



September 2006

Next Meetings

9th September: All Gauge MRC, Carina

4th November: Mark Ward, Toowoomba

(All meetings start at 1.30pm unless advised)

14/15 October: National Convention, Niagara Park (Gosford Area), NSW

Visit to the Shasta Pacific of Ken Leitch

About 23 modellers attended the July 10th meeting at Ken Leitch's model railroad, the Shasta Pacific at Beerwah. There was the usual "show and tell" which included Phil Perry's DCC equipped N scale Burlington Zephyr, Ross Evan's selection of US timetables. Glenn Steven's urged us to consider Hundman's CTC Board magazine as a source of scenic details and colours. Bob Brown showed his On30 2-8-0. Others showed trees from grape stalks and mentioned methods that make life easier for we modellers. Bob Cuffe's Overland SP dormitory coach in two-toned grey with quite a story attached to it was shown. When Bob with two other Brisbanites visited US in 1999 they wondered if they would get a chance to see this car and compare it to their own detailing and painting efforts. They were convinced that their painting was probably "not quite the right shades of grey". On being lucky enough to ride that very coach, they managed to meet the actual owner of that coach himself. Naturally they asked him about the veracity of the colour. He reply floored them, "I just got paints mixed up to match the Floquil colours!"

After a session on the layout and a wonderful afternoon tea, Glenn announced that he would have to step down as the co-ordinator of the Display Layout SIG for 6 months due to work pressure. He also urged us to look for an alternative place to work on the layout as Bob Brown must by now want his garage back! Bob suggested if we organised ourselves we could probably almost finish the scenery on the layout in two full weekends and he would be amenable to that being done at his place.



Ken Leitch enjoying watching this SP diesel set with passenger train on his Shasta Pacific.

Electrical

At our meeting at Ken Leitch's, someone showed mini PCA plugs and sockets that will fit the standard NMRA DCC concept. These are also excellent for loco to tender electrical coupling and have many other uses in MR as they are very small. This is not an advertisement but a service to members. These are available from Prime Electronics, 22 – 26 Campbell St., Bowen Hills, Brisbane.

Answers to Last Issues Quick Quiz

1. Texas then Illinois.
2. A temporary RR track used to detour traffic while the permanent railway is being repaired, re-constructed or is obstructed, preventing its use.
3. A stretch of 78.86 miles on the former Seaboard Air Line.
4. In some hilly regions wire fences are electrically connected to the signal system so that if the fence is pushed out of line or broken, the signals are set to permit the train to proceed at a restricted speed prepared to stop short of obstructions.
5. The 12 mile pile trestle forming part of the Lucin Cut-off which carried the former SP across the Great Salt Lake.
6. The 7.79 mile Cascade Tunnel of the former GN in Washington State.
7. The Frenchman, Nicholas Cugnot.
8. The NYC No.999 at 112.5mph in 1893 near Batavia, NY.
9. A 4500hp coal-burning steam turbine electric locomotive of the N & W placed in service in 1954.
10. 1945 on the Burlington.

Another Ten Questions for You

1. What railroad herald was a simple "S" in a circle?
2. In railway terms in the US, what is dunnage?

3. What does I.c.I. stand for?
4. Did American RR units operate any railways in Australia during WW II?
5. What is the highest altitude reached by any railroad in the US?
6. What is the lowest point reached by a RR in the US?
7. What RR used to have a "Minute Man" on its herald?
8. What was the nick-name of the Ontario and Western?
9. On what type of freight car would you see the reporting marks UTLX?
10. What does PCC stand for in relation to the famed streetcar?

Where's the Emphasis

There is no doubt that locomotives are attention gatherers. For my own part and I know for many others, if it's steam, even more so. When you try to research some RR subjects, it can be annoying to find all the photos available of a certain line are all locomotive photos. Over the years they have certainly caught the interests of photographers. The other elements of a model railroad rarely seem to get as much attention as the locomotives. So on models we see locos with very fine detail but set in scenes of lesser detail, pulling rolling stock of lesser detail and often operated with lesser authenticity. Why not improve these aspects a bit at a time? Look around your layout and think of where people would take a short-cut when walking to your stations or around the engine yard. Model the track they would leave by lightly spraying your short-cut a lighter shade of the base colour. Don't have rough texture here as it would be worn smooth with the passage of feet. While you have that airbrush out, darken the pale colours on buildings around door knobs and where the doors are sometimes kick in to open them. Use paler shades on dark buildings. Use some "I" section brass to make a rail crane at your loading docks. Nothing flash, just a short piece coming out of the door with a clobbered up pulley made from a couple of bits of Evergreen with a rope (linen thread) going through this pulley.

Another modeller might place a lot of emphasis on bridges, or natural scenery. I've seen some beauties with forced perspective by having buildings smaller as they get closer to the backdrop. A most effective ploy is used to emphasise the distance by spraying background scenery very lightly with a pale grey. This is particularly effective if the spray is increased slightly as the scenery gets further away from the viewer.

We all know modellers who like to emphasise their bridges. They do a wonderful job choosing the right bridge for a particular location and manage to use several different types along their right-of-way. Bridges can make an interesting scene divider that eases one's interest ever so gently from one scene to another.

We are seeing more modellers place their emphasis on operation. Usually this happens when many other aspects are well on the way to completion. Operation is the culmination of all of the effort of building a model railroad. I don't think there are too many of us who don't enjoy a good operating session. But how much more enjoyable that would be if a few things were explained first. A map of the layout is a good start. Our layouts, with all the best designing in the world, still criss-crosses itself in a bait tin fashion which can be very confusing to a new operator. Also, what are some of the operating rules of your layout? When do trains need a caboose? Are switchers used only for switching or do they occasionally make mainline runs as way freights over short distances? Is time expected and allowed to make brake tests? Before a session starts these things should be explained to operators and this can be done a few days ahead or on site before the clock starts.

It seems to me that those with the best layouts are people who can shift their emphasis from one aspect to another. This is a pretty handy talent as it prevents boredom and it gets everything up to scratch eventually. Besides it makes running on your layout a special pleasure.

Display Layout

After the Toowoomba show our display layout was packed up while we had a slight break then the working bees started again sorting out the things we learnt in Toowoomba and progressing further towards its eventual completion.

The under bench wiring has been stapled up to minimise any wires being broken. Sharp edges and screw and nail points have been dulled to prevent injury. The super-elevation has been removed on the corner modules. This was causing some lifting of outer wheels on pulled rolling stock and the transition area into flat straight track caused a problem with some locos particularly with 6 wheel trucks. This super-elevation looked good but it was too high on the outside of the curves. We also thought that the effect was lessened by the fact that the two tracks were spaced quite some distance apart. We had used strips of 1/16" balsa under the outer edges of the ties but probably should have used a length of jumper wire or something about 1/32" or a little less.

Paul Skehan is now co-ordinating work on the display layout and it is presently stored at the same premises as the UP Club. This has been the location of the two

NMRA DIVISION 1 (QUEENSLAND)
(www.Zelmeroz.com/anmra-1)

working bees we've had since Toowoomba. These working bees are for the moment, every three weeks and the next one is scheduled for Sunday

17th September. There's still a lot of work to be done so anyone wishing to contribute will be welcome to turn up. Bring you own morning tea and lunch.

Possible Weekend Outing

Like most state based clubs, our Division 1 is based around Brisbane. This gives us a feeling of "the guilts" about how we can better serve our country members. Glenn and Denis made a trip to Innisfail to see member Bert Toogood a couple of years ago and it's about time we considered another far reaching trip. John Lebsanft of Bundaberg has invited us up to see MR layouts, look at their railway museum and take in railway features in the area. It's a reasonably pleasant drive to Bundaberg through beautiful Childers or you could go by Tilt-Train. Just after Childers on the left is the Apple Tree Creek band rotunda. Now there's a structure just calling out to be modelled and it would be just as reasonable on an American layout as on an Australian one. If sufficient interest is shown we will organise it for next year.

Plea for Articles

I know that most of you are doing some research to better present your MR. If you think any of this is useful to other members, please send in an article so that I can publish it and other members will benefit. For example, we buy Walther coaches that have sheets of decals in them with the numbers and names of coaches. But how do we get the right decals in the right place? You search your library of magazines and books. It could happen that someone else is looking for the same information. Here's your chance to publish what you have found. It could be useful to others. Likewise, you may be in a quandary about which decals to put on your coaches. Try asking other members through this Newsletter and you may get the answers or you may be pointed in the right direction. All of us have junk boxes. These are 'goldmines'

of material we hope to use some day. Or will we? If you need some obscure bit try asking other members here. You could be lucky. I'll start off by asking members if they have any Peco ties from flex track they don't want? We need some for the display layout. Besides helping your colleagues you are experiencing one of the great advantages of being a member of NMRA.

Congratulations

It's time for some congratulations. Each month I peruse the Bulletin Board in Scale Rails to see how our Australasian Region members are doing on the world stage. It's not very often that we see someone's name from our local group there. However in the latest August issue it's pleasing to see not just AR

member's names but Division 1 of AR people being official recognised for their skills.

Golden Spike Awards have been handed out to:

Bob Brown

Denis Lane

Master Builder – Structure Award have gone:

Denis Lane

Master Builder – Scenery Award to:

Denis Lane

Mark Ward

One other I must comment on is Master Builder – Structures and Scenery to Rodney Smith in Division 7 because I have had the good fortune to see this wonderful layout thanks to John Saxon. This is a layout where all aspect of modelling fit and the whole appears so believable.

CALOUNDRA SALE AND DISPLAY

Saturday October 7th 10am – 2pm

North St., Caloundra (opp. Rydges).

And for those wanting to go further afield - to New Zealand:

Hamilton American Model Railroaders

Mini Convention 3-5 November at Glenview Club, Peacocks Rd., Hamilton, N.Z. For further details contact: Sheryl Hart, 10 Smith St., Raglan, New Zealand.

Please keep us informed of e-mail changes of addresses so that we can better get this Newsletter to you.