



THE FLIMSY

NMRA Division 2 Newsletter

January 2017

From the Editor

Greetings and happy New Year. I hope 2017 will be productive and fulfilling for all our members. I look forward to our program of meetings for the coming year.

That said, I was away for the January meeting. John Gillies kindly offered to take notes and some photos for me. I have taken this onboard and trust that I have captured both the content and the spirit from the meeting.

This issue follows a similar format to the previous two issues of *The Flimsy*. The meeting notes and "Show and Tell" form the foundation of the newsletter to keep all Div.2 members informed. Additional content provides Div.2 members the opportunity to showcase their knowledge and experiences for everyone to share. Please feel free to make contributions at any time. My contact email is on the back page.

Brad

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In 2017 I will be including a prototype train photo in *The Flimsy* but without identifying the location or the train. Let's see how knowledgeable Div. 2 members really are. Where and what is this train? (Photo: B. Hinton)



January 2017 meeting

The January meeting was hosted by Mal Risby on the southside of Canberra. We had sixteen people in attendance, including two guests. We hope that the visiting guests enjoyed the meeting and the local hospitality.

Div. 2 Superintendent Dion Koch welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2017. Dion reported that the Christmas dinner banquet at *La Piazza* in Erindale was a great success with more than enough good food for everybody. He also said how pleased he was with the recent issues of *The Flimsy* and that it's great to have it back again. Those present wholeheartedly agreed (thank you for the kind words, Ed.).

Dion submitted an application for Div. 2 to display a layout at the Canberra Model Railway Club Kaleen Expo 2017 on 25-26 March. Dion has accepted and thanked Stephe Jitts for his kind offer to use his "Old Sydney" layout for the exhibition, which means he'll now have to request a larger space as the layout is 1 x 9 metres long when assembled. Jack Child is currently minding the layout for Stephe and has informed Stephe that the layout needs a little work to bring it up to exhibition standard. Stephe will arrange to set the layout up at his house and the work sessions will be held there prior to the exhibition. There will be more details to follow at a later date.

John Gillies reported that the NMRA AR's end of financial year statements confirmed the Association's sound financial position. Locally, our Division 2 bank account has a balance of \$465.03. With the exception of the most recent \$20 deposit of surplus tip money after the recent Christmas dinner, all remaining funds were obtained from past Div. 2 exhibition payments.

The NMRA meeting dates for 2017 are now up on the NMRA Australasia Region website.

See: http://www.nmra.org.au/region/d2_meetings.html .

However, Div.2 still needs meeting hosts for the June and July meetings. Dion said Tony Payne couldn't now host the April meeting. David Low kindly stepped forward and advised he would take Tony's place.

Visiting from the central coast, former Div.2 member David Mitchell showcased his skills with his almost completed SEF white metal LNER A4 steam locomotive in OO scale. (Photo: J. Gillies)



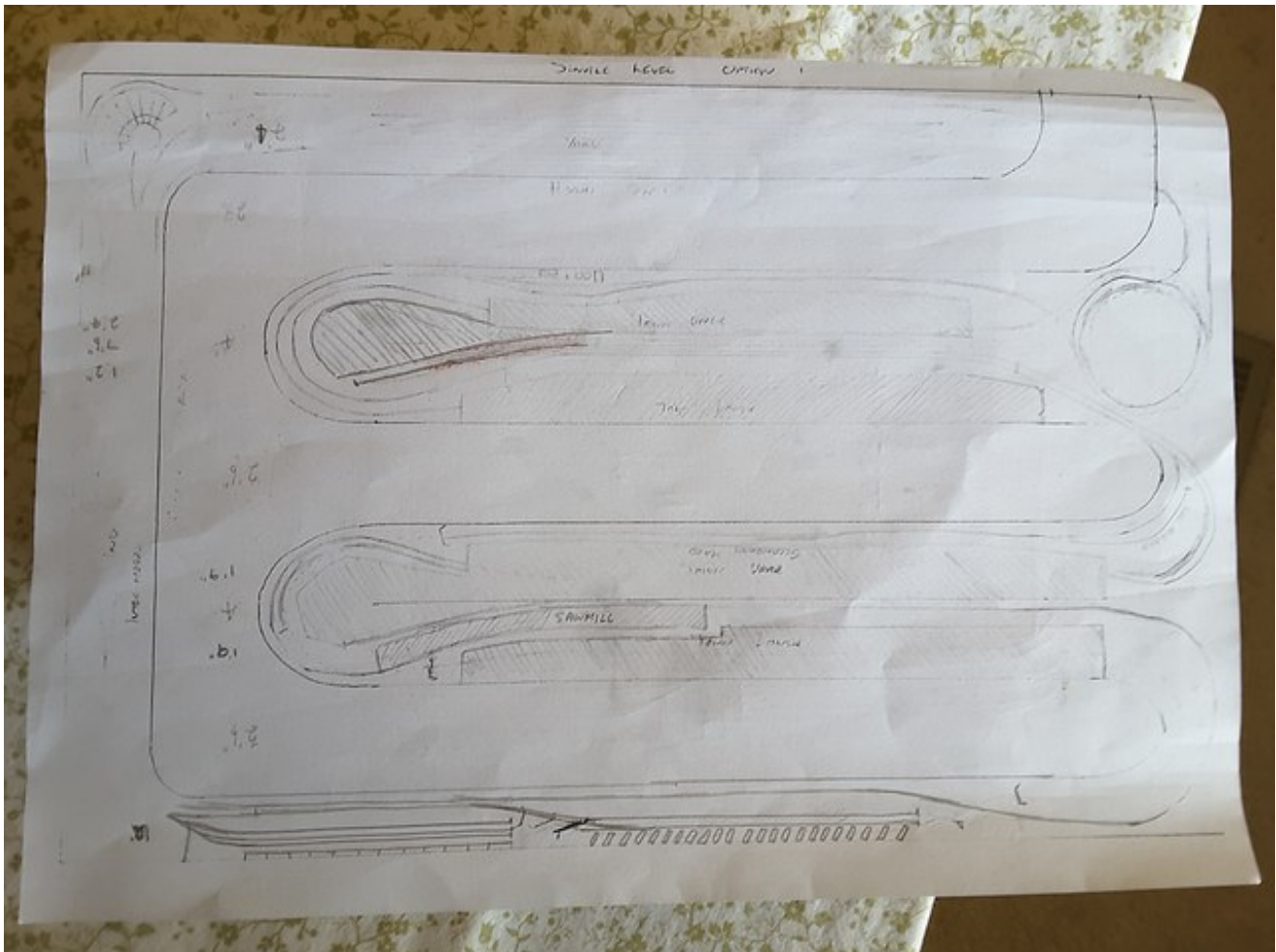
New layout ideas—Mal Risby

Our host, Mal Risby, reviewed his layout plan from last year. Mal explained that when he thought about starting work on building the new layout during the past year, something wasn't quite right. Some preliminary checks showed that the draft plan didn't quite work out when translated into the actual layout space available. In fact, Mal discovered that the actual room size was only 18 feet wide, not the 19 feet he thought he had!

Mal reaffirmed his longstanding plan to model the Montana Rail Link and BNSF in Montana. He will use Atlas code 55 track (now back in production and available) as it has better appearance and good operational capabilities over the alternative Peco code 80 track used on his current layout. Mal has decided on a twice around the room plan built on one deck with the track levels of each lap connected by a helix (which drew some discussion), but with a height difference of around 12-15 cm as per his drawn plan below (Photo by John Gillies).

Mal intends to offset and alternate the areas of operational focus between the two levels to avoid congestion as operators move around the layout. He will also have two 16 track staging yards and plans to use 3 unit lash-ups as his standard train power which will pull any of his planned long trains easily up the helix without problems. The new *Digitrax* DCS240 Advanced Command Station will allow Mal to run up to 400 locos and 400 throttles and operate accessory decoders in staging and on the main line for turnout control as well as all the various 3 unit consisted mainline powered trains running or in staging on the layout. Visible yards will use small control panels.

Those present enjoyed Mal's informative layout update presentation. Marlene was also thanked for providing the usual sumptuous afternoon tea. Thanks to Mal for a very enjoyable start to the year!

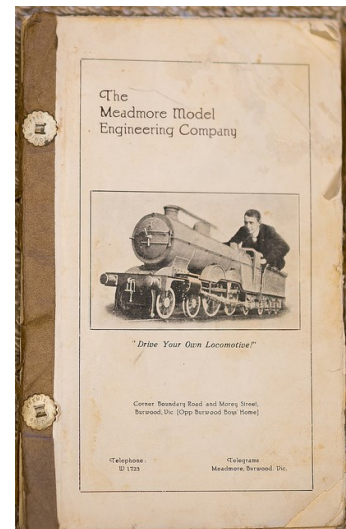


Show and tell

Jess Brisbane brought along a very nicely built O scale card model of the free [Clever Models](#) "Muchie's Pawn Shop" which was covered in a three-part series in issues 8-10 (July/August through November/December 2016) of the free [All Scale Rails e-magazine](#). The shop (at right) is nicely detailed inside and out with subtle weathering and battery powered internal lighting. Jess also showed her latest snow technique trials to select the best snow modelling medium for her layout and noted that her station will be winterised in the coming months.



Wal Pywell circulated a booklet produced by The *Meadmore Model Engineering Company* which his sister had given him as a present. It featured a range of trains and products in various gauges and types from a number of manufacturers including *Bassett-Lowke*. Graeme Hodges and John Bullen knew of Meadmore from their Melbourne days and indicated the publication dated from the 1930s or later. Graeme advised the company was still trading as late as the 1960s.



David Mitchell brought a skilfully assembled *South Eastern Finecast* OO scale whitemetal LNER A4 Class 4-6-2 locomotive that he has been building over a number of years. Dave explained some of the trials and tribulations he had to overcome building the kit. This was due to many parts not fitting as intended, which required considerable drilling, filing and soldering of small parts, and even assistance to turn down the diameter of driving wheels and flanges so they would fit.



Stephe Jitts informed the meeting that he and Karina had a wonderful time travelling in the USA which included a number of train trips. He located an old HO scale AHM Lincoln Funeral Car model after visiting the Gettysburg museum. Stephe advised that the unique four truck passenger car was originally built as Lincoln's Sate car, but was never used for that purpose and converted to Funeral Car service following Lincoln's assassination in April 1865. Stephe also showed a HO scale [Ring Engineering](#) power pick-up truck that will be used for marker light illumination.



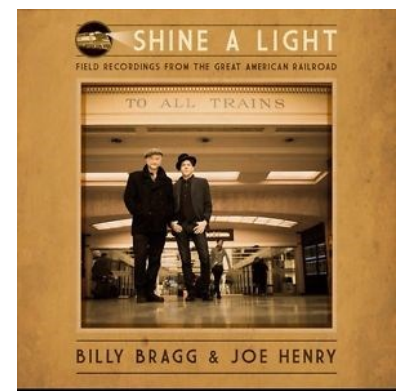
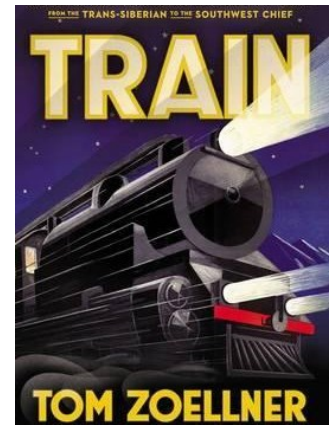
Show and tell (continued)

John Martin showed us his *Rapido* HO scale passenger cars decorated in the Burlington Northern Executive paint scheme. The passenger cars are very well detailed in line with typical *Rapido* products and feature internal battery powered lighting that's turned on and off by using a wand waved above the car (photo at foot of the page).

Mathew Waterreus brought his recently completed capacitor discharge unit he has been building over the past few months. Matt built it on a perforated circuit board with components fitted in a *JayCar* box with external outputs. The unit will be used to operate *Peco* point motors.

Graeme Hodges brought the book "Train" by Tom Zoellner which covers his thoughts and observations on long distance train travel. Graeme also brought the 2016 Billy Bragg and Joe Henry CD, "Shine A Light" (not to be confused with the Rolling Stones 2008 CD of the same name). As stated, "In March 2016 Billy Bragg and Joe Henry, guitars in hand, boarded a Los Angeles-bound train at Chicago's Union Station looking to reconnect with the culture of American railroad travel and the music it inspired. Winding along 2,728 miles of track over four days, the pair recorded classic railroad songs in waiting rooms and at trackside while the train paused to pick up passengers." The website interactive map that shows their journey and recording spots is very good with videos of songs being recorded and background stories to them. As you may be well aware, Billy Bragg has a strong world-wide following and Canberra is one of the last stops on their tour at the Canberra Theatre on the 20th of April.

Mal Risby passed around two recent N scale locomotive acquisitions: a *Fox Valley Models* Santa Fe GP60 which he discovered has a problem with the light board and an *InterMountain* BN SD40-2 which features an accurate body shell and trucks and is a great improvement on some of their earlier locomotives, as far as he's concerned. The loco, with *ESU Loksound*, ran well around his layout.





MR Video Plus and TrainMaster TV were both discussed at the January meeting. There were pros and cons for both subscription services. Here is an interactive excerpt from MRVideoPlus from their newsletter dated 31 January 2017.

Buffer stop

Last issue we had a question from host Wal Pywell. And this issue we have some suggested solutions

Q: How to wire an automatic polarity switch device to power a wye or reversing loop? What is the best “box” to do the job?

A: There were a couple of suggestions in response to Wal’s dilemma. Products that can do the trick include those from [Azatrax](#) and [Tam Valley](#) (the frog juicer). And [this website](#) gives information on polarity control for DC layouts.

Kalmbach publish books on wiring, and Wal’s problem is covered by Mike Polsgrove in his book, “DCC Projects & Applications”.

From the internet

The amount of information from the internet about model railroading is immense. We have already seen in the two previous issues that Youtube is a great source of information. But for this issue, we will look at some of the commercially produced model railroad content that can be accessed with a subscription — *MR Video Plus* and *TrainMasters TV*.

[MR Video Plus](#), from the stable of US magazine [Model Railroader](#), is a subscription video website “designed to help you build great models and train layouts”. The videos are streamed in HD, and accessible on a range of devices such as a phone, tablet, or computer with an Internet connection. A personal subscription costs USD44.95 per year.

[Model Railroad Hobbyist](#) provides a similar online video subscription service called [TrainMaster TV](#). “TrainMasters TV uses a TV-show format to present an act each week, building toward a complete 4-act show by month-end. Each act contains many segments ranging from a few minutes to 30 minutes or more. TrainMasters’ viewers can choose to watch individual acts or the entire show. TrainMasters also has an archive library of how-to videos on a broad selection of model railroad topics.”

While both these services are on a subscriber-basis, they are well worth considering as part of your model railroading information armory.

The last say....

I want to thank John Gillies for taking comprehensive notes from the meeting as I was away down the coast enjoying some R&R. John also supplied a number of photos that enabled me to assemble an expanded *Show and Tell* in this issue with all of the post-Christmas goodies.

And thanks for the favourable comments at the meeting about *The Flimsy*. I am just building upon the work done by my predecessors. However, like them, I need to have the involvement and co-operation of members to help me with content for each issue. John did a sterling job for me at Mal's place but content can also be supplied to me outside of monthly meetings. Last issue had a great article written by Rob Nesbitt about his future layout. This type of information, plus a photo or two, is just the thing for providing that added information to make *The Flimsy* an enjoyable read. And it also showcases the work of our local NMRA members.

Let me warn you that I will be looking for a layout article for the February issue. If you are interested in putting your layout or layout plans forward, I can work with you to put a one page article (including photo) into the next issue. I can even make a special visit to the layout to get the information I need if that is more helpful.

Drop me a line and we can discuss — no need to be shy!

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 library allows all members to access a range of DVDs. See the NMRA Australasia website for details.

The next meeting

Date: 18 February 2017
Location: Steve Walker's place. Dion will email full details to Div.2 members.

The Flimsy contact

editor.theflimsy@gmail.com

The National Library of Australia has a new exhibition called "The Sell: Australian advertising 1790s to 1990s". Details can be found from the exhibition website: <https://www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/the-sell>
Australian modellers may find some useful advertising posters for their layouts.

