



# The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no.84– May 2015

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



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# St. Lawrence Division

## Executive Officers

**Superintendent:** Peter Gray  
Phone (613) 875-1335  
Email: [peterg13@gmail.com](mailto:peterg13@gmail.com)

**Assistant Superintendent:**  
Chris Lyon  
Phone (613) 837-8522  
Email: [cnlyon@sympatico.ca](mailto:cnlyon@sympatico.ca)

**Paymaster:** Debbie Stewart  
Phone (613) 761-1774  
Email:  
[windermere.630@rogers.com](mailto:windermere.630@rogers.com)

**Clerk:** Peter Nesbitt  
Phone (613) 592-0110  
Email: [Nesbitt@magma.ca](mailto:Nesbitt@magma.ca)

**Dispatcher:** Gregory Gee  
Phone (613) 843-8911  
Email: [gee.gregory@gmail.com](mailto:gee.gregory@gmail.com)

## Appointed Positions

**Inspector:** Grant Knowles  
Phone (613) 825-5438  
Email: [gd.knowles@sympatico.ca](mailto:gd.knowles@sympatico.ca)

**The Mail Car**  
Editor: Andreas Mank  
Phone: (613) 591-9088  
Email: [amank@magma.ca](mailto:amank@magma.ca)

**The Mail Car** is published five times a year by the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA.

Opinions expressed are those of the editor or the individual authors and are not necessarily those of the St. Lawrence Division–NMRA

### Copy Deadlines

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

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

## *Superintendent's Report*

By Peter Gray

As a reminder, the NFR convention May 15th to 17th is fast approaching. I hope to see many of you there. Also, next year the trip will be a bit shorter because we are hosting the convention.

Our modeller's corner was a success at OTE again as it was also in Kingston.

Our last meet of the year will be the end of May and will be in Carleton Place.

Over the summer look for some news on changes (subtle) to our meet schedule.

What I really want to say is thank you.

Sometimes in our busy 1 to 1 lives we forget to do the small things. I try to ensure that I acknowledge all those who help make our gatherings and events what they are, sometimes though I miss a few along the way.

Thank you to all of you, all the membership, but especially those that open layouts, give clinics, bring items for the display table, volunteer in the back and for ground and those that work with me on the executive.

Together we have something great.

If I do not see you in May, I will hopefully see you in September and have a happy and safe summer.

P.S. We still need a vice superintendent, let me know if you are interested.

Hope to see you all next month.

## Cover:

Bill Meredith captured this shot of CN 9618, a GP40-2W returning with the Arnprior way freight to Ottawa. The train consists of 4 tank cars and runs once a week. The picture also shows the embankment of the rail line, a very common feature that in the editor's opinion is not modelled often enough on our home layouts.

# *Rail-O-Rama 2015 in Kingston*

by Grant Knowles

The SLD once again hosted the Modeller's Corner at the Kingston Rail O Rama train show this past March.

The show was bigger and better than past years and attendance exceeded 1,600 over the two day event – a significant increase over last year.

The SLD had no problems manning the booth with enthusiastic volunteers. In fact we had to scavenge a third table to accommodate the extra folks on Sunday! As usual the public were a pleasure to converse with as there was a keen interest in what we were doing along with soliciting guidance with their own projects.

The show organizers were very delighted with the whole event and have already requested that we return next year.

I want to extend a personal thank you for all who not only sat behind the tables but those who helped prep for the event.

See you all next year!

Photo 1 (right) Overall view of the main hall which contained vendors, operating layouts and the SLD Modeller's Corner. A second room, new for this year, contained the live steamers, Meccano and kids activities.



Photo 2 (top) Peter Gray sows off his latest "graffiti'd" creation while Geoff Chase contemplates the next step in his loading dock project.



Photo 3 (right) On Sunday Greg Montague, Grant Knowles, Bill Meredith, Peter Nesbitt & Bob Farquhar socialized with the public about their current projects and tabling any railroad related questions.

## *Movin' – Part 2*

By Fred Adams

Oooops, in the early summer of 2014 my wife Monique and I realized that the property we owned was far more than we could maintain. What do we do now? Well, we started house-hunting for something that would be feasible for us to maintain, and to have room for a layout. Kevin Kelly, our good friend, and real-estate agent went on many, many home tours. We found great basements, but the upstairs were not too great. Some people say, “So what? As long as you have a layout room!”



Photo 1 – Another view of the old layout room. Please check the first part of the article in the March 2015 Mail Car for more pictures and the beginning of the story.

I could almost get away with that, but Monique is a lady who is happy that I am working on my layout, rather than being in bars trying to pick up some 20 year old chickies. Of course, we have to realize that at our age - that's all in our minds anyway!!!! Just like a dog chasing cars – would not know what to do if he ever caught one, or be too tired out to make any difference. Of course, having a layout can attract beautiful young ladies!!!!

After numerous forays into the wild unknown, Kevin convinced us to have a look at a new housing project in Rockland, about 15 minutes further from the city than where we were living. We visited the model home, and went downstairs to check things out. Nice room, but one problem – there was a patio door at the back, as it was a walkout basement and a window that was very low. We pondered the idea for some

time, and realized we could build a layout there, BUT, Mike Hamer and Ron Newby would be the only two operators to work on the very low trackage under the window.

Let's go see another unit. As Monique and I checked out the kitchen area, Kevin disappeared. Gourment cooking is another of my hobbies!! Suddenly, we heard Kevin screaming: "This is going to work!!" We went to the basement and found him standing there with a big grin on his face. We mentally started designing a new layout, one that operators other than Mike and Ron could operate.

With all of that out of the way, now, I really had to start working to pull all this lumber out of the basement. Where the Hell do you start??? OK, get everything as far as rolling stock, engines, etc, back into their boxes and pack them for moving. Next step the structures. It is totally impossible to put a 6 stall Atlas roundhouse into a box & %\_(#@E#^%#@@\*\*\*?!?!?!?!)

Now comes the really gooooooood part! I bought a few bottles of 99% rubbing alcohol to dissolve the glue holding the track down. Well, I took a trip and never left the farm for a few days.

Okay, there goes all of that stuff into boxes. How is it possible to box 3' long sections of Flextrack???? I came up with an ingenious idea, the boxes for the wrapping paper to wrap the dishes can be overlapped and track fits in perfectly.

Damn, there is one big pile of lumber here that has to be dismantled. Time for "Black Jacques Noir de lumBERjack de OttAWA" to return from de woods. I started taking screws out, and piling up 2" X 4" lumber on the floor with the chipboard. Uunnnnnh - running out of place to walk! Taberwit, this is going to be a nightmare carrying all of this stuff up the stairs, through the living room and across the backyard to put in a dumpster.

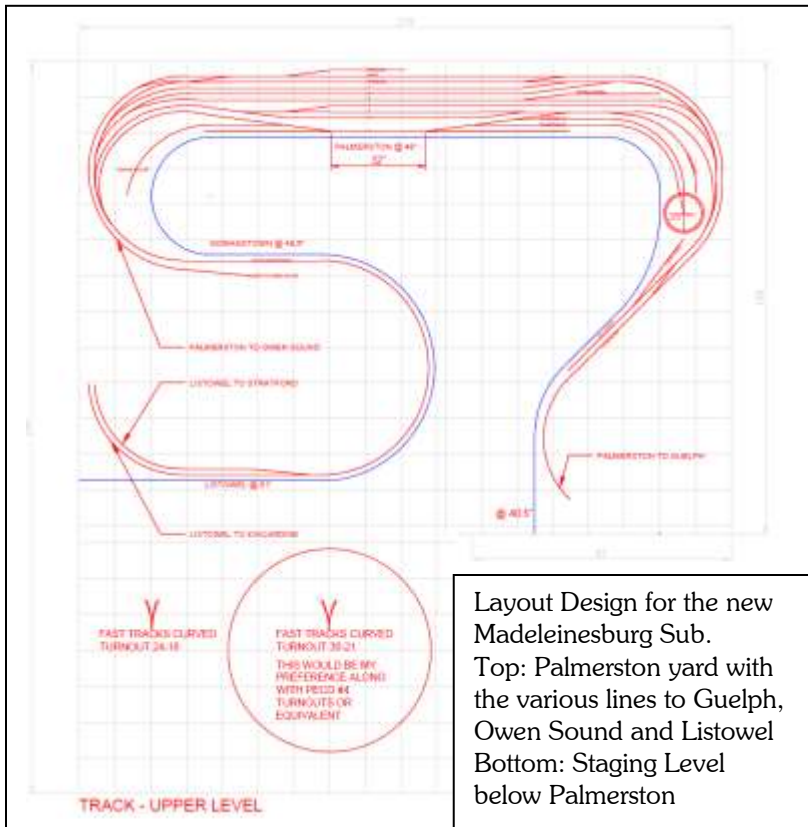
Gilbert to the rescue. This guy has more good ideas than Planters have peanuts. We dismantled all the wood, salvaging an 11' section of our scenery around what was Gowanstown. We removed the window leading to the patio and started tossing junk out the window. In a very short time everything was outside and the basement was empty except for the boxes of buildings, rolling stock, scenery supplies and everything else I have packed into boxes that I am still looking for. Point of interest for anyone moving anything - proper labelling REALLY does help.

Anyway, after moving, I was wondering how I could build a decent size layout to have operations that would be interesting. I saw an article in Model Railroader that was a double deck system complete with helixes. In my small basement - 13' X 18', I did not have room for a helix. What do we do now?

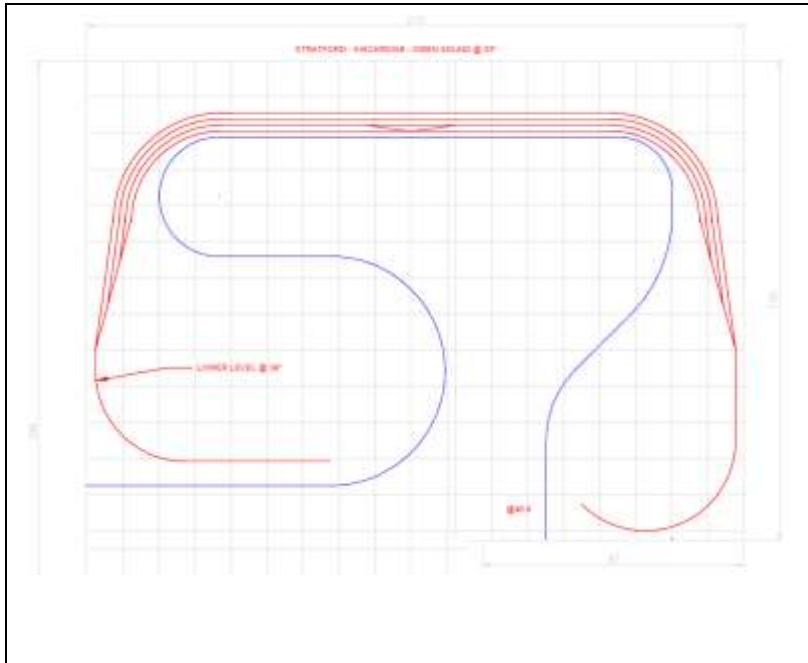
I discussed with Gilbert and a few other modellers how I could get this working realistically. We came up with a concept of a double deck layout that utilizes the track changing levels, and a large loop under one area for the layout to get to staging. Palmerston will take up the 18' wall, and the track will gradually drop so that after passing through a large curve will come to staging that is directly below Palmerston. This staging will be Guelph, Stratford, Kincardine and Owen Sound.

From Palmerston one track will travel out around a peninsula through Gowanstown to Listowel, where industries will take switching as on the old layout. From Listowel, the trackage will drop under the peninsula and go into the staging yard as Stratford and Kincardine. Additionally from Palmerston, a track will lower through the peninsula and go to staging as Owen Sound. We have designed the layout that a continuous run can take place for when visitors come.

Since I did a lot of talking to God while dismantling the old layout, Gilbert and I worked out a system that the layout will be built on modules. These modules with the exception of some that have to be designed differently will be 2' X 4' modules constructed with 1/2" birch plywood with 1/4" hardboard tops. So, if the time comes that I still have all my senses, and I am not too afflicted by Alzheimer's, or is that Sumheimer's, I can move the layout a lot easier and quicker. The scenery will not have to be destroyed as I had to do in the past.



Layout Design for the new Madeleinesburg Sub.  
 Top: Palmerston yard with the various lines to Guelph, Owen Sound and Listowel  
 Bottom: Staging Level below Palmerston



The 11' of scenery will be cut into sections to be used throughout the "NEW" Madeleinesburg Sub.

For all of us who think we will never change things – everything changes!

For those of us who think their layout is forever – think again!

For those of us who want to move their layout – talk to me!

For those of us who love model railroading – KEEP ON LOVIN' IT!!!!!!

The one major problem I have these days is that I am enthused about rebuilding, but it seems to take a bit longer, and the boxes seem a little bit heavier.

I had to answer a question my four-year old grandson asked the other day – "Grampa, will you have the train running when I come back next week?"

"Well Hudson, grampa works a bit slower now, so it will take longer than next week." He seemed OK with that.

Hudson has a Thomas engine that I would run on the old layout for him – equipped with a decoder. But, he was just as interested in seeing and hearing my steamers and diesels operate. "Grampa, make the bell work!" "Grampa, stop that one and move that one!"

Hudson is excited that I have an engine on my layout that named for him.

See what happens when we get new blood into the hobby! We have the need to complete something to be sure the younger generation is pleased with our hobby and will hopefully make it their hobby.

God, thank you for my grandson, he gives me my inspiration.

I will not have the layout operating next week, but the time will come when I will be working closely with my grandson and showing him my love of modelling, and hoping he loves it too. Maybe by the time I do get my layout back to where I want to see it, Hudson will be doing a lot of the work for grampa.

Happy modelling everyone and do not bloody move unless you absolutely have to! OR, build Z-Scale and use a microscope to see it. At least you can pack a layout into a suitcase.

# Display Table report

By Grant Knowles

The March Display Table was full of various models and related paraphernalia. This month's theme was "Small Structures".

First up is something from my HOn3 layout. When I designed my layout 25 years ago, I had set aside space for the future town of Idaho Springs. This little rural community would host a series of small industries which would generate freight traffic for the railroad. Building this portion of the layout was deferred to a later date when I completed the rest of the empire. This was re-thought recently when I was bitten by the "operations" bug. It now became apparent to me that I needed a Staging Yard more than I needed another little town. Therefore the space was then repurposed as "Denver" thus providing a means to bring traffic onto and off the railroad. I did have one criteria - the staging yard will be part of the layout thus would be fully sceniced. e.g. no five finger switching.

Since my space was very limited, I had to come up with an efficient use of the space to handle the break up and building of trains, this Sector Table / Turntable combo was the solution.



Trains entered from the right. The three yard tracks were aligned by rotating the crank on the front. The turntable allowed the engine to escape, turn around and run around the train. Shunting was performed from the right end of the yard. After 5 years of stellar service (that validated the approach) I am now ready to build the sceniced version of Denver thus freeing up this "module".

We had two McKean Models Centre Beam flats from Stan Conley. Both models have been upgraded with detailed brake rigging and one is fully weathered. As Stan states, the second one (bright yellow) is desperately waiting to be weathered too!

Gilbert Lacroix brought out a laser cut sign lettered "Kelly's" which will be used on a Mount Albert kit Peter Nesbitt is building.

Bruce Leckie brought out his "in progress" scratch building project - an On30 shop built plow. The model is built from a combination of wood, plastic and metal parts.

James Van Blitterswyk is in the process of kit bashing a Rocky Mountain Ultradome car which is quite feat given the fragile roof structure. I cannot wait to see the finished product.

(Top) Grant Knowles is retiring the original version of his Denver staging. It will be replaced with a fully scenicked version.

(Bottom) Bruce Leckie is working on this On30 plow.

Photos: Andreas Mank





Several members brought out their loading ramps from this year`s Kitbuster theme.  
Photo: Andreas Mank

The theme of this year's Kit Buster was to scratch build a Loading Dock to which we had a series of finished products on display from Tom Badenoch - HO scale, Grant Knowles - HO scale, and Alex Binkley who brought out two S scale units, one from the project and a larger one from his layout. Peter Nesbitt had his O Scale version on display. Not to be out done, Geoff Chase had two docks on display, one was built per the plans while the second was modified to include an end loading ramp.

In keeping with the month's theme, Dave Primeau brought out a cute HO scale wooden out house.

David Gardner had on display an interesting piece of railroading history - the Canadian Pacific Double Cupola Observation Car no. 517 which was built in the CPR Angus shops back in 1902. The HO scale model is from Westwood and was purchased assembled from Lark Spur Line a couple of decades ago.

Ken Broten had a number of artifacts on display from his father's estate.

Mike Hamer brought out his HO Scale diorama he calls "Black Water" after a favourite Doobie Brothers song he plays in his band. The structure is the Campbell Kit No. 394 "Hamilton Dinghies Ltd which Mike renamed as Dexter's Dinghies. Mike cut out an opening to add a door at the end of the far wall that juts out over the water. This enabled him to create a scratch built loading dock which he took around the far

side of the structure where he was able to place additional details to the scene. Mike tells us that the building is a combination of two substructures built independently then married together. The walls were coloured with a combination of stains and acrylic paints. Mike has indicated that this diorama is the first of many that will form a longer maritime scene with each subsequent module honouring a colour and a song of his liking.

Mike also brought out his version of the Walthers Cornerstone Series "City Station" which was built for a fellow modeller who required a lengthy depot in a narrow space. Mike designed a truncated version using both the back and front walls of the structure as well as both roof assemblies. This proved a challenge at the point where the roof



Normand Levert brought this collection of flat cars with loads, some of which are in operation on local layouts.  
Photo: Andreas Mank



flanges were out one course of shingles higher on the back roof than on the front roof section. Mike cleverly designed a central dividing wall section to take the eye away from where the two deviating roof sections meet. Fortunately, the roof pitch is the relatively the same front to back. Mike tells us this build was a special challenge as he had not worked in plastic in some time.

Chris Lyon showed us the Rapido LRC locomotive.

The N scale Transfer Terminal was a major kit bash done by Steve Watson that replicates the original found nowhere near the Algoma Central (according to Steve). The model is comprised of five Pikestuff kits and assorted metal and styrene pieces. Steve used a milling machine to cut out the office windows.

Normand Levert delivered another awesome clinic, this one on flat car loads. To support his presentation, Norman brought out a large number of "flat car loads" which included:

- TTX flat with military load - scratch bashed "demolition tractor" on a 60' flat.
- Heavy Crane on Flat - Doucet built the crane, Norm blocked it on the flat. No chains were used in order that the load could be removed.
- Depressed Short Flat - The car was a gift from Rob Peck that was upgraded with grab irons. The dozer load is removed by pivoting on the spot and driving off the side of the car.
- 300 Ton Heavy Flat - the car was scratch bashed from an Athearn heavy duty flat with scratch built span bolsters complete with Buckeye six wheel trucks.
- Trusses on Gondola – Michel Boucher required a non-bridge load that spanned two cars.
- Bulkhead Pulpwood Flat - Norman's first kit ~ 60's.
- Girders on Flat - Built with bracing to hold the girder load.
- Depressed Flat (Walthers?) - Early planning, the load needs substantial bracing.
- 8 Axles Depressed Flat - Another scratch bashed, European depressed flat with scratch built bolster weighed with lead plus load on a cradle.

Bill Meredith had a partially assembled On3 Colorado Central Porter Bell #30 locomotive on display. This was built from one of his kits which feature working inboard valve gears. The pieces were designed by Bill who included nickel silver etchings and brass castings

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\\_15/mar\\_15.htm](http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/mar_15/mar_15.htm).

## TimeTable

Date	Meetings / Shows	SLD Workshops
May 15 to 17, 2015	Mortimer Jct NFR Convention Rochester Institute of Technology Rochester, NY	
May 30, 2015	Carleton Place Arena Board Room 75 Neelin Street Carleton Place, ON, K7C 2V8	
September 26, 2015	Brockville	
October 31, 2015		Emmanuel United Church
November 28, 2015	Emmanuel United Church	



# Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

*When:*

**Saturday, May 30, 2015**

*Where:*

**Carleton Place Arena  
Board Room  
75 Neelin Street,  
Carleton Place, ON**

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

*What's on:*

*Morning:*

Division Business

**Clinics:**

Joel Racine

*Designing the OCR*

Peter Gray

*How not to design a model railway*

**Display:**

*Convention Models*

*Afternoon:*

*Layout Tour*

Doug's Northland Garden  
Railroad

