

NMRA DIVISION 1 (QUEENSLAND)
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MARCH 2009

Coming Meetings

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April 4th Bob Brown – 10.00am

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May 2/3/4 AMRA Train Show

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June 13/14 Toowoomba Train Show

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July 18th Graham Emery

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August 15/16 Lynn Zelmer (Rockhampton)

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September 19th Justin Walker

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October 3/4/5 Sydney Anniversary Convention

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November 21st Ian Wellings

All meetings start at 1.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Visit to Colin Upton's

Our visit to Colin Upton's home and layout resulted in a good turnout of Division 1 members. First of the formal business was the presentation of Visit Certificates to Charles Clarke representing All Gauge MR Club, Bob Brown and Denis Lane for their generosity in hosting layout visits during the recent NMRA Convention in September. A plaque was also handed to Colin Upton for his hosting of our visit on this day.

The "Show and Tell" first item was a superbly detailed model by Grahame Davis of his scratchbuilt O gauge pile driver for the Mosquito & Coal Creek RR.

Bob Brown showed a MTH SP "Daylight" DCS 4-8-4 with sound and DCC. Impressive.

Paul Skehan had a kit-bashed and repainted Rivarossi E-8 brought up to modern NMRA standards looking resplendent in its unusual CB & Q livery.

Bob Deakin showed photos of his RR's new location and also showing how he built a gully on the layout.

We all enjoyed the sausage sizzle and an opportunity to run trains on Colin's yet uncompleted layout. Thanks to Col for being a generous host to us all.

Bill Dunn's Superb NSW layout

On Saturday 28th on February we were fortunate in visiting Bill Dunn's layout based on NSW practice. Bill lives at Clayfield and the real QR runs right at his back door. However due to a high wall preventing visual distractions, we were able to get a short meeting concluded, chaired by our Superintendent Glenn Stevens.

Bill's layout is fairly well packed into a downstairs room and has very well made and running NSW rolling stock and appendages. There were several trains running at all times and one got the impression of Broadmeadows, Newcastle or Woolongong from the busy layout with suitable backgrounds.

I don't know how many points there are on Bill's layout but it must be pretty high and all ran faultlessly on the day. Bill was ably assisted by Peter Kennedy and between the two of them and their adroit handling of their NCE DCC electronics I never noticed a hitch and I did watch for a long while.

Having now seen this layout I hope we get a further chance of becoming familiar with it with more visits in the future.

How I Got Started
By Ross Evans

How did I get started in model railroading? I was given two books in 1945. Both were "Chums Annuals" 1919 and 1929/30. In these were articles about railway models by Church of England parsons who practised this hobby between Sundays. Brass locos on wooden rails powered by clockwork mechanisms were mostly made by hand. They also wrote books with photos of sleek locos, Mallards, Merchant Navy Class and Branchline locos with tanks for oil and water.

At Reed's Rare Bookshop (secondhand books) I saw a Fawcett Book edited by A.Kalmbach. On a reverse page there was a photo of a heavy loco and a string of cars coming around a hill. It was a SP cab-forward. From that moment I was hooked. About the same time I was also given a Rand McNally Atlas which

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gave me state by state and county by county maps of the US. I could now follow railroading city to city and across America. The learning began.

History, geography and English language were my best subjects and still are 64 years later. Autos are one form of transport, but I never wanted one. In the USA, the movement westward was history and geography to me. Rails made the difference and took over transportation from rivers and canals. Steam was king. In Queensland the move was also westward. Ports with boats (500tons) to Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns necessitated railways to the west from those points to bring produce to ports. Eventually all of these ports were connected by rail thus lessening the dependency on ships and speeding the arrival times of goods at markets.

I am still learning, industry by industry, regional politics, fortunes to be made, wins and losses, who won, which region fades, what new industry rises and where. How do rail companies work? What new invention is announced and adapted to railroading? Rail is still king.

The editor would like to hear any other stories about how you became interested in model railroading. Please send your story in, about the same length as the above. I'm sure other members will be intrigued.

Comment

I had a discussion recently with one of our members about scratchbuilding, kit-bashing and craftsmen kits. This was not a member who isn't skilled in any of these. In fact it was Denis Lane and many of you would have seen his superb scratchbuilt sawmill on his Westridge line. This must have been a massive undertaking as there are so many parts to it and all had to be handbuilt or adapted.

Denis showed resourcefulness in his use of several unusual materials to achieve the beautiful model that now graces his layout. Most of the insides are on show so in this model there was no fudging. It is all available for visitors to see and it is illuminated with internal lighting.

But what struck me as unusual in this day, is that Denis related how much he enjoyed using wood, nature's plastic. I had to agree with him that it is a wonderful material for modelling and that a considerable amount of my scratchbuilt rolling stock was made of wood.

That led onto a discussion about styrene and cements for plastics. I lauded the quality, price and range of

the products made by "EFD Simply Glues". You must have all seen the stand at the shows; the bottles with the bright yellow labels. This guy, another Ian, makes a wide range of cements and other useful materials that are superior to most of the expensive imported materials for the same job. I rue the fact that for several years I walked past his stand without trying his wares. No there is no connection and he probably won't see this Newsletter so I'm not on any commission. It's just that when I find a great product, I like to shout about it.

Wood on the other hand requires different glues and techniques. I started making MR gear from wood in the mid '50's, before Aquadhere, Araldite or ACC glues. I used Aeroflyte model aeroplane glue and Duco glue from tubes. The other great standby was Pliobond and I used this as a contact cement particularly handy for attaching cardboard rivet embossed (yes with a watch wheel) sides to a wood sub-form.

When the newer glues came along we were told how good they were. Yet Aquadhere took ages to dry and wasn't liked at first for that reason; although I've gone back to it as its strength and reliability takes some beating. Araldite was great to get two dissimilar materials together, e.g. a lead bolster to a wooden underframe. ACC's were good for attaching small bits like handrails, etc. For years we have been using these modern glues and they have been doing a good job although at times I get annoyed when I see the modelling press gluing just about everything with ACC.

I have been waiting for the older equipment to start to fall apart so that I can get modern glues in place. But I look at my freight cars made in the '50's and even "finger" them a bit to loosen doubtful joints and what do I find? The Aeroflyte, Duco and Pliobond are still holding up well. They have never fulfilled any of the dire predictions and warnings about using these glues as newer ones came on the market. Not once have I ever had to re-glue any part of any model made with those old glues. Remember, these models are now over 50 years old! I wonder if we will be able to say that about models built with the modern glues.

Perhaps the one of biggest steps forward was the methods used for the styrene models made by Al Armitage. Styrene has become one of my mainstays now and the glues from EFD Simply Glues seem to be the best available for that material.

Like my decal collection, I'm fond of saying I have a greater store of Evergreen than any hobby shop. It is a particularly useful material because there is a huge range of sizes and shapes. Now the next sentence

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should be in bold. Do not use super glue to stick styrene to styrene. Use one of the watery glues like EFD Simple Glues Tetra and apply it with a very fine brush. A little pressure, if possible helps. Too much pressure causes small styrene bubbles to exude out of the joint.

For those of you who would suffer super glue withdrawal, you can get your fix when applying small metal details to styrene.

That leads onto another subject, scratchbuilding detail bits. You can make a highly detailed lifting injector for a steam loco using very fine brass tubing and styrene in the time it takes you to comb your hair and fill your pockets to leave home for the hobby shops – if they have lifting injectors! Now before I get abusive letters from hobby shop people about taking away their business, perhaps they should consider that there would be few people in this game who want lifting injectors and even fewer hobby shops that carry them!

What my point is that super detailing is often a much easier job than you might think. And to get back on my hobbyhorse, take the trouble to get your models right with the appropriate extra detail. You will never be sorry that you did when you see it running and looking to be a miniature replica of that beauty you admired in a prototype magazine.

And finally, much of that detailing fits into that 15 minute modelling that I wrote about a couple of years ago and we all have lots of 15 minutes waits that can be productively used in this way.

Award

At a presentation on Saturday 20th December in the Darling Downs Model Railway Club's rooms in Toowoomba, Glenn Stevens, Division 1 Superintendent presented the 2008 Division 1 Hopkins/Bone Award to Ted Freeman, the long standing secretary of the DDMRC.

In the presenting the award, Glenn praised Ted for his long term dedicated support of Division 1 activities and the wider NMRA goals, even well before Ted and the DDMRC were members of the NMRA.

The Hopkins/bone Award is donated by the Australasian region of the NMRA, to be awarded annually by the Division Superintendents for achievement in the hobby. The inaugural Division 1 award in 2007 was presented to Ian Venables for his support on Div. 1 with the Div.1 Newsletter.

Glenn Stevens
Div 1 (Qld) superintendent
NMRA

Freight Cars

I have noticed in "Scale Rails", our journal from U.S. that our central office is advertising the NMRA publication "Postwar Freight Car Fleet" and marking it "HURRY! GET THEM WHILE THEY LAST". So anyone interested in more accurate models of freight cars or anyone who is interested in the history of freight cars should order one immediately. This is a superb book and one I find myself going to very regularly.

The 25th Convention

It seems like a good contingent of Queenslanders are heading south for the Convention. Have you made definite arrangements yet?

Fresh Ideas

We have some pretty original thinkers in our group as we have right through NMRA. Graham Emery has come up with a new signal system for layouts incorporating the block detectors and the lighting circuitry in a way that makes it easy to fit and replace masts. It also makes these very vulnerable bits easy to protect and shift if necessary. Watch here for further developments.

Apologies

I apologise to you all for not getting a Newsletter out for some months. On 29th December, we were hit by lightning. That blew my computer, 2 TV's, 2 VCR's and a DVD player. It took 2 months of battling with the insurance company to get everything replaced to the same standard. Sadly that disrupted several trains of thought I had about the Newsletter and it put an extra load back on to Glenn to keep in touch with you. I wish to thank Glenn for his help. He also suffered a computer problem from lightning but got going quicker than I did. Hopefully we'll try to get things on track again and look forward to hearing from you about anything you wish to say through these pages.