



The Interchange *Our 43rd Year*

Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders — OVAR

April 2004

Issue 384



Want a good chuckle?

Gilbert Lacroix photo

HOTrak member **Gilbert Lacroix** is not only a good modeller, he also brings an excellent sense of humour to the hobby.

He shows it in the construction site flood scene depicted on one of his modules that was on display during the March setup at St. Anthony's.

Here is Gilbert's tale of what happened.

"At one end of the switching yard is the future manufacturing plant of Bobbett's Sponges. The site is in panic mode this Monday morning. It seems that the lower level of the building, where the mechanical works will eventually be set up, is under eight feet of water.

"The architect and chief engineer, Herb N. Sprawl, had miscalculated the height of the water table. Billy Wrent, one of the partners in the construction firm Dundif, Wrent and Lea, didn't mind the extra work to install a sump pump in the foundation of the building. However he knew it would be a

big gamble during the erection of the foundation walls until the bilge system would be installed.

"Their luck took a turn for the worse when Kelvin was assigned to watch the temporary mobile pump knick named "Slurppy the big gulp pump" for the whole weekend. All he had to do was make sure it ran all the time and refuel it Saturday night. His mission got sidetracked Saturday morning when Clime, his best buddy came down to the construction site to keep him company with a case of two-four on his shoulder. Forgetfulness sank in as the beer flowed. By Sunday morning, both were trapped on the porch of the site office by the rising tide and resolved that the best they could do was to polish off the rest of the beer.

"Now Monday morning, Bart Lea is scrambling to get this mess cleaned up and all the while turning away orders of ready-mix concrete and rescheduling deliveries of materials and also sending men and sub-

contractors home for the day. Kelvin and Clime, motionless on the front porch and isolated from the incensed crowd are oblivious to the commotion as they lay asleep in their state of intoxication. Mr. Bobbett, the client, is arriving shortly to make his monthly site visit at 10 o'clock. Call in the bucket brigade!"

If you get a chance, take a long look at the module. The detail is fantastic — the submerged machinery, the floating debris, all the curious onlookers and the sleeping buddies.

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plus much more

From the Private Car

by Dennis Rule, OVAR Chairman

I know some of you are probably thinking: What's this? The Chairman is actually writing a column. Yes, my first column this year. I don't believe in writing stuff just to take up space in THE INTERCHANGE but this time I actually have a few things to talk about.

Flea Market

I would like to thank all the participants in the Flea Market which was held last Feb. 28. I believe that we have finally figured out the correct level of advertising to promote this event. It was the most successful OVAR Flea Market yet. We had 20 vendors and a crowd of approximately 250 visitors. As in previous years most of the shoppers came between 10 a.m. and noon by which time most of the vendors were nearly sold out. Remember next year come early. The executive committee has agreed that next year the event will again be held on the last weekend in February.

Auction

The tradition was that every February meeting was auction night at OVAR but interest waned as more and more trade shows within the city and in nearby towns presented opportunities to dispose of surplus equipment and supplies. Over time members lost interest in the auction and attendance for the February meeting fell considerably so the auction was dropped completely. Michel Boucher and John Licharson re-introduced the auction on a bi-yearly basis about six years ago a tradition that we have kept ever since. Last year the attendance was down again, so this evening I will ask you for a vote by show of hands for the following: Now that the OVAR Flea Market is held in February do you wish to let go the auction and replace it with a typical guest speaker evening?

McEwan Award

It will soon be time to pick a new MCEWAN AWARD recipient for this year. Some of the newer members may not be aware of this time honoured tradition so here is a brief description of this tradition.

Herb McEwan was one of the original handful who started OVAR back in 1961, and contributed to the club's growth in its formative years. When he died in 1967 it

was a shock to the membership as he was the first to pass on. A committee was formed to establish an award in his memory. The committee decided the annual award would be given to individuals who made an outstanding contribution to the hobby of rail-roading.

As time passed other members died, and Joe Thomas suggested the award should honour all deceased members. The committee agreed, and with each presentation in June we remember all of the members who have passed on to greater glory.

The trophy awarded is an HO scale business car, painted and lettered in the livery of Herb McEwan's railway, the "SOUTH SHORE". The cars are numbered consecutively from no. 1, awarded in 1968, to the present time. Each car is hand-built by an OVAR member and has a small brass plaque on the car side bearing the name of the recipient.

From 1968 to 1993, nominations for and presentations of the HERB MCEWAN AWARD were performed by a three-person selection committee. But as OVAR grew in size, it was decided in 1994 to open the nomination process to the entire membership and that the nominator should make the presentation to the winner.

Currently nominations are taken at the April and May dinner meetings and the award is presented at the June meeting. The June display theme is reserved for passed winners to display their cars as well as the trophy plaques that bear all of the winners' names and dates.

New Trophy Car

To date there have been 36 recipients of this award and the car awarded has been a Walthers business car. To the best of my knowledge the club has made two bulk purchases of this kit in the past. Three years ago Fernand Leroux came across a single kit at an estate sale giving us a total of 39 cars. As you can see we are running out. Since there are no kits that closely resemble the original Walthers business car, the executive have decided that it was time for a change. We are pleased to announce the OVAR has purchased 20 Kato business cars offered at cost by Lark Spur Line to ensure that the award tradition continues. The cars will be re-lettered to "SOUTH SHORE" and the consecutive numbering will continue.

More Videos

Our membership is growing and our dinner attendance is up substantially so I'm pleased to announce that the club is doing well financially. Remembering that we are a not-for-profit organization and it is required that any budget surplus be spent on club programs. It is my pleasure to inform you that the Executive has approved that \$600 be spent on new tapes or DVDs to update the Video Library.

Elections

Yes, summer is almost upon us once again and June means election time. Some of you may already be aware that after serving four years on the OVAR executive I have decided to step down. Bud Nelson has informed me that he will take on the Chairman's position if unopposed next year. The other members of the executive have all decided to stay on as well. This leaves a position open so let us know if you are interested in serving on the executive. Remember the benefits "you get to eat first".

RAILFAIR

BRMA and OVAR as sponsors of RAILFAIR, share and alternate the duties of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the planning committee every year. A few short months ago I was reminded that it was once again OVAR's turn to provide a Chairman for the RAILFAIR committee; I accepted the challenge and agreed to take on the position for the upcoming RAILFAIR as well as Vice Chairman for the following year. I look forward to these new challenges.

Check out OVAR's Web Site
www.ovar.ca

For the Record

March Meeting:
131

Current membership:
180

**REMEMBER IF YOU CAN'T
MAKE THE DINNER PLEASE LET
PETER JOYCE KNOW**

Raffle layout finds a good home

by Mike Hind
photos by the author

I was fortunate enough to be the winner of the CHEO raffle layout at RAILFAIR 2003. Fortunate because after purchasing many raffle tickets for various causes over many years this is, I believe, the first time I have won. I'm doubly fortunate in that I model in N scale and triply that the students built the layout under the guidance of Brian Earl. It is beautifully executed. Brian was also able to provide me with the month and year of the MODEL RAILROADER from which the plan was taken and I now have a copy of the original article.

My good fortune was relayed to me by a member of the Ottawa Valley N Trak group. "There is some big guy in the hall who wants to see you," he said as I was packing up by N Trak modules at the conclusion of the RAILFAIR show. Brian verified that I had the winning ticket and was relieved that he didn't have to deliver my prize, as we were able to get it into the minibus on top of the other modules. This got it home. The next step was to summon No. 1 son, strong like ox, to help unload and transfer the layout to the basement. It was no easy task due to the configuration of the basement stairs and doorways. However this was successfully accomplished with a little language and without damage to the layout. It fits nicely between the TV and the couch making both useless!

I was assured that CARP Central was not the railroad of the CANADIAN ASSOCIA-



RAILFAIR raffle layout has found a new home as Mike Hind's first completed layout.

TION OF RETIRED PERSONS which I am hoping one day to join and thus spend more time in the hobby.

Now that I had my layout home, the task was to build a "biere" so that the layout could be moved into the other end of the basement when not in use. However this required that the door separating the areas be widened by 14 inches to allow passage. Both of these jobs are now completed.

The layout is wired for single engine use or DCC. I have MRC Command 2000 so I'm using the DCC options and it works

beautifully. My next task is to install Tor-toise motors on the switches starting with those on the opposite side of the layout from the controller. Consideration is also being given to incorporating the layout with my "at home long in the building layout." The biere was built at a height to allow for this in the future. In the meantime it is great to have a completed layout — something I have never had in 60 years of model railroading.

Again my thanks to Brian and the students and to RAILFAIR. It's great to be a winner.

Herb McEwan Car Recipients 1968-2002

(Year/Car #/Recipient)

1968	1	Joe Thomas	1980	13	Tony Chinery	1992	25	Dave Venables
1969	2	Bob Craig	1981	14	Odfried Wendler	1993	26	Ron Shurtliffe
1970	3	Adrian French	1982	15	Bill Scobie	1994	27	Carl Swail
1971	4	George "Toots" Eggert	1983	16	Tony Mitchelson	1995	28	Ken Healy
1972	5	Bill Williams Sr.	1984	17	Jim Simpson	1996	29	Jim Nelson
1973	6	Doug MacKenzie	1985	18	Ross Peever	1997	30	Stew Waldron Sr.
1974	7	Tom Hood	1986	19	Omér Lavallée	1998	31	David Steer
1975	8	Dave Knowles	1987	20	Bill Erwin	1999	32	Marty Phillips
1976	9	Brian Ludlow	1988	21	Michel Boucher	2000	33	Steve Adamson
1977	10	Reg Bilodeau	1989	22	Bruce Curry	2001	34	Angus Palmer
1978	11	Jim Jarrett	1990	23	David Stremes	2002	35	Mike Hamer
1979	12	Al Craig	1991	24	Brian Earl	2003	36	Peter Nesbitt

Railfanning Strasburg, Pennsylvania

by Normand Levert
photos by the author

Last September, I drove back from the Washington, D.C. area through Strasburg, Pennsylvania, as this would add only 60 km to my overall journey. Strasburg is a triple treat for railfans.

The Strasburg Railroad
www.strasburgrailroad.com

The Strasburg Railroad is a very neat operation, with interesting rolling stock. Trains run from Strasburg to Paradise, through Amish countryside. Trains include open-air coaches, regular coaches and first class, which are air conditioned and used for dinner trains. I elected to ride in open air for better photography opportunities. There are no turning facilities. The layout is simple. In Strasburg, the station is served by a siding, which allows for a run-around. In addition, there are storage tracks and an engine house. Midway to Paradise, there is a siding with a passenger platform on the mainline. It serves a park where kids can be kept happily busy, a smart marketing ploy. The layout in Paradise is a bit different, since it is an interchange with a former Pennsylvania RR mainline (Still electrified for Amtrak). The Strasburg Railroad mainline swings parallel to PRR and the interchange track, then joins the interchange trailing through a spring switch. This interchange track continues some distance alongside the PRR and Strasburg Railroad mainlines and is connected back to Strasburg Railroad through a trailing crossover. This arrangement prevents any stray cars or trains from entering the Strasburg Railroad directly.

The Strasburg Railroad runs trains very efficiently with spring switches, saving time and labour. The engines, which face south, (left) run around the train at each end. At Strasburg, the north switch is aligned for the platform siding and all trains enter the siding. The locomotive is uncoupled from the train, and runs forward through the south spring switch, trailing through the points that are set for the main line. It then runs around the train, taking water if necessary from the water tank. Moving forward, it enters the siding and couples to its train. It then pulls its train northbound in reverse. If there is a meet, the northbound crew must throw the Midway siding south switch by hand to enter the siding, but trains exit the siding without need to re-align the north switch.



Trains enter Paradise by trailing through the crossover. Again, the loco is uncoupled and moved through the spring switch onto the interchange track. She then goes forward past the crossover, backs onto her train and heads south to Strasburg.

Engine no. 90 is a 2-10-0 Decapod, which made light work of our train. There is an excellent souvenir shop in the Strasburg Railroad Depot.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Museum
www.museumppa.org

The Pennsylvania Railroad Museum is just across the road from the Strasburg RR depot. It is a fantastic museum with an impressive collection, not only of Pennsylvania Railroad equipment, but other railroads in Pennsylvania, and a few strangers, notably a Virginia and Truckee locomotive.

The Interchange



Most of the materiel is displayed indoors in a superb facility. While indoor display is more difficult to photograph, indoors storage preserve the materiel much better. The museum covered exhibit space was expanded and the newer portion has much better natural light and more room to see the locomotives and cars. The inside collection includes electric, steam and diesel locomotives plus interesting rolling stock.

In addition, the museum staff conducts tours of the outside yard. The yard hosts some beautiful exhibits, including NKP 757 Super Power Berkshire and a PRR Mountain with long distance tender. The original GG1, "Rivets" is on outside display while another one is inside, in top shape.

It is always hard for me to have a favourite exhibit, but the one that caught my imagination the most is an industrial engine. It is a fireless 0-8-0 done in splendid blue and silver. It is quite refreshing to see such a stylish design!

Still, the huge Mountain type engine on the corner of the property stirs the soul. It is not all steam, or electric locomotives. We are essentially reaching the fourth generation of diesel electric locos. Diesel fans will find not only first generation E8 and GP9, but as well a GP30 in the lineup.

Thomas the Tank Engine

Some "serious" railfans may be scandalized but the Strasburg RR is home to Thomas the





Tank Engine! They run a family-oriented operation and Thomas probably draws enough paying visitors to sustain the operation of the “serious” steam train. In this case Thomas is a Porter 0-6-0T which may not have been all that much modified from its original layout. Blue is a good colour for a steam engine, at least of that size. I did not get to see Thomas run a train. No, don’t worry, they did not put a grumpy face on old no. 90!

Modellers’ inspiration

For the modellers, the Strasburg Railroad offers a prototype for an excursion train running back and forth without turning the locomotives. Spring switches greatly simplify and speed up operation. A Railroad Museum would be a good place to display your older engines.



Shortline models in short supply in March

Editor's Note: we apologize for the lack of photos with this month's display report, but unfortunately our photographer was absent at the March meeting.

Mike Hind's N scale model of the diesel-powered version of the Wakefield excursion train won the CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE award at the March meeting. **Brian Earl** painted the locomotive and its four passenger cars. **Michel Boucher**, who has worked on this train, said it was an accurate and well-done reproduction of the full sized unit. There was considerable discussion about where a certain bench should be located.

The theme of the display was Ontario shortlines. **John LeBlanc** came through in fine fashion. (See elsewhere in this issue about a special award for John.) He brought out three HO boxcars that came from layouts of former OVAR members that depicted fictional Ontario railways. There was the Rideau Valley & Finch line of Joe Thomas, the Ottawa Maniwaki of Carroll Duffy and the Eastern Ontario railway that Bob Craig had. John says cars from the three lines put in occasional appearances on his Canada Atlantic line.

Bruce Morgan displayed a Lionel O

Scale GP9 painted for the Algoma Central. **Bill Scobie** did the paint job to represent the last GP9 produced in Canada.

While the Chesapeake and Ohio wouldn't count as an Ontario shortline, everyone admired **Dave Steer's** HO scale 4-8-4 from Olympia. The brass model dates from 1964 and is one of 68 models made at the time. Dave has recently refinished the loco and DCC and lights. It is a hefty beast.

Hugh Laing displayed one of the odder sights seen on the display stand in some time. It was an O scale "Beep". It looked like someone had squished a full-size loco into half of its length. It was painted for UP, has directional lighting and diecast couplers.

Normand Levert brought out a calendar that features various Croatian steam engines. He asked people to leaf through it with clean fingers.

Denis Rule displayed some photos he had taken earlier in the day in Merrickville and Smiths Falls.

Readers who are trackside taking shots with digital cameras might consider sending their better photos to Ian Cranstone for use in THE INTERCHANGE at:

lamontc@nakina.net

Send one photo per e-mail.

Special award presented to John LeBlanc

John LeBlanc was presented with a special certificate and a mounted vintage HO freight car at the March meeting of OVAR to mark his faithful participation in the monthly display.

Vice-Chairman Bud Nelson made the presentation. He recalled that during the many years he wrote up the display review for THE INTERCHANGE, John seemed to always have an item or two on the stand. The current reviewer has found that it is a rare occasion when the name LeBlanc doesn't appear in the display review.

John has a collection of models that is a virtual history of HO scale. Many of the

products are from manufacturers that have long ago gone out of business. John has carefully built and lettered the cars and they all are in operating condition. He also has some interesting structures assembled over the years.

His collection also enables John to come up with some goodies for whatever theme is selected for the display. In March it was Ontario shortlines and John had freight cars from the freelanced layouts of three late members of OVAR — Joe Thomas's Rideau Valley and Finch; Bob Craig's Eastern Ontario; and Carroll Duffy's Ottawa Maniwaki.

Congratulations John.

TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

April 23-25: LONDON – TRACKS TO LONDON, NMRA NFR convention.
www.drgwrr.com/nfr/pages/frameset.html

April 24-25: IROQUOIS – SEAWAY DISTRICT MODEL RAILROAD SHOW & SALE, Seaway District High School, Hwy. 401 to exit 738, South to Hwy. 2, east on Hwy. 2 for 3 blocks. Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Info: Jason Edge (613) 657-1392, e-mail: cuttingedge@ripnet.com

May 1: OTTAWA – Ottawa Central Railway Open House, Walkley Yard, enter via Albion Road South. Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

May 4: OTTAWA – Bytown Railway Society, Canada Science and Technology Museum, 1867 St. Laurent Blvd. 7:30 p.m. Info: www.bytownrailwaysociety.ca

May 5: CORNWALL – Moccasin Model Railroad Club, Nativity Hall, 7:30 p.m. Info: Jacques Thuot, e-mail: jthuot@cnwl.igs.net

May 8-9: ABERFOYLE – Aberfoyle Junction Model Railway Open House, #128 Brock Rd., 1.5 km north of Hwy. 401, Exit #299 (old #6 Hwy.) just south of the town of Aberfoyle, Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: Craig Webb (905) 527-5474.
www.aberfoylejunction.com

May 21-23: ST. CATHARINES – "Golden Horseshoe Mixed Convention", Canadian Association of Railway Modellers, 1st National Convention (held jointly with Canadian Railway Historical Association), Brock University. Info: www.caorm.org/convention/index.html

May 29: OTTAWA – St. Lawrence Division NMRA Meet, location t.b.a. Info: Stan Conley (613) 523-8237, e-mail: sconley@ccs.carleton.ca
www.cyberus.ca/~g_knowles/sld/sld_index.htm

August 14-15: GANANOQUE – Thousand Islands Model Railroad Show, Gananoque Recreation Center 600 King St. W. Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Info: Bill Bowman (613) 382-7575, e-mail: timrailroaders@aol.com



Next Meeting

Railway Inspections in Bolivia

presented by

Colin Churcher

Display

Railway Art of all kinds and
any South American models

Tuesday, May 11

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 Peter Joyce at 841-1950. Thank you.



OVAR Directory

2003-2004

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THE INTERCHANGE

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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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