



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 39 – May 2006

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

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Stanley Conley

The March 25th SLD meet was well attended with almost 30 members present, and they were well entertained by two excellent clinics, a layout tour and of course the social interaction that is an important part of the overall meet concept.

Our first presentation was provided by Jeff Hill and covered digital layout design tools in a general way using his own current, in-progress layout as an example. Jeff was able to discuss the overall concepts and parameters available to the designer from a number of software packages, and provided a comparison of the tools as a basis for choosing one over the other depending on an individual's requirements. Continuing on he provided some guidance for what can and cannot be expected from a design tool, and the benefits and drawbacks of using the tools. Jeff was able to relate many of the points to his current, under construction layout providing concrete examples of many of the features. Jeff's presentation reinforced some of the benefits offered; being able to generate many track plans and modify them without fear of re-work, save the current version and modify again, thus spurring on the creative process by allowing relatively easy exploration of 'what if'; keeping you honest, the design software will not let you cheat a curve, allow kinks, and keeps dimensions in control; assists in visualizing the final result. Jeff did warn however, one need keep the software under control, or you may never actually build the layout!

The second clinic of the morning was presented by Bill Meredith, wherein he discussed the inspiration for his current

layout, the lessons learned from the first build and the current re-build. Bill is re-creating a portion of the Denver South Park and Pacific Railroad in his basement, in S scale. The presentation started off with a visual introduction to 'The Palisades', a four percent accent cut into the side of virtually vertical mountain sides as it approached Alpine Tunnel on the Continental Divide. Recreating this image is a key feature of his layout and required not just careful track planning but extensive planning for the scenic support system to ensure the eventual cliff faces will have something to attach to. In contrast, the area around Como is almost flat and will occupy the upper deck of a peninsula at close to eye level. Bill discussed the mechanics of his double deck sections, complete with integrated lower deck lighting, and covered some of the structural elements required to support the layout plan.

The meeting was rounded out by the display table, general announcements and the door prize draws which were won by Jim Baxter and Steve Watson.

For the afternoon, we visited the Delaware and Hudson layout of Michel Boucher. This layout has been in the hobby press, most recently, *Railroad Model Craftsman*, September 2004, and represents the North Creek branch from Saratoga New York to Sanford Lake and the titanium mine at Tahawus. Michel's layout features a consistent view of the branch at a point in time, the motive power, rolling stock, on and off line buildings all support the image of the time and place. The



Through workshops and earlier displays, we have witnessed the coming together of Stan Conley's HO CNR combination car from BGR. Well for the March meeting it was essentially complete and it was magnificent in the green and black paint scheme. Can't wait to see the other two BGR cars he has to assemble. Stanley entered the model in the contest at the NFR Regional Convention in Chatham, see the report on page 5.

Photo: Andreas Mank

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

Continued from page 1

operations are based on reasonable representations of the prototype, with small variances for owner preference and 'playability' to keep operators reasonably occupied during a session. The result is a layout that is a joy to operate, sometimes a challenge and easy to become immersed in. Michel has never been one to sit back on his laurels and lately has been seen waving his arms about, a long threatened expansion may be in the works. More information about Michel's layout can be found on his web site: www.delaware-hudson.com.

I took a moment during the meet to thank those who spent a day at the train show in Kingston, March 18-19 promoting the hobby, and our organization, to the public. Thanks go to Grant Knowles, Steve and Seana Watson, Gary Baillargeon, Jim McSherry, Bob Hobbs, Paul Anderson helping out. The show was physically smaller than previous years however it was as pleasant as ever and I managed to get a kit half built myself between chats and a little browsing. The rest of the gang seemed to make some progress as well and everyone enjoyed the day.



Our next meet will be May 27, 2006 and will be held at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 105 Church Street, Merrickville. We have been invited by the newly formed Merrickville Fathers and Sons Model Train Club which has had great initial response and shows great promise for encouraging participation in our hobby. The meet will include our annual general meeting with elections of officers to fill the vacant positions on the executive, details of which can be found in this and the previous issue of the **Mail Car**.

This will be my last 'Message from the Superintendent' as my terms of office come to an end in May, and I would like to thank all those who have helped me along way, my fellow executive officers, volunteers at meets and workshops to set up, tear down and just lend a helping hand, clinicians I have badgered and who stepped out of the blue, and layout owners who have opened their houses for us. I thank each and every one for helping to keep the organization rolling and for lightening the load on my shoulders.

Announcement

The annual general meeting of the St. Lawrence Division of the NMRA will be held in conjunction with the division meet on May 27, 2006 at 9:30 am at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 105 Church Street, Merrickville.

As part of the annual general meeting, elections will be held for all division officers. All NMRA members living within the boundaries of the SLD are eligible to vote in person at the Annual General Meeting or by proxy.

A general election announcement can be found on page 5 of the **Mail Car**.

Display Report

By Alex Binkley



Alex Binkley had an S scale 40 foot depressed center flat car from a resin kit offered by Bill's Train Shop and models of 75 foot and 89 foot flat cars made mostly from pewter parts. The kits were produced in New Zealand and distributed by BTS. The cars need couplers, decals and detail parts such as cut levers. The depressed center car will have chains for securing loads. The flat cars will be used for hauling special prefabricated lumber products on the Canada Southern.



Another graduate of SLD workshops was Paul Anderson's HO container handler unit. It was built at an SLD workshop from a Kibri kit that offered few construction hints in English. However Paul figured it out and even got the boom to extend and retract. It will be used on his HOTrak module.

Brian Earl had the smallest and largest items on the display table. The smallest was an N scale two bay hopper painted for the Alleghany Midland of Tony Koester, one of the NMRA's living legends. The large was the shell of an LGB F unit that Brian has taken apart and is repainting in CN green and gold for a customer. It should be quite a site when it is complete.



Bill Meredith displayed several of his Cimarron Works products including a finished model of the Hancock depot as well as a DSP&P 400 series gondola, a 500 series reefer and a 600 series box car. The kits were all produced from masters that Bill made. He has painted them with Polly Scale, applied decals he made himself and Sn3 trucks from one of his kits. Gorgeous models.

As part of his presentation on designing a layout on a computer, Jeff Hill had a laptop which displayed a train making its way around the virtual version of the pike that is coming together in his basement. Jeff said that with a hefty enough computer, one could even have virtual operating sessions on the layout. Guess that would end the frustrations of balky switch, electrical gremlins and couplers that take the day off.



Grant Knowles brought out two HOn3 Gramps tank cars. It was reassuring for the rest of us to hear that Grant sometimes runs into snags getting models finished. But the end products were outstanding. The cars were of standard gauge tankers that were converted to narrow gauge in the late 1930s. Some of them even migrated to the White Pass and Yukon. Grant says the kits had a remarkable amount of details. The models were displayed on an equally well executed diorama encased in a custom build wooden enclosure.

All photos on pages 3&4 by Andreas Mank

SLD Election of Officers

Earlier this year, Stan, on behalf of the executive asked me to be the election steward for the upcoming election of division officers. The Annual General Meeting and the election will be held in conjunction with the May meet on May 27, 2006 at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 105 Church Street, Merrickville.

In accordance with the division's code of operating rules, Stan must step down from the position of Superintendent. Stan has done a fine job as Super and the division has prospered under his leadership.

I will be nominating the following individuals:

Superintendent	Peter Joyce
Assistant Superintendent	Paul Bullock
Paymaster	Gary Baillargeon
Clerk	Tom Badenoch
Dispatcher	Andreas Mank

Members may make other nominations at the Annual General Meeting. While not required, they may make their intention to do so known to me in advance. An Officer must be a member of the SLD.

All NMRA members living within the boundaries of the SLD are eligible to vote in person at the Annual General Meeting or by proxy.

Peter Nesbitt
February 27, 2006

SLD at the regional convention

By Stanley Conley

The recent NFR Regional Convention held in Chatham April 28-30 was a great success. The overall package was well put together and there were no discernable flaws in the event. From Friday evening's clinics, continuing with Saturday's model contest, clinics, layout tours, banquet and door prizes, and following up with Sunday's Regional Annual General Meeting (which came off in good time and with unanimous decision making!), then on to the one day train show. Gary Shurgold and his able crew are to be congratulated for a job well done and with some style to boot. Total attendance at the convention was 105, down from the last few years, as was the contingent of eight or so SLD members, some veterans and a few new faces.

There were more entries in the model contest this year than last, with a total of 44 models entered, 12 in the judged category. Peter Joyce entered three Montreal and Southern Counties models in the appearance portion, M&SC Freight Motor 504, M&SC Flat Trailer and M&SC 500 Work Motor. Peter's work received first and second in the prototype traction category. I entered Canadian National Combination car 7187 in the judged portion of the contest where I garnered 82 points. There were some truly inspiring models in the room which showcased the work of many talented people in our region. Pictures of all the models will be available in the June issue of the NFR Flimsy and on the NRF web site www.nfr-nmra.org in the near future.

On a more personal note I would like to say that I enjoyed the convention very much, renewed and strengthened old acquaintances, made a few new ones, visited a few layouts and learned a few new things to add to the repertoire; everything that should come from a good convention.

NMRA Dates

SLD Meetings		NFR Spring Convention	
May 27, 2006	Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 105 Church Street, Merrickville.		
September 30, 2006	TBA		
November 25, 2006	TBA		
January 27, 2007	TBA		



Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, May 27th, 2006

Where:

**Holy Trinity Anglican Church
105 Church Street
Merrickville**

Doors open at 9:00am -- Admission \$5.00

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Clinic

- Grant Knowles
- TBA

Display

- Open Loads

Door Prizes

- You never know what to expect!

Afternoon:

- Layout Tours

