

Vol. August
No. 1. 1951

"THE JOURNAL"

Official Organ of the
AUSTRALIAN MODEL RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

"For all who are interested in Scale
Model Railroading"

EDITOR:

Mr. E. Mainka,
12 Flora Grove,
Ivanhoe, N.21.
Victoria.

SUB-EDITOR:

Mr. E. Dean,
5 Eunson Av.,
Northcote, N. 16.
Victoria.

Affiliated with the Australian Association of Model
Societies.

Page 2.

For our first Editorial the Editor has great pleasure in presenting to you --

A Statement by the President and Committee
entitled

"W H Y A N D W H A T F O R ? "

The above laconic query probably sums up the general comment of most of Australia's growing fraternity of model railroaders regarding the advent of the A.M.R.A.

With this in mind, your committee has decided to incorporate only in this first issue of The Journal a Presidential statement-cum-editorial of some length, in an endeavour to clarify for members and others the attitude of this new Association regarding the thornier problems confronting us.

It is a generally accepted fact that the Australian fine scale modeller has in the past trodden a very stony road, yet so far no attempt has been made to organise these men into a body banded together for their own common benefit in the hobby.

The Australian Section of the American N.M.R.A. is probably the nearest approach to this ideal, but unfortunately this fine organisation appears to have persistently refused to flourish in this country,

A likely reason for this is the dislike of many individuals towards sending a comparatively large amount of money each year out of this country and receiving in return rather spasmodic deliveries of the N.M.R.A. data sheets and similar material,

Surely nobody will disagree with the statement that this standards data is the finest information of its kind available for the scale model railroader anywhere in the world,

Unfortunately for the Australian member of the N.M.R.A., having received this admittedly excellent material, he can expect little else, for obviously he can't join in the many other activities and benefits his American opposite number enjoys,

It is not our intention here to dissect the N.M.R.A. and the causes of its alleged shortcomings in Australia, but it is necessary in the stating of your Committee's views to touch upon several of the more salient reasons why we think the N.M.R.A. as at present constituted will continue to mark time in Australia,

As an example, we consider that the great distance of the Australian Section from the controlling parent Association must inevitably cause a quite human "out of sight out of mind" attitude among those American officers responsible for the affairs of the comparatively tiny number of Australian N.M.R.A. members,

If such is the case, you could quite reasonably ask why we do not turn our endeavours to boosting the strength and activities of the N.M.R.A. in Australia to the point where a separate Region could be formed,

This is a fair question, but is answered at least in part by the reference to the difficulties of distance from the controlling body, for even an Australian Region would be still controlled to a great extent by the N.M.R.A. in America,

Similarly, the formation of a Region would not waive the objections of many model railroaders regarding the remittance of contributions to the parent Association in America, and at the same time being forced to refer that country for final decisions on everything but purely minor domestic matters.

We also think that the setting up of an Australian region of the N.M.R.A. would merely serve to aggravate the present position, as a member would then be called upon to pay even greater dues than at present, but without a corresponding increase in the benefits offered in return for that money,

Despite the foregoing, the new A.M.R.A. is very definitely pro N.M.R.A. which seems rather ambiguous, but we do realise the enormous amount of excellent service the American body has rendered model railroaders in the U.S.A., and to a lesser extent elsewhere,

I feel I must apologise at this point to the officers of the Australian Section of the N.M.R.A. for my discussion of what is after all really their own affair; however, much of what I have written here has been individually said elsewhere

Page 4.

and having been set the task of explaining the viewpoint of my Committee, I could do little else but approach the matter of the N.M.R.A. as it affects us, as objectively as possible,

You will have noticed in reading the constitution of the A.M.R.A. that this Association intends to promote where possible the use in Australia of N.M.R.A. standards.

Possibly this will cause some eyebrow raising, but a moment's reflection will convince you of the wisdom of this decision,

As previously stated, N.M.R.A. standards are fairly generally recognised in Australia as elsewhere, as the best information on standards available to model railroaders.

What would be the point in the A.M.R.A. working to evolve a new and possibly different set of standards and thereby adding to the already confused position yet another snare for the unwary enthusiast.

However, we do propose to issue Recommendations which in due course would become Standards for such equipment and dimensions as are not covered by N.M.R.A. data.

A notable example of this would be four-wheeled rolling stock.

We have written to the N.M.R.A. in America seeking permission to make use of N.M.R.A. standards in this manner and have taken the liberty of assuming such permission will be forthcoming in the near future.

Obviously, it will be of benefit to that body to have the standards they have been advocating in this country for so long publicised by a similar organisation.

Neither will this be a case of "stealing another's thunder" as most of these standards are freely available from sources other than actual membership of the N.M.R.A.

Where the Constitution of the A.M.R.A. specifically mentions standards, we want you to notice care has been taken to differentiate between N.M.R.A. and A.M.R.A., for the former standards must and always will be, as far as we are concerned, the property of the N.M.R.A.

Before leaving the subject of these (at first glance) apparently overlapping organisations, let me condense your Committee's views regarding the N.M.R.A. - A.M.R.A. parallel into a few lines,

Basically, and at the risk of being considered insular in outlook, the Management Committee of the A.M.R.A. feel that by the very fact of being Australian in every respect and answerable only to Australian modellers, this Association will appeal to a greater number of these enthusiasts,

Because of this, and just as importantly, it will therefore have a better opportunity of coming to future agreement with Australian manufacturers, retailers and publishers, for the problems of this country's fine standard and fine scale model railroaders will be the sole problems of this completely Australian Association,

However, we do sincerely hope that the N.M.R.A. and the A.M.R.A. will grow and prosper to the mutual benefit of model railroaders. Surely when we survey the vast field available for improvement, it is reasonable to suggest that there is ample room for both organisations in this country,

And so at this stage of the development of the Australian Model Railway Association, we are asking you to lend a hand by suggesting to your model railroading friend that he also becomes a member of the A.M.R.A.

If he, and in turn, his friends will be "in it" with US, and you all give us not only your financial support, but your letters of constructive criticism, your suggestions and ideas, the scale model railroader in Australia should begin to feel a good deal less like tossing it in.

If many men grouped together by a common interest combine to accomplish a certain ideal they are a great deal more likely to attain that ideal than the same men acting individually or in small isolated groups.

What is our ideal? Without doubt, the standardisation of Australia's unstandard standards, and the general introduction of fine scale model railroading in all gauges on a national basis, as is the present day position in America.

Page 6.

Obviously a fellow with an operating layout 'built to any gauge or standards, and perhaps grossly out of scale, cannot be expected to tear up the product of possibly years of spare time work just because the A.M.R.A. decides to try and 'bring a modicum of order out of the present chaos, But surely it is common sense to encourage those chaps just starting in our hobby (and there are a great number of them) and those experienced men about to rebuild to construct their new equipment to one common set of standards for each gauge, whatever the gauge or scale they select may be.

We've tried individual and sectional action in Australia for many years in connection with scale model railroading, and ended up precisely where we started, With a lot of fellows going nowhere in particular, the few who are on the right track lacking a convenient avenue through which to help the newcomers to the hobby, and the manufacturers, small in numbers as they are, all going their own sweet way as regards standards and everything else connected with model railway matters,

Admittedly, those Australian manufacturers now operating who don't produce their products to fine scale and fine standards, aren't likely to fling their dies and allied equipment gaily into the melting pot and re-tool to new standards, just because the A.M.R.A. has entered the area.

However, if we talk loudly enough, and convincing enough and collectively we can, the men who make the material we buy and those who import from overseas, are much more likely to issue their new products in fine scale and fine standards form, Similarly, new men entering the commercial model railway field for the first time, will be inclined to consult this Association before finally deciding what to produce, not because of any mythical "big stick" we might wave, but merely because it is obviously sound business practice to obtain from the consumer's representative an idea of what that consumer would like to have available for purchase,

We wish to make it quite clear that you are not asked to hand in your money and gracefully retire to your private model railway domain, On the contrary, we want to hear from you as often as the urge to write occurs. We want more of you fellows, professional or amateur, on the Management Committee and sub-committees, because this is not a closed corporation, and if you feel you would like to

Page 7,

take an active part in the affairs of the Association, write to the Secretary, Tim Dunlop, about it,

Before concluding this sermon, I must touch upon the subject of Professional Modellers; those gentlemen referred to at some length in Article 8 of the Articles of Association,

The A.M.R.A. is an amateur organisation for the primary benefit of amateur modellers, and the inclusion of the Article referred to above is merely a safeguard that the Association remains in that form, We have no quarrel with the model railway manufacturers, retailers and publishers of Australia, for we are well aware that all is not the bed of roses and fat bank balances it is often alleged to be for them, and anyway whatever the faults of some of their products may be, the fact remains that without those products, our hobby as we know it today would be practically non-existent.

Therefore, we do wish to work with them, not against them, and although control of the Association has been deliberately vested in the hands of the amateur model railroaders, and cannot be removed therefrom, men who earn their living by modelling railroad equipment and other allied professional people and firms are invited to join the A.M.R.A. and have their say in its destiny, just as several already have done.

And on that note, I shall leave you to digest the foregoing statements. Quite possibly you may think that what you have just read is all pure unadulterated hog-wash, or then again you may have been thinking along these very lines yourself. Maybe you consider our opinions will lead to nothing but a set of unattainable ideals, but if you disagree with any, or all, or none of the views expressed, don't just tell your friends about it, write and tell us too, for this is your Journal and it's your Association.

The Editor welcomes contributions of interest to modellers. Articles submitted for publication under a non-de-plume must be accompanied with name and address.

Problems? You send them to us; we'll do our best to solve them for you.

Money Orders to be made payable at Preston P.O. Postal Notes to be left open,

Page 8.

ONE METHOD TO 2-RAIL LOCO DRIVERS

by Douglas McFadden,

This method, outlined below, has been proved beyond question to be practical. A Hornby Dublo "Sir Nigel Gresley" loco was treated two years ago and is still running satisfactorily.

Using a jeweller's saw, every second spoke of the driver is cut right through, as close to the rim as possible, Then apply a small amount of good glue (G,U.D. is recommended) to the gap with a sharpened match-stick,

Allow about 24 hours to set properly, then treat each alternate spoke the same way,

It sounds extremely simple, but it works,

The particular loco, mentioned above ran for several months as a 2-rail loco, on a scale layout, and since then has been re-converted to three rail, and has spent its time racing at fantastic speeds on Hornby Dublo track with its 14" radius curves,

This has apparently had no adverse effect on the drivers,

If you contemplate using any other glue or cement, I cannot vouch for it as yet,

Recently a "Duchess of Atholl" was done with Tarzan's Grip, but I do not think it is as suitable as G.U.D.

Tarzan's Grip is now being tried out on an "0" gauge 0-6-0 chassis but as the loco itself is not complete at the time of writing, I cannot say whether it will be as good as the first "00" gauge loco,

Here are a few cautions,

When using the jeweller's saw, see that the blade is placed so that the teeth point towards the handle, the cutting stroke being towards you, not away from you as is normally done. Extreme care must be used when cutting spokes not to cut the same spoke twice in different places, or you will be minus one spoke or part of one. When applying the glue make sure you do not plaster it all over the armature or commutator of the motor, To insulate the third pair of drivers on any of the Hornby 4-6-2s you will have to remove the armature.

It is also quite possible to insulate car and truck wheels in the same manner, If they are disc type, it will be necessary to drill a small hole in the wheel, then cut round half way and after glueing, do the other half.

This is not my idea; it is to Mr. P. W. Duckett to whom I give credit, and in spite of my early criticism, the idea DOES work.

"TOSS ASIDE YOUR TINSNIPS"

by Cliff Richardson.

Although the train has been dramatically referred to as a "juggernaut of iron and steel" the wood content of even a modern steel train is often surprisingly high. And by "wood" I'm not referring to the split billets despairingly stacked into loco. bunkers during our more desperate coal crisis, but the veneers, plywoods, laminated woods, sawn planks and beams which perform their part in keeping our full size railroads operating.

This brings us to the subject of these articles, the use, (and misuse) of wood in model railroading, together with a discussion of its close ally in modelling, and an often despised material at that - cardboard.

WILL SOME KIND PERSON RENDER FIRST AID TO THE GENT
WITH THE SOLDERING IRON.

Now, let's get down to business.

Firstly, you can't use the end of a butterbox or the side of a packingcase and expect to get quality results in your models. Thank it over for yourself this way.

The fellow who pays for the initial cost of the manufacture of that packing case isn't likely to specify best seasoned silver ash in its construction. Rather will he order the cheapest (and roughest) material available, consistent with ease of handling and safe arrival of the goods the said crate will contain.

You CAN use such a source of supply, and take the risk of subsequent warping and splitting, but remember that you will in all probability spend at least £10 worth of time on your latest bit of construction, be it wood or metal.

If you use metal, you don't, I assume, select a rusty slab of buckled sheet steel from the nearest municipal dump, and go to work on that.

By the same token, your few shillings spent on the purchase of good wooden raw materials will become a better investment in direct relationship to the amount of time and detail you lavish on your project. Anyway, for 10/- you will buy enough first

Page 10,

quality stuff for several pieces of rolling stock, or a quite large lineside structure.

On the basis of cost and the subsequent permanence of your model, the subject of packing case timber and good quality purchased wood can be fairly well disposed of.

Now for "cardboard", a name daily applied by all of us to describe a staggering multitude of different paper "boards" all made for a specific in industry and commerce.

We are interested in Bristol Board, a superior sister of these pulpboards. This is a high quality card in various "weights" or thicknesses, and familiar in the form of visiting and invitation cards, The large sheets as purchased are often die stamped in one corner with the maker's name, and although I invariably use white, I believe this card is also obtainable in several colours.

Bristol Board has a hard, fine satin finish on both sides, is even in texture and thickness, scribes well, will not readily fray or "rough up", even on a cut edge, and perhaps most importantly of all, it takes paint beautifully and stays painted. It is of interest to note that although wood is frequently used alone in modelling, I can't think of an occasion in model railroad construction where it would be either useful or advisable to use Bristol Board without a solid backing of wood or metal"

SIGNS OF LIFE FROM THE GUY WITH THE SOLDERING IRON.

Bristol Board on a wood backing will simulate sheet steel to perfection when painted, and in its thinner forms it will take the finest of rivet impressions.

A point frequently overlooked by the detractors of wood and cardboard construction, particularly regarding rolling stock, is the inherent resistance of wooden models to superficial damage. Probably there isn't an operating layout in existence which has not at some time witnessed a loco, running at speed, clout the side of a box car too close to a turnout. A heavy engine in these circumstances can and often does depress the side panel of a metal car to a point where a major constructional operation is necessary to remove the offending dent.

A wooden car in the same circumstances will, if

Page 11.

correctly built, show only a tiny indentation where the front beam of the loco. made contact, even if the car is coupled more or less immovably to a long string of vehicles, If necessary, this scar is easily and invisibly repaired from the outside of the car, without the tedium of removing the roof or floor.

In the next issue of the Journal an article by a timber expert will be included, this deals with the properties of timber in general, and a short list of some of the Australian timbers suitable for use in modelling. Included also are simple suggestions to those men who would like to season and store their own supplies of timber, and this applies particularly to timber intended for use in benchwork construction. After all, if the benchwork "creeps", so does your beautiful track alignment.

Reading these two articles will give you a basic knowledge of the two materials we are to discuss in succeeding issues, and in those issues we'll settle down and go thro' the do's and don'ts of wood and Bristol Board construction as applied to a particular project; and we'll also have a yarn about the few tools required, glueing, including fixing metal to wood.

(THE GUY WITH THE HOTROD HAS JUST HAD A RELAPSE)

SPECIALLY MIXED MODEL RAILWAY PAINT is now coming on the market in a variety of colors with exception (at present) of the dirty Victorian Railways goods stock red. (Words are a bit mixed up here, but you know what we mean),

Go out and buy yourself a quart of Dulux red surfacer - it dries dull and quick. Don't use paving paint - it is too shiny.

"THE BUYERS' GUIDE SERVICE"

Members will receive each month a copy of A.M.R.A. Buyers' Guide listing Model Railway Supplies available from the hobby retailers and from other sources. This Guide will keep you informed on the latest equipment in "0" and "HO". All materials and tools, etc. When buying, please mention that you read it in the Australian Model Railway Buyers' Guide,

Page 12.AUSTRALIAN MODEL RAILWAY ASSOCIATIONOffice Bearers

President:	Mr. C. Richardson
Secretary:	Mr. T. Dunlop
Treasurer:	Mr. E. Dean
Asst. Secretary:	Mr. D. McFadden
Asst. Treasurer:	Mr. B. McClure
Secretary's Address:	Steane Street, Reservoir, N.19, Vic.

"STANDARD" GAUGE?"

Railroad gauges throughout the world are as confused and varied as international politics. The United States and Great Britain have succeeded in adopting a 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge and much of Europe uses this same gauge; but Spain, Portugal, Eire and Russia do not. Spain and Portugal use a 5½ ft. gauge, Eire has a gauge of 5¼ ft. and Russia 5 ft. The longest stretch of track with one gauge in the world is the Russian line from Leningrad to Vladivostock.

Through lines in North Africa are standard gauge, as they are in Iran. In Iran's neighbour country, Iraq, however, two-thirds of the lines are one metre gauge (which equals 3 ft. 3 5/8") and the rest are standard gauge.

Turkey's main line is standard gauge.

The railways of India are chiefly one metre and 5½ ft. gauge. In Burma, Indo-China and Thailand the metre gauge prevails.

The principal main lines in China and Manchukuo are standard gauge.

Australia's railroads are owned by the individual States and are famous for their confusion of 3 ft. 6 ins., standard and 5 ft. 3 ins.
