

# TRAX

May 2009

The Sudbury Model Railroaders Newsletter

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## Hot Cinders in My Shorts

Viewpoint from the Editor

I just returned from the NMRA NFR Regional Convention in Woodstock. This year's convention was very good, with many informative clinics and almost 30 great home layouts open for visiting. The weekend finished with a HUGE train show on Sunday.

I received another article from John Strother-Stewart and a good response to last month's letter to the editor. This type of railroad related discussion and content is great. Keep the content coming.

I'd like to remind readers about receiving TRAX electronically instead of by mail. If you have access to e-mail, please consider switching to the electronic distribution of TRAX. You get the same content, but the cost of reproducing and mailing TRAX each month is greatly reduced. Many similar organizations in our hobby have transitioned to electronic distribution of publications. Electronic subscribers are sent an e-mail each month with notification that the new TRAX is available and a link to the website to download the PDF document. The e-mail also contains extra tidbits – I get many submissions that are in a format that is not publication friendly, like videos and links to other sites. Just send me an e-mail (see the last page) with your e-mail address and let me know that you would like to switch to electronic distribution.

As we near the yearly summer break, it's also that time again to remind everyone that volunteers are required to host future meetings. Have a great summer everyone.

Trevor Ross  
Editor – TRAX Newsletter

## Trackside

From Allen Stacey

These old TH&B cars have been at Azilda for quite a while.



# **Club Car**

## **Local Club News**

### **May 2009 Meeting**

Al and Jackie Melanson have volunteered to host the May meeting on Tuesday May 12, 2009. To reach Al and Jackie's house at 332 Wellington Heights, turn East on Hyland Drive off Regent Street, then turn right on Wellington Heights. Call Trevor at 690-3423 if you get lost.

### **April 2009 Meeting**

Thanks to Mike Svos for hosting the April 2009 meeting.

### **Meeting Schedule 2009**

All meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. unless noted otherwise.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Host</u>	<u>Date</u>
May	Al and Jackie Melanson	May 12, 2009
June	No Meeting	
July, August	Summer Break	
September	Volunteer Needed	
October	Volunteer Needed	
November	Train Show	
December	Trevor Ross	

Volunteers are needed to host future meetings. If you are interested in hosting a meeting then please contact Mike Svos (566-5593) or Trevor Ross (983-9602).

Meeting co-ordinator: Mike Svos (566-5593)  
SNRC treasurer: Garth Harris (969-8678)

### **Upcoming Events**

The 2009 Midland Train show is on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at the North Simcoe Sports and Recreation Centre. We have no plans to attend this show with the modular layout.

The Careol Train Show takes place on August 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Capreol Arena.

The Muskoka Train Show takes place on August 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> in Bracebridge. We are still looking for more club members to come along and attend this show with us.

## **Letter to the Editor**

from Dale Wilson

I'm the one talking about removing CP tracks from downtown Sudbury, although it's clear only the freight function would go, rail being left for future interurban and intercity passenger service. The CP main line and Sault branch is to be diverted around settled portions of the city. This is part of the vision of Imagine Sudbury, a diverse group viewing Sudbury as more than a one-industry, small-growth region headed for decline unless there are major changes. There are no politicians, or 'politically motivated' people in the group.

The tale by the anonymous writer is sad, but only proves a southern Ontario municipality's incompetence. How did they come to own the land without knowing what condition it was in? That's plain foolish.

About railway lands: A few years ago, a North Bay group began promoting rehab of their CPR yard between downtown and the lake. Environmental studies were done and one batch of diesel fuel discovered and removed. There was NO massive contamination. Had the intention been to develop high rise residential or commercial properties on their "rail lands", more expensive work would have been needed. However, North Bay's vision uses the New York Central Park model, with most land for recreational and 'greenspace' use. Things are going very well; new growth is in place at either end of the rail lands and downtown properties are being improved by private owners and their value is rising.

Then there is Sudbury: What rehabilitation is needed for rail lands here? We don't have all answers, but know a few years ago the city bought a piece of land across the main line in 'the barrens', so to speak. Environmental assessment showed little contamination except along Lorne Street where the current Independent grocery store is now located and that was from a service station once there. Clean up was done and conditions overall are similar to North Bay. Remember there was a tank farm off Douglas Street at the west end of the CPR property. It seems the land has been tested, remediated and is now waiting for re-development.

Let's be clear. Environmental assessments are always required when there is massive change in land use. Clean up following that is as expensive as required for how you wish to use the land and the experience of both Sudbury and North Bay suggests cost to taxpayers is minimal.

The anonymous writer suggests horrifying deposits of deadly materials and I look forward to his/her authority. Please be aware that "Everybody knows..." is NOT an authority, and everybody usually knows little for sure. The surviving rights of way through the city would still have rail on them, for use by passenger trains. Does anyone see a problem with this?

As for road crossings of the CPR, how about closing Elm at the track and lifting Larch over several sets of rails to connect directly with Lorne. That's a whole lot cheaper and better than underpasses as Brady Street has proved, and better than massive structures like the Paris Street bridge.

If this is a "pipe dream" consider the alternative. Do we continue to do nothing and let the centre of the city (the rail lands) continue to rot while what passes for the business section turns into even more parking lots? The greatest amenity we have, Lake Ramsey, is cut off from the downtown. Should this continue? We are supposed to be seeing a School of Architecture somewhere downtown. Where should it be?

If the two level crossings at Martindale and Kelly Lake are such a problem, how about holding Councillors' feet to the fire until they make that a priority — or are such improvements supposed to happen magically, with no work on anyone's part?

# Midland & Western Railroad

From John Strother-Stewart

Over the past 30 years the Midland & Western railroad has gone through many transformations and is a completely different layout than what you would remember of it in Sudbury. Since I moved to Regina I have built it 2-1/3 times. The first time was when I was still married to Audrey. When Rosemarie and I bought our house we had decided on an existing house rather than the 6-month old house that I purchased when I moved to Regina. We had decided that we did not want to start from scratch; finishing a basement and doing the landscaping. (Been there, done that!) In the 20-year old house we purchased there was an ideal 145 square foot room for a layout, which I thought would be a manageable size for a compact layout. The plan is basically a loop around the outside walls (CP mainline & Midland yards) and a point to point Midland & Western line that starts in Midland (population just under 300,000), goes out into a peninsula for a couple of scenic loops until it reaches the lower level divisional point at Wembley (population just under 20,000). I decided that I would model a 1983 vintage, as cabooses were still in use yet some interesting things were beginning to happen. When I first started building my layout, Wembley was intended to be just a staging yard with minimal scenery and structures. Then about 10 years ago I realized that I was going to have to deal with some problems with the basement walls. I had to demolish about 1/3 of the layout and have the wall repaired. This is a very common problem for houses of that age in this city. Rosemarie found it dismaying but I saw it as a challenge to upgrade the lower level staging yard into a larger lower level complete with scenery, more structures and a backdrop to suggest a city of about 20,000 people. This did result in a bit of reorganization of industries, but I will tell you more about that at a later date.



## Rebuilt lower level

Above: Downtown Wembley. (Note mirror behind overpass.)

Left: East end of Wembley yards, towards; M & W mainline towards Midland.

I found the article in April's Trains magazine about grain handling very relevant. With the changes in grain handling I have noticed over the past 25 years, the changes that would have happened along the Midland & Western would be extensive. With the disappearance of the old wooden grain elevators every 13km and their replacement by large concrete grain terminals every 50-70km and local food processing plants, such as meat packing plants, have been closed in favour of larger plants in big cities, it would be entirely possible that the Midland & Western would be a fallen flag by now! That's another reason why keeping the era as 1983 is a good idea. Again, if any of you wish to contact me, my email address is:

[strotherstewart@accesscomm.ca](mailto:strotherstewart@accesscomm.ca)

## Woodstock Turn

To round out this edition of TRAX, here is a selection of photos from the various layouts that were open for the NMRA NFR convention in Woodstock:



Great scratchbuilt reproduction of a bridge in Quebec.

HO Sawmill



Another trestle with a narrow gauge locomotive hauling timber.



Outdoor G-Scale layout.  
The kids had fun driving these trains! The owners 7 yr old grandson was running the show.

Zachary and Lucas with a speeder.



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The Fine Print and Administrative Items

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### Newsletter Content

I am always looking for content for upcoming newsletters. If you are interested in contributing any model railroad related articles, news, or information please forward them to me at [trevor@tjrcadd.com](mailto:trevor@tjrcadd.com) or give me a call (983-9602).

### Website

You can find additional local model railroad news, events, and information online at [www.sudbuymodelrailroading.com](http://www.sudbuymodelrailroading.com)

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