



# The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 83 – March 2015

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

## *Railroad Loading Ramp Scratch Building Clinic*

By Grant Knowles

The objective of this year's SLD Kit Busters project was to introduce members to the fun and enjoyment of scratch building their own structure, in this case a wooden Loading Ramp. Recognizing scratch building may strike fear in even the most seasoned kit builder, we undertook the approach where we would guide the modeller through each step of the process from reading plans to sourcing materials and ultimately building the structure.

Lorne Munro, an experienced scratch builder in the club, graciously agreed to select an appropriate project, draw up the instructions and lead us through a work shop session. We chose to keep the project on the simple side in order to make people feel comfortable with scratch building while also being able to complete the project in a single day.

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Cover: Peter Coleman brought out two wonderful CPR ice houses for the display table. The first, shown here, a 218 ton version was built from a Juneco kit as per the instructions but with replacing the roofing with Campbell shingles.

Photo: Grant Knowles

# St. Lawrence Division

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January Issue - December 15

March Issue - February 15

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# Superintendent's Report

By Peter Gray

Once again we had a fantastic turnout to our Kitbuster sessions in January and February. Kitbusters is always a good way to make some headway on a project and to share what you have been working on. The picture below is from the February Kitbusters meet.

For those of you looking for something to do on the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of March this is a reminder that we will be at the Kingston train show that weekend.

The March meet is quickly upon us. Clinics will be on flat car loads from Norm and Ron will be sharing his experiences with being published. The afternoon session will be an opportunity to do some operations on your fellow member layouts.

I will be absent from the March meet due to family obligations, Chris will be fulfilling one of his final moments as the vice superintendent as he will be leaving us soon. If you are interested in joining the executive team, please let us know.

Now fast forward to next year. In case you did not know we are hosting the NMRA convention so it will be a busy year. We are also going to shake things up a bit by moving our March meet to be one of our out of town meets in Kingston to piggyback on our participation at the Kingston show. It also will mean that the meet after the convention will be held locally.

I hope everyone is enjoying our slow thaw. Hope to see you all soon.

Picture below: February Kitbusters session  
Photo: Peter Gray



# *The Move of the Bonnechere and Braeside Railway – Part XI*

By Peter Nesbitt

While there has been a lot of work done on the railway by myself, and the semi-monthly work crew, I did not get trains running by year end as I had hoped.

In my last installment I omitted mentioning that John Doerner is a dedicated part of the work crew. Chris Savage has also joined us. John and Chris have spent most of their time on scenery building.

Having finished painting the backdrop, Chris Lyon and I discussed his idea of painting the fascia of the upper level in the same greens as the backdrop. The purpose being to help the upper fascia “disappear”. It was agreed that he would do it, and he and Leala came with paints and video camera to get it done and to record the process for later uploading to YouTube.

After finishing this, Chris also videotaped the railway and interviewed me for another one of his excellent YouTube videos.

The room lighting does not do much for large portions of the lower level. The plan had always been that I would install low voltage quartz puck lights, in more or less the same manner as I did on the prior layout. I mounted these on white hardboard that I then attached to the underside of the upper level.

The low voltage wires are run up into the space above the drop ceiling. I have a duplex plug up there that is wired into the ceiling lighting circuit. This keeps the 120 volt wiring away from the layout and keeps all the wiring hidden.

I use Tortoise switch machines throughout and electro-magnetic uncouplers on the main line and passing sidings. The control switches and LEDs had been wired to these already and were hanging below the layout. This allowed for testing but was not conducive to running trains.

Having finished installing and painting the lower fascia I could now mount all the toggles and LEDs. Unfortunately, Murphy had not left the room! In some places the scenery and fascia placement had evolved to something different from what was planned when the wiring was done. Of course, in all these situations, the wires were too short – never too long.

I find the convenience of crimp connectors to be worth the cost, especially when working under the layout. A good supply of butt connectors on hand meant that I could lengthen wires as needed to install the toggles and LEDs onto the fascia.

This means that trains can now run over the full length of the railway!!!

There is a swinging gate with two tracks at different heights on it at the entrance to the layout room. The seasonal changes in humidity affect this track work. I am optimistic that when the scenery is completed (no idea of what it will be) it will stiffen up this area. At the moment train operators will treat it as “track under repair” with a slow order being applicable.

A lot of people have been very instrumental in getting the Bonnechere and Braeside Railway to this point and I thank them all most sincerely.

The next priorities are to install decoders and speakers into a few more locomotives, get Rail Op up and running, and start operations. My plan is that we will intersperse operating sessions and work sessions to finish the scenery and progress with the structures.

Lorne chose the Erie Railroad Loading Dock which appeared in a recent issue of ScaleRails. Upon closer examination of the plans, Lorne realised there were a few errors which would ultimately confuse the modeller so he redrew the plans for use in our workshop. Lorne also assembled a Bill Of Material (BOM) and suggested list of tools which was circulated to the participants with the recommendation they source the materials in advance of the January SLD Meet.



Photo 1 - Over 20 members participated in the afternoon Kit Busters workshop.

Photo 2 - Lorne guided us through the afternoon building exercise.



At the January meet, Lorne presented a clinic in the morning regarding the building process which we followed in the afternoon Kit Busters session. We had over 20 enthusiastic participants with representation from all the popular scales and skill sets, all came prepared with materials and tools.

As with anything to do with model railroading, there is more than one way to approach it, each providing the desired results so it is up to the modeller to select the approach they feel most comfortable. Lorne led us through the following sequence:

1. Build the six bents first,
2. Add the deck stringers,
3. Attach the cross bracing between the bents. This step significantly strengthens the otherwise very fragile model.
4. Cut and install the ramp stringers and add the supporting bent,
5. Then add the decking.
6. The final step was to stain and weather the model.

The build sequence proved to be very effective and is documented on the SLD web site:

[http://sld-nmra.ca/loading\\_dock/loading\\_dock.htm](http://sld-nmra.ca/loading_dock/loading_dock.htm)

Being a non-conformist at heart, I chose to take a slightly different approach in that I built the bents as described above then built the deck as

a separate sub assembly. The decking was cut to size and laid on top of the plan then the deck stringers were glued across the deck boards. Note the assembly is upside down at this point. The previously assembled bents were then installed at the appropriate locations and once the glue had set, the cross bracing was added. The ramp was fabricated in a similar fashion then added to the main platform.

As you can see, both methods resulted in the same model though the path taken was slightly different – remember, when building your models, use the approach you feel most comfortable with.



Both approaches have been documented on the web site for your reference.

Though everyone worked feverously in the afternoon I do not believe anyone completed their project though some were pretty close. I completed my model over the following week through correcting a few errors and adding nut/bolt castings to the cross bracing.

I certainly enjoyed the project and look forward to participating in future SLD Kit Buster projects.

Do not forget to bring your finished loading ramps to the March SLD meet.



Photo 3 - Peter is busy installing the stringers on his O scale loading dock.

Photo 4 - This is how far I got with my project by the end of the work session.

## Time Table

Date	Meetings / Shows		SLD Workshops
March 14 & 15, 2015	Rail-O-Rama Ambassador Hotel Kingston		
March 28, 2015	Emmanuel United Church 691 Smyth Road Ottawa		
April 25 & 26, 2015	Ottawa Train Expo CIH Arena 8710 Highway 17 Rockland, ON		
May 15 to 17, 2015	Mortimer Jct NFR Convention Rochester Institute of Technology Rochester, NY		
May 30, 2015	tbd		

**OTTAWA**

# **TRAINEXPO**

**d'OTTAWA**

We would like to ask the assistance of anyone willing to help with the operation of  
OTTAWA TRAIN EXPO.

There are numerous positions available:

Friday Set-up – Morning & Afternoon – Marking floor for booths to be installed

Friday Set-up – Afternoon & Evening – Ensuring that exhibitors are entering property at the correct time and location.

Saturday & Sunday – Door – This consists of taking cash, issuing wrist-bands, ensuring entry is neat & clean & checking that all persons entering have either a wrist-band or Exhibitor Badge.

The shifts for Friday are: 09:00 – 14:00, 14:00 – 20:00, 20:00 – END

Saturday Shifts are: 09:00 – 11:00, 11:00 – 13:00, 13:00 – 16:00

Sunday Shifts are: 09:00 – 11:00, 11:00 – 13:00, 13:00 – 15:30

Sunday Clean-up will take place from 16:00 to approximately 18:00

If you would like to volunteer for a shift or shifts, please inform us at: [ottawatraining@gmail.com](mailto:ottawatraining@gmail.com)  
All volunteers will be issued passes for the duration of the show.

## ***Wanted!***

**One Assistant Superintendent for the Saint Lawrence Division NMRA Canada.**

Current person (Chris Lyon) moving away from Region.

### **Duties:**

Assist the superintendent and Committee to manage the activities of the Division.

Be prepared to assist with the development of the clinic schedule, afternoon events.

Assist with the development and implementation of the Regional Conventions held by SLD.

Be prepared to stand in for the superintendent in his/her absence.

Have fun and encourage the positive social atmosphere among members.

Long term be understudy for the position of Superintendent.

Please contact Chris Lyon at [cnlyon@sympatico.ca](mailto:cnlyon@sympatico.ca)

Or 613-837-8522

# *Movin'*

By Fred Adams

When a model railroader starts building a layout, he may start with the 4 X 8 sheet of plywood, and gradually work up to something larger and more complex. What a lot of us do not take into consideration is the fact that someday, we may move. OK, no problem, pack up the 4 X 8, take it with you set it up and start operating within the hour.



Top: Stratford staging – 3 tracks on left, Kincardine staging – next two tracks. Owen Sound staging – back 7 tracks – trains ran through Listowel and then Palmerston to get from Stratford to Kincardine

Bottom: From Stratford/Kincardine staging looking through Listowel. Buildings on left hide trackage to Owen Sound from Palmerston



only thing that took place was I think I invented a few new curse words.

Madeleine came downstairs one evening after one rather vocal session and said, “Let’s get this basement finished, and you will start to build a “real” layout. A couple of months later, the basement was finished, and I had a large U-shaped room in which to work. So now, I had to design an actual layout. By the time the basement was finished I had a plan in my head, and now I had to put it into action. I was going to build my local area – Palmerston and Listowel in the transition era. I grew up with the trains running

Then, there are some of us overly ambitious, or is that foolish, people who want to have something more than an engine and four boxcars running in a loop continuously. I was one of these people who thought that within a few weeks, if not months, I would have an operating layout, and my fellow cronies would be all aghast and in awe of what I had constructed.

After a couple of failed attempts at building a 4 X 8, and I loosely use the term – “layout”, I felt that I deserved something a little bigger, and of course – better!!! I pondered different ideas, taking note of layouts that were published in various magazines, design books, etc. I finally opted to build an L-shaped layout as shown in one of the Atlas Track Plan books. I was struggling in the basement, attempting to change the size of the plan to incorporate more trackage, but was having no success. The



behind the house, as our farm was split lengthwise by the CN line between Palmerston and Listowel. I was ready to build a railroad – the Madeleinesburg Sub.

The Madeleinesburg Sub, named after my late wife Madeleine, was a takeoff on a sarcastic line that a good friend, now passed away too, made one night. I am originally from south-western Ontario, and Madeleine was from here in the Ottawa area. When we got married, she moved from Ottawa to a village of about 1,800 people. Bit of a culture shock!! My friend Doug, one night made a joking remark – “What’s wrong, can’t you get used to living here in Madeleinesburg?” Since then, the name stuck as I endeavoured to build a railroad.

The Madeleinesburg Sub came into existence over a few months, if not to say years. My friend Chris Lyon had this fantastic idea - build the framework for the system out of 2” x 4” lumber and top it with ¾” chipboard. This is a fantastic concept if you are trying to construct a bomb shelter, or, being here in the Ottawa area - an earthquake shelter. I did find out that I

Top: Working in Listowel – Gowanstown is just behind me.

Center: Gowanstown – Palmerston to right

Bottom: Track behind roundhouse goes to Owen Sound



Top: Guelph

could have been a lumberjack.  
 “Black Jacques Noir de lumBERjack de OttAWA!!!!”

The first section I built was along one side wall - 30” deep and 28’ long. Then, a 90° turn and it ran another 25’ across the back wall of the room. At this point, I made the framework angle out into the center of the room on a 45° angle – 16’ long. Then a 3’ long lift-

out added to that to join the 30” X 7’ section beside the bottom of the stairs, which was the other side of the room from the first section. In reality the benchwork formed a stylized U. The 45° section was accessible from both sides and housed Palmerston, complete with the WYE, roundhouse, and 7 modeled tracks of the 9 original tracks that were built in Palmerston.

Trains would come out of Guelph, cross the lift-out and enter Palmerston where they were classified. Additionally, trains would come from Stratford through Listowel and the same process took place again. Stratford was 4 tracks on the front of the 30” X 28’ section at the very left end. Listowel was situated just before the tracks made the 90° turn to go through Gowanstown into Palmerston.

Trains would go to Owen Sound, Durham and Southampton by leaving Palmerston yard and disappear behind the scenery at Gowanstown, and the buildings of Listowel to come into a staging yard behind the Stratford staging. Between the seven tracks of Owen Sound staging and the Stratford staging was the Kincardine staging which ran into Listowel, and there a track could be utilized as an interchange for traffic to Stratford.

A few years later, which happened to be in the spring of 2014, things were progressing nicely. Gilbert Lacroix and I really started to get into the landscaping/scenic mode. We spent a few weekends adding untold amounts of plaster to the work that had already been completed. This thing was LOOKING GOOD!!!!!!

To be continued



Bottom: Layout room from Guelph – Palmerston on the right (connects to Guelph via a liftout), Gowanstown in center, Listowel to the left

# Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The Display Table had another good showing this January and even had a couple of models related to the theme of "What Santa Brought You".



Top: Peter Gray presented this On30 model of a reefer.

Bottom: Peter Coleman scratch build this Icehouse from styrene after the 218ton version he assembled from a Juneco kit turned out to be too large for space on his layout.



John Stewart brought out a large scale kit of a European Wagon that will ultimately accompany Debbie's French 2-8-2 Mikados. Despite the foreign prototype, the kit was mouth watering exceptional with laser cut wood panels, white metal castings, etched and machined metal parts. I cannot wait to see this car in its finished state.

Peter Gray had another On30 piece of rolling stock on display, this time a laser cut reefer from ON30MIA. Peter even hand lettered the car numbers!

Earlier this season, Chris Lyon gave an informative presentation on how to take photos that will lend themselves for use on magazine covers. This month Chris displayed a number of Branchline magazine covers that demonstrated very well on how you can crop a landscape photo to be used in a portrait format. This approach can also be used for model photos which I am sure Andreas will gratefully receive for posting on the **Mail Car** cover!

Peter Coleman brought out two wonderful CPR ice houses. The first, a 218 ton version was built from a Juneco kit as per the instructions but with replacing the roofing with Campbell shingles. Upon completion Peter found it to be slightly too large for the target spot on the layout. Peter then chose to build a slightly smaller version based on the Juneco kit proportions this time with styrene walls and a wooden platform. It now blends into the surrounding scene without over powering the surrounding structures.

Stan Conley brought out some more resin vehicles (auto & rail) that have been under construction. The Whitehead & Kales auto carrier was built from a Sylvain kit and no doubt required careful work to assemble the delicate parts and apply the multi colour paint scheme. The Fruehauf livestock trailer, also from Sylvain included both resin and laser cut parts. And the third model that Stan brought out is the completed Jones & Laughlin Coal Tar tank car which was out last month – unpainted.

Tom Wright described to us how he managed to bend a tight curve in a piece of Peco track using the Fast Tracks rail bending tool. This involved slipping the rail out of the plastic ties, running it through the rail bending jig to obtain the desired curvature then re-inserting into the ties.

Fred Adams gifted himself a Walthers Proto Snow Plow for Christmas. He plans to paint it boxcar red, letter & weather it.



Top: Lorne Munro is scratchbuilding this CNR wooden caboose based on plans by Al Craig from the August 1984 issue of Model Railroader

Bottom: Bill Meredith is scratchbuilding this SN3 RGS 2-8-0 with a detailed cab interior



Now that the Loading Dock project is behind him, Lorne Munro has turned his sights onto scratch building a CNR wooden caboose based on plans by Al Craig that appeared in the August 1984 issue of Model Railroader. Lorne used modified windows & doors from Grandt Line and Pike Stuff along with True Line trucks and Kadee couplers. The end hand rails and ladders were totally scratch built. Lorne has yet to add the Cal-Scale brake details, real glass windows along with painting and lettering the model.

Santa brought me the Kokomo House laser kit from Wild West Scale Model builders. This small residential structure once existed in the town of Kokomo, CO but is now buried under years of mine tailings. The structure is comprised of a log cabin core with extensions made with clapboard siding and has an interior stair case and second floor. The model is made of top quality materials and went together as described in the excellent 26 page colour manual. The only down side is the laser

cut shingles which looked too much like a "Disney characterization" for me so they were tossed in favour of my own individual shingles - 900 of them! The kit even includes a very detailed outhouse. I have built several Wild West Scale models and highly recommend them.

Bill Meredith brought out his next to finished Sn3 2-8-0 RGS #19 (class 60 Baldwin). We last saw this loco partially built at our November meet. This model is totally scratch built from Bill's own parts except for a handful of commercial castings. The model has been painted with Scalecoat and Alclad was used on the boiler jacket - certainly a more complicated paint scheme than your standard straight black. Bill is actually building two sister engines from extensively reworked Railmaster kits. I have seen all three and they are certainly masterpieces!

That does it for this month. Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the January meet web page: [http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/jan\\_15/jan\\_15.htm](http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/jan_15/jan_15.htm).



# Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

*When:*

## Saturday, March 28, 2015

*Where:*

**Emmanuel United Church**  
691 Smyth Road,  
Ottawa, ON

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

*What's on:*

***Morning:***

Division Business

**Clinics:**

Normand Levert

*Flatcar Loads*

Ron Newby

*Getting Published.*

**Display:**

*Small Structures*

***Afternoon:***

*Operating Sessions*

