Some of the amazing scenery that was the creation of well known & respected modeller, Geoff Nott

Sadly, Geoff passed away recently.

His modelling skills were second to none, his influence on the modelling world cannot be underestimated and for those who knew him personally, a very nice man.

More information on page 15

New Member

A warm welcome to Justin Kilby as our latest member.

Justin resides in Newcastle and lists his interests as USA and NSW prototype in HO scale.
New England Model Railway Club Incorporated

www.newenglandmodelrailwayclub.com

Executive for 2013

Warren Herbert .......... 6732 5711
President
Don Waghorn .......... 6752 1750
Vice President
Geoff Yeomans .......... 6772 0251
Secretary/Treasure/Memberships
Gary Ible .......... 6775 1627
Editor

Committee for 2013

Don Haywood .......... 6792 2074
Don Haywood
David Heap .......... 6772 1598
Damien Lees .......... 0408 495 046
Andrew Robertson ........... 6725 4604
Kevin (Jack) Warrener .... 6723 1383
Hans Voskuyl .......... 6772 6848

2013 Club Calendar

Date : Sunday 21st July
Host : Michael McGowan
Location : 218 Turrawan Road, Narrabri
South-East of town a few kilometres out
Time : 10:00am onwards
Confirm : Ph: 6792 1910 Em: michael_mcgowan@hotmail.com
Lunch : Provided with a note donation

Michael has sent the following directions :
“Gunnedah after Baan Baa - take the first on the right at the sign ‘Narrabri via Tarriaro’ 218 Turrawan Road from Narrabri down main street, follow signs to Gunnedah. After Tarriaro Bridge, follow the tar towards highway. 2nd property on left”

Date : Sunday 15th September
Host : Don Hayward
Location : 15 Jenkins Street, Narrabri
Time : 10:00am onwards
Confirm : Ph: 6792 2074
Lunch : Provided with a note donation

NEMRC A.G.M.

Date : Saturday 7th September
Host : Kevin & Sue Warrener
Location : “Alister” Tingha Road, Gilgai
Time : 1:30pm Sharp

Date : Sunday 17th November
Host : Ken & Helen Dickins
Location : 1079 Booralong Road, Armidale
Time : 10:00am onwards
Confirm : Ph: 6775 1020
Lunch : Finger Food provided with a note donation

Submissions for future Catchpoints

More items are always needed for future editions, so please send your stories, photos, track layouts, your current modelling exploits, layout information or future modelling ambitions, layout concepts, methods of operating or just about anything related to railways / railroads.

If emailing photos to include in Catchpoints, please add some information to describe the content.

Email : garyible@gmail.com  Post : PO Box 718 Armidale NSW 2350

Regular Meetings :

Weekly meetings are held on Tuesdays at 1:30pm at the Armidale Clubroom which is situated in the Armidale Railway Yard. The entrance is off Miller Street via Ampol Street, through the double gates at the western end of the yards.

Running days are held at meetings on 1st Tuesday of the month - so bring something along
Funny how things get overlooked or put on the backburner when we have something ‘more important’ to get on with. Now that we are firmly in the winter period with no daylight saving for outside duties to finish at home after work, most of us would prefer to catch up on inside tasks in front of the fire. My preferred ‘work after work’ is to bolt/dash/run to the train shed and get on with all the things that attract me to the hobby - building, wiring, scenery, train operations, tuning locomotive sounds more like the real thing (as far as possible in HO scale), watching my collection of trains running by in the environment of my creation and socialising while doing all of the above.

To date, the most I have accomplished is the majority of benchwork and some trackwork in place. This of course has taken far longer than I thought it would to get to this stage but having only a few hours most evenings to work on the layout I guess I should be pleased with what I have achieved. Most nights see me in bed by midnight, and Cathy has insisted I get a large clock to make sure I can see the time easily. I missed a show on TV one night that I had bookmarked after going to the shed for an hour or so at 7:00pm to get back by 8:30 to watch said show, to return indoors at 11:30. I have know solved this problem by a) getting the decreed clock and b) putting a TV in the shed !!

One sunny weekend (while here by myself) I elected to start wiring some Tortoise turnout motors while having the car races on the (house) TV working on the small table in the living room while basking in the sunlight streaming through the windows. Setting up a production line with cut wires of varying colours for the different function on the Tortoise, diagram of how I was intending to connect the relevant wires, suitable length terminal strips, bootlace ferrules and crimping tool, soldering station etc I was working up a sweat up as neared completion of the 16 units I set out. The car races lost it’s appeal as no Nissan was near the front so I ventured out to the shed to see what else I could accomplish.

Can you see where the ‘Tunnel Vision’ thing is now coming from ?? This hobby allows so many aspects to pursue that sometimes almost all else gets overlooked - chores, eating, sleeping. Not really a good thing. When we get so focused on completing a task it seems very easy to get carried away and because there are so many interesting things to do we don’t seem to get bored or notice how long we have been involved on any particular aspect.

This issue has photos of Don Tydd’s current state of progress while we will get to see how far Ken Dickins can get with his layout for our November meeting at his home. Peter Stevenson was discussing his early stages of construction of benchwork with me. Hans Voskuyl is progressing well on his multi-level layout. Len Durkin will be ready to tear into his redesigned layout when he ceases his shift work at the cotton gin. Dave Heap will commence construction on his new layout when he stops working, period !! Warren will start his layout when his new home is constructed, so no rush there either.

With quite a few of our members in varying stages of constructing their own layouts, we can look forward to getting updates on their progress over the coming issues of Catchpoints (prompt for the person who drives the ‘Winnebago Room’ - no pressure !)

As you have no doubt found / are about to find in this issue of Catchpoints, the announcement for the NEMRC AGM in September where all positions for the committee will be called to be filled by nomination, I would like to call on members to consider nominating for the position of Editor of Catchpoints as I would like to step back a little and be able to find more time to get stuck into my layout and try and have something that will be operable in time for us to actually get to run trains on the thing and not crash our zimmer frames together as we pass each other in the aisles (knew I should have made the aisles 2000mm wide).

As we are now ‘empty nesters’, I know that Cathy will ‘suggest’ we go away a bit more than we have in the past (won’t be difficult as we haven’t been anywhere for decades !!). I also would like keep some of my ‘after hours’ work going as I do enjoy design work from selected clients carried over from my still functioning business, so will need to allocate time for this as well. Maybe I should give up my day job !!!!

Notice I haven’t mentioned time for chores as these will be assessed on an ‘as-needed’ / prioritised basis. Although the need to cut firewood currently is probably up there.

All assistance will be given of course for any budding Rupert Murdoch wanna-be’s (ok, he is not really an Editor) and it is not really difficult - I wouldn’t be doing it if it was, so please all consider.

Catch up soon,

Gary
A busy couple of months has been the order of the day for us. The first week in June saw us attend the Toowoomba exhibition which was mixed weather with some sunny days and some wet days. This didn’t seem to deter the patrons, as it was quite busy on both days. Members Graeme Tampion and Jack Warrener turned up for a look, and Damien lees was there for the weekend and gave us a helping hand to pack up on the Sunday evening Thanks Damo.

Two days at home and we were off to Sydney to attend the Epping model railway club exhibition at the Thornleigh Brickpit hall. Some more members turned up there as well. Not sure how many were there but I did see Andrew Robertson and Graeme Barnes lurking about looking for bargains as usual.

As usual there was a good selection quality exhibits at this show with Epping presenting their new Binalong layout. Also Geoff small had a new layout called “whereisit” and the Dubbo boys had Bathley Creek. All great layouts.

The news on that weekend that Geoff Nott was not very well echoed around the hall and that he had been moved to a Palliative care unit and was refusing his medication. Geoff had been diagnosed with cancer of the spine in March. On the following Thursday while we were still in Sydney, I received a call from Steve Pettit to say that Geoff had passed away that morning. We have lost one of the best scenery and structure modellers in the country. Steve was one of the crew who helped Geoff build the Red Stag Lumber Company layout. One of the many layouts that Geoff had built. You will find a tribute to Geoff elsewhere in this issue. Those of you who attended our Convention in November most probably met Geoff and attended his presentations as well as marveling at his Smugglers Cove layout.

On a brighter note I took notice of several new types of lighting systems on a few of the layouts at Thornleigh. The combination of two of them may be able to be incorporated into Swan Vale with some very good LED lighting. To this end I have ordered a couple of these lights with the idea of playing around to see if it can be adapted to Swan Vale.

Our last Bi-Monthly meeting was held at the Home layout of Don and Barbara Waghorn. Don had the layout pumping with lots of trains running and several novice engineers who had no problem in creating numerous short circuits around the layout. Barbara looked after the Dining Car with a sumptuous lunch followed by copious quantities of red wine and other drinks. A really good day and good to see some of the new members in attendance.

So our next meeting will be at the home of Michael McGowan at Turrawan near Narrabri on July 21st. You will find directions to Michael’s elsewhere in this issue. This is a new layout for most of us as we have never had a meeting at Michael’s before. So it should be a good visit to see the progress that Michael has achieved.

We have also been invited back to the Guyra Lamb & Potato Festival in January 2014 to display our layouts and have a good time, hopefully this time with a little drier weather. So put the Australia Day long weekend in your diary to have a weekend of running trains at Guyra.

This issue of Catchpoints is issue number 99 and so the next issue will be a milestone with 100 issues of Catchpoints being produced by 6 or more different Editors. This seems to coincide with our 20 years old existence. If you think you have anything special to contribute, please put some thought into providing our editor with some witty or interesting items for inclusion in our 100th edition.

Until next time,
Write if the mood strikes

Warren
Delays in model delivery NOT restricted to Australia only !!!

We are occasionally labelled as impatient wingers who bemoan ad nauseum about delays in announced models - Ken Dickins’ ‘R’ class is probably a legitimate exception.

Maybe we should get used to it as recent postings on USA forums are stating that all the major brands are experiencing delays from the China based factories to supply announced models and the trend seems set to continue as in the case of Walthers announcing that the majority of their model delivery dates are now several months behind previously set dates.

With our small based (Oz models) market, one would imagine that the factories will service the volume needs of the larger brands before we get much of a look-in.

For those who are having issues with their TrainOrama 44/930 class loco bogies and haven’t read Bob’s Hobbies (TrainOrama) March newsletter ….

“44 and 930 Class gears:

Our new factory is currently investigating engineering advances towards improvements on the 44 Class bogies before supplying the order placed for change over spares.

At present, there are no spare 44 Class bogie units, these being sold out.

As foretold, the factory is presently undertaking advances in design to enable production of a much improved 44 Class drive bogie, inclusive of factory fitted gears, which will be produced as a special run of ‘spares’ at the earliest possible time.”

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Links to Cool Stuff !!!

Gerry Hopkins has fitted the new TCS WOW Sound decoders to 2 steam locos. See / Hear this on YouTube : [http://youtu.be/mgxM2HDCgug](http://youtu.be/mgxM2HDCgug)

Laurie McLean has been testing the new TCS WOW Sound decoders with different speaker combinations. See / Hear this on YouTube : [http://youtu.be/DqeUytPfEbo](http://youtu.be/DqeUytPfEbo)  (Sample 1) [http://youtu.be/P4eJ38DK1nw](http://youtu.be/P4eJ38DK1nw)  (Sample 2)

For those who have not yet visited the Model Railroad Hobbyist website to download / read their FREE ‘e-zine’ (for I-Pad / mobile phones or computers) here is the link :


There are also Blogs and Postings by folks, many are worth their weight in gold. Don’t be put off by the USA prototype bias as most items of interest are more than adaptable to the Australia scene.

As our member Ian Millard has been updating his site with new work on his layout, here is the link to his blog featuring some most impressively neat and tidy electronics and control :

[http://liverpoolrange.wordpress.com/](http://liverpoolrange.wordpress.com/)

If anyone still has any download capacity remaining, this YouTube link to 11 movies *(maybe only download the 5 High Definition ones)* of a USA southern states freelance layout that captures that rare quality of ‘atmosphere’ with some impressive detailing and shows what can be achieved in a narrow shelf type, multi-level layout design :

[http://www.youtube.com/user/maandg/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/maandg/videos)
NEMRC Anniversary Wagons

We have a surplus of our 20th Anniversary wagons for sale at a bargain price of $45.00 each. If you are interested, please contact our hard working Secretary to let him know how many you would like to purchase.

Where is Thomas’ Clothes ?!!??!!?

Searches far & wide have not discovered the whereabouts of Thomas’ layout curtain. If any club member knows where this may be hiding can you let any committee member know so that we can return it to the layout. *Reward I hear you ask ??*

Invitation to exhibit ‘Swan Vale’

*Following the Club’s recent excursion to the Lamb & Potato Festival at Guyra earlier this year, we have received an invitation to show Swan Vale at the same venue in Guyra - the Masonic Lodge Hall - on the Australia Day weekend in January 2014*

*Mark this in your 2014 diaries*

NEMRC Website

Dave Heap has been busy rejuvenating and updating the Club Website.

This is still a work-in-progress with more photos, members pages, convention information etc to be added in time but the effort Dave has put in to date shows that the site will be a professional and easy to follow adjunct in raising the Club’s public profile.

*Thanks Dave*

*For those who still don’t realise the site address has been a footer on the front cover of Catchpoints for many years, here it is again…*

www.newenglandmodelrailwayclub.com
Gwydir Valley Models

EasyDCC Now Available in Australia

Now with ZoneMaster 7 Amp Boosters
Basic Starter System $495.00
Expanded Starter System $695.00
Wireless Starter System $875.00
NEW T5000 Wireless Throttle $225.00

FAST TRACKS Easy to build Turnouts
Create Your Own Accurate Turnouts
Also Available:
Soundtraxx, Tsu-1000 $130.00
Soundtraxx AT-1000 $105.00
Soundtraxx TSU-750 $149.00
TCS Decoders From $25.00
Irdot Infrared Detectors
Hold & Fold Etch Bending Tools
Centreline Track Cleaning Cars
Evergreen Styrene & Scratch building materials
Uneek Detail Items, Tichy Windows, Doors etc
Micro-Engineering: Rail, Track, Joiners, Track Gauges, Spikes
Kappler Scale Lumber: Sheet, Strip, Bulk Packs
Kadee Couplers, Tools Uncouplers

P.O. Box 740 GLEN INNES NSW 2370
Phone: 02 6732 5711 Fax: 02 6732 1731
Web: www.gwydirvalleymodels.com

VISA  MASTERCARD
A yarn with Jack Warrener (Kevin when in Hospital and that other place)

I got my first train from Santa Clause and started modelling. It was a Hornby OO scale, but it did not go. I peddled that push bike connected to the generator as hard as possible – still no movement from the station, that was during 1968ish aged 4-5. The loco was a green 4-6-0 with 6 wheeled tender with a set of 3 Pullman carriages; Anne and Mary with the third, a composite guards van.

The track was steel rail super 4 track which is the coarsest track known apart from the O scale clockwork wind up set we had previously (I had a clockwork loco with REVERSE gear – very modern, my elder brother did not eheheh). No one new how to set up the Hornsby set and run it. Perks general store - in Wariawa had the PPP (public private partnership) with Santa and we swapped locos to try to get it to run, to no avail. I had an Uncle with ‘a fair bit of railway stuff’ took the loco to him and it ran perfectly – the culprit was steel track, rusty and dirty. So out with the Metho and rags.

We went to OO scale as Perks didn’t carry N scale stuff to expand the elder brother’s train set so that became discarded along with the O scale clock work stuff. With trains running we commandeered the out-house laundry and chucked out the old copper and concrete wash tubs. We developed quite a railway system with 3 tracks – 1 each for the 3 boys and the girl was not allowed in the room – ever. It was a basic L shape layout in a 3x4m shed with grass painted on the boards in the hope of a good season with plenty of pick, roads were sealed and all the mod facilities including Warialda’s first international airport. Life was simple and basic. Not bad for a town of population of a few 100!

We had the royal mail exchange car and the giraffe that ducked under overhead bridges – most of the time until the rabbio inspector from the PP Board threatening to dob us into the RSPCA! We were the envy of the town’s kids. All up we each had 3 trains of 2 freight and 1 passenger and several shunting locos, 9 trains all together.

Then as we grew up and started to leave home the layout and bits were distributed to be condemned to boxes rarely to see the light of day through the layers of accumulated dust. The items were released from their interment a couple of years after the arrival of next generation of Jacks, or modellers, one thinks a bit prematurely for a 2yo but who needed an excuse???? The remainets were expanded to include Lima items of the XPT, a 3801, 44 class and 421 class and some USA steam and diesel locos and trains due to limited NSWGR. Points were made by Lima with code 100 track with a mix of set and flexi track as we moved with the times. So from O scale, N scale OO scale we settled on HO scale Australian.

It was all packed up and boxed again in 1992 when I moved from Town in Inverell to land at Gilgai. 2008 was my epiphany year with the exhibition in Inverell run by NEMR, when I saw the butter box, and all my kind of trains and I was smitten yet again. (Butter box was our local term for the CPHs running between Moree and Inverell, but I never got to travel on it, but did on the 400 401 classes when up to no good as a youngen). Things always wanted as a kid but weren’t available then but now are laid out before me. I joined the club that day and now that the kids are gone and money was MINEEEE, Warren signed me up. I have known Warren over several years of being towed out of bogs at Copeton Dam but not knowing of his dark secret of passion for the train miniature and large.

So some of you may recall that great moment a few years ago with the club at my home when amongst oos and arrrrs, elderly gents acted like little school boys at the `discovery and exploration of by box of treasure of old OO scale Hornby, Lima and bits.

Given my respite and confinement I have had time to ponder and now I am filled with new vigour and determination not to mention mobility. I will again ascend the stairs in my shed and Sign On for duties to operate HO scale 1970’s period Wariawa. I will need to run the stock yards, Weigh Bridge, wheat sunflower and other grains into the silo and goods and out shed and station. There’s a lot to do in Wariawa. Trains run through to the junction and onto the mainline. I must remember to fill the canvas water bag hanging in the waiting room and clean the cup {I could use one of the syringes from hospital to fill the water bag}.

Next will be the massive earth works of tunnelling and cuttings to adjust grades, alignment and curvatures. So I’ll be calling for tenders; in other words looking for help including land scaping; coffee and training provided. So, please make your offers to drop in and line up.

Maybe we will see another exhibition in Inverell sometime soon and we’ll see more enthusiasts coming out of the bush, like me.

Jack & Roger
May Meeting at Don & Barbara Waghorn’s—Moree

On 19th May twenty five members and four wives attended our two monthly meeting at the Moree premises of Don and Barbara Waghorn on a beautiful sunny winters day. By ten thirty after Gwydir Valley Models arrived and filled a display table of bargain priced items, the crowd soon gathered around. A lot of discussion and haggling with Warren took place, with items and money changing hands on a regular basis for the rest of the day except for lunch. More enlivened activity followed in Don’s layout room as new members and old took to operating Don’s layout like they had been doing it for years. The only major problem occurred with two trains going in opposite directions into the reverse loop. The DCC system Don uses doesn’t like the short circuit effect this causes and instead of blowing whistles and horns like some systems do, it just shuts down. This resulted in much searching, as one of the trains would be on a lower level behind where the attached picture was taken from, and out of sight. Fortunately our host was across the problem and educated the offending drivers. The enjoyment of the members was evident by the level of conversation going on, so much so that this almost deaf character couldn’t make out any particular conversation and retired to the outside where I could.

It was good though to see so much activity on the layout and instructions were being yelled from one end of the shed to the other, with lots of extra unnecessary, non helpful comments from those with only their head stuck in the door contributing to the general din of conversation. Don spent a lot of time helping on his programming track as Dave and Graeme got their locos set up to run on Don’s system. Some like Paul and Michael just got on with driving trains even if at times they lost sight of them on the large layout or out of sight because there were too many bodies in the way. We did have a licenced signal man attending the meet but I think that Don’s unusual signals had him confused.

Barbara put on a lovely lunch and with the substantial morning tea provided on our arrival we were well catered for and a big thank you to Barbara and her helpers, and thanks to Don and Barbara for opening their home for our club meet.

Nev. Murray

More photos over.........
May Meeting at Don & Barbara Waghorn’s—Moree

More happy shoppers

One of the star attractions of the meeting - Graeme’s functioning track work machine

Locos (and a ring-in) on display around the recently installed (as in that morning !!) turntable

Another star attraction and certainly the longest - Damien’s heavy haulage wagon

Member’s ‘Model Sharing’

Send an email (garyible@gmail.com), write a letter (PO Box 718 Armidale NSW 2350) or phone (6775 1627) with your request for sharing / splitting any current or future model pack and it will appear in the next edition of Catchpoints so everyone will know who wants what.

Don’t forget, if you are ordering any models through Gwydir Valley Models, it would be of benefit to let Warren know if you are interested in splitting your pack so he can keep a record as well.
The Narrow Gauge Junction

Rio Grande Southern Steam Power

The Rio Grande Southern holds a special place in the annals of Colorado narrow-gauge railroading. Crossing the heart of the Rockies, its magnificent scenery was matched by its spectacular operating costs. The railroads 162 miles of winding route between Ridgeway and Durango, Colorado featured grades rarely below one percent, with several in the 3½ to 4 percent range. Few were the runs that didn’t require helper service.

Throughout its history, the RGS ran with used or leased locomotives. Even the famous Galloping Goose rail cars’ fabricated at the RGS Ridgeway workshops, were constructed from used automotive components. Ex Denver and Rio Grande Western engines predominated in its steam roster through the years, but three ten wheelers from the Florence & Cripple Creek were there as well. There was also 2-8-0 built initially for the Colorado & Northwestern, subsequently owned by the Denver Boulder & Western and resold to the Colorado & Southern before finally reaching the RGS.

Over the years the RGS worked closely with the D&RGW. From the 1930s on, it regularly leased some of the latter’s Consolidations and many of its K27 “Mudhen” 2-8-2s.

Over the years the RGS worked closely with the D&RGW. From the 1930s on, it regularly leased some of the latter’s Consolidations and many of its K27 “Mudhen” 2-8-2s.

As the 1920s ended, many older, smaller 2-8-0s and 4-6-0s were retired. Much of the work then fell to Consolidations 40, 41, 42 formerly D&RG 402, 409, and 420, which came to the RGS in 1916. Engines 40 and 41 had 37-inch drivers, with a quarter inch less diameter on number 42. These small wheels meant slow running, but on a railroad where train speeds rarely exceeded 25 miles per hour, this mattered little. Of this trio, engine 41 still hauls tourists at Knott’s Berry Farm in California.

Important too, were Ten Wheelers 20, 22 and 25. Also acquired in 1916, they came from the abandoned Florence & Cripple Creek. These 42-inch drivered engines were slightly less powerful than the 2-8-0s, but were known to be good steamers. Number 20 was a favourite of engine crews, and is preserved in operating condition at the Colorado Railroad in Golden.

By the late 1930s, the RGS found itself leasing increasing numbers of D&RGW engines. One frequently used, number 455, was purchased in 1939. It made another such purchase in 1950, when D&RGW 461 was added to the roster, also retaining its old number. Both were K27 Mudhens, delivered initially to the D&RG in 1903 as Vauclain Compounds. Later modernised, they were the first RGS engines with superheaters and Walschaert valve gear. Engines of this class offered a significant increase in boiler capacity and power over other Consolidations.

Number 20, one of three 4-6-0s which served on the RGS until 1951, poses by the icy blue of Trout Lake.

Number 74 departs Ophir station with the last southbound steam passenger train witnessed by a respectable motorcade in 1951.
Before the addition of 461 to the roster, Colorado & Southern number 74 had been purchased in 1948. This relatively large 2-8-0 (by narrow gauge standards) had last served on the C&S Leadville branch prior to the line’s conversion to standard gauge. Already third hand, this 1098 Brooks engine was substantially rebuilt by the C&S and equipped with a modern steel cab and Walschaert valve gear. It was held in low esteem on the RGS, however, where crews found it a poor steamer.

In 1943, Number 455 was wrecked in a runaway descending the four percent grade from Dallas Divide at mile post 12. A major rebuilding followed at the Ridgway shops, which was completed in 1947. Thereafter 455 boasted a modern steel cab that was standard on D&RGW standard gauge 2-8-0 locomotives plus a used tender from such an engine modified for three foot gauge track.

The RGS operated its main line as two districts, the first reaching 66 miles from Ridgway to Rico. It also included the Telluride Branch’s 11 miles from Vance Junction to Pandora.

First district trains encountered grades up to four percent (1:25) crossing two ranges of mountains with summits at Dallas Divide (12 miles from Ridgway) and Lizard Head Pass (52 miles from Ridgway). When crews weren’t struggling up these slopes, they were warily inching down the opposite sides around sharp curves and over spindly timber trestles with severe speed restrictions.

Two Engines of the K27 2-8-2 design blast up the north slope of Lizard Head Pass, before shutting down to work light throttle into the snowshed.
The second district encompassed the 96 miles from Rico to Durango. It, too, included a few short spurs tapping mines along the route. The stiffest grade here was the hard 21-mile climb from Durango to Cima, most of it at 2 1/2 percent. From there to Mancos, an equally sharp descent followed. Then came another seven-mile climb at 2 ½ percent to Millwood and a 12-mile drop to Delores. Continuing on, the RGS climbed grades in excess on one percent to Rico, relatively mild for the RGS, but tough by most standards elsewhere.

Freight runs would commonly originate at Ridgway or Durango, work through to Rico and return. In addition, there were special movements to other points, notably during the stock rushes.

Light rail and harsh weather were serious problems for the RGS. Heavy snow caused many blockages, landslides were common, and rock falls led to crews becoming proficient at dynamiting such obstructions if the track beneath was intact. Derailments were an accepted risk, but thanks to low operating speeds, damages were usually limited. Unless severe damage occurred, crews usually re-railed their own equipment and proceeded down the road with only a loss of time to show for a typical derailment. Under these tough conditions, the small but sturdy three-foot gauge power managed to meet day-to-day challenges that would cause havoc on heavier standard gauge lines.
Finally in the last two months I have been able to spare the time to complete the frame work for my new layout. After thinking about the final design and the space involved, changes have been made with the elimination of two “tear drops” originating from the back and the introduction of a centre isle which will give me a longer branch line and larger industrial area to that initially proposed. I have made sure there are adequate width in the isle areas to walk along with any trains moving around the layout. Construction is “L” girder and based on information gained from a Kalmbach Books publication by Rick Sebly “HO Railroad From Set to Scenery” which I have found extremely helpful in the past and I would recommend it to anyone altering or starting a layout. I used the same information for my original layout which has been “recycled” into the new structure. All timber was glued and screwed with bolts used where necessary for extra strength.

The main line will run around the back of the room from and to (named at this stage) points A & B being two station/town complexes. The line will then run back along the front of that structure. In addition, a line will leave point A and travel under the structure to a four metre long staging yard on the back wall with the line reappearing near point B. This will also allow trains to “disappear” for a time and “reappear” when required. The branch line runs off from near point A as does the line to the industrial area. The layout is freelance design but includes track details from several yards in the North West of NSW.

Back boards have been constructed with the southern wall complete and the others ready to be placed on the structure in the next month. They are 500mm high to match the maximum sized background prints I will have produced from photographs in my collection (I prefer this system to trying my artistic abilities!!) The construction phase (on my own) has been more satisfying than I would have imagined. The only negatives were the quality of some of the timber (some DAR pine which was prone to warp) and pre-cut timber which despite “accurate” machines still seemed to be out a few millimetres requiring the odd recutting with a hand saw. I had some timber cut to size in the local store (they were happy to do it – Armidale Building Supplies). The plywood for the backboards was cut to size at the local Men’s’ Shed at a very reasonable cost. The plywood table top (which will vary in height in sections of the layout) will also be cut to near size and then finished and rounded off at the corners with a suitable saw.

Working on my own, I was pleased to have my trusty “G” clamps and a new Ryobi cordless drill with a torque fitting, which saved hours with the hundreds of screws involved. The staging yard will be completed by the end of June (due to its location) along with the related line. I expect to have all the structure completed by the end of July and then utilise the HO structures I have built or purchased to determine what will fit and where. Track and wiring plans will then be introduced along with the first of the Backboard photographs. Like all layouts it will take some years before the scenery is completed but in the meantime, I will be able to bring rolling stock from storage, run some trains for the first time in two years and enjoy watching it all come together. There will be challenges in its completion but that is part of being involved in this rewarding hobby.
It is with deep regret that I inform everyone of the passing of

**Geoff Nott**

on Thursday 13th June from complications of spinal cancer

Geoff was 68 years young and was one of the most amazing modeller we had the pleasure of seeing and a bloody nice bloke as well.

Geoff built numerous layouts in both HO and O scale - Leigh Creek Lumber Co., Sunny Corner, Charging Moose, Smugglers Cove, Muscat Ramble and others.

The funeral was held on Thursday 20th at Castle Hill

Warren

Some of Geoff's work we remember …
Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting

of the

New England Model Railway Club

will be held at

Kevin & Sue Warrener’s home

‘Alister’, Tingha Road, GILGAI

on

Saturday 7th September 2013 at 1:00pm

The following positions will be required to be filled:

President
Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer/Membership Officer
‘Catchpoints’ Editor
and
6 Committee Members

Anyone wishing to submit a nomination to the Secretary may do so with the consent of the nominee by one of the following methods -

Postal Address: 17 Weaver Ridge, Armidale. 2350

Phone: (02) 6772 0251 or Mobile: 0413 016 086

Email: G.D.Yeomans@bigpond.com