



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 79 – May 2014

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

Superintendent's Report

By Ron Newby

Well, it is hard to believe that this will be my last Superintendent Report. My second term as your Superintendent is coming to an end, where have the four years gone? That being said it is time for someone else to lead us as after four years, I am running out of ideas.

During my time a lot has happened both within our division and our region. Here are some of the highlights:

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Bob Farquhar assembled Peckham's Sail, a FOS Scale kit. Please go to the display table report for a view of the other side of the building.

Photo: Andreas Mank

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March Issue - February 15
May Issue - April 15

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

- We ran a very successful MR101 program that has garnered interest all over North America and has been seen as leading edge.
- A layout bus tour to Montreal to visit layouts and hobby shops was very well attended, we even hired a bigger bus that we originally planned.
- Over the past four years we had meetings in Kingston, Brookville, Merrickville, Pembroke, and Smith Falls to name a few.

On the regional level the bylaws were changed to allow for the President to serve more than one term. There is no longer a need to have a Canadian President and American President alternating. Furthermore, a plan was put in place that guarantees that a regional convention will be held every year, our year is coming up in 2016.

While I will no longer be on the executive I will still be active as I have taken on the task of being the 2016 Convention Chair. I have already started recruiting members for the committee and will continue to do so until I put together a great team to insure that the convention will be a success. Planning will start in the fall when I am back from my current project in Temiscaming.

Before I forget I really need to thank Peter Gray, Peter Nesbitt, Deb and John Stewart, Gary Baillargeon, Andreas Mank and Grant Knowles who have made my job really easy the last two years.

For the last meeting of the year we have put together a great meeting to end the season. We will be meeting at the Cumberland museum for our meeting portion of the day and visiting with the live steamers in the afternoon.

So for the last time may your train stay on the tracks and you never run out of rails.

Pandora – Part II

by Bill Meredith

The Red Mill was a more complex project. The exterior siding was board and batten (B&B) with double hung windows and a corrugated iron roof. To replicate the B&B, scale 8' high strips of Evergreen 1/8" 12"x24" sheets were used. The building consumed two 12x24" sheets of B&B and two 12x24" sheets of corrugated, or in other words; eight square feet of exterior Evergreen siding. To attach the 40+ Grandt windows, I had to offset the B&B by 0.060" from the 0.020" veneer so that the windows could fully seat in the B&B. If the offset was any less, the veneer would keep the windows from seating properly. To enable this, I cut strips of 0.060" sheet styrene and glued them to the veneer on 8' horizontal centers so I could glue the upper and lower edges of the scale 8' wide strips to the sides of the building.



The Red Mill includes the main building and a side structure

The freight doors were scratch built from strip and scribed styrene. To do this, scale 8'x8' sheets of scribed were cut and a frame of 0.060" x 0.080" was attached. The reason is that I wanted the frame to be part of the door as both the doors and windows are to be painted separately from the main structure. The freight doors were spaced so that they line up perfectly with the side doors of the D&RGW/RGS ubiquitous 30' boxcars for expedited loading.

The upper portion of the Red Mill has an 0.080" sheet styrene sub structure. I wanted to add some visual character to the building so I angled the structure slightly. While this created a small challenge to get

the walls cut correctly, I think the end justified the means. I braced the inside of this portion of the structure with wide strips of 0.080" styrene to give it greater structural integrity.

I painted the Red Mill with what most would consider to be a Tuscan roof (to replicate rusted corrugated iron) boxcar red walls and white windows. The reality was much more complex. I use dry brushing extensively to subtly inject the effects of weathering and colour shading. Dry brushing is a technique almost mastered by our military modeling brothers whereby a tiny portion of fine pigmented paint is lightly applied in quick back and forth strokes over the upper surface of the model using a wide brush. If you do this properly, nobody will know it was done but the affect while amaze you.

If you take the time to really examine a rusted corrugated iron structure, a few things will surprise you. The overall colour is not an orange rust colour but rather a deep rich red. Hence the Tuscan used as the base. The upper edges of each ripple of the corrugation is in fact a dark bluish grey. Check it out. Now unless you have a garden railroad and you have the sun to light up your layout, most of us rely upon electrical light fixtures. The amount of lights it would take to replicate the intensity and spectrum of the sun is well beyond most of our hobby dollar budgets. The typical layout is lit using low CRI (colour rendition index) and low heat fluorescent bulbs. If you can, it is suggested that you invest in bulbs from Philips that have a CRI of 82 or higher and have a temperature of

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5000K. While these have to be special ordered, the added colour rendition and brightness will amaze you.

Sorry, back on topic.



The Red Mill includes the main building and a side structure

to make a light red brown) to bring out more highlights. In order to get the best effect around the window openings, I temporarily installed a Grandt window casting so that it would prevent the highlighting paint to touch areas immediately surrounding the window frame. The windows needed to look like a weathered white. The base colour was actually concrete. I then dry brushed on a cream colour and finally a very light dry brushing of antique white.

Now I realize that all this dry brushing on such a huge structure sounds like a lot of work that would consume hour upon hour but in reality it only takes a few minutes. The brush you need is a 1/2" wide flat artist brush. I picked up a set of these at the Dollar Store for \$1.25. One of the biggest mental challenges I had was realizing how much lighter the highlight colours need to be in order to be effective. You want the details to stand out but you do not want to know why they stand out. I should also mention that this technique has a wide range of applications; rolling stock, figures, locomotives all can benefit.

The other buildings in the Pandora yard include the boiler house (a Banta kit for that exact building) the coal bunker for the boiler house, and the warehouse and office complex. The coal bunker was built from pre-cut and pre stained strip wood and the warehouse was built from Evergreen 1/8" board and batten over a 0.080" sheet styrene substructure using identical practises as the Red Mill. We did something different with the warehouse however, we painted it with the Krylon brown primer and we left that colour as it was on the walls. It is such a nice shade of brown and at \$5 a can at Canadian Tire, why not? After the Krylon dried, I lightly dry brushed on the mix of rust and sand to bring out the battens. After all the buildings had their dry brush treatment, Bill hosed them down with a very dilute mix of Floquil mud to kill the sheen as the Model Master paints have more of a satin finish.

The scenery was relatively low tech using a mix of styrofoam and cardboard covered in either drywall mud or hydrocal. The ground cover was a mix of sifted decomposed rock and ground foam. Ballast was mixed from the ground cover rock (using a very fine tea strainer to get a near powder

Where I was going is we need to adjust how we paint our models to better suit the fact that our lighting is less than perfect most of the time. I had Bill Scobie prep the Red Mill by priming the entire structure with a spray can of Krylon brown primer. The windows and doors were painted separately. After the primer dried, he painted the roof with Model Master Crimson paint that was similar to Floquil Tuscan and the walls with Model Master boxcar red. I then dry brushed the roof with Model Master dark blue. Once that was dry, I dry brushed on light blue with lighter strokes to get the absolute tips of the corrugations.

The walls were dry brushed with a mix of rust and sand (mixed together

consistency) with ceramic tile grout. The ceramic tile grout is an exceedingly fine powder that basically tints the rock ballast and a little can go a very long way. We used black and light grey. The effect I wanted to achieve was a fine mist of cinders over the track. This cinder mix was feathered back from the track onto the surrounding scenery before the ground foam was applied so that the demarcation between cinder and local ground was obscured. The RGS, or any of the Colorado narrow gauges were infamous for taking minimal care of their right of ways. At first I tried using only the grout as ballast but the powder is so fine that it acted like a paint and was absorbed into the wooden ties. Not what I wanted. Mixing with the sifted rock was just the ticket.

The lessons that I took away from these projects are:

- If you can, use an all styrene substructure for large buildings. Remember that you can get huge sheets of styrene for a few pennies if you need to.
- If you use a styrene veneer over a wood substructure, you must ensure the styrene sheet is secured flat up against the wood. That is, you do not want any undulations in the veneer. The thicker the veneer the better.
- Windows can be glazed with a black backing.
- Whenever possible, build a removable building foundation that your finished building will mount on. This will enable you to more easily scenic around the foundation without fear of damaging the main structure.
- Krylon red brown primer is a pretty nice colour all on its own and a steal at \$4.95 a can.
- You can use ceramic tile grouting for all sorts of ground cover projects as a tint to your locally sourced sands and fine rocks

I hope you found the article somewhat useful and informative. If you have any questions, please ask!

TimeTable

Date	Meetings / Shows	SLD Workshops
May 31, 2014	Cumberland Heritage Village Museum 2940 Old Montreal Road Cumberland, ON	
April 26 & 27, 2014	Ottawa Train Show Ernst & Young Center	
May 2 – 4, 2014	NFR Regional Convention The Grapevine Express Niagara on the Lake	
September 27, 2014	tbd	
October 25, 2014		Emmanuel United Church
November 29, 2014	Emmanuel United Church 691 Smyth Road Ottawa	

Project Cabinet

By Grant Knowles

If I suspect we have all been there - having multiple model railroading projects on the go at the same time with pieces scattered all over the place. Invariably this results in lost parts and never completed projects. And for anyone who has seen my train room, they can certainly agree that not only am I a member of this club but perhaps the poster boy to boot!



Top - The Ikea plastic tray sitting on top of the finished model cabinet.

Bottom - The finished model cabinet complete with the masonite shelves and mounted on casters.



Seeking to bring some order to the chaos on my model bench and to the whole train room, I explored various options (sounds like I am taking on yet another project). The obvious solution is to work on one project at a time but we all know that conflicts with one of the cardinal rules of model railroading - take on one more thing than what is physically possible. Thus I quickly came to the conclusion I needed a way to store all the parts to a project together in one place while I focus on another.

My solution involves storing "in progress" project on a plastic tray which in turn slides into a master cabinet with other "in progress" projects. After searching around I found some ideal plastic trays in the kitchen department at IKEA which measure 14 in x 20.5 in with a 0.75 in lip around the edges, perfect for holding all the small parts yet soft & light enough to not damage any parts.

I then set about to make a cabinet to host multiple trays. The cabinet is mounted on casters so it could be moved around the room and it topped out at table height - 30 inches. The cabinet was made out of 3/4 in furniture grade plywood but any quality plywood would do. Stay away from spruce or pressure treated as these will warp and splinter. See enclosed diagram for dimensional details.

To make the cabinet, I started with cutting out the sides and top & bottom. Dados were then cut on the side panels at 4 inch increments in which the 1/4" masonite ledges will be inserted. A rabbit was also cut on the rear edges of all four pieces to accommodate the 1/4" plywood rear panel.

Since I wanted a finished look to the cabinet, I then added a thin veneer strip to the exposed plywood edges. You can pick this pre glued veneer strip up at your local hardware store. To apply it you run a hot (clothing) iron across it to melt the adhesive and once it has cooled down, you can trim off the overlapping edges.



I then cut 2" wide strips of 1/4" masonite and glued these into the previously cut dados. I made sure these ledges were at 90 degrees to the side panels and let the glue set over night. The four panels were then assembled. In my case I used carpentry biscuits to hold the pieces together but this requires a specialised tool so you may want to use screws instead. The rear 1/4" plywood panel was then cut and installed with glue and finishing nails.

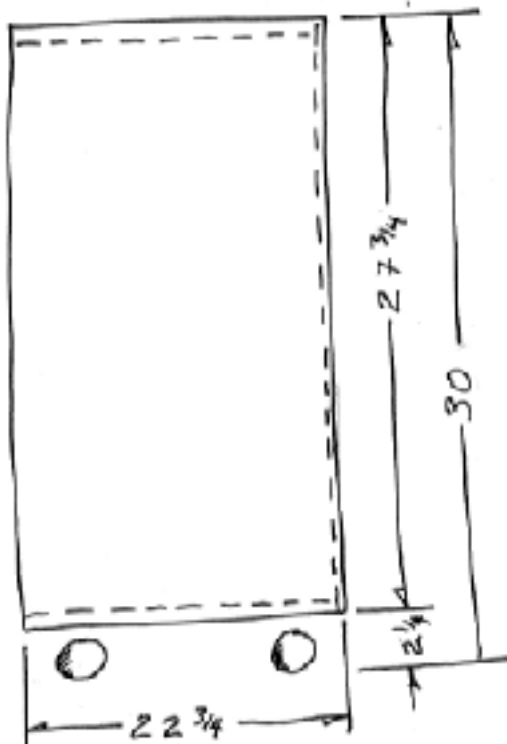
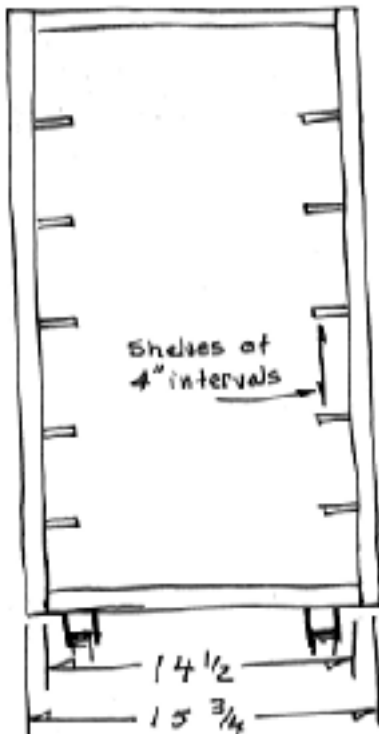
Finally the casters were screwed onto the bottom. I used the double wheeled version as I find the single wheel design does not move well under light weight cabinets. I applied 4 coats of urethane on the outside surfaces before putting the cabinet into service.

In use, the plastic trays can be placed on each set of masonite shelves or skipped when there is tall object on the lower shelf.

I have been able to clean up my model bench and can now focus on each model as the mood fits without spending hours looking for the parts!

Left - The model cabinet with trays of "in progress" models in place.

Below - This diagram shows the overall construction and dimensions of the cabinet.

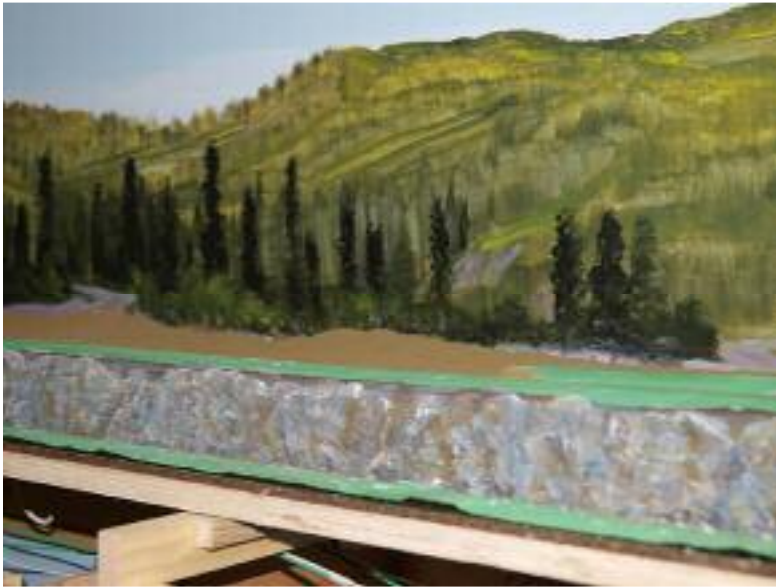


The Move of the Bonnechere and Braeside Railway Part 9

By Peter Nesbitt

The rebuilding of the Bonnechere and Braeside Railway continued through the winter with a small interruption when the primary builder and his spouse enjoyed a vacation in Hawaii. I am pleased to say that the last of the track has been wired and the Tortoises installed. As well, it has been tested and all is good.

Near the end of the last instalment I said that the next part was the installation of the fascia. Guess what, wrong again!



Top: Chris' backdrop art along the main line

Bottom: Binkley Furniture, one of the major industries on the Bonnechere & Braeside



Working in the back corner behind Silver Creek, log camp 3, I realized that with the long reach to the back, if I had the fascia installed Chris Lyon would have real trouble painting the backdrop in that area. I was in luck; Chris was available on short notice. Chris had done the backdrop on my layout in the previous house and had offered to do this one. How fortunate for me, as he does such a wonderful job.

By the time you read this, the backdrop should be pretty well all completed. What has been done so far is gorgeous as evidenced by the photographs.

Binkley Furniture Manufacturing is in place and the background gives a real illusion of depth. The track is still covered with tape as we work on scenery. The photo of the mainline between Eganville and Deacon nicely shows the backdrop as well as a rock face that Kevin Kelly is in the process of painting. It is nice to have talented friends! The upper track is the logging branch from Silver Creek log camp 3 to the sawmill in Eganville.

In conjunction with this, very good progress has been made on the scenery. In the most part the scenery base is a web constructed with strips of corrugated cardboard held in place with glue from a hot glue gun. However in some of the flat areas I have used pink Styrofoam. Lepage make a construction adhesive that is safe on foam, does not smell, and is water cleanup. Much nicer to use than what in fact was recommended by Home Depot. (Lepage Heavy Duty, Instant Grab.)

The third method used is nylon window screen and I am using this in the two areas where there is a steep rock face. Cardboard is used on edge to create the profile.

In the first two cases and sometimes with the third, the structure is covered with plaster cloth. This gives a nice base to work with and I find it less messy than paper towel in Hydrocal. But there is no “right” answer here. Whatever works for you.

The base is then covered with plaster. I use Durabond 90 rather than Hydrocal. This product was suggested to me some years ago by Tom Hood. It is strong and slow setting, thus giving lots of working time. However I do find a faster setting plaster to be better for rock casting as the slower setting stuff does not seem to want to setup properly in my molds.

Have lots of flexible mixing containers on hand and you can get a lot done in one session especially when those friends are around. I use two pound margarine containers. Let the residue harden and the next day the flex in the container will make for easy removal of the leftover. I always mix some black and brown dry tempera paint into the water before adding the plaster. The result is coloured plaster and rocks and if chipped on the layout down the road it will show up as a dull grey rather than stark white. By the way I found the liquid tempera did not work well.

After getting the plaster in for most of the layout from the front track to the backdrop, the next step was some basic earth colour and rock painting. The portion in front of the front track cannot be done until the fascia is in place. When Chris is finished with the backdrop, I will put up the fascia.

Chris suggested that in the area with two levels that the upper fascia be painted in the same manner as the backdrop. Hopefully, this way it will “disappear” as it blends in with the backdrop on the upper and lower levels.

I like to build up the landscape in layers. First I paint the plaster with an earth coloured paint, nice thick coat and while the paint is still wet I shake on some Woodlands ground foam – earth blend. At this point it begins to look decent!



Static grass applied with the Grass Master

Then I come back to add the next layer. In most areas this would be Woodlands Scenic grass – green blend. I have some coarser ground foam in a couple of different shades of greens and yellows. These are in old 35mm film canisters with holes punched in the top. I shake on a variety of each. Also in shaker jars I have some brown material, and I shake some of that on as

well. Then I spray with wet water, lightly at first so the “grass” does not all blow away. Once it is all wet then I drizzle on diluted white glue (40% glue and 60% water with a drop of detergent or photo flow in it until it is very wet.

Last fall I bought a Grass Master for applying static grass. I seem to have had better luck with it than Bob Farquhar – maybe he did not cross his legs the right way when he applied it!

Now, while everything is very wet, I put in a small screw for the ground clip, turn on the Grass Master and add some static grass to enhance the three dimensional aspect of the ground. Later when it has dried I will come back and using some tacky glue add some clump bushes and tufts of long grasses.

Some boulders here and there, as well as some twigs and deadfall under the trees are all eventually added.

Heading west out of Braeside, which is the lower of the two tracks and the upper is near the end of the

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uphill run from Renfrew to Eganville, as we approach the corner which contains Castleford, we move a single scene to a two level scene. When I laid the track I just continued through knowing that at some point I had to come back and deal with the transition.

Chris suggested a narrow waterfall for the area and even painted the river on the backdrop. I had two bridges from the prior layout. Both were wood and while different truss types they were about the same length. But they just did not seem to work together in this scene. I also had a short wooden trestle as well. The combination of it and one of the truss bridges along with the waterfall looked like it would work.



Waterfall scene under construction.

Out came the appropriate tools and in quick order I had the track cut and removed on both levels, the plywood cut and removed, and wood supports installed for the bridge and a base for the low pile trestle in place. Chris outlined where he thought the waterfall should go and after he left I got the knife, Styrofoam, and adhesive out and fleshed it out.

Chris is a great advocate for CelluClay, a product I have never used. I bought a bag at Michaels and he brought his tools and showed me how to use it as he built the two cliffs that support the bridge and are the sides for what will be the waterfall.

After seeing how it works, I have become a convert and have bought what I think is enough CelluClay to do all rock faces and cliffs that will be part of the layout.

If you were paying close attention you might have noticed that a bit of the upper fascia has been installed. Hopefully some more will be installed before I get too heavily into golf and helping my wife with all the garden and yard work.

I have enjoyed the help and fellowship of the crew that have been helping me with this endeavour. They are a great bunch and without them the layout would not look nearly as nice and progress would be a whole lot slower.

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The theme for the March Display Table was “What does not fit on your layout” in honour of the railroad paraphernalia that we all collect with no hope of ever finding a spot on our layouts. Though we did receive a number of models that aligned with the theme, we also had a strong array of people's recent projects.

Without further adieu, let us take a closer look at the models. By the way, additional photos are on the web site.



Top: James van Blitterswyk weathered this covered hopper following Allen Egan's instructions

Bottom: Stan Conley modified Rusty Stumps Garage as the center of his shoebox diorama.



Last month Allen Egan gave us a wonderful presentation on how to weather rolling stock with oil paints. Chris Lyon brought out a beautifully aged MDC double door boxcar that sported hand lettered graffiti and very realistic rust marks and James VanBlitterswyk showed a nicely weathered covered hopper.

James also had a modern structure on hand - a yard tower built from a California Model Company kit.

Lorne Munro brought out his finished Moreau Assembly Company HO scale building. This scratch built model is based on a D. Harriman plan that appeared in the NMRA magazine and will become part of a larger diorama. Lorne had hand carved the stone foundation and cut all the individual shingles.

Stan Conley has made remarkable progress on his Rusty Stumps garage (the KitBusters theme for this year) having mounted it on a display panel (Is this for the upcoming NFR contest?). Stan has modified the original kit by adding a front extension to handle modern sized vehicles. The display also includes scratch built HO scale saw horses and an equally impressive coaling trestle much of which was built with the aid of styrene jigs.

Grant Knowles brought out a CN #3 station that was built from a Kanamodels kit. Having never built one of their kits, I offered to build it for a friend after I saw it sitting on the shelf. The kit makes the version where the walls were covered in shingles. The kit came with laser cut heavy cardboard walls and Campbell's shingles which we felt would be too coarse in appearance. Thus the wall panels were replaced with laser cut shingle sheets from BEST. Though these were on the pricy side, they certainly were worth the effort. I also found the resin castings were a challenge as most were warped or

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Top: Bruce Leckie scratchbuild this single stall engine house

Bottom: This assortment of carbodies and detail parts are the masters for a series of S and O scale models by Bill Meredith



include etched metal parts for brake rigging, resin details and cast brass trucks all which builds a unique model. Bill also had a number of test run brass and nickel silver frets of parts for a Sn3 D&RG Class 60 & On3 Porter Bell locomotives. The artwork was made using Corel Draw with a tolerance of 0.001". One of the ongoing challenges the loco manufactures face is how to make the flair in the tender upper skirt. To address this, Bill milled a chunk of aluminum to fashion a tool that will "stretch" a piece of sheet stock to the proper radius. It works like a charm.

Since retirement set in David Steer has been working away at his backlog of HO scale resin rolling stock kits. First up a Northern Pacific steel/truss boxcar ca1912 made from a Yarmouth Model Works kit. Next is a Colorado & Southern single sheathed steel frame boxcar ca1929. This was built from a

distorted. With careful application of heat (oven and hot water) I was able to fix all but one freight door which I ended up scratch building. The rest of the kit went together as planned. The instructions ramble on and on with no illustrations and extremely poor photos fortunately I had a scale diagram from a magazine that filled in the gaps. These shortfalls with the kit are really not acceptable given modern technology and attention to detail. Would I build one of their kits again, certainly, but next time I will be mentally prepared for the extra work required.

Bruce Leckie brought out a number of scratch built models from his On30 diorama. Inspiration for the steam donkey came when he found a set of spool drums in the scrap box. Everything else you see on the donkey was scratch built. The single stall engine house was made with distressed strip wood and Grandt line castings. The tool shed was built from a HO scale Bachmann work train car and the flag stop station was also some of Bruce's handiwork.

Ron Newby brought out an interesting book on all the Porter Steam Locomotives ever built. If you have the builder number, it is in the book!

Bill Meredith has also been very busy making masters and artwork for a series of S and O scale narrow gauge models. The SDP&P stock car and reefer samples were made from the first test run of the CAD drawings. The parts are laser cut with self adhesive so they go together very quickly. The kits will



Top: Here is the other side of Peckham's Sail. The front can be seen on the cover of this issue

Bottom: One piece resin casting for the store front of the Beechburg Food Store designed and painted by Gilbert LaCroix



Speedwich Media kit. The third car was a CNR gondola car ca 1933 made by Westerfield. Dave focus's his interest in cars in the 1910 - 1930's where there was a plethora of designs and rapidly evolving construction techniques.

Mike Hamer has a neat diorama that was built for the "Railroad-Line" Forum's SBM challenge (Scratch building - Bashing - Modifying). The diorama is comprised of the Barrel Factory kit from Full Steam Ahead along with a platform canopy, a Bar Mills Hubcap Haven shed and a scratch built platform. The barrel factory and canopy include working lights.

Turning our sights westward, Doug Cushman had a great grain elevator complex built from a 30 year old Campbell's kit along with a series of MDC/Roundhouse 36 ft boxcars.

Bob Farquhar had his completed Pattison & Keg Company structure on display. This limited run Bar Mills kit was painted with a sponge and Pan pastels. Bob also detailed the lumber rack out back.

There's a story behind the Peckham's Sail structure of Bob's, a FOS Scale kit. The major message Bob shared with us is that expensive kits are not necessarily well designed and some vendors are reluctant to help you out. Despite this, Bob did a stellar job of building an eye catching building.

The final item on the display table was from Gilbert Lacroix. This was a one piece resin casting of the Beachburg Food store that he built the master for. This is a fine example of the railroad's influence on main street architecture during the affluent days of the Ottawa Valley's lumbering industry.

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 March meet web page: http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/mar_14/mar_14.htm.



Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, May 31, 2014

Where:

Cumberland Heritage Village Museum
2940 Old Montreal Road,
Cumberland, ON

Doors open at 9:30 am -- Admission \$7.00

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Election

Clinics:

TBD

TBD

Display:

End of Train

Afternoon:

Visit to the Live Steamers

