



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 78 – March 2014

St. Lawrence Division web site: www.sld-nmra.ca

Superintendent's Report

By Ron Newby

Spring is around the corner, at least by the calendar and it cannot get here soon enough as I am getting tired of -30 degree weather up here in the wild north of Quebec. I have been working on modeling projects to pass the cold winter nights, but more on that later.

Just a reminder that the Grapevine Express

Convention is coming up fast and is being held at beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake. If you have not registered yet and you plan on going I would suggest that you register before April 7, 2014 as the cost will go up by \$20.00 after that date. If you have never been to a convention and are thinking about it, it is well worth the trip. You get to see some great clinics, great modeling and some great layouts. But the best part of the convention is meeting old friends and making new ones.

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Bill Meredith will report in detail on how he built this scene – Pandora – on Bill Scobie's Sn3 RGS layout.
Photo: Bill Meredith

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Copy Deadlines

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

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

There is also a special contest this year called a “Diorama in a Shoebox”. This is not a judged contest and the winners will be picked by popular vote. The organizers are hoping for lots of entries in this contest so please consider making a diorama to enter into the contest. I plan to make one, but I need to get it in gear as I have a couple of ideas, but have yet to start it. The rules were listed in the last edition of **The Mail Car** and are on the convention website at <http://www.grapevineexpress.ca>

Well it is getting really close to election time again, where did the last two years go? We are always looking for people with fresh ideas. So if you have some ideas we need you on the executive. I have been the Superintendent for the past four years and have had a lot of help over those four years. If you are thinking about being on the executive please contact Peter Joyce. There is more on the upcoming election later on in this issue.

So what have I been doing to pass the time in the wilds of Quebec? Ice fishing, that is what. My cabin is situated on a lake so I am taking advantage of it. When I am not fishing I am building a module set. At the time of this writing the frames are completed and the basic landforms are in. The module set consists of two 2 ft x 4 ft modules that is a rural scene with lots of water and a couple of bridges. Below is an overhead photo of one of the modules. Next up is the wiring.

I have also been working on finishing my Lyons Tractor works for the convention as I plan to enter it in the judged portion of the contest at the convention.

That is all for now so until next time, may your train stay on the tracks and you never run out of rail.



Pandora

by Bill Meredith

For several years, I was unable to scratch my layout building itch as the house I was living in had no usable layout space. Knowing the situation was transitory, I was not too worried but none the same, the need to build something, anything; was mounting. At this time, my good friend Bill Scobie came to my aid and we made an arrangement that I would be allowed to “let loose” on a small (relatively speaking) section of his burgeoning Sn3 RGS empire, specifically the mining town of Pandora, Colorado. Pandora sits in a box canyon a couple of miles past Telluride. My goal had several facets to it. I wanted to hand lay the code 55 track using switch templates, try some novel techniques at ballast and ground cover, and recreate some of the very large mills that dominated the Pandora landscape. It was the ideal place to try out some proofs of concept and hopefully learn some lessons that I could apply to my own layout when the day comes.



Smuggler Union Mining Corporation Mill. The building is close to scale and dwarfs the Sn3 boxcars.
Photo: Bill Meredith

This article will cover some of the lessons that I came away with when it comes to building big, and I mean massive buildings in S scale. Pandora had two substantial mills that were serviced by the RGS; the Smuggler Union Mining Corporation, or SUM; and the Red mill. As a matter of interest, the SUM is still running some 60 years after the rails of the RGS were pulled up. I pulled the dimensions from several existing sources so I can say that at least the SUM is scaled pretty closely to the actual building. The Red Mill however was imagineered based loosely on the concept of the real Red Mill as I went along. The original Red Mill was also fairly massive and I wanted both these buildings to stand

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out. So often we use selective compression to reduce the size of our online industries but I wanted these keystone industries to at least look a little like they warranted the construction of the branch by the RGS. Operation is very important to Bill and we wanted something that would consume several carloads of activity during each operating session.

To be honest, I have to admit that this project started about 5 years back and I owe Bill a debt of thanks for not stepping in and completing the scene. I carefully laid out the track plan with an eye to operation. Both mills needed to be serviced in such a way as to not interfere with each other while allowing a run around for the locos working the area. The basic benchwork comprises a simple 1x3" frame covered in 1/2" plywood hanging from the wall. What you do not see is a set of braces attached to the wall and hidden in the SUM mill. Just one of the benefits of having a massive building on the pike.

The roadbed comprises of 1/2" homasote ripped on a table saw into 1.5" strips by the late Reg Webb. Using my mitre saw I put 1" cuts every 2" staggered along each side. It was a lot of work but it allows the homasote roadbed strip to be bent into curves. (I have ~50' of it left over for anyone interested; yours to enjoy.) Using drywall mud I filled in any large open slots and then lightly sanded it to get a

relatively uniform surface for the ties. Mount Albert 6'6" ties were then glued in place, sanded and stained with a mix of leather dye and alcohol. I wanted to ensure smooth transitions and crossovers so I created #6 stub Sn3 switch templates in Corel Draw which I printed out and glued to the roadbed. In addition to the near perfect crossovers it also ensured that all the switch ties are the correct length when they are glued in place. The templates also had markers showing where to drill for the feeder wires and the mounting screws and actuator wires on the tortoise switch machines. Weathered code 55 rail was then spiked in place.



Handlaid Trackwork using Code 55 Rails
Photo: Bill Meredith

The observation was made that so many pikes have the town sites parallel to the tracks. I wanted to build a segment of the town and have to cross the rail line coming into town. The real Pandora did not have a depot (come to think of it, Pandora did not have a town either so sue me) so this was not an issue. I had some kits left over from my days of manufacturing resin kits so I put a brick hardware store and Iron Horse press along the street. The town was also built on an incline and we put the structures close to the tracks. The effect I was looking for was that the viewer would be looking up the narrow old west street with the vintage gas pump, Texaco and Coke signs and the train would dart across the street between the closely packed buildings. Chris Lyons' outstanding skill as an artist was then skilfully applied to the backdrop.

The General Store and the Hardware store sit on a stone foundation made from sheet styrene and Chooch rockwall material. A small box was made from sheet styrene and the rock wall was attached to it. These foundations were not attached to the buildings as I wanted to embed and glue them into the scene and be able to do that without risk of damage to the buildings themselves. A wooden raised boardwalk was built up and also glued in place with the ground cover.

The mills came next. Both buildings because of their size, were built up over a pine 1x2 frame covered with 1/8" tempered Masonite. The SUM building is an actual 40" wide by 16" deep while the Red Mill is an actual 36" wide and 15" high. The Masonite and pine substructure provided a strong platform on which to build but more important; a full size mock up allowing us to visualize the finished scene rapidly.



The other side of the SUM mill building
Photo: Bill Meredith

Over top of the Masonite, a veneer of 0.020" sheet styrene was attached to the Masonite using contact cement. While this may sound expensive, it's important to note that we purchased 4'x8' sheets of said plastic from Canus Plastics out on Conroy road at very attractive prices. The styrene was secured using standard contact cement practises but the key here is that you must make sure that the plastic is tightly fitted against the substructure. You do not want any undulations in the styrene.

The SUM prototype structure is a combination of corrugated aluminium and concrete. The concrete was recreated using 0.080" sheet styrene with expansion lines carefully carved on the sides. The corrugated aluminium was replicated using Evergreen 0.060 corrugated styrene cut into scale 4'x8' sheets which were glued to the styrene veneer. To accentuate the corrugated sheets, I glued a small strip of 0.005" styrene to the veneer behind the bottom edge of each corrugated piece so that each bottom edge protrudes slightly over the top edge of the corrugated sheet below. I used the same technique on the roof of the Red Mill which had corrugated iron sheets.

The challenge of replicating corrugated aluminium is that it looks nothing like aluminium foil which is the fall back method these days. When aluminium oxidizes it turns the metal to a light grey colour. To complicate matters, each sheet weathers at a slightly different pace so each sheet can look subtly

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Our Layout

By Debra and John Steward

If you head to the NMRA-SLD “Grapevine Express” convention this coming May, you will be in the heart of our model railway - “Port Dalhousie”.

St. Catharines is an old manufacturing area, one of the first in Canada. The Welland Canal goes through its core, as does as the Canadian National Railway. What is lesser known is the fact that it had not one electrified railway, but two. There were interurban trains that took people off cross-lake ferries (Toronto to Port Dalhousie) and whizzed them to distant places, such as Niagara Falls and across land to the shores of Lake Erie. Local service moved people and freight in the local area.

Whilst moving people by rail stopped about 50 years ago, some of the freight traffic hangs on to this day, under the ownership of the Trillium Railway.

Port Dalhousie was the first Lake Ontario entrance of the Welland Canal.

Originally, ships were powered by sail, and industry abounded in Port Dalhousie; from Corset manufacturing to rubber products (Kant Krak boots!), and even shipbuilding. Lake ferries would come from Toronto and into the harbour, tie up to the west side and exchange passengers for local attractions (and the local street car system), then move over to the east side, and exchange passengers for the Interurban system. It was a busy place during its heyday, eventually getting replaced by Port Weller as lakers got larger. Today Port Dalhousie is a nice community, with a beautiful harbour, two Light Houses (technically “Range Lights”) but with few indications of its industrial past.

Deb and I are building Port Dalhousie East, where the Range Lights are situated. We are re-laying the long-pulled rails, and are rebuilding some of the industries.

For the remainder of the layout, we have cherry picked some areas of interest, but are not creating an accurate rendition of the area. Here is a little snippet of what we are trying to re-create:



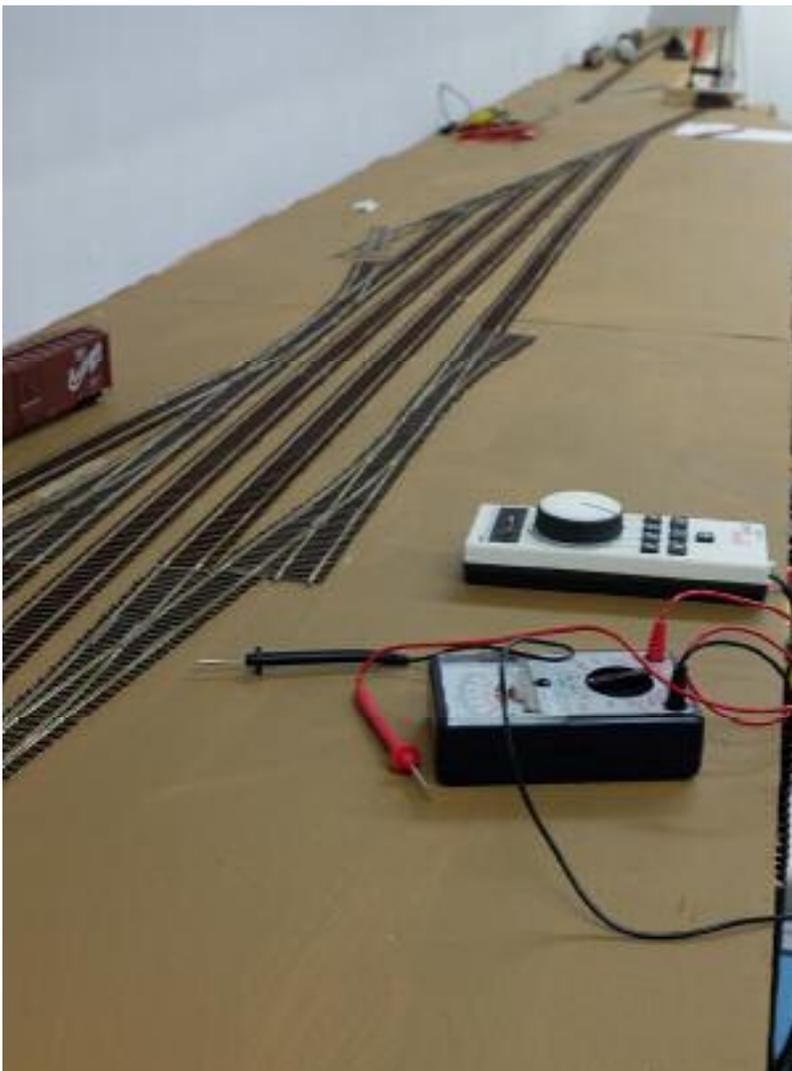
Top: BK Enterprises diamond going into Yale Crescent yards. We have 3 crossings, and purchased the rail pre-soldered together to save time, but there is still a lot of work to put them together.

Bottom: The "Top of the J" - cars being pushed into an industrial area on the right. When finished, the closest track will be street running.

Photos: Debbie Steward



- Louisa Street. Street running, narrow streets, shady trees, old houses. Today, the tracks are long gone, but the trees and houses are not. Imagine large auto-parts boxcars trundling down Louisa going to the automotive plants on Ontario Street.
- Yale Crescent yards. Still exists, and is still switched by Trillium. While the West side of the yard does not go anywhere now, it does on our layout. The East end, heading towards Merritton and the interchange with the CNR is there as a stub track on our layout. Louisa Street was along a bit on the West side, but we have moved it to:
- Bunting Road. Industries still exist, and are switched sporadically. On our layout, from the Yale Crescent yards, you will exit across the diamond (still exists in the prototype) but will travel down a tree lined street (Louisa-style) to a small yard, while in reality the rails in this area parallel the road. If you are in the area, drive around and find the active tracks to the Kemira plant on Welland Avenue, and other active sidings, to get an idea of what the area used to be like.
- Pine Street, Thorold. We have moved this down the Niagara Escarpment, and will be shrinking it, when we get around to modelling this area. I find this area fascinating - pulp mill on one side of the road, houses/shops on the other, gorgeous owners mansion on the hill at the end, and tracks down the centre of the street, popping in to the mill as appropriate. While most of the mill is gone now, last time I was there the tracks were still in the street part way down Pine Street, the shops and houses exist, as does the mansion at the end.



If you do drive along the canal up to Thorold and look at Pine Street, go across to the east, and have a look at the Kimberly Clarke plant - it had rail service until very recently, and might have it again. A vandal burnt a trestle down below the escarpment putting the line out of service, but as there were two lines, very close together, climbing the escarpment, a proposal was put through to join them to allow rail service to resume.

There are lots of areas and little bits still existing for the rail fan interested in history, while it is disappearing, it is still there for the keen eye.

A view of Yale Crescent yards under construction, looking east. The diamond is visible on the top left, on the top right is the original track to Merritton yards. Industries located off the picture to the left, and we might put something on the right, so long as it is "Arm" proof. The turnout without track yet just to the left of the Lenz controller will go to a yard in the bottom of the "J", the tracks going out the bottom left of the picture wind around 180 degrees to Port Dalhousie East.

Photo: Debbie Steward



Top: Until a valence is put on, we have been using aluminium brackets for turnout control and DCC. Currently Lenz, but we will investigate wireless options when completed. There are going to be at least 8 Lenz controller plugs spread around the layout.
Photo: Debbie Steward

Oh - if you want to sound like a local, "Dalhousie" is pronounced "Da loozie", and is a great place to go and watch the sunset over the lake, or to take your partner on a date and spend 5c (five cents) to ride the old carousel...

Details of May 2014 Election of Officers for the St. Lawrence Division

By Peter Joyce, Election Steward

In May, at the annual general meeting an election of officers is required for the Division. The following extract from the current St. Lawrence Division (SLD) Code of Operating Rules covers the description of the executive officers, the terms of office and their areas of responsibility. In particular please note that in order to prevent the abuse of volunteer goodwill, and the potential abuse of office there are strict limits on terms of office. The maximum number of terms is two within the same office and three overall.

For the May election, two vacancies need to be filled: Assistant Superintendent and Dispatcher.

Officers and their Duties

14. The officers of the SLD shall be superintendent, assistant superintendent, clerk, paymaster and dispatcher. The officers shall form the executive of the SLD. At its discretion, the executive may increase the number of officers or change their duties. Two offices may be held by the same person except that a person may not be both clerk and paymaster at the same time. An officer must be a member of the SLD.
15. Officers shall hold office for two years from the date of their election, or if appointed, until the next election, or until their successors are elected or appointed in their stead. Officers shall be subject to removal by simple majority vote at a general meeting of members. The maximum number of consecutive full terms that a person may be an officer is three and he may only hold the same office for two of them.
16. Officers shall be elected at the annual general meeting of members held in an even numbered year. The election portion of the meeting will be chaired by the election steward. If for any reason, an officer is unable to complete his term of office, the executive may appoint a replacement.

17. The superintendent shall be the chief executive officer of the SLD and chair all meets and meetings. He is also the division's representative to the NFR and the NMRA.

The assistant superintendent shall promote the NMRA and the SLD to others, arrange the program for meets, perform such other duties assigned to him by the superintendent, and in the absence or disability of the superintendent, perform the duties of the superintendent.

The clerk shall serve as the division's secretary performing the normal duties of such position including: maintaining the list of members and supporters, issuing membership cards, keeping proper minutes of special and annual general meetings of members, ensuring such meetings are properly announced to members, keeping count of votes, and preparing proxies.

The paymaster is the division's treasurer and will perform the normal duties of such position, including the presentation of a financial statement at each annual general meeting of members.

The dispatcher will be responsible for preparing and distributing the Mail Car, as well as announcing meets and other events.

It should be noted that as a practical matter the Editor of the Mail Car is now appointed by the superintendent and does not have to be the same person as the Dispatcher whose principle responsibilities are distribution of the Mail Car, and other announcements to the membership. The Mail Car Editor and Inspector are appointed by the standing Superintendent and do not have the same term of office restrictions.

The Division only works if there are active participants in the functioning of the Division and this means that we need an influx of new volunteers to help organize and guide the Division for the next two years. Anyone willing and interested in volunteering for any of the positions should contact me before the May meet (particularly if you cannot attend in person), or make your intentions known during the election portion of the meeting.

Closer to the May meet, up to date information will be available on the division web site. In particular, in the event of multiple members vying for a position, information on proxy voting will be provided for members who cannot attend the meet.

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TimeTable

Date	Meetings / Shows		SLD Workshops
March 29, 2014	Emmanuel United Church 691 Smyth Road Ottawa		
April 26 & 27, 2014	Ottawa Train Show Ernst & Young Center		
May 2 - 4, 2014	NFR Regional Convention The Grapevine Express Niagara on the Lake		
May 31, 2014	tbd		

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The theme for the January Display Table was “Something Red” in honour of the jolly old gentleman that visited everyone's home recently.

Up first again is Mike Hamer with a series of HO scale creations. The Hoosegow Diorama is based on a jail house kit provided by Walt Gillespie of Rusty Stumps Scale Models. Mike assembled the kit and installed it on a sea side complete with a winding stair case, ship and inmates.



Beyond Milepost 27 is another diorama by Mike which includes a Bars Mills station and shack by Full Steam ahead. The surrounding scenery and written dialogue describes Mike' fetish for the number 27.

Mike also had Hubcap Haven from Bar Mills (predominately peel & stick construction) and Klinger's Pharmacy which was first built for a friend then for himself.

Stan Conley displayed his completed Blue Ridge Coal tippie from Full Steam Ahead. This model includes LED lamp fixtures strategically located around the structure.

Top: Hub Cap Haven is a Bar Mills kit assembled and detailed by Mike Hamer.

Bottom: Blue Ridge Coal tippie including the Office/Scale House is a Full Steam Ahead kit assembled and detailed by Stan Conley.

Photos: Andreas Mank



John Stewart has perhaps the longest running project amongst all of us - a 1/16th scale British 2-6-0 live steam locomotive. This 3 1/2" gauge model has been on the go before his grown children were born! John has now fabricated the cab walls by CNC milling 1.5mm brass. He has even "dimpled" the location for the future rivets that will be installed.

Grant Knowles brought out a pair of aerial tram way towers that were built from an Anvil mountain models kit. This gift from Santa contained laser cut pieces along with strip wood and white metal castings. It makes a very unique model which will find a home on his HOn3 layout.

James VanBlitterswyk had the neatest church model I have seen in a long time. James built the Blair Line model and installed it on a raised diorama that includes stone walls, pathways and gorgeous

looking tree. James did ask for suggestions on how to replace a burned out light bulb that is integrated into the structure of the model - I do not think he received the support he was looking for!

We had another BarsMills structure on display. Bob Farquhar brought out his "in progress" Pattison's Pallet & Keg Go facility. This is a limited edition kit that Bob is customizing for his railroad.

A completed Rusty Stumps garage was on display from Peter Coleman. This year's Kit Busters themed project was stained using Saman stains and assembled with Aleen's Tacky Glue. Peter also used the left over kit parts to add framing details inside the structure.

Alex Binkley brought out the solitary piece of rolling stock (and the only red thing on display) an S scale CPP Bath tub gondola. This was built from a Quality Craft wood kit.

That does it for this month. Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy



Peter Coleman showed his completed Rusty Stumps Garage kit and the glue and stain used during assembly.
Photo: Andreas Mank

for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the January meet web page:
http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/jan_14/jan_14.htm.

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different. To capture this, hundreds of scale 4'x'8' sheets were cut and attached to a board where they were painted and weathered en masse. Attached using masking tape and subsequently removed, the finished sheets were randomly glued to the sides and roof of the SUM.

The windows of the SUM were Grandt Line S scale roundhouse windows that were framed and painted prior to being attached to the building. Window glazing was made from old black photograph negatives. These are nice because they have the sheen of glass but appear black on the inside.

This article will continue in the May issue of **The Mail Car**.



Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, March 29, 2014

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:

Bob Farquhar

Tips and Tricks

Peter Nesbitt

Sugar Railways of Hawaii

Ron Newby

Making Rocks out of Foam

Display:

What does not fit on your layout

Afternoon:

A Visit to the Bytown Railway Society

