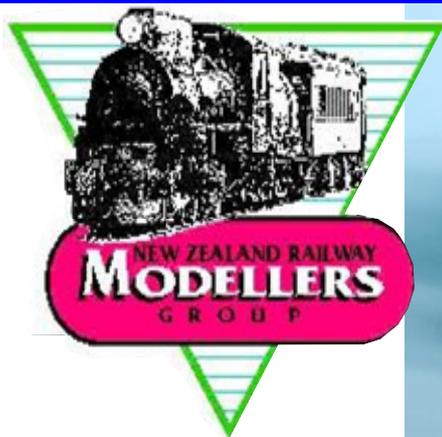


NZR modellers in all scales getting together to share their common interest in our own railways. Regular meetings the **last Sunday** of every month from 10am at rear of **Colin Barry's garage, 7 Hadlow Place, Burnside**. 03 358 3681, colin.barry@clear.net.nz



New member, John Atkinson's WA was not yet fitted with pick-ups, hence the wires.

Newsletter March 2019

In spite of a depressing weather forecast threatening heavy rain and strong winds, apart from two light and very brief showers the morning was mainly sunny and not particularly cold if you had dressed appropriately. As you can see, morning tea was the usual pleasant interlude enjoyed under a blue if not cloudless sky, and mostly in bright sun.

We were privileged to have a new person along. **John Atkinson** had been aware of our group for some time but work in Vancouver and latterly Norway had made it a rather long commute. He says the work away from Christchurch will continue for another year but while back for a short break **John** finally took the opportunity to see what we get up to.

He has a layout but it's 'somewhere in a shipping container' at the moment. We did, however, manage to persuade him to produce an almost completed WA from his bag. A few of us, knowing what that kit was like to build, were impressed.

Apparently the task was not made any easier by some of the valve gear parts going missing, and the unmodified chassis not working. When the original wheels also gave trouble **John** managed to source some cast brass replacements from the USA.

As it happened the new wheels had a trick of their own. Being insulated on only one side, one set had conspired to get itself the opposite way round to the others, meaning that when placed on the track there was a dead short.

With pick-ups not yet fitted there were loose wires to allow the motor to be run, and with the chassis held clear of the track and the wires touched to the rails, the chassis ran very smoothly with no binds even at creep speed.

John had modified the chassis in the following ways:

1. The gearbox is no longer mounted on the motor shaft.
2. A special bracket keeps the gearbox and front axle fixed.
3. The other two axles are sprung.
4. A new motor bracket keeps the motor horizontal.

5. A plastic universal joint transfers power between the motor and gearbox.

6. New jointed side rods are matched to the chassis.

The body is much more standard, although **John** has added extra weight to improve its balance. All in all the general construction and adding of details like pipework is of a high standard. **John** explained that the body has been painted before but he stripped it back to bare metal ready for another go.

To simplify the use of Kadee couplers, he had extended the draft boxes out over the cowcatchers. This gave rise to some comments and suggested alternatives, and **John** has since emailed that he intends taking that advice.

One interesting question, was how and when did our group start? I was able to confirm with **Reuben Romany** that he launched it back in the late 1990s while working at Ironhorse Hobbies.

He found he was constantly getting enquiries from NZR modellers as to where they could help and advice, so he arranged the use of the Garden City Model Railroad Club's Ferrymead meeting room on Sunday mornings and things were soon under way.

**NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY
MODELLERS GROUP**



An informal group to exchange ideas and to improve their modelling ideas and skills that meet last Sunday every month.

ENQUIRIES PHONE: Peter 384.2992 Kelvin 332.4735 Bryan 359.6563

By November 1998 Bryan Lawrence had produced this card, a copy of which is in a notice to members of that date.

Thanks to Colin and Helen Barry for hosting us, and Helen for another fine morning tea
Remember : Come if you can this Sunday : Leave a gold coin before you go



I can't remember why, but we later moved to the tea room above the Canterbury Railway's workshop.

By January 2003 things were at a low ebb. I have a letter on file that I sent to those on the members' list essentially asking if they wanted the group to carry on.

Suitably chastened, 12 came to the next meeting where it was decided to move to **Colin Barry's**, and we've been there ever since.

One of the attractions at **Colin's** in the early days was enough bench space for about eight modellers to work. For a while several did that, but as attendance grew there was no longer enough room — and there were also too many distractions. Smaller groups have used **Colin's** workshop at other times, and one group is currently doing so on alternate Wednesday evenings.

So it turns out following up on **John's** query that today was the 16th anniversary of our gatherings at **Colin's**. And



John, Bryan and John. New member, John Atkinson (left) in conversation with Bryan Lawrence (centre) and John Dudson.

all in all the group seems to have been going for something over 20 years!

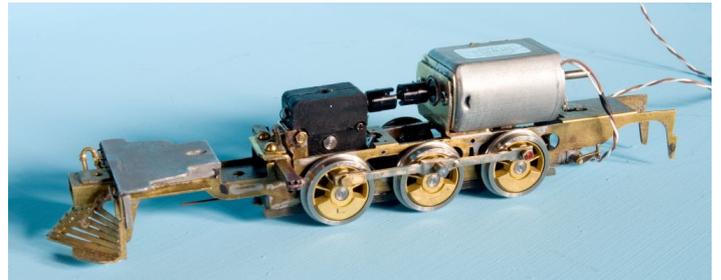
Jessy Blunsdon had brought along an interesting trio of DGs representing the products of Railmaster, Vanguard (Junction) and Trackside Details. Two had been fitted with re-cabs but I'm confused as to which two — the Vanguard and one other — but which?

Jason Horne was thrilled to receive original Eb prints from **Caleb Scott**, thus clearing up a lot of questions about various details as he works towards completing models of every class associated with the Arthur's Pass-Otira electrification.

Paul Christensen had reached the end of the line with his search for more detail of the Kempthorne Prosser signage carried on a number of K class wagons from the late 1930s. His contact at KP's successor, Ravensdown Fertiliser, had not been able to find anyone left on the staff who could remember. We have black and white photos, so the only suggestion now is look for the colours in old KP magazine ads.

Brent O'Callahan's firm, Lighting Specialists, had just completed a move into new premises in Gasson St near Black's Fasteners. Always worth a look for that hard to get light bulb or tube.

— Peter



John Atkinson's Wa chassis and drive arrangement .



Some of the morning tea gathering. From left, John Atkinson, John Dudson, Paul Christensen, Kevin Leigh and group founder, Reuben Romany.

Morning tea time chats



Jason Horne (left) and Brent O'Callahan in a relaxed moment.



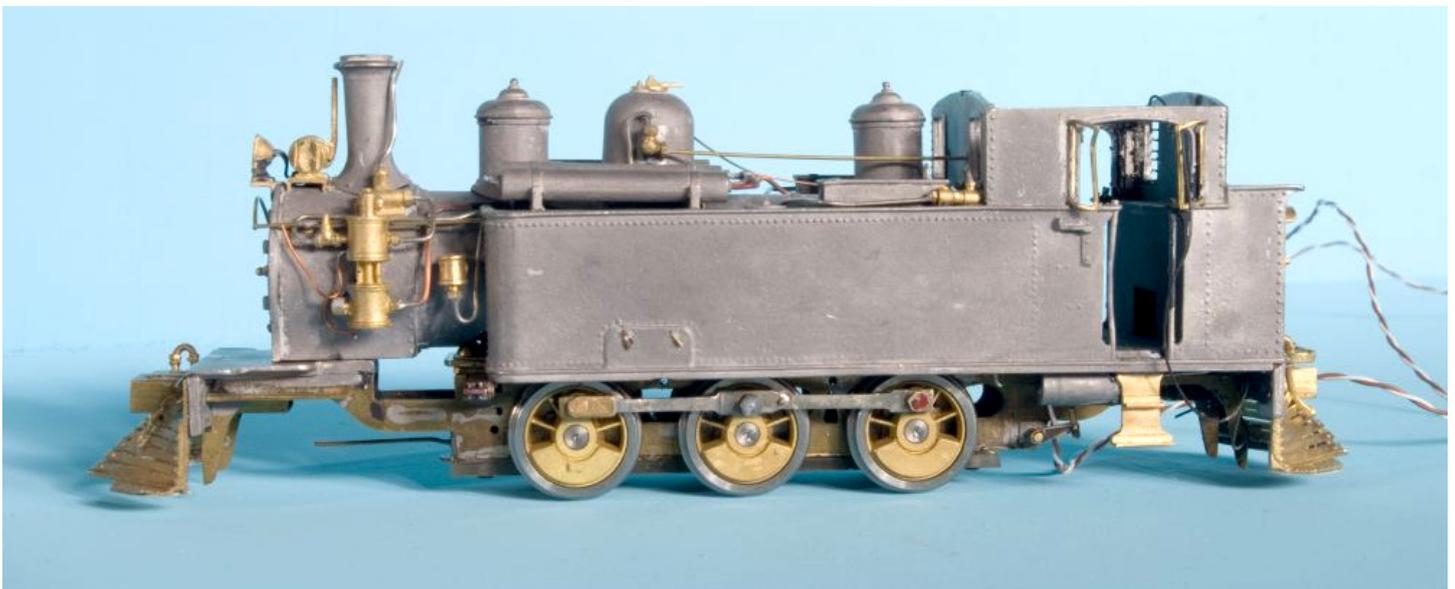
New member, John Atkinson in conversation with Bryan Lawrence (lower right). John's current work as a designer of outdoor recreation equipment has taken him to Vancouver and more recently to Norway but he hopes to return to Christchurch in about a year. In the past he worked for five years in the toolroom at PDL Industries using skills that have no doubt helped with his railway modelling.



Ian Murie (right) could perhaps be interpreting John Dudson's thoughts into NZ Sign language?



Brent O'Callahan (left), Jessy Blunson (centre) and Jason Horne enjoying a morning tea chat, while Colin Barry's garage provides a familiar background.

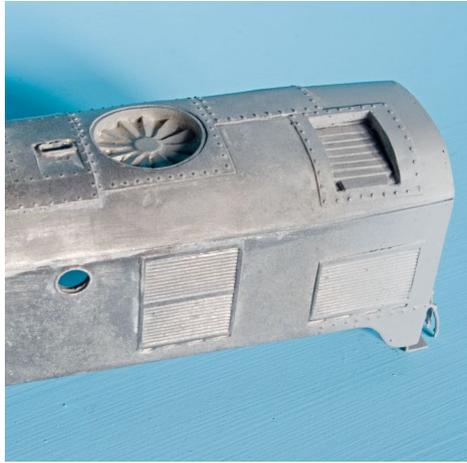
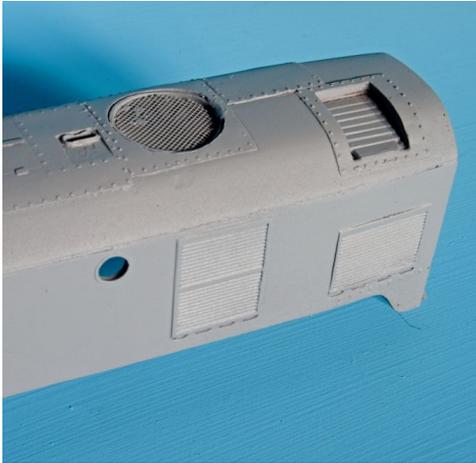


As this view shows, John Atkinson is well under way with a WA built from a JG kit that his father bought in the 1990s. As such it was probably one of the first release, not that that matters as John has replaced the original suspension system with a rigid front axle to carry the gearbox, and springs on the other axles. John has made new jointed side rods exactly matched to the chassis, and fitted cast brass driving wheels obtained from the US.

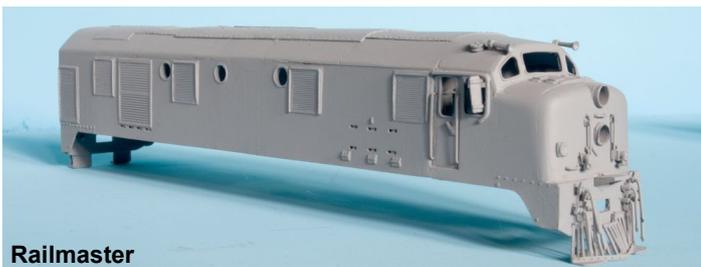
Jessy's trio of DGs



Three makes of Dg body and two makes of the new cab make for interesting comparisons. Based on the radiator fans, the model on the left is a Railmaster, centre is a Vanguard/Junction Models, and right is a Trackside Details.



Do the steadily improving radiator fans provide a clue? If so, we have Railmaster left, Vanguard centre, and Trackside right. The number of rivets on all is correct, by the way, but the Trackside model has a much more definite exhaust port.



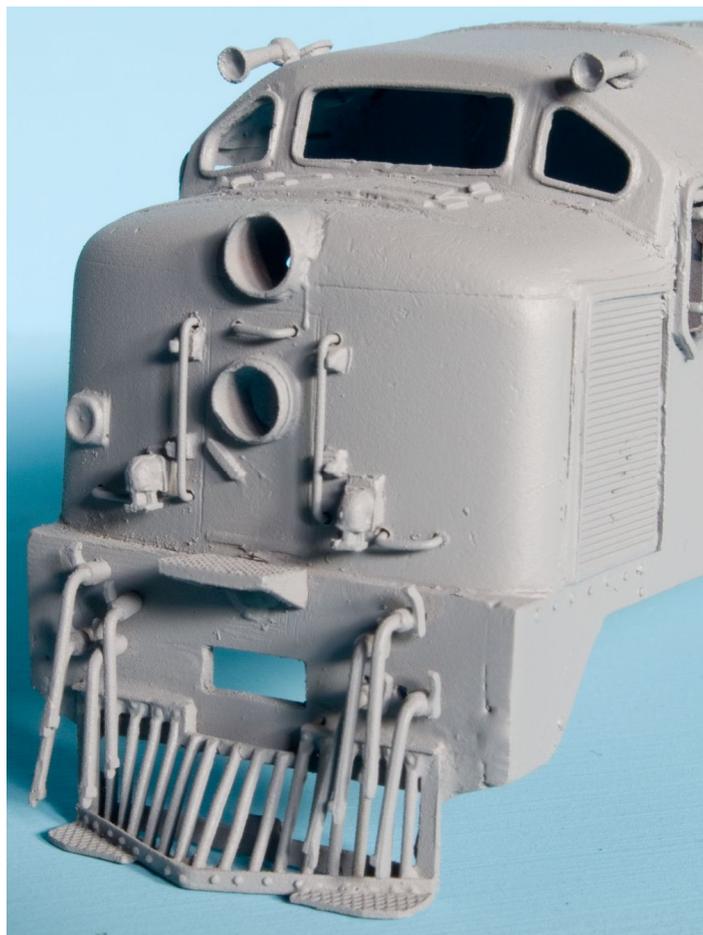
Railmaster



Vanguard/Junction Models



Trackside Details



Remembering Roger Bennetts 31 August 1943 - 7 March 2019



Bryan Lawrence photo

Suddenly and very unexpectedly, on the evening of March 7, our good friend and fellow modeller, Roger Bennetts had a massive heart attack and died. Roger was at Mainline Steam doing what he liked best, mixing with fellow railfans and carrying out electrical work for them.

While Roger rarely associated with us as a group, almost all of us would have known him in some capacity. Perhaps it might be through the *TALMR* layout that Tom Lynch, Bryan Lawrence, Colin Barry in the early days, and Roger constructed between them, because 'to catch the public's attention the trains needed to move'.

Roger, Tom and Bryan took *TALMR* to countless Christchurch train shows, starting in the late 1990s. They also took it on several trips to Invercargill and to a couple of Christchurch conventions. Although the layout was originally Tom's initiative (*TALMR* stands for Tom and Anne Lynch Model Railway), Roger came in many ways to be the main driving force.

Roger also became increasingly active in the Garden City Model Railroad Club and did wonders with the NZR section of the club's 16.5mm layout.

Members there recall his regular successes in their annual model competitions — and Roger's modelling also received a number of awards nationally in convention model competitions.

His part in the story of the *TALMR* layout as it was 20 years ago was told in a major feature in the February 2000 *NZMR Journal*. Roger's modules drew on and reflected his early life growing up in Hornby. A couple of houses are actually based on the homes of families he knew, and it was gratifying to have one of them recognise her old home on the layout.

Every year Roger would incorporate some new feature or novelty into his modules and he would be disappointed should anyone miss noticing.

Roger was a highly qualified electrician, especially in the industrial field. I understand that his father was in the same trade and in 1959 took the family to live at Otematata while the Benmore dam was being built. Roger followed him into the electrical trade and the Ministry of Works. Returning to Christchurch in 1972 he was

saddened to find that the steam locomotives had all gone, as well as all the local branch lines.

While working on the hydro scheme Roger had already shown what he was capable of as a modeller, building a very creditable diesel earth scraper completely from scratch. For quite a while after returning to Christchurch he was taken with model aircraft, and in particular helicopters.

But it was almost inevitable that he would sooner or later discover NZR modelling and the ability that gave him re-create the days of KBs, JAs and all the rest hustling their loads of goods and passengers through Hornby, not half a mile from where he used to live, their sounds carried on the crisp night air.

Although 75, and plagued by arthritis, particularly in his hands, Roger never retired. He did reduce his hours, though, and that gave him more time to spend modelling. No-one knows how many models he had but it will turn out to be a very large number.

For all that, his wife Leonie and son Wayne say the *TALMR* modules and the models themselves are too precious to ever be sold.

I can't remember my first meeting with Roger, but like so many others it was probably through the train shows, but I always feel the best way to really get to know someone is to go on a trip with them.

A number of us, including Roger, went to Nelson in November 1997 to visit NZR modellers there, and long hours travelling in the car together gave us the opportunity to talk and exchange aspirations. He would have liked a home layout but for all his commitment to modelling he never did anything about it.

He felt his only option for a suitable space would have been a second storey on his garage. He said at the time that his neighbours would never agree to that. But as I got to know him better I realised that Roger would not have wanted to intrude on them in that way. So he made do with his *TALMR* modules and the NZR section of the Garden City layout, and we are all the richer for that.

Everyone seemed to know that Roger would help out with any wiring that needed doing and I made use of such favours three times. The first project was wiring a large shed that I was renovating for a workshop and model railway. Cash was tight at the time so I wanted to do as much of the job myself as I could. Roger on the other hand was having no amateurs. Whatever needed to be done by a tradesman he insisted on doing. Electricity was not to be messed with. Had I known that he only intended to charge a pittance for his time I needn't have worried.

It turned out he was also very loyal to local industry. On that occasion he reluctantly used cable and fittings made in China that I had bought from Bunnings, but on my next two jobs he had me worked out. He would supply good NZ cable and PDL fittings — even though they are now made overseas anyway!

Roger's cups of tea are legend, and with me it was no different. The one downside to getting Roger to help with wiring was that he would do it in a given month rather than on a given day. When he was ready he would phone and shortly after, roll up. 'Must be time for a cup of tea' would be his first words. This I would duly supply and we would then sit chatting over it for maybe an hour or more, me all the while thinking, 'what's this costing?' I'm really sorry, Roger, it took a while but eventually I realised it wasn't costing anything. In fact you charged almost nothing for

your time, just the materials. The fact was that you just liked to help out and make sure things were done properly and safely.

I suppose anyone reading this could come away with the impression that Roger's passion for modelling might have seen him neglecting his domestic duties, but that was never so. Everything about the property was well maintained and immaculate and the household well provided for. He just chose to spend the evenings at his modelling bench instead of watching TV.

These few recollections are of a man I still can't believe is no longer with us. My heartfelt sympathy goes to Leonie and Wayne, who I know feel the same way.

— Peter Ross



This undated Bryan Lawrence photo appears to be from one of the early *TALMR* visits to Invercargill. Roger is surveying a very busy scene from behind a row of temporary cardboard buildings. In the background behind his right shoulder, Don Wills is chatting to local stalwart, David McCallum, while on the other side, with arms folded is Tom Lynch.



A scene on Roger's Kempthorne Prosser module as it was in late 1999. A KB-hauled express heads for Christchurch while a very new DSC moves wagons on the KP siding.



Some of Roger's work on the Garden City MRC 16.5mm-gauge layout.

**AP
19** Modeller's weekend
ARTHUR'S PASS April 12-14 2019

Whatever spins your wheels!

*Limited places * workshop for me, accommodation and shared food (some meals are self catering)*

Modelling * Train on Train action * Kindred spirits

more info: marshalltimj@gmail.com

It's not too late but places are limited. Email enquiries to Tim Marshall marshalltimi@gmail.com.

**RAILS
FROM THE
RUBBLE**

NZAMRC National Model Railway Convention
Friday 10th - Monday 13th April 2020
St Andrews College, 347 Papanui Road, Christchurch

The convention website is now up and running and being regularly updated at modelrailcon.co.nz
Use the Contact Us page to get on the mailing list for newsletters as they come out.

February roll call:

Glen Anthony	John Dudson	Tom Lynch
John Atkinson	Les Frost	Ian Murie
Colin Barry	Jason Horne	Brent O'Callahan
Jessy Blunsdon	Bryan Lawrence	Reuben Romany
Paul Christensen	Kevin Leigh	Peter Ross