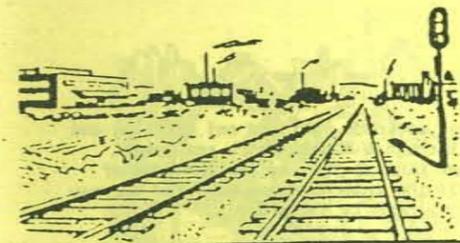


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# MAIN LINE

NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION - AUSTRALASIAN REGION

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

APRIL, MAY, JUNE 1987

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION # NBH 7190



CADILLACS TOP THE RISE! Smooth-riding GM SD9Es roar through Laughlin CA, on the Northwestern Pacific's WILLITS TURN, August 1985.

Drawing from a photo in CTC BOARD, Sept.'85

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### NMRA Building Fund

Apart from one or two members, support for the Building Fund has been Nil from the Region. Whilst understandable in view of distance, having its own premises will certainly help contain costs of the NMRA and so we should support the Drive.

Donations can be made through the Chattanooga office address which appears on page 3 of the Bulletin and you can quote your Visa or Mastercard details to make it easier.

So be in it. You will receive a Certificate of Appreciation and a pin, button, cloth patch, etc. depending on the amount you contribute from \$US10 upwards.

The Region itself recently contributed \$US25 and we hope to provide further support from part of the proceeds of sale at Eugene in July of the NMRA logo mentioned in the last issue.

### PROTO: 48

Don Wishart of P.O. Box 1, Mt. Macedon Victoria 3441 has supplied me with copies of correspondence and standards he has received in respect of Fine Scale 1:48 modelling i.e. modelling in 1/2" scale but with prototypically correct track gauge and wheel standards (Instead of 1.25" between rails, 1.177" is preferred). Don would be interested in hearing from anyone interested in the subject.

### Membership

As promised last issue, a membership form for that friend of yours who might join is enclosed - please use your best endeavours to gain a member or two.

The decline in membership in the National appears to have bottomed. There was a net gain in January, February and March of 145 members to a new total of 21,128. The hard work of the new regime in the U.S. appears to be having its effect.

### The Great Wall

Having spent three weekends (off and on) drilling and pounding a hole through a double brick and cement render wall for an exhaust fan, my earlier idea of demolishing myself the inter-bedroom-wall for the new Cedar Valley was thankfully discarded.

My Irish builder (true!) has just spent 21 days cutting the opening 6'8" x 6'6" and has yet to re-render and make good. He said he had never struck such a solid wall - "It was a real B-----" and the builder (Dutch) who built the house in the early '50's "must have intended it to stand until the Second Coming!"

Once I clean up and re-paint the alterations there will be no excuse. I will just have to manipulate the layout by the previously described circuitous route (Main Line Vol. 3 No. 3) to its new home. Any volunteers? Previous experience as a Circus strongman would be well regarded.

### Membership Listing

A future issue will include a membership listing as a service to those who would wish to make contact with other modellers in their area or with similar interests. If you do not want your name and address published for any reason please let me know.

### Helper Column

We have received requests to publish a helper service where either we will answer questions or call for membership assistance on some more esoteric subjects.

Please address your questions to Helper Column C/- NMRA, P.O. Box 529 Epping 2121.

### Finally

Don't forget the AGM on 30 May - see separate notice in this issue. It promises to be a fun day especially as the Bankstown Live Steamers are having their 25th Anniversary meeting nearby on the same day.

Until next time

John

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Main Line is the official journal of the Australasian Region of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc. It is published four times per year in approximately February, May, August and November.

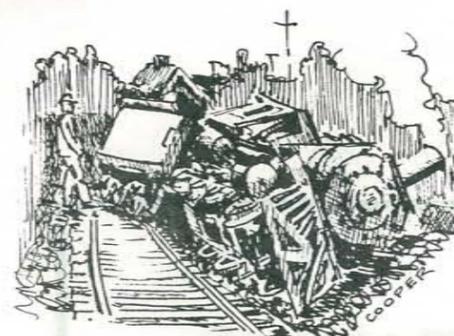
Articles, letters, members classified advertisements and club notices are solicited from the membership and are considered to be donated free for the benefit of the hobby. They should be addressed to the Editor at the address shown in the Directory on this page.

Paid advertising is welcomed. Current rates payable in advance are \$100 for a full page for four issues, \$50 for a half page and \$25 for a quarter page.

## OFF THE RAILS

by Bill Cooper

### common sense



It is the unusual that attracts our attention. Beautiful (or awful) people stick in our memory longer than the common herd. On our travels, the striking, different scene is remembered, rather than the routine roads, trees, hills and houses that make up most of the landscape. To us train nuts, the Super Chief, Flying Scotsman, or some (probably faster) freight hotshot is better known than the 1420 to Woolwoop (great train). Unusual things impinge on our memory and the commonplace doesn't ... or does it?

As modellers, we are just the same. Most likely, there are far more Big Boys and IHB 3-cylinder 0-8-0s (a REALLY rare machine) sitting around on layouts than the two-a-penny 4-6-0s and 2-8-0s of the steam days. Interesting passenger cars, like observations and diners, are as common as coaches in the model world, whereas the vast majority of prototype cars are coaches. Lots of baggage cars, too. Among freight cars, billboard reefers, watermelon cars and 4-truck flats are as common in miniature as they are rare in reality. Our bias towards the unusual sees the one-off become the modelled norm.

So what? Why not just do what pleases us? Why not indeed. My FERN VALLEY runs a Pacific Coast Shay and a PA together (but not MU), so perhaps, people in glass houses ....

Yet, in the work of top layout builders, there is a certain charisma, a hard-to-define quality, that makes a scene look like 'a slice of the real world'. This ability is beyond that required to just build a nice model (a relatively common attainment of those with enough motivation and practice.) More than that. It is the ability to create a scene which looks somehow familiar. Each individual part may not even show top modelling work, but the overall result is STUNNING. Better than the sum of its parts.

What IS it that sets these models apart? In large measure, the skill is in replicating the COMMONPLACE. Things that we see but don't see, because we know and expect them to be there. A single-minded dedication to modelling the mediocre and the ordinary. That is what

idea. John Allen's magnificent artistry in the GORRE AND DAPHETID was firmly based on ordinaryness, but with some skilful caricature, making it larger than life. Frank Ellison's DELTA LINES displayed its creator's theatrical flair, way ahead of its time in portraying the real-life scene of the period. So successful was he that his articles of the '40s are still worth reading for today's modelling ... which can't be said of many layouts of the time.

For us mere mortals, careful pursuit of the ordinary is a safe, proven path to greater realism in our modelling. A problem here is research into the 'ordinary'. Books are full of the outstanding, the unusual. A book on, say, architecture, will be more likely to contain photos and drawings of cathedrals and palaces than of houses and shops. The extra-ordinary sells better than the ordinary. Fortunately, in the avalanche of recent books, the ordinary finally HAS found a place. And, of course, if all else fails, look around. The ordinary is all around us (but may be more difficult for some other place and time).

An aspect of ordinaryness is repetition. Lots of the same. Same structures, same motive power, same paint. In an engine terminal, 3 USRA Mikes and a Tenuwheeler would be more realistic ... and comforting to the company accountant than the more likely modelling mix of NYC Hudson, GS-4, 2-truck Shay and General. A FANTASTIC museum lineup, but imagine the spare parts inventory needed to keep that lot operating! The same accountant would be happier still with three RS 3s, ecstatic with a pair of GP50s.

If your line features three signal towers; one each of Atlas, Revell and Faller, say, then if a couple are traded, or at least repainted in a 'company scheme' one less jarring note may be achieved.

So, if you realise that you operate a hodgepodge then ... banish the big and showy to the showcase, flog off the weird (via MAINLINE), multiply the mundane. All you have to lose is your unrealism.

JOHN KIDDELL & STEPHEN TOWNLEY

The Region lost two of its valuable members in the month of March.

John Kiddell died on 6 March after a short illness. Those of us who knew the nature of his condition and probable outcome were most impressed by his cheerfulness and optimism over the last few months. Nevertheless, his death only four weeks after he attended the meeting at Sowerby Smiths on 7 February came as a great shock.

John's Poverty Point & Western layout was visited by the members in August last year. Everybody was most impressed by John's demonstrated abilities and desire to pass on his enthusiasm for the hobby to others. John's layout has been featured in the Australian Model Railway Magazine and he contributed a number of articles under his nom de plume of John Burgoyne.

Approximately seventy people attended the funeral service, a fitting tribute to a fine modeller and good friend. The Region's condolences were passed on to Beb, David, Ann and their families

Stephen Townley, the popular proprietor of the Model Den, passed away on 1 March at Auckland Hospital after a long illness.

Steve will be sadly missed in many quarters for he was an enthusiast in all he undertook be it model railways, ships, aero modelling etc. He was involved in all the modelling clubs where his cheerful presence and wise counsel will be greatly missed. As the proprietor of a model shop he had few equals; he was always generous with good advice and always encouraged the young modellers. It may be truly said the hobby world has lost a great practitioner.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife Betty and to his son Christopher in their tragic loss.



## What's under an EMU?



### Part ii: making the bits

Last issue, the general arrangement and function of parts festooning an Electric Multiple-Unit (EMU) underframe and roof was discussed. This issue, we look at how to make them. Next issue will include some details of mass-production methods (so that six parts don't take much longer than one part to make) and drawings for trucks and jumper cables.

#### THE PARTS

Drawings and construction details of the following parts are included here:

RESISTOR BANK  
MOTOR-GENERATOR  
NOs 1&2 SWITCHGROUPS  
AUXILIARY SWITCHGROUP  
BATTERY BOX.  
AIR COMPRESSOR

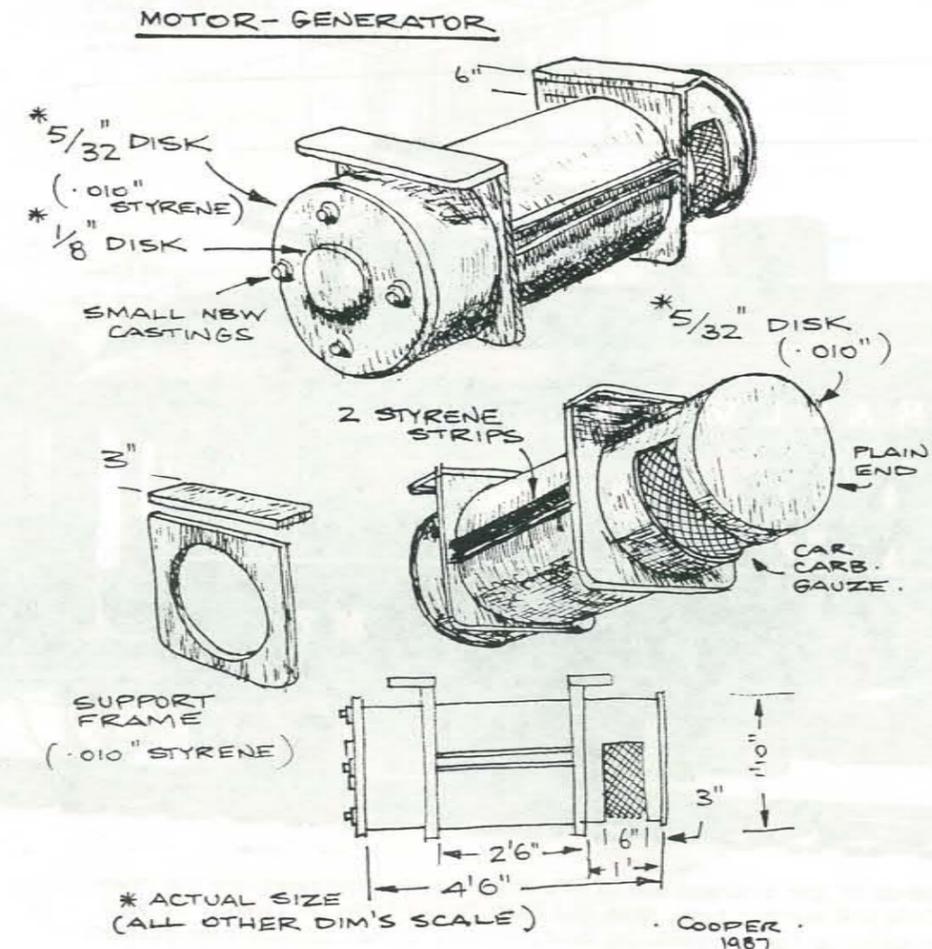
The switchgroups and the battery box are more or less simple styrene boxes, with the exception of the No 1 group's open front and interior.

The motor-generator is a length of 1/4" brass tube, with styrene and wire gauze details.

The resistor bank is more difficult, but rewards careful work.

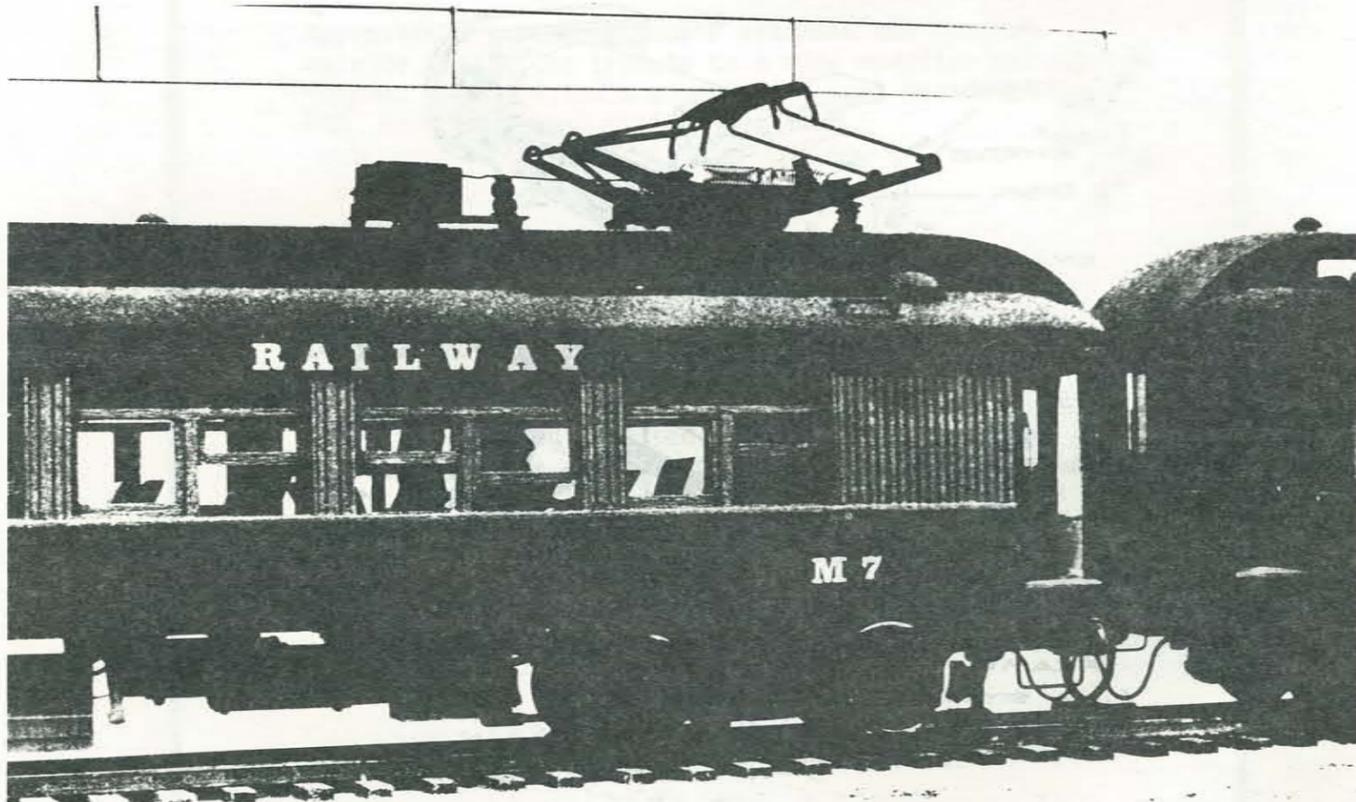
Hardest of all is the air compressor, with its complex shape and busy detail.

TO BE CONCLUDED





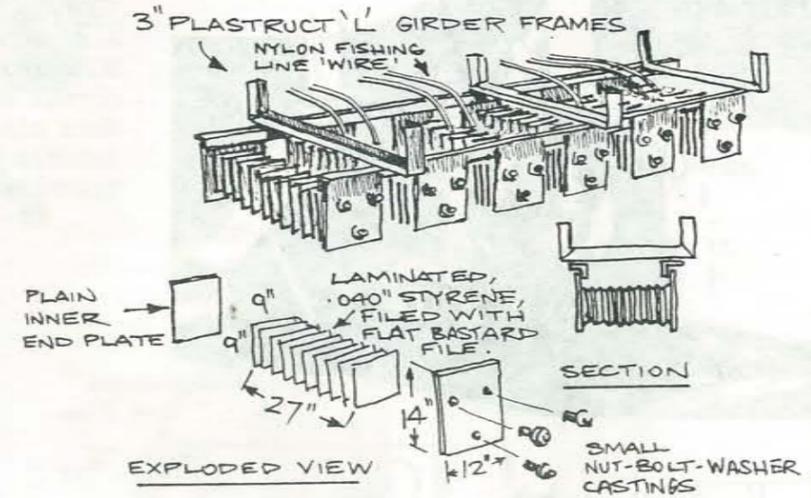
FVR MOTOR CAR #M7, in all her decomposing glory! This HO model has a SPUD motor truck under the pan and a standard CV trailer truck (w/added b'shoes) Underframe equipment, front to rear, comprises: air compressor; brake cyl.; Nos 1&2 switchgroups; air tanks and battery box. On the roof, the main fuse and roof through-box sit ahead of the MARKLIN pan. Photo by Jack Parker.



Close-up of the business end of M7. Motor truck sideframes are cut down ATHEARN AAR swicher type. What the MARKLIN pan lacks in finess, it more than makes up for in operating quality. Yes, it has already been pointed out to me that the window frames should extend up past the toplights! Note the operating jumper cables. Photo by Jack Parker.

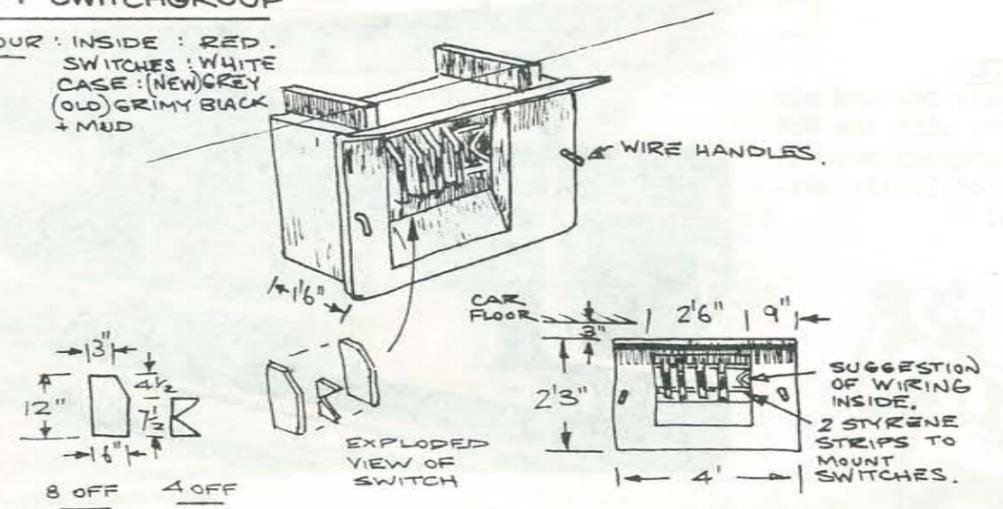
Part ii: making the bits

RESISTOR BANK



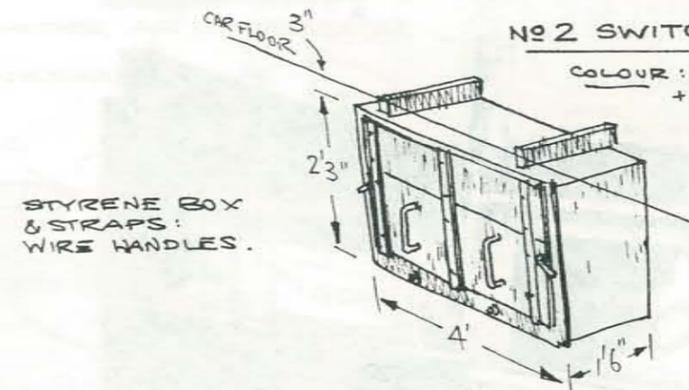
No 1 SWITCHGROUP

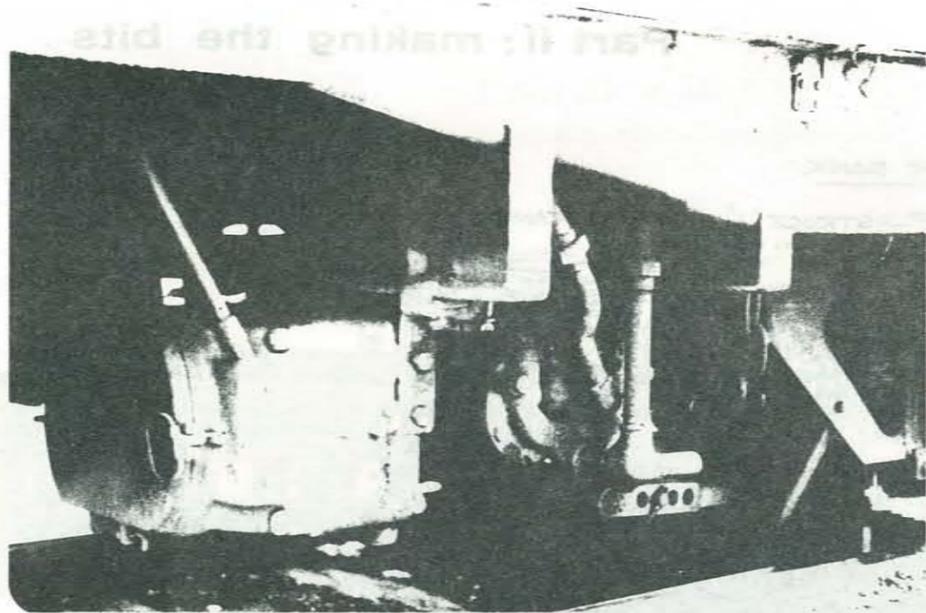
COLOUR: INSIDE: RED.  
SWITCHES: WHITE  
CASE: (NEW) GREY  
(OLD) GRIMY BLACK  
+ MUD



No 2 SWITCHGROUP

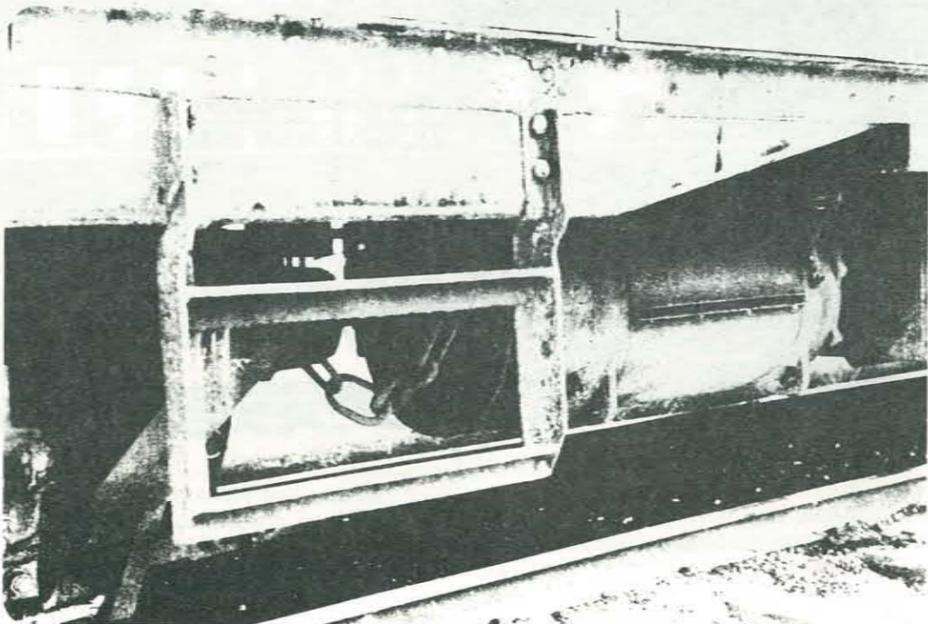
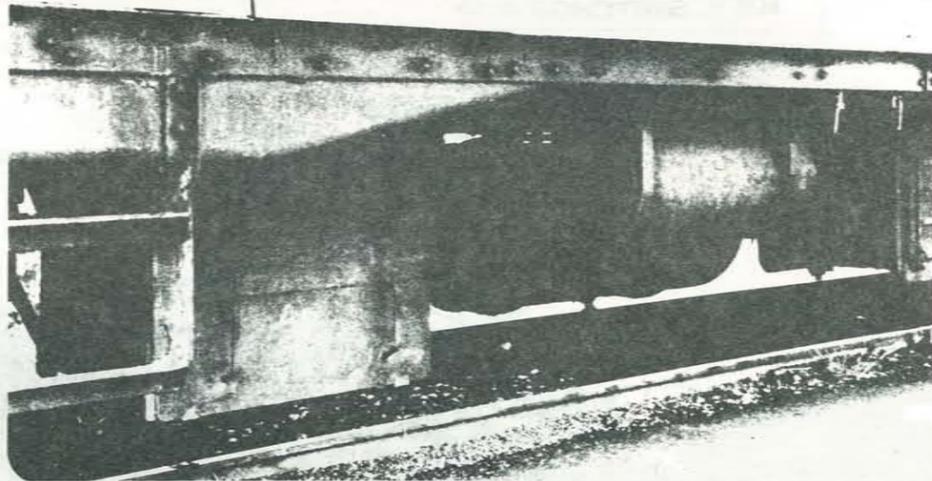
COLOUR: DIRTY GREY  
+ LIGHT SPRAY  
OF MUD.





**TOP**  
Air compressor, set 90° around from the normal mounting. Note pipes, conduit, latches and mounting brackets.

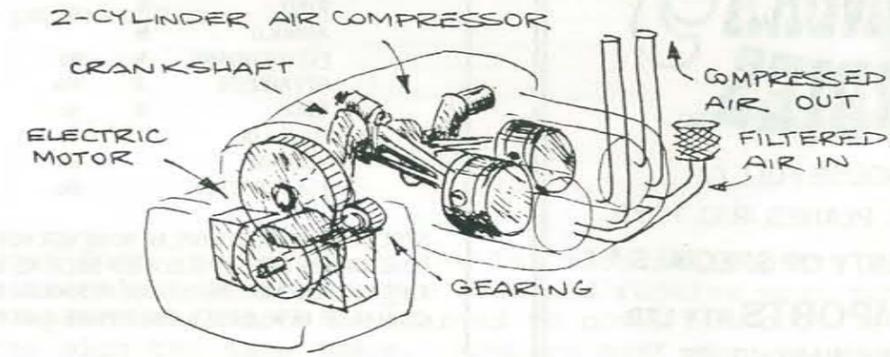
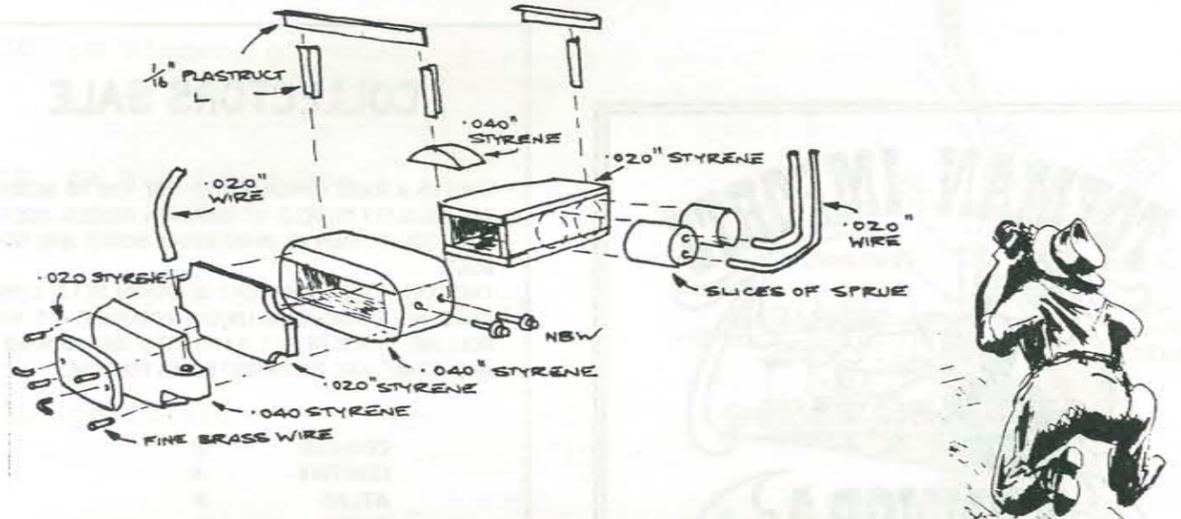
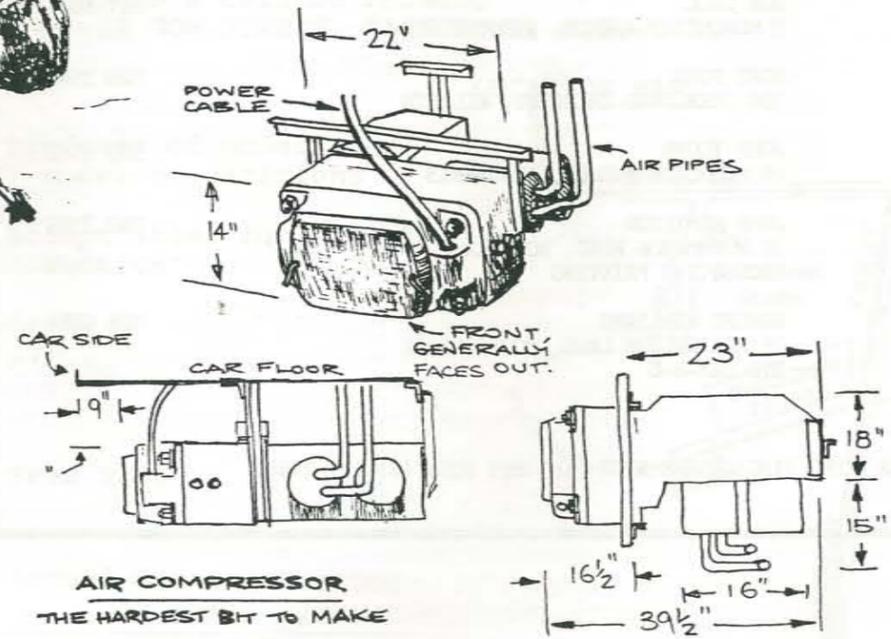
**CENTRE**  
Battery box and air tanks, with the No1 switchgroup beyond. Lots of little details!



**BOTTOM**  
Motor-generator detail. Steps and truck chains also add to busy look.



# What's under an EMU?



**AIR COMPRESSOR - HOW IT WORKS**



# MELBOURNE MEETINGS

|        |  |          |
|--------|--|----------|
| JUNE 5 | REG WEBBER<br>7 CORREA AVENUE, CHELTENHAM                          | 583 5833 |
| JULY 3 | PETER GRANT<br>47 FOREST PARK ROAD, UPWEY                          | 754 5758 |
| AUG 7  | BOB DALL<br>7 MURCHISON AVENUE, VERMONT STH.                       | 221 6034 |
| SEP 4  | MIKE FORD<br>108 CHERLYNNE CRESCENT, KILSYTH                       | 728 3544 |
| OCT 2  | JOHN YOURN<br>19 MCCREGOR AVENUE, BEAUMARIS                        | 589 5583 |
| NOV 6  | JOHN HAMILTON<br>37 WOODMASON ROAD, BORONIA<br>LOCOMOTIVE PAINTING | 762 3189 |
| DEC 5  | ROBERT WILLIAMS<br>26 MEADOWLARK LANE, MOOROOLBARK<br>BYO BAR-B-Q  | 726 0864 |

FOR ANY ENQUIRIES RING GRAEME NITZ (AH) 857 6959 (B) 657 2148

## NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIAN REGION

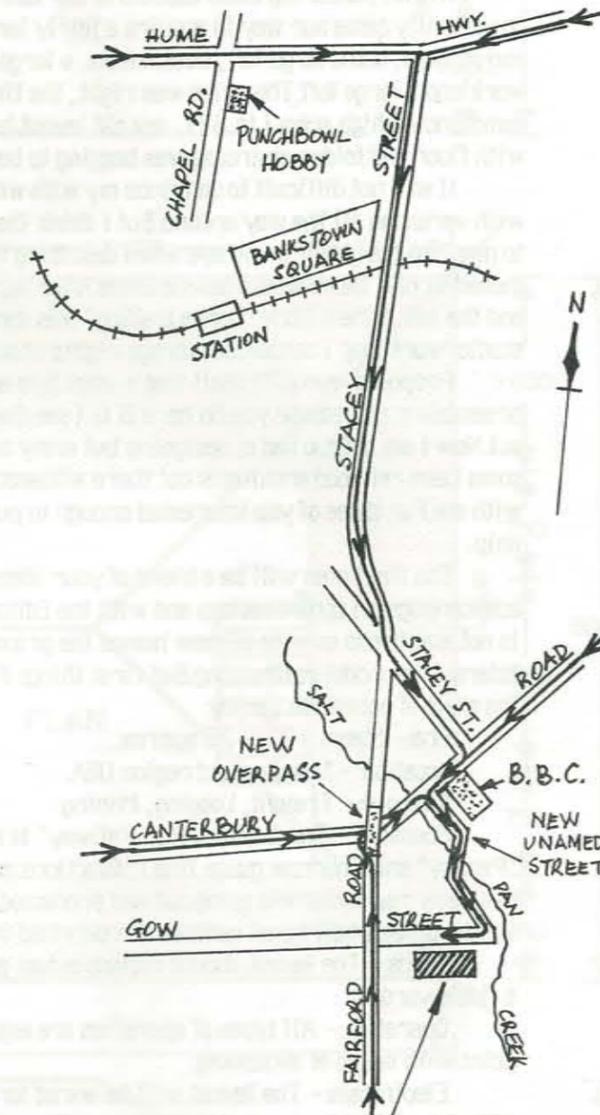
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
30TH MAY, 1987

CONFERENCE ROOM, BERGER & BRITISH PAINTS,  
9-29 GOW STREET, BANKSTOWN. N.S.W.

### PROGRAMME

### LOCATION MAP

- 9.00-10.00 am Register of models for model competitions
- 9.00-1.30 pm Accept items for silent auction
- 2.00-2.30 pm Clinic
- 2.30-3.00 pm Free Time
- 3.00-3.15 pm Annual General Meeting
- 3.15-3.30 pm Winners of Model Competitions announced
- 3.30-4.00 pm Afternoon Tea
- 4-00 p.m. Close of Silent Auction
- 4.00-4.30 pm Clinic
- 4.30-5.00 pm Free Time
- 5-00 p.m. Close



BERGER & BRITISH PAINTS

The Conference Room is located on the 1st floor with entry from street level. On arrival, register at the desk and receive your name badge. A fee of \$2-00 per member will be charged to cover the cost of morning and afternoon tea plus the name badge. Members must show their membership card. Visitors accompanied by a member are free. A low cost light lunch will be available between midday and 1-30 p.m., R.R.R. style. The programme has been adjusted to allow more free time for viewing the model competition, checking the items in the Silent Auction, looking over the mobile hobby shop and socialising. Wives are most welcome. See you there!

BRUCE LOVETT

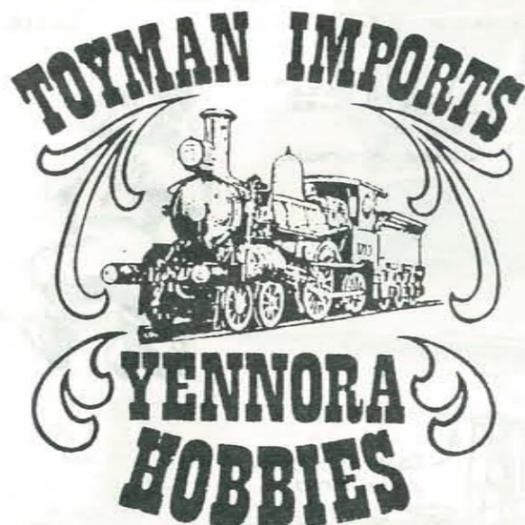
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| ROCO        | N | Ho |
| MARKLIN     |   | Ho |
| LILIPUT     |   | Ho |
| ELECTROTREN |   | Ho |

STOCK IS MAINLY EUROPEAN HOWEVER NORTH AMERICAN ROAD NAMES ARE REPRESENTED SUCH AS UNION PACIFIC, CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN, MISSOURI PACIFIC, CENTRAL OF NEW JERSEY, BALTIMORE AND OHIO, etc.

THIS IS A "ONE OFF" PRIVATE SALE. A CATALOG IS CURRENTLY BEING PRODUCED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO GENUINE BUYERS. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL SYDNEY 477 2395 BETWEEN 7 & 9PM WEEKDAYS OR WEEKENDS.



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## A NEW START-LOFTY GOALS

BY PETER BURROWS

Our home was a nice contemporary four bedroom house with all the "mod-cons" but it had a few shortcomings such as it was not close to transport, only the garage was suitable for hobbies, it was not in a bushland setting, there was no train room, there were no views and there was no train room. I'm sure many of you will understand the situation or have suffered the dusty garage syndrome.

Whilst pondering these aspects of our family home and trying to work out a solution the opportunity came our way to acquire a fairly large home at Hornsby which was close to transport and schools, had a large loft, bush views, a large loft, a garden studio for my wife's stained glass work and a large loft. The price was right, the timing good (end of school year and eldest commencing high school in 87), my old layout had just been pulled down and this loft complete with floor and foldup staircase was begging to be utilised.

It was not difficult to convince my wife who had always liked Australian colonial style homes with verandah all the way around. But I think the studio for her stained glass work did the trick not to mention the gleam in my eye when describing the loft. The legalities were finally completed and we moved in just three weeks before Xmas. After agreeing in principal that the studio would be hers and the loft mine a little "horse trading" was done and for a carpentry corner in the studio/workshop I conceded storage rights under the proposed layout.

Proposed layout?? Well that's what this article is really all about, but I thought the preamble might amuse you. So here it is (see diagrams) a virgin loft just waiting to be laid out. Now I am not too bad at designing but many heads are better than one so I thought there may be some keen railroad architects out there who would like to have a go and share some of their ideas with me. For those of you interested enough to put pencil to paper, thank you (in advance) for your help.

The final plan will be a blend of your ideas and mine and it should be a beaut. I will acknowledge all contributions and with the Editors "nod" publish progress reports. The time scale is not ambitious as with all new homes the priority assigned to projects is rarely in the best interests of model railroading. But first things first and we need some guidelines so I will define the style of operation I enjoy.

Era:- Steam 1900-25 approx.

Location:- New England region USA.

Revenue:- Freight, Logging, Mining.

Scenario:- The "Holmes Run Railway" is a short line operation interconnecting with the "Pennsy" and a narrow gauge line. It functions as an intermediate carrier of freight and goods with basically raw materials going out and processed goods such as food and supplies coming in. Just two or three small rural centres are serviced including a river port.

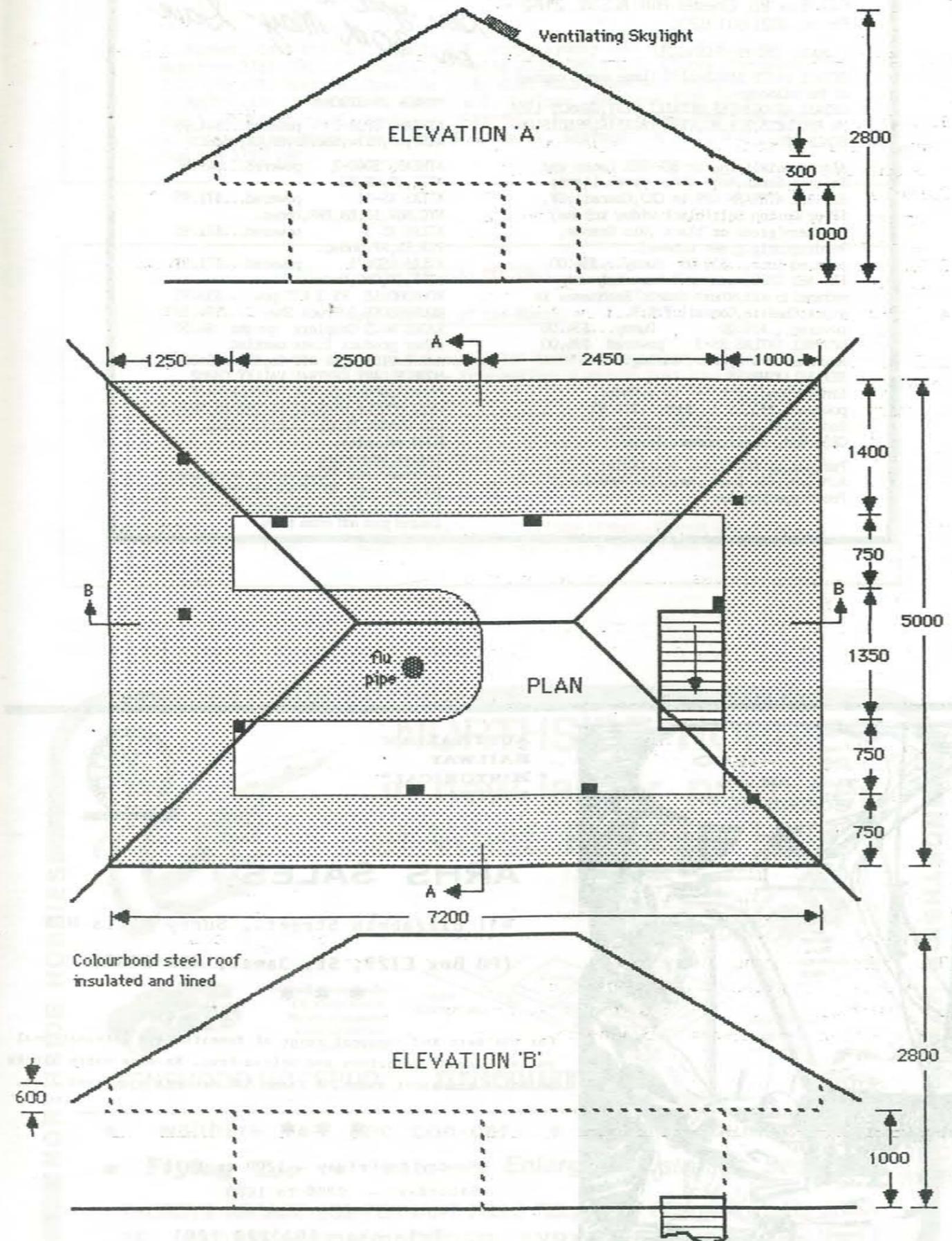
Yards:- The layout should include a dual gauge interchange, a standard gauge interchange and a fiddle yard.

Operation:- All types of operation are enjoyed be it timetable, loop running or just point to point with heaps of switching.

Electricals:- The layout will be wired for block and section conventional DC control but CTC-16 will be the normal mode of operation. Computer control techniques will be gradually introduced.

The Loft:- The plans show the roof line, vertical supports and access stairs. The shaded area on the plan and the dotted lines on the elevations indicate the notional layout area. It's external limits are defined by the roof coming to 300mm off the notional one metre high base and internal boundary being as close as you can get without having to stoop. Don't feel bound by the notional layout area as this won't be a "billiard table" layout so it will rarely track along the one meter level. Access is good beyond the perimeter shown but the roof gets a bit low. The internal boundaries have been arranged for "crew" space and a roll out work bench but again this is flexible. Only the roof supports are fixed and not truly vertical (depicted at one metre level).

My address is 175 Pretoria Pde Hornsby NSW 2077. Phone 477 2395. I look forward to seeing your ideas and suggestions. So break out your scale rules, compasses, pencils etc. and get into it.



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Prototype Modeler.

*See you at Bankstown  
on 30th May - Dave.*

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## WELCOME ABOARD

To the following newly joined members

J. Parker, Bass Hill 2197 (HO); W.E. Kerr, Sydney 2001 (N); R.M. Clyne, Wantirna 3152 (HO); D. Kiddell, Rozelle 2039 (HO); W.E. Clarke, Eastwood 2122 (HO); R. Ventura, Rowville 3178; D.R. Moss, Wantirna 3152; S. MacMicking, Middle Cove 2068; B.G. Treloar, Portland 3305 (HO); J.L.A. Whittenbury, E. Bentleigh 3165 (HO); R. Dunn, Paraburdoo 6754 (HO); G. Brown, Wagga Wagga 2650 (HO); R.G. Snook, Seaford 3198 (S); R.R. Cole, Hampton 3188 (HO).

## CANBERRA CLAN MEETINGS

(Last Tuesday of the Month)

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| MAY                       | Steve O'Brien's, 138 Nemerang Crescent Waramanga (88 3614) - Tree making, a clinic that could grow on you.                            |
| JUNE                      | Peter Weller-Lewis, 2 Hayley Close, Queanbeyan (97 7479) - Birthday celebrations, test running on Elk Run, to celebrate or to solder. |
| JULY<br>(to be confirmed) | John Bailey's, 11 Charlton Street, Pearce (86 2273) - Running on John's layout, big action and big trains.                            |

## NORTHSIDE HOBBIES

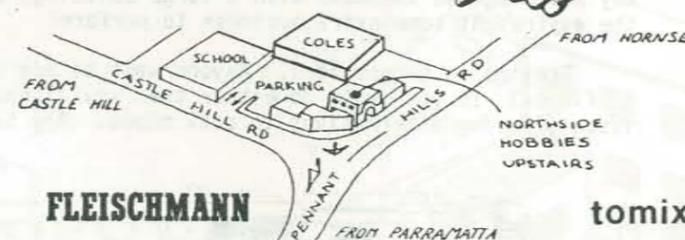
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by Lawrence Nagy

## Surviving Without Tunnels

If we decide to model a railroad, instead of build railroad models, then the scenery becomes just as important as the type of locomotives and structures on the layout. In the same way we wouldn't use an 0-8-0 to haul our passenger expresses, we should also be selective about what scenic details we include on the layout. Yet I'll bet at least 95% of layouts sport coal mines or tunnels.

Most of us model mountain railroads because they are a good excuse for the sharp curves, stacked track and short trains we are encumbered with due to space limitations and our never ending search for that extra metre or two of mainline. However, even the so called 'mountain' railroads such as the Great Northern, Western Pacific or Pennsylvania ran through flat or undulating land for most of their mileages. For example, the Pennsylvania might be famous for its Horseshoe Curve, but the majority of its mainline runs through the plains of the Eastern Seaboard or the flatlands of Ohio and Indiana.

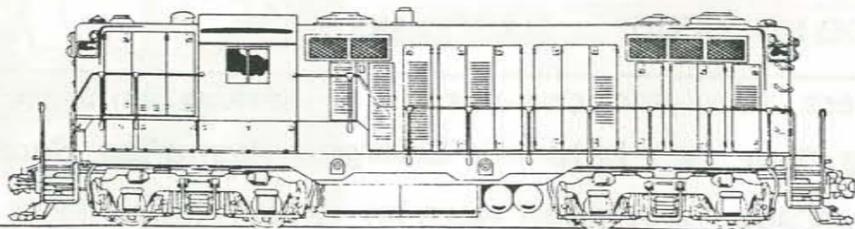
If we want to model typical features, then we have to go easy on the frequency of tunnels. I'm not suggesting they be avoided at all costs, just that one or two on a medium sized layout can be plenty if the scenery is realistic. Care is needed in their application. Other scenic devices are available for those who don't like to model portals. Below are three examples.

Fig 1 shows a typical let's-hide-the-sharp-curve-in-the-corner situation, otherwise known as the sharp curve hidden in a dollup of plaster. By using lengths of larger radius easement curve immediately either side of the minimum radius, and curving the layout edge sympathetically the severity of the curve is reduced. By daylighting the tunnel and using a cut with trees to hide the track and the contorted trains trying to negotiate it, the end result is a typical scene in a typical landform.

Fig 2 brings together two glaring faults. Firstly, a uniform and vertical rock wall parallels the upper track and secondly a tunnel portal is the sole support offered for the upper track. Time for the resident civil engineer to freak out! A more structural solution is offered by supporting the overpass with abutments and beams, ie, a bridge, while the landform benefits when the vertical rockwork is replaced by an embankment. Where there's no room for an embankment a masonry or timber retaining wall saves the day, but try to keep the lengths of vertical elements to a minimum and rely on sloping ground for effect.

Fig 3 shows a common way of punching a line through a backdrop which sometimes works, sometimes doesn't. If the general landform in front of the tunnel is flat then a sudden vertical lump of rock won't appear convincing. Why not disguise the hole with a large building, and at the same time give the wayfreight some extra business to perform?

They're my suggestions. Anyone want to add some more or shoot me down in flames? If you don't do either then you'll have to put up with me next issue offering alternatives to coal mines. Any takers?



## Surviving Without Tunnels

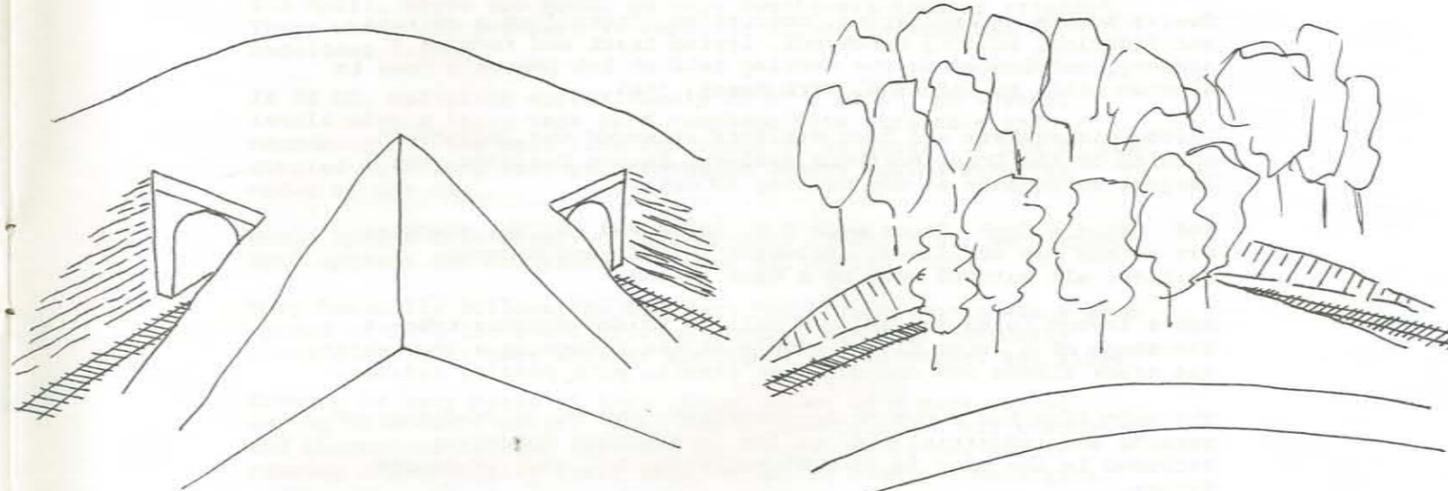


FIG 1

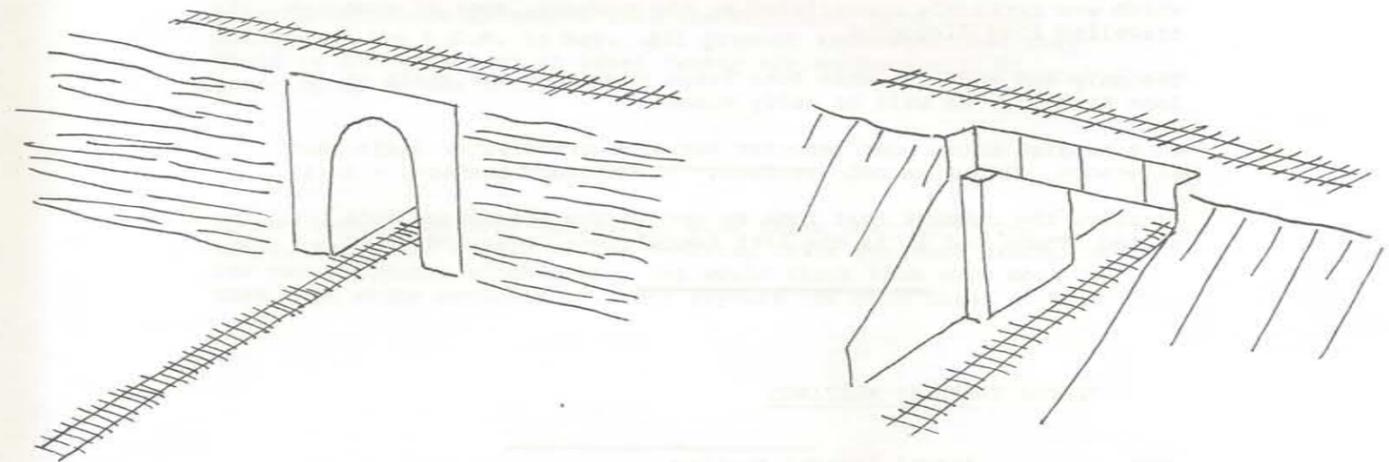


FIG 2

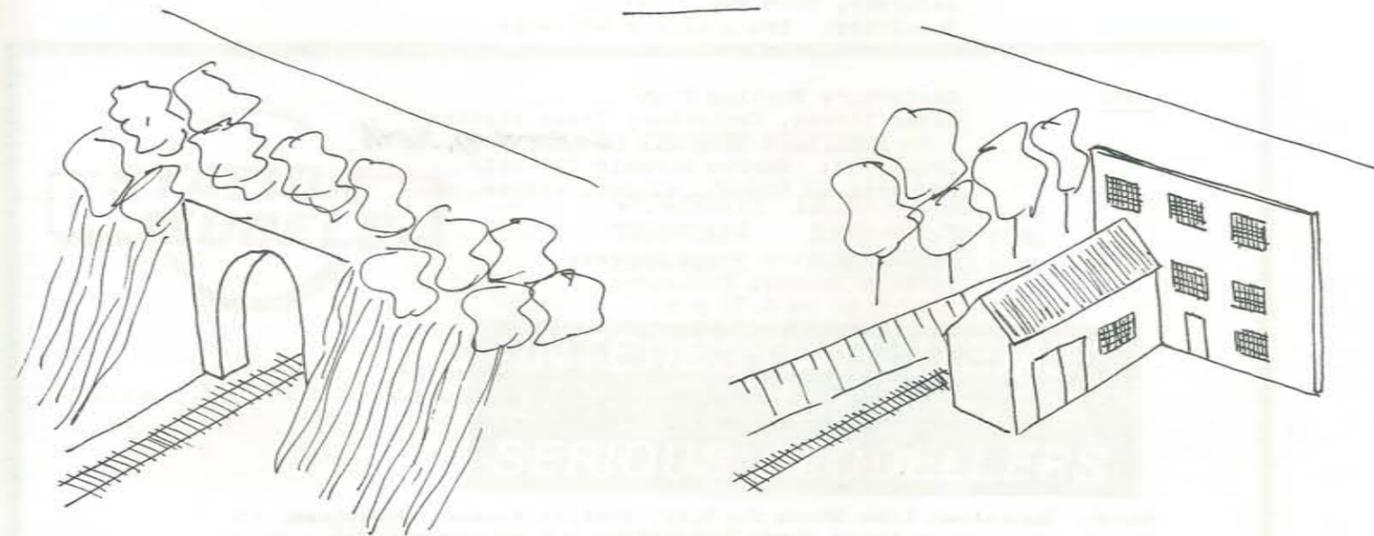


FIG 3

SYDNEY MEETINGSMARCH

Twelve months of excavating, concreting, installing a ceiling and lighting, buiding benchwork, laying track and forming scenery, culminated in the meeting held at Bob Benson's home in Winston hills on Saturday, 14th March, 1987.

Thirty-six members and four visitors attended the "official" opening of the Great Northern Railway, Benson Division, the largest attendance at any meeting to date.

And what a day! There were G.N. locos and rolling stock as far as the eye could see, including a full length Empire Builder, all watched over by a beaming Bob.

Bob's layout is HO and and basically a folded dogbone type in the shape of a large E, the middle of the E forming a loop where the track climbs and crosses over itself, with passing sidings.

The main line has a run of approximately 200 ft. with plenty of passing and industrial sidings for interesting operation. Included in the plan is an HON3 railroad, but that is in the future.

A sound system has been installed which was very realistic, the only thing missing was the smell.

Bob donated a quantity of miniature screw drivers which sold quickly and helped to swell division funds.

A scumptious afternoon tea was served by Bob's wife Cheryl, which was certainly appreciated by the members, some of whom had travelled long distances.

The only sad note was when John Saxon announced the death of John Kiddell. He will be sadly missed.

On a happier note, your reporter became a grandfather again that afternoon, with a second grandson. (Two future members? - Ed.)

Finally, the comment that took my eye in the attendance book stated "Thank God it is the 14th March" -- neglected Wife".

SYDNEY MEETINGSMAY

Annual General Meeting  
Berger & British Paints Conference Room  
9-29 Gow Street, Bankstown  
9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.  
Saturday, 30th May, 1987  
Enquiries: Bruce Lovett 498-4659

JUNE

Canterbury Bowling Club  
Close Street, Canterbury (near station)  
2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m., *Saturday, 26th.*  
Enquiries: Warren Wormald 797-0997  
Portable HO layout, slides, videos, etc.

JULY

Bankstown Live Steam Society  
Hoskins Avenue, Bankstown  
2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.  
Saturday, 11th July, 1987  
Enquiries: Bruce Lovett 498-4659  
2½", 3½" and 5" live steam. Ride behind a steam loco and enjoy the sight, sound and smell! Wives and children very welcome.

Note: Bankstown Live Steam Society, Hoskins Avenue, Bankstown, (3 minute drive from the A.G.M.) are holding their anniversary open day on Saturday, 30th May, from 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. Visitors welcome.

APRIL

Tony Cutcliffe ordered a beautiful day for his meeting on the 4th April, maybe too good, as only twenty-six members attended. Those who could not make it were the losers as Tony has an excellent layout.

It is HO, measuring approximately 21'0" x 15'0", on several levels with a large main yard complete with turntable and roundhouse,. The main line run would be in excess of 150'0" and coupled with long sidings, prototype length trains were the order of the day.

Scale speeds were observed, the control of which was very smooth both upgrade and downgrade. Eleven out of ten, Tony.

Tony basically follows the Southern Pacific, so there was a good spread of S.P. locos and rolling stock. Our host obviously liked diesels as they were in abundance in all shapes and sizes.

Scenery is very basic at this stage, which is a nice way of saying it doesn't exist. Tony has concentrated on his trackwork and electrical system, refining both until it is now smooth running and virtually fault free, which is highly commendable.

Actually, small sections have been scened trying out different methods to see which system best suits the layout and time available.

The trackwork is not finished as a branchline is under construction which will climb up to the top of a mountain almost at eye level.

After a delicious afternoon tea, the President gave further details of the A.G.M. in May. All present indicated that they would be attending, so at least twenty six members will be fronting up on the 30th.

To Bob Benson and Tony Cutcliffe, plus their long suffering wives, may I, on behalf of the members, thank you most sincerely for two enjoyable afternoons. (We would thank them even more if they both wrote articles on their layouts for Main Line - Ed.)

BRUCE LOVETT



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## NEW ZEALAND AMERICAN MODELLERS MEET

American modellers were invited to attend an "American Meet" held over Waitangi Day weekend, 6th, 7th & 8th February, hosted by the North Shore Model Railway Club in Auckland.

Friday morning modellers started arriving and trains started running, the coffee started flowing and it was all go for the start of a good weekend.

After lunch and the official welcome we were treated to two very interesting clinics, one by Paul Hobbs "Computers and Railroads", the practical part to be put into practice at the Metropolitan Club that evening.

The other clinic was on "Air Brush Painting" by Robert Askew, a junior modeller who displayed some good examples of his workmanship. After further operating sessions it was off to the Pizza Hut for an evening meal and a chance for a further chat session.

From there we assembled at the "Met Club" for the practical part of Paul Hobbs clinic on "Computers and Railroads". Once we were all assigned a job and switch list it was operating like the prototype even to communication by phones.

However fate stepped in and the session was cut short by a major power cut, (no we didn't cause it) so it was to home and bed.

Saturday morning we met at "Platform One" the local model shop to give cheque books and credit cards a hiding. We headed back to the North Shore Club and more train running featuring Sante Fe steam and diesel resulting in a good muster of motive power.

After lunch it was the Official opening of Santel Yard which has been completely redesigned and rebuilt.

Some of us were "volunteered" to represent our clubs and face Mastermind Quizmaster Dave Reddick who produced some good questions, some that good that we didn't know the answers. Michael Tolich took the trophy for the Met Club.

At 4 p.m. we moved to the local sports ground for the cricket match of the year, North Shore Club challenged the visitors (plus some ring-ins). A lot of fun but think I'll stick to trains.

After a barbecue tea put together by Dave Reddick & Co. we moved back to the Met Club to finish off the operating session which proved very interesting.

Thanks must go to Dave Reddick & the North Shore Model Railway Club for a terrific weekend.

Keith Oman



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We the model railroaders are great dreamers and fantasizers. In our earliest efforts, we can watch a model train run around an oval which we see as fields, villages, mountains and countryside. We progress often to beautifully scened railroads with realistic models, correct operation, sound in locos, even now teasing smells. Each one of these gives us pleasure but also helps us to disregard the lack of white steam coming from loco underparts, or the squeal of wheels as a diesel powers a consist around a curve.

I believe that much more can be done and will be done to create greater realism in the future. But just imagine the unpleasant place the railroad room could become during an operating session. The cacophony of different sounds, the desensitising of nostrils by many smells and God only knows what chemicals in the air to produce smoke, steam, exhaust soot and the like.

How excited many of us were when we read in Model Railroader May 1959 of successful steam sounds coming from a loco. However to do it all properly now is still expensive and time consuming and requires a lot of skill to maintain.

Perhaps an earlier alternative ought to be considered. One that overcomes all of the disadvantages but evokes the feelings we are trying to capture. These feelings are not just about the moving train but its whole environment in scenery, time, place and meaning. Our senses are often stimulated by the different branches of the arts and perhaps none better than by music. Think how it is used as background to movies and often sets the whole tone of the action. Think also of music you have heard that evoked a feeling or a perspective totally removed from the surroundings in which you heard it.

A simple and well known scene is evoked by Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" of the Napoleon/Kutuzov conflict at Borodino. A wonderful river scene comes to mind when listening to Smetana's "The Moldau". In these works you see what the composer is trying to depict. However each of us sees and feels scenes, an atmosphere or an energy in all sorts of music.

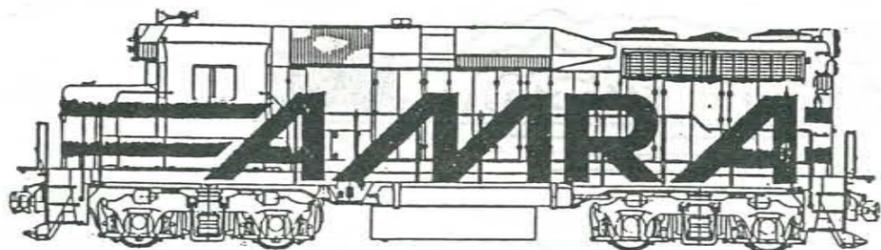
I find one of the best pieces of American railway music is the 3rd movement of Dvorak's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World". I don't really know why but perhaps it capsulises the energy of America at that time in her history when railroads were expanding and were so important. Parts of Delius' "Florida Suite" do the same. Maybe Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" with its steam train rhythms helps you. Some of Alfred Hill's music does the same on the Australian scene. It might just as well be Mozart, Beethoven or the Beatles, it's a very personal thing and your life's experiences are wrapped up in it.

All sorts of possibilities come to mind. A lot of Baroque music sets a good mood even though composed long before the existence of railways. There is much music for water scenes, forest scenes and for no scenes at all but for more abstract considerations.

Next time you are having a record session or watching TV, look out for this factor. Try to get a recording of pieces you react to then play them back during an operating session.

You may be agreeably surprised how music can fill in all those missing elements. If you have picked the right pieces the sounds, smells, sunlight, warmth, etc. of your railroad scene will unfold with remarkable clarity. There may be just enough dream and mystery to help your modelling become more realistic and enjoyable.

..... from Ian Venables



## AMERICAN MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

The 1987 A.M.R.A. Committee announces the Fifth Biennial AMRA CONVENTION to be held in the TAURANGA - MOUNT MAUNGANUI area from 30 May to 1 June 1987.

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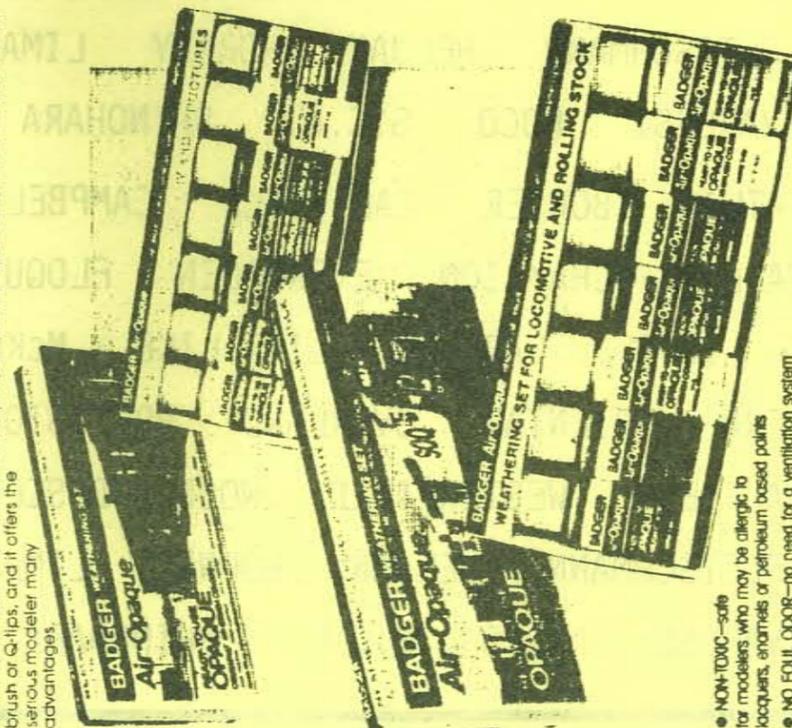
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