



Mortdale Matters

NSW State News November 2006

As at 24 October

Welcome to the November Edition of Mortdale Matters!

Once again it's time for a new edition of *Mortdale Matters*. I'd like to apologise for the lack of an October edition of *Mortdale Matters*. Illness and a death in the family meant what little time I had available to me went towards this year's Exhibition Guide.

While on the subject of the Exhibition Guide, I'd like to thank our Exhibition Manager, Glenn Percival. Glenn somehow managed to find time amongst everything else leading up to the Exhibition to help show me the ropes in producing the Guide. I'd also like to thank him for chasing up the Guide Advertising while I was out of action.

Chris Winston

Journal/Mortdale Matters Sub-editor

AMRA NSW BRANCH 50th ANNIVERSARY

This coming weekend, Friday Night October 27th to Sunday October 29th we will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the NSW branch. While it is now too late to book for both the Anniversary Dinner and the "Golden Jubilee Express" Steam Train to Berry, don't forget the clubrooms will be open on both the Friday Night and Saturday.

On top of our usual layouts we also have the HO scale *Moss Vale*, courtesy of the Guildford Model Railway Group and the G scale *Little Gilston*, courtesy of Denis Gilmore and myself.

This weekend will also mark the commissioning of the AMRA theatre in the main meeting room on Friday Night.



A shameless plug of my own layout! Little Gilston – as seen during the October Open Day. Little Gilston will also be operating at the 50th Anniversary Weekend. Photo: Glenn Percival

SUBMITTING TO MORTDALE MATTERS AND JOURNAL

With so much happening at Mortdale it's easy for something to slip through the cracks. If you've got any news you'd like to submit to *Mortdale Matters* or *Journal* please email me your submissions at subeditor@amransw.asn.au. Photos are especially appreciated. Space permitting I will try and fit your submissions into the bi-monthly NSW news in *Journal*. The deadline for material for next months *Mortdale Matters* is November 20th while *Journal* is December 13th.

A TALE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC WOE

At this year's exhibition, Glenn Percival and I attempted to collaborate to try and cover as much photographic ground as possible. The aim was to collect as much material as possible, for future promotional use – such as next year's Exhibition Guide or Flyers. Glenn was going to take stills, while I looked after the Video side of things. As it turned out, Glenn was unable to find time to go and take photos, meaning that don't have that much in the way of still photos.

To top it all off, at our recent Open Day, Glenn did manage to find time to photograph the layouts, but an equipment problem developed which saw most of his photos being corrupted.

If you have any digital photos of either the Exhibition or the October Open Day and you'd like to submit them, please do so to subeditor@amransw.asn.au or preferably on a CD in the Journal pigeonhole in the office. You will be properly credited for your work and I will also attempt to include your photos as much as possible in *Mortdale Matters*.

Chris Winston

Journal/Mortdale Matters Sub-editor



A view of the main hall during this year's Sydney Model Railway Exhibition. One of the few still photos I managed to take during the exhibition.

SYDNEY MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION REPORT 2006

With nearly all the post-weekend tasks completed, it's almost time to close the book on this year's show. So, how did it all go really? In short, we are continuing to settle in at the Hurstville Aquatic Centre, with significant improvements over last year but with more to come. For my first one 'at the helm', I can only now look back and say 'not too bad at all'.

Rather than singling people out and forgetting some, perhaps I should start with paraphrasing the traditional speech after Monday night pack up, which is applicable to everyone who contributed:

Thank you one and all. It really has been a team effort and it has felt like a team effort and it showed, from the overwhelmingly positive response to the car park, through to a publisher's summation that it was one of the best Sydney Exhibitions he has ever seen. "Don't know what I did", but I'll keep doing it, and hopefully you all will as well. I know it's a sermon – but you should be proud of it, and its all those Exhibitions that have helped provide for the Mortdale clubrooms we now enjoy. It's a big job, but hopefully you get something out of it on the weekend – it's a huge social event, so be proud of it, and please keep helping.

Some other points of note are:

- There were 17 layouts and traders new to our show this year, which could be seen as a positive reaction to the newer, brighter venue. Loading and unloading appeared as fast and cooperative as last year.
- Car parking in the adjacent Penshurst Park was a big winner, as was the return of the *Thomas* ride. We will be working with the Council and the Centre to improve car parking entry/exits, layout and signage.
- Attendance was flat relative to last year, which itself was slightly up on the last year at Liverpool. Affecting factors would appear to include: football finals, weather and the shift in school holidays this year, which placed the long weekend at the beginning rather than middle of the holidays. This is an interesting twist, as that is how it used to be under the old 3-term school year. What did change was the relativity between the three days, with Monday provisionally christened "family day".
- Arrangements for the buses proved to be fraught with politics, as indeed a number of organisations seem to be dealing with this season – I can count at least four. We actually had some buses in the end, but two weeks earlier...
- Considerable support was again given this year by business, from signage to advertising and Guessing Competition prizes. It's quite a sizeable list in fact, which we could post at the clubrooms.
- Catering, for both exhibitors/staff and the public, continued to be problematic from a practical and financial standpoint. Whilst we have settled into a routine using the crèche for ourselves, public queues were long again especially on the Saturday – as observed by Centre management.
- The changed layout of the foyer, forced on us by equipment changes at the Centre, did not work out quite as well as expected. It seemed to stand out as suffering somewhat from a lack of oversight in what was otherwise a wonderful team effort at taking on and managing tasks over the weekend. Some useful brainstorming has already produced a likely layout solution
- The main hall layout appeared to be well received, continuing the generous aisles of last year yet managing to fit in more exhibits.
- The Saturday night awards presentation/supper/social gathering was again well supported. I feel that being able to host exhibitors & visitors in this way, as the Victorian Branch does for their awards, are a fantastic adjunct to the Exhibition.



Exhibition Manager Glenn Percival goes to great lengths to find a good viewing location at this year's Sydney Model Railway Exhibition. Photos Courtesy of Geoff Lanham

So, was it "successful"? I believe so. The bouquets appeared to outnumber the brickbats, and the interest & joy on the faces of the little (and big) kids made it all worthwhile.

Improvement needed? Always. Don't forget, it was only our second year in a near-new venue after 21 years at the previous one. With the Centre keen on big events, we can only build on what we have already achieved.

As always, we are open to constructive feedback for the future. A couple of afternoon tea brainstorming sessions have already been held and the 2007 Management Committee will examine the contributions.

Glenn Percival
Exhibition Manager



Exhibition Manager Glenn Percival and Branch President Barry Wilcockson present the Exhibitors awards at the Clubrooms at Mortdale on the Saturday Night of this years Exhibition.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Another busy couple of months have just passed. We started out by hosting a visit by the Hornby Railway Collectors Association on Sunday 20th August. There was lots of interest, and action on the layouts. There were also lots of older trains to be seen. It was a great day, which is sure to be repeated. This was closely followed by the annual visit by the Hills Model Railway Society.

David Bennett has completed the exhibition raffle layout, which ran flawlessly for the three days of the exhibition. Thanks to David, ably assisted by Robert Merrick, Terry Flynn and Shaun Huckstepp, for undertaking this task.

Our 2006 exhibition was a well-run event. Congratulations to Glenn Percival in his first year as Exhibition Manager for a great weekend. The attendance was good, the exhibits were of a high standard and the members who volunteered their services did a fantastic job. All of those involved in working for the exhibition can pat themselves on the back for a job well done.

The open day followed two weeks after the exhibition. The day was extremely hot, but the public still came to marvel at what was on show. The three fixed layouts were running faultlessly upstairs, while downstairs, the U-drive, Little Gilston, Binnabri and Moss Vale were claiming plenty of attention. Thanks to the Guildford Model Railway Group for showing Moss Vale at our open day and also the 50th anniversary. The commercial stands were Casula Hobbies, Iron Horse Hobbies, Frate-N and Keiran Ryan Models. Robert Merrick and Ross Stell took care of the modelling demonstrations. The ladies of Petticoat Junction, as always, looked after needs of the inner man (and woman). They also managed to find time to run the Needles and Natter stand. I have been told that there was a record twenty people that stayed on for pizza for dinner. Thanks to Bruce Harris for another good event.

Final preparations have been made for the 50th anniversary, with 79 bookings for the dinner at the Mortuary Station and the train trip to Berry booked out. The Clubrooms will also be open on Friday night and Saturday for members and visitors.

Barry Wilcockson

MORTDALE BUILDING REPORT

Now that the exhibition is over for another year, we can start to do some of the remaining jobs left to complete the building. By the time you read this, our theatre should be installed with the projector screen and sound system in place as well as new acoustic tiles for the ceiling. There are still a few other jobs left such as the installation of the laundry tub and the range hoods in the kitchen.

N SCALE LAYOUT REPORT

The tunnel portal area at the right hand end of the bridge below Watson's Flat has taken shape with the lowering of the level of the siding at the far end of Watson's Flat to make an easier grade for trains. The area has been covered with plaster bandage, smoothed over with casting plaster then given a coat of colour to remove the snowfield appearance. The area at the left hand end of the bridge has been modified in preparation for the location of the factory building, which is well advanced. The conveyor in the quarry area has been covered in corrugated iron and is now ready for painting. Regular maintenance of the layout is ongoing.

David Bennett

N Layout Supervisor



*The New Truss Bridge on the N scale layout with Lanham Wharf visible on the left.
Photo: David Bennett*

‘PIZZA DISCUSSIONS’

HO FIXED LAYOUT – STONEY CREEK

Greetings, to all you good people and especially the people that make writing ‘PIZZA DISCUSSIONS’ very easy.

The milestones, be they small ones keep on building up so fast it’s hard to keep up with them. With out tell tails out of school one of members said ‘it been 3 weeks since I was last hear and there is so much done’ High praise for the group that work very hard on this huge project. The progress we see on control panels and on top of the layout is the tip of the ice burg. Under the layout is where the hard work happens; this takes much more time and effort to bring to completion.

We need to think about and start operating the layout as a RAILWAY not a train set!!! When ‘Operator’ control comes on line there will be operational rules applied such as all trains will have to originate and terminate from yards (not on the main line) and a few others. We have to get rid of our bad habits now and keep the operational standards up so when operator control comes in there will be no shocks.

A few poor practices that are being used need to be thought about. Poor practices that need to be stopped include: -

Changing locos on the main line: Run your train into a siding to a loco change using the controls and then send the train back on the main line.

Removing trains off the main at pack up time: Run your train into a siding then pack up.

Only operate trains that fit in a siding: If you need to send the train out and then PUSH the second half after it, then the train is too long. Think about on the real railways there are not many people that can push a rake of wagons.

When shunting, use a loco not the 0-5-0 (hand)

Locos and wagons have to be ‘road worthy’ that is, locos need to run and keep running, wagons need to stay on the track and remain coupled. While you are having trouble, others are not getting their run. There are times for testing but during the main running time faulty equipment and/or testing are not permitted. Think about others.

Don’t leave the layout area, while your train is operating. Emergencies excepted when some one is looking after your train.

Be mind full of people waiting to have a run when you have more than one train operating or you have been running for an hour or more.

We all need to lift the standard and keep lifting our standards not only to make the layout operate well. My hope is for good operations become second nature, so others will see AMRA as good prototype operators.

Denis Gilmore

HO Layout Supervisor



*The Mortdale clubrooms during our October Open Day – Oct 14th 2006.
Photo: Glenn Percival*

THE OCTOBER OPEN DAY

October 14th, two weeks after the exhibition, we once again held our biannual Open Day at the Clubrooms. This event has become bigger and bigger over the years, with increasingly more displays for the public. The October Open Day was no exception. Not only were our three fixed layouts operating at close to their maximum capacities but we also had several visiting layouts and stands.

Downstairs we had no less than four layouts operating. As always the *U drive* was providing plenty of entertainment for the kids and Ross Verdich once again operated *Binnabri*. A new addition was the HO scale *Moss Vale*, thanks to the Guildford Model Railway Group. Completing the line up was *Little Gilston* in G scale. All of these layouts will be operating at the 50th Anniversary weekend.

Also exhibiting were Casula Hobbies, Iron Horse Hobbies, Needles & Natter, Frate-N, Kieran Ryan Models, Robert Merrick (fun with styrene), Ross Stell (signals). Plus there was a small Lego display and a memorabilia section.

The Ladies Auxiliary once again did a fine job with catering for the hordes of visitors and members that descended upon the kitchen all day.

Thanks to all the members involved who helped during the day.

CAR PARKING

I have just been made aware of an accident that has happened recently in the Car Park at the Clubrooms. While I will not go into the details of the accident, it is apparent that one members vehicle has hit another's. I'd like to just remind everyone that our Car Park can be a pretty busy place and to please take care, especially when reversing.