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MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Inc - Australasian Region

Jan-Feb-Mar 2000

Volume 17 Number 1

**NOW 28
PAGES**

**MAKING
BRASS RUN**

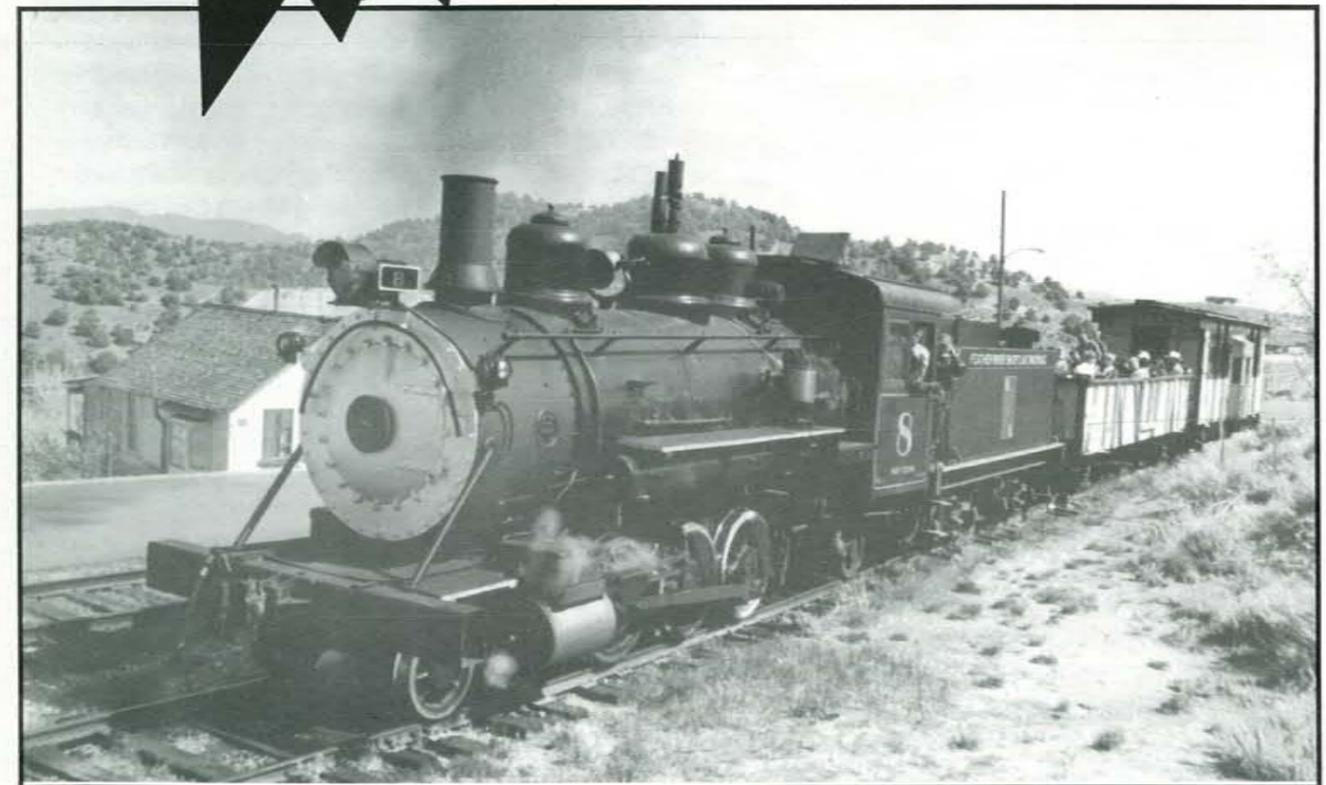
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COME ON! START THE AP PROGRAM

By Ken Scales, MMR



The usual stumbling block to modellers getting into the AP program is knowing where and how to start. When we read the paperwork it all looks too hard. However there are a couple of simple ways to start.

The first is to try to earn an award in structures. I believe this is the simplest category for many modellers for two reasons. First most of us already have a lot of the materials to build the required models. Secondly this is a category where we can build up the skills as we go along. This will make more sense as I explain why.

The structure category requires us to build 12 models one of which must be a bridge or trestle. Only 6 of these need to earn 87.5 points. The other six are required to be good quality super-detailed models. Six of them must be different which means we cannot build the same structure again and again.

Most of us have structures we built years ago, which we are not happy with. Many of these are plastic or wood kits, which cost quite a lot to replace. What I suggest is that we take one of these structures off the layout or out of the cupboard and rebuild it as a starting point. Even basic kits can be kitbashed and rebuilt as super-detailed structures. One of the simplest techniques is joining three or four small kits together to make an industrial complex. These could even be old kits we have lying around. Super-detailing can be added by a mixture of scratchbuilt items and parts purchased from hobby shops or even pirated from other kits. This structure can be one of the super-detailed models that are not judged. We can repeat this process until we get to model number seven which must earn 87.5 points. There is another hidden bonus in this process. The basic scratchbuilding of a structure is not all that difficult. The real skills actually lie in the super-detailing. By building up our skills in the way I have described we will improve as we go along. The most important thing about this approach is that this first model becomes our starting point.

Remember that models for the AP can be on a layout. They do not have to be on a plain base like contest models. A good technique is to build models on a base so that you can work on them at a desk or bench and then scenic the base onto the layout.

An important point to consider for structures is conformity. Use articles from model magazines to build models, which conform to prototype practice because points are awarded for this.

One of the stumbling blocks to the AP program has always been the high emphasis on scratch building. This has now become easier as points for scratchbuilding have been reduced from 25 to 15. However I would still recommend that you scratchbuild the six models to be judged because of the 15 points for scratchbuilding. An excellent method of learning to scratchbuild is to first build a kit that consists of a bag of cut lumber and some plans. Try to start with a kit that is not too complex and has very good plans because they will be your learning guide. You will develop most of the construction skills necessary to scratchbuild by constructing this type of kit.

However the real bonus in this approach is that it allows us to build up our skills as we go along and this is what the AP program is all about. Because the AP program has a standard this will give us a goal to aim at. We know that even our first model must be good quality and super-detailed. By the time we get to number seven our skills will improve to the point where we can achieve the standard to earn the 87.5 points. If you have a go you may be surprised just how quickly your skills improve and how much more enjoyment you get out of the hobby.

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Keith McCarron
Editor

Contributors this Issue

Martin Boyask
Donald Davis
Erik Bennet
Steve Chapman
Gerry Hopkins
John Gillies
Grant McAdam
Glenn Stevens

SUBMISSIONS: MainLine welcomes articles, photographs, drawings, cartoons and other railroad modelling related material as contributions to the mutual enjoyment of the hobby by the membership. Material should have wide appeal and preferably be sent by email or post the editor. Articles may be submitted on 3.5" computer disks in any Windows based word processing format. Sharp photos, either B/W or Colour are welcome. Don't own a computer? That's fine - typewritten articles are also welcome.

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Turn to Page 2 for the Victoria, ACT & Queensland Meeting schedules.

Schedule of Divisional Meetings New South Wales

All meetings start 2:00 Saturday unless indicated differently.

08 Apr	Rod Smith, 26 Peel Road, Baulkham Hills.	9624-3912
13 May	Bob Best 34 Winicoopa Road, Blaxland.	02 4739-1953
17 Jun	Eric Bennett, 33 Taminga Ave, Bayview.	9997-7971
15 Jul	Alan Garbutt 20 Orchard ave, Winston Hills	9686-4270
12 Aug	Geoff Hoad. 55 Kimberley Court, Baulkham Hills	9838-8590

On the Cover The oil-burning 2-6-2 No.8 of the Feather River Shortline Railroad chuffs up an incline near Virginia City, Nevada.

Photo by Erik Bennett.

**TWO
CONVENTIONS
IN ONE**

MELBOURNE 2000 CONVENTION

You've studied the prototype. Now it's time to build the model.

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**DAY
TWO**

For details contact Laurie Green at P.O.Box 435, Sunbury 3429 Ph: (03) 9744 5188 Email: lauriegreen@bigpond.com

Canberra

All meetings start at 2:00 pm Saturday unless indicated differently.

15 April	John Gillies	14 Earle Street, Lyneham	02 6248-8408
13 May	Rob Anderson	8 Purbrick Street, Chisholm	02 6291-9183
10 June	Peter Weller - Lewis	5 Tarilta Court, Queanbeyan	02 6284 4363
8 July	John Bullen	39 Buvelot Street, Weston	02 6288 7312

Queensland

The Queensland meeting schedule

is proposed. For details of venue and host, please contact Glenn Stevens on (07) 3201-5022.

20 May, 15 July, 16 September, 2 December

Victoria

All meetings start 11:30 Sunday unless indicated differently.

19 March	Graham Meyer	2 Elizabeth Court, Emerald	(03) 5968 4518	Tree Making
16 April	Ken Morecroft	Lysaghts Sporting Complex, (BHP Steel Recreation Reserve) Denham Road, Tyabb Melway 155 A2	(03) 5998 7362	
7 May	John Beaton	25 Victoria Street, Bacchus Marsh	(03) 5367 3128	Operating Session
20 May	Melbourne Convention 2000 Bayside Secondary College, Williamstown (03) 9744 5188			
18 June	Mario Rapinett	6 Steel Street, Healesville Melway 278 B-4	(03) 5962 2190	Track Laying
9 July	Peter MacDonald	4 Boyd Street, Bacchus Marsh	(03) 5367 3601	Electronic Controllers
13 August	Bob Backway	4 Tor Road, Belgrave Heights	(03) 9754 6502	Sound & model RR
10 September	Steve Cullen	67 Mowbray Crescent, Melton	(03) 9747 6267	Figure Painting

President's Report

Brickbats & Hat Tricks



President Geoff Hoad

My report this edition focuses on the talents and dedication of individual members who have served you and me, our Association, by what they have done and what they achieved. You will have seen in the past two editions of Mainline a survey we have been running to determine from you, the member which way the board of directors and I should lead the Australasian Region, now and for the foreseeable future.

In a report tabled on page 7 in this edition you will see some very clear answers and a clear call to action by the members who took the time and made the effort to contribute to our future. They are the first group to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. Over 30% of members contributed to the survey, which is a great result. These members have given us clear and valuable feedback to the questions we put to them. The direction of the Association will now be largely directed by the contributions of those who completed the survey, which leaves the rest in an interesting situation.

Every member's voice deserves to be heard. In fact, through the survey we asked, on two occasions, for your thoughts, opinions and advice. Those who did not answer have placed themselves in the position where their individual voice will always be listened to, but will be placed second to the collective opinions voiced by an overwhelming majority of members. It is to these members the board now has to listen, first and foremost. Why? Because they are the members who made the effort. They are the members who have given the Board a clear mandate to follow, and they are the members we have to listen to, because no-one else told us anything different.

To those who did not contribute, you have two options. Let the voice of the majority be your voice too, or complete a survey and have your opinion recognised. Otherwise, your opinion will always be listened to, but it will be judged against the wishes of the majority. Don't be outraged or upset when the board listens, but does nothing. You lost your opportunity, but it's not too late. Fill in a survey: your opinion will be recognised and added to those who made the effort, and gave us direction.

Our Trustee David North, (who by the way is a direct representative of members, not the Board) recently came back from a Trustees Meeting in the US with some great news for us. The Board had asked him to approach the main body in the US and start canvassing for changes to the way in which we manage membership, until now a thorn in everyone's side. Well he did better than that. He gained full support from the US for the Australasian Region to manage all memberships, including the component we pay for Association membership to the US.

But better than that, he tabled our survey results to the Trustees, who had until then, not seen any substantive feedback from members, and secured recognition that the Australasian Region is taking bold steps to secure the future in the region. But it doesn't stop there. He also achieved substantial cost savings for the region by getting the US to reimburse our expense for renewal mailouts. This means that the US saves \$2US per member that they incurred for each member and instead they reimburse us about \$0.60 cents per member, a real win-win situation. Well done David! What appear to be simple administrative issues are in fact great leaps forward for the way we manage and control costs in the future. A hat trick indeed!

To all members, take my comments in the constructive spirit in which they are intended. Be part of our collective future, for unless we determine what the future looks like, we will not have a future. Based on the response to the survey, I think we have made a very strong start.

Geoff Hoad

President, Australasian Region
National Model Railroad Association

You've studied the prototype – now it's time to build the model A Melbourne 2000 Convention Update

By Grant McAdam

With contributions from Laurie Green, Bob Backway, Peter MacDonald & Mario Rapinett

The theme for this year's convention is *You've studied the prototype – now it's time to build the model*. Its aim is to get you out of your armchair and start modelling. To this end we have devised a full day of clinics by experts in their respective fields and all the presentations have a very practical focus. Each presentation will be given twice to help keep the numbers down so you can get nice and close to the action. The clinic programme will be extremely entertaining and educational.

The Convention is being held in Melbourne on Saturday 20 May at the Bayside Secondary College, Williamstown.

A brief synopsis of each of the presentations follows.

Operating - The N gauge experience
John Beaton

John has an extensive N scale layout at his home and over the years has developed an operating system that dictates where each of the freight cars should go. Many of the visitors to John's layout do not realise the different uses and loads many of the freight cars can carry in real life. An explanation of the different prototype freight cars and the loads they carry will be outlined along with the operating system that has been employed by John.

Brass & whitemetal kit construction
Peter MacDonald

Peter has extensive experience in assembling brass & whitemetal kits. In fact he has completed five AD60 Garratt locomotives in HO scale plus many Victorian prototypes from kits produced by BGM. Come and learn first hand the techniques used by this master of his craft to assemble these kits. Peter will dispel many of the myths that surround these types of kits.

Working with plastic kits
Paul Richie

The humble plastic kit is sometimes derided when compared to the craftsman's kits of today. With attention to detail and finish it is hard, at times, to tell the difference between these types of kits when installed on a layout. Paul will take you through the simple tools and techniques that are used to construct plastic kits. He will also explain how you can modify these kits and end up with a unique model. These skills can all be put to later use if you feel inclined to start scratch building your own models.

Alternative Scenery Techniques
Mark Fry

For those of you who have seen Swan's Crossing will know of the skill and artistry of Mark and Angela Fry. During Mark's presentation he will highlight some of the alternative techniques that he has used in constructing his award-winning layout. Have you found that you cannot get the correct colour of ground foam from Woodland Scenics, well Mark will explain how to make your own as well as your own foliage net. He will also describe numerous other techniques that will help to add realism to your layout.

Amongst the tall timbers - Scenery Techniques
Geoff Nott

Great Model Railroads - 2000 has featured the work of Geoff Nott. If you have had the opportunity to see his layout first hand you will know of the quality and artistic beauty of his work. Geoff has now moved up a scale to On3 through his association with the construction of the *Red Stag Lumber Co.* but is finding that many of his scenery techniques are still applicable. Many of the techniques that Geoff uses to achieve such a realistic result will be described.

Realistic Weathering
Laurie Green MMR

There are no hidden secrets or great mysteries in achieving realistically weathered models. No matter what the scale or prototype the model is being built in, it is possible with only a few simple tools, the right materials and several easy techniques, to achieve those results that you only see in competition winning models.

Soldering techniques
Ian Mitaxa

Many people attach a certain mystique to soldering and those who have mastered the art are believed to have some special skill. Ian has taught soldering techniques at a TAFE College and will explain the simple methods that can be used to achieve reliable solder joints and go on to explain about resistance soldering techniques.

Light layout-framing techniques
Mario Rapinett

Any one who has ever exhibited a model railroad knows that it is essential to keep the weight to a minimum to reduce stress on you operators. The use of simple aluminium framing and styrofoam results in an extremely light and rigid framing system. Mario will explain the techniques that he has used and where to source the necessary construction materials.

Electronic project construction - reducing smoke loss
Bob Backway

In this clinic Bob will guide you through the construction of a typical electronic project. Beginning with an overview of the documentation normally supplied with a project the clinic will progress through the various sections

dissolving the techno-geek with liberal doses of simplifying techniques, sources of further information and tips and tricks from an experienced project creator and builder. This is a clinic designed to give you the confidence to see through the smoke and mirrors and create some electronic marvels for your own railroad.

Why Change to DCC
Gerry Hopkins MMR

Gerry, a Master Model Railroader, will show you why he's changed to DCC. His enthusiasm is not as a result of an addiction to new technology but from the sheer pleasure of running his railroad more realistically with DCC. Topics covered include:

- exploding DCC myths;
- pros and cons of various systems; and
- reducing costs.

This clinic will be sales hype free with emphasis on DCC operation rather than DCC technology.

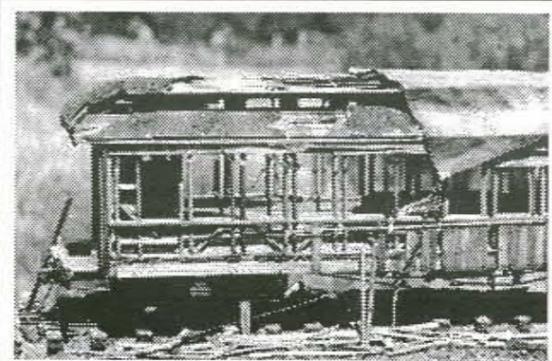
Working with Couplers
Graeme Nitz

Couplers are an essential part of our miniature world. If they do not work reliably it can result in frustration and at times desperation. There are now a myriad of coupler types out in the market place, but which one is right for you. Graeme will outline the different makes and types and explain their differences and uses.

The usual NMRA competitions will be held and at the end of the day there is an optional Saturday night banquet that will be followed by an after dinner speaker and the award of the competition prizes. As part of your registration fee you will receive a set of all the clinic notes as well as a light lunch and tea and coffee throughout the day. Ample breaks have been scheduled throughout the day to let you catch up with friends. To make the trip more worthwhile for interstate visitors the convention is being held at the same venue and weekend as the Modelling the Railways of Victoria Convention (Sunday 21/5/00). They have also arranged a full day of presentations and a tour of the nearby STEAMRAIL'S Workshops. You are entitled to a discount if you elect to attend both days. This will be an excellent opportunity to show case the talents of the NMRA to non-members.

By now you should have received a copy of the registration form for the convention. If you have not or need additional copies please drop us a line at P.O. Box 435, Sunbury 3429, phone Laurie Green on (03) 9744 5188 or the convention web site at <http://nmraconv.webjump.com>. The web site also contains information about local accommodation, rail minded attractions in Melbourne as well as a guide to travelling around Melbourne.

I look forward to seeing you in Melbourne in May at what promises to be a truly thought provoking and entertaining convention.



Techniques will be shown in Laurie Green's clinic on Realistic Weathering. Photo by Laurie Green

Canberra

by John Gillies

January Meeting

On a day that tempted many Canberrans to travel down to the south coast for swimming, surfing or other activities to cool off, ten members attended the first meeting of the year at Malcolm Risby's. Mal had an assortment of magazines and books available for perusal as we caught up with what everyone had done over the two months since the last meeting. As a fellow BN modeller I enjoyed looking through Mal's copy of Kalmbach's "Burlington Northern Diesel Locomotives" which provides some interesting insights to the development of BN's locomotive fleet in the 1970s and early 1980s. Steve Walker brought his copy of Hundman Publishing's "Northwest Passage" which covers 25 years of the Burlington Northern in the Pacific Northwest - it is a wonderful book with lots of information and excellent photos for modelling

purposes. I'll have to get a copy later on.

We continued the discussions from the previous meeting on plans for our exhibit at the National Model Railway Exhibition in April and spent some time deciding whether the two HO scale modules to be built would use the same standards as the Sydney module group. Rob Anderson kindly agreed to build two bare modules to the Sydney design standard and Peter Weller-Lewis generously volunteered to develop some track planning and operating ideas for the modules. Mal had some of his N scale equipment on display, including some recently acquired BNSF Dash 9s and operated a lengthy train around an oval test track. Mal modelling period goes up to the present time and it is surprising to see just how big the Dash 9s are compared to SD70s, 60s and 40-2s. Thanks to Mal for hosting the meeting.

February Meeting

I couldn't make it to the February meeting at Viv Brice's as I was away celebrating Sally's 40th birthday with friends. Peter Weller-

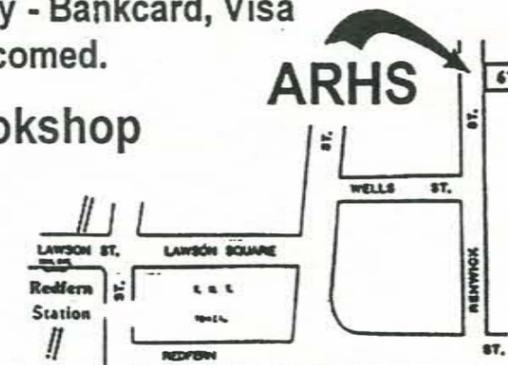
Lewis informed the eight members present that he had recently returned from visiting Toni and John Saxon where the track plan for the modules was discussed. John had informed Peter that the July 1999 issue of the NMRA *Bulletin* contained an article on building an Appalachian coal mine module which should fit the bill. It was interesting to note that Peter's issue of the magazine contained the article, but that the pages for the article were actually marked as being from the June 1999 issue. I didn't receive the June issue, so I don't know whether it was published in that issue or not - other member's copies of the July issue have an article on redetailing a PBL Sn3 D&RGW K-37 in its place! This plan was received favourably. Peter provided details of the Melbourne convention in May using information e-mailed by Grant McAdam to Board of Directors members - at this stage it appears that Rob Anderson is the only member who'll be able to attend the convention. Thanks to Peter and

Continued on Page 9/...

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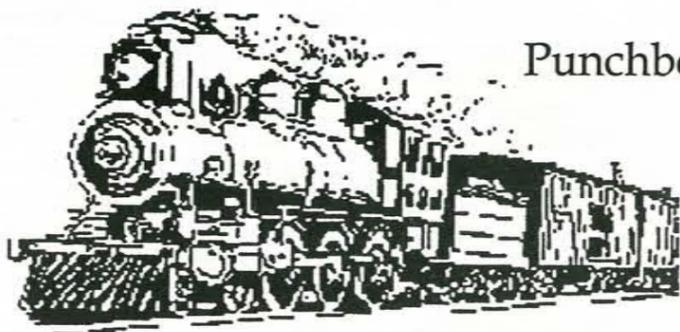
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THE ONLY DRIVR-IN HOBBY SHOP IN SYDNEY

Australasian Region Member Survey Report

by Geoff Hoad

– Part One

This is a summary of the report tabled before the Board of Directors of the Region in January 2000 and accepted as the representative feedback of members. A full copy will shortly be posted on the website, but anyone who wants a copy is welcome to e-mail me. The full report comes to nine pages, so I will focus on the essential details.

For ease of reading it will be divided into two parts; data and analysis. This edition we will present the data and in the next edition the analysis plus a report on what the Board proposes to do.

Data

- 30% of the total members responded making this a statistically significant and valid result
- 30% of respondents have up to five years membership and another 30% between 6 and ten years membership
- 61% of respondents live in NSW 16% in QLD and 11% in VIC
- Over 62% of respondents model HO with Hon3 coming second with 10% and N scale with 8%
- 78% of respondents are over 50 years old with the next highest group being the 40-49 age range with 15%
- People joined the NMRA because of social issues, a desire to develop skills, model a US prototype, get information and benefit from a set of standards
- Over 87% of respondents had attended at least one convention in Melbourne or Sydney
- Good things about being a member were listed as increasing knowledge, meeting others, visiting layouts, the Mainline Magazine, the Bulletin Magazine, attending conventions, receiving standards, being part of a specific national/international body and attending monthly meetings in order of popularity
- 52% of respondents believed that the NMRA has helped members learn about the hobby through conventions
- Unfortunately 25% did not attend monthly meetings, but 48% attended over 5 per year



There is a lot of information, and you are reading the abridged version! In the next edition I will present some detailed analysis as to what it all means and put forward the Board's plan for addressing the mandate for moving forward that you have given it.

Continued from Page 24/...

Victorian Division

A short note about the April meeting. Once again Ken Morecroft has arranged for the NMRA visit to the BHP Western Port Railway Society. The miniature railway will be in operation for our riding pleasure. Barbecue facilities are available to cook your own lunch and morning and afternoon tea will be provided. Please note that as a safety requirement no open-toed shoes will be permitted. %

New South Wales

by Gerry Hopkins MMR

December 1999

The weather was very kind to us again for this meeting; someone high up must have a model railroad. The venue for our Xmas party was Jasper Rd Public School in the near western suburbs of Sydney. The hall was an ideal size. The centre of the hall was taken up by the Module SIG (Sydney) layout, a total of 26.4

metres in length. The stage area was home to an O gauge modular layout organised by Bruce Lovett. At the far end of the hall was a G gauge display, which ran a Bachmann Shay and Climax.

The members were jovial and were treated to after dinner music. The band played Kentucky Blue Grass music and all songs had a railroad theme. The Band was a family affair - from the Bennett family. Thank you Eric and family for your entertainment [*The Von Bennett Singers? Ed*].

As usual, the food was excellent and many thanks to the ladies for their efforts. One of the members of the Module SIG (Sydney) brought along a full size plan of some proposed modules. The track was marked as 1" wide tape, the building locations were plans of Cornerstone kits and it was all set out on sheets of newspaper stuck together to get the right size. This is a good way to your layout before you start building.

Santa must have passed by, there appeared on the module system a 2-6-0 with 2 passenger cars, box car and caboose - in On30" - with full sound system. Is this the start of something new?

Steve Chapman was the owner and the delightful units were appreciated by many of those present. We have eight weeks before the next meeting - plenty of time to get some work done on your layout.

All the very best for a productive year during 2000. Is Y2K related to P2K? [*I don't get it. Ed*]

Queensland

by Glenn Stevens



Glenn Stevens presents Mark Ward (centre) with his Model Railroad Author Award witnessed by Ted Freeman.

Well since the last newsletter, multitudes of things of importance to Division 1 have happened.

At our Christmas function in December, we welcomed three people who graced us with their presence for the first time, and I hope that we see Greg, Audrey and Kay more often. It was also good to see Lynn and Amy Zelmer from Rockhampton. The meeting was hosted by yours truly, and as the only official function for the day, I presented Ian Venables with his Master Builder - Cars Award. Well done Ian. I would also like to thank Lynn for the donation of books and railroadians as prizes at our upcoming Convention.

During January I made a visit to Toowoomba and presented Mark Ward with his Model Railroad Authors Award, and had a little side visit to myself and presented myself with an Association Volunteer Award for looking after Division 1 since 1994.

I would also like to welcome Tony Reidpath of Burleigh Heads to Division 1. Tony joined the NMRA at the Convention last year, and Toni Saxon, the Regional Membership Chairman, forwarded his name. As a result of other information Toni passed on, I have amended the Queensland membership list.

The most important news (from my perspective at least) is that I have decided after 37 years to leave the RAAF, and have consequently ceased full-time employment as of 30 Jan 00 (for a while at least) so I am only contactable at home.

Following correspondence from members, and discussions that have taken place over the last two meetings, I have drafted a proposed Convention schedule for all of you to peruse and make comment. It will be an item for discussion at the next meeting.

That's about all from me for this time, have a happy, safe and prosperous 2000. %

CONVENTION 2000 MELBOURNE 20 MAY 2000

Study the prototype: Build the model
MainLine

Rob for their work on the modules and plans. Thanks also to Sylvie and Viv for hosting the meeting.
March Meeting

The meeting at John Prattis' began with a discussion to finalise plans for constructing the two modules at the National Model Railway Exhibition. The two bare modules were set up in John's garage and plans were further refined. Charles Schuster brought two well done HO scale locomotives; a V-Line T class and a repainted SA 830 class. Charles is developing a good collection of Australian diesel locomotives in both N and HO scales. Rob Nesbitt had a wonderful brass Union Pacific turbine and tender on display - the detail and finish were top excellent. John Prattis showed the twelve members present the switching layout from the Kalmbach book "101 Track Plans" that his son Hugh (who is a junior member of the NMRA) is building as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Hugh has made very good progress on the framing

and roadbed of two of the three sections with only a little more work to be done before the scenery and track laying begins. Well done Hugh.

Several members used the afternoon operating session to run their locomotives over John's Lithgow Zig Zag layout. John's layout has expanded further since our last visit with construction of the Wolgan Valley branch being well underway. This branch will generate extra traffic for the main line run over the Zig Zag and John has developed a condensed version which captures all the main features of the prototype including the shale oil refinery. Thanks to Julie and John for hosting the meeting.

NEW NMRA MEMBERS

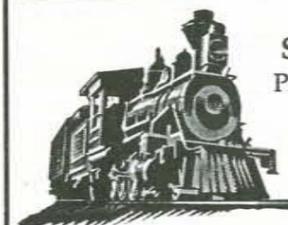
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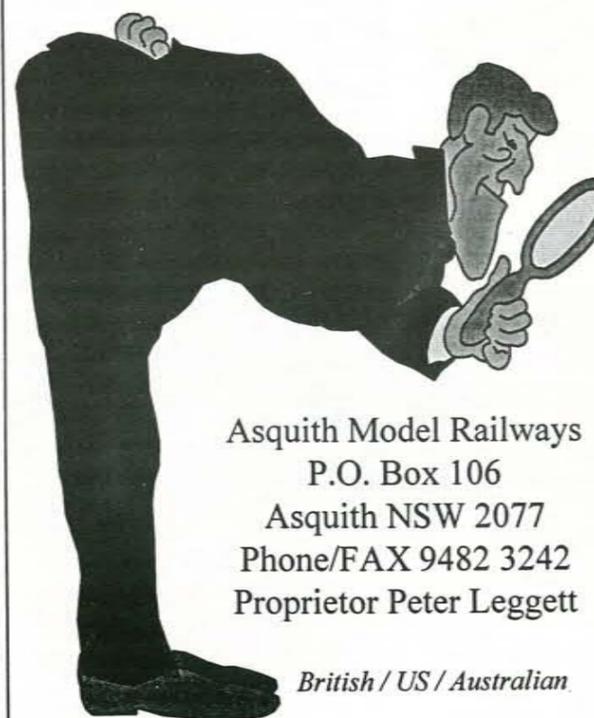
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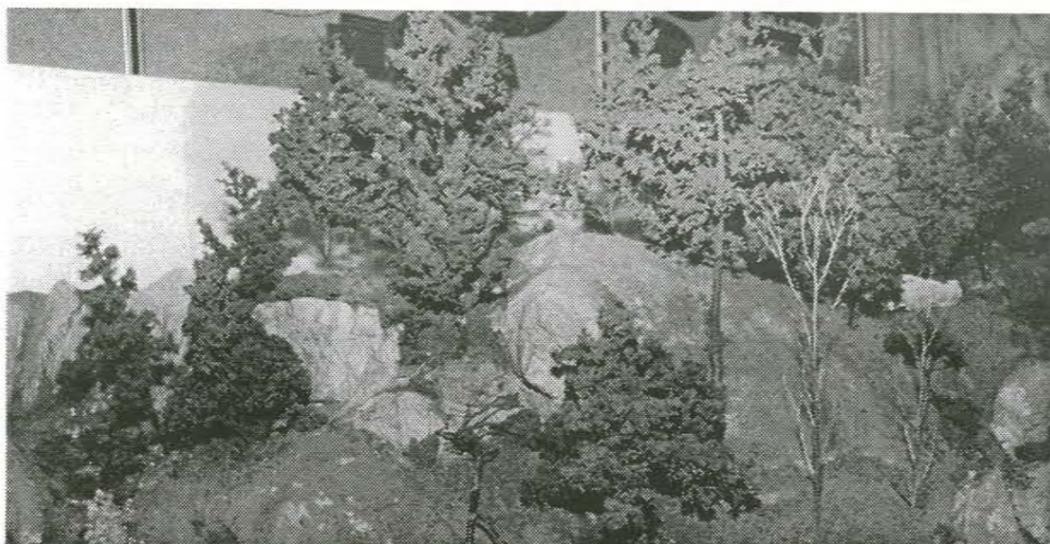
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Mass Producing Trees

by Donald Davis



whilst drying). Block of foam from an old lounge or mattress; Screw top glass jar. Metal trays (3 to 4 of baking dish type, or aluminium drip trays. Food blender is optional. Timber frame covered with flyscreen Approx 600mm X 600mm in size and 50mm deep. Woodlands Scenics or similar brand of finely ground foam for final cover on the

Building a layout on a budget I have attempted to save money where possible. This was the reason to look at alternative scenery supplies other than commercial products. When I started looking for an alternative supply of trees I was discussing the possibilities with Gary Spencer-Salt. He told me of a method that he had found to be successful in the past.

When I want to mass-produce trees as cheaply as possible, I firstly look at the type of tree that I want to reproduce. This is done by researching from magazines and books of the area to be modelled.

I then look for foliage that might easily fit the shape of a tree. I use the flowerhead of the Nandina Domestica (sacred bamboo) for making pine trees. Another is the Asparagus Densiflorus (foxtail asparagus fern) which, when dried, looks like a dead pine tree. These are not the only plants that can be used, but they are the ones I prefer. For small trees I use the Heki brand of dried weeds or the flower heads of the Spireas Bumalda (Red May bush). The stems of the May Bush are also used to make a tree armature.

It does not matter which type of plant you use to form your armature as the method of adding foliage is the same.

Materials required: Spray adhesive Approximately \$5 from the reject shop; 3M disc cement or pressure sensitive contact glue \$6 -7 from the hardware store. Mineral turpentine. Block of styrofoam (an old fruit box - to place the tree into

tree. Material dye solution (RIT is one brandname).

As this article is about mass-producing trees we need to prepare our basic components first. 1. The foam. By using the foam from an old lounge or mattress we will save money. Firstly break the foam into pieces approx. 20mm square, then place it in the food blender. Important, do not use the blender for

Photograph 1: The right hand side of the photograph shows the Nandina flowerhead. The left-hand side of the photograph is of the finished tree.

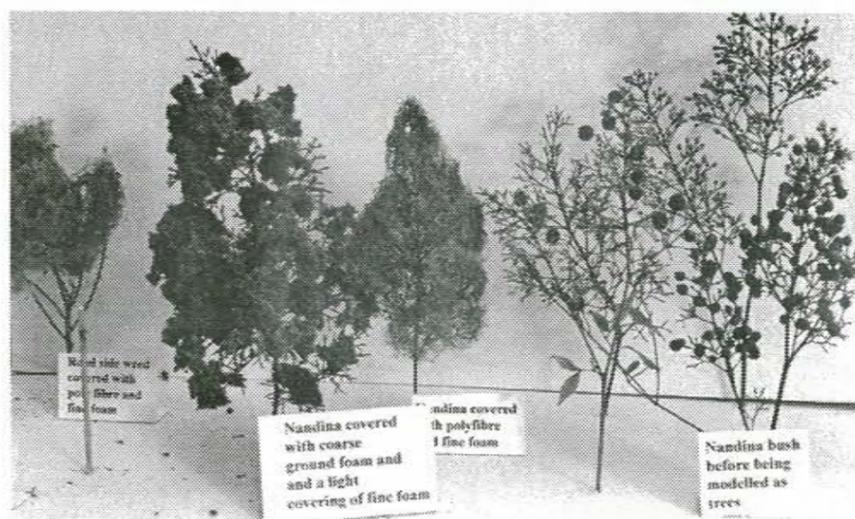


Photo one - Don Davis

food after using. Add the dye to the water (quantities are by trial and error. It is easier to increase the strength of the dye than to lighten the result). Then pour the water into the blender covering the foam with the mixture. Blend ingredients until the foam is reduced to pieces approx 3 - 4 mm diameter.

Drain off the water and store so that it can be used again. Place the foam on the drying frame and place in a warm area. (If drying in the sun place a piece of flyscreen over it to prevent the foam from blowing away). After foam has dried store it in a container for later use.

2. Next we prepare the Nandina flowerhead as a tree armature. Firstly remove all traces of leaves, berries or flower petals. The stem can be used as-is, or painted with the appropriate colours for the type of tree that you want to model. Similar process is used for other types of flower heads used for this purpose, or the flower can be used as a base for the foam to give the armature more foliage body.

3. To prepare the glue first have a clean screw top glass jar. Pour the 3M glue (contact adhesive or pressure sensitive) into the jar filling approx. 1/3 then fill jar with mineral turps. This will give a glue base that is very easy to apply.

4. There are two methods of applying the glue to the tree. Pouring the glue over the entire armature, allowing excess glue to drain into a baking dish size container for re-use, or painting the glue onto the area to have the foam attached. This method is good to use if part of the armature is to be left free of foliage to model a half dead or lightning struck tree.

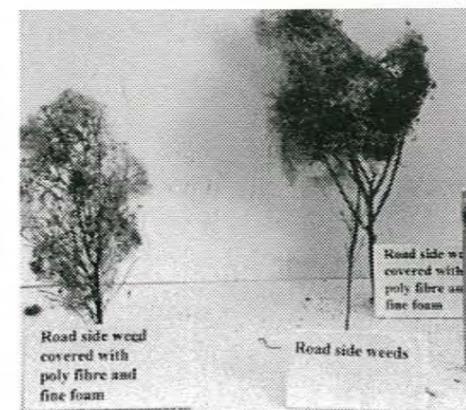


Photo two - by Don Davis

5. Immediately the glue has been applied, hold the glued armature over another similar size tray and cover with the home made ground foam. After fully covering the armature, stand the armature in the block of styrofoam and leave it to dry overnight. 6. We now come to the expensive part of making trees. Holding the armature, which has had the home made foam applied, spray in a well-ventilated area with a clear spray adhesive. Sprinkle woodlands scenic ground foam (commercial brand) over the armature, allowing the excess to collect in another baking dish

size tray, so that it can be reused. Apply spray adhesive again to completely attach any loose ground foam. Place back in the foam block to dry.

7. Now comes the most important part of the process placing on the layout I have read that trees grow in stands of odd number of plants to what degree people have researched I don't know as trees whether in odd or even groupings will on enhance the layout.

I hope this short instruction will assist in your own tree making.

Yours in modelling,

Donald Davis

VALE FRANKLYN ALAN MAXWELL 1920 - 2000 AGE 79.

On the 10 January 2000, Franklyn (Frank) Alan Maxwell, a founding father of the Southern Cross Model Railway Association, passed away peacefully after a long illness.

Frank was born in Epping on 25 April 1920 - Anzac Day. It seemed appropriate, as he would later become one of the legendary, WW2 'Rats of Tobruk'. His early days were spent working as a Jackaroo on a property north of Goulburn NSW. He studied and became a Wool Classer before the out-break of WW2.

Injuries sustained during the war prevented him from continuing his trade after the war. Undaunted, he ended up turning his hand successfully to many trades, including Watchmaker and Jeweller, PMG (Telephone) Technician, Electrical Technician, Landscape Gardener and Computer Engineer. 'Jack of all Trades' is an apt title for this talented man.

During the 1950s-60s, Frank was an active member of the Sydney Model Railway Club (SMRC) which, in those days, held its weekly meeting in the old Transport House, Castlereagh St. Sydney.

An early issue of the AMRM, depicts Frank leaning over the central yard throat of the SMRC layout, eyeing one of his own locos doing some shunting. The importance of this is that the loco is actually puffing smoke from a little device that Frank designed and scratch-built. It was one of the first smoke generators. Using a syringe to insert small amounts of fluid (sewing machine oil I think), the oil would be heated and a puff of smoke resulted. This was one of the first of its kind and a remarkable invention of its time.

Frank built an exhibition layout in the garage where he lived in Chatswood. The main Passenger, Goods and Loco yards all had hand-laid tracks with scratch-built points.

During the formative days of the SCMRA, Frank would spend hours typing the members Newsletter, before running off numerous copies on the Club's Gestetner printer in the garage. He actively encouraged people into Model Railroading and was responsible for enrolling many members into the SCMRA / AMRA.

He had such a passion for railway modelling that during the 1980s he was honoured with Life Membership of the SCMRA, AMRA and the NMRA.

by Bob Maxwell (Frank's Son)

Railroad Modelling: Is this wonderful old pastime in need of a transplant?

by Stuart Hall

In any debate on the future of Railroad Modelling, it could be argued that in the face of countless recreational pursuits that are available to our youth, our hobby will struggle in the not too distant future if we do not recognise the need for a wholesale recruitment of youth!

Fantastic improvements have kept pace with new technology. It has been 'we' model railroaders who have been slow to embrace it. We now have smaller scale, Digital Command Control (DCC), digitally recorded real sound decoders on board our loco's, block control, signaling and route selection, all of which can be interfaced and controlled by a computer. This is the link to our youth and we must cultivate it!

Some may argue that the hobby lacks the technological excitement of the computer age. I disagree, totally!

Our challenge is, just how do we give them access and involvement? I believe I have found one answer!

A few years ago, at the age of fifty-two, I made the decision to seriously consider building my first model railroad. Although I have enjoyed a life-long interest, there was one compelling reason that held me back. I wanted to run full-length passenger and freight trains on a reasonably long main line and sufficient space was never available. Watching a locomotive chase the markers on the caboose would be akin to watching grass grow! My other half rejected the notion of using the garage. A 'brilliant' suggestion to counter this setback, by using an elevating platform and false ceiling,

was also summarily dispatched!

Devastated, but never beaten, my thoughts turned to pure fantasy. There could only be one solution. Build my model railroad empire as I envisaged it and run it as a commercial attraction to help fund it's cost. The decision having been made, it was now down to serious planning. A casual comment on my plans to my close friends in New Zealand, resulted in them selling up, and moving to Sydney to join me in the venture. After two years of an almost full-time construction program, a back yard that is completely filled with huge modules (27 at last count), we have reached the point whereby, we can share this 'monster' with you!

The Union Pacific Model Railroad project has given us cause for much pride of achievement, but equally, much excitement at the prospect of encouraging countless new model railroaders to a wonderful pastime.

There is a vast, relatively untapped, pool of potential model railroaders out in the community who have absolutely no access to an operating model railroad. Therefore, there is no opportunity to get the 'hands on' feel of participation, the very element that fires the imagination leading to a desire to become involved. The Union Pacific Model Railroad Co. has a role to play in developing this interest and we look forward to joining with other groups, in a common goal of fostering our wonderful hobby!

The Union Pacific Model Railroad will operate with DCC and provide an opportunity for visitors to become an 'Engineer' and have control of a full length passenger

train on a journey that will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. This participation in operations, particularly the flexibility of DCC and the reliability of quality Kato locomotives, should give many prospective new enthusiasts, young and old alike, a real taste of model railroading. At a later stage, computerisation of operations will be deployed and another window of opportunity will unfold, capturing the imagination and heightening the interest!

So, does the hobby need a transplant? I don't believe so! Perhaps all that is required, is a transfusion of new blood. Past and present generations of Model Railroaders have laid a solid foundation for those of us who follow. All the proprietors of the UPMRR are rank beginners and we owe a debt of gratitude (to all those who have provided us with) the abundance of information that has guided us to this point. We obviously have a lot more to learn and we will require the support of the established sectors in the hobby to assist us along the way. Our advantage is that we can view the hobby through 'new eyes' and having identified a need for new blood, will endeavour to concentrate our efforts in encouraging new enthusiasts. We invite and welcome your support. %

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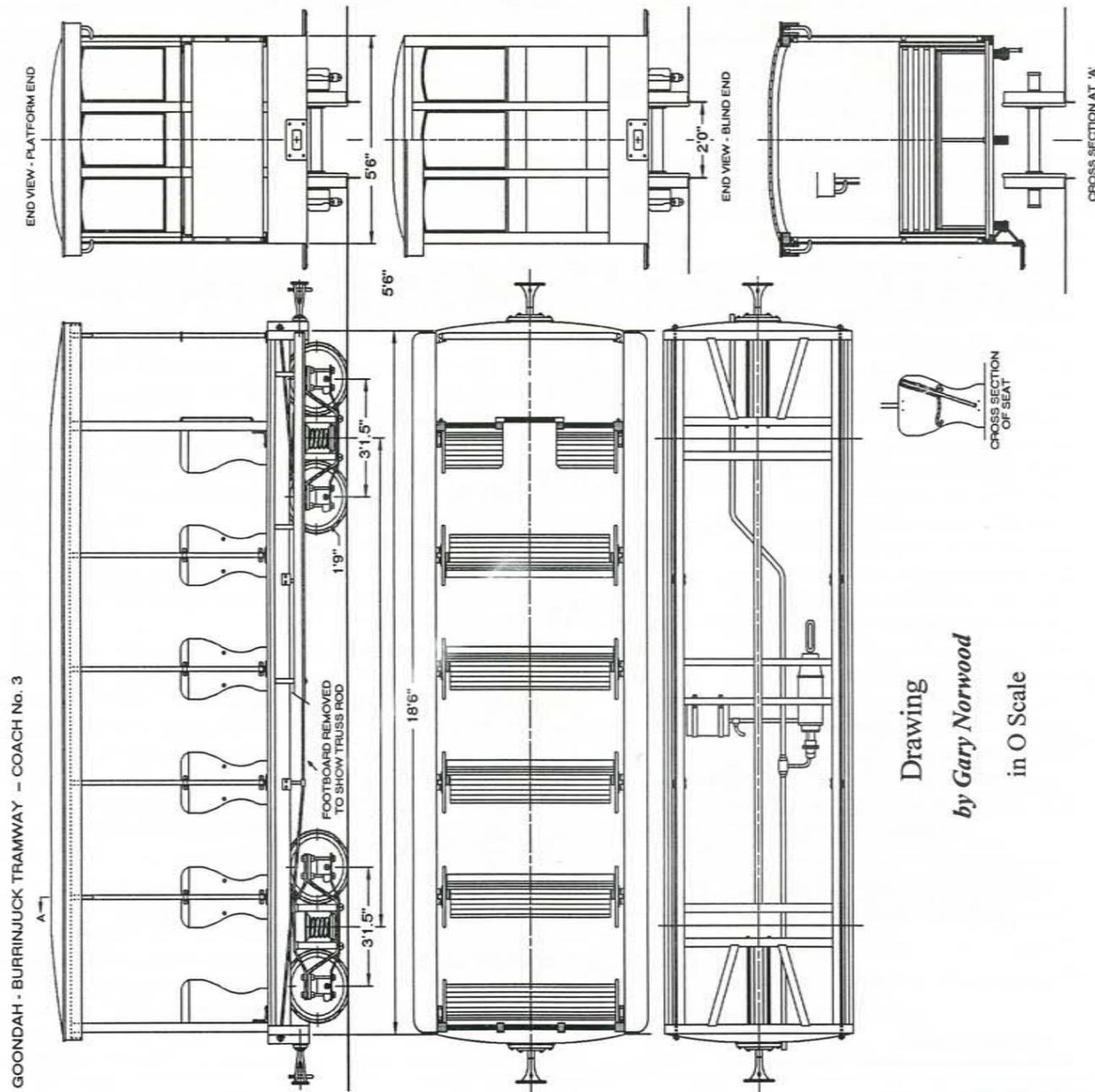
GOONDAH – BURRINJUCK TRAMWAY PASSENGER CAR #3

The Goondah – Burrinjuck Tramway was constructed in 1907 to transport materials for the construction of the Burrinjuck dam. The line was dismantled in 1929. Substantial amounts of the original roadbed are still visible along with several dams used for locomotive water supply. The tramway was 2'0" gauge and had 1 Fowler 0-6-0T loco and 4 Krauss 0-4-0T locos. These were named Dulce, Robin, Jack and Archie. By good fortune Archie still exists and is on display at the Rail Transport Museum at Thirlmere.

The line had 6 passenger cars and 27 freight cars. All were built by the Biloela Government Dockyard - this later became known as Cockatoo Dockyard. Passenger car #3 had seating for 17 passengers on three fixed seats and four reversible seats. There is a small open platform at one end for the guard. Length over main end sills 18'6", width over floor and end sills 5'6". Bogies were 3'1 1/2" wheelbase with 1'9" diameter wheels with 6 curved spokes. (Try buying them in any scale). The Car had a wood frame with steel truss rods. The Roof was supported by wood posts and each end of passenger section. Intermediate supports were steel tubes. Fascia was supported by curved steel tubes at two points on each side. Roof was wood planked covered with canvas. The only previously published drawing was very inaccurate. This drawing has been composed by proportioning and estimating sizes using one published photograph. The car appeared to be stained wood finish and painted canvas roof. Photographs would suggest that the car was later painted, colors not known. Framing appears to be darker color than the end panels. Possibly two tones of green or brown, your guess is as good as mine. Some of the Westinghouse brake equipment is shown except for the brake levers and linkages. Drawings exist showing brake gear details on the freight cars, but these are not visible on the passenger cars. Handbrake is not visible in any photographs of the passenger cars.

References:

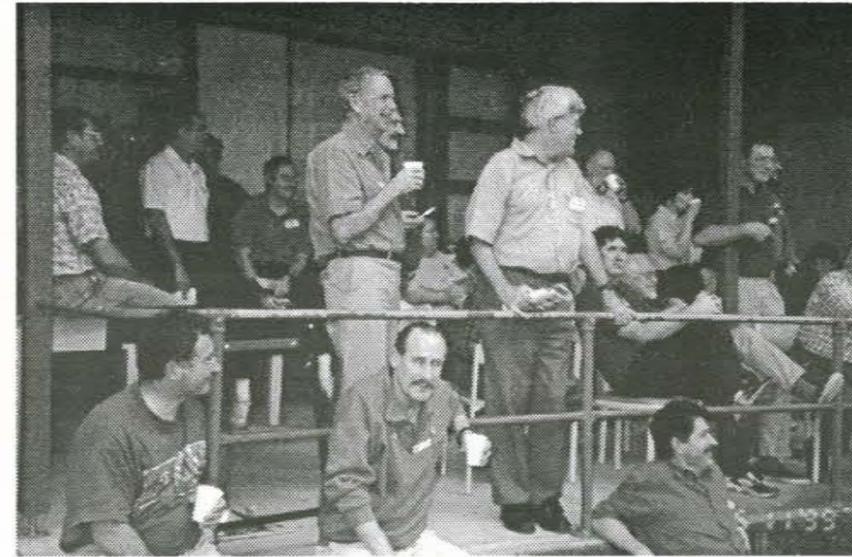
ARHS Bulletin No. 230 - December 1956 ARHS Bulletin No. 596 - June 1987 - John Newland ARHS Bulletin No. 597 - July 1987 - John Newland
 ARHS Bulletin No. 598 - August 1987 - John Newland ARHS Bulletin No. 604 - February 1988 - John Newland
 Book 'The Goondah - Burrinjuck Railway' - John Newland, ARHS 1994 Book 'Railway to Burrinjuck' Sue Chessbrough & Yvonne McBurney



GOONDAH - BURRINJUCK TRAMWAY - COACH No. 3

Drawing
 by Gary Norwood
 in O Scale

Sydney Roundup



Flashback to Nov 99 at Epping MRC Photo by Alan Garbutt

February Meeting

Monthly meeting at Glen Coventry's Residence. 12 Feb 2000.

Meeting opened with about 60 people in drizzling rain. Geoff Hoad gave an opening address and said good day to new members.

He said that survey results are coming in and the results will appear in mainline shortly.

If you have filled in a survey, great stuff. If you have not, then don't complain when things do not go the way you hoped for.

Jack MacMicking has some forms for the O Gauge Convention 26th August 2000.

Our Trustee David North gave us a very long and enlightening chat about NMRA affairs. I won't steal his thunder, so look in other parts of mainline for his report.

Some questions were asked about the survey and David's report. There were too many put write about them here, but you can hear the whole formal part of the meeting Audio CD when I have enough data to fill most of the CD.

A relatively new member asked for help. He was swamped with kind and helpful offers. So ask if you need help.

The meeting closed after 40 minutes of very interesting facts.

Thanks were given to our host Glen and his Family.

Steve Chapman

March Meeting

March meeting at the residence of David Latham at Oatly.

David North opened the meeting with apologies from Geoff Hoad, he's on his way to Melbourne.

There was also a notice given about the Board's elections coming up in the May meeting. So, do you want to be on the BOD? Get your name in now and do your bit for the NMRA.

There were questions why there was no Financial report at the Monthly meetings. It was pointed out that the monthly meetings were mainly for socialising and most of all, running trains. But if members want a financial report given, then we could do that, David North said. There was at one stage a financial report given, but it faded away over time and with changes in the Board. But if you wished to see the different reports, all you have to do is ask.

My tape player gave up the ghost halfway through the meeting so I missed a few things. Also there will be no CD recording of this meeting. There are previous meeting recordings made, see our librarian for further details, or contact me.

A very good show and tell was given by one of the members: Lyndon Spence, from Figtree, spoke about the Accurail Web site that has all issues on different train magazine. The Model Train Magazine Index.

QUEENSLAND SEPTEMBER 1999

Nick Negerevich is a relatively new NMRA member and on 18 September he hosted a visit to his layout, the Ferntree Garden Railway. Ten members, six wives/partners and three guests attended the meeting, continuing the good run of attendances during 1999.

It is amazing what you can do to your layout when a visit by your friends is imminent. Nick finished his first loop the week before with the assistance of Denis Lane. For all of us who run small trains, (O, HO, and N), the detail and size of a LARGE GP-9 was a sight to behold. Because of the size, Nick has no trouble fitting sound and remote control, the sound quality being excellent. Also on view were ARISTO CRAFT Heavyweight coaches and a variety of different manufacturers locomotives.

Nick gave a very good run-down on the different scales of garden railways, with 1 3/4" gauge track only being standard gauge if you buy the right train.

A very good afternoon was had by all and it was good to see the visitors. My thanks to Nick and Pam for hosting us.%

Glenn Stevens

You can search by category, by keyword, keyword list, title text, for roadname, for trackplan, etc.

Web Site:

www.elnet.com/~accurail/index.htm

A very special acknowledgment was given to David Latham and his wife Sue for hosting the meeting and putting on a delicious afternoon tea.

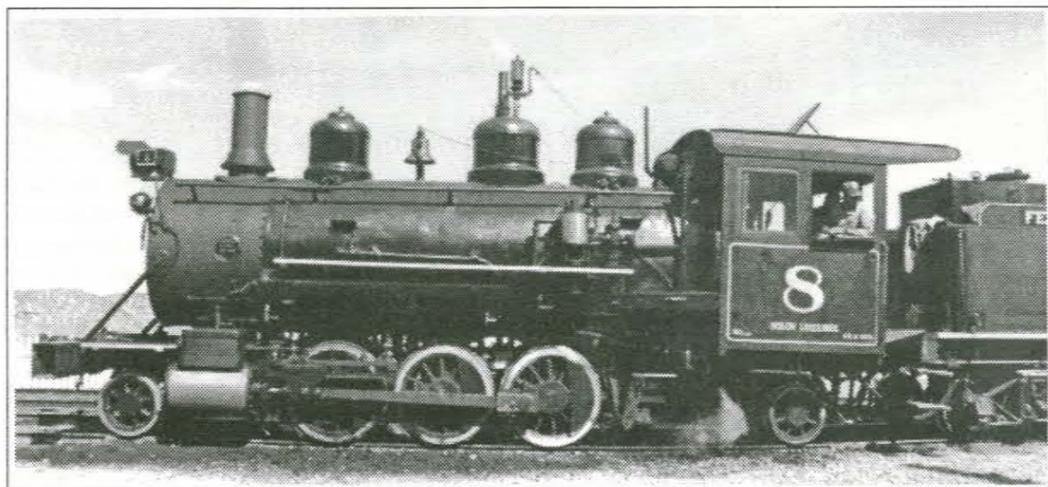
Steve Chapman

CONVENTION
 2000
 MELBOURNE
 20 MAY 2000

FEATURE SERIES Brass Locos

Getting Them to Run

By Martin Boyask



A 2-6-2 of the Feather River Shortline Railroad - Photo by Erik Bennett

Sorting out HO Brass

Many owners approach the brass steam loco as though it was a cross between a Swiss watch and an atom bomb. It is certainly complex compared to most of our models, but it has a degree of order in its construction and can be repaired and improved by most modellers, with care and a little patience.

The surprising discovery is how similar many of these apparently varied models can be, considering what a wide range of prototypes they cover. The major differences are usually down to when they were produced, between say the late 50s to the present day.

I thought it might be useful to write a "serialised" column of description and tips, so that the curious owner might feel better able to tackle problems. Perhaps this will build up into a kind of generalised workshop manual of, at least, the simpler aspects of looking after these valuable models. Other brass tinkerers should feel free to send me

their own tips and experiences so that I can cadge....er, give them credit for the extra information.

At this stage I will limit my scribbling to what we might describe as mainstream, rigid-framed HO brass, for example your typical Mikado or Pacific. Later we can add riders applying to articulateds and other oddballs.

Where applicable I'll try to indicate variations from the norm, but I will certainly overlook some details! For this, Part One, I'll finish by briefly describing the typical construction. [I will assume for this purpose that the loco has been stripped down to its components by simply removing every screw in sight, and unsoldering any motor or lighting wiring. I will assume also that you have placed each small item in a safe container, with perhaps some notes as to its location/purpose on the model.]

Tools needed: [put away that hammer!]

- Set of small "jewellers" screwdrivers.

- Small pliers, needle nose.
- Assorted small files
- Small drills and metric taps.
- Small and large soldering iron [the latter for repairs only].

Useful additions:

- NSWL Quarterer
- Riveting tool, e.g. Bowser.

The mainframe usually comprises two frames running from pilot to rear of cab, separated by a series of transverse spacers soldered between them. Occasionally some of the spacers are riveted. The front end might have a non-detachable pilot and deck, with other fittings - more often this assembly is removable. The rear end will have a mounting plate to secure the chassis under the cab, and might also carry some details and pipery. In most models the cylinder block will be removable, held by a single hollow screw [whose bore takes the long vertical screw holding the front end to the smokebox]. Occasionally two small screws secure the cylinder block to a cross bearer in the mainframe. The

Author Martin Boyask, at age 55, is a Dental Surgeon by trade and the Editor of the British Regions excellent flagship magazine, *Roundhouse*.

Martin has lived in Hove, near Brighton on the south coast, for about 30 years and has been a railfan since about the age of six. He began modelling in American outline about 1970 with some N scale NYC/PRR steam alongside U.P. 2nd generation diesels!

He joined the NMRA British Region in 1973 and changed to HO scale, modelling early 1950s C&O steam for many years, even becoming a C&O Historical Society member.

During this period he became well acquainted with "brass" and started getting called upon to do some custom painting and repairs etc. It is those many years of experience that have led to this series of articles.

Martin started submitting the occasional drawing for the cover of the then "roneo'd" version of *Roundhouse* magazine. In 1983 he was asked to become its editor and he has held that position ever since [Modelling? What's that!]. Martin, together with graphic designer Ian Wilson, has brought *Roundhouse* from a roneo'd newsletter to one of the most professionally produced NMRA regional publications.

Martin said, "Since 1982 I've tried to holiday in the eastern USA about every two years on average. I have made loads of NMRA and NRHS friends, and have been lucky enough to go railfanning with several of them, including our illustrious National President, Bob Charles who accompanied us to both Horseshoe Curve and the B&O Museum.

About three or four years ago the home C&O layout was abandoned and instead, in co-operation with some local NMRA members, built a sectional exhibition HO layout, featuring the Erie Lackawanna in Indiana, period around 1969-70. We show this a few times a year at model railway exhibitions, and try to keep the flag flying and plug NMRA-BR of course."

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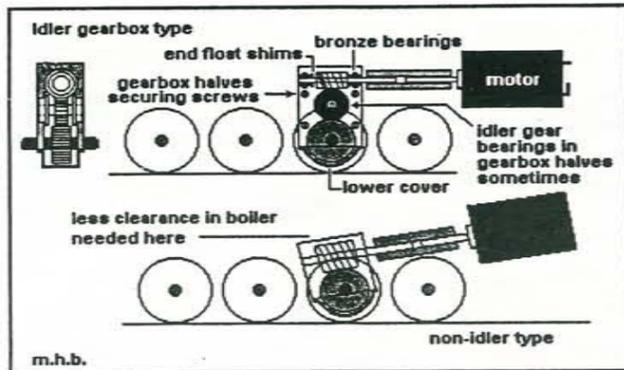
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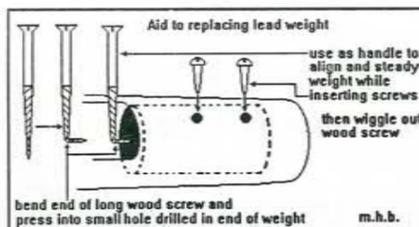
The cast-on weights are different, the geared axle must obviously go in the right slot to line up with the gearbox and keeper plate cut-out. Identify the insulated sides, visible as a fine band of plastic or fibre just inside the

cylinder block usually has the slidebars connected to it. They are prone to detachment and should be checked for security of fit into the rear cylinder cover.

In most models the mainframe will have a line of dummy driver springs soldered to the top edges of the frames, and some form of bracket to hold the motor. This bracket in turn is often removable.

The mainframe will have cut-outs [hornblocks of sorts] for the driver bearings except in very old models where the axles run directly in the mainframe brass. It might also have threaded holes between each driver cut-out, to take the brake pivot screws, though sometimes the brakes are part of an assembly secured to the keeper plate by solder, or more usually by screws. In the type of loco where there are separate, screwed on brake hangers, you will have a collection of these in brass or plastic. Some brass ones secure to the chassis via plastic bushes to insulate them. [The left hand brakes will cause short circuits if they are uninsulated and can touch their nearest driver tyre.]

You will have an appropriate number of driver sets; each set comprising two wheels and two bearings on an axle, unless this is one of the very old locos with no bearings. One axle will have a wormgear fitted, one or more sets might be "blind", i.e. have no flange. Note that in most locos the wheelsets are not interchangeable.



tyre. [I mark this side with a fine short scratch on the inside of the weight - I have seen numerous locos with one axle reversed and the owner wondering why it is shorting.]

The other items to note regarding drivers are the coil springs. These fit between the top of the frame cut-outs and the driver bearings. The coil springs are sometimes carried in holes bored in the tops of the bearings, and often locate over small pegs in the top edges of the frame cut-outs.

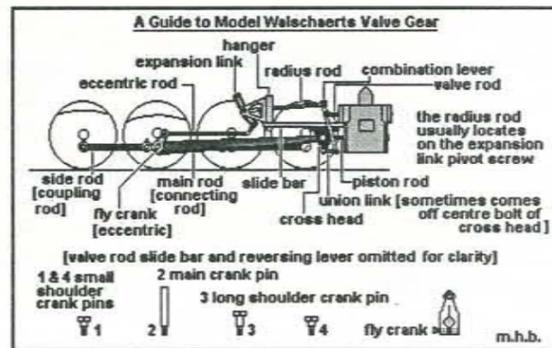
A rare alternative to coil springs is the use of a single longitudinal stainless steel wire each side, running along near the top of the frame cut-outs. The top of each driver bearing presses up against this. I've only seen this on a couple of Custom Brass locos, and it is pretty poor. Very old locos are without springs and also without brakes! [Sounds like some old bangers I've driven!]

Similarly you will have a truck or trucks unless the loco is a switcher. Some are one-piece, others can be dismantled if necessary. Again it is a good idea to identify any current-collecting wheels and mark them. Some trucks have fine springs to act as a self-centring mechanism, and also to provide a slight downward pressure against the rails. I invariably try to discard these springs. A well-sorted loco, on decent track, has no need of them, and they are actually detrimental to traction. Some trailing trucks [and tender trucks] at the upper end of the market have sprung wheelsets. In HO these are probably almost non-functional.

You will have a pile of short side rod parts, connecting rods, and

valve gear parts - unless you are very familiar with prototype steam locos, mark everything clearly as it comes off the model. The same goes for the crankpin screws that released the siderods.

You will next have a motor, and gearbox parts. The former will be an open frame type or an enclosed "can." The gearbox can be open [i.e. gears all visible] and built up from brass plate, or closed, usually two half castings of white metal and a small pressed metal bottom cover to be secured with two screws to the side castings. Variations include Delrin gearbox casings, old bronze castings and gearboxes closed underneath, but with exposed worms. The gearbox will contain a



worm-on-shaft, usually carried in two bronze bearings, and might have an idler gear on a shaft.

One rare variation is the torque arm system, where the gearbox has an extension rearwards that carries the motor, instead of the motor being bolted solidly to the chassis.

Another part of the mechanism will be the connection between the worm shaft and motor shaft. Though usually just a length of flexible tubing, it can be quite a well-engineered Carden shaft with universal joints each end.

You could have some separate valve gear hangers, unscrewed from the deck of the chassis. Rarely, these are soldered on.

At the rear, except in very early models, there is an insulated plastic bushing that carries the tender drawbar kingpin. The kingpin will carry the metal drawbar and a coil spring. The nut that secures the kingpin screw usually also retains a small solder tag, which sends a wire to one motor brush. The other motor brush is

generally earthed to the loco chassis, either with another wire, or just through the motor's screwed connection to the chassis.

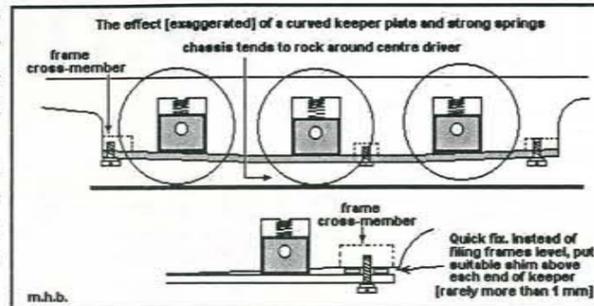
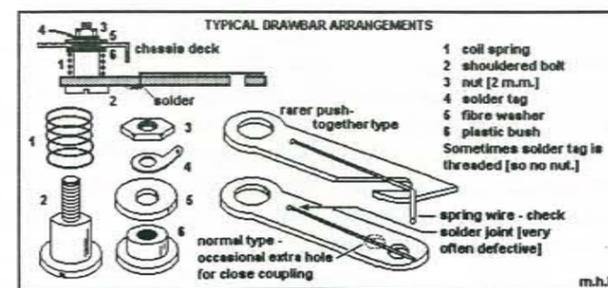
Finally you should have, in one large lump, the entire superstructure of cab, boiler, smokebox etc., possibly with a separate smokebox front.

The general principle for all conventional brass is that all left-hand [looking from the cab forward] loco wheels are insulated, as are all right-hand tender wheels. All right hand loco drivers collect current; the truck wheels might or might not. All left-hand tender wheels collect current. From the above you will see that, conventionally, locos and tenders are of opposite polarity - their metalwork must not touch. If you have any metal rolling stock, OR do any double-heading, it is good practice to ensure the pilot coupler is plastic-shanked, or at least insulated from the loco chassis. Similarly, if the cab has a metal fall plate, it must be insulated on its underside, where it touches the tender footplate.

The tender: this much simpler item will usually comprise the one-piece tender shell, two trucks mounted with spring-loaded kingpin screws to the floor; the floor itself, usually secured with four small screws to cross pieces at the bottom of the tender shell. Some locos have a removable oil bunker [especially where the prototype could be oil or coal fired], and some Vanderbilt tenders have a removable rear end for the water tank.

Sometimes the tender floor is actually the whole underframe, other times the underframe remains part of the tender shell and the floor is a removable rectangular panel underneath.

Right. At this point we have



described the basic elements - next chapter we'll start by finding the problems that we will have to fix. Then we can start the rebuild, a section at a time, with notes on whatever oddities and problems I can recall.

Part 2. What's Up, Doc?

The Introduction left you, theoretically, with a pile of individual components that might or might not re-assemble into a brass locomotive. [Though, to be fair, I suggested not starting down that path yet.]

Now let's go back to the beginning - a loco that is not dismantled but, you feel, ought to be. The burning question is "Why?" Quoting the famous line, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," is highly appropriate here, but unfortunately quite a lot of brass is broke! It can be literally broke, or just performing below par - or sometimes not performing at all. In other cases the model is superb - but it needs painting - "uh oh" - trouble!

So the first job is to assess the beast. What is it doing wrong? It is possible to categorise the most common faults. Here are a few:

- 1] Binds - loco doesn't run with a smooth, fluid motion, usually showing a "catch" at the same point of each driver revolution.
- 2] Noise - this grates for itself.
- 3] Track holding - it doesn't. Bear in mind this category assumes at least reasonable quality track, and also assumes we are not setting the loco unrealistic goals.

Ten-coupled brass might go around an 18" curve but if it doesn't it is hardly the engine's fault. Problems that show up on small radius curves and, especially on

under-gauge track, might not really be problems at all on well-laid 36" radius curves. You might be surprised at how often flex-track goes under gauge on tight curves, where ideally it ought to be slightly over gauge if anything.

4] Traction - [it don't pull nuffink, gov'ner!] Well, all brass should be able to pull something [with the possible exception of certain NWSL logging locos resembling old iron bedsteads].

5] Short circuits - the bane and curse of numerous brass engines. Nobody has invented more ways for a loco to short than the brass engine designer, especially those of years gone by. Naturally enough this is another fault that can be greatly affected by track radius, especially those shorts caused by trucks to frame, or cylinders or pilots, wheels to pipes, and between engines and tenders.

The other possible defects are a little more individual, and might concern separate components. These would include things like poor gearboxes, and motor faults. Not everyone would like to rebuild a motor, but these days good replacements are available economically as compared with the overall cost of the model. Open frame motors are actually fairly easy to work on so long as nothing vital, such as armature windings or commutators, have digested themselves.

Of course one of the most common faults is the simple breakage. Often soldered joints aren't. Others appear to be, but turn out to be glued. Some locos are largely held together by paint. On others the paint falls off if somebody sneezes in the next room - and takes many of the details with it. In these it is best to get rid of the old paint entirely.

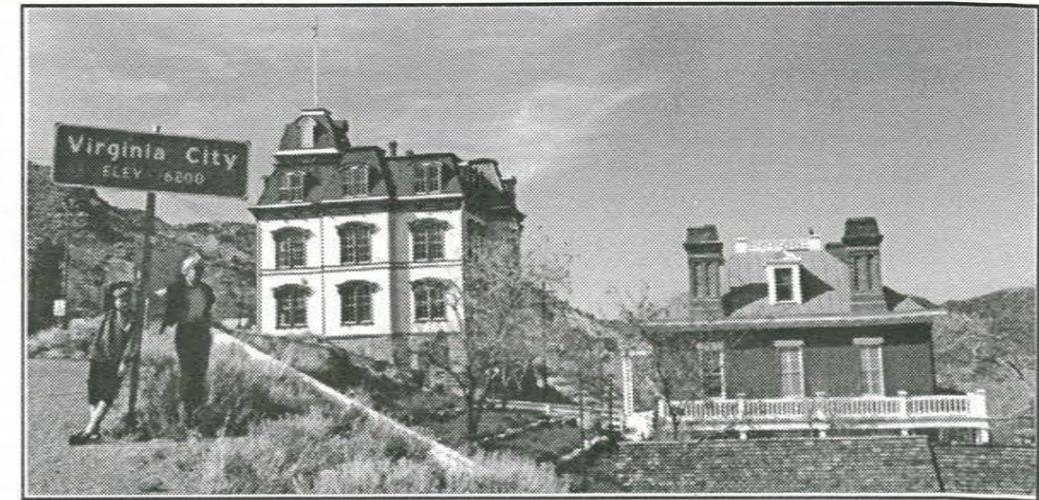
One of the biggest benefits of starting from scratch with a completely stripped down loco, is the ability to check all soldered joints as you go and rectify bad ones. It is most galling to finish an intricate paint job, only to have to go back and fix a chassis cross-member afterwards.

Continued on Page... 20/

Railfanning California

Part Two

by Erik Bennett



Part Two of *Railfanning California*, by Erik Bennett takes us from the Sierra Nevada, through Sacramento and on to San Francisco. With his wife Denise and son Michael, Erik's diary continues:

Day 9 Sunday

Got away early and headed east on 88 over the highest part of the Sierra Nevada. The scenery was awe-inspiring. Soon there was plenty of snow and ice on the ground. Passed a frozen lake and saw a white timber wolf eating something on the ice. Passed the area where Kit Carson, the famous scout, helped establish the "Immigrant Trail", then passed a town actually called Kit Carson. The altitude we climbed to was almost 9000 feet when we finally arrived at Lake Tahoe. The lake contained very blue water and was very pretty with the snow peaks in the background coming down to water level. It was obviously an up-market ski resort. We had a look around, paddled in the lake (freezing cold) then headed northeast to Nevada. Coming down the other side of the Sierras into Nevada we quickly encountered desert like vegetation. In fact, it starts to appear within a mile or so of leaving the lake area. So on one side of the Sierras there is substantial snow and precipitation. On the other side, within a mile, there is none.

Pulled into Carson City and

visited the Railroad Museum. They had some magnificently restored steam locomotives and a very early Pullman coach. Drove on, heading north now on 341 and came to Virginia City, which is an original silver mining town. It was fabulous. There was a running 2-6-2 steam train (burning oil) and a saloon with a bouncer in cowboy gear, including gun in holster.

Headed north onto 395, passed through Reno then crossed into California again. Turned west onto 70 and pulled into Portola. Booked into a nice motel then had dinner at The Alpine Inn, one of the two restaurants in town.

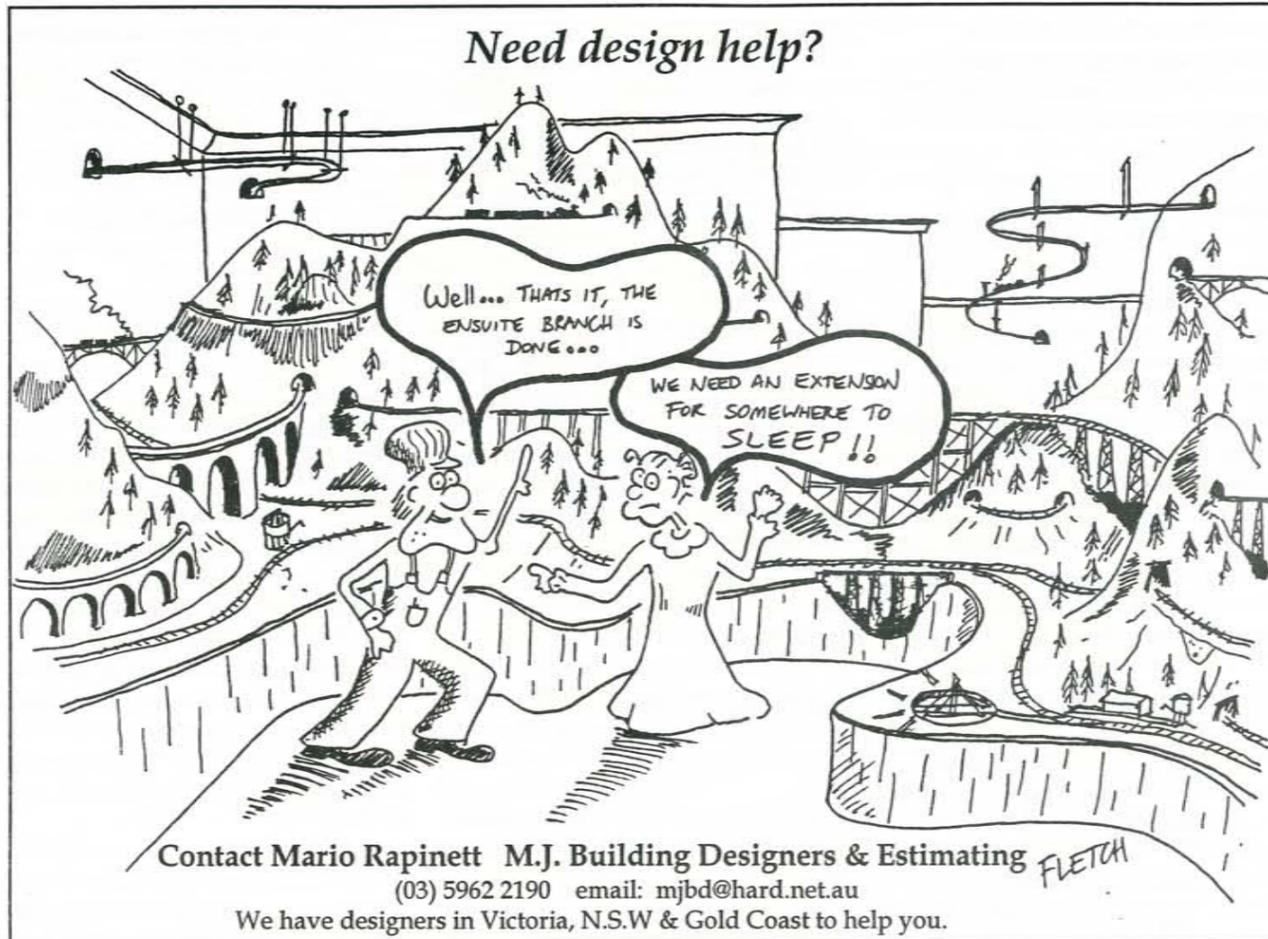
Day 10 Monday

Up early and visited the museum at Portola, built on the old Western Pacific workshops. There was heaps [sic] to see. Crawled all over a DD40-AX, #4946, beautifully restored WP F7A, caboose, SD9s, Kodachrome GP38, and lots of others. Started chatting to a chap who turned out to be a museum executive. He was most interesting and held our attention for nearly 2 hours. Eventually left Portola and headed up 70 to the Keddie Wye.

Drove a fairly long way, through Quincy (is this the Quincy of Burlington, Quincy, etc?), eventually arriving at Keddie. The Wye is just there over the side of the road. You get a great view of it and the Feather River, which it spans. We followed the tracks on both sides of the river for quite a while, not quite seeing where they were all going. We eventually went back down to Keddie and chatted with a BNSF work gang who told us that this was the branch point of the main WP line to Sacramento in the southwest and Portland, Oregon in the northwest.

Headed back south onto 89 then to Truckee on Interstate 80. Truckee was significant for its name but not much else. It is now just a town halfway down the hill on the eastern side of Donner Pass. We arrived there mid afternoon and figured that the trip from Portola to Keddie and back had been of minimal value. The scenery is nothing special until you get to Keddie and start seeing the Feather River hundreds of feet below. Visited two train shops in Truckee and was underwhelmed.

Headed up Donner Pass to the



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Continued from Page... 19/.

Likewise, the "build-up-from-scratch" routine enables problem pinpointing, and hopefully fixing, to be done systematically. As each part is fixed on, the chassis is re-tested. If a fault shows up, such as a valve gear bind, it is immediately obvious which component is guilty.

So to end this chapter, let's run over some pre-dismantling tests and observations. For these you need some track, either on or off the layout, and a suitable controller.

Note down your particular grumbles for this loco - derailments [forwards? reverse?]; shorts [forwards? reverse? on curves? on turnouts? anywhere?]; noise; lack of power; binding; poor current collection [here, if possible, try the loco with another tender].

Now stand the loco on a flat, straight bit of track and observe, at track level, the wheels. Are all wheels in contact with the railhead? Gently lift the smoke box end of the loco. Do the front truck wheels all

stay on the rails when the front drivers are raised 1 or 2 mm off them? Lift the cab end and check the trailing truck similarly. Now with the loco sitting on the track again, use a small screwdriver to lift the trucks off the rails. Can you lift each truck wheelset 1 to 1.5 mm at least without lifting the drivers? All loco trucks should have this vertical free play. If you cannot raise the truck without lifting the drivers too, the truck is almost always reducing the engine's traction. If you can't lift the loco a little without the trucks remaining on the rails, you are heading for regular derailments. This would not apply if your track were smooth and level as sheet glass, but....!

Bear in mind that, unlike a real engine, model locos' trucks just go along for the ride. Their only function is to look right, stay on the track and keep out of trouble. Old-timer Frank Ellison [Delta Lines] used to run his Berkshires as 0-8-0's if the trucks gave trouble.... hurrumph.

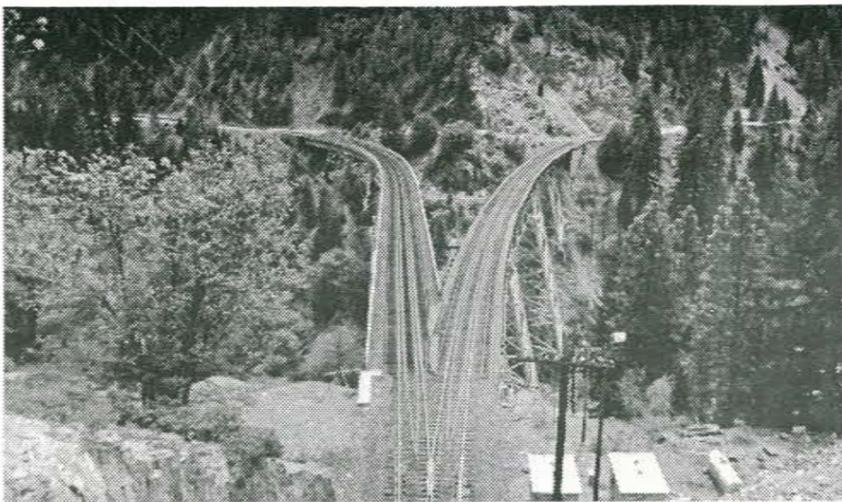
Another thing to look for in trucks is where abouts the truck frames are, relative to the rail. You

might be surprised how many tender trucks have frames whose lower edges can foul the railhead. Also pilot trucks, [especially 2-wheel type] most of which have inside frames, can have the same problem, and have even been known to be fitted upside down.

While inspecting the engine, look at the pilot relative to the railheads. Is there good clearance, at least 1/16". Do any of the lower boiler details, pipes etc. look as though they can foul the track, the tender, or the truck swing? Is there good clearance between cab and tender, especially around the deck area and the rear cab roof corners.

Look at the loco head-on. Is it sitting squarely on the track? Is the cylinder block level? [i.e. is it horizontal, both from the front view and the side view.] From the side, is the boiler centre line horizontal? [i.e. is the smokebox pointing at the sky or the ground?] Is the tender riding level also? Check the whole outside of the engine for loose details and components, noting anything insecure for repair. Also try to see if

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The Keddie Y. This unusual bridge crosses the Feather River. Photo by Erik Bennett

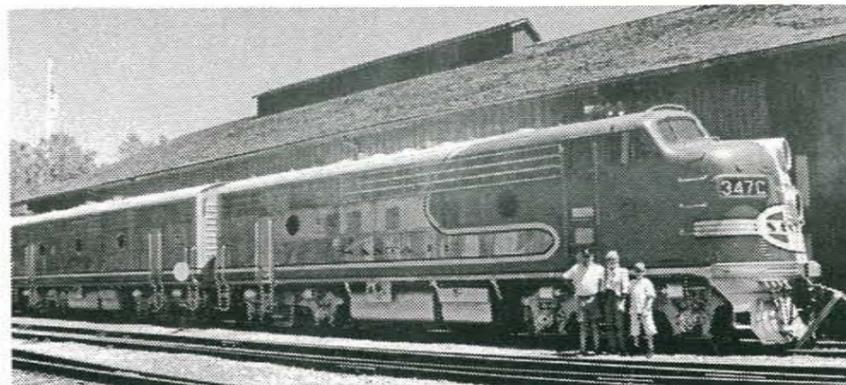
highest point on I80 and saw all the snow sheds on the mainline high on the hills across the valley from the freeway. Drove on a bit and turned off at Soda Springs and made our way to Norden. There, they store snowploughs under concrete snow sheds. There was still a lot of snow around and it's easy to see how it would be excessive in winter. Went on up a bit and came to a big ski lodge area. Asked a local and found Summit, the highest spot on the mountain. Had a look at the ski fields and, just as I was commenting that it would be a good place to ski because you could spend time looking at trains while in the lift queues, a train came. It was a UP freighter with a Norfolk Southern Dash 9 #9003 leading. Shot it then drove down the mountain, back onto the freeway and drove to Emigrants Gap to shoot it again. Drove up a dirt track off the freeway exit to the rail embankment and waited for the train. After shooting it and while heading back down the dirt track, Denise saw a package hidden under an old newspaper. It turned out to be a box with a .38 revolver inside. We put it in the boot and headed off to give it to the police and find accommodation, as it was getting late. We drove on 20 to Nevada City where we had planned to stay, but couldn't find a policeman. No-one knew where the police were stationed. The sheriff's office was deserted.

So we headed on to Auburn. The sheriff's office was closed so I made a phone call and told them about the gun. At first, they didn't

know what to think, but eventually a sheriff's deputy arrived. He was obviously a bit worried but became calm when he saw we were genuine and not about to ambush him. Hoped to stay in Auburn, but took a wrong turn and ended up on the freeway, so continued on I80 and ended up getting accommodation on the northern outskirts of Sacramento.

Day 11 Tuesday

Today we treated ourselves to a traditional American high cholesterol, low fibre, full-on waffle breakfast. We then headed off to the Roseville yard, which meant retracing our steps for a few miles. But at Roseville saw a CSX Dash 8 narrow cab #7094, just like the one I once had a model of, so shot it. The yard at Roseville was full of SP engines. I think the almost universal general grubbiness of SP engines is partially due to the grey colour they are painted. Saw an operating SP SD9, which must have been one of the last around. Was pleased to see that whereas I had thought I had over-weathered the SP SD9 I have in my collection, the real one was even



A warbonnet F7 set #347C at the Sacramento railroad Museum

dirtier. There's always a prototype. Dropped in to Railroad Hobbies at Roseville. It was the best-priced shop I'd seen. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, they were out of stock of UP SD90MACs. Bought a few reefers and some KDs.

Headed off to Sacramento and visited the museum there. It was great. Saw a warbonnet F7 set #347, a WP F7 set, a working GE 44 tonner. Inside was Cab forward #4294 and a number of other superb static displays. Well worth the visit. Obviously, the state of California had spent a lot in creating the museum.

After looking around Old Sacramento, we visited a friend, the chief information officer of the state library. He showed us the library and we shot the state legislature building, in very pretty surroundings at the state capital precinct. Then we headed off on I80 towards San Francisco.

Turned south at 680 to the Martinez Bridge and looked at the US navy mothball fleet. There were dozens of old ships there. Decided to bypass the Richmond/Pinole area for trains and drove on to Berkeley where we looked for the motel we had stayed at in 1994. After searching high and low, couldn't find it. I had forgotten the name of it. Could picture it in my mind, but couldn't physically locate the motel. So ended up staying in a motel that was a bit down market but acceptable and not diabolically expensive.

Day 12 Wednesday

Strolled through the university at Berkeley. Shot Michael on the main campus, wondering if, someday, he might end up there as a student. Bought a reefer from Joe's Hardware and a PT109 for Michael.

Joe's was hardware upstairs and hobby downstairs and the prices were pretty good.

Drove south on San Pedro St and there it was! The Golden Bear Motel - best motel in Berkley. Booked in for the night, moved in, then headed off across the Bay Bridge to San Francisco. Did the whole tourist thing with the exception of Alcatraz, which needed to be booked days in advance. Rode the cable cars. Checked out Chan's Trains. It seemed fairly disorganised and high priced. Finished off the day with a treat for Denise - crab dinner at Nick's Lighthouse at Fisherman's Wharf.

Day 13 Thursday

Last day. Checked out and drove south on 880 to Alameda and toured the aircraft carrier USS Hornet. Michael was pretty stoked at the whole thing, being an aircraft carrier aficionado. He particularly enjoyed sitting in the captain's chair on the bridge of the aircraft carrier that had seen action in every theatre and had picked up Neil Armstrong and his mates.

We gave ourselves plenty of time to drive back to Oakland, over the Bay Bridge and out to the airport. We arrived in plenty of time and at the hire car check-in counter, I was surprised: we had travelled 1755 miles railfanning California. %

Continued from Page... 20/.

Making Brass Run

anything is totally missing and, if important, see if something can be bought or made to replace the missing item.

Check the draw bar situation. Try to see if the loco draw bar meets the tender pin about half way up. Too low and it will often uncouple - too high and it can be fouling the underside of the tender deck. The tender floor or frame should not sit on the draw bar's top surface. Also check if the draw bar is too close to the underside of the cab metal work - a common place for a short. The draw bar must be able to clear the lower cab weatherboard [and also the rear end of the chassis metalwork] throughout its swing.

Finally, if fitted, check out the knuckle heights against the

Kadee gauge and note any discrepancies. But also bear in mind whether the loco ride height is correct. For example if the tender is riding rear end high, the Kadee might become correct when the tender ride is levelled.

I don't want to give the impression that all or most brass engines suffer from loads of major faults. It is nice to take a favourite engine out if its box and find it runs very efficiently. Fortunately there are many such examples, either from new or because they have already been well sorted out. But it only takes one important flaw to demote a nice engine to also-ran. And, a good runner can, in time, become in need of attention like any machine. So it is handy to be able to locate most common problems and fix them.

So now you will have a hopefully not-too-long list of faults to correct, and you can dismantle the loco as suggested in the previous episode, ready to start the Big Rebuild [which will include painting notes, so keep taking the tablets.] %

Look for Part 3 in June.



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Regional Roundup

Victoria

by Grant McAdam

December 1999

The festive season was in full swing with the Christmas and end of year function at Grant McAdam's (the Divisional Superintendent). There was a good turn out of members that was further bolstered by many partners and families making a total of nineteen people.

Our Christmas function is family orientated to in part make up for taking the members away throughout the year to attend meetings. That is not to say that partners and family members are not welcome at meetings at any stage during the year. In fact the attendance of partners and responsible rail-minded off-spring is encouraged to ensure the continuation of the Association and the hobby in general, but enough of the sermon and back to the meeting report.

The day was overcast which helped to keep the temperature down and it cleared during the afternoon. Many people helped by bringing along salad items, which was greatly appreciated, with the NMRA subsidising the event by covering the cost of the meat and associated sundries. Grant is known locally for his baking talents and those who came along were not disappointed. The new Division 3 urn was christened during the afternoon. It is planned to be used at all future meetings ensuring a steady supply of tea and coffee. The afternoon was spent in convivial company.

There was an assortment of show and tell items on display throughout the afternoon. Gavin Hince brought along an O scale Porter locomotive designed to run on 9 mm gauge track and a G scale poppet mine head frame destined for his garden layout. Steve Cullen had recently received the book

"Where Rails meet the Sea" by M. Krieger. Mario Rapinett set up an assortment of layouts under construction in Grant's garage and also had an On3 gondola that was nearing completion. Peter MacDonald displayed another HO AD-60, in fact that makes five that Peter has constructed for other people. As Peter follows and models Victorian prototypes he has no intention of building one for himself. Grant McAdam is also a member of the Croydon Narrow Gauge Group and its new O-16.5 switching layout was in operation during the day. Grant also displayed his Bachmann On30 train set for those who had not yet seen it. Bachmann, from all accounts, is on a real winner with their new On30 range.

The formal part of the afternoon was kept brief and the members were given an update on the Convention taking place in 2000 and then the meeting was brought to a close.

On behalf of the Division 3 members I would like to publicly thank all those who hosted meetings throughout the year. Your continued support of the Association by making your homes and time freely available is greatly appreciated by us all and will help to ensure the success of Division 3.

February 2000

The start of another New Year and my first anniversary as the Division 3 Superintendent. I hope that over the past twelve months you have enjoyed reading about the activities in Division 3. With the New Year we also had the pleasure of welcoming a new member of the NMRA to our meetings, John Dennis.

Ten NMRA members and two sons made the trek to Ballarat for our first meeting of the year. Meetings are not normally held during January because of the

holiday season and this January there were four model railroad exhibitions in the state of Victoria. Paul Richie has made some progress on his home layout since our last visit with more of the scenery being installed. He has also been modifying his portable Sn3 layout to allow for a continuous run.

It was a very enjoyable day in Ballarat with plenty of sunshine, although it was a little windy at times. The day was spent in pleasant company and with good conversation. Geoff Truman, from Werribee Hobby Centre, brought along some examples of the new Bachmann On30 Porters and trams and these were test run on Paul's layout. He left with considerably fewer locomotives than when he came. During the afternoon Grant McAdam provided the members with an update on the convention.

Many of the members brought along show and tell items including:

- Ian Mitaxa a Hornby Dublo set that he had been given and several books (Logging Railroads of the West; Bellbrakes, Bullocks & Bushmen; The History of the Baltimore & Ohio; and Advanced Model Railways);
- John Beaton had the book Pennsy Electric Pictorial;
- Steve Cullen had an O16.5 Caboose based on plans that appeared in the Jan/Feb '96 Gazette of the Manns Creek Railway;
- Laurie Green had his O scale engine house that is nearing completion and you should be able to see it in the competition at the convention;
- Grant McAdam had an assortment of narrow gauge magazines and some G scale figures that he had painted;
- Bob Backway had a turntable complete with electronic indexing; and finally
- John Dennis brought along two HO2.5 diesels, one, a small six-wheeler with fly cranks and the other, a bogie diesel based on a Queensland sugar cane prototype.

With such an ample array of show and tell items the afternoon passed very quickly. Thanks to Paul and Kath Richie for hosting another very successful meeting.

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