



THE FLIMSY

NMRA Division 2 Newsletter

January 2016

Welcome to 2016

I hope that this newsletter finds you all fit and well and ready to kick 2016 off with a bang.

The computer issues that struck me down towards the end of last year have now abated themselves and I'm back on deck. The last of The Flimsy's will be updated over the next few weeks and published on the NMRA-AR website in addition to Div 2's new website.

This year will see a number of activities for Division 2 that have either not been done before, or the Division hasn't participated in. First off the blocks is the new Division 2 website. This has been a slow endeavor, but is coming together quite nicely and will certainly get our name out there.

This year will see Div 2 be represented this year again at the Kaleen Exhibition, this year Mathew Wateraus has kindly donated his smaller 8x4 HO layout for the exhibition. All volunteer spots have been filled, we are now working on a couple of small workshops in the lead up to Kaleen.

Dion

"I asked a man in prison once how he happened to be there and he said he had stolen a pair of shoes. I told him if he had stolen a railroad he would be a United States Senator."

- Kim Abercrombie



The Brains Trust

In This Issue

- Welcome to 2016
- Mal Risby's January Meeting



John Bullen receiving the Division 2 Bones/Hopkins Award for his contribution to the Division.

The Main Show

JANUARY 2016

We got the New Year off to a flying start by travelling all the way to Canberra where 15 of us attended the meeting at Mal Risby's home. The inevitable question arose... Would Peter Dinham (who lives next door) plead that he had too far to travel? No! Through hard experience Peter has become cunning. On learning that his brilliant apology last meeting had been blown right out of the water, this time Peter craftily declined to submit any reason at all for today's apology, thereby devilishly frustrating his would-be tormentors.

Announcements

Our Indomitable Leader welcomed us all to 2016. Gosh where on earth did 2014 go? And now 2015 has gone missing as well. Our Valiant Leader also apologised for having been recently overwhelmed by interstate work demands and family difficulties. With all that on his plate he understandably never got round to mentioning little things like a major computer crash.

At the small Christmas gathering in December, those present had discussed possibilities for a small modular layout for exhibition purposes – hopefully to be at least partly displayable at Kaleen in early April.

Thinking of the design of such a layout, Jess Brisbane drew attention to the website <http://www.carendt.com/> which offers a huge amount of plans for consideration for small portable model railway layouts. This is an absorbing website if you have a day or two to spare.

Mathew Waterreus offered the use of his old layout. It is HO scale, 4ft x 8ft, well built and is almost ready to go. Expressing much interest, the meeting was keen to come around and have a look at this with a view to using it at Kaleen.

Our Fearless Leader called the meeting to attention while he presented the Hopkins/Bone Award for Division Two for 2015. This was taken as some sort of evidence that 2015 apparently did exist after all. Anyway it was presented to John Bullen for his support for Division Two in several ways, most notably his incoherent scribbles which are published in *The Flimsy* on those occasions when the text is not sufficiently libellous or offensive to get the hapless Editor sued.

Meeting Hosts Required 2016

Meeting hosts are still required for a number of meetings for 2016.

Meetings are an integral part of Division 2 as we don't have a central meeting location.

By hosting a meeting, you are not only helping out the Division, you are allowing other members to share with you your hobby.

After posing for the mandatory media photography, John threatened to haul out the thirteen-page acceptance speech he had previously prepared for this occasion. But instead, he simply said he wanted everyone to note just one word which our Noble Leader had uttered during the presentation while describing John's scribble, namely "**accurate**". John has been accused of many things, but that's a new one. And from an authoritative source too. Everyone kindly take due note.

This year's NMRA AR Convention will be in the Liverpool region. It will again be organised by Division Seven who organised the conventions at Niagara Park in 2012 and at Ettalong in 2015. This time it will be a one-day convention only and will be held on **Saturday 3 September**.

As previously announced, the 2017 Convention will be in Adelaide.

All NMRA members in Australia will be receiving the February issue of the NMRA magazine from America, since this is the office bearer election issue and voters need to be informed on the candidates for office.

Our Diligent Leader has been investigating possible premises for permanent use by Division Two – mainly for meetings and for setting up our portable railway. The CSMEE (the Canberra Model Engineers) site at Symonston has been eliminated as unsuitable. It has been noted that 'Men's Shed' activities attract donations and grants. This could be worth looking at. Several other options were discussed. Church halls can often be rented cheaply. But what about permanent use? Further investigation will continue.

The meeting was concerned to hear that our Australasian Regional President and former Division Two member David O'Hearn has been forced to resign from the Presidency due to the serious illness of his wife Margaret. Not long afterwards, and before this issue of The Flimsy could be published, the sad news came through that Margaret O'Hearn had died. Our deepest sympathy is extended to David from all his old mates in Division Two.

Closer to home, Ross Pratt's wife Barbara in Cooma is in medical trouble. We all earnestly wish Barbara a good recovery.

Show & Tell

Miniature locomotives come in all types of novelties – such as key-rings, fridge magnets and Christmas tree decorations. Today Mathew Waterreus showed us a new one in the form of an 8-gigabyte USB drive or memory stick in the shape of a General Electric loco in Union Pacific livery. Very neat!

Two obvious questions immediately arose – what loco class? And where did this one come from?

Well, with something a bit smaller than Z scale that's likely to be shoved into a pocket, you can't expect much detail. So just be satisfied that it's a UP diesel, will you. As for the source – it came in Mathew's Christmas stocking. Thank you dear Santa Claus. However, it is reasonable to guess that the desperately overworked Santa might have had a bit of help from Lynda Waterreus who just might have made a purchase from the Union Pacific online shop.

Brian Thomas displayed his very impressive handmade rock wall in O scale and then explained how he makes these. To our great relief, it is apparently not necessary to chip actual rocks into shape, one by one. First Brian gets the flat lid of an egg carton, rules lines on it and then cuts it up into stone shapes. It must be from a light grey carton, not one of the blue ones, so remember to choose your eggs judiciously when shopping. Brian then glues each stone to a cardboard base. Finally comes the painting of selected stones to introduce variety to the wall. Slight variations in colour look more realistic than sharp contrasts. The paint must be thin enough for the texture of the stone faces to be preserved. This is not a high precision drafting job and can be done by the multiskilled while simultaneously engaged in more demanding activities, such as watching TV. The finished job, mounted on cardboard, is flexible and can easily be fitted to a curved embankment.

Which glue? Brian uses PVA glue for this. Tony Payne recommends buying PVA glue from Big W. The right type is cheaper there than elsewhere.

Fran Thomas produced some specimens of *Nandina* which she uses to make trees. After flowering, the dried limbs of this useful shrub provide an excellent basis for many model trees and they remain quite strong after they dry out. However, there are two varieties of nandina commonly seen in Canberra and only one of them is suitable for model railway scenery. The dwarf shrub with its bushy shape and attractive red/green foliage is unsuitable. The one for modelling trees is the taller shrub with straight stems and sprays of red berries. For pictures of the right plant, see <http://tinyurl.com/hwtrdla>.

Fran makes several types of tree from nandina clusters which have shed their berries and have dried. She prunes them first to get the desired branch shape and then binds several stems together with string. Covering the stems and string with Selley's 'No More Gaps' gives a suitable tree trunk which can then be painted to gain the right colour for a eucalypt, silver birch, or whatever you like.

After painting the branches with thinned PVA as the necessary adhesive, Fran applies Heki *Blätterflor* or Heki *Flor* for leaf foliage. Heki foliage is pretty much the best quality that you can get. Both these Heki products are stretch foliage used to cover branches. The *Blätterflor* has larger particles than the finer *Flor* and the larger particles give a most realistic leaf effect on larger scale trees. Both products come in different shades of green for different species of tree. If you select with care and stretch these flexible nets of leaves over the branches, you finish up with a remarkably lifelike tree without needing any loose scatter material at all.

Fran displayed a very attractive and realistic grove of trees, mostly eucalypts and silver birches that she has recently made in O scale, using *Nandina*, *Blätterflor* and *Flor*.



Fran recommends against the use of hairspray as an adhesive. It's too sticky and retains all dust that inevitably settles from anywhere. Using your vacuum cleaner in either blowing or sucking mode will not remove dust from hairspray and it will remove any foliage that might be loose.

Graeme Hodges the First drew our attention to a particularly interesting *article "A Study in Steam"* in the recent October 2015 issue of *Trains* magazine.

Graeme also showed us his latest book acquisition. "*Railroad Vision*", edited by Jeff Brouws and Wendy Burton. This purchase set Graeme back \$65 (Aust) at Booktopia, this being a cheap price for this book which normally retails for \$86. Newly published in October 2015, this book contains a selection of steam era images from the extensive collection of images in the *Trains* magazine archives of about 120,000 photos. This carefully edited selection contains 156 photos on 200 pages and is published by Quantuck Lane Press. Quantuck Lane is a prestige book publisher, which probably explains why this book does not appear on the Kalmbach publications sales list. It is not a light paperback – rather more like a two-handed lift, this being why Graeme only brought one book today. See <http://www.booktopia.com.au/railroad-vision-jeff-brouws/prod9781593720605.html>

The Main Show

Mal Risby passed around photocopies of the Risby RR master plan which has steadily evolved over several years and several visits to northern USA. The latest plan fills a rectangular space of 18ft by 31ft (5.5m x 9.5m) inside a large garage. The track layout runs right around all four sides, with access from one corner and with two long promontories running out from one of the sides. Both promontories have scenery dividers for their whole length, separating the scenery on each side of each promontory.

This is a layout for running long (30 car) N scale freight trains, mostly grain and lumber. Trains are Burlington Northern and affiliated lines. "Any passenger trains?" asked John Bullen hopefully. Simple question, simple answer... "No way!"

With easy cleaning in mind, there will be very little hidden track although there will have to be some hidden staging beneath the main yard. There will be a 3-level helix, but grades on the main layout will be easy. Near the main yard will be the turntable and loco shed. All track will be Atlas.

Mal explained his design principles and invited suggestions. Someone suggested he could save himself a lot of work if he invited Rob Nesbitt's comments before he started to lay any track. Been there, done that. Mal's latest design already incorporates Rob's thoughts.



No doubt speaking from experience, Tony Payne advised against laying track in winter. In Canberra's climate this can lead to trains derailing on The Big Dipper in summer. Thanks Tony, got that one covered too.

Time for a lovely afternoon tea – many thanks Marlene! And then out to the big garage for a look and for further discussion while long trains ran smoothly around the track currently in existence. **TF**



NMRA-AR Division Two—Where the fun begins

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about us

NMRA-AR

Division 2

0413 010 444

div2sup@nmra.org.au

Visit us on the web at
www.nmra.org.au

