port Lincoln Division. Details are 3d printed and designed to fit in as a future kit.



3. The 1:24 scale OBN: Also under development is a largescale narrow gauge SAR prototype open wagon that ran on the Northern lines (Wilmington to Gladstone) in SA, these were used for bulk goods (grain, fertiliser). Again the underframe has been undergoing some test and adjusting for ease of printing. Decals, details and side panels are at the print stage. Models are expected to be displayed at the upcoming MRSAC in September.



Ron Solly

Ron has been extending the layover tracks/storage at his main station, Tawnton.

David Teague

David has some new modules under construction. He is making a right angle in his layout to better utilise the space available to him. We suggested that with enough right angles, he could go right through the house!

Vern Cracknell

Vern tells us that the exhibition at Stawell (Grampians Model Railway Exhibition) was a good exhibition as usual. Vern's layout, Uphill Logging, won the best in show award. Vern and Uphill Logging will be at the Milang Exhibition on 25th & 26th November. They'll be in the Institute and Vern was telling us of the difficulties of finding a level floor where Uphill Logging will be located.



Rod Stewart

Rod has found his electrical bug! A faulty connection in a "chocolate block" was the culprit. So it's onwards and upwards!

Bob Bevan


Bob reports he's "still modelling". What he didn't mention was that he's been fairly successful at reducing his inventory. Like most of us, Bob has more than he needs or will ever use. But that's being taken care of - slowly.

Ray Brownbill

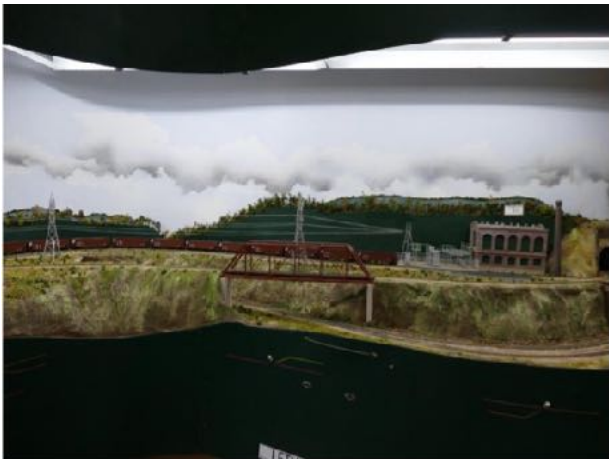
Ray has completed the last of his signal relays (7) and with 4 signals to make, he'll be ready for the next NMRA meeting.

The next meeting was originally to be at David Orr's in Modbury North but a change in plans means that the next meeting will be on the 9th September at Ray Brownbill's, 4 Acorn Place, Blakeview.

The meeting concluded with afternoon tea and a look at Adelaide Model Railroader's club layout.

Photos: Some photos of Adelaide Model Railroader's layout, the Southern Central RR are below.....







Division 8 / 9 Northern NSW

Ian West (NMRA Inc.-AR Div 8/9 Northern NSW Superintendent)

August 2023 meeting:-

Report: Northern NSW Meeting Overview:

We spent an enjoyable afternoon at the home of Keith and Shirley Morrison on Sunday 20th August. Sixteen were in attendance, including two spouses. There were four apologies. Mike Bartlett is in Texas at the Annual NMRA Convention so gave his apologies for our meeting.

Members were able to run trains on Keith's layout with only a few misadventures. Older members helped



Watching trains on the track



Jamie being tutored by John

the newer members with running trains. Keith also had an activity for members to complete on his layout.

While we stopped for our meeting Shirley supplied us all with a lovely afternoon tea.

The upcoming NMRA conference was discussed, but only one member is attending. Members were also concerned about the renewal of

insurance with NMRA. Our local group will look into insurance this week in case the NMRA cover fails.



Steve, John, Jamie, Bill and Rhonda enjoying afternoon



Ian following the program Keith set

CCRMI Monthly Update:


The CCRMI have been making steady progress with the renovation of their new shed at the showgrounds. The awning, to go on the left-hand side of the shed, is the next assembly job as the dismantling of the old poultry cages is complete. The trailer which houses the travelling layout, and the food caravan named "Bob's Tuck Truck" will then be stored under the awning and not in the main shed.



The main part of the shed is now cleared and can be readied for the floor to be laid

Next Meeting:

Our next meeting will be held at the home of Paul Baker on Sunday 1st October at 11.00am. Paul lives at 1 Palm Tree Drive Boambee East.

I hope to see you there as Paul is nearing the completion of his latest layout.....


Division 10

Pat Britton (NMRA Inc.-AR Div10 Superintendent)

August Report:-

Details:

Had a meet and greet at the Longford train show on the weekend of 22-23 July. I also attended the Kingston show on the weekend of 5-6 August.

Had a meet and greet at the Longford train show where we had a table trying to recruit new members. Picked up two new members on the weekend of 22-23 July, plus I attended the Kingston show on the weekend of 5-6 August and caught up with some of our members. We will get the convention out of the way and look at having our first meeting in October with the view of having a zoom meeting before then.....



What's in the Next Edition

- *Ken House continues to describe how the Adelaide Model Railroaders Club introduced Operating Sessions into their activities, in this second and final part of this two part article.*
 - *Arthur Hayes MMR® enjoys the challenge of building loads for wagons and containers for the many type of loads that are carried by the railways. Arthur will cover some of those applications in this article.*
 - *Even if you live in a small space such as a caravan, it is possible to have a layout with lots of operational interest and opportunity to add detail, as Ian Barnes outlines in Peter Robins Z Scale layout, 'Bellerscalia'.*
 - *Dave Whibley was encouraged to display his trains around the walls of his train room after seeing what another member of his Division did, so he added another room to his train room to do just that.*
- plus a lot more informative reading as well.....*