

The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 23 - March 2003

St. Lawrence Division web site: www.cyberus.ca/~g_knowles/sld/sld_main.htm

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Stanley Conley

January 2003 brought a refreshing change to our meeting. Les Modélistes Ferroviaires de Gatineau invited us to hold our meeting in their backyard so to speak, and assisted the executive with location planning, and edutainment for participants. The meeting was held at Le Centre des Aînés de Gatineau, located at 89 Maple Street, Gatineau, Quebec, this was a very nice room with lots of light and space to set up displays and socialize.

Two clinics were presented, the first conducted by David Steer who introduced us to signals on the layout, supported by a seven foot long main with one end of a siding. The track was set up as four control blocks to display the signals, the sequence of operation and display the control electronics below the layout. All of this enclosed in a traveling wooden box that came close to furniture.



The second clinic was presented by Grant Knowles on fabrication and use of rock molds.

Two Merit Certificates were presented at the meeting to members, one to Vic Dohar for his sawmill structure that was presented for judging in November and one to Peter Nesbitt for author.

John Shipman, who joined us for the first time in January was the recipient of a \$25 gift certificate provided by Hobby House in Ottawa.

After the formal part of the meeting (and lunch!) the club opened their developing HO layout, housed in a building previously used as a park storage and activity space which the group has a lease on from the city under favorable conditions. At the Club location, two hands-on workshops related to scenery construction had been prepared to share some practical knowledge between our two groups.



The first clinic carried on from the morning presentation by Grant Knowles on fabrication and use of rock molds.



The second workshop, led by Mike Hammer and Bill Meek was on the fabrication of realistic trees from natural plant material, white glue and ground foam.

All Photos Courtesy of Doug Cushman

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Copy Deadlines

November Issue - October 15
January Issue - December 15
March issue - February 15
May issue - April 15
August issue - July 15

Special thanks to Diane Dodds for proof-reading and general nit-picking

Our invitation to the club was initiated by an individual who is connected to both the SLD and Les Modélistes Ferroviaires de Gatineau, but is significant in that it came at the recognition that the membership of the SLD can provide considerable assistance through the sharing of knowledge between our groups. This co-operation we hope will also provide the contact to encourage participation in the activities of the SLD and NMRA in general.

Our March meet will be held in the Barbara Marsh Room at the Carleton Place Public Library. This meet location was initiated from a conversation I had with Neil Lowes at an OVAR dinner meeting several months ago. He indicated that he and a friend had reached the stage where they were willing to open their developing layouts up to our select group of discerning eyes. Carleton Place offers an interesting venue with railway ties, and will be a good location to start off to the layout locations.

As the Superintendent for the Division, I would like to think that these invitations represent the reaching of a stage of development for the Division. Through our meetings, participation in public shows and contacts with individuals, we have created a reputation for bringing together talented individuals, quality ideas, and an environment of encouragement that outsiders are not afraid to interact with. As a group, the SLD has always attempted to reach out to individuals with an inviting hand, to encourage participation and sharing, and to grow as modelers together, this has always been our call to action, and hopefully always will be.

Before our next meet, the SLD will be participating in the Kingston Model Train Show, March 15 and 16. We will not only represent the SLD but the NFR and as always the NMRA as a whole. This is a low key affair, several members will spend an enjoyable day sitting behind a table working on one (or more) of their modeling projects while answering queries from a generally interested public. Please take a look at the announcement below.

Participation Alert! Participation Alert! Participation Alert!

We have been asked by the Canadian Vice President of the NFR, Gordon McBride to wave the flag at the *Kingston Rail O Rama* show as we did last year.

The show dates and times are
March 15, 11 am - 5 pm
March 16, 10 am - 4 pm

We are looking for 6 to 8 bodies per day to relax behind a row of tables and work on any modeling project, and field questions from the public enjoying the show. This is a low stress activity, and good progress was made by a number of participants on their projects. Last year I completed an Intermountain flat car while 'On Duty', and Chris Butler drew exclamations of disbelief as he glued down row after row of shingles to the roof of the St. Lawrence Forwarding Company building next to me. The space we had last year was bright and comfortable, the show is a nice relaxed affair well run by the Kingston Division of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association. SLD participants are treated as exhibitors at the show therefore entrance is gratis.

One other alternative is that if enough interest by participants is demonstrated there is the possibility of taking our module to the show and letting the young engineers earn some certificates, if you could support this activity please let us know.

Please contact Stanley Conley (contact info at left) ASAP as the date is ever so near. It may be possible to arrange some car pooling to ease the drive.

Important Dates

SLD Meetings

- March 29, 2003 Carleton Place Public Library
101 Beckwith Street, Carleton Place, Ontario
- May 24, 2003 TBA

SLD Activity

- March 15 and 16, 2003 *Kingston Rail O Rama*,
Portsmouth Olympic Harbour, 53 Yonge Street,
Kingston, Ontario

OVAR Meetings

- March 11, 2003 St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall,
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa
- April 8, 2003 St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall,
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa
- May 13, 2003 St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall,
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa

NMRA National Convention, Maple Leaf 2003

- July 13-19 2003, Toronto, Canada
- www.ml2003.com

Modelling Tips

from the machine shops of the

Bonnechere & Braeside Railway Company

At the last meet Mike Hammer gave an excellent clinic on tree building. One of the questions that came up was "what scale is the tree" Interestingly enough, some years ago when I gave a tree building clinic at OVAR, this was by far the most common question.

While Mike answered it admirably, given its popularity, I thought I'd expand on it in this issue's column. To all intents and purposes, there is no such thing as an HO tree! It's going to be determined by the size of the prototype tree we're modelling.

To illustrate, let's look at a model pine tree that is eight (8) inches high. If we put that in the foreground of an HO scale layout, then we're saying it is a model of a 58 foot tree ($8 \times 87 / 12 = 58$). By the same token if it is an O scale layout then it is a model of a 32 foot tree. In N scale it's a 107 footer.

Scale also impacts the type of materials that can be used. For example 1/32 of a real inch scales out to 2.7" in HO, 5" in N scale, and 1.5 in O. Thus Baby's Breath makes good main branch material in N and works well in HO but won't work in O scale.

Peter Nesbitt
General Manager

Display Report for January Meet

Compiled by Stanley Conley

Peter Joyce brought out a Montreal and Southern Counties Interurban Car, #104, one of 4 double ended passenger motors built in 1912 by the Ottawa Car Company. Peter's model is a LaBelle kit (wood - many pieces cut to shape, other pieces cut to fit, built up by layers) of a Sacramento Northern car, slightly "bashed" to M&SC configuration. Wheelsets are from Q-Car; detail parts (underbody details, light, whistle, poles, cow catchers, seats, etc) are from Q-Car, Walthers and my parts bin; vestibules and interior details built up from styrene and wood.

Paul Anderson graced the display table with a set of Walthers new Bombardier bi-level commuter cars in GO Transit colours. The set included a cab car and two coaches and really do capture the look of this interesting Canadian car.

Doug Cushman displayed a brand new out of the box Life-Like/Hobbycraft RS-10 in CN's green and gold. Doug pointed out that this very much anticipated model of a particularly Canadian locomotive has met with considerable nit-picking within segments of the modeling community over small discrepancies in the final product but feels that outside of being slightly under powered is a fine representation of the prototype, and much appreciated for his layout.

Doug also displayed a ready to run Athearn CNR Coach, based on previously released models but with an outstanding paint job and correct lettering.

Grant Knowles brought his passenger equipment to November's meet, so he brought some private label cars to January's meet. They consisted of a Tiffany Summer and Winter Car, in HOn3. This is a Clear Creek Styrene model and includes full break detail. The second Model is of a CONOCO oil car, owned by the Continental Oil Company. This model is also in HOn3, a Taurus kit consisting of a resin tank and strip wood construction flat car, complete with full break detail. The prototype ran on the Colorado and Southern.

John LeBlanc displayed an HO model of a CNR coach constructed from a Labelle kit. This wood and cast metal kit was built up with a complete interior, including figures cast by John during a 1960 visit to Walthers on Water Street in downtown Milwaukee. John hand painted the figures before placing them in the highly detailed coach.

Stanley Conley displayed a 1951 CN slab side hopper constructed from a Funaro and Camerlengo resin kit. The model was not painted as Stan awaits proper ventilation for his spray booth. This kit was started two years ago during the period of the resin kit workshops and had languished on the workbench for some time.

Modifying the Campbell kit “DeWitt’s Depository and Delivery” and Scratch Building a Trackside Shanty

Part 4 – The Trackside shanty

By Chris Butler

Photographs and Illustrations by the author

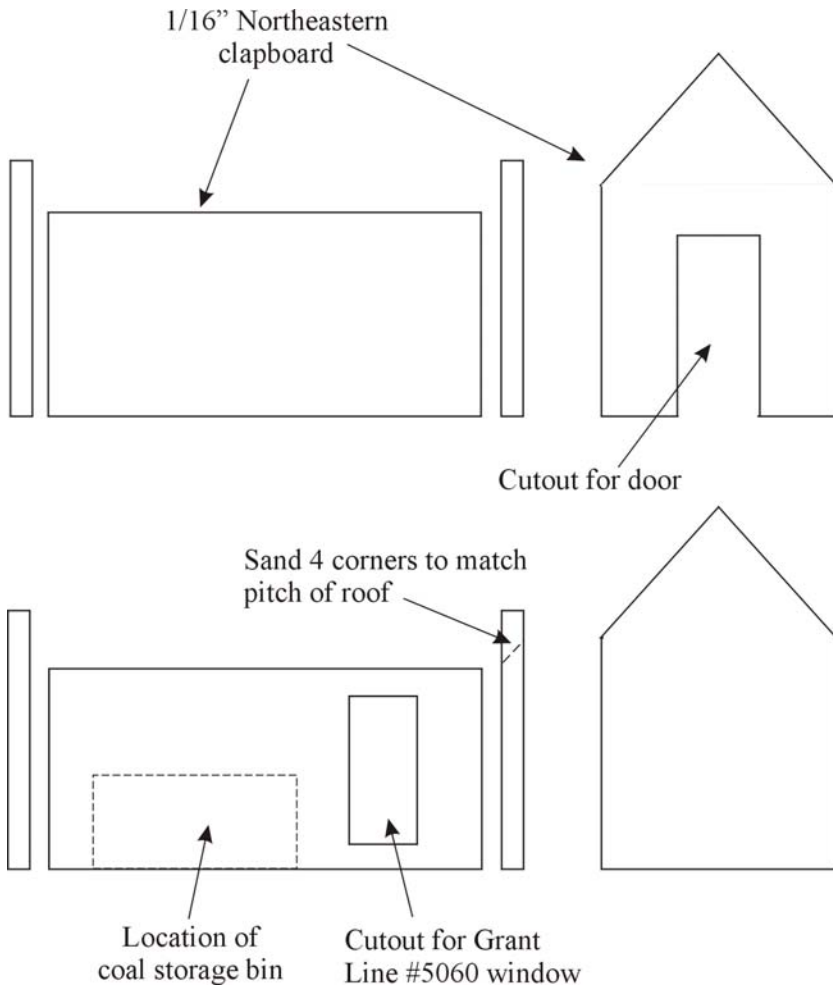


“Watchful Willy” approving of his new home on the SLD switching module

In the previous issue, I described how to make an off-the-shelf basswood kit truly unique. Now let’s get busy with the “real thing” - scratch-building and in this case, a trackside shanty. Personally, I’ve always gained more satisfaction from scratch building than building kits or even kit-bashing and, for me this holds true for both structures and rolling stock alike.

The main shanty structure was constructed from 1/16” Northeastern clapboard siding and card stock. I also cut four pieces of Northeastern 8”x8” dimensional basswood to represent the trim at the end of the walls. These were glued to the wall ends and when dry, I sanded the tops at an angle in order to match the pitch of the cardstock roof.

I started by making a crude cardstock mock-up of it – just one side plus an end, so I could play around with its dimensions while I moved it around the layout. Once I was happy with the building’s location and its proportions, I measured the cardstock sections, and transferred the dimensions to a piece of 1/16” Northeastern clapboard siding. Next, I cut two end walls and two side walls. I picked an end for the door and a wall where the window would be and cut those as well. I think if I did this again, I would invest a little more time up-front and build a proper 4-sided cardstock model first as this would have given me a full 3-dimensional image to play around with. As if that’s like me, eh?



The Shanty's component parts cut from basswood

The door was built from cardstock with 2x6" and 2x4" Northeastern dimensional lumber glued to one side to represent the door's sectional pieces. All wood surfaces were scribed edgewise with an old Atlas Snap saw to make the grain more visible and also to generally distress them as I didn't want the shanty to appear as if it was totally new. The window was a Grandt Line #5060 casting "modified" with an X-acto knife to look old and worn.

I built up a bi-level deck from some highly distressed, pre-stained (with my rubbing alcohol and black shoe dye mix) Northeastern basswood. I also made up a coal storage bin from the same basswood dimensional lumber and also some cardstock (from an old writing pad). Although there were over 20 separate pieces to contend with, it only took me about an hour or so to design and build it. Once it was complete, I added some shiny HO scale coal and a white metal shovel (previously painted with silver and rust colours) and dusted the bin with black chalk to give it a well-used look.

The roof was constructed from 0.020" cardstock (from the same writing pad) and covered with Campbell shingles. The rafter tails and gable ends were made from short lengths of HO scale 2x4" Northeastern dimensional lumber. A Campbell stove pipe (a leftover from the DeWitt's Freight depot kit) was added to the roof. Although I took a short cut here, I think that this detail would be pretty easy to make from a few scrap pieces of styrene.

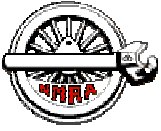
I added an outside lamp to the structure and made it from a Campbell #255 brass lamp shade soldered to a piece of 0.032" brass rod for the stalk. This was then cleaned-up and airbrushed a grey primer colour and then hand painted with Testors dark green. I then drilled a 0.032" diameter hole into the wall and glued the stalk into it with Super glue. When it was dry, I dry brushed the lamp with Floquil reefer white as described earlier in part 2 of this series.

Various white metal and urethane detail parts from Juneco and others helped me to create some all-important junk around the place in order to give it some character. From experience, I've found that structures really come to life when "people" are around, so I added a Preiser figure (Watchful Willy) to the deck.

Since the SLD module was over at Grant's house, he glued the Shanty to the module and "back filled" it with dirt. Boy, what a difference that made. Now, if I could only get him to clear out all those weeds!

All in all, I really enjoyed building this structure. It was very easy and quick to construct and I have to admit, I gained more pleasure from this structure than the Freight depot. I suspect the reason for this was that I wasn't limited by the constraints of a kit.

For more information and access to colour photographs, feel free to visit my web site at <http://www.igs.net/~cjbutler/r/>.



Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, March 29th, 2003

Where:

Carleton Place Public Library
101 Beckwith Street,
Carleton Place,
Ontario

Doors open at 9:30am -- Admission \$5.00

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

- Welcome from Division Superintendent

Clinics

- Installing a crossing guard on the module
- NMRA video presentation

Display

- Motive Power, big and small, bring 'em all

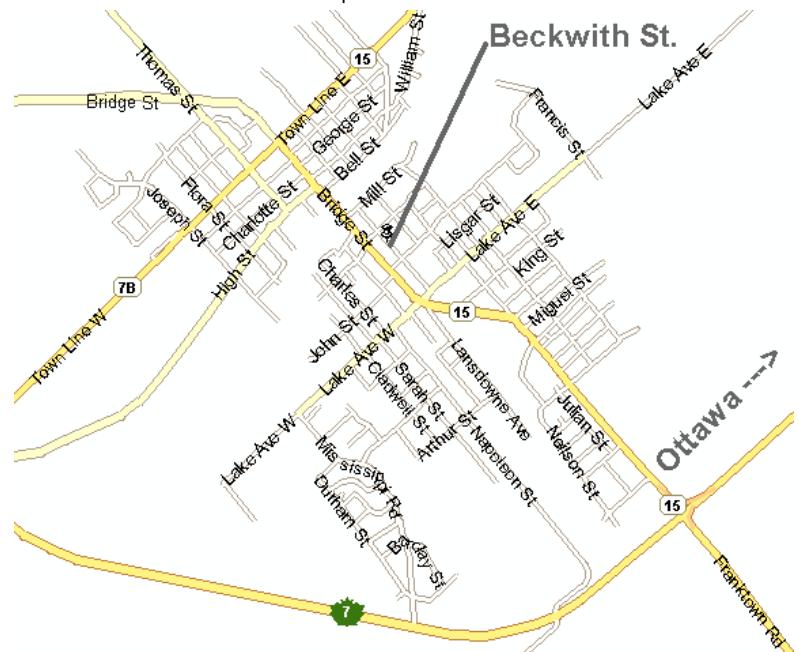
Door Prizes

- You never know what to expect!

Afternoon:

Layout Tours

- Two local modelers give us an invitation



Driving Instructions From Ottawa

Drive west on 17 to Carleton Place, turn north on 15 into town. Proceed past Lake Ave then turn east (right) onto any of the next couple of streets, the first intersection should be Beckwith. Travel time from Ottawa Center to Carleton Place should be roughly 45 minutes.