



March 2007

Next Meetings

31st March at Alan Harland, Oxenford.

12th May at Bob Brown, Bray Park.

Jun 16/17 – Toowoomba Train Show

Aug 11 – Macleay Island layouts

(All meetings start at 1.30pm unless advised)

Farewell

On behalf of the Display Layout SIG, we said farewell to popular Canadian member, Roy Berryman on Sunday 7th January. Roy brought with him much enthusiasm and knowledge that we all appreciated.



Roy flanked by Division 1 Superintendent Glenn Stevens and Display Layout Co-ordinator Paul Skehan holding our farewell presentation to him, a Kato BN business car.

We wish him, Jessica and children our best wishes on their return to Canada and hope that we haven't seen the last of them. Roy stated that he wished to remain in contact with us in the future and for our part I'm sure everyone here is pleased to know we have a faraway friend we appreciate.

Display Layout

We are still working on the display layout, recommenced again on 14th January. Lessons learnt in the past are being put into action and we believe that when finished all of these improvements should make the thing a joy to erect and run. We progress slowly but that's pleasant because I've never known modellers to be short of conversation on their favourite topic.

There is a lot of chat in amongst all of that hammering, drilling, soldering, gluing, etc. I hear people say, when doing some job on the layout, "That's given me a good idea of how to do that job on my own layout".

All of the frogs are wired to the slide switches that operate the turnouts. The tubing and connecting pins for joins at module ends are in progress and being done a lot more accurately than previously. Some scenery work has been started and we've decided to make the trestle a ballasted one as that eases the maintenance of the track bed in that section. This is because the roadbed doesn't need changing to a thinner piece at the bridge. This should be more durable for a layout that is moved often. Some jobs are repeats but are being done much more carefully and not so rushed. Others are new directions and hopefully doing things in a way that will stand a lot of movement but achieve the results that we hope for.

Comment

You're a model railroader.

That means you have a reasonable collection of tools especially fine ones. It also means that you probably can use them with proficiency. You also have a workshop or workshop area that contains timber, all sorts of wire in many thicknesses, putties, glues, electric tools maybe a lathe and round half-hard brass lengths. You probably have many colours and types of paint and what's more you can mix them very accurately to match a chip of some obscure colour. You aren't too bad with electrical circuitry either.

Got the picture? You also have family, friends and neighbours with almost none of these advantages nor the skills to use them, but can sniff out your workshop and your abilities like a pig finding truffles in the French forests.

These people are out to spoil your modelling time by asking you to fix Aunt Dolly's clock radio, daughter Maisie's connecting cord from the PC to the printer. How about a daub of paint on the car where a stone chipped the bonnet? And you haven't told them anywhere near about all of your talents yet. Thank God!

We are likely to see all of these chores as a pain but we do them anyway; and of course we never charge them a cent. You can get some mileage out of all of this. I'm fond of announcing that my Unimat lathe has saved this household a fortune over the years. Such that washing machine bearings have been fixed promptly without

having to empty the machine and it cost almost nothing; except for the original pile of cash the lathe cost! But each job it does, lowers the cost of each individual piece. That must bring the next job cost down to about 0.001 cents.

Well how about getting your due in full. Show them where all of this gear and your talents are directed to. Explain how model railroading has taught you so many skills that are great fun and useful around the household (that will get spouses in!).

Show them the interesting and the finer points of your hobby. You could force them to accept you as a very well adjusted hobbyist rather than a nutter who plays with trains.

You may, with considerable skill get a convert to our great hobby, and as I said before, "That's got to be good for all of us". Lots of people are looking for hobby time these days.

And don't think of it as a male thing; you'd be surprised by the number of women I know that are fascinated by the scenic aspects and one or two by the possibility of making structures.

If none of these things come to pass, you may bore them to tears and suddenly find that you have more hobby time and fewer interruptions.

Some Reading Matter

I have just received from Chattanooga the new NMRA publication "The Postwar Freight Car Fleet" by Larry Kline and Ted Culotta.

What a wealth of information there is in this hard cover book. The Introduction explains the make-up and the reason the book is written. In particular the authors validate their freight car coverage by ensuring that their treatment reflects the percentage of each type of freight car in the American fleet in 1947.

The book is really a photographic record of the diversity of freight car with captions that give some account of the logic behind each particular car. There are a lot of surprises to be found throughout this book. I noted that that flash Reading herald with the red background was extant in 1947 and is not a later indulgence as it seemed. I recently bought a gondola with that logo in a sale and was about to backdate it to my era by using something a lot simpler. Don't have to now!

It is interesting to note the variations in lettering for cars of the same road in photos taken in 1947. The maxim seems to be, "Don't be too dogmatic about how a car was lettered at any particular

date". Another surprise is the number of boxcars that seemed to use Murphy corrugated ends and the variety of corrugations in those ends. Yet there aren't a lot of models with these Murphy ends.

As most of the photographs are dated, we now know that obsolete equipment, for example vertical brakes staffs, carried on long after its stated official discard date and it was used in interchange.

If you are at all interested in the accuracy of your freight car fleet this book is a must. It can be cross referenced with information obtained from Official Railroad Equipment Registers reprints from NMRA, plans and articles in the various magazines and information from the internet very well. As modellers of the American prototype, this is another great tool to get your freight cars right.

I also ordered the 2006 Clinic Book (Philadelphia) at the same time. Like clinic books of the past, it is full of information on a variety of aspects of our hobby. In my own case, I even got some answers to long standing questions about the Borden butterdish milk tank cars. There are sections on Animation and Electricity, Cars and Trains, General Modelling, Industries and Prototype Research and Modelling. It all makes one thankful to be in the NMRA.

Outing with Live Steam

On Sunday 11th February, we paid a visit to the live steam group at Warner, the Queensland Society of Model and Experimental Engineers.

There was a good roll-up of members and wives and friends and as it turned out, we didn't even have time for a formal meeting. There were so many locomotives in action during our visit, mostly steam, that it was impossible to round up members.

Although a hot day, we found good shelter at a few picnic tables under shady trees and were so taken up with the trackside action I doubt that very many would even remember what they ate for lunch! Prominent runners were a couple of beautiful BB181/4 QGR steamers, more QGR in a PB15 and a C16, NSWGR 3807, a "Rocket" type and a vertical boilered logging loco that ran all day. Yes there were a few non-steam types but they are difficult to remember for an old steam freak like me. This is one of those places where you go expecting a 2 hour outing and stay for 5 hours. So be warned.

Easter Events Interstate

A couple of Easter events have been brought to my notice. Firstly the **Exhibition of Australian Model Railways 2007** run by the Hobsons Bay Model Railway Club. For details check: www.hbmrc.net.

Secondly, there is the **8th Narrow Gauge Convention** in Melbourne. For details check: <http://users.bigpond.com/nawlins/ngconvoz.htm> or contact Laurie Green at: lauriegr@bigpond.net.au.

Attendance is by pre-registration only and closes 26th March.

UP Club Buy and Sell

This year's dates for the popular UP Club buy and sells are;

Tuesday 20th March

Tuesday 17th July, and

Tuesday 20th November.

These are an opportunity to get rid of your unwanted items and perhaps buy up on items you need. But they are also great social occasions. So be there as you are sure to get something out of it.

AMRA Train Show

The AMRA Train Show this year will be on the long weekend in May, Saturday 5th May to Monday 7th May. Besides the social event here you get a chance to see what so many others are doing and perhaps make a purchase or two of items not normally seen in the shops and the usual items will be available.

Scale Rails

Check out NMRA Scale Rails (The old Bulletin) as it is much improved and may be a help to your modelling.

Address Changes

Finally, this is a plea for you to please keep us informed of your e-mail changes. Your Newsletter editor has little enough hair already without needing an excuse to pull out more!