



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 55 – November 2009

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

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Peter Joyce

Greetings once again!

Our outing to Morrisburg went well, with a very healthy attendance. Thanks to Sheldon Oglestone and Paul Bullock for opening their layouts to the group.

On October 24th nearly 25 of us met at Emmanuel United Church for the first session of “Kit Busters”. It was a busy day, with two great clinics on preparing and painting plaster kits provided by Grant Knowles and Chris Lyon. I was late for the clinics, so was given an extensive one-on-one tutorial which simply made my day. We have so much talent within our group that it hurts!

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Wuppertal's suspended Monorail

By Andreas Mank

Imagine you are the mayor of a fast growing city stuck in a river valley between two “mountain” ridges. You realise that your city needs reliable transit to ensure the future growth of commerce and of the city itself can be supported. 20 years ago the default solution would have been to build roads. These days, at least you and your council would think about a form a rapid transit. But this is the year 1887! There are no cars, no buses and no rapid transit.

The towns of Barmen, Elberfeld, and Vohwinkel in Germany found themselves in exactly this situation. All three are located in the valley of the Wupper, stuck in between ridges to the north and the south.

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A train on the suspended monorail in Wuppertal is departing the station at Oberbarmen, which is the eastern terminus of the line. The line is suspended above the river Wupper at a typical height of 12 m.

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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

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

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

Continued from page 1 "From the Superintendent's Desk"

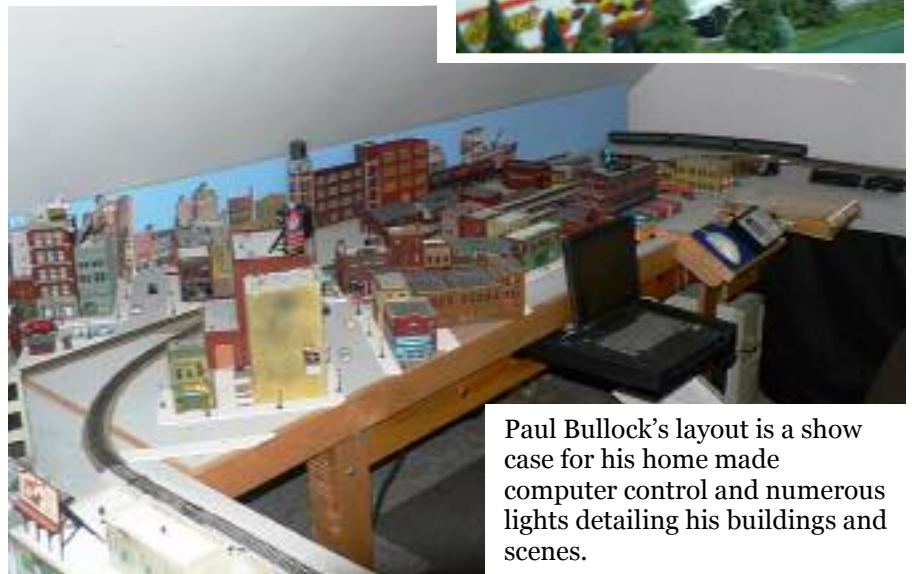
The suggestion has been made by Regional HQ that for every new member we enlist we should provide a mentor from within our ranks – someone that could be phoned to answer questions or point the “newbie” to a learned source. I have not received much response from the membership on this idea, but I feel that it is something we will endorse wholeheartedly. Time will tell of course – when we see “new faces”.

November 28th is our next regular meeting. Peter Nesbitt will present a clinic on laying flex track. Hopefully Bob Farquhar will have his clinic on “Waterfalls” ready for presentation, and there will be layouts to visit in the afternoon.

Our featured presentation for “show and tell” in November is “non revenue”, but as usual bring out whatever you want to show off!



Sheldon Oglestone opened his ONR themed layout for visitors. The layout is fully scened and detailed, and captures the feel of small towns in Northern Ontario including Canada's favourite Coffee shop.



Paul Bullock's layout is a show case for his home made computer control and numerous lights detailing his buildings and scenes.

KitBuster Plaster Kits 101

By Grant Knowles

It has been a couple of months now since we last spoke, how are you progressing on your Plaster Structure Kit? I will have to admit, I not only have mine out of the box but I have cleaned the castings and assembled the walls to the base. Of course it is a simple four sided oil shed but a structure none the less. I now need to plaster in a few cracks then we will be ready to practice those neat painting techniques Chris taught us.



The main room at the KitBuster Plaster Kits 101 session with everyone heads down working on their models.

Photo: Grant Knowles

For those who were not able to join us at the October KitBusters session, we had two clinics presented on how to paint our plaster kits. I spoke to the art of painting (or is “staining” the more correct term) of the raw castings. Chris Lyon then took over and shared with us numerous techniques he had learned at the Structures Convention that bring a plain model to life. In this case, Chris pre-primed his castings with an acrylic sealer that reduced the porosity of the castings so that they behaved more like a hard surface when applying paints. From there he demonstrated the use of various colouring agents and sequences to arrive at different effects. The part I liked best is when he made a plaster casting look like real rusted old galvanized roofing!

We will be posting all the details covered in the clinics on the SLD web site in the near future. The neat part of this is all the techniques are transportable to any model surface, they are not limited to just plaster.

We also handed out practice castings that were donated by Ed Fulasz to allow us to practice what we learned. A number of the members took up the challenge and did just

that, demonstrated how easy it is to bring life to plan old chunk of white plaster.

Our next KitBusters Workshop is scheduled for early January so be sure to mark that in your calendar as we would like to see all of you there. And do not forget, you do not have to be building a plaster kit in order to partake in the fun and merriment!

So if you have not started your kit, there is no excuse to hold back any longer, with the wet cold weather outside, what better excuse do you need to hunker down in the hobby room and get to work! In fact, why not bring out your model to the November SLD Meet to show us your progress?



Peter Nesbitt makes use of some bar clamps while assembling his O-scale kit.

Photo: Grant Knowles



A member practices Chris' techniques on some sample castings. Chris' finished sample is on the left.

Photo: Grant Knowles



Here are 5 samples that Chris completed for his clinic. Clockwise from the top, galvanized roofing, two stone walls, four barrels and work bench with tools.

Photo: Grant Knowles

The three towns co-operated and contracted for the construction of an electrically driven suspended monorail. Over a length of 10 km, the track is supported at a height of 12 m above the river Wupper. The track continues another 3 km above the main street in the western town of Vohwinkel at a height of slightly more than 8 m. Years later the three towns



A view of Vohwinkel, near the western terminus of the suspended monorail. The rail is suspended at a height of 8 m or more to allow for clearance for street traffic below.

were amalgamated into the city of Wuppertal ('tal' means valley, therefore the name means valley of the Wupper, which describes exactly the locale). The suspended monorail was opened in 1901 and has been in operation almost continuously ever since.

The track is supported on 472 girders and the cars glide along at the height of the third and fourth story. At the end



A train loops around at the western terminus. In the background, another car can be seen waiting in the car barn.



The train hangs off the top of the rail. Here the train has a choice between going straight into the car barn or to loop around and return to the other end of the line.



A train on the suspended monorail in the center of Wuppertal.

stations, the cars turn using return loops of 9 m radius. The original cars were replaced with more modern vehicles between 1972 and 1974. A total of 27 cars are available and on workdays typically run on 5 minute headways, transporting 82,000 people per day. One of the original cars from 1901 has been kept as an excursion vehicle.

The line has an impressive safety record, there have only been 4 accidents over the 108 year life of the suspended monorail. Rear end accidents in 1917 and 1997 resulted in a few slight injuries. In 1999, a contractor working on the rail forgot to remove a steel strap. The first car through the area derailed and dropped into the river with the cost of 5 lives and 47 injured. The strangest accident occurred in 1950. For a promotional stunt, a young elephant was riding the suspended monorail. The animal spooked and jumped from the train into the river – and survived unscathed!

The suspended monorail is a great way of sightseeing. While I would not suggest that Wuppertal is a prime tourist destination with lots of sights, it is an interesting experience to glide along the track. The perspective is even better than riding the double-decker buses in London or Berlin.

Wuppertal's suspended monorail is a prime example of the kind of catalyst a good rapid transit system can be – it continues to support growth. The monorail is a key element in the transit system of Wuppertal. Over the last 30 years, it has been continuously upgraded. All of the original load bearing structures manufactured from iron have been replaced with steel construction. All of the stations along the route have been rebuilt and modernised, including providing handicapped access. After 108 years, the monorail is looking into a bright future.

Tip of the Month

By Normand Levert

I found this web site for asphalt shingles. The interesting bit is that they have "samples" of their asphalt shingles that are capable of tiling perfectly. <http://www.filterforge.com/filters/2972.html>

The successful asphalt shingle roof creation procedure was as follows:

Copy the shingle pattern you want. Open a Word Document. You should set it for "landscape" orientation - not mandatory, but most roofs are rectangular with the wide dimension horizontal. Paste the shingle pattern, using the "Paste Special" function, and select "Device Independent Bitmap" (otherwise, you will not get the picture)

The picture is very large - about 3/4 page size. Use your image tools to reduce the image in size WAY down. Before you reduce it, or after by blowing the picture up to 150 - 200% in size, you can use your image tools to lighten the colour and play with the contrast. When you are happy with size and colours, copy the new image (Ctrl + C). Then paste the reduced, enhanced image over and over again (Ctrl + V).

Here is a sample of the reduced, lightened blue shingles:

This is about right for HO scale. (Says I before measuring!) The bitmap image is large – a page full will hit 10s of Megabyte. There are nine shingle variations available on the site.



Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The September Display Table theme was centered around the 2009/10 KitBusters program of Plaster Structures 101 plus your Summer Project. There were ample examples of both on the display table.

To start off with, James VanBlitterswyk brought out his plaster HO scale CC Crow kit that he will be building as part of this year's program.

Grant Knowles had a series of items on display. First up is an HO scale Power Station that he is in the process of kit bashing from a Walthers kit. This will ultimately be installed on David Steers HOM Swiss railroad. Grant also had a plaster kit, the Burrus Livery, that was built from a Guts, Gravel and Glory kit. The castings were of a lower quality as they contained a number of bubbles and were not flat which did complicate the assembly. The finished model will ultimately be located on the new HON3 layout. Grant also had three un-built plaster kits on display one of which he started at the October KitBusters workshop.

Our guest, Bruce Leckie has won the all time award for having the most models on the Display Table. I lost count after two dozen! So let us walk through what Bruce had for us to view. First up is the scratch built HO Scale Beausoriel Belle ferry (and diorama) that was based on original plans. Next is a scratch built COOP Mill scene complete with loading docks. The final diorama was of the Radial Coal yard that is based on plans in the RMC.

Moving up in scales, Bruce had his On30 scratch built train set up along with two kit bashed locomotives, one a 0-4-0T Porter and a 4 wheel diesel both of which will be at home pulling the line up.



Bruce also had a number of reworked HO scale SBL diesel units for his railroad. He even stimulated some lively conversation to determine what the mystery box was on the running board on a locomotive. Transpires it was an auxiliary heater to keep the engine warm when not running in the winter.

And to wrap up the picture, Bruce had scratch built HO Scale SBL Combine, a series of reworked (as per a Stafford Swain's article) Accurail Box Cars and a CN 36 ft Boxcar Westerfield kit.

Moving on, Lorne Munro had his Fenelon Falls Station project on display. Lorne is scratch building his station in plaster as a single unit (all walls cast together). The next step is to carve out the windows and doors followed by scribing the brick and stone details. I cannot wait to hear his clinic on the whole project!

Normand Levert provided pictures of the Grain Transfer System he built for Michel Boucher. Normand "stole" the cyclone and motor from a kit and scratch built the rest. The model was built on its own display base then installed on Michel's layout in whole. Normand was also very proud of his Silver Plume Bakery kit as it was finally finished! The model comes complete with two roofs – the first: a Plastruct standing seam roof with scratch built chimney. The second roof is made with asphalt shingles. The floor is removable to allow installation of a detailed interior when the new tenants move in.

And Normand had a series of HO scale 34 ft Hoppers (2 are Athearn units) on display that were reworked for his NORD railway. The cars are weighted to NMRA standards and sport light weathering with wash of NATO brown.

Brian Earl has also finished his Silver Plume Bakery kit into a Bingo and Pool hall. As Brian states, the N scale model box has more paper and packaging than kit parts!

Who would have ever thought you could make an HO scale Tyco kit look like a craftsman kit? Speedy Andrews is a 1970's style model that was typical of the kits used in the early days of plastic modeling. Chris Lyon used modern paint and weathering techniques to make it look like a wood craftsman kit.

We had a HO scale Proto 2000 B&M S3 1188 on display which Dave Primeau detailed & painted.

David Steer took the front seat for the longest project this month with his Sn3 Westside #12 Shay. This is a PBL / Samhonga brass model that required major repairs to get it working again. The rebuild was performed over a 5 year period and finally culminated this summer with the application of the perfect paint job. This model represents the largest and most modern shay on the Westside Lumber Company operations. The shay is equipped with a Lenz DCC receiver and a Soundtrax sound decoder.



Ron Newby On30 Superior Detritus Co Boxcar on display. This is a “paper” based kit made by Full Circle Models that builds up exactly as the instructions say and looks really nice. Peter Nesbitt plans on building the O scale White Ground Farm Supply as part of this season’s Plaster Structures 101 program. Not a bad idea considering he does not have a train layout at this time!

Peter Joyce’s O Scale is on a roll with scratch building yet another unique car for his Montreal & Southern Counties railroad. The O scale Railway Milk Car # 514 was one of four wooden milk trailers built by the Grand Trunk in 1915. All were scrapped in 1955. The model is scratch built from wood and styrene with parts from Precision Scale, Q-Car, Wagner and Walthers. Peter recommends you do not build fragile models at the campsite on windier days, unless you like watching your hard efforts be blown across the field!

Last but not least, Bill Meek has his plaster based HO Scale Downtown Deco farm house on display. This was built a number of years ago and is normally located on his railroad.

Well, that was certainly a full Display Table this month. Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the Sept Meet web page:

http://members.fortunecity.com/gknowles/meets/sept_09/sept_09.htm

NMRA Dates

SLD Meetings		NFR-NMRA Convention	
November 28, 2009	Emmanuel United Church		TBD
			SLD Workshops
			January 9, 2010
January 30, 2010	Emmanuel United Church		
			February 27, 2010
March 27, 2010	Emmanuel United Church		
			April 24, 2010
May 29, 2010	TBD		



Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, November 28, 2009

Where:

Emmanuel United Church

691 Smyth Road,
Ottawa

East of CHEO at Dauphin Road

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

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Clinic

- Bob Farquhar:
Modelling Waterfalls
- Peter Nesbitt:
Laying Flex Track

Display

- Non Revenue

Door Prizes

- You never know what to expect!

Afternoon:

- Layout Tours

