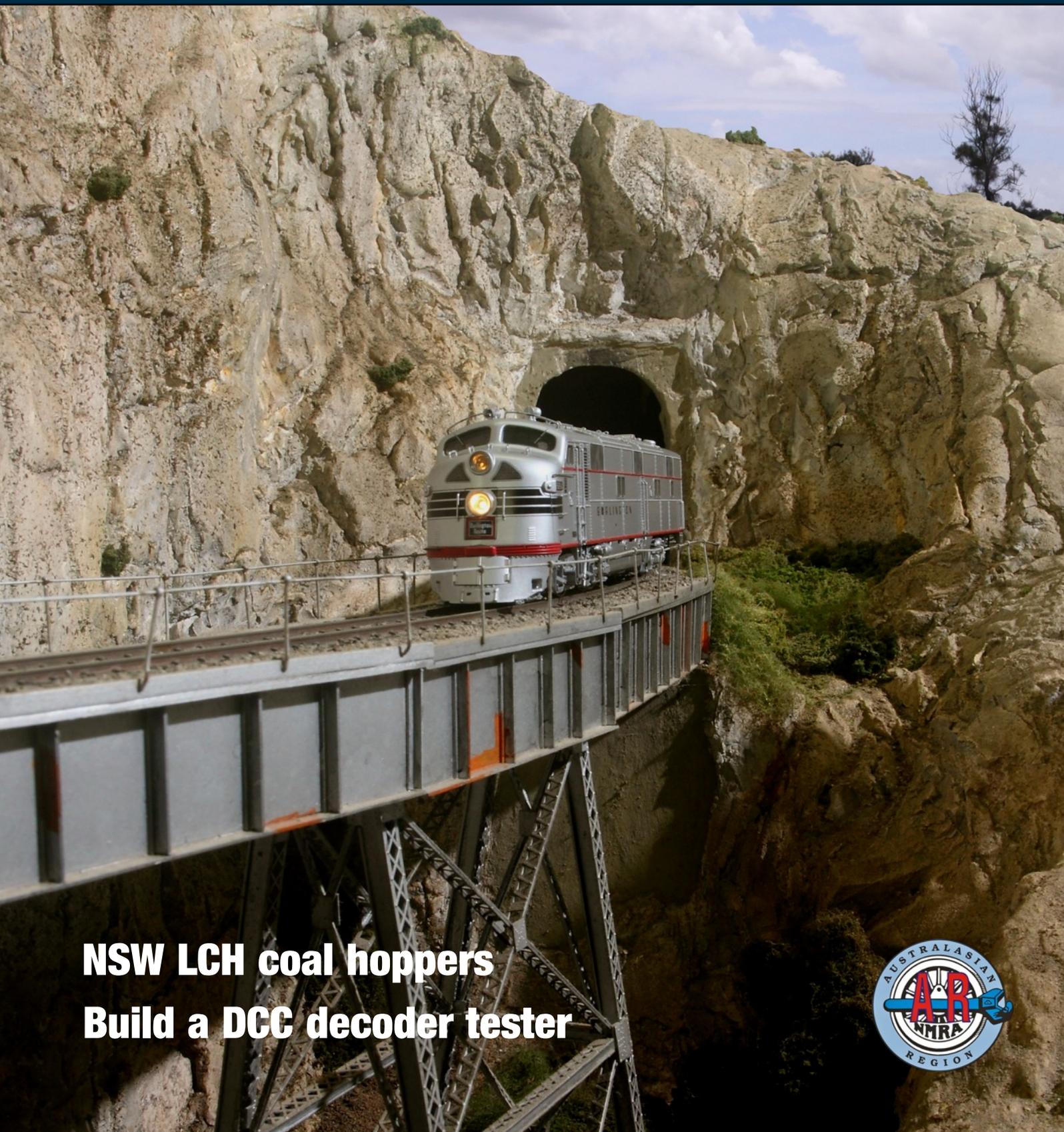


MainLine

National Model Railroad Association Australasian Region

WINTER 2012

VOLUME 29 No 2



NSW LCH coal hoppers
Build a DCC decoder tester



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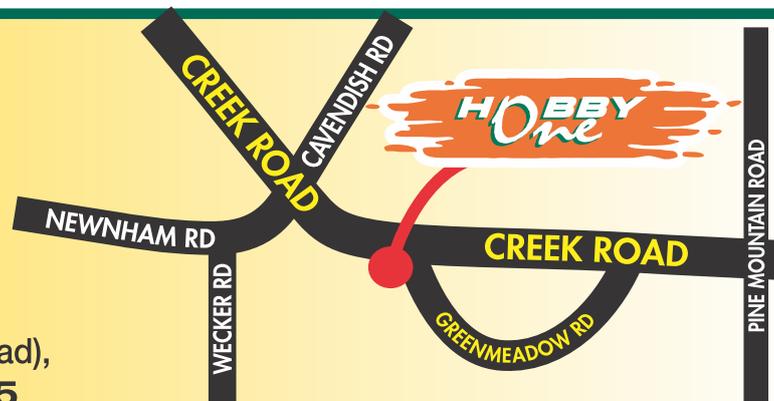


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EDITOR: Robyn Taylor

DISTRIBUTION: Bruce Kerslake

CONTRIBUTIONS:

All members of the NMRA are welcome to submit articles of a railway nature that are suitable for inclusion in Main Line. Contributions can include photos, drawings, modelling tips and historical information that would be of interest to fellow members. Please ensure that the material supplied is not bound by copyright or that written approval has been gained by the author to use any copyright materials.

Submissions should be in an electronic format ie: Word or PDF and photos must be original size and uncropped. Hand written or type written documents are also acceptable but should be legible to assist us in converting them to electronic format.

Cut Off Dates for Submissions and Advertising:

- * Winter 2012: 11 May 2012
- * Spring 2012: 10 August 2012
- * Summer 2012: 9 November 2012
- * Autumn 2013: 8 February 2013

Submissions and advertising copy can be emailed: editor@nmra.org.au or mailed to: 77 Englefield Rd Oxley QLD 4075

Advertising:

The National Model Railroad Association Australasian Region is happy to accept advertising in this magazine. For advertising rates and enquiries please contact the Editor.

MainLine reserves the right to refuse publication of material deemed to be inappropriate or offensive. The Editor and the NMRA accept no responsibility for the opinions or views expressed. Advertisers accept responsibility for advertising copy and must ensure that it complies with the trade practices act. Advertising in MainLine in no way constitutes endorsement by the NMRA

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Cover Photo

A Burlington E7 leads a passenger train through the tunnel on the decent to Lookout Ridge on the Union Pacific Model Railway Club layout in Brisbane.

Photo: Paul Skehan

A Big Thank You

With the publication of this issue of MainLine we should take the opportunity to thank two members who have been instrumental in providing us with a quality and informative magazine every quarter. Geoff Horne should be congratulated for his efforts as Editor over the last two and a half years. It is no small feat to produce an informative and enjoyable read every three months keeping the members of NMRA Australasian Region informed of what is happening within the Association and the divisions that form this collective. I am sure that all members will join with me in wishing Geoff all the very best for the future.

Thanks also to Sowerby Smith for his efforts in managing the distribution of MainLine and his assistance with editing photographs to ensure that we had the best possible results for each issue.

We have been fortunate to have the support of volunteers who give their time freely to ensure that all members enjoy the benefits of our Association and I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming Bruce Kerslake to the position of Distribution coordinator for MainLine. Bruce is an avid Australian prototype modeller with a keen interest in NR locomotives. I look forward to working with Bruce in this new role.

The success of any publication depends wholly on the support of members who take the time to develop and write articles and provide photos that give the magazine its character. For others, it is offering ideas and criticism to help make the magazine more enjoyable and to improve the quality of what is offered to our subscribers. I have been overwhelmed by the flow of articles and other contributions that have assisted me in putting this issue of MainLine together and I thank those who have offered their support as we create some new and exciting ideas for the future of MainLine. It is also important to recognise the support of our advertisers and I ask that you support them and mention MainLine in your dealings with them. This is your magazine and this is your opportunity to share your ideas, modelling tips and knowledge of the hobby with our fellow members and help to promote this great hobby.

I have had the good fortune of attending recent division one meetings here in Queensland where I have seen the diversity of interests shown by members of NMRA. The most rewarding part of these meetings is having the time to view the layouts of our hosts and to witness first hand the quality and variety of what our members achieve in their modelling. The stand out benefit of these gatherings is the willingness to share ideas and offer help to those of us who

are venturing into realms unknown. For me, a clinic by Laurie McLean on how to solder has given me renewed interest in dusting of my rarely used soldering unit and having another go. I also received a call from a friend of mine who attended his first division meeting and was on a high because he managed to gain some very worthwhile information on DCC from one of the more experienced members in this field. Within a day or so after the meeting, my friend has put into practice what he learned. What a wonderful commendation for the people within our ranks that share their knowledge and experience with others, this is what makes our hobby so rewarding.

One final and rather important item that I need to mention is the cut off dates for news and articles which are listed on the previous page. In order to meet our deadlines with the publication of MainLine we have to adhere as much as possible to the cut off dates shown. I will send two reminders via email to allow enough time for division supervisors to collate their news and photos and to forward them to me for inclusion in the magazine, however, late arrivals may miss publication.

I would like to thank all those who have taken the time to provide articles, news and photos for this issue and hope that you enjoy the fruits of our efforts.

Until next time, keep on train-ing

Robyn Taylor



Pacific National NR 9 heads a container train as it roars past the Kyogle Golf Club heading for Melbourne. Photo: R L Taylor

FROM THE CAB

David Howarth, MMR - President NMRA AR

At our AGM in June this year, the current Regional Committee will complete its two year term. As the chairman of the Committee I wish to thank all the committee members who have worked so well together and achieved so much.

Over the past two years I have sought to ensure that our work at a Regional level has been as much as possible representative of the whole Region and not "Sydney Centric" We have achieved the following:

Completion of the 2012 Strategic Plan for the NMRA Australasian Region, following good consultation with all Divisions;

Importantly, for the first time, all the Divisional Superintendents, were invited to attend a workshop to discuss the future vision and activities of the Region. The meeting was held in Sydney on the 2nd October 2011 and was a great success. It helped cement our leadership group as leaders of the whole Region, and developed a long action list. I do hope that this gathering becomes entrenched as an activity of all future Committees, as the benefits are significant.

I endeavoured to travel to as many Divisions as I could during the past two years to help bind our Region together and hear first-hand the views of our members.

We have just appointed Robyn Taylor as our new MainLine Editor, and supported her proposal to have our magazine produced, printed and distributed from Queensland. This will enable our Division 1 members to contribute more in the running of the Region, and again help reduce the "Sydney Centric" perceptions of the membership. We wish Robyn all the very best in her role as Editor, and can assure you all, that her skills and experience are well suited to the role.

We encouraged more promotion of the NMRA throughout the Region, and have produced many publicity banners for use within the Divisions. A new publicity flyer has been drafted and will be produced in the near future.

We continue to celebrate those members who have achieved 25 continuous years of membership.

And for the benefit of the NMRA as a whole, we will be supporting the transportation of a new layout being designed and built by our members at the invitation of the Organizing Committee of the new NMRA Scale Model Exhibit at the California State Museum in Sacramento California.

I will not be seeking re-election for another term as President, or any other role on the committee, having been involved with the committee some eight continuous years. I wish the incoming Committee all the very best in their endeavours. All the best and happy modelling.

David



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REPORT OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Peter Jensen - Pacific District Director

This will be my last report as Pacific District Director. I must say thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve in this capacity, I have been honoured to do so.

Mike Bartlett, the current Division 9 Superintendent, has been elected as the new Pacific Director. Mike's term begins at the next BOD meeting. He is certainly in for an interesting time, where we have a new president, Charlie Getz, also beginning his term in office as well. I congratulate Mike and wish him all the best for his time in this important role. To the other two candidates, thank you for standing. It was great to see three very strong candidates put their hand up to help our organisation.

The NMRA is a great organisation, but we are facing interesting times. I first joined the NMRA in the 70's. At that time, there were a lot of young folk in their 30's, starting families, and engaging in this great hobby. Today, we find the average age of members is in the high 60's. We are aging as a group at an alarming pace. If it continues, our organisation may end up disappearing. The good news is that there are some on the BOD that are looking at this change, and have started to research ways of attracting younger folk to the organisation. The message is, we must become relevant to the modern, younger generations. Facebook, twitter, electronics, online, web sites are the way people communicate today. The models we buy are of outstanding quality. The need for Kit bashing and Scratch-building has changed. DCC has changed the hobby in ways we did not dream.

The NMRA still has a vital part to play as we look at standards and interoperability. Any one near the average age of the NMRA will remember the bad old days when couplers, wheels and track just didn't seem to work together as well as it should. Well, NMRA standards fixed that. Along with the DCC standards, and the new NMRANET standards that are coming, the NMRA still has a vital role to play.

I should also add, on a social level, the NMRA still provides a great place to learn and to meet and make great friends. In closing, don't forget Grand Rapids in July. It may not be the biggest National Convention held, but it will still be a great event to attend – great layouts and great clinics.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your representative on the Board of Directors, I wish my replacement a great and successful tenure.

Cheers ... happy modelling
Peter Jensen
Pacific District Director



NMRA Pacific District

July 29 - Aug. 4

A stylized illustration of a steam locomotive, number 1225, moving towards the viewer. In the background, there are several rectangular buildings of varying heights, representing a city skyline.

NMRA National, Grand Rapids, MI

Grand Rails 2012

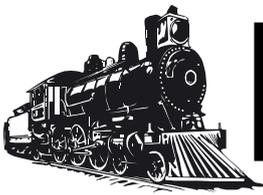
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*** DETAILS ENCLOSED WITH THIS ISSUE ***



A TRAIN OF THOUGHT

By Paul Marrant

The recent passing of our fellow member Brett Payne, prompted the writing of this letter. Brett was a NMRA member for several years and also an active member of the CCWN a 100% NMRA club.

Brett being a very organised person kept an extensive record of his train collection. His record of loco models, manufacturers, model numbers, prices paid, dates purchased, insurance values etc. was extensive. The same applied to anything else of value such as radio controllers, boosters, transformers, unbuilt kits etc.

The value of such a record has numerous benefits including insurance values, resale of equipment if necessary (God forbid) and is of enormous assistance to the poor souls left with the huge task of disposing of all of this gear in an estate sale.

Anyone who has had the personal experience of being involved in an estate sale will know what a huge job it can be, a list as proposed makes this task a lot easier.

The personal loss of a partner is something we can only imagine and if an inventory as suggested takes even a small part of the worry away then the time spent compiling a list as suggested is well worth the effort. The record can be kept on file in your computer or simply in a note book. As none of us is sure as to when things may occur, I would therefore urge you to consider the above proposal sooner rather than later.

Myself being amongst the more disorganised in these matters, I certainly undertake to follow Brett's lead and make my list asap, as I hope you will.



Laurie Green's O Scale dilapidated Gun Shop

Photo: Rod Hutchinson

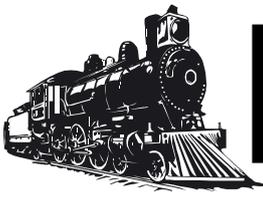
CALLING ALL BUDDING AUTHORS

We are looking for articles and photos for the next issue of MainLine so if you would like to share your ideas and knowledge on all things model railroad then here is your chance. Put pen to paper, grab your trusty digital camera and make a start.

The Technical Stuff:

Text: Word document files are good, don't worry too much about layout and embellishments, we can do that prior to setting up in the magazine. Don't embed photos in the document, send photos separately.

Photos: This is always a daunting prospect, but as a general rule clear sharp photos are the best for a magazine. It is best to send us the original photo file untouched, no Photoshop or cropping is needed we can do that here. If the files are too large to email simply burn them to a disc and post it to us.



A REPRESENTATIVE EARLY CONRAIL ROSTER

FOR AN OPERATING LAYOUT

By Rod Tonkin

My layout is a representation of a division of Conrail. To operate the line I need a group of smooth running, reasonably well detailed model locomotives capable of standing up to the rough and tumble of an operating session. I wanted these locomotives to be typical of the early days of Conrail. Developing this operational roster has provided me with enjoyable modelling since the 1980's.

From its constituent lines the real Conrail had just about one of everything. My aim has been to give an impression of Conrail's early motive power. Kalmbach's "Diesel locomotive rosters" published in 1982 and the "Conrail Cyclopaedia" on the internet provided me with an appreciation of the type, colour schemes and numbers of locomotives Conrail operated from its inception on April fools day 1976 through the late 1970s.

My aim has been to build a roster representing the more common locomotive models with a smattering of minority types thrown in.

Conrail's eight wheeled locomotive roster included;

- 230 GP40
- 128 GP40-2
- 335 GP38-2
- 279 GP38
- 189 GP35
- 82 GP30
- 273 GP9
- 180 GP7
- 121 SW1500
- 96 RS3M
- 146 U25B
- 99 U23B

The twelve wheeled locomotive roster included

- 43 SD35
- 113 SD40
- 169 SD40-2
- 156 SD45

Interestingly the eight wheeled locomotives outnumber the twelve wheelers by about four to one. As well as these large groups of locomotives Conrail initially rostered almost one of every diesel locomotive model produced in the previous forty years.

Martindale Creek's traffic pattern consists of export coal trains to Port Stephens, Sydney to Brisbane interstate trains and local freights. To service this traffic

Martindale Creek's roster uses locomotives appropriate for the service. The coal train roster is a pair of SD35s, an SD45 and a U36C. The interstate train roster is a GP35, a pair of GP40s and a GP40-2. The local train roster is an SW1500, a GP30, a GP38-2 and a U23B.

The locomotives modelled represent around half the major groups of locomotives Conrail was operating in its early days. Similarly to Conrail's roster balance, my eight wheeled locomotives outnumber my twelve wheeled locomotives.

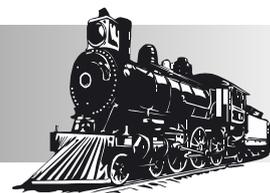
To represent Conrail's odds and sods roster of locomotives I've included Conrail 6592 one of the baker's dozen GE U36C's Conrail inherited from Erie Lackawanna.

The colour schemes of the early days of Conrail are carried through into my Conrail roster. 2273, 3079, 3284, 6051, 6592 and 9611 are painted in the Conrail dress blue colour scheme. 2749, 3062 and 6017 are painted a weathered black with Conrail numbers and initials. Ex Reading 2168 is painted in the final Reading colour scheme with the Reading heralds and numbers blacked out and over painted with Conrail numbers and initials. Ex Erie Lackawanna SD45 3610 still carries its EL number and herald.

2168 is a ready to run DCC equipped Bachmann GP30 painted and lettered for the Reading Railroad. The model was delivered in the original Reading colour scheme. The model has been repainted with PVA paints to match the later Reading colour scheme with the Reading heralds and numbers blacked out and over painted with Conrail numbers and initials. 2273 is a ready to run Conrail painted and lettered DCC equipped Bachmann GP35. 2273 was Martindale Creek's first decoder equipped locomotive. 2749 is an unlettered Athearn blue box U30B kit painted in overall black and lettered as Conrail U23B 2749 to match prototype photos.

3079 is a ready to run Conrail painted and lettered DCC equipped Bachmann GP40. 3062 is a demotored Bachmann train set GP40 repainted with PVA paints and decaled to match prototype photos of Conrail 3062.

3284 is an Athearn blue box GP40-2 kit. CR 3284 was the first factory painted Conrail locomotive on Martindale Creek.



Erie Lackawanna 3610 is an out of the box Bachmann SD45.

6051's body shell is a Pemco model re painted and lettered in the 1980s in the Conrail dress blue colour scheme. It is now mounted on a Mehano SD35 chassis. 6017 is a Mehano SD35 repainted with PVA paints and decaled to match prototype photos of Conrail 6017.

6592 is an Atlas ready to run GE U36C purchased from a trader at the 2009 ARHS WA Railway Museum Rail Fest. After repainting and re arranging some of the detail parts, the obligatory weathering and installing a decoder it was ready for service.

8091 is an unlettered Athearn blue box GP38-2 kit, painted and lettered in the Conrail dress blue colour scheme in the late 1980s

9611 is a Conrail dress blue colour scheme painted and lettered Athearn blue box SW1500 kit. I purchased the model at the 1993 Perth model train show and put it straight into service on my then exhibition layout.

All these models operate reliably, are reasonable looking and robust. The combination of the DCC system, all wheel drive and all wheel current collection provides reliable operation. The sturdy plastic body shells, steel wire hand railings on the Athearn blue box kits and plastic hand railings on the Atlas, Mehano and Bachmann models withstand the normal handling encountered during an operating session. The level of detail on the models is adequate for my needs.

My HO scale Conrail roster is a motley collection, rather like the prototype was in the 1970's



GP40 class 3079 and 3062



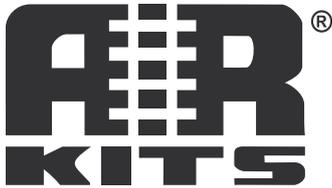
Conrail SW1500 9611 in the striking blue and white livery



SD60 in Erie Lackawanna Livery shortly after 1st July 1976



XPT 2012 Kyogle Station January 1 2012 Photo: R L Taylor



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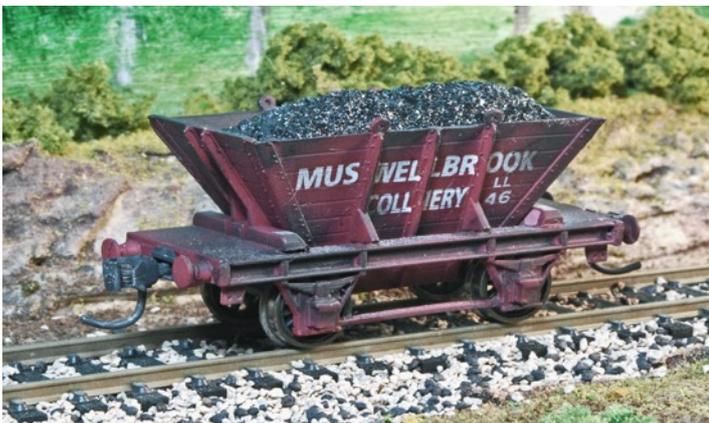
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THE PRIVATE OWNER NON AIR COAL HOPPERS OF NEWCASTLE NSW

By Bill Cox



For many years I have been an avid fan of a series of books on NSW Railways called Byways of Steam, the most recent edition, number 27, was of particular interest as it had substantial coverage of the early coal railways in Newcastle. My interest was drawn to the information on the small 10 ton coal hoppers often referred to as non air hoppers. These diminutive wagons were used for many years both by the New South Wales Railways and privately owned companies transporting coal to the ports for shipment around the world. A number of fine publications are now available on the subject of these amazing coal mines and they also contain considerable information on the LCH Hoppers which are the subject of this article. I have listed the reference materials used for this project as a guide only as there are no doubt other sources available.



A Brief History

Coal has been mined in the Newcastle fields from 1857 to the present day and has been a driving force behind the development of railways in the Hunter Region of New South Wales. The government railways first terminus was at Honeysuckle Point where engine sheds and carriage sheds were erected. 1858 saw the railway extended to the city of Newcastle. The Brown family featured heavily in the early days of mining in the Hunter region and were responsible for opening a number of quite successful mines. Numerous wagon types were used for the haulage of coal but in 1863 the Scottish Australian Coal Company introduced a vehicle that was to be the basis of a design that would be used for many years to come. The simple design consisted of an open iron underframe into which a slope sided timber hopper was placed. The success of this design saw the numbers in use by private operators and the NSWGR climb to over 13,000 vehicles, there were a number of variations of the original hopper but the basic elements were always present. The early versions of these hoppers were of 6 ton capacity, over time the newer versions were capable of carrying up to 12 ton. The majority of the hoppers were classed as LCH, however, with the desire to increase the capacity some wagons were fitted with 'hungry boards' and were classified CCH.

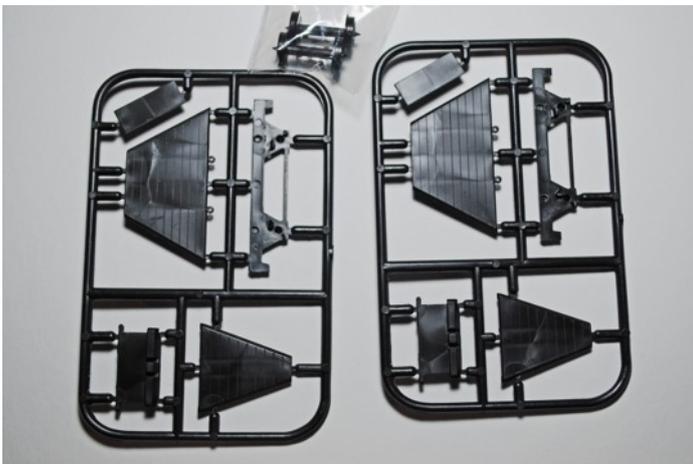
A particularly useful book in completing my project was the Train Hobby publication "Coals to Newcastle Volume One the Steam Era" as it had quite a number of coloured photos of wagons that assisted me in painting and weathering the models. My research found that trains regularly ran with forty non air hoppers which were assisted in the braking department by a CHG guards van. I decided that I would complete a rake of forty non air LCH hoppers in private ownership to run behind my NSWGR 53 class locomotive with a J & A Brown branded CHG brake van.



Kit built DJH 53 Class suitably weathered

What you need for this project

- LCH coal hopper kit from Casula Hobbies
- Decals for private owner wagons from rail-modeller-australia.com.au
- Quality liquid plastic cement
- A small brush to apply liquid cement
- A sharp craft knife and cutting board
- Small side cutters to remove the parts from the sprue
- A range of files to clean up any flash on the parts
- A pair of pointed tweezers
- Patience, this is something that is quite hard to find

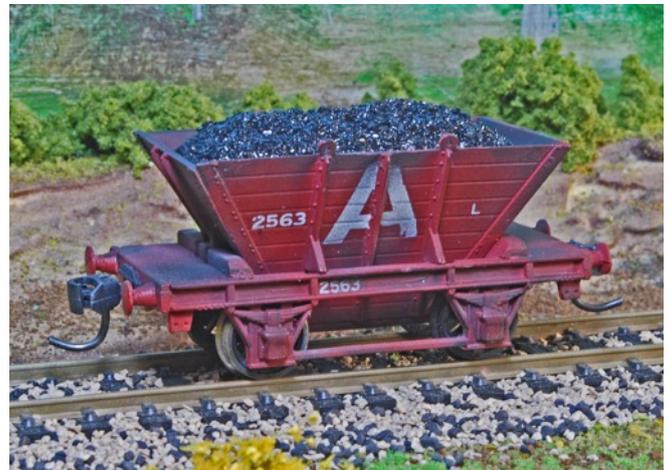


The kit as supplied with wheels and axle bearings

Overview of the project

The wagon kit consists of two injection moulded frets that contain two hopper sides, two hopper ends, two

hopper bases (only one base is used for each model) and the components for the steel underframe made up of four parts. A bag supplied with the kit has four small delrin bearings for the axle boxes and a pair of plastic spoke wheels. Buffers are available at extra cost as are metal wheels which I have now started to fit to my wagons. The construction of the wagons was not particularly difficult as the parts are well moulded with little or no flash to clean up. I chose a liquid plastic cement that helped to provide a strong clean joint once the parts were glued. The biggest issue I found was making sure that the parts were fitted together square to ensure that wheels lined up correctly so as to provide trouble free running. The hopper portion of the kit was rather more involved as it took some work to get the angled sides and ends to go together square. The best way to approach a project such as this is to spend some time and research the prototype so you have a reasonable idea of how the model should look when it is finished. I spent many enjoyable hours wading through my books and putting post it notes on the pages that I would use later as a reference guide; this effort was well worth it as I could easily find photos that were invaluable when it came to painting decaling and weathering.



Completed model of Aberdare 2563

Building the models

The first job I tackled was to read the instructions that are supplied with the kit, these were very basic but they do give a good view of how the parts go together. Because I chose to make 40 of these wagons I decided to use take away containers to hold the parts as I cut them from the using my small side cutters. I then removed the parts from the containers that I needed to construct the underframe and built them in batches of ten. I should mention that you will find it considerably

easier to fit the delrin bearings in the axle at this stage as it is quite a challenge once you have glued everything together. I worked with the parts upside down (axles facing up) on a small sheet of thick glass, this made it easier to fit the wheels prior to final gluing. It is important to ensure that the parts fit together square and that the axle boxes are lined up with each other. To achieve this I simply 'tacked' the parts together using a small amount of glue applied with a small paint brush. Using a square and a ruler I wriggled the assembly until it was right I then fitted the wheels to the assembly to test them for running and once I was satisfied that all was correct I fully glued the parts and allowed them to dry. The advantage using liquid cement is that it flows into the seams by capillary action and when dry the parts are very strong. I set the completed underframe's to one side to allow the glue to fully dry and then made a start on the Hoppers.

The Hoppers were going to be awkward to put together as the parts have no distinct locating element built into them and it is all down to patience and trial to find a method that works effectively. In hindsight I probably should have made a jig that would accommodate the parts and hold them square while they were being glued, but I chose the old fashioned hard way and spent many enjoyable hours and a few words of disdain as I glued, straightened, re glued and re straightened them until I was satisfied with the result. Again these were set aside to allow the glue to cure. The next stage was to test assemble the hoppers in the underframe and glue a strip of lead into the bottom of the hopper, the weight is vital to ensure that these wagons run well. I then placed them on a sloping piece of rail and watched as they either ran down the slope at breakneck speed or just sat there waiting for some divine intervention from the hand of man! A few wagons needed a little bit of work to get them running correctly but generally the overall results were quite good. Once I was satisfied with this stage of the project I then glued the hoppers to the underframe At last it was time to set up my trusty coupler height gauge and fit Kadee number five couplers and the small buffers to get the models up to running condition. The couplers had to be glued to the underframe as there was not enough thickness in the base to use a screw, this requires some care to ensure that you do not glue the coupling so as to render it unworkable. With my forty wagons tucked away safely in a carry box I went off to my club running day quite excited about my efforts and looking forward to test running my new hoppers prior to painting and decaling. It stands to reason that Murphy will always intervene when you least expect it and this was one of those

days, my beloved 53 Class did two laps of the layout and then decided to throw in the towel, however, on the bright side the hoppers seemed quite happy being towed behind a candy 48 class which is quite incorrect but I continued to convince myself it was only a test run.

The Final Chapter

Of course all good stories have an end and we are now approaching the final chapter in this project, the painting, decaling and weathering. This is always a subject that would require more pages than this magazine has in order to outline the process, perhaps this would be the subject of another article. In simple terms, I washed all the models using soapy water and then rinsed them under the tap, they were then spread out on a board and allowed to dry completely. I then primed the models using my airbrush and an automotive etch primer, again they were allowed to dry completely before being painted with an automotive lacquer in red oxide. I prefer to use automotive lacquers as they dry quite fast and there are no issues with dust accumulating on them. While waiting for the models to dry I created a load pattern using real coal that would be cast in polyurethane by a friend of mine, the final result was a drop in load that sits quite nicely in the model. Once the paint was dry I then started the arduous task of decaling the models using the photos that I had found as a guide. The decals are quite good as each decal is a complete set including the private owner letter, a small L or LL and the numbers needed for each wagon. I managed to get forty wagons with no repeat numbers which makes for an interesting train. The last job was to apply a coat of matt clear and weather the wagons using a wash of black which was applied using my airbrush. The finishing touch was to glue the coal loads in and then off to the railway club to admire my handiwork.

Reference Books:

Byways of Steam Volume 27

Eveleigh Press

Coal, Railways and Mines

The story of the railways and collieries of J&A Brown
By Brian Robert Andrews

Coals to Newcastle

NSW Hunter Valley Coal Traffic Part 1 The steam era
By Peter Attenborough

EFFECTIVE BACKSCENES

PRESENTING OUR HOBBY TO THE PUBLIC

by Bob Deakin

The “Backscene” is an essential layout feature to separate the miniature world on show from the life size clutter and distractions beyond. The primary purpose of a backdrop behind a model railroad or diorama is to convey the feeling that the scene extends to the horizon and beyond, so that the walls of the room or any visible areas behind the lay-out are completely hidden with a 'Sky Backdrop' that extends from the scene all the way to the ceiling.

This sets limits on the scene as the backdrop does on a theatre stage and it prevents attention being distracted from the focus on the principal happenings, towards the helpers and operators, and clutter behind the stage. We are trying to hold the attention on to a miniature model world which is three dimensional. The viewers eye should be directed at this scene not at other distractions,

A necessary feature of any backdrop should be the “Haze”. This can be achieved by a light over-spray over any detailed structures, hills and clouds, with a flat white-grey colour, so that the backdrop which is only two dimensional will have a muting of colours, of light and shade, and a lack of detail. Forced perspective is also effective in creating the impression of distance; ie structures close to the back of the scene could be of a lesser scale. The backdrop has to be well done to fool the viewers eye. A basic test is to partly

close your eyes to check that there are no glaringly anomalous features. In addition, one should avoid distractions from under or over the top of the scene.

Distractions may arise from:

- * Operators- who may be at the front of the layout.
- * Windows - which cause a totally different lighting effect.
- * Exhibitions- where the back and side views of other layouts are visible.
- * Construction and square corners not found in the natural world.
- * Large structures and unusual scenery effects at the rear of a layout.

Another very important impact is made by the positioning of the horizon which can suggest “the beyond the layout concept” because that is where our eyes tell us the scene ends. It is generally accepted that the horizon must be high enough so that the hills or structures along the rear of the scene are within approximately 150mm (six inches) or so of the height of the viewers eyes. This fills the viewers peripheral vision and gives the same effect as a wide angle movie screen in a theatre or stage, This helps to create the feel that you are part of the imaginary world and watching the trains run by.



These two photos highlight the clutter that is sometimes seen by the public at model railway exhibitions. The way in which we present our displays at model railway exhibitions is a reflection on the hobby and the use of effective backscenes to hide or disguise what lays beyond the layout is important in helping to focus visitors attention on the display rather than the distractions behind.

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G - HO - N - Z - NARROW GAUGE

Grandchester Model Live Steam Association Inc. (GMLSA)



Photo: Bill Cox

Early in 1994, Jeff 'Jake' Gillam, called a public meeting of people interested in forming a new club in the Grandchester area for the purpose of operating Model Live Steam Locomotives.

The local community, as well as several model Engineers from surrounding areas, expressed enthusiasm for such a project and by the end of that year the G.M.L.S.A.I. was up and running. Land for the clubs tracks and buildings within sight of of the original Bigges Camp station was leased from the Ipswich City Council and a major fundraising program was established to get the project underway.

With lots of support from local residents, businesses, council and interested government departments, club members worked untiringly and the new track was officially opened to the public on the 1st August 1998. At this time the club had 25 active members, was affiliated with the Australian Association of Live Steamers (A.A.L.S.), and had relocated and restored the old Yarongmulu Station to the grounds.

The Old Station

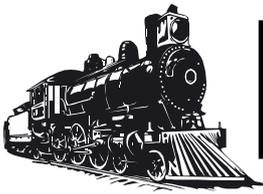
This building was originally the signal cabin at Yarongmulu on the Little Liverpool Range between Laidley and Grandchester. Yarongmulu (Aboriginal for sandstone) was initially a condition stop at the Western end of the Victoria Tunnel from 1866 until a siding was built in 1880-81. The siding was known as Victoria and an interlocked cabin was erected in

1891 with Victoria Station, S&WR, operating from 1893.

In 1912 an electric staff station called 48 Miles was opened but then renamed YARONGMULU on 6th February 1913. In 1914 the cabin was moved to a site near the deviation and by 1945 the position of Station Master (5th class) was abolished, ending its life as a station. The building was used to house disconnected points levers when permission was gained to remove it to Grandchester. It arrived to its present site in May 1997 and took over 12 months to restore.

Running Days

The club has its running days on the first Sunday of each month



A SIMPLE DCC DECODER TESTER

By Wal Pywell

Most of the locomotives in my fleet are rather old. Many have been purchased from ebay and come without decoders nor even the provision for one (plug and play was not invented way back then). I have gathered considerable experience over the years modifying diesel and steam locos – mainly Athearn, Walthers and Bachmann. I have some modern (build date- not era) steam and diesel locos complete with sound which get a good run at shows but my home fleet is generally non-sound equipped. Double check and test as you go is my mantra, but occasionally something does not work as it should. After triple checking all the connections, insulation etc., every now and then I suspect the decoder itself. Faults cover the range from no motor power, to lights not working correctly. It is a good idea anyway to check a decoder before installation into a loco. If it tests OK, that narrows down the fault finding if something is not right after installation. The problem of how to determine where the fault is – loco or decoder – has meant that I needed a decoder tester. A simple tester that is easy and quick to use was required.

I have a large number of electrical/electronic parts of all descriptions left over from many years in Amateur Radio and from Historic Radio collection and restoration and the pile is still being added to. Rummaging through my vast junk box the other day, I came across a meter which had its zero in the centre of the dial. I decided this could be used to indicate forward and reverse motor drive directly without the need for extra components. With the addition of forward and reverse lights, and an easy way to connect the leads from a decoder, my Decoder Tester at photo 1 was born. The box consists of a load resistor to represent the motor, and two LEDs, one for the front lamp and one for the rear lamp. The decoder is attached with a series of clips and the whole is connected to the track using two leads with clips. This is clipped on across the programming track, or to the main line if you are sure of the decoder address. On my layout, I have a track about 2 metres long which is switchable to the program track output, to the normal mainline DCC, and to a DC source for testing locos prior to conversion. In this way, I can program a decoder, usually back to 03 (the factory default), then switch to DCC and use the cab to operate the decoder as if it was installed in a loco. Once connected, I set by DCC controller to the decoder address, and drive the 'train' as if it was a loco on the mainline. The power that the decoder normally feeds to a motor can be observed on the meter. Whether this is left or right depends on whether forward or reverse is selected on the cab. The lights can be turned on or off, usually F0, and their operation can be observed as forward or reverse is selected.

At a recent meeting of the Canberra division, there was quite a bit of interest shown in my box, so I will describe its assembly and use for those who may wish to make a similar box.

My tester was built from what I could find among my treasures. The only thing I had to buy was a box. The load resistor was chosen to provide a reasonable load but not too much that may damage smaller decoders. With a decoder output of 12v, the resistor of 110 ohms gives a current of just under 100 milliamps, so as the cab throttle is cycled from zero to full speed, the meter indication goes from zero (middle scale) to full scale. Full scale is equivalent to 11 volts, but this is near enough to full speed for most decoders/locos. At this current, the power dissipation in the load is 1.1 watts. The nearest (next) power resistor is the 5 watt wire wound resistor. I could have selected a single resistor of suitable value, but I chose not to for two good reasons. Two resistors spreads the heat generated across a greater surface area and hence will run cooler. This is important when they are mounted in a totally enclosed box, even if it is unlikely that power will be on for a long time. The second reason is that I happened to find two 220 ohm 5 watt resistors in the junk box. Two in parallel provides a 110 ohm resistance. Quite arbitrary, but if you want to build your own, see below for resistor selection.

My meter is a current meter calibrated for -100 milliamps to +100 milliamps, however in researching the available parts for a construction article, no such meter is available. Also a volt meter might give a more accurate indication of the decoder output. BUILD YOUR OWN.



Figure 1: The Final Tester

The problem of how to determine where the fault is – loco or decoder – has meant that I needed a decoder tester. A simple tester that is easy and quick to use was required.

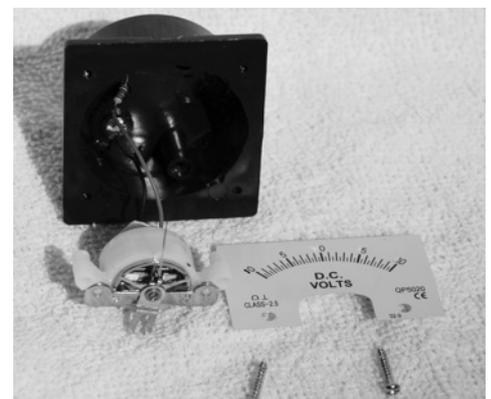


Figure 2: The meter inside removed. Note the resistor can be just seen inside the meter



Figure 3: The Modified Meter

The meter.

It would be unlikely that others might find a suitable scale, centre zero meter to duplicate my original design. If you can then you are in luck. Skip the next section. However all is not lost. I purchased a 20volt full scale meter from Jaycar (part number QP-5020) and with a little careful modification, this meter can be made into a -10v – 0 - +10v meter. So it is not 12 volts but quite good enough to indicate that near full power can be generated by the decoder under test.

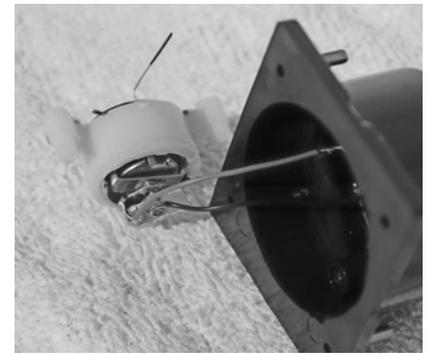


Figure 4 The small fibre board can be seen on the back of the meter

To modify the meter, pop of the front escutcheon. In the front of the meter is an adjustment screw to set the zero point accurately. Do not touch this yet. Remove the two screws which hold the scale to the meter. These screws also hold the meter in its case. Withdraw the meter to expose the rear of the movement. Try not to remove the meter from the white plastic frame; it is a little fiddly to put back but no harm will be done. If it does come adrift, be VERY careful with the movement and the hair springs front and back.

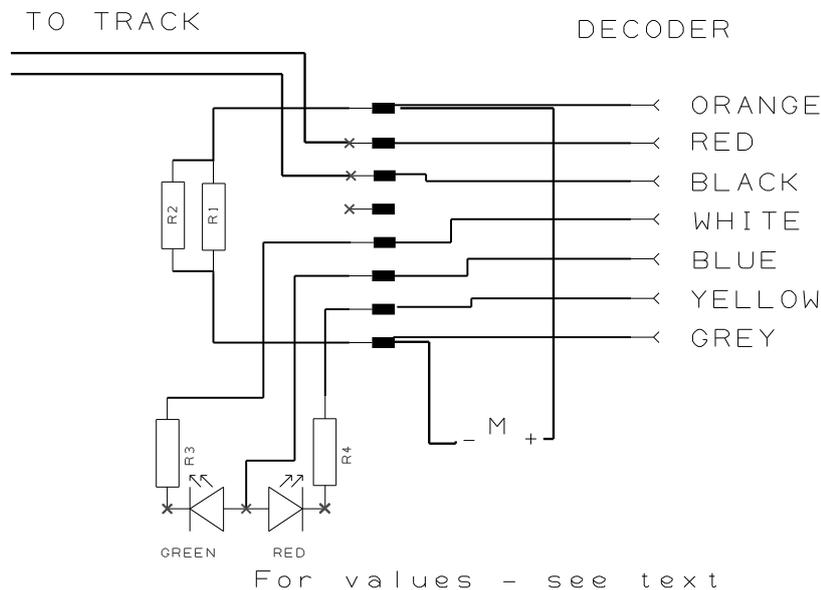
There are two wires attached to the meter, and a resistor in one of the leads. Note where the red and black wires are connected in case they come loose and need to be re-soldered. At the back of the meter movement is a small screw and a lock nut which are sealed with a drop of nail varnish. Unscrew the lock nut a little until the small piece of board can be moved. Rotate the board anti-clockwise (looking at the back of the movement) until the meter needle is about in the middle. Small adjustments will be made from the front plastic screw once the meter has been re-assembled.

There is a small copper contact on the board that you need to move. This copper wraps around the end of the board and if you rotate the board, one end of the copper strip will short against the bearing frame. I cut the end off this copper strip where it wraps under, and used a drop of CA glue to fix the copper to the board. Once done, re-assemble the meter and check that it is still a voltmeter with a battery or power supply. If applying volts to the external terminals does not produce an indication on the meter, either a wire has come off or the copper strip mentioned above is shorting to the frame. Now is a good time to change the lettering on the dial. I added a 1 in front of the left zero, deleted the 1 in the centre so it read zero, removed the 1 from the '15' and changer the 2 to a 1 on the right side. Re-assemble the meter and set the zero point (now in the middle) with the front panel screw.

Load selection.

Selecting the values for R1 and R2 on the circuit depends on what current you would like your tester to place on the decoder. I would recommend using the values I used which places a moderate load of around 100 milliamps on the unit under test. For heavier loads use 33 ohms for a load of 300milliamps and 20 ohms for a load of 500 milliamps. The higher current naturally means more heat and I would recommend a 33 ohm resistor be at least 10 watts rating and a 20 ohm load be at least 20 watts. These become physically large as well so stick with what I used.

Figure 5 Complete Circuit Diagram



Parts List

Here is a list of parts I used with JAYCAR part numbers to aid in parts identification and selection. Of course you may use whatever you have lying around, or source similar parts from your favourite supplier.

Case	115w x 90d x 55h	HB6126	
Meter	20 volt	QP 5020	
Resistors R1 and R2	220 ohm 5 watt	RR 3282	2 required
Resistors R3 and R4	1kohm 0.5w	RR 0572	(pack of 8)
LED	Green	SL 2612	
LED	RED	SL 2610	
Tag Strip	8 way	HM 3308	
Alligator Clip	Small	HM3020	4 packs,(2 in each pack)
Alligator Clip	Medium	HM 3022	(2 in the pack)
M2 x 10mm countersunk bolts with nuts			

Construction

Cut a hole in the front of the box (the smaller part) to mount the meter and also holes for the LEDs. The cable to the track may also come out of the front panel like mine, or you could drill a hole in the side. Mount the tag strip on the rear panel roughly in the centre. To mount the small Alligator clips, first remove the plastic sleeve. Using a 2mm bit, drill 7 equally spaced holes about 2 cm back from the join and 7 holes about 1cm back as shown in the photo. The first hole is for a mounting screw to secure the clip to the box and the second hole is for a wire soldered to the clip and passing inside the box to be secured to the tag strip. I used M2 x 10mm screws. The mounting hole in the clip may need to be opened out with a 2mm drill to pass the M2 bolt. I used a small drop of CA glue under each clip to hold each clip firmly. Solder a small gauge wire to each clip and pass the wire inside the box and solder to the tag strip. I painted a colour patch behind each clip to match the colour coded wires in the decoder. This makes connection of a decoder under test much simpler – just match the colours.



Figure 6 The small clips are mounted on the top and colour-coded.

The pair of wires for the track connection can be a length of two-core power cable or any pair of wires. The colours are not important. Connect the two medium sized alligator clips to these and slide the plastic covers back over the clips after the wire is soldered on.

This tester is better than a GO-NOGO test but is only designed to test the basic functions. You may wish to expand the connections to include speaker connections, or ditch lights. Also an NMRA 8 pin connector socket mounted on the box could be handy. I have found it convenient to test and program each decoder prior to installation. Anyway.....Happy Testing.



UP Locomotive 3575 rounds a bend above the township on Bob Deakin's extensive HO layout

DIVISION CALENDAR

QUEENSLAND- DIVISION 1

FOR DETAILS MARTYN JENKINS (07)5563 7554

Meetings start at 1.30pm unless shown otherwise.

June 2012: Toowoomba Model Railway Show

July 14: Ken Leitch 10.30am Lunch

August 18: Colin Upton 10.30am Lunch

September 15: Mike Crjanin

October 20: Martyn Jenkins 10.30am Lunch

November 17: Bob Brown 10.30am Lunch

December 15: Christmas Party

ACT- DIVISION 2

FOR DETAILS VIV BRICE div2super@nmra.org.au

Meetings start at 2.00pm

June 2: Peter Dinham

June 30: Viv Brice

August 25: Rob Anderson

Sept. 7/8/9/10: Region Convention Niagra Park

September 22: John Gillies

October 20: Dave Mitchell

November 17: Charlie Dearling

December 8: Wal Pywell

VICTORIA- DIVISION 3 **Meetings start at 2.00PM**

August 19: Ken Hughes

September 23: Bob and Myra Thornton

October 21: Laurie & Rosemary Green

December 2: Grant McAdam

WESTERN AUSTRALIA- DIVISION 4

FOR DETAILS ALAN BURROUGH (08)9364 6527

Meetings start at 1.30pm unless shown otherwise.

June 24: Les Hodgson

July 9: Phil Knife MMR

August 26: Frank Goode MMR

September 30: Bob Kollwyn

October 28: Allen Perry

November 25; Garth Ceaser

December 30: Peter Scarfe

NEW ZEALAND- DIVISION 5

FOR DETAILS Kelvin Sherson (04) 234 8557

SOUTH AUSTRALIA- DIVISION 6

FOR DETAILS PETER JACKSON (08) 8339 3922

Meetings start at 1.30pm unless shown otherwise.

June 2: Geoff Chatwin (to Be Confirmed)

August 4: Max Wright

September 7/8/9/10: Region Convention Niagra Park

October 6: Ian Wade

December 1: Ray Brownbill

SYDNEY - DIVISION 7

FOR DETAILS ERIK BENNETT (02) 9997 7971

Meetings start at 2.00pm unless shown otherwise.

June 9: Sowerby Smith

July 14: Garry Glazebrook

August 11: Ken Scales MMR

September 7/8/9/10: Region Convention Niagra Park

October 13: Phil Collins

November 10: Rowan Mangion

December TBA

NORTHERN RIVERS- DIVISION 8

FOR DETAILS JOHN SKINNER (02) 6652 2919

Meetings start at 2.00pm unless shown otherwise.

MID NORTH COAST- DIVISION 9

FOR DETAILS MIKE BARTLETT (02) 6553 6227

Meetings start at 2.00pm unless shown otherwise.

AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION REPORTS

Division 7 Report by Gerry Hopkins MMR

10th March

We had the pleasure of visiting the home of David Latham overlooking the water at Kangaroo Point on a beautiful, sunny day. David has added to the layout since our last visit and as usual the layout ran faultlessly. The new section of layout went across the back of the garage and featured a branch line dry Arizona country. A number of members models were on display including 4 pieces of scratch built NSW rolling stock by Sam Mangion in 1:29 scale. Thanks to all who brought models for the display. Also a big Thank You to David and Susan for hosting the day and for the satisfying re parse at afternoon teatime.

14th April

The weather was again on our side for our visit to the homestead of Richard and Freda Biggs at Oakville. Since our last visit, Richard has added a branch line with a beautifully painted backdrop. The trains continued to run all day and there was a mixture of Steam & Early Diesels that ran in NSW. A number of the buildings were scratch built to suit the era and location – the small town Cinema was a star attraction. For those who looked closely there were a number of heavily weathered pieces of rolling stock – among the best I have seen for a while.

During the meeting a number of AP certificates were presented including those of MMR to Kelly Loyd and Sam Mangion - Congratulations Gentlemen. Gary Norwood presented a small clinic on painting, lettering and weathering rolling stock – Thank Gary for the presentation. I know a number of members who did learn from it.

Thank you Richard & Freda for your hospitality.

Division 3 Report by Rod Hutchinson

Southern Forrest Narrow Gauge Meet March 18th 2012

A number of NMRA members joined with other Narrow Gauge Railway enthusiasts at the Southern Forest Narrow Gauge Meet held in the Gemco theatre which is adjacent to the Puffing Billy's Emerald Railway Station Victoria, Australia. A number of excellent workshops covered such topics as air brushing, tree making and model construction. For a few there was the enjoyable ride of a private train running along the Puffing Billy Line to and from the venue. Your author's photos of modelling that took his fancy are available at: <https://picasaweb.google.com/114407457222550456145>

March 2012

The meeting was held at the home of your reporter; Rod & Julie Hutchinson in Melbourne's East, the home of Regnans Tramway, and a fiscally challenged bush tramway harvesting timber from the mighty Mountain Ash forests of Victoria. <http://www.trainweb.org/regnanstramway/Model%20Pages/MainPage.html> Visitors travelled from as far as Warrnambool & Geelong. Rod's modelling interest is devoted to torturing himself building small HO_n30 mechanisms and sometimes author. 14 members and guests enjoyed the camaraderie of model railways whilst enjoying views across the valley from the new built deck. Weather was somewhat cool so following a warm lunch and the usual array of sweets the members retreated downstairs to the warmth of the indoors. There were very few models for display; however Peter MacDonald brought along 3 which he has been working on, these were a HO SAR 700 class, HO SEM Railcar, HO VR J class tender.

April 2012

This meeting saw 14 members and guests arrive at the home of Geoff and Di Truman West of Melbourne. Geoff is often sighted on the Broad Gauge Models stand at model railway exhibitions beavering away construction brass locomotive kits. A pleasant day was spent outside under the enormous patio roof. An extreme range in sizes of steam power was the theme for this meeting from Garden scale Mamod steam loco to a 7mm standard gauge Manning Wardle and down to a tiny 3.5mm HO_n3 Porter. The porter is an example of the genius of Japanese Railway Modelling. The tiny unit is seen here sitting on an Australian 50 cent piece. The model is produced by the Ginza Light Railway Club of Japan <http://homepage2.nifty.com/narrow-garage/ginza2.html>

As always reading material was in abundance and models for display included;

Bob Thornton: Mamod Steam (garden Scale??)

Grant McAdam: 7mm IXION Manning Wardle

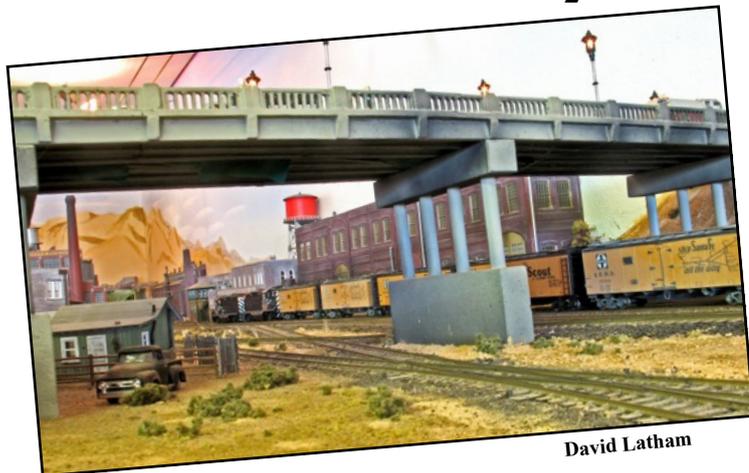
Laurie Green: Outback Models Prototype Building, Scratch built Assay Office and Dilapidated Gun shop

Phil Morrow HO_n3 Porter by Ginza (Japan)

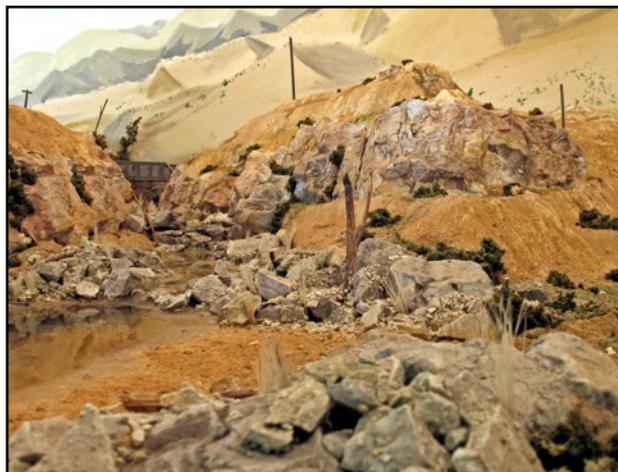
Planning for the 2013 Narrow Gauge Convention has begun, and is scheduled for Easter 2013.

Grant presented each of the hosts with an NMRA thank you plaque for opening up their homes and allowing members a venue to get together and enjoy the camaraderie that is model railways.

Division 7 Photo Gallery



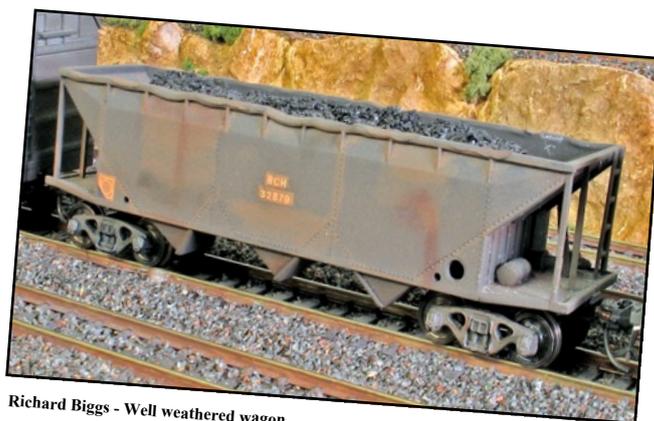
David Latham



David Latham



Richard Biggs - The Town Cinema



Richard Biggs - Well weathered wagon

Division 3 Photo Gallery

Rod Hutchinson Photo © 2012



PhilMorrow HO3 Ginza Porter
on an Australian 50 cent piece



Rod Hutchinson Photo © 2012



Rod Hutchinson Photo © 2012

David Axup's On30 Ambulance Models



Rod Hutchinson Photo © 2012

PeterMacDonald HO VR AEC RailCar

Rod Hutchinson Photo © 2012



Adrian Gunzberg's On30 ASG

Division I Photo Gallery



Presenting Leigh with a meeting plaque Photo Eddie Stavleu



Presentation of AP award to Wayne Ariel Photo Eddie Stavleu



A busy corner of Ian Wellings layout Photo Eddie Stavleu



Ian Wellings receives a meeting plaque Photo Eddie Stavleu



Quinton River

Locomotive number 2 shunts a group of wagons on Ron Everingham's layout which was on display at the NMRA Model Railway Show at Mt Gravatt, QLD over the weekend of May 19th and 20th. The layout features some wonderful cameos including a fettler boiling his billy. The use of hand made Alex Jackson couplings makes shunting on the layout completely hands free and adds to the overall enjoyment of watching the layout in operation. I hope to be able to feature this popular layout in a future edition of MainLine

Editor

AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION REPORTS

Division 1 Report by Martyn Jenkins

February Meeting

Our first meeting for the year was at Eddie Stavleu on the south side of Brisbane. We had a gathering of approx 40+ in attendance. Anymore and I think we would have been on the street. The Show & Tell Table was full as usual with some Dutch rail items from Eddies Trip to Europe. John Burt had an O scale Williams ABBA F7 (I think) set. Ken Leitch had another new SP loco for his collection. I was showing off the latest release from Auscision the E type passenger cars in VR livery 1980's. There was several N scale Dapol UK passenger cars and a multitude of other items on display. The show & tell segment of the meeting is always a large part of the meeting especially with all the Christmas goodies. We all had a good feed as Eddie and crew fired up the bbq for lunch. Many thanks to our host Eddie Stavleu.

March Meeting

Thanks to Craig and Glenda Leigh's generosity, we met at their place on the 17th March, 2012. A collection of approx 50 members were in attendance including the new editor of the Mainline NMRA magazine Robyn Taylor. Robyn gave us an outline of the new production and distribution for the magazine and invited all members to submit articles and any offers of help to editor@nmra.org.au She also showed us some of her scratch building and some patterns she hopes to use in the future for short runs of kits

Craig is in the throws of getting his track down and at least it was wired up at the time of our meeting. I believe that there were some pretty long nights achieving that but it certainly is the basis of an interesting modern layout.

The formal part of the meeting included discussion about the NMRA Train Show to be held at Mount Gravatt on May 19th and 20th. There were two awards given out on the day, firstly to Wayne Ariel who received his AP Scenery Award and then James Lampard was awarded his Golden Spike he was not in attendance so we will present this next meeting. Congratulations to both members. The show & tell table was overflowing as usual with several DCC diagnostic tools Rampmeter and the SPROG2 by myself. Graham Young and Mike Crnjanin showed a Walther turntable.

Charles Clark managed to bring in a vintage controller, huge in size compared to today's throttles.

John Burt showed a Lionel O scale cab unit in 3-rail and mentioned that parts are still available. He also showed some NSW hoppers and the small size of the digital camera which could be easily placed on a HO flat car. With such a variety of model equipment we are very lucky indeed.

April Meeting

For the next meeting we travelled north to the lovely Sunshine Coast. Our hosts were Ian and Helen Wellings. Approx 45 members were in attendance as it was a warm Queensland day we were lucky that Ian had procured the loan of another gazebo so we all had some shade.

Ian has a great layout located in a dedicated air conditioned train shed in the backyard. I believe it is based on the Great Northern, how should I know it looks very Victorian whenever I run a train on it.

What's more this was the inspiration for me building a shed for my layout. Ian has certainly built a layout of impeccable standard several members enjoyed operating trains and admiring the work that has progressed since the last visit.

We were all happy to see Sandra Stevens at the meeting and we hope to see her at many more. Garth Fraser was also in attendance and it was a pleasure to catch up with him once more. I believe Garth will be providing some inspirational clinics talks on his exploits in our wonderful hobby.

The show & tell table was again the centre of much discussion. I had the first model by a new Australian manufacture Bendigo Rail Models (BRM). Their first release was the flat top T class loco in VR livery. I had loco T413 on display which was the only loco in the class with dynamic braking. I also had a new DCC gadget. The Pricom Pocket DCC tester. This device decodes DCC packet information from the rails and displays it on an LCD screen. Very helpful for booster and decoder diagnosis. Robyn had some examples of Tudor building which was scratch built.

Several other models were also on display and I will have an update in the next Mainline report.

Our resident magician Laurie McLean MMR was on hand to provide an after lunch clinic on the black art of soldering SMD LED's. This was greatly appreciated by the members and we will envisage to have a clinic after lunch at each meeting in the future. Our thanks go the Laurie for presenting a educational and entertaining clinic.

Many Thanks go to all our hosts so far and to Ian Venables for his meeting newsletter where I get my information from .

Deadline for Division News and Articles for the Spring Edition

10th AUGUST 2012

Taree and District Model Railway Club

Last weekend a dozen members travelled to Dorrigo to spend the two days as guests of the Dorrigo Club .They were also reinforced by Gerry and Lauris Hopkins from the Central Coast .

Travelling up on Saturday morning Kevin Bambury decided to show his passengers that he was a frustrated Grand Prix racing driver, in the vein of Jack Brabham or Stirling Moss. One of his passengers remarked "it was exhilarating to say the least."

After arriving and booking into the Dorrigo Hotel the next stop was the Dorrigo Railway Museum for a guided tour. This was in the capable hands of Museum Curator Keith Jones. The visitors were amazed by the extent and variety of the exhibits, both engines and rolling stock. Both Steam and Diesel locos were present in the display.

The collection of steam locos extended from the giant Beyer-Garratt right through many other classes to the humble shunting loco. The Beyer -Garratts generated a lot of interest because these were the zenith of steam traction used on Australian railways. And were utilised both singly and double headed to move the giant coal and wheat trains from the West of the State and the Hunter coal fields. Members also commented on their surprise at the remarkable condition of these locos. Keith Jones explained they only needed a Boiler Check to be able to be put back in operation. It was also surprising that the Diesel locos though not as old as the Steamers were not in quite as good condition.

It was time then to move onto the large collection of rolling stock both carriages and freight wagons of all types. It is quite an amazing to see the vast number of specialist type wagons used by the railway. It was at this point Gordon Robbie climbed up onto the roof of a wagon to be able to get some better photos. To everyone's surprise and delight Gordon proceeded to display the Highland Dancing skills his ancestors were renowned for. This really was surprising as nobody was aware that Gordon was such an accomplished performer. Especially as he only had a Bee to hum the melody and not the usual bagpipes.

Sunday saw members moving off to look at the layouts of Bill Baggatt and Bruce Block and again they were in for some amazing sights and sounds. Firstly Bills layout was a reconstruction of the branch line running from Glenreagh just north of Coffs Harbour to Dorrigo .Bill has housed this in a 18 meter by 20 meter shed. An appreciation of the size is that it takes a train forty five minutes to travel from start to finish. This is travelling at what we call Scale Speed which is a method of relating the speed travelled at by the real train to the actual model loco and the layout.

Bruce Block has gone one better than Bill in that he has converted an old house into his "train room". This is not surprising when we see that Bruce has modelled three different types of railways, Australian, British and American. Both Bill and Bruce are recognised as World Class modellers and so as one of the visitors was heard to exclaim "this really gives us something to work for".

Central Coast Wednesday Night – MRC 100% Club

On the weekend of March 31 and April 1 some of the members of the club joined with members of the Taree MRC 100% Club and members of the Coffs Harbour MRC 100% Club for a 2 day visit to the Dorrigo Railway Museum and some surrounding layouts. Except for a short thunder storm on Friday night the weather was perfect all weekend.

On Saturday we had a full day conducted tour of the museum (and a sausage sizzle). We all took plenty of video and photos of many items.

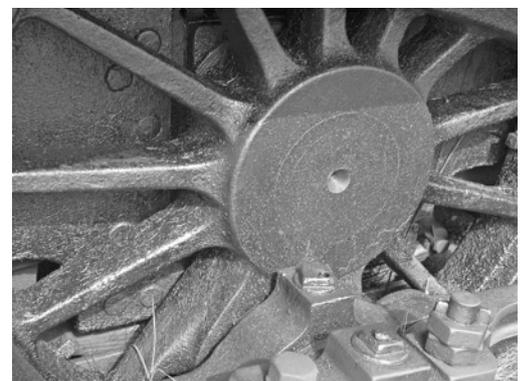
On the Sunday we were treated to visits to 5 layouts – 2 x USA, 1 Oz, 1 x Austria, and 1 x British – all of a very high standard. Photos of the layouts are in the Layout Gallery on our web page.

Thanks to Ian Phemister for organizing the event.

Gerry Hopkins MMR



NSWGR Loco on display Dorrigo Steam railway Museum *Photo R L Taylor*



Loco driving wheel
Dorrigo Steam Railway Museum
Photo R L Taylor

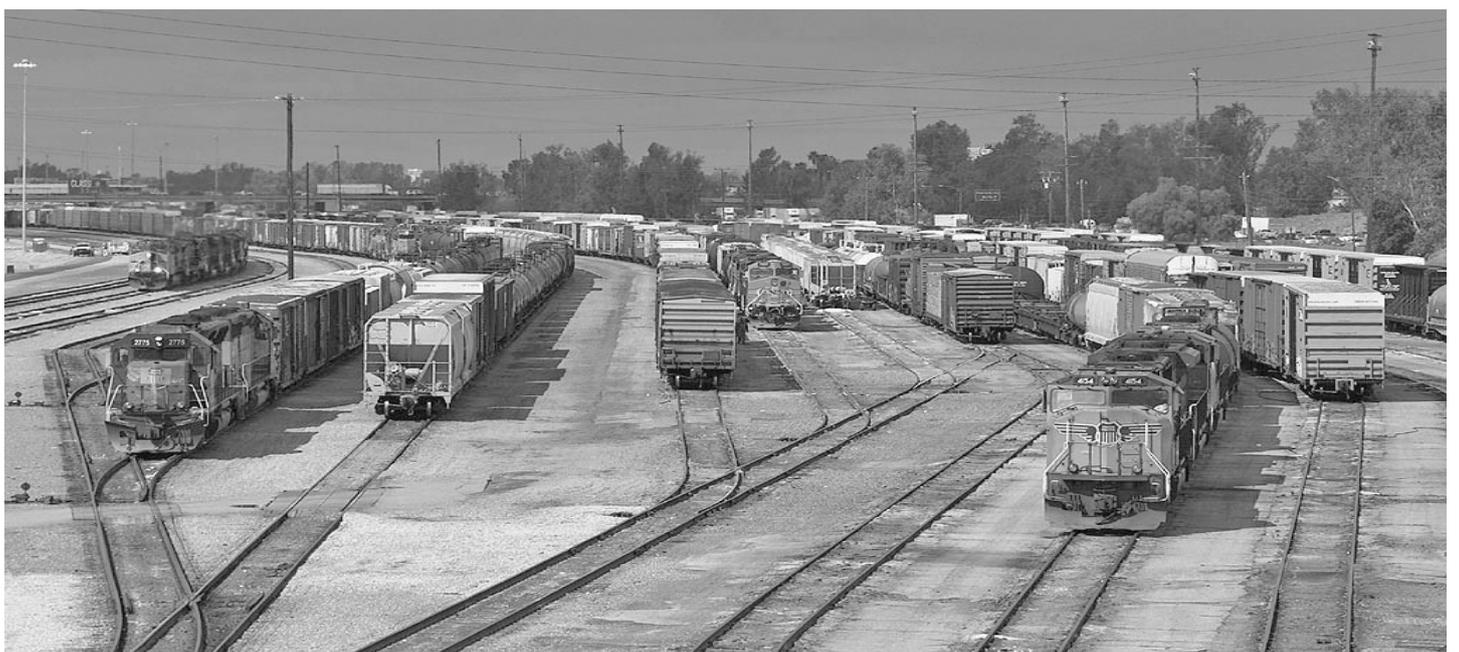
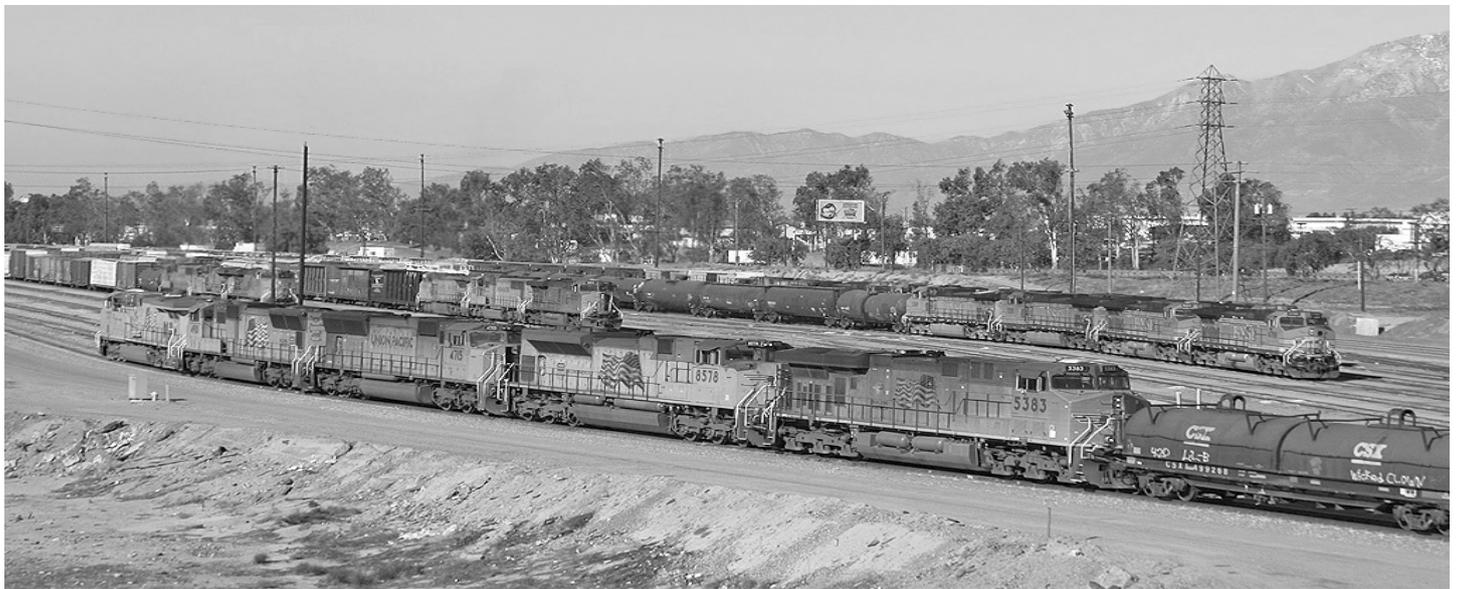
Div 7 May 2012 Meeting by Erik Bennett

The May meeting was held at the Hills club, which very kindly agreed to host the meeting when asked at short notice. 56 Div 7 members attended and a most enjoyable time was had by all. It was a beautiful Autumn day and members took advantage of the perfect weather to gather on the lawn outside to gas-bag. Some members brought along Bring 'n Buy items and set up tables outside to add to the atmosphere.

Members had been asked to bring along engines to run and a large number of members obliged. Most brought along HO locos and ran them on the Club's large Springfield Junction layout. It was interesting to see the range of engines running on the same mainline – from a C&O 2-6-6-6 Allegheny through Santa Fe 2-10-4 Texas, a British Rail 4-4-0 Schools Class hauling an 8-car Bulleid set, an On30 tram, miscellaneous Australian diesels and a British 5BEL "Brighton Belle" EMU set.

Div Super, Erik Bennett, presented an NMRA Meeting Plate to Club President Doug Bouchier and also presented an Appreciation of Participation certificate to the 16 members who had brought along engines. Erik thanked Doug and his club members for their hospitality and in particular, the afternoon tea which was served Natalie Oliver and Fran Bouchier and her helpers.

Below are a few photos of the engines and trains running on the Club's layout.



Erik assures me that these photos have not been altered in photoshop...that is a very large layout, perhaps 12 inches to the foot scale? *Editor*

CELEBRATING THE RAILWAY HOTEL

By Robyn Taylor

It was once said that the first thing that arrived in a town after the railway was built was the Railway Hotel. The architecture is as varied as the brands of beer they served, some were multi storey monuments covering large tracts of land and others were simple single storey structures but they all served the same purpose providing welcome relief for the thirsty crews that built, maintained and ran the railways of Australia. I have never been a pub person but I have a fascination for these buildings that grace so many of our railway towns. The years that have passed since these hotels were constructed have seen many changes and it is quite amusing to see a substantial building proudly bearing the name Railway Hotel and to find the railway has long since gone and that there is little or no evidence that a railway ever served the town.



The Railway Hotel Laidley QLD Photo: R L Taylor

Australians have always had a reputation of hard working and hard drinking habits and that, coupled with the opening and closing times of those early days meant that the bar in these establishments must have been a very busy place. The towns where a major railway centre was located would no doubt have seen these hotels packed to overflowing when the six o'clock swill was in full swing. What is interesting is the fact that some old railway workers have said that they always drank at the Railway Hotel because it was "their pub". I would imagine it is like minded people talking about their workday with their mates and it almost seems that it was a club like atmosphere. What saddens me is to see these wonderful historically important buildings falling into disuse. The reality is a lot of towns where the railway has been closed down

don't have enough people to keep these places going and they gradually become abandoned or become very large homes. On the other side of the coin there are hotels that have survived and continue to prosper and this is thanks to the prosperity of the area they serve. The hope is that we will continue to see the Railway Hotels of Australia continue long into the future, I'll drink to that.



The Railway Club Hotel Seymour VIC Photo: R L Taylor



The Terminus Hotel Seymour VIC Photo: R L Taylor

STUCK ON YOU

The story of Superglue

By Tom Boyd

I reckon a bloke's workshop can be a pretty dangerous place when you consider the tools of the trade as far as model making is concerned. Let me tell you about one of the most dangerous things that I have come across in recent times; SUPERGLUE ! The word strikes fear into the heart of most blokes not the least this one. Our saga begins with an outing to the supermarket where I found a cheap superglue and promptly placed it into the shopping basket. As we journeyed around the aisles the superglue continued to find it's way out of the basket landing on the floor. On the third occasion I decided to carry the thing. Fronting up to the checkout I kept the superglue until last and suggested to the missus that she stick it into her handbag so we didn't lose it. Stick it, now I reckon I could not have chosen more appropriate words. Late that afternoon we arrived home and after dinner I remembered the superglue, the missus went to retrieve it and, yep you guessed it, it took us three days to prise her purse and other contents from her handbag. Strewth, when I think about it I could have shoved the superglue in my pocket, what a disaster that could have been. The thought of throwing acetone over certain parts of the anatomy is enough to make a bloke cringe. Now that I think of it, if I had stuck it into my back pocket I could have been taking home one of those designer cafe chairs from the place where we had lunch. Now one of those chairs would have been a great addition to my workshop. Fair dinkum, we have all experienced hassles with superglue. You know your in trouble when the instructions say, apply glue to both parts and press together- hold in place until the glue has set. The instructions should then read, now try to remove both hands from the previously glued parts. There are the times when you search high and low looking for the tube of superglue you used only minutes ago, how can it vanish into thin air? So, you go to the cupboard and grab a new tube, two hours later you find the first one....permanently attached to your shirt sleeve. So, how do we deal with this very important but sometimes dangerous item in our modellers arsenal.

Tom Boyd's Superglue Survival Tips

1/Don't give it to your missus to carry in her handbag. Have you seen the price of them ? Trust me, it can take a fair whack of your modelling budget to replace one.

2/ If you must carry it in a container with other items wrap it in a plastic bag and seal it.

3/ Have a place set aside on the workbench where the superglue permanently resides. This will ensure that the chance of accidents is greatly reduced as you know exactly where it is at all times.

4/ Always keep a small container of acetone somewhere close. Acetone can be used to deactivate superglue that you may get on your skin.

5/ Work near an open window. Superglue is an isocyanate and as such it is pretty dangerous stuff if inhaled.

6/ Use small amounts. That is why it is packaged in tiny containers, you don't need a lot to glue any amount of items together.

7/ Read the safety instructions on the container and follow them. Use a magnifying glass if you have to, but do read them.

8/ Never, ever *stick* superglue in your pocket the outcome could see you wearing the same shorts for a few weeks.

So there you go my brave fellow modellers, Just a few of Tom's safety ideas for using the dreaded Superglue. Now, I wonder how I can get these Ugg Boots off the carpet before the Missus gets back from Bingo !

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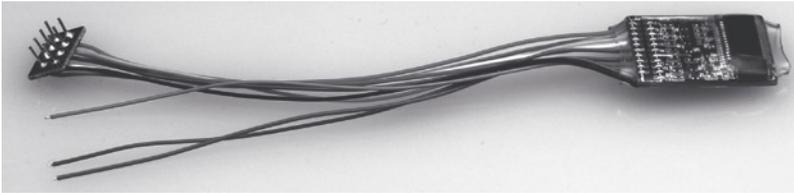
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Your editor can't seem to get away from trains, I was fortunate enough to quote and win the job of signwriting the front awning of the Railway Workshops Museum at Ipswich in Queensland. It was great to be able to do a job that allowed me to use my trade skills again. The job took four days to complete and as you can see by the photos the weather was very kind to me.





Bundaberg Fowler number 5 sits at the station at the Australian Narrow Gauge Railway Museum, Woodford QLD *Photo: R L Taylor*



This model of the Railway Hotel at Imbil in Queensland is a major feature on the S Scale Modellers Rosevale Layout *Photo: B Kerlake*