



Main Line

National Model Railroad Association

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Main Line

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DIV 3 Vic/Tas	Paul Richie (053) 32 1138	28 Ascot St South BALLARAT 3350
DIV 4 N.T./S.A./W.A.	Bob Nelson (09) 364 4417	36 St Michael Terrace Mt Pleasant WA 6153
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WAYBILL

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Main Line is the official journal of the Australasian Region of the National Model Railroad Association Incorporated. 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 forwarded to the EDITOR, Mainline, 7 Booralie Road, TERREY HILLS, N.S.W. 2084.

Paid advertising is welcomed. Current rates for four issues are \$130 for a full page, \$70 for a half page, \$40 for a quarter page and \$150 for the back cover.

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FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT

From the heading it is obvious that I am standing down from the Presidency.

My reason for standing down at this time is primarily that of reduced availability caused by unexpected business obligations. Whilst I did avoid a permanent move to Melbourne it will now be necessary for me to spend much more time in that city. Time (our most valued resource) is now even scarcer for me to adequately satisfy a role that often requires many hours per week.

I have enjoyed my term in office which has had its ups and downs. Often I have been disappointed by thoughtless and inconsiderate comments from members who have little or no idea of the issues and unavoidable politics that go with the job. Fortunately there is also the odd thank you and words of encouragement that keep you going.

My outgoing request to members is that they try and appreciate the challenges that face your executive committee in trying to satisfy the needs of members spread all over the largest geographical Region in the Association. Only positive attitudes will see us through the inevitable problems and pressures the current recession will bring. Remember your office bearers are volunteers doing the necessary work that you (for personal &/or geographic reasons) cannot do. Reward them with encouragement and support.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their efforts and in particular Sowerby Smith for his unfailing support and generosity in giving his time resources. I would also like to thank Richard Roth for the excellent job he has done in promoting the achievement program and Gerry Hopkins for his time and considerable resources that have made it possible to not only continue the publication of Main Line but improve the content and presentation.

I wish you all the best for the new year and look forward to our continued association as model railroaders.

PETER BURROWS

MEETING SCHEDULE

- | | | |
|-----|---------|---|
| Sat | 9 Mar | John Gordon, 416 5049
14 Dudley Ave,
Roseville
HO SP/UP |
| Sat | 13 Apr | John Saxon, 949 4767
37 Beatrice St,
Clontarf
HO - Freelance |
| Sat | 18 May | CONVENTION , Sydney
See advert for details. |
| Sat | 15 Jun | Jack MacMicking, 958 5988
247 Eastern Valley Way
Middle Cove
On3 D&RGW |
| Sat | 13 Jul | Gary Norwood, 622 5859
271 Vardys Road
Blacktown
HOOn3 D&RGW |
| Sat | 10 Aug | Newcastle Exhibition |
| Sun | 11 Aug | NSW's Premier Exhibition |
| Sat | 14 Sept | Scout Hall, Abbots Rd
Curl Curl
Gerry Hopkins - HOOn2 ¹ / ₂
Laurie McLean - HOOn3
+ Module Meet |

ALL MEETINGS START AT 2.00pm

Another Hobbyco Evening

We are pleased to announce that HOBBYCO will open their doors NMRA members only on Wednesday 13 March next between 7.00pm and 8.30pm. This follows the very successful evening there last year when many bargains were secured.

All model railroad items will be reduced by 25% for the evening only, except of course on any Specials already available to the public.

HOBBYCO have many new items on order from the US and hope they will be in stock by that date. So do yourself a favour by being there on 13 March next.

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WANTED

--- A New President

You may have noticed from our directory on page 2 that Soweby Smith is recorded as wearing two hats, that of President as well as his usual fedora of Vice President. An explanation.....

Peter Burrows has filled the position of President with distinction since May 1988 and he was the successful candidate in our first contested election last May by a few votes from Bruce Lovett, Vice President 1986 to 1988. Peter has a very responsible position with a very well known Australian public company in the construction industry and related fields.

Peter's role with his employer had been increasing in responsibility over the last few months and very recently he was promoted into a very exacting role which requires almost weekly interstate travel. As a consequence, Peter has of late found the responsibility of running the NMRA intruding more and more into his professional and family life. Consequently, after discussion between the NMRA executive, Peter stepped down as President effective 1 January 1991.

Having plenty of notice of this change, the remaining executive unanimously agreed to ask Bruce Lovett to take on the roll of President until the next scheduled elections in May 1992, this option being available under our local constitution. Somewhat reluctantly, Bruce agreed and there the matter should have rested except to advise the membership of the changes.

Unfortunately Bruce has now indicated that he cannot accept the appointment and the position of President is now vacant. The executive had not had an opportunity over the holiday period to meet to discuss this most unfortunate state of affairs as at the date of this report but I am sure that we will shortly be able to rectify the situation with some suitable appointment.

In the meantime, it is business as usual with Sowerby the titular head. Let's all give him our support until we get this problem sorted out.

John Saxon,
Trustee.

Welcome Aboard

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Australasian Region.

Michael Toohey	18 Cameron Ave Baulkham Hills NSW 2153
Fred Hudson	9 Chirnside Crt Kambah ACT 2902
Deanna Norwood (Mrs)	271 Vardys Rd Blacktown. NSW
David Latham	86 Marine Drive Oatley NSW 2223
Alex Danilov	1/150 Falcon St Crows Nest NSW 2065
Phyllis Hunt (Mrs)	82 Thomas St Edgeworth NSW 2285
Calvin MacKenzie	4 Islington St Mt Pleasant NSW 2750
Micheal Welton Park, Terera Rd.	Shoalhaven Caravan Nowra 2541
Bill Dunn	9 Saltash St West Kilara NSW 2017
Bob Dow	22 Hillview Pde Lurnea NSW 2170
Julian Israel	4 Cornhill Place Cherrybrook NSW 2126

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Division 3 - Victoria/Tasmania

Sunday, August 12th, there was a barbeque at David Goddard's home a Mt. Helen attended by 5 members and their families on a fine, but cool day. After introductions and a hot drink we inspected and discussed the progress on David's layout. We enjoyed the barbeque which David had cooked to perfection and Jenny's sweets rounded off lunch.

A discussion about the type and frequency of meetings for the future as well as Golden Spike requirements and the Achievement Program etc. It was decided that a Saturday afternoon was a better time for future gatherings.

After this we visited my railroad and a short running of trains by the children. The railroad has not progressed since my description in Main Line due to the construction of a 5 m X 1 m Swiss narrow gauge railway for the Ballarat Exhibition.

The day was enjoyed by all.

On November 24th, members and friends met at Rob Dall's home. After introductions and morning tea and coffee, we inspected Rob's layout which is in the early stages of development.

Barbeque lunch was followed by a discussion of the program for next year which was drawn up. After a discussion of the various models which were brought along by the members, ranging from a bridge, multi storey buildings, V.R. breakdown crane, various types of rolling stock and loads, ideas were exchanged regarding various ways to increase the N.M.R.A. in Victoria.

We thank Rob's wife Jan, for looking after us with salads and afternoon tea.

Paul Richie

Meeting Schedule

Sat.Feb 23 Graeme Nitz 03 857 6959
20 Alpha St,
North Balwyn.
Bring a train. Start 2.00pm

Sat.Apr.30 David Goddard 053 41 3725
311 Eddy Ave,
Mt Helen.
BYO BBQ start from 11.30 am

Sat.Jun.15 Henk Molenkamp 03 534 4126
26 Birdwood Ave,
Upwey
Start at 2.00 pm

Sat.Aug.17 John McClure 03 809 2419
19 Brynmawr Road,
Camberwell
Start at 2.00 pm

Sat.Nov.16 Rob Dall 03 801 6034
7 Murchison Ave
Vermont South
BYO BBQ start from 11.30 am

Could those wishing to attend please contact the host or myself to confirm the time and place.

Paul Richie
053 32 1138

Free Membership Winner

Rob Osbourne of Helensburgh is the winner of a free membership to both the National and Region for his suggestion on one way to increase membership numbers. So simple we should have thought of it long ago. Just include a separate membership form in each Main Line so that we can pass it on to any friend who may be interested! Thank you Rob. Yours was the only suggestion received.

John Saxon

A.G.M.

This year's AGM will be held during the meeting at Jack MacMicking's place on the 15th June 1991.

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Division 4 – NT/SA/WA

My reason for writing is to introduce myself to the rest of the region officials, etc. and to request information as to just what is required of me in the pursuit of Divisional duties. You may also, for obvious reasons, tender my apologies for BOD meetings in the foreseeable future.

On the off chance that anyone is interested, I have been a member of the NMRA since 1952 and a model railroader (or railwayer) even longer – circa 1940 or so. That doesn't mean I am especially good at it, by the way.

During the middle 60's I was editor of the *Midwest Waybill* for three years and then Midwest Region Treasurer for a couple of years. At that time I corresponded with several Aussies whose names I picked out of the NMRA Directory. Yes I am a Yank, but in my defence I can say I did vote against Nixon, and then gave up in disgust and came over here in 1972. We lived in Cronulla [Sydney] for a year and a half, then in Koondrook [Victoria] before moving to Perth [West Australia] in 1974.

I am also a member of the AMRA and was for a short time Secretary of the W.A. Branch of that organisation.

The only thing I can offer as a contribution to the BOD meetings is to suggest consideration of assigning the division directors voting strength based on divisional area. Perhaps one vote for

every 100,00 square miles or something like that. This occurred to me when I added up the areas of WA, NT, SA, which come to 1,876,270 square miles. Just a thought!

I will be looking forward to a list of duties, instructions, etc, but not too many I hope.

Bob Nelson

[The President has replied to Bob's request for information. – Editor]

Editorial

Due to the unforeseen hospitalization of your editor, this issue [and possibly the next] of Main Line is running behind schedule. I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

I still require articles for future editions, both long and short. If you can supply them on a computer disk [which will be returned] it will help me immensely in preparation of the magazine. I can read any disk from an IBM compatible machine, Word, Wordstar, Wordperfect (4.2/5.0/5.1) ASCII and most of the word processor packages used these days.

For the technically minded, I now use Wordperfect 5.1 on a Canon 200 SV computer with 4 meg RAM and 160 meg Hard disk. The printer is a Canon LBP 4 with 2 meg RAM.

Gerry Hopkins

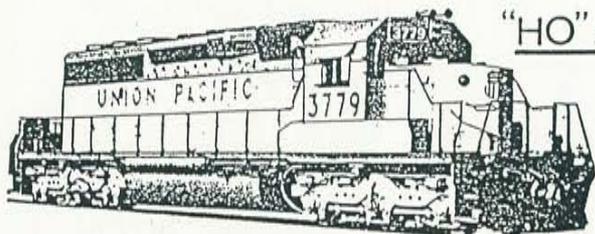
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Autumn 1991

'91 NMRA SYDNEY CONVENTION
American Model Railroading For The '90's
Macquarie University Sydney.
Sat 18th May Sun 19th May

- MODELLING CONTEST** Bring along your favorite model and enter the Contest. There are new categories for your first contest.
- CLINICS** We have four Major Clinics and three small clinics covering a wide range of interests all will give detail notes for you to take home for reference later.
- LAYOUTS** Two popular layouts will be at the convention – Kennebec County HO_n30" by Gerry Hopkins – D&RGW by Laurie Mclean.
- COMMERCIAL STANDS** Plenty of mouthwatering items for the modeller.
- VIDEOS** Continuous Program of Videos on all aspects of railroading.
- SWITCHING CONTEST** Can you carry out the switching moves in the allotted time? Switch a string of cars into the required industries with a Shay at a scale speed of 10mph. (You have to clear the mainline for through passenger trains at regular intervals.
- BANQUET** Have a great social evening with plenty of food and listen to our GUEST SPEAKER – a top media personality from overseas (he is also a top railroad modeller and will be giving one of the small clinics).
- LAYOUT TOUR** The layout tour will take place on the Sunday and will cover four top layouts. At the end of the tour we will meet at a local hall for light refreshments and to view two modular layouts – O scale and HO scale.

Registration (\$20.00 before 15th April) \$25.00

Help us make this our best CONVENTION to date. Your early registration will make planning more accurate and efficient thus ensuring a smooth and eventful two days.



New Deal – for the ordinary Model Builder!

Keen readers of **Main Line** will have noticed in the last issue some discussion on changing the way we run modelling contests. Well, those changes have been argued about, and now the Region Executive have agreed to a new deal for the ordinary guy who just wants to build good models. For a long time now I have heard complaints from people that our contests are only for the "super modellers", who always win anyway – so why bother entering at all.

As from now, all our NMRA regional modelling contests will be judged at two levels. We are calling them **Masters Contest** and the **Modellers Contest**. This is being done to encourage beginners and those who just want to "have a go" to enter our contests with a very real chance of taking away an award. This is how the new systems works:

In all NMRA contests (unlike those in other organizations) every entry is judged on its own merits against a set scale of marks – there is no comparison of one model against another. A model gaining 70% or more of the total possible marks qualifies for a Merit Award in the Achievement Program, and this is the standard that we have set for the Masters Contest. Anyone who has scored at this level or higher in a particular category in any NMRA contest or Achievement Program judging is automatically placed in the Masters Contest. Everyone else is in the Modellers Contest, and remains there in a particular category until or unless they score 70% or more with a model in that category. Maybe this sounds a bit confusing, but a person can be in the Masters Contest in one category while being in the Modellers Contest in another category.

Let me give you an example. Just say that your

particular talent is in building structures, but you also enjoy building freight cars. You enter your favorite off-line structure in this category, and your latest Westerfield boxcar in freight cars. Because you haven't entered a contest before, they both go in the Modellers Contest. The judges give the structure, say, 92 points and the boxcar 78 points out of a total of 125 points. Both models win a place in the contest, but only the structure rates a Merit Award (70% of 125 = 87.5). The next time you enter a contest, you are in the Masters Contest for structures, but in the Modellers Contest for freight cars. Is that clear?

Our intention is that all place awards are always given in the Modellers Contest, providing that there are enough entries – and, if there is only one entry, that one gets first place regardless of the marks it receives! However, in the Masters Contest, awards are only given for models that better the 70% mark (and this has always been our policy).

So, what does this mean for the ordinary model builder? It means that, if you haven't entered a contest before, or haven't received an Achievement Program Merit Award, then you are eligible to enter the Modeller's Contest. That means too, that you are **not** competing with the experts and the masters, but with ordinary folk like yourself. Therefore, even if you don't think your own models are of "contest quality" (whatever that is!), bring your favorite models to our next contest and **have a go!** What you think is a very ordinary model may well be a prize winner!

This and other changes to our contest rules are found in our new **Contest Directory**, copies of which are held by all Division Directors, Executive committeemen and me (Region Contest Chairman). If you have any further queries, please contact me – my address is on the inside front cover of this magazine. Better still, bring your favourite models to our big **1991 Sydney Convention** on Saturday 19 May!, and make this year's modelling contest our biggest ever!

Phil Knife, MMR
Contest Chirman

Meeting Report

Zig Zag

The November meeting for 1990 was held on a Sunday this year. The reason :- the Zig Zag Railway just outside Lithgow. About 40 members made the early start from Sydney and brought along about 20 additional family and friends for the ride.



The train departed at 10.30 sharp, weather for the day was ideal cool and sunny all day. Every window seemed to have a head hanging out as the train departed the top station. Then it plunged into a very long tunnel on it's way to Middle Points. The sound and smell of steam in a tunnel are just wonderful. The Pacific on the front made light work of the job to the Middle Points.

A brief stop to swarm around the train and we soon departed in the opposite direction with a 4-8-0 at the front with the Pacific following behind still coupled to the train. The run round tracks at the Middle Points were blocked due to rebuilding of the track work, hence 2 locos working the train.

Hanging out of every window were at least 2 heads and 4 cameras as we all marveled at the engineering feat that in its heyday was considered one of the greatest civil engineering works ever done. One short tunnel and then a brief stop. More pictures and inspecting the immaculate engines that are so lovingly cared for by the enthusiasts who all work voluntarily in their spare time to run the railway.

Two toots and a scramble to board and sounds of steam engines starting a train upgrade. The bark of a Pacific on the point and a 4-8-0 as helper on the rear. It reminds us all of our youth and exposes our kids to the sounds and smells of real railways.

It is 12 o'clock by the time we arrived at the top station and say farewell to the train. A brief

drive to a bar-be-que lunch at Gerry and Lauris Hopkins "ranch". A delightful bush setting that Gerry and Lauris will be retiring to. Set alongside the Bells Line of Road 6 km the Sydney side of the Zig Zag among a profusion of wild flowers, every shrub seemed covered in blooms. The food soon emerged from eskys and picnic baskets, tables and chairs appeared and the serious business of lunch was proceeded with. Looking out over the valley that lay before us I thought how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful country.

As the afternoon progressed Gerry demonstrated a small portable work table with built in battery powered light. So when he and Lauris stay in the small shed they have constructed on the site the modeling does not have to stop when evening arrives. Very nifty.

I would like to thank Gerry and Lauris for their invitation to their weekend retreat. It finished off a wonderful day perfectly.

Sowerby Smith

Christmas Meeting



December 15th my place in Chatswood. A last minute change in venue saw another visit of the group to Fullers Road.

This time the priority was Christmas Cheer and the layout was secondary. Approximately 80 members and guests arrive for the afternoon and a visit from the Macarthur Model Railway Club with 2 modules. Peter Burrows also brought his along and they were all set up in the car port. Warren Maclean had his trailer on the nature strip by the gate. The bring and buy was in the spare bedroom. Out on the deck was the BBQ and an almost non alcoholic punch on the table alongside. The bar was open in the family room and the weather (for the fist time at my place) was balmy.

Main Line

The trains were running on the layout, with considerably less trouble than last time and Gerry Hopkins was spotted with a throttle in his hand and a big grin on his face.

Catering was handled by my wife Jenny and a committee of the lady members who all did yeoman service making food appear magically. It doesn't of course and a great deal of the credit for the success of the day goes to all those people who spent many hours of their time to make it all happen.

Mid afternoon a short meeting was held. The major news being Peter Burrows announcing his resignation as President effective January 1st. John Saxon and I thanked Peter for all his dedication and hard work on our behalf and the group showed their appreciation with loud applause. It was announced Bruce Lovett had accepted the job as president. This has not actually happened due to unforeseen circumstances and the I am currently acting

temporarily in that role until the committee meets and appoints another president for the remainder of the term.

After the normal announcements a new feature, a very brief mini clinic. This one was by John Saxon on using polystyrene meat trays for stone wall construction. It took 10 minutes and a repeat occurred later for those of us who missed the first. This type of thing will become a regular feature of most meetings in future. So if you have a good technique you would like to share with us call and let me know and we will allocate a time for it.

By 5.30 most had left and a few stalwarts helped clear away and the house was tidy by 6.30. I would especially like to thank my wife Jenny who's 40th birthday was on the 15th. and Toni, Shirley, Lauris, Bruce, John, Glen and all our members who all helped to make the day a real success.

Sowerby Smith

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Autumn 1991

Main Line

Of Aim & Focus

By Lawrence Nagy

"It's my layout, I'll do what I like." – is an escape clause for insipid despots who wander aimlessly through hobby stores, impulse buying their way up a dead end siding.

It's an escape clause because such modellers inevitably never complete a layout, and often begrudge people with completed layouts, assuming it takes bags of skill, time or money. Yet all layout builders are people too, with careers to pursue, families to attend, lawns to mow and social obligations. There is no magic wand to be waved that will complete a layout.

Mind you, completeness is a concept that varies from individual to individual, and I won't be so rash as to define "complete" completely, except to describe a completed layout as one that doesn't look like it's still under construction.

Let's look at such a layout, and its builder, and see what their secret is. Why do some layouts offer inspiration, while many of us are still caught in a how – do they – do – it? malaise that sees our layouts change from a comfortable pastime to an unfinished ogre.

Judging by the scratchbuilt structures and rolling stock, he can obviously build fine models when he wants to, yet most of his structures and nearly all the rolling stock are off the shelf proprietary models or kits, albeit carefully selected and modified. The general scenery suggests a certain location – the mix of station names, locomotives and rolling stock pins it down to a specific area.

Surprisingly for such a prototypical operation, the layout is not all that large. That, probably, is one of the two factors contributing to its completeness. Small layouts are more manageable when it comes to wiring, scenery and trouble shooting. Especially trouble shooting. The simple linear track plan puts everything up front, out in the open.

The other factor contributing to the layout's completeness is that of goal. It's obvious from the attention to detail that a prototype was

researched and a target set. Inconsistencies like mallets hauling ten car mainline freights, SD45's passing ten wheel steamers and locos with mid-western road names winding through precipitous scenery – they don't exist on the layout. Sure, any of these situations can be explained away if given the opportunity, but credibility is easier to attain when the observer can grasp the details, without long winded explanations cluttering up the appreciation process.

It's a case of "Hey, this looks like the GTW", as opposed to "Err, yeah, well....it could have happened, couldn't it?"

By carefully choosing and buying suitable equipment when able, and building or kit-bashing when unable, each new model placed on the layout adds to the layout, with purpose and conformity.

Credibility isn't authenticity. Credibility is an artist blending essential elements to capture the overall effect. Authenticity is a craftsman measuring the location of a boiler band with a vernier. Both are modellers, but are philosophically opposed. Models can be authentic, but model railroads need to be credible. If a model railroad isn't credible, it isn't a model railroad. At best it can only ever be a train set with super accurate models.

Completeness comes from using only what's necessary to convey the impression, then moving on to create more impressions. The final goal of the layout builder is reached when the sum of these impressions becomes, for example, the Grand Trunk Western, circa 1980. If there's doubt in the knowledgeable viewer's mind whether it's 1980 or 1960, then the goal has been missed. Even if the viewer hasn't heard of the GTW, all is not in vain, because any railroad prototype has character and aura, and a knowledgeable railroad type person, be they enthusiasts, railfans or modellers, will pick this up.

One thing brass collectors seem to miss is that any individual model contributes no more to the scene than any other. In other words, the cars and caboose on a train are just as important as the locomotive. Yet how many modellers have a

magnificent brass loco that waddles along a plywood raceway, dragging a mismatch cacophony of too modern cars. For the cost of one brass loco, enough rolling stock could have been purchased to accentuate the accuracy of the brass jewel, and cement the various elements of the layout together for more impact.

I have no quibble with the collector. Collecting is as valid a part of this hobby as building or operating. My pet peeve is with the person who has shelves groaning with corroded brass, and describes himself as a modeller with no time, space or money for a layout. Modelling involves thought and commitment, no blind self indulgence! It's as much an intellectual pursuit as any other.

Some wonderful small layouts exist that show a determined modeller, applying a bit of forethought, can enjoy all aspects of the hobby, and (now we're getting to the point of all this), share the hobby with others. It's a shame that of the fifty plus NMRA members that turn up regularly to meetings, we are scratching for ten or so good layouts, of any size, to use for meetings. We are a gregarious bunch, and even at meetings where there's been no permanent layout, or the layout is just roadbed and a few building kits, we have a good time. But I wonder if the typical NMRA member isn't a day dreamer with limited application.

Over the years a few small layouts have appeared in magazines that show quality modelling and operation isn't unbearably time or space consuming. The Blue Ridge and Southern (Dec 83 RMC), the Indiana Northern (Nov 85 RMC) and the Grand Trunk and Indiana (Dec 86 MR).

The builders of these layouts must have, at times, wondered if there was really enough time or money to continue with the hobby, or if a bit of scenery wasn't going to look contrived. But they pressed on, not because they were rich, had heaps of time or were master craftsmen, but because they had a goal, and every little thing they achieved was one more step towards it.

That's their legacy.

LIBRARY NEWS

As notified previously, we now have the basis of a library. The stock currently stands at the following:

- * **Model Railroader,**
Bound volumes 1978 through 1985
- * **Railroad Model Craftsman,**
Bound volumes 1978 through 1985
- * **Painting Miniatures** by Floquil
- * **Track Planning for Realistic Operation** by John Armstrong
- * **Scenery for Model Railroaders**
by Bill McCanahan
- * **How To Wire Your Model Railroad**
by Linn Westcott
- * **101 Track Plans** by Linn Westcott
- * **Easy To Build Railroad Structures**
by Willard Anderson
- * **Practical Guide To Model Railroading**
by Linn Westcott
- * **Classic Articles From Model Railroader** by Mike Schafer
- * **The Encyclopedia of Model Railroading** by Terry Allen

Our Librarian is Glen Coventry, of 16 Lanai Place, Beacon Hill, N.S.W. 2100. Phone (02) 452 2131. Books will be available at Sydney Meetings or by writing or phoning Glen.

Borrowing fees will be just sufficient to cover costs and postage. More details next edition or if you are keen to borrow immediately, call Glen.

Don't forget about our Video Library and Tape/Slide library. Some of the tape/slide items have already been transferred to video tape complete with music and *Australian* commentary. Contact Bill Cooper.

Walthers Wood Boxcars

Backdating to the 1920's

In the hope that one day I will be able to model my chosen prototype the **Denver & Salt Lake**, I have been locating and purchasing suitable equipment over a long period.

After scratch building 8 D&SL gondolas, dreams of a fleet of scratch built rolling stock struck reality. Examination the **"Railway Equipment Register of 1925"** showed that of the 1022 pieces of rolling stock listed that 379 pieces were box cars and 549 were gondolas. Terror and despair overtook my dreams and those modelers located in the 1970/80' were viewed with increasing envy.

Proving that there is hope for all, I stumbled across Railroad Hobbies in Colorado who had a custom run set of D&SL box cars. Two were the curved 1920/30 Logo and the other one the 1940's logo, just before the road was absorbed by the D&RGW.

The run had used the "Walthers" wood sheathed box car and after close examination I concluded that the end arrangement of the cars was incorrect but after being assured that the artwork was prepared from photos from the respective periods the scale rule was left in the back pocket and 26 sets were purchased.

Upon our return to home, off came a lid and in 15 minutes - a box car!

A "Moffat" mallet was dragged out, the box car coupled between a few of those scratch built gondolas but it did not look right, the detail was excellent and I did not have to letter 50 cars, but the concessions to ease of assembly and manufacture were all too apparent.

Many nights of thought, coupled to the fear of explaining the the "Boss", that I may have made a rare error of judgment, lead

Gary Spencer-Salt

me to look at what could be done to upgrade the appearance of these box-cars.

In the article that follows I will detail the modifications used to upgrade the quality of these cars. The result is that a few hours of work creates a model that can be proudly displayed with more expensive craftsman kits on your model railroad.

BODY SHELL

The cast grab irons are the most obvious item to be upgraded. Using a X-ACTO No.17 blade carefully remove all the cast grab irons located on both sides of the shell. I chose to leave the grab irons/ladders located at each end of the shell as supplied, upgrading of these will have little effect on the final appearance and only complicates final assembly.

The careful removal of the cast grab iron's leaves a witness mark in the profile of the grab iron on the side of the shell. Using a sharp scribe locate the centre of the witness mark that was the mounting bolt of the grab iron - carefully prick the surface of the shell about the center of this witness marks and drill a 0.016" hole at each center mark.

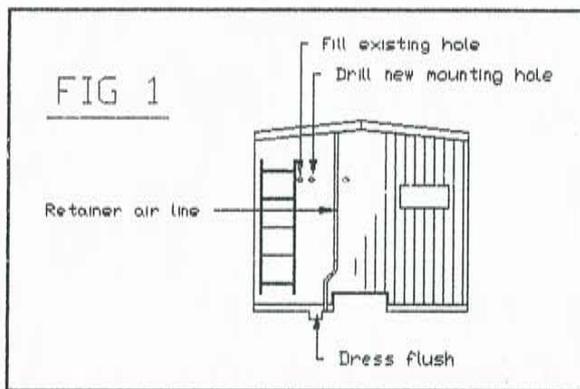
Using the X-Acto knife remove the 4 steps off the base of the shell and dress flush using a fine flat file. Remove all flash from the shell, this is best achieved by scraping the flash with a single edged razor blade, files tend to create more flash than they remove.

The factory roof walks are well detailed but thick in terms of scale. We will now prepare the roof for new walkways. Sit the shell on a flat surface, using a broad and long file carefully dress the top of the cast roof walk supports - just dress enough to exposed bare plastic at each support. At

this time remove the sprue witness mark from the centre line of the roof.

Backdating and upgrading of the braking system requires the purchase of a 'Cal-Scale' KC Brake Set. This allows the instillation of the correct brake cylinder to the underframe of the car for the early 1900-20's.

To upgrade the handbrake mechanism on the end of the shell, we plug the outer mounting hole for the factory brake platform using one of the locating pins from the platform casting supplied. (Refer fig 1) - a touch of liquid cement from the inside of the body shell will retain it. Measure the centers of the mounting pins on the Cal-Scale brake platform, with a pair of dividers use the existing inner hole as a



center, mark the location of the new mounting hole. Drill a 0.039" hole at this location and then enlarge the existing hole with the same drill.

The original platform has a notch to clear the cast retainer air line, to fit the Cal-Scale platform we will have to notch this air line. Fit the Cal-Scale platform into its mounting holes and transfer its top side to the air line using the X-Acto No 17 blade, remove the platform and cut out the unwanted portion of air line to clear the platform.

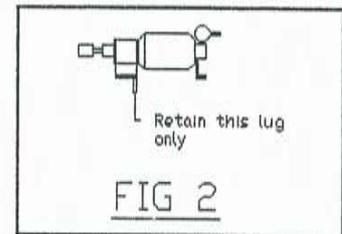
You may wish to retain the cast on brake shaft step, however compared to the Cal-Scale unit this is a blob of plastic. A portion will be retained to provide a strong attachment point for the Cal-Scale unit (Refer Fig

1). Using the X-Acto No.17 blade trim it flush with the face of the shell - avoid cutting a taper as it will affect final assembly.

SHELL - ASSEMBLY

We commence by manufacturing new roof walks, you will need 3 strips of 0.060" x 0.020" styrene. Cut each piece about 40mm (1.5") longer than required, this provides a convenient handle's during instillation. The D&SL cars don't have the small roofwalk from the grab iron's to the center roofwalk. I suggest you examine photographs of cars of that period and decide if to install these, if you chose not to, install a 0.040" x 0.020 styrene roof rib equispaced about the centre line of each end bay. All bays would have been equally spaced on the prototype but after painting this minor error is not noticeable except to the most eagle eyed.

Commence instillation of the roof walk by fitting the centre strip using liquid cement,

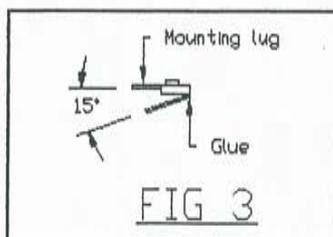


then let it dry thoroughly. At this point, I would proceed to assemble the 'KC' brake cylinder, follow the manufactures directions, except remove the mounting lug's as shown in fig 2. This is best done while the castings are still on the sprue.

With the centre strip set, install the others using the centre one as a reference, I space the strips using a single edged razor blade, don't worry if you get a little wave in the boards just look at a photograph from the period. After the roof walk is trimmed to length, finish the job by running a fine razor saw blade along the roof walk to give that well weathered appearance.

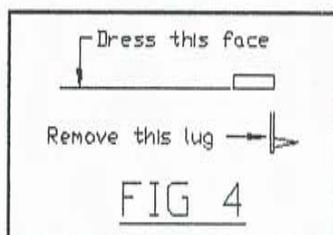
To install the Cal-Scale Handbrake Brake on the end, locate the Brake Platform and enlarge the hole for the brake shaft with a 0.022" drill. Fold the two braces back till

they are at 15 deg. to the platform floor (Fig 3), fit the platform to the end of the shell and fix using liquid cement from the inside of the shell. The two braces



should now be in firm contact with the face of the shell, touch the hinge point's of the braces liquid cement, this serves to fuse any cracks formed from the folding operation.

Next install the Brake Step Bracket, while still on the sprue cut the mounting lug off the rear face of the casting



(Refer fig 4). and dress with a file to produce a flat. Cut the Step from the sprue, treat the the face of the lug left on the shell with liquid cement, locate the brake shaft bracket about the centre line of the hole in the platform. The result is a well detailed bracket that is as rugged as the cast unit.

Fit the brass brake shaft supplied and at a point just under the end eave, use the scribe to prick the shell on the centre line of the shaft, remove the wire , drill a 0.026" hole thru and fit the Cal-Scale Brake Shaft Support after running a 0.022" drill thru the shaft opening, fix with liquid cement from the inside of the shell.

Fit the chosen grab irons using your favorite method - I just use a 0.020" styrene spacer and place a drop of cyanoacrylate cement on each wire from the inside of the shell. If you use the Westfelds grab irons as I do, treat them with a chemical metal black before use, this will prevent that shiny brass look if you chip the paint during final assembly. In fact treat all brass items before instillation -I chose to do this on the day of purchase,

then place them in stock ready for instillation.

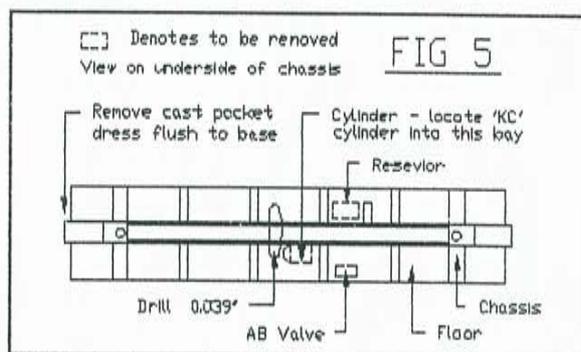
Important * - Do not install the bottom grab irons, these will prevent final assembly of the floor and shell , they are installed on final assembly.

Next I fit "A-Line" stirrups or ones of your choice, the brass stirrups are more durable than the cast ones they replace and look superior.

UNDERFRAME AND CHASSIS - PREPARATION.

In the 1920/30's a 'K' Type brake systems was generally installed to this type of car and the detail supplied on the underside of floor is for the 'AB' brake system.

We commence by removing the receiver and cylinder from the chassis frame using a X-Acto No.17 blade (Fig 5). Remove all casting marks, again scrape a single



edged blade along each one till the all marks are removed.

Remove the valve from the floor using the X-Acto No.17 blade, then assemble the two pieces by placing the floor on a flat surface and fitting the chassis frame ,using a small brush treat all joint's with liquid cement. Don't worry if it runs onto the floor as long as you don't touch anything until its dry. It will pay to place a weight on the top side of the chassis while the assembly is drying or you could end up with a unwanted swayback floor.

After the floor assembly has dried, drill a 0.039" hole to position the 'KC' brake cylinder, locate the centre line of the pivot pin of the brake lever located in the adjacent frame bay (Refer fig 5) to the valve casting, before drilling remove the cast pin. Next weight the car to at least 4 ozs, this will require additional. weight, I add two fishing spoon weight's sold at the local K-Mart. Cut a 3 x 3 mm (1/8" x 1/8") notch into one end of each steel weight about its centre line, this allows the truck fixing screws thru the floor. Fit the steel weight equispaced about the centre line of the floor (door opening), ensuring that the notchs faces the truck fixings. Now fix the spoon weight's to the topside of each steel weight as close as possible to the bogie pivot point.

Now install the cylinder assembly by placing the locating pin into the 0.039" in the floor, fix with a suitable gap filling adhesive. Next fit a piece of 0.040" x 0.020" styrene strip across the chassis frame to the underside of the air line casting on the 'KC' cylinder. Locate one of the brake levers supplied with the kit, measure the distance from the cylinder clevis to the side of the frame and fold a suitable angle, fit the tapered end into the clevis, the return is placed against the side of the frame, a touch of liquid cement will fix both of these items. Both of these items increasing the durability of the 'KC' cylinder assembly.

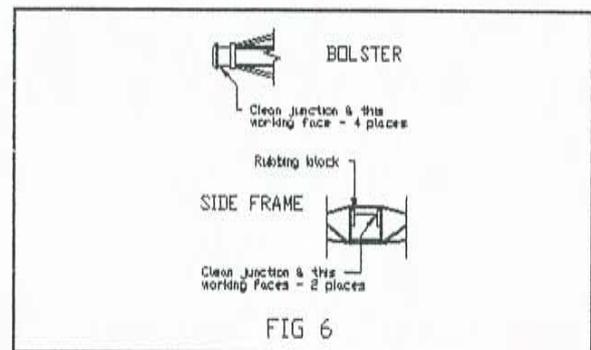
At this point you should decide which couplers you wish to use, I used Kadee No.4's, most will choose the No.5's. Installation of the No.4 couplers will require the removal of the cast pocket and fixing using a cyanoacrylate cement. If you choose to use No.5 couplers you may use the kit's pocket, however I would suggest the use of the Kadee pocket, these are installed as per the instructions for the the No.4's except the coupler pocket is screwed to the floor using the hole left by the removal of the cast coupler pivot.

TRUCKS - PREPARATION & ASSEMBLY

Walthers provides a set of fully equalized trucks for these kits and with a little work

they are as good as there all metal cousins.

Carefully remove all casting marks from the bolster and frame paying particular attention to were the bolster and frame contact each other (Refer fig 6). The casting marks are again best removed by



scraping with a X-Acto No. 2 blade. In the area where the bolster and truck mate, press the blade into each corner and scrape outwards, then go to the opposite side and repeat the operation.

Now assemble the frame and bolster, if they are still stiff the cause is the rubbing blocks on the front of the truck. Disassemble the truck and scrape these down, very carefully (Refer Fig 6) using the X-Acto No 11 blade, reassemble the truck and check movement, if the frame can be rotated 15 degrees about its vertical axis without binding, you are finished, if not, repeat again. Now complete the assembly of the truck, following the directions supplied. If all is well, place a slight pressure on one end of the truck frame and release it, the truck should spring back, you now have have a fully equalized bogie. These will work to ensure smooth operation of the car when combined with the added weight.

At this point spray the trucks and floor assembly with Tamiya flat black paint. Avoid spraying directly into the bearing journals of the side frames.

Before instillation of the Kadee wheel sets we will need to lubricate the frame journals with dry lubricant. To do this fill one journal

with Kadee "Grease-em" till a slight mound is present, compact this with your finger, carefully rotate the truck and do the same to the opposite journal. Fit the wheelset and squeeze the two journals between your fingers while rotating the wheelset. Slowly release the pressure and continue rotating the wheelset until no pressure is being applied. Most of the lubricant will fall out during this process but enough will remain to coat the axle end's. This process greatly improves the rolling characteristic of the truck, do not use any oil or grease as these only tend to reduce rolling characteristic.

A final trick, polish the faces of the wheels using a motor tool fitted with a wire brush, start by polishing the flange area till a bright line appears, then carefully expand this to the outer edge of the rim. Stop while there is a small black ring still present on the rim, this prevents you polishing the face of the wheel and ruining the final effect. (With thanks Gary Norwood). A word of warning, this is best accomplished with the motor tool fitted to a drill stand and the wheel set fitted to the truck, use a finger placed on the opposite wheel to prevent the wheel being rotated to the r.p.m. of the drill, it can burn out your bearing surfaces. Be carefully not to stop rotation of the wheel as you could destroy the flange or put a very prototypical flat on the wheel set.

FINAL ASSEMBLY

Clip the body shell and floor assembly together and check that the fit is correct, I now fill the shell with aerosol foam, the type you use to seal leaks in roofs, its generally available from most hardware stores. This removes that hollow toylike plastic box sound when coupling cars and gives the cars more dense sound when running on a layout. A word of warning this step is optional as this material expands to a great volume from the original application and can quite easily destroy a car if overfilled. I have found that filling 25% of the shell works well. To do this, place the shell on it roof and apply the foam, fit the floor assembly, then place a

weight on the chassis while this material is expanding and curing.

After everything is dry install the bottom grab irons, secure them by placing a drop cyanoacrylate cement at each wire to secure it to the underside of the floor.

Fit the trucks to frame using a 2-56 x 3/8" long self tapping screw. If you have chosen to install the Kadee No. 4's you will have to pack the trucks up 0.030" using Kadee washers. At this point check the couplers in the Kadee Gauge and shim as required to achieve correct coupler height.

Next install the brake shaft and trim 12" above the roof line and fix the handwheel using a drop of a/c.

FINISHING.

Paint and weather the car using your favorite methods. I have outlined my current method below, I will add that I have never had much luck with other methods and this is more from a lack of ability on my part than a reflection on those methods. Also at this time I have been allocated rights to a room with the rest of the household and spraying with petrochemical based paints would lead to a loss of lease.

At this stage I have found that I can obtain excellent results using Tamiya paint and methylated spirits as the thinners.

I chose a colour that is as close to the car colour as possible, this paint has been thinned down approximately 10-20% during blending. (My thinner is methylated spirits 80-90% , top up with water and a drop of detergent - It works for me.) I now brush paint all the new plastic parts, at this point they are not a perfect match but this is only a base coat.

Next using the air brush, thin the base paint with about 40-60% thinner. Firstly concentrate on the new plastic items till the plastic base colour disappears, use a card shield to prevent painting the body shell, now overspray the whole model very carefully. Do not attempt to paint the

shell just blend the new items to the factory paint and tone down the factory lettering. (If I want very faded lettering, lightly rub the lettering with 1 200 grit wet and dry with lots of water till the lettering begins to fade.) My airbrush is a external mix and I have done no trials with a internal mix airbrush.

Now weather the car using any colour that meets your requirements, I have listed my equivalents for popular colours.

Box Car Red - 60% Red, 35% Hull Red, 5% Desert Yellow.

Tuscan Red - 60% Hull Red, 20% Flat Brown, 15% Red, 5% Desert Yellow.

Box Car Brown - Equal parts Hull Red, Flat Black and Brown.

Deck Tan is used to tone colours down - don't use white its too savage. Always add a yellow during this process especially when mixing boxcar colours as they will tend to a pink.

These are not given as definitive formulas but as a guide, try to avoid formula's for all colours as we do not live in a paint by number world.

Deck Tan, Buff - Grime of all kinds.
Earth - Instant Weathering
Dark Yellow - Mud
Hull Red, Flat Brown - Rust
Orange & Flat Brown - Rust
(equal parts)

After weathering with the other colours I use some of the base colour thinned with about 80% thinners to blend and tone down the weathering, after that brush the car with chalks to achieve that dusty look, no fixative is used as long as the car is not to be handled.

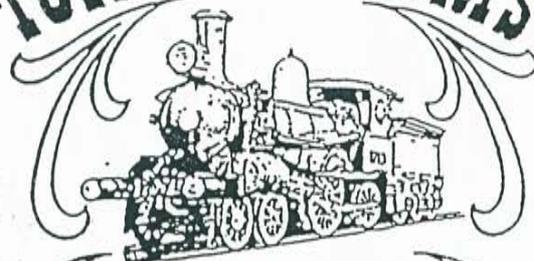
I can spray in the house, on a table top using these paints with no odor or overspray problems. The down side is that the airbrush tends to block quickly and will require unblocking during the spraying. This can be reduced by filtering the paint thru a tissue before spraying. I still have a

lot to learn about this paint but it is a simple method that has allowed me to produce some quality effects.

By the way if you dont like the effect, just wash the car using some metho or Brake fluid with a soft short hair brush, the weathering will just wash off with little or no effect to the base paint. Now that you are finished you should have a car that is a good as the more upmarket offerings without the cost and having to letter and with a minimum of assembly time .

Should there be enough interest I will write an additional article on upgrading the M.D.C. cars for the same period, as well as a detailed article on weathering cars using Tamiya and metho. By the way, avoid breathing to much of this low grade alcohol because everything you do begins to look good.

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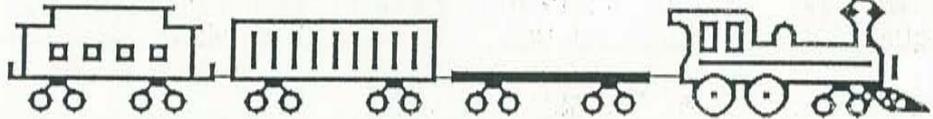
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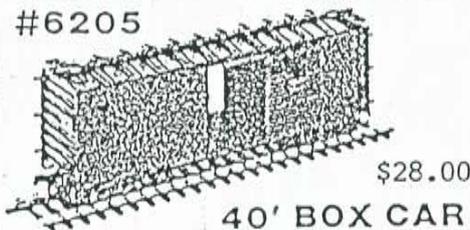
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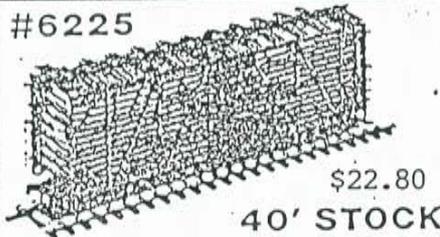
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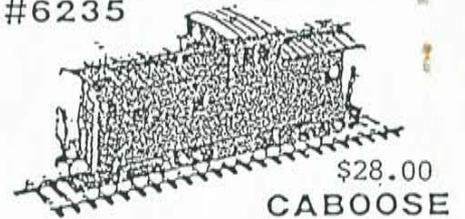
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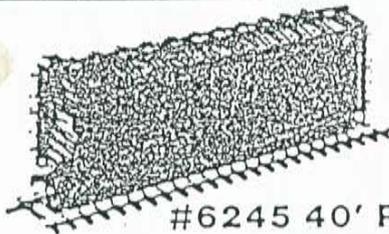
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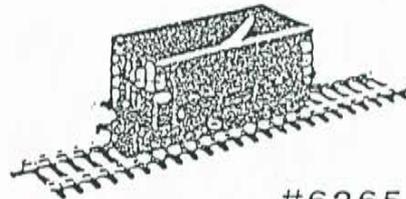
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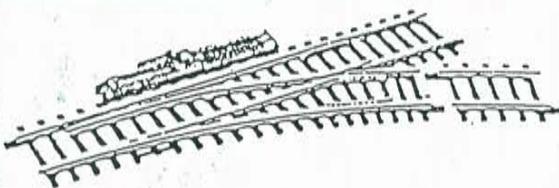
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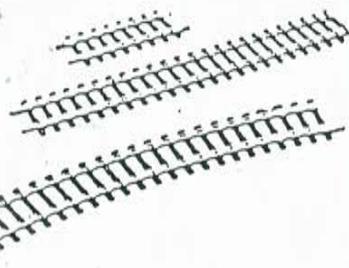
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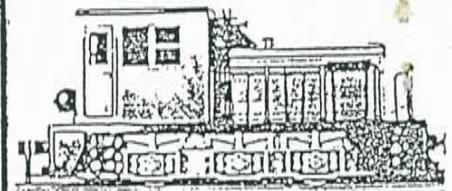
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