

# The SCOOP

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The newsletter for the Knoxville Area Model Railroad Club, Inc.  
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## **Conductor's Comments - Larry Burkholder, President**

Our next regular club meeting will be Sunday, April 6th. We will have a very short business meeting to cover anything that I am not up to date on due to our travels most of March. Our museum open house will be on the 20th.

As I write my part for the Scoop this month my wife and I are just finishing two weeks touring New Zealand. It has been a great trip with friendly people and beautiful scenery everywhere. I have only gotten to photograph a few railway subjects, but we did do a 4.5 hour ride on their Tranz Alpine Express across the southern NZ Alps. It was spectacular, but would be even better in a couple months when they get snow. NZ passenger rail is privately owned and, like in the US, is quite limited in coverage. Of course, there are only a half dozen rail lines covering the country. There are only about 5 mm people in NZ and about 2 mm of them live in Auckland. They also don't produce much here, so freight transport by rail is relatively small. Since most things are imported they are quite expensive compared to the same thing in the US. Of course, the slide in the value of the US dollar doesn't help us travelers.

According to Kel Shearson, Superintendent of the New Zealand Division of the Australasian Region of NMRA, there is a reasonable model railroading community in NZ, with about 2000 known. However, only about 25 are NMRA members. There is a NZ MR meeting held every two years. Most do their own thing without club affiliation. Others stick to special interest groups. There are four small clubs in Auckland. I visited a large modern-day multidecked HO operating layout in Auckland that is considered the best in NZ. The layout owner likes BNSF, but his operating partners add their own favorite road names. Kel Shearson is located in Wellington and models Nickel Plate Road in HO. His layout is large and is also set up for operations. NZ railroads are narrow gauge and are modeled as Sn3.5. Hobby shops sell this gauge, but because of the limited rail service most modelers model US or European railroads. I am also meeting with a couple model railroaders here in Christchurch this afternoon. Both model US and one is in N scale. I am told that there are essentially no layouts set up in Christchurch at this time. Most are portable modules. I have a number of pictures of the two large HO layouts, but can not download them to my computer now, so can not include any for this issue. I will post some on our web page after we get home.

Since I have been out of touch, hopefully our division coordinators can cover any issues or news of interest to the club.

## **HO Division – Alex Cameron**

Here are the dates for April, 2008. Regular club Sunday meeting on April 6 and April 20 (operation session), starting about 1:30. Saturday work sessions will be on April 12 and April 26, starting about 9:30. Provisional Thursday work sessions will be on April 3, 10, 17, and 24, starting at 9:30, but you will need to check with me to see if we will actually meet that day.

The attendance on Thursdays has been fairly constant, but, as I have said, you still need to check with me on a week to week basis to see if there is going to be a Thursday work session.

We will continue to have an operating session on the third Sunday. Again, I hadn't prepared before hand for the March operating session, but it only took a short time for us to get set up for it. The session went alright, but attendance was not as good as in February, and all the trains were not run. Progress on car cards and waybills continues slowly. Maybe for April!!

Scenery progress on the mine area has been progressing steadily, with most of the work in the coke oven area.

We continue to address track problems. And have fixed several more. Thinking back on the ones that have been fixed, nearly all of these were caused by the sub-roadbed and roadbed being uneven, and causing dips or kinks in the rails. Gauge of the track has seldom been a problem.

There have been more few cars have been checked now for weight, coupler height, and so on, and more still need to be done. This is being done by several dedicated members.

When you can, come and see what has been happening. Come and runs trains, or just hang around.

## **N/Z-Scale Activities - Bruce McElhoe, N Coordinator**

It's spring and the call of yard work is starting to cause some time management problems. After consulting the Farmers Almanac and my weather rock I've concluded that time spent being involved with trains is more rewarding. NO weeds, No lawn mowing, and No blisters from all of the digging.

### **N-Scale:**

At our last gathering we were surprised by the visit of a past member Greg Wroblicky. Greg had been busy working up in Johnson City but has recently relocated back to Oak Ridge. The layout welcomes his Western Pacific colors and rejoining our wee crew.

Charlie Womac has modified two double track portals for the tunnel entrances on the peninsula. Due to the n-track track spacing the normal portals were too narrow. To finish the portals, a new keystone needs to be made and they're good to go.

Bob Strickland has acquired some long flights of stairs. The plan is to use these to build a boat house and docks near the coal fired power plant. We have the boats and now there is a plan to moor them.

The mountain dividing the logging camp from the soon to be installed lumber mill is still taking shape. There seems to be no end to the gluing and carving of Styrofoam. The stream bed has been roughed that will include a series of short waterfalls. The mill structure is built but awaiting additional detailing before final placement on the layout.

### **Z-Scale:**

Not much to report this month. With some key members enjoying winter runaways and vacationing in New Zealand the layout has been static. It's hoped that we can start working on things soon.

### **Large Scale Rails - Brad Tutt**

The S scale folks are still building our buildings on Wednesday and we are not getting much done on our modules in the club area. We hope to get started soon since we have invited the Blue Ridge S Scalers group to our club on Saturday May 31. Jim Schall has contacted several vendors and has scheduled clinics for our guests. We will also be setting up the triangle layout from the mall for the weekend for those who would like to operate. More about our gathering next month as details come together.

The G scale group is still looking for track and/or donations to help with the garden layout expansion at CMOR. So far, so good but lots of work to go so let Mark know if you can lend a hand now that warmer weather is here. Please continue to use the website for club announcements and hope to see you at our monthly gatherings and club meetings.

Keep on Chugging!!

**KAMRI Web Site - Bruce McElhoe**, Web Site Moderator -  
hmcelhoe@aol.com

A KAMRI web site use seminar is still promised. We will try and target a spring gathering time

Remember that our newsletter is always posted prior to the first Sunday gathering of each month if not by the first day of that month. The calendar is for our community to reference for upcoming events and schedules and for you to add anything related to our hobby you wish to share.

I encourage all to utilizing our web site at [www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com](http://www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com).