



THE FLIMSY

NMRA Division 2 Newsletter

March 2016

Already???

Where does the time go. It only seems like yesterday we were having the first meeting of the year at Mal Risby's.

One of the things that appeals to me about being a member of the NMRA, is the opportunity to learn from others and see how different people approach an activity.

With the Internet age, there are so many resources where people can get this information from, it is a shame that these are not passed on to others within Division 2. I understand that some people are reluctant to share information, especially the newer members, but we all have something to learn if we can share the knowledge.

You might present a technique that most people know, but one step could be different, and that can make a world of difference to someones modelling.

Where I want to start is in The Flimsy, I will be including two new areas. One of them will be where members can ask a question of the group and then others can submit a response for publication in the next edition. Secondly, I would like to call upon all members to contribute a an article to The Flimsy. This could be as simple as something that you read somewhere and think that it could be a benefit to others. For those of you wanting to work towards AP points as an Author, this is a great opportunity to increase your points towards your AP.

The website is coming along quite nicely and I want to also include articles there as well, so again, if you have something, please send it through and I can publish it on the website for others to use. Also, you can gain AP's if your work is published electronically as well - you can't double dip, if it has been published in one medium and you've claimed points, you can't claim them again for another.

We have some very talented Model Railroaders within Division 2 and I would like you to think about how you could contribute and think that some of your knowledge could either keep somebody in the hobby or attract a new person to the hobby.

I'm happy to proofread any documents for you as I am sure that others will.

Let's start the transfer of knowledge within the Division.

Dion

Two drunks were walking down a New York City street when one fell down the subway steps. When he got back up top he told his drinking partner, "...boy you got to see that guy's train set in the basement!"

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The Main Show

March 2016

Thirteen of us assembled for today's meeting at Dion Koch's home at Banks in Canberra's Deep South. The main session today is to be presented by Stephe Jitts and we're all ready to go, but hey, Stephe's not here. What do we do now? But as we fly into panic mode, Stephe arrives, accompanied by Jack Child. Coming from Yass and Bowning (even further) respectively, they had well over half an hour's drive still ahead when they hit the northernmost outskirts of Canberra. But they're here now so away we go.

Announcements

This year's NMRA Australasian Region Convention is now to be held at Berowra, not at Liverpool as previously announced. It will be a one-day event only, on Sunday 11 September. Presumably layout visits may perhaps be possible on Saturday 10 or Monday 12 but nothing has yet been announced on that.

The 2017 Convention will be in Adelaide and there is a proposal for the following 2018 Convention to be in Western Australia – possibly a bit ambitious so soon after the travel to South Australia for so many NMRA members based in the eastern states. However, we will see what develops. Maybe 2019 might be a possibility for ACT? Lotta work in it chaps, but we've done it before. What do we think? The meeting slipped into mumble mode, most of it favourable. Yes, could do. Our 2013 effort went pretty well and we have most of the general planning principles written down, giving us a good starting point for next time.

And of course people are now starting to look ahead to the main NMRA Convention to be held in 2020 or 2021, not in USA as usual, but in Australia. This will be a huge affair and will require planning on a scale not previously experienced by NMRA Divisions in the Australasian Region. At the moment Divisions One (Queensland) and Seven (Sydney) have separately expressed interest in being the host for this event.

Our Intrepid Leader advised us that we now have a possible home for our monthly meetings when we need one. The parish hall of the Catholic church in Mawson is available for \$50 per event. Its limited kitchen and audio-visual facilities make it suitable for meetings. Discussion revealed that the ideal meeting venue still remains the good old private home, just as long as we don't have difficulty finding enough volunteers. Many of us enjoy visiting homes, especially those with a model railway layout, and several of us enjoy hosting meetings. For example, Stephe Jitts is perfectly happy to host all meetings at his place, just as long as someone else presents the Main Show. Oh yes, almost forgot... Just as long as everyone (in addition to Jack Child) is happy to travel to Yass each time. Today's meeting felt that we should stick with homes for the time being, using the church hall only as a fall-back position on those dates when a home is not available.

But we still need to find a suitable venue for storage of our club and exhibition layout. Investigations are continuing.

Our next meeting is at David Low's home at Wanniasa. David says he won't be giving a presentation at that meeting but he would like everyone to bring along more than one item for a grand Show & Tell. David lives at the far end of a small cul-de-sac, so kindly don't load your Show& Tell items into a lorry that is any larger than absolutely necessary.

For our May meeting, Stephen O'Brien is considering the church hall option and Jess Brisbane is looking for an opportunity to give a presentation on winter scenery. And there's a lot more to this topic than just generous drifts of snow here and there.

This prompted the question... Should we have more Show & Tell sessions at our meetings? Or more clinics? This led to general discussion. Obviously we enjoy the mixture of both that we are currently getting, without the need to control this aspect more closely.

April 2016 Meeting

The April 2016 meeting will be held at David Low's on the 16th of April.

Dave has requested that the topic of the meeting is Bring & Brag. He would like each person to come along with something interesting and rather than him give a presentation, the owner of the item to give a mini presentation.

Workshops conducted by those interested have been continuing on Mathew Waterreus's old layout in preparation for the Annual Kaleen Model Railroad Exhibition.

Written articles are needed for publication in **MainLine**. Not interested? Well, do remember that this is an easy path to becoming a **Model Railroad Author** in the NMRA Achievement Program.

And on the same subject, our Indefatigable Leader needs additional content for the Division Two website which is now nearly ready to be launched.

Stephe Jitts MMR, our Division Two NMRA Achievement Program Assistant Manager, announced that he had taken advantage of a recent opportunity to present Martin Canteros Paz with an NMRA Achievement Certificate, namely...

Martin Canteros Paz – Model Railroad Engineer, Electrical

The meeting strongly supported this independent action taken by Stephe, because we don't see Martin all that often. Tumut is pretty close to Canberra actually, though none of us have yet tackled the direct track (short cut?) across the mountains, preferring to take the Hume Highway instead – very much the long way round.

The news delighted all those of us who have already seen for ourselves the technical excellence and the magnitude of Martin's model railway work. We hadn't time today to summon the local town band and Rent-A-Mob to celebrate the occasion, but loud applause and cheering spontaneously broke out on hearing Stephe's news so we opened the windows so that Martin, Alex, Nico and Lulu could hear us in Tumut.

Show & Tell

Dion Koch displayed his N scale Orient Express made by Kato. Packed very neatly in two book-style boxes which open out, it makes for an attractive display. The boxes contain carriages only. You pick your own loco depending on which country the train is passing through.

Tony Payne showed us a shunter loco body and its motor. Tony has converted the motor from a belt drive to a gear drive.

John Martin displayed a Great Northern passenger car, one of a set that he is assembling.

Jack Child produced a Japanese brass 0-6-2 Baldwin steam loco in HO scale bearing ATSF livery. Jack had bought this loco with the intention of converting it to a NSW B Class loco, having been fooled by an incorrect photo caption which had suggested that the NSW B Class was made by Baldwin. Actually there were two B Classes in NSW – the B(205) Class made by Beyer Peacock and introduced in 1882, and the B (55) Class made by Dubs and introduced in 1891. Both these latter locomotives (and their tenders too!) differ too much from Jack's Baldwin ATSF model for a conversion to be feasible. However in 1881 SA Railways introduced a Baldwin X Class 2-6-0 with a tender closer in design to Jack's model. But again, major modification would still be necessary, shortening the loco body and moving the driving wheels closer together. And new side rods too. And so on. Altogether too much. Understandably, Jack has decided to keep this very nice ATSF model just as it is.

Jack also displayed the HO scale plastic body of a NSWGR 43 Class diesel loco. Jack is trying to remove the old paintwork but has not yet been able to find a suitable solvent. Plenty of suggestions were immediately offered, but Jack has already tried them all. Unfortunately none of them dissolve the paint, except for those which attack the plastic too. But any further suggestions will still be gratefully received so that Jack can get that loco looking good again.

With a flourish, Jack then changed scale abruptly from 1:87 to 1:1, producing a large and dangerous looking 19th century railway tracklaying hammer which he has recently acquired. It is marked with an arrow (government owned?) and some badly rusted lettering. Our in-house experts quickly got to work on the lettering (a bit of spit helped) and eventually deciphered it – “Made in Australia”. Thanks chaps, that was really helpful. The concave surface along one edge of the hammer indicates that this was definitely a specialist tool in addition to performing the basic bashing function of a heavy hammer. Jack is investigating further the history and function of this interesting piece of NSWGR equipment. Curatorial staff at Trainworks at Thirlmere may be able to assist.

The Main Show

Stephe Jitts then demonstrated how to optimise the newest model of Peco points (or turnouts if you prefer) for use with DCC and motorised point motors. At least that's what he planned to do, but then he found that the set he had brought to demonstrate on was in fact an older model. Quick! Duck home and grab the right ones. To Yass? Without a Tardis? Not that easy mate. We'll make do with the older model. The show must go on!

Stephe explained that the new design Peco HO points are slightly different from the older design. The main difference is in the way the over-centre spring is installed. In the new design, removal of the spring can leave the moving blades liable to fall out.

Stephe then demonstrated a method for ensuring that the blades are held secure and also demonstrated the complete process for preparing electrofrog points for DCC usage. Stephe recommends the use of electrofrog points over insulfrog points because, thanks to the frog being of metal rather than plastic, electrofrog points ultimately have a longer service life. However, they are slightly more complicated to prepare.

Stephe's parts list for this work is...

- 1 or more Peco HO Finescale Points.
- 2 lengths of hook-up wire. Stephe uses different colours.
- Soldering iron, and solder.
- Small 1.5mm jewellers flat blade screwdriver.
- Evergreen 123 plastic strip.
- Modelling glue or CA glue.
- Tweezers or forceps.
- 8 toothpicks.

Stephe then demonstrated how to do it, explaining as he went. This is what he did...

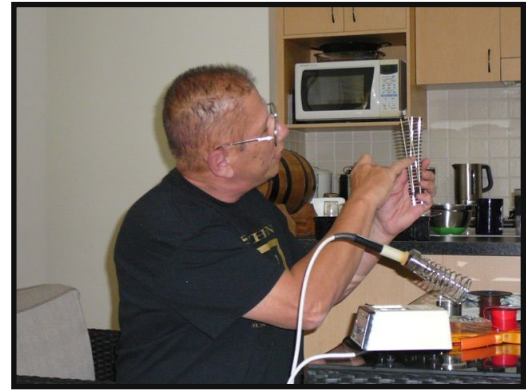


Step 1

- 1.1 Turn the point on its back.
- 1.2 Using the small screwdriver remove the two small bits of wire linking the frog with the two moving blades.

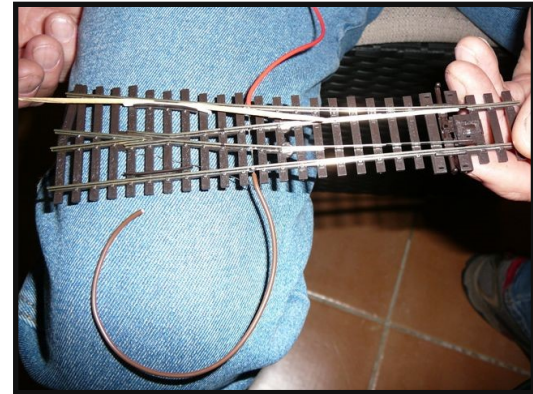
Step 2

- 2.1 Take two lengths of hook-up wire and strip about 13mm off one end of each wire.
- 2.2 Twist and tin the stripped ends.
- 2.3 Tin the underside of the rails where there are gaps in the sleepers.
- 2.4 Solder each wire to a running rail and its adjacent rail.



Step 3

- 3.1 Turn the point right side up.
- 3.2 Using the small screwdriver, remove the clip holding the over-centre spring.
- 3.3 Remove the spring and replace the clip.
- 3.4 Cut a 40mm length of 123 strip.
- 3.5 While holding the strip in the forceps, apply glue to one side of the strip.
- 3.6 Glue the strip onto the rear sleeper and hold in place with two toothpicks.



Step 4

- 4.1 Cut two more lengths of 123 strip.
- 4.2 Apply more glue and stick onto the outside of the check rails.
- 4.3 Use two or three toothpicks to hold the strips in place. (See photo)

Step 5 (optional)

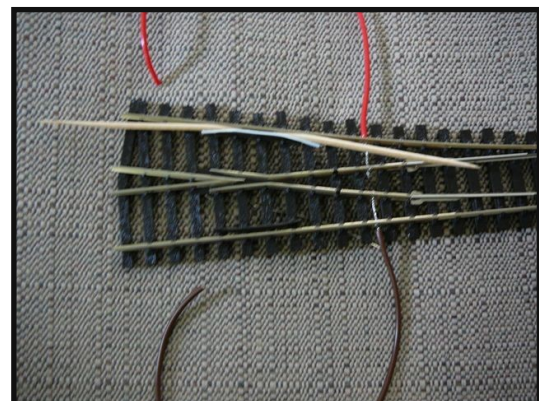
- 5.1 Some people like to solder a short piece of flexible wire across the junction of moving blades to improve electrical continuity. However Stephe has not found any need for this.

All very quick and simple when demonstrated by a Master Model Railroad-er, but for the less experienced it certainly doesn't look all that difficult.

For those who want notes on how to do it, Stephe has printed notes on paper (which he handed out) and he also has those notes in digital form (easily emailed).



Thanks Stephe for an interesting and informative session. Time now for afternoon tea in congenial surroundings. **TF**



Kaleen Report

This year Mathew Waterreus kindly offered Division 2 his HO Layout Callahan Central for display at Kaleen. Callahan Central is a typical American town serviced by Santa Fe and Union Pacific.

In the weeks leading up to Kaleen, there were a number of workshops held at Matt's place to iron out the layout in preparation for the weekend. Friday saw four of us meet at Matt's house to transport the layout to Kaleen. After a few finishing touches were applied, the layout was transported to Kaleen.

Saturday Saw Dion & Matt man the layout during the morning. Jess & Rob Nesbitt were on hand Saturday afternoon. The numbers on Saturday were typical for Kaleen. On Sunday, John Bullen & John Gillies manned the layout. John Bullen was a hit with the kids in encouraging them to be involved in "operating" a train. Dion & Matt seeing out the afternoon on Sunday. Numbers seemed down a bit on Sunday, no doubt the Airport open day, Auto Italia and the GWS Giants game all contributed in some way to the lower than expected numbers.

In amongst all of this, a number of members stuck their head in to see how everything was going and pitched in as well. Steve Walker was a common sight assisting even going back to his place on Saturday to retrieve some rolling stock. No, he didn't bring out the N Scale stuff, believe it or not, Steve has quite a collection of HO Locomotives and Rolling Stock. There was of course the ubiquitous Burlington Northern Caboose as well as a beautifully unpainted Brass Caboose. That particular Caboose received a great deal of feedback from a number of attendees.

Thanks needs to go to David Low for his generosity in making available his car and trailer for the transport of the layout to and from the exhibition.

The biggest thanks needs to go to Matt for his generosity and keenness in getting Callahan Central up and ready for the exhibition.

For those who aren't sure if they would like to assist in the future, come along and spend a bit of time on the layout and see how things run, this hopefully will give you an insight to what happens and may well help change your mind. **TF**



Division 2 Website

Div 2's website is "up & running", but it is in desperate need of content, both written and visual.

I have taken onboard some comments that members have made in regards to colours, but I would still like more input from the membership on the layout, look and feel and so on.

My intention is to upload every edition of The Flimsy for reference.

Overnight in Gundagai

Rob Nebitt has made a suggestion that rather than have two out of town meetings, that the Sunday following Martin's meeting, we gather in Gundagai and Rob will show us the local sights.

The plan would be to finish at Martin's and then travel to Gundagai where we would settle in to our accommodation and enjoy some sights of town.

Then Saturday evening we would meet up, enjoy a bite to eat and tell tall stories of days of old.

Then on the Sunday, travel to Junee for the morning and head off back home at approximately 1300.

If you are interested, please let me know so I can gauge if it is worth pursuing and I will then make arrangements based on numbers.**TF**



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about us

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