



March 2004

# THE FED NEWSLETTER

## Thinking About O-Scale

What thoughts come into your mind when you hear the words O-scale? For me there is something magical in the term: a quality that conjures the nearest thing we have to a mythical past in this hobby. They speak of a time when the world was more open, less confined and less homogenised. Did this golden age ever exist? Probably not, but then O-scale is not only about the past and I'm more interested in the scale's future than a mythical history. 7mm modelling is alive and kicking and a growing number of modellers are discovering what it has to offer.

There have been some remarkable developments in O-scale modelling over the last couple of years and one of the most exciting is the formation of the **Aus7 Federation**. You might ask why we need yet another organization dedicated to modelling and, in particular, one dedicated to O-scale modelling. The simple answer to this question is that many of us involved in 7mm modelling felt that, for the scale to grow and prosper, we needed an organization that was focussed exclusively on the issues and challenges facing O-scale modellers in Australia today.

We formed the **Aus7 Federation** to provide 7mm and O-scale modelling that focus.

What are the aims of the **Aus7 Federation**? The primary aim is a simple one: to make 7mm and O-scale a viable scale choice for Australian railway modellers. An equally important aim of the Federation is the sharing of news and information of interest to the 7mm and O-scale modeller. This might be prototype information, but it also involves modelling hints and tips and sharing the experiences and expertise of other modellers working in the scale. One final aim is to promote the scale to those in the railway hobby community, and to the broader community, and to raise its profile with these groups. We can achieve this aim in many ways, not the least of these being this brand new newsletter. So welcome to the **Aus7 Federation** and, if you're new to the scale, welcome to the world of 7mm modelling. There really is no better modelling scale.

Trevor Hodges

*Why settle for half when you can have the Whole O?*



4811 works its way past the engine facility as it enters the confines of Morpeth yard ~ Trevor Hodges' 7mm "Morpeth"

**7mmAusmodelling@yahoogroups.com**

From my perspective by Keiran Ryan

Sick of cross posting on your favourite newsgroup? Tired of all the infighting within the newsgroup that you are subscribed to? Frustrated about the same two guys having the same continuing argument day after day, and boring the daylights out of the rest of the group, who really weren't interested in their squabble.

Well I certainly was, and I was frustrated about what I could do to change the situation, whilst still giving and receiving good information about a topic that I have a passion about — Model Railways —. Could I start a new group, and would it become the same thing, after a few months, of the infighting, the cross posting and the arguing, no, definitely not the way to go? Enter Yahoo, a web site where you can start up a group discussion, on ANY TOPIC that you desire, and you can invite your friends and fellow modellers with similar passions and thoughts, where REAL issues can be debated in a manner befitting mature adults, and at the same time excluding the riff raff.

My thoughts after the 2003 "O" Scale Convention at North Sydney Leagues Club were of a way to promote, show and discuss and grow 7mm modelling in a real way, and it wasn't hard to find a few people who wanted to go on this journey with me. One of the first things to do was to find somewhere where the problems of promotion, growth, etc could be openly discussed. Enter the 7mm Ausmodelling Yahoo Group, a moderated group, where people can be invited, or ask to be invited to become involved with a group suited to the mutual purpose of all members.

The group grew to my surprise fairly quickly, and the debate started in earnest, leading to the simple questions that had to be answered. What standard? What sleeper sizes? Who manufactures in 7mm? What's available? Can that loco, detail part, wagon or carriage, be built, here. Answers to questions that prompted questions, which required answers and then more questions. Now, I am not talking trivial questions, but thought provoking questions that, really did get people driving in the same direction.

They started the focus on the proposal of a Federation so that newcomers and modellers from other scales could come to, and find out the basic information about 7mm modelling and modellers, about setting standards, and seriously promoting and growing the scale. And through a democratic process, developed a name for the Federation and the selection of a Logo, that we can proudly say, will see us into a great future.

I am proud to say that our group has some of the best modellers in the country, lurking and sometimes openly discussing topics that are real to each and every one of us, topics that change our thinking and topics that we would not have thought of if not for someone having the guts to ask that stupid question. And with Trevor Hodges developing actual working models, always asking questions, and always willing to promote the Federation, the 7mmAusmodelling Yahoo group will go from strength to strength, I am committed to a long future in the Scale and I would love for all the existing members and any new group members, to come with me and the rest of the dedicated group, that we have here, and not just watch this group and scale grow, but to become an active participant in the growth and promotion of 7mm modelling in Australia.

This is the Re-Birth of 7mm modelling in Australia and we have a great opportunity to show, not just what we can do, but how we can be seen as modellers. While I have a passion for Model Railways & 7mm "O" scale in particular, I hope that all the people that I come in contact with will realise my commitment and join with me with confidence and enthusiasm, to show the rest of the modelling fraternity, how we can make a difference.

*And believe me — we can make a difference.*  
7mmAusmodelling@yahoogroups.com — Founder

## Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of *The Fed*. The title of this occasional newsletter *may* change following discussion amongst the group. But for this edition it's good enough! I don't envisage having to put together a hard copy of the newsletter very often.....only when a forum or exhibition beckons and hard copies will help spread the word on what we are about. For one thing hard copy is expensive (this issue is being sponsored) - it's much easier to produce an electronic version for regular updates over the web!

You will note this edition contains three "introduction to 7mm" articles by Trevor Hodges, Keiran Ryan and David Peterson. They explain our aims, how we are trying to promote 7mm modelling and the technical standards being explored.

Keiran and Trevor have led the way in the re-emergence of 7mm modelling. Recently, Trevor showed us how 7mm modelling has progressed over the past couple of years with his Morpeth layout in the pages of Australian Model Railway Magazine. (AMRM). Very recently Trevor has put together a couple of lightweight modules to illustrate that 7mm modelling can be compact in size and easily transportable. Go to or join the Aus7modelling Web Site at Yahoo Groups:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/7mmAusmodelling/>

for further information on Trevor's modules, images and informative chat.

Suggested further reading:

AMRM issue 239 April 2003  
AMRM issue 241 August 2003  
AMRM issue 243 December 2003  
AMRM issue 245 April 2004

Australian Journal of Railway Modelling issues 7 and 9.

Ross Verdich

The purpose of the Federation is to promote and support modelling of railways of Australia in 7mm scale. Modelling in any scale requires adhering to a scale ratio to apply to the prototype dimensions and employing any modelling standards that may be relevant. Scale is the relationship between the size of a model and its prototype. For 7mm scale modelling this relationship is usually expressed as 7mm = 1foot, or alternatively, to a ratio of 1 to 43.5. As in most scale reproduction, 7mm scale employs some compromises in determining the scale dimensions. These compromises have been determined by experience over time and can be generally classified as falling into a number of areas, two of which, dimensional standards and compatibility, we address here.

**Dimensional standards**

There are two aspects of dimensional standards that are critical if trouble free running is to be achieved. The first of these are track gauge and clearance standards and the other is wheel gauge and profile. It is proposed that the Federation adopt the track and wheel standards defined by the Gauge O Guild (GOG) of the UK.

It is important to note that the GOG standards deal only with the critical dimensions of wheelsets and pointwork. These standards present dimensional detail for three commonly practiced standards: Fine Standard, Coarse Standard, and Scale Seven. GOG leave the choice of a standard to be employed to the modeller, however GOG note that the majority of modellers work to the Fine Standard.

It is proposed that the Federation make the Fine Standard a preferred choice. In making this preference, it is further proposed that the Federation will not discourage modelers from modelling in other standards. Issues such as coupler height, rolling stock and structure gauges, permanent way formations etc. will be addressed by the Federation over time.

Prototype dimensions and reference material for both rolling stock, which includes locomotives, and permanent way and track, are available from a number of sources. These are general arrangement drawings (GA's), publications and technical literature, and photographic libraries. The Federation has access to these sources of information and has been given consent to use both the Gauge O Guild Track

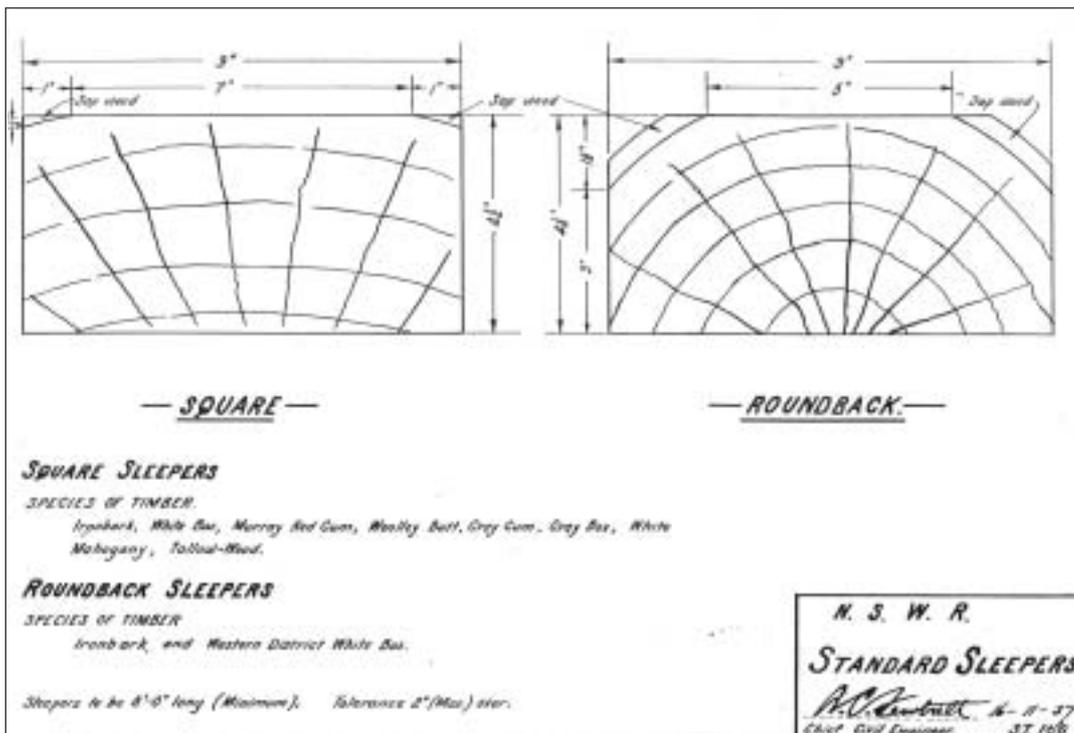
and Wheel Standards, and TheTrackwork Manual for Typical NSW practice 1855-1940 produced by Greg Edwards as the basis for its own standards. It is stressed that the consent to use these documents to produce a formalised set of standards in this way is limited to the members of the Federation and that and the stated copyright provisions will apply.

**Compatibility**

The Federation recognizes that many modellers may be concerned about the compatibility between their models and those of others so that they reliably perform on their home track and another member's track or an exhibition layout. Without compatibility between the track standards and the range of different wheels the modeller may use, it is unlikely that reliable running will be achieved. The Federation can play an important role in providing guidance to 7mm modellers to help achieve this compatibility.

One major aim of the Federation is to form a Standards Committee to develop and put into place a set of standards that specifically apply to modelling Australian prototypes. Federation members would have full and free access to these standards and it is proposed that any current member could make recommendations to the standards committee that may eventually be adopted by the Federation as a standard. Such proposals would be referred to the Standards Committee that would examine the proposal and decide on a recommendation to be taken to the membership.

David Peterson



Several Federation members have discussed and researched the possibility of procuring sleepers to more accurately reflect NSW practice (see drawing). Discussions with the Mt Albert Lumber Company in Canada has resulted in their agreement to produce a minimum of 10,000 sleepers, which is twenty bags at 500 per bag. Suitable sleepers for point construction are also being procured. For further information and orders please contact Ross Verdich: (02) 9699 4595, email: rossverdi@arhsnsw.com.au



The Vacuum tanker truck waits patiently while the 48 goes about its work of shunting the oil siding.  
Image by Trevor Hodges from his 7mm layout "Morpeth".

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### INTERESTED IN RESEARCH?.....Try the ARHS/nsw Railway Resource Centre

The Railway Resource Centre maintains the archives of the Australian Railway Historical Society, NSW Division and is home to a collection of thousands of documents, periodicals and books on Australian railway history that the Society has acquired over the years. The collection, which the Society makes available to its members and the public for research purposes, contains many records not readily available from any other source.

A series of **Railway Resources Guides** are being produced to assist all railway / tramway enthusiasts and researchers to locate information on the various aspects of the railway and tramway systems in NSW. The following guides are currently available. Prices include GST and postage.

BLH-01	Richmond to Kurrajong Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	BLH-09	Cootamundra to Tumut/Batlow Branch Lines <i>(Revised)</i>	\$5.00
BLH-02	Blacktown to Richmond Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$5.00	BLH-10	Wagga Wagga to Tumbarumba Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00
BLH-03	Glenreagh to Dorrigo Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	BLH-11	Fassifern to Toronto Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00
BLH-04	Tarana to Oberon Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	BLH-12	Clyde to Carlingford/Sandown Branch Lines <i>(Revised)</i>	\$5.00
BLH-05	Campbelltown to Camden Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$5.00	BLH-15	Adamstown to Belmont Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00
BLH-06	Westmead to Rogans Hill Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	BLH-16	Muswellbrook to Merriwa Branch Line <i>(New)</i>	\$4.00
BLH-07	Yass to Yass Town Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	PLH-01	Joadja Shale Oil Works, Mittagong <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00
BLH-08	East Maitland to Morpeth Branch Line <i>(Revised)</i>	\$4.00	PLH-02	Wolgan Valley Railway <i>(New)</i>	\$4.00

Enquiries can be made by phoning 02 9699 2736 or email: [resources@arhsnsw.com.au](mailto:resources@arhsnsw.com.au). Research material can be provided (at a small charge) by post.