



The Limited

September, 2020

A newsletter for the model railway clubs in Auckland.

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Editor's Desk

If you were to ask club members what the activities of a model railway club are, the more common answers would probably include modelling, operating sessions, and assisting those new to the hobby.



A less likely answer is community service. Despite this, I believe the clubs in Auckland taken as a group have of late made a reasonable fist of community service. For example, there has been the open days run by the North Shore MRC and last year's pop-up

train show run by the Western Districts MRC. To be sure, the committee of both clubs are not starry-eyed and were also holding the events to raise money and possibly to gain new members.

More recently, two clubs have volunteered their time and expertise to aid two organisations. More about this later in the issue.

In this issue I have included short items on events outside the Auckland area. My justification for the inclusion is that the event was either well attended by Auckland modellers or I expect it to be so.

Calendar of Events

I believe the following will go ahead. I recommend you check closer to the time.

10-11 Oct. Train Show, Hamilton Gardens, 10am – 4pm both days. \$6 (adult), \$3 (child), \$15 (family). Hamilton Model Railroaders. The Hamilton Gardens make excellent viewing, adding to the enjoyment of attending the train show.

18 Oct. Auckland NZR Modelling Day, 10am – 4pm, Scout Hall, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead. *All modellers welcome.* Free entry. The last modelling day I attended was well patronized.

23-26 Oct. 9 mil 50th Weekend, St Andrew's Hall, Market Street, Hastings. Basic fee is \$55, includes some meals. Overnight security is planned. Paul Berntsen bernieofthebay@xtra.co.nz

6-8 Nov. 2020 mini AMRA, Glenview Club, 211 Peacocks Road, Hamilton. John Hart theharts.raglan@xtra.co.nz

8 Nov. Collectors Toy and Model Fair, 10am – 1pm, Mt Eden War Memorial Hall, 487 Dominion Rd, Balmoral, Auckland. Entry \$6 (adults), \$0 (child).

29 Nov. Auckland NZR Modelling Day, see above.

9 Mil 50th Weekend

As described in the above Calendar of Events (CoE), the 9 Mil 50th Weekend will be held in Hastings over Labour Weekend. Just under 40 people have registered, including a large contingent from Auckland. There is still time to register for the weekend. Contact Paul Berntsen at the email address given in the CoE.

The weekend will be a mixture of socializing, six clinics, socializing, films, a quiz, and socializing. I will be attending and besides meeting new people and having a break from Auckland, possibly the most important part of the weekend for me will be the discussion entitled “9 mil, where do we go from here?” I believe other scales, along with events such as the NZAMRC convention, and local clubs would benefit from having a similar discussion, provided the discussion leads to action.

Mini AMRA 2020

There is still plenty of time to register for this event. There is a registration form at the end of this issue. The form contains a general description of the activities at the event.

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.

You can email me your email address if you are not on the email list for AMRA 2021 and I will pass it on to the organizers.

Malcolm Ross

Malcolm Ross passed away late July after a long illness.

Malcolm was a stalwart of the Auckland MRC, Auckland's oldest club. Most AMRC members are UK modellers and Malcolm was no exception.

Malcolm was perhaps best known in the hobby as the editor of the AMRC's monthly newsletter *The Clinker* from 2004 to one year ago. The most distinctive feature of *The Clinker* under Malcolm's editorship was the long, well-researched articles on the railways in Britain. Malcolm's almost encyclopedic knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject clearly came through in his writing. Anyone following on from Malcolm as editor would know they had big shoes to fill.

The undated photograph below was supplied by Wayne Brindle and shows Malcom (black cap) with the members of the AMRC at the Helensville Railway Museum. Malcolm got a lot of enjoyment out of the meetings.



I first met Malcolm about three years ago when he attended an open day at the North Shore MRC. Malcolm was using a stick and I was little concerned about him getting up and down the steps to the layout room. The steps were little bother but I do remember Malcolm being pleased to sit down in the lounge after his tour of the layout. Malcolm must have made an impression on me because I joined the Auckland MRC a while later.

Malcolm was instrumental in handling Chris Greenhill's model railway estate after Chris died early 2019. Malcolm worked with family members of Chris to catalogue and price Chris' extensive collection of Great Western rolling stock and other items. Malcolm helped organize several sessions, one of which was at his house, where members of the AMRC could buy items. I bought one or two items, actually quite a few (they were well priced).

Malcolm's departure will leave a big gap in the life of many Auckland modellers.

Free-Mo Running Meet

The latest Auckland-Hamilton-Tauranga Free-Mo running meet was held last weekend (September 26-27) in the Paeroa War Memorial Hall. I attended part of Saturday morning.

As with previous AHT Free-Mo running meets, this meet was advertised by word of mouth because it was intended for people with at least one Free-Mo module and guests of these people. Fifteen people brought modules. Several people brought more than one module, the most being five.

The total amount of track was over 100 metres, significantly longer than the 87 metres at the previous running meet. Steve Waugh said that setting up the modules went more smoothly than previously. Steve attributed this greater efficiency in part to Alex Shepherd, an LCC expert, who coordinated the setting up of the electronics.

The photograph below was taken from the hall stage and shows about three-quarters of the layout. The rest of the layout is in a side room to the right of the photograph. Still space for more modules. 😊



Auckland Garden Railway Society Inc

August and September were quiet months for the AGRSI. The running meet in August was cancelled and the combined AGM / running meet schedule for the third week of September was postponed until December.

One recent decision made by the AGRSI committee was to recommend to the December AGM that the 2020/21 annual membership be \$0 for existing members. New members will still pay the normal \$25 fee. The justification for the zero fee is that six months of AGRSI meetings have been cancelled this

year and members have not received good value for their \$25.

Assuming the \$0 membership fee is approved by the AGM, the AGRSI will be the second Auckland club to charge \$0 for the 2020/21 year. The first club was the Auckland Märklin Club. Their fee for the 2019/20 year was \$75. The fee was reduced to \$0 to recognize the effort members have put into running recent train shows and because some club meetings this year had been cancelled.

Auckland Märklin Club

First the bad news. The AMC's application to lease part of the old Massey Library was unsuccessful. The successful organisation was Sport Waitakere. Barry McCullough's (the AMC president) comment to the AMC members was 'back to the drawing board'.

The good news is that the club has all but completed a small layout for an organisation that raises money for children with a hole in the heart. The layout will be auctioned this or next week. This auction will be televised for the TV3 show *The Project*. All the proceeds will go to the hole in the heart organisation. The layout, see the photograph below, was made mostly from items donated by AMC club members.



Barry told me on the phone today that he will be challenging other clubs to do something similar.

The AMRC held a very well attended August meeting at Warrick Harman's layout. I believe the good attendance was in part due to the cancellation of previous meetings.

Getting to Warrick's place is an adventure in itself. Warrick lives in a gated community and a two-step process is required for entry. First you have to be let through the front gate and gather at a central place. Then its to Warrick's house to see the layout.

Auckland MRC

The September was cancelled. The August meeting went ahead and was held at Graham Leary's layout out in the country. This was my third visit to Graham's layout and I was keen to see what changes this enthusiastic modeller had made.

Graham models a fictional English village and surrounding country side in OO. As I did my last visit, my first action when I arrived was to check the cricket game on the village green. Sadly, the match had been suspended because of Covid-19.

Graham's layout is very full and looked complete to me. Not so to Graham. As I said above, Graham is very enthusiastic about the hobby and typifies the modeller who is always tinkering with their layout. For example, Graham had several wagon kits on display that he intends building.

The photograph below shows one of Graham steam locomotive. No guesses as to which railway Graham is a devotee of.



City of Sails MRC

The club's August meeting was postponed to early September. The main part of the meeting was a hands-on clinic on decaling facilitated by Paul Hobbs. The clinic was at the Western District Model Railway Club and seven of the club eleven members attended. Having seven meant the club did not run afoul of the cap in Auckland at the time of 10 people in gatherings.

Paul first gave a PowerPoint introduction to decaling. This introduction generated a few questions and then it was to the hands-on activities. This had two phases. We first practiced putting several decals on to a strip of smooth plastic. As part of this, Paul challenged us to lay down a thin, straight 10-centimetre long decal. I need more practice. In phase two, we practised applying Solvaset to decals.

The thoroughly enjoyable clinic was finished off with a moderately calorific supper.

The second Zoom meeting for Division 5 of the NMRA's Australasian Region was held early September. This meeting was open to all NMRA members in New Zealand. Paul Hobbs, James Kelso and Philip Sharp attended. There were two layout tours during the meeting. One tour was of James' large, incomplete, triple deck mushroom layout. James showed electronic dexterity by conducting the tour using a smart phone and a laptop.

North Shore MRC

Saturday, August 1, the NSMRC held its first open day since the lockdown. The open day ran for five hours from 10am to 3pm.

Visitors signed or tagged in and made a gold coin donation if they wished. They then took as much time as they wanted to look at the Waitemata & Chelsea RR upstairs. After exiting the layout room, visitors could view the Thomas layout the club was then repairing for the Wilson Centre (see below) and take one or more free magazines. They could also view the rest of the club downstairs. Club members were available at most points to answer questions. One pre-adult went around three times, his father clearly being very obliging.

When I left at 11:45am, 70 people had already attended the open day. This increased to 186 by the end of the open day, three times higher than the best of the previous open days. The club committee discussed why this three-fold increase occurred and reached no firm conclusion, although the unintended mention on a local radio station was thought to have significantly increased the promotion of the event. In addition, the event was advertised more widely on-line through Eventfinda and a website for events in Auckland.

The next NSMRC open day will not be held until Auckland is at Level 1.

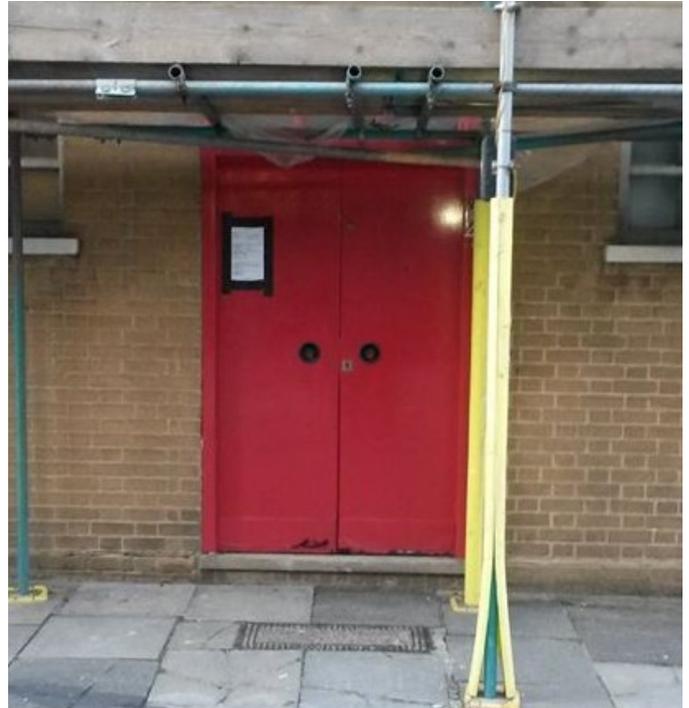
In June, the NSMRC was contacted by the Wilson Centre for Children, a child rehabilitation service in Takapuna, and asked if the club could restore a Thomas layout the centre had. The layout had borne the brunt of much enthusiastic use and was in need of TLC.

Members of the club acted quickly. They viewed the layout at the Wilson Centre, transported the layout back to the club, and got to work. The refurbished layout, see the photograph below taken from the club's Facebook page, has since been returned to the Wilson Centre.



The Red Door

The red door in the photograph below is no ordinary red door. It is the main entrance to the *The Model Railway Club* in central London. The *The* is part of the club's name. The TMRC was established in 1910 and bills itself as the oldest MRC in the world.



I was fortunate enough to visit the club several years ago while in London. I have four lasting memories from the visit. The club members I met were very friendly and helpful. The library is large with over 4000 books. The club was running out of space for the library and was planning to eliminate some books. In what I thought of as the main room there was a small canteen, and a collection of a dozen or so test tracks mounted on a well-preserved wooden frame. There were several layouts in the building and as is common in England the layouts were small.

If you are ever in London, I encourage you to contact the club and see if you can arrange a visit.

Contact Details

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