



The Interchange Our 42nd Year

Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders – OVAR

March 2003

Issue 372



The Smiths Falls Railway Museum provides fine setting for CPR caboose in November 2002. (Alois Lazecky photo)

A good railfanning spot: Medicine Hat

by Normand Levert

The official slogan for Medicine Hat, Alberta, is “The Gas City” because it owns its own gas wells. The city is also described as “an oasis in the Prairies.” Best of all, Medicine Hat is a great place to railfan. It is one of Canada’s sunniest cities, with 1,440 hours of sunshine a year, so while you are not guaranteed sunshine, the odds are in your favour. Her Majesty’s pleasure brought

me back to Medicine Hat this January with a Saturday to myself while saving airfare cost.

Old Medicine Hat is built for the most part in the South Saskatchewan River Valley, sheltered from the Prairie wind. There is a large and magnificent Canadian Pacific two-storey stone and brick station with turrets. Currently, there is no passenger traffic going through Medicine Hat, but the

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plus much more

From the Private Car

by Fern Leroux, *OVAR Chairman*

Auction Night

I would like to thank Angus Palmer and his crew for the effort, work and time they put it in organizing the auction. I would also like to thank OVAR members for bringing out all the fine goodies they wished to sell. Comments were very favourable and some members suggested we do this on a yearly basis instead of every two years. I'll let the executive decide on that one. For one, I was very happy to bring home the purchases that I made. Thank you Angus and your crew for the fine show.

OVAR's web site

Steve Watson made a valiant effort in soliciting materials regarding member's layouts at the last meeting, unfortunately because of all the hustle and bustle, as a result of the auction, I would simply like to reiterate what he attempted to request. As many of you are aware the OVAR web site has pictures and description of member's layouts, on many of these layout much work has been done to the extent that it would be nice to see the changes; others have layouts worthy of being seen on the web page, Steve is requesting that you get those cameras out and take pictures and send them in. If you need technical information Steve will only be too happy to help you out.

RAILFAIR Raffle Layout

On October 14, 2002, I received an e-mail from Brian Earl, stating that he was starting his fifth year with the Model Railway Club at St. Michael School when it started to build the new layout for RAILFAIR 25. He also stated that he would like to hand it over to someone else as he needed to back off on

all his volunteer activities.

I have known Brian for many years, I have known him as a member; as the OVAR Chairman and also I have known him as a caring individual. I have, on many occasions, asked Brian to say Grace, to orient a new members and never has he refused. I know we have recognized Brian in the past but I think it is necessary to single him out again for the services rendered to our club. As this is being written progress is being made on the layout for this year's RAILFAIR raffle. Thank you Brian.

OVAR Clothing Sale

Tonight, on your table, you will find order forms for various items of clothing OVAR is offering. You will notice that the selection is not as varied as last year, we have eliminated those items that did not appeal to the members. I would like to remind members that this is the only occasion to order items. Please state the correct size (a size larger is recommended) and include payment with the order form. Cheques are to be made out to OVAR.

Please...

In the November issue of THE INTERCHANGE Denis wrote on the topic of heavily scented perfume, aftershave lotions and colognes and how they affect members with serious allergies. At the February meeting I was approached by several members on the same topic. Again, we ask that if you use these products please use them in restraint so that all OVAR members can enjoy their monthly meetings in comfort and good health.

Happy Railroading!

Profiling: a member of the executive

Steve Watson, webmaster

Steve was introduced to the world of railways by his father with whom he took long walks along the lines that snake through the ravines of Toronto. In 1965 his family rode the train to Vancouver. The first morning out of Union Station, Steve awoke in his roomette to see the rugged Northern Ontario landscape rolling past his window. For an eight year old, it was a magical adventure. That fall, his father built a CN-themed HO layout, which lasted until Steve was in his teens. Steve's interest in model trains was rekindled while raising his own children, and he built a small HO train-set layout for them (on which he says he made every possible layout construction mistake.) Eventually, Steve and his wife Seanna decided to get into N-scale, for its capacity to put a lot of railroad into a small space. Currently, they are working on a "practice" layout in a coffee table, with an Old West theme. But Steve recalls that first glimpse of Northern Ontario from a train window, and their long term ambition to build a larger N-scale layout depicting that country, the railways that operate there, and the industries they serve.

Steve works as a software designer at Nortel Networks. The Watsons live in Kanata with their two teenaged sons, three cats, an outdoor pond full of goldfish, and a nice big basement. FL

Profiling: your local merchant

Model Railway Controls

David Steer, prop.

P.O. Box 65074

Nepean, Ontario, K2G 5Y3

828-5727

Model Railway Controls has been in business since 2002. David is an official dealer for Lenz DCC Systems. David handles the sale of Lenz products, systems, decoders and their installation. Lenz has developed electronic components for the model railroad industry for over 22 years. Lenz was a pioneer in the development of the DCC standards. They continue to innovate and produce high quality NMRA standard DCC products. In addition to selling Lenz products, David also carries and installs Zimo and Roco systems and decoders. David, not only sells DCC products but also provide after sale service. Welcome to this new dealer for model railway controls.

ImageStation™ to share photos

by Normand Levert

Thanks to Railway Bob, a.k.a. Bob Moore of HOTRAK, I've discovered ImageStation™ by Sony. This web site:

www.imagestation.com

allows one to store digital photos and videos for free. ImageStation™ make their money when you order prints or other products, which you do not have to do. They also promote their Sony products. You can organize your photos and videos in albums that you can either keep private, share with friends

through a password or share with every one. There are many categories and sub-categories, but the ones of true interest of course are "Hobbies & Interests" with sub-category "Trains". You have to join to view the albums.

Should you join ImageStation™ I invite you to see Railway Bob's HOTRAK album, or my "TRAINS IN MEDICINE HAT", "TRAINS IN ZAGREB" and "TRAINS BY NORMAND" albums. In turn, let us see your favourite railway photos.

Drywalling the new train room (Part One)

(Editor's Note: Last year Rob Rolfe provided us with an amusing account of the preparation of his new layout room. He continues his adventure in this latest dispatch.)

by Rob Rolfe

So it's time to finish your new train room walls. You can just picture the magnificent painted scenes of mountains and forests against the majestic backdrop of the endless sky. It will look so real that people will think you have cloned the Rockies. But first you need something to paint these no doubt prize-winning murals upon. That's where drywall comes in and I'm here to tell you how to do it. Let's get started then.

First, walk around the room and figure out what you need. Since every person's arm span is exactly four feet you need only count the number of arm spans to know how much drywall you need.

Go to the store. Pick up the drywall. Back

at the car you discover that you forgot the roof racks at home. No problem, the emergency blanket will do. No blanket, the kids took it out for the dog's bed. Your coat will work. Spread it over the roof and load up the drywall. Since you also forgot the rope and/or bungee cords, just drive slow; the weight of what is after all stone should keep the stuff on.

Before you leave, unload everything again because the keys were in your coat pocket. Repeat the loading procedure. On the way home, stop frequently to pick up sheets that have slid off. Never mind the tire marks from cars that were following you, they can be painted over.

When you get to your place, prop open the door to make bringing the "cargo" in easier. Pull the first piece off the car and carry it inside. All the neighbour's dogs, kids, etc. that ran inside can be easily shooed out later. Now open the basement

door with your foot because you didn't open it before.

Your triple-switchback bookcase-lined basement steps will comfortably let pass a sheet of drywall, right? After all, a 2 by 4 stud just fits, and thus will something 4 by 8, according to the MODEL RAILROADER'S BOOK OF LOGIC (S.N.O.B. publishing, 1999). This wonderful book also describes fixing the snowblower engine on the kitchen table, so it's a handy thing to have.

After a half hour or so of fighting with the drywall on the first stair landing, take it back upstairs. Apologize to the spouse for shouting out "that word" in the house. Now cut all the drywall in half so it will fit down the stairs. Soon everything is in the trainroom and FINALLY the backdrop of your dreams can begin.

Next time, we will actually do some measuring and cutting. You did pick up drywall screws, didn't you?

A message from the outgoing Membership Chair

by Don Leger

It has been an enjoyable two years for me to sit on the OVAR Executive, and I want to thank all of you for your help and support.

As I leave this post in June, and to make it easier for the incoming Chair, I would ask that members should notify the Membership Chair promptly of any changes to your personal address, phone number or e-mail listing. The current membership is over 180 members, and as you all know, it is costly to have the list printed. It is even more costly, when upon distribution, someone tells you that their personal information is incorrect. It should be every member's duty to inform the Membership Chair of any changes to your personal data.

Being on the Executive is not much extra work, for those who serve on it. My own job as Membership Chair takes me about four hours a month. So at most, one's job on the Executive works out to about twelve hours a month, an average of three hours a week. That's what you contribute to OVAR as a member of the executive. And like the old adage, "what you get out of it is what you put in".

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Where are they now?: news from TLA



John Licharson reports that he has delivered this monorail model to Bombardier, with this final set done for himself from the reject components.

Clarification

The February issue of THE INTERCHANGE had a front-page item on the rebuilding of the old Ottawa streetcar. The item contained some personal observations about recent tragic events at OC Transpo that the writer didn't intend to be included with the story. The editor, glad as always to get some copy from the members, failed to understand the distinction between the report on the rebuilding of the street car and the personal observations of the writer and included them in the story. The Interchange apologizes for any inconvenience or consternation this may have caused to the people named in the story.

Mike Hamer notes that his comments were based on his personal recollections and that some incorrect observations were passed on as a result. Barry Thomas is the Emer-

gency Planning and Response Coordinator for OC Transpo, hired in 2000 to help implement the jury recommendations arising from the fatalities at OC Transpo and not head of security although he worked closely with other OC staff and managers to implement the many safety and emergency improvements. As this is Barry's second career, he obviously enjoys and takes his work seriously.

The comments about the shootings on that very sad day were based on the author's and editor's recollection from the press and media coverage and were not meant to be attributed directly to Barry Thomas.

THE INTERCHANGE and the author still hope that the article might encourage some members of OVAR to assist in this worthy rebuilding project.



Westbound quartet of CP AC4400W's at speed near Dunmore, Alberta.



GP38-2's 3107, 3054 & 3071 returning to Medicine Hat on a cloudy Sunday morning.



Eastbound 9565 pulling away from Medicine Hat station.



Lead unit of a matched trio of GP38-2's (3107, 3054 & 3071) in Multimark scheme. Notice how the heat from the dynamic brakes has faded the CP Rail lettering.



When you are short of 36-inch wheelsets, use 33-inch

A good railfanning spot

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Calgary newspapers were reporting discussions to bring passenger service between Calgary and Regina so the station might see passenger trains again.

At a nearby park are two 1400-series FP9 engines donated by CPR. You know time is marching by when diesels become display engines! The Hat is a crew change point on CP and also has a busy yard that is the base of operation for local turns. Medicine Hat station and yard sit in the bottom of the valley, near the South Saskatchewan River, so all trains must descend into and climb out of Medicine Hat.

In addition to the large station, Medicine Hat has a good size flat yard, and on top of the bluff a sizable gas based chemical industrial park. Down in the valley, tucked in the remnants of smaller rail served industries, is a huge flour mill that has two tracks each easily holding a dozen 100-ton grain hoppers.

Coming from the east, the CPR line sweeps down from Prairie level. Just east of the town, near the Trans-Canadian Highway is the junction between the CPR line to Lethbridge and the line to Calgary. The challenging westbound grade is on the north shore of the South Saskatchewan River. CPR goes through Medicine Hat nearly due northwest, perpendicular to the river, which is just past the station. The railway crosses the river on a double track bridge, the second track being the yard lead. Just across the

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Eastbound CPR automobile train changing crews January 11, 2003.

river, the line turns sharply west before running into the bluff, already climbing. It then climbs side-hill for a distance of about eight km in what I'm told is one of the toughest grades before the Rockies. In modellers' terms, it is like turning the corner of the room.

There is a steady parade of mainline trains coming through the Hat. Over the years, I've seen not only the legions of SD40-2's, but also brand new SOO SD60's and one of the two GP30's in Canada (no camera of course). This last January, GE AC4400W's or GM SD90MAC's headed mainline trains. In addition to CP units, you may find leased CEFX SD90MAC's or even a Union Pacific SD60 idling in the locomotive storage tracks. The flat yard was switched with a set of rebuilt GP9m's, SOO 4204 and CP Rail 1635. One can have a very safe and legal good view from the station platform, which is also good for morning photography. The other side of the railway property, along South Railway Street, is unfortunately fenced, but there are two or three good vantage points.

The local switch job requires a set of three GP38-2's with dynamic brakes and a van. The trio, 3107, 3054 & 3071 are a matched set in CP Rail Multimark paint scheme. A testimony to the steep grades and heavy tonnage is that the stick-on CP Rail lettering is half-baked away on all three engines. Most of the traffic in Medicine Hat is tank cars and grain covered hoppers, but there is other covered hopper traffic. One neat local industry shipping in private name two bay
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Climbing out of Medicine Hat, just across the bridge over the South Saskatchewan River. These engines do not even have road dust on them!



AC4400W laying over in Medicine Hat.

A good railfanning spot

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hopper cars, which almost literally blew my mind, is Cancarb. They make carbon black by poorly burning natural gas in a large open cylindrical chamber and harvesting the soot. The first time I saw the huge ball of red flames flare up I thought I was witnessing a major catastrophe! Carbon black is used in tires among other products. The typical gas industrial park turn seems to have about forty to fifty large tank cars and those three GP38-2's were working hard both uphill and downhill.

Since I had a rental car, I went chasing east of Medicine Hat, to Wisdom, Dunmore and Irvine. The Trans-Canada highway is close to the rail line and the open Prairie lets you see trains from a great distance. On my way back, I caught a quartet of brand new GE AC4400W's on their first trip westbound (9724, 9731, 9707 & 9714). It had to be their first trip; there was not a speck of dust, road grime or soot anywhere to be seen on any of the four engines! Chasing west again I caught them at speed. At the east limit of Medicine Hat, I had to decide between a grain train with a mid-train CEFX SD90MAC slave or my quartet of GE engines. But the grain train was already pulling away, with no visible way of getting near enough for photography. Later I went back to Wisdom where I photographed a ribbon rail laying and pick-up machine and a string of flat cars modified to carry Maintenance of the Way equipment between tasks. These would make for good modeling projects.



Detail of mu'd GP38-2's. Note railing and safety chains.



GP9m accelerating with a large cloud of smoke at Medicine Hat yard.



Local turn requires a trio of GP38-2's with dynamic brakes, on account of stiff grades and heavy tonnage.

Rabbis assist Canadian Pacific with derailments

For Rabbi Asher Zeilingold, a request by Canadian Pacific Railway to help recover kosher canola salad oil this week from a derailed tank car is just another day at the office. And while not part of Randy Hansen's usual duties as a CPR damage prevention and claim service specialist in Minneapolis, this isn't the first time he has had to request the services of a rabbi to help recover a kosher product involved in a derailment. In 1998, Hansen summoned a rabbi from Fargo, N.D., to help transfer another load of kosher canola oil from a derailed tank car in Thief River Falls in northwestern Minnesota. That rabbi has since moved away, so Hansen this time turned to Rabbi Zeilingold, leader of Adath Israel Synagogue in St. Paul.

Rabbi Zeilingold has assigned Rabbi Yosef Grossbaum, one of three other rabbis at United Mehadrin Kosher, a kosher-certifying organization, to travel on Thursday to Thief River Falls to assist in the transfer of more than 185,000 pounds (more than 84,000 kilograms) of salad oil-grade canola.

The rabbi's involvement in the transfer process is often misunderstood, said Brenda Haist, transportation specialist for the shipper, CanAmera Foods of Oakville, Ontario, a suburb of Toronto. "He's not going to get on top of the car with a tent and chant," Haist said. Instead, she said the rabbi's involvement is hands-on.

Rabbi Grossbaum will have to certify as kosher a food-grade pump and hoses before they are used to transfer CanAmera Foods' canola oil from the derailed kosher tank car into another kosher tank car. The canola oil will be returned to CanAmera's kosher plant in Altona, Manitoba, for re-processing in accordance with the company's policies to ensure the quality of its food-grade products.

The kosher-certification process is required to render food ritually fit according to Jewish law. When CPR's Randy Hansen was involved with recovery of kosher canola oil from another derailed car in 1998, a rabbi instructed a railroad contractor in how to prepare a food-grade pump and hoses for the transfer.

The rabbi used tongs to pick up a piece of ballast from the railroad tracks, held it over a flame to sterilize it and dropped the large rock into a 55-gallon drum of boiling water, causing the water to flow over the rim to

sterilize it, Hansen said. The rabbi then poured the hot water into the pump and pumped it through the hoses before attaching the hoses to two tank cars for the transfer.

In the latest case, the canola oil will have to be heated for several hours in the tank car before the transfer can be started around 5 p.m. Thursday. Even though the tank car has two insulated jackets, the oil will have turned to gel after sitting for nearly three weeks in subzero weather. Steam will be piped to coils between the inner and outer insulated jackets, heating the coils to warm the canola, Hansen said.

When this derailment occurred Feb. 8 at Karlstad, Hansen knew right away to contact fellow damage prevention and claim services specialist Ron Van Deusen, who was at the scene about 30 miles northwest of Thief River Falls.

"I called it to my partner's attention that day that this might be kosher oil, so we've got to watch it," said Hansen, whose job sometimes involves taking unusual steps to recover derailed loads for the railroad's customers.

Canola oil is frequently being processed these days as a kosher product for ease of doing business with all customers. Indeed, the demand for kosher food has grown, said Rabbi Zeilingold, chief administrator of United Mehadrin Kosher, which works with about 150 food companies. Mehadrin (pronounced Muh-HAH'-drin) means best or highest level, and UMK follows the highest rules for kosher certification, making its certification universally accepted by all Jewish groups.

Rabbi Zeilingold oversees three rabbis who work full time certifying everything from food-processing plants to barges to tanker trucks and equipment involved in food handling.

"Doing the kosherizing takes us to places far away," Rabbi Zeilingold said. The rabbis travel to Europe several times a year and have gone even to Japan to certify food-processing plants as kosher.

"They'll pretty much consider that an everyday assignment to go to Thief River Falls," said Rabbi Zeilingold, whose most exotic assignment ever was going to Alaska's Aleutian Islands to certify an imitation lobster product made from pollack.

TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

March 15-16: TORONTO – Toronto Model Railway Show, Toronto Congress Centre, 650 Dixon Road. Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: Jack Bell (416) 249-4563.

March 22 & April 26: TROY, N.Y. – Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Open House (New England, Berkshire & Western). Sat. 12-4 p.m. Info:

http://railroad.union.rpi.edu/open_house.asp

April 1: OTTAWA – Bytown Railway Society Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Info:

www.ovar.ca/bytown

April 2: CORNWALL – Moccasin Model Railroad Club, Nativity Hall, 7:30 p.m., Layout Design-Auto Cad (Terry Firth & Andy Tait). Info: Jacques Thuot at jthuot@cnwl.igs.net

April 5-6: LAVAL – Model Train Expo, Polyvalente George-Vanier, 3995 Boulevard Levesque Est. Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Info: M. Piette at (450) 625-4230 (evgs):

<http://pages.infinit.net/hpassion/etm.html/>

July 13-20: 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

February Meeting:

120

Current membership:

182

THE INTERCHANGE

wants to know what you're doing on your model railroad — or what your favourite prototype is doing!
Don't be shy — write!



Next Meeting

Pintsch Gas and Safety Chains

presented by

Ron Ritchie

Display

To be announced

Tuesday, April 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.

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

2002-2003

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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.

Copy Deadline:

April March 20

Printing and Copying:

Impression Printing, Smiths Falls

THE INTERCHANGE is published eleven times a year, September through June and Summer, by the Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders. Opinions expressed in THE INTERCHANGE are those of the Editors or individual authors, and are not necessarily those of OVAR. © 2003