



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 67 – January 2012

St. Lawrence Division web site: www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/sld_index.htm

Superintendent's Report

By Ron Newby

First off I want to wish everyone a very Happy New Year with a lot of health, wealth and happiness. I also hope you were all good and Santa was very good to you, I know he was to me.

We have planned another great session for you this month with a DCC theme. Peter Nesbitt will give us the in's and out's of programming decoders and Andreas Mank will tell us how to wire your layout for DCC. In the afternoon will have our Kitbusters clinic, so do not forget to bring your tools and projects.

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November SLD meet in the renovated rooms at Emmanuel United Church
Photo: Andreas Mank

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January Issue - December 15

Special thanks to Beate Herzig for proof-reading and general nit-picking

Continued from page 1 "The Superintendents Report"

The November meeting was the first in the renovated facilities at Emmanuel United Church. The new room is really nice, as you can see from the picture below.

On the convention note have you given any thought of going to the regional convention being held on April 27–29 2012 in Sudbury? I know I am going, these conventions are always a great time meeting old friends and making new ones and one can learn something by attending the clinics offered. Preliminary reports indicate that the boys up in Sudbury will be putting on a great show.

Speaking of conventions, we are also looking for help for the following upcoming conventions.

- March 10-11: Kingston Rail O Rama (we will be doing a modellers corner)
- May 5-6: Ottawa Rail Expo

If you can and are willing to help out please let me or anyone on the executive know at the meeting.

This is all for now, looking forward to seeing everyone on January 21st, till then, may your train stay on the track and may you never run out of rail.

A New URL for the Club!

By Grant Knowles

As mentioned by our illustrious superintendent at the November meet, the SLD has chosen to move our web site to a dedicated ISP provider that will ensure the site is easier to access and provide a more enjoyable experience. The key improvement you will notice is the new URL: SLD-NMRA.ca. No longer will you have to remember the convoluted character string of the current one!

There are other added benefits: the overall performance is faster, screens will load quicker and links more responsive and the other benefit is there will no longer be those annoying advertisement banners! I am sure you will appreciate these improvements.

Now I must warn you that moving the web site over to the new ISP will take some time as we have over 500 GB of material that has been accumulated over the past 10 years. So you may find a few links that take you back to the old SLD Home page. Please be patient during this time and use your browser's Back Button to overcome these short term challenges.

With time I would like to overhaul the web site completely so it takes less effort to maintain and has a little more "sex" appeal but in the mean time, the focus is relocating the current material.

As per usual, I am always open to material and suggestions to service you better.

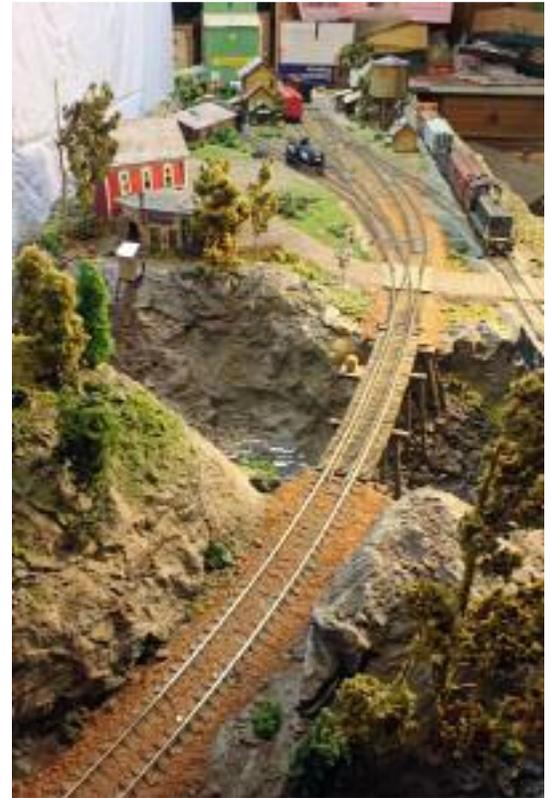
SLD Module - Off to a new home!

By Grant Knowles

In November the SLD Executive identified it was time to retire the SLD Switching Module. Over the past 10 years, the module has made numerous appearances around the region and delighted thousands of budding railroad enthusiasts. The module was also subject to ongoing enhancements as the scenic details were completed and presentation improved. The module packed a lot of interest into a 2ft x 6ft 6in space - 13 structures, a river, town, industries, four RR crossings and numerous trees. By all estimates, there is over \$600 worth of parts and models in the package.

The module was then put up for silent auction, the highest bid by midnight Dec 15th won the module. We initially received a few bids that got the ball rolling. Regular emails were issued throughout the period providing the membership with a status update on the bidding and the opportunity to participants to "refine" their bids. As expected, there was a flurry of activity in the closing hours which brought the closing bid to \$325.

A week later the module was delivered to Peter Gray's home and will become part of his HO Trak modules in his basement. Peter lives in an older home so we had to stand the module on end to fit it through the hallways and down the stairs. I am sure that if it was an inch longer, it would not fit! Peter has great plans on how to integrate it into the basement empire and I am certain he will keep us abreast on its progress.



Thank you to all that participated in the auction and especially to all those who have helped to build the module and man our booth at all the various events. The module has certainly met and exceeded our expectations.

TimeTable

Date	SLD Meetings		SLD Workshops
January 21, 2012	Emmanuel United Church		
February 25, 2012			Emmanuel United Church
March 31, 2012	Emmanuel United Church		
April 21, 2012			Emmanuel United Church
April 27 – 29, 2012	NMRA NFR Regional Convention Sudbury		
May 26, 2012	tbd		

The move of the Bonnechere and Braeside Railway Continued

By Peter Nesbitt

Progress has been made but not as much as I had hoped. Life, golf, and running trains elsewhere keep interfering with building the B&B.

During the nice weather two sheets of 3/4" plywood were turned into all the required sub-roadbed (straight and curved) and a bunch of sawdust. It is much easier to clean up the mess in the garage than in the workshop.

I am using HO cork roadbed as O scale was too large. But using it in On3 meant that there was a gap of about 3/8" between the cork sections. A lot of ballast would be wasted filling this. I could fill the gap with caulking but that could be a messy job. There had to be a better solution! At Home Depot I found a roll of self adhesive grey foam weather stripping of the correct width that was the same thickness as the cork. Problem solved for a couple of dollars.

The priorities from the last instalment of this saga are either done or well along. Short pieces of rail have been installed across the cuts in Braeside. Some but not all of the local wiring has been reconnected but I expect to have it finished by the time you read this.



The turnout on the main coming out of Braeside has been installed. This is the split between westbound to Renfrew and beyond and Arnprior (east staging). Eastbound, the two additional turnouts creating the staging tracks have been installed along with the tortoises. The wiring is yet to be done. See photo 1

The three staging tracks have been laid. All the new trackage will be code 100 and uses San Juan Car Co. flex track and hand laid turnouts. From a construction viewpoint the two are going together well and I do not foresee any operational issues. But the trackage laid so far will be wired and tested before proceeding much further with track laying.

Photo 1: Eastbound staging track. The turnouts and the Tortoise switch machines to power them are installed, but the wiring still has to be done
Photo: Peter Nesbitt

I finished the design of the swing out / duckunder benchwork in front of the doorway. The frame is made out of aluminum L sections and is hinged to wood supports. Grant Knowles helped with the construction of the supports at each end. The swing out end is supported by a leg with a caster under it. See photo 2

I wanted to confirm the operation of the track I had laid before proceeding and this meant temporary wiring. As I looked at the bench work it occurred to me that given the way it was constructed and the



way the subroadbed was going to be attached that I could install virtually all the bus wires at this point. This would mean a delay in testing the trackage but also the avoidance of temporary wiring.

Another big advantage of this was that I would be doing it from the top while standing up rather than from underneath the layout! I did not take long to reach a decision on this one. As I write this I am almost finished. The basics of the wiring are the same as in the previous version of the B&B but there have been some minor changes. No doubt it suffers from overkill but experience has taught me that even at today's cost of wire it is easier to put in

Photo 2: The swing-out bridge was built on an Aluminum frame for added stiffness. In the end it will carry two tracks at two different levels.
Photo: Peter Nesbitt

more than needed than to retrofit. But even so I have probably missed something somewhere.

The layout is divided into six (6) power districts. There is one for each of the four (4) towns with each including the trackage east of that town. Another is for the logging branch. All the turnouts in Braeside are controlled by accessory decoders and these are on the sixth bus. All the power districts use NCE EB3s for short circuit protection.

All bus wires are colour coded via a set of 8 markers. This makes for a very fast and simple way to identify the various wires.

There are two tracks on the swing-out section – one between Braeside and Renfrew while the other is between Renfrew and Eganville. Both of these tracks will get their power from plugs that plug into receptacles in the fixed part of the layout. Track sections on each side leading towards the swing-out also get their power through these plugs ensuring that if the swing-out is open, trains will come to a halt before reaching the abyss.

All mainline and passing siding uncoupling will be done by electromagnets which need their own electrical supply (24 V D.C.). I will have lights in buildings and likely elsewhere and therefore ran a nine volt bus – one to Braeside, Deacon and the log camp and the other to Renfrew and Eganville. I have two turntables and these get their power from an eight volt D.C. supply.

There is a three wire bus around the layout that supplies the power to all the switch machines except those in Braeside. I will have some sound modules on the layout providing background sounds, likely some animation including train order signals and bus wires were installed for that purpose. A 9 Volt bus and a 12 Volt one. Lastly, while it is unlikely that I will have a dispatcher's panel I had a bunch of CAT IV wire (4 pair - #24) from the previous layout that had been previously given to me and it has been strung around as well. This is good for signals or for reporting occupancy.

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The subject for the November Display table was “Weathered Freight Cars” in honour of Peter Gray’s clinic. This was our first meet in the newly renovated Emmanuel United Church which provided ample natural lighting to view the wonderful models. As is the unofficial tradition with the SLD, models of every description except for those related to the “theme” were brought out! This month a number of the display cards included extensive descriptions of the models so I will follow suit and provide as much detail as I can about the models, after all the SLD is all about sharing our construction techniques!

Mike Hamer continues to churn out models in preparation for the “future” layout extension. This month he has shifted from land based structures to four sea worthy vessels: a harbour tug boat, a sardine hauler, a clipper boat and a lobster boat.



Mike Hamer’s fleet of boats for his future layout extensions. The various boats are described in the main article.

Photo: Andreas Mank

45’ Harbour Tug (French River Model Works)

Mike has been interested in waterfront modeling for a few years now to which he has been assembling marine vessel kits with some frequency. During his research on boats, Mike came across many fascinating pictures of tugboats and felt that the layout needed to include one. There is quite a variety of tugboats available from different manufactures in many of the model railroad scales. Mike finally settled on this little gem from Frenchman River Model Works and was very impressed with the level of quality of the resin castings.

Since the resin castings were of the highest quality, no “filling” was required. The casting received two scrubblings with Resin Prep before receiving a coat of primer paint. Mike used an “automotive grey” on all castings and left them to dry overnight.

Building model ships is mainly an exercise in fine-scale brush painting. Mike used the acrylic paints which come in small plastic bottles that you find at stores like Michaels or Wallacks. The list below outlines the colours used on the tugboat. (Mike really likes the colour combination shown in the image that came with the kit – very close to the Boston & Maine colours, so he copied the manufacturer on this one!

- Brick (Americana Heritage): Wheelhouse and middle section of hull.
- Teddy Bear Tan (Folks Art): Wheelhouse trim, mast and upper section of hull.
- Craftsman Black: Lower section of hull and used as wash over main deck grating.
- Rain Grey (Delta Ceramcoat): Main deck grating and roof sections of Wheelhouse.
- Bright Red (Delta Ceramcoat): Fire Mains and miscellaneous mast and deck items.

After the core painting was completed, Mike ran a wash of black paint over the deck planking and the wheelhouse door and brushed light rust powder over the anchor and anchor chain. The model was quick and easy to assemble as the Wheelhouse came as a complete structure. Mike added windows to the interior using acetate from an overhead projector which is softer than the stiff window material offered in the kit. The mast is angled to match the angle of the smoke stack. Mike drilled holes in the mast by the navigation light shields to thread the rigging through. Adding the tire bumpers was tricky. Each tire was first painted black then wrapped with rigging line. Mike then drilled two holes in the gunnel of the vessel for each tire. Using tweezers, the thread was pushed through the holes carefully and held in place with locking tweezers. This allowed Mike to turn the tire over and add glue so that it could be adhered to the side of the vessel.

Mike posted pictures of the vessel on the Railroad-Line Forum which drew feedback from a couple of retired tugboat workers! One recommended that the vessel should have a fender up front as metal should never rub against metal in this industry. Mike scratch built the bow fender by wrapping thread around a narrow folded piece of yellow Post-It note.

Clipper Workboat (Model Tech Studios)

This model required considerable time invested to clean up the castings as their quality was not the best. Extensive filing and “dental work” was required. As with the tug boat, the castings were scrubbed and primed (white in this case). Once again acrylic paints were brushed over the primer coat.

- Acrylic White: Hull, wheelhouse walls, main mast.
- Denim Blue (Delta Ceramcoat): Gunnels, rails and supports, fish boxes and wheelhouse trim.
- Brick (Americana Heritage): Lower section of the hull.
- Teddy Bear Tan (Folk Art): Planking.
- Acrylic Black: Winch line, winch rigging and muffle.

Mike then ran a wash of black paint over the planking, the wheelhouse walls, roof and the sides of the vessel. Light Rust powder was brushed over the winch rigging, winch line and muffler.

Assembling the model was rather difficult as the instructions were largely images with the occasional test; no “step-by-step” methods were used here. This can be a real challenge for modellers who know very little about marine vessels. ACC glue was used to assemble the wheelhouse, miscellaneous details and the rigging. Canopy glue would be a suitable alternative for the window area as the window sections require some “jimmying” to get all the angles right before the glue sets.

While Mike did not keep accurate track of his time, he figures the vessel took a little under two weeks of evenings and weekends to complete thus probably 40+ hours. Mike will be contacting the manufacturer as one winch line was missing from the kit. The full boat casting was not very good quality indicating they had used the mould far too many times. It took a lot of effort just to clean it up. Some areas are still noticeable along the upper hull sides. Mike really liked this Clipper workboat and was willing to put up with the nuisance and challenge of turning a poor quality kit into a really nice looking model.

Mike did not supply a detailed description for the remaining two boats: Lobster Boat (Frenchman River Model Works) and the Sardine Hauler (Sea Port Model Works).

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Como Station from a Design Tech resin kit assembled by Grant Knowles.
Photo: Andreas Mank

Grant Knowles brought out his recently completed Como station from a Design Tech resin kit. For the past 20 years, a cardboard mock up, made from photocopied plans, occupied the location for the station on the train layout. My plan was to scratch build it some day. Though the structure was a straight forward rectangle with an "L" extension, the ornate

window details posed challenge. Bill Meredith must have taken pity on me as he assembled the styrene masters for the wall and roof sections along with the various windows and doors. These were then shipped off to his friend, Doug, at Design Tech who made rubber moulds and cast the parts in resin. I was presented with the first "shots" and offered to assemble these and build a diorama for the up coming Narrow Gauge convention where Design Tech would be selling this kit.

It was fun assembling a kit with no instructions (as they had not been written yet!). The finished model was photographed by David Steer and emailed to Doug for inclusion in the instructions. Meanwhile the diorama travelled in Bill Meredith's luggage to the narrow gauge convention. Doug then finished off the kit instructions and sent these off to the printer. Everything came together at the convention – the display model, the instructions, kit parts and packaging. Doug & friends were busy stuffing the boxes while folks were purchasing the kits at the show! Talk about "just-in-time".

I had painted the display model with final years colours of tuscan walls with a dark green trim. As you will note, I still did not have a station on my layout! So I assembled a second kit, this time with interior details and lights. I chose the earlier paint scheme of off white walls and light green trim. The kit was lots of fun to build (even twice) and fills a very predominant location on my layout. I gather sales have been good and a portion of the proceeds goes towards restoring the original building.

It all started out rather innocently: build a "paper based" model as part of this year's Kit Buster's program. I required a Stamp Mill for the town of Central City and since this would be located towards the rear of the layout, it did not have to be super detailed. I planned to use some Paper Creek printed sheet material but soon discovered they were not longer in business (just my luck) so I started looking for alternatives when I realised I had a HO scale stamp mill on hand. This came from Bill Scobie's long gone Ouray Branch Hon3 modular layout. A quick assessment determined it could fit with some modifications. The original structure was built from two Timberline Models kits. I had a third kit on hand (purchased at a past OVAR flea market) that provided the necessary parts to facilitate the modifications. Here is the 85% complete final product. I also scratch built a boiler house to augment the model.

Lorne Munroe continues to astound us with his scratch building skills and attention to details. This month Lorne brought out his scratch built Austin Sawmill which can be found in Kinmount, Ont.

Lorne had first viewed the saw mill back in 2006 and had displayed his research material at the March 2007 SLD Meet. The mill is sandwiched between the former Lindsay-Haliburton CNR line

railway right of way and the Burnt River. The mill was suffering from serious neglect at the time but has since been refurbished as a tourist attraction. Lorne had provided photographs showing the before and after refurbishing as well as an aerial shot of the mill in its heyday.

The diorama is mounted on Cradled Wood Panel from Wallacks with the surrounding landforms built up with pink Styrofoam. The rock faces are carved from Sulptamold while still wet and the "earth" was made from Celluclay covered with earth blend (Woodland Scenics)

Lorne made his own forms to make Hydrocal castings of the foundations and dam. The stonework was coloured with black/gray Delta Ceramcoat wash. The concrete foundations / dam received a black/white wash. To form the river, Lorne first built the base out of Hydrocal which was then painted with a mixture of deep blue and black. The glossy surface is made from Liquitex Pouring Medium and waves / rapids were applied with water effects. The surrounding trees were made from Spirea blossoms that were dried, dipped in glue and foam added in blended colours.

The saw mill was scratch built with post-beam construction, siding was made with pre-stained (Saman wood stain) board by board construction as well as the decks. The sawmill sports a fully detailed interior with sawmill Machinery from Keystone, K&S metal roof (painted/ weathered) and CAD generated Signage. The logs in the pond were made from Mock Orange bush.

Peter Nesbitt had the Bonnechere and Braeside On3 gondola on display. This car, from San Juan has been custom lettered and provides coal service on Peter's railroad.

The HO scale Bruce Lake Navigation Co. office was scratch built by Bruce Leckie. This structure represents a 3 season office/waiting room and is built from original plans (that have since been long lost). The model is a wood construction with the lower wainscoting made from scribed siding while the upper clapboard walls were made from individual boards. Campbell corrugated roofing was weathered with PC board etchant for form the cover.



This On30 Railbus project was displayed by Bruce Leckie, together with some of the semi-finished parts still to be installed.
Photo: Andreas Mank

Bruce scratch built many of the parts in the detailed interior including: freight bench, office divider, lockers, office Desk and packing crates. Commercial parts included: windows and doors, workbench with tools, waiting room benches, stove, lamp shades and figures.

Bruce also brought out his latest On30 Critter - #5. (a photo of this model also appears in the NMRA Canada 2012 calendar). The model represents a company built gas-

hydraulic locomotive. The gas engine is in one hood, the hydraulic tank, pump and air compressor are all in the second hood. Between the two is the power shaft and hydraulic controls. Hydraulic motors in each truck power the unit. While I have not found an actual prototype, the concept is viable and could have been manufactured by an ambitious well equipped shop.

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The critter is kit bashed on top of a HO gauge Bachmann 44 tonner. The shell is built out of styrene and sports interior details include scratch built control levers, brake levers control panel, and seats. Additional scratch built details include: air tank, fuel tank, muffler, headlights, tool box and tools, horn, bell and cut levers, seats and lunch box. The model also has working windshield wipers and doors.

Both models were judged against the NMRA Achievement Program criteria at the meet and each earned a Merit Award. Congratulations Bruce!

Bruce also brought out has nearly completed kit bashed On30 rail bus.

Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the November meet web page:

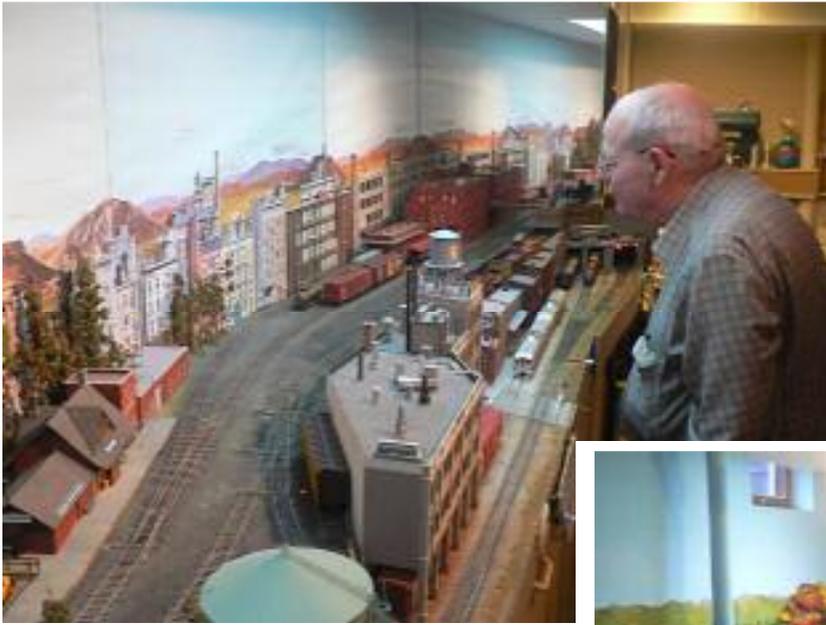
http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/nov_11/nov_11.htm

Layout Tour

By Andreas Mank

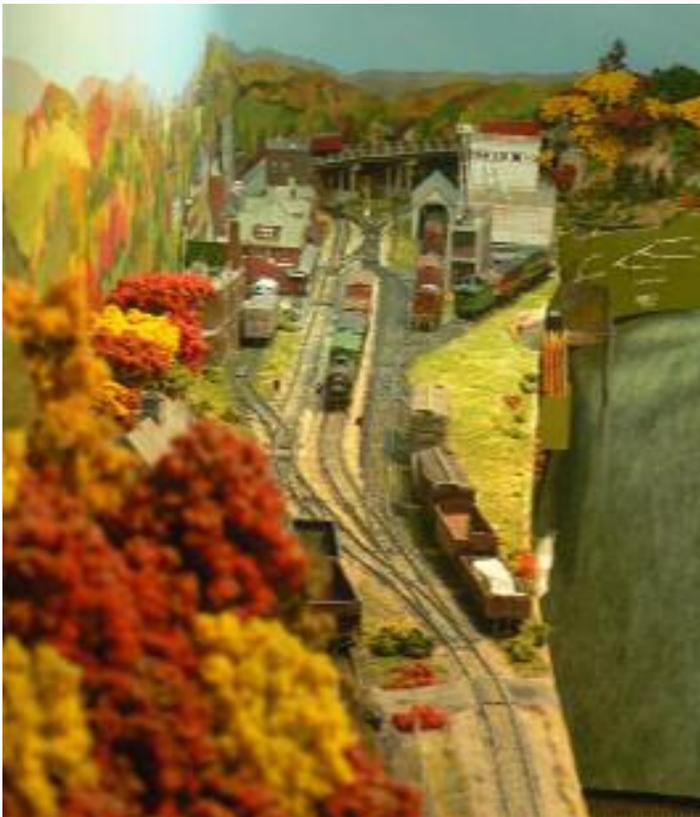
During the afternoon of the November meet we had an opportunity to visit two impressive layouts: Jack Scott's Canadian Pacific and Dave Primeau's New England. Both layouts are in the advanced stages of completion, Jack's with very impressive western mountain scenery and Dave's bringing New England to life.





All photos below:
Dave Primeau models central New England in fall colours. The towns of Wells River, St. Johnsbury (bottom left) and White River Junction (bottom right) are connected by a single track mainline running through gorgeous New England fall scenery.

Previous page and top:
Jack Scott models the Canadian Pacific in the Rockies and combines amazing mountain scenery with diorama like scenes depicting the cities along the route.





Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, January 21, 2012

Where:

Emmanuel United Church

691 Smyth Road,
Ottawa

East of CHEO at Dauphin Road

Doors open at 9:00 am -- Admission \$7.00

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Clinics:

Peter Nesbitt
Programming DCC decoders

Andreas Mank
Wiring for DCC

Display:

Motive Power

Afternoon:

Kitbuster

Mont Blue Ford Exhibition

