



MARCH 2006

Next Meetings

1st April: Denis Lane, Springwood. As a preview go to www.nmra.org.au/Layout_Tours/Layout_DCC.html

17/18th June: Toowoomba Train Show

8th July: Ken Leitch, Landsborough

9th September: Graeme Emery & Avon Aitchison, Macleay Island

4th November: Mark Ward, Toowoomba

(All meetings start at 1.30pm unless advised)

Celebrations at Buderim

Saturday 11th February was an important date for Division 1. Garth Frazer, our first Master Model Railroader received his plaque and citation from Gerry Hopkins, the AR's Achievement Programme Chairman. Gerry made the trip from Gosford to do the presentation.

To wish Garth well there were about 30 members and friends in attendance. Garth spoke about how he became interested in MR and how he started his Copper River layout. He told us of the humidity problems and remedies. Moulds and jigs used to make rolling stock parts for this 'O' scale pike were displayed. Garth said that he has always been more interested in making RR models rather than modelling Railroading.

His engineering background has been called upon to make a saw bench for his lathe, his own designed and built slow motion switch machines and many other things around the RR.

Garth uses several materials for grass but likes the texture of very fine sawdust dyed and cooked in the microwave. This process tends to give permanency of colour.

"Show and Tell" allowed Denis Lane to show us the actual track plans of Darling Harbour in Sydney in the days when it was a real working "museum" of commerce and transportation rather than the sterile precinct that it is now. John Lebsanft showed us his scratchbuilt QR molasses wagon, a very unusual car. He also showed for interest an old government sign stating the official speed limits for vehicles in the early 1920's. There were different limits for pneumatic tyred vehicles, solid rubber or steel tyred vehicles.



Garth with his MMR Awards. He is now MMR Number 359 and all members congratulate him for his achievements.

Bob Brown showed us 4 new additions to his already considerable library, 3 books on the Sante Fe and 1 on the Southern Pacific. Finally Roy Berryman showed us a very useful wooden three drawers unit from IKEA which is the ideal size for storing locomotives and rolling stock. The gathering was very friendly and it was edifying to see our first MMR honoured for his achievements.



Garth manhandling a scratchbuilt RS-3 on his Copper Creek RR with admiring other Division 1 members looking on. Photo by Mark Ward.

It is hoped that after the visit of Gerry Hopkins and Garth's "elevation", other Division 1 will make an effort to gain points towards their Achievement Program standing. There are a few members who aren't too far away from that now and perhaps a concentrated application will get them "over the line".

A further report of Garth's MMR appears in Scale Rails March 2006.

Naming Rights

Up until now, no one has come forward with a suggestion about a new name for this, our Newsletter. So we will continue for the moment with "Newsletter". However if you have an idea, please let me know.

Display Layout Progress

We have accepted an invitation for the Caroline Pacific Lines, our display layout, to exhibit at the Toowoomba Show this year 17/18 June. That means

we have to work hard to finalise and gremlin proof the layout.

Recent rain slowed things down because where we are building it, in Bob's car port, isn't weatherproof enough to take the covers off. At this time all of the jumpers and bus wires are in and have been tested. Gauging problems are have been fixed. Layout edge scenic profiles are in and the river is well on the way. Both bridges have been completed.

Below: Most of the front from operating side including the river and bridge area of our display layout. Photo by Glenn Stevens.



NMRA Clubs

The Northern Rivers MRC is a 100% NMRA Club. Logan & District MRC and the Caloundra & District MR Assoc. are in the process of becoming a NMRA club.

For your information and if you are travelling the Northern Rivers MRC have open house on 19 Mar, 16 Apr, 21 May and 11 June. They will exhibit at the Sandgate PCYC on 4/5 March and at Darling Downs on 17/18 June. They also have a club meeting every Monday night from 7pm.

Early Newsletter

As we have Garth Fraser's MMR to report and the forthcoming visit to Denis Lane's layout, this Newsletter is a little early. Considering our outings are early in even months for the next two months, the

Newsletter will be issued mid-late odd month prior to those outings.

Queries

Q1. To start the Query section off; I have two yellow Borden decals from Champion and would like to use them appropriately. With one I will make a red butterdish tank car and with the other a green butterdish tank car. Does anyone know the shades of red and green these tank cars were?

Here's Another Ten Questions for You

1. What railroad was known as the Feather River route?
2. The Monon ran mostly in Indiana. What was its full name for most of its existence.
3. Which railroad in the U.S. ordered the last American (4-4-0) to be made in America?

4. In what year was Trailer Train (TT) founded to acquire and manage piggyback flatcars?
5. How many “cab-forward” steam locomotives were built for the Southern Pacific?
6. The reporting marks SFRD were used on what cars belonging to what railroad?
7. In the golden age, what railroads served the NMRA home city Chatanooga?
8. What railroads served Reno, Nevada?
9. During WWII 2-8-2 locomotives previously called Mikados were changed away from the Japanese inference and called what?
10. What is a Drovers’ Caboose?

Answers to Last Issues Quick Quiz

1. Canadian Pacific.
2. 13 tons.
3. Northern Pacific.
4. Gilsonite (an asphaltic substance
- Uintah RR - You-in-TAR RR).
5. Florida East Coast.
6. The Montour.
7. Ten.
8. Because they were made to an order for the Russian Government during WW I. After 857 had been shipped the order was cancelled by the incoming Bolshevik government, leaving 200 completed locomotives in the USA.
9. “C”.
10. The Baltimore and Ohio.

Freight Fleets

Over the last decade or so there has been a trend to have more accurately modelled rolling stock. This is especially so in the freight cars. There has been a constant introduction of new cars in expensive but accurate kits, more articles in the MR press like RMC’s Essential Freight Cars by Ted Culotta, many kit-bashing articles and great part products like etched metal bits, etc. This has seeped into our own fraternity here. These days, some of our earlier efforts look quite dull if they started out as “shake-the-box” kits and built as instructed. How often do you feel like filling in that 15 minutes or so spare time before dinner or before you go out and while you wait for your spouse to do his/her hair and paint lips, or use up that 15 minutes between dinner and the first TV you want to watch?

These are 15 minutes of time that you should learn to cherish! Organise yourself so that on your workbench there is always an old Athearn or similar piece of rolling stock needing a facelift. Have a few necessary spare parts at the back of the bench.

In 15 minutes you can lift off a coarse plastic roofwalk and thin the edges down so that it doesn’t look like they are 6 or 7 inches thick and re-install them.

In 15 minutes you can install four pieces of 2” x 2” Evergreen as slope sheet supports on a hopper. Okay that’s not exactly the cross-section or size of supports but it sure looks better silhouetted than none.

In that short space of time you can easily add a couple of pieces of fine wire and No.10 stationery staples to the underside of a freight car to give the impression that your brake rigging does work.

Another one; heat up the soldering iron and soften gondola and hopper top edges just enough to put a few outward dents in them.

You could, if you keep yourself organised, have small number and letter decals on hand to quickly put lettering on the ends of freight cars. Or paint the wheels a rail brown.

Or on boxcar’s, use small section Evergreen to replace door slides making them look much nicer.

By the end of a year your rolling stock fleet will look decidedly smarter. None of these little projects, and there are dozens of others, need you to fire up your airbrush or get yourself into some work that requires a big clean-up.

I like to shine the wheels of rolling stock lightly using a brass rotary brush in the Dremel. One of my pet hates is moulded on handrails. In 15 minutes you can neatly cut of all on one side of a boxcar. The other side can be done on the next 15 minute break. You can drill the holes for wire handrails in 15 or so minutes but don’t hurry or broken drills will result. Don’t worry too much about doing boxcar ends as most of the time these will be hidden in a train.

Now you are getting the picture. Weathering with chalks or similar materials can be done in 15 minutes and the car put aside until you have time to fix this with Dullcote. By the time you get around to using your airbrush, you will probably have several items to be done and that saves on time and effort cleaning the airbrush.

You can have 15 minute, give or take another quarter hour or so, projects lined up ready for work. Re-numbering cars is a good project to start and now you can have the correct numbers on them from ORER, two editions being available from NMRA HQ USA.

Some of this work may require a minor paint touch up. Be warned. Wear an apron if you are ready to go out to dinner and your spouse is still titivating. You don’t want to finish up with the contents of a bottle of Floquil Reefer Yellow down your front.

Concerning up-grading cars, I can hear some of you saying, “Why?” Well if you’ve never tried it I can assure you there is a definite satisfaction in knowing

that each piece of rolling stock is closer to the prototype than a stock shake-the-box. And once again, you are personalising your layout as each upgrade has your dabs all over it, metaphorically only, I hope.

Unusual Source of Information

Good usable information and materials can be found in unusual places. I like to peruse boat chandleries, Spotlight, art and craft shops, etc. for materials I can use in modelling.

My wife picked up a book at the Brisbane City Council Library that is fabulous for the structure builder whether scratchbuilding or just painting a kit.

It's an American publication by Claudia Nice titled "Painting Weathered Buildings in Pen, Ink and Watercolour" and published by North Light Books, Cincinnati, Ohio. There are various buildings depicted from all over the U.S. with the sort of textures we like in modelling.

Of particular value is a piece about painting white buildings, which really aren't just white. What makes this book so usable is that the formulas for mixing the paints are given. You could easily adapt these formulae into your Floquil or other mixes. Indian ink is often mentioned and the results depicted. Highly recommended!