



# The Interchange

Our 42nd Year

Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders – OVAR

Summer 2003

Issue 376

## Nesbitt wins Herb McEwan Car Award

by Fern Leroux

Peter Nesbitt was awarded the HERB MCEWAN CAR at the June meeting to mark his many years of active involvement in model railroading, OVAR and in the revival of the St. Lawrence Division of the NMRA.

The award is presented to an OVAR member in honour of Herb McEwan. Herb was a founding member of OVAR, who worked with live steam in his younger days and developed a hobby retail outlet as a side line. On his passing the executive decided to create an award in his memory. The award, a passenger coach made up by a club member, is presented in recognition of outstanding contribution to the hobby of railroading. This year recipient certainly exemplifies outstanding contributions to the hobby of railroading. Congratulations Peter.

Peter is currently building an On3 layout to replace his former HO one. He has served on the executive of OVAR as well as the SLD and now looks after the Achievement Program for the Niagara Frontier Region of the NMRA. He operates a growing hobby supply business. He is a treasure trove of ideas for solving all the inevitable problems that crop up when layouts are being constructed. He operates on several local layouts as well as helping countless other people get their pikes into running condition. In other words, he has done a lot to make model railroading fun for many modellers, experienced and novice, which is what the MCEWAN CAR AWARD is all about.

Peter is now the proud owner of the HERB MCEWAN CAR AWARD and he is part of an elite group of model railroaders who have deservedly earned the honour.



Special train and members of the Latin American Railway Association at Oruro. Author Colin Churcher is second from the left.

## Travels in Bolivia

by Colin Churcher  
photos by the author

Railroading in Bolivia is different. On my first trip, we were travelling in a railcar and ran over a man who was sleeping, dead drunk, between the rails. We stopped the train, backed up and the train crew explained, in Aymara, how fortunate

he was not to have been cut up into metre length pieces. The next day we were forced to make an emergency stop because a man was tardy in getting out of our way. The long suffering train crew quickly bailed off the car, caught the offender, and the conductor held him while the brakeman beat him up.

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## OVAR Membership Renewal

by John Shipman

As a relative newcomer to OVAR, my first official request as Membership Chair is to ask for your patience and understanding as I try to put names to the faces of the many fine folks I have met at our dinners over the last couple of years.

In the past members who have memberships coming due have received an addressed envelope in the Summer INTERCHANGE so that they could mail in their dues. This year we have opted to collect dues at the September meeting, along with a short questionnaire requesting updates to your address, phone number, e-mail address etc. and some information on what aspects of rail you are most interested in i.e. railfan-

ning or modelling (and scale). Please take a moment to fill out this questionnaire, as this information will allow us to obtain a snapshot of OVAR's demographics.

Membership dues are available in multi-year options. A single year remains at \$25, 3 years is \$60 and 5 years is \$100, giving you a \$25 saving. Please make cheques payable to the "Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders".

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plus much more

# The OVAR financial report for the 2002-03 fiscal year

by Gord Bellamy, Treasurer

This is a summary of the Debits and Credits of the Ottawa Valley Associated Railroaders over the Fiscal Year 01 July 2002 to 30 June 2003

The bottom line of the summary shows a Debit of \$1,782.14, due to the purchase of the new Video Projection equipment. This is, in effect, a loan from the reserve fund of multi-year memberships.

In addition, the Treasurer holds the Dinner Float Fund of \$100.00, and a slush fund of \$20.00 for stamps, envelopes, tickets, etc. The slush fund currently has \$5.94 worth of stamps.

## BANK OF MONTREAL COMMUNITY ACCOUNT

Chequing Account Opening Balance	01 July 2002	\$ 4,728.68
Chequing Account Current Balance	30 June 2003	\$ 1,454.08

## BANK OF MONTREAL INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

T-Bill Account Opening Balance	01 July 2002	\$ 3,807.02
T-Bill Account Current Balance	30 June 2003	\$ 4,853.92

## From the Carrel of the Librarian

at the C. Robert Craig Memorial Library

Summer is the time to get ready for the Fall railfan season. Do your research now at the CRCML — Open Tuesday to Friday 8:30 to 4:30. Free parking.

### New Books

**Heselton, Bill & Ann — NOT TO EXCEED 10 MILES AN HOUR: A History of the Moose Jaw Electric Railway.** This System was a major user of streetcars built by the Ottawa Car Company

**Taber, Thomas T. III — NORTH OF THE PAS.** A then (1952/3) and now (1994 + 2001) account of the railway to Hudsons Bay by an American soldier, and subsequently railway historian.

**Pharand, Jacques — LES TRAMWAYS DE QUEBEC.** A history of Quebec City streetcars. Another major user of cars built by the Ottawa Car Company.

Visit our webpage at:

[www.ovar.ca/CraigLibrary/index.html](http://www.ovar.ca/CraigLibrary/index.html)

THE INTERCHANGE  
wants to know what you're doing on your model railroad

## A new look to the OVAR executive

A couple of new faces have been added to the OVAR executive to replace outgoing chairman Fern Leroux and membership chairman Don Leger.

Normand Levert, an active modeller and Interchange correspondent, is taking over the job of finding us interesting presenters every month. John Shipman will be keeping the OVAR roll and reminding the forgetful among us when annual membership dues are late.

Bud Nelson, who has been handling program duties for the last couple of years, is moving up to vice chair while Denis Rule takes his second term as chairman. The rest of the executive remains unchanged with Mike Shore as secretary and guardian of the back issues of THE INTERCHANGE, Gord Bellamy as our minister of finance, Peter Joyce as the man who makes sure we all get some dinner, Steve Watson as the webmaster and all-round wizard. The executive gets a big help from Paul Therien, the keeper of the videos, and Dave Knowles, the master of Craig Library and all the archives.

## A thank you

by Mike Hamer

On behalf of Mike Mueller and Barry Thomas and the team that is working in earnest to restore the streetcar here in Ottawa, I'd like to extend my appreciation to all OVAR members who have purchased a trolley video in support of the cause. Thus far, OVAR members have contributed \$780 to the project and from all accounts everyone has enjoyed viewing the tape.

Indeed, it is amazing how widespread the audience is for THE INTERCHANGE. It was through this venue that a banker from Colorado read about the streetcar restoration project. He donated 40 boxes each containing 50 tapes for the cause! While I know that we do not have 2000 OVAR members, let it be known that your contributions are greatly appreciated by the fellows hard at work in this endeavour.

If you have not purchased a copy of the tape and wish to do so please call me, Mike Hamer, at 526-1988 and I will bring your copy to the next OVAR meeting.

## For the Record

June Meeting: **126**

Current membership: **182**

## TIMETABLE

Upcoming events of particular interest to OVAR members

**September 2: OTTAWA – Bytown Railway Society Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m.**  
Info:

[www.ovar.ca/bytown](http://www.ovar.ca/bytown)

**September 3: CORNWALL – Moccasin Model Railroad Club Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m.** Info: Jacques Thuot, e-mail: [jthuot@cnwl.igs.net](mailto:jthuot@cnwl.igs.net)

**September 20-21: NEPEAN – Toy & Train Show, Nepean Sportsplex, Salons A & B, 1701 Woodroffe Ave., Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.** Info: Hugh Laing 613-592-9402 (days) 613-592-5824 (evg.) or Frank Steele 613-378-0302.

**September 28: CORNWALL – St. Lawrence Division NMRA Meet, location t.b.a.** Info: Stan Conley (613) 523-8237, e-mail: [sconley@ccs.carleton.ca](mailto:sconley@ccs.carleton.ca)

## Travels in Bolivia

*continued from page 1*

In the last five years I have been asked to go to Bolivia, as a volunteer, to assist the government to develop a railway safety program. These have been challenging and worthwhile assignments — and I haven't been beaten up once!

The railways in Bolivia run in the Amazon jungle on the borders of Brazil where tarantula spiders and venomous snakes are frequently seen. I always wear leather gloves when making an inspection — the spiders are known as “two hour spiders” — get bitten by one and you have two hours to say goodbye to your friends. At the end of the day one can have piranha soup and fried caiman for supper.

Other parts of the system run on the Altiplano at over 12,000 feet where no trees grow. In fact the branch to Potosí goes over the highest railway summit in the world — Condor summit. At this altitude, there is a serious lack of oxygen and strenuous exercise has to be avoided until you are sure that your body has acclimatized.

My most recent trip was in late April and May this year. I spent most of the time in the capital city, La Paz, but did manage to get out on one interesting railway journey. I gave a presentation to the Latin American Railway Association in La Paz and the next day was invited to go with the group on a special train that was put on by the Andina Railway from Viacha to Oruro.

Viacha is the site of the locomotive works for the Andina Railway and is a short bus ride from La Paz. Short it might have been, but uneventful it wasn't. On the divided highway there had been an accident in which one car had gone over the side and a



**Andina railway locomotive at the head of the special train at Viacha, Bolivia. This locomotive was built by Mitsubishi and has three trucks to distribute the weight.**

truck was broadside across the lanes in the opposing direction. The gas tank had a three inch gash in it and gasoline was pouring out on to the highway and creating a pool right where our bus stopped. Luckily nobody smoked and we were able slowly to make our way out of the potential conflagration.

We visited Viacha works where I saw a Sulzer engined locomotive which was waiting for parts. These are pretty rare in South America.

Our short special train was headed up by a three truck Mitsubishi locomotive. There was a restaurant car and the crew were anxious to make our four and a half hour journey a memorable one. As soon as we started there was a call for breakfast (desayuno). Here my poor Spanish got the better of me as I inadvertently ordered desayuno americano, which turned out to be the works — omelet, toast, fruit etc. Half an hour after returning to my seat I was called to lunch. Now, lunch in Bolivia is always very special, and this was memorable. We started with hearts of palm which was followed by chairo, the local speciality — a hearty soup made with vegetables, beans and corn and with a slice of meat as well as pork rind. The

main course was roast chicken with salad, boiled potatoes and chuño — a potato which is freeze dried outside on the Altiplano and only available in this area. Dessert was, thankfully, a small portion of fruit.

All the while we were passing small villages built of adobe (sun dried bricks) and with a back drop of the mountains of the Chilean Andes. The bare ground was dotted with llama and alpaca and there were a few lakes in which one could see flamingoes. At Oruro, the main line runs right through the local market and trains have to go very, very slowly to allow the traders time to remove their stalls to allow the train through. It was a novel experience to be sitting in a restaurant car and see the tops of the stalls brushing the window — and being watched by women wearing colourful shawls, petticoats and bowler hats. At least the train crew was well behaved this time and nobody was beaten up, probably because they would have been heavily outnumbered. All in all it was a pretty interesting trip, especially so because there are now no passenger trains on this route. Bolivia is a fascinating country to visit and I would thoroughly recommend it.



**Above: Archbar trucks are still very much in evidence although they are not used much in regular service now. They were banned in interchange service in North America in 1940.**

**Right: A train coming through the Oruro local market in 2002. This illustrates the extent of the encroachment problem that the railways face.**





## Next Meeting

# The Friday Night Group:

## Train Operations In a Round Robin Setting

*presented by*

**Mike Hamer**

## Display

Your summer project & New England

## Tuesday, September 9

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

<b>Chairman:</b>	Denis Rule	613-823-3440
<b>Vice-Chairman:</b>	Bud Nelson	819-837-3350
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mike Shore	613-829-8867
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Gord Bellamy	613-725-6979
<b>Membership:</b>	John Shipman	613-237-0707
<b>Program:</b>	Norm Levert	613-834-6798
<b>Dinner:</b>	Peter Joyce	613-841-1950
<b>Video Library:</b>	Paul Therien	613-824-8477
<b>Archives:</b>	Dave Knowles	613-722-4473
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Steve Watson	613-592-3609
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## THE INTERCHANGE Summer 2003 — Issue 376

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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:

October                      September 20

#### Printing and Copying:

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