

ers of much higher fidelity anywhere on the layout. While it works equally well on analogue or DCC layouts, its LocoNet connectivity makes it a stand-out sound device on a compatible DCC system. At this stage, the lack of English language capability for its computer program is a limitation, but one which I am sure will not be for long. Despite this, I think it is a great little unit to add the layout.

Phil Knife

***The Leeds Forge Cars C3101 to 3150* by Roy Howarth and Glenn Ryan. Published by Bow River Publishing. Review copy provided by Berg's Hobbies, 181 Church St, Parramatta 2150. Ph: 02 9635 8618. Email: mail@bergshobbies.com. Price: \$59.50.**

An interesting aspect of the

contemporary railway enthusiast scene is the growing interest in suburban electric systems, extending to both publications and commercial models. Significantly adding to the knowledge base on Sydney's electric suburban railways is this new 152 page (plus end papers) A4 landscape format book, authored by well-known suburban electric enthusiasts Roy Howarth and Glenn Ryan. The book concentrates on the 50 single-deck power cars (C3101 to C3150) constructed by British firm, the Leeds Forge Co., for the opening of Sydney's first suburban electrification scheme in 1926. Some of the cars in this contract remained in suburban service till the end of the single-deck car era in the early 1990s, so cementing



their place in Sydney's suburban transport history.

The first section of the book gives a brief history of the Leeds Forge company, builders of the cars. The second section briefly outlines the circumstances surrounding the original order of 50 all-steel cars (*sans* bogies, electrical equipment, drawgear, interior fittings, etc., which were sourced locally) for the NSWGR's first sub-

urban electrification project. It describes the design and construction of the vehicles, then goes on to outline their introduction into service, firstly as loco-hauled suburban trailers and then, once the electrification scheme was sufficiently advanced, their conversion to power cars, proving trials and eventual entry into service as electric multiple units. This section is amply illustrated with contemporary drawings and photographs, plus extracts from newspaper and magazine reports of the time. There are many detail photographs of components and tables of relevant information.

The main section of the book consists of photographs (mainly colour, with some b&w) of almost every car in the contract. The time period covered ranges from entry into service through to scrapping/disposal. Most images are from the 1980s and not only feature clear 'vehicle portraits', but also illustrate the cars in their 'natural environment', including much detail of the surroundings through which they worked. As, by their nature, the vehicles ran in sets with other varieties of single-deck cars, there is also much interesting detail of their contemporaries to be seen. Particularly prominent are the many illustrations showing variations in shades of red between individual cars, putting the lie to the oft-repeated mantra that there is only one 'right' vehicle colour!

Coverage includes the two parcel van conversions, (C3111 to parcel van C3556 and C3122 to van C3774) and details of the 'special' colour schemes carried by some of the cars, such as the 'Opera House opening' scheme

carried by C3112 for a few weeks in 1973 and the 'zoo' scheme adorning C3122 from 1991 till withdrawal. Also covered are some of the accidents involving Leeds Forge cars and tables listing the ultimate fate of all the cars in the contract.

There are many fine images illustrating various aspects and details of the cars which will greatly aid anyone wishing to superdetail the Berg's Hobbies HO scale models. One image that particularly caught my attention was a b&w image on p79 showing C3117, still coded EBB2223, on the traverser at the Clyde Engineering works at Granville in 1925. This particularly fine image clearly illustrates exactly what a Leeds Forge car looked like when it was still a steam-hauled trailer, including details of the elaborate lining applied to NSWGR passenger cars at this period. It's almost enough to make one abandon the workstation and head for the modelling bench!

This is an excellently researched and produced book that should appeal to rail historians and modellers alike. The quality of photographic reproduction, coupled to the breadth of coverage, makes this the definitive work on these vehicles. No modeller of Sydney's suburban system should be without it!

James McInerney

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