the

MainLine

magazine

Read more about the NMRA Australasian Region National Convention from page 19 to 25

NMRA Inc - Australasian Region Directory

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REGARDING ARTICLE CONTRIBUTIONS

All members of the Australasian Region are invited to submit articles of a railway nature for publication in the 'MainLine' magazine.

I would appreciate all articles to be sent to me in an editable format, such as 'Word, Pages, text, email, but not pdf, and high resolution photos sized up to 2MB in size.

Please send your articles to editor@nmra.org.au

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New Articles

Regular Features

the Cover Photo

The evening rush hour at Wobbegong station is about to commence.

Two interurban passenger trains in platforms 2 and 3 are ready for departure.

Tank engine 1803 stands by for shunting instructions at platform 4

Editor's Comments

We have been waiting five years now for the next NMRA Inc.-AR National Convention, and now the wait is almost over. As all members would know, the convention will occur later this year and is scheduled to start in less than five months time. So if you haven't done so recently, now is the time to finalise your travel plans and accommodation, as it is on a long weekend with sporting events also scheduled during the same time, so timing is critical. The conference could be a giant step forward in the rebuilding of membership and a resurgence in our hobby after enduring two years of limited convention activity.

So if you haven't read what is scheduled for the Convention, then turn to pages 19 to 25 in this edition of MainLine and read about everything you need to know and what you could experience at the event. Gerry Hopkins MMR® also gives an introduction into what to expect at the conference in his article called 'Are You Having Fun?', which starts on page 16.

There are a good number of interesting and diverse articles in this 93 page bumper edition of MainLine, *(I believe that number may take the record for the most number of pages)*, plus there are an excellent number of quality reports from each of the Divisions, outlining what their members have been doing over the last couple of months.

Erik Bennett kicks off the articles this month from page 6 with a very interesting topic of '*Accessory Decoders and Servos*'. This article is for DCC users who need accessory decoders and/or servo drivers for points, signals and other animations. Erik's article describes how to quickly and simply set up an inexpensive Arduino to operate a Tortoise-type point motor for a turnout.

The cover photo in this edition shows part of the new concourse that Ian Barnes has build to add interest to his layout, and which he outlines from page 26. For some years now, the East Coast Railways main through/terminus station Wobbegong, hasn't had a building for its customers and so Ian has built a concourse over the top of the existing station platforms to give '*passengers*' easy access to the station.

From page 29, Stephen Reeves outlines a practical approach for understanding Configuration Variables (CV's), where he gives further insight into what some of the prominent (CV's) do and how they are applied and work in DCC decoders.

Ted Freeman, ex NSWGR Fireman / trainee Driver, continues the second instalment of a four part series from page 32, where he reminisces about the adventures he had in earlier years when he was a NSWGR Fireman / trainee Driver, recalling some of the high and low periods during his time with the NSWGR.

There has been plenty happening already within each division in 2023 and this is outlined in the Divisional Reports which commence on page 50. What is noticeable now in the Divisional Reports is that there is a lot of activity emanating from some of the Divisions, with regular NMRA Inc.-AR visits and display stands at model trains shows, conventions and other events. There is also a lot of activity with train related excursions and new ways of conducting monthly meetings, and visiting multiple member's layouts during each monthly meeting. I have no doubt that with this proactive approach, it will greatly enhance the satisfaction level of existing members, and new members will see that the NMRA has a lot to offer.

Lastly, if you are looking to advertise to Sell, Swap or Give Away your Privately owned model train items at no cost to you, then turn to page 92 to see how this is now possible. ....ᴍ

Merv Bagnall

Editor - MainLine On-Line

Accessory Decoders & Servos
by Erik Bennett

This article is for DCC users who need accessory decoders and/or servo drivers for points, signals and other animations. Commercial products are expensive and, currently, hard to source. This article describes how to quickly and simply set up an inexpensive Arduino to operate a Tortoise-type point motor for a turnout.

No Arduino knowledge or programming is required. Knowledge of basic electrical wiring and soldering is required, along with knowledge of how to download and install a program from the Internet.

Introduction

Most modellers have heard of Arduino's, but many don't know much about them and don't know how they can use them on their layouts. Many think they are computers and you need to know how to program.

Arduino's are not computers. They are little circuit boards with a clever microprocessor and a few dozen connections.

And you don't need to program. Enthusiasts around the world who <u>can</u> program write programs to get Arduino's to do just about everything, and make their programs freely available on the Internet.

All you have to do is decide what you want to do, then go to the Internet and download a suitable program. You load it into your Arduino and set it up to do what you want.

No programming involved. It's like setting up your TV set the first time. Anyone can do it, you just need to read the instructions.

This document shows you how to use an Arduino as a DCC accessory decoder to operate Tortoise-type point motors.

Arduino's on your Layout

Here are some of the things you can use Arduino's for using the process covered in this document:

- Accessory decoders. One low cost Arduino can act as 16 accessory decoders.
- For those who use servos as point motors, Arduino's make excellent, simple-to-set-up servo drivers.
- You can use them with servos to operate semaphore signals. You can even get the signals to bounce.
- You can use them to operate LED signals. You can configure them for multi-LEDs with either common anode or common cathode wiring.
- You can connect sensors to initiate any of these operations. Arduino current sensing sensors or infra-red ones that you hide in your ballast cost only a few dollars each.

· Anywhere you use momentary switches or push-buttons, you can configure an Arduino so you can use DCC as well as the switches. Handy when you need to change a point and you're on the other side of the layout.

All the above at a fraction of the cost of commercial accessory decoders, servo drivers and sensors.

Although we don't cover it here, you can use an Arduino as a complete DCC system, conforming to the NMRA standard. You use an Arduino-compatible power board as the booster and load some software called DCC++ EX. The Arduino contains the intelligence; the power board does the work.

Finally, Arduino's will be around forever, not like some commercial products and suppliers.

About Arduinos

Arduino's were invented in 2005 by a group of Italian university lecturers who wanted something to motivate their students to be creative.

About that time, a chip manufacturer called Atmel introduced the first microprocessor that used flash memory, ie, memory that saves the data when you turn it off.

The university lecturers designed a board to use the Atmel microprocessor and called it Arduino. They named it after the bar they met in after work, which was named after an 11th century Italian king.

The heart of an Arduino is the Atmel chip. In fact, you could say the Arduino **is** the Atmel chip, as it does all the work. If you look at an Arduino, you see the chip in the middle and a lot of sockets around the outside which connect to the legs of the chip.

There is a bit of other circuitry. The important other circuitry is the 9-16V power supply for the chip, and the USB to serial converter to let you use USB to communicate with the chip.

There are also a few pins for other communication methods and a few power pins.

The Atmel microprocessor runs programs called "sketches". The university lecturers coined the word "sketch" because they taught their students to use pencil and paper to jot down ideas early in their design process. They wanted the creative process to be simple.

You search the Internet for a site that has the sketch you want and download it to your computer. Usually, these sites give full instructions on what and how to do everything and a loader that transfers the sketch to the Arduino and makes it go.

You plug the Arduino into a USB port on your computer. The USB port provides the power to make the Arduino run. You load the sketch you have downloaded (using the loader that comes with the download), then configure it – in accordance with the instructions for the sketch.

The configuration program then sets the Arduino to run the sketch every time it powers up.

You can now unplug it from your computer and install it on your layout. When you turn on its power, the Arduino runs and does what you want it to do.

You can also download, from the Arduino site, a program called the Arduino IDE, which stands for Interactive Development Environment. This runs on your PC and talks to the Arduino via USB. It is another way of transferring sketches to an Arduino. We don't need it here.

Types of Arduino

Arduino's come in several sizes, the most popular being the Uno. It has 20 input/output connectors and sufficient memory to run all the accessory decoder and servo driver software. It ranges in price from Chinese clones at about $6 from the Chinese eBay, AliExpress , to original Unos at about $35 plus

delivery from Australian electronics suppliers, RS Components.

For larger projects, such as an Arduino DCC system, more memory is required. The bigger Arduino, the Mega, has more memory and 68 I/O connections.

There are some other types, eg the Nano, which is smaller, but all use the Atmel chip and have a similar layout with more or fewer I/O connections.

Arduino Essentials

Power

The Atmel microprocessor at the heart of an Arduino runs at 5V DC. This is the same as most other microprocessor-driven devices such as your smartphone, inside your computer, inside your TV set, etc.

Your phone charger and computer USB ports output 5V, which is suitable for devices with 5V microprocessors.

Similarly, an Arduino can be powered from a USB connection; the same USB connection that downloads and configures its software.

An Arduino also has a standard 2.1mm input socket that allows it to be run from a power pack such as a wall wart. Any voltage between 9 and 16V will do. The on-board power supply converts the 9-16V to 5V.

When installed on your layout, it's probably most convenient to run it off a wall wart.

Ports

The input/output connections on an Arduino are called ports and most ports can be configured as either input or output ports. Ports are at "logic level", ie they run at either 5V or 0V. This suits digital applications which are either on or off, running or not running, etc. And certainly suits accessory decoders where you want to switch one way or the other.

If you apply 5V to an input port it will interpret it as Switch On; if 0V or GND, Switch Off. When the Arduino switches an output port On, it outputs 5V; if Off, it outputs 0V.

5V Relays

The Arduino chip is a low power device, so an output port can only supply limited current – about 40mA max. This is sufficient for LEDs, etc, but not for changing points. So we use 5V relays.

5V relays are so named because they run on a logic level input: the relay is turned on and off by its primary receiving 0V or 5V. An Arduino outputs 0V or 5V, so they are ideal to be used in conjunction with an Arduino.

They come as a single unit, 4-pack, 6-pack or 8-pack and they aren't very expensive.

They can do the power switching for just about anything on your layout, as they can switch up to 10A.

Each relay has three screw-connector outputs: a common connection, a normally closed (NC) and a normally open (NO) connection. When the relay is not activated, the common output is connected to the normally closed connection; when activated, the common output is connected to the normally open connection.

5V relays are activated when the input is 0V, ie, Low, and de-activated when it is 5V, High.

You connect a Uno port to the input and whatever you are switching to the output.

When the Uno port outputs 5V, ie High, the relay input is High, the relay is not activated and the output is the NC connection. When the Uno outputs 0V, Low, the relay input is Low the relay is energised and the output is the NO connection.

Fig 4 shows the secondary-side power connection for using a Uno and relay to switch a Tortoise type point motor. Port 1 of the Uno is connected to Input 1 of the 4-pack relay. The secondary supplies power as shown.

In Fig 4a, a DCC accessory command has turned Uno port 1 on, so its output is high, 5V. The relay input is high, the relay is de-energised, the indicator LED is off, the secondary is in the NC state and +12V is supplied to the point motor.
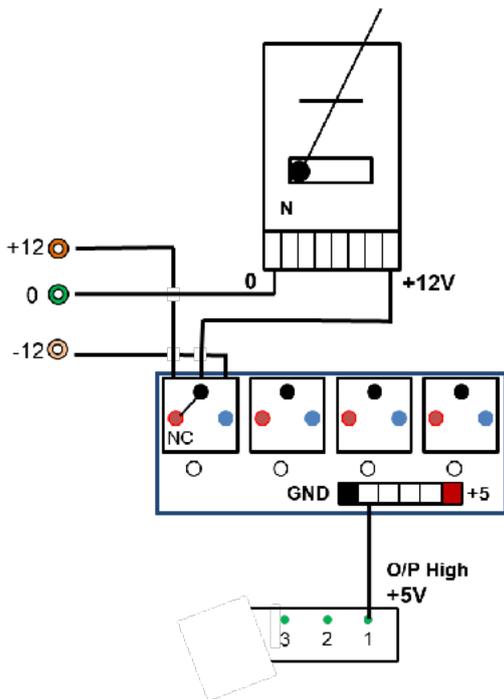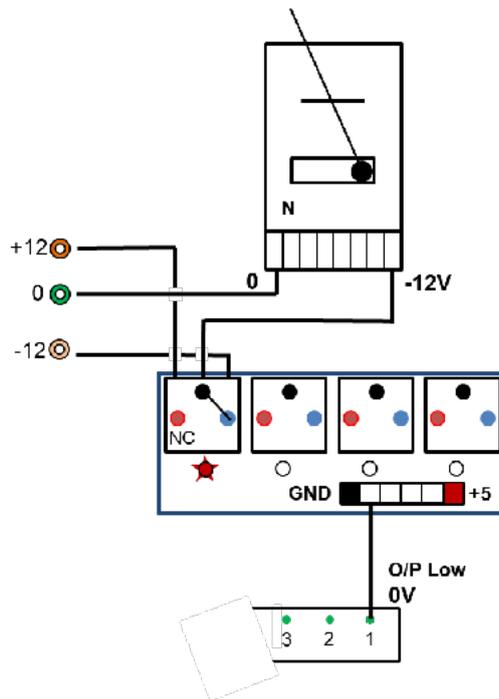
Fig 4a   Fig 4b

In Fig 4b, a DCC accessory command has turned Uno port 1 off, so its output is low, 0V. The relay input is low, the relay is energised, the indicator LED is on, the secondary is in the NO state and -12V is supplied to the point motor.

In practice, when installing the relay output wiring to the turnout, you test which orientation produces the turnout alignment that you want.

Connectors

The connector system for Arduino equipment uses Dupont wires.   Dupont is a manufacturer of plastic products and once produced the plastic insulators enclosing the pins or sockets on the ends of the wire. The pins are 0.635 mm square on the end of 28 AWG wire, rated at 1A. The spacing on a row of pins is 2.54 mm. Wires can be male-male, M-F, F-F and usually come in various lengths in tear-off strips of 40.

Dupont connectors are very convenient for interconnections but are not very robust. The female ends - both on the wires and on Arduino's – have little spring-loaded sockets which are meant to grip the pins when inserted. They can be easily over-extended. Use care when connecting Dupont connectors.

A 40-pack of 15 cm wires costs about $6. Also, Dupont pins are available as stand-alone items. You can solder them to Veroboard to make connectors for Dupont wires.

Relay Power Connections

There is an input pin for each relay on the pack and a +5V and GND pin for powering the input logic circuitry.

A relay pack can be powered from the 5V and GND output pins on the Arduino, but if you are using more than one relay pack, to reduce the power load on the Arduino, it's best to use a separate 5V supply for the relays.

You can use a phone charger. You clip off the phone plug and replace it with a 2-section screw connector which you mount near the relay. Use a multimeter to determine which side is positive and colour the screw connectors red and black to indicate the +5V and GND (0V) terminals, respectively.

Screw the male end of a MF Dupont wire into the 5V side of the screw connector and slip the female end over the +5V pin on the relay. Similarly, use a Dupont wire for the GND connection, with the following proviso.

A GND is needed to complete the relay power circuit and also to complete the signal circuit from the Arduino. Some relay packs may only have only one GND pin. Because Arduino's have several GND pins, it's best to connect the power pack GND to an Arduino GND and connect another Arduino GND to the relay pack, as shown in Fig 7.

Software

The best software package I have found on the Internet is one produced by Nico Teering in The Netherlands called Arcomora, Arduino Controlled Model Railway. He has a number of packages, but the one relevant to accessory decoders and servos is Mardec, Multifunctional Arduino Decoder.

Mardec has a number of important features which make it ultra-easy for first-time Arduino users:

- It is complete; you don't need any other software, and it's a fairly small download.
- It is extremely well documented in English, with easy-to-read explanations and examples.

- It provides every option you need to make an Arduino do what you want for points and signals.
- It remembers settings, ie, when you finish a running session, next time you turn it on, all points and servos are set to their previous alignment.

The Download

You start by downloading the Arcomora Software from the Download section of www.arcomora.com to your PC.

When you install the download, it asks which products to install. You need Mardec; it covers accessory decoders, servos and on-off, red-green, etc, light signals.

If you have sophisticated light signal requirements, you download Arsigdec as well. Both products are well documented and the documentation is included in the download.

The Mardec download contains

- the Arduino sketch called Mardec
- A Mardec loader which loads the sketch into a Uno and lets you configure it. Mardec is the name of the sketch and also the name of the shortcut on your PC that organizes the load and passes control to the sketch running on the Arduino.
- a Mega loader to let you load the sketch into a Mega
- a program that lets you change the USB Com port – if you plug the Arduino into a different PC from the one you first used
- the Mardec documentation

Setting up the Arduino

These are the steps to set up a Uno to operate a Tortoise-type point motor:

Read the Mardec manual thoroughly, particularly the section on Accessory functions.

It's a good idea to make a LED test lead to enable you to experiment with configurations. Use any LED and solder a 1K resistor into either lead. Solder two Dupont plugs if you have them or fold over the end of the leads to form plugs. Plug the positive lead into Uno port No 3 and the negative into any GND socket.

Plug the Uno into your PC.

Click on the Mardec shortcut. The first time you do this it will run a process on the PC which will load the USB drivers to enable it to talk to the Uno.

It then loads the Mardec sketch into the Uno and hands control to Mardec on the Uno. (The unusual-looking screen format is actually the Uno desktop running on your PC.)

It asks you to number this Uno so if you have a number of Arduinos, it can tell you which is which.

It asks a few preliminary questions, eg, are you using a Roco system (which has a strange DCC address system), and asks for some servo default values.

It lists the port configuration for all 16 ports. Initially, of course, all ports are un-configured.

Mardec then asks what you want to do.

You say you want to configure ports, so it asks you for the Mardec port number and the DCC address you want to assign to that port. Because of the physical setup of the Uno, Mardec port number 1 is actually Uno port number 3 – which is why you plug your LED test lead into Uno port 3.

It asks whether you want this port to be an Accessory, Servo or Input port. We want to operate a point motor, so you say A for Accessory.

Mardec asks what Mode you want. Mardec can get the port to behave in nine ways, which are called modes. These can be constant output, flickering, pulsing, one-time pulse, etc. For points, you want constant output, so you enter Mode 1. The modes are explained in the documentation.

And that's all there is to it!

Mardec asks if you want to test the output. You can, by entering T. Mardec will simulate a DCC accessory command to the address you gave for the port. You can turn the port on and off by tapping T, simulating DCC commands, and you can see it working with the LED.

If you wish, you can experiment and back up and change the mode, eg, to flashing, and you will see the LED flashing.

When satisfied, you tell Mardec to save the configuration. It will do so and set the Uno running.

You could now install it on your layout, although you might want to configure all the ports you need for multiple point motors.

Once you have done the above for a test and familiarisation, you can read the manual a bit more and configure accessory combinations, servos and sensors (using Input ports).

Installation

DCC – Arduino Interface

Arduinos run at 5V. DCC track voltage is typically 12 - 14V, so you can't just connect a pair of track droppers to the Arduino. You need to reduce the DCC voltage by building a small interface. The output of the interface plugs in to Arduino pin No 2, which Mardec uses to interpret the DCC signal.

You need a small piece of Veroboard, a few resistors, a ceramic capacitor, a LED and an opto-coupler. The opto-coupler ensures the DCC system and the Arduino are electrically isolated from each other. It needs to be a 6N137 which is fast switching one to keep up with the DCC signal. Get them from RS Components, part number 691-2325 or 805-1267.
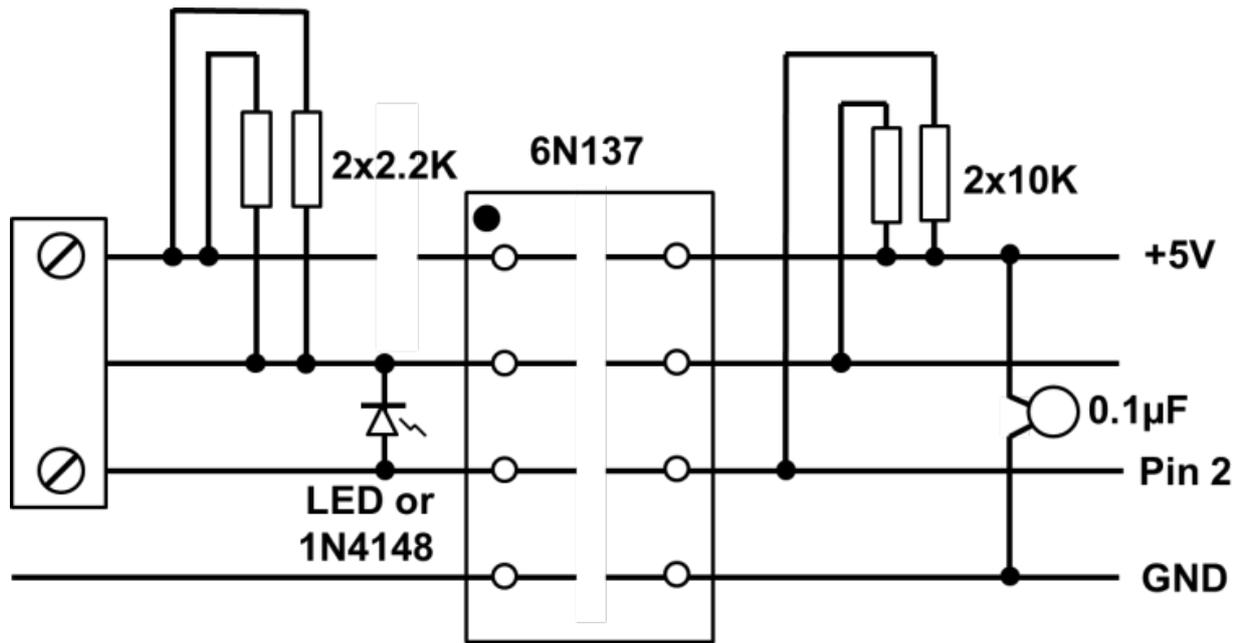
Fig 6 shows the circuit and layout superimposed on the Veroboard. The horizontal lines depict the copper tracks on the side you solder the components to; the components themselves go on the insulated side.

Note the cuts in the copper tracks. The dot on the opto-coupler must go in the orientation as shown.

The DCC input feeders go into the screw terminals shown on the left. The two parallel resistors on the input give you about 1.1K and ensure they stay nice and cool even with a high DCC track voltage.

For output to the Arduino, you can solder M-M Dupont wires with one end cut off to the Veroboard or use screw terminals with M-M Dupont wires.

Assembly

You need the normal power source for the Tortoise-type point motors, usually plus and minus 12V. You need a 9 – 16V power pack for the Arduino and a 5V supply for the 5V relay. The 5V phone charger, described earlier, will do, with suitable connectors for +5V and GND.

Fig 7 shows the full wiring. Note that the relay needs a ground from the 5V supply to complete the power circuit and also from the Arduino to complete the signal circuit. If the relay pack you are using has only one GND socket connect the relay power pack GND to the Arduino and another Arduino GND to the relay pack.
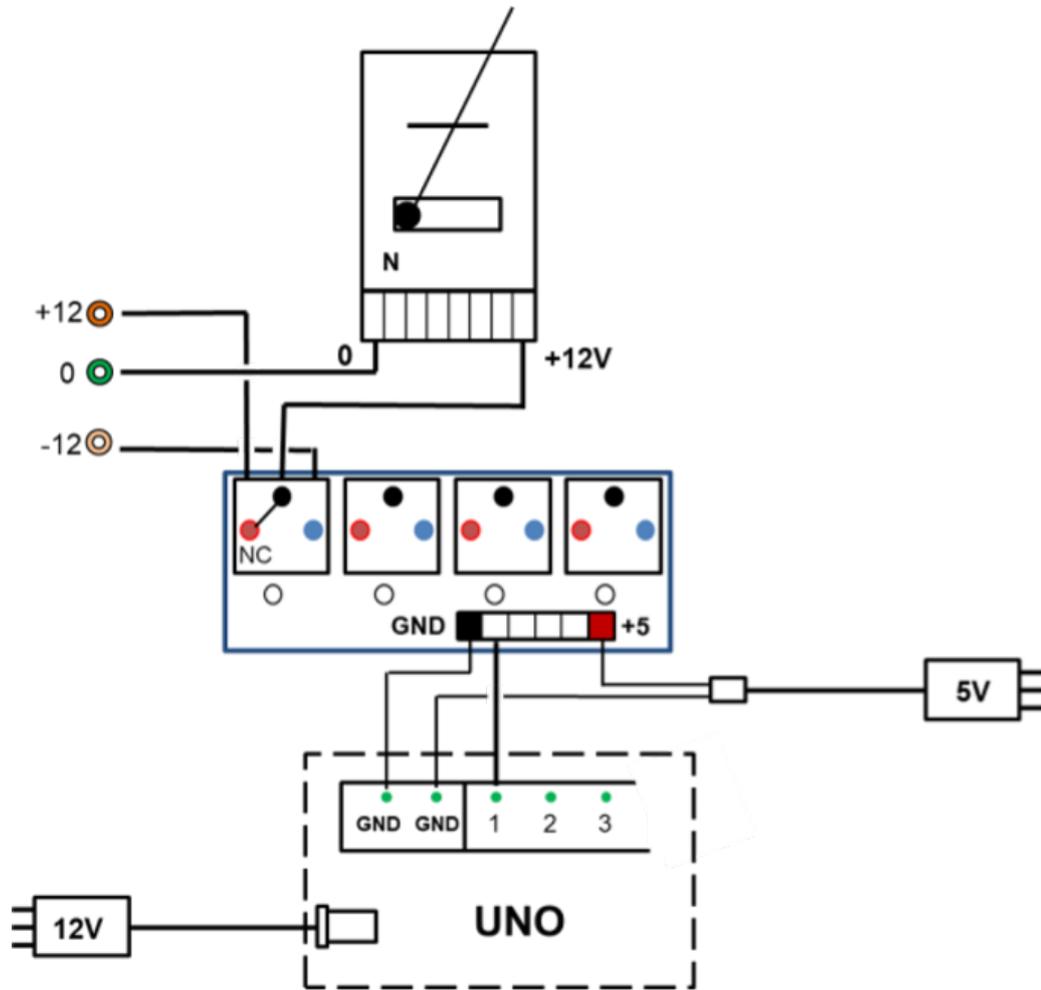
Fig 7

Conclusion

This document covers the elements of Arduino hardware and the 5V relays that enable you to operate or switch most equipment on your layout.

We've covered just one of the accessory decoder options of the Mardec program, ie, the constant output to operate a Tortoise-type point motor.

Some further reading of the Mardec manual will reveal how to use it for many other DCC requirements, eg, servo operation, pulses to emulate push-buttons, blinking lights, sensor input, etc.

If you use servos, Mardec provides easy set-up for positioning, rotation speed, end point adjustment, bounce, etc.

So, like me, if you need accessory decoders and servo drivers, get into Arduino and Mardec.

What's the time? Have a Kit-Kat....

bennettedm@optusnet.com.au ....

Are You Having Fun ?

by Gerry Hopkins, MMR® FNMR

There are many interpretations of "fun" in the model railroad hobby. Each one is important to us being comfortable and relaxed when "**playing trains**".

Below are just a few, to learn more about each of these you can come along to our Convention later this year. At the Convention there are many "experts" in different fields who are happy to give up their time to prepare and present clinics on many different subjects.

Running trains - round & round. Not quite, but more a case of watching your favourite train travelling through scenic vistas. You can learn how to design and build your scenes – from track laying to fully detailed scenery.

Running trains – bringing back memories of our ill spent youth. Many of us grew up with steam locos and the smell of burning coal; and watching those big giants taking their loads to distant places. We can learn how to detail out of the box locos and rolling stock to represent what we remember.

Running a train – the one we dreamt about but never saw. For many this could be the Orient Express or the Rocky Mountaineer. Most of these would be covered at the Convention.

Running trains – to a pattern to simulate the real thing, sometimes with timetables or even using waybills to bring an order to our play. Setting up this type of operating session are covered in a number of clinics at the Convention.

Building trains – enjoying the skills we have learnt. Some of us just like building trains, buildings or vistas.

Building trains – exact replicas of the original with sounds and lights as we remember them.

Building the scenery – from memories or photos. This is 3D art and can be very satisfying. Whether big bridges and valleys or open country side we all can learn.

Collecting trains – to have the most.

Collecting trains – to have a particular 'set' of locos and rolling stock.

Researching trains – for many different reasons, such as the stories behind the railroad of our choice.
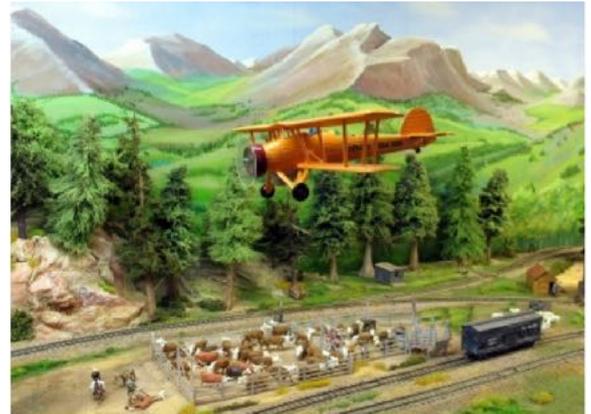
When you have worked out which one applies to you, you might like to start building a layout to satisfy your needs. There are many things to think about – the **era** you like, is it early steam, transition – steam/diesel or just modern stuff. This is when you need to be seated, what **area** to model – the rolling hills of Western Europe, or the east coast of the USA or of our Australia.

You might like something a little more up and down – the Austrian/Swiss Alps, the Colorado Rockies, the Canadian Rockies, the British Isles or just any big city.

At the Convention there are numerous clinics that show you many industries The main industries are things like coal, timber, ores, produce, livestock, people or just general freight. Now, the trains can just "flow" through your scenes – a rural station where your favourite trains can just roll through or you can have a main freight interchange with lots of rolling stock, a wharf with loading and unloading, a ferry terminal where rolling stock is loaded on barges.

When you have come close to a decision, you can do research on the web or you can look at peoples layout for inspiration. This is where the "Layout Tours" that are part of the Convention can give you ideas for your layout.
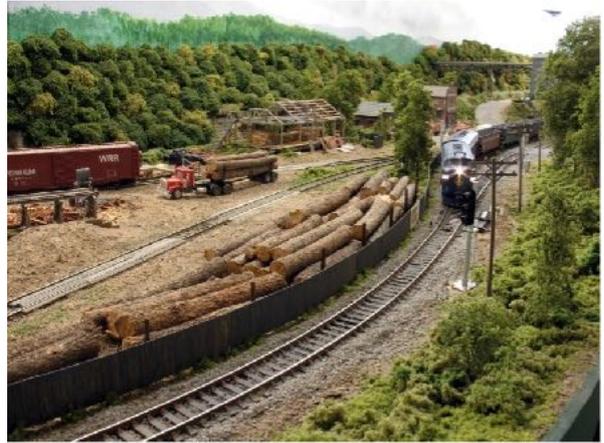
Have I got you thinking yet?

I hope so.

Come along to the Convention – learn from clinics and get some new ideas.

Plenty of Narrow Gauge for your enjoyment……..

RAILS @ ROSEHILL

Australasian Region National Convention 2023
National Model Railroad Association
29 September - 2 October 2023

6029 is part of the collection managed by Transport Heritage NSW

Newsletter #3 | March 2023   rails@rosehill.org.au   **On Track to Rosehill**

Welcome to our third Rails@Rosehill Newsletter!

I am delighted to announce that **registrations** are **now open** for Rails@Rosehill! **Click this link** to access the event booking system to reserve your ticket.

Ticket options are explained on the next page covering the Friday Evening Canapes, Convention Clinics, Convention Dinner and the Partners Program.
I am excited by what your convention team have been able to put into the 'Convention Ticket', I truly believe we are presenting good value options.

Also open is registration for your accommodation at our host venue, **Rydges Parramatta**. Click this link to access and make your booking direct with the Hotel.

Thank you to the Members who have offered to run clinics. On Page 3 of this Newsletter we have listed the clinics we have scheduled so far for each of Saturday and Sunday. I think you will agree that the range of topics offered is exciting! In April we will bring you a detailed list including: clinic timing, a narrative, the 'take outs', and intended audience for each Clinic. This information will enable you to plan your clinic journey.

Our Layout Tour planning is well advanced with an diverse range of layouts to visit. We are scheduling the tour program over three days and you will have the opportunity to visit both private and club layouts on Friday, Monday and Tuesday of the Convention.

Tour layouts on display demonstrate extraordinary features of planning, operation and scenery. You can choose to inspect well known and acclaimed layouts in the hobby. Layouts for Rails@Rosehill feature new and never-before-seen layouts from highly skilled modellers; on display for the first time!

The participants in the Partners Program will be joined by their Hostess and travel by coach to Darling Harbour to join 3 hour cruise and a 3 course 'Top Deck Long Lunch'. A great Saturday outing returning to Rydges Parramatta by 5pm. On Sunday, Partners will be taken on a tour of two iconic, historic sites in Parramatta and will return back to the Hotel for lunch around mid-day. This is looking to be an exciting program!

As part of the Rails@Rosehill Convention we hold a Modelling Contest that any/all attending members can enter! I am hoping to see quite a number of entries. Please read the information in this Newsletter about entering into the Contest.

Over the winter months I encouraging you to put your skills and talents into building an 'A4' sized diorama and bring this with you to Rails@Rosehill . I have seen some amazing creations from a focused challenge such as our 'A4' Challenge! More information is on the Contest page.

- ♦ Convention Registrations are open: Click here to Register
- ♦ Partners Program Registrations are open: Click here to Register
- ♦ Accommodation Bookings are open: Click here to book

Yours sincerely
John Arrowsmith
Convention Host
Email: host@rosehill.org.au
Div 7 Super

Key Information

Dates: 29 September—2 October

The Venue: Rydges Parramatta
          116-118 James Ruse Drive
          Rosehill NSW 2412

Program Outline:
   Friday: **Layout Tours, Welcome Canapes**
   Saturday: **Clinic Program, Convention Dinner**
   Sunday: **Clinic Program, Kids & Grandkids**
   Monday: **Layout Tours**
   Tuesday: **Layout Tours**

Clinic Program: **Clinics offered to support modellers new to the hobby through to emerging topics and techniques, and prototype modelers.**

Bring Your Kids/Grandkids! **Sunday morning bring your kids and grandkids to see and run the on-site layouts.**

Partners Program: **A lunch cruise on Sydney Harbour and visit to Parramatta historic sites.**

Layout Tours: **Tour program covers south of Sydney, general Sydney area, and north of Sydney over three days.**

Accommodation: **Available at Rydges Parramatta, and other venues nearby.**

Contact Us:

⇒ **Program:** rails@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Contest:** contest@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Layout Tours:** layouttours@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Prototype Tours:** prototype@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Partners Program:** partners@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Registrations:** registrations@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Shop:** shop@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Accounts:** accounts@rosehill.org.au
⇒ **Host:** host@rosehill.org.au

A diesel-hauled rake of wholestick cane trucks passes through the station yard on the way to the mill in a typical Queensland country scene. The wholestick trucks were scratch built using an HOn chassis, the locomotives were often built on an N gauge chassis.

A Brisbane modeller, Greg Stephenson is one of more than a hundred contributors to NMRA-affiliated CaneSIG. Greg has also been a frequent contributor to the Modelling the Railways of Queensland Convention.

Greg Stephenson's OO9 freelance Queensland-style layout.

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Your Convention Ticket Options:
CLICK HERE TO BOOK

	Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea	Friday Canapes	Layout Tours Friday, Monday and Tuesday	Clinic Program Saturday and Sunday	Convention Three Course Dinner	Partner Program Saturday and Sunday	Ticket Value
NMRA Member and Dinner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	**$330**
Non-NMRA Member and Dinner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	**$360**
NMRA Member (No Dinner option)	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	—	**$260**
Non-NMRA Member (No Dinner option)	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	—	**$290**
Partner Program and Dinner	✓	✓	Optional	—	✓	✓	**$280**
Partner Program (No Dinner option)	✓	✓	Optional	—	—	✓	**$210**
Convention Dinner Only	—	—	—	—	✓	—	**$80**

Your Rydges Parramatta Options:
CLICK HERE TO BOOK

	Friday Night	Saturday Night	Sunday Night	Monday Night	Car Parking	Breakfasts	Included
Superior Queen	**$240**	**$240**	**$180**	**$180**	Complementary subject to availability	Own Cost	WiFi
King Room Converted to two Queen Beds	**$240**	**$240**	**$180**	**$180**	Complementary subject to availability	Own Cost	WiFi

On-site facilities include: Restaurant, Bar, ATM, laundry, room service.   Facilities are available for disabled or mobility impaired guests.

2 Day Partners Program Overview:

Saturday starts from Rydges Parramatta at 10.00am for a coach trip into King Street Wharf where guests will embark at mid-day on a three hour cruise on Sydney Harbour. Soak up the Harbour sights, engage in fellowship all the while enjoying a three course lunch. Your choice of beverages will be extra. Guests will arrive back at the hotel by coach by 5.00pm.

Sunday starts at 9.00am back on the coach for a tour of Parramatta and surrounding historical landmarks including **Hambledon Cottage** with a guided tour and morning tea/refreshments, then on to **Old Government House**, Parramatta. Back to the Hotel for Lunch and a chat!

Built in 1824, **Hambledon Cottage**, was part of John Macarthur's Elizabeth Farm estate. It was used as additional accommodation by the Macarthur family and their friends. Best known resident was Penelope Lucas, governess to the Macarthur daughters. All of the furnishings are genuine period pieces and some have a special connection with the early colony. The cottage is built of sandstone brick and is a house museum - offering you an accurate sense of a colonial cottage in the early to mid 19th century! To find out more you will need to book on the Partners Program!

Did you know that **Old Government House**, which was built by convicts in 1799 on Indigenous Darug land, **i**s a UNESCO World Heritage-listed site? It is the oldest surviving public building in Australia. To find out more interesting history...book on the Partners Program!

CLICK HERE TO BOOK

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Clinic Program Overview

Clinics are scheduled over Saturday and Sunday and are offered in three streams: 1) for the beginner or early adopter of model railway/railroad or a technology, 2) for modellers who are down the track with their layouts, and 3) a stream covering prototype modelling.

At the time of writing, 27 Clinics are scheduled, some 45 minutes and others 1 hour 45 minutes duration. Workshops, discussions and presentations make up the styles of clinics. The list below outlines the Clinics scheduled for each day.

Saturday

- Arthur Hayes MMR: **Prototype to Model**
- Chris Minahan: **LCC – the Current State of Use in Layouts**
- Duncan Cabassi: **Setting Up For Operations with JMRI Ops Pro**
- Garry Glazebrook: **Moving Coal on the Newcastle-Fassifern Layout**
- Garry Glazebrook: **A Newcastle Rail and Industry Museum**
- Gerry Hopkins MMR: **Getting Those Projects Finished You Started a Few Years Back!**
- Gerry Hopkins MMR: **Wheels, Rails, Pickups**
- Jeff Lee MMR: **Scratch Building Industrial Sites**
- Ruth Garbutt: **Photography: Focus on Composition, Creativity, and Telling the Story.**
- Steve Chapman MMR: **On30 Module Puzzle**
- Steve Pettit MMR: **Baseline Weathering**

Sunday

- Arthur Hayes MMR: **Building a Farm Shed**
- Arthur Hayes MMR: **Tips & Techniques For Modelling in Styrene**
- Craig Mackie: **How to Train Your Crew**
- Craig Mackie and PK: **Weathering in a Can and with an Accent**
- Darren Lee: **Operations: How to get started and the enjoyment it adds**
- David Howarth MMR: **The Journey in developing an O Scale Layout of the New York Central West Shore River Division**
- David O'Hearn MMR: **3D Printing**
- Gary Ruming: **The Online Resources**
- Graeme Barnes MMR: **Planning Your Layout using the rewards and constraints of your aspirations**
- Ian Barnes: **Layout Operations - A Workshop**
- Ian Barnes: **Logging Railways - a Modeller's Dream**
- Ian Sprent: **An Introduction to JMRI and Why You Need It ?**
- Ian Sprent: **JMRI Software Installation and Configuration**
- Martyn Jenkins: **Interactive with Jim Scarse (NCE) on History and Direction of NCE**
- Paul Cassar: **Proto Throttle by Iowa Scaled Engineering Prototypical Operations**
- Peter Jensen: **Operations Using Track Warrants**
- Steve Pettit MMR: **Trees for the Forest**

Further clinics are being finalised and will be included in the April Newsletter along with a *full briefing and current timetable for each clinic*, including what you can expect as a 'take out' from each of the clinics.

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Layout Tours

Visits to private and club layouts are an appealing feature of model railroad Conventions. **Rails@Rosehill** will hold 3 days of layout visits to give all modellers an opportunity to view the progress of the hobby.

Layouts on display demonstrate extraordinary features of planning, operation and scenery. Guests can choose to inspect well known and acclaimed layouts in the hobby. Layouts for **Rails@Rosehill** feature new and never-before-seen layouts from highly skilled modellers; on display for the first time.

Modellers attending **Rails@Rosehill** can create their own personalised layout tours using a booking system specially created for the Convention.

Layout tours will span three days either side of the formal Convention sessions. Travellers from interstate have the opportunity to book and visit layouts as they drive to the Convention, and on their return home. Guests can select layouts from all parts of Sydney and surrounding regions.

Hosts will offer their layouts in reserved times on Friday 29 September, Monday 2 October and Tuesday 3 October. All Hosts will be open for general inspection and some Hosts will offer operating sessions.

There are many model railway clubs open for inspection as part of the NMRA National Convention. Clubs have more than a single layout; in some cases up to five layouts of diverse scales. The listing of layouts include clubs and private layouts in clusters for ease of location.

To plan your layout tour itinerary, an online booking system will be available from Thursday 1 June. The booking system will offer layouts clustered together for ease of selecting nearby locations. For each layout, Hosts will offer visit times and maximum numbers of Guests. All layouts will be open for inspection and some Hosts will offer operation of the layout as part of your visit. Operating sessions are a feature of club layouts.

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The booking system will give confidence to Guests that their reserved visit will be trouble free and restricted to a maximum number of total visitors. The Host will explain to all Guests at the same time the features and operation of the layout. Using the maps and locations of all layouts gives a mechanism for Guests to plan travel times between layouts.

Introduction of three day layout visits gives Hosts an opportunity to also become a Guest at layouts they may have never visited. Hosts offering their layouts for inspection as part of the National Convention receive AP (Achievement Program) points as volunteers to the NMRA.

The search for layouts for **Rails@Rosehill** is ongoing. Layouts can still be included. To be a Host, or to get more information about layout tours, contact layouttours@rosehill.org.au or call **Graeme Barnes on 042 740 0755**.

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Contest Information: *Contest Chairman:* **Gerry Hopkins MMR FNMRA**

As part of the Convention we hold a **Modelling Contest** that any/all attending members can enter! Click this link to the Contest Information page on the AR Region Website which explains the options and categories available.

The link above includes an explanation of the contest rules and categories available, with links to explanations of the forms needed to enter a model in the contest.

Have you though about entering into the **Photography Contest?** This will be judged by someone who has won the contest a few times herself – *Ruth Garbutt.*

The **Rick Shoup Award** is awarded for the Best Model Of An Australasian Prototype. This model can be a loco, rolling stock or structure. The choice is yours!

The **John Baker Award** is awarded for the best Model Of An American Prototype. This model can be a loco, rolling stock or structure. The choice is yours!

Additionally, attaining a point score of 87.5 points, or 70%, entitles the entrant to a **Merit Award** which counts towards the **Master Builder Awards** in the **NMRA Achievement Program**.

Here is the link again: https://nmra.org.au/contest-information/

These are some photos of previous entries:
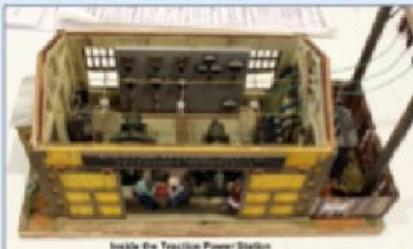
If you require any information on the Modelling Contest,
please email the Contest Chairman, he is happy to assist.

Up for a Challenge—an 'A4' Challenge?

Your skills and talents are called upon to create a diorama with a foot print exactly the size of an A4 page—that is 297mm by 210mm.
   * Your diorama can be any height!   * Must have at least one human and one animal included.   * Not to include any 'trains'.

Think about: movement, light, and sound. Maybe something typical of the location or era your modelling. *What about:* ...water...lights... Dioramas will be on display in the Contest area and during the Convention Dinner.

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More Places to Stay

There are other places you could choose to stay during **Rails@Rosehill**. You will need to make contact with the hotel or motel to make your own enquiries and bookings. Here is a selection:

Nesuto Parramatta—within 0.1km	Mercure Sydney Parramatta—0.6km	Meriton Suites Parramatta—1.5km
Holiday Inn Parramatta—1.6km	SKYE Hotel Suites Parramatta—2.2km	Novotel Sydney Parramatta—3km

Optionally, check with: www.bookings.com, www.wotif.com, www.hotelscombined.com.au, www.stayz.com.au for these and other options. *Be mindful of the distance and cost to get to and from the Rydges Parramatta when considering your choice of accommodation.*

On Line Resources:

In this hobby there are many exceptional online resources both here within our Region as well as internationally. These are found as podcasts, websites, YouTube channels, blogs, chats, etc. *For example*: Luke Towan, Will James Railways, Around The Layout, Second Section, TCD Crossing Gate, Modellers Life, NMRAx, DCC Guy, Chadwick Model Railways, Ron's Trains and Things, Little Wicket Railway...

The questions is: what other resources have you found of value and would *highly recommend* to the members in our Region?

Dispatch an email to: Rails@Rosehill.org.au. The contributions will be published at Rails@Rosehill.

Bring Your Kids and Grandkids (BYKG)

Sunday morning will be a special time when Conference attendees are able to share some of the Conference with their 'kids and grandkids' (BYKG)! A time when you can personally host them to see and run some of the exciting layouts we have on-site —to see more of what it is that takes up your spare time!

If you have family in the Sydney area during Rails@Rosehill who you would like to be able to share this experience with, let them know now so they can mark their calendar.

There will be two timeslots available:

◊ 9.30am through to 10.30am followed by morning tea at 10.30am

◊ 11.00am through to 12.00min-day preceded by morning tea at 10.30am

There will be no cost for BYKG, but bookings will be essential. Numbers will be limited.   *Further details in coming Newsletters.*

Getting to Rydges Parramatta:

By Car: Rosehill is accessible from Sydney's Motorway network:-
Use your GPS for directions to Rydges Parramatta (situated opposite Rosehill racecourse). Complementary parking subject to availability.

♦ M1—North Connex—Carlingford—James Ruse Drive

♦ M2/Hills Motorway—Carlingford—James Ruse Drive

♦ M4/Western Motorway: either direction—turning off at James Ruse Drive

♦ A40/Victoria Road turn off into James Ruse Drive

♦ A44/Parramatta Road: turn off into James Ruse Drive

By Train: From Parramatta Station (the closest major station) then catch the M92 bus to stop 2142152 (opposite Prospect Street).

Flying: from Sydney Domestic Airport:-

♦ From Platform 1 to Central Station platform 21 (usually) - T8 Line

♦ From Platform 18 (usually) to Parramatta Station - T1 Line

♦ Then either by M92 bus to stop 2142152 (opposite Prospect Street) or by taxi to Rydges Parramatta

Best Supporting Tools:

♦ Apple/Google Maps

♦ TripView from the App Store or Google Play

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Wobbegong Station Concourse

by Ian Barnes

For some years, the East Coast Railways main through/terminus station Wobbegong, hasn't had a building for its customers. The platforms allowed passengers to embark and alight trains, but apart from a trudge through the adjoining paddock, there were no amenities and the railway company was not earning any ticket revenue.

The site for the building had been set aside on the outskirts of the city which the railway served but the modelling distance between railway and city was only 50mm *(Right)*. The challenge was to build a station complex in context with the city behind i.e. try to blend both over a distance of a few centimetres.

Wobbegong's problem area. The railway has arrived in the city, platforms are in place, but there is no believable linkage between the station and the city. The solution has to be achieved in minimal depth available. The columns suggest an early start to construction

A plan was drawn up which features:

- A central elevated roadway above the railway tracks.

- A station building and a theatre either side of the roadway, both bulky in size and hiding part of the back scene.

- The roadway curves behind one building to soften its sudden junction with the back scene.

- Lots of activity to focus the viewer's eye on the mid ground rather than the background.
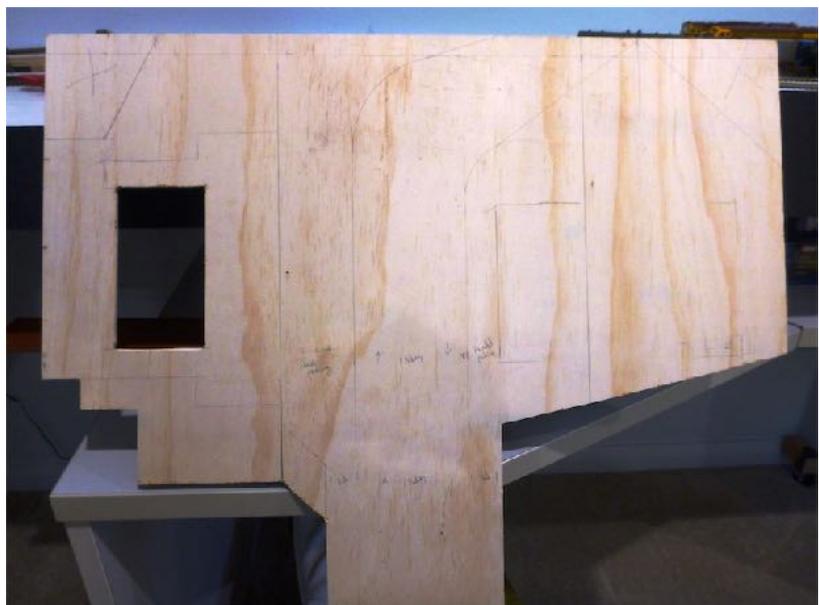
A plan is drawn up on the concourse "plate

- Breaking up the parallel lines of railway and back scene.
- Putting all the above on a removable "plate" to allow access to the railway below and ease the construction of lighting.
- Installing under concourse lighting so that train operators can see the position of their train in the "underground".

The plan was drawn up on 6mm plywood cut to dimension. After checking for size and placement to see if the whole concept would work, the columns supporting the concourse were glued in place taking particular care with the placement and height of those around the perimeter (*first photo, previous page*).

The concourse, with its two primary buildings temporarily placed, is tested for fit on the columns

After a second fitting, with buildings temporarily placed (*Left*), the detail construction began. The result is shown in the photo *(below)*.

To support and position the concourse, 10mm I beams were fixed under the perimeter, corresponding to the column tops but allowing the whole structure to be lifted off when necessary. The buildings are modified Kibri and Walthers kits, the kerbing, walling and garden bedding is

3mm MDF and lighting has been added to buildings, the roadway and under the concourse.

All other details are commercial or from the junk box. The background trees are carefully placed to soften what remains of the foreground/back scene junction.

The finished result, with lights on

Wobbegong station now has a proper entry complex and the starkness of the back scene junction has been improved.

The next task is to tidy up the area under the concourse.......

There is lots of evening activity on the central concourse

The Rivoli theatre

Wobbegong station entrance
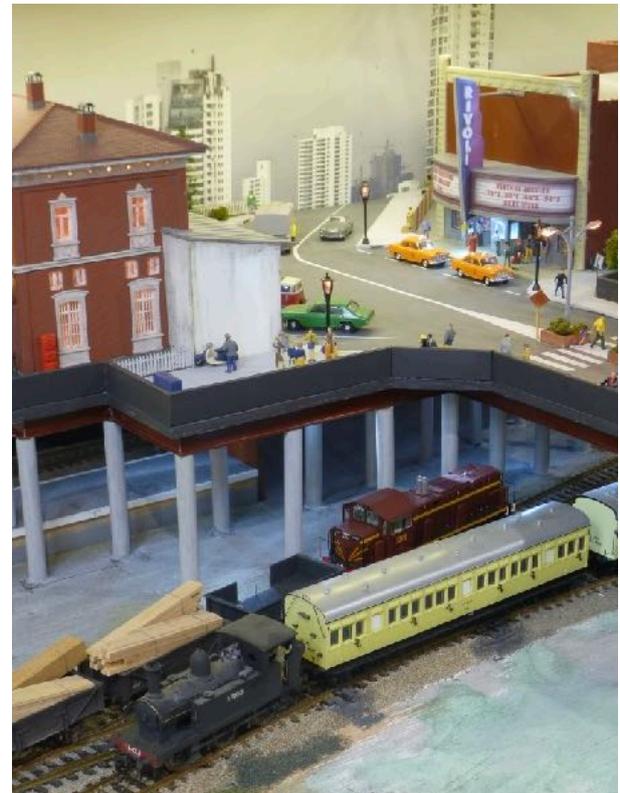
Understanding Configuration Variables - a Practical Approach
By Stephen Reeves

To provide reliability, conformity and maintain minimum benchmarks, there exists an extraordinary number of standards applied to products, materials and services delivered by businesses, manufacturers, and organisations across Australia, and indeed globally. These standards are usually written to provide guidance on how they're applied practically.

The programming and designation of Configuration Variables (CVs) for Digital Command Control (DCC) decoders, and the subsequent systems they are utilised within, are no exception, and therefore must comply with standards set by the NMRA.

The NMRA is an amazing organisation. One outstanding example is the foresight of the original members and directors, to put into place standards (and recommended practices) so that rail modellers anywhere in the world know that the products they buy will perform dependably. For example, we know that if we buy one manufacturers' track, we should be able to connect it to another manufacturers' turnout of the same scale, gauge, and code with no difficulty. Or we can have rolling stock from different manufacturers, or even scratch-built items on our layouts, and if all items are made to align with the standards we will have consistent running on our railroads.

So, by examining the NMRA STANDARDS S-9.2.2 **Configuration Variables For Digital Command Control, All Scales** July 2012, we can begin to understand what CVs do, which ones are critical, and / or mandatory, and how we can program them to have our locomotives (and accessories) perform exactly as we desire.

On page 2 of S-9.2.2 we find **Table 1 multi-function Decoder Configuration Variables.** This table provides a way to start exploring the features available and how they can be configured through programming DCC decoders.

All decoders (on locomotives) must have CV# 1, 7, 8, and 29, as these are mandatory. All the rest are optional, though are typically found on quality brand decoders. Accessory decoders, e.g., for driving point motors, have another set of mandatory CVs.

CV# 1 is designated for the primary address, and the default setting is 3. If you have bought a locomotive with a factory fitted decoder you'll find that initially its address is set to 3. CV# 1 has an address range of 01 to 127. CV# 17 and 18, are usually available to provide extended addressing, such as a four digit address, e.g., 8125 as compared to 25.

CV# 7 and 8 are not user configurable as they represent the Manufacturer version number and Manufacturer ID, respectively.

CV# 29 is possibly the most important CV to understand with regard to how its settings affect locomotive (or accessory) operation.

CV29 Bit Functions		
Bit	Value	Description
0	1	Controls the normal direction of travel; **on** or **1** to reverse the direction of travel
1	2	**Off** or **0** for 14 speed steps, **on** or **1** for 28 speed steps
2	4	**Off** or **0** will not run on DC power (DCC control), **On** or **1** to run on DC power
3	8	**On** or **1** for advance acknowledgement (not used at this time)
4	16	**Off** or **0** for standard speed table, **on** or **1** for alternative table (CV67-94)
5	32	**Off** or **0** for two-digit addressing, **on** or **1** for four-digit addressing
6	64	Reserved for future use by the NMRA
7	128	**Off** or **0** for multi-function decoder, **on** or **1** for accessory decoder

CV29 Bit Function table

As explained in Gerry's article (March/April 2022 MainLine) it can be rather overwhelming and confusing to grasp how the various bits function, especially if you're not used to binary numbering. Using tables with the bits all "mapped out" can make it easier to program CV# 29.

However, DCC system manufacturers have anticipated that model railroaders would most likely wish to configure a locomotive to respond, or operate, according to their individual desires, or requirements.

For example, I have a NCE Power Pro® system and by reading the System Reference Manual I can easily step through the configuration of CV# 29 without having to try and work out, or determine the binary number, (or any other value, apart from standard decimal) to enter to achieve my preferred configuration.

Not only can I set CV# 29, but I can also easily change other parameters seamlessly, such as altering CV# 3, which determines the response of the locomotive to increasing the speed setting, or in plain English, changes momentum response of the locomotive.

Depending on the individual's experience, skill level and knowledge, there is more than one way to program a DCC decoder. Resources to access, or guide you include hardware, software, websites, and online information sources.

Manufacturers such as ESU® now offer their own LokProgrammer®, which connects directly to your PC and interfaces with their DCC decoders. By using the LokProgrammer® you can download new sound files and upload them to the decoder or change a plethora of different settings.

A free open-source software is JMRI: DecoderPro®. JMRI stands for Java Model Railroad Interface. JMRI is explained in this way (from the JMRI website; https://www.jmri.org/): "The JMRI project is building tools for model railroad computer control. We want it to be usable to as many people as possible, so we're building it in Java to run anywhere, and we're trying to make it independent of specific hardware systems.

JMRI is intended as a jumping-off point for hobbyists who want to control their layouts with a computer without having to create an entire system from scratch."

JMRI does require reasonable computer skills to install, and to be able to navigate through the various screens to program DCC decoders. But this is another viable alternative to improve the understanding and practical application of DCC. The aim of the software developers, as outlined above, is to make it easier to comprehend and program CVs for the end user.

Alternatively, you could research via print format (either online, and/or, in hard copy), e.g., Model Railroader® magazine (MR).

MR includes a DCC column in every edition that highlights and discusses how to deal with operational issues, e.g., how to install a reversing loop, or may review new products, or has even provided guidance on how to select a DCC system to suit your needs.

Kalmbach®, the company that publishes MR, (and numerous railroad and other hobby magazines) have printed several books specifically dealing with DCC. These books cover various aspects of using DCC such as basics, choosing systems, wiring, installing, and programming decoders. I'm sure there are other quality magazines and books readily available from various publishers, or online, that provide information on DCC.

Online blogs, videos, and user forums are further sources of information on DCC.

Factory fitted DCC is now becoming standard on new locomotives offered across the world, including our own Australian outline retailers.

DCC is yet another option to increase the reality of our "miniature worlds" and add to their plausibility in representing prototypical rail operations. I look forward to becoming more confident and applying new skills to take advantage of DCC and would encourage others to do likewise...........◥◣

Magazine Publishing Deadline Dates

If any member wishes to submit **An Article** for publication in MainLine, your article may be submitted at any time and it will be included in a future edition, where the subject matter will allow for a balanced number of differing subjects to be included, and where the number of available articles will allow for that to occur.

If you are providing any type of report, then **All Report Types** can be submitted at any time with a deadline date being as shown below, which is 10 days prior to the end of the month of publication.
This criteria is requested to ensure that the editor has sufficient time to complete the bi-monthly edition of MainLine in the required time frame.

If you are providing a **Divisional Meeting Report**, please submit your report as soon as possible after each monthly meeting, with the deadline date being as shown in All Report Types below. If your meeting is scheduled after the deadline date, then the cut off date is 5 days prior to the end of the month as shown.
This criteria is requested to ensure that the editor has sufficient time to complete the bi-monthly edition of MainLine in the required time frame.

File Types:- For all submissions, text files saved as MSWord, Pages or Open Office files are preferred with limited text and page formatting. Please don't send pdf files, they are unsuitable for use in this publication.

Photo Types:- For all submissions, photographs are preferred as jpegs or png file types and to be under 2MB in size. Should you prefer to send larger photo files, then please consider sending them via Dropbox or Google drive or a similar 'Cloud' storage program, or alternatively send a disk or flash drive via a postal service.

The following are the deadline dates for the next two editions of MainLine;-
July / August 2023
Deadline date for All Report Types = 20th June, 2023
Date for Reports of Div Meetings that occur after the Deadline date = 25th June, 2023
Publish Date on Web Site = < 5th July, 2023

September / October 2023
Deadline date for All Report Types = 21st August, 2023
Date for Reports of Div Meetings that occur after the Deadline date = 26th August, 2023
Publish Date on Web Site = < 5th September, 2023

Nine Years on the NSWGR's
- 'Teditor's' Tales - Part 2 of 4
by Edward (*Ted*) Freeman

Looking back, the loungeroom size firebox would not have the same appeal today, even if it had a TV in it. There were some characters amongst the `cleaners', Malcolm was a biker and raced his Ducati on weekends, Peter was a Bikey and raced down booze on a weekend. Mal was a nice enough guy and I never had a great deal to do with him. Big Pete was built like a Gorilla and was really a gentle giant, until the toxins in his preferred ales took hold, then he became a vociferous loudmouth that was almost uncontrollable. I never socialised with him, but did meet him at the speedway one Saturday night, I was in a suit with a neat tie and polished shoes having come from another engagement, Big Pete was in the traditional leather jacket, jeans and boots with cans in both hands and Sheila's on both arms - Hey Teddy, come and join the gang, I felt like the outcast in Easyrider but couldn't have been treated better. Pete remembered nothing on Monday!

Finally, some on the road action as a fireman, the story continues as Teditor's Tales becomes a train trip to torture (not really, but it sort of rhymes!)

Being a Junior Trainee Engineman not only entailed cleaning locomotives; but you learned the art of filling the tenders with water and coal and some rudimentary driving skills. Of course, we also had the opportunity to play fireman and put on a fire from time to time, including the art of `lighting up'.

Lighting up a steam locomotive from cold is an interesting exercise, you have to check the water level in the boiler (the engine should have been left with a full boiler). Coal along with kindling would be placed in the firebox and a mixture of the trusty old black-oil and sawdust would be placed on the shovel and lit, then this shovel load of fire would be placed in on top of the aforementioned combustibles. Continual monitoring

of the fire would be necessary and additional sawdust/oil mix would be placed on top of the burning heap until the coal took hold.

At this stage, smoke becomes quite a problem as it rolls out of the firebox, not only from the smoke stack, but also out of the fire hole door, filling the cab until smoke curls up under the roof of the cab and filters out around the locos cab roof. This will continue until some steam is raised in sufficient quantity to activate the blower (the blower creates a draft through the firebox, into the flues and out the smokebox, taking the smoke with it):

It takes many hours to get things going, but once the blower comes into effect, everything starts to take off, air compressors can be turned on, dynamo's will work, injectors come into play and the whole process of looking after the locomotive settles down to routine checking and top up of fire and water.

Finally the day comes, the first outing on a steam locomotive under the guidance of an inspector, the chance to see if you are going to cut it as a fireman. Pretending to be a fireman on a fast express whilst in the depot is one thing, but being on a rocking footplate and attempting to perform the same herculean feats is another.

Memory is vague on my initial outings, but as best I can remember, it was on a ubiquitous "P", or 32 class and the inspector was one Harold Fowler. Now Harold was a nice enough bloke, but he had a reputation that preceded him and he was not short in telling me that I was pretty slow and would have to shake it up if I wanted to become a full fledged fireman.

 After several trips and much confirmation of my slowness, Harold decided to let me loose, figuring my enthusiasm and love of the job would nurture my talents and get me through.

Most of the early period as an `acting fireman' were spent on exciting jobs such as the Alexandria shunter, Darling Harbour shunter, Darling Island shunter or Sydney Yard shunters. The latter generally on one of the ubiquitous 'S' class (30 class) tank engines of

the 4-6-4 wheel arrangement or one of the two 79 class 44 ton diesels that shunted the two carriage sheds.

One could be excused for thinking that these shunt jobs would be lacking in excitement, but imagine if you will, the bucking, rolling, jumping, surging motions of a near 100 year old 0-6-0 19 class (Z class) shunting engine scurrying around banging goods trucks together over the period of an eight hour (or longer) shift, and the boredom was soon overcome by a survival instinct.

Nothing is worse than lining up the bat (shovel) with the firebox door, making the graceful arched swing to execute a perfect manoeuvre – and – whump, 'A over head' as you hit hard up against a string of wagons, coal everywhere but in the firebox, try to regain your stance, step on a large lump of coal and promptly get deposited onto the tender shovelling plate, pick yourself up – then the loco changes directions, out goes the slack and back onto the shovelling plate goes you!

These little engines performed sterling duty, I was always amazed at just how much they could lug around. When shunters gave the 'hit-up' signal (rapidly waving hand motions) and the six small driving wheels dug in, with sand aiding almost non-existent adhesion, exhaust barking and momentum rapidly picking up to 'kick' the wagons into the yard.   Up goes the shunters hands in a stop motion, on goes the Westinghouse, and the little 19 class grinds to a halt as the wagons continue on their merry way.

Darling Harbour was a gravity yard, here, all we had to do was run the slack in so the shunters could uncouple the wagons and the grade did the rest. Of course, when we had to drag strings of wagons 'up' the yard, the going was just that bit tougher.

Darling Harbour was a major yard, with the markets, dairies, truck transfers and myriad other commercial connections. There were at least three (maybe four) 19 class engines based here most of the time. They would be changed over every couple of days for a fresh engine. Coal would have to last through the engines term on duty, while water and sand could be replenished on site. Through quiet times, the fire would be banked, boiler filled and the engine stabled for the period not required. Sometimes you might get a bit of shut eye, some times in the amenities block, oft times on the loco.

Improvisation was the name of the game, the 19 class had a small lift up round wooden seat, it was possible to wedge a shovel in under the seat to the tender, place your kit bag with some cotton waste at your head and get some rather uncomfortable kip. Of course, if you were the restless type that rolled around in your sleep, you were in trouble.

Two jobs in particular etch in my mind with regard to 19 class shunting duties and Darling Harbour. There was a unique double deck truck/train transfer shed on one side of the yard, nestled next to a brick retaining wall. Access for trains was via a roller coaster ride up a steep grade of single track that split part way up the grade to two tracks for access to the two top shed tracks. The other was banking duty out of the top yard.

Trains leaving Darling Harbour via Sydney Passenger Terminal had to traverse a gantlet track under Cleveland Street, this would then open back up to double track for a short but 'very' steep climb up to the connection with the main line.

Our job, "should we wish to accept it", actually there was no choice, was to push the mainline goods trains out of the yard, through the "gantlet tunnel" and up the short, steep grade where we would shut off just prior to cresting the hill and let the train continue.
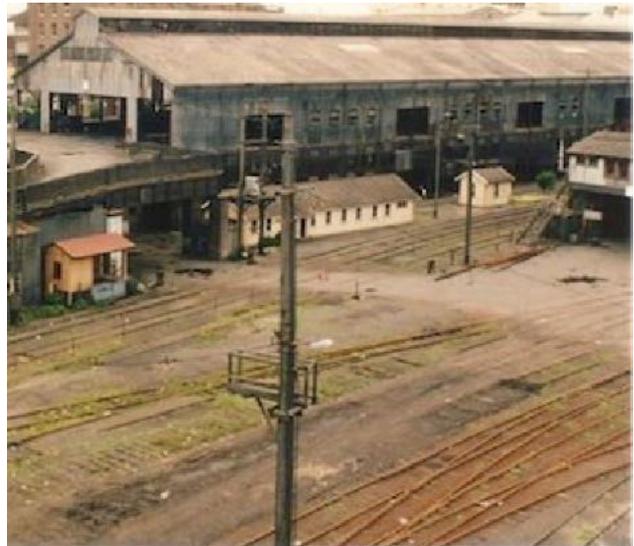
First we will take a look at the Top Shed job.

Imagine, if you will, going for a ride on a roller coaster at Dreamworld or one of the other theme parks, place yourself in the very rear of the last car, stand-up! And stay that way throughout the ride! Sound like fun? Or sound suicidal? Basically, this is what a trip to the top level of the double deck shed at Darling Harbour on a 19 class was like, and the rear pushing duties out of the yard assisting goods trains was little better.

We've just dragged a string of assorted bogie and 4-wheel wagons up the yard, our 19 class 0-6-0 is blowing off with a full head of steam, the gauge glass shows around half and we are waiting for the shunters signal to shove the string of wagons through several turnouts and up a steep climb to the upper level of Darling Harbours unique double deck goods shed.

The full head of steam and the half glass of water are necessities for this arduous duty, the ride will be too rough to put any fire on and too much water will have the loco priming profusely. Although this is a several times a day occurrence, a few 'hail Mary's' don't seem to go astray as the shunters give the go ahead signal and the driver flings open the 19 classes throttle to the full open stop peg, with sand pouring under the front driving wheels, the ubiquitous engine digs in for all its worth and lurches into a frantic bucking motion as it gains speed on the down grade of the yard.

Hanging on for grim death as the engine thrashes and lurches through several turnouts, gaining momentum with a rapidly accelerating exhaust, then the train of wagons start the climb to the shed, the 19 class immediately protests with an

The Turnout 9points) that took us to either 1 or 2 road on the top deck.

even harsher bark of the exhaust as the full weight of the wagons starts to bear down on the front buffers.

Up ahead, the shunter is still waving his hand frantically, urging the driver on, not to lose momentum as another shunter bears his full weight onto the point lever directing us into the second track of the shed. Now, with everything including the loco and tender on the grade, we are struggling to maintain movement, the engine bucks as the drive wheels fight for traction, the string of wagons curves across the trestle leading into the shed and then the weight eases off as the train of wagons levels out. The driver has to anticipate the change of load so as not to run away and shove the wagons out the far end of the shed, a catastrophic happening to say the least (don't know if it ever actually happened).

In what was one hell of a ride, and the first of probably several we will do through the shift, we have successfully placed the string of wagons in the shed where motor Lorries will load/unload the cargo in readiness for a repeat performance.

The double deck goods shed, a unique icon of Darling Harbour.

We uncouple, retaining the shunters truck, and ease down the grade just far enough to clear the turnout and then proceed back up against the brick wall into track one where we will pull the string of wagons out in readiness for the next lot we shove up the hill.

The trip back down into the yard is usually uneventful and far less demanding - unless of course, the brakes are misused and you run out of air!

Goods trains out of Darling Harbour were more often than not powered by one or two 46 class electric locomotives, most of these heavy trains heading west or north. The exit from Darling Harbour via Sydney Yard included a short run on gauntlet track under a building and then a tight right steep climbing grade out of the hole to the crest as it entered the mainline between the area known as the Mortuary and the main entrance junction of the country platforms.

This short climb was enough to tax a maximum tonnage train and a shove was needed to get them over the short climb and clear of the crest. Again, our insignificant 19 class shunting engines came to the fore.

Ultimo Street Signal Box, the backbone of the frantic pusher activity out of Darling Harbour.

Exit from the yard was controlled by a colour light starting signal (SY 80), this in turn was controlled by the Ultimo Street Signal Box (*destroyed in a fire on the 11th March 1996*). With the road engines attached to the front of the train and brake and air tests complete, it was the job of the assisting bank engine to ease up against the brake vans buffers and maintain pressure ready for a launch.

The procedure was that we had to be ready to go when the road engine blew his horn, this would have a general time appointed, but could vary considerably according to Sydney Yard passenger traffic.

Pressure was maintained against the buffers by cracking the throttle with enough steam in the cylinders to hold the engine tight against the van, an eye had to be kept on the steam and water, but you didn't want the engine blowing off constantly, so a roaring fire was out of the question.

Of course, under these circumstances, with very little draft on the fire, and a desire to keep the steam below blowing off, the inevitable would happen, the fire would die. An occasional shovel full of coal would go on, but if you sat waiting for an hour or so, attention would lapse.

With no warning, there would be a toot from the front end and almost immediately the train would lurch into motion, now! Remember how we had the throttle cracked, well! With luck, we would move off with the train. The driver would fling the throttle across full and open the cylinder cocks to expel the inevitable build up of water in the cylinders. The blower would be another job for the driver to turn on as quick as possible, and the fireman, by now in a state of panic, would start firing wildly in the hope the fire would ignite to an inferno immediately and maintain steam pressure.

At this stage, the electrics (with horsepower in the thousands) would be sailing easy, so all we had to do was struggle to keep up, fall back at all, and the dangerous rush to get up against the brake vans buffers was on, with the Ultimo Box signalman waving frantically for you to get back on the train.

Model O Kits 'O' Scale Model

Photo Courtesy of T Hodges

When the front of the train entered the gauntlet track, you were on a slight downgrade, momentum building up, then - all of a sudden, the full weight of the train would fall back on your struggling 0-6-0 as the electrics well and truly got into the grade. With smoke and cinders belching from the stack, the 19 class would sound like it was going to lift the building off the top of the gauntlet tunnel, speed getting down to a crawl, smoke would shoot to the sky as you exited the tunnel and back into daylight, now it was on for earnest (*my middle name by the way*). The road engine/s would crest the grade and gradually take charge of the tonnage as you approached the home signal where the driver would shut the throttle and throw the brake handle straight across so as not to roll back.

Often, at the conclusion of this assisting manoeuvre, the 19 class would be scheduled to return to loco for regular maintenance. Now that we are stationary, all hope is in the air that there is enough water still left in the boiler to cover the tubes and fusible plugs. More oft than not, you would have the

injector straight on, pumping in the valuable commodity, and although anxious to get home, hoping that the `all clear' signal wouldn't be given `just yet'. Not to worry, being a light engine, and a slow 19 class 0-6-0 at that, there wasn't much chance you would be let out on the main until a substantial gap was realised.

It was always an interesting place to sit and while-away the time, watching interstate expresses arrive and depart through the complex track work that constituted the yard throat of Sydney Passenger Terminal. Along with a constant flow of Interurban's and shunting-moves, as well as the suburban trains on the far side, there was constant movement- `except for us!'.

With a clear signal shown, we would make the final short ascent out of the goods line and then be 'on the main' good and proper. It must have been an endearing site, this 1800's technology, almost a hundred years on, trundling along the mainline at a leisurely pace as local electric's scampered back and forth and maybe, just maybe, an opposing express headed up by a 38 class or a couple of newfangled diesels might just try and blow you off the track.

Through Redfern, side rod's clanking away and a non-polluting smidgen of smoke we would trundle past hoards of local travellers waiting for their `Red Rattler' home (or to work).

At the southern end of Redfern Station, we would deviate off the mainline and enter "The Illawarra Dive". This subterranean refuge would take us into a dark and dingy hollow that forged its way under all the mainline and suburban trackage to exit

alongside the Eveleigh loco depot foreman's office and have us heading in the direction of the South Coast.

To the right were the MacDonaldtown (*no - it wasn't a fast food city*) car sheds, nestled in a hollow between the South Coast lines and the Main North/South/West and suburban lines. A long pedestrian footbridge spanned this area affording access for railway staff to the loco depot, car sheds, MacDonaldtown station and an employees car park on the far side of the tracks.

After rolling down a short grade, we would bring our mighty steed (*Shetland pony*) to a halt at Erskineville station and wait for our shunting signal to allow us to set-back into the Alexandria Goods Yard approach and henceforth into Eveleigh loco. It was standard procedure to replenish the sandboxes and top-up the tender with water, you would then leave your mount where instructed, and head to the charge man's office.

The charge man's office was located right at the MacDonaldtown overbridge stairs, engines coming into loco usually were stopped just here and the driver would find out what road the engine had to be placed in. While in the office, some pranksters would oil the rail under the trailing drivers (the loco would undoubtedly be tender first). Now the grade here was quite steep, and as you would imagine, the engine would erupt into wheel spin and gradually drift downhill. Of course if the engine happened to be a 36 or 38 class, it had no rear sanders - nuff said.

An unusual job that I scored when on shed duty with my regular driver was to take an engine, fresh from overhaul, to Enfield locomotive depot. Now, this may not seem like

any big deal, but in this case, we struck a rather different type of engine, one not normally associated with passenger working (as Eveleigh was), a rather large AD60 Garratt, 4-8-4+4-8-4, all 260 tonnes of it. Neither the driver or myself had ever worked on one of these behemoths, and all the engines we worked regularly, even the 200 ton 38's, were hand - fired. The Garratt was 'stoker fired', and the firebox was "big".

We discussed the situation with each other and decided, `yea! Why-not!' There's a lot of engine in front of you on one of these freight giants, but the biggest challenge - we didn't have a clue how to work the stoker and neither did anyone else in the depot at the time. Oh well! Its just a light engine (*always amazes me how 260 tonnes is light!)* And we felt we could get by with hand firing.

When a steam engine Is working hard they eat a lot of coal, and hand firing them is strenuous work, but at least you can get enough swing on the shovel to regularly get some coal to the front of the firebox. But the Garratt, with the firebox the size of an average bedroom, was an enormous effort to get coal much past half way. Fortunately for us, the freshly shopped engine steamed admirably and we managed to get the 60 class safely over the road to Enfield.

Enfield, as opposed to Eveleigh, was a sprawling facility, the steam loco depot separated from the diesels (DELEC) by the enormous Enfield gravity sorting yard. Three full circle roundhouses feeding one to the other catered to the needs of the vast number and variety of steam engines housed there. Being a goods depot primarily, the standard goods engines of the 50 through 56 class abounded, also prevalent were 59 class Mikado's and of course Garratt's. Unfortunately, absent from the scene by the time I was on the job were the magnificent 57 and 58 class Mountains. The goods yard, being as large as it was, required more than 19 class engines to work it and standard goods 2-8-0's were used, some with modified four wheel tenders affording better vision for the crews.

Return from Enfield/DELEC to the home depot could entail another light engine move or a ride on the Railway Bus, a compact mini-bus that ployed its trade on a regular (1/2 hourly, as I recall) basis to Flemington Station, where, if you were lucky enough, a connection might be made for a city bound train. This is where MacDonaldtown station came in, otherwise you would have to alight at Redfern and trudge back some distance to the depot office........🗲

*Part 3 of **'Teditor's Tales - Nine Years on the NSWGR's'** continues in the next edition of MainLine.*

100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News
Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc.
A 100% NMRA Club in Division 6
Club News - Running Night **March** 2023
By Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)
https://adelaidemodelrailroaders.com

This month the AMR celebrated its 75th anniversary. We are the oldest model railway club in SA and have seen other clubs come and go during those 75 years. Today the AMR is in its strongest position ever with 22 members and an operational layout which has about 80% of its surface covered with scenery.

So far operating sessions have brought in two new members and this month we welcome Jarrad Dent, Murray Dent's son, into the clubs ranks.

Above: With Inge bridge swung away this panorama shows almost one third of the Southern Central Railroad.

ADELAIDE MODEL RAILROADERS CELEBRATE 75 YEARS

At the March monthly general meeting the Adelaide Model Railroaders celebrated 75 years.

Left: Margaret House, Ken's wife, baked and decorated one of her delicious and famous ginger cakes for the occasion. These cakes are usually reserved for supper after operating sessions on Ken's home layout, so those who were apologies missed out.

Reminiscences of past times of the AMR were recounted. The AMR being founded by eleven NMRA members in an office in Bentham St Adelaide March 1948. Past members, Len Opie, Noel Gully, John Trelease, Bob Footner, Peter Letheby, John Holland, Peter Kerry all passed away were remembered plus Royce Juttner. Jeff Barclay brought along a Varney HO scale reefer from the early 1950s and some copies of early printed Boosters that he and Alan Ziegler produced. Len Opie edited the first Booster in the 1950s. The Booster at that time was the newsletter for the NMRA Southern Cross Region, Australia. which was directed from Adelaide. In the 1960s the management of the Southern Cross region moved to Sydney where it was decided to go commercial with the Booster which eventually went on to become the Australian Model Railway Magazine. This resulted in the SCR being disbanded, because under the NMRA's constitution at the time, commercial enterprises were prohibited. So the Australian Model Railway association, AMRA, was formed. The AMR continued on, but was no longer a 100% NMRA club. A few AMR members continued their NMRA membership and at the time of his death in 2008 Len Opie had been a continuous NMRA member for over 50 years. The AMR perpetuated the Southern Cross Region by calling it's layout the SCR, Southern Central Railroad, railroad being one word. Also the AMR is in Adelaide South Australia which is in a more or less in a central position in the south of Australia. I have mistakenly been using the initials SCRR but from now on it will be corrected to SCR in the Booster.

Ken House brought along a DVD of the AMR's layout when the club's premises was the Mt Lofty railway station and early AMR activities.

Left: With cake and candles. L-R Warwick Graham, Christiaan Werk, Jeff Barclay, John Gayler, Peter Kirkland, Tony Mikolaj, and Ken House

MARCH OPERATING SESSION

From feed back that I have received all who attended on March 8th enjoyed the session.

The crew was Kingston yard master, Tony Mikolaj, Houseman yard master, Ken House and the four road crews Murray and Jarrad Dent (two man crew), Peter Kirkland, Christiaan Werk, and visitor and former member Wayne Hoskin. John Gayler acted as conductor for Christiaan when he drove the West Wind passenger train.

Mostly trains ran well except I did notice that some had derailments on the curved number eight turn out that exits the eastern end of Prattis.

The ebb and flow of traffic was noticeable especially when several trains all at once descended on Kingston much to the YM's consternation. The same happened at Houseman but did not seem as bad probably due to there being more operating space

around Houseman yard. When they were all gone the Houseman YM was able to get his local switching done with out interference even though he did feel somewhat lonely.

Left: At Haynes and Zieglersdorf . L-R Murray Dent, Christiaan Werk, Wayne Hoskin, Jarrad Dent.

Right: Unicorn Timber and Mining Co Alco RS1 number 1000 heads up grade with the Kingston turn past one of the pump jacks creaking away as it pumps "Texas Tea" up from under ground at Wallage Wells.

Above: The Kingston switcher, Southern Central Baldwin SW 1200 number 122, in front of Mikolaj fuel & oil and Golden Valley canning co.

Above: One of the busier times at Kingston. L-R Christiaan Werk, Murray Dent, Tony Mikolaj, Yard master, and Jarrad Dent.

Left: L-R Christiaan Werk is driver of the West Wind west which can just be seen on the upper level going past Frenda Mine behind the operators. Murray Dent is coupling the loco on to the Houseman turn. Then Ken House and Jarrad Dent are checking the consist of the Houseman turn east. At the far right John Gayler is the conductor on the West Wind.

Left: The only train that did not fulfil its train orders was the grain train seen here behind Atlantic Coast Line GP7 number 109. The grain train had set out its consist of loaded box cars at Kingston for Murray Milling and is waiting to return to Houseman with a consist of empties.

Above: Staging at Barclay at the end of the session.

WORKING ON THE SCR

Above: Several years ago Peter King built the two oil pump jacks from kits the club had. Christiaan Werk has now installed both, the one above at Wallage Wells and the other just outside Werkendam near Wright Stone Cutting. Tony Mikolaj has powered this one so now the SCR has some animation.

Left: Christiaan has now added Woodland scenics realistic water to the, yet to be named, river near Wallage Wells.

Tony Mikolaj is making progress with the exhibition layout. Ken House now has droppers on the track laid on the first steel mill module. He has removed the module from the layout and has it the worksop upside down so that he can wire it and install LED strip lighting to illuminate the tracks at Atkins on the lower deck. Warwick Graham and Peter Kirkland have been organising the workshop and adding some new shelving. Warwick has a heap of short lengths of copper wire to recycle.

Right: Jeff Barclay continues to work on the AMR's rolling stock. He has decorated these hoppers for the SCR and weathered them.

The SCR needs more equipment lettered for the SCR to make it's story more plausible.

ON MY WORKBENCH
By Ken House

Right: I have donated these two Atlas GP7s to the AMR. They were both Santa fe 2707. Along with the AMRs decision to paint SCR locos solid black and decorate with yellow decals, Tiger stripes on the front and rear, the winged SCR logo on the side and numbers under the windows. I sprayed the black loco with two coats of acrylic matt black that I bought from Auto Pro. Something any one could do with a little masking and care. A number of locos painted for the SCR will make our roster of locos more believable. Next I need to fit them with decoders.

VIDEO PAGE   Please click on the images to view

Above: While an Ippinitchie Creek consolidation rests in the Housman ready tracks SCR switcher no 120 arrives with two boxcars from the industries seen in the distance.

Above: Ippinitchie Creek consolidation no 28 is setting two empty cattle cars in Houseman yard for the Houseman switcher to spot at the sale yards at the edge of town.

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Correction:

As advised by Gary Rose, just a little correction to David O'Hearn's article on the painting clip base, page 21 in the March / April 2023 edition of MainLine.

The website address is incorrect in as much as there is no 's' at the end of 'modernpets'.

The correct website address is https://www.modernpet.com.au

Direct link to the product;

https://www.modernpet.com.au/products/cardboard-cat-scratcher-boards-3-pack

100% NMRA Inc.-AR Club News
Adelaide Model Railroaders Inc.

A 100% NMRA Club in Division 6
Club News - Running Night **April** 2023
By Ken House (AMR Newsletter Editor)
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SCR OPERATING SESSION: APRIL 12

A number of members were away in holidays on April 12. Leaving us with a crew of four. This session was the last in the present sequence and had a number of trains added on to the regular sequence to make up a two hour operating session. The four of us just managed to complete the sequence but did not run any of the extra trains. Which was a good result. It means that re-staging for the next session should run to plan.

Most of the trains to be run this month were through trains. The only exceptions were, 329 grain extra west, which was about to depart Kingston at the end of the March session. Tony Mikolaj ran this train which travels from Kingston to Houseman setting out empty box cars at the Werkendam, Zieglersdorf and Houseman grain elevators. The other being the Ippinitchie creek turn west. Work in Houseman yard was almost complete, a cut of cars was in tack one ready for the Sweeper west. The only train to be made up was the Ippinitchie Creek turn west. Ken House began the session as Houseman yard master and added the cut of cars to the Sweeper west when Warwick Graham arrived with it.

Right: 102 the Southern Belle east at Lower Kerry

Then he made up the Ippinitchie creek west which Warwick Graham ran a short while later. John Gayler ran train 174 the reefer express Barclay to Redman. After finishing work at Houseman Ken House went on to run 102 and 103 the Souther Belle passenger east and west and 216 the merchandise train east, a through freight Barclay to Redman.

Left: Houseman Yard: Consolidation number 27 is backing up to train 395 the Ippinitchie creek turn west in track five.

Left: An F7 heads train 216 a merchandise train around the curves at Upper Kerry.

Below: Left to right John Gayler, Tony Mikolaj and Warwick Graham, the crew, enjoyed a cuppa and cookies after the operating session. Photo taken by

Ken House. This session proved that with only four operators a operating session on the Southern Central can be just as enjoyable as one with a full crew…………


Click on images below to view video

ADELAIDE MODEL RAILROADERS

Operating session

Left: The April operating session. Train 102 the Southern Belle east crossing Jollifees Jump.

Right: South Australian Railway Modellers open day. Their HO scale permanent layout. A 930 class crossing the steel trestle with a train of advertising M vans and tank wagons.

SAR 930 class
830 class
600 class
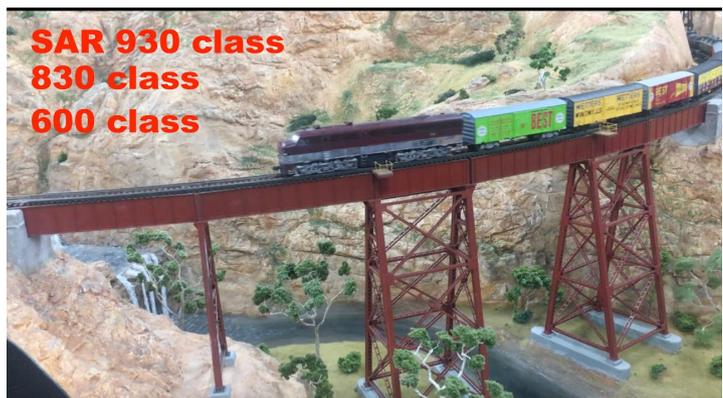
Divisional Reports

Division 1

Paul Rollason   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division1 Superintendent)
February 18th 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
52 members

4 On-Line

3 Visitors

AP Awards:
Brad Anderson - Association Volunteer

NMRA Regional Feedback:
Nil

NMRA Division 1 Feedback:
Queensland Membership; 354 current members, 2 new members and 1 member (Mr Bill Cox) passed away.

Next Gathering: 25th March following the closure of the Bundaberg Model Train Club and Hobby Expo.

Report:
The Div 1 February meeting was hosted by the Ipswich Model Railway Club. The team at Ipswich always make us feel very welcome. Not least because of generous lunch organised by Maureen Kathage.😊

The club roles out its modular N scale layout that seems to be growing organically with each visit to the Masonic lodge. It takes a lot of effort to set up this huge layout and the smooth running on show is testament to the skills of the IRMC.

The turnout for this meeting was 55 (including 3 visitors) and 4 members logged in via Zoom. This is the largest Div One gathering ***ever*** and the comments and feedback received was very positive.

Building Switches using Fast Tracks:

Al Cutmore and along with Peter Woodhead and Keith Waples from SDSR Model Train Association put on a practical clinic on the use of the Fast Tracks system to hand build switches (turnouts or points if you prefer) for your layout. The demonstration along with the detailed commentary was comprehensive. The tips given and the discussion of the pitfalls to be avoided was interesting and entertaining. Well done team.

The Amherst Train Model Railway Show:

Martyn Jenkins (Technical Director at large– NMRA) presentation on the show held each year Springfield was eye opening. 31,000 visitors, 6000 exhibitors on 620 displays. Simply put, this event is enormous. It is held in 5 separate pavilions.

Martyn was eloquent, informative, and provided many a useful comment on how to swap suitcase space from clothing to rolling stock. Note that thermal underwear is a must to deal with the seasonal cold.

It was interesting to hear about the variety (and price) of what was available and the sheer size of some of the layouts was impressive.

Martyn also briefed the group on the working of the NMRA board of directors and touched upon some of the initiatives that could flow. Australasian region members have been active at an international. Indeed, the current board has representation from around the world not only the USA. NMRA was conceived as a way to standardise the products that make it to market to promote interoperability and this remains a major focus along with generally [promoting the hobby.

From the Footplate:

Arthur Hayes history of his early experiences as a young man sent to Mackay to work the steam engines hauling trains during the cane season was fascinating.

Arthur was starting his career with Queensland rail and spent 6 months working in Mackay in 1967.

It was the time when diesel was starting to replace steam. He was 18 and just passed the fireman's exam. It allowed him to abandon his "Call Boy" bicycle for the footplate.

Apparently, it was not uncommon to find your bed under the stars or your tucker box up a telegraph poll. So we can assume that fun was had by all.

It must of worked out ok as Arthur and one other from the group made inspector later in their careers.

We learnt the difference between Blair Athol and other coal and what happens to runaway rolling stock and much, much more.

Arthur could have a career as an after-dinner speaker. Brilliant and most entertaining Arthur. We can't wait to hear more stories.

Show and Tell:

(Right) Craig Mackie demonstrated his animation of a camera flash suitable for both DCC and DC.

(Below) Richard Marshal showed his layout in a suitcase. A lot of detail is packed into this Z scale layout.   What a marvellous effort of what you can do in such a small space. And you can take it everywhere you go to get your train fix.

Greg Cass a long-term member who specialises in Qld 3'6"" gauge. He showed samples of the models he has built recently.

Charles Clarke showed a few examples of rolling stock and locos.

NMRA Business.

Hervey Bay trip – approaching the deadline to confirm the numbers for this weekend on 21-22 October 2023.

He reported on the activities of the team working on the STREAM initiatives including the development of a day's program to introduce young people to the hobby and build their practical skills. This program will be held 1st July 2023 at Duncan's layout.

N Gauge and HO scale gauges are available from Paul (in limited numbers at $30) as they are currently unavailable anywhere else as NMRA National in the USA have got no more and they are trying to find a new manufacturer.

Paul foreshadowed the membership survey and asked for a quick show of hands on a couple of key questions. The members at the meeting liked the format of the meeting and thought that arranging visits to layouts that could accommodate smaller visitor numbers would be interesting. This was tried with success in Gladstone. The 100% Gladstone club made 20 visitors from Div 1 very welcome.

NMRA Division 1 shirts ($35) and jackets ($80) are always available and the closing date for the next batch is 31/3/23.

As you might be aware, the NMRA (National) released Interchange on Discord some weeks back to allow all NMRA members a better channel to communicate. The registration process is a little convoluted. There is a link to a clinic to help you at Interchange Clinic Link

If you would like an online session to help, please contact Brad Anderson (bradley.anderson.86@gmail.com)

AP Awards:

Congratulations goes to Brad Anderson for achieving the AP Award for Volunteer. Brad has done and enormous amount of work behind the scenes over a number of years including being the NMRA AR web master, co-hosting NMRA-X and helping develop Interchange. Well done Brad and rightfully deserved.

Meeting Recording:

Please find below a link to the Zoom recording for the gathering. Apologies for the late start in the recording as I (Paul Rollason) forgot to hit the record button.

You can copy the recording information below and share with others

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/JIJ6pUq_RFawu2tTiZAhMHLuyDIcqasHPkwLtDNGZ5yjbVXhDdeVLv3tMYnaIAhS.gfS7IE5iCVF_wHe9
Passcode: Rsw1+8Kc

Next meeting Bundaberg 25th March immediately after the closure of the Bundaberg Model Train and Hobby Expo. A dinner has been organised following this. Please RSVP to div1super@nmra.org.au ....

Division 1

Paul Rollason   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division1 Superintendent)
March 25th 2023 Meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
37 members in attendance at a brief gathering following the Bundaberg Model train & Hobby Expo.
Awards:
John Lebsanft - 50 year Membership

Excursions/ Visits:

NMRA promotions table and clinics at the Bundaberg Model Train and Hobby Expo

NMRA Regional Feedback:

Nil

NMRA Division 1 Feedback:

Division 1 decided to build a Free-Mo layout for promotions (both general membership and STREAM program)

Next Gathering: 10am 15th April 2023 at Aurora Trains Unit 7 / 106 Wilke St, Yeerongpilly. This gathering will also have the NMRA Inc -AR AGM.

Report:

Traditionally in March, the NMRA Div 1 travels to Bundaberg to run a promotions table and to support the Wide Bay Burnett Model Railroad Club at their Bundaberg Model Train and Hobby Expo. This year was no different and as part of the weekend we had a small gathering on Saturday following the closing of the show for the day.

This was an opportunity for those exhibitors attending the show to also be a part of the gathering (many faces not normally seen at gatherings) plus it allowed us to engage with the local members.

Whilst the gathering was only 25minutes long, it was good to communicate with all those present.

Following the meeting, we all adjourned to the Old Bundy Tavern where 50+ members were able to socialise over an awesome meal. The night saw many NMRA 100% clubs (including the Wide Bay Club and their family) and some guests attend the dinner.

During the Expo itself, Division 1 had their usual promotions table with various clinicians showing off their skills and promoting the NMRA. Many thanks go to all those members who gave up their time as clinicians and ambassadors. One member (Tim Rollason) seemed to have every youth member that walked past take note of what he was doing. I guess there is something in having younger people on as clinicians if we are going to attract younger members to our wonderful hobby.

Numbers were well and truly down for the Expo but there was still a lot of engagement, and we hope to get 2-3 new members out of our efforts.

Division 1 members also kindly assisted the Wide Bay Burnett Club at the admissions desk as the Club has only minimal numbers and were stretched over the weekend. Well done to all those that kindly gave up some time to assist.

Gathering Notes and Updates: -
1. Div 1 Superintendent Report
    - STREAM committee
        - ∅ Had 5 meetings.
        - ∅ Al Wright now coordinator
        - ∅ Members, Al wright, Anthony Palmer, Bob Perren, Martin Dixon, Duncan Cabassi and myself
        - ∅ Pilot program/Proof of Concept is 1st July 2023
        - ∅ Will need 5-6 youth members and accompanying parents (2 to come from AMRA show)
        - ∅ Expression of interest open at April meeting.
        - ∅ Program now set and clinicians being approached.
        - ∅ Have 1 big sponsor on board and looking for others
        - ∅ Please promote to family and friends
    - New shirts and jackets have arrived
        - ∅ next round closes 31st March 2023 then 30th June 2023
    - HO and N scale NMRA track gauges
        - ∅ Division 1 has them available
        - ∅ Other gauges coming
    - Calendar out for 2023 is on the website
        - ∅ Changes to calendar
            - June – Layout tour of Brisbane South side
            - November – Layout tour of Brisbane North side

2. AR Report
    - NMRA AR Convention – 29 Sept to 2nd Oct 2023 – Rydges Parramatta NSW
        - ∅ Make sure you register now
        - ∅ Book accommodation early (very good rate for Sydney
        - ∅ Lots of very talented clinicians presenting
        - ∅ Program looks amazing
        - ∅ Convention dinner
        - ∅ Layout Tours

3. Membership
    - 348 current Qld members
    - 3 new members – Greg Cash, Peter James and Trevor Hodges
    - 4 memberships expired

4. AP Report / Awards
    - Nil

5. Awards
   · John Lebsanft – 50.17 years
   · To note Lynn Zelmer 60.17 years, Ken Leitch 57.17 years both Qld and 1 x 56, 1x57, 1x58 years in other states.

6. Events for the Year
   · Hervey Bay – 21-22 Oct 2023 $175pp twin share
      o Coach ex Brisbane
      o Accommodation
      o Dinner at Boat Club
      o 5 layouts
      o Gathering at Merv Bagnall's residence
      o Visit to M&K Models
      o Partner's program
      o Spots still available
   · Other future regional events
      o Casino and Lismore March/April 2024
         § Brad Anderson assisting
         § Bus ex-Brisbane
      o Bowen Oct 2024
         § Opportunity for a Whitsunday holiday as well
         § Visit one rather large O scale all hand built Victorian layout
         § Arrange own transport to Proserpine and then mini bus from there

7. Division 1 Freemo Layout
   · Division 1 decided to build a Freemo layout for:-
      Ø Promotion of the Stream Program
      Ø Interactive demonstrations at shows
         · Live building of layout
         · Cut down version of how a module is constructed
         · Hands on by public
      Ø Attracting new members including younger members
      Ø Will see this become a U-drive layout
      Ø Layout can be used for promotions in shopping centres etc
      Ø Currently looking for sponsors

8. Future Gatherings
   · 2023 calendar up on NMRA website
   · Seeking people to run clinics for 2023

Next gathering will be held at Bob Perren's place, 39 Norbiton Street, Zillmere on Saturday 20th May 2023. Please RSVP to div1super@nmra.org.au …….. ◢◤

Division 2

Stephen O'Brien   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 2 Superintendent)
November 2022 meeting:

November was the last meeting of Division 2 for 2022.

Fourteen members turned up to the home of John Gillies who was our host.

Feedback from the last ARC meeting was presented to members and noting the 2023 NMRA Convention at Rosehill on the October long weekend.

A number of Division 2 members attended the New England convention and comments were positive that the next convention in two years may be worth attending.

Various items for Show n Tell were presented and more details and pictures can be seen in the November issue of The Flimsy on Australia Region website.

John Gillies provided an interesting presentation on "Grain Handling" that covered the early days of bagged grains with much manual labour to the various bulk hopper rolling stock loaded with minimal personal. An insight into how the railways handled grain.

John's presentation could be considered for a wider audience, maybe the 2023 convention at Rosehill.

Members enjoyed afternoon tea and a time to catch up with all the usual banter.

Thank you to John and those members who were able to attend….......ꙮ

Division 2

Stephen O'Brien   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 2 Superintendent)
January meeting:-

Before Covid and its restrictions Malcom Risby was our regular host along with his mother Marlene for the January meetings. Life seems to be slowly getting back to normal and in 2023 Malcom and his mother Marlene welcomed Division 2 members to the first meeting of the year. It was like old times with good roll up of members, seventeen and a visitor, potential member.

Welcome to new member Tony Roberts who came up from Bombala for todays meeting.
We hope Tony will get the most out of his membership and make contact with those Division 2 members closer to home.

Ross Balderson MMR, newly retired on the day before the meeting will have even more time to pursuit his modelling interests, OMG !

Show n Tell, greater coverage can be found in The Flimsy and also on the NMRA AR website.

The members adjourn to Malcolms layout room, a triple bay garage with aircon for his N scale empire.

Restrictions have allowed Malcom to progress the layout and while it looked like a construction site members could look at some interesting layout building.

Malcolm's mother made sure we had plenty to eat for afternoon tea and we all enjoyed her hospitality.

Thank you to Malcom and Marlene for hosting our first Division 2 meeting for 2023.......

Division 2

Stephen O'Brien   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 2 Superintendent)
February meeting:-

Our host for the February meeting was Steve Walker and the weather was perfect for gathering outside under the shade of his garden pergola. Sixteen members turned up for the meeting.

Welcome to new member Tom Dowling who is one of the founding members of the Canberra Monaro N Scale Group CMNSG. I hope Tom will get the most of out of his membership.

Division 2 welcomes the return of John Prattis who has spent the last ten years in Adelaide and a member of Division 6 during that time.

On a note that surprised many was the news from John Prattis that Brad Hinton had suffered a mild hear attack earlier in the week. Thankfully Brad has had bypass surgery that has been successful with more procedures to follow. A visit to Woden Hospital on Sunday found that Brad had been discharged. They don't keep you long in hospital !

armchairmodellerdownunder.blogspot.com will give you an update of Brad's activities and his health. We all wish Brad a good recovery during this time.

Name Badges for members are being organised by John Gillies, see his email for details.

Intechange, the latest venture for members from head office USA has been taken up by at least three members from Div. 2.

Ben Featherston told the meeting that becoming an Interchanger took a bit of effort but he got there in the end along with John Gillies who said he was close. Ian Barnes is another who will Interchange !

The 2023 NMRA RoseHill Convention, members have an idea of accommodation costs and await the Registration and Banquet costs. This is not a budget event and it will be interesting to hear from the convention chairperson at the next ARC meeting.

Show n Tell, see the submissions to The Flimsy for more detailed information.

One item raised was FreeMo, another Standard has been created in Australia, this is not an NMRA standard.

Our host, Steve Walker's presentation was Wheels. How do you keep them clean, bogies and track too. As expected everyone had different ideas and there are likely to be even more that have not surfaced. An endless topic for discussion and trialling.

Members had the opportunity to run long trains on Steves N scale layout and take in the fine detailing and weathering, enjoy afternoon tea and the talking that comes at the end of a meeting.

Thank you Steve for hosting our February meeting…..

Division 2

Stephen O'Brien   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 2 Superintendent)
March meeting:-

Fifteen members attended the April meeting hosted by Jack and Maren Child at their rural property at Yass NSW. Members can from Canberra area, Junee, Bombala and the South Coast.

Agenda items for information and discussion with members were,

Australasian Region National/Regional Convention 2023 at Rydges Rose Hill.

Badges and Shirts, I cannot remember seeing a Division 2 member sartorially attired.

Interchange, a number of Division 2 members have signed up and are active.

Some articles in Division 2's newsletter " The Flimsy " are worthy submissions to the MainLine magazine.

There was some lively discussion on various issues from the members.

Show n Tell, a more detailed coverage of members modelling can be found in the March issue of The Flimsy and additionally in Rob Nesbitt's Blog, buildingwagga.blogspot.com

Our host Jack Child gave a presentation on the big screen detailing his modelling and research for his Walcha Road NSW based layout. There were some humorous parts to the presentation and some great photographic coverage.

Jack's presentation would make a great clinic for a convention or a worthwhile article in the MainLine magazine.

Meetings are a good place to sell off or give away stuff that may not be of use and a table provide some freebies and items for sale.

The meeting adjourned to Jack's shed, air conditioned and insulated for members comfort, looking at the layout that was the focus of the earlier presentation.

Trains running on DCC, scenery and some lever frames that made point throwing like the real thing.

Members enjoyed afternoon tea provided by Jack and Maren before heading home.

Thank you to our hosts and those members that travelled a distance to attend the meeting……..

Division 3

Peter Kendall   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 3 Superintendent)
(Report provided by Peter Kendall & Rod Hutchinson)
February 19th meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

11 members

5 Visitors

Report:

A bright sunny day greeted attendees at our February meeting held at the home of Paul Richie in the rural city of Ballarat. A relatively central location for those living anywhere

around in rural Victoria. 11 members, 3 partners and 2 guests attended a pleasant summer's day. Travellers came from as afar as Horsham, Castlemaine and, Mooroolbark.

This was our host's 1st meeting since the death of his partner Kathy last year.   Paul operates in a variety of scales with his principle genre, the US rail system.

Paul however, is an extensive structure builder and some of his creations were on display.

New member, Graham Stockfelds attended this meeting. On behalf of the NMRA Inc.-AR, welcome Graham. Long distance member, John McTaggart from Horsham, was a most welcome addition to attendees bringing some new interest to the meetings.

Show and tell was quite prolific with a range of gauges, scales and themes. An extensive range of US stock from new member Graham Stockfeld, HO VR outline by John McTaggart from Horsham amongst others.

A very pleasant sunny day ensured a very relaxing barbeque by all. Our superintendent presented Paul with his thank you plaques.

Models on display:

Graham Stockfeld: HO US outline Cars & Loads.

John McTaggart: HO VR Rolling Stock and an O sheep wagon

Mick Bennie: Garden Rail Logging Equipment.
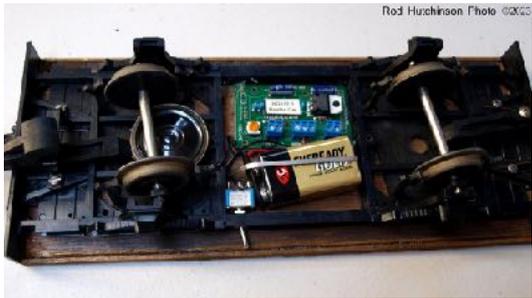
Paul Richie: HO Buildings.

Division 3

Peter Kendall   (NMRA Inc.-AR Division 3 Superintendent)
(Report provided by Peter Kendall & Rod Hutchinson)
March 20th meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

14 members

3 Visitors

Report:

- ·   Grant McAdams funding raising for the Royal Children's Hospital.
- ·   Welcome to first-time attendees Jack and Glenn along with a video screening of their home layouts.
- ·   Info concerning upcoming Australian Narrow Gauge Convention.
- ·   Inspection of Peter Mac's beautiful O-Scale Narrow Gauge layout.
- .   Viewing the models and references provided for display.

An overcast cool day greeted members at the home of our hosts, Peter & Michelle MacDonald in Bacchus Marsh. Peter is one of our our most prolific modellers and has offered professional model construction in the past. He will be often be sighted building rolling stock and locos at exhibitions around Victoria.

Members came from as far afield as Alexandria, Belgrave and Ballarat.

Show and tell was unusually small but of high quality. Of interest to VR Narrow Gauge Modellers would be Mick Bennie's Puffing Billy NQ wagon 1:48 decals.
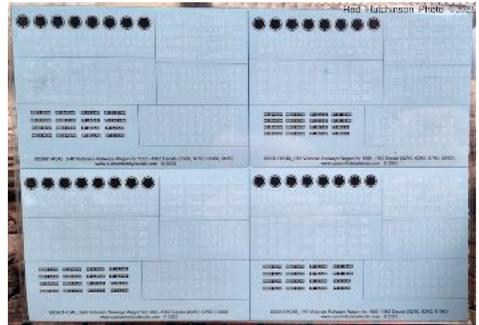
Some beautiful structures were presented by Paul Richie
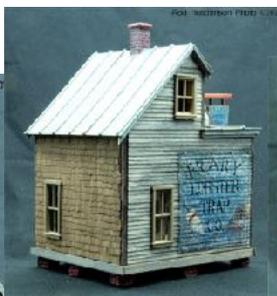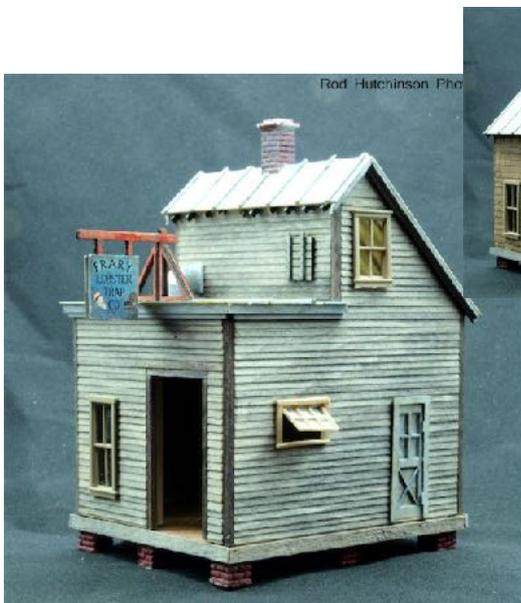
and Peter MacDonald.

Two new members attended this meeting.

On behalf of the NMRA Inc.-AR, welcome Jack Gringlas & Glenn Brooks.

An overcast, though pleasant day ensured a very relaxing barbecue by all. Our superintendent presented Peter with his thank you plaques.

Models on display:

Peter MacDonald: O scale Outback Model Co Post Office.

Mick Bennie: O scale NQ Wagon Decal Sheet

Paul Richie: HO Buildings.

Bob Backway : presented an article on WiFi throttle control as an alternative to the Blunami and other Radio Control devices. *Info at http:// www.wifitrax.com/*

There is no meeting in April because of the Australian Narrow Gauge Convention being held over Easter……..M

Division 4

From Frank Godde, MMR®   (NMRA Inc.-AR Div4 Superintendent)
March 16th Meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
8 members
0 On-line
0 Apologies
ARC Report:
Nil

NMRA Regional Feedback:
Nil

N Show and Tell:
Rod Tonkin brought an SW1500 HO diesel, and an English electric locomotive.

Dave brought his next model for his Achievement Program which is a caboose. Apart from some plastic lids from a Kadee box, the caboose was fully scratch built. He has weathered it very nicely to make it look old and run down. Once again, his 3D printer was busy producing other parts for the caboose

Division 4 Clinic:

The upcoming AMRA WA exhibition was again discussed at length. Frank informed the members on the progress of the display. l

Report:

We had a very pleasant meeting at Michael Lee's home. He lives North of the river, which is a typically "Perth" expression. Michael had set it all up outside but it was a bit too hot, so we moved inside and all were happy.

Frank distributed a draft advertising paragraph to be included in the AMRA (WA) brochure for the upcoming exhibition to be held 3-5 June 2023. Once everyone had read it, it was accepted to be sent in for publication. We also obtained Dave's permission to use some of his photos to be sent in with the screed.

Frank gave an update on the NMRA Inc.-AR layout, which will be displaying 4 different railroad modelling scales. The RAS has reduced the hours allowed for setting up the exhibits, so we will all have very limited time to get this done on the Thursday before the exhibition. The shirts and jackets have been ordered, so hopefully, they will be available in time

Frank received an email from the Editor for the NMRA magazine, to say that Dave's story on his "Scratch Building in G gauge" has been accepted for future publication. This is a great achievement for Dave.

We then discussed the Achievement Program in general. It is very pleasing to note that with only 13 members, we have some strong contenders interested in completing their personal MMR certificates. Rod queried the non-acceptance of a commercially made point for his efforts for the "Civil Engineering" certificate. Frank explained that the point had to be scratch built which Rod felt was unnecessary.

Rod mentioned that he had put an "expression of interest" to present a session at the convention to the organising committee for the NMRA Convention in October 2023, but that he hadn't had any response as yet.

Next meeting will be at Dennis Turner's home at 62 Balwina Road, Greenfields on the 16th of April at 2.00 pm. This is going to be a "paint fest" to paint the faceboards and legs of his layout black. So, wait for my email with the information. ……..◥

Division 5

From Philip Sharpe   (NMRA Inc.-AR Div5 Superintendent)

April meeting, Period March 1 to April 5:-

Conventions:

2023 Texas Express NMRA National Convention

Chris Draper from the City of Sails Model Railway Club (CoSMRC) will attend this convention. I do not know of any other Division 5 members who will attend.

2023 AMRA

This will be in Palmerston North, New Zealand over King's Birthday Weekend (June 3 -5). There should be a good attendance from Division 5 members. Duncan in his role as the president of the NMRA Inc. Australasian Region will attend the convention and is interested in meeting as many Division 5 members as is reasonable.

2023 NMRA Australasian Regional Convention

I have advertised the convention in the last three issues of Division 5 monthly newsletter *The Bridge*. So far, no Division 5 member has told me they will be attending the convention.

2024 NZAMRC Convention

This convention, which will be the first NZAMRC convention since the NZAMRC was reformed last year, is being jointly hosted by the Western Districts Model Railway Club (WDMRC) and the CoSMRC.

Most attendees at past NZAMRC conventions have been NZR modellers. I expect the same to happen with the 2024 convention. However, most members of the local organising committee are American modellers. I expect this will lead to some changes in the administration of the convention.

Club and Group Activities:

American Central Model Railroaders (ACMR)

The ACMR held an operating session at Steve Thomas's layout on March 10. There is a detailed report written by Steve Thomas in Highball # 353. The report included the following comment;-

'Man do I like those car cards, it only took about 20 minutes to check and reset the car cards following the Thursday night op session, car cards can't be easier to set up before an operating session.'

The ACMR's next gathering was at Hutt Valley Model Railway Club in greater Wellington. The ACMR members examined the major improvements to the layout since the ACMR's last visit and tested the improvements by running trains.

City of Sails Model Railway Club (CoSMRC)

The CoSMRC members decided, because of work commitments, to postpone the March meeting until early April. This will mean the club will have two meetings in April.

The meeting in early April was held at the WDMRC. All but one attendee was and still is a member of the local organising committee for the 2024 NZAMRC convention, and some of the meeting was spent discussing the convention. The rest of the meeting was devoted to examining the recent electronic upgrades to WDMRC's HO layout and discussing the CoSMRC's operating sessions.

Progress on AP certificates:

Michael Hill, president of the CoSMRC and WDMRC, had a two and half page article published in the February issue of *The Bridge*. The article was entitled "Tips and Tricks". This article combined with the clinics Michael has given at national conventions means Michael is well on his way to completing his Author's certificate.

James Kelso has met most of the requirements for the Electrical Certificate. The main task before him is to complete and submit the Statement of Qualification (SoQ) for the certificate. Kel Sherson published a summary of the SoQ he used for his electrical certificate in the March issue of *The Bridge*. James plans to use this summary as a guide for his SoQ.....

<u>Division 6</u>

From David Orr   (NMRA Inc.-AR Div6 Superintendent)
<u>March meeting:-</u>

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
12 members

AP Awards:
Nil

ARC Report:
Nil

NMRA Regional Feedback:
See comments in report.

NMRA Division 6 Feedback:
See comments in report.

Report:

12 members gathered at Bob Bevan's for our March meeting.

The Gathering

David welcomed all to the meeting, and presented Bob with the Meeting Host Plaque.

On ARC matters, David advised the group of;

1. the number of exhibitions/train shows held in Queensland during February.

2. the decision to retire and destroy all DVDs created by copying from video tape due to the degradation in quality.

3. the intention of transferring the DVD library to Youtube format and making this available to members only on the NMRA Australian website.

4. that the AGM will be held at 11:00am AEST on the 15th April 2023 and be hosted by Div1.

5. that the Membership form needs to be updated to include credit card CID, an increasing requirement and spouse details as safety measure for next of kin contact.

David also advised the meeting that the topic of shirts and sweaters and the logos used, was raised in the ARC meeting. If members care to look on the nmra.org website, in the Regions section, they'll see many newsletters published by many Regions and Divisions and those newsletters will show that many Regions and Divisions have their own logos. A few of those logos are attached.

After some discussion, the ARC agreed the Divisions create their own shirt / design of their choice and proceed accordingly. The topic was then discussed at our meeting and although there was some interest during our meeting, it's a case of "watch this space".

Treasurer, Ron Solly, advised the meeting of our current financial state.

AP Asst Manager, SA, Ray Brownbill, advised the meeting that he presented the AP Certificate - Scenery, to member Christiaan Werk. Christiaan is a member of the Adelaide Model Railroaders as well as the NMRA and has done an immense amount of excellent work at their clubrooms. Our August meeting is planned to be at the Adelaide Model railroaders clubrooms so if you attend that meeting, you'll have a chance to see Christiaan's efforts.

At last month's meeting, David raised the topic of NT Junction, Division 6's exhibition layout, which is used to encourage participation by exhibition attendees. David advised the meeting that we needed to make sure that NT Junction was in a state fit enough to be used as intended. Ainslie Brittain offered his help and stepped up to the plate by fitting decoders to 2 of the locos to be used. He now has 3 more that he's doing. Thanks Ainslie!

On the subject of AMRE (Adelaide Model Railway Exhibition), Ron Solly advised the meeting that the plans had now been sent out to exhibitors and the setup times will be coming soon, along with a safety checklist which every exhibitor must comply with. All electrical items must be tested and tagged beforehand.

David has sent out the AMRE roster but only 3 "volunteers" have put their times in so far. The deadline for this is May 3rd. If you don't get on the roster by then, you'll miss out.

Round the group

For the last few weeks, Ron Solly has been designing a new control panel for his S&D Railway. During this time, the S&D has been out of action so operating sessions have temporarily halted. Ron tells us that he's been having a great deal of "fun" with relays, some that work electrically but only after having some mechanical assistance from a finger!

Ray Brownbill has been hosting the "missing" S&D operating sessions at the Wildcreek Railroad. In between all these sessions, Ray's found time to expand the scenery between Orrville and Solly Junction on the Wildcreek Railroad.

David Teague has acquired 2 new Japanese Self Defence modules for his TT layout.

Casey Tonkin has inherited a new train room. Woo hoo, Casey!

Neil tells us that the benchwork and track laying are complete.   Wow, no mucking around there!


 Rowan Lee told the meeting that he's finished the N scale layout he was building for his grandson. It's been accepted so well that his grandson's friends now want him to build one for them!

Here's Rowan's report -   Great Northern - Coal Creek Railway Update

I have an update to the N scale Coal Creek railroad that I was building for my Grandson's birthday in November of last year. As per the attached photos I managed to finish scenicking it with layers of Woodland Scenics turf varieties, static grasses and trees.

I also built frames and a valance which I painted black around the layout with lighting and finished it off with some vinyl lettering compliments of my wife's Cricut vinyl cutter spelling out the name of the Railroad.
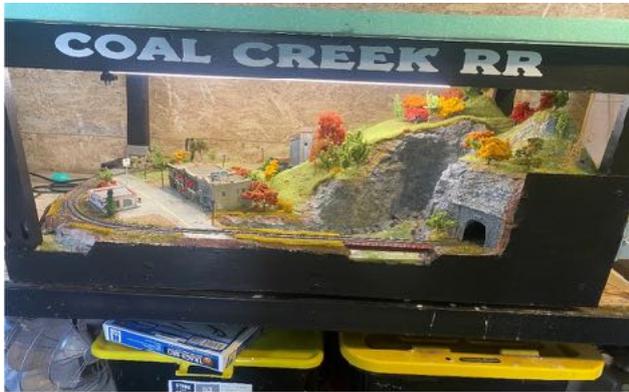
I'm also happy to report that my grandson loves his present and all his mates now want one too 😊

Modelling Non-Stinky Rivers and Waterways.

One aspect of modelling scenery that I think a lot of people are afraid of in case their scene gets ruined is modelling rivers and waterways on our layouts.

There are so many commercial products in the marketplace from manufacturers like Woodland Scenics, Scenic Express, etc to old school methods using two-part resins.

Some of these products are good, they achieve the desired results but some are a little toxic with vapours that can stink and linger in train rooms once a pour has been completed and others can find pinholes in scenery bases after pouring that will seep out and end up on train room floors ending up in tears.

Well I have come across a low toxic, non-smelly, reasonably cheap way to create a good looking river or waterway in any scale.

I'm not sure if anyone has come across a You Tube creator who goes by the pseudonym of "Boomer Diorama"? This Canadian gentleman is actually a well-known diorama and model builder that has won many awards and has worked as a professional modeller in Museums. He is very much into building shelf layouts and using his knowledge and skills has built two very highly detailed and realistic HO scale layouts named "Glover Road" and "The River Road".

One of the facets of his second layout, "The River Road" is that he really needed to work for the location that he is modelling. The area is a waterway with a train ferry terminal and he needed the shoreline and water effects to fix and look correct to set the scene.

He didn't want to use commercial scenery products or resins to model water as he has allergies to some of these things, so turned to his knowledge of artist products and in particular the "Golden" range of artist products for their non toxicity, no odour and how good the range of products works well together.

Thinking about these points with my modelling of the Coal Creek railroad I thought about my grandson and his siblings probably wanting to touch the water to see if it's real and I didn't want to potentially cause any harm to them. I did some research into the "Golden" range here in Australia and found that an Artist Supply store here in Adelaide (Port Adelaide) stocks quite a good range of their products encompassing modelling pastes, a VERY good Matte Medium and a variety of Gels that Boomer Diorama speaks of in his videos.

For modelling water, he uses two products; Golden Soft Gel medium and Golden GAC 500.

He mixes these two products into equal ratios of 50/50 for the area required and mixes them slowly and I emphasise slowly, in order to prevent bubbles forming.

Once mixed using a brush , he applies it to his scenic base and works it around using a brush and waits for it to set and

dry completely. The beauty of these products is that if you want to add things like snags and fallen timber later to add to scene, this material can be manipulated easily and reset.

I took a leap of faith and purchased both products (shown above) mixed them to the suggested ratio, poured it, manipulated it and let it set and the attached photos below are the result. The best part of it is that this material doesn't smell at all and is non-toxic.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Ainslie Brittain has nearly completed the crane he's building for John Prattis *(below)*. It's 98% completed, he says. He needs to make some very small pulleys and is looking for someone with a small lathe. If you know of anyone that has a small lathe, let Ainslie know.

He's also been trialling different types of cord for use as a cable.

And in amongst the crane building activity and fitting decoders to NT Junction locos, Ainslie has fitted lights to a German Railmotor which he tells us is very nicely

detailed and runs very smoothly.

Rod Stewart has been progressing with his wiring but is currently having an issue with getting power to the track. That offered the opportunity for lots of "advice" for Rod!

Bob Bevan's layout is progressing with the help of Ray Brownbill and Ron Solly. The trackwork and wiring must be almost finished because Bob has now put all the rolling stock on the layout.

Vern Cracknell showed the group a tap press which, he says, makes a great G scale wheel press.

In one of his inventive moments, Vern

looked at a small baked beans tin and thought, this might make a G scale water tank. So, after filling the empty tin with water and freezing it, with the aid of a stout pair of gloves and his trusty Dremel. he cut off the smooth parts top and bottom of the tin, leaving only the corrugated section. After painting and mounting on a wooden tank stand, it makes a very credible water tank for his new Uphill Logging exhibition layout.

The meeting concluded with afternoon tea and a look at Bob's layout.

Next month's meeting will be 15th April at David Orr's, 53 Rawlings Road, Modbury North......M

Some photos of Bob's layout.

Division 7

John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)
Regarding 4th Quarter 2022 meetings:-

It has been a very busy year for our division with the end of covid restrictions and recommencement of our monthly meetings. We have also seen train shows coming back, a Mini Convention, and now planning in place for the Region Convention to be held on the October long weekend in 2023. We are also building our membership, with an increase in our division of 38 members over the previous year.

2023 will also see a change in how we run our meetings. This includes hiring halls a few times a year so we can setup the Division Free-Mo Modular layout, with hands on/

chance to run your trains, along with our regular meeting, a BBQ lunch and layout tours throughout the afternoon. As many of our members' homes cannot accommodate a large number of people at once, the concept is to have a number of layouts available for viewing on a colour card basis. The first of these meetings will be held on the Central Coast in February. Gerry Hopkins is kindly organising the hall, and layout tours with Central Coast members, and I will have all the details out to you by the end on January.

On August 13th, our monthly meeting was at Bob McNairn's place. Thank you, Bob and family, for your hospitality. Bob's layout is in progress, and it was great to see what he has going on "behind the scenes" before he gets scenery underway.

A bit about Bob's layout:

Prototype - the layout is based on lines in Maine USA that connect Portland, Brunswick, Augusta, Lisbon Falls and Rockland. These are represented on the layout. I visited the area in 2004 and at that time trains were run from Portland by Pan Am, which interchanged with the Maine Eastern at Brunswick for service to Augusta and Rockland. ME was also operating heritage tourist passenger service pulled by FL9s. Since then Maine Eastern lost its concession (granted by the State of Maine - the line owner); was replaced by the Montreal, Maine & Atlantic, who in turn were bought by Canadian Pacific. As well, Amtrak now runs to Brunswick and Pan Am has been bought by CSX! Change is a constant even on a backwater.

The layout is HO with most track Peco code 100. The layout is designed for operation, and it is intended to operate in accordance with the 2008 version of the NORAC operating rules, which applied to the prototypes. I will pass a copy round so visitors can have a quick peek. The majority of switches are controlled by Modratec lever frames, while Tortoise point motors are used for the remainder. Train traffic includes both Amtrak and Maine Eastern heritage passenger trains and freight is interchanged at Brunswick. This includes cement, steel, propane, municipal waste containers and others.

I enjoy building the layout and running trains & hope the layout will be of interest to members. I have certainly enjoyed and found worthwhile my visits to other members layouts. Looking forward to meeting you at this or other meeting or at an exhibition.

The 10th September meeting included a layout tour of the Southern Highlands. Starting at Graeme Barnes Gunnedah layout, Phil Andersen's Canadian pacific, Garry Glazebrook's Newcastle-Fassifern layout, Peter & Lachlan McGuire's Dogbone Creek and

Milwaukee Road layouts, Steve Pettit's D&RGW layout and George Paxon's Traction layout where the Division meeting was hosted. Thank you to everyone involved who organised the event.

The variety of layouts was fantastic, and showed layouts in all different stages of completion. I personally find that very interesting, as one gets to see the nuts and bolts of how the layout was constructed, trackwork, planning, wiring, dcc and so on, before a lot of it is hidden by scenery. Below are some photographs of the various layouts visited.

On the 8th October, our meeting was hosted by Rob & Meredith Petersen. Thank you for your hospitality. Rob's layout is N Scale USA.

Once again, those pesky floods caused a bit of havoc on the Hawkesbury, which prevented me getting there. Randall Jones did a great job running the meeting in my absence. At present I don't have any photographs to share with you, however I will be in touch with Rob to have some ready for our next newsletter.

The 12-13th November was our Division 7 Mini Convention. After months in the planning, it turned out a resounding success. Thank you to everyone who was involved, and to all those that made the trek to Bowen Mountain to attend.

We had hands on layouts, clinics, trade stand and a layout tour of my 1st Arizona Subdivision. The weather was kind to us as well. The rather quaint little hall in the grounds of Bowen Mountain Park set the scene with its rustic look and feel. It sits right at the top of Bowen Mountain, surrounded by gums, oak trees and lush green park grounds. The view from the park stretching right across greater Sydney, making it the perfect backdrop to our convention.

Those that attended were treated to unlimited morning & afternoon teas, lunches and a 3 course dinner held at the Village Kitchen in Kurrajong, five minutes down the road from the hall, on the Saturday evening.

Below are photographs from the Convention courtesy of Ruth Garbutt.
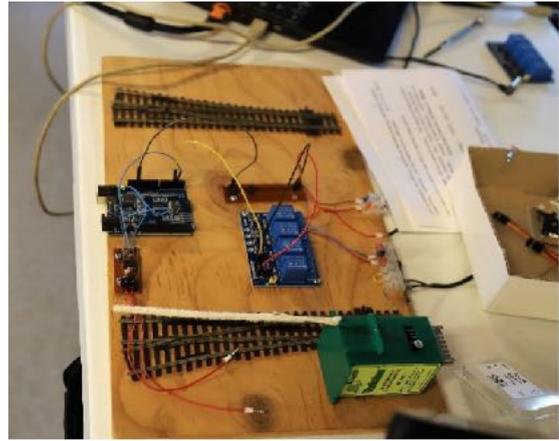
On the 10th December, we finished off the year with our division Christmas party, held at the Village Kitchen, Kurrajong. Shane our host, put on a three course meal for us with roast turkey and roast pork mains in his delightful restaurant, with a view looking over Sydney. The restaurant art works are all on display from local artists. The November dinner had a number of Australian scenes, December, sketches of native birds. Thank you all who attended, I hope you all had a great time.

So now with the year coming to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you all again at our first 2023 meeting 14th January, at the Illawarra Model Railway Club, Fowlers Rd, Coonawarra……◪

Division 7

John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)
January 14th 2023 meeting:-
Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
15 members *(including partners)*

Report:

Another month gone, and a great meeting at IMRA (Illawarra Model Railway Association) Club House. 14th January 2023

 The guys at IMRA made us all feel very welcome, put on a BBQ and salad spread, as well as the opportunity to bring trains to run on either their DC or DCC layouts in HO and O scale.

NMRA members in attendance: 15 including partners. Whilst a bit of a drive from the Central Coast, Blue Mountains and Sydney suburbs, it was well worth the trip.

 Special thanks to Jonathon and the IMRA team. Looking forward to doing this again in 2024!

Below are some photos from the meeting:

Some very nicely done scenery and trackwork. Some very impressive trains brought along to run too. Notably, Rob Barker brought along a beautifully weathered Soo Line freight train with some outstanding detail. There were also some lovely Australian, British and other USA outline trains.
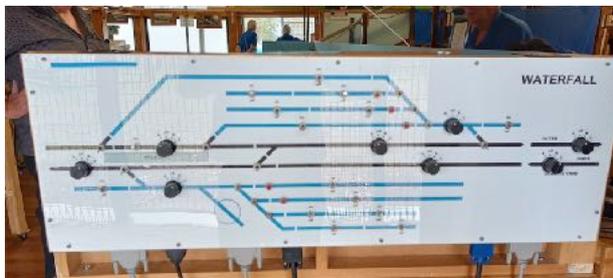
News:

Gerry has been very busy organising and promoting our next meeting on the 11th February 2023. He has arranged a hall, and 6 outstanding layouts to tour after the meeting. It sounds like it will be a fabulous day out.

As we have a hall available to us, If you would like to bring any of your models you have been working on along, please do so. Use our meetings to grow your knowledge, seek advice from other members. Bring your trains and enjoy the day model railroading. I will be bring a long a few modules that you can use "hands on" to test/play trains with your locos and rolling stock. (HO DCC) There will also be discussion on the modular concept and adapting standards.

Looking forward to seeing you all there.

Rob Petersen has also mentioned looking at constructing some N Scale modules with the same track plan as our HO scale ones. Great for our N Scale members to enjoy and great concept for those who would like a layout but have very limited space at home!

Central Coast Layout Tour 11th February 2023 10.00am to 4.00pm

Meeting centre is at Scout Hall Park, 48-52 Narambi Road, Buff Point, there will be tea and coffee available and some modules you can operate.

John Dever –3 Walker Road, Wyoming.

"Wombat Hollow" HO DCC layout with a double deck , dual track , NSW with helix and plenty of switching.
Runs faultlessly, partially scenery but has some very interesting buildings and detail parts and vehicles on the layout.

Dennis Clarke MMR – 100 Buff Point Avenue Buff Point.

"Barmedman Branch" HO DCC layout with plenty of steam locos. Many unusual locos from NSW. Main industry is grain shipping. There is a long branch line with other industries and a round house. Many of the locos and rolling stock are kit built.

Rowan Mangion – 9 Elouera Avenue, Buff Point.

"The Main South" HO DCC layout with multi levels. A large layout with double level and two peninsula's. All 425 turnouts are hand laid. More scenery has been added since this photo was taken.

Spencer McCormack – 15 Morris Crescent, Bonnells Bay.

"The Short North" HO DCC layout with plenty of operation. Follow some of the branch lines and see plenty of different terrain. You might even see a thunder storm in the hills. The heavy trains do helpers at the rear to get over the hills.

Trevor James – 88 Timber Road, Mandalong.

"UP/SP Mandalong Sub" N DCC layout with long trains and plenty of switching in a 40' x 20' room with great scenery. See some of the great "named" passenger trains on the long runs. Most of the trains are diesel hauled but there are a few steam hauled trains.

Gerry Hopkins MMR – 15 Narara Crescent, Narara.

"Great Northern Railway" HO DCC layout single line operation though the grain fields of Northern Montana in 1959. The layout can run with "just" steam or diesel and often a mixture of both. All locos have sound and can be operated 'close' to prototype.

In the pipeline:

We have a fair bit going on this year. Below is our Division 7 Calendar to date. There are a few spots to be confirmed, I also need the June & September date filled.

Date	Venue
14/1/23	Illawarra Model Railway Club
11/2/23	Buff Point Scout Hall+ Layout Tour
11/3/23	Sydney N Scale Model Railway Club
21/4/23	Mid West Model Railroaders, Dence Park Epping
6-7/5/23	Epping Model Railway Club Show Rose Hill
6/23	
8/7/23	Hall Hire Blue Mountains + Layout Tour
12/8/23	Bundanoon Club House Southern Highlands Layout Tour
9/9/23	
29/9-2/1	National Convention Rosehill
11/23	David Howarth Dural
12/23	Christmas Party Lunch

If you know or are a member of a club that is happy to host a meeting for the NMRA, please get in contact with me so we can make arrangements. As our division grows, and member numbers at meetings increases it is not always viable to hold a meeting at a member's residence. Some partners may also be a bit overwhelmed with numbers. Hence the new concept of a hall hire or meeting at a club house or museum, followed by a layout tour. The strategy was quite successful in the Southern Highlands last year.

Are you working on your AP Awards?

If so, please use our meetings and Division 7 Facebook page. Our division has many resourceful members who can assist you and guide you in your quest. Feel free to ask questions, bring your work to meetings for constructive critique. Our February meeting is an excellent opportunity……..◥◤

Division 7

John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)
February 11th 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

35 members in attendance

Report:

I would like to give a warm welcome to our new members:

Will James, Joe Calipari, Ian Smart, John Thomsett, Phillip Hurst, Des White, Steve Allworth. Looking forward to seeing you all at our meetings, online, on our Division 7 Facebook page and at our convention.

The 11th February meeting was held at the Buff Point Scout Hall, followed by layout visits with Gerry Hopkins, John Dever, Dennis Clarke, Rowan Mangion, Spencer McCormack, and Trevor James. *(ED - Read a description about the layouts toured in the January Division 7 report above)*. Members also brought along models for display, and the Division 7 Module concept layout was setup at the hall.

The weather was very warm and humid, so the formal meeting was kept to a minimum. There was much interest in the displays and the layout, and our biggest post Covid turnout yet with over 35 members in attendance. Thank you to everyone who made a contribution to the meeting, especially Gerry who organised the hall and the layout visits for us, and of course our layout hosts.

Some photos of the February Meeting:

Forestville Show Stall:

Our division booked a stall at the recent Forestville Model Train Show. The show was packed for most of the weekend with visitors. Our stall was particularly popular with the kids getting to have hands on Al Harris' switching layout and my own modular layout, oh and of course Thomas made an appearance.

A special thank you to everyone in our Division who donated some of their valuable time to man the stall, keep the layouts going, and spruik the features and benefits of the NMRA to prospective new members.

The stall turned out to be very successful, with convention flyers hot off the press, and new members coming on board, it was also a great time to catch up with members who came along to enjoy the show……..

Division 7

John Arrowsmith (NMRA Inc.-AR Div7 Superintendent)
March 11th 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:
?? members in attendance

Report:
Our 11th March 2023 meeting was kindly hosted by the Sydney N Scale Club. Again, we had a significant turnout for the meeting, the club putting on lunch for us and allowing us use of one of their rooms for the formal part of our meeting.

The weather was kind to us, being a pleasant day. The Club also offered the opportunity for our members to run trains on their extensive N Scale layout. I highly recommend members go visit the Sydney N Scale Club if you have not been before. For more information, contact https://sydney-n-scale-model-railway-club.business.site/?m=true There is a large layout downstairs and several more upstairs

What's Coming Up

23/4/23	Valley Heights Rail Museum	17b Tusculum Rd, Valley Heights NSW 2777	10am-4pm
6-7/5/23	Epping Model Railway Club Show	Rose Hill Race Course	Fri-Sun
10/6/23	Hills Model Railway Society	Building 8 Balcombe Heights	10am-4pm

Wanted:

Support/Volunteers for the stall at Rosehill show. Please email me if you can assist.

On other matters:

Can I get a show of hands of those that would be interested in assisting in running a Bunnings BBQ to raise funds for the division and trigger some interest in the NMRA at the same time. We should be seeing a bit cooler weather the next few months and thought it an excellent opportunity to get out there and promote us. On a typical Saturday or Sunday, an event like this could raise around $1000, which would assist us greatly in covering costs of hall hire and financing the costs of clubs and members hosting our meetings throughout the year. It could also perhaps allow us funding to purchase materials to build modules, etc. and be a great avenue in with Bunnings to score some sponsorship from their organisation in the future. More importantly, it will greatly help in keeping our members costs down.

Module Specifications were sent out in a separate email this week. A fourth module is under construction at the moment to be ready for the Rosehill show next month. While still maintaining the track heights, ends legs, etc. It represents how you can push the boundaries and be more radical in a Free-Mo module, with a curve and plenty of depth in the scene.

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next meeting……..

Some photos of the March Meeting:

Division 8 / 9 Northern Rivers

Ian West   (NMRA Inc.-AR Div 8/9 Northern NSW Superintendent)
April 21st 2023 meeting:-

Meeting Attendance and Apologies:

16 members
5 Apologies

NMRA Division 8/9 Feedback:

Col South opened his layout to members who enjoyed running trains.

Next Meeting: Sunday 25th June 2023 at 1.30pm at the home of Ian and Wendy West, 4 Amadeus Place, North Boambee Valley. You will be welcome any time after 1.30pm and afternoon tea will be provided. RSVP to westmond@internode.on.net or my mobile 0429 099 470

Report:

Sixteen of our members enjoyed a ninety-minute running session on Col South's large layout before we convened inside for our meeting and supper.

Business arising from our last meeting was the swapping of meeting dates between some members. The next three meetings will be as follows:

25th June: Ian West's 4 Amadeus Place North Boambee Valley at 1.30pm.

20th August: Keith Morrison's 26 Manning Avenue Coffs Harbour at 1.30pm.

22nd October: Paul Baker's 1 Palm Tree Drive Boambee at 12pm.

'Tunnel Portal' by Graeme Tampion (Right)
Graeme built this diorama for the New England Model Railway Club Exhibition held at Armidale in October. The dioramas were only 30cmx30cm.

Allan Amos enjoyed running trains on the layout at Col South's. (Left)

Paul Baker, Bill Baggett and fellow members during the running session. (Right)

Ian West presented Col South with the thank you plaque from NMRA (Left)

Al Harris filled us in on the NMRA AGM results and reminded the local secretary that the *Annual Report* was due.

Wendy asked if all members were receiving their *Rails at Rosehill* updates. Can anyone do a presentation at the convention? Are you planning to go? Contact Randal Jones on 0409 743 254 or randall@nmra.org.au for more information…..

Division 10

Pat Britton   (NMRA Inc.-AR Div10 Superintendent)

Regarding March / April meetings:-

There has been no report received for the March / April period from Division 10….

Model Train Market Place

On the NMRA Inc.-AR Web site, you will find a link in the 'Members Area', where any financial member who wishes to Sell, Swap or Give Away any Model train related items from their Private collection, can advertise those items.

The link to the location is as follows: https://nmra.org.au/market-place/

Should you wish to make use of this member service, then the procedure and rules that will apply for advertising your items, are located on the Web Site.

What's in the Next Edition

- *When a club layout has to be moved it can be either a positive or negative situation. In the case of the Sydney N Scale MRC's Cascade Union Club Layout, it was all positive, as described by Eric Coughlan.*

- *Gary Sardoni has built many neat Downloadable Card Buildings, which are very prominent on the NMRA Inc.-AR 100% Toowoomba Club layout. In this article, Gary outlines how to improve these structures.*

- *There will be <u>at least</u> one article which will show a member's layout which is available to be viewed on the 'Layout Tours' part of the 2023 Convention later this year.*

- *In the third part of his four part series, Ted Freeman recalls some of the more interesting adventures he had while being a Trainee Engineman during his time with the NSWGR.*

plus a lot more informative reading as well......