



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 55 – September 2009

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

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Peter Joyce

To paraphrase Snoopy, “it was a dark and dreary summer”, but one that (hopefully) left time for working on summer projects. I know I had fun working at our campsite picnic table, between showers and wind bursts. Unfortunately Mother Nature did some damage that I hope to repair before our first meeting on September 26th.

Our September meeting (Saturday Sep 26th) will be held in Morrisburg, at the McIntosh Inn. It is located on old highway 2 (now county road #2) just east of the junction with highway 31 from Ottawa. Do not forget to bring along your summer project for “show and tell”. I hope to have some layouts to visit in the afternoon, or there is train watching at Brockville or Cornwall.

Due to the slightly larger distance for most of our members, we decided to open the doors at 9:30 am and start the program at 10:00 am, one half hour later than usual.

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KitBuster Plaster Kits 101

By Grant Knowles

Welcome to the 2009/10 SLD Season. As outlined elsewhere in this issue of the **Mail Car**, we have a very busy agenda assembled for the membership for this year. As part of this program, we will be hosting a new KitBusters Workshop project which based on feedback from the club will be focused on building a Plaster Kit Structure.

The format for the year will be very similar to last in that we will have clinics presented by our members followed in the alternate months with the KitBusters workshops where you can practice what you have learned. Of course we will not be repeating the clinics instead building on what we learned last year with focus on those building techniques and skills that are unique to assembling a plaster model.

This year we have “opened” the doors to source your own kit if you wish. With last year’s experience under your belt, many of you now have expressed the desire to branch out on your own. This is excellent. In addition we are hosting a group purchase with a chosen supplier

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Plaster Kits 101 will take the participant from a collection of plaster walls and detail parts to a finished model, such as the one shown on Grant Knowles layout on the right.

Photos: Grant Knowles

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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

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

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

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

Most of you will have received Email from Grant Knowles informing you of this year's modeling project. Grant will be introducing us to plaster kits; see more details elsewhere in this issue.

In planning for this season's activities, we would like to find volunteers to present clinics of general interest to counterpoint the Plaster Kit 101 activities. The top items on our wish list are:

- Railroad brake systems
- Geared locomotives (Shays, etc)
- How to model waterfalls
- How to paint trees (on the backdrop)
- How to lay flex track
- How to weather with (Bragdon) powders
- Airbrush 101

Please contact a member of the executive if you would like to improve our modelling skills by presenting a clinic on one of these or a similar subject. You can also contact us if you know somebody that would be knowledgeable on these subjects and could be invited to present a clinic.

Railfair is being held on October 17 and 18, and Paul will have a sign-up sheet at the September meet. The more volunteers we have the easier the load.

At this point in time it is unclear whether there will be a convention in the spring of 2010, as no group came forward to volunteer. The April KitBuster date is currently listed as tentative, as it would likely be dropped if an NFR convention is held in the spring of 2010.

See you on the 26th of September in Morrisburg!

Note on postal delivery of the Mail Car

The Mail Car will be delivered by Canada Post to any member that signs up for postal delivery and pays a \$5 subscription fee to cover the cost of printing and mailing. This will be the last issue delivered to anyone that was signed up for the 2008/2009 season.

Starting with the November **Mail Car**, only those that have renewed their subscription for the 2009/2010 season will continue to receive the publication by mail.

The Mail Car can be downloaded from the SLD webpage at

http://www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/sld_index.htm

An e-mail notification is sent to the membership on the day of the posting of the latest issue. Please ensure that you notify the Clerk when your contact information changes.

One benefit of downloading **The Mail Car** from the SLD webpage is that you will receive **The Mail Car** in colour. Printed copies can only be provided in black and white.

to which a communication was issued earlier this summer to the membership. In the end, 20 kits were ordered from Ed Fulasz (<http://edfulasz.com/>) who was delighted to help us out with our cause. Ed deals in HO scale only with a broad cross section of excellent kits in the \$60 - \$90 US price range.

If you do plan to supply your own plaster kit, here are a few helpful hints. Choose a plaster kit that will provide an opportunity for you to grow your skills and be a challenge. Sure there are some really nice simple four sided plaster kits on the market but after the four panels have been glued together and painted – the challenge is over. Pick a project that is a little more complicated, multiple panels, surface textures, etc as it will be much more rewarding to complete.

The model railroad market has a handful of active Plaster Kit suppliers of which most provide kits in HO scale. O is the next most popular scale with the other scales, S & N having a very limited presence out there. Thus for those who may have unique tastes and requirements, we will leave it up to you to locate your kit of choice.

I expect to have our order in from Ed in time for our September meet, where they will be distributed and accounts settled. I will be sending out emails to those who have purchased the kits through me identifying what is owed.

Along with distributing the kits in September, we will also have a clinic on how to get started, thus you can proceed in advance of the October KitBusters if you wish.

It will also be nice to see what all the kits look like before we commence construction. Thus the September Display Table Theme will not only be “My Summer Project” but will also include “My Plaster Kit”. Therefore I ask that if you have sourced your own kit, can you bring it to the September meet so we can all see what you structure kit you have chosen to assemble. It will be interesting to see the kits that are available on the market. Of course we will have Ed’s kits on display as well.

As with any volunteer organization, it is the participation of the members that make the club what it is. I have a draft plan assembled for the year’s program and am looking for people to assist with all aspects of the endeavour, especially with the clinics. Feel free to come forward and offer your ideas and services in this area. I seem to have lost my list of those who did express an interest back at the May meet so please contact me again on this matter.

Having built a number of plaster kits from various manufactures I can say this is a really neat medium to work in and provides fantastic results very quickly. If you have not built a plaster kit before, what better time to give it a try.

NMRA Dates

SLD Meetings		NFR-NMRA Convention	
September 26, 2009	McIntosh Inn County Road 2 Morrisburg		TBD
			SLD Workshops
			October 24, 2009
November 28, 2009	Emmanuel United Church		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		
September 25, 2010	TBD		

A visit to the Dampfloswerk Meiningen

By Andreas Mank

This year's summer vacation took me to Germany to visit my mother. My mother is physically handicapped and living alone, but generally coping quite well. She had expressed an interest to visit the city of Dresden, world renowned for the architecture of the historic old town and the landscape of the Elbe river valley. Dresden lies in the eastern part of Germany, close to the Polish border. The city got almost completely destroyed shortly before the end of the second world war in 1945, but is being rebuilt faithfully.

Unbeknownst to us, Mr. Obama decided to visit Dresden only 36 hours after our arrival in the city. The ensuing security measures by the German Police made a normal visit impossible, as they barricaded the entire historic old town. Even the people living there had to get special permits to stay in their homes and a police escort every time they wanted to leave their homes. I doubt that Mr. Obama even got a glimpse of a "regular" citizen, as the security cordon was wide enough that he never got within a kilometre of any crowds. At least our hotel was just on the outside of the security perimeter and thus we were spared the worst.

Do not be worried, we are now getting to the railroad content of the article. One of the southern suburbs of Dresden, Freital-Hainsberg is the starting point of the Weißeritztalbahn, a 750 mm Narrow Gauge Line operating under steam. The line was opened in 1883 between Freital-Hainsberg and Kurort Kippsdorf and had been continuously operated until 2002.



A 2-10-2T tank engine is accelerating its train up the grade from the station stop in Rabenau. Rabenau lies approximately one third of the way between Freital-Hainsberg and Dippoldiswalde.

In 2002, the valley of the river Elbe and surrounding areas fell victim to the highest reported flooding ever. Apart from causing wide spread damage in the historic old town of Dresden, the entire road bed of the Weißeritztalbahn was destroyed.

The people in the area rallied behind the railway and with government support, the line is being rebuilt. In December of 2008, the first part of the line to Dippoldiswalde was opened again. Unfortunately, we were not able to ride the train, but instead chased it from Freital-Hainsberg to Dippoldiswalde.

The next day found us in Meiningen. Meiningen first came to my attention through an article in the February 2009 Trains magazine about the construction of a brand new 4-6-2 Pacific steam engine for main line excursions in Britain. The article mentioned the Dampfloswerk Meiningen as one of the few places in the world where the knowledge of building a steam engine and in particular a new boiler was kept alive.

A little research led me to the webpage of the Dampfloswerk Meiningen (<http://www.dampfloswerk.de>) and I was ecstatic to see that public tours are offered on the first and third Saturdays of each month. The timing of my trip to Germany and my mothers desire to see nearby Dresden worked out perfectly and so I found myself with **83** other steam enthusiasts on June 6, 2009 at the Dampfloswerk.

The Dampfloswerk Meiningen started its life as a major shop first for the Prussian Railways and was built between 1910 and 1914. The shops continued to grow, employing 1600 people in 1918. After World War I, all the German railway companies were nationalized and united under the umbrella of the Deutsche Reichsbahn. Meiningen continued to grow to more than 2000 employees and starting in 1925 was responsible for the maintenance of the new BR01 (4-6-2) and BR44 (2-10-0, 3 cylinder) engines, the heaviest German express and freight engines at the time.

After 1945, it continued as a major shop for the Deutsche Reichsbahn in the German Democratic Republic. Due to fuel shortages in the East Bloc, the railway in East Germany continued operating steam engines much later than any railway in western Europe, and thus the Dampfloswerk Meiningen retained the knowledge to service, re-build and construct steam engines. Between 1958 and 1962, the Dampfloswerk Meiningen re-built 58 passenger engines of BR39 (2-8-2) with new



On a rainy Saturday morning, 84 railfans came to visit the Dapflokwerk Meiningen.



Self propelled rotary snow blower. The top portion with the rotary blower can rotate on the frame to eliminate the need for turning facilities.



high efficiency boilers. Shortly thereafter BR18 201, a Pacific type 3-cylinder engine with driving wheels 230 cm (7ft 6.5in) in diameter was rebuild from a 4-6-6T BR61 001 express tank engine designed for operation at speeds up to 120 mph. Equipped with a new boiler, BR18 201 entered regular service in the Deutsche Reichsbahn and is preserved in working condition. Today, it is the fastest steamer in excursion service with recorded speeds up to 175 km/h (110 mph). Unfortunately, the engine was not in Meiningen during my visit.

Even in the depths of the cold war, the Dampflokwerk Meiningen was working on steam engines from West Germany and other places in western Europe, although such contracts were only whispered about and never openly acknowledged. After the re-unification of East and West Germany, the Dampflokwerk Meiningen became part of the Deutsche Bahn, the government agency operating mainline railroads in Germany. While part of the Deutsche Bahn, the Dampflokwerk had to be profitable and thus began marketing themselves world wide for the expertise in steam engines. Ironically, even though situated on a medium density railway line, most engines brought in for service or repair arrive and leave on truck flat bed trailers – as the trucks constantly underbid the Deutsche Bahn for transportation services.

In order to diversify, they also started building and maintaining snow removal equipment, from small plows to fully self propelled rotary snow blowers. On these large units, the blower is mounted on a turntable on the frame and can be turned at any suitable location to reverse the direction of operation without invoking the need for a turntable (now very rare in Germany) or a wye.

The tour started with a video presentation on the history and current operation of the Dampflokwerk. It was followed by a guided tour through the erecting hall and the shop area. The erecting hall is filled with several steam engines in various states of repair undergoing service. As several of the units are funded by preservation groups, work often progresses at an irregular pace, dictated by the availability of funding. The erecting hall is also the place where a new narrow gauge steam engine was built for the 750 mm Narrow Gauge lines in Saxony. The engine is constructed to the specifications of the I K model. The engine was finished 10 days after my visit and is now running on the Weißeritztalbahn or one of the other lines still active in Saxony.

Earlier this year, one other steam engine for a narrow gauge tourist line on the Baltic coast had been completed, it is now running in service. The previous year, Dampflokwerk Meiningen built the boiler for the new A1 Pacific constructed in Britain, which is now running mainline steam excursions.

The shop area has all the tools required for the task – a lathe, that can turn driving wheels and rims up to 210 cm (7 feet) in diameter, large bed milling tools for building frames, a hydraulic roller press for rolling steel plate up to 35 mm thick (1 and 3/16 inch) into cylinders for boilers, and all the heavy

Newly constructed 750 mm narrow gauge engine build to plans of the I K model (0-6-0).



Wheel lathe and wheelsets before (front) and after (rear) rework



Fire damaged BR45 010, the last of her kind.

lifting and handling equipment required. We had quite a bit of freedom to roam around the erecting hall and shop area, no hard hats or steel toe boots required – but the personal liability laws in Germany are quite different and it is generally understood that you cannot blame your stupid behaviour onto someone else.

The visit ended with a stroll through the outside storage area. Due to the unfavourable weather, we cut that stroll quite short, it was raining quite heavy. In a way it was a sad sight to behold some of the stored units in various states of disrepair. Some of the units in Meiningen are part of the collection of the Deutsche Bahn, and are normally housed at their museum in Nürnberg. Unfortunately, their storage area and some of the engines in it were heavily damaged in a fire in 2005. While BR 01 150, a Pacific type express engine is going to be re-build to working order, BR 45 010, a 2-10-2 fast freight engine, will only be cosmetically restored. The boiler on this engine is unique as she is the last of her class and the cost of constructing a new boiler is prohibitive. The pacific will receive a reworked boiler from a sister engine that had been used as a stationary heating plant and been stored in Meiningen “just in case”.

A few days later, while travelling to meet up with my wife at her sister's place, I was able to squeeze in a side trip to Nördlingen and the Bayerische Eisenbahnmuseum. I find it noteworthy that the three leading historical collections from the steam era in Germany are all located in Bavaria: Deutsches Dampflokmuseum in Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg (a visit in 2006 that I reported on previously), the collection of the Deutsche Bahn at their museum in Nürnberg (which I had the pleasure to visit as a teenager still living in Germany) and the Bayerische Eisenbahnmuseum in Nördlingen, all within 100 kms of Nürnberg.

The museum in Nördlingen was holding their annual week long celebration of steam, with numerous fan-trips and lots of active steam engines in attendance. Unfortunately, I could only squeeze in a few hours myself nonetheless, the visit was quite impressive.



Steam days at the Bayerische Eisenbahn-museum in Nördlingen. Most of the collection was parked outside or heading up steam fan trips. The collection is housed in the former roundhouse of the station at Nördlingen.

Just suppose...

A model railroad in a shipping container

By Gilbert Lacroix

This spring, during a brief lunch break at work, I let my mind wander for an escape from the drudgery at hand. It turned out to be a great interlude with my imagination which I thought would be something to share with you. After all, do we all not have dreams of a new model railroad layout from time to time? Who knows, it may happen someday and the setting may become part of one of your destinations in a layout tour.

Just suppose there was a small group of avid model railroaders, all of them being craftsmen in their own right, wishing to start a club similar to the ones known in the Montreal or southern Ontario area. They have ambitions of a permanent layout but as we all know, finding the proper space is next to impossible unless the membership has the means to fund a hefty 5 digit yearly budget. Ottawa has high real estate values...

Using the resources at hand, they come up with the idea to build the layout inside a 48' shipping container. The ones we see during railfanning trips racing down the track criss-crossing our country in the deep well railcars. It just happens that one of the members owns a heavy equipment company with plenty of extra space within the storage yard next to the excavators and dump trucks for the Clubhouse. In a matter of a few minutes, the container is plunked down into place and the doors of the new home for the club are opened welcoming the members.

Next comes the sweaty part of the work. The floor, walls and ceiling would need some covering up to make the place cozy and suitable for the layout. It is a little difficult painting a backdrop on the corrugated metal of the wall sides and we cannot forget that dialling up a loco in minus 25 temperatures is next to impossible with gloves on. Come to think of it, the locomotive may not even want to move down the track in that frigid environment.

To start, the floor gets covered with a layer of 2" Styrofoam followed by 2 layers of plywood. An electric radiant heating mat is sandwiched in between the 2 layers. This system is ideal for the closed quarters. It is also safer than electric baseboards. The plywood floor is painted for a finished look but also after the scenery is completed on the layout, the aisles are covered with soft rubber mats for the comfort of the operators.

I would see the walls and ceiling furred with 2x3's and insulation placed in between the studs. If it was cost effective, sprayed-in place foam insulation would be the ideal insulating material since the voids of the corrugated metal casing of the container would be entirely filled. A finished covering of drywall completes the surface along with coved corners to eliminate shadows and make a nice transition between adjacent surfaces.

A buried electrical cable running from the company's garage with a pony panel mounted inside the container is the way to power and illuminate the layout. The electrical service entering the container would also have the amperage to meet the heating and cooling requirements. I would suggest 2 evenly spaced cooling units on the roof of the container for the air to get more evenly distributed throughout the space. The idea is to eliminate hot zones at the far ends during the hot summer days. To help with the cooling if the layout is extensively used in the summer, an effort to use low heat emitting light fixtures would have to be considered. The virtually maintenance free exterior could be painted white as well to reflect the heat.

The existing cargo doors with a strong padlock make for good security when nobody is "home". I would add a house entrance door with a side light at the opened end of the container just inside from the metal doors. This entrance system would be used for the times when the layout is being used by the club.

A port-a-potty around the corner meets the demand for those who got to go although a coffee shop within walking distance would be ideal for obvious reasons. If the coffee shop name starts with the letter T then it is a bonus.

Inside the Box, the scale of the layout would have to be HO or N. Maximum use of the space is critical. Double tiered track layout is best to maximize the train runs. The aisle near the helix would be shifted closer to the other outer wall rather than centered elsewhere. It would also be worth designing the ultimate vertical staging system. This is not impossible if you are using the heavy duty drawer slides manufactured today.

The work tables and the dispatcher's desk also need to be tucked under the lower level of the track. Designing the layout with a very efficient use of the space is quite possible with an architectural 3 dimension CAD program.

It would be a little tight for a crew lounge but once all the scenery was completed, a second container could be set-up and connected, actually, welded to the first one doubling the space and providing a lot of room for expansion of the next phase.

We would have here a very different type of modular railroading layout if a second or even a third container was to make an appearance...is my imagination running wild?

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The May Display Table theme was centered on the display of completed Laser Structures 101 projects along with the usual compliment of Bring What You May.



The selection on the display table at the May meet was dominated by the various incarnations of the Laser Kit 101 Bakery kit.

Photo: Grant Knowles

Ron Newby had his O scale Creedence Saloon on display. Ron had made serious modifications to the Bakery kit in order to fit the model into his layout. Ron also brought out his scratch built N scale Beaver Creek Company Store which won a merit award at the NFR Woodstock Turn convention.

Brian Earl was courageous enough to share his “in progress” N scale bakery with us. No doubt we will see it return at the September meet as a completed summer project – right Brian?

Bill Meredith has been busy recently building the masters for an S scale resin building kit he plan to have out shortly. Bill states it was “fun” working with the Plastruct brick sheets. Bill had on display masters for an On3 Colorado Central Porter-Bell. These masters will be used to create lost wax casting for many of the loco details – over 40 pieces so far. Bill also has a series of etchings underway for the locos.

Michael Rozenboom had his Christmas Present out which was a Disney Engineer cap complete with sound.

Alex Binkley had a series of S scale cars on display that were also at the NFR Woodstock turn and placed well in the Appearance Contest. Alex also had his S scale bakery on display. Business at the Cafe Evelyn has been brisk enough to warrant a patio out front. Alex also added a loading ramp out back

Peter Joyce had his Montreal & Southern County Motor Car 609 on display. This car won first place in the NFR Convention in the Appearance Contest (do not tell Peter that it was the only entry!). Peter also had his M&SC scratch built caboose on display. This model also won an award at the convention. Congratulations Peter.

Back to our Laser Kits, Stan Conley had his completed HO scale Tweed News out. The building is complete with interior lights and many details and finish made from paper. Perhaps Stan can give us a clinic on this medium?

Gilbert Lacroix demonstrated very early in the season that he was building his Bakery to a different vision than the rest of us. To build Wrongway's, Gilbert reversed the floor plan then installed LED lighting and a scratch built Chase Light system with fire optics!

Paul Anderson had his HO scale Bakery on display. The model is nearly complete and demonstrates what the model looks like if built without any modifications. Very nice workmanship Paul.

Mike Hamer, our wizard with laser kits built his Bakery as a Barbershop complete with Fine Scale Structures interior details and sceniced surround. The model is named Barber Bill "no meek cuts" as a play on his (former?) friend and sports LED lights integrated into the ceiling fans.

And always one to be different, Bob Farquhar had built his Bakery as the Hislop Marine with a strong nautical flavour. The final location in his harbour scene has yet to be established.

Peter Joyce, one of our O scalers has his St. Lambert Pharmacy on display that he built from the Bakery Kit. Aside from the detailed store front, Peter also added details in the back along with a new second floor!

Our Laser Structures 101 leader had his Bakery model out. Grant decided to retain the bakery concept and built his HO scale model as the Reisen Bakery complete with lighting and detailed store front. Construction of this model appears in the Web Site instructions http://www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/laser_kit/laser_kit.htm.

Another of our enthusiastic members, Chris Lyon, had his Bakery model built in record time. Chris built his as a Pool Hall complete with back yard deck and detailed scenery. This model won Best In Freelance at the NFR Woodstock Turn Appearance Contest.

Steve Watson had his N scale Friedman's General Store (named after his father-in-law) on display. This was built from a Blair Line laser kit and will reside in the village of Unterglas on his coffee table layout. Some of the signs were made from images on the internet that were in turn applied using an inkjet decaling kit.

Though I did not receive display cards for them, we also had more bakery kit projects on display from: Dave Primeau - HO Scale, Lorne Munro - HO Scale, Jim VanBlitterswyk - HO Scale, Deb Stewart - HO Scale, Geoff Chase - HO Scale and David Steer - O Scale.

This completes our review of the May Display Table. It was great to see so many completed Bakery models not to mention those "in progress". The full collection of Bakery Photos may be found on the SLD Web Site at: http://members.fortunecity.com/gknowles/laser_kit/assembly/models/finished_models.htm

I look forward to seeing the remaining Bakeries come out for display at our future meets as they are completed.



Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, September 26, 2009

Where:

McIntosh Inn

County Road #2 (just east of the junction with Hw. 31)
Morrisburg

Doors open at 9:30 am -- Admission \$5.00

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Clinic

- Grant Knowles:
Introducing Plaster Kits 101
- tbd

Display

- My Summer Projects
- My Plaster Kit

Door Prizes

- You never know what to expect!

Afternoon:

TBD

