



The Mail Car

Newsletter of the St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

Issue no. 80 – September 2014

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

Superintendent's Report

By Peter Gray

Hello fellow modelers and train enthusiasts.

Well I guess it is official, I am your new superintendent, in all the glory that the position holds. I once again thank Ron for his tenor and making it look so easy. So many of you are probably wondering what the next several years hold for the SLD. Contrary to popular belief I will not insist that every flood their fleets with grime and graffiti. In 2016 we will be holding the regional convention. Work on that has already started and it will take a lot of the focus for the 2015 and 2016 seasons. This year though the focus is on you, our NMRA members and fellow modelers.

Continued on Page 2



The Cumberland Live Steamers opened their facilities for the May meeting of the SLD. Here you can see Mike Roseboom and Paul Anderson enjoying a ride behind a live steam 2-6-0.

Photo: Andreas Mank

St. Lawrence Division

Executive Officers

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

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

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

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

Dispatcher: Gregory Gee
Phone (613) 843-8911
Email: gregory.gee@sympatico.ca

Appointed Positions

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

The Mail Car
Editor: Andreas Mank
Phone: (613) 591-9088
Email: 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

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

After the last convention there was a lot of conversation with regards to what the NMRA has to offer members and to a greater extent all model railroaders. That led to a discussion on what we could offer our individual members. So, a little bit of back to basics for this year with the theme, very loosely being about some of the aspects that the NMRA can help you with to improve, plan and have fun with your model railroad.

Themes will include planning your railway, scratch building, building your layout, rail fanning as well as some topics about other aspects of the hobby that help you share your passion such as writing about your railway and giving clinics on your favourite aspects. All in all ideas and topics that help you stay inspired and moving your railway forward.

One other thing we would like to know is what interests you? Contrary to popular belief, we as your executive do not know all and see all. We do our best to bring you a season filled with clinics and activities that we hope will be of interest to you, but really the best thing we could hope for would be an email, phone call or in person comment to any member of the executive on a topic you would like to see covered or an activity that would interest you. We are here for you so please, reach out and let us know what you are thinking.

People out of town, you are not forgotten. Geographically the SLD is humungous and we know that it is just impractical for some of you to make it out to the regular sessions. Hopefully you are reading this, because I want to know what we can do for you. Please, reach out to us. We plan to contact you but feel free to reach out to us.

The SLD is a very special group of modellers and I am honoured that you have given me the privilege of representing you.

Your content could go here!

Electronic Frogs

By Debra Stewart

Our Port Dalhousie subdivision has a gaggle of turnouts, and a triplet of crossings. Turnout frog wiring is controlled by the Tortoise switch machines that populate the underside of our layout, but the crossings were a different thing - making these work well with small locomotives and DCC was an interesting prospect.

There is a product that many of us know about, the Frog Juicer that switches the polarity of turnout frogs automatically. Now, while we are currently using one of the built-in switches in the Tortoises to do this, others have used Frog Juicers to do the same thing.

Three "two frog" Frog Juicers were purchased; each unit works with one hand-laid crossing. Installation was simple, and consisted of:

- screwing the frog juicer to the underside of the layout close to the crossing;
- running two wires from the DCC track wiring bus to the juicer;
- running two "frog" wires from the (isolated) frogs on the crossing;
- setting jumpers on the juicer to indicate that both frogs should be switched at the same time.

Simple!

As Ron Newby pointed out to me a while ago, electronics rarely fail, but mechanical things fail. I expect he is right; it is the buttons and mechanical switches that usually have failed when I dig into a broken gadget. So, while we are using the built in manual switches in the Tortoises for frog polarity on all of our turnouts, I would expect that in the future we will see more and more products like these Frog Juicers.

Looking at the web site <http://www.tamvalleydepot.com>, they currently have 3 products; one for one frog, one the dual-version that we use, and one for six frogs. The only caveat is that these frog juicers must be connected to the same DCC power district as the frogs that you want to power, but that is not too tough a requirement.

Model Railway Construction "OOPS"

Deb Sez:

"Before Husbands drill feeder holes, they should check that there are no obstructions underneath, especially if I am in the middle of wiring up said obstruction"

Now to find another Tortoise Switch Machine... should have purchased a spare! Funny how the motor does not work when given the Swiss Cheese treatment...

John S.



NFR Convention Report

by Grant Knowles

The 2014 NFR Convention, The Grapevine Express, was held at the Niagara College, Niagara-On-The-Lake campus over the May 3rd weekend. The college proved to be an excellent locale for the convention as it offered lots of space and ideal room layout facilities to host the clinics.

I drove down with David Steer on the Friday with the objective to arrive late afternoon. Since the traffic was flowing better than we anticipated (and Dave has a lead foot) we found ourselves ahead of schedule and decided to take a side detour to the Credit Valley Railway Hobby Shop (<http://www.cvrco.com/>). This hobby shop is well worth the visit as they have something for everyone and the prices are fair. You can also join their members club and enjoy a regular discount. Despite ample time spent in the hobby shop we still had some free time so we took another detour, this time in support of my other hobby - hot rods, and paid a visit to Horton's (<http://www.horton.on.ca/>) - the candy store for car nuts. I restrained myself and stayed away from all the shiny chrome stuff and picked up a couple of electrical door switches. These have since been installed and work like a charm!



Chris Lyon won the Shoebox contest with this model of a wharf.
Photo: Andreas Mank



Dave Steer won the Appearance Freight Car Award with one of these resin kits .
Photos: Grant Knowles



After contributing to the local economy, we made our way to the college residence and checked in and tied up with a number of SLD members who had been rail fanning on their way down. Upon returning to our room with the second load of luggage we found another couple making themselves at home in our room! This was quickly resolved at the front desk (who had inadvertently given the same room to two patrons). The event did provide the opportunity to meet fellow NFR members! A short walk across the parking lot brought us to the main college building where we had a quick check in at the registration desk then off to a local chain restaurant for some grub.

The convention followed the traditional format with clinics presented Friday night and Saturday morning followed by layout tours on Saturday afternoon and the Awards Banquet in the evening. The

convention organizers had their first challenge that night when one of their clinicians had to cancel out on short notice. Some great replacement clinics were quickly substituted and as far as I could tell, the rest of the convention was executed without an issue.

I managed to attend 5 clinics and found them all very informative and well presented by some very talented individuals. Ample time was provided between the clinics to roam through the Raffle Room and to scope out the Contest Models which were located in a large room equipped with one full wall of windows that provided an over abundance of daylight to illuminate the models. The SLD did well at this year's contest with Chris Lyon winning the Shoe Box contest, Stan Conley scooped up a first in the photo contest and David Steer walked away with the Appearance Freight Car award.

Before commencing our travels on the Saturday afternoon layout tours, we dropped into the college's beer and wine outlets where we sampled some great products and stocked up for later consumption! Dave and I took in five layouts in the afternoon. We had planned on four but due to some GPS miss programming, we got a bonus layout scheduled in! All were well worth the visit. I have posted my photos on the SLD web site.

The Sunday morning AGM was well attended and very interactive. The NFR executive will be kept busy following up on many great ideas. We left for home right after the AGM and were able to hit one more hobby shop before getting stuck in a Gardner Express closure!

If I had any recommendation to this and future convention organizers, please make sure your signature layouts are open on both days as those from out of town will likely leave before the Sunday layouts are open. I know we missed out on viewing a couple of great narrow gauge layouts because of this.

The June Flimsy contained additional Convention details along with an in depth article by Peter Gray (NFR Contest Chairman) where he describes his thoughts on how the Model Contest may evolve with the times in order to better engage the regional membership to bring out their models, both judged and not judged.

I have posted a full set of my convention photos on the SLD Web site at:
http://sld-nmra.ca/nfr_2014_convention/nfr_2014_convention.htm.

Saturday Morning Door Prizes

By John A. Stewart

Create space and help your fellow modellers by bringing your unused (or gently used) model-railway related stuff to the SLD meets and give it a new lease in life.

We are always looking for door prizes for the SLD meetings; something model railway related, not necessarily related to rails or one particular scale. Do you have duplicates of that Branchline car kit? Did you get three soldering irons last Christmas and only have two hands? How about that "HO" scale pink Corvette that does not fit your 1930s On30 layout? We all have things like this stuffed into the back of a cupboard - gosh even Deb and I do!

Think of it as a trade-up system; as everybody gets a chance to win the door prizes; you get rid of stuff you will never use, AND you get the chance to get a gem that might make your next model the stuff of legends.

Bring something along for donation, and give it to Deb at the front desk. Items should be in "like new" condition. We will draw for two or three treasures per meeting, (assuming that we have enough prizes) and we will choose those at random from the items donated.

Display Table

By Grant Knowles

The May Meet found us east of Ottawa in the quaint community of Cumberland. Here we rented the Community Centre building at the Cumberland Historical Village for the morning activities. The hall was built in 1900 and moved to its present location in 1983. It started life as a Loyal Orange Hall and community centre. For those who are architecturally inclined, it is a wooden balloon construction covered in shiplap siding.

The theme for the May Display Table was “End Of Train” in honour of the end of the modelling season. Despite large quantity of models that turned out and tight quarters, everything was well displayed for viewing. The models on display covered all genres from dioramas, to structures, rolling stock, kit built, scratch built and all popular scales. The SLD certainly has a wide diversity with its membership interests.



Lorne Munro has assembled an interesting diorama to display his scratch Moreau Assembly Company HO scale building that includes railway sidings and an additional freight house. I wonder what Lorne's next project will be?

Mike Rozeboom had a beautiful CP brass caboose from Van Hobbies on display that he had recently picked up.

Gordon Teal has been at it again - scratch built a super detailed structure (Hopkins Cooperage) complete with working lights and a wealth of details. The structure was part of a diorama that included scratch built trees.

Since retiring from the hectic high tech world, David Steer has been working his way through his back log of resin rolling stock kits and brought out his recent accomplishments. First

Top: Lorne Munro showed this diorama set around his scratch build Moreau Assembly company.

Bottom: Gordon Teal displayed this scratch build structure.



Continued on page 8

up in a BAR 40 ft Boxcar XM-1 (circa 1928) built from a Sunshine Resin kit #91.3. Next up is the Illinois Northern "Mather" boxcar (circa 1928) which was leased from Mather. This is also a Sunshine kit, #7.2.



Top: Grant is scratch building a 1:24 scale model of the Grand Central Mine. Bottom: Stan's finished shoebox diorama with the modified Rusty Stumps garage. In the background you can see the photos that won him the Photo Contest at the NFR convention.



circa 1885. Bill has shifted to using nickel silver sheet material for his etching for a number of reasons, one of which is it is easier to solder. Bill also brought out the On3 tender for the Colorado Central Porter Bell. These Porters (around 1875) were built as tank locomotives but were soon converted with a 6 wheel tender. In order to ensure the tender shells were true, Bill had built a jig out of a 2x3 to guarantee the corners were folded correctly.

Dave's D&H 36 ft Boxcar is also from Sunshine (kit #85.5) that represents a steel under frame car that was built in 1906, rebuilt in 1928 and many remained in service into the 1960's.

The last model from David is a Canadian Northern Quebec refrigerator car built in 1906. The story goes where David found the unfinished Canadian Railway Model Co (CRM) wood kit (circa 1965) in Tom Hood's collection. The car sides were pre painted & lettered. David assembled the kit supplemented with modern technical details.

Doug Cushman brought out a number of rolling stock pieces that played on the "end of train" criteria. The largest is an O scale brass CNR caboose that he picked at a good price. There were another 7 HO scale caboose representing GTR (wood) and CNR, all nicely painted & weathered. Doug also had an Athearn express reefer and brass E-10-a 2-6-0 from Van Hobbies. Doug stated the display theme did not dictate what "end" of the train!

As you know, Bill Meredith has recently been creating the etchings and cast brass parts for a number of narrow gauge projects he has in the works. This month he brought out the boiler/cab assembly for a Sn3 D&RG C16

I brought out my newest project, a 1/24 scale scratch built model of the Grand Central Mine that was located in Central City, Co. The core is made out of various scrap pieces of 3/4 ply I found in the workshop. The board by board siding was ripped up on my table saw from an old cedar garden gate and the roof was made from some 1/4 inch masonite I had kicking around. I hope to complete the project in time for our September meet. It will ultimately be installed on my garden railroad where highly detailed models are not required.

This year's NFR Convention included a Shoe Box Challenge where participants were required to build a model that would fit into a standard sized shoe box. Of course there were some content requirements the model had to meet but aside from that, the competitors were invited to be as creative as they wished. Chris Lyon built a highly detailed fisherman's wharf as his entry. His model won first place in the popular vote contest. Further details regarding his built will be posted on the SLD web site.

Stan Conley also fared well at the NFR Convention contest coming home with a first place for his North Conway prototype photo. Stan also had a few more of his exceptional photos on display.

Stan also had an entry in the Shoe Box contest - a diorama of George Riley's garage and coal dock. As the story goes, George bought a new car only to discover it was too long for his garage! The solution was to lengthen the garage which the HO scale workers were wrapping up. The display also includes scratch built HO scale saw horses and an equally impressive coaling trestle.

One final item from Paul Anderson. Paul had on display all the models he won at the NFR Convention Raffle with the purchase of \$30 of tickets. No wonder I did not win anything!

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 May meet web page:

http://sld-nmra.ca/meets/may_14/may_14.htm.

TimeTable

Date	Meetings / Shows	SLD Workshops
September 27, 2014	Centre Charles Emil Claude 164-B Chevrier Ave Cornwall, ON	
October 25, 2014		Emmanuel United Church 691 Smyth Road Ottawa
November 29, 2014	Emmanuel United Church	
January 31, 2015	Emmanuel United Church	Emmanuel United Church
February 28, 2015		Emmanuel United Church
March 28, 2015	Emmanuel United Church	
April 26, 2015		Emmanuel United Church
Tbd	NFR Convention Rochester, NY	
May 30, 2015	tbd	



Next Division Meet

St. Lawrence Division – NMRA

When:

Saturday, September 27, 2014

Where:

Centre Charles Emil Claude

146-B Chevrier Ave,
Cornwall, ON

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

What's on:

Morning:

Division Business

Clinics:

Pierre Lamontaigne

Sectional layout planning and construction

TBD

Display:

Summer Projects

Afternoon:

Layout Tours

Pierre Lamontaigne

Gordon Teal

