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MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Inc - Australasian Region

July, August, September 2000

Volume 17 Number 3



THE RED STAG LUMBER CO.

THE SCENERY CLINIC

TRAVEL THROUGH THE DEEP SOUTH

LIGHTWEIGHT FRAMING

JACK MACMICKING'S COVE VALE RAILWAY

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NMRA - SETTING THE STANDARDS IN RAILROAD MODELLING

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ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM CHIEF DISPATCHER



By Ken Scales MMR, Achievement Program Chairman

Some years ago I was one of a group of six NMRA members who earned an AP award as chief dispatcher. We operated trains in a prototype manner nearly every Tuesday night for just over a year. As well as being a challenge it was one of the most enjoyable times I have spent engaged in model railroading activities. We were privileged to have the use of a massive layout with a single line run of 300 feet from the main yard to the most remote end of the layout and back again. The layout used radio throttles and we sometimes used radio headsets. I have no doubt the experience would have been even more rewarding using DCC. Getting the AP award at the end was really the icing on the cake.

The AP award was however, the reason we started, and it kept the group very focused. It also taught us all a lot of new skills. One member of the group had actually worked in the train control section of the SRA so he had some experience in twelve inch to the foot operation. I had also spent hundreds of hours operating my old Ontario and Western HO layout using a card system that I developed from early articles written by Bruce Chubb for Model Railroader.

The best part of the project was the fact that the AP regulations actually gave us a blueprint for developing an operating system for the layout. The regulations required that we

- ◆ Prepare a schematic drawing of a model railroad layout and indicate all simulated distances.
- ◆ Develop a timetable appropriate to this model railroad, simulating prototype time and covering a period of eight hours or more.
- ◆ Develop an operating train chart (graph) which sets up a schedule for timetable operation of the model railroad.
- ◆ Develop or adapt a system of operation for the layout, including all the necessary forms and explanations of their use for controlling car movements, train makeup and operation in a prototypical manner.

We worked as a team from the start of the project, which included modifying and improving some areas of the layout to improve operation. We shared an enormous amount of knowledge as we developed the operating system. It is a real achievement just to build a layout of this size. It is an even greater achievement for it's creator to watch it take on a life of it's own and operate like a real railroad.

We also worked as a team on operating nights and rotated in the positions set out in the AP regulations. We used the five basic positions set out in the regulations. These were Dispatcher, Towerperson, Yardmaster, Hostler and Engineer. These were rotated so that all members of the group achieved the required hours in each position. This satisfied the requirements of the regulations, which specify that you must have participated in the operation of a model railroad, either home or club, for no less than fifty hours. A minimum of ten hours must be served in each of three of the five categories listed above, one of which must be DISPATCHER.

This experience must be accumulated on one or more model railroads having at least two mainline trains plus yard switching in simultaneous operation. Some system of freight and passenger train and car movements, including road switching, must be used for controlling train activity.

To get an AP award you should set up the paperwork before you start. The hours worked in each position should be witnessed as set out in the regulations. You also need to ensure that the paperwork you use to support your operations complies with the regulations. However if you want to run prototype operations with a group over a long period of time you really need to do most of this anyhow.

I can really recommend this part of the AP program to anyone. It is satisfying, it is a learning experience and most of all it is a lot of fun.

SCHEDULE OF DIVISIONAL MEETINGS

All meetings start at 2 pm Saturday unless indicated differently.

NEW SOUTH WALES

14. Oct. John and Natalie Montgomery
12 Lindwall Place, Shaley. 9628-9921

18. Nov. Mike Bartlett
158 Wallamatta Road, Newport. 9999-4966

9. Dec. 12 Noon. John Baker
12 Roseberry Road, Kellyville 9629-2349

CANBERRA

28 Oct. Tony Payne
24 Darmody Street, Weetangera 02 6254-6985

25 Nov. Stephen O'Brien
138 Nemerang Crescent, Waramanga
02 6288-3614

QUEENSLAND

For details of meeting schedule, please contact
Glenn Stevens 07 3201-5022

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CONTENT - I.c.I.* July-Aug-Sept 2000
Volume 17 No. 3

ON THE COVER: Climax # 3 hauling logs across the high
trestle toward the Red Stag sawmill. Sowerby Smith took the
photo.

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RAILWAY - Live steam with character.

***I.c.I.** = railroad parlance for less-than-car-load-freight,
which also goes for this edition of MainLine. Keith is off
on vacation, so John Saxon and I put our heads together
and came up with this issue. Happy reading. DC.

RENEWAL NOTICES FROM THE US

Many members have asked why they are receiving renewal
notices from the US up to 3 months ahead of their
membership expiry dates and should they pay the US direct
or pay us locally.

The Region is progressively taking over the handling of all
renewals, even for those members of the parent who are not
paying members of the Region. Our practice is to send a
reminder at the end of the month preceding the expiry date
as we have found earlier reminders are often mislaid or
forgotten. So, when you receive a reminder from the US,
and any follow-ups, ignore them please. Just await our
reminder, pay through us (cheaper at present) and we can
keep better control of our membership database.

If you have any questions, please call, write or email me
using the addresses shown in the MainLine directory.

Toni Saxon, Membership Officer .

REGIONAL ROUNDUP & MORE!

CANBERRA from Viv Brice.

August

The 12 August meeting was held at my home in MacGregor where I was able to show the local members the framework of my developing empire. I have used Linn Wescott's (of Model Railroader fame) L-Girder method of building a very strong but light framework, which may be readily altered or extended. Until I am a little further on with this aspect I decided to avoid the temptation to lay any track but hope to have a little down by the next visit. I was also able to show my tiny but purpose built workshop which will enable me to more easily do some modelling when the mood strikes.

September

We visited long-time life member and B&O modeller Kerry McPherson's home at Melba for the 12 September meeting. Kerry and Lynn are about to undertake building a new home so Kerry's modelling has been taking a back seat of late. However, we enjoyed watching a few railroad videos and the

Sydney

Meeting Report 15 July 2000.

From Steve Chapman.

The meeting started at 10am for those 9 members who had signed up for the scenery clinic provided by host Allan Garbutt, Ken Scales MMR, John Montgomery and Ray Mackaway. We built up plaster castings on styrofoam bases, stained the rock faces with various colors, then added fine sand and ground cover, followed by foliage material. A piece of track and ballast completed the exercise. We were very pleased with the result. It was fun and we look forward to participating in more such clinics.

After a delicious lunch provided by Allen's wife Ruth (thanks again Ruth!), we were joined by about 50 members to inspect the progress on Allen's Illawarra area of the NSWGR. His lower staging deck represents Scarborough and will be connected by a branch line to Nowra. Traffic will consist of local and medium distance passenger trains and freight trains carrying coal, steel, ballast, dairy products, timber, cattle and general freight. It promises to be a very interesting layout.

David North opened the formalities reporting that due to printing problems, and the US postal system mistaking Australia Post codes for US Zip codes, there had been some delays in local delivery of our monthly Bulletins. He recommended that any members missing Bulletins should contact Toni Saxon who would arrange replacements.

We were also told about the improvements of MainLine, brought about by editor Keith McCarron, for which he has been presented with a well deserved President's Award. These changes have halved the printing costs and will defer membership fee increases a little longer.

Thanks again Ruth and Allen for your hospitality, including a wonderful afternoon tea!

The Annual General Meeting was also held during the afternoon with president Geoff Hoad covering the main points of his "President's Report" which will be seen elsewhere in this issue. John Saxon and myself are the new elected member representatives on the Board. Mike Bartlett has been appointed to the third vacancy.

September Meeting Held at Wyong District Model Railroad Club

Approximately 40 members made the trip to this new 7 member club layout being constructed in a six meter square garage approximately 100 kilometers North of Sydney. The layout is based on the NSWGR in the Hunter Valley area, it has double deck and staging, with a continuous run and a helix connecting both levels via a 2% grade.

DCC has recently been installed and one locomotive, a 38 class, featured a very believable sound system. Operating sessions are being organised on a monthly basis and the scenery, particularly the backdrop, was very nicely done.

We were invited to an excellent sausage sizzle around noon, which most members enjoyed after the trip from Sydney. There were also a number of items for sale by club members and some bargains were the result.

President Geoff Hoad announced an upcoming modular meeting with the Southern Cross group on 11 November at Epping. He also confirmed that the Sydney Christmas Party will be held at John Baker's residence in Kellyville on 9 December, starting at noon. Geoff also asked for volunteers to man the Association's layout at Liverpool on the Labor Day Weekend where we have a good record of recruiting new members.

Allan Garbutt presented one of the newly minted meeting plaques to our hosts, as well as to many former hosts who were present.

The final announcement was that the 2001 convention will most likely be held again at the salubrious premises at Huntingwood. There will be no overseas guest for this convention. The Board is convinced that there are enough talented modelers locally to run a good show. (See "Overheard in the Roundhouse" for further info. Ed.)

Division 3

Meeting Reports by Grant McAdam with contributions by Mario Rapinett

June Meeting

About 20 people, including some wives, made the trek out to Healesville to the home of, our first time meeting host, Mario Rapinett. Mario is well known in Melbourne and Sydney for his enthusiasm for the hobby and his willingness to travel almost any distance to view fine layouts and meet with experts in their field. It was a beautiful winter's day at Healesville so the meeting was held outdoors. Besides the usual barbecue, Mario's wife, Jackie, had been busy cooking

cont. page 15

TRUSTEE REPORT September 2000 by David North

The Board of Trustees meeting in San Jose provided some very positive results for our Region.

First, I have some good news for you about our Membership Renewals system.

As you know, both HO and the Region currently send renewal notices for your dues. This means duplication of postage and other costs and often results in frustration and confusion for you and the Membership Officer. (I'm sure we have all received a reminder from the US long after paying locally).

Well, I think we've got it fixed and I believe it's a real winner for all Region members. I'd like to give you a preview of how we see it working.

The Region Membership Officer, Toni Saxon, will be responsible for the collection of all Region and National renewals and will issue membership cards.

Postage costs within OZ are significantly lower than Airmail from the US.

Plus, you can catch Toni at most Sydney meetings, or phone her if you have any questions....and she speaks our lingo. Toni will remit National dues to the US with a summary and work with them to fix any problems that arise.

Additionally, Head Office has agreed to reimburse the Region for the cost of National dues collection - about half of current HO cost. As I said, we all win.

We will implement this change during the next twelve months or so and naturally there will be teething problems so I ask for your understanding as the changeover occurs.

Secondly, on behalf of the Region I applied for a grant from Pacesetters to help fund expansion of our Video Library. The application included a commitment that the Region would match the requested grant. The good news is that a grant of \$1500 has been approved and I am expecting the money soon.

Our aim is to provide a selection of tapes to each Division and rotate them every so often so we all have local access to them. (HINT- let me know what tapes you like). Again I ask for your patience while we select and purchase the tapes and await their delivery from the US and elsewhere.

The Trustees approved a balanced budget and it was agreed that a year-end deficit was not to occur without prior Board permission. This might help plug some of those financial 'holes in the bucket' that seem to re-occur each year.

Additionally, a CPA has been appointed to assist the Treasurer in maintaining the Association accounts. He is a member and has volunteered his services.

Our Region AP Chairman, Ken Scales received an award for The Best Performing Region for 1999-2000 and I'd like to join Ken in congratulating all of you who participated (and continue to participate) in the Program.

The National Convention in 2005 will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio. If you are able to attend any of the coming Nationals I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

Last but by no means least the Board was presented with a Strategic Long-Range Plan for the NMRA. As it is 15 pages long, I won't try to summarise it here. I

will discuss with Geoff Hoad how best we can share the details of this vision with you.

That's all for now

VIDEO REVIEW by David North

Great Layouts: A Video Tour Volume 1

Leigh Creek by Geoff Nott

I've often heard people say 'the tape doesn't do the layout justice' when discussing layout videos. Well, that sure isn't the case with this tape!

I've long believed that Geoff Nott's layout is truly world class and Brian O'Reilly's videography displays it in all its glory.

The narrative provides info on each of the scenes and the addition of prototype sounds from time to time complements Geoff's incredible scenic realism. The video quality is clear and crisp and the production is excellent.

Geoff tells us about his introduction to the hobby and how his attitude towards scenery materials has changed over the years. We get a detailed look at some of the raw materials Geoff uses and how he selects and prepares them. The session where he explains how he does his version of hardshell and rock work on a small demonstration diorama is worth the price of admission alone for me.

I have seen many layout videos including Allen Keller's tapes and this Australian made tape is easily on a par. Check the ad in AMRM for price and availability - in my opinion this tape is a definite buy.

Overheard in the Roundhouse:

Bruce Ballment is recovering well from a recent health scare that put him in hospital for a few days.

Gerry Hopkins MMR has adopted the Great Northern for his expanding HO standard gauge railroad.

If you search around, the sweet-running and well-detailed Proto 2000 0-8-0 switcher is available in Australia for less cost than in the US.

Asquith Model Railways has moved a little further up the street into larger premises.

Ron and Jan Cooper's son Ian, was one of the composers of the original Australian music played at the Olympic's opening ceremony.

Peter Jensen has accepted the role of chairman for next year's Sydney convention.

Tony Koester has accepted the Region's invitation to be guest speaker at the 2002 convention.

Congratulations to *Steve Pettit and Susan*, now holidaying in the US after marrying at a lovely ceremony in the gardens at Dural.

David Latham, who has taken over the Librarian role from *Piet Hamersma*, will be introducing a number of new tapes in the next few months.

When attending *John Baker's* Sydney Christmas meeting, don't overlook his daughter's adjoining antique outlet for that special Xmas present. John also advises that he has arranged for a marquee to protect us from rain or the December sun.

A MEMBER'S

TRAVELS THROUGH THE DEEP SOUTH

Philip Moss

A recent visit to the Southern United States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, North and South Carolina provided a wonderful opportunity to enjoy Southern hospitality and the railroad scene.

After Chicago, Atlanta was the first stop to attend a disappointing Greenburg Train Show, which turned out to be more like a swap meet than a train show. There were dozens of tables set up with people buying and selling all types of mainly 'O' gauge trains but only three layouts on show and none of which were of display standard.

However, I did enjoy the Southeastern Railway Museum in the northern suburb of Duluth where they was a display of some ninety pieces of rolling stock including a World War 2 troop kitchen car, a RPO car and the 1911 Pullman car "Superb" which had been used by US President Warren Harding.

Then on to The Kennesaw Civil War Museum which has only one locomotive, but a famous one, the *General* that was the engine used in one of the more unusual episodes of the American Civil War. On April 12, 1862 a group of twenty two Union soldiers carried out what later became known as the Andrews Raid, when they attempted to steal the *General*, the then Georgia, Western & Atlantic's locomotive, to destroy the Confederate's supply lines. The raid eventually failed, due to the stubborn persistence of the train's conductor and his helpers, but several raiders ended up receiving the newly created Congressional Medal of Honor for their actions. The locomotive is still capable of operation but was last fired up in 1962 and is today located only one hundred yards from the spot where it was seized back in 1862. If you haven't seen them I recommend you try to view the 1927 Buster Keaton silent classic *The General* and the 1956 Walt Disney movie *The Great Locomotive Chase* which both featured the locomotive.

Heading north out of Georgia and across Tennessee I made a brief stop in Dillsboro, North Carolina to ride the Great Smoky Mountains Railway along the scenic Tuckasegee River behind a former Fremont & Elkhorn Valley Railroad 1942 Baldwin 2-8-0 #1702. This was a very worthwhile visit with three different routes available that feature trestles, tunnels and a steep 4.3% grade.

Leaving Dillsboro, next stop was Versailles, Kentucky and the Nostalgia Station Toy & Train Museum, which is situated in a 1911 L&N Railroad passenger station. This museum houses a small but interesting collection of early toys and model railways, including an 'O' gauge Buddy L set from the twenties, an operating original 1926 Lionel store display and a rare 1910 pedal train engine with matching tender. Again, worth the drive.

Then it was an eleven-mile train ride behind an ex U.S. Army Fairbanks-Morse H10-44 diesel #1849 at the nearby Bluegrass Railroad Museum. Stops were made to view the Kentucky River Palisades and the 104-year-old Louisville Southern Railroad's Young High Bridge which is spectacular at 281 feet high and 1,659

feet long.

A comfortable drive brought me to the Kentucky Railway Museum in New Haven. Here they use a variety of motive power including an L&N E6 #770, a Monon BL-2 #32 and a Santa Fe CF-7 #2546 to haul their excursions on a twenty two mile trip through the scenic Rolling Fork River Valley. The day I was there I was lucky enough to get their fourth choice, a L&N 4-6-2 #152 built in 1905 by Rogers.

Leaving railroad interests for a while, a little further South I visited the famous Mammoth Cave National Park in Cave City and the Chevrolet Corvette factory and museum at Bowling Green. Then it was on to Nashville, the home of country music, to visit the Nashville Toy Museum located on the famous Music Row. The museum had all types of old toys, including over 1000 pieces of model railway rolling stock, several operating layouts and, something rare for America, a lot of British Hornby clockwork locomotives.

Also in Nashville, there are two train attractions, one being the Broadway Dinner Train complete with a restored former Pennsylvania Railroad E8A #5764. Close by is the Tennessee Central Railway Museum, which operates diesel excursions over the Nashville & Eastern Railroad, as well as featuring a museum display of some fourteen cabooses and several former ATSF Budd stainless steel coaches.

I decided to miss The City of Jackson, which features two railroad attractions. Firstly there is the Casey Jones Museum, dedicated to the famous engineer who died in a trainwreck in 1900. The museum is in an 1800's baggage car and includes three display layouts together with a replica of Casey's engine #382. Then nearby is the Nashville, Chattanooga & St Louis Depot and Museum where the display reflects the city's history as West Tennessee's railroad hub.

And so I headed South towards Chattanooga with a detour to Shelbyville to see a big car show. On the way back to the Interstate I found the Cowan Railroad Museum where a recreation of a turn-of-the-century telegraph operator's office complete with artifacts and an HO model railway displaying the Cowan Pusher District is located. Outside is displayed a rare 2-4-2 Columbia type locomotive built by Porter in 1920 complete with caboose and several freight cars. Cowan is on the main line from Nashville to Chattanooga and supplies helper engines to assist their trains over the nearby Cumberland Mountains.

Arriving in Chattanooga I called in and said hello to the staff at the NMRA headquarters building which is contained within a purpose-built replica of a typical country depot. The building is on land donated by the adjacent Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum, which was established in 1961 and features an interesting outdoor display of locomotives and rolling stock. A regular six mile round trip shuttle service, much on the original right-of-way of the East Tennessee & Georgia Railroad, is operated across Chickamauga Creek and through the 986 foot Missionary Ridge Tunnel to their East Chattanooga Depot. Here they have a gift shop, turntable, displays and an active steam locomotive repair shop.

cont. page 11

LIGHT-WEIGHT FRAMING - AN ALTERNATIVE TO TIMBER,

By Mario Rapinett

Introduction

Modern day sailing boats, planes, space ships and UFO's from Mars all use light-weight materials.

Before I started planning my first layout, I did some research on the various bench work construction methods that were available. This included using doors, particle-board, plywood, steel framing and the popular L girder construction. None of these appealed to me, as they seemed to be over-engineered and a lot of work for something that was not seen and too heavy to move. Plus, I was never any good with timber. All that cutting, gluing and screwing, who needs it? There had to be a better method.

About the same time I joined a local model railway club, and while helping with scenery work, Barry and Bob remarked that the club layout always had problems due to timber moving, warping and that it was too heavy to move when it was time for the next exhibition. Timber was used because it was obtained at no cost and no other material was considered. Then Barry mentioned the magic word, *aluminium*.

The next day I located companies that specialised in aluminium sections and once I knew what was available, I set-out to design the bench-work for my layout.

Quick Construction

I decided to use 25 x 25 mm square hollow section (SHS) for all my bench work, designed for modular sections of 900 x 900 mm, 1200 x 900 and 1800 x 600 mm.

Knowing that the stock lengths were 6.5 m long, I was able to design a cutting list to suit and save on wastage. Modules were then made up using plastic joiners. These joiners give an extremely strong connection and the resulting frames are perfectly square. You need to deduct 25 mm per join when calculating cutting lengths. You can dismantle the frame by hand, if modifications are needed, but a light tap with a rubber mallet will help.

A 900 x 900 mm module takes a minute to assemble, ready for a Styrofoam and 3mm or 6 mm medium density fibre-board (MDF) base.

Castors can be attached to the SHS legs and are ideal while working on the module. It allows you move the module as required.

There would be many places that stock the framing materials. I use Capral Aluminium. Tell 'em it's for your model railway.

Once the frames are constructed, fix MDF to frame with Selley's Liquid Nails or *Nortons* Stronghold Adhesive. Buy a dozen at a time. Trust me, you will use them over time. If you are not using heavy scenery, such as real rocks, you could eliminate the MDF base.

Fix the Styrofoam to the MDF. In 10 minutes you will have your first basic module. You can then lay the cork roadbed and track.

Additional 3mm or 6 mm MDF to the underside of the cork and track is optional. Use Canite if hand laying track. Some people have

used cardboard or foam core for the roadbed, but these items tend to compress over time.

A typical 1200 x 600 mm flat earth module with modest scenery could be completed in a day. Overhanging the MDF and foam to the front of a module, then shaping with a few curves makes for a more interesting layout. I have used this technique to create a 1500 x 600 switching layout based on "Old Ophir" by Laurie Green.

Using 50mm, 75 mm or two layers 50 mm Styrofoam, allows for rivers or depressions in the module.

Another way of creating interest and losing that straight module front look is creating add-on mini scenes, which can be bolted to the front of modules.

My new exhibition layout which is under construction will be floor to ceiling scenery using light weight materials, all of which can be moved easily by one person.

Using a modular system allows for the layout configuration can be changed at any time.

Joining Modules

When using 25 mm SHS, you can use ONE bolt size. I originally planed to weld a bolt to some modules that would eliminate some of the loose hardware, but these protruding bolts could catch onto something while moving them around at home or at an exhibition and injure people and even damaged the screw treads.

Tools

Rubber Mallet available from your nearest bargain shop. Yes, that's all, unless you need to do some extra frame cutting with a hacksaw or Precision Mitre saw.

Cutting List & Materials

Module Size	Quantity	Joiners
900 x 900mm	4 / 850 mm	4/3 Leg
900 x 600mm	2 / 850 mm	
2 / 550 mm	4/3 Leg	
1200 x 600mm	2 / 1150 mm	
2 / 550 mm	4/3 Leg	
1800 x 600mm	2 / 1750 mm	
2 / 550 mm	4/3 Leg	
1800 x 900mm	2 / 1750 mm	
2 / 850 mm	4/3 Leg	
600 x 600mm	4 / 550 mm	4/3 Leg

Using aluminium sections, individual modules can be modified or completely changed at any time without having to cut pieces of timber from the layout. If all else fails, sections, joiners and foam can be re-used. No nails to pull out or fear of timber splitting.

Styrofoam

Styrofoam is light and easy to work with. It has been used by many around the world for years and extensively promoted by Malcolm Furlow. He has used light-weight materials for his HOn3 and Gn3 layouts.

I do not shape Styrofoam as shown in many books, but snap sections off. This gives an uneven rugged look. Use solid Styrofoam where possible. This allows for better contouring. The type of packaging found in

household appliances, such as TV sets, Hi-Fi systems is generally not suitable.

The pieces are then covered with *Topping Coat*. Topping Coat is a ready to use paste, used by plasterers as a finish over plasterboard joins. Place some in a small plastic container, mix with a little water and brush on. Apply a thin coat to the Styrofoam. As it dries, stipple with a brush to give some interesting finishes.

It takes a day to dry and hardens like rock with minimal extra weight. This is a must have product in lieu of plaster. It is available in a 25 kg plastic drum and costs about \$27.00. Buy some and share it with your club mates and friends. This product will "knock your socks off". It has caused a lot of interest at some of the demonstrations I have conducted.

In the next issue of MainLine Mario will talk about DESK TOP MODELLING and will give you a few scenery tips



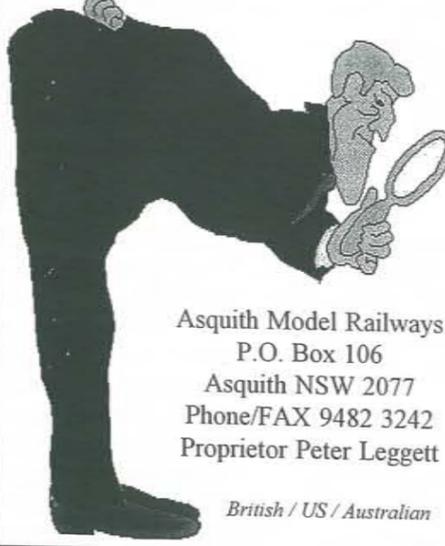
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Hidden treasures on your track

Let's say you're an HO-scale modeler and you're ready to start a new layout. Maybe you've been thinking about using code-83 or code-70 rail this time instead of code-100. What to do with the old nickel-silver code-100 stuff? Well, in tearing it out, most of it got kind of mangled so it can't be reused, even in tunnels or other hidden track areas. But it is nickel-silver, and we all know how valuable silver is. Hmmm. Maybe there's enough silver in it to make selling it worthwhile. Why, with that old layout being so big, there's probably enough silver in all that old nickel-silver track to send your kid through college. Hmmm.

Sorry. You better fill out that scholarship application after all. The truth is there is no silver at all in nickel-silver, ...zero, zip, nada. I gleaned this information from an item by Frank Hermanek in the *Rusty Spike*, published by the Central Indiana Division of the Midwest Region. Not only is there no silver in your nickel-silver track, but what IS in your nickel-silver track may surprise you. Frank tells us that brass is a copper-based alloy containing up to 40% zinc, and that nickel silver is also a copper alloy. Depending on the alloy type, nickel silver can contain 17-32% zinc, 10-30% nickel, and of course, no silver at all. Frank sums up by saying, "So you see, we're still running on brass track and all we did was change the color."

Now before I get letters, E-mails and phone calls, I know that it's about more than just color, and I'm sure Frank knows it too. It's also about the superior electrical conductivity of this particular kind of "brass track." But then again, brass still has its place in our hobby. After all, who ever heard of a nickel silver locomotive?

(Pilfered from Jim Zinser's Region Roundup in the NMRA BULLETIN, June 2000. Ed.)



THE SCENERY CLINIC Part 1

Ken Scales MMR

One of the most daunting prospects to many modellers, particularly those new to the hobby, is scenery. There are two major obstacles to overcome if the task is to be enjoyable. The first is acquiring the materials. The second is getting to where we as individuals want to be in the first stage of scenery construction.

Acquiring the materials is not easy when you look at the enormous range of products stocked by hobby shops. The most important point to make here is that you must have all the basic materials before you start or the job will become a series of frustrations. Scenery requires a lot of mixing gluing and cleaning. If you do not have all the basic materials to complete a stage it will simply take too long and become frustrating.

For this article I will concentrate on showing how to create simple scenery using a limited number of basic tools and materials: We will need:

Tools:

- A good spray bottle
- Two soft plastic sauce dispenser bottles
- 3 plastic ice cream containers
- An old spoon for mixing
- Several small house paint brushes (10 to 40 mm.)
- A small coarse sieve
- Several artists brushes (mixed sizes)

From the Hobby Shop:

- Woodlands Scenics Course Turf medium green T64, Blended Turf green blend T49, Foliage medium green F52 and Ballast medium (any colour).

From Elsewhere:

- Casting Plaster
- Selleys Aquadhere or other white glue
- Dishwashing Liquid
- Fine Sand
- Coarse Paving Sand
- Aquarium Filter Packing
- Hairspray
- Black dye or water paint

Preparation:

Fill the spray bottle with water and a teaspoon of dishwashing liquid. Fill one sauce dispenser with undiluted Selleys Aquadhere and the second with a mixture of 50% glue, 50% water and a teaspoon

of dishwashing liquid. Also, mix a teaspoon of black dye or water paint in a container of water with a teaspoon of dishwashing liquid.

The Rules:

- Remember to allow for scenery when laying the track. If the layout plan allows it, always try and build the lowest part of the layout at the front with the higher tracks at the rear.
- Tunnels are usually best placed over the curved ends of the layout to hide the tight curves which can be difficult to make realistic and also to allow us to place our turnouts on the straight or gently curved sections of the layout.
- Try to avoid large flat sections on smaller layouts as although large, flat yards and industrial areas look good on large layouts, they can be difficult to achieve realism on a small layout.
- Don't place elevated tracks too close to those below or it can be difficult to make hills and embankments look realistic. Walls alongside tracks are usually expensive to build and difficult to make look realistic. Simple embankments with slopes less than 70 degrees are easy to build and scenic.

Remember none of this advice is absolute. I have seen many examples of what I have said not to do that look great but extremely talented and experienced modelers built them all.

Technique:

The first step is to shape our rocks and slopes. Rock castings are attached to the layout using a thick plaster mix. Undulations are covered with a thin coat of plaster worked on with a paintbrush. Water can be sprayed on the plaster while brushing to make it smoother. Rock faces are brushed with the mixture of black dye, detergent and water to get a grey color. Further tinting can be done with chalks or dry brushing.

General scenery is usually stuck down with Aquadhere. Ground cover, flock, dirt, crushed stone and ballast can all be attached with Aquadhere. The best way to start is to squeeze some undiluted Aquadhere onto the layout and spread it with a paintbrush. Next cover this with a thin coat of the diluted Aquadhere from the sauce bottle. Sprinkle on some fine sand and Woodlands Scenics blended turf ground foam using the sieve.

When it looks right give it a gentle spray with water to ensure that it is all glued down.

cont page 11



FOUR MODELERS ADVENTURE INTO O SCALE

By Michael Flack, Geoff Nott, Steve Pettit, Ray Walter.

The Red Stag Lumber Co. came about when four modelers, who had been meeting regularly on Tuesday nights, decided to have an adventure in a different scale. Modeling in O Scale could provide new stimulation, and if our project was successful, would result in a portable layout that could be shown at NMRA functions and train shows.

CONCEPT.

We set out to model logging on the Pacific West Coast of the United States. The time frame we chose would be somewhere in the 1930's to the early 1950's. The work would be freelanced and follow prototypical practices. We decided that scenes to be modeled would include:-

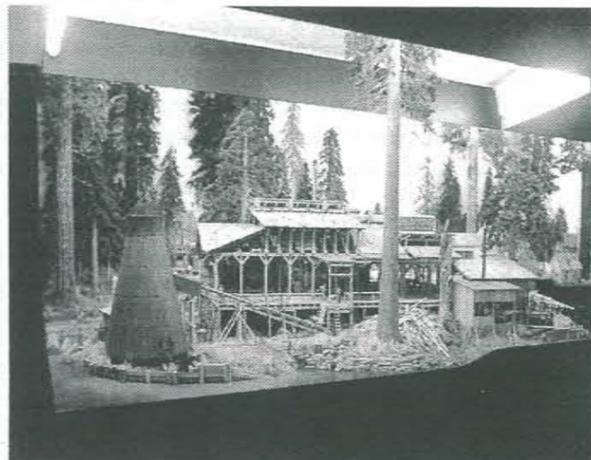
- Timber Cutting
- Forest Camp Sites
- Densely Timbered Area
- Scenery to include Bridges, Creeks, Swamps and Rivers
- Small Town and Engine Facilities
- Sawmill, including as many features of the prototype as possible
- Town Waterfront Scene

Modeling gigantic trees realistically in O Scale is difficult to achieve. By modeling them in diorama style sections, with the trees cut off at roof level, allowed us to place very

large trees in a small space. Some of these large tree trunks were used to support of the roof of the layout and its fluorescent lighting.

DESIGN AND OPERATION.

The four of us resolved to build one or two sections each using common techniques and materials. We ended up with six main sections totaling 10 meters x 1 meter, with the possibility to add a seventh section at a later stage. Smaller scenery sections were bolted to the front of the layout to give it extra dimension. Operations include point to point running in addition to two loops for simple train movement during exhibitions. The basic concept is for timber, cut in the forest, to be transported to the sawmill, and the processed lumber to be sent to destinations somewhere off layout.



Large trees support the roof and lighting of the layout. Photo by Gary Norwood

SCENERY.

The contours of the terrain were created with bird wire, then covered with a layer of paper towel cut into squares and coated with full strength white glue. Several more layer of newspaper squares and glue were added, and in some places strength was improved by the addition of polystyrene foam. Plaster was almost entirely avoided. As many natural materials as could be gathered were used on the layout, because nothing is more realistic than the real thing. Shale rock was use sparingly. It, along with many other scenery components, was bonded into position with brown No More Gaps. Sifted dirt, crushed rock, bark, leaf litter, various lichens, mosses, ferns, weeds, small bushes and grasses along with sticks and branches were used to achieve a great variety of contrasting features. All these natural materials are being complemented with buckets of ground foams and Woodland Scenics field grasses.

cont. page 10

Steam donkey engine being hauled in for repair. Photo by Sowerby Smith



Below: Shay # 3 and work train drift by the Red Stag mill pond. Photo by Sowerby Smith



Above: R.I.P. Jeb. - Camp life in the woods was tough, - and sometimes short.

Photo by Sowerby Smith



A Shay crosses the bridge in front of the Red Stag engine facilities. Photo by Sowerby Smith

Red Stag Lumber Co. continued

Big trees, which are a feature on the layout, were made by using small Casuarina trees (She Oak). The smaller trees were made with tapered balsa trunks, distressed and painted, then branches added using our local Blue Status or Misty Blue dried flower bush. Adhesive spray and ground foam was applied to finish the trees.

Creeks, ponds and rivers were created in several ways, depending on individual preferences. Some of these methods include:-

- Woodland Scenics Water Crystals
- Two Part Epoxy

Flat, smooth board, textured for waves, painted, then coated with a gloss finish.

Waterfalls were created by using a polyfibre material or clear silicone bonded onto clear plastic to match the sections of falling water.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION.

The larger size of O Scale has allowed us the use of materials in modeling scenery that are unsuitable for smaller scales.

The size of rolling stock, buildings and figures has made every detail very visible.

The variety of figures available in O Scale almost promotes a sub-hobby; the collecting and painting of these beautiful models.

We have become very enthusiastic about our adventure into O Scale and several of us plan to incorporate their sections into their home layouts.

Top right: A new office is under construction at the sawmill.

Right: Business is booming at the Red Stag Lumber Co.

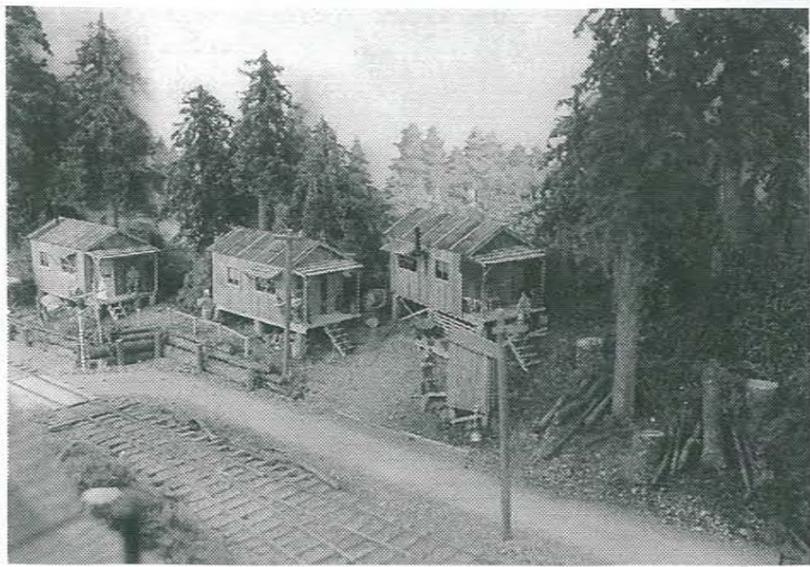
Below: At the end of a long and hard day mill worker relax at their quarters.

Photos by Sowerby Smith

Have there been times when you became bored with your modeling of a large layout? Think about modeling a diorama in a different scale. The change can be exhilarating, like a breath of fresh air, introducing you to a variety of new challenges, techniques and learning.



(If you've missed the RED STAG LUMBER CO. at the Castle Show, don't despair. The layout will be a feature at the 2001 NMRA convention. Ed.)



TRAVELS THROUGH THE DEEP SOUTH cont.

The other site worth visiting was the Chattanooga Choo Choo Holiday Inn. Although it is now a hotel, it was opened in 1909 as the Southern Railway Terminal Station and operated until it closed in 1970 to be absorbed into the Holiday Inn hotel chain. The lobby of the hotel is under the dome of the old station while the guestrooms are all in forty-eight remodeled passenger cars, with a vintage tram being used to take guests to the rooms farthest away. Inside the hotel the Chattanooga Area Model Railroad Club operate what they claim is the worlds largest model railroad open to the public. Begun in 1973, the HO gauge layout is 174' x 33' with 320 structures, 3000 feet of track, 120 locomotives, 1000 freight cars and 80 passenger cars along with three major yards, two small yards and four passenger stations.

The final leg of the first two weeks of my tour was my return to Atlanta with a stop in Marietta to visit the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway which, using GP7 #2097 or GP20 #4125, operates a twenty six mile round trip over the old L&N Hook and Eye Division.

To be continued.



THE SCENERY CLINIC cont.

This method has some advantages that are often overlooked. Firstly the thick Aquadhere is easy to control on slopes. Secondly the diluted Aquadhere and water draw glue up from the bottom as we add coats of scenery so we don't mark the top of the scenery by adding more glue.

The coarse sand and any rocks and similar items can now be glued down with straight Aquadhere. Put a thick blob of glue where you want this material and sprinkle it on. Also sprinkle on a very small amount of Woodlands Scenics blended turf to represent foliage growing between the rocks.

Now repeat this process to attach the

Woodlands Scenics coarse turf, which represents weeds and light undergrowth. Again sprinkle on a very small amount of Woodlands Scenics blended turf to give colour and texture variation.

Next tear small pieces of the aquarium filter material and attach this using straight Aquadhere. This can be dyed first and allowed to dry or used in its natural white color. Spray this with hairspray and cover with a mixture of Woodlands Scenics coarse turf and Woodlands Scenics blended turf to represent thick undergrowth.

Remember, when adding rocks weeds or undergrowth, try to follow nature. Foliage usually grows best in low areas that are damp. Tallus usually fills gaps in rocks on the bottom of gullies. Look at photos of what you are modelling to see what nature does.

Lastly, ballast the track. Simply pour small amounts of ballast between the ties and work into place with a small brush, spray with the water and detergent mix, carefully pour on the diluted Aquadhere mix and allow it to settle into the ballast.

Other Materials:

In addition to the basic materials referred to above there are many other free or inexpensive materials you can use to scenic your layout:

- Fine dirty sand, sandy topsoil washed into gutters or drains, any rock dust. These are all best heated in an old pot to remove bugs and moisture.
- Crushed sandstone. Can be also be fine screened into different powders for roads, paths, tennis courts etc.
- The spoil from large anthills making sure you remove the ants and don't get bitten.
- Kitty Litter can be crushed coloured or used as is. Colour and size varies according to the brand. One of the best uses for Kitty Litter is as Mine Tailings.
- Out-of-scale ballast can be used for special effects in other scales. O gauge ballast can be used to represent mine tailings or rocks in HO. Very fine N gauge ballast makes excellent roads paths etc in HO or even larger scales.

Part 2 will follow in a future issue of MainLine.

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JACK MACMICKING'S COVE VALE RAILWAY

Story and photos by Gary Norwood

When Dieter and I arrived at Jack and Shirley MacMicking's home, the little 2-6-2 tank engine "TAW" sat simmering in the yard, ready to pull out a string of wagons. "TAW" is a Roundhouse live steam locomotive, butane fired and radio controlled, and obviously Jack's pride and joy. The next hour or so we spent shunting, refueling, or just sitting and watching the train chuff around Jack's yard. Jack's 16 mm scale outdoor layout is built in a small courtyard. His trains run on O gauge track on a reinforced concrete shelf. This scale gauge combination originated in U.K. in the early sixties and is referred to as SM32. That is 16mm scale, 32mm gauge track which represents 2 foot or 610mm gauge prototypes. Jack's construction began in 1980 as a gauge 1 layout. The base, framed and poured on site, consists of reinforced concrete with vertical strips added to form broad channel about 40mm thick. It rests on supports of stacked Besser blocks, 1.8m apart. The concrete was allowed to cure for a couple weeks before track was laid on a base of blue metal. Approximately 20m of track follow the curve of the garden with a 5.5m spur and short locomotive servicing area branching off the main line.

Most track and all point work were hand laid on 3/8" x 1/4" battens. 90% of rail is .200" bullhead on cast white metal chairs. Later sections are flat bottom rail. To speed up track laying Jack made up 900mm sections, curving them as needed. After leveling the track, a 3mm mesh gravel was poured over it and saturated with sump oil to bind the ballast. The track has a minimum radius of six feet. The points are operated with Tenmille ground throws. When the layout is not in use protected with galvanised sheet metal covers protect it against the weather.

Structures:-

The station building was modified from a Brandbright commercial kit. Station seats and lamps are also from Brandbright. The water tank and water column are both scratch built.

Locomotive:-

"TAW" is, for the time being, Jack's sole operating locomotive, but a second steam powered tank engine is under construction.



Coaches:-

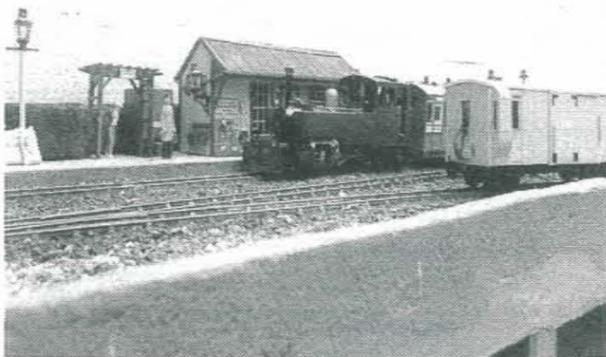
#2 - Brake/composite 1st/2nd open end car,-
#10 - Open centre section 3rd, - #14 - All 3rd, and
#15 - Brake/composite 1st/3rd -are all Tenmille kits.
#5- Composite 1st/3rd is scratch built.

Goods stock:-

#3 - 4 wheel van is a Tenmille kit.
#2 - 4 wheel open,
#9 - 4 wheel open,
#12 - bogie open, and
#20 - bogie flat - are all scratch built.
The traction engine load is a Wills kit.

Brake vans:-

#5 - Tenmille kit.
#23 - Scratch built.



During our visit Dieter became intrigued by all the equipment in Jack's workshop. Anyone with an engineering background would feel at home in here. The smell of cutting oil brings back memories of rush machining jobs, cold mornings and even colder bosses. The only thing missing was the swarf sticking to the soles of your shoes.

Jack has an English Myford ML8 lathe and drill press. The



collection of ancillary tools for the lathe and hand tools was an eye opener.

Crammed into every bit of space were off cuts of every type of metal imaginable. Some would regard this as scrap or just junk, but it's the stuff that we model builders just have to keep for some future project. It is simply amazing what Jack has made from some seemingly scrap metal. What took both our attention was a section of shelving

live steam models, an almost completed tram car body built from wood. The curved side panels and the compound curves in the roof must have been difficult to produce. On the same shelf was the Birney style frame that

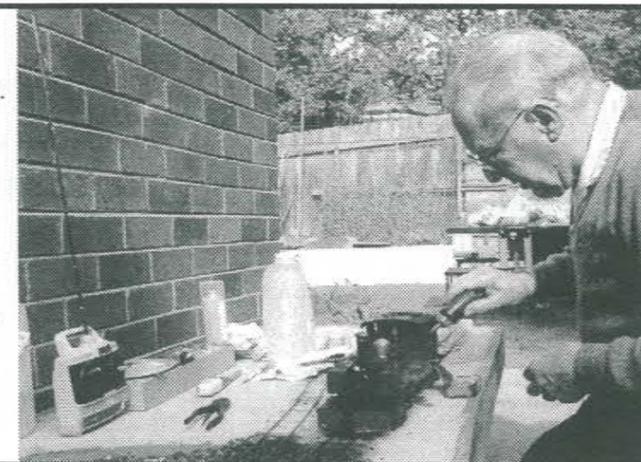
seemed to belong to it. Completing this varied collection was the body of an ancient tinsplate locomotive that I was unable to identify. What an interesting collection on one shelf!

A Bit about Jack.

Jack was apprenticed to New South Wales Government Railways as fitter and machinist in 1943. He left NSWGR in 1952/53 for health reasons and worked as a draughtsman for several companies including the Civil Aviation Authority. Eventually he became Technical Officer for the CAA and stayed there until his retirement.

Jack and his wife, Shirley, have been involved with NMRA Australasian Region from day one. Jack has served as Membership Officer for many years. He is also a member of the "Railways in the Garden" modular Live Steam Group.

His current project is constructing a new 7mm scale modular layout following English prototype.



WELCOME ABOARD!

New NMRA members

Robert Peterson	North Rocks NSW.
John Parker	Umina NSW.
Claus Kleinhapel	North Parramatta NSW.
John O'Callaghan	Lower Hutt NZ.
Gary Cronin	Eltham VIC.
Brian Morris	Engadine NSW

Peter Keddie	Torquay VIC.
John Cracknell	Norlane West VIC.
Peter Trener	Research VIC.
Graeme Young	Kenmore QLD.
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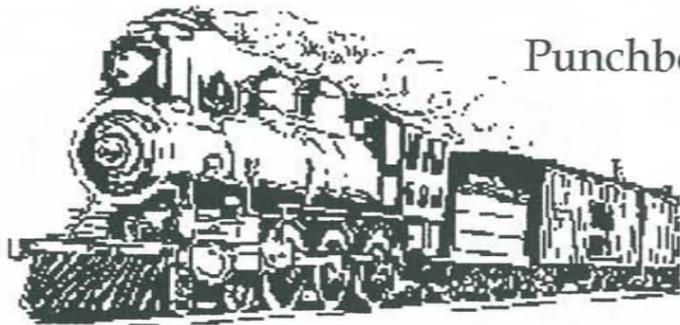
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THE ONLY DRIVE-IN HOBBY SHOP IN SYDNEY

ROUNDUP continued.....

and there was an assortment of excellent casseroles to accompany lunch. Nobody went home hungry after this meeting.

As a result of an invitation extended by Grant M^cAdam during the NMRA Convention in Victoria, Peter Trenergy took the opportunity to take part in one of our meetings. As a result of the convention Toni Saxon tells me that a number of new members were signed up and I look forward to welcoming them to future meetings.

During the afternoon Mario gave a demonstration of the scenery techniques he has used on the many layouts under construction and that were on display. He has made extensive use of styrofoam and this is covered with topping-coat and results in lightweight and durable scenery. The topping-coat, which is a ready to use paste, is usually mixed with a little water to make it easier to apply with a brush.

Laurie Green brought along several items all destined for his new On2.5 layout and they included a water tank, a bobber caboose and a turntable. The turntable has been seen several times now and Bob Backway has been helping Laurie with the control mechanism. After several attempts all the problems now seem to have been solved. A narrow-gauge rail truck built to a scale of 1:24 was on display from Bob Backway. A Denver Rio Grande 583 Class locomotive in HO standard gauge, a Bachmann Spectrum Mountain Class 4-8-2 (HO) and a Proto 2000 stockcar were brought along by Ian Petherick who has recently moved to Melbourne from Perth. Grant M^cAdam had an assortment of photographs from the NMRA Convention and his recent trip overseas plus some books and magazines.

July Meeting

The Division Three meeting in July was held at the home of Peter MacDonald at Bacchus Marsh. Some people may think that this was a brave choice because it can be very cold in the "Marsh" at this time of year. However, the weather was kind to us and allowed us to cook our barbecue lunch. The afternoon was spent chatting and socialising. Mario Rapinett had brought along a track diagram for his new layout and he was seeking advice on where to put the track feeds and cut the insulating joints. There were a number of different opinions as to how best to wire the layout for either ease of operation or ease of wiring. This was a very appropriate lead into the topic of discussion for the afternoon that was hand-held throttles by Peter MacDonald. Peter described the throttles that he normally uses and which are popular amongst the members of the Sunbury Model Railway Club. The throttles consist of the minimum number of components and are very easy to fault find. Peter was able to supply a wiring diagram for those who wanted to have a go at building their own throttle.

There was a large selection of items for display this month. Our host, Peter MacDonald, had a recently completed model of a D³ locomotive and a "C" class. At this year's Sunbury Model Railway Exhibition a mini-diorama (6" x 8") competition is being run. Mario Rapinett brought along his entry and an HOn3

brass locomotive that he had just finished spray painting. Laurie Green brought along one of the On2.5 modules for his new layout that features the mill complex for the gold mine. The module features a series of waterfalls using the techniques demonstrated by Geoff Nott at the recent NMRA Convention held in Victoria. Reading matter this month came from Bob Backway (Light Railways) and Steve Cullen (Vancouver Island Railroads by R.D. Turner). Paul Richie built a small railcar in Sn3 built from etched parts from South Park Miniatures. Grant M^cAdam had been inspired by an article by Lane Stewart in the "Gazette" to build his own version of "No Problem Joe's". Grant described how he had modified the structure from that described in the article, which included reducing the size, removing a doorway and relocating the chimney.

August Meeting

As the regular attendance at meetings has been increasing, more people are willing to host meetings. August saw us travelling to the home of Bob Backway at Belgrave Heights for the first time. Bob is a strong advocate of DCC and was instrumental in assisting in developing the standards now in use. Bob's layout has been relocated into the loft but is currently not in operation. Bob models HO standard gauge with an interchange to the narrow gauge, which is very appropriate as living in the Dandenong's, the Puffing Billy Railway is just a short drive away.

It was our usual lunch time barbecue meeting. Doreen Backway had excelled herself with a range of salads to accompany the barbecue that was followed by a selection of sweets. The weather was reasonable although a little on the cool side. After lunch we adjourned to Bob's lounge room to watch the video Mario Rapinett had taken of the "Red Stag Lumber Company" at the Castle Hill exhibition. Everyone was impressed by the quality of the layout and the clarity of Mario's photography. Several people were heard to say that they will be willing to make the trip interstate for the next showing of the layout.

We then relocated up stairs for Bob to give a thought provoking presentation on the use of sound in model railways. Bob expressed the view that sound is usually over done and can become very wearing on operators. The use of sound tubes was described to direct the sound to a particular location. Bob also stressed the need to seal around the back of speakers when mounting them which helps to improve the sound quality.

More and more people are willing to bring along items for show and tell and they usually generate much discussion about the different techniques that had been used. Grant M^cAdam and Mario Rapinett both had a selection of photographs that they had taken of the Red Stag Lumber Company. Grant also had an assortment of narrow gauge magazines. Mario had some HOn3 locomotives that Peter MacDonald had done some work on for Mario to get them running smoothly. Another scratch built locomotive from the stable of Steve Cullen was on show. This time Steve had built an On2.5 "A" class climax. There were several things Steve was not happy about on the model and he is

thinking of rebuilding it.

Steve also had the book "Narrow Gauge Nostalgia" by George Turner. Another prolific builder is Laurie Green who is currently preparing a new layout in On2.5 called the "Enterprising Gold Mining Company". Laurie brought along a Bachmann On2.5 Porter that he had modified to have a pillared cab, the sign for the layout and the station halt to be used on the layout. Gavin Hince brought along a kit built live steam locomotive from Argyle Locomotives which is nearing completion.

Some catalogues from the Home of O gauge were brought along by John Beaton. BGM has recently released a kit for the Victorian Railways D³ locomotive. Peter MacDonald has completed one kit and another is ready for the paint shop. Ian Petherick had modified some HO hoppers to make them into narrow gauge vehicles for On2.5. Last of all was a model "Wepowie" of a small waiting shelter in HO by John Dennis.

A Golden Spike Ceremony with a Difference

Contributed by John Parker

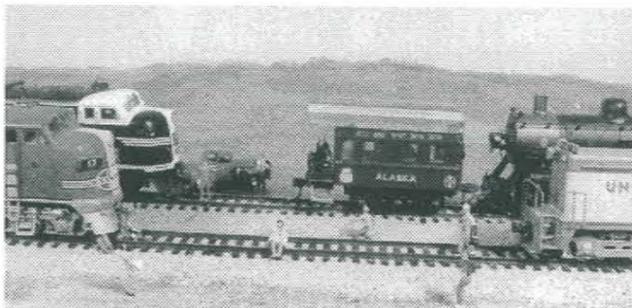
Recently, a good friend of mine, Ted York celebrated the completion of tracklaying duties on his HO gauge Cajon Pass Model Railroad. Ted who lives in Utah, came up with an original idea. He invited his friends and neighbours over for the official "Golden Spike" ceremony, and then to stay for a barbecue as part of the celebrations.

However, not to be overlooked, Ted also invited his friends from around the U.S.A. and overseas to send a "proxy" if they could not attend. The "proxy" had to be a HO figure who would witness this grand event and be photographed for posterity sake. We also had the choice of leaving our alter egos there permanently on his layout, or they would be returned with a souvenir photo of the ceremony as "hand luggage".

Consequently, I stuffed my proxy into a padded jiffy bag and sent it off for the occasion.

Among the HO "dignitaries" photographed were "Marty Quaas" and his private business car specially shipped in from Alaska. Also, present was "Chard Walker" (author of three highly acclaimed books on Cajon Pass) and Cajon Pass railfan "Al Bowen", (humorously known as the "Mayor of Cajon").

In the official photograph shown below, my wife and I are standing beside the rear of the pickup and our son is in the right foreground taking photographs.



That's "Ted York" dressed in the engineer's outfit (immediately left of the UP switcher) marching down

the track to tell Cajon Pass enthusiast, "John Thompson" (sitting on the track) to move it. If you wish to visit Ted's layout on the Internet, his website address is "http://www.xmission.com/~tedyork" and it is well worth the visit.

Do you have a golden spike ceremony coming up on your layout? Please drop me an invite and if I can't attend in person, then I'll send you my proxy.

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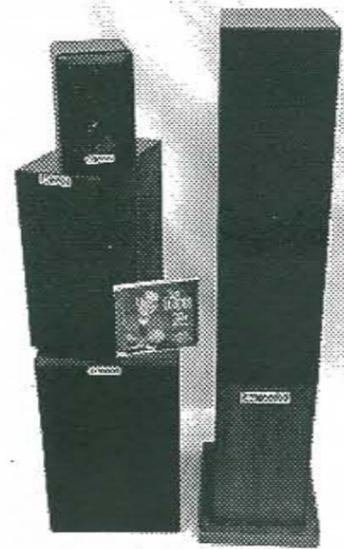
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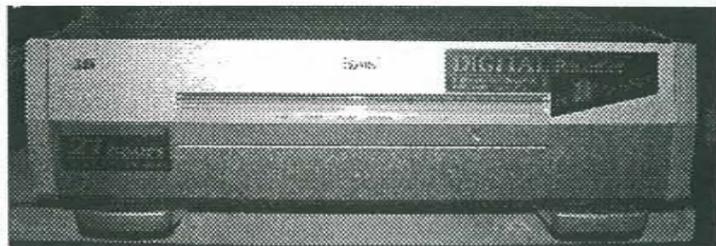


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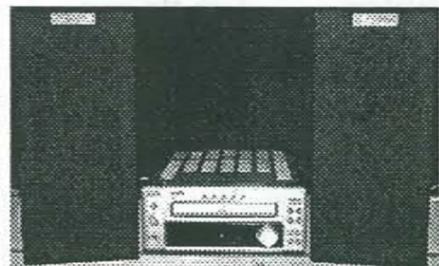
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