



The Interchange

Our 46th Year
Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders — OVAR

November 2006

Issue 409



OCR train works the compact four-track yard at Portage du Fort.

Riding the Ottawa Central Railway

by Normand Levert
photos by the author

The Ottawa Central Railway runs from Ottawa to Pembroke on the former Canadian National Beachburg Subdivision. This was the line used by CN's *Super Continental* between Montreal and Capreol, where it would be joined by the Toronto Section to travel across the continent to Vancouver. Thanks to Her Majesty, I rode this line a few times on the *Super Continental* to and from Chilliwack, B.C. in the mid sixties, and from Montreal to North Bay in 1973. It is also the line that CPR Pacific 1201 and her train used on a Fall Spectacular in the early '80s. The sub-division now runs 88 miles from Walkley Yard in Ottawa and ends as an interchange with the Ottawa Valley (CPR)

in Pembroke. The Ottawa Central Railway falls under federal jurisdiction because it has rails in Québec and Ontario.

James Allen, General Manager of the Ottawa Central Railway, offered Jim Wrinn and me a ride on the Ottawa Central train to Pembroke and back. James told us the train leaves Ottawa at 0930 and usually returns by 1800 hrs — better bring a lunch! On Wednesday, June 14th, we met James Allen at the OCR's Headquarters in Walkley Yard. James discussed OCR operations with Jim and gave us an overview of the subdivision. We then met our crew, before taking a few pictures as our train was put together.

Our train is actually two trains combined into one. We have two black OCR RS18s coupled back to back (1824-1842) and the

third locomotive (1859) is still in CP Action Red, but lettered for the New Brunswick East Coast, and twelve cars. Engineer Bisson and her conductor climb in the third engine. Our lead engine has three crewmembers, as our engineer is doing a re-certification run. Jim Wrinn and I ride in the second engine.

We move forward a few car lengths and
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plus much more



The CNOR Third Class station that Mike Hamer constructed for Chris Lyon has now found its permanent home on Chris' layout. Since Chris hasn't yet ballasted this track, Mike helped out by Photoshopping it in! (Mike Hamer photo)

From the Librarian's Carrel

by David Knowles

This month I want to draw your attention to two books that have been issued by members of the Wilson clan.

I do not know what, if any significance the date June 25, 1954 played in Ian Wilson's life, but I am sure that it is now engraved on his heart. His sixth book continues his chronicling of CNR operations in various parts of Ontario on this date. The earlier volumes on operations at Allandale, Stratford, Palmerston, London and the Niagara Frontier deal with populated areas, this one deals with a remote part of Canada in which railroading is difficult but vitally important.

In STEAM IN NORTHERN ONTARIO Ian has produced a very handsome book, crisp, clear photographs, beautifully reproduced, track diagrams of many of the stations along the right-of-way, notes on local industries which support the populations and provide revenue for the railways, and timetables which detail the few passenger trains in the area, all of which maintain a vital link between more populated areas. To the more regular types of traffic this book adds the travels of the school cars which brought education to otherwise isolated areas.

The focus of course is on steam with many pictures of last generation steam locomotives, but first generation diesels are sneaking into the pictures. The rear of one of CN's

pioneering diesel-electric railcars of the late twenties can be seen on page 21, and a trio of shiny new RSC-3s on page 175. While colour film was not unknown in 1954 it was not yet in widespread use by amateurs, thus the two pages of colour at the end of the text provide a useful glimpse of a passing era and what was about to come.

While I recognize the value of a series of books of this sort, they are unfortunately repetitious and I doubt if I will read it from cover to cover, as I have with Ian's other books. I do expect to skim it and to refer to it from time to time, and I am very appreciative that Ian has produced it. I would of course like to see a similar book on Ottawa, although perhaps based on the CPR. (Bruce C. please take note.)

Another recent book is the third volume of Dale Wilson's A NATIONAL PASSENGER CHRONICLE. This examination of CN's passenger service covers a number of subjects, the major ones are the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk Pacific and Newfoundland services. Nicely produced it contains text essays, black and white photographs, maps, and timetables. One unusual feature is the reproduction of pages from THE OFFICIAL REGISTER OF PASSENGER TRAIN EQUIPMENT. A useful and interesting addition to the CRCM Library.

TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

November 18-19: MISSISSAUGA – Toronto Christmas Train Show, International Centre, 6900 Airport Road. Sat. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Info: www.antiquetoys.ca

November 25: OTTAWA – St. Lawrence Division Meet, NMRA, Emmanuel United Church. Info: www3.sympatico.ca/gd.knowles/sld/sld_meets.htm

December 2-3: BELLEVILLE – Belleville & Brighton Model Railroad Show, Quinte Secondary School, 45 College St. W. Info: Paul Martel (613) 968-9270, email: pmartel@cogeco.ca

December 5: OTTAWA – Bytown Railway Society, Canada Science & Technology Museum, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd. 7:30 p.m.: www.bytownrailwaysociety.ca

December 6: CORNWALL – Moccasin Model Railroad Club, RCAF Association Wing 424, 240 Water St. W. 7:30 p.m. Info: Chris Patrick, e-mail: cpatrick1@cogeco.ca

December 7: MORRISBURG – Morrisburg Model Railroad Club, McIntosh Country Inn. 7:30 p.m. Info: Steve Skerry stvskserry@personainternet.com

February 25: COPETOWN – CARM Copetown Train Show, Copetown & District Community Centre, 1950 Governor's Rd., just east of Hwy. 52. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.. Info: www.caorm.org

May 17-21: VICTORIA – CARM 4th Annual National Convention, University of Victoria. Info: www.caorm.org

For the Record

October Meeting:

150

Current membership:

189

Lakeside Jersey Dairy

by Grant Knowles

This project started over three years ago when Jack Johnson invited me to assemble a “monster kit” he had received from his wife. I had always wanted to try my hand at one of these “huge” kits, so Jack knew he had me hooked!

This HO scale model by South River Model Works is a watered-down version of the Millett Creamery that was located in Ellenburg, N.Y. around the 1920s. These facilities often started out as a “holding shed” where the farmers would drop off their milk for pickup by the next train. Ice was used extensively to prevent spoilage of the milk. Over the years, the establishments grew to include milk processing (once again cooled by ice) and eventually most used mechanized cooling by the mid ’30s.

This model is comprised of a boiler room, milk processing building, storage and office. The coal trestle is to facilitate delivery of coal for the boiler.

Assembling the kit was straightforward, especially when you follow the 100-page booklet! Very little was modified on the model as it was a perfect fit as is. Don’t be



Grant Knowles constructed large creamery complex as a series of small projects.

scared of the large kits for they are really just a series of smaller structures that are interconnected. Treat each one as a separate project and you’ll be just fine.

The shape of this diorama is dictated by the corner location on Jack’s layout where it will be installed. One track feeds the dairy to deliver the raw milk and to remove the processed product. The trestle provides the necessary coal for the boiler and the third track

provides space for switching operations and doubles as a team track on occasion.

A sandwich of ½" MDF and 1" styrofoam forms the base for the diorama. This was then contoured and covered with plaster and standard ground cover. Track is Atlas and Peco code 100.

We have to install a few more details and then it will be ready for Jack to install on his layout!

Overheard on the railroad...

by Bruce Chapman,
forwarded by Alex Binkley

1. I can see your point, but I still think you’re full of shit. *(Supervisor to union rep.)*
2. How about never? Is never good for you? *(Train crew response to yardmaster when asked when they’d be ready to depart.)*
3. I’m really easy to get along with once you people learn to worship me. *(Train dispatcher)*
4. I’ll try being nicer if you’ll try being smarter. *(Engineer to conductor at 4 a.m.)*
5. I’m out of my mind, but feel free to leave a message. *(CSX Payroll Department’s answering machine)*
6. I don’t work here; I’m a consultant. *(Art Dowd after the buyout — sorry Art, couldn’t resist)*
7. Ahhh... I see the screw-up fairy has visited us again. *(Overheard while walking past the new dispatcher on the Terminal Desk)*
8. I like you. You remind me of when I was young and stupid. *(Chief Dispatcher to anybody training with him)*
9. Yes, I am an agent of Satan, but my duties are largely ceremonial. *(Norfolk Southern management when receiving the Harriman Award)*
10. And your cry-baby whiny-butt opinion would be? *(Dispatcher to supervisor during ‘peak’ Season)*
11. Do I look like a people person? *(NS Human Resources)*
12. This isn’t an office; it’s Hell with fluorescent lighting. *(Any train dispatching office)*
13. I started out with nothing & still have most of it left. *(Conductor on a lite engine move OR your block operator’s roster position)*
14. Sarcasm is just one more service we offer. *(Especially in Selkirk)*
15. Errors have been made. Others will be blamed. *(TMS or CADS Delay Reporting, or CSX Payroll if they actually answer phone)*
16. Chaos, panic, & disorder — my work here is done. *(River Line Dispatcher)*
17. I thought I wanted a career — turns out I just wanted paychecks. *(Dave LeVan — After selling out Conrail)*
18. Sure, you came up with that idea. *(Train Dispatcher overhearing STO on the phone after a good move)*

Riding the OCR

continued from page 1

a red dwarf protecting the diamond for the O Train blocks our progress. After a while the signal blinks to yellow and we roll ahead at a restricted speed, crossing the diamond and then the viaduct over the Airport Parkway. We trundle down the main toward Wass junction with VIA, rocking and rolling on jointed rail track. The vegetation is closing in on us, a few branches brush against the cab. As we near the VIA track, the right of way is clear of vegetation and we have a clear signal. We pick up speed and cross the Rideau River. I point out to Jim that the abutments and piers are built for double track, but the approach embankments are single track. VIA swings South West toward Smiths Falls at Federal Junction. A Beachburg subdivision speed limit sign posts 70 over 60 m.p.h., but we are limited to 35 m.p.h. on account of hazardous cargo.

The Ottawa Central Railway earns some money by storing unneeded cars on their sidings. As we approach Moodie Drive in Bells Corner, we meet a long string of LPG tank cars on storage on the former CPR line to Stittsville and Carleton Place. We will meet two more strings of stored cars as we roll to Pembroke.

The former CN line is in quite good shape, though portions have not only trees and shrubs encroaching but also grass growing through the ballast as well. Another sign that things have changed are the signals that are turned to face away from the track. The OCR is dark territory except where it runs on VIA tracks. As we swing toward the 417 our speed increases to 40 m.p.h., as we are no longer within the built up limits of Ottawa and the hazardous cargo 35 m.p.h. speed restriction. So far, we ran without whistling but there are crossings on either side of the 417 overpass. The fill quite effectively hides our approach to motorists, especially those on the east side of the curve in the track. Fortunately, automatic signals protect the crossings.

We reach Nepean Junction and this resolve a mystery that I should have figured out on my own: on maps, the Beachburg sub-division appears to take the reverse route through the switch, since it veers north at a sharper angle than the Arnprior spur turns toward the West. We modellers are always short of space, so we often run our mainline through the curve of switches. Canadian National civil engineers placed the junction switch a good $\frac{1}{4}$ if not $\frac{1}{2}$ mile



Engineer Bisson boards the third unit (NBEC 1859) of the OCR's Pembroke train.

before the lines separate. The Arnprior spur, the former subdivision to Barry's Bay, takes a left hand switch and then runs parallel to the mainline until the two part company. The Beachburg subdivision runs through the switch's normal straight route and then veers left on a fully banked and spiralled main line curve. In the days of the *Super Continental I* would have gone through the junction at 60 m.p.h. with hardly any notice.

We are rolling steadily just under 40 m.p.h., blowing for every crossing. At most crossings, motorists would have a good long line of sight and see our train approaching well before we are on the crossings, but I note that in some curves the vegetation encroaching on the right of way hides us until we are almost on the crossing. Fortunately, none of the roads have much traffic and no one seems to be caught off guard by our train. Soon we cross what I think is the Mississippi River. We can see the power dam and the Ottawa River on our right.

The crossing of the Ottawa River is as superb as I had promised Jim Wrinn. There is a speed restriction of 10 m.p.h. on the bridge. This gives us ample opportunity to admire the views on both sides. Rolling again at authorized track speed, we pass a string of stored boxcars. As we progress west toward Portage du Fort, Mike, who is the senior engineer, walks back to our locomotive. Mike hosts Jim and me both with tales of his railway career. He tells us the younger crewmembers nicknamed him "Slowpoke

Mike", but he is perfectly happy with the 40 m.p.h. speed restriction. As we near Portage du Fort, Mike goes back to the front engine.

Portage du Fort has a double-ended four-track yard and a long siding, which doubles as the east yard lead. The Ottawa Central Railway gives us an impressive lesson in efficiency. Our train comes to a halt with our lead loco occupying the highway crossing at the west end of the yard. I wondered why we stopped on the highway crossing rather than short of it. It turns out it is because the crossing circuit would have shut down and left the crossing unprotected. We are stopped for a very short time, as 341's conductor is already on the ground and has cut off our cars. We pull ahead until we clear a crossover west of the highway the crossing. The crossover connects the mainline to the passing siding, which becomes the Portage du Fort Paper Mill spur. The west yard ladder starts a little distance east of the highway crossing.

We back our train in the siding and cut off engine 1859 and its seven cars past the yard ladder. As we pull west again, Bisson fires up her engine while the conductor cuts off the seven cars on the siding. We take the crossover, realign the switch for the mainline and begin to back against our four cars train. Meanwhile 1859 moves forward, backs down the yard ladder and couples to a string of stored newspaper boxcars. She pulls two boxcars to add to her train as we couple to our cars. I expected to move ahead

as 1859 coupled the two boxcars to its seven cars. However, we need to back east a short distance in order to reset the crossing signals circuit. We pull ahead again. I expected 1859 to move in unison with us. I suspect that the crossing circuit may be wired such that the crossing gates would have come up as soon as the main was clear, even though the siding would still be occupied. So we leave train 341 in the siding as we take a curve and cross the bridge over the Ottawa River. Soon we roll through Beachburg.

We have two industries to switch, both of them trailing moves westbound. We have two loads for the Fibreboard plant east of Pembroke. We leave the last car on the mainline and back up along the very well-maintained spur, which ends in two tracks. A good lesson in safety is that the engineer repeats every instruction given by the conductor who is on the ground, before moving the engine and cars. We drop two cars and lift one. We then retrace our steps and couple back to our car on the mainline.

Our conductor blocked the train so the bulkhead flatcar with structural steel is first behind the engines. When we reach Pembroke, I can see why. The spur into the steel fabricator is much older than the one at the fibreboard factory, rather overgrown with vegetation in part and the drainage is not very good. As we back slowly on this trackage, everything creaks and groans. The conductor has to unlock and open the chain link gates before we can proceed. From a modeller's point of view, this is a great industry. The spur is very short and ends in a sandy yard. It is essentially a private team track. The steel yard and fabrication shops are some distance away from the spur. One could model this industry "in the aisle" and just build a spur not much longer than a car or two into an unloading area. Add fencing and the need to open and close the gates. Before pulling away from the bulkhead flat, our conductor winds the handbrake a dozen turns until the brakes are set hard. As we drill the steel fabricator, we hear Canadian Pacific blasting through town, too bad we missed them by so little.

The end of the mainline comes abruptly for us. All the sudden, we veer off to the north on a very sharp curve with a 10 m.p.h. speed limit. As we swing on the former switch, we can see the dark streak of straight clean and bare roadbed heading west to Algonquin Park and beyond.

The interchange with CP has a long siding between the former CN and CP tracks. We pass behind a few houses, but as we near

Ottawa Valley Railway's track we are in the forest. Near the north end, a track swings east in the forest to a lumber mill that unfortunately closed this last April. They had been a good source of traffic for the OCR. Shortly after, our tracks swing west; combine into a single track parallel to Ottawa Valley's track. The contrast between the two tracks is very strong. Our interchange track is jointed rail buried in a low ballast and with much grass encroaching. OVR has continuous welded rails on new ties with deep, clean ballast.

There are two cars from CPR/OVR waiting for us on the siding. We push our two cars in front of them at the west end of the siding. Jim and I alight on the ballast before the engines travel back to the south end of the siding. We have to change engines for the return trip in any fashion. We have a chance to look at the rails. The siding rail was rolled in 1924, but I don't find any weight markings on the web. It is smaller than the main track, so it is possibly 85 lb. rail.

Our switching work is done because the

two interchanged cars are going to Walkley Yard. Mike, the senior engineer, had explained earlier that if this train came back to Portage du Fort close to the time train 341 was ready to return, the two trains would get combined into a single consist. But today, train 341 completed the Paper Mill well before our return, so we run back to Walkley at track speed. Midway through our run we need to perform a pull by inspection. The OCR has a neat way to work within no backing without eyes in the back rule. We stop as we reach the Ontario abutment of the bridge at Fitzroy. Our conductor drops on the ballast to inspect the train as we pull by. Once the last car is beside him, he has a clear view of the bridge all across the Ottawa River. With no one on the bridge, it is safe to back our two cars and locos. The conductor boards the lead locomotive and we roll again at track speed toward Walkley. Our crossing of the Rideau River is uneventful; all signals are clear at Federal and Wass and for the diamond at Capital Railway.



OCR RS18 1842 became the lead unit for the return to Walkey Yard.

Locomotives focus of October display

Ian Cranstone photos

Peter Jackson showed his converted Walthers F40-PH2, modified to more closely match the Canadian version. His partially completed shell showed most of the changes that he made. Peter also displayed his CNR CPA16-5 locomotive A-B set kit-bashed from Proto 1000 freight units, noting “Proves law that when you finally kitbash a unit you want, some manufacturer will make it available.”

Christian Derosier displayed his brass Micro-Meta kit-built German Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits gaz tank car used for lighting the Simplon Orient Express coaches circa 1900-1914, before the introduction of electric lights. He also showed a Roco model of SNCF locomotive BB 9004, which won a world speed record on March 31, 1955 at 331 km/h. It was the prototype for all French Bo Bo locomotives.

Jacques Thuot built an On30 saw filer car, starting with a Bachmann flat car, which he lowered and then built the rest board by board with details from various sources.

John Chambers showed Samongasa (Korea) CNR 4-6-0 #1392. He notes that the prototype was constructed for the Canadian Northern, and now is preserved in Alberta.

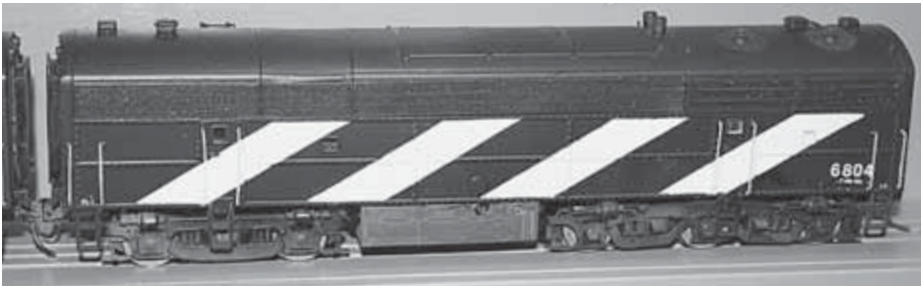
Doug Lake showed mystery locomotive CN 6502, which he found in a shed in back of an old house. Doug knows only that it was made in Hong Kong, and is looking for suggestions as to its heritage.

Cameron Harvey-Stremes spent some time building his Puzz3D model of the Orient Express steam engine.

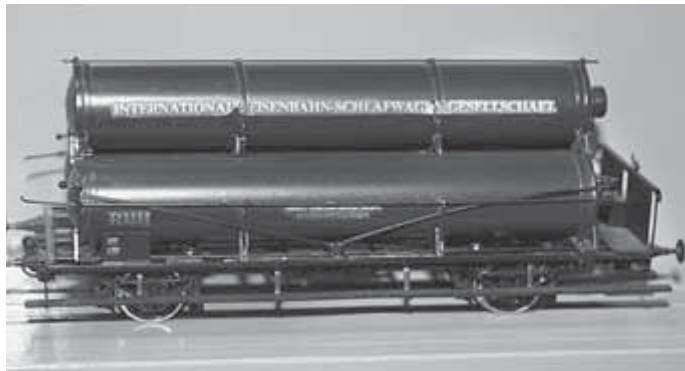
Dave Stremes brought in an American Flyer locomotive he was given by a neighbour, and ponders what it is a model of.

Dave Knowles showed his love of electric locomotives with a Suydam Butte, Anaconda & Pacific electric, which he notes is a duplicate of the CNR Z-1 which used to ply the Mount Royal Tunnel (and so he has lettered it for the Canadian Northern), and a Tenshodo Great Northern Y-1.

John LeBlanc brought in a 1963-built Akane CNR 2-8-2, which he notes was



Peter Jackson constructed CPA16-5/CPB16-5 set from Proto 1000 C Liners.



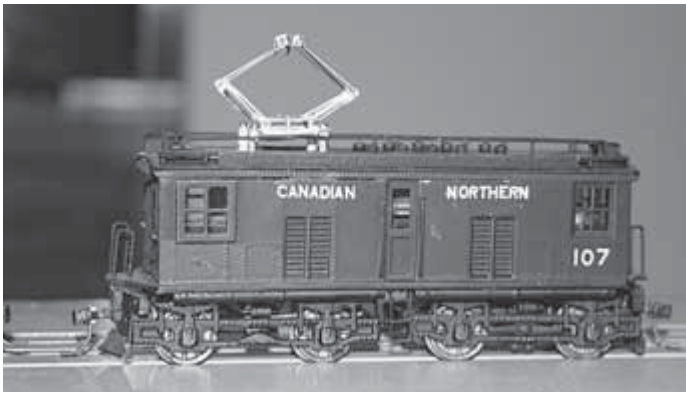
Christian Derosier built gaz tank car from Micro-Meta brass kit.



Jacques Thuot modified a Bachman On30 flat car to create this saw filer car.



CNR 4-6-0 1392 was displayed by John Chambers.



CNoR electric locomotive was shown by Dave Knowles.



Dave Stremes ponders what the prototype is for this engine.

built by Alco for the Grand Trunk. He modified the model to CNR standards in the late 1960s as part of a railway exhibit by the National Library or National Archives.

Walter Weart showed his kitbashed MDC Roundhouse 2-4-4-2 3' gauge mining company engine.

Grant Knowles showed two structures: a Settlers First Home by Temagami Station, and the Lakeside Jersey Dairy by South River Model Works (more on this model can be found on page 3).

Brian Earl brought in the motive power for the Rideau Power Company's unit coal train — 2 SD7s and an SD9.

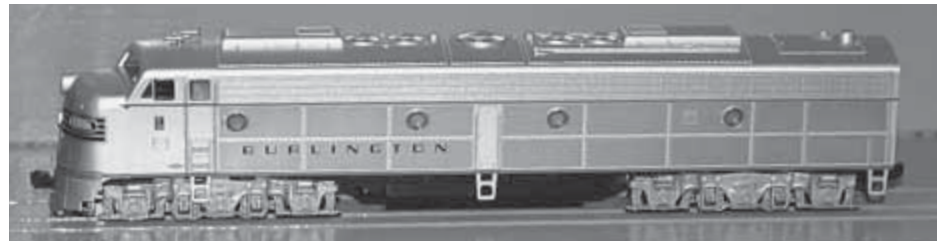
Michael Dawson showed a Kato CB&Q E8A. He notes that "Burlington had one of the largest E8 fleets and ran them fast!"

Barry Innes modified an AHM SD40 for his Bourget-Cornwall with a Mashima can motor.

Charls Gendron showed some of the new Rapido CC&F coaches, which have been racing off the shelves of local hobby shops.

Mike Hamer displayed the diorama and CNoR third class station he built for Chris Lyons (featured in the October INTERCHANGE).

Steve Watson picked up a thin slice of rail from the CP Right of Way near Rosspport, Ontario. Bob Moore notes "this is a 'track gauge', used to check the profile of rail."



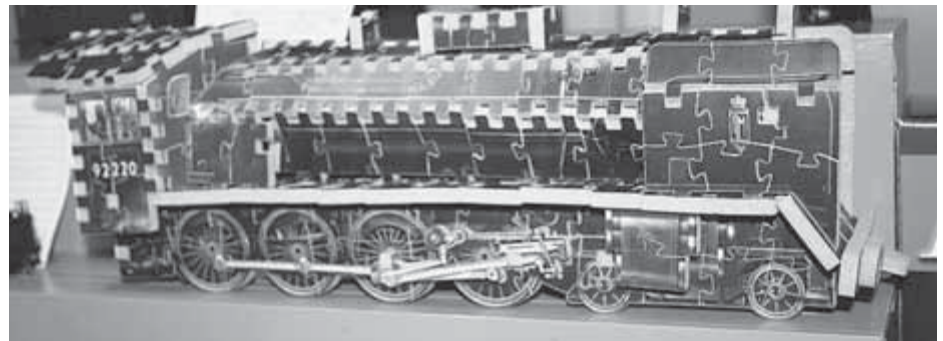
Michael Dawson showed Kato model of Burlington E8A.



Handsome CNR coach was one of three Rapido cars displayed by Charls Gendron.



Barry Innes remotored this AHM SD40 with a can motor and lettered it for his Bourget-Cornwall.



Cameron Harvey-Stremes displayed his Puzz3D model of the Orient Express' steam engine.



Brian Earl brought in the unit train power for the Rideau Power Company.



Next Meeting

The remembrances of a Yank railroader and railfan

30 years on and beside the rails

presented by

Wally Weart

Tuesday, December 12

St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa
(just off Preston Street at the Queensway)

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Dinner served at 6:30 p.m.

Admission: \$20.00

Includes dinner, facilities, program expense, taxes and gratuities.
Free parking.

Please note:

If you cannot attend the meeting after saying you would, please call Fred Mills at (613) 723-1911. Thank you.



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2006-2007

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Submission of Articles:

THE INTERCHANGE welcomes your submissions that may be of interest to club members. Please send them to one of the departments listed above. Material submitted can be handwritten, typewritten, on floppy diskette, or sent via e-mail.

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