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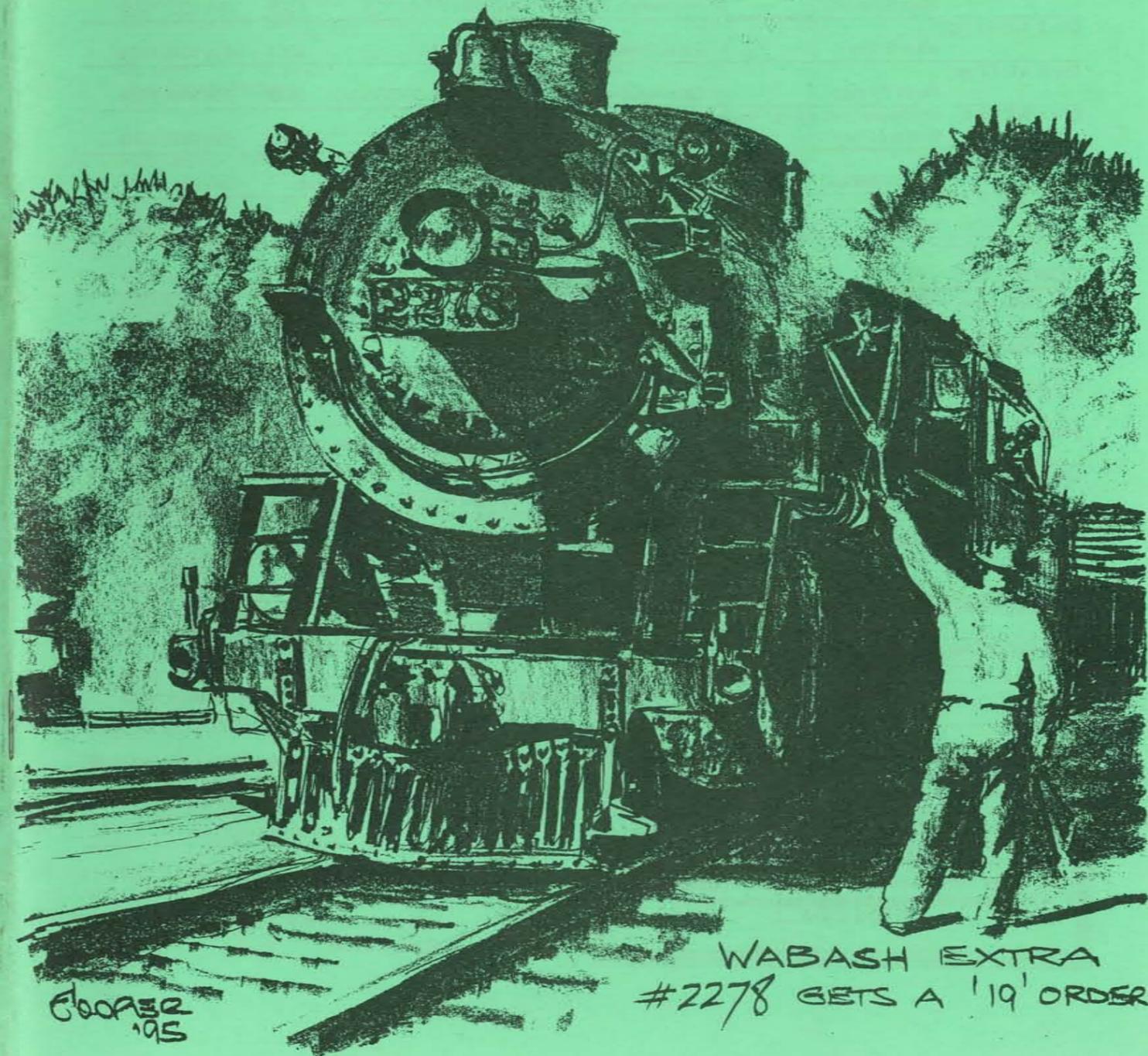
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# Main Line

National Model Railroad Association Inc.  
Volume 14 Number 4  
Registered By Australia Post

Australasian Region  
October, November, December 1997  
Publication # PP241613/00080



WABASH EXTRA  
#2278 GETS A '19' ORDER

**Australasian Region Directory**  
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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, member's 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 mailed to:- THE EDITOR, Main Line, 7 Booralie Road, TERREY HILLS, N.S.W. 2084. Articles can be submitted on a computer disk 3.5" or 5.25". Most WP packages can be read at this time.

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. All enquires regarding advertising should be directed to the Editor.

**COVER by Bill Cooper**

**REGIONAL TIMETABLE**

8 February	1:30 pm		Sunday
John Beaton	25 Victoria Street,	Bacchus Marsh	(03) 5367 3128
14 February	2:00 pm		Saturday
Ken Scales	19 Goliath Ave	Winston Hills	(02)
21 March	2:00 pm		Saturday
Gary Norwood	271 Vardys Road	Blacktown	(02)
22 March	11:30 am		Sunday
Paul Richie	28 Ascot Street South,	Ballarat	(03) 5332 1138
19 April	1:30 pm		Sunday
Steve Cullen	67 Mowbray Crescent,	Melton	(03) 9747 6267
May	2:00 pm		Saturday
Vic Quince		Granville	
17 May	11:30 am		Sunday
Grant McAdam	194 Booran Road,	Glenhuntly	(03) 9578 8685
20 June	8:30 am		Saturday
<b>MINI CONVENTION</b>		Thornleigh	
21 June	1:30 pm		Sunday
Peter MacDonald	4 Boyd Street,	Bacchus Marsh	(03) 5367 3601
19 July	1:30 pm		Sunday
Gavin Hince	6 Perry Street,	Alphington	(03) 9489 4527
16 August	11:30 am		Sunday
Laurie Green	20 Nambour Drive,	Sunbury	(03) 9744 5188
20 September	11:30 am		Sunday.
Geoff Truman	12 Goodwin Close,	Hoppers Crossing	(03) 9748 7864
8 November	11:30 am		Sunday
Graham Meyer	2 Elizabeth Court,	Emerald	(03) 5968 4518
6 December	11:30 am		Sunday.
Grant McAdam	194 Booran Road,	Glenhuntly	(03) 9578 8685

**WayBill**

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Hi! I would like to wish all our members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It only seems like a few months since the last one and a lot has happened. As a group we have had a marvellous year with a super convention being the highlight. I would like to thank the extra effort the organisers of that event put in. Regrettably as you all know Fred Gill our president had to step down due to continuing ill health. I saw him last week at Geoff Nott's Sydney meeting and he is looking trim taught and terrific and feeling very much better. Keep up the good work Fred and good luck with the next operation. On a sadder note the BOD and myself offer our condolences to Richard Roth who's father passed away early in November.

Yesterday the 14th of November I received a letter from Phil Knife our Regions returning officer and it was the official notification of an appointment of our new Trustee. David North, who currently holds one of the ordinary member positions on the BOD being the lucky (only) member to offer his services and being most suitable for the role, gets the Guernsey. David's anointment starts as of the 31st of March 1998, and he will have to step down from that ordinary member roll in accordance with our constitution as only one official BOD position can be held by each member. As we have a new Trustee elect in the wings it is an appropriate time to mention the pivotal role played by John Saxon our retiring Trustee.

John has been a tireless worker for the NMRA and especially this Region. Without John's commitment and dedication the chances are we would not have an Australasian Region at all. John has been a vigorous campaigner on our behalf and has in his role as a member of the board of the parent body contributed much to the improvement in the running of the parent NMRA. The role of Trustee is one that costs a lot to do. Twice a year to the US for meetings sounds like fun until you get the Bankcard bill for your accommodation and meals etc not to mention the temptations of the hobby shops! John, I would like to on behalf of all the members of the Region thank you for dedication to the hobby and the enjoyment your efforts have brought us all. John remains our Trustee until March 31st next year.

Talking about next year, the BOD is planning to hold a mini One-Day Convention next June the 20th. It will be held at the Thornleigh Community Centre in Sydney's North West it is situated right alongside the railway station and there is some parking at the venue and lots of street parking near-by. The venue is a beautiful modern building with very good facilities. Pre-Registration and

setup on the Friday Evening and the Saturday for final registrations, Clinics, Contests, Trade Stands, a couple of small layouts at the venue and after a BBQ in the early evening a Live Auction. We are aiming to make this a very inexpensive event to attend, but still a fun, informative day. We will not be having layout tours this time round and no well-known guest speaker from OS. As more details are locked in we will keep you informed on the progress. Mark the 20th of June 1998 in your diary and be sure not to miss the fun.

That's about all the gossip for now.

Sowerby Smith

## SYDNEY MEETING REPORTS

Three members have offered to write reports for the Main Line. They have different perspectives of the meetings so I will print three reports for each meeting. The membership has a varied background so each member can have a report for his/her point of view. -EDITOR

Saturday 9th August 1997

### REPORT 1

On August 9th Michael Flack invited members to attend an afternoon at his 3rd Division of the Denver & Rio Grande Western layout which models Gunnison and the Crested Butte Branch. Three stations are depicted, Gunnison, Jacks Cabin and Altmont. Michael's layout is modelled in Sn3 and occupies a space about 20' x 12' and consists of continuous running with hidden sidings with a reverse loop and stub ended branch to Gunnison. This configuration produces an 85' long main line, 30' branch with minimum radius of 24", with about 3% grades.

Michael has made great progress since starting the new layout in January 1996. Much more detail will be added progressively. Many structures are to be built including stock pens, western scale mine and coke ovens. Many more trees, clutter and finishing the river will be a priority in the near future. Gunnison Station and environs have been scratch built, two locos are built up from kits, three more are brass imports. Rolling stock is being built as time permits.

The weather was beautiful for the afternoon gathering. About 66 people attended and we thank Carol and Michael for a lovely afternoon tea

and for entertaining us, especially since Michael was quite ill.

A plaque was presented to Michael in recognition of the NMRA visit to his layout, a nice touch which has been introduced recently and will be continued.

### REPORT 2

The meeting was held at the home of Michael and Carol Flack at Epping. Michael welcomed 66 members to see this new layout, it was only 23 months ago that the old layout had its last run and was then demolished at the NOV 95 monthly meeting. Michael's new layout is now Sn3 scale following the Denver and Rio Grande Western 3rd Division prototype.

Most of the layouts main features are complete - it's now detail time. The layout was operated for most of the afternoon without any problems, although Murphy did have one little strike, no power to the turn-table - not a bad effort for a public showing.

Due to Fred Gill's retirement, Sowerby Smith is now President. He conducted the meeting's business session and several announcements were made - details in last issue of Mainline. The business session over, it was back to the layout and because of the lovely weather, afternoon tea was served in the garden.

Many thanks to Michael and Carol for providing a fine afternoon tea (not much left over). The last people left about 5:30pm. All agreed it was a good afternoon.

In this, and future reports, I will be asking the host to comment on the meeting and the reasons for his layout.

Michael was very pleased with the number of members and visitors to his home and layout, and the interest shown in his layout and models. Michael's change in scale from HO to Sn3 was the desire for larger models with better detailing opportunities but still on narrow gauge tracks.

Michael likes to finish off a scene with all the small detail, railway and non-railway. The biggest hurdles with Sn3 scale are the cost, and lack of equipment in Australia, but then you don't need a yard full of rolling stock. Michael is very happy with his change to Sn3.

**Reporters comment:** I have noticed lately we are not having any clinics or demonstrations at our monthly meeting - are we that clever, we don't need any help or advice? Come on mates, I need all the help I can get.

Saturday 13 September 1997

### REPORT 1

This month's meeting was held at the home of Gerry and Lauris Hopkins at Terrey Hills. At the same time, and in a Community Hall across the road from Gerry's home, the NMRA conducted an auction to help dispose of railroad equipment of the late Mark de Havilland.

The auction started at 1.00 p.m. to a crowd of 60 plus modellers with 500 odd lots to sell. The bidding got off to a brisk start - many good bargains were obtained including a good selection of brass. Final bids ended about 4.30 p.m. Everyone paid, received their goods and then proceeded to Gerry's home for a welcome cuppa, a bite to eat and a look at Gerry's layout.

Gerry's "Franklin - Somerset & Kennebec RR in HO on 30" situated in the garage is a fine example of narrow gauge modelling. Also on display was Lauris's exhibition layout "Lost River Canyon" also multi narrow gauge HO on 3 & HO on 30" with many small fine details. This layout was also being prepared for showing at the Liverpool October show.

After a busy day, a good auction and a couple of good layouts and afternoon tea on a lovely Spring day, we finally finished around 5.30 p.m.

Thanks to Gerry and Lauris for their day long efforts.

### REPORT 2

On arrival at the hall nearly opposite Gerry's home, the auction was held to support a fellow deceased member Mark de Havillands. The auction itself was very well run, plenty of interesting plastic, brass and other assorted models all went under the hammer. There wasn't much left after the hords brought up all and sundry. Many thanks to all willing helpers who worked very hard to sell all or most of the Models for de Havilland family.

Approximate 3.30pm I left the auction and made my way over the Gerry's place to see his HO on 30 layout. It is basically a point to point layout for the running nights, it can also be converted to a continuous loop for the open days. His models look very cute, and most of all very realistic. Good work Gerry.

Gerry also had his exhibition layout running, very nice setup. Afternoon tea was organised by his charming wife, Lauris, a really fine, tasty treat. About five o'clock Sowerby Smith opened the meeting with many thanks to all the volunteers who helped in the auction. Michael Flack gave out

Golden Spike and Structure awards, and another AP award to Jack MacMicking for the splendid work he has been doing.

Peter Jenson called for people interested in an Operations Sig. he is forming. Gerry also asked for articles for Main Line as his backlog is getting very low. Sowerby thanked Gerry and Lauris for hosting the meeting and presented a meeting plaque to Gerry.

Meeting closed and then Gerry's layout really had a good workout.

### REPORT 3

September's Meeting was held at Gerry Hopkins' in conjunction with the auction of the late Mark De Havilland's railroad equipment. A great roll-up of over 80 people attended, which resulted in the sale of most of the lots for about \$12,000. Thanks to David North for organizing, Sowerby Smith and everyone who gave their time to make the event successful.

Before and after the auction members participated in Gerry's afternoon at the Franklin, Somerset & Kennebec Railroad in HO30" which is re-creating narrow gauge railroading in Maine, U.S.A. He has intergrated sections of his portable layout into the new layout design with great effect. Work is progressing well with about two thirds of the scenery and buildings being completed. The waterfront on the peninsular has been commenced and will be a real feature when completed.

The layout can be run on a large loop for informal running of trains or can be operated point to point. There is also a standard gauge interchange. The variety of buildings, motive power and rolling stock are a mixture of kits and scratch building. As usual Gerry's work is inspiring with the layout's smooth running and fantastic attention to detail. Terrific to see a husband and wife team with Lauris having helped with some of the modelling.

Good to see several of our Victorian friends in attendance. Steve Pettit received a Golden Spike for his layout Chamatiago & Southern. It was announced that Graham Davis has been awarded his Golden Spike. Jack MacMicking received his Achievement Award for his work on the Board.

Many thanks to Gerry and Lauris for their generous hospitality which helped make the afternoon a great success.

## Sunday October 12<sup>th</sup> 1997

October's Meeting was held on a beautiful Sunday Arfternoon at Steve Pettit's Chiamatiago & Southern Railroad. About forty people attended and we all enjoyed Steve's layout featuring fantastic detail, great scenery and buildings. The folded loop design is in HON3 and measures two by one metres. Code 70 rail is used with very tight radius' down to 13". Many mini scenes abound which draw and hold the viewers attention. Scratch building and kits are used in the construction of buildings and rolling stock, all of which are finely painted and weathered.

A short meeting was called and it was announced that a one day Convention will be held next year. Peter Burrows spoke about a six by four feet layout, the design taken from Model Railroader, which will be built by members and taken to exhibitions to represent the N.M.R.A. Michael Flack gave some details about the Achievement Program and encouraged members to participate in the future. Contact Michael and see how easy it is to join in. Steve gave a demonstration on the making of Bottle Brush Trees offering some great tips.

Thanks to Steve and Susan for hosting our Meeting, providing us with a nice afternoon tea and making us welcome.

### REPORT 2

Once again Sydney turned on a lovely Spring day. This month's meeting was held in the garage of Steve Pettit's unit in Carlingford. 38 people attended the Sunday afternoon meeting.

We were treated with cold drinks, most welcome, plus the usual tea & coffee, but the highlight of the meeting was Steve's Chamatiago and Southern narrow gauge railroad.

This layout, which is the first that Steve has built, was admired by all who attended. Mainly built as an exhibition layout, it ran without a hitch all afternoon and the degree of detail on this layout has to be seen to be appreciated. Because of Steve's excellently made trees on the layout, he had to conduct an impromptu clinic in which several of his secrets were revealed - everyone went home to make trees.

Steve won Exhibitors Choice Award at the 1997 Castle Hill Show.

After the business part of the meeting was finished, afternoon tea was served and again a good spread. It was good to see Fred Gill in attendance at the meeting looking much better

after his illness. The meeting finished around 5.30 p.m. after a most enjoyable Sunday afternoon.

### REPORT 3

Sowerby Smith opened the meeting with apologies from different busy members. Sowerby thanked Steve Pettit for his "lovely thing" layout, then Michael Flack presented him with his monthly meeting plaque.

Sowerby went on to tell us about a 'Single Day' convention some time next year, seems the convention in Canberra has fallen through. There is a possibility that a Sydney location, Thornleigh, may be available, it will be a single day event - minimum of fuss, it will be a good day and no times have yet been set. No activity plans have yet been organised, possible a hero speaker, possibly an auction but all are still in very early planning stages and nothing has yet been set.

Michael Flack spoke at length about the achievement program, giving out a question and answer sheet on the program. Articles will be shortly put into Mainline concerning the achievement program. A model will be brought along to monthly meeting where it will be judged. Michael will do the paper work and you will be able to see how it is all done.

Peter Burrows told us about our new or nearly new layout, Sowerby Smith and Peter Burrows have built a 6 by 4 frame where at monthly meetings track and scenery will be laid by you and other members. Hopefully it will be finished half way through next year. It will all start at next meeting in November. It is planed to exhibit this layout at different model railway shows rather than have a static display shoved into a corner some where hardly unseen.

Gerry asked for articles for Mainline, one person can't fill the magazine so do your bit and send him something. After the meeting Steve Pettit gave a bottle brush tree clinic after the supper. He used hemp rope to form the branches and Florist wire to form the trunk. Looks really interesting and simple, works out to be about one dollar per tree.

## November Monthly Meeting.

### REPORT 1

At Jill and Geoff Nott's house at North Rocks. The home of the nearly ceiling to floor HO layout Leigh Creek & Western Logging Line.

The Meeting started with apologies and a very big welcome to some of the new visitors.

Jack MacMicking told us all that there may be problems with our U.S.membership this year. So if you have problems you must contact him straight away so he can try to fix them immediately.

A member present informs us that a change of computers in the U.S. may have caused these reminders being sent out when they should not have.

John Saxon then addressed the members to inform us of the change in Trustee. David North is our new trustee. Much thanks and applause was given to John Saxon for his thankless achievements over the years in the roll of trustee. Peter Burrows explains what is going on with our small layout. It will be used to show other members HOW TO DO sessions and will be used at exhibitions as a fully functioning layout. Come along to the next meeting to find out more and to HELP.

Meeting was closed with a presentation of a meeting plaque to Geoff Nott.

### REPORT 2

Saturday 8 November 1997

This month's meeting was held at the home of Geoff Nott who lives at Carlingford.

Today's meeting was attended by 62 members & visitors attesting to Geoff's reputation of having an excellent layout. To those seeing this layout for the first time, it is truly an awe inspiring sight Geoff's layout - the "Leigh Creek & Western HO Logging Railroad" is a freelance line located in Washington State, in a mountainous, heavily forested area. The sheer size of the layout, with its mountains, valleys, waterfalls, trees and all those bridges and trestles with logging trains winding around three levels of track and for all those who have seen the layout before, you still look at the detail and the whole layout and shake your head in wonder. This must be one of the best layouts of its kind in Sydney (Australia - Ed ).

After the official business part of the meeting was finished, afternoon tea was served and as usual your Sydney hosts once again put on a very good spread.

Thank you to Geoff's wife Jill for this. Not much left over - good effort fellows. Another excellent monthly meeting, enjoyed by all who attended.

Again thanks to Geoff and Jill, your hosts, for the day.

Reporters - Geoff Nott, Steve Chapman, Bob Carr ---- many thanks.

## Victorian Report

Our **August** meeting was hosted by Graham Meyer at Emerald. It was a typical winters day with 23 member braving the snow, rain and hail to barbecue their lunch. Once again Graham put on an excellent spread.

There were several books and videos for members to browse through. Laurie Green had built a tank by Williams in On3.

Steve Cullen had rebuilt some Fleischmann wagons using timber and his usual keystone chassis was on another wagon.

Sunday **21st September** was a fine and sunny day which saw members of the NMRA make their way across to Sunbury for a meeting at Laurie Green's. Time was spent watching the mainline across the valley for trains to Bendigo but none were seen. Jeff Kennett does not like paying overtime. It was a pleasure to be outside. A bit of a change from the August snow and sleet. All were instructed in how to throw the ball for Patch Laurie's dog). Thanks to Laurie and Ro for their hospitality.

A number of items were brought along for display.

Peter MacDonald had almost finished an A2 with Walschaert's valve gear utilising a Mehanateknica light pacific. This project was started 4 years ago and with some wheeling and dealing and building of several other brass and whitemetal kits, he has finally got enough parts to finish it. The tender was scratchbuilt.

Grant McAdam brought along some Model Company whitemetal figures in O scale. For the price they had fine features and interesting poses.

Paul Richie has built a HOn3 Doodlebug powered by a Flying Circus mech. and a Jordan Flanger, by Walthers, altered to have operating flangers.

Steve Cullen has been up to his old tricks by building a geared steam locomotive over a Bachmann 44 ton diesel, On2.5 naturally.

Laurie Green had a 'Frankenstein' loco made from bits and pieces of other loco kits left over after being built. He has also built a 4 wheel mineral wagon from timber on a Dapol wagon underframe.

Geoff Truman brought along a Fiddleyard 'X' class diesel in brass and whitemetal.

The meeting schedule for the coming year was discussed and it was decided to have some lunch time and afternoon meetings either on the second

or the third Sunday of the month. Look elsewhere in the Mainline for dates.

Lunch time meetings typically start between 11:00 and 11:30am while the afternoon meetings start between 1:30 and 2:00pm. There was no meeting during October as most of the members who attend meetings regularly catch up with each other at the Sunbury Model Railway Show.

The **November** meeting was hosted by Ron and Jan Wigglesworth. Anyone who knows Ron also knows that he builds a lot of layouts of varying sizes and scales. On view were just some of Ron's layouts including "Jan's Backyard" in 1:35 (model of a garden railway), "Kimdealy" in HOn2.5, plus two other layouts under construction in O-9 and O-16.5.

Ron's train shed is where the Croydon Narrow Gauge Group hold their work nights and also on display was an OO English layout being built by the Group for a local hobby shop.

After a barbecue lunch and much talking a brief meeting was held where Grant McAdam updated the members on the one-day convention being held in Sydney next year (see the report by Sowerby Smith for further details) which Sowerby had passed onto Grant earlier in the day.

Grant also handed out copies of the meeting schedule for the coming year. The dates will appear in the Mainline and will also be posted to all the members based in Victoria.

To all those who hosted a meeting in 1997 it was very greatly appreciated and hope to see you and many others at the meeting during 1998.

*As (h)Editor I sea sum wonderful speling, the corect speling is shon in bold tipe.*

<b>Gerry</b>	= jerry, jerrie
<b>Lauris</b>	= loris, lorus, lorie
<b>Fred</b>	= phred, fredd
<b>Sowerby</b>	= sawby, sawerby

## NMRA MEMBERS INTERSTATE - WA

Members of NMRA have an opportunity to share their modelling experiences when travelling away from home.

In most parts of Australia there are active modellers who belong to NMRA and who organize

meeting to share their modelling experience, problems, skills and general info. In each Mainline there is a list of meetings, local Division office bearers and other contacts. More and more the email addresses also appear to get an idea of what is happening even before you travel away from home.

At the "home office" in USA, members can by FAX request a short address list for the area where they plan to travel. Make a request in advance and it shouldn't take too long for an answer. Here in Perth, Western Australia, regular NMRA members meetings are held. Off course it is a big state and some Western Australian members live nearer to Indonesia than to Perth, still the contact works.

Recently Phil Knife from Karratha, flew to Perth for a few days and had arranged to spend time with fellow model railroaders for a night whilst in the south. John Humphrey, modelling the Rio Grande Southern in HOn3, showed his narrow gauge layout as host for the get together.

We had a philosophical discussion on the use of manual turn-out throw levers instead of motorised point throws. "It is much more like the prototype", it was agreed.

John H uses DCC electronic control for all locos, so he can remove the hand controller and walk on to the next depot / switching location whilst the train continues on its way, to reach the points after they have been hand thrown. It works well. And it allows time to think about how realistic the scene is with a narrow gauge consolidation hauling five cars up the grade besides the river while you enjoy the sights before it gets to Vance Junction, the next switching stop.

John has modelled a river beside much of the track on the layout. It is typical of the Colorado narrow gauge: tracks built beside the watercourse. In the Rockies it was the only practical way where the lines were constructed. During the night we discussed the water's appearance, clear between some rapids with white water as it falls over the rocks. And how it was installed.

All members of the NMRA are invited to make contact when travelling in the area. Make a time: don't just blow in. Call one of the office bearers or members on the area where you plan to travel. Some contacts in Perth if you are travelling in WA are:-

<b>Richard Percy</b>	Division Superintendent
08 9419 4476	espee@inet.net.au

<b>John Humphrey</b>	Sec
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<b>Phil Knife</b>	Karratha (far North west)
	pknife@ozemail.com.au

<b>Vic Unicume</b>	B & M modeller
08 9354 4031	

## Live Steam Modelling In Western Australia

Near to Perth, in the southern suburbs, there is a well-established model live steam operation. The Castledare Miniature Railways of West Australia (inc) has been operating for many years. Located just off the Leach highway at Wilson it is easy to access from the airport and all main roads.

Each month on the first Sunday there is an operating day, which is open to the public and attracts a large crowd. Many children enjoy the repetition of travelling on each train in turn as they get to know the diesel and steam alternatives. Both 180 mm (7 1/4 inch) and an 130 mm (5 inch) trains can operate, although only the larger trains can operate on all track throughout the 5 km of mainline.

Scale models of cane locos always make good haulers on a live steam system, and they are well represented in the loco shed. There are also diesel outline locos with petrol engines to haul effortlessly the small public, but as well, the enthusiasts see the special skill in operating such locos as a scale GE steam turbine of the 1950 era.

One particular model is arranged for remote cable control with the driver well away from the loco. In photos it is especially realistic; no caricature as some other locos appear with the oversize, out-of-scale driver intruding into the loco appearance.

Contact available at PO Box 337 BENTLEY 6102. Track operation located at 100 Fern Road Wilson, adjacent to the disused Marist College.

There are plans for the national convention of live steamers to be at Castledare during Easter in a couple of years time.

<b>Ian Petherick</b>	<b>August 1997</b>
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## The Achievement Program

Having taken on the Achievement Program Chairman's job I started to wonder why I had done little in this area in the past. What follows are some of my questions, and possibly yours - viewed from the 'other side' - and some answers.

What is the Achievement Program and why should I participate? I don't want to be a Master Model Railroader, so what's in it for me? My modelling may not be good enough I don't want to be embarrassed. I don't mind modelling, but the last thing I want to do is all that paperwork which cuts into my modelling time and I don't know what it's all about anyway.

These questions and many more accompany most peoples' thoughts when I mention the APs. Excellent modellers who could quite easily gain Achievement Awards just aren't interested. Let's see if I can answer some of the above questions and waylay your fears:

### What is the Achievement Program?

The NMRA being a Standards Association believes that it should -give recognition to its members who have demonstrated a high degree of craftsmanship as model railroaders and/or service to the and the hobby in general'. The Achievement Categories are.

#### MASTER MODELLER:

##### Railroad Equipment

- 1 Motive Power
- 2 Rolling Stock
- 3 Structures
- 4 Scenery
- 4a Prototype Models

##### Railroad Construction and Operation

- 5 Civil
- 6 Electrical
- 7 Chief Dispatcher

##### Service to the Hobby and the NMRA

- 8 Association Official
- 9 Association Volunteer
- 10 Model Railroad Author

#### Master Model Railroader

7 of the above categories

#### Why should I participate?

If you have spent time building a series of structures, for example, and you are quite proud

of the finished results. Why not spend a fraction of this time in completing the paperwork and see if you can get an Achievement Award as well.

The Master Builder notes, which can be supplied, will assist you as they indicate what is required for the models to achieve the required points. You are proud of your models, why not get recognition? It's always a talking point amongst your friends as well as other modellers.

#### I don't want to be an MMR:

You don't have to be. If your forte is scenery, then participate in that category only. Every modeller can do something well - find out the requirements - you may be pleasantly surprised. I'm sure that most modellers have at least one Achievement Award in them.

#### What about the paperwork?

OK you do have to do the paperwork, the needs to ensure that the standards are kept don't forget we are a Standards Association in more ways than one. The 'Master Builder Requirements' will assist you in what to write or you can get assistance from previous award winners, judges or myself. If in doubt, ask. Remember, building the model is the challenging thing and then you are only required to write down what you have done - the old saying is very true, 'the job's not finished until the paperwork's been done'.

#### What happens if my models are not good enough?

Remember, start with the category that you feel most comfortable with, don't try to build a Big-Boy from scratch if it's the first loco you have ever built. If you read the Master Builder requirements then you will see what is required, you can often add detail to an already finished model. Ask me or one of the judges for an opinion or look at the judging requirements, they will give clues as to what is needed. If you don't reach 87/2points the first time you can rework and resubmit your model.

If you can think of any other questions please write to me and I will endeavour to answer any queries. However, in the next issues of Main Line and at the monthly meetings in Sydney I will outline each of the categories of the Achievement Program together with the judging requirements - possibly including a model for judging, how it scored and the paperwork requirements.

Happy modelling, don't forget Model Railroading is fun and can also be rewarding.

Michael Flack

P.S. If you have a layout, why not start with the **Golden Spike**. If you are interested, ask for details - there isn't much paperwork for this and each layout you build can receive this award.

## Module SIG

How many of you would like to build and operate a layout, but feel you do not have the time, space, spare money, or feel the task is a bit daunting? You know that there is nothing new in life, so we decided to drag up an old concept and give it a 90's twist. To encourage those of us who are not currently building a layout to get out of the armchair, or for those who just want to try something new and different, we would like to propose the formation of a modular (or sectional) layout special interest group (SIG).

Our proposal is to create a modular HO layout consisting of a number of rectangular modules, owned by members, linked to corner modules, funded by the local NMRA. The modules would be based on the existing specifications developed by the Australian region. The aim is for each module to be easily transportable (ie. will fit inside the backseat of a typical Australian sedan or the rear of a hatch). However, when assembled, the modules form a layout, limited only in size by our participation. Our thoughts are that each module would be approximately 1200 mm x 600 mm or 48" x 24", consisting of two mainlines, leaving the rest of the module to the discretion and imagination of the builder. The existing specifications relate to subjects like: mainline location, rail height from floor, and electrical wiring.

#### What is in it for me/us?

- You "put-in" a 2' x 4', you "get-out", say a 20' x 40'.
- It promotes involvement in the hobby (and the NMRA for non-members) at an affordable cost in terms of money, time, and commitment.
- It provides an additional layout to visit and operate at monthly meetings (i.e. hire a hall, assemble the modules, and have some fun!). An opportunity to try new ideas and share old ones with other members at low risk. (If it doesn't work out, it hasn't cost you a fortune.)

The purpose of this article is to invite you to an initial meeting to determine whether there is sufficient interest. Please join us on Wednesday,

January 14 at Geoff Hoad's residence, 65 Kimberly Court, Baulkham Hills, to share ideas and, perhaps, nail down some of the basics. Look forward to seeing you there.

Please RSVP to Dave North at (02)-9975-2569 or e-mail at northd@advisemet.com.au.

By:  
Dave North, Geoff Hoad, & Ken Edmier

## Operation SIG

By Geoff Hoad & Ken Edmier

The desire to create a group interested in operations has been discussed for some time now, but until Peter Jensen's advertisement in the last Mainline, there was no progress towards actually doing something. With the support and hospitality of Sowerby Smith, a group has been formed and has met on two occasions to discuss how effective operations can take place and to actually operate.

The first meeting attracted about twelve people and the evening was spent running trains in a prototypical fashion and discussing how an operating session would work.

Train types, routes and operations methods were all explored with both Sowerby and the group discovering the importance of good communications within the limitations of a block control system. Acting as dispatcher, Sowerby provided great control over his excellent layout so that everyone had opportunities to run and switch various train types.

Some immediate lessons were learned. Good trackwork and rolling stock that runs well is not negotiable. We cannot recall any derailments and the overall smoothness of the trackwork and equipment made it a pleasure to operate on Sowerby's layout.

A number of people who had operated on layouts with command control and block power commented on the additional flexibility that command control can give to operations, freeing up the dispatcher to dispatch, and not have the additional work of power routing. Even die hard block advocates started to think this way as well!

The format the group agreed was to try different operational approaches (timetable, waybill, dispatcher and train order) over a number of actual operating sessions on different layouts.

The first three operating sessions are taking place on Sowerby Smith's layout and the next three are to be on Geoff Hoad's. Meetings have been once a month on Tuesday evenings. If the idea of becoming involved in the Operations Special Interest Group appeals to you, or you want to try it out to see if it is something you want to try out, then give Peter Jensen a call on 02 9651 3369.

Although this group operates in metropolitan Sydney, there is no reason why any collection of like-minded people in other states, or even in country areas, can organise an operating group. One thing that seems to have come out of our meetings so far is that operating adds a new dimension to the enjoyment of model railroading.

15 Sydney members showed interest in the creation of an operations SIG, with 10 attending the inaugural meeting. The meeting was held at Sowerby Smith's place, with an operation session on Sowerby's layout.

Operations was followed with a discussion lead by Geoff Hoad on the financial, economic, and operational aspects of a railroad. The goals and objectives of the group were also discussed.

The many ideas and interests within the group have yet to be understood as we enter this exciting part of the hobby. The one area we all agreed on was the hope that we could learn more about the 'hows and whys' of railroad operations. We also agreed to continue to meet on a monthly basis.

For further information contact

**Peter Jensen on (02) 9651-3369.**

## CONTESTS AND JUDGING

### A CLARIFICATION from Peter Burrows

It has come to the BOD's attention that there may be a misconception regarding model contest judging and the relationship between the "Modellers" category and the "Masters" category. It seems that some members have the misconception that a person entering in the "Modellers" category (i.e. they have not achieved 87.5 points in that category before) are automatically "bumped" into the "Masters" category during judging if the model entered achieves 87.5 or better. This is not so.

To illustrate this aspect of contest operation I will use the example of Ted who has not had a freight car successfully assessed for the achievement program and has entered a freight car for the first

time ever. Ted is therefore in the "Modellers" contest. Fred who has had a freight car successfully assessed for the achievement program and/or has won a place in a previous "Modellers" contest has entered a freight car in the "Masters" contest.

At the completion of judging the results are that Ted's freight car has achieved 110 points and Fred's car 100 points. Both are the highest point earners for freight cars in their respect contests. Therefore Ted wins the "Modellers" freight car category and Fred the "Masters" freight car category. Ted is also awarded an achievement certificate for his achievement program but does not cross into the "Masters" contest for freight cars until the next contest he enters.

It is also possible that Ted could win "Best in Show" because this award is common to both the "Modellers" and "Masters" contests across all categories. I trust this example clears up any misconceptions and further encourages members to enter our modelling contests. Should you require further information on this subject please contact myself or Gerry Hopkins our chief judge.

## Magazines and Books For Sale

RailRoad Model Craftsman, 1959 to 1979, most are in excellent condition, a few are missing.

ARHS Bulletins 1950 to 1988, includes 14 bound volumes, all in excellent condition, few are missing.

Railway Transportation 1965 to 1973, good condition, a few are missing.

Old issues of Railway Digest (1984 to 1995), Rail Australia (22 issues), and Australian Railway (8 issues), and

Many assorted books and magazines, including:  
 Along the Line Vol 1 - 1961, Along the Line No 2 - 1964, Along the Line in NSW - 1966, Along the Line in Queensland - 1965,  
 Railway History in Illawarra by C.C. Singleton - 1969,  
 Lithgow Zig Zag Railway by William A Bailey,  
 Destination Valley - 1964, Destination Circular Quay - 1967, The Bendigo Tramways - 1972, The Ballarat Tramways - 1971, A Century of Tasmanian Railways - 1971,

Murray River Paddle Steamers - 1970, Century of Steam - Tasmania - 1971, Railways of Queensland - a Lineside Guide - 1964, Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Light Railway Co - 1978, Quainton Stockbook - 1978, Quainton Guide - 1978,  
 Didcot - The Great Western Society - 1978, Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway Guide Book - 1977, Ishpool and Llanfair Light Railway in Pictures - 1975,  
 Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway - 1974,  
 Festiniog Railway Companion - 1973, Standard Gauge across Australia by William A Bayley,

Steam Triumph on Railway across Australia by William A Bayley - 1970.

For a full list of what is available, please call Peter Jensen on (02) 9651-3369 or email at [pmjense@ibm.net](mailto:pmjense@ibm.net)

## WELCOME ABOARD

Malcolm ABEL  
 East Balmain NSW  
 Gauge 1, US Roads

Andrew LEBSANFT  
 Liverpool Military Area  
 HO, US Roads

John Houghton  
 Laverton VIC  
 N, UP-SP

Phil CALVERT  
 St Ives Chase NSW  
 HO, NSW

Jim MORE  
 Riverton NZ  
 HO, Freelance

Alan PUTTOCK  
 Killara NSW  
 HO

Mark FRY  
 Gerrigong NSW  
 HO HON3 HON30" NSW

Jeff DRIVER  
 Lower Hutt NZ

Bryden SMITH  
 Gordon ACT  
 HO Sn3.5 NZ Roads

Pam MORECROFT  
 Cannons Creek Vic

Grant COOPER  
 Goulburn NSW  
 HO, NSW & USA

Steve WALKER  
 Kaleen ACT  
 HO, BN

Vivian BRICE  
 Mac Gregor ACT  
 HO, PRR

Adian HOAD  
 Ferntree Gully Vic  
 7mm / 16.5 Narrow Gauge

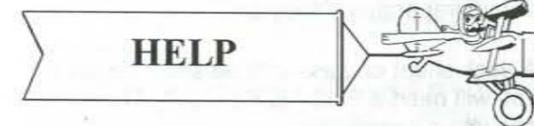
Warren CARROLL  
 Heathcote NSW  
 N

Mick STRATTON  
 Cranbourne Vic  
 HO, BN- NS

Mark WARD  
 Toowoomba QLD  
 HO, BN (Oma Belt)

Ken EDMIER  
 Westmead NSW  
 HO, ATSF

Lou DAVIS  
 Kings Langley NSW  
 HO, SP



Occasionally we need help with the transport of our display and/or a small layout. This mainly occurs at convention time and when we decide to exhibit at a regional exhibition e.g. Liverpool or Newcastle.

To avoid abusing the generous nature of a few, I would like to develop a register of members with transport that has room for 2m X 1.3m (6'x 4') layout and 2m X 1m display panels. A small van or station wagon would be OK for most requirements.

Responses from those with that type of transport will be appreciated as the more volunteers we have the less an individual will be called upon. Please include the type of vehicle and the carrying space dimensions.

Contact Peter Burrows on (02) 9487 6108 or [pburrows@cdm.com.au](mailto:pburrows@cdm.com.au).

# ASSEMBLING KITS

Or

## Don't Do What I Used To Do

### INTRODUCTION

The following piece of information has come from hard gained experience i.e. MY MISTAKES but as I 'aim to improve' each mistake is really a valuable learning experience, here are some methods that might be of help.

The most important aspect of any kit assembly be it wood, metal, plastic or composite is good preparation beforehand, NEVER CHARGE IN or you'll soon retreat with one mess or at best something that could have been done better. Most kits don't assemble in one night however small they might be (sorry to disappoint you speed freaks) remember, take your time and the results will show.

### RESOURCE FILES

Something worth considering when kit or scratch building models is establishing your own resource file or library. These days, if I find an old/new article or photograph of a model or prototype subject I may wish to model in the future, I photocopy the information and store it in a file of similar or specific topics so that it is easy to find & utilise for the future intended model. At home I have files on Railcars, Logging Locomotive Things, Shays, Heislars, Climaxes, Mallets, Garratts, as well as rolling stock types, bridge structures and interesting machinery, e.g. a BEST 60 DOZER.

The beauty of having this information file is: a quick means of finding specific information instead of thumbing through countless pages of books, magazines, and bits-of-paper looking for "that article" you read some time ago. The other benefit of doing this is that you can individualise your model and/or add further detail if you like than what may be supplied in the kit or shown on the plan.

The basis of my resource file is the KWIK-ZIP File System with easy (and quick) removable clear plastic sleeves, available from WOOLWORTHS Stationary section. These are cheap yet capable of holding a large amount of information. The initial effort of establishing your own resource system is well worth it in the long run.

### GETTING STARTED

Firstly, familiarise yourself with the kit and its parts BUT don't open any satchels containing those microscopic parts that will grow wings instantly and fly out of your fingers in a single bound, never (rarely) to be found again. Read and re-read and read again the instructions highlight any steps or information that is important to you and add any additional steps (detailing etc).

Photocopy all your plans and instructions at least once (twice is better) by doing this, one set are "working drawings" that can be trashed whilst the originals are stored and protected from the spilling glue pot or paint bottle or.... the shredding razor saw!! Next do a "check-list" of all the supplied parts with those specified as supplied in the kit, this could save you "years" of heart-break looking for that "lost part" which really may never have been supplied at all! Once you are satisfied that it is all there at least for now anyway) you can commence Pre-assembly Preparation, by doing this correctly now you could save hours of extra work later on.

### PRE-ASSEMBLY PREPARATION

The following items are needed to assist in "pre-assembly preparation" they are:

- A thick sheet of glass with no sharp edges (or you will need a First Aid Kit also!!) This ensures a completely.
- Flat work and assembly surface that is also easy to clean & view plans underneath, if required.
- A cutlery draw liner with different compartments or a plastic storage box, like those used for storage of embroidery threads or small screws, nuts, bolts etc. This allows the individual parts to be kept individual in their own compartment, or at least grouped in their future sub-assemblies.
- Sticky-tape to fasten any plans or instructions underneath the glass sheet. Double-sided Tape is used to hold down any 'assemblies' over your plan on the glass. **Never take any measurements through glass** due to distortion instead refer to your second photocopy plan or original.
- The next step is preparing the parts before using them in the construction of the kit.

### White Metal Kits

Now is the time to carefully open one satchel at a time of your white metal "bits". Working over the glass surface with good lighting place a strip of thick cloth or felt about 100-125mm wide across the width of the glass sheet along its edge and parallel with the front of the work bench. This acts as a "dampener" for any dropped (flying) parts that may bounce first on the glass, it also acts as a mat for any tools you are using making them easier to pick up. As stated earlier open only one bag at a time and inspect each part for any flash/moulding lines or imperfections.

It is imperative that each part be properly "cleaned up" so as not to detract from the model's final overall appearance.

The following tools & items are what I've found useful for this work:

- A Blunt X-acto Blade and holder - ideal for scraping away or cleaning up casting/mould lines & cutting free fine detail parts.
- Small Nipping / Wire Cutting Pliers - able to carefully cut out parts from sprues.
- Small Files, Women's Emery Boards & 800-1000 grit Wet/Dry Paper for smoothing of seams, cleaning up of parts.
- Fibre Glass Eraser- final cleaning up of parts before painting etc. (BEWARE of the shed hairs - vacuum up immediately or you'll be sorry)
- Well - Used Toothbrush - cleaning up/scrubbing of parts in a suitable de-greaser or warm soapy water (with a cold water rinse to follow) prior to painting or further treatment.
- Plastic Screw Tops, Lids, Caps etc. - ideal for mixing glues; paint washes; holding small workable amounts of de-greasers, metal blackeners etc. When you're finished with them dispose of them! I collect every top/lid/cap I can find so I have a plentiful supply on hand-
- Long Nose Tweezers (amongst others)- for dunking parts in the above solutions or picking up/holding parts for assembly.
- Blu-tac Ball- a good holder of parts for painting or positioning in place during assembly.
- Small Paper Clamps- as above.

Assuming that all parts have been "cleaned up" you should now have each of the parts grouped into the compartments of your container as mentioned in point (2).

The next step is to thoroughly wash these parts carefully of all mould release agents, oils & other

materials, this is done by either of the two following methods:

1. Scrub in warm soapy water with a used toothbrush followed by a rinse in cold water and air-dried.
2. CARR'S ACID DIP DE-GREASER. In more recent times I've been using this product. The beauty of this product is that all you need to do is simply drop the part into the de-greaser for half an hour or so then remove and rinse in cold water and allow to dry. If you're going to paint the parts you can scrub the surfaces with another toothbrush you need to have a collection of toothbrushes-used also but I rarely do this myself now. I would recommend using rubber gloves or tweezers when handling parts which have been washed in this solution to reduce re-contamination of the parts & damage to your skin. If a chemical blackener is to be used just simply drain the parts of the de-greaser & drop them into a shallow container of chemical blackener simple as that! I prefer to use CARRS WHITEMETAL BLACKENER because of the very natural "metal" look finish. The blackener is used on all of the small "detail parts" and any larger ones that that won't be handled regularly or at all e.g. "static fixed models" in scenes etc. I've also began using the blackener on trucks & side frames without any problems though I do "clean up" any blackening which may have occurred in any axle bearings. Experience & different white metal compositions determine how long you leave the parts in the blackener, never allow them to become "scaly" or "frosted looking" as this indicates that they've been left too long! If this happens then clean them up with a dry toothbrush & repeat the procedure. When the parts have been blackened remove with tweezers or tongs & drop into water for about 10 mins. or so then remove and air dry. The blackener is re-useable a number of times though it progressively becomes weaker. You may find also that the rinsing water becomes more & more concentrated to the point that it too can blacken your parts further so keep this in mind.

For larger kits that require soldering for assembly and or parts that may be handled regularly I either airbrush or brush paint (using a thick "wash") these white metal parts with either a self-etch grey or self-etch matt-black paint. In the case of kits such as DJH. Locomotive kits I would recommend first carrying out all major soldering or assembly then commencing this painting step in at least sub-assemblies. If the kit is being assembled using an epoxy glue or a Super-glue type then all you need do is carefully clean-up those gluing faces of the kit parts back to bare shiny metal for a good bond (This will be discussed further later on).

The Self-etch Matt Black & Mid Grey Paints produced by AR KIT CO. are ideal paints & mix readily with Methylated Spirits to make suitable washes. DON'T brush paint direct from the bottle with these paints instead place a small sample in a "mixing cap" & wet you're paint brush with metho; & mix a portion at a time then apply to the kit parts with a soft paint brush You need to achieve a definite colouring of the part i.e. you should not be able to see any of the original metal colour BUT don't overdo it either, remember too little is better than too much.

By now you should have a collection of (AND still individually stored or in sub-assemblies in your compartmentised container) blackened parts. At this point I decide whether to begin assembly OR to weather/colour the parts further, if possible. Lately I've been weathering & colouring every part I can before assembly. This particularly applies to fine "detail parts" such as "bolt heads, stirrups, brake gear/rigging etc". It's simple to go back & touch-up parts after assembly that may get blemished in some way during assembly than to try and "pick out" parts for painting after everything is assembled together. A final "overall" or "blending" of weathering coats can be applied when the kit is completed.

A simple weathered / rusty / dusty metal colour is made by applying a "weak wash" of Oil- Wash (rubbing alcohol & India ink solution- see recipe in "Wood Staining" section) & TAMIYA 'FLAT EARTH' paint mixed together in one of "those spare lids" mentioned earlier & applied with a small soft paint brush- round tip kind.

Other colours can be applied also for special effects using the same method.

## ASSEMBLY

Assembly can be carried out as per instructions & you're own additional notes if any. Don't forget to drill out or re-drill all necessary parts before assembly. For small kits I use Green Zap-A-Gap or 5-Minute Araldite or both together. Larger assemblies can be done with an Epoxy or Soldering or a combination of both. I would recommend that you read any of the recent articles written by Phil Badger and others on soldering white metal kits before attempting it. Good soldering requires the right approach, the right method & the right tools with the right knowledge & preparation (and some practice) if using any of the super glues it's best to "seal" them with some paint after assembly. Super glues can progressively weaken if exposed to air after a while due to the air's moisture content.

When using any of the 5-Minute Epoxy Glues I squeeze out equal parts of the glue BUT do not mix them! Instead I then mix from these two proportions "workable amounts" in a disposable mixing lid. This ensures min. wastage of glue, be sure to use separate mixing stirrers when "pulling in" the workable amounts.

Remember do all of your "assembly work" on glass & all of your "cutting" on a cutting board and have FUN!!

## Wooden Kits:

This God-given wonderful raw material has been around since the beginning when "SCRATCH BUILDING" was first invented! It's still hard to beat as a modelling medium when building scale-structures made of wood. The old saying of "wood is wood" could be never more true in modelling, no matter how hard you try nothing looks quite like wood except wood. Styrene can be made to look very similar to wood but it's hard to disguise it totally although some modellers are very good at this.

The same basic steps of Pre-Assembly Preparation & familiarising yourself with the kit apply to wooden kits. Don't forget to do a parts check, even wooden kits can have

Parts missing! Wooden kits whether they're rolling stock, buildings, or bridges particularly need to be assembled on a glass sheet.

The following tools & "bits" are what I've found useful for this type of modelling work. I'm sure most of them you know maybe there is something that is new for you.

A Blunt Razor-Saw Blade: 2 are better; one "coarse" toothed blade & one "fine" toothed blade. These are used to put grain back into, wood or pronounce it. This looks best done in overlapping "S" curves running with the natural grain of the wood. It also look's effective across cut ends. Holding the razor-saw between 90 degrees & 30 degrees to the wood will also vary the wood grain quite effectively.

\* A Small Length Of Dowel Or Tubing With A Fine Headless Bolt Fastened At One End: Gavin Hince uses this method with excellent results for getting that pronounced wood-grain effect; use the same technique as above.

\* 1 000 Grit Sandpaper, A Brass Suede Leather Brush: Both of these items are used for removing wood "fizz"- sand or brush with the wood's grain in one direction only and only after using the above mentioned tools and before colouring.

\* New X-acto Blades: X-acto No 2. & No 1. Blades are the most common types I use. For wood modelling, you need plenty renew immediately when the blade shows signs of becoming blunt don't persevere, "just do it!" (It's more easier to cut oneself than the wood when "fighting" with a blunt blade- I HAVE THE SCARS TO PROVE IT!!)

\* An Engineer's Square: 2 are better, these are ideal for obtaining square corners & Right angles etc. They are also excellent for setting up perfect vertical square surfaces when used on a sheet of glass and can support pieces e.g. walls, bents etc. when gluing up. There are many other uses for this tool(s) too many to list, experience will let you discover more.

\* An Angle Cutting Jig: A simple angle cutting device I made at home, refer to the diagram if you can follow it that is! This tool helps to cut odd angles eg. like those found on trestle bents.

\* A Modellers Mitre Box: Aluminium type, replace when worn.

\* A Right Angle Steel Bar: Made from 2 lengths of 1/4"x 2"x 12" steel bar welded at perfect right angles. This "weapon" also has a lot of uses some of these are, a bending jig, a support stand weight, "toe-breaking"(I have the toes to prove it!) I use this to weight down any items flat after gluing. A very useful item to have.

\* Steel Rule: (Not plastic) for cutting guides.

\* NWSL Chopper: A recent addition & well worth the money. Accuracy of cut and speed of operation make it worthwhile.

NWSL Duplicutter & True-Sander: Whilst I have not used these they would be worth considering for the modeller who builds predominantly in wood or sheet materials (styrene, brass etc.)

\* A Clutch Pencil: I use an architectural drafting type with 0.7mm 2B. leads for marking out on timber or making quick notes on my plans.

\* Drafting Dividers: ideal for quick accurate measurement checking or transposing dimensions from plans; make sure you use a "locking" type so they can't be knocked out of the required calibration.

\* A Multiple Scale Model Railroader's Rule: Essential.

\* A Good Quality Razor-saw(s): One with a fine deep blade & one coarse with a narrow depth blade.

Of course there are other tools and items that could be mentioned but the above tools I find I use the most in building. Achieving Character-. The next step in a wooden kit's assembly is to determine the "look" or "character" of the finished building. For that rustic look I heavily distress the timber which will be seen on the model using one of the grain accentuating methods mentioned earlier. On randomly selected timber lengths I'll carefully carve of some of the square cut edges using the X-acto knife & also add some knots and splits, this also looks effective on wooden round piles. For newer looking timbers I simply run the fine toothed razor- saw along the grain but only lightly creating a faint impression. If the model you are constructing represents a well kept or freshly painted structure then I would recommend painting it with an airbrush or brush in sub-assemblies and disregard the next series of steps on weathering.

Weathering: For models that will contain weathered or ageing timbers I firstly stain them in one of 3 different solutions & then carry out further weathering effects if required;

Solution 1: Freshly milled hardwood particularly Australian can be represented by staining in Watty! "Contemporary Maple" wood stain. This also provides that faint underlying brown leadish tinge that can be seen through ageing silver-grey weathered wood. Stain and allow to dry and air for a week before using Solutions "2" or "3" if required.

Solution 2: 1 use a "home- brew" mixture that roughly consists of 1 part Tamiya "Sky Grey" + 1/2-1 part Tamiya "Neutral Grey" to 20-30 parts Methylated Spirits. You may need to further experiment with this solution until you reach a concentration you like. With this solution I will drop into or paint on either unstained or Maple stained timber, if dropped into the solution wait a minute or more for the stain to soak in a little. Incidentally, throw a couple of small "lead fishing sinkers" into the solution these help keep solution in suspension by regularly shaking or stirring. Next remove the timber & drain it on a piece of flyscreen mesh suspended over an "old" cake-baking dish, the solution can be recycled. Allow to dry for a few days out of sunlight.

Solution 3: This is perhaps the best known of "aged wood" techniques and is very safe & reliable. With this technique I simply drop the timber 'into' or 'paint on' my solution of "Oil Wash" as Dave Frary refers to it in his scenery articles. I mix 1 Teaspoon x India Ink in 500g Jar (Allowie

Honey type!!!) x Isopropyl Rubbing Alcohol. Sometimes you may need to add a little more India ink if the stain is too light in colour. Another method though I have not attempted it is to use the India ink in ammonia, the end result is a lovely silvery-grey colour and a fantastic headache (do it outdoors I GUESS!) Any of the above methods can be further enhanced by another application of "Oil Wash " or if you want to go further then try using Coloured Pencils.

Coloured Pencils: these little items that occupied so much of our early childhood (for those who did grow up!!) once again can occupy our time, at least you don't have to colour between the lines this time around. Any soft-lead brand will do, though I now use either Derwent Studio or Colleen brand coloured pencils for additional weathering effects. Using pencils is very user-friendly & forgiving, if you do make a mistake you can simply rub it out with an eraser and start again. Coloured Pencils can simulate faded-paint, rust, weathered wood, chalked-on messages, lettering etc. The soft lead types can be used on many different types of surfaces including painted metal, plastics, plaster and even bamboo! On the non-porous surfaces further effects can be achieved by painting over the coloured-in surfaces using a soft brush and Rubbing Alcohol or Oil Wash Solution; the rubbing alcohol tends to "soften" the pencil shading and "blend" the colouring-in effect.

Weathered Wood Effects: For weathered wood effects I use 3 colours over previously stained wood, usually one of the 3 methods mentioned earlier. The colours I use are Greyish to medium tone, White & Black, I commence by randomly shading the Grey pencil along the piece of wood, the aim is not to completely colour the wood but further simulate the desired "mottled" look of aged-weathered timber. Next I shade &/or lightly streak the White pencil along the wood, this has the double effect of white-highlighting as in dry brushing with white & also helping to create the illusion of that Silver-Grey look so characteristic of weathered wood. Following this I lightly & sparsely shade the Black coloured pencil along the same piece of wood. Any areas that may resemble rotting wood can be "touched-up" with the Black pencil. The Black pencil has the effect of blending all of the colours together subtly and creating further the illusion of "shadow" in the wood grain etc.

Faded Paint Effects: For faded paint effects I firstly carry out the previous step of ageing the wood then I sparingly shade over the aged grey wood colour with 2-3 shades of the "original colour" of the structure. Try and use photographs of the original structure or something similar and observe the weathering effects on it you can't

beat nature's way of doing things especially weathering effects! This really is where a good set of coloured pencils is handy the more colours you have the more subtle and varied the effects can be. For example, if the model I am weathering is to have a faded original green colour then I will apply the green first, again shading over the grey wood. Then, and referring to my photo reference I will apply a lighter green shade over it randomly & feathering (thinning out) over the grey-green wood to nothing. You can repeat this "till the cows come home" and if you over-do it, then simply rub it out & start again! When satisfied seal with some sprayed on Dullcoat & another application of Oil Wash for that final "grey look", if you wish. Whilst this technique sounds very long winded it actually all happens very quickly and is considerably mess-free, very controlled and safe.

Air Brushing: One final method of achieving the weathered grey timber "look" is the use of the Air Brush. I use this method usually with wood stained in Solution 1. and on larger structures that were not stained in Solutions 2&3 before assembly. I start by air brushing on Tamiya Sky-Grey in only a "light dusting" and with a thinned mixture in Methylated Spirits and next with an over spray of Tamiya Neutral-Grey also in a thinned mixture with Methylated Spirits. I also tend to concentrate the Neutral Grey on the undersides of the structure where shadow and dampness may occur. The aim is to grey the wood enough but still see the original natural wood colours "through it" though faintly as found in real life. One minor advantage is that this method helps to "hide" any horrid glue stains for those of us who get a little over-zealous with the glue!!

All of these methods have been used on Swans Crossing ranging from structures to rolling stock to locomotives, each described method has it's uses so if you feel like it try one for yourself.

These wood staining methods work well on Basswood and also on other timbers also. On Swans Crossing I've used these stains on Spruce, Candle MatchWood, Birch, Bamboo, Balsa & Toothpicks!

### **Gluings:**

When gluing timber kits together I now use 2 glue types per joint unless the joint is minute. I use Green Zap-A-Gap or Selleys Super Glue Gel for near instant holding & P.V.A. White Glue for a more permanent joint. Super Glue joints seem to be a little brittle on wood whilst White Glue joints seem a little more shock resistant if bumped. You only need a small amount of each on your glue joint but NEVER mix them as the Super Glue

seems to neutralise the P.V.A. making it not very effective. For clamping in place I use small sprung paper clamps, Blu-tac, or weights and where applicable let everything dry thoroughly. I usually weight down on my glass sheet any assemblies square and flat for the night when finishing a modelling session.

When I've finished the construction of a kit I touch up any obvious "blemishes" such as glue stains etc. with a weathering wash or chalks and apply a matt finish such as an artist's matt fixative spray or Dullcote. Be careful using it over some chalk types as they will disappear before your very eyes and over any rubbing alcohol wash weathering coats. Other weathering techniques can also be applied at this time also just do it till your "gut-feeling" says enough then STOP!

### **BOLTHEAD DETAIL**

The following is a simple & cheap method of mass-producing bolthead detail for wood or plastic kits. This method creates the illusion of bolthead detail without closely resembling it and is quite convincing up to about 150mm viewing distance. It's most suited for structures/models that are perhaps not in the prime focal point of a scene but are instead part of the overall scene although once suitably weathered they blend in fine (we've used this method on 15 of the 18 bridges found on Swans Crossing without this technique detracting from the final appearance of each bridge). An added bonus is the increased structural strength it can give to a model, which is particularly useful on bridges and portable layout structures. This technique is best applied when the model is still in sub-assemblies for ease of access and reduced risk of damaging the finished item.

The materials used are Peco Track Pins (fine) & Epoxy (5min or regular). You can also substitute gap-filling super glues if you are desperate. The method simply involves drilling out first a clearance hole for the bolthead detail ie. the track pin diameter. I drill out first all the holes on a section of the model then proceed to the next step. The holes need to be deep enough to take the "sharpened" end of the spike (track pin) plus a little more of it's length say 1-2 mm. If this can't be achieved then remove the spike end before commencing the following steps. Next take a Peco track pin and holding the head of it firmly between thumb and forefinger dip it into a small mixed amount of epoxy & TWIST IT drawing a little amount of the epoxy "up" the track pin then place it immediately into the pre-drilled hole. You won't need much epoxy on the track pin; practice will determine the correct amount. The aim is to allow for the small amount of glue to 'slump' at the base of the pin where it has been inserted into

the structure and then let dry thoroughly. When you have finished doing this to your model it should resemble something being treated by "Acupuncture". After the pins have dried simply nip-off the excess pin length (recyclable for more of the same detail) & close to the 'glue-slump'. I next paint each bolthead detail with a grimy black colour followed by a thin wash of rust coloured paint simply dabbed on and don't forget the stains on the timber! This method as mentioned earlier has the added advantage of helping to structurally pin the model together, which is ideal for tall trestles etc, provided the clearance hole is drilled deep enough. The beauty of this technique is that one packet of Peco Track Pins can be reused over & over again providing hundreds of bolthead detail components (sorry Cliff

### **CONCLUSION**

So there you have it, what was to be a 'brief' article grew somewhat but if someone has learnt something new or has been of benefit to them then it's been worthwhile. These techniques are not "the way" of doing things but just some alternate ways we have tried on 'the Crossing'. We all develop our own ways of doing things so let us always be willing to share our ideas and experiences and encourage each other onwards. Do or say to another modeller what you would like them to do or say for you and enjoy your modelling together.

**HAPPY MODELLING**  
& As in life Aim to Improve.  
**Mark & Angela Fry**

### **ELECTIONS**

At the AGM, which will be held between April and June next year (1998), all positions on the board will become vacant. There are two other positions becoming vacant which are not elected positions these are Membership Officer and Editor. For details about the Membership Officer contact Jack MacMicking. The Position of Editor requires a person with unlimited access to a computer and Laser printer, should have experience of a good word processor package (I use MS Word 97 running in Windows 97). An E-mail address would also be a big help. The Main Line takes about 40 hours per issue to put together; this does not include chasing people for reports. The magazine is sent by E-mail to Richard Percy in Perth WA who then sets it up as an electronic version on the Australasian Region Web Page. If you require more information please E-mail me at [gerrymmr@ozemail.com.au](mailto:gerrymmr@ozemail.com.au)

**Gerry Hopkins MMR**

# AUSTRALIAN NARROW GAUGE CONVENTION

- When?** Easter Saturday & Sunday 11 & 12 April with optional activities on Monday, 13 April
- Where?** Blackheath Public School, Great Western Highway and Leichhardt Street, Blackheath NSW at the top of the Blue Mountains just west of Sydney
- What?** Format similar to last two conventions with more and new clinics.
- How Much?** Registration \$70 /head, \$15 for partners, Saturday night dinner \$15/ head
- Contact?** Register by sending credit card details (Master Card, Visa, Bank Card, Diners or American Express) or cheque to 3rd NG convention c/o Geo A Paxon, Convention Secretary, 5 Appledon Ave., Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782

The convention will attempt to provide three choices of clinics each session that address how-to- do-it modelling as well as prototype subjects. Model and photo contests and displays, optional layout and Zig Zag Railway visits are also planned. A sit down dinner on Saturday night will follow the successful approach used in the past. New clinic subjects we shall address include computers in model railroading, a locomotive sound forum, locomotive construction methods, resistance soldering, and NSW narrow gauge.

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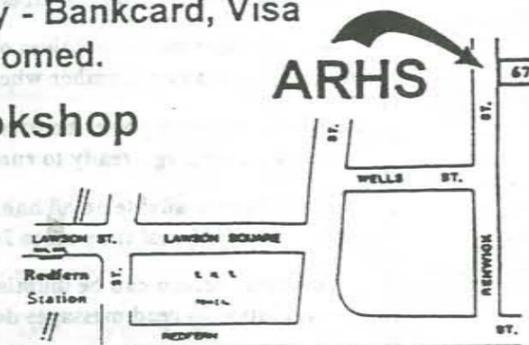
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