

NMRA DIVISION 1 (QUEENSLAND)

(www.Zelmeroz.com/anmra-1)



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JANUARY 2010

Coming Meetings

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20th February -
20th March – Martyn Jenkins
10/11th April – NMRA Train Show
1/2/3rd May AMRA Show
19/20th June Toowoomba Train Show
17th July - Denis Lane
21st August - Graham Emery, McLeay Island
4/5 September - Newcastle Convention
18th October – Bob Brown
20th November – Bill Dunn

Meetings start at 1.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Comment

Our modules are now showing how useful they are to those who have them. Last year we went on public display at the May Show and at the Toowoomba Show and our modules gave us a wonderful chance to attract and hold people's attention. From this we were able to converse with MR enthusiasts and the general public with the background knowledge of our NMRA lore.

In early December several of us set up our modules at the home of one of our members and we had a relaxed and enjoyable running day. There was a lot of RR talk in all of this, and from such discussions we gain knowledge of areas we should explore to better operate our MR.

One of our members has had his module set up at home almost permanently and this has been a valuable test track for him and a wonderful way to share his modelling with his very keen and interested grandson.

The only fear is that we may perceive our modules as complete because they give so much enjoyment. We should be ever cognisant that when our modules are up and running, self criticism should be strong and ways of improving our industries, track arrangements, etc. should be noted and acted upon. While we have an engine terminal, an interchange and other industrial areas, I cannot see why any module cannot be placed in any sequence when we set up. Likewise there seems to be no limit to the

way we join up and what we can expect of new members of our module group.

If you are interested in joining in, contact Paul Skehan who now has in written form the guidelines we work to. There's nothing in these that should cause you any difficulties.

The choice of industries on your module is up to you. But may I suggest that you consider having room, at each one of your industries, for more than one freight car. This isn't necessary but it does add to the possibilities you can work at during operation.

On my module I have four industries, all to do with food processing plus a team track. My choice of industries gives me the need for every type of freight car albeit some only occasionally. There is no reason why you should have such a theme and industries of mixed production are certainly acceptable.

I think one of the main things to foster reality is to ensure that your industries are of a size that will need the number and regularity of freight cars you intend having on the module at any one time.

Besides taking in raw materials and then shipping out manufactured goods, remember that you may need coal in hoppers for boilers and steam production, oil or liquid products like corn syrup in tank cars, new machinery on flat cars, ash taken away in gondolas, etc. Boxcars can carry into your plants, raw materials, packaging materials, labelling paper, tinsplate, etc. Ventilated boxcars bring melons to my jams and jelly factory and gherkins to my pickling plant. Reefers bring in fruit for jams, meat for the cannery, etc. Wooden tank cars bring in vinegar, brine and spring water. Possibilities are numerous. There is just as much variety in getting the manufactured, processed goods and waste out.

The team track remains the last refuge of all else but once again both in and out consignments.

The scope of modules like ours is only limited by our collective imagination. Operations on the set-up is as varied and as structured as we want it to be.

Help Wanted

I long remember seeing ads for Unimat lathes in Model Railroader when I first became interested in serious MR. I had to have one and after several years of saving and the fact that they were for sale at a Brisbane outlet, I bought one. I've never regretted it and have even been able to say that it saved this household much angst and money. After all, how many families can say that the washing machine was fixed up for free on a Sunday when it ran a bearing dry. The Unimat can make washing machine bearings just as well as it can make steam loco boiler fronts.

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Another electric tool I had to have was a different affair. Just occasionally I needed some green dyed rubber foam ground up for scenic foliage. With the shops closed and it being too far to go out just for one thing it was achieved by talking my wife into going for a cup of coffee with a friend.

That was the signal to get the food blender out, fill it with foam and a bit of water and chomp away. Well the household has a brand new blender so I've scored the old one. This old blender has seven speed switches like Whip, Puree, Aerate, Chop, Mix Grate and Blend.

Does anyone have a translation table that will tell me what all of this means in MR terms. Which of these is the equivalent of Foam Foliage, Woodchips, Sugar Beets, Tanning Bark, Scree Stones, Scrap Metal and Foundry Dross? Please help but ring me one day when I home alone!

Visit to Ian Wellings

The November 2009 Division 1 meeting was held on a fine and hot Queensland day, hosted by Ian and Helen Wellings on the Sunshine Coast. Ian models the Great Northern, and is the proud recipient of the Golden Spike Award. He has one of the best layout studios (no way it's a shed) for many a mile.

It was a lunchtime meeting with a scheduled start at 10.30am, however the first arrivals (John & Bernice Lebsanft from Bundaberg – 400kms away) arrived at 9.30 and it kept going from there. At the end of the day, we had 43 attendees, the best attendance we have ever had. We were lucky that Ian's neighbour donated the use of a BIG awning for the day to help keep the sun away.

Ian's layout room is suitably cool and saw a continuous stream of members. Ian, with the help of Ken Leitch, Alan Harland and numerous others, ran four trains (two freight and two passenger) throughout the day.

With so many present, there were plenty of side conversations. It was wonderful catching up with Garth Fraser (MMR) and Geoff Aldridge who have not been in the best of health over the last year. The formal part of the meeting was conducted before lunch with Glenn presenting a 25th Anniversary Plaque to Chris Hitchens and a Golden Spike Certificate to Barry Turner. It must be said that the rate of Golden Spike applicants for Division 1 is on the increase. Let's hope that there are even more on the way. Glenn also brought members up to date on the discussion between NMRA and the Sacramento Rail Museum regarding the hobby display.

Glenn then proposed that Division 1 conduct a Model Train Show and Membership Expo early in April 2010, which was unanimously supported by

all members present. The idea is for the NMRA members to display their layouts at the show. At the same time NMRA 100% clubs as well as non-NMRA clubs will have membership information booths. The show will be advertised on the Australasian Region website at www.nmra.org.au

Finally the personal thanks of all members who attended go to Helen and her helpers, Sandra and Bernice, for not getting flustered and turning the catering for 30 odd into catering for 43 – Three Cheers.

Glenn Stevens.

New AP Judges

We have two new Achievement Programme judges in Division 1. These are Graham Emery (07) 3409 4784 and Martyn Jenkins (07) 5563 7554.

Should you need clarification or judging then please contact either of these two. Graham lives on Macleay Island and Martin lives at Biggera Waters on the Gold Coast.

Golden Spike Award

Another news item in the AP field is that Graham Emery and Glenn Stevens went to Noel McDowell's layout and have deemed him to qualify for a Golden Spike Award.

It's just a matter of time for the presentation to be made once our AR office has had time to process the award.

Gold Coast Display

Here's something interesting to do over the holidays. The Gold Coast Miniature Train Club – a 100% NMRA club – has a display on every day from 10am until 4pm until 26th January inclusive. This is being held at The Pavilion, Broadwater Parklands, Southport. They are operating two layouts, their modular layout in HO and a G scale layout. This is another of those vibrant clubs who manage to accomplish a lot using some innovative techniques.

Your Newsletter

Sometimes it becomes difficult to decide what to write in this Newsletter. If you have anything you

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wish to contribute, please let me know and we'll get it in.

Many of you are experts in at least one field and have ideas or stories in which we would all be interested.

Methods of modelling, use of locally available materials, knowledge of a particular railroad, how you got into this hobby, knowledge of some prototypical practice, etc. would be welcome. All would be interesting.

We have had a few in the past but we need more. So write, ring or e-mail a proposal and we can get started with your article. Another advantage, it will contribute towards your AP awards and may help you all the way to your MMR.

Cabooses or is it Cabeese

For many of us, these are our favourite type of 'freight' rolling stock. They come in so many styles and sizes. A caboose at the rear certainly looks better than a flashing red light. I was lucky during the year to pick up a second-hand copy of "Caboose" by Mike Schafer at a shop in Armidale. This book is the inspiration for some of the ideas that follow.

A caboose is a place where you can definitely stamp your railroad's ownership and to some extent, the prosperity of your line. Apart from the owner's lettering, it is usual to also have the road's logo on the caboose.

Colours are usually caboose red, sort of like a tail light. Here is a place for your artistic flair if your road is freelance. Real cabooses came in reds, browns, blue, oranges, yellows, grays, white, greens, silver, black and just about any combination of the above.

There are 4 wheel types, twin bogie types, transfer types, drovers, combination passenger coach and several others. There are cupolas, non-cupolas, extended view, bay-window and probably some I can't even imagine.

The point is that they are often very individualistic. Some railroads, e.g. The Interstate, never had two alike. In their whole history they had 21 and nearly all were bought second-hand from various RR's. They made a few but their construction was so far apart from each other in years, that they weren't made from the same set of plans.

So much for talking about them! What about the cabooses you own. Are they consistent with the roads you model? It seems a good policy to me that you get a matching caboose every time you get a freight loco.

Are your's lighted? Do they have 'glass' in all windows? Are they weathered in the way that the last vehicle in a train would naturally be weathered?

I don't mean 'exact dirt' but certainly not a shiny plastic.

How about a few extras. Is at least one door ajar? Are any of the windows open? Is there a conductor or brakeman standing on a landing or the steps?

Are there crew members visible through the windows? Is there any individual decoration that a conductor might have in his temporary home? I've seen photos of a caboose with a pot-plant. Another had a U.S.flag, maybe it was Thanksgiving Day. Another had with a box of apples on the landing, probably gathered from a railside overhanging tree. Do you use classification lanterns in a serious operation session? In modern eras, in daylight, red bats had become popular. These can be set on the caboose in a manner so that they can be changed or taken out.

It seems there are a lot of things we can do to liven up our cabooses and consequently our trains. Why have a detailed locomotive on the front and a hunk of plastic on the back?

All of these improvements help to make our rolling stock more believable and alive as though they are populated by people. They also help us to achieve a consistent quality over our railroads. The old adage of having everything on your railroad at a consistent level of modelling.

Most of these improvements are short tasks and are ideal for those 15 minute projects I spoke about a couple of years ago. Another thought, once you have the first and the last parts of your train looking great, you might be moved to spruce up all the bits in between!

Recipe for Caboose Coffee

Take a couple of fistfuls of ground coffee and toss them into a tall enamel coffee pot; fill with cold water. Let stand unheated for a couple hours, maybe even overnight. Bring to a boil several minutes before you're ready to serve. Pour and drink. Pour through strainer or cheesecloth if you don't want grounds in your cup. Not for the timid.

At least now you know what those chimneys were for. Also a great awakener for when you are getting your railroad ready for an NMRA visit.