

THE FLIMSY

NMRA Division 2 Newsletter

February 2017

From the Editor

One of the challenges of a model railroad group such as our Div. 2 is exhibiting a layout under the banner of the NMRA to generate interest in the Association. Since there is no Div. 2 layout as such, we have previously used individual member layouts under the banner of the NMRA Canberra. We will do this again this year.

As all exhibitors know, having a sufficient number of crew to operate a layout over a two day exhibition can be a challenge. This is made more difficult in our case as many Div. 2 members are members of other clubs, or who have private layouts, exhibiting at the same event. The number of NMRA members is now spread out among several layouts.

On the one hand, members are actively involved in showcasing the hobby with their layouts at an exhibition even if they are not all declaring their personal association with the NMRA. On the other hand, this might limit public exposure to the NMRA if it means there aren't enough members to staff a layout specifically under the banner of the NMRA.

What do you think?

Brad

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The NMRA Div.7 layout , Kansas City West Bottoms, exhibited at the recent Forestville Exhibition (Photo: B. Hinton).



February 2017 meeting

The February meeting was hosted by Stephen Walker on the north side of Canberra. We had sixteen members at the meeting. I am sure I can speak for everyone by saying that we all enjoyed both the conversation and the delicious afternoon tea! Many thanks to Steve and his wife, Lorraine.

As Div. 2 Superintendent Dion Koch was unable to attend, John Gillies filled in with his report from the recent ARC meeting. John advised that both the Australasian Region and Div 2 were in a sound financial position. That said, the ARC was looking to reduce costs wherever practicable while retaining services for members. An example was *MainLine* no longer being printed but is available to all members via the NMRA AR website (see back page). Changing ARC meeting audio conferencing providers last year also reduced costs for the organisation. Membership fees would remain the same for 2017.

John explained some of the NMRA AR's taxation implications after changes to legislation in 2016 and that tax is payable if the NMRA AR's taxable income is \$417 or more, the main driver being bank interest earned from the AR's term deposit account. There was also a discussion about public liability insurance (PLI). The NMRA AR Sanction Application form for PLI Coverage is [here](#). Applying for a sanction was also covered in the *Secretary's Notes* column of the [Sept-Oct 2016 issue of the NMRA AR magazine MainLine](#). PLI covers members on Association activities (approved by the sanction process) in the event that they become legally liable to pay compensation for personal injury and/or property damage to others (non-members/public). It only applies for occurrences in connection with our Association.

John Bullen led the discussion about volunteer organisations, and the *ARHS Canberra* voluntary administration in particular. There was much debate over the causes leading to the current situation, and plenty of concern as to the future of the exhibits and the operational locomotives such as 6029.

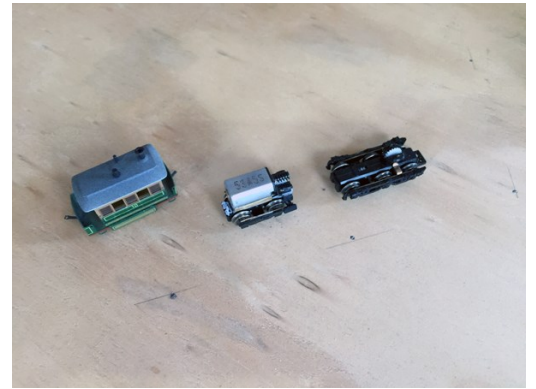
Div. 2 is exhibiting Stephe Jitts' *Old Sydney* layout at the Kaleen exhibition on the weekend of the 25th and 26th March. A roster of operators will be created and some operational training will be required beforehand.

Host, Stephen Walker, models the Burlington Northern in N scale. After the formalities of the meeting, there was a beeline into the layout room. BN 6350 is on its way to pick up its train from the yard (Photo: S. O'Brien).



Show and tell

Ross Balderson started proceedings with his N scale steam tram and carriages. The tiny tram even has a DCC chip inside. Ross had one of the trams in action on a small test track built by Steve Currie. The tram is powered by a bogie from a *Badger Bits* 48 class locomotive. The body is made from a home-produced brass etch. Ross also makes the decals. As the photo at right suggests, the body and the mechanism are very small indeed.



Jess Brisbane showed us her latest O scale building—Arkham station. The building is made with a shell surrounded by styrene brick sheet (Boston red bricks). Tichy window castings round out the building. The photo shows the building after a dusting of snow which is based on a photo Jess has of the prototype.

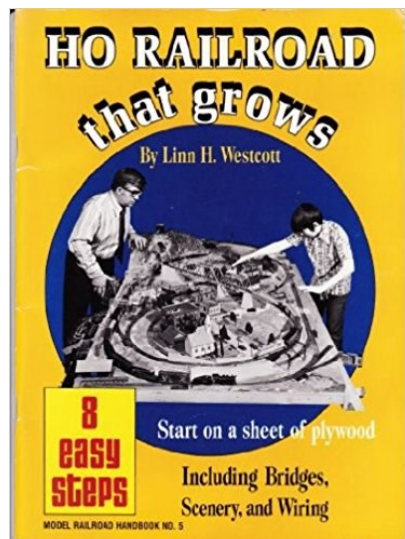
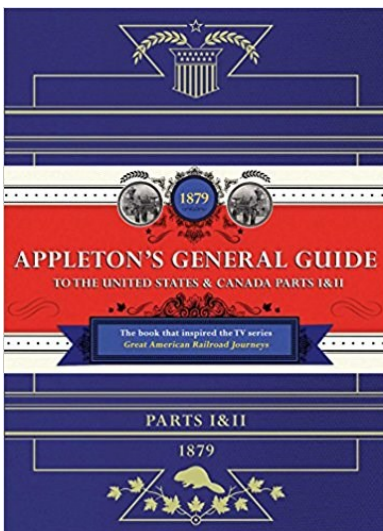
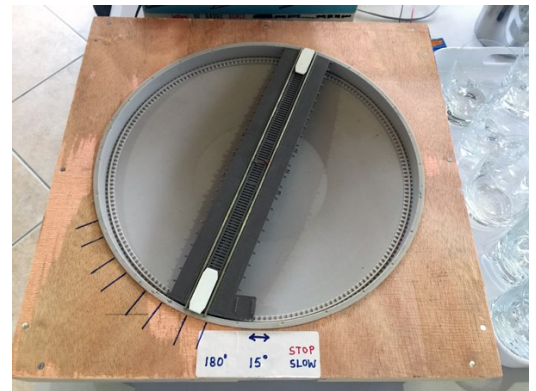


Jack Childs gave us a demonstration of his motorised Walthers turntable. Jack constructed the mechanism himself using some gearing and an Arduino to drive a stepper motor, giving precise turntable road indexing in 15 degree increments. Jack has written and submitted an article for AMRM about how he built the mechanism—look out for that.

Graeme Hodges, a prodigious reader among the group, brought along another recent purchase from Booktopia—Appleton's General Guide to the US and Canada Parts I and II (orig. 1879).

Matt Waterreus also came prepared with an old book: "HO Railroad that Grows" by Linn H. Westcott and published by Kalmbach many years ago (well, not as long ago as the original Appleton's book!). Matt said how helpful the book had been in working on his own layout.

Lastly, Stephen O'Brien showed us his recent purchase, the Noch Grasmaster, from the German store modellbahnshop-lippe.com.



Member's layouts—Jess Brisbane

My *Arkham & Vermont Railway* is a two-foot gauge common carrier railroad operating (mostly) in the alternative Massachusetts of H.P. Lovecraft's imagination in 1925. It is based largely on the prototype *Waterville, Wiscasset & Farmington Railway* in Maine, with sundry additions from the other Maine Two-footers. It is modelled in On30 (O scale rolling stock running on HO gauge 16.5 mm track). This is somewhat wider than the scale track gauge, but the ease of using HO trucks, mechanisms, and so on outweighs the inaccuracy. I had already started on the layout when *Bachmann* brought out their wonderful Forneys, which sealed the deal. Track is hand laid code 70. Code 70 rail in O scale is a close representation of the prototype 35lb rail. I also use Kadee #5 couplers (which are actually S scale) because in O scale they are roughly the size of the 3/4 MCB couplers used by the Two-footers. Control is by an ancient Digitrax Chief system, supplemented by later throttles. I use Fast Tracks equipment, but not the turnout jigs. I use their Twist-Ties turnout templates instead, so I can build curved and overlapping turnouts to fit. Turnout control is digital – you use your digit to move the Caboose Industries 220S switch stand which have a built in switch to control frog polarity, and are sprung.

The layout is being built in two phases. Phase one is the branch line terminus at the port of *Innsmouth*. It is not yet complete (what layout ever is?), but it is close. There are only a couple of things still to be built, a few electrical gremlins to be extirpated, and a further scattering of details to be added. *Innsmouth* is a river port loosely based on *Wiscasset* in Maine. The most obvious resemblance is the trestle over the mudflats. There is also a Maine-style covered station (somewhat anachronistic for 1925), and models of the turntable at Albion and the Kingsfield engine house. Other features include a fisherman's co-op and fish wharf, a cargo wharf, and various supporting businesses. In keeping with H.P. Lovecraft's description, there are few if any animals, and an unusual proliferation of motor cars for the time. Most structures are modelled as being built from timber and shingled or tarpapered, to give a uniform, back-woods feel to the town. Separating *Innsmouth* proper from the rest of the layout is a stretch of countryside with forest, marshland, and a waterfall. There is also a country cemetery and a typical Down East lighthouse.

Phase two is the city of *Arkham*. It features the city station, some of the industrial area of the city, and the wye where the *Innsmouth* branch splits off from the main line to points west. *Arkham* has barely begun construction. *Arkham* is set in winter, in contrast to *Innsmouth's* early summer. Key scenes that I have planned so far are a city-spanning viaduct, the main station/company office building, a standard gauge interchange track, and an ice house. Next to the ice house will be a frozen pond with an ice harvesting scene. In order to emphasise the big city feel, most structures are masonry, and the important ones have slate roofs.

I am more a modeller than an operator, so operations will be quite unsophisticated. In the main, they will consist of making up a train at one end of the layout, taking it to the other end, and breaking it up. This will then be repeated ad lib. In some ways, *Arkham* could be considered a detailed fiddle yard for *Innsmouth*, though it will have switching opportunities of its own. Since I have sound-equipped locos, all train movements will be accompanied by the appropriate whistle signals. Switching moves will be expected to include time for the brakemen to uncouple and couple cars, connect air hoses, throw switches, and walk to where they need to be.

More information on the layout can be found on Jess' blog: <https://arkhamandvermont.wordpress.com>





What is this locomotive and does anyone know where it is located? You may need to do some research on this one.

Buffer stop

The January issue featured a prototype photo of a mysterious steam locomotive. The question was asked as to what the locomotive was and where it was located.

Quick off the mark was Rob Nesbitt who correctly identified the locomotive and the location.

The loco is preserved W class tank locomotive, one of two built for the New Zealand Railways. The loco is in action at the *Ferrymead Museum* in Christchurch.

Will Rob be first out of the blocks again next month?

The prototype and location of the locomotive above might be a challenge...

From the internet

In keeping with the theme of preservation railways, here are some web links to a selection of Australian railway preservation groups.

National Rail Museum (Port Adelaide)

<http://www.natrailmuseum.org.au/>

Puffing Billy (Dandeenong, Victoria)

<http://puffingbilly.com.au/en/>

Steamranger (South Australia)

<http://www.steamrangerheritagerailway.org/>

Transport Heritage NSW

<https://www.transportheritagensw.com.au/>

Sydney Tramway Museum

<https://www.sydneytramwaymuseum.com.au/>

Steamtown Heritage Rail Museum (Peterborough, SA)

www.steamtown.com.au/

Pichi Richi Rail Preservation Society

<https://www.pichirichirailway.org.au/>

The Workshops Rail Museum (Queensland)

<http://www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au/>

Rail Heritage WA

<http://www.railheritagewa.org.au/index.html>

West Coast Wilderness Railway Tasmania

<http://www.wcwr.com.au/>

The last say....

For this issue, I am giving the last say to **Jess Brisbane** who explains what an automat is and how it works. The automat was part of the station building that Jess constructed and brought along for *Show and Tell*.

The Automat was a chain of cafeterias that was popular in the interwar years. Their *schtick* was that everything cost 5 cents (later ten cents) and was obtained from coin-in-the-slot dispensers. This was seen as the acme of hygienic modernity, despite there being a full kitchen crew keeping the dispensers loaded with pies, sandwiches, soup, and other options. There was a cashier, but their function was to make change (in nickels, 5 cent coins) rather than to tally up the total cost and accept payment. If you only had a couple of nickels to your name, you could get some pie or soup and a bottomless cup of coffee. If you had more money, you could assemble a pretty good lunch for a quarter (25 cents) or so.

Until next month, enjoy your railway modelling in whatever form it takes.

Brad

NMRA services

The [NMRA Australasia website](#) offers a wide range of services and information, including: The Achievement Program, layout galleries, clinic notes, Market Place, Youtube channels, contest info, and the library.

The next meeting

Date: 18 March 2017. Ross Balderson will be our host. Dion will email details of the meeting to Div.2 members in the preceding week.

The Flimsy contact

editor.theflimsy@gmail.com

For more information about Automats and their history, see the article from The Smithsonian "[Meet Me at the Automat](#)" and this article from 6sqft, "[Horn & Hardart Automats: Redefining lunchtime, dining on a dime](#)". The image below is from this latter article.

