

Noarlunga Model RailRoaders Inc. Newsletter



Right On Track

September 2016 Volume 19 Issue 13

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This newsletter is available as a download from our website www.noarlungarail.com



Coming events:

NMRI Exhibition.

Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2, 9.30am-5pm (both days).
Hub Recreation Centre, Aberfoyle Park.

Lakeside on display.

Tuesday, November 8. 2.00-4.00pm.
Holly Aged Care, 16-24 Penneys Hill Road, Hackham.

NMRI Annual General Meeting.

Saturday, November 12. 2.00pm.
At the clubroom.

Model Railway Swapmeet.

Friday, November 18, 7.30-9.00pm.
Uniting Church Hall, 28 Hillier Rd, Morphett Vale.

Membership subscriptions.

Subs fall due on October 1. Members are reminded that subs have risen to \$100, the first time that they have increased since 1994 (when the club began...). The weekly attendance fee ("Dibs") will reduce to \$2 at the same time. Expenses *have* risen over the last twenty-two years, and the best efforts of our sausage sizzling teams have been unable to cover all of the cost increases. Junior subs will remain unchanged at \$25pa. The committee can arrange for partial progressive payments to be made if this is more suitable.

Exhibition 2016.

Not long to go now! Final plans are all but complete, and members are asked to add their names to the work roster for Friday set up and Saturday and Sunday event days. All three days will be good! Club members who are not on the roster will be charged normal entry fees. Many hours have already been put into the planning for the exhibition by our committee and other members. Special thanks must go to Bruce Ewens and Anita, whose IT knowledge has been invaluable.

Members are asked to donate cake or biscuits for the exhibitors' lounge.

These can be bought or baked. Cake can be stored, frozen, at the clubrooms.

Lakeside on display. Tuesday, August 23, Estia Health Flagstaff Hill.

An entertaining day was had by those members who attended the display! There were two special highlights...

First, the manager of the facility was taking photographs of the layout and the residents when she noticed “someone” pressing buttons on the DCC controller, at which she remarked “You must be the little Fat Train Controller”, to which said person replied “Oh, yes”. A good round of laughter followed: **hence our cover photo, of Dame Toppem Hatt!**

Second was the unplanned entertainment provided by the “Two Ronnies”. An accident occurred late in the day due to inattention, sleep deprivation, excessive hours driving trains, or whatever excuse could be found. The end consequence was that the residents nearly jumped out of their wheelchairs or fell off their walkers with so much excitement! Photos have been placed on the website, and on facebook, and below.

The consequence is that after the exhibition is done and dusted, two Saturdays, more if necessary, will be set aside for the Two Ronnies, and other members, to learn how to operate Lakeside in both DC and DCC modes.

Denis



The Art of Cleaning Wheels.

Last newsletter I wrote about cleaning track. As I made clear then, there is little point in cleaning track if the trains (locomotives and/or wagons) have grubby wheels, because the crud on the wheels will transfer to the track. ***This means that every wheel on every locomotive and every wagon has to be clean!*** It also means that, from time to time, ***every wheel on every locomotive and every wagon will have to be cleaned.*** Once wheels have been cleaned it is relatively easy to keep them clean: just make sure that the track is perfectly clean, and make sure that ***all*** wheels are perfectly clean.

Traditionally, at NMRI, loco wheels have been cleaned by upending the loco in a cradle, powering up the loco, and cleaning the pickup wheels (only) with a cotton bud moistened with methylated spirits. This process has major limitations! For a start, wagon wheels don't get cleaned. Non-pickup wheels don't get cleaned, either. Pickup wheels get cleaned only of the crud that is soluble in alcohol. And pickup wheels that are unpowered are, at best, difficult to clean thoroughly. Add to this the reluctance of those who own newer, superdetailed, locomotives to turn them upside down in a cradle (because bits fall off), and it's little wonder that trains stall.

So, in the quest for reliable running, where do we start? Strangely enough, that is obvious: with perfectly clean track. The next step is nearly as obvious: clean all of the wheels on all of your locomotives, because it is the pickup wheels, in particular, that allow crud to be burned onto the track. The last step is to ensure that ***all*** of your wagon wheels are perfectly clean. Now, I have dealt with cleaning track (in the July newsletter). Bear with me, and I will get to practical wheel cleaning.

Start with powered locomotives (dummy locomotives are little different to wagons in this context) and railcars, because they are electrically active, and, usually considerably heavier than other rolling stock. Model train wheels are made of a variety of materials, from stainless steel to bakelite, and what works for stainless steel will destroy bakelite (and that may not be a bad thing...). Metal wheels can be degreased, and have the dirt removed by "washing" them with methylated spirit or isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol, in American). Undoubtedly, there are chemicals that will remove the oxides (tarnish) from metal wheels, but a drop in the wrong place will likely damage the rest of the loco, so physical removal of oxides (polishing the wheels) is the only real choice. This needs to be done regularly, ***and from brand new*** (you don't really think that manufacturers clean the wheels before they pack a model locomotive, and then keep it vacuum packed so that no oxidation will take place...). So, how to do this?

There's a lot to be said for little, sturdy engines. For a start, there are not so many wheels, and there are not so many "individually applied detail items" to break or fall off when the locomotive is upended to clean the wheels. And there is no alternative to upending the locomotive (or railcar) to clean the wheels, because without a detailed inspection of each wheel, you will never be able to tell if the wheels are clean. Big, delicate engines, especially, will need individual, custom

cradles to allow them to be turned upside down, safely. More rugged engines may be located into a more generalised cradle, but they must be firmly held, as it is unlikely that any of us will be able to clean loco wheels with one hand.

The next step is to power up the mechanism. For straight DC or auto-detect DCC locomotives, apply 12v to the pickup wheels. For non auto-detect DCC locomotives (fortunately, uncommon), a DCC signal will be required to get the wheels rolling. Then wash each of the rolling wheels with a cotton bud moistened with alcohol. Now get the unpowered wheels turning: these will have to be as clean as the powered wheels, or the whole process will have been a waste of time! You can turn the wheels with a finger, and, if the wheels are of plastic, you may have little choice, but you may also use a 12v "moto tool" with a rubber in the collet, turning *slowly, but only for metal wheels*. For metal wheels, *only*, you can use a brass brush, also running *slowly*, effectively skipping to the next step, which is polishing the wheels, removing the oxides.

This is where you really have to know what your wheels are made of. You can use a plastic brush, but it will not do the same job. And, *do not use a steel brush* – all but stainless steel wheels will be destroyed by a steel brush (ask me how I know this...). All of your locomotive's wheel treads will have to be brought to a high polish, to show that they are clean. Stainless steel wheels (rare, unfortunately) will look like polished steel, as will sintered steel wheels. Solid nickel-silver wheels will look like silver, as will brass (eg Lima) wheels. Plated brass wheels will, eventually, lose their plating, but they will lose that to arcing if they are not polished. But, come hell or high water, *do not use a wire brush on plastic wheels or traction tyres* – you will finish up with an awful smell, bits of black stuff in the air, and either no traction tyres, or wheels of reduced, and uneven diameter. Do be gentle with the brass brush – ask for help if this is new to you. Also, be especially careful if your loco type has a history of split gears. Only brass or sintered steel wheels will need regular polishing, unless your model locomotive is allowed to run with grubby wheels, or on grubby track.

Strangely enough, and despite the fact that they rarely cleaned, wagon wheels do not get anywhere near as grubby as locomotive wheels (though with plastic wheels it can be hard to tell...). There are two reasons for this: few wagon wheels are electrically active, and most wagons are lighter on their wheels than locos. Added to this, oxides on wagon wheels are of no consequence, because, unless they are powdery (rare...), they do not come off, and their insulating properties do not impact operation. Plastic wheels should be cleaned, now and again, with an electric toothbrush (borrow someone else's!) and metho. The most important reason for this is to prevent whinging from some of the old farts!!! I have never had any reason to clean my wagon wheels, though, admittedly, they are all metal, and if they were grubby I would be able to see it.

Having written this, I am obliged to demonstrate it – and, I will, for the two Saturdays after the exhibition.

Allan

A request from John Cutler.

Most of you will know John, a past president of the club who, when he is on this side of the Tasman, is most often to be found under a layout, emerging only to fit lights into model buildings. He is a member of the committee, and among his other duties he reconditions the little track cleaning blocks (those little blocks of wood, half covered in cloth, and half covered in fine sandpaper, used for spot cleaning the track), **but only when he can find them!**

The photograph below is of a **very stern-faced John** (it's a pity that he is so camera-shy...) pointing out the tin into which used track-cleaning blocks must be placed. It's on the wheel-cleaning bench. My understanding is that members who leave track-cleaning blocks on the layouts will, in future, run the risk of addressing a white flash emerging from under the layout, with the intention of beating them into a bloody pulp: it's a risk that's not worth taking...

When you have finished with track cleaning blocks, please return them to the Used Track Cleaners tin.



Club Member Responsibilities 2015/16

President	Ron Weeden
Vice-President	Frank Crossley
Secretary	Denis Woolard
Treasurer	Peter Lynch
Committee Members	Denis Woolard, Frank Crossley, Jeff Kohler, Peter Lynch, John Cutler, Ron Weeden, David Morley, Peter Saunders
Events (Open Days, Swap Meets, etc.)	Denis Woolard, Peter Lynch
Membership	Jeff Kohler
Almoner	Frank Crossley
Security	Peter Saunders
First Aid	Peter Lynch
Cleaning	Peter Lynch, Jeff Kohler (extra help always welcome...)
Web Administrator	
Newsletter	Allan Lees
Main Layout	Frank Crossley
Lakeside	Ron Weeden, Denis Woolard, Jeff Kohler, Peter Saunders
Paradigm	Committee
Drinks and Confectionary Purchasing	Jeff Kohler
Sausage Sizzle Group Leaders	Justin Coombes, John Cutler, Peter Lynch
Sausage Sizzle Sausage Purchasing	Peter Lynch
Sausage Sizzle Onion Purchasing	Justin Coombes (Thanks to The Pizza Pan, Hackham)

Next committee meeting
Monday 10/10/2016 7:30 pm

Drakes Foodland Community Dollars Tokens

Are you still using your Drakes Foodland Community Dollars token? Using the token at any Drakes Foodland store builds funds onto a gift card for the club: the more that you use the token, the more valuable is the gift card...

See Geoff, AKA Frosty, if you do not have one.

Vivien

Yes, folks, these are advertisements, but not ordinary advertisements. These businesses each help our club and its activities.

End Of The Line Hobbies

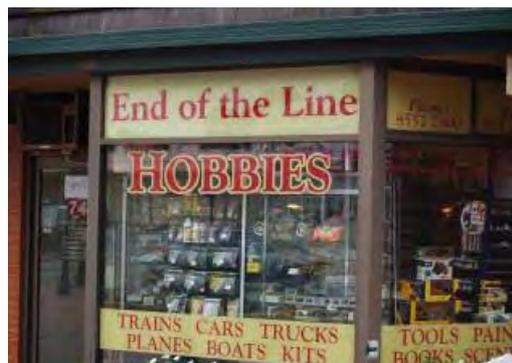
Your One Stop Hobby Shop

End Of The Line Hobbies is offering club members a 5% discount off all purchases. To be eligible you must be a current financial member and mention your club membership at the time of purchase. The club will receive the same amount as a voucher for use as we see fit. So you can help yourself and the club at the same time.

Delivery can be arranged anywhere in the world and orders may be placed in person at the shop, via email, snail mail, phone or fax. There is a stock hold option and payments can be made by Visa Card, Master Card, EFTPOS and good old fashioned cash!

Wednesday – Sunday 10:00 am – 4:30 pm

End Of The Line Hobbies 74 Ocean Street Victor Harbor SA 5211(near the turntable)
Ph 8552 7900 Find us at www.endofthelinehobbies.com.au
Fax 8552 7933 Email shop@endofthelinehobbies.com.au



A promotional advertisement for Pizza Pan. It features a large, appetizing image of a pizza slice with melted cheese and toppings. The text includes the address '109 Pennyes Hill Road, Hackham', trading hours 'Monday - Closed Tuesday - Sunday 4.30pm', and delivery fees '\$5.00 within a 5 Kilometer radius'. The phone number '8326 2330' is prominently displayed, along with the website 'www.pizzapan.com.au'. Logos for Coca-Cola, VISA, and MasterCard are also present, along with a Facebook link.