



THE FLIMSY

NMRA Division 2 Newsletter

April 2017

From the Editor

The April meeting was filled with plenty of discussion about a number of issues relating to exhibitions and what the NMRA Div.2 members should be doing. You can read more about it on the next page. However, I want to get members thinking about what they want from their membership of the NMRA and Div. 2 in particular.

For me, I enjoy the social interaction and the international connections that can be made through the NMRA. In May I will fly to the US to attend the NMRA Thousand Lakes Region/ Mid-Continent Region joint convention in Ames, Iowa. I will catch up with modellers who I met three and four years ago at the TLR event back then. However, locally I am interested in more tips and tricks on model railways. Stephe Jitts' talk last year on modifying Peco point throw bars was a great example. Does this have broad interest in the group? Do we have the expertise? Perhaps we will hear something like this at the May meeting with the focus on show-and-tell, with an emphasis more on the tell (explanation).

What do you think?

Brad

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The April meeting discussed exhibitions. Is the Epping Model Railway Club what we need to aim for? (Photo: B. Hinton).



April 2017 meeting

The April meeting was hosted by Div. 2 Superintendent, Dion Koch . There were nine members in attendance on a weekend when lots of things were happening in and around Canberra. Dion did not have much to report as we were between ARC meetings.

Dion thanked Stephe Jitts for exhibiting “Old Sydney” at the Canberra Model Railway Expo under the NMRA banner. The layout won second place overall which was rewarding recognition. Dion also thanked all the members who helped in operating the layout during the course of the weekend. And this led to a question posed by one member—should Div. 2 merge with another Canberra model railway club to increase the size of the group and make available more operators at exhibitions? Those present were not in favour of such a move.

A lively discussion followed concerning the purpose of exhibitions and what role the NMRA and members should play at such events. The discussion focused on whether exhibitions were useful in attracting new people to the hobby, especially children, which is an ongoing debate. Is the NMRA presence at exhibitions to foster the hobby and/or to generate membership? How can the NMRA differentiate itself from other exhibitors? Is there a place for small and incomplete layouts? More specifically to Div. 2; what is it we want from our membership? Some said they joined to learn new skills and to improve their own modelling efforts. For them a focus on doing things was important, while others were happy to socialize and work on their own projects.

The meeting finished with a more than adequate afternoon tea—thanks Dion!

What’s the purpose of model railway exhibitions and how should Div.2 members be involved? (Photo: B. Hinton)



Show and tell

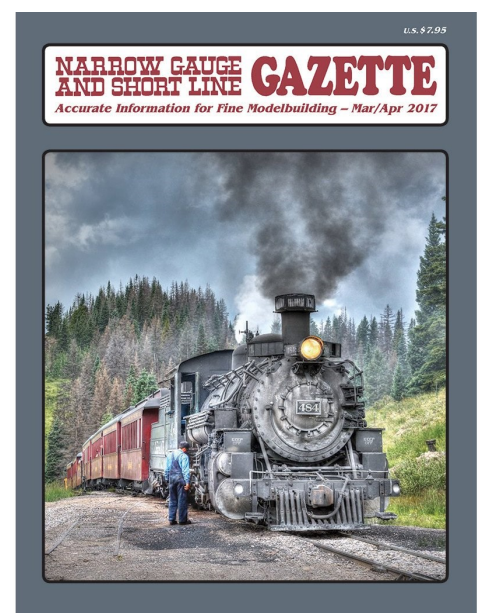
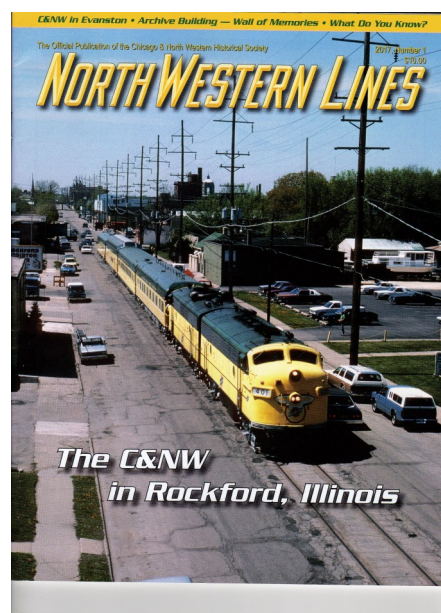
Jess Brisbane, following on from last month, brought along one of the flatcars she has been building. Jess will submit the flat car for AP judging in the rolling stock category. Jess also alerted everyone to the new issue of *Narrow Gauge and Shortline Gazette* now being published by White River Publications.

Brian showed us his fabulous O scale NSW 45 class diesel locomotive produced by Auscision Models. Brian commented that it was quite a wait from the time of payment to delivery, but like all good things, the wait was very worthwhile. The loco has been fitted with a Loksound DCC decoder. While Brian and Fran model South Australian Railways (SAR) (and the NSW 45 class is almost the same as an SAR 600 class), Brian is happy to keep his loco in the traditional NSW Indian Red colour scheme).

Matt Waterreus, an erstwhile HO scale modeller, was tempted by two N scale Athearn truck trailers. Could this be the start of a new phase for Matt's model railway empire? We will have to wait and see. Matt also brought along the April 2017 issue of *Model Railroader* - the 1000th edition of this magazine.

Brad brought along a recent purchase (although at the time of the meeting he left the magazine in the car!). Still, as the editor, I can slip the magazine into Show-and-Tell without anybody noticing..... *North Western Lines* is a quarterly magazine from the Chicago and North Western Historical Society (CNWHS). Railroad historical societies are a great way to get prototype and modelling information.

Lastly, Dallas had a Digitrax DCC command control unit for sale. Matt Waterreus didn't take long to recognise a bargain and quickly sealed the deal with Dallas—two very happy chappies!



Member's layout - Old Sydney

Stephe Jitts MMR kindly exhibited his layout "Old Sydney" as the NMRA representative at the Canberra Model Railway Expo held at Kaleen in March. Stephe gives us a brief summary of the layout and how it came to pass.

Sydney 1876 (aka Old Sydney) was a joint project by Stephen Herrick, John Prattis and me. The three of us shared a common interest in the "early days" of railways and wanted to see if we could replicate this interest in a model railway. The project was inspired by the etching of the Sydney railway precinct that appeared in the *Town and County Journal* of 1876. As faithfully as possible, the layout depicts the second Sydney railway station and environs as it was shortly after its construction.

The layout is HO scale and DCC operated using NCE components. The model uses Peco code 75 track with the standard Peco point motors, each having its own individual capacitor discharge unit. All structures are scratchbuilt from cardboard utilising plans scaled from photographs. The buildings certainly give the layout that wonderful 19th century feel.

Most of the locomotives and rolling stock are from short production runs from specialist suppliers such as John Sievers, Phil Badger and Peter Ford. These production runs are often only available at the annual "Early Days" model railway convention in Sydney. The "Early Days" convention is on again this year at the Dence Park Creative Centre, 26 Stanley Road, Epping (near swimming pool) on 22 July 2017. The early days of NSW railways is designed to cover the 1855 to 1930 period.

The "Old Sydney" layout is unusual in that it is a peninsula point-to-point model that allows members of the public to inspect it from both long sides and one end. The manner in which it is operated by a driver on each side, allows and encourages the public to talk to the operators to ask questions and make comments. These interactions frequently last considerably longer than the average three minutes that most members of the public spend viewing the majority of layouts. When operated by a team of three, considerable interaction between the three is required. The layout operators must understand how locos and trains move within the layout to best showcase all aspects of the model. This gives the train movements some purpose and leads to a far more enjoyable time than simply watching trains go around and around on the traditional exhibition layout.

"Old Sydney" as it appeared at the Canberra Model Railway Expo in 2017 (Photo: B. Hinton).





Can you identify this locomotive and where did it see service? (Photo: John Gillies)

Buffer stop

The March issue featured a prototype builder's plate on a steam locomotive. Yet again, the human supercomputer for all things railways, Mr Rob Nesbitt, was quick off the mark with the correct answer from last issue's train photo.

"The loco is the 3 foot gauge D&RGW K36, #487 presently running on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad line in Colorado/New Mexico.

I am hoping that we have another Div.2 member with quick reactions and an international knowledge of railways to be able to answer the challenge of identifying the loco pictured above.

And if you don't have the answer off the top of your head, then test your search skills on Google!

Feedback

The March issue invited comment about a number of things, including "show and tell" and the role of the NMRA Achievement Program (AP). Besides some general discussion, I received some written responses which I share with you here in a new segment called "Feedback". Please feel free to send in your comments originating from this current issue or from previous issues.

John Gillies agreed that "show-and-tell was a great way to share experiences and encourage active modelling".

Rob Nebitt said : "Show-and-tell is a great way to encourage modelling - particularly for those people without a layout. And if the AP is your thing, then so much the better. During my loco a month period from 2011-2013, I was bringing in a model or two every meeting. It was also a way for me to see a goal and purpose for someone without a layout (at that time)".

And Stephe Jitts has this to say about the AP: "The AP can also be a valuable educational tool. It gives guidance for aspects of the hobby that one might not normally explore. In obtaining my own MMR I was required to perform tasks to achieve an end. One of the things it did for me was to identify aspects of the hobby that I don't particularly like and yet it enhanced my appreciation of others".

Send your responses to: editor.thefimsy@gmail.com

The last say....

We discussed building layouts among other things at the April meeting. A big layout requires a lot of resources and time. And some members have commitments to other club or home layouts. Still, there were a few members wanting to build something - perhaps a diorama, a Timesaver or an Inglenook layout (as discussed last November). Or perhaps several modules with common building standards such as FREMO. Could this be of interest to Div. 2?

The 2014 NMRA Convention in Brisbane displayed a HO modular club layout built by individual members using their own agreed standards. Participation was voluntary and not all club members were involved. Modules could be joined together to form a large layout for exhibition purposes. The idea was for members to cover all the skills with a small-sized module that could be completed and form part of a group exhibition layout. This was beneficial to individuals and the group.

The benefits are that members can participate more actively and learn new skills. It is largely inexpensive compared to a full-size exhibition layout. The sections are small enough to store easily at home. The pieces fit together in different combinations and are not dependant on every module being at exhibitions.

The concern is that the modules might not blend together realistically, being of different quality, and being independent of other modules regarding scenery. There might not be a realistic flow to the layout this might detract from the look.

What do members think?

Brad

Epping Model Railway Exhibition 10-12 June

Members are reminded that the Epping Model Railway Club's exhibition at the Thornleigh Brick Pit Centre is on again over the June long weekend.

The next meeting

The next meeting will be a special "show and tell" meeting at the home of David Low. Like last year, bring along your masterpieces and tell us how you did it or where you found it!

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Modular layout (note join between modules at left) from the 2014 Brisbane NMRA Convention (Photo: B. Hinton)

