



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 65 – September 2011

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

Superintendent's Report

By Ron Newby

Do not tell me summer is over already, where did it go? Hope everyone had a great summer, I know I did. In between working and drinking “refreshments” in the gazebo, I managed to get a little modeling done.

You get to read my second draft of this column this time mainly because I forgot to send the first draft in before I went to the National Narrow Gauge Convention. As I am writing this I am sitting in a hotel room in Fairmont, West Virginia and tomorrow I am off to the Cass Scenic Railway where I will spend the night before heading off to Hickory, North Carolina for the convention. As you read this, it will be a recent memory. The convention is a great place to meet old friends and do some catching up and meeting new friends.

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The 2011 Railfair Raffle Layout

By Grant Knowles

Normally the summer is the time to put your indoor hobbies aside while you pursue the great outdoors to take advantage of the warm and dry weather – and this summer has been no exception. Even the Garden Railroaders had a perfect weather for their passion. Meanwhile a dedicated group of individuals have been working very hard to complete a 4ft x 7ft model railroad in record time!

We have been meeting on a bi-weekly basis at John and Debbie Stewart's house. The format was pretty standard.

We started each session with a quick review of the evening's job list and instructions provided on how to do the various tasks.

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The two sides of the 2011 Railfair CHEO Raffle Layout.
Photos: Andreas Mank

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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

Through the summer we continued our MR 101 program by building the raffle layout with new people in the hobby working alongside and learning with the more experienced hands. I liked the sessions I attended, there the new model railroaders learned by doing.

Speaking of our MR101 program, we are still amazed at the responses that were and still are being generated. We are still getting inquiries about it, in fact we (I) will be giving a clinic on the program in Barrie in October. It seems other groups are looking on how to do a similar program.

Our first meeting of the season will take place on September 24th, 2011 and we already have a full state (well almost) for the season. Weathering freight cars, maintaining cars, DCC, weathering structures and using LED's are some of the clinics planned. I see another exciting year ahead for us.

We have an exciting meeting planned for September with a field trip to Montreal to visit some outstanding layouts. As of this writing we will be visiting the AMFM, one of the largest layouts in the country, A G-scale layout with a logging flavour and the west Island Club's layout which just happens to be very close to Hobby Junction. If you need any model railroading supplies, now might be the time to pick them up.

The cost for the trip is \$35.00. Even at this price, the SLD is sponsoring the trip significantly. Nevertheless, at this time all the seats on the bus to Montreal are booked. Peter Nesbitt does keep a waiting list though, so if you want to participate in the trip and have not already signed up, please contact Peter.

Before I wrap this up, I just want to remind you about the NFR convention in Sudbury, coming up April 27 to 29, 2012. It is never too early to start planning and it is the first convention in two years. If you have never attended a convention, you do not know what you are missing. They are a lot of fun, you get to make new friends and there are great clinics and layouts to see. I know I plan on attending.

Looking forward to seeing you in September, till then, may your train stay on the track and you never run out of rail.

The 2011 / 2012 Kitbuster Program

By Andreas Mank

The theme for the upcoming season of Kitbusters will be Paper Kit Modelling.

The SLD executive was looking for a theme that would pull the season together, be attractive to experienced and novice modellers and hopefully cover an aspect of the hobby not so well covered before. As usual in a volunteer setting, the person advocating the strongest in favour is asked to run the show even though he does not have a particularly deep experience on the topic in question.

Even though Paper (or Cardstock) models have been around for some time, it is not something that a lot of us have an in depth experience with. Paper models carry the stigma that they are 2-dimensional and went out of favour at the time when inexpensive plastic models with true 3-dimensional detail became available. Since those days, a few things have changed.

For one, truly inexpensive plastic models are but a memory and the current mainstream models, while nicely detailed, are also priced at a level often unaffordable for a lot of modellers. At the same time, Paper models have improved in detail and are still very affordable.

A lot of the models can be downloaded from several sources on the Internet for a modest fee. With the advances in printing technology, most of us either have access to a full colour printer at home or at a near by printing shop. A number of sites even offer free models of varying quality either as a starter / training model or as a public service. While these free models might not hold up to close up scrutiny, they will be perfectly fine in a background or a group setting. Furthermore, the introduction of laser profiling has also added a level of detail to cardstock models – although laser profiled cardstock kits come at a price commensurate with the added cost of the manufacturing process.



This is the O-Scale version of the crossing tower. The picture is part of the instruction set provided by Clever Models for this kit.

For the Kitbuster series, we have selected a kit from Clever models, a Crossing tower. The model is available as a free download in both HO-scale and O-scale. By scaling the printout, it will be possible to provide an S-Scale version. For the really adventurous, we can provide an N-scale version as well. The file needs to be printed in full colour on 110lbs paper. You can either print out the kit yourself or let me know which scale you are interested in and a printed kit in your scale of choice will be provided at the first session on October 29.

We will start the first session with a clinic giving an overview of the resources available to the Paper Kit modeller as well as providing an overview of basic construction techniques and tools required.

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The “seasoned” members provided demonstration and guidance to the “less seasoned” members as they took on the challenges. Our newer members: Steve, Ed and David, were always keen to take on these challenges and certainly rose to the occasion. Remember though our over all objective was to build a stellar layout, the first objective was to assist the newer members with building up new skills.

Over the summer months we addressed:

- Track installation & adjustments,
- Back drop painting
- Track wiring
- Structure assembly –as per the instructions and kit bashed
- Road and crossing installation
- Scenery build out – Styrofoam, celluclay, ground foam, etc
- Tree fabrication and installation
- Bench construction
- Painting (just about everything)

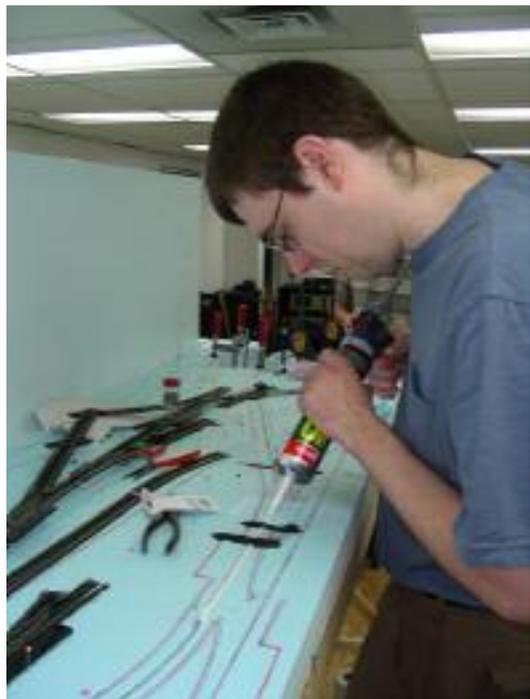


Photo 1 (Left): After the Atlas Snap Track sections were dry fitted together, Steve used Liquid Nails to attach them to the Styrofoam base.



Photo 2 (Right): Paul was in charge of the Styrofoam carving (note the heavy duty home built nichrome cutter) and installing the switch stands.

We also had a steady rotation of other SLD members coming out to help when they were available so we were never short on bodies and there were lots of opportunity to try something new.

As the layout contains a fair number of structures, these were handed out to volunteers to build outside the work sessions. We had a mix of plastic and craftsman kits, some were built as is, others required kit bashing to fit their specific locations. Members often brought their “in progress” work to the work sessions to table questions they had and seek guidance on the next steps. This approach worked very well as the byproduct of this effort has produced some stellar structures.

It is now late August and the layout is just about finished, we just need to complete the scenery, install the last of the buildings and test run the trains (this is the best part!). I will let the enclosed photos show more of the construction process.



Photo 3 (Top Left): David (L) and (Ed) as busy fitting the last track pieces in place on the “rural” side of the layout.



Photo 5: With the track in place, we penciled in the roadways and general layout of the buildings and key scenery elements. This allowed Chris to determine what was to be painted on the backdrop. Chris had both sided finished in one evening!



Photo 6: At the close of the work session, Chris whipped out the spray bombs and gave the track an over spray of colour. Note the use of face masks and John ran a fan in the window to help exhaust the fumes.



Photo 7: Most of the structures required some modification to fit the target locations. Here Ron is pondering on how to kit bash the general store. Parts left over from the kit will be used to build a freight shed that will appear at the other end of the layout.



Photo 9 (Bottom Left): David, another new member, is trial fitting the Cornerstone Interlocking tower that he is building. Dave completed the model in style including a scratch built interior complete with the switch controls stand and attendant.



Photo 4 (Top Right): Ed, one of our new members, dove quickly into wiring the layout after receiving instructions from Peter. Track feeders were installed on each section of track to ensure future trouble free operations.



Photo 8: (Bottom Right) This year we chose to finish the edge of the layout with masonite. Ron is fitting one of the end pieces.

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Photo 10: Ed was in charge of building the concrete roads. Here he is cutting and fitting the styrene base.

Photo 11: Lorne kit bashed the Full Steam Ahead Roosevelt Hotel to fit in the odd shaped space between two tracks and a roadway. Lorne also scratch built the foundation and chimney from plaster. All business names were selected to reflect local landmarks, business, etc.



Photo 12: Grant scratch built a roadway over pass to help disguise the track as it passed through the backdrop. Since the two modules could be reconnected end-to-end, the second half of the bridge appears on the other module to complete the scene.



Photo 13: Ed holds the Upper Canada Flour Mills complex in place. Grant kit bashed a Cornerstone Red Flag Mills kit to produce to false front buildings.

Photo 14: Mike Hamer, is the proud builder of the American Model Builders farm house. Mike built the model with the back corner "sliced" off so that it could sit against the back drop on an angle.

Photo 15: Debbie, not afraid to get her hands dirty is helping out Chris with applying the ground cover – dirt and foam with lots of glue!



On a side note, Fred Bock, the NMRA Education Dept Asst. Manger has undertaken a program to assemble and make available information and material that the Regions/Divisions may use as "beginners" courses. A number of other Divisions are also pursuing educational programs that run the full gauntlet from simple to complex programs based on the need of their particular



Photo 16: When Tom's initial build didn't provide quite enough track clearance, Tom came up with a unique solution – cut the corner off the offending corner of the building and leave the second floor in place! Here he demonstrates all is well now.



Photo 17: David is in the process of installing a fence around the scrap yard. We used brass wire for the fence posts to ensure wayward elbows would not level the area!



Photo 18: The short pile trestle on the main line was built from a Hunter Line kit by Grant.



Photo 19: The rest of the Hunter Line kit was used to scratch build a coal dock.

geographical regions. Fred is keenly interested in our MR101 approach along with our high level of success as this model is easily implemented by all sizes of audiences. Fred is currently assembling an electronic repository to capture and catalogue the material from the NMRA community and plans to have this available later this year for all to use. I am currently evaluating this "site" with Fred and have discovered lots of useful material we can use moving forward. We will no doubt see a formal announcement from the NMRA when this material is ready for general consumption.

Additional on going information on the layout build can be found on the SLD web site;

http://www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/raffle_layout_2011/raffle_layout_2011.htm

along with the Railroad Line Forum at:

http://www.railroadline.com/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=33053

The CHEO Raffle Layout will be on display at the 2011 Railfair train show in Ottawa October 15 – 16th where tickets will be sold. The winning ticket will be drawn at the close of the show.

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Photo 20: Ed took on the challenge to build a weather the IHC Novelty Iron Works plastic kit. This was something new for Ed so he requested and received recommendations from the seasoned members on how to paint and weather a plastic model.



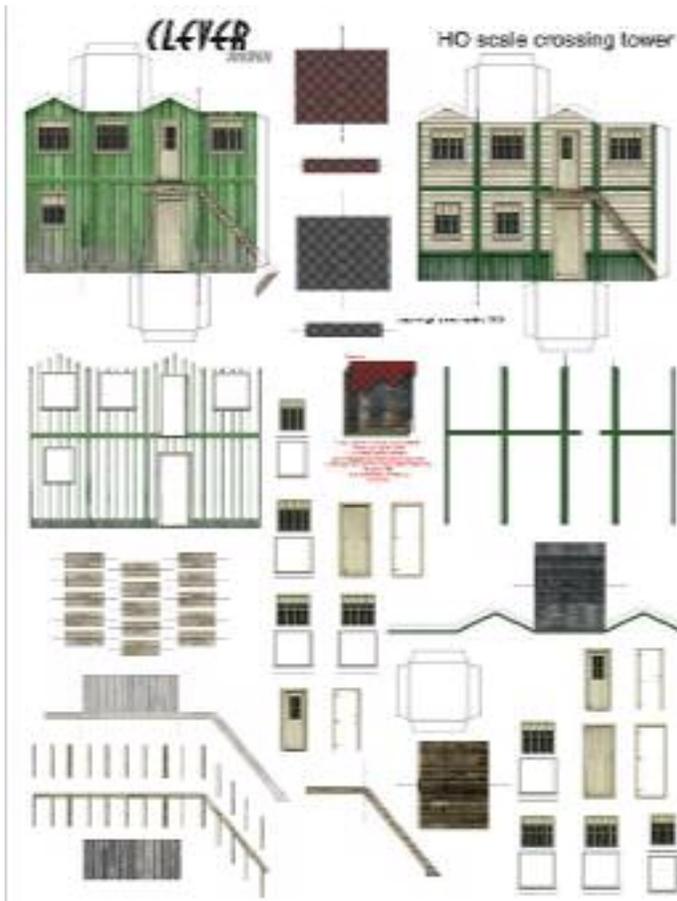
Photo 21: Here is the river Chris included on the layout – just awaiting the final application of “water”.

All photos in this article by the author.

On a closing note, one of the key benefits of building the Raffle Layout is that it gives us the opportunity to share our knowledge in the hobby with our fellow members and to provide the opportunity to practice what we have learned. Yes completing the layout is a key objective, but the journey is also very important.

Since the September SLD meet will be taking place out of town, we will not have an opportunity to display the layout before Railfair. Therefore you are highly recommended to attend Railfair to see the wonderful workmanship that has gone into the layout and to purchase a pocket full of tickets!

I want to thank all those who have participated in the build all the way from making donations, to investing their effort and offers of opinions. Without this investment, we would not have been able to build this wonderful layout so quickly. I am sure the winner will be more than satisfied with the prize!



Here is a list of the basic tools required:

- Cutting surface
- Sharp knife (X-acto or similar)
- Straight edge (to guide the cuts)
- Elmers Glue
- Toothpicks
- Felt Pen in a dark colour, preferably gray, brown or dark green
- Weights, Clamps

If you feel that you have already mastered the basic methods to be learned on the Crossing Tower model, you may join us by volunteering to provide instructions to the true beginners in this clinic. Or you might just bring a kit of your choice and keep us company during this exercise.

If you have any questions or advice, please contact me at amank@magma.ca. I am looking forward to see you all on October 29.

Crossing Tower Kit from the Clever Models web page. The design is reproduced here at lower resolution, please do not use this to create your kit print.

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The subject for the May Display table was "Work Trains".

The Francis Masonic Lodge (Smith Falls) provided us with ample table space to spread out the models for all to review and admire. As usual, members brought out an interesting and diversified collection of models.

As you are aware, the SLD is building the 2011 CHEO Raffle Layout and through the efforts of Mike Hamer, we have been blessed with a number of craftsman kits for the layout. Lorne Munro was first out of the starting blocks with the kit based wooden hotel from Full Steam Ahead. Lorne had to modify the foot pattern of this structure to fit the odd space between the tracks and roadway. Despite a mismatch in size between the windows and shutters, Lorne managed to pull it all together along with relocating many of the doors and windows. Lorne also scratch built the foundation and chimney from hydrocal plaster.

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Doug Cushman has returned to the SLD fold after an extended stay down south. Today's collection from Doug includes a kit bashed tender for a crane/pile driver, auxiliary water car and a collection of Athearn, Tru-Scale and Juneco service cars.



Doug Cushman brought his work train to keep in line with the theme of the display table.
Photo: Andreas Mank

Our newly acquired "graffiti" king, David Gray had some of his fancy work on display in the form of a Proto2000 Newsprint car and Athearn 50' FMC offset double door boxcar. Both cars are wonderfully weathered and one sports artwork from the younger generation! Look for an upcoming clinic from Peter on weathering rolling stock.



David Gray displayed this modern "tagged" box car.
Photo: Andreas Mank

In the S scale department, Alex Binkley brought out two steamers (2-8-2 & 2-6-0) that had just been re-motored and geared by Bill Meredith. I remember Bill commenting that the level of detail was reflective of their vintage and that the heavy cast boilers will make them strong pullers!



Bruce Leckie showed this On30 Critter
Photo: Andreas Mank

Moving up to On3, Peter Nesbitt had the latest release from San Juan – a beautifully detailed UTLX tank car. No doubt this car will see lots of use on Peter’s new layout.

Bruce Leckie had a neat looking On30 “critter” on show. The scratch built cab rests on a Bachmann drive unit and sports working doors and wipers amongst a pile of other details.

Last up, in the king of all scales, HOn3, I brought out my trusty 2-8-0 outside framed MDC locomotive and a collection of Labelle wooden freight cars.

Thank you to everyone who brought out their pride and joy for us to examine. Additional photos are available on the May meet web page:

http://members.fortunecity.com/gknowles/meets/may_11/may_11.htm

TimeTable

Date	SLD Meetings		SLD Workshops
September 24, 2011	Road Trip to Montreal		
October 29, 2011			TBD
November 26, 2011	TBD		
January 21, 2012	TBD		
February 25, 2012			TBD
March 31, 2012	TBD		
April 21, 2012			TBD
April 27 – 29, 2012	NMRA NFR Regional Convention Sudbury		
May 26, 2012	TBD		



Next Division Meet

St Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, September 24, 2011

Where:

Road Trip to Montreal
The bus leaves at 8:00 am
from the park and ride lot at
Highway 174 and Trim Road

Doors open at 8:00 am -- Admission \$35.00

What's on:

All Day:

Division Business

Layout Tours

Lunch

Layout Tours

Hobby Shop

