



# The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue No. 97– January 2018

St. Lawrence Division web site: [www.sld-nmra.ca](http://www.sld-nmra.ca)

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## *Superintendent's Report*

By Chris Lyon

Twenty Seventeen has come and gone and the SLD continues to be vibrant. We have had great turnouts (no pun intended) to our monthly gatherings and the success is largely due to the quality of presentations delivered by volunteers and the membership energy. The executive have maintained a dependable and active contribution that ensures our needs are met. I thank them so much for their contributions. However, the NMRA is not without challenges and there still is much help needed. Communication with the NFR has improved and there is less controversy. Most of their efforts and mine are focused on problems in other Divisions, money and ensuring there are conventions in the future.

Some years ago, it was decided that the Divisions would rotate organizing the NFR Conventions amongst them. This has worked for the most part, however, this year it was to be run by the Northern Division. Memberships in the north have declined and their executive is stretched not to mention the great distances to be travelled to organize, host and attend. The NFR has stepped up and are working to run one in the fall a little closer to home. I know that the fall time of year is unusual and will be a test of our flexibility to fit it into our plans. I ask that you take an extra step and try hard to make sure you can participate. Attendance is key. Without it the NMRA stands to lose all around. Reputation, funding, and enthusiasm to volunteer are all a stake. Also, it is important to consider giving clinics or helping with the contest judging. Christmas is the giving time of year, so take a moment and think about how you can give back to ensure the NFR remains key to Model Railroading in Canada.

Winter and Spring are the model railroader's time of year. Time to work on the layout and build those much anticipated projects. Consider calling some of your fellow modellers and invite them to see your progress. Spend some time working together on things that need doing and enjoy each others company. I have found that model railroading is greatly enhanced by the social aspect and helping others

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### **Cover:**

No 489 is ex-D&RGW and now on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad in Chama, New Mexico. It is poking its head out of the shop while having its main rod bearing refitted.

Please see more of Dave's and Grant's travels in Colorado starting on page 8 of this issue of the **Mail Car**

Photo: David Steer



*Continued from page 2 "Superintendents report"*

overcome the challenges along the way. Many of us have artist's/technical blocks or come to a grinding halt because we find some aspect of the project as being daunting. Doing something to help a fellow modeller is special and rewarding all around. We all can get by with a little help from our friends.

Looking forward to 2018.



A Picture is worth a thousand words. Here is a true reversal. Troels Kirk originally did sketches and paintings to develop an idea for his models. Now his finished model on his On30 layout has inspired him to do an acrylic painting bringing his model scene into a wonderful masterpiece.

# Vancouver Model Train Expo

by Malcolm Vant

A key ingredient of the show, and one necessary to ensure its survival, was the effort to attract families with children. The organizers did a wonderful job in that regard. There were many things to experience and touch and not just layouts with “don’t touch” warning signs.



Photo 1 to 4, clockwise from top left: Ride-on train, W-trak set up, toy train layouts and Lego trains



There was a ride-on train, a W-trak setup [W-trak is a modular standard for wood track tables and shelf railways (photo 2)], a Thomas and Friends corner, a place to play with activity blocks, Lego trains, and hands-on running of model trains from control stations lining a large area with toy train layouts.

There was also a good turnout by local vendors, in the flea market area, and also along the sides of the main hall. Stalwarts such as Central Hobbies were there, but also Britannia Hobbies, Swaraj Ent Tools, and other hobby shops. The offerings were not limited to model trains either. You could purchase authentic CPR chinaware – maybe buy a tea service. There was also a husband and wife team of artists selling lithograph prints with railway themes.

The hands-on activities were for children of all ages. You could try some fun activities such as colouring your own plaster rocks for scenery, or you could learn how to make a tree or weather with pan pastels. The





Photo 5 and 6, top row: Authentic CPR Chinaware and Railway themed prints

Photo 7 and 8 bottom row: Clinics on how to weather with pan pastels and making trees

Craftsman Corner was manned by local modellers, including ex-Ottawa resident Rene Gourley and Master Model Railroader Mike Chandler.

Many local clubs brought extensive layouts to the expo, ranging in size from Large Scale down to N. Themes varied from British steam-era railways to ones with a western logging theme. Here is a partial list of clubs that were proudly showing off their layouts to the public: Victoria Model Railway Club, Mainland Modular Railway Society, Canadian Toy Train Association, Chilliwack Model Railway Club, Vancouver TraiNgang, Greater Vancouver Garden Railway Society, Delta Model Railway Club, and Sunshine Coast Model Railway Club.

Rounding out the show were the many special interest groups, such as the West Coast Heritage Railway group, which operates the extensive museum at Squamish, BC, and the Fraser Valley Railway Historical Society, which has done an excellent job of restoring and running ex-BCER traction equipment. On offer to young and old was a virtual reality terminal that allowed you to be engineer on an interurban tram.





Photo 9 and 10, top row: British themed model railway and western Canada themed model railways

Photo 11 and 12, bottom row: Logging themed model railway and train simulator





Our fellow NMRA members from 7<sup>th</sup> Division, Pacific National Region also had a strong presence and were doing their best to promote the hobby. An affiliated group from Victoria, The Pacific Great Eastern/British Columbia Railway Special Interest Group, brought a large display with numerous examples of PGE and BCR equipment in both HO and N scales.

It was a great way to spend several hours on a wet and rainy weekend in Vancouver. Hopefully, the show will continue to build on the momentum of the last couple of years and amuse and entertain all ages for many years to come!

Photo 13: Exhibit Booth of the 7<sup>th</sup> Division of the PNR

## TimeTable

Date	Meetings / Shows		SLD Workshops
January 20, 2018	Emmanuel United Church 691 Smyth Road Ottawa, ON		
February 24, 2018			Emmanuel United Church
<b>March 24, 2018</b>	Emmanuel United Church		
April 28, 2018			Emmanuel United Church
May 26, 2018	TBA		
September 29, 2018	TBA		



# *Pilgrims to the 3 Ft Mecca- Part 2*

*or*

## *Grant and Dave explore Colorado*

by David Steer

On Sunday morning Grant and David headed out of Denver via the Platte Canyon towards the South Park and the former DSP&P division point at Como. Here the original stone roundhouse and depot dating from the 1880s has been restored and some track relaid. We stopped at the site to view the restoration which is first class and hopefully will attract a stream of visitors in future years. The locomotive, restored from the KMR in the Yukon, had operated under steam the previous day, but was idle while we were there.



Continuing our journey south we passed through the valley to Alamosa, along the principle scenic element of 60 miles of straight road across the dry plain. Boring drive. It was then further south to Antonito where we connected with the former D&RGW narrow gauge main line. Locomotives 315 and 463 (lettered as RGS 455) were preparing for a special trip the next day. After some photographs it was a drive over the pass to Chama New Mexico where we would overnight three days for train travel and train chasing. It was beautiful weather, sunny and warm in the valley, but as usual one needed jackets and sunscreen for the wind at the higher altitudes. The town of Chama is at about 7,870 feet, while the Cumbres Pass summit is at 10,022 ft. The trains climb the steep grades (slowly).



Our train trip was on Tuesday with seats in the Parlour car at the rear of the train. This is a good choice for enthusiasts as the back open platform is the best spot to ride the train and enjoy the scenery. Especially on a nice day, and even still the best if the weather is inclement. The train stops mid-way at Osier where lunch is served to the hungry trainloads of tourists (the two daily trains meet here for refreshments and to exchange crews). There is also a small gift shop selling trinkets and pullovers to the tourists on cold days.



On Wednesday we drove from Chama NM over to Durango Colorado to ride the "Silverton" train. This is the D&RGW branch that has been featured in many Hollywood movies including "Around the World in 80 days", "Ticket to Tomahawk" and of course "Denver & Rio Grande". The mountains around Silverton are where the rich silver ores were located and a few tunnels still deliver small loads of precious metals. From an elevation in Silverton at 9,318 ft, three small narrow gauge railroads operated north to the mine sites, including The Silverton Northern, The





Silverton Railroad, and the Silverton Gladstone and Northerly. The caboose of the SN has been restored and sits beside the history museum beside the courthouse in Silverton.

Following the Durango & Silverton trip, on Friday we travelled from Durango over the path of the Rio Grande Southern Railroad through Dolores, Rico, Lizard Head Pass, Telluride and Ridgeway. Dolores features one of the famous RGS “Galloping Geese” rail buses that were used in the later years for mail and passenger traffic over the narrow gauge route. We stopped at the new museum at Ridgeway where there are a number of RGS cars on display.

Continuing north along the former D&RGW branch we joined the original main line at Montrose and turned east for Cimarron and the Black canyon of the Gunnison River. Sadly the locomotive D&RG 278 that is usually displayed on a bridge beside the power dam was away being restored by the US Park Service so we missed that although the park service display of stock cars was interesting. Continuing on, we overnigheted at Gunnison and on Saturday we travelled up to Leadville to see the former Climax branch of the C&S.

Leadville was once one of the most railroad serviced towns in Colorado where the Denver & Rio Grande, the Colorado Midland and the Colorado & Southern (DL&G) served the mines in the area. Leadville is also one of the highest Colorado cities at 10,152 feet elevation<sup>1</sup>. Lately the C&S branch to a molybdenum mine at Climax has been operated. The mine remains active as it is still one of the most substantial global

deposits. Currently a standard gauge tourist line operates the track from Leadville to below the mine site at 11,360 feet elevation. Sadly Leadville is otherwise unconnected to the railroad world with the closure of the D&RGW (now UP) connection.

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<sup>1</sup>As a reference, usually it is about 10,000 feet when the airline seat belt sign is switched off after takeoff.



continued from page 9, "Pilgrims to the 3 foot Mecca – Part 2"

From Leadville we travelled to Breckenridge to see the C&S number 9 locomotive display and the associated freight cars. Nice display.

Then it was on to the Georgetown loop at Silver Plume where we rode the train around the loop and over the reconstructed bridge. This was the only time during the 10 days of vacation that we had rain, with our downward trip being a bit damp.



Arriving in Denver in the late Saturday afternoon we met our hosts and enjoyed dinner together. Sunday we travelled to the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden to see the displays. These included several Shay locomotives that formerly were part of the Westside Lumber Company in California. Also nicely displayed was locomotive 191 now restored to its original form on the roster of the Denver Leadville & Gunnison RR (1890). In the afternoon we travelled to the Platte River Canyon west of Denver to see the route of the original DSP&P as it made its way west.

On Monday we spent doing track construction on our host's S scale layout (S and Sn3 and some Sn2) This included finishing Sn3 track between towns and town track layout and starting some S standard switches from kits/scratch on the lower level.

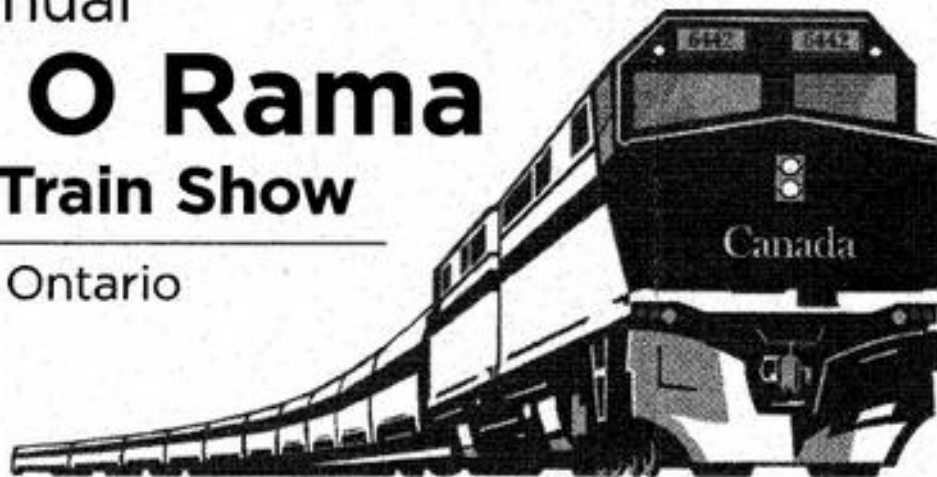
Tuesday morning found us back at the Denver airport for travel back to Ottawa.





# 29<sup>th</sup> Annual **Rail O Rama** **Model Train Show**

Kingston, Ontario



Operating Layouts, Vendors,  
Displays, Thomas Activity Table

## Daily Admission

Adults (13+) .....	\$6
Seniors (60+) .....	\$5
Children (5-12) .....	\$3

## Additional Information

Visit our website:

[kingstonrailorama.wix.com/show](http://kingstonrailorama.wix.com/show)

- Photos
- Show Information
- Vendor List
- Contacts & More

## Presented by

Canadian Railroad Historical Association  
Kingston Division

## With the Cooperation of

Ambassador Hotel  
[www.ambassadorhotel.com](http://www.ambassadorhotel.com)

**2018**  
**March 10 & 11**  
**10am—4pm**

Ambassador Hotel  
1550 Princess Street  
Kingston, ON

- Free Parking
- Dining on Site
- ATM on Site
- Wheelchair Accessible



**A** Ambassador  
Kingston Hotel & Conference Center

# ***Display Table Report***

**by Grant Knowles, MMR**

The September meet found us back at our regular location on Smyth Street. It must have been a long summer as the hall saw the largest attendance yet of eager individuals itching to return to the hobby! As I write the November Display Report (on Dec 26th) we are experiencing the beginning of a week long cold snap and I cannot help but think, you could not get a better excuse to spend quality time indoors working on your latest project!

Here is the review of the November Display Table, where the theme was: **Bridging The Gap (bridges, culverts, wakways, conveyers, etc)**. Remarkably we did have a few models that aligned with the theme.

Stan Conley had brought out a series of books on railroading and related subjects. The one that caught my attention, though not directly related to railroading, but none-the-less just as fascinating was the "125 Years In Building Our Fair City" which covered the evolution of Ottawa's architecture/infrastructure.

Stan also brought out a HO scale Labelle SOO Line Boxcar kit he is building for Chris Lyon. Stan has the body built along with the roof/walkway installed, next will be the addition of the grab irons, details, under carriage stuff, etc. A couple of years ago we built these types of kits as part of the Kitbusters program - they were lots of fun.



Photo 1: Post Truss bridge at Forks Creek, CO. Scratch build to a design based on old photographs.

I brought out a series of railroad bridges which I had built over the years for my layout. My general practice has been to design the bridges to be removable as this simplifies installing scenery around the structures and prevents damaging them when working on the layout behind the bridges. My first bridge, which is also my favourite, is the scratch built Post Truss bridge that existed for about 20 years at Forks Creek on the C&S. This is a rather unique design that took some research on my part to figure out and then draw plans based on old photographs.

Next up is the wooden Howe Truss bridge that is based on the one found on the Denver & Rio Grande Western at Hermosa Creek in Colorado (<https://bridgehunter.com/co/la-plata/bh55526/>). This model was built from a kit (I cannot remember whose) and is comprised of stripwood, wire and NBW castings.

Over the years I have scratch built Sn3, On3 and G scale versions of this bridge.

The Platte Canyon bridge is a steel bridge built following plans in the NG&SLG. I scratch built this from Central Valley girders and strip styrene. The sides of the bridge are skewed as the bridge crossed the river on an angle.

The fourth bridge was an On3 model that was built from a Cimarron Kit which Bill Meredith designed and made the masters for. This straining truss bridge is based on a Denver, South Park & Pacific prototype. The kit was comprised of quality strip wood, resin castings, etched brass girders, wire & NBW castings. The model went together as per the instructions but you had to be careful due to its delicate design - it makes a beautiful model. I plan to scratch built an HOn3 version for my layout!

Alex Binkley brought out an O scale boxcar which he plans to reduce down in size to an S scale version. This project could go seriously wrong if not approached correctly so Alex was looking for ideas on how to proceed.



Our master of 3D printing, Gilbert Lacroix, brought out a HO scale fully functional operating derail. The model is based on a Wester Cullens Hays derail. As Gilbert noted, this could add a new dimension to your operating sessions!



Photo 2 (Top): Operating derail 3D printed and assembled by Gilbert Lacroix.

Photo 3 (Below): C&S 537 conversion from an Sn3 C21 brass locomotive.

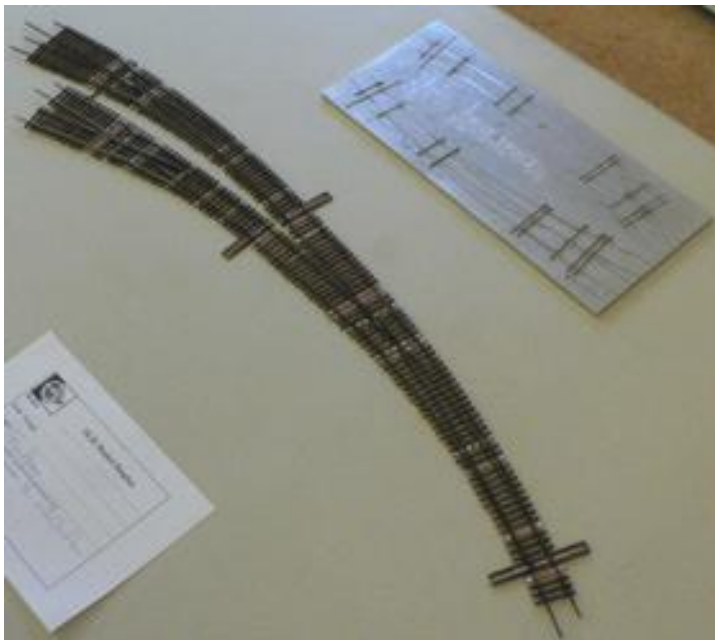


Photo 4: Curved yard ladder with 3 switches build as a one piece assembly by Fred Adams

Bill Meredith brought out some interesting "stuff" this month. On a recent trip to Leadville, Colorado with a friend, they were permitted access to an old bar, as Bill describes it, it was like stepping back in time to the 1910's. It was a treasure trove of antiques where he found an old C&S lantern. Bill was fortunate enough to relieve the owner of this very collectible item.

Bill's latest project for a customer involves taking a PBL Sn3 C21 brass locomotive and converting it into the C&S 537. Much of the boiler detail required attention including new domes, piping etc. Bill also scratch built a new tender which was etched in nickel silver from Bill's CAD drawings. Many years ago I had kit-bashed a HOn3 version of this locomotive from a Model Die-casting kit. It was a poor man's version as it was not 100% accurate but conveyed the key features of the prototype.

Greg Gee brought out his scratch built CN wooden trestle. This was built many years ago when we held our first Kitbuster's project in my basement of all places. It was a lot of fun building our trestles together and I still have mine too!

Fred Adams also brought out an interesting piece a track work - a three switch curved yard ladder. This was built as one piece assembly using Fast Tracks curved turnout jigs. Turnouts built in this fashion look great and function so much better than trying to force fit commercial turnouts into a tricky space.

Normand Levert brought out a module (or piece of a layout) that contained three long curved turnouts that he had scratch built. These were exquisite turnouts that functioned flawlessly when running a set of trucks through them.

To wrap things up, Ken Broten brought out a number of railroad publications a family memorabilia to support his clinic. These included railroad operating

manuals and "retirement" keepsakes from when his dad retired from CN.

That sums up the November Display Table. Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the SLD November meet web page: [http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/nov\\_17/nov\\_17.htm](http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/nov_17/nov_17.htm).

Just to give you advance warning, the theme for the January meet is "What Makes Your Heart Throb". So bring out your favourite model, project, picture, etc which you feel passionate about.



# Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

*When:*

**Saturday, January 20, 2018**

*Where:*

**Emmanuel United Church**

691 Smyth Road

Ottawa, ON

Door Open at 9:00 am -- Admission \$7.00

*What's on:*

**Morning:**

*Clinics by:*

*Bill Scobie:*  
Stub Switches

*Dave Bullis:*  
JMRI and block detection

**Display Table:**

"What Makes Your Heart Throb"

**Afternoon:**

*KitBuster*

