



The Interchange

Our 41st Year

Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders – OVAR

December 2001

Issue 358

Marty's Last Run (for a while)

by Alex Binkley

The Maine Central à la Marty Phillips has had its last run for some time.

Like John Licharson and Jim Kerr, Marty and his better half Mary are heading west although they are going farther to set up a new railroad and home on Vancouver Island close to the grandchildren. As John did, Marty held a final run of his layout before it was disassembled and stored in a container for the trip west.

The operators and observers for the final run of the Maine Central included the regulars from the Friday night operating group — Mike Hamer, Bill Meek, John Mitchell, Stan Conley, Gerry Berrigan and Jim Baxter as well Howard Scodras, Carl Swail, Michel Boucher and Trevor Marshall, who designed the trackplan for the layout. There was even a rare spotting of Mike Pasch.

Mike, who put a lot of hours into the building of the pike, offered this tribute the next day. "It was with very mixed emotions that we gathered to enjoy Maine Central's final (and finest) hours at 70 Newport last evening. The essence of model railroading is the recreating of a railroad in miniature that looks, operates and feels like the real thing. Marty, with Trevor's assistance, you have done this in a very short period of time...



During last spring's NMRA CAPITAL EXPRESS convention, Mike Hamer opened his layout for tours. THE INTERCHANGE presents photos from that tour on pages 4 & 5.

and done it superbly well.

"Model railroading is something more. It is the bringing together of people, the making of strong and lasting friendships and the laughter that we found a-plenty last evening. It is a testament to your modelling skills, your knowledge and your character, Marty that so many took the time out to visit the MEC on its final run. Railroading in New England came alive again last night.

"Mary, what more can be said. You're the BEST!... oh and by the way... we heard the greatest compliment ever stated about those fantastic cookies... Trevor said to me... "What's that in your hand, Mike... a ham-

burger with raisins!"

Marty says it is hard to leave after 35 years of involvement with OVAR. Anyone who has operated or worked with Marty has shared his infectious sense of fun and wish him well in his new home. Of course, the rebirth of the MEC on Vancouver Island ought to boost the tourism business out there as everyone will have to make the trek to check out the new pike.

OVAR Has a New
Web Site — Check Out
www.ovar.ca
and bookmark it!

Modular Rally: a post-holidays treat

It's that time of year again. On the weekend of January 5 and 6, OVAR will be hosting its traditional modular rally. This rally was designed with three main goals. First it enables the modular groups a venue to get together and try new operating scenarios without a general population audience. Second, to give all of our members a chance to see the fine work that these groups are doing. The third and most important is to promote the exchange of ideas and modeling techniques.

At the time of this article HOTRAK, N-TRAK and The British OO-scale modellers have confirmed. We also hope that The Cumberland Third Rail Group will be able to convince its members to join in.

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plus much more

From the Private Car

by Denis Rule, OVAR Chairman

Most of you are probably aware that some changes have been happening to our web site. Its look had become a little stale and it was time to add some new content. It brings me great pleasure to announce that our new web site is now up and running at a new easier to remember address. Our new home is now:

www.ovar.ca

I invite all of you to explore all the new features of this site. At it, you will find all of the old features plus some new ones. I particularly like the fact that now, if you have missed a meeting, you can download a copy of THE INTERCHANGE to stay informed on club news.

Greg Adams was the webmaster who set up the original site for us. He has moved to

California although he does visit Ottawa frequently so it is very difficult do to for him to keep a figure on the pulse of the club and to provide the numerous site updates required. For this reason Greg has decided to step down.

I would like to thank Greg and Steve Adamson for all their hard work and contributions to our web over the last few years. Together they have gathered and compiled a tremendous amount of useful information for our site. I will be temporarily taking over as Webmaster until a volunteer steps forward for the position.

On behalf of the entire Executive I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a safe a happy holiday season. See you in 2002.

OCR: a railway to model

by Alex Binkley

James Allen has all the ingredients for a great model railway, except of course he is running a business trying to make a profit for its owners.

Allen is the general manager of the Ottawa Central Railway and in a humorous presentation to the November OVAR meeting that drew lots of assists from the audience, he talked about the OCR's success in rebuilding rail traffic in the Ottawa region since it took over from Canadian National Railways in 1998.

The OCR that he presented would make a

perfect candidate for a layout — interconnections with CN and CP and the Quebec Gatineau Railway and sharing tracks with Via Rail. You can't get a simpler paint scheme than the OCR employs and for those modeling in HO, chopnosed RS18s will soon be available.

The operations are based out of Walkley Yard delivering and picking cars up from all over the Ottawa Region. Allen's description of how the Ottawa Central operates provided freelance operators with plenty of ideas. It also showed that the staples of the freight business — boxcars, tankcars, hoppers, gondolas and flatcars are all you need to keep yourself very busy.

He described the problems that OCR and the CP had in exchanging information at the De Beaujeu interchange until a mailbox was installed where crews could leave waybills. There's a nice touch for your pike.

Perhaps best of all, Allen provided an antidote to model railway nitpickers. He explained that he was not a long-time railroader but was hired to run the OCR because of his background in business. He knows that to succeed in any enterprise, a company has to provide the kind of service that customers want and can afford. Apply that same approach to your operating sessions. We're here to run a safe operation and deliver what our customers want. Skip the prototype practice tyranny.

Flea Market was a success

by Fern Leroux

The OVAR Flea Market took place at St. Anthony's on Saturday, Nov. 17 and by all accounts it was a success. There were 15 vendors occupying seventeen tables and they had plenty of used train stuff for sale.

The articles for sale was of excellent quality. The turnout for this event was good especially right after it opened at 10 a.m. but business fell to a trickle later.

The executive would like to thank all members who brought out their goodies and the others for adding to their collection.

First comes running, then comes operating

by Alex Binkley

On the facing page, Denis Rule talks about how he moved from wanting a layout to run trains on to having one that becomes the backdrop for operating sessions. Many other OVAR members have built their layouts with operating sessions in mind. There are many ways of doing it from computer generated switch lists to cards for each car on the layout.

During a late November open house, members of the St. Lawrence Division of the NMRA could see Denis's dot system as well as two layouts in the early stages of a car card and dispatching type system.

Tom Badenoch's Northern Pontiac Railway depicts a CNR line running north from Ottawa to serve mining, lumbering and quarrying industries. He has a couple of staging yards that enable point to point operations. Tom has been doing a lot of building on the layout during the last couple of years and had it open during last year's NMRA convention. It is a great example of packing a lot of fun into a small space and keeping the pike to a manageable size for a person with a demanding job. His biggest challenge may be building enough trees to cover all his hills.

Tom is hoping to start having operating sessions with dispatched trains and a manifest list that instructs the operator where all his cars are to go. THE INTERCHANGE got to run a test operation and found that Tom had worked in plenty of wrinkles for the operator.

The other pike was Bob Farquhar's CPAC Central. Bob is well known for his modeling skills and love of gadgets and both show through on the layout. His ferry and waterfront scenes are beautifully executed and his scenery is trademark Farquhar. The track loops around through long tunnels and past many industries and would seem to be a natural for operations. An expansion is also in the works that should enhance operations. There is a bank of car cards set up but they have been distributed too all the switching sites. Bob says his layout could handle three to five operators during a session. However they would probably all want to operate the Shay equipped with sound!



Dave Copland switches cars in Bentbrook.



Grain cars being switched at Berkshire.

Operating made simple

by Denis Rule
Bob Farquhar photos

Now that my trackwork is done and I've grown tired of watching trains go around in circles, the next phase in railroading is under way. Operating the railroad in a prototypical way can be as rewarding as building your empire. I have attended many sessions and I have participated and observed many different operating systems such as computer generated switch lists and car cards some with and some without a dispatcher.

I found these to be too labour-intensive for my personal enjoyment. One day I was invited to Gord Priest's home to operate his Kettle Valley pike in Barrhaven. Gord introduced me to his colour dot system which I quickly adopted on my own railroad due to its flexibility and adaptability.

A colour dot is simply a $\frac{3}{16}$ " diameter sticker that is available from any stationery store. They come in four colours red, blue, yellow and green in a package of about 400 at around \$9 for a lifetime supply. This provides an endless colour code combination by using single, double, triple or more stickers to identify towns or areas on a layout.

I have developed my operation so that I can run a full session with a minimum of three trains. The system is flexible enough to handle up to six trains including a passenger



Rob Rolfe operating at Marystown and Chuck Larabie operating in Berkshire.

train that has priority over the freights to keep everyone on their toes. The session is designed to last about two hours and there is no need to look for car numbers or fumble with any paperwork.

For those of you who are not familiar with my Bentbrook & Berkshire R.R. it is a point-to-point line divided into four towns. First I assigned each town a colour. In this case green is Bentbrook, yellow is Long Gate, red is Mary's Town and blue is Berkshire.

To keep the description simple lets look at the town of Bentbrook (green). At the start of an operation the operator looks at his yard and he sees some cars that have a small colour dot on them. First he must pull out all the cars that have a green dot on them. These are local cars destined for industries in his district. The operator must deliver these cars to an appropriate industry. For example, a grain car goes to the elevator, not the fuel dealer. While doing his local switching, full or empties with a different colour dots are picked up for interchanging later on.

Once the local switching is completed, the train returns to the yard with all the cars he as picked up. The operator couples them

with all other cars that are dotted for other towns. A westbound freight is now assembled and readied for interchanging with the operator at Long Gate. Once the interchange is done the train returns to Berkshire to split up its new cars in the yard and return the locomotive to the shop.

In Long Gate (yellow) the operation differs slightly because this is a mid-point town the operator must make up two trains one eastbound and one westbound.

When planning the operation special care must be given to balance the car flow so that you have an equal or near equal number of cars leaving and arriving at each yard. Also plan for a one and a half to two hour session to avoid operator fatigue or loss of interest. No matter what operating system you choose for your railroad, just remember that it take multiple sessions to get the bugs out and work it into your layout. That's all part of the fun of model railroading.

More of Denis Rule's layout can be seen at his website:

<http://sites.netscape.net/denisrule/homepage>



Mike Hamer's Boston & Maine

Ian Cranstone photos

Conventioners from the NMRA's CAPITAL EXPRESS convention, held in April of this year, had the opportunity to tour Mike's outstanding B&M layout. It has already been featured in *Model Railroad Planning 2001*, but *THE INTERCHANGE* feels that it deserves further attention. Truly impressive features of this layout do not end at the stunning scenery and beautifully-detailed models however, for Mike Hamer has also managed to incorporate some interesting operations into this relatively small layout, helped tremendously by the surround staging.

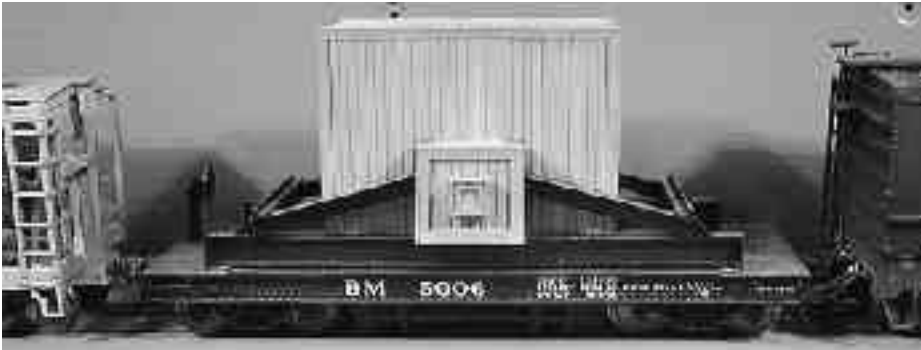




Knowles & Crago vie for CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE



O-scale CPR express reefer was constructed by Brian Ludlow from Juneco kit.



Mike Hamer's B&M mixed train included well hole flat, and tractor-laden flat.



CPR 70-foot coach was rebuilt by Brian Ludlow.



John LeBlanc showed circa 1958 metal Athearn boxcar.

Ian Cranstone photos

A lot of excellent models appeared in the November display and as reviewer **Bud Nelson** noted, there could easily have been CHAIRMAN'S CHOICE awards for **Grant Knowles** and **Bill Crago**.

The award went to **Grant Knowles**, who brought out the completed summer project that he displayed in September. It is a mine complex based on Cimarron 1 Mine. The kit was produced in On3 by Banta Model Works and finished with Grant's usual flair for colour and detail. "The Banta kit is one of the new generation of laser kit structures where all the wall panels are cut out of solid and ply woods with a laser. This allows for a high tolerance on the parts as well as simplifying the construction unless of course you decide to kitbash as I have done." It would be most remarkable if Grant didn't kitbash a structure.

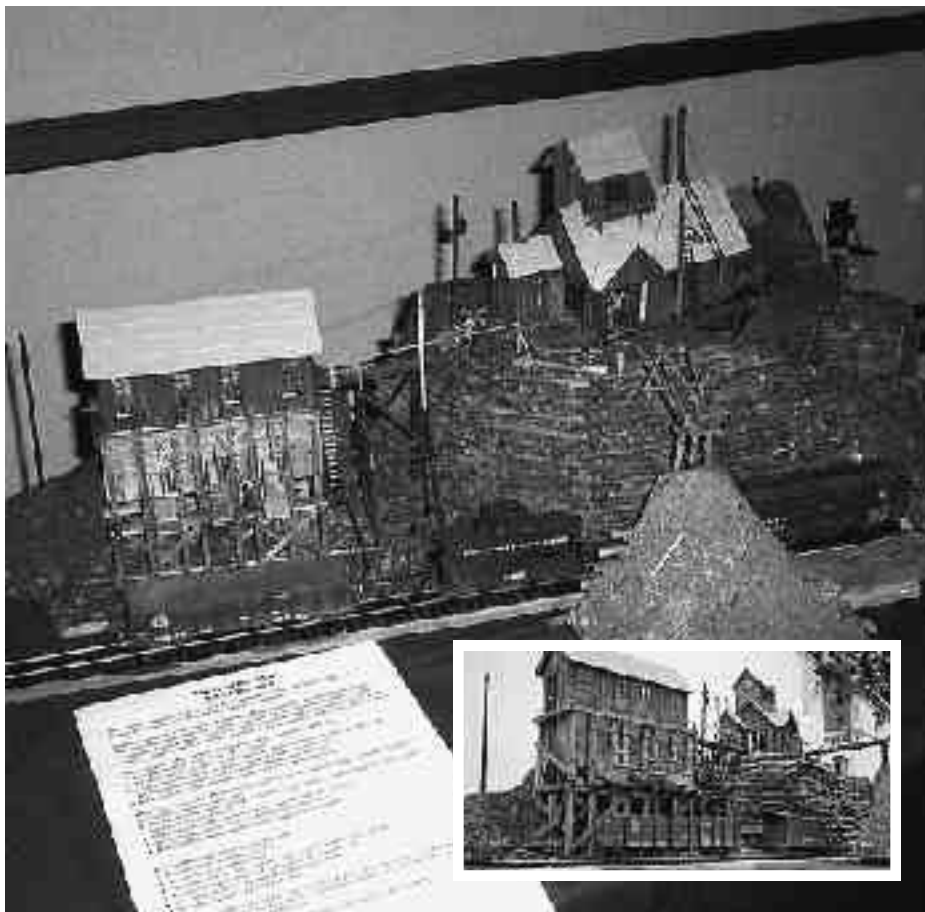
He did the mine shaft in a mirror image, added an extension at the rear, scratchbuilt a tramway complete with trestle bents and bridge and many other changes. The model is destined for **Dave Steer's** D&RGW layout. Next month, THE INTERCHANGE will have an introductory article from Grant on building lasercut structures.

Bill Crago brought out a trio of superbly built and weathered covered hoppers. One was a Model Die Casting Pullman Standard PS2 car done with C-D-S lettering for the New York Central. As well, he had an Intermountain Canadian 4550 cubic foot grain car lettered with C-D-S transfers for CGLX 1868. As well, there was an Intermountain PS 4570 cubic foot hopper lettered NAHX with Herald King decals. A beautiful set of cars.

Brian Ludlow showed off his handwork. He had a CPR 70-foot coach in O scale that he bought second hand and began rebuilding with a Pinsch gas system for lighting, full underbody detail and finished interior. The detail was extraordinary.

Mike Hamer brought out a collection of his rolling stock that depicted a Boston & Maine mixed train. It was led by an Atlas RS-2 that Mike found in the display case at George's Trains in Toronto. He said it is painted in the all-maroon paint scheme. Behind it were a Funaro & Camerlengo milk car, a well hole flat made by Tichy, a Kato snap together hopper that Mike says was made without using any glue and a flat car carrying a load of tractors that provoked a

The Interchange



Grant Knowles displayed Cimarron 1 Mine, seen in-progress at September meeting.

lot of comments about which model they were. At the rear of the consist was an old Athearn passenger car that Mike says looks OK once doctored and weathered. Well done, Mike. However people want to know what was holding the tractors on the flat car?

John LeBlanc brought out some more of his historical pieces. One was a circa 1958 Athearn CNR 40 foot box car built from a metal kit. The other was a Selley knock-off kit that he bought from the Wackid model shop at Laurier and Bank in the late 1950s. It was part of helping the Boy Scout troop at the Rockcliffe air base get a merit badge.

Alex Binkley displayed two S scale freight cars. One was a Train Stuff Soo Line

gondola, an early cast plastic kit while the other was a wooden Quality Craft model of CPR bathtub gon that will be operated second hand by the Canadian Southern Railway.

Normand Lev ert had two HO reefers that he said had been quickly weathered for a photo session but lacked the all-important brake wheels.

Paul Nor ton had an Aristocraft G scale bulkhead flat with a pipe load. This load was well secured.

Hugh Laing had a Lionel U36B painted in Ottawa Central's "stealth scheme" in honor of our speaker for the evening — Jim Allen from the OCR.



Hugh Laing paid tribute to dinner speaker OCR President James Allen with U36B. December 2001

Stepping up

OVAR has a second member who makes his daily bread from the railway industry.

Tony Borges has been hired as the managing director for Canada by R.L. Banks & Associates Inc. of Washington, a well-connected transportation-consulting firm. Tony has worked for the Canadian and Australian governments on transportation issues as well as a private consultant is also preparing a book with Colin Churcher on the former New York Central line that ran into Ottawa.

Peter McGuire has been the executive director of the Canadian Association of Railway Suppliers for several years and has helped grow that group into a major organization. His work was recently commended publicly by his boss, John Marinucci, the president of National Steel Car Ltd.

Of course, gentlemen, if you really want to impress, how about an item or two for the display?

INTERCHANGE YARD

Classified advertising in the Interchange Yard is free to all OVAR members. Non-OVAR members: \$1.00 per line, minimum \$5.00. Cheques or money orders should be made payable to **OVAR**. *Do not send cash*. Ads must include the advertiser's name and telephone number. Send copy to: Ian Cranstone, 34 Baneberry Cres., Kanata, ON K2L 2Y4 or via e-mail at lamontc@nakina.net

FOR SALE—RAILFAN COLLECTION: Vol. 1 No. 1 through Vol. 14 No. 4 (163 issues) \$75. Ken Healy 829-7545 or e-mail: KennethHealy@sympatico.ca

TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

July 13-20, 2003: TORONTO – MAPLE LEAF 2003 NMRA National, International Plaza Hotel, 655 Dixon Rd. Info: David King (905) 560-6414, e-mail: dlking@wchat.on.ca
<http://www.ml2003.com>

For the Record

November Meeting:

118

Current membership:

170



Next Meeting

39 years at CPR

presented by

Bruce Chapman

Display
Anything CPR-ish

Tuesday, January 8

St. Anthony Soccer Club Hall
523 St. Anthony Street, Ottawa
(just off Preston Street at the Queensway)
Doors open at 5:30 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.



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2001-2002

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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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