



# The Limited

May, 2020

A newsletter for the model railway clubs in Auckland.

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## Editor's Desk

The lockdown provided a good test of how well Auckland clubs can communicate electronically with their members and which remote activities they can run. Later in this issue I will go through what some clubs did. Here I will make general comments.



My experience was that most clubs decided early on to use email to send interesting items about model and prototypical trains. Not surprisingly, the

enthusiasm for this form of communication sometimes dwindled as the lockdown wore on.

Other forms of communication were postings on Facebook and information added to club websites. Most Auckland clubs did not make extensive use of Facebook. One reason I heard is that a significant portion of club members either do not follow Facebook or make limited use of it. Club websites were little used, with one website being down for the lockdown. This raises the general question of whether it is worthwhile for local clubs to have a website, especially if the club has a good Facebook page and uses email to communicate with members.

What happened during the lockdown suggests each club would benefit from having a communications officer. This person would handle the club's social media accounts and publish the club's electronic newsletter if the club has one. I believe most local clubs can ill-afford the time and money to publish a hard-copy newsletter or magazine.

## Calendar of Events and Non-Events

The Calendar of Events remains ill-defined. It is easier to talk about upcoming events that will not be held or whose status is uncertain.

The Taupo Hobby Expo, scheduled for July, has been cancelled.

For the last two years, the Auckland Märklin Club has hosted the Whangaparaoa Train Show and Out West Hobby Expo in July and November respectively. The current status for these two events is unscheduled.

The Hamilton Model Railroaders have a train show scheduled for October. The show's status is pending, subject to the Covid-19 restrictions.

The status of the 9 mil 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary weekend, scheduled for Labour Weekend in the Hawke's Bay, was 'completely up in the air' as of early May.

## NZAMRC 2020 Convention

There is still no word on when the next NZAMRC convention will be held. Possible dates suggested earlier this year were Easter 2021 and Easter 2022. The NZAMRC would like people's opinions on a suitable date for the convention.

## AMRA 2021



The next AMRA convention will be Queen's birthday weekend 2021, and based at the Northcote Birkenhead Rugby Union & Sports Club beside the Birkenhead RSA.

The first convention newsletter was going to be emailed about six weeks ago. This did not happen, mainly because of a death in the family of the person in charge of email operations. The organizing committee is meeting Queen's Birthday Monday and will discuss the newsletter among other matters.

## Brian Hill

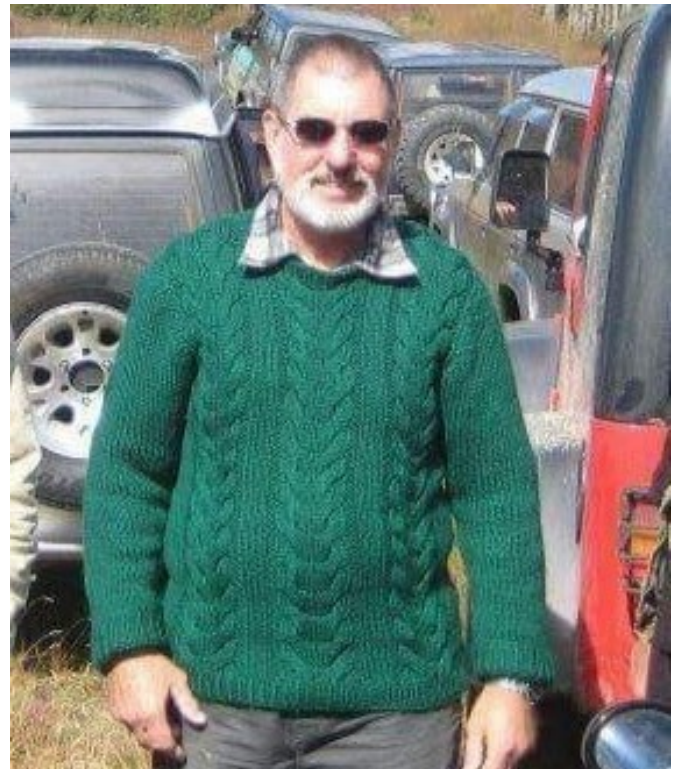
Brian Hill, 71, president of the Western District MRC, passed away unexpectedly early April. Brian had had an enjoyable day with his family and died in his sleep.

I met Brian at the WDMRC several years ago. I found Brian an enthusiastic advocate of the club and the hobby. He had been president of the WDMRC for a few years when he passed away, and possibly had had a previous stint as president. I recently learnt Brian was in the hobby at least 45 years.

Brian's early involvement with the hobby was with a large OO layout in the basement of a house. There were around 40 locomotives and they were run using Hornby's Zero 1 digital system, an early DCC system that was incompatible with the NMRA standard.

Brian was more interested in passenger cars and services than freight cars and operations. On several visits to the Western Districts MRC I saw Brian running a passenger train on the club's N-scale layout. He also made trips on passenger trains in Europe.

Model Railways was not Brian's only hobby. He did off-roading and, not surprising, enjoyed talking about that hobby. The photograph below, supplied by Michael Hill, shows Brian at an off-road meet.



You will be sadly missed Brian.

## Auckland Garden Railway Society Inc

The AGRSI communicated with its members through email, a weekly newsletter by John Boyson on the layout he is building, and the posting of photographs and videos on the AGRSI Facebook page.

The highlight for the club during the last two months was the Seven Sharp item on Michael Hilliar's layout. I received an email one Sunday morning from Carolyn Robinson of TVNZ. Although we had sold our TV twelve years ago, I did recognize Carolyn's name. This recognition along with some simple checks was enough for me to email Carolyn Michael's contact details.

Michael rang me later that day to say Carolyn and the cameraperson had left. They managed to complete the filming just before the rain came. Michael said he had tried to promote garden railways as a hobby but was unsure what would appear in the final cut of the Seven Sharp item.

The video appeared the next week. Even though there was not a lot of direct promotion of garden railways, the item was very good. The video is available on the AGRSI's Facebook page and on the Seven Sharp webpage.

The AGRSI has not held a monthly meeting since February. The next meeting is tentatively planned for July.

## Auckland Märklin Club

As well as sending out emails to members and making additional Facebook postings, the AMC ran a photograph competition. The rules of the competition were simple – submit any number of photographs of a layout or layouts. The winner of the competition has not been announced. My favourite photograph is that below.



The AMC still does not know if its application to rent part of the old Massey Library in Westgate was successful. The decision has been delayed by the New Zealand Police's request to use the library during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mid-December last year, an Auckland modeller submitted a complaint to the Human Rights Commission. The complaint was about a large copy of the canton for the 13-mullet version of the Stainless Banner on display as part of a layout at the 2019 Te Atatu train show. This show was hosted by the AMC.

The complainant said that they did not believe any form of punitive action was warranted. Instead, they regarded the matter as requiring some re-education of the parties involved. The complainant also said they particularly wished to see better guidelines on what is acceptable for public display and in what context.

The complainant withdrew their complaint mid-May. I have not heard if the HRC will be publishing better guidelines.

On a related point, my understanding is that the Te Atatu train show is unlikely to be held this year. One reason, common to many train shows, is that the show takes a lot of effort to organize and there is great uncertainty about the size of the profit.

## Auckland MRC

The AMRC did not send many emails to members during the lockdown, but it did hold its 2020 AGM. Instead of having a live meeting using for example Zoom, the meeting was conducted over several weeks using email.

The officers of the club were returned unopposed: Roger Woolmer (pres), Ray Flint (sec), and Wayne Brindle (treas). Ray agreed to continue as the editor of the club's magazine *The Clinker* as Malcolm Ross has been unable to resume the role of editor.

The AGM approved some wording changes to the club's constitution. The club's finances were little changed from the previous year and the annual subscription was kept at \$20, the lowest of any MR club that has a non-zero annual subscription fee.

Two matters were discussed under general business. The first was the idea of visiting layouts and railways in the coming year the club has never visited or not visited for a long time. I support this idea because I believe variety will contribute to keeping members. The second matter was that of getting new members, particularly UK modellers.

Auckland used to have an association for UK modellers. This association had folded by the time I joined the hobby mid-2015. I was unaware the association had existed and in 2017 I started asking Auckland UK modellers if they were interested in forming a group or at least setting up an email

group. There was limited interest. I joined the AMRC in 2018, and after visiting a good selection of AMRC layouts I realized the majority of the AMRC members were UK modellers.

There are other Auckland clubs UK modellers could join. The Auckland Central MRC has several UK modellers and its Sheffield layout. The North Shore MRC has UK modellers and part of the club's main layout models a scene in northern England.

## City of Sails MRC

The CoSMRC held a meeting earlier this week, its first meeting since February. The official reason for the meeting was to run a hands-on clinic about weathering a boxcar. The unofficial reason was to have an in-person catch-up. During the lockdown, members of the club had kept in contact to some extent with email.

CoSMRC president Michael Hill gave the clinic. He covered the use of powders and some paints, and described differences between cheap and dear products. The photograph below shows six CoSMRC members and one WDMRC member in different states of engagement.



The CoSMRC plans holding a clinic on decaling in two months. Contact me (Philip Sharp) at [pwsharp101@gmail.com](mailto:pwsharp101@gmail.com) if you are interested in attending.

## North Shore MRC

Dave Webley, president of the NSMRC publishes the club's combination newsletter and magazine *The Waybill*. This has a flexible publication schedule and

Dave used this to advantage during the lockdown, publishing two issues one month apart.

The NSMRC re-opened just over two weeks ago and has strictly adhered to the Covid-19 restrictions. The club decided not to hold operating sessions for the time being because it would be impossible to satisfy the one and two metres rules, particularly around Amberly and Glydebourne stations.

## Western Districts MRC

The club ran at least two virtual club meetings near the end of the lock down. I did not attend these but from what I heard attendees enjoyed the meetings. The club is now re-open for in-person meetings, subject to Covid-19 restrictions.

Brian Hill's passing, see earlier in this issue, meant the club was without a president. Michael Hill who was vice-president, is now the interim WDMRC president.

The club is currently renovating its main layout. The goal is to have the renovations completed for the 2021 AMRA convention, a demanding goal. Now that the club is open for in-person attendance, work on the renovations has resumed in earnest.

## Lionel Layouts?

A member of the Auckland MRC recently asked me what Lionel Layouts there were in Auckland. I did not know, so I am asking here what layouts there are. You can email me at [pwsharp101@gmail.com](mailto:pwsharp101@gmail.com)

## Classified Ad

Free to a good home, New Zealand Railfan magazine from 1994 to latest. Winner takes all!! Please contact me on 09 534 9317 or 0274 850 727 (Colin Zeff).

## Contact Details

James Kelso, [jameskelso250@gmail.com](mailto:jameskelso250@gmail.com)  
Philip Sharp, [pwsharp101@gmail.com](mailto:pwsharp101@gmail.com)

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