

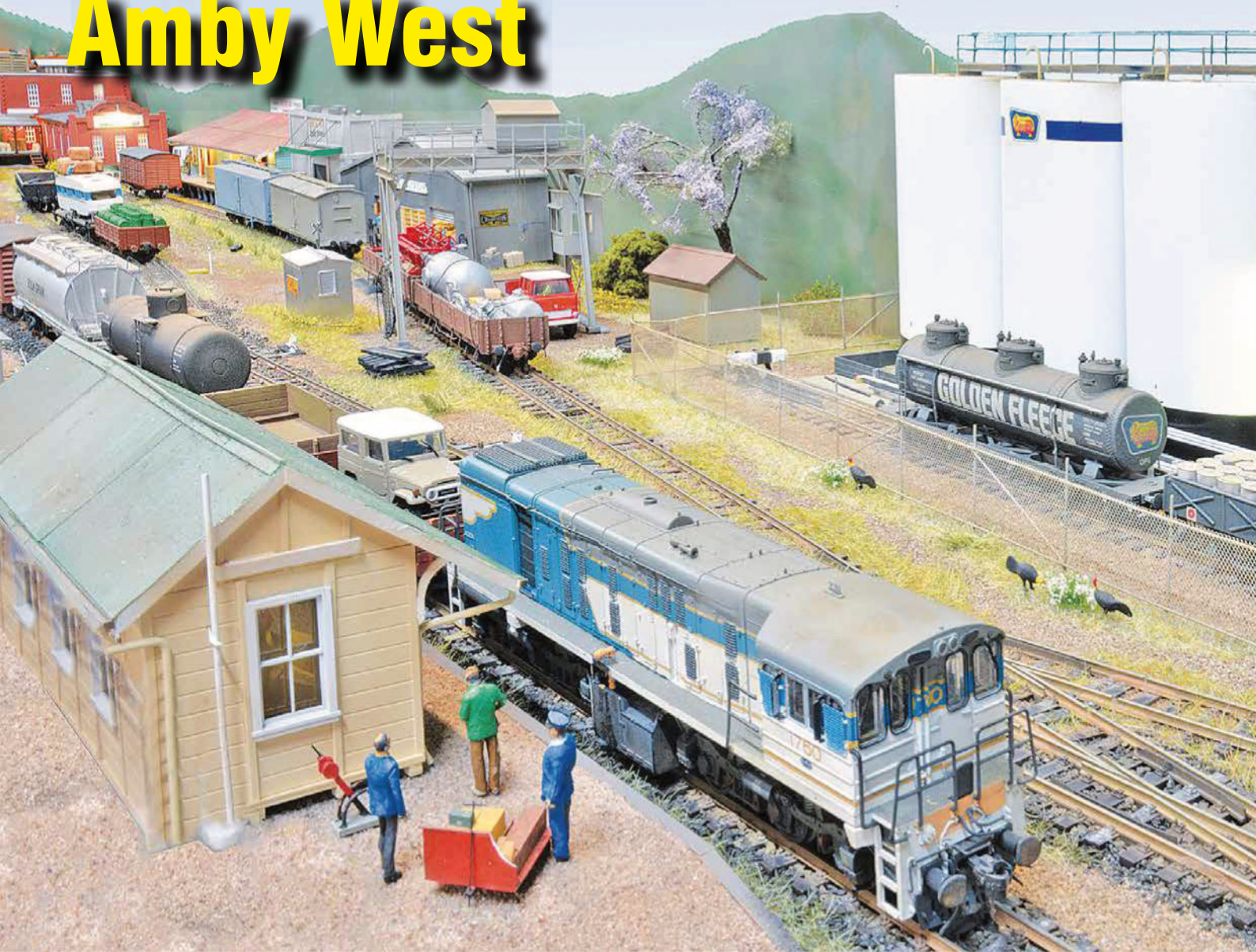
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Reviews • Mailbag • AMRM News**

Issue 377 Vol. 32 No.8

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AT ISSN 0045-009X

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The sixth season

Time does fly; this issue marks the sixth season of our change of production and editorship at the AMRM.

From a television series point of view, by the sixth season the characters have been established, the audience feels emotionally invested and the support characters are being developed with a back story.

From an AMRM perspective, from early in the piece we had a new set of characters working in the background, developing their already substantial skills. Without a doubt, we have been lucky that the team almost perfectly fell into place.

A good manager values team feedback and promotes an open communication environment. This has been invaluable, and suggestions from team members have made improvements or initiated wholesale changes in direction.

Without tooting our own airhorn (pun intended) we have made a concerted effort to improve the look and feel of the magazine. Incrementally, we have tweaked the presentation and layout. Furthermore, we have revived certain types of articles such as locations to model and wagon and locomotive profiles with scale drawings.

The team has worked hard on building up a library of such articles, and over time the 'publish it and more will come' mantra became a reality.

Authors started volunteering articles matching the new mantra, which is very heartening to see. We sowed the seeds of change and over time this bore 'article' fruit.

Clearly, putting in the 'hard yards' in the early 'seasons' have contributed to where we are today.

Feedback is a tricky thing, and it's hard to get unadulterated feedback, but what we have received so far has been very positive, and readers have stated that the magazine is heading in the right direction.

The AMRM's charter is to promote modelling of Australian prototype. This also includes cultivating relationships with model manufacturers, industry leaders etc. A change of management requires building new relationships within the industry. I am happy to report that the initial hesitance (which is expected) has been overcome. We have also received valuable feedback from a manufacturer – supplier point of view.

This journey has also changed (for the better) the way I accomplish my own personal modelling. While I am time limited, it's all about the pre-planning which can be accomplished anywhere. My techniques and the materials I use have also changed over the six seasons, and I am hoping that this year I can get moving on a couple of big projects that have been in the planning stages for a bit too long. Being part of the editorial team, you can identify new techniques and products and add them to your modelling regime.

One thing is for sure, modelling as a concept is continually evolving, and I hope the AMRM is on that development curve. Some changes are more incremental while others come in waves where advancements create a tipping point, such as digital control products. I am still searching for alternative materials or processes that might lead to building lighter layout boards.

It's hard to see where the future will take us, but it almost certainly will be an interesting journey.



The less glamorous side of being the Editor, is this temporary computer desk propped up (appropriately) by four empty model boxes! A purpose built desk is now in a semi permanent location, and the model boxes have returned to storage. Photo by Doug Hart.

Give us feedback at: amrmteam@outlook.com

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The Annual Membership Fee for SCMRA is \$80.00 from March to February, which includes the membership data pack. Applications must be received by the first of the odd month to meet our mailing list deadlines. For applications received between the 2nd September and the 2nd January the Half Annual Fee is \$40.00 (does not include October issue of AMRM). All fees are GST Inclusive. Membership entitles you to participate in the activities of the Association, to receive AMRM and our regular news-sheet *Booster*. Standards, Recommended Practices and Information Sheets covering model railway practice are included in the joining kit together with a vinyl ring binder and are also issued at regular intervals. For further details write to the Secretary or contact the divisional representative. Meetings are usually organised on the second Saturday of each month in New South Wales. For further details

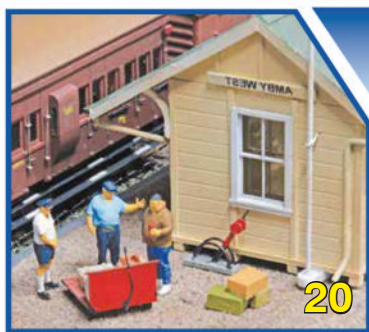
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FEATURES

20 Amby West

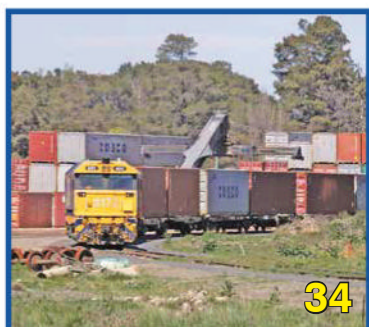
Arthur Hayes builds a Queensland Railways prototype shunting layout.



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30 Henley Beach debut

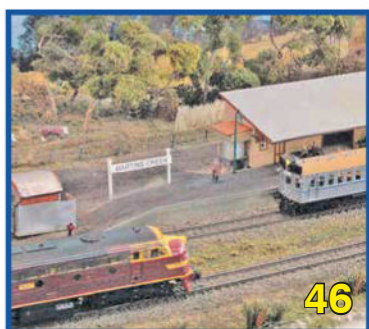
Rodney Barrington reports on the progress of Henley Beach, a group layout build.



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34 Location to model: Kelso, NSW

Scott Fitzgerald outlines a modern location to model with two 'dust bowl' intermodal terminals. Photos by the author.

40 Phillip Island Exhibition gallery

Mark Jesser presents a gallery of layouts at the 2026 Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers exhibition.

42 90 years of the Sydney Model Railway Club

Alan Smith looks back at 90 years of the Sydney Model Railway Club.

46 Dungog – The prequel

Andrew King describes the development of the layout Dungog by the North Shore Railway Modellers Association.

54 Wagon profile: SSR BGIH 100t hopper

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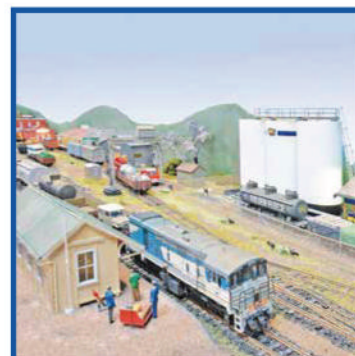
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ON THE COVER

Locomotive No. 1760 is preparing to shunt the yard at Amby West. This layout was built by Arthur Hayes and is based on Queensland Railways prototype. Photo by Arthur Hayes.



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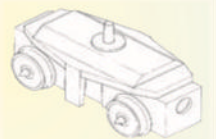
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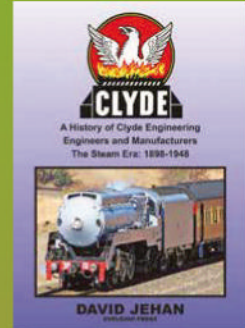
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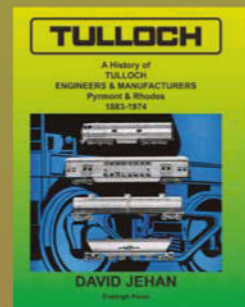
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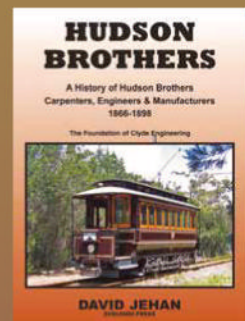
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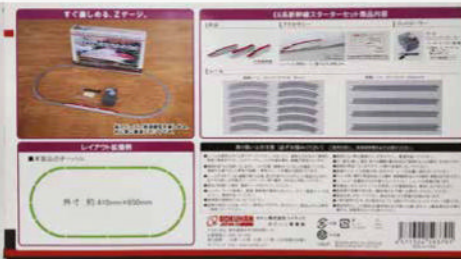
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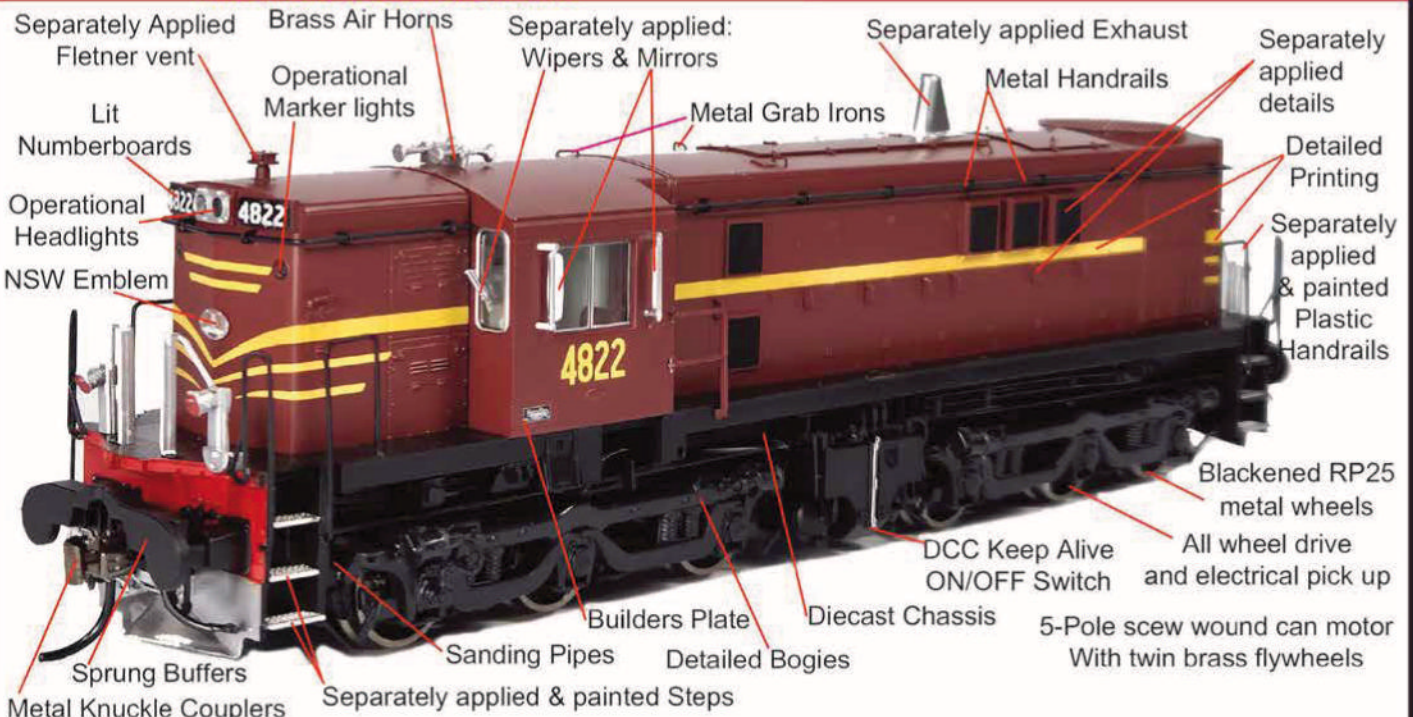
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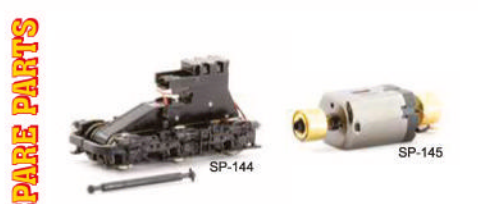
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 N-23 N453 V/Line Passenger - MK3, "City of Albury"
 N-24 N472 V/Line Passenger - MK3 "City of Sale"
 N-25 N473 V/Line Passenger - MK3 "City of Warragul"



V/Line - PTV
 N-26 N452 V/Line - PTV, "Rural City of Wodonga"
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 N-28 N464 V/Line - PTV, "City of Geelong"

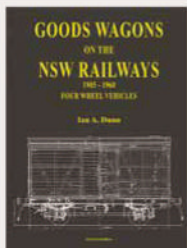


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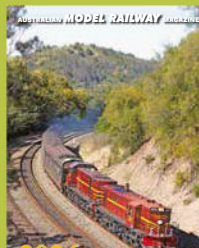
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The diesel cover features 4833/4918 with AK car track inspection train. Other photos include Genesee and Wyoming Darwin to Adelaide freight service; VR B73/7407 at Broadford; NSW 4015 on a coal and grain train at Thornton; Hamersley Iron 4038 and 2004 Alco at Wombat Junction; QR 1600 class between Linville and Moore; BHP 54 within the confines of BHP Newcastle steelworks, Mayfield; CR crimson and silver GM13 and GM24 near Caltowie, east of Peterborough; TGR 2110/2112/2111 cross South Esk River, east of Longford between Launceston and Deloraine; VR Walker's railcar RM28 at Healsville; NSW 4841 leads short goods between Michelago and Royalla on the Cooma line; VR T class locomotives T389/T386/T335 approaching Tallarook; Pacific National 8250/8212/8167/8243/8222 approaches Omega, north of Geringong with a grain train.



The steam cover features NSW Standard Goods 5439 departs Wyong with No.269 pick-up goods. Other photos include: VR J556 with No.25 approaches Wail with Melbourne to Dimboola passenger service; NSW 5132+5914 approaches Marulan between Moss Vale and Goulburn; QR BB18 1016 heads to Mayne with No.35 goods; NSW 3820+6023 with No.631 goods at Fassifern, Newcastle; SAR No.291 Peterborough to Port Pirie goods with Garratt 400; VR VR J523/M462 No.38 goods from Maryborough to Ballarat; NSW 3531 with No.25x passenger from Narara north of Gosford; TGR at Launceston prior to departing for Deloraine for Railton cement train duties; NSW 3008T hauls No.24 mixed crosses the Belubula River, from Eugowra; QR C17 917 crosses the Bremer River with 'workers' train from Ipswich station; NSW 3315 departs Armidale with No.13 Glen Innes Mail; WAGR W903 at Donnybrook with No.346 goods.

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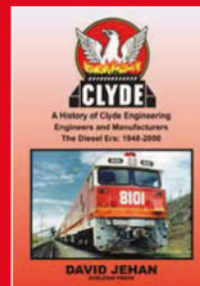
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On Track Models

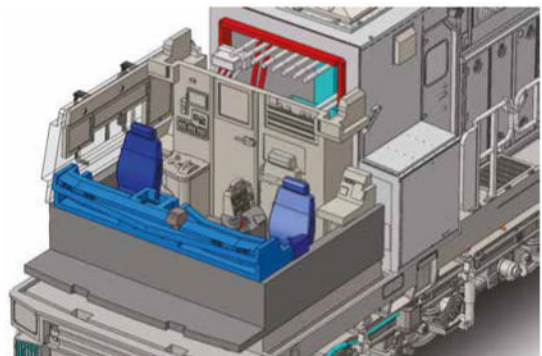
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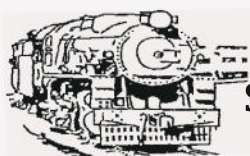
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Registration forms will be available in mid-June:

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THE NSWGR 38 CLASS RE-RUN



3830 in dark green at Werris Creek



3801 in light green at Werris Creek

3801 and 3830 above are decoration samples recently received from the factory which illustrate "light" and "dark" green. The factory advises that once production is resumed after Chinese New Year the 38 class assembly will be completed which means they should arrive at Port Botany in April.

The following variations will be available:

- 3801 1946 green(light), 2021 green (dark), black, grey
- 3802 Special green (dark)
- 3803 Special green (dark)
- 3804 Black
- 3805 Black
- 3806 Green (dark) with black smoke box
- 3807 Royal Train pilot lined black
- 3809 Black, lined red
- 3813 1967 Streamlined Green
- 3815 Black, lined red

After delivery price

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| Factory weathering (light dusting) | \$820.00 |
| Factory fitted sound | add \$50.00 |
| Postage | add \$185.00 |
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- 3818 Green (dark) with black smoke box
- 3820 Black lined red
- 3822 Green (dark) with green smoke box
- 3827 1947 Special green (dark)
- 3830 Green (dark) with black smoke box



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- 6001, 6007, 6016:** Plain black with red lining, short bunker without sound tubes.
- 6020:** "Centenary Colours".
- 6027, 6032, 6036:** Plain black, long bunker with sound tubes.
- 6029:** As preserved ACT ARHS with ACT Herald, City of Canberra and ARHS name boards OR as preserved Transport Heritage NSW, plain black, Transport Heritage NSW name boards.

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Amby West

Arthur Hayes builds a Queensland Railways prototype shunting layout. Photos by the author.

It looks like shift change is imminent as the rostered 1720 class locomotive No. 1760 and guards van is positioned next to Amby West station building. No doubt the 'billy' is on the boil.



Trains shunting has fascinated me for many years. Even as a kid I spent many hours sitting on the fence watching trains going back and forward kicking wagons down different sidings, even though I had no idea what was being achieved or what they were up to. Later in life with a railway career, I learnt the finer points of the operations. Being at the pointy end of the pencil in life, at first this layout was to be one we could take with us when we found the need to downsize; something that was easily transportable, didn't take up a lot of room, and would provide an activity that was enjoyable. A few years back, a switching layout at a National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) regional convention caught my eye. The layout was designed around fitting into a

medium size car to be transportable and could fit in the corner of the garage or a spare room. In the meantime, the layout could be exhibited at shows and other functions. Shunting and prototype operations are not big in our part of the world, so perhaps the layout could be used to promote that part of the hobby and illustrate the potential of what a small layout can offer. Maybe it could assist others into the hobby?

First stop was to measure what would fit into the Toyota Camry. Two 1400mm by 400mm modules fitted into the car with the back seat down. The next step was to see what could be jammed into the two modules.

There were a couple of lessons to be learnt.

Number one, less is more. Apart from providing operations, there was a need for some curved track.

Number two was to think about what industries would require more than one type of wagon to create extra operations, and an era.

The layout would reflect the local prototype, Queensland Railways (QR) 3ft. 6inch. gauge network and be freelance modelled in HO_n3½. Most country stations would have a station building on the main line, a crossing loop to allow trains to pass, sidings that serve the local community like a goods shed with a crane, a side loading bank and cattle-sheep yards. These were a must and would be a good starting point to set the atmosphere for the layout. Official QR



documents include a list of sidings on the network, and this assisted in adding a few private sidings that could serve local industries in the surrounding district. Plus being a country lad, some industries may have played a part in life's journey. Alternatively, if modelling a prototype location, it's all there for you. A short list of industries was developed that included a fuel depot, butter factory, flour mill and a fruit Co-op.

To figure out how this was all going to fit onto the real estate available, it was over to a layout design program called 'AnyRail'. The complimentary free download was used (note: the free download version limits the amount of track you can use), and after a few amendments a final plan was devised. There was room available for extra sidings, but at the end of the day it was a prototype layout and it needed to look like the prototype. The main line moves to the front of the baseboard through points on a curve, and at a later date could be made continuous, or by removing a couple of structures (cattle-sheep yards and goods shed) could be converted to double track main line. A prototype name was required, and Amby West was the name given to the layout. Amby is a small country railway town west of Roma some 530 kilometres west of the state capital of Brisbane. The current population is around 50 people and most of the rail facilities are gone, leaving just a short crossing loop and a siding. West was added to the name to give it a 'ring' as the layout would look nothing like the real Amby.

Over the following months my modelling projects turned to constructing the buildings. In the cupboard for many years was a kit purchased for the butter factory, a 'one day down the track' project. All other buildings would be scratch-built with some being low relief for placing

along the backdrop. Many were freelance structures, built using plans of a similar structure, and others were drawn up and built from photos I had taken. This was quite enjoyable with a fair bit of research required and was a convenient break from building rollingstock. When most of the buildings were completed, work started on the baseboard.

To make the layout as light as possible, the frame was made using 25.4mm (1 inch) sq. aluminium tube stock joined with plastic connectors. All up, the cost was \$108.00 from a local aluminium supplier who also cut the lengths to size. The legs were made to fold up for storage and transportation. Thinking about the leg support brackets, these would have been better installed on the back of the layout and not on the front. Adjustable rubber feet were added to the bottom of the legs should the floor not be level.

The track base is 7mm ply glued with Liquid Nails to the frame and riveted. Make sure you check where the track will be, as rivets under the track may not be the greatest configuration. Track was laid straight onto the ply. The layout is 810mm high, making it great to sit and work from a chair.

To join the two modules, tabs made from aluminium strip were riveted to the uprights on the frame at one end. These tabs are a 'purchase point' for a clamp to hold the two modules together. The size and weight of the modules allowed them to be turned on their side on a table to work on the wiring and point controls. A wire in tube method is used to control points from the front fascia, and lever switches are used to change the polarity feed for the live point frog. There is only one DC power district for the layout. Each length of track has a dropper to the power supply, and sidings can be isolated if required in the future. A 50mm remova-

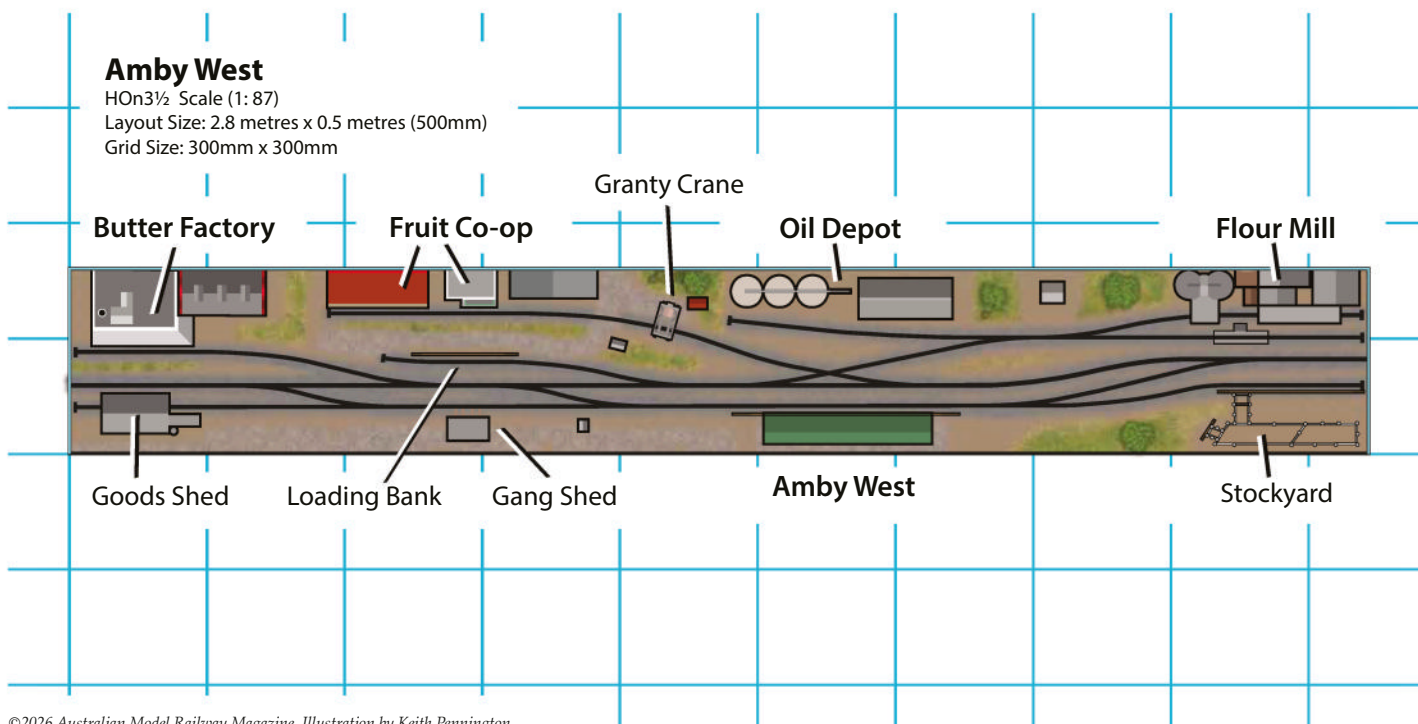
ble joining track is used to bridge the track across the two modules. A lighting bus on a separate power supply is used for the buildings' lighting and animation. Each building is connected to the bus with push in plugs so the building can be removed to transport the layout. PECO HOm track and points were used to replicate the QR 3ft 6inch track. The track was pinned to the base board until the ballast was glued in place.

Once the track was down, and tested with trains running, work on the scenery commenced. Washed dirt from the backyard was used for the exposed areas of the baseboard. The dirt was sprayed with water containing Isopropyl Alcohol (IPA), 50/50 matte medium and water with a drop of detergent was used to fix the dirt in place. A portable rechargeable airbrush was used to spray various colours of brown Tamiya paint thinned with IPA to texture the ground, like adding paths beside the track where shunters walk etc. The track was weathered in the same manner. The back scene is a sheet of 3mm medium density fibreboard (MDF) with the sky and hills being airbrushed. The back scene sits in a moulded plastic channel riveted to the back frame and is held into place with clamps. This allows for interchangeable back scenes, if required in the future.

Static grass was added to various areas and between the tracks in some sidings. This too received the airbrush treatment to add texture, dead vegetation spots, areas where there could be less moisture in the ground and to take the shine off some of the colours.

Wagon allocations and industries

Time to think about how the operations of the layout can reflect the prototype. Wagons were allocated to each siding. At first the plan was to use eight-



wheel bogie wagons as they are less troublesome during shunting moves than four-wheel fixed-frame wagons. However, eight-wheel wagons take up more space which reduces the number of wagons on the layout and that means less operational opportunities. After some testing, a mix of both was decided on; a plus was that a more prototypical-looking train was achieved. Where possible, shorter eight-wheel wagons and heavier four-wheel wagons were allocated.

To help tell a story and to set the scene, various figures and road vehicles were added to numerous locations. A trolley shed with sleepers and part-worn rail stacks show track maintenance is part of life on the railway.

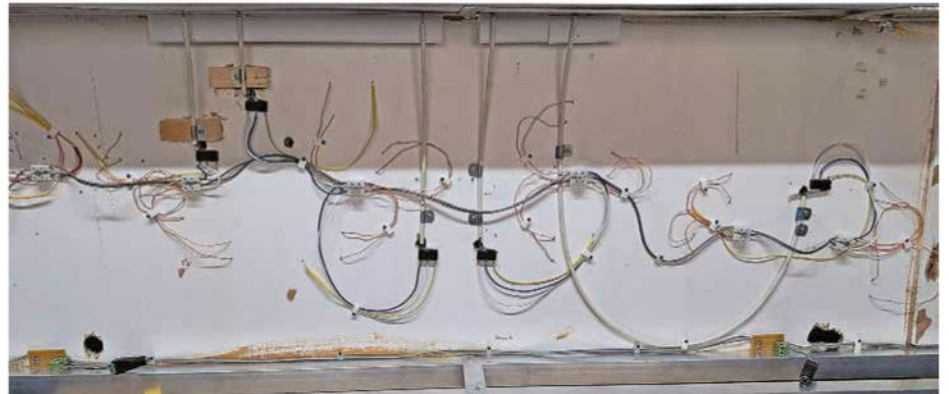
Motive Power

The locomotive currently used on the layout is a 1720 class 60-ton locomotive and the era I model requires a guard's van. These don't have labels and can be changed around from time to time. All trains start and finish with the guard's van on the platform. Trains conveying eight wagons are very manageable on the layout and gives the operator plenty to think about.

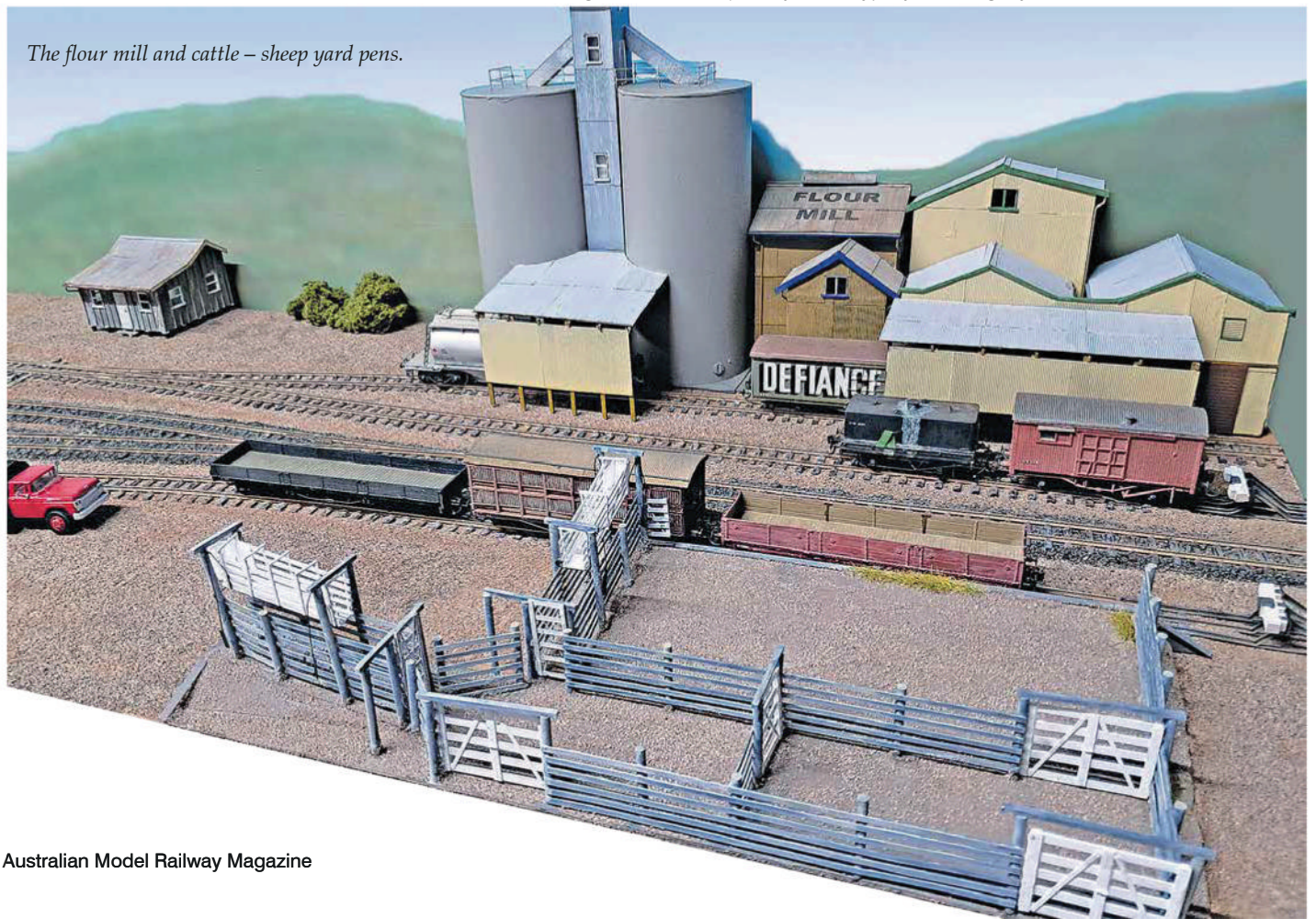
The short shift allows one to take a break from world events and recharge the batteries. Additionally, two operators can spend time working out moves and shunting together, similar to two driver operations (TDO) sharing both driving and shunting duties.



Baseboard construction in progress.

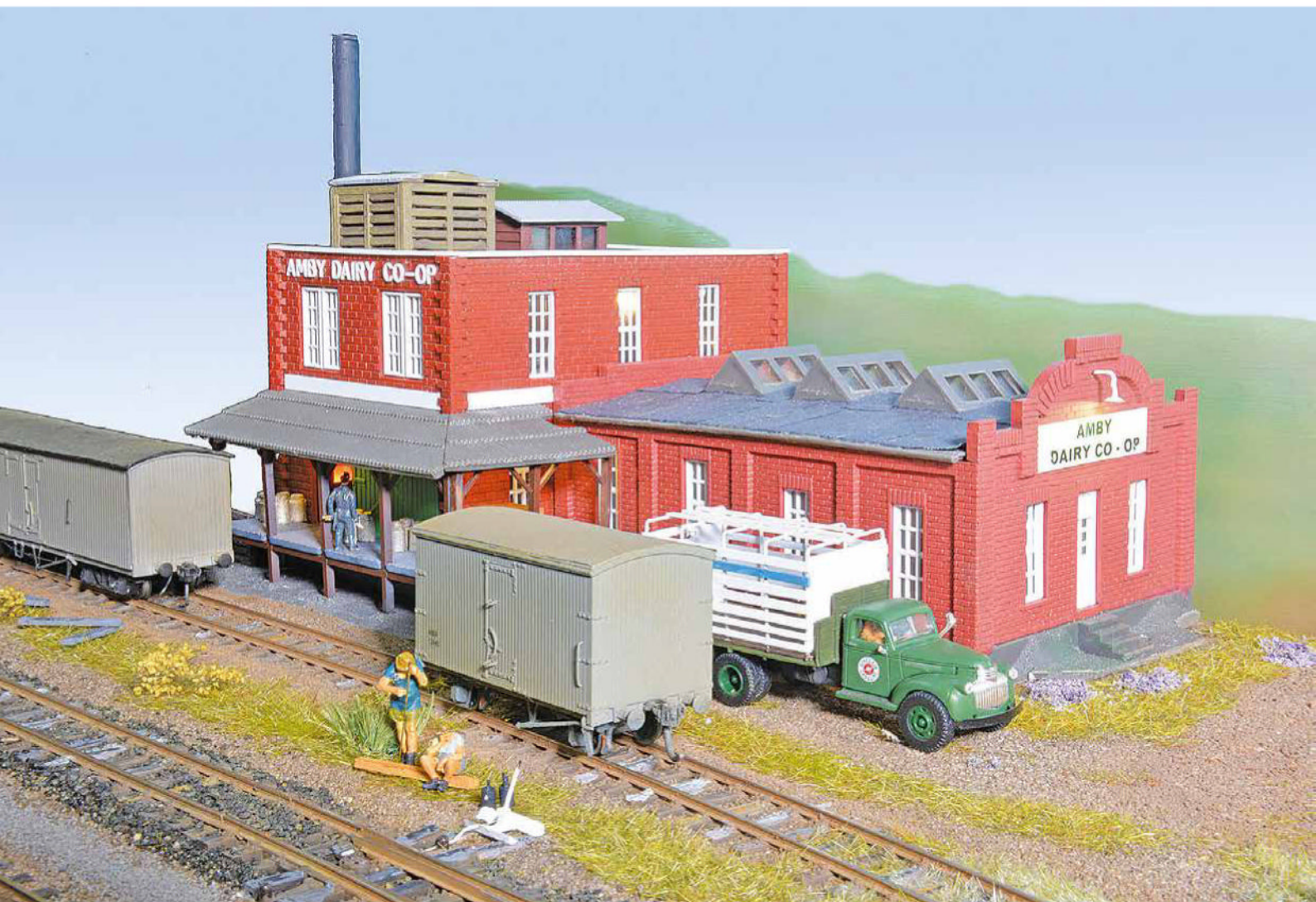


Neat DC wiring is all that is required for this type of shunting layout.



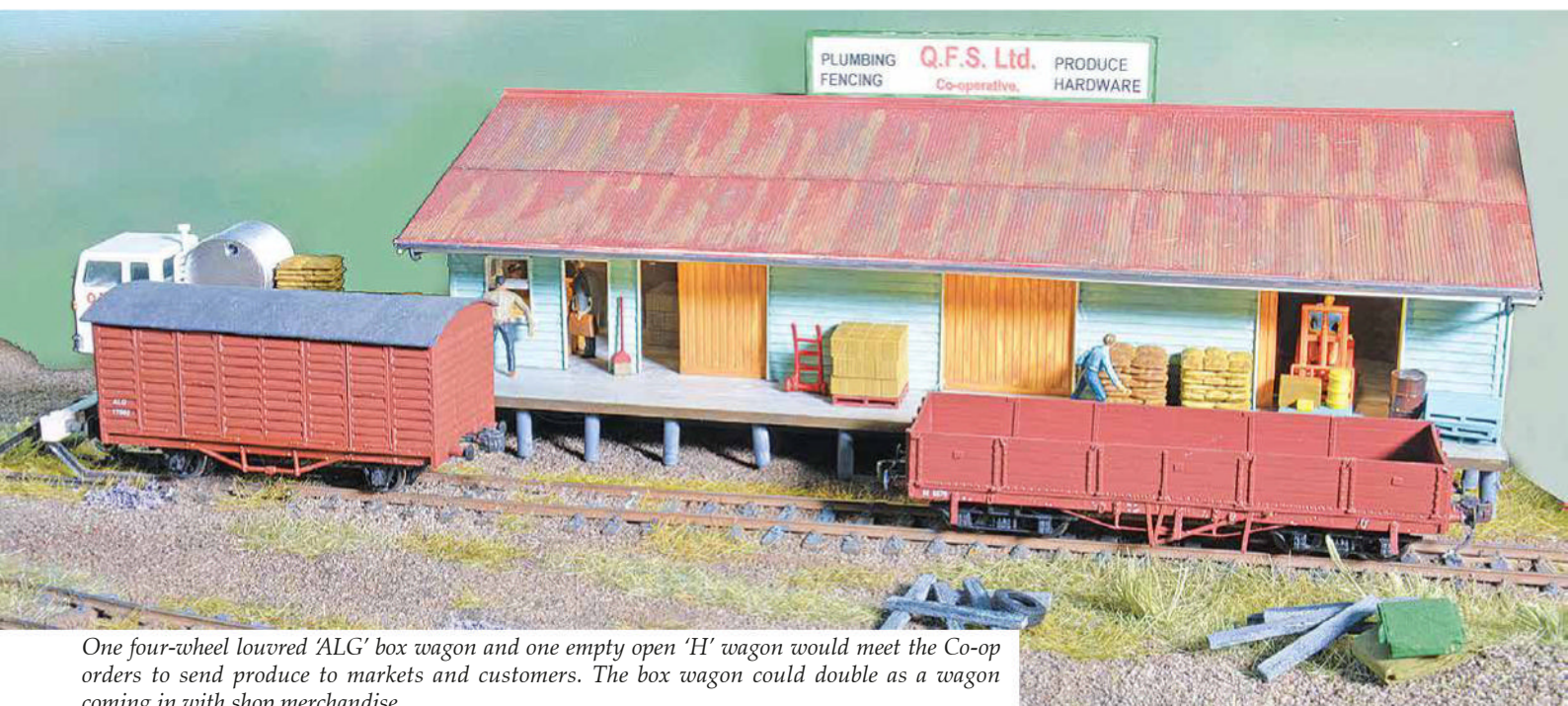
The flour mill and cattle – sheep yard pens.

Butter Factory



Two butter wagons, one four-wheel 'ABG' and one eight-wheel 'CMB' is allocated for this traffic. This would provide transport to send the end product to the Butter Marketing Board.

Fruit Co-Op



One four-wheel louvered 'ALG' box wagon and one empty open 'H' wagon would meet the Co-op orders to send produce to markets and customers. The box wagon could double as a wagon coming in with shop merchandise.

Fruit Co-op Cold Stores



One eight-wheel refrigerated 'CMI' wagon conveyed chilled fruit to markets from the Co-op cold stores.

► Overhead Crane

▼ Flour Mill

A 'WHE' bulk wheat wagon and a box wagon have been assigned to the traffic.



Two eight-wheel open 'H' wagons loaded with cranky freight [see AMRM issue No. 337 August 2019, for detail regarding cranky freight] share space with the overhead crane.



Golden Fleece fuel depot



Two 'OP' fuel tank wagons discharge their load to the bulk tanks, and a four-wheel open 'FG' loaded with drums for the drum shed.

Cattle - sheep yards



As one would expect, stock wagons can be found at the yards, in the form of an 'NM' sheep wagon and an 'YK' cattle wagon. The siding is also used as a dumping ground for other wagons – today it's an 'FJS' four-wheel open wagon loaded with sleepers waiting for the local fettlers to be unloaded.



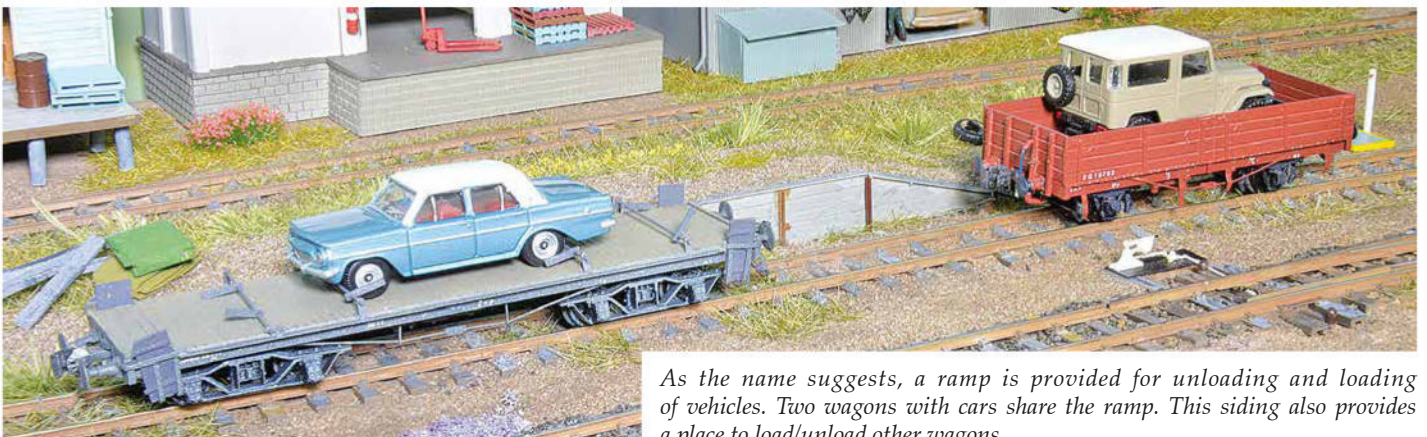
The siding is also used to unload a wagon of bitumen. The parked bitumen spray truck marks the location to unload the 'OFO' Emoleum tank wagon. An empty eight-wheel open 'UR' wagon waits for orders.

Goods Shed



Two four-wheel box wagons and two four-wheel open wagons covered with tarpaulins are in the siding for LCL goods. These wagons contain various consignments for a number of stations down the line and are marked 'Road Wagons' to be marshalled next to the Guards van for unloading en route.

Ramp road



As the name suggests, a ramp is provided for unloading and loading of vehicles. Two wagons with cars share the ramp. This siding also provides a place to load/unload other wagons.



A Bedford truck loaded with wool bales is about to unload the bales into a 'HJS' open wagon. Additionally, a wagon of drums has been loaded for today's train.



Not all fuel depots have a depot siding to unload their fuel. Some depots could be a block or two away from the railway line, so a pipeline connects the depot with the railway. The siding has a pit to couple a hose from the wagon to the pipeline. Sidings running off the main line are fitted with choke blocks, unlike the prototype to prevent runaway wagons coming out onto the main line, these are clearance markers.

Departmental wagons



All yards have a wagon or two that helps keep the railway network operational, and often there is no set place for these wagons. The head shunt road for the fuel depot has two such wagons; a camp wagon and a water wagon. A wagon weighbridge was added for additional operational opportunities.

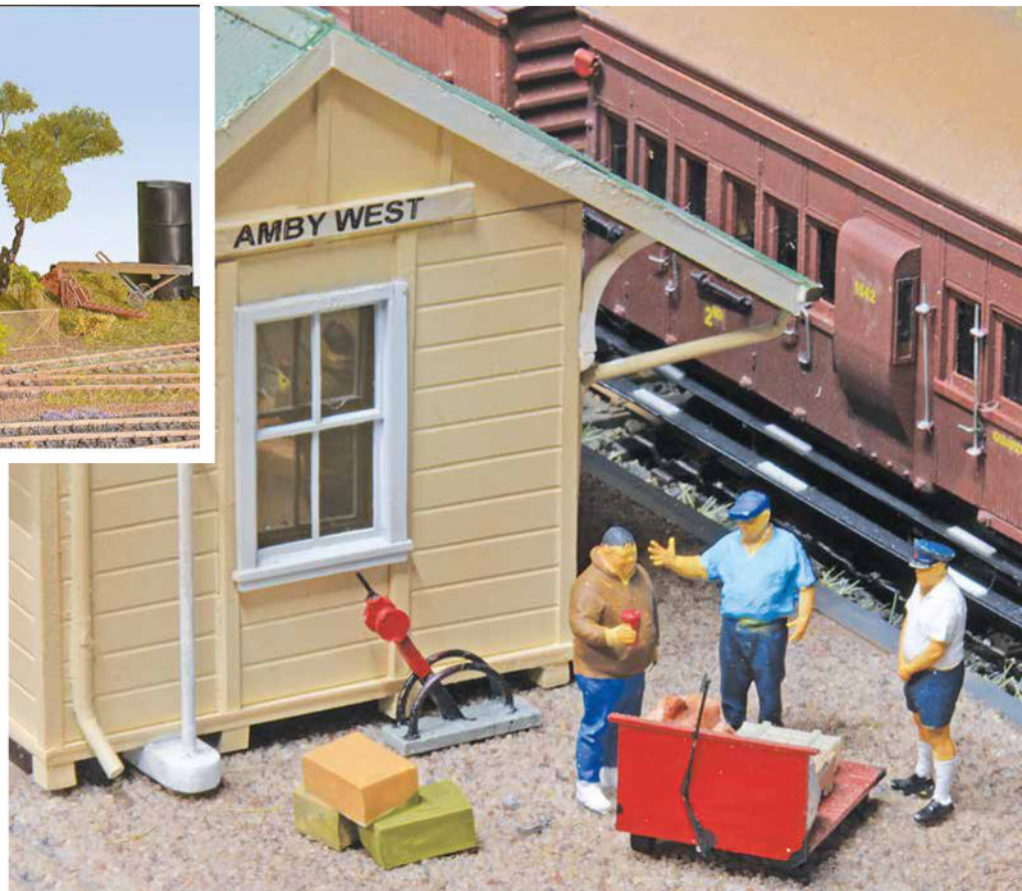


Not all real estate on the layout has a siding, and other local industries filled the gaps. These companies used facilities available to the general public.



▲ Filling a scene is this run-down residence.

► 3D printed figures tell a story at the station. It's these small things that make a big difference to a layout.



Conclusion

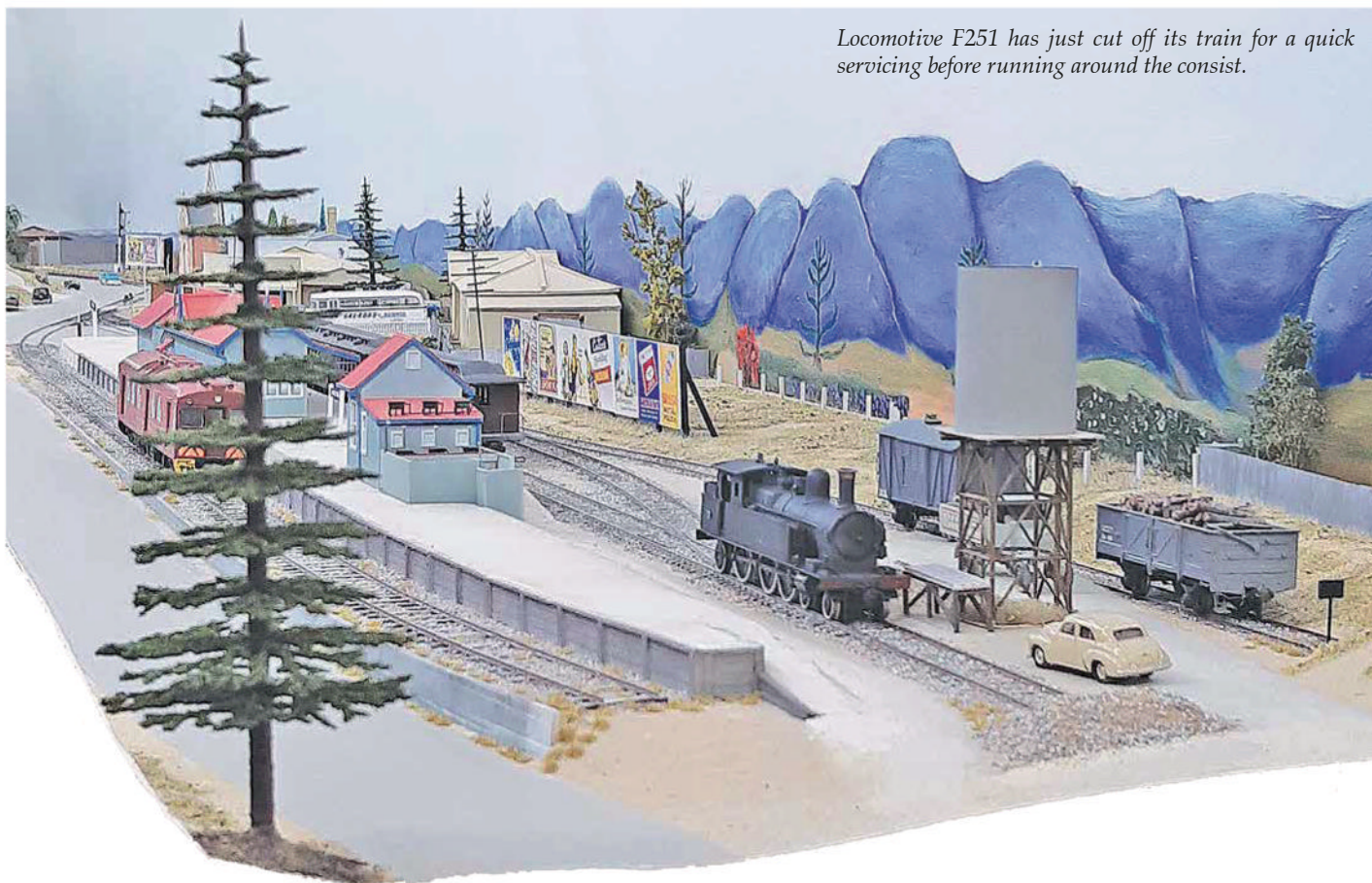
The layout has been a huge success, providing many hours of enjoyment to the point that the other fixed layout in the garage is getting neglected. Sitting down and scooting up and down the layout on

a wheeled office chair instead of standing to do operations may be the winner. The opportunity is there to change the buildings and the rollingstock if I wish too, which still allows for some additional modelling projects as well.

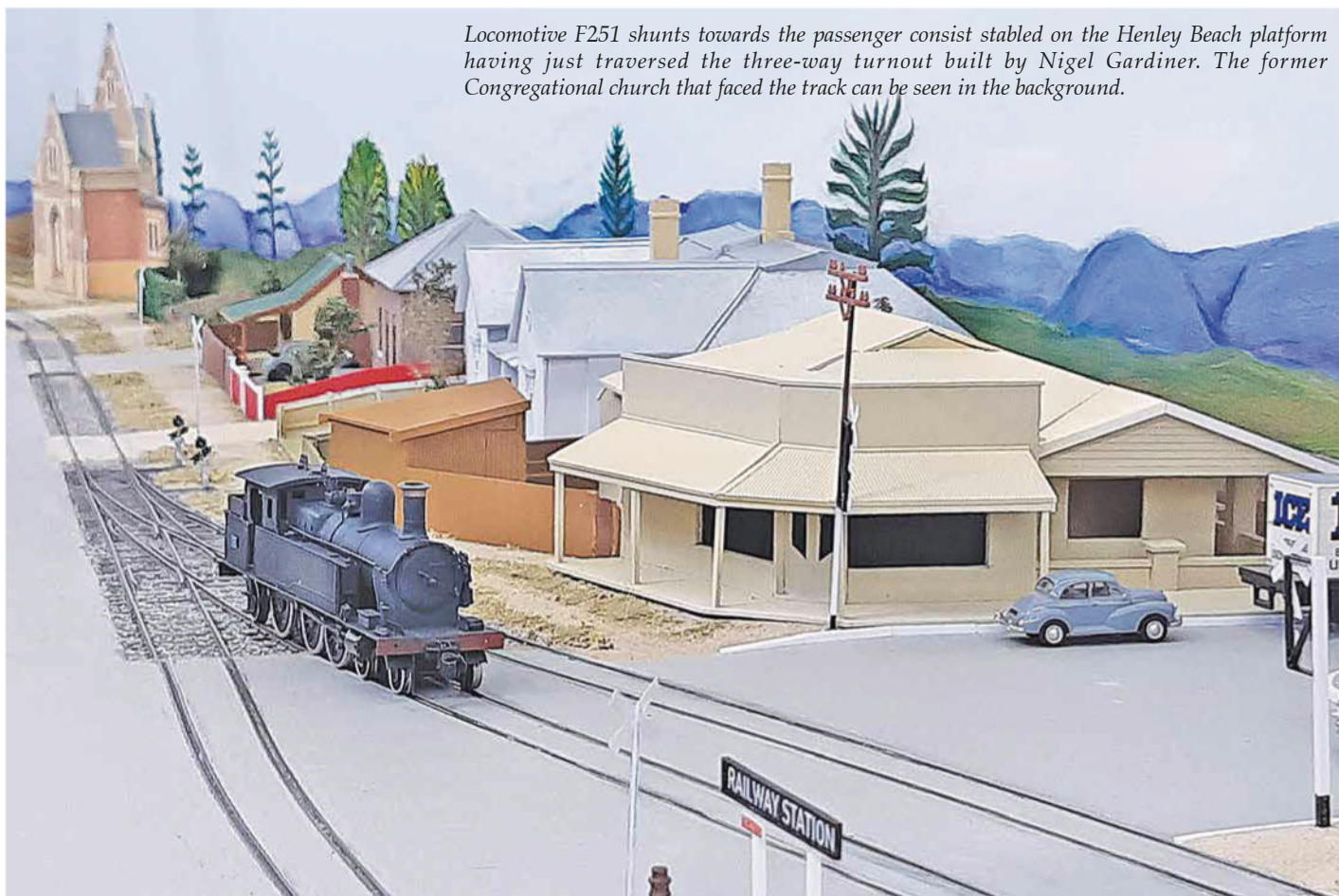
What a great hobby we have with so much to learn, do and enjoy. Thank you. 📌

Henley Beach debut

Rodney Barrington reports on the progress of Henley Beach, a group layout build. Photos by the author.



Locomotive F251 has just cut off its train for a quick servicing before running around the consist.



Locomotive F251 shunts towards the passenger consist stabled on the Henley Beach platform having just traversed the three-way turnout built by Nigel Gardiner. The former Congregational church that faced the track can be seen in the background.

The HO scale model of Henley Beach railway station made its operating debut at the National Railway Museum (NRM), Miniature and Model Railway Exhibition held on the weekend of the 13th and 14th of September 2025. The layout Henley Beach first appeared at the Modelling the Railways of South Australia Convention in September 2022, when under construction. See AMRM No. 357 December 2022. The layout remains a work in progress!

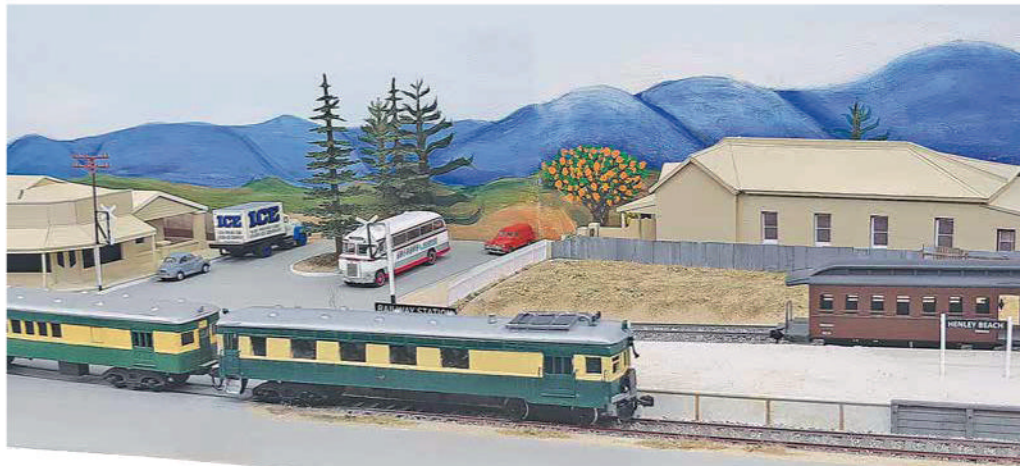
There is not much left standing of the railway that ran down Military Road, just a remnant of the old platform at Grange. This suburban street railway to Henley Beach closed in August 1957, nevertheless most of the buildings modelled on the east side of the road remain intact, including the corner shop. Other than railcars the line never saw diesel traction; indeed, up until the end there was an intense passenger service with steam locomotive-hauled trains operated entirely by F class tank engines, interspersed with Brill railcars and then brand new Redhens. There was also a goods siding served by a once a week local goods service, for firewood and occasional wagon load traffic.

For further information on the actual railway refer to Modelling the Railways of South Australia (MRSAC) 2022 presentation, 'When Henley Beach had a Railway'. Refer: <https://www.mrsac.com>

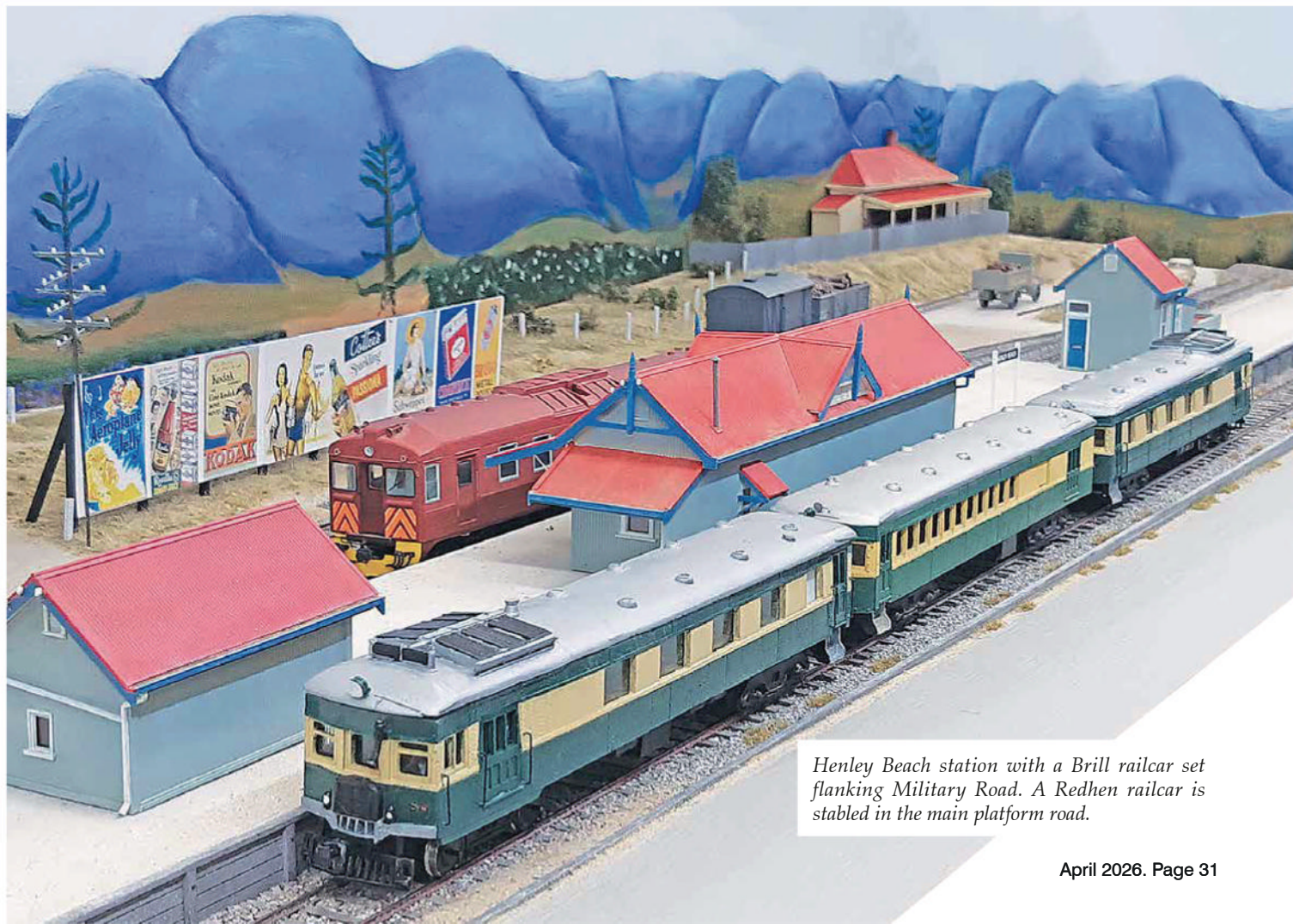
Builders included John Wilson, Nigel Gardiner, Wayne Hoskin, Rodney Barrington and backscene artist Kate Stewart Moore.



Doug Colquhoun photographed a Redhen set traversing the three-way turnout entering Henley Beach on the last day of operations on the 31st of August 1957. Photo from the NRM archives.



A Brill railcar consist crosses Main Street and enters the back platform at Henley Beach.



Henley Beach station with a Brill railcar set flanking Military Road. A Redhen railcar is stabled in the main platform road.

Prototype Modellers Forum 2025

John McCallum reports on the Victorian Model Railway Society's Prototype Modellers Forum 2025, photos by the author.



John Boyle-built Emu Flat School from a kit by the US based Mt Blue Model Company. It was inspired by an article in the AMRM August 2009.



David Goedeke's VR 20ft goods shed is based on a prototype that could be seen in the Wimmera or Mallee. He refers to an article by Phil Jeffery in the AMRM, Oct 1988.



David O'Hare's model of NN 23 is a Pauls 3D print, with some sanding and filling. He added some extra etched brass details, such as the shunter's steps, handbrake and handrails. It is painted with custom spray paint from an automotive paint supplier.



Denis Kahl's four-wheel container flat KMQ7 with livestock container MC20. The flat wagon is a Model Etch kit with the number plate relocated to match the prototype. The container is an SDS Models VR cattle container with some light weathering.



Andrew Maddicks' O scale (1:48) VR four-wheel U van is constructed from a Veteran Models kit. It is finished with Floquil zinc chromate primer and Humbrol Brunswick Green. The decal was supplied by Railways of Victoria.

The Victorian Model Railway Society (VRMS) held their Prototype Modellers Forum again in 2025 at Ringwood Training and once more we thank Australian Model Railway Magazine for their generous sponsorship.

There were nine presentations on both modelling and prototype topics. The day's program allowed participants to select and attend six presentations. All nine presentations were supported by articles in a book that was provided to participants on the day and which is available for purchase. See the VRMS website, vmrs.net for details.

As usual, a light lunch and all-day beverages and biscuits were provided.

Topics for the 2025 Forum ranged from the scholarly to the practical and all who attended were informed by the authors

research and experience.

Fraser Brown presented a summary of open wagon development on the Victorian Railways from inception to about 1905.

Lance Cross traced the history of sleeping coaches on the Victorian and South Australian Railways from the earliest days of the interstate service until the introduction of steel bodied coaches.

Phil Dunn outlined the genesis of the Victorian Railways (VR) D³ class steam locomotives.

David Foulkes showed us how to solder brass details on plastic models.

Peter McLeod continued his detailed descriptions of the construction of etched brass locomotive kits, in this case the Steam Era Models (SEM) X class tender.

Phil Jeffery gave a thorough account of

how the VR used advertising and how we can use advertisements to add another level of realism to our model railways.

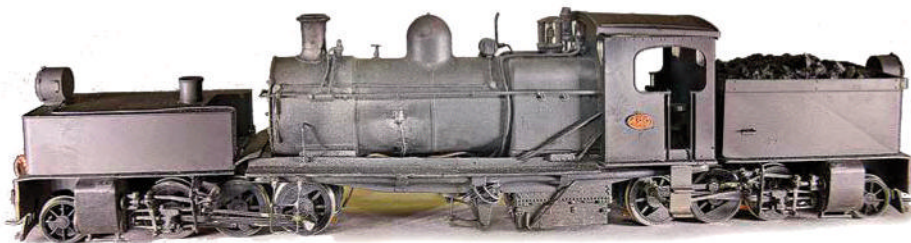
Adrian Ponton's professional experience informed his summary of aspects of grain handling on the VR.

David Powell explained how he applied the principles of art and design to build and present his layout.

Matt Turner reminded us of some of the dangers inherent in our modelling techniques.

The models displayed by participants were, as usual, of a very high standard. Breaks between the presentation sessions allowed participants to view the models and discuss them with their builders. It was particularly advantageous to have a good representation from the smaller and larger scales, apart from HO scale. ▀

Adrian Gunzburg's Msa class locomotive, No.499 of the Western Australian Government Railways (WAGR), is scratch-built using 3D resin printing and lost wax brass castings. He produced all the artwork for the casting and printing. The model is built to the scale of Sn3½ (3/16 inch).



Roger Hill displayed several VR steam locomotives in O scale (1:48). N 132 is based on the Veteran Models K class kit, with the boiler and many other components being scratch-built.



Peter McLeod constructed VR S300 'Sir Thomas Mitchell' from the Steam Era Models (SEM) kit. It has operating lamps, DCC sound and is painted SEM Diesel Blue. The model has been lightly weathered with Humbrol dark earth powder.



Steve O'Meara's N scale (1:160) VR VHCA 21H (CJ) cement hopper wagon.

Jason Pearson shaved much of the detail off a SEM Z van kit and replaced it with new handrails and uncoupler bars as well as installing SEM lamp irons and buffers. The model is finished in SEM paint.

Ron Van der Horst displayed a VR four-wheel steel louvre van in O (1:48) scale. The sides and ends are polyurethane castings from his own 3D-printed masters. White metal castings are from Veteran models and brass castings from his own patterns. Decals are by Digidecals from the builder's artwork.

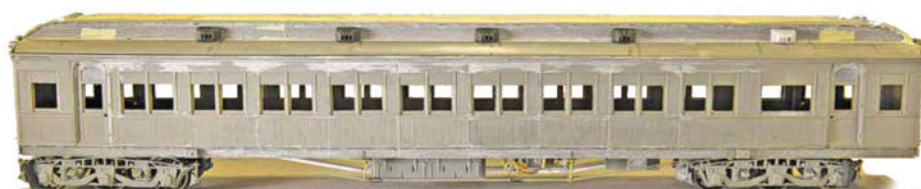
Peter Twiddy displayed some of his coach bodies in N scale (1:160), double etched from 0.3 mm brass. This model is a Southern Aurora power van.



Koshi Sato displayed a selection of his N scale models of VR prototype. All models are scratch built to 1:160 scale, mainly in styrene. Here is his model of Motorail wagon VMBP 1X.



Adam Rankin displayed several VR passenger coaches kit-bashed from SEM kits, all models are 'works in progress'. Sleeping coach 'Torrens' is based on the BE kit. Arched windows (to be installed) and roof vents are 3D prints. Brake detail on the end walls has been removed.

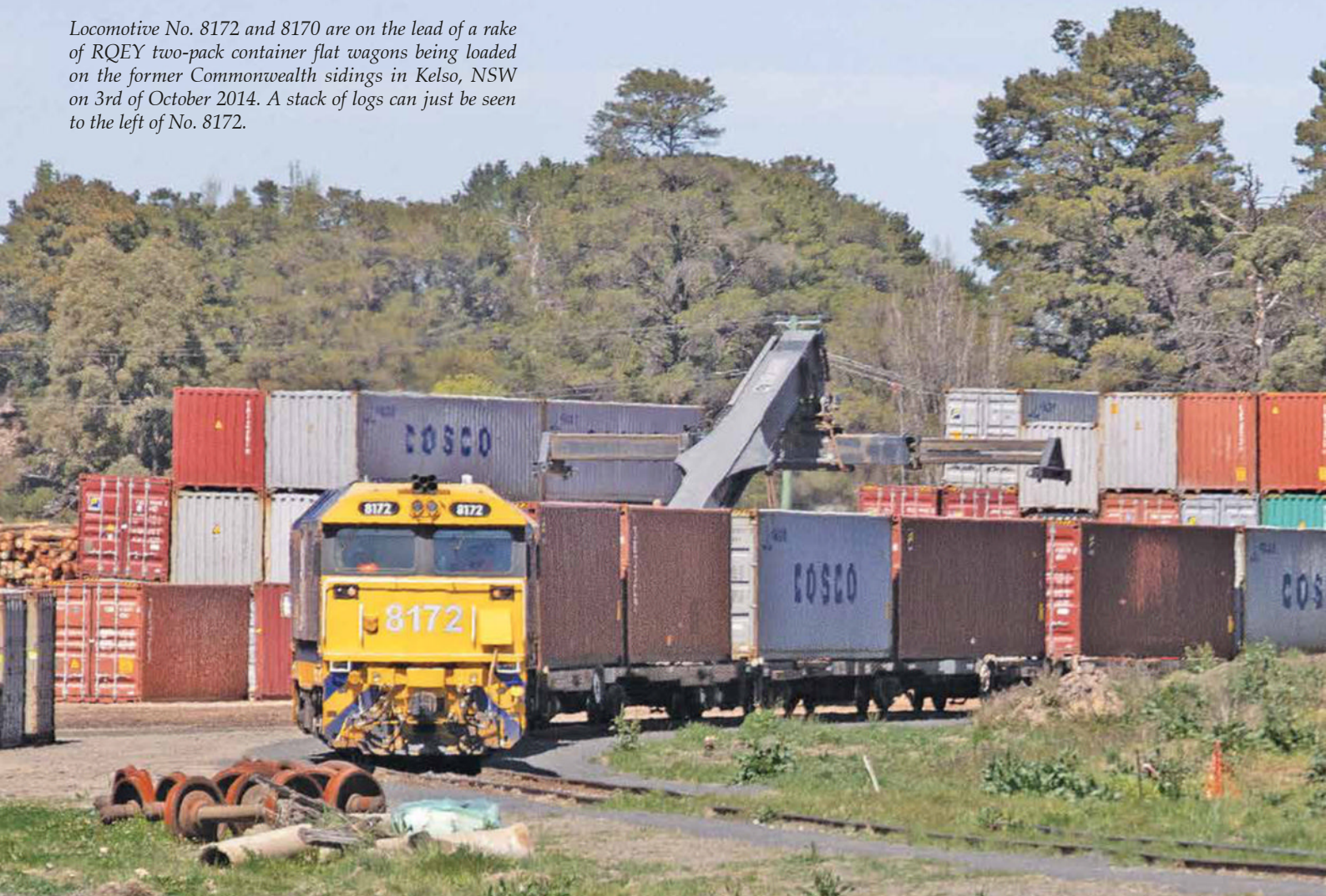


A LOCATION TO MODEL

Kelso, New South Wales

Scott Fitzgerald outlines a modern location to model with two 'dust bowl' intermodal terminals. Photos by the author.

Locomotive No. 8172 and 8170 are on the lead of a rake of RQEY two-pack container flat wagons being loaded on the former Commonwealth sidings in Kelso, NSW on 3rd of October 2014. A stack of logs can just be seen to the left of No. 8172.



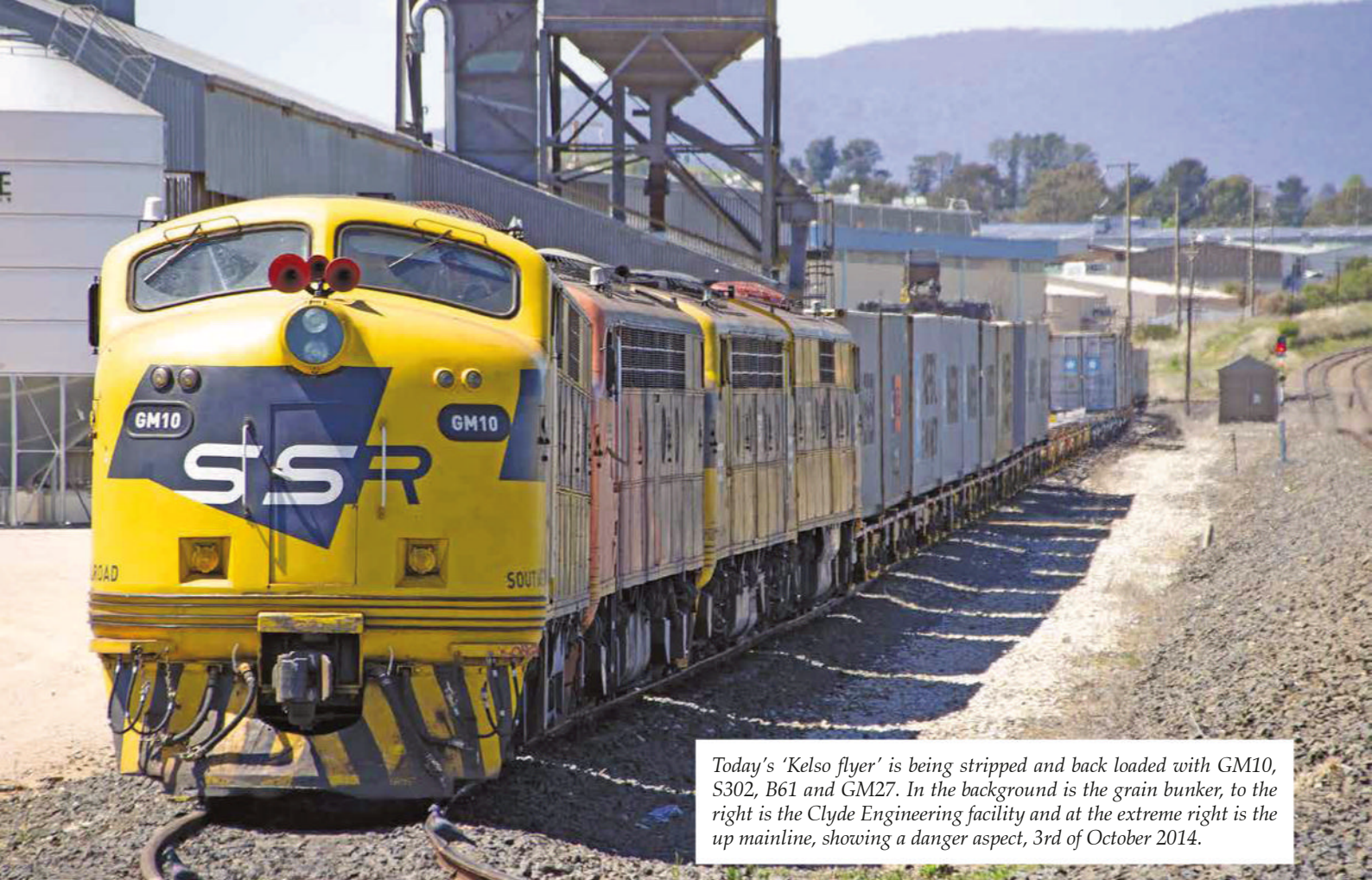
While there are two tracks that cross Toronto Street on the Commonwealth Sidings, only one is active; note the baulk just prior to the gate. The containers in the distance are in the Grainforce Logistics facility, 3rd of October 2014.

KELSO INDUSTRIAL PARK

LAND FOR SALE

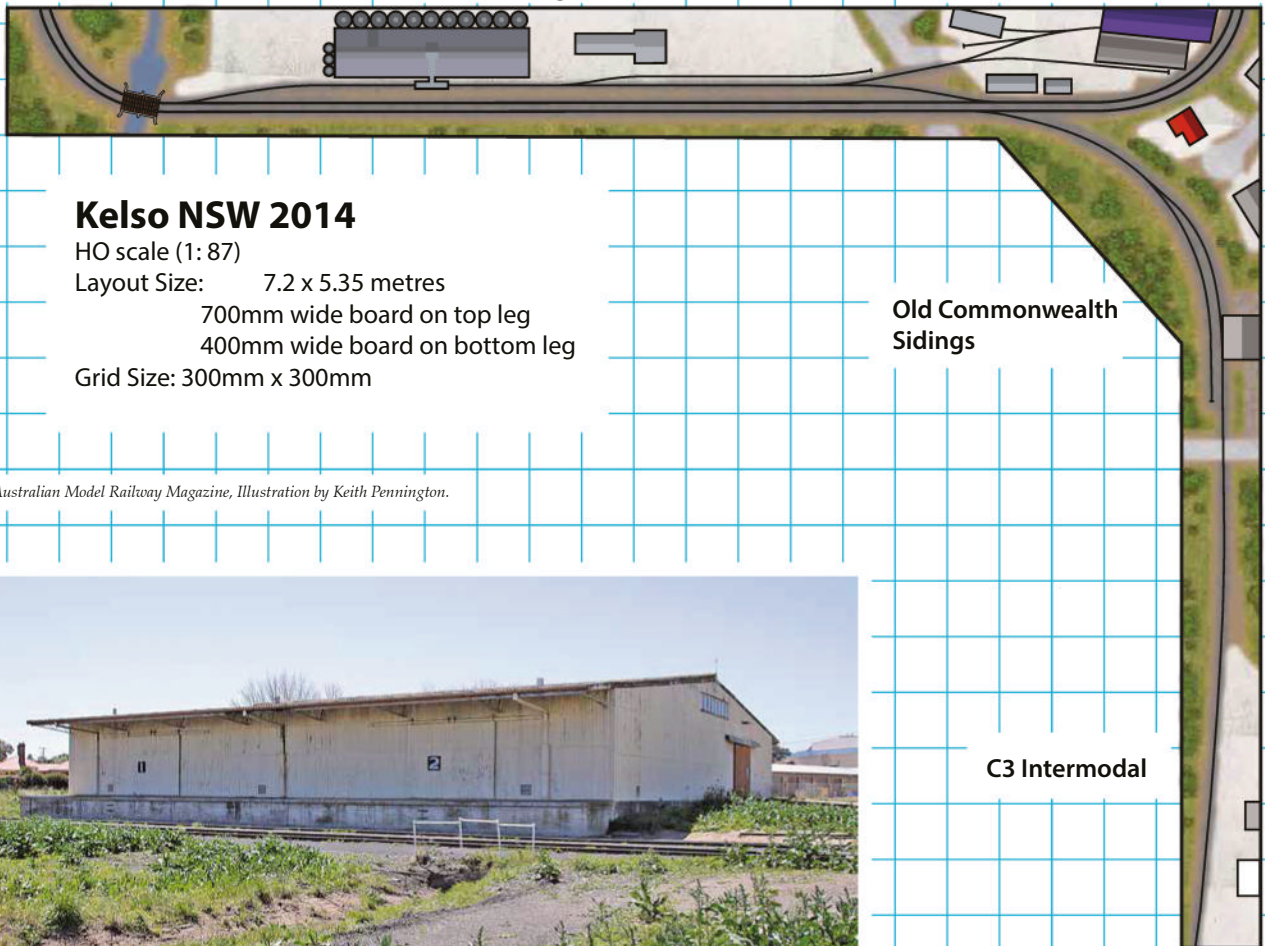
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Bathurst City Council on 6333 6235



Today's 'Kelso flyer' is being stripped and back loaded with GM10, S302, B61 and GM27. In the background is the grain bunker, to the right is the Clyde Engineering facility and at the extreme right is the up mainline, showing a danger aspect, 3rd of October 2014.

To Bathurst Grainforce Logistics Clyde Engineering To Sydney



Kelso NSW 2014

HO scale (1: 87)

Layout Size: 7.2 x 5.35 metres

700mm wide board on top leg

400mm wide board on bottom leg

Grid Size: 300mm x 300mm

Old Commonwealth Sidings

C3 Intermodal

©2026 Australian Model Railway Magazine, Illustration by Keith Pennington.



This is the only shed on the old Commonwealth Sidings served by the siding, 3rd of October 2014.

Dust bowl intermodal terminals

The growth of container operations and the proliferation of modern, efficient container stackers and retrievers has made establishing a satellite intermodal terminal relatively easy for freight companies. These short to medium distance terminals are becoming a popular way to gain efficient and reliable access to major ports such as the Port of Botany in New South Wales (NSW) [Refer Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Research Report No. 139 'Why short-haul intermodal rail services succeed'].

Such 'pop up' intermodal terminals are usually established using re-purposed locations. These terminals are built to a budget and therefore infrastructure such as hard stand areas are simply compacted earth.

Kelso NSW, on the main western line just to the east of Bathurst, has two such rail-served intermodal terminals.

Grainforce Logistics

Off the Up main line is a grain bunker siding that has been converted to an intermodal terminal and is currently operated by Grainforce Logistics. The grain bunker itself is still active.

The initial configuration of this siding was the result of a rationalisation of facilities in November 1994, reducing the siding to a single loop with an additional set of points provided at the up end to access Clyde Engineering's facilities.

This siding is serviced three times a week by Southern Shorthaul Railroad's 'Kelso Flyer'. A kick back siding has been installed at the Up end, which helps the crews to shunt container wagons around the available hard stand manoeuvring area.

To facilitate the stripping and back loading of containers, Grainforce Logistics

utilise two Hyster container stacker retrievers: a 45-31 CH and 46-41LS CH.

Frame B1 controls points at the Up end of the yard and Frame E controls points at the Down end.

Commonwealth sidings

Built in February 1943 to service Defence Department stores, these sidings connected multiple sheds, with the line branching off the down mainline. The sidings were later booked out of service in November 1981.

In 2009, Patrick PortLink opened an intermodal terminal on the former Commonwealth sidings site, with a single remote-operated trailing point branching off the Down mainline.

Of the two tracks that used to cross Toronto Street, one is baulked short of the level crossing at Toronto street. Blue metal has been added either side of the remaining track into the siding for rail crews to safely walk the length of the consist.

The terminal has a compacted earth hard stand and two Hyster stacker retrievers.

Following Patrick PortLink's exit from the market, the terminal was transferred to the Cargo Care Group (C3) and Asciano in 2014. This consortium initially had a three-year contract exporting containerised forestry products for PF Olsen Australia.

This siding is serviced three times a week by Pacific National (PN).

Modelling notes

The Grainforce Logistics siding is operated by ground frames, which can be easily replicated in model form.

The old Commonwealth sidings have a gate to enter the intermodal terminal which is unlocked by the crews and adds

operating interest in model form.

From a modelling perspective these feeder intermodal services are comparatively short trains.

This type of operation can be added to an existing layout, all that is needed is a section of flat ground in a goods yard, add containers, a couple of stacker retrievers and an ATCO hut and you are good to go.

Operational variety can be added in a number of ways; like swapping out locomotives, reversing the consist using the single siding and then departing 'wrong road' on the up. In practice, the PN service runs across the river bridge into Bathurst yard for the locomotives to swap ends and depart for Port Botany, and could reappear on the layout heading in the opposite direction after completing this move 'off stage'. What looks simple in model form is always more complicated in the prototype world.

By bending a little bit of history, the Clyde Engineering facility could be active and accept repair and overhaul work, with a contractor delivering and picking up locomotives or rollingstock.

Through services such as Manildra Group (SSR) and PN trains along with intrastate and interstate passenger services, further add to the operational variety.

References

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Research Report No. 139 'Why short-haul intermodal rail services succeed' 2016

The railway heritage of Bathurst and district, Notes for a tour by the Australian Railway Historical Society, October 2013 by Stuart Sharp



◀ Gates on the former Commonwealth Sidings This would make an interesting operational feature. 3rd of October 2014.



The former Commonwealth Sidings, looking in the down direction, the siding to the left has baulks installed just shy of the Toronto Street level crossing. In the background is the Grainforce Logistics. 3rd of October 2014.



IN THE LOOP

Wiring, turnouts and deadlines

Trevor Hodges, photos by the author.

After an intense period of working on two different locomotive projects, I decided over the Christmas/New Year period to focus on a layout project. I had a few different options:

- making some leg assemblies so my portable layout Morpeth could be set up – currently the modules are sitting on the train room floor
- making a start on a Queensland Railways (QR) layout I wrote about in a previous In The Loop
- or making module bases for a small HO scale project that's been simmering away in the background for quite a while.

However, I decided to lay some track on my main, permanent layout, the Morpeth branch. Maybe it was the festive season, but I felt in the mood to make some scenery and lay some track.

This mood may well have passed with the coming of the new year if I'd left it at that, but I'd made an offer to a couple of members of my train club to demonstrate how I wire my track, an aspect of the hobby they were both facing in the not-too-distant future. The only problem was that I didn't actually have any track laid, so first things first, I needed to get some track laid. One of my friends was on a summer break from work which made it easy for him to visit my layout, and his return to work provided me with a hard deadline.

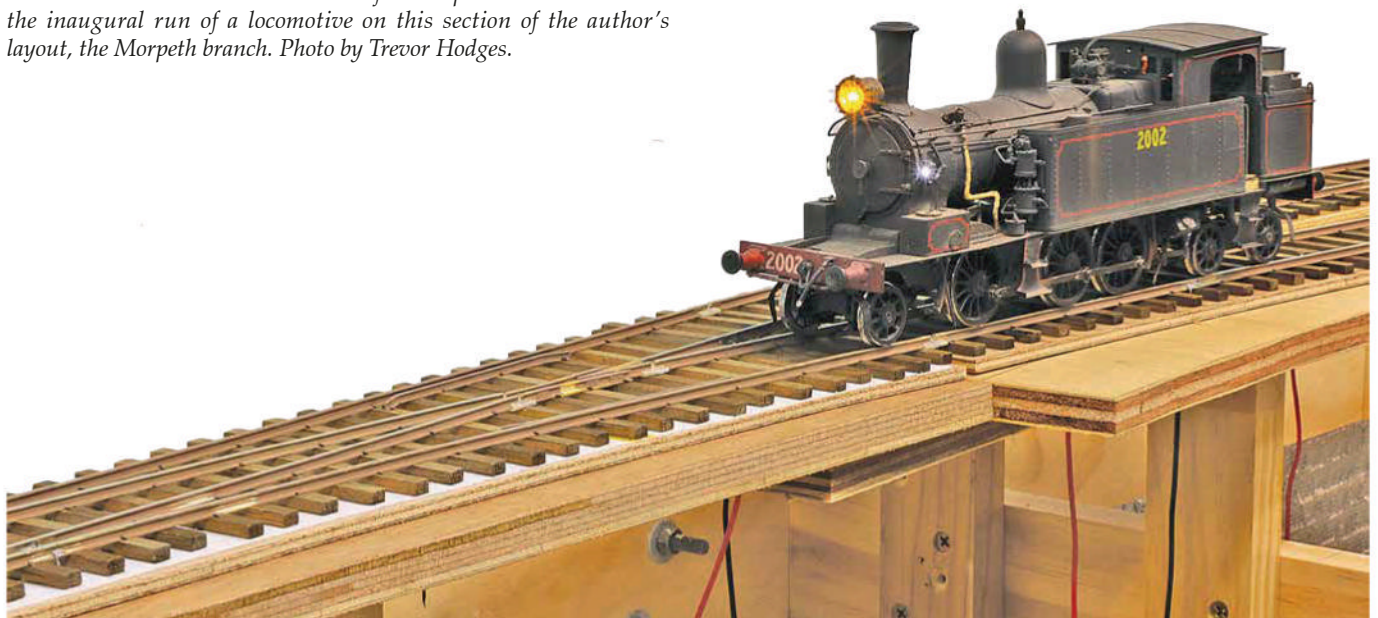
I had the benchwork that would carry the track through East Maitland on the layout finished with lighting and a painted backdrop already installed. I'd installed the sub roadbed through this section and made some curved track that was designed for the inner and outer curves of this passing loop, so it was pretty much ready to have track laid. The only problem was that the end of the passing loop needed a turnout. I hand-lay all my track on the scenic portions of my layouts, so it wasn't just a case of opening a box and laying some PECO track. To complicate things, I'd decided to test out installing some point blade slide chairs on this particular turnout and I

was finding their inclusion was slowing me down. I'd started to build the turnout and had all the slide chairs in place when I found a mistake and had to take them all up and reinstall them. In spite of repeatedly checking and the use of a long straight edge, the stock rails had inadvertently bulged out in the unsupported portion of the turnout. I laid the slide chairs to these incorrect positions so when I checked afterwards the gauge had widened.

I finally got the turnout completed and took it into my layout room and began by loosely setting out the track I'd already built. I then realised there were two short but critical pieces I hadn't previously made because I'd been waiting until I had the turnout completed against which I could make measurements to this fixed point. As my deadline approached, I drew out the centrelines on the track bases I'd cut out, started laying sleepers then pinned the rail down and was ready to start laying the curves of East Maitland so they'd be ready for the arrival of my friends. My hand-built track is made on bases of 4mm-thick plywood and whilst laying it is very similar to laying normal flex track in some respects, if I make a mistake, I can't just push it about to "make" it fit. It takes time and a bit of care with measuring if I want it to go in correctly, but the upside is that it doesn't allow for bodes and fuzzy geometry. When I get it right it goes in first time and the curves and connections are smooth and I can be sure trains will run through it nicely. Luckily everything went together as intended and I was able to screw the sections of track into position the afternoon before my friends arrived at nine o'clock the following morning.

Making your own track is not a route I'd recommend for everyone although it is a good, challenging modelling exercise just to prove to yourself you can do it. Perhaps there's a piece of point-work not available commercially that you need? Why not have a go at building it yourself? However, for the majori-

Locomotive No. 2002 sits at the end of the loop at East Maitland on the inaugural run of a locomotive on this section of the author's layout, the Morpeth branch. Photo by Trevor Hodges.





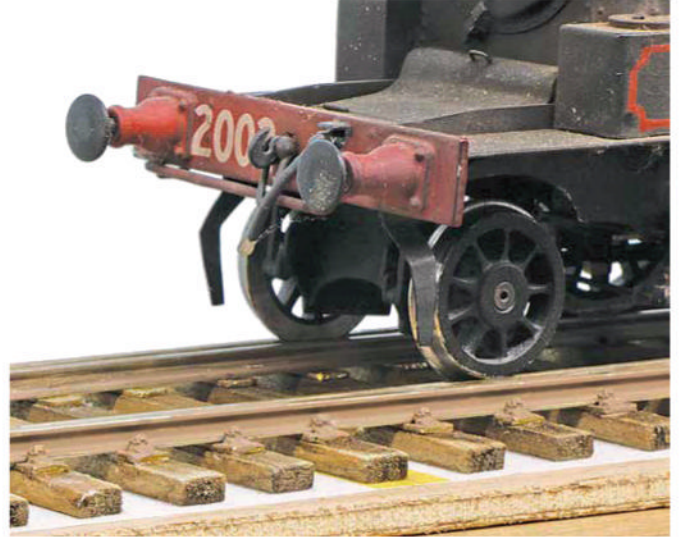
IN THE LOOP

ty of track and point work that you might need to build a layout what's available commercially is more than adequate. I know if I were still working in HO, I'd be using code 83 PECO range to lay my track.

I've had a couple of exhibition layouts and while sitting under a layout at 10pm working on the wiring the evening before you're due to transport your pride and joy to an exhibition is no fun, having an exhibition to get your layout ready for certainly provides the motivation to get projects completed. You don't need to restrict setting yourself deadlines to exhibition layouts, however. Inviting friends round to run trains or to show them a particular process you use and that they've expressed an interest in is a great way to get things done. I know that without my friends' visit I'd still be tinkering with that No. 6 turnout as I scratched my head about what I'd done wrong with the slide chairs. Their impending visit made me find the problem, come up with a solution and push through.

This is a hobby and not work, you don't have to force yourself to do anything. However, in spite of it being a hobby you'll inevitably come up against difficulties and challenges and always following the path of least resistance will inevitably lead to many started projects and very few completions. I enjoy most aspects of this hobby but there are some I definitely prefer having completed rather than doing them. If it takes inviting a couple of friends over to make me do a task that I'm

not that enthusiastic about, then that's all to the greater good because it means I can move onto things I do really enjoy and there are plenty of those, including wiring!



The uncooperative slide chairs can be seen just below 2002's front wheels. Photo by Trevor Hodges.

Build a controller hanger

Les Fordham builds an easy and affordable controller hanger. Photos by the author.

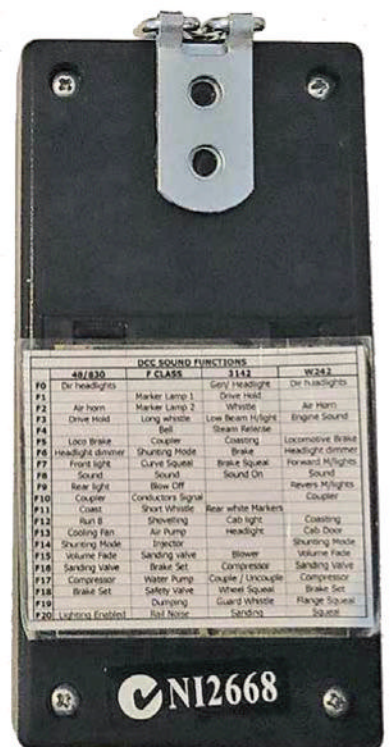
If you are using hand-held controllers for your layout, sometimes you need to put them safely away so they do not get dropped, or you may need both hands to do something.

On my layout there was no easy or convenient way to mount the conventional controller or throttle holders.

However, I found these picture hanging rings at my local hardware store are an easy and inexpensive way to solve this problem. The hanging rings, Everhang No. 71999, are available in a pack of four for \$2.60 AUD (see photo No.1).

I fixed the hanging ring on the back of my NCE Cab06P with some double-sided, heavy-duty tape. Where I want to hang the controller, I screwed in a small cup hook. The whole setup takes about two minutes and is very unobtrusive, as well as not taking up too much space.

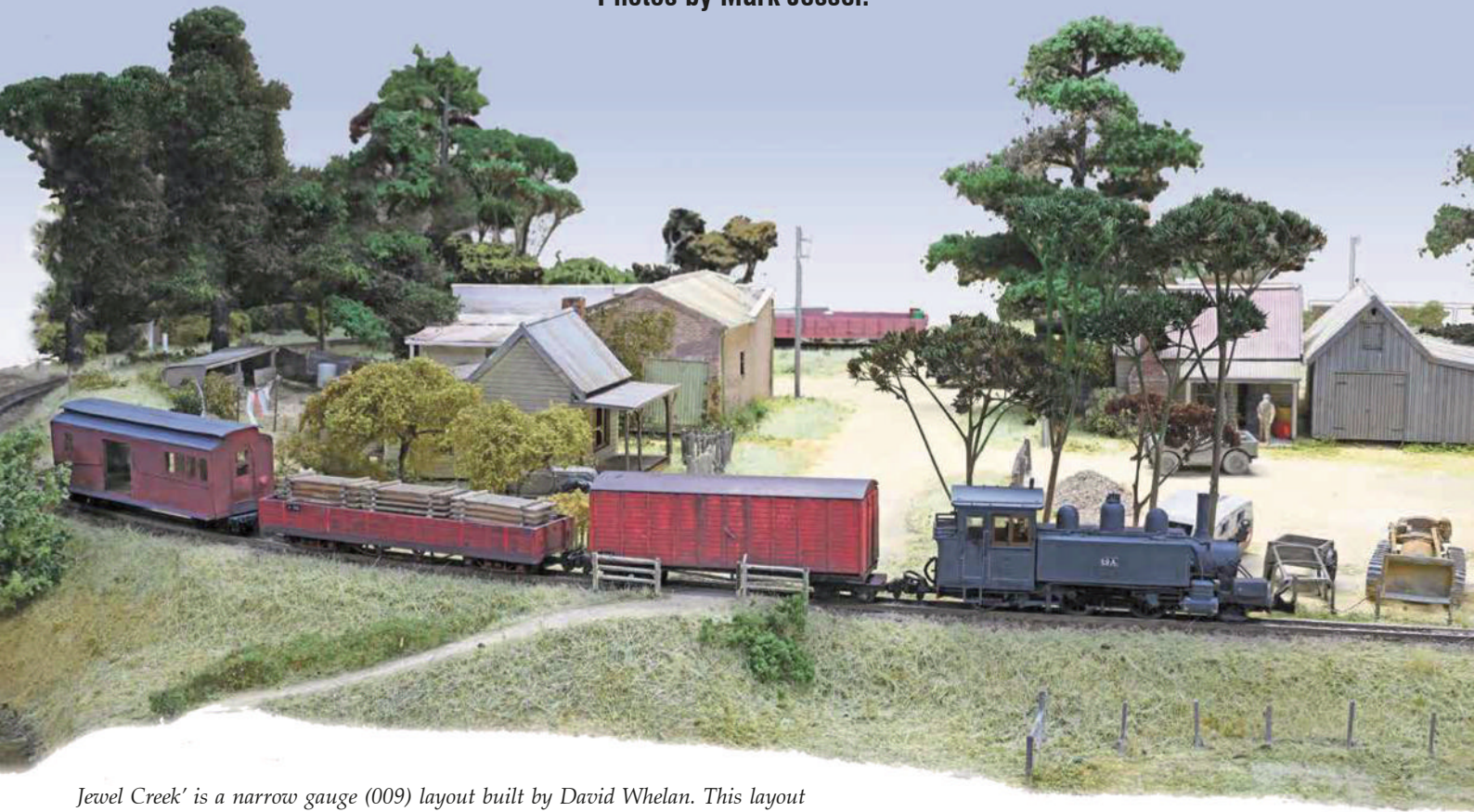
The conventional controller holders normally cost more than \$10.00 AUD whereas these picture hanging rings cost about 65 cents each.



D-ring packet, cup hook, and D-ring installed on the back of a NCE Cab06P controller.

Exhibition Gallery – Philip Island 2026

Mark Jesser presents a gallery of layouts at the 2026 Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers exhibition.
Photos by Mark Jesser.



'Jewel Creek' is a narrow gauge (009) layout built by David Whelan. This layout is based on the famous 'Puffing Billy' Victorian Railways narrow gauge line.



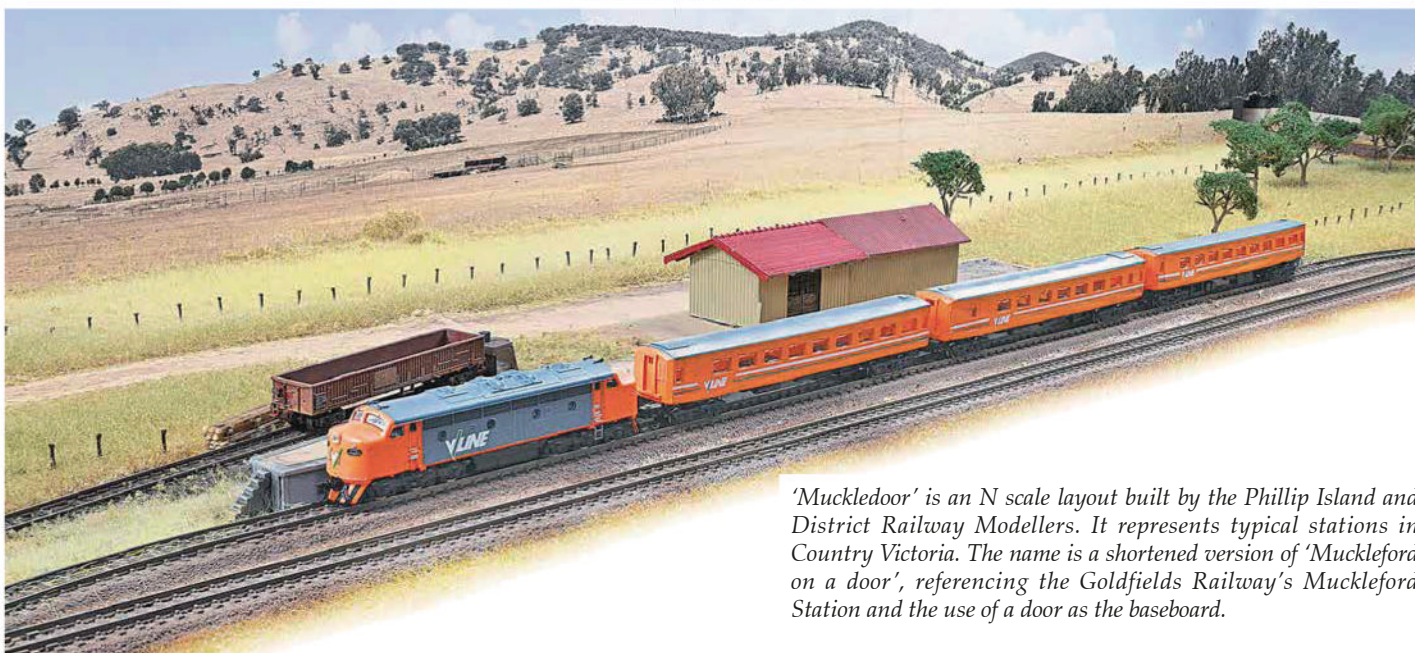
'2 Mile Creek' an On2½ scale layout built by the Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers. This layout depicts a timber harvesting and saw milling township in South Gippsland in the 1920's with scenes of tree felling, winching of fallen logs, loading, saw milling operations and a township with associated buildings of that era.



▲ 'Llanegryn' is a small narrow gauge (009) layout built with the primary purpose of serving the local Hop growing industry.



◀ 'Teasdale' is a new TT120 layout based in the North of England on the Settle to Carlisle line in the 1960 to 1970s time frame. This layout is a work in progress by Dale Brain.



'Muckledoor' is an N scale layout built by the Phillip Island and District Railway Modellers. It represents typical stations in Country Victoria. The name is a shortened version of 'Muckleford on a door', referencing the Goldfields Railway's Muckleford Station and the use of a door as the baseboard.

90 years of the Sydney Model Railway Club

90 years of the Sydney Model Railway Club. Alan Smith looks back at 90 years of the Sydney Model Railway Club. Photos by the author.

In 2026 the Sydney Model Railway Club turns 90 years of age, this apparently makes it the oldest model railway club in Australia.

My connection to the club is via my father Ken Smith: he took me to the Railway Institute when I was around 12 years old. Dad passed in his 90's, and I am now 75.

There is a lot of modelling history that I think is gradually fading away, so this article is a small attempt to leave a legacy.

I visited the Club at its Arncliffe site in 2025: much has changed, but some things have stayed the same.

The most noticeable change is the impact of r-t-r models, the old days of scratch building have receded. What is the same, is the camaraderie of the Club. Most gratifying is the enthusiasm and commitment of its members in the new century.

For me, growing up in my teen years, the four key names associated with the Club were my father, Ken Smith, Frank Shennen, Lionel Glendenning and Arthur Wheatley. This group ate dinner each Monday night and headed off to the Club for the evening. Other names I heard regularly were Eric Moss, Jack Page and Norm Read.

Frank in that time owned and printed the magazine *Truck and Bus* and its stablemate for the railways. It was he who in the late 1940's printed up coach sides which members assembled. My father, much to Mum's disgust, cast bogies on her stove in the kitchen. Today, proudly on display in the Club are some of these coaches.

Refer photo 1 and 2. There are about a dozen in my late father's collection.

Arthur was a great scratch builder, and the go-to man for painting locomotives.

The paint booth etc was all setup in the back of his garage in Northbridge.

My father and Frank were two of the 24 founding members in 1936. Post World War II, Ken was President of the Club from 1946 to 1949. From 1949 he was a partner with Ken Thomas, in what later became the giant transport company TNT. Years later he was Treasurer for many years; he once told me if the Club was a bit short at the end of the year, he'd just top up the funds himself.

In 1986 the Club turned 50, and reprinted a number of articles from the late 1940's. One such article was by my father relating how he became a modeller. Looking around the industry today with its plethora of models available I thought readers might appreciate an origin story of our hobby in Australia. **A**



Photo 1.



Photo 2.

Ken Smith Article Sydney Model Railway Society Bulletin July 1945

My earliest recollections of model trains goes back to the early 1920's in England, when I was given an 'O' gauge train set consisting of a 2-4-0 locomotive with a cast iron body of American parentage, several wagons and a circle of track with one siding.

The track, hand laid by my father, consisted of Gauge '1' bull-head rail, mounted in lead chairs fastened to wooden sleepers held in place by wooden battens underneath. The rails were joined together by fish-plates fastened to the rails by nuts and bolts, which were forever getting lost in the carpet, and they were soon replaced by spring steel fish-plates.

At this time one of my friends had a 'OO' gauge clockwork train set made by Bing. The locomotive was a 2-4-0 tank with four-wheeled carriages running on pressed tinfoil track with embossed sleepers. I recall the locomotive could be bought separately for about 45 cents.

Another more affluent friend had an electric 'OO' gauge Bing set, and this was my first introduction to electric trains. I dreamed of the day when I would have my own electric train layout, but that was some time away.

In those days 'OO' and 'HO' were a novelty, but the Bing sets were a forerunner of Hornby Dublo twenty years later.

A great treat at this age was to be taken into London on a late-night shopping night at Christmas to visit the toy shops, particularly Bassett-Lowke and Gamages in Holborn, and Hamleys in Oxford St.

Gamages arranged a most extensive 'O' gauge layout in their store, tinfoil electric with some scenery and many working accessories all lit up, with many trains operating at the same time in a programmed sequence. All this was an eyepener to a young boy.

I then progressed through various Hornby clockwork 'O' gauge tank engines, wagons, points and rails, and I had quite a reasonable collection by 1928 when my family moved to Australia. I brought the trains with me on the boat, but soon found even the gentlest move of the ship made it impossible to run the trains on the deck!

A great step forward occurred in 1930 when I became the proud possessor of a second-hand Hornby 'Riviera Blue' electric train set. This consisted of a 4-4-2 locomotive, painted in French Nord railway colours, plus two Pullman coaches in blue Wagon-Lits colours, and a circle of track.

This is when my first model railway scratch-building really began, as I added a centre rail to the original steel trackwork to accommodate the new electric train. It was possible to buy single rail lengths of Hornby tinfoil from their local agent

and I used this for the centre rail. These were the depression years, and over the next few years I made quite a lot of tinfoil track, using the rail mentioned above nailed to wooden sleepers. I then became more confident and made several points using the same method which were quite satisfactory.

On leaving school trains fell into the background for some time, although with a friend we started a Model Railway Club in the local church hall for a few school children in the area: but that is another story.

In the mid 1930's I started to make 'O' gauge models of New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) wagons, mostly of wood, with plenty of improvisation. It was difficult to obtain parts, and even they were mostly imported and not prototypical for local modelling. However, I was proficient with a soldering iron at this time, and was able to put together passable bogie frames and other running gear.

I was also inspired to try and rebuild the old Hornby electric mechanism into a more realistic model but for some reason of English outline rather than a local one. The result was somewhat crude, but it worked satisfactorily, and I was encouraged to undertake more advanced model building.

However, I was introduced to a new world when I attended the first meeting of the proposed Sydney Model Railway Society in the 'Greyhound Recorder' offices in Hay St, Sydney. Here I found a group of enthusiastic people of all ages and backgrounds who shared a common interest and purpose in model trains.

I think it was mostly through the efforts of Jack Page, who held a senior position in the Railways, that the embryo club in due course obtained the use of a room in the Railways Institute in Castlereagh St, Sydney: first on the ground floor and subsequently we moved down to the basement.

It was at this time that Hornby introduced their Dublo OO gauge electric system. Tinfoil track with embossed sleepers and centre third rail. The first locomotive was an 0-6-2 Tank, which was quite a well-proportioned model of an English prototype, and this was followed by a model of a 4-6-2 streamlined passenger locomotive. There was a fair range of coaches and wagons and other railway accessories.

This new gauge caught my attention, and I sold all my 'O' gauge equipment, and embraced OO gauge three rail. I suppose the main reason was space, or rather lack of it, and I could now see an opportunity to have my own permanent layout,

albeit on an open veranda, and somewhat chilly in winter, as some of my friends can recall only too well.

But I made a false start in three-rail for it was not long after the Club started that a couple of Club members bought in Hornby Dublo locomotives that had been converted to two-rail. I was sold on the spot and set out to convert all the locomotives and rolling stock to two-rail. The trackwork had to be rebuilt, since the three rail system consisted of rail soldered to brass sleepers, with the points built in a similar way.

Insulated wheels, of course, were a problem but one of the members, Gordon Usherwood, commenced production of a range of parts as a sideline in his commercial machine shop. These included fibre wheels on steel axles, but it was difficult to get true running wheels, and this problem of wobbly wheels was not overcome until die-cast plastic wheels became available.

For the locomotives the Club members: Rushton and Thomasson, turned down the rims of the Hornby driving wheels, turned up scale treads from brass stock, and pressed the treads back on the wheels with a layer of fibre in between. These were an excellent job and they ran for over twenty years. Another method was to cut a slot halfway around the wheel, between the wheel and the tread with a jewellers saw, and fill this slot with glue and fibre, and when this set to do the other half in the same way. This was very satisfactory, but generally retained the original course treads on the wheels.

That was OK at the time, as the battle of standards for wheels, track and back-to-back measurements for the Club layout was yet to be fought in the late 1940's.

Fortunately, some brass bullhead rail was available in Australia, all imported, of course, but sleepers were a problem. You could cut your own out of thin plywood, and there were some American fibre in 36-inch lengths available, with wider sections for points construction. Rail spikes were generally not obtainable and it was usual to use small round headed brass tacks. I have the feeling that rail joiners were hard to come by, and were of inferior quality.

In the late 1930's a local manufacturer brought out a wooden milled sleeper strip in 6 inch lengths, and also wooden edging strips of reasonable correct profile to hold the sleeper strips in place. This made a realistic track when ballasted, but great care was needed in laying the track because of the varying thickness of the sleeper strip. There is still some of this track at the present Club layout, (referencing 1945!).

Point motors were expensive, and most people wanting remote control of points either put in rodding or cord, or wound their own solenoids and made their own point motors. I made a dozen or so, and they worked well for many years, but they drew a lot of current and became very hot if left on for too long.

Back to the Club: when the move was made to the basement of the Institute the majority of the members were 'O' gauge, and the building of the layout began. I am hazy as to the layout design and how far the actual construction proceeded, as I joined the forces in 1940, and lost touch

with the Club for several years.

However, before this, the HO gauge members started to build a portable layout on a flat nine foot by six foot table top, and at least an oval of track and some passing loops were in operation.

During the war the basement was required by the Railways, and in any case membership dropped to a very low level. The layouts were dismantled and there seems some doubt as to what happened to them.

But it took more than a war to stop the Club, and it was revived in 1945 with meetings being held in the Railway

Institute in Devonshire Street. I was on leave from the Airforce and attended the reopening meeting, held on June 4th, 1945.

I was one of 25 members, as is recorded in the SMRS bulletin Volume, 1 number 1, June 1945. The present members of the Club at that meeting were Eric Moss, Frank Shennan and myself. It is interesting to note that membership was set at 10 shillings per annum payable in advance.

Ken Smith

Snippet from Norm Read

Another snippet from the period is from Norm Read, he wrote:

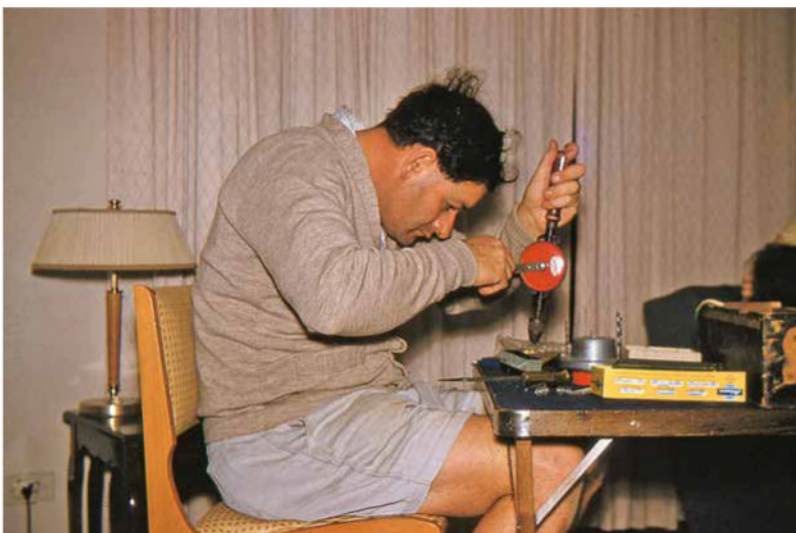
I had a funny experience at one stage during the War when I went in, while on leave, to try to get a drawing or photo of a coach. At one stage I had visions of them declaring me a spy, but as I had my pay book with me, and as I was ultimately

cleared by someone in Victoria Barracks, I was allowed to leave minus any information. But many months later a photo did arrive home of the coaches, but useless for modelling details as these coaches were never built by our workshops.

Norm Read, an O gauger, finishes his article published in 1954 with this

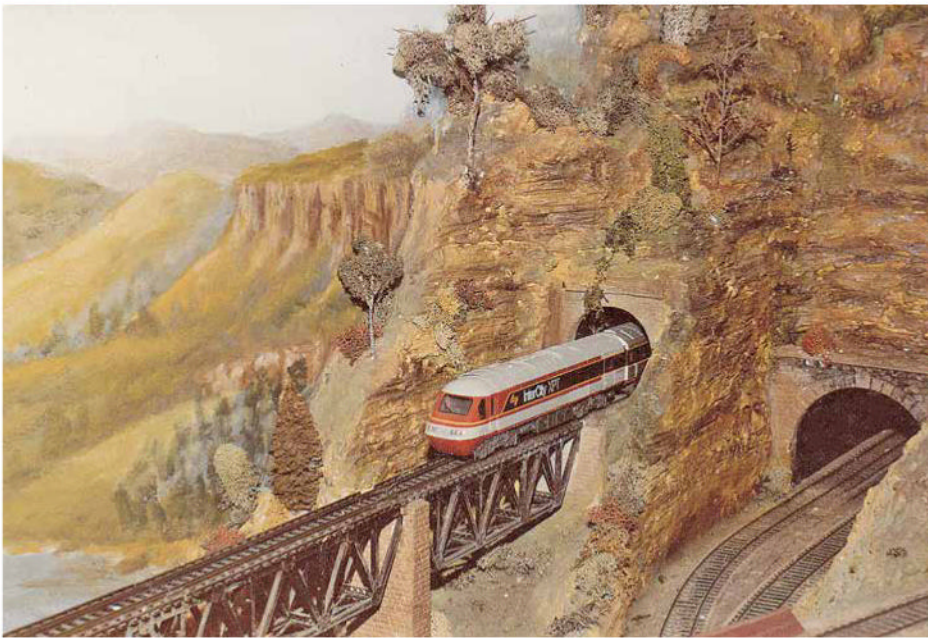
summary:

Ingenuity, imagination, and plain tenacity were the requirement in those days to get a model railway into operation. It's much easier now when the biggest problem as I see it is what not to buy, not what there is to buy.



▲ *Ken Smith (to the right) is working on the club layout.*

◀ *Ken Smith hard at work in the late 1950s.*



Ken Smith's layout early 1980s.



Ken Smith's layout early 1980s.



Ken Smith and a young helper at the club in the 1960s.



Photo 1. Dungog in full exhibition display in 2014. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

Dungog – The prequel

Andrew King describes the development of the layout Dungog by the North Shore Railway Modellers Association. Photos by NSRMA members unless otherwise noted.

Introduction

Those who followed the Star Wars franchise will know that after the 1977 film Star Wars, there were two sequel movies, then a prequel trilogy was released, followed by further sequels. A prequel is defined as a story or film containing events that precede those of an existing work. This article is the prequel

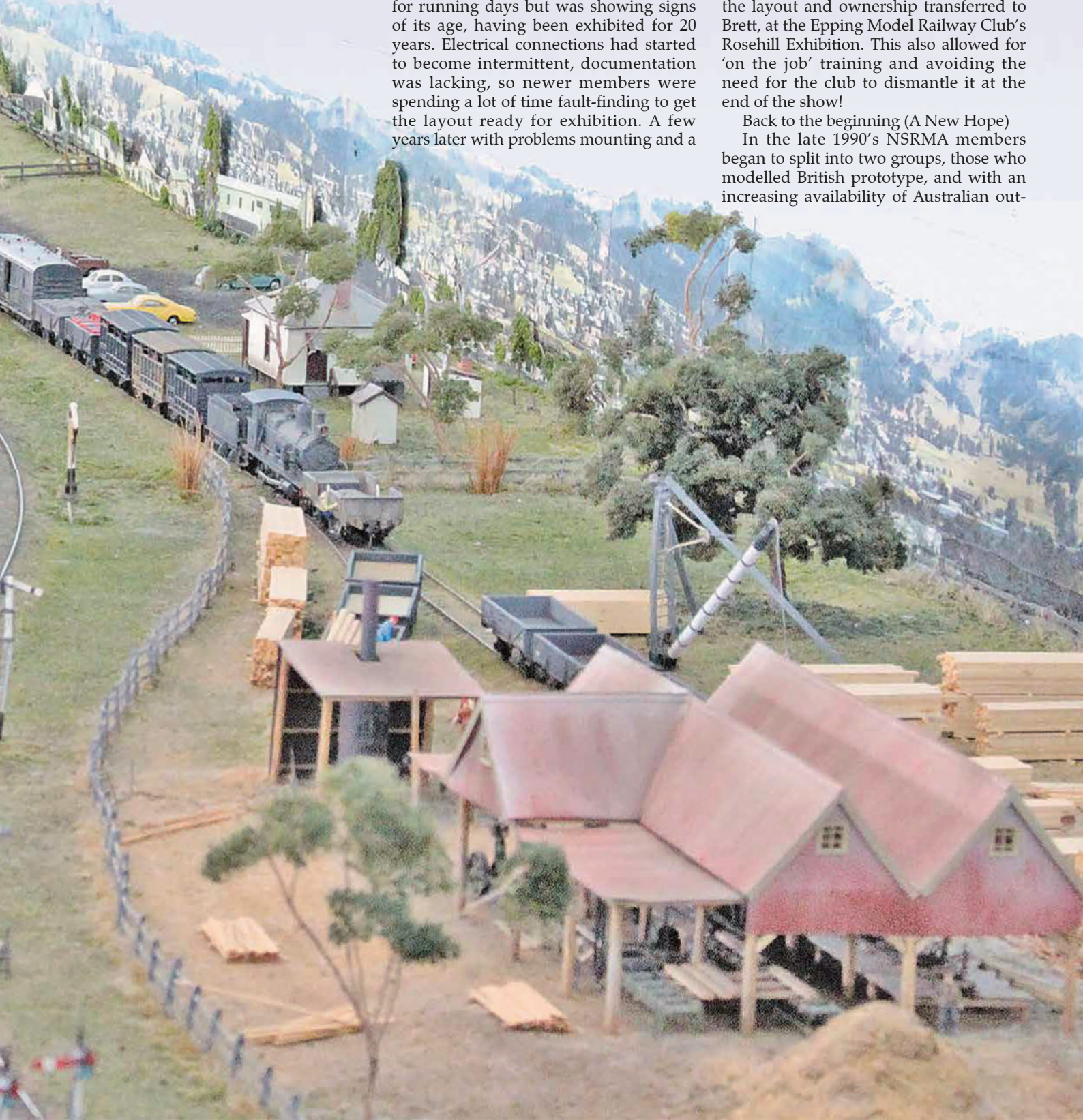
to Brett Watson's article 'Dungog NSW' (See AMRM issue No. 376 February 2026), describing the origins of the Dungog layout by the North Shore Railway Modellers Association (NSRMA).

In 2018 NSRMA had developed the first iteration of a new layout, Blue Mountains, and space in the club rooms was tight. Dungog was the club's layout for running days but was showing signs of its age, having been exhibited for 20 years. Electrical connections had started to become intermittent, documentation was lacking, so newer members were spending a lot of time fault-finding to get the layout ready for exhibition. A few years later with problems mounting and a

new layout demanding more of the club's space it was decided to conduct a tender process to sell the layout. We had several bids with similar monetary values. Brett's bid stood out based on research of the quality of modelling the new owner would have, hence our much-loved layout would be seen as going to a good home. So, in 2022 it was decided to sell the layout and ownership transferred to Brett, at the Epping Model Railway Club's Rosehill Exhibition. This also allowed for 'on the job' training and avoiding the need for the club to dismantle it at the end of the show!

Back to the beginning (A New Hope)

In the late 1990's NSRMA members began to split into two groups, those who modelled British prototype, and with an increasing availability of Australian out-



line kits and models, the other group focussed on Australian prototypes. Hence, when a new layout was to be developed, these were the long-term goals and became the core requirements of the layout:

- NO hernia's lifting overweight modules
- NO army of help needed to assemble the layout
- NO single-level terrain layout
- NO bored operators due to non-prototypical operations
- NO r-t-r rolling stock or kit-pack build-ings
- NO double track with trains endlessly circling.

Inspired by the single main line on the North Coast, a small core of NSRMA members made research trips to Dungog and agreed it was the place to model. Members applied a fresh approach to exhibition layout construction and operation. Most important, was ease of assembly and operation by a minimum of two members. Without clubrooms at the time, it was evident that we needed a trailer for storage and transport.

Construction

The core of each module was a slab of medium grade expanded polystyrene foam 200mm thick. This was surrounded

by 9mm marine grade plywood sides and ends using polyvinyl acetate (PVA) glue to fix it together. By avoiding the need for a large baseboard and timber framing, the result is an extremely light 2.4m x 0.9m module which can be lifted by one person. See photo 2.

Joining the modules together was achieved by fixing a length of 20 x 80mm 3mm thick aluminium angle into the end plywood, screwing it to the plywood and mounting tapered alignment pins. The foam was cut away in two sections to allow bolts and wingnuts to be inserted to secure the modules together. Track crossings were aligned by fixing printed circuit board to the top of the aluminium angle, removing the last few sleepers under the track and soldering the track to the printed circuit board (PCB). See cross section below.

Where items needed to be mounted under the layout, a 'high tech' cookie cutter (see photo 4) was employed to hollow out sections of the foam block and cover these with a small square of 3mm plywood which was glued to the foam. Items such as point motors were then able to be firmly secured to the module and the wiring connected to a board mounted on the underside of the foam.

The module ends sat on wooden trestles topped by a length of 'U' channel steel wide enough to sit the ends of two modules on, but not interlocked. As the modules were lightweight, the layout could be assembled by two people by laying out the trestles, placing the modules on the trestles then pushing them together.

Completed module weights range from 23 to 39kg, the heaviest being ones with the most wiring, trackwork and wooden scenery. The first two core requirements were achieved.

Layout

The original track plan included a nine-track fiddle yard feeding into a single track at each end plus a feed off the first track into the Martins Creek quarry. Subsequently, a single head shunt was added at the Butter factory end to provide five storage roads.

As the popularity of the layout grew, this was replaced by the 17-track fiddle yard as shown in the track plan (See Photo 5), with sundry sidings at each end for locomotives, and a programme track and rail motor storage. For direct current (DC) operations all tracks in the yard are switched and gapped in the middle, this enables at least two trains to be stored on each track, effectively, this is not required for DCC operations. [

The layout featured Dungog station and its associated sidings on the main viewing side, Martins Creek station and the nearby gravel loader in the quarry that has supplied much of the ballast for the New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR). The other side of the layout featured the Williams River bridge and the Dungog Butter factory and siding. As Brett described in his article, the refurbishment process involved changing several of the original buildings to suit the new era of the layout. The sawmill was replaced by Watto's pub, the Crew barracks have gone and Martin's Creek quarry is no longer in operation.

Electrical and Control

When the layout was initially wired, digital command control (DCC) was in its infancy, so club members wired the layout using DC as they were more familiar with DC operation.

The power was supplied from three controllers, for Up, Down and Local control. DC wiring required the layout to be



Photo 2. Mick Bluett carries a module in one hand.



Photo 4. The 'high tech' cookie cutter.



Module Alignment

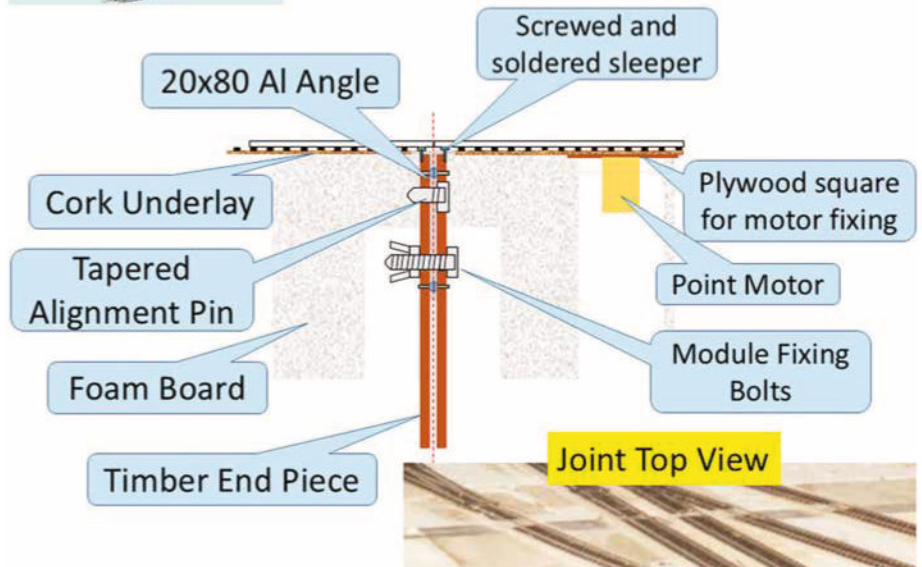


Photo 3. Module alignment graphic by Andrew King.

sectioned in blocks that could be switched according to the desired direction and position for each locomotive. Power from the controllers fed a control panel which contained a number of five-position, dual-gang rotary switches that could select UP, LOCAL or DOWN with an unused position between each of these three to ensure that circuits were 'break before make,' and avoid cross-connections between the supplies. The switch outputs were then connected to 12-pin Molex connectors, and a loom of cables would then be used to connect to each module around the layout. The number of wiring looms and connections to each module become one of the Achilles heels of the layout as use over time reduced the

reliability of the connections.

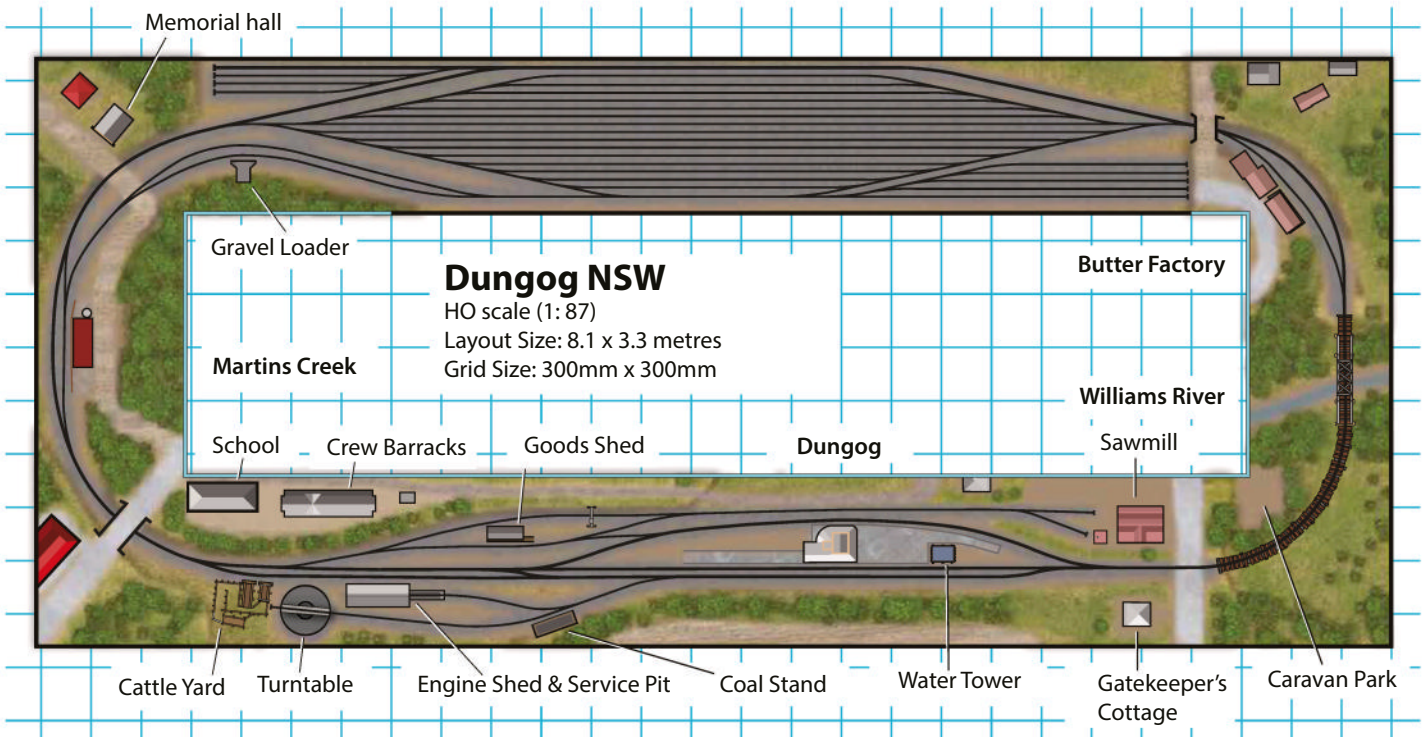
Converting the layout to DCC operation was easy. All it required was to add an NCE Power Pro System fed via an NCE EB3 three-channel circuit breaker to replace the previous DC controller feeds. It also required adding cab bus wiring around the modules to allow throttles to be connected as needed. The control panel also included bi-coloured light emitting diodes (LEDs) to indicate the position of the points. These provided confirmation that the point motor had actually operated as they were fed back from micro switches mounted on each motor. Tortoise motors were a new invention at the time and had only two single-pole double-throw (SPDT) contacts. Our

design needed four contacts so the late Brian Moss developed a system using a stall motor on a Rix bracket with four micro switches mounted on the other side of the actuating arm (see photo 8) and a connection using a 15 pin D plug. See photo 9.

We are so fortunate today to have readily available integrated stall motors also including DCC control.

A Graham Walker uncoupler magnet was used for each uncoupler on the layout with a back electro motive force (EMF) diode to suppress the switching spikes of a large coil. This was driven by a timing controller to supply one uncoupler at a time.

Again, we are so fortunate today to



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▲ Photo 5. Dungog track plan.

◀ Photo 6. Fully loaded fiddle yard, Dungog Centenary of Rail 2011 photo by Andrew King.

have rare earth magnets etc to bring down the power requirements and increase reliability of uncouplers.

The Models and Scenery

From the basic flat slab modules described above, additional foam was added to create relief for bridges and cuts made particularly for the Williams River bridge crossing, thus achieving the 3rd core requirement and providing the base for some interesting scenic features.

Actual photos of Dungog were taken from a hill behind the Dungog Wastewater treatment plant to make a background to the main scene on the layout. The photos were cut together then trimmed to remove the skyline and mounted on 'magic-mount' tape. This made the photos stand out from the background by a few millimetres and provided a 3D effect to the scenic background. Over time the colour photographs faded so the photos were replaced a few times.

A few of the buildings on Dungog were kit-bashed items, but most were scratch built by NSRMA members. The list includes:

- Mick Bluett: Butter factory road bridge, Trestle bridge and nearby caravan park as well as most of the signals on the layout
- The late Geoff Brown: Martins Creek quarry (scratch built from photos), Goods shed (kit bashed), Cattle yard (scratch built), Trike shed (kit built), Williams River truss bridge and plate girder bridge (kit bashed).
- Peter Dibben: Dungog station, Locomotive shed, Butter factory, sawmill, coal stand, turntable, water tank, fettler's tent and Martins Creek station (all scratch built), gantry crane (kit built)
- David Taylor: Martins Creek quarry (scratch built from photos), crew barracks, Memorial Hall near the quarry, and Station Master's residence.
- Murray Simpson: kit-bashed two card kits into the Gate Keeper's house at the road crossing, the milking shed on the farm and the cottage next to the Memorial Hall.
- Alan Walton: Mary St road bridge (scratch built)

Fun fact No. 1 – construction of the layout was an international process. NSRMA member Peter Dibben was an experienced Qantas international flight captain who has seen all the tourist attractions in his many layovers, so he took a bag of tools and kit materials to while away the hours in his hotel room and often would return with a completed model to be fixed on the layout. One can only imagine in pre 9/11 times him being able to take items through customs that subsequently would be banned!

Fun fact No. 2 – the layout was invited to Dungog to exhibit during the town's celebrations of 100 years of the railway in Dungog in 2011. This was its second time being exhibited in Dungog as it was also shown at the 40th anniversary of the Dungog Pre-School in 2007. We set up in a room in the Dungog Community Preschool which was previously the railway crew barracks. We had the pleasure of pointing out to people that you were in a building that is modelled on the layout! It was a memorable visit as some elderly people reminisced over their early years

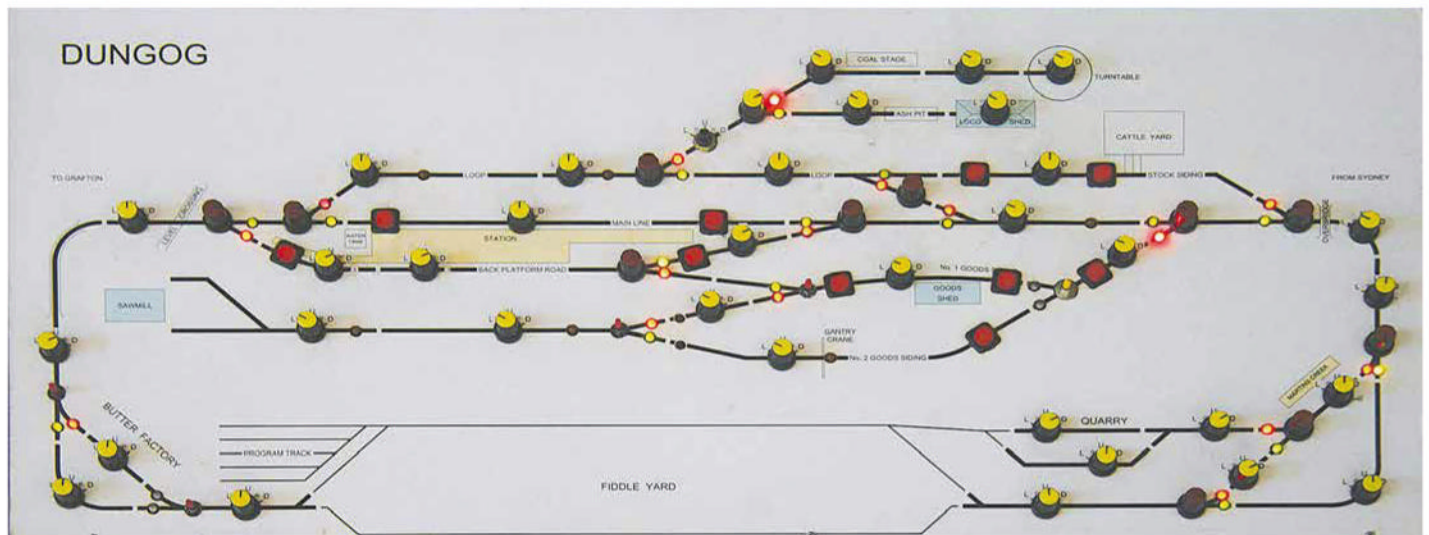


Photo 7. Dungog control panel.

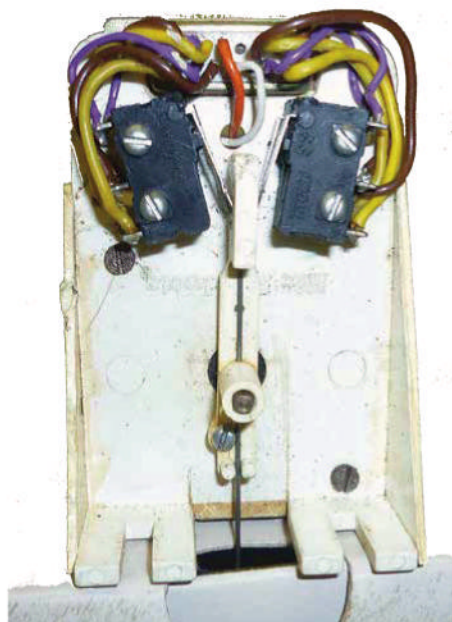


Photo 8. Micro switches installation.

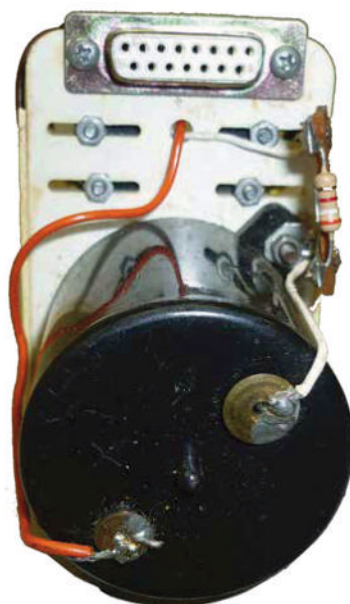


Photo 9. 15 pin D plug installation.

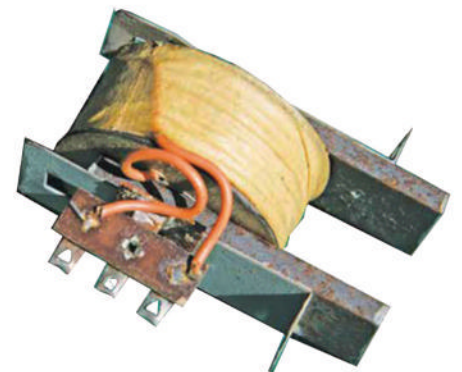


Photo 10. Graham Walker uncoupler.

working on the railway and told stories of how wagons were unloaded, then uncoupled, the brakes released so the wagon would roll down the grade but sometimes were a bit too free-wheeling and nearly made it back onto the main-line to derail the incoming 'North Coast Mail'. Obviously, Workplace Health and Safety procedures were yet to exist.

Operations

When NSRMA members exhibited the layout, we endeavoured to run trains typical of those that ran through Dungog in the period from 1940's to 1970's, e.g. overnight passenger trains such as the Brisbane Limited, North Coast Mail, and the inter-city daylight passenger trains, together with goods and vegetable express trains to Sydney and Brisbane. Ballast hopper wagons were loaded with gravel at Martin's Creek quarry which supplied ballast for the railway line. A small amount of coal is carried for locomotive fuel and power stations.

Although the AD60 Beyer Garratt locomotives did not work north of Martin's Creek quarry as seen at the end of the layout, we used modellers licence to run through Dungog station.

The mixed direction of single-line working certainly met the 4th core

requirement – operators were never bored on the layout; they really had to keep an eye out for trains coming in the other direction and co-ordinate with other operators. It was in fact quite an exhausting and tiring but pleasurable experience to operate the layout at exhibitions. From the crowds that often have watched the train movements it is a testament to us meeting the 6th core requirement.

Conclusion

Dungog has been exhibited 40 times over a 24-year period from 1999 to 2022 by NSRMA members, mainly in Sydney but also at exhibitions in many country NSW towns and Melbourne and Ballarat in Victoria. Over this period, it has been admired by many rail enthusiasts and has brought joy to many children seeing the locomotives travel along the layout.

It displayed the fine modelling skills of NSRMA members and won many awards. These include:

- The Darrell Nelson Memorial Award for Best New Layout at the Queen's Birthday Exhibition (NSW) 2004,
- Exhibitor's Choice, Sydney Model Railway Exhibition (AMRA) 2004
- Best Layout / Exhibitors Choice at the NSRMA Annual Exhibition 2005,
- Most Popular Layout at the Blackheath

Rhododendron Festival 11th Model Train Show, November 2005

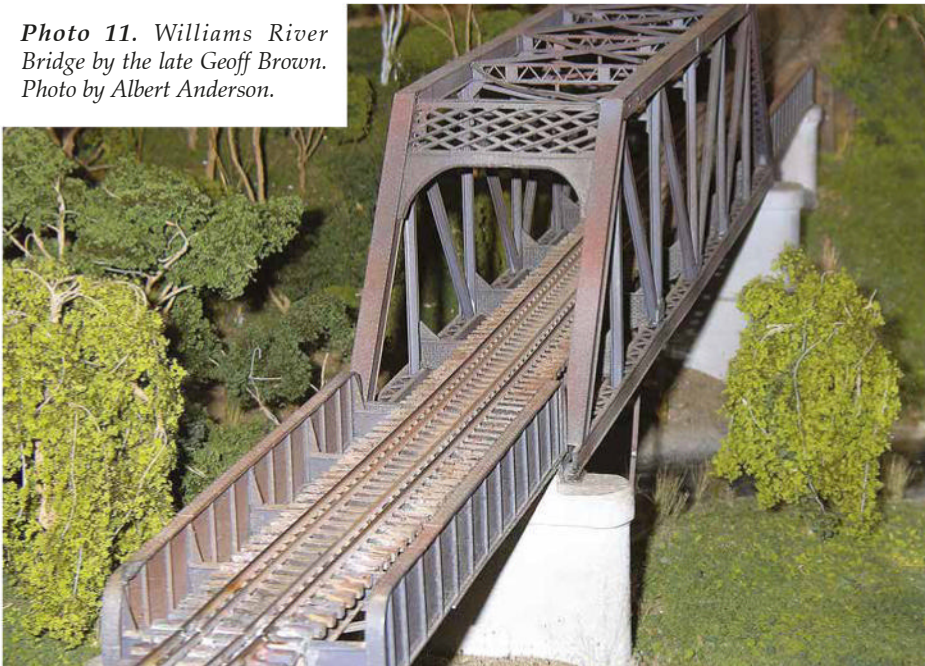
- Best Australian Prototype Layout - Club, Sydney Model Railway Exhibition (AMRA) 2006
- Best Australian Prototype - Club, Sydney Model Railway Exhibition (AMRA) 2009
- Best Model Railway Layout, Sydney Model Railway Exhibition (AMRA) 2011
- Best Australian Prototype Layout - Club, Sydney Model Railway Exhibition (AMRA) 2011

Sadly, it was time for us to let it go in 2022.

The refurbishment of the layout undertaken by Brett Watson confirms we made the right decision as to whom we should sell the layout and we wish him and his colleagues all the best. We hope to see it once again in Sydney.

This article is dedicated to the memory of three of our modellers who are unfortunately no longer with us; Geoff Brown, Brian Moss and Deric Netting. ▲

▼ *Photo 11. Williams River Bridge by the late Geoff Brown. Photo by Albert Anderson.*



▲ *Photo 12. The prototype Williams River bridge photo by James Brook.*

▼ *Photo 13. The sawmill scratch built by Peter Dibben somewhere in the world based on a 1904 postcard image (see photo 14).*



▲ *Photo 14. 1904 postcard image by George Kelly photographer Dungog (c1905-1915).*





Photo 15. The Crew Barracks where the layout was exhibited. Photo by Albert Anderson.

Photo 16. A busy day in the Dungog yard as wagons are unloaded while a 44 class diesel leads a consist of ballast wagons up the coast for track maintenance. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

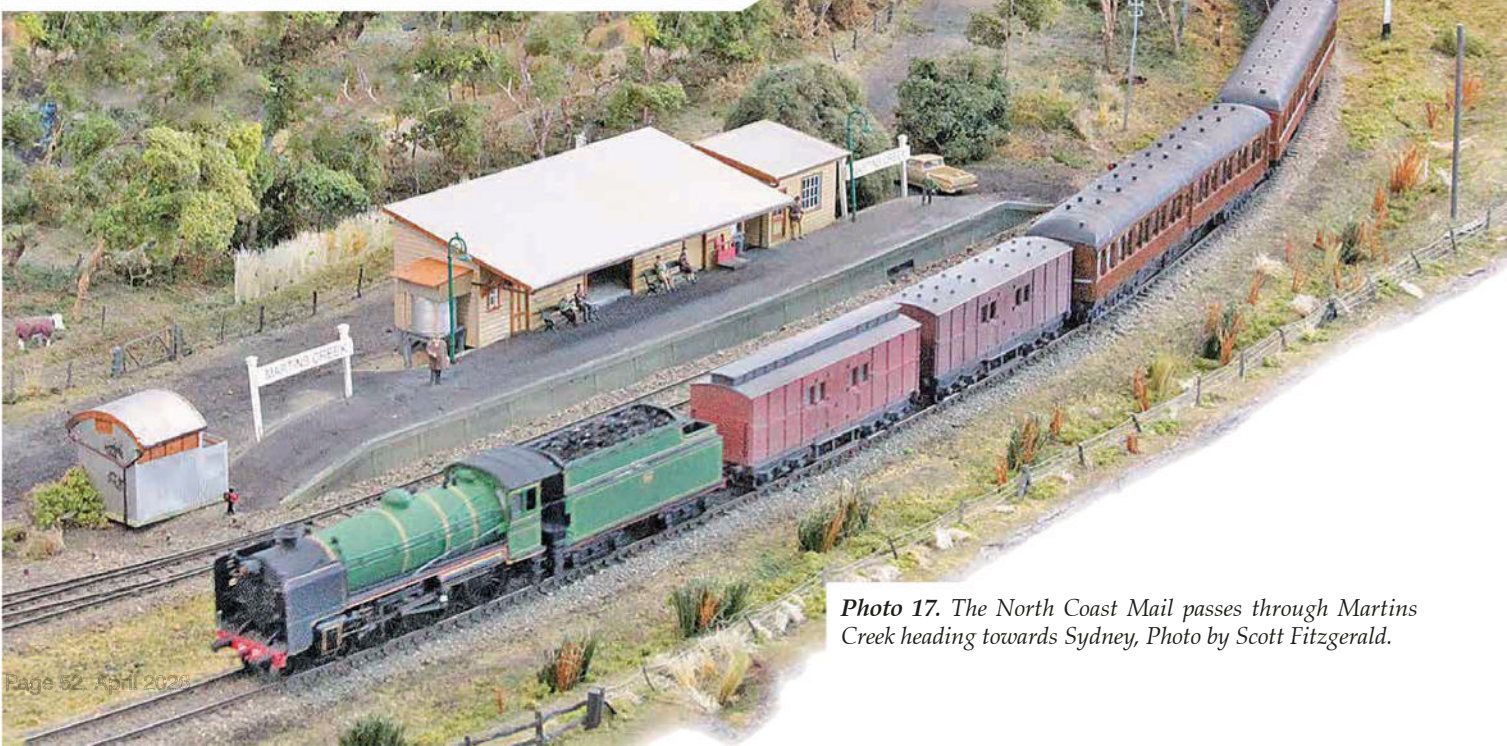


Photo 17. The North Coast Mail passes through Martins Creek heading towards Sydney, Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



Photo 18. A goods train continues northward after unloading at Dungog while cattle await unloading and timber from the mill is ready to go to Sydney. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

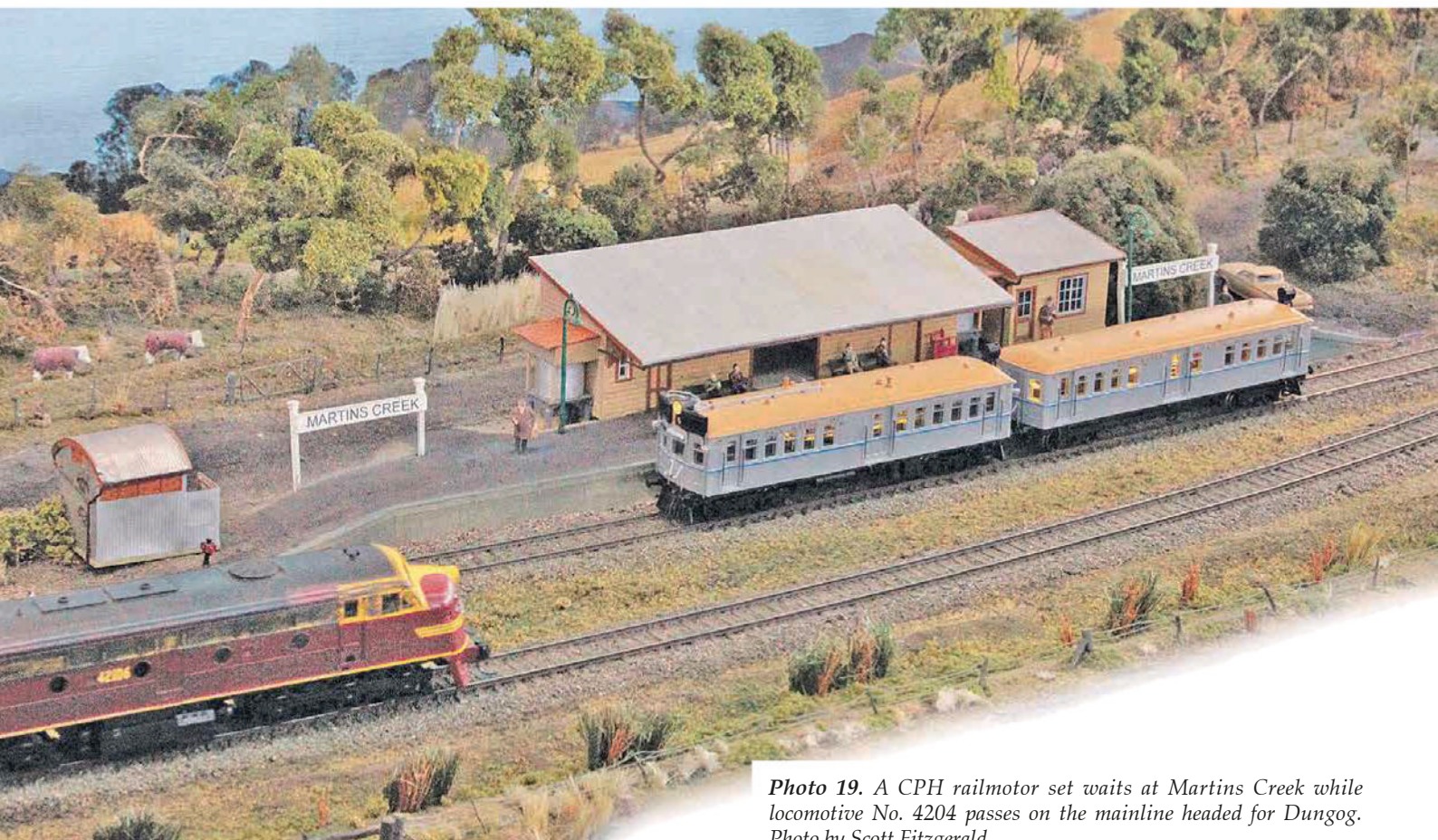


Photo 19. A CPH railmotor set waits at Martins Creek while locomotive No. 4204 passes on the mainline headed for Dungog. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

Wagon profile: SSR - Arrow Commodities BGIH 100t grain hopper wagon

Chris Jones outlines SSR and Arrow Commodities new grain hopper wagons.
Photos by the author unless otherwise stated.



SSR locomotives No. 4908 and 869 haul a mixed 53 wagon rake of loaded SSR BGIHs and BGKFs from Merrywinebone to Burren Junction, coast through the remains of Rowena yard on the 17th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

Southern Shorthaul Railroad (SSR's) BGIH grain hopper wagons are a continuation of the successful 184 (92 pair) MGIH grain hopper wagons manufactured for Manildra Group by CRRC Meishan (see AMRM issue No. 373 August 2025). In early 2025, SSR placed an order for 80 BGIH aluminium hoppers set as 40 pairs in a Master and Slave configuration with delivery occurring in November 2025, just in time for the start of the new harvest haulage program.

The hopper wagons are numbered 1901-1980, with the first 60 wearing the navy and gold livery of Arrow Commodities (a long term SSR grain customer) and the final 20 wearing the SSR yellow and black livery. Despite being an aluminium hopper body, the material is painted silver to provide a uniform finish as weld marking can sometimes appear as dark lines on the external surfaces. Yellow ends are displayed on the coupler ends of the Arrow Commodities wagons for visibility and identification for crews when shunting.

With a steel centre sill and headstock

ends, and most of the remaining hopper body being aluminium, the tare weight is an impressively light 21.3 tonnes. This allows for near on 79 tonnes of grain to be hauled when on heavy axle load networks. By comparison, early Government railway aluminium grain hoppers built in the 1970s and 1980s could only achieve a total gross weight of 76-81 tonnes.

The sluice design discharge gates are becoming more common in grain haulage, with the entire CBH Western Australian fleet (both legacy and new) having this design, as well as other recently built grain hopper wagons. Individual pneumatic cylinders allow for the A end or B end discharge gates to be operated independently if tipping into a small pit. The cubic capacity of 104m³ provides ample volume for wheat, with a pair of wagons measuring 32.72m total length. The height of 3846mm allows the wagon to operate within the confines of almost all silo facilities in New South Wales (NSW).

The BGIH demonstrates the best in wagon technology with Wabtec ECP

Overlay brakes and Wabtec Automatic Park Brake (APB) being standard. Crew and maintainer access to isolating valves and drains demonstrate consideration for whole of life operation and maintenance. The bogies are CRRC steering bogies, with K class bearings, which are common on 30 tonne axle load coal hopper wagons.

Operation was planned and has been primarily limited between Narrabri North and Newcastle Port. Arrow Commodities has a grain loading facility at Narrabri North (see AMRM issue No. 348 June 2021 and No. 368 October 2024). This Hunter Valley corridor allows 100 tonne wagon operation so the wagons are fully utilised for this impressive capacity. The 60 Arrow Commodities hopper wagons presently run as a single consist for 6000t, and the 20 SSR hopper wagons supplement existing SSR BGKF and BGUY fleet of hopper wagons in another consist. While the operation of these hopper wagons may move to other regions, this would likely only be the case if drought conditions occur in northern NSW. ▀



SSR BGIHs No. 1979F and 1980B are connected by a drawbar. Merrywinebone on the 17th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



SSR BGIH No. 1980B at Newcastle on delivery.



SSR BGIH No. 1970Q roof detail, Rowena 17th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



SSR BGIH No. 1964 and 1965H drawbar end detail, Rowena 17th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



SSR BGIH 1966Q with A and B end detail, Rowena 17th of December 2025. Photo Scott by Fitzgerald.

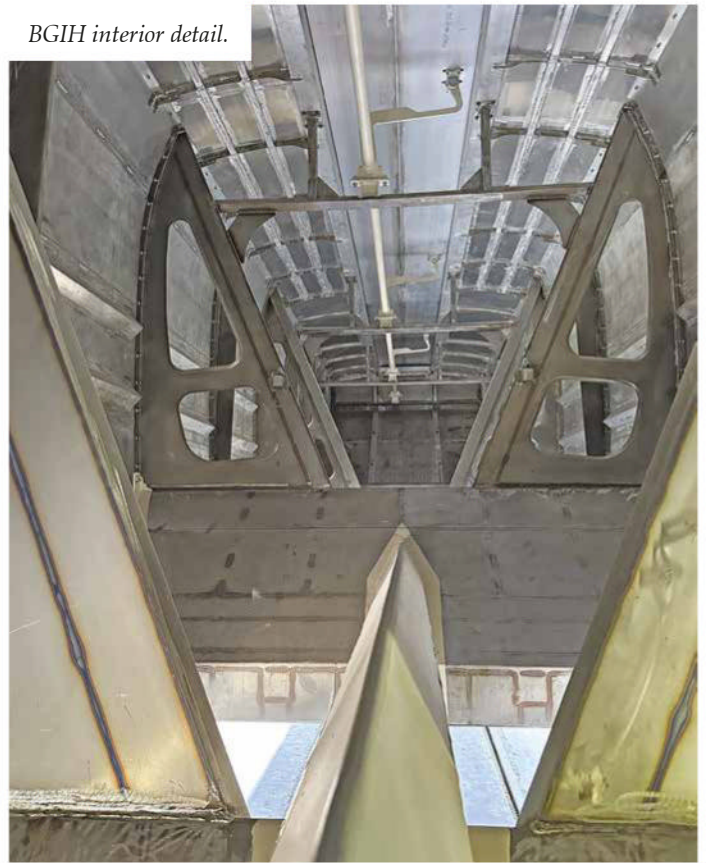


BGIH bottom door actuator detail. Photo Scott by Fitzgerald.

BGIH discharge gates detail.



BGIH interior detail.



BGIH bogie detail.



SSR locomotives C505 'Rachel Bromwich' and RL307 are stabled at Narrabri West with a rake of loaded Arrow Commodities BGIHs grain hopper wagons on the 16th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



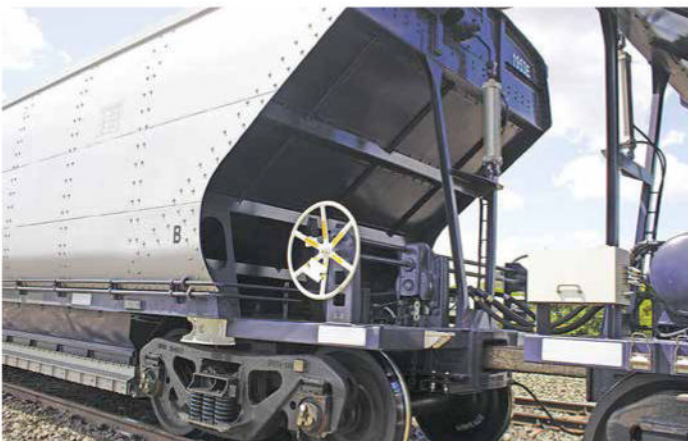
BGIH 1955W at Bullock Island.



Arrow Commodities BGIH 1954N side detail Narrabri West 16th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



▲ Arrow Commodities BGIH A end detail Narrabri West 16th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.



◀ Arrow Commodities BGIH B end detail drawbar end Narrabri West 16th of December 2025. Photo by Scott Fitzgerald.

Brett Watson Weathering

Photos by Scott Fitzgerald

In this gallery we display a selection of Brett Watson's locomotives that operate on his layout of Dungog.



Locomotive No. 4855 is an Auscision Models 48 class, I used washes of black and dark brown from Tamiya on the underframe and bogies. My favourite 'SMS Carc Black' helped on the roof.



Locomotive No. 4517 is an AR kits 45 class blasted with light coats of Humbrol earth and layered. This paint job was completed before I discovered SMS Paints. Grilles were done with black washes, before applying to the underframe and bogies a Tamiya earth - dirt colour. Washes were added in areas to bring out the detail. Humbrol Matt black was used on the roof and hand painted oil stains along the hood doors as per a prototype photos.



Locomotive No. 44223 is an Auscision Models 442 class, this model was panel lined to bring out the exquisite detail on these models. I used a mix of SMS RAF Earth and some dark brown across the frame and the bogies. I also painted the wheelsets a dirty brown. The yellow pilots were spray painted with a wash with a low PSI.



▲ Locomotive No. 44220 is an Auscision Models 442 class. Weathered from photographs in the 1990 period with another grime dirt mix for the frame and bogies, panel line, black, used for the body and grilles. Panel line glides through the detail and brings it to life. And again, Carc black from SMS paints for the roof with Matt black around the exhaust port.



▼ Locomotive No. 4467 is a Trainorama 44 class. My usual methods of an earth mix, each locomotive being slightly different, and SMS Carc Black washing back the yellow roof area slightly as per the prototype. This model was renumbered from No. 4468 and the number box did have a missing 7 as per the prototype.

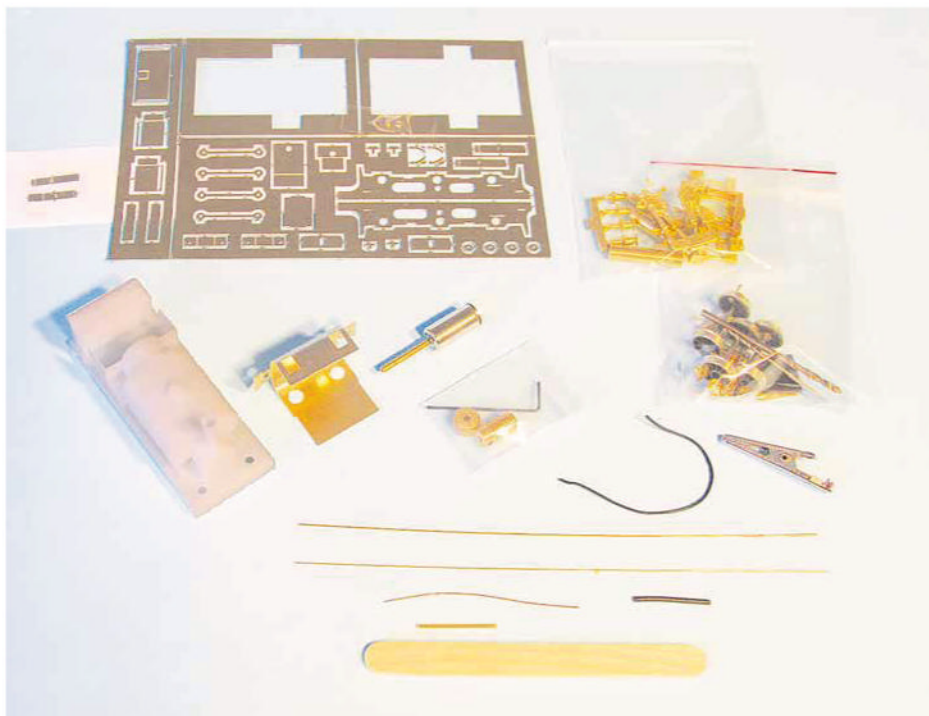
**Review: Ezi Kits' P127 steam tank locomotive
HO scale**
Email: newbj48@gmail.com
Phone: 02 6254 2526
Price in text

The latest model from Ezi Kits is the small 0-6-0 tramway locomotive of 1879, classified as P127. The railway historian Gifford Eardley described these locomotives as "three natty little 0-6-0 tank engines" and this description suits them well. They were built by Vulcan Foundry in Ballarat Victoria, and upon arrival in New South Wales (NSW) they were initially put to work on the Blacktown to Richmond services, with subsequent varied careers in colliery, tramway and shunting duties. A P127 was the first locomotive to operate on the Yass Tramway. The notes with the kit mention that Redfern Works plan to produce a model of the KA tramcar, which would be an ideal companion to the P127.

The model

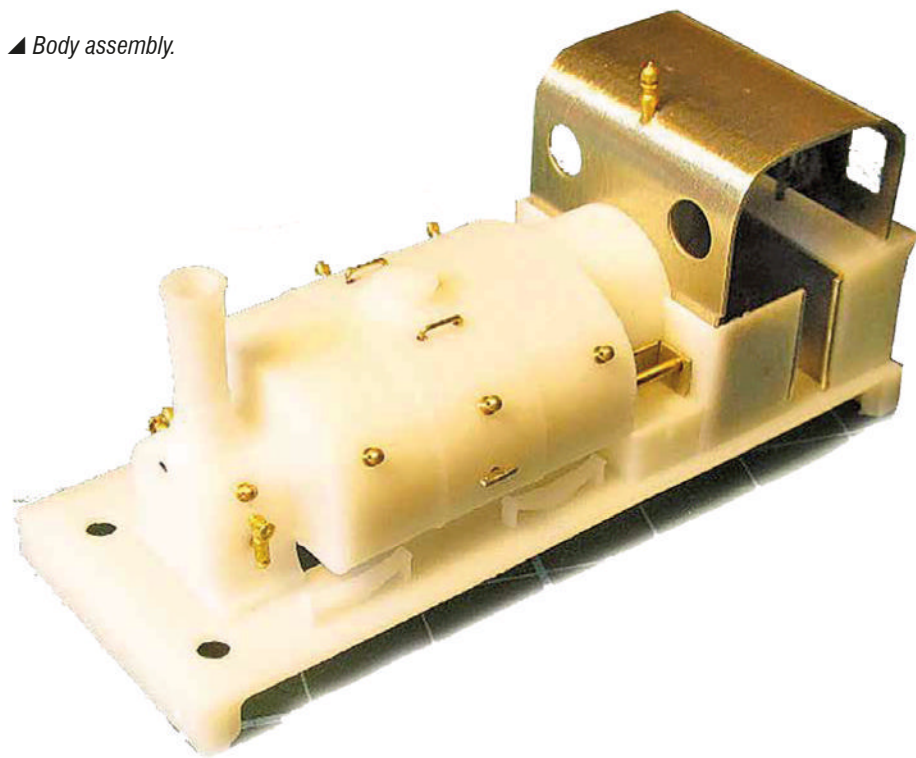
The kit has some attractive features, including a very nice 3D-printed one-piece body, comprising of the footplate, buffer beams, boiler/saddle tank, cab sides and back. The distinctive cab roof and front/rear plates is a pre-formed nickel silver etching which fits smoothly onto the body. As well as the usual handrail knobs etc., the brass detail parts include two crew figures, a jack, and front and rear lamps. I had not had previous experience with 3D-printed models, but I was impressed with the quality and ease of working with this material. The chassis follows conventional practice; etched nickel silver side frames and spacers, with brass bearings. The 3D printed body is quite light, so additional weight in the form of two pieces of brass rod are provided, which can be glued to the inside of the saddle tank. Additionally, there is space for more weight if you wish. Lastly, there are some useful inclusions with the kit; an alligator clip and wooden spacers to help with assembling the brake shoes, and two drill bits of sizes relevant to ensuring smooth running wheels and coupling rods. A small but powerful cylindrical motor is included, with a worm gear which drives the gear on the centre axle. Also included is a tiny (0.9mm) Allen key which is used to fasten the worm gear to the motor shaft. The instructions are well thought out, with diagrams and photos.

Assembly of the kit was straightforward and a reasonably experienced modeller would not encounter any serious challenges. The body required little actual assembly other than fitting the etched nickel silver cab, which comprises the cab front/roof/rear, and is located by gluing it to the back of the boiler (it fits perfectly). The base of the cab backsheet simply rests on the centre of the small coal bunker, which does not provide much surface for gluing, however if you glue some coal onto the bunker, this will also help fasten the cab rear. The handrails for the cab are ingeniously incorporated on the etches that reinforce the cab sides and rear, and brass wire is provided for the boiler handrails. I



Kit contents.

▲ Body assembly.



REVIEWS

The products covered in the Review pages have been supplied or made available by the manufacturer, producer, importer or retailer listed in each product heading. AMRM welcomes access to new product lines for inclusion in the Review pages and requests items be addressed to the Editor at Australian Model Railway Magazine, PO Box 345, Matraville 2036. Readers are reminded that the prices quoted in the reviews are those applicable at the time of going to press. Those using the prices as a guide to purchasing products by mail order should always add extra for postage, or contact the supplier for the additional cost for mail order.

Editor

body has dimples to show where to drill for the handrail knobs, though these are difficult to see in the white material. The 3D printed material is easy to drill, but caution is needed to start the drill at exactly the correct spot. If using a small powered hobby drill, it will 'bite' wherever the drill bit contacts the surface. To avoid errors in drilling, use a thin (0.4mm) marking pen to put a black dot in the drilling dimple. This makes correctly locating the drill much easier.

Some care was needed with the chassis, given the small size of this locomotive. The 0-6-0 chassis is a simple affair, but extra care in assembly is desirable, given the close tolerances on the wheels, axles and coupling rods. Good, detailed advice is given in the instructions, which should be adhered to. The motor mount is a flat plate between the frames, to which the motor is to be fastened, using epoxy glue or silicone, after the wheels and rods have been checked for free running. It is important that the axis of the motor and worm gear is parallel to the chassis, and thus at right angles to the gear wheel. I found it useful to cut two pieces of styrene to

closely fill the gap on either side of the motor. This ensures the motor is in the accurate location and provides additional gluing surface to fasten the motor. Provision is made in the kit to fit a piece of brass wire across the frame to lightly bear on the front end of the motor drive shaft, ahead of the worm. This is intended to ensure the worm gear and the axle gear maintain the correct mesh, and may be useful if the motor is fastened with silicone. However, I fastened the motor with slow setting epoxy glue, which gives a rigid mounting, and I found no apparent need for the 'steading' wire.

Pictures of the P127 locomotives are rare. Useful images can be found in two publications; Gifford Eardley's 'Locomotives beyond Recall' (RTM 1976) and Garry Saunders' 'NSW Railways in Colour' (Eveleigh Press 2019). The latter includes a good builder's photo of a P127 as delivered, and as modelled in this kit. It appears that not long after they entered service the cabs were fitted with simple side plates, probably to give improved weather protection. To update the locomotive to a later period, it would

not be difficult for the modeller to make such cab side plates from thin styrene or brass sheet. Dummy hook couplings are provided, and there is sufficient space to fit a small Kadee™ coupling at the rear, with some modification to the buffer beam. The completed locomotive weighs approx. 60 grams, which is not a lot, but it is quite able to haul five bogie coaches with ease, so a tramway coach or two is well within its abilities.

In summary, it's a very nice kit which makes good use of current 3D printing capabilities. The result is an appealing model of a locomotive from the pioneering days of the New South Wales Government Railways. It is priced at \$265 AUD.

Warren Miller



Completed model.



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English's Model Railroad, A division of Bowser mfg
Alco C415 locomotive r-t-r in HO Scale.
LokSound V5 Decoder
Price in text

A brief history

Locomotive No. 1000 was built by the American Locomotive Co (Alco) in 1966 as a demonstrator and toured different railroads in the United States of America (USA) before being returned to Alco. In 1968 this locomotive was purchased by Hamersley Iron (HI) for its Pilbara operations in Western Australia (WA). The locomotive was shipped to A.E. Goodwin in Sydney for modifications and repainting into HI livery and was given the road number 008 (later changed to 1000) before being shipped to Dampier along with HI's first order of Alco C636 locomotives in mid-1968. It operated mostly in yard operations at HI's 7 Mile yard and on construction trains on the main line. No. 1000 was withdrawn from service in 1982 and donated to the Pilbara Railways Historical Society (PRHS), where it regularly operated PRHS tour trains along with No. 5450, an ex-Mount Newman Mining F7A, and No. 4079, a former Great Western Railway steam locomotive named 'Pendennis Castle'.

No. 1000 was loaned back to HI in 1991 for use on construction trains associated with the startup of new mines, for which she was given a complete overhaul at 7 Mile workshops and renumbered 2000. No. 2000 was later returned to the PRHS and renumbered back to No. 1000 as she was not up to the task of operating heavy construction trains and was not fitted with dynamic braking.

Technical specs for the prototype:

V8 251E prime mover at 1120 kW/1500Hp
Bo-Bo wheel arrangement
Weight 109t
Max speed 106 Km/h
Gauge 1435 mm

The model

The model C415 is manufactured by English's Model Railroad, a division of Bowers Mfg. It comes packaged in a cardboard box with a see-through box that slides into an outer sleeve. The model is screwed to a plastic frame that holds it securely for shipping, and mine arrived without any damage or parts that had fallen off.

The model is painted in the HI colours of green and gold with a red HI at both ends of the unit in the correct font with the black lining around the lettering. Very impressive.

Looking at some of my photos, the green looks to my eye to be a little bit bright for No. 1000, but it should be remembered that HI locomotives were painted in several different shades of green over the years depending on who manufactured them or who repainted the locomotive, and of course noting the constant exposure to the Pilbara sun. The bogies and roof



Top down view of Bowser C415 in Hamersley Iron Livery.

appear to be unpainted grey plastic and not the silver that they were painted when the paint was new, but this did weather down to a grey tone over time. With these couple of minor points, the paint job on the model is very good, being evenly applied and with the lettering being very accurate, including the number boards.

The model depicts No. 1000 in her early days of operation, recognisable by the original exhaust stack. This was changed by HI to a stainless steel exhaust fitted with fins to help expel the exhaust up and over the cab roof. There are several details not applied to the model that are present on the prototype, these being the lower second railing along the footplate that was standard on all HI locomotives, and the air conditioning unit also situated on the footplate in front of the cab is not present. Additionally, the air horns on the model are a single trumpet on each end of the cab. These were changed to five chime type horns when the locomotive was donated to the PRHS, and interestingly the loksound file air horn is a multi-chime type! Most of these issues can be fixed at the end of the day but I personally would like it to be correct as I feel the manufacturer has taken the shell of the demonstrator model and painted it in the HI livery.

Most of the detail on the body is moulded on with a brass etching over the fan. All the grab irons are separate details and are scale size along with the multi-unit air hoses on the headstocks. The bogies are accurate, although missing the speedo drive cable, and the brake shoes are in line with the wheels which are all in gauge. The model is also fitted with a cab interior but there is no crew, however there is a cab light that is controlled by function 14. The model weighs in at 315 gms.

Performance

I placed the model on to my layout straight out of the box to test its running quality and found that it ran beautifully. It started moving at speed step 1 without any jerking whatsoever and I was just able to detect the movement. At this point I did not check the top speed as I wanted to run the model in first, but I was impressed considering the model was straight out of the box.

After running the model in, I found no noticeable difference in its performance. Like most models its top speed seems a bit high but with DCC these are adjustable so I don't see this as too much of an issue. The model was able to handle 40 ore cars on level track with no problems. It operated through all the turnouts and dual gauge diamond crossings without any issues. The model is fitted with twin flywheels with a centrally-mounted motor. I should point out I did not remove the body from the frame as I found they can be a bit tricky to get back together, so I know to leave this well enough alone. All in all, I found the model's performance very good and up to the standard expected in today's models.

The sound file installed is impressive with 31 different sound and light functions in total; some of these are not used with this model. The prime mover sounded right to me both in startup and shut down as well as going through the different notch settings. There are also many CV settings which allow you to change the type of air horn and bell sounds, air dryer type and even the type of brake shoes fitted (composite or cast iron). The volume was a bit loud for my tastes but once again this can be reset by changing the appropriate CV.

The model is fitted with capacitors and the model ran for several seconds after I lifted it off the track. One of the notes in the instructions regarding the decoder advised that the model

should only be programmed on a programming track and that programming should only be carried out once the capacitors have been fully discharged, about 45 seconds.

They also advise that once any programming is done, you should remove the model from the track for 10 seconds then replace it back on the track, I not sure why this is required other than it has something to do with the capacitors? I used Decoder Pro for programming the locomotive and did not note any problems.

As for the lighting, all operate as expected; the headlights, marker and number board lights looked to be right without being too bright but the footplate lights did seem to be a bit too bright. There was no ability to change the marker lights from white to red other than directionally. It should be noted that all HI and now Rio Tinto locomotives are required to display red lights at each end within yard limits. I did not detect any light bleed which can be a problem on locomotives that are painted yellow.

The model comes with three pages of instructions explaining how to separate the body from the frame, and this is achieved by first removing the coupler pockets then removing the three screws that attach the body to the frame, one at the short hood end and two at the long hood end. One needs to be careful when removing these screws as they are partially obscured by the bogies. A feature that I also like

is that there are no wires running from the mother board to the lighting in the body as all the lighting is contained on the frame. This feature makes carrying out any maintenance on the drive chain so much easier. The 2nd sheet covers the lubrication points on the model and the 3rd sheet contains the instructions regarding the operation and functions for the decoder. It also mentions that the full LokSound 5 instruction manual from ESU is available on Bowers web site if you need it.

Cost

I should point out that my model was a gift from a good friend in the USA so my following comments are based on prices I have seen advertised and not what it cost me.

I did a bit of research looking at the cost of buying the model direct from the manufacturer and that came to \$339.95 USD plus \$82.00 USD for priority postage. Based on the cost to my friend to ship the model to Western Australia making a total of \$421.95 USD, not including any possible additional exchange rate fees etc, my advice would be to look around at different retailers both in Australia and the USA to compare prices and to see if they offer any discount on the recommended retail price from the manufacturer. They all generally offer something.

Overall conclusion

This model holds a lot of personal memories for me, having operated this particular locomotive many times on everything from the Parker point dumper, to main line construction trains, and PRHS passenger trains over my 40 years at HI/Rio Tinto. In my view this is a unique locomotive being the original Alco demonstrator and one of only 26 constructed, with only a very few left in existence today, so I guess I had to have one.

Can I recommend this model? Well yes, I can. Even considering some of its shortcomings, it is still a very good model that looks, runs and sounds great. What I found not quite right can easily be addressed with just a few hours work and it is not a deal breaker by any means. Some may find the cost a bit prohibitive but as I said look around, there are savings to be made. If you are interested in the iron ore railways of the Western Australia's Pilbara region then this is a model you should have. From me, it comes highly recommended.

Gary Lamb

Reference.

Peter Clarks, An Australian Locomotive Guide; Rosenberg Publishing Pty Ltd 2012
American Rail.com
Wikipedia



► Side on profile shot where we get to see the details on the fuel tank and bogies.



▲ Another top down view of Bowser C415 where we start to see the detail work on the locomotive body clearly.

◀ View of the B end of the locomotive.



Recent Releases

Auscision Models – HO scale

Has released a re-run of the r-t-r VicRail - V/Line N set coaches (ACN, BRN and BN), available in three coach sets with a D van. Available in the following liveries with two different numbered packs unless otherwise stated:

VicRail orange and silver, V/Line orange and grey, V/Line passenger MkI red white and blue, without bottom sill stripe (one pack) with bottom sill stripe, V/Line passenger MkII red white and blue, V/Line passenger MkIII grey white and red, V/Line Public Transport Victoria (PTV) 'Gem'.

Refer: <https://www.auscisionmodels.com.au/N%20Car%20Page.htm>

Also released is a re-run of their r-t-r four car V Set Interurban Passenger Electrical Multiple Units, with and without sound

Selected liveries in this re-run include:

TfNSW TrainLink Chopper Set, CityRail CityDecker with destination boards, CityRail Intercity with blanked off destination boards and TfNSW TrainLink with blanked off destination boards. Blue Goose with Candy L7 logo with and without Bicentennial branding.



N464 and N set coaches with D van in V/Line PTV livery.



V set in CityRail livery CityDecker with destination boards.



V set in CityRail livery.

V set in TfNSW TrainLink livery.

Buckambool Model Trains and Gopher Models – N scale

Have released State Rail Authority of New South Wales XPT passenger sets r-t-r with and without sound.

Available in five and seven coach packs with two power cars and single XF passenger coach, in the following liveries: SRA of NSW Candy, CountryLink and NSWTrainLink.

Refer: <https://bmodeltrains.com/product-category/gopher-models-n-scale-xpt/>

XPT five coach set in Candy livery.



XPT five coach set in TfNSW TrainLink livery.



XPT XF class coach in Candy livery.

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Roundhouse Models - HO Scale

Have released a range of HO scale vehicles, available as unpainted kits.

The range currently includes:

- Ford: Falcon: AU XLS 2000 ute FG XR6 Turbo
- Ford: F250 2015 super duty
- Ford: Mustang Shelby super snake coupe 2018
- Holden: FC special 1958, EH special 1963 sedan.
- Commodore VC, VE, VF, VF SS Redline sedan and wagon, VN sedan, VF SS ute and VZ ute
- 1971 and CZ8 Monaro
- Holden Special Vehicles VE Clubsport R8.
- Mazda: RX7 1999
- Nissan: GQ and GU 4x4 Patrol wagon, Skyline R32 GTR
- Subaru: Impreza WRX Sti 2006
- Toyota: Camry sedan 1997 and 2010, Landcruiser 79 series ute 2007, 80 series 4x4 wagon 1995, 200 series 4x4 wagon 2010, Hilux dual cab ute 4x4 2018, <https://www.roundhousemodels.com.au>



A selection of Holden Commodores and a Monaro and a Nissan GQ Patrol.



Left to right Holden EH Special 1963, Monaro 1971, FC Special 1958 and Nissan Patrol GU S4 4x4 wagon.



Ford Falcon AU ute 2000.



Ford F250 super duty 2015.



Toyota Camry sedan 1997.



Toyota Landcruiser 79 series ute 2007.



Hand painted versions display only.

Auscision Models – HO and N Scale

Have received the following N scale painted pilot models:

- Public Transport Commission of New South Wales (PTC) KLY KLV NLKY NKLY louvre vans
- State Rail Authority of New South Wales (SRA of NSW) NGHF grain hopper wagons, NHHF coal hopper wagon and NQIW container flat wagon.
- FreightCorp NPHH pneumatic cement hopper wagon.

Have received HO scale painted pilot models of the Commonwealth Railways (CR) ROX container flat wagon and RQX bulkhead steel wagon and derivatives. Finally, the Specialised Containerised Transport ARFY refrigerated van.

Has announced the production of the Commonwealth Railways CL class diesel electric locomotive in HO scale.

▲ Painted pilot model NLKY in PTC livery.

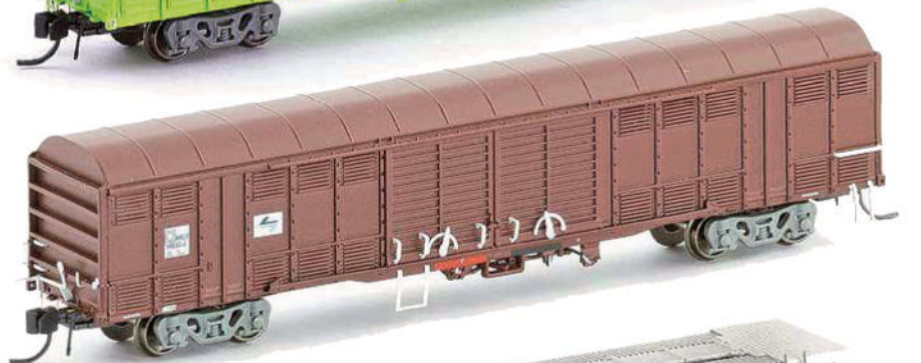
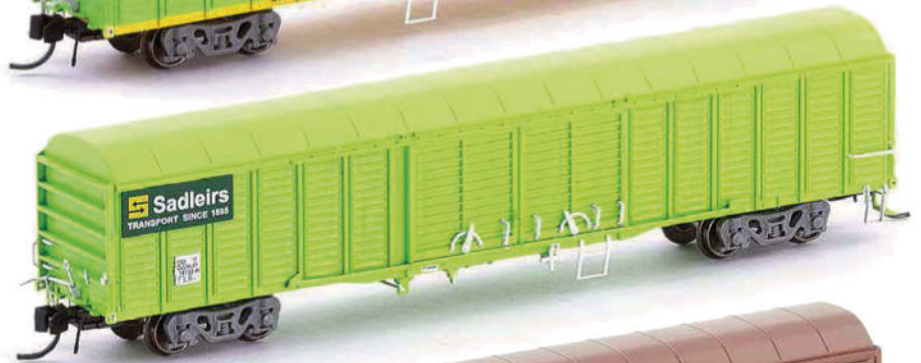
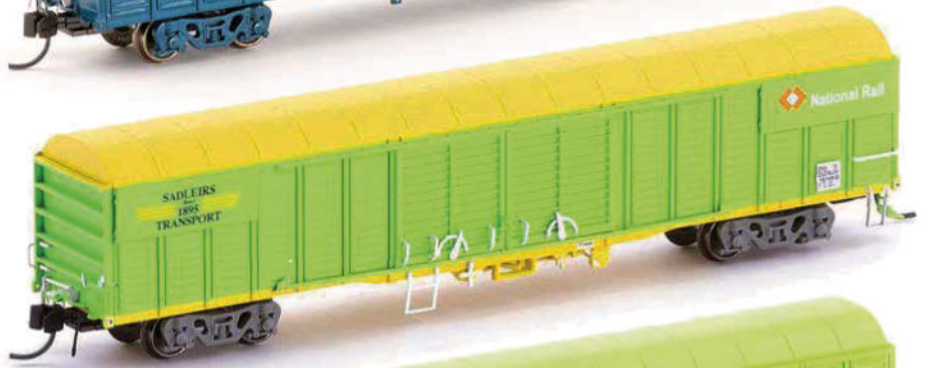
▼ Painted pilot model RLUY in Sadlier – National Rail livery.

Painted pilot model RLSY in Sadlier livery.

Painted pilot model NKLY in PTC livery.

Painted pilot model NGHF in SRA of NSW Candy livery.

Painted pilot model NGHF in Pacific National livery.



Auscision Models – HO and N Scale (Continued)



Painted pilot model NHHF in PTC livery.



Painted pilot model NHHF in FreightRail livery.

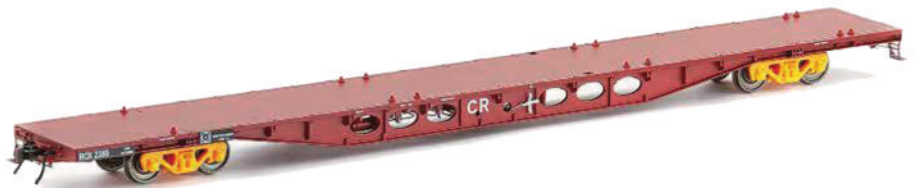


Painted pilot model NQIW.

► *Painted pilot model NPHH in FreightCorp – Australian Cement livery.*



Painted pilot model CR ROX container flat wagon.



Painted pilot model QR National - Aurizon QQXY container flat wagon.



Painted pilot model AFQX (RQX) bulkhead steel wagon in Australian National livery.



Painted pilot model ARFY.



Badger Bits and Gopher Models – N scale

Have received the first engineering prototype of their r-t-r New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR) 422 class diesel electric locomotive.

This model is scheduled for release in the 3rd quarter of 2026, in three liveries, Indian Red,

reverse and SRA of NSW Candy. There will be numbered and unnumbered versions. Unnumbered models will include number decals, should the modeller want to model a specific locomotive. For those wishing to model 42220 post rebuilding (1980) 3D printed parts will be available for modellers to convert an

undecorated model to 42220. These models can be pre-ordered via <https://gophermodels.com.au/pages/contact-us>

Gopher Models is now a stockist of Micro Engineering track and rail.

Back in stock is the Tomix track and vacuum/cleaner car.



▲ ▼ 422 class engineering prototype.

IDR Models – HO scale

The r-t-r Victorian Railways F class diesel electric shunting locomotive production run is progressing slower than expected, however, a painted pilot model was received recently.

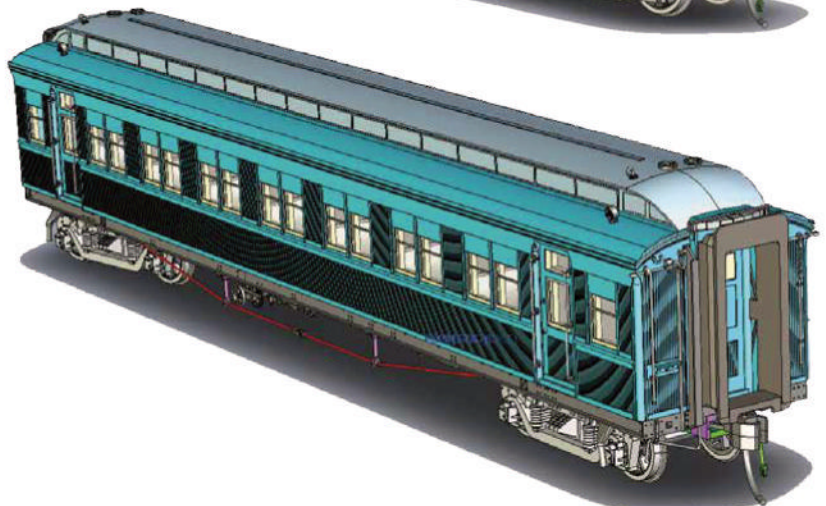
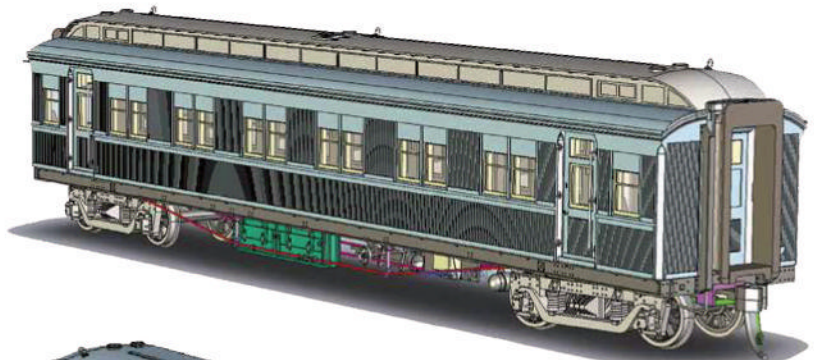
Once all details have been evaluated, a production timeframe will be confirmed.

The next model for production which is now in the tooling phase, with the first test shots due at the end of March, is the Victorian Railways (VR) W coaches.

Variants being produced are the AW, BW ABW / ABU and CW including all the short coaches with the clerestory roof.

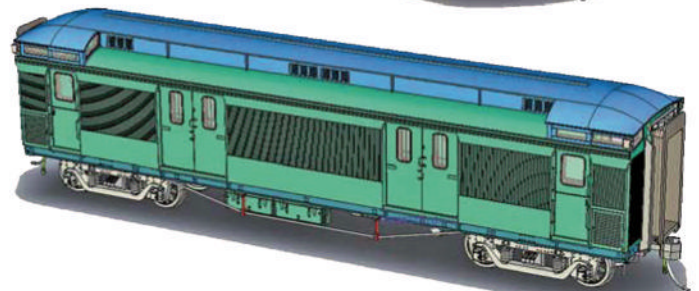
The CW is still in design.[DH2.1][SF2.2]

The models are designed with interior lighting and the CW will have marker lights. They are still working out the production details and it is expected for delivery later this year or early 2027. Available r-t-r in four and one coach packs.



▼ Digital rendering VR AW coach.

► Digital rendering VR BW coach.



Digital rendering VR ABW coach.

Digital rendering VR CW baggage coach.

Ixion Model Railways – HO scale

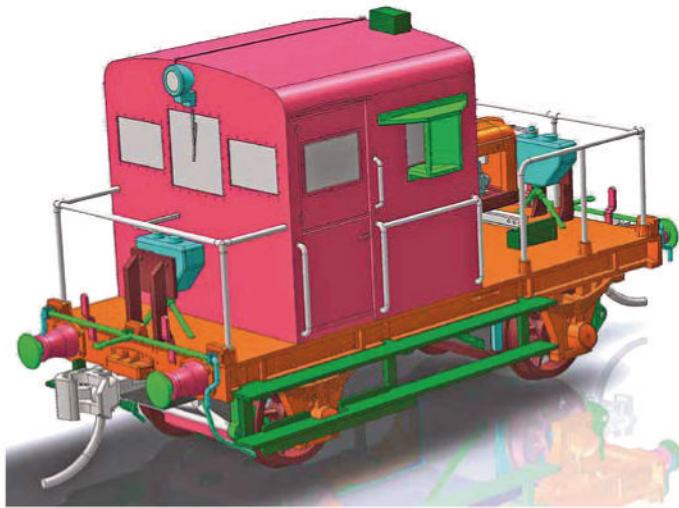
Have announced their next r-t-r model: the Victorian Railways RT rail tractor.

Available in DC and DCC Sound versions, tooling is underway and expected delivery in the second half of 2026.

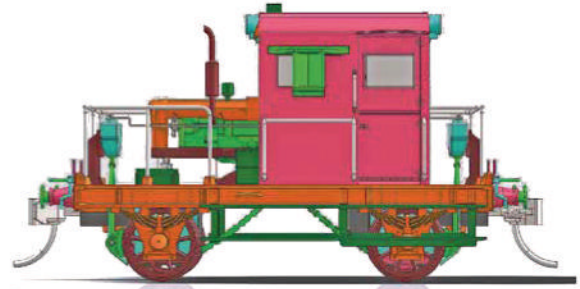
The range of liveries in which the model will be released have not been finalised.

Features include:

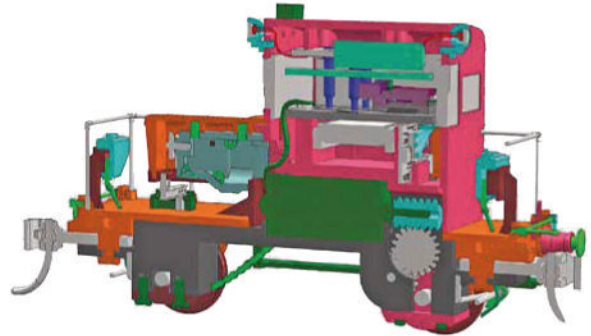
- Sprung buffers
- As applicable will be fitted with a Zimo Next 18 sound decoder, stay-[DH3.1][SF3.2]alive unit and stay-alive controller board. The speaker, and possibly the stay-alive, are planned to be fitted to all models, both DC and DCC, and other brands of compact decoders may be fitted to the DC version if desired.
- All-wheel pickup, a coreless motor, and gearing designed to give a maximum scale speed of 35 km per hour.
- RP-88 profile wheels and genuine Kadee™ ‘scale’ couplers.
- Working directional light emitting diode LED headlights fitted on the front and rear of the cab.



Digital rendering of VR RT rail tractor rear end view.



Digital rendering VR RT rail tractor side view.



Digital rendering VR RT rail tractor cut away showing mechanism design.



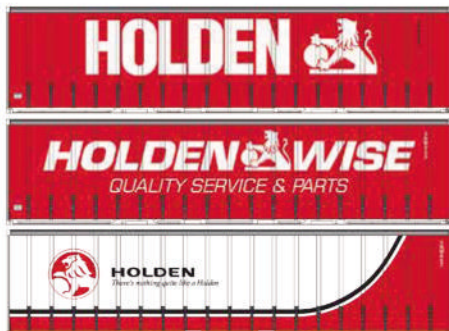
Digital rendering of VR RT rail tractor front end view.

On Track Models – HO scale

Has started tooling their Pacific National 94 class diesel electric locomotive.

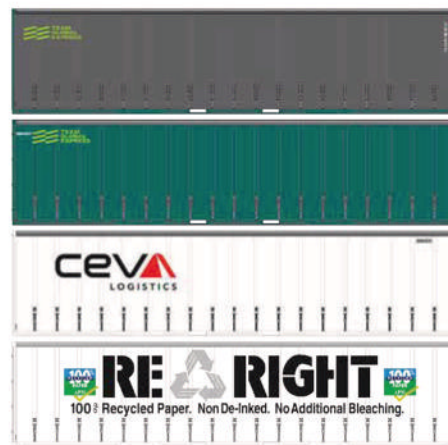
Judging from the digital rendering, the design is rich in detail.

Another run of 40ft curtain sided containers are in production, this includes in demand Holden re-runs and new branding, including Darwin Express and Team Global Express.

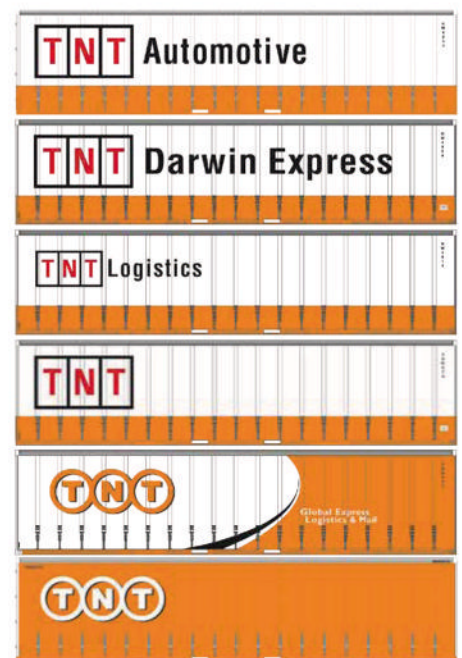


Digital rendering for the forthcoming 40ft curtain sided container production.

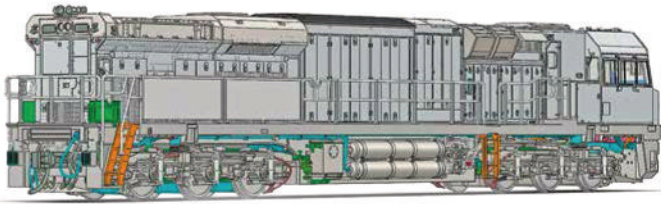
▼ *Digital renderings of Team Global Express and Ceva Logistics curtain sided containers for the forthcoming 40ft curtain sided container production.*



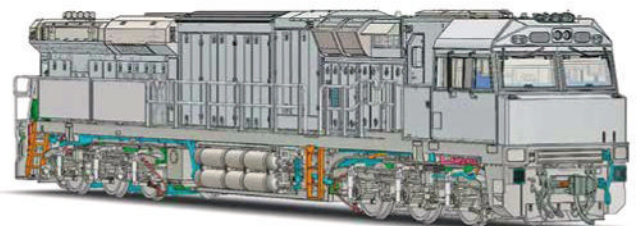
► *Digital renderings of TNT curtain sided containers for the forthcoming 40ft curtain sided container production.*



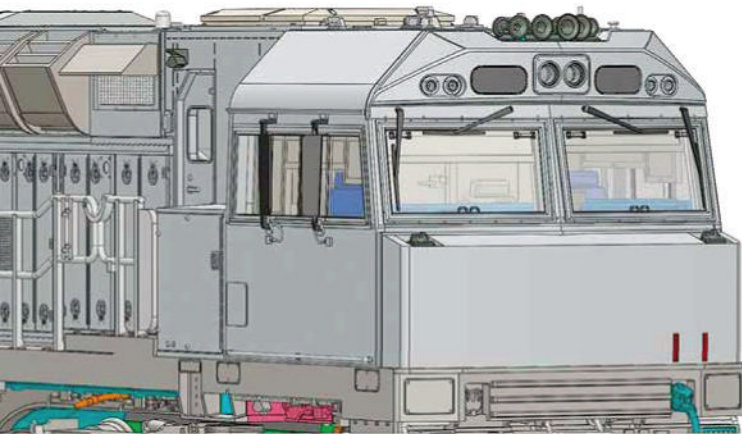
On Track Models – HO scale (Continued)



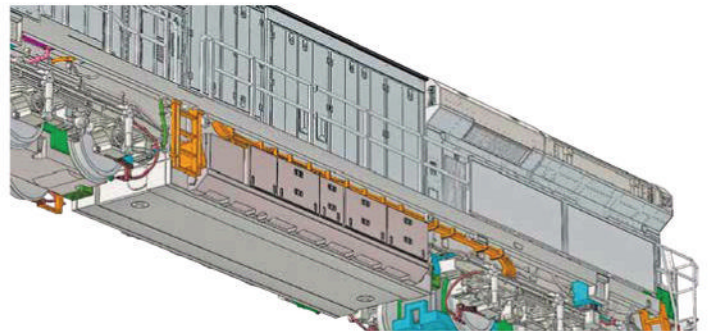
Digital rendering of the 94 class locomotive viewing from the rear end of the locomotive.



Digital rendering of the 94 class locomotive viewing from the front end of the locomotive.

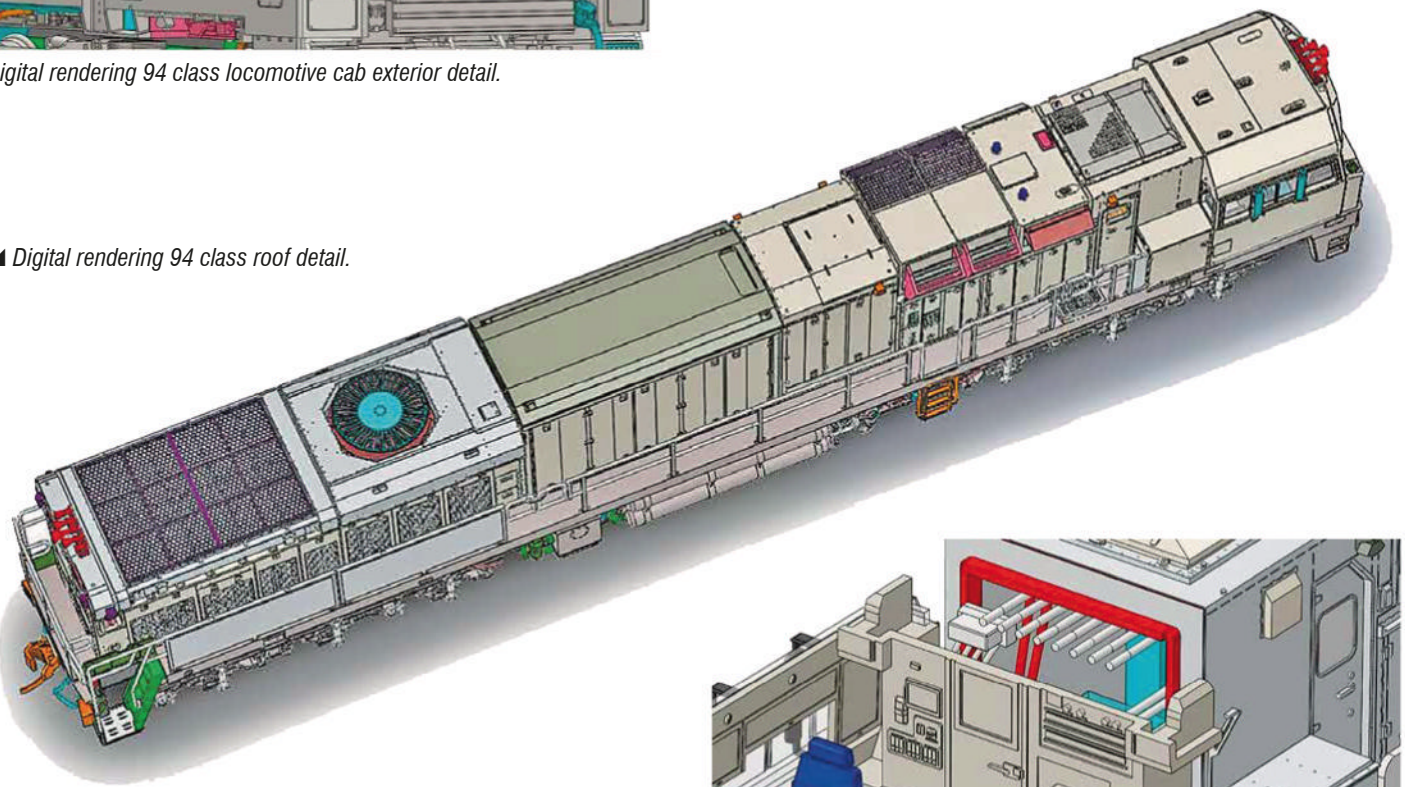


Digital rendering 94 class locomotive cab exterior detail.

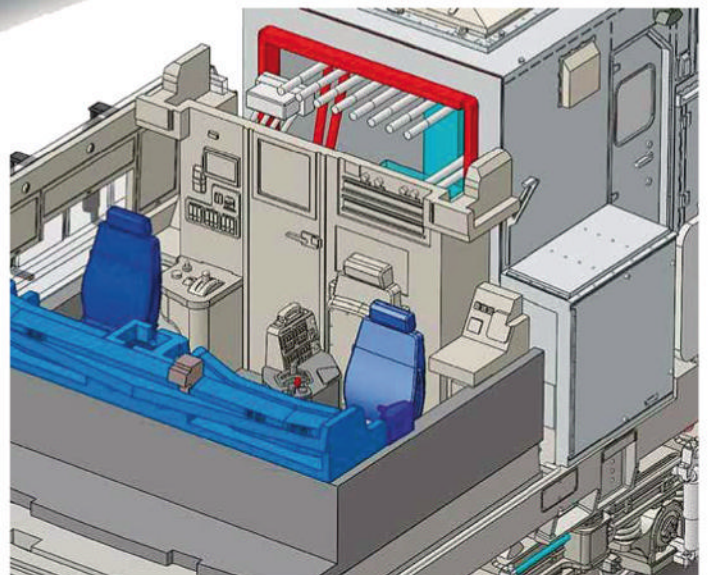


Digital rendering of the 94 class locomotive, showing wiring loom.

▲ *Digital rendering 94 class roof detail.*



▶ *Digital rendering of the 94 class locomotive cab interior detail.*



ScaleModelCo – HO scale

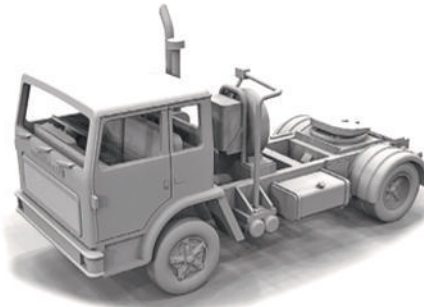
Has in development another series of OZ kit's HO (1:87 scale) truck kits:

International Acco prime movers, milk tanker semi and rigid fuel tanker

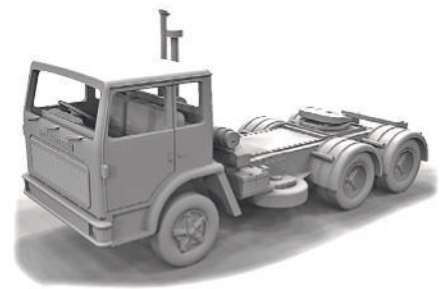
TK Prime mover and milk tanker semi

Bedford S Milk tanker and flat bed with side gates.

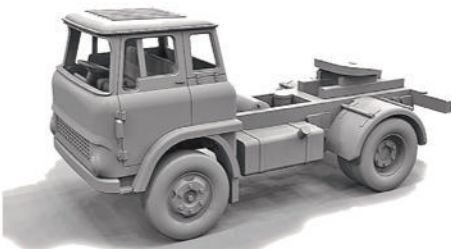
Acco C1800 flat bed.



Digital rendering International ACCO prime mover two axles.



Digital rendering International ACCO prime mover three axles.



Digital rendering Bedford TK model prime mover two axles.



Digital rendering International ACCO C1800 flatbed truck two axles.



Digital rendering Bedford milk tanker two axles.



Digital rendering International ACCO four axle fuel tanker.



Digital rendering Bedford TK model prime mover two axle, with single axle milk tanker.



Digital rendering International ACCO prime mover two axle, with two axle milk tanker.

Sydney Railroad Prototype Modellers Meet

The inaugural Sydney Railroad Prototype Modellers Meet (RPM) is scheduled for the 18th of April 2026. This is a new annual event.

This event is limited to pre-sold tickets only – and organisers are requesting that you bring your models.

A full day of prototype railroad models, displays, learning stations, hands-on demonstrations, hear from select manufacturers and more.

Bring your models, your models are at the core of Sydney RPM. Hundreds of models will be showcased.

Teach, learn and collaborate with fellow modellers from around Australia. We are delivering demonstrations and learning stations from renowned Australian modellers, manufacturers and guest creative talent applicable to all railroad prototype modellers



Locomotive No. 1957 saunters over a level crossing, displaying a selection of delicate details that make a model 'pop'. Photo by Ian Phemister - Andlan Models.

SDS Models – HO scale

Have received production versions of their r-t-r NSWGR FG coaches. The production run is expected to arrive in Australia mid March 2026.

Available in nine different two coach packs, including the following liveries:

- Venetian Red and Manila
- Venetian Red and Russet
- Indian Red
- SRA of NSW Candy

Also received are 1st engineering examples of the Victorian Railways four-wheel KC LCL container flat wagons, LCL boxes and Tallow tanks.



FG 689 in Indian Red livery.



FG 689 in Indian Red livery and FG 648 in SRA of NSW Candy livery.



1st engineering example of the VR four-wheel KC LCL container wagon, and two LCL containers. Note the small door arrangement and vents.



1st engineering example of the VR four-wheel KC LCL container wagon, and two Tallow tank containers.

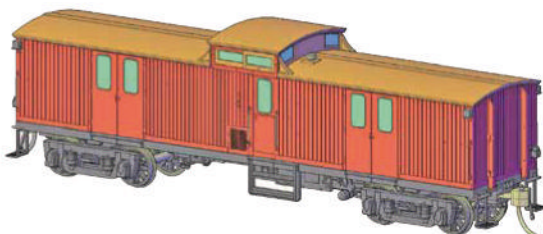
Train World Pty Ltd – HO scale

Is in development for a new range of Victorian Railways models under the brand name 'Country Line' including:

- Z and ZL timber planked and steel sheeted four-wheel guards vans
- ZB / ZD/ ZL/ ZP six-wheel guards vans
- ZLP – VVBP bogie guards vans, in as built two windows versions and later one window door versions.
- C bogie guards vans, in Auto-coupler fitted era, with prototype specific details, alternate roof edge profiles, shunters steps, and dog box doors.

Tooling is under way for these models and will feature:

- RP25-88 metal tyred wheels on pinpoint axles
- Genuine Kadee™ couplers
- Modeller installed folded or open tail discs
- Wire handrails and etched metal steps and lamp irons



Digital rendering VR C bogie guards vans.

TrainOrama – HO scale

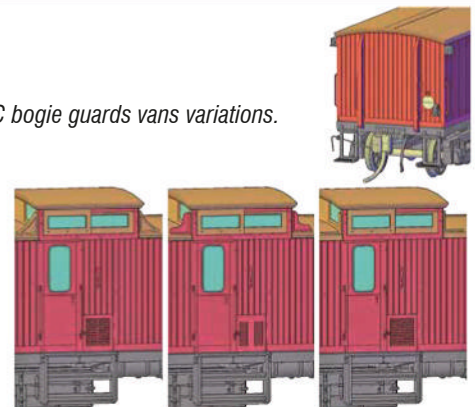
TrainOrama's Factory is in progress with r-t-r VR S class diesel electric locomotive re-run.

As soon as the factory staff return to work after 25th of February 2026, a shipping date will

be confirmed, the current estimate is late April, early May 2026.

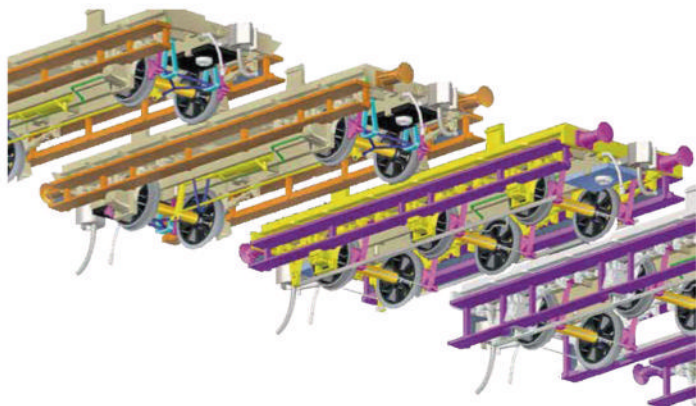
The r-t-r NSWGR 42 class locomotive production re-run is set for 700 units and is expected to be completed and shipped by mid August 2026.

Digital rendering VR C bogie guards vans variations.

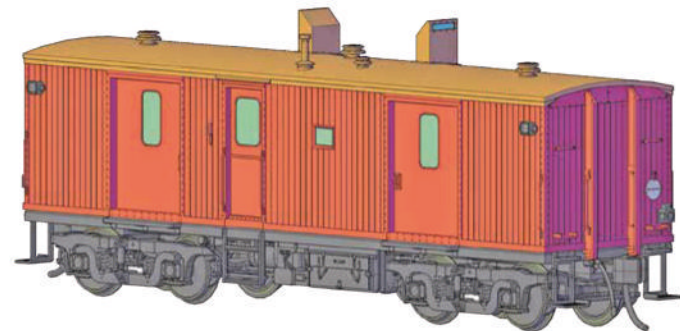




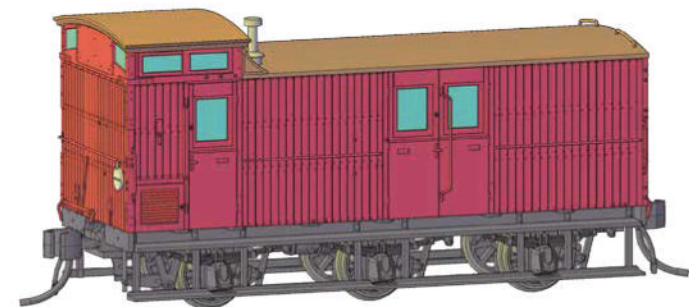
Digital rendering VR Z/ ZL timber-planked, four-wheel guards van with buffers.



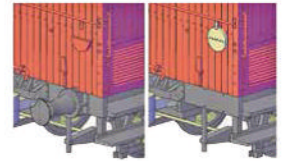
Digital rendering VR Z/ ZL timber-planked, four-wheel guards van with buffers.



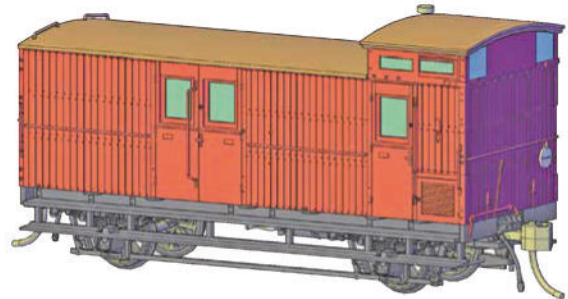
Digital rendering VR ZLP bogie guards van.



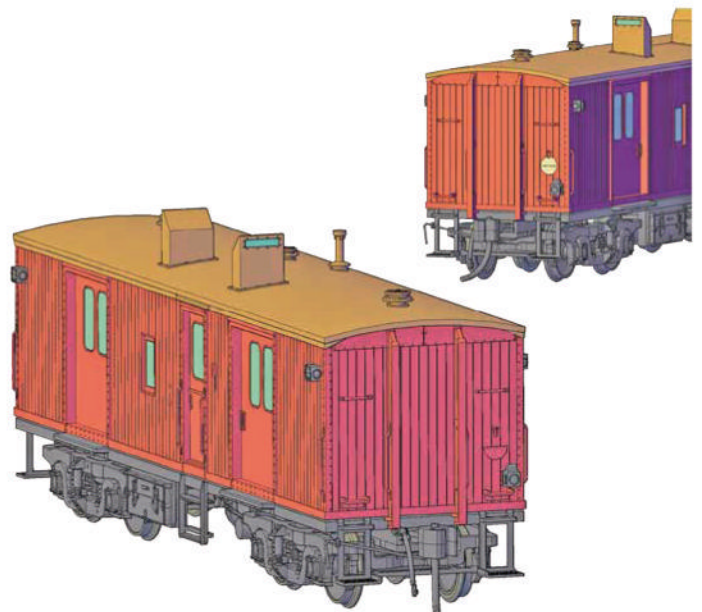
Digital rendering VR Z/ ZL six-wheel guards van.



Digital rendering VR Z/ ZL timber-planked, four-wheel guards van.



Digital rendering VR Z/ ZL, steel sheeted four-wheel guards van frames.



Digital rendering VR ZLP bogie guards van.

Vale

Desmond (Des) James McAuliffe

27 March 1935 - 15 January 2026

It was with great sadness that I learnt of the passing of my close, respected and valued friend Des McAuliffe early on the morning of Thursday, 15 January 2026, having visited him the previous afternoon.

I believe Des treated all of humanity, regardless of race, ethnicity and religious beliefs, with great humility and respect. He enriched almost everybody's life that he had contact with. He certainly did mine.

These traits exemplified Des' desire to provide and promote good teaching by example and communication. He enjoyed passing on information and skills that he had acquired, not only to children and teenagers, but to adults as well. He was artistic, as could be seen in his highly detailed model railway structures, displays and scenery. He was most chuffed when requested to explain his methods on constructing buildings and infrastructure from scratch; his weathering was inspiring.

I first met Des at a general meeting conducted by the South Australian Railway Modellers' Association (SARMA) when I joined that group in 1966 at age 18. Des had joined SARMA in 1960 when aged 25.

In 1968, at SARMA, I met Des' then-new South Australian Railways (SAR) work associate, Steve Cranwell. In many ways what I am about to say here can be echoed by good friend Steve.

It was also in 1968 that Des invited me to see his 'Melton Valley' model railway layout – a small, beautifully-detailed and scened railway that exuded character with the recognisable beginnings of a South Australian flavour.

Shortly after my visit to the 'Melton Valley', the SARMA 'Buffer Stop' editorial team took up Des' offer of visiting. They prepared an article for members' insight into what one member could do, particularly with regard to his scenic and weathering abilities in HO/OO scale. Des' method of operation, was based on his workings as an SAR Guard.

Several visits and operating sessions followed and his penchant for prototypical operation still enthralled me, even though he was not using SAR or look-a-like rolling stock. He was keen to pursue that aspect and model a South Australian station. Later, 'Wakefield River' was conceived and built.

Des, Steve and I did not immediately form a close bond but over the following years I enjoyed Des' friendship, his style of prototypical model railway operating, as well as his layout scenicking techniques. His compact 'Melton Valley Railway' was named after a small SAR station on the Yorke Peninsula which, he often worked to and from as a Guard.

After completing his handover duties, with his shift completed, he would then light up the wood-fired stove so that he, and the driver and fireman could cook up a brew and meal. There was no electric power at many of the station crew facilities, only a bunk. He would spend his eight-hour rest period in the crew quarters with his kit, blanket and faithful lantern.

Des enjoyed life!

He was born on 27 March 1935 in the State's northeast country town of Jamestown near the heartland of the narrow-gauge Peterborough Division of the SAR. That year was also the time that South Australians were slowly coming out of the Great Depression and wanted to enthusiastically celebrate their upcoming 1936 centenary of European settlement.

With a father employed by the SAR and eager to ascend the ranks, he shortly after accepted the Station Master's position at Mannahill. On moving there, halfway between Peterborough and Cockburn on the 145-mile-long Barrier Line in the State's far north, Des' formative years were built on love. He delighted in country life. Other family transfers followed, each move enriching Des' childhood years. A couple of his memorable childhood towns were Cummins (Port Lincoln Div) on the Eyre Peninsula, and Bowmans where he started school, had a dog and learned about a staple country food source, rabbits, from trapping.

Des had been around trains and exposed to railways for most of his life.

Being the son of the then long-time Snowtown Station Master, Des, as a 14-year-old, eager and without trepidation joined the railway service in 1949. He moved to Salisbury to board, to be close to the SARs Islington Workshops, his first nomination and location.

But that was not to be however. Days before his move to Salisbury to board and have his medical check with the Islington Sister, he was head-butted by a bull at Snowtown. Dazed, grazed and with a high temperature, the Sister immediately sent young Des home by train. His condition quickly became critical and he was given the last rites as the bright lights beckoned him to that great railway siding above.

But he was a fighter and it was not his time, he had just cheated death. Des reminded me of this account again only two years ago while we were chatting about life, railways, travel and books over a stout and curried egg sandwich.

Des was a prolific reader of books and magazines. His railway collection alone of Australian and international model and prototype books was extensive, covering main line, branch line, industrial, private, state run and preservation lines.

Upon his recovery Des was advised not to return to the noise and grime and toxicity at Islington. He was quite relieved to be transferred to the Traffic Branch where years of correspondence courses followed, gaining him his qualification 'tickets'. He then progressed through the ranks to spend many years working for the SAR in various positions and areas of Traffic Operations, both in acting and rated capacities. His spheres included duties as a Porter-In-Charge, Shunter, Guard and Signaller, working over and stationed in many country and Adelaide suburban areas.

Des finally finished 'in the Service', the then SAR, with, to quote him, 'a sit down, look out of the window job'. That institution became the SAR's later incarnation, Australian National.

From this position he also became an active union representative, dealing with all manner of issues with Union management and the varying levels of ANR and AN Management in determining outcomes satisfactory to both parties. He was highly regarded at all levels but retired early.

He then took up his model railway hobby in earnest and cemented a reputation for being a fine modeller with an exceptional aptitude and flair for his scenery creations. His other great model railway foray was with Lindsay Baker creating the 'South East Division Railway' which was based on the Mount Gambier to Naracoorte region. This was another inspiring model railway and a combined Northern Group project.

Des was also a driving force in producing articles and presentations at the 'Modelling the Railways of South Australia Conventions', inaugurated in 1996. He promoted the convention and had a large involvement creating highly detailed dioramas for the Convention as well.

With the dedicated Northern Model Railway Group members he was instrumental in producing the colourful 'Northern Group's Newsletter', along with Steve Cranwell.

In 2013 we also decided to produce the Group's 'bible';

a book of 268 pages, titled 'Modelling the Railways of South Australia: The Northern Model Railway Group'. Des was particularly proud of the book, referencing it most days as well as promoting it and a DVD version.

The Layout 'Wakefield River' [SF1.1] came about quite by accident. Des and I had each independently decided to model the Port Wakefield railway station, its yard complex and wharf area. I had already purchased SAR plans in 1969 and had taken photos of the then existing infrastructure, as well as gathering information. Discussions followed with Des later in the 1970s, who was keen to pursue the project after his Melton Valley Railway was dismantled and forthcoming house move.

The start of the 'Wakefield River' was when I made my plans available to him. It was decided that a U-shaped footprint would suit. A decision was made to build a stand-alone version of Port Wakefield and house it at Des'

home. All of the structures were scratch built then painted, and weathered by Des.

'Wakefield River' continued to provide great operating enjoyment for the group until 2019, by which time two of the Group had passed away.

Latterly Des, Steve and myself carried the mantle until Des took ill early last year after a fall at home. We had operated the layout to SAR methodology under the umbrella name of 'The Northern Model Railway Group'.

Des enjoyed the comradeships at SARMA, the Modelling the Railways of South Australia Conventions and the like-minded Northern Group team. Thanks Des.

We all learnt much from him, our patient mentor.

I have treasured memories of a giving, kind and gentle man who never lost his enthusiasm for model railways and fellowship.

In closing, one of Des' latter years' repeat quips to me was "I do not regret growing older – it is a privilege denied to many", followed by "... and any moment could see me presented with a one-way journey, a ticket on my going home train."

That journey has commenced, rest in peace in your eternal sleeping car, Des!

Respectfully,
Pete Fehlberg

Vale

Dennis Burrows

1946 - 2026

We sadly report the passing of Dennis Burrows.

Dennis would be known to many as the face behind the counter at Casula Hobbies where he helped Joe and Theresa service their large number of clients. But there was much more to Dennis, model railway hobby wise, than met the eye.

Dennis was an avid N scale modeller when he started dabbling in resin castings. In the 1990s he was a member of the Sydney Model Railway Society, holding various committee positions and was credited with expanding the membership of the club. His resin casting enterprise expanded when he purchased the Sydney Hobbies range from Geoff Kemmis. The variety of products in this range fed the burgeoning market

needs, such as, to add a load in their open wagon or address an empty coach interior. An addition to his production was the Frate N casting [DH1.1] [SF1.2] range, his skills producing masters and casting in both scales saw great results.

He also addressed the need for custom castings, satisfying many individual modellers with reproductions for their own model railway layout. He was also involved with radio-controlled model aircraft.

A quiet fellow who always seemed to care for what others needed. He will be missed.

Bob Gallagher

Mailbag

What's in a name - brand identity for young modelers

I just read your editorial in AMRM issue No. 376 February 2026. I couldn't agree more that there needs to be stepping stones to get the younger generation into trains at an inexpensive cost. As many of us started, it was from seeing the real thing that got us hooked. It still applies and I see it all over video platforms with what we sometimes term 'squeakers' or 'foamers' which film everything to do with trains. Here in Western Australia, it's everything Transperth or Metronet. Everything from opening of new stations to unusual workings during shutdown maintenance. So, what we need is something like a Vlocity set but as a Transperth train. At \$100 a pop, you could sell hundreds easily.

Further to that, I expect that's why the NR class locomotive has been such a popular model. Everyone can recognise an NR class locomotive and if you can't, most could recognise famous named trains 'The Ghan' or the 'Indian Pacific'. NR class locomotives are everywhere and they're contemporary so most kids will see that like the SCT train you mentioned in your editorial.

Alison Kelly
Perth WA

I totally agree with your observations in the editorial last issue (AMRM issue 376 February 2026). Helping my grandson set up his N scale model railway has been a great trauma, because he is unable to do skilled railway construction. He desperately wants to be able to run 'a real model railway' that is accessible and not too difficult to turn into the local railway he wants to model. I could write an article about our traumas. The introduction of robust ready to run local model sets would be an incredible help. And I agree that introducing young ones to model railways early (he is only eight years old and already fascinated by railways) can only help keep young modellers developing into adult customers!

Bruce Mumford
NSW

BRASSTIC KITS

By popular demand, the *Australian Model Railway Magazine* is once again stocking the brass castings for the BRASSTIC NSW 45 class, SAR 600 class and NSW 48 class modifications, as described in articles in AMRM.

Cost is:

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| 45 Class | \$35.00 |
| 48 Class | \$35.00 |
| 600 Class | \$35.00 |

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For further details on service items contact:

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EXHIBITIONS & EXPOS

BUNDABERG WEST – QLD. March 21-22, 2026. Bundaberg Model Train & Hobby Expo. Bundaberg Multiplex Sports & Convention Centre, 1 Civic Avenue, Bundaberg West. Open: 9am-5pm (Sat), 9am-4pm (Sun). Contact: 0407 559 086. www.facebook.com/bundabergmodeltrainexpo/

KALEEN – ACT. March 21-22, 2026. The Annual Canberra Model Railway Expo at UC High School Kaleen, 104 Baldwin Drive, Kaleen ACT. Open: 9am-5pm (Sat), 9am-3pm (Sun). Adults \$20, concession \$15. Free entry for school age children.

LILYDALE – VIC. April 4-5, 2026. Yarra Valley Model Railway Club Exhibition. Lilydale Basketball Stadium, 26 Hutchinson St, Lilydale VIC. Open: 9.30am-5pm (Sat), 10am-4pm (Sun). \$20 Adult, \$5 kids (under 16), \$40 Family (2 adults & 2 kids). Contact: Matthew 0433 235 858. Email: Secretary@yvmmc.org.au

SYDNEY – NSW. April 18, 2026. Sydney Railroad Prototype Modellers Meet. Bring your models, meet Ray Arnott from Around The Layout Podcast. Onsite manufacturers, learning stations, creative talent and door prizes. Pre-sold tickets only. Contact: hello@sydneyrpm.com learn more at www.sydneyrpm.com

LAVINGTON – NSW. May 16-17, 2026. Murray Railway Modellers Train Show. Mirambeena Community Centre, 19 Martha Mews, Lavington, NSW. Open 9am-5pm (Sat), 10am-4pm (Sun). Website: www.murrayrailwaymodellers.com.au

CLARENDON – NSW. May 30-31, 2026. Hills Model Railway Society Exhibition, Hawkesbury Racecourse, Clarendon NSW. Website: www.hmrs.org.au

ADELAIDE – SA. June 6-8, 2026. Adelaide Model Railway Show (June long weekend) new venue. Ridley Centre, Adelaide Showgrounds, Goodwood Rd, Wayville. Over 30 layouts, local & interstate traders. Website: www.modelrailwayshow.org.au

ZILLMERE – QLD. July 4-5, 2026. AMRA Qld Inc. Annual Brisbane Model Train Show. Northside Indoor Sports Centre 20 Cambewarra Street, Zillmere. Adults \$20, Concession \$15. accompanied kids under 16 free. Tickets only at the door on show days.

STAWELL – VIC. July 11-12, 2026. Grampian Model Railroaders Inc. SES Hall Sloane St Stawell Victoria. Open: 9.30am-5pm (Sat), 10am-4pm (Sun). Contact: Stuart 0438 545 233 Website: www.gmrinc.org.au

BRAYBROOK – VIC. August 1-2, 2026. Sunshine Model Railway Club Annual Model Train Exhibition. Braybrook Secondary College Sports Stadium, Burke Street Braybrook. 9:30am-5pm (Sat), 9:30-4pm (Sun). Adults \$10 Kids Free. Free parking. Contact: Ted 03 9311 8389 or Phil 0402 314 537. Website: www.sunshinemrc.org.au or find us on Facebook.

CAULFIELD – VIC. August 8-9, 2026. Australian Model Railway Association. Vic Branch. Caulfield Racecourse, Station Street, Caulfield. Open: 9am-5pm (Sat), 9am-4pm (Sun). Contact: Clubrooms (03) 9885 7034. Email: exhibitionamravic@gmail.com

THORNLEIGH – NSW. August 8-9, 2026. Marklin Modellers of Sydney Exhibition. Thornleigh Community Hall. Corner Phyllis and Central Avenues, Thornleigh. Open: 9am-5pm (Sat), 9am-4pm (Sun). Large Bring & Buy stall. Contact: Rolf 0429 992 353.

ROSEHILL – NSW. October 24-25, 2026. Great Train Show. Grand Pavilion, Rosehill Gardens Racecourse, Entry James Ruse Drive or Grand Avenue, Rosehill. Open: 9am-5pm (Sat), 9am-4pm (Sun). Adult \$20, Senior \$16, Child \$10, Family \$50. Contact: Mike 0408 817 554. Facebook: The Great Train Show Sydney. Email: exhibition@eppingmodelrailway.org.au. Website: www.greattrainshow.com.au

SEMINARS & CONVENTIONS

ADELAIDE – SA. August 21-23, 2026 19th National N Scale Convention. At the Hopgood Theatre, Noarkyba. Exhibitor registrations, partner program and merchandise information on Convention Website: www.nscaleconventions.au

ADELAIDE – SA. September 12, 2026. Modelling the Railways of South Australia 30, at Flinders Medical Centre lecture theatres, Bedford Park. Registration at 8.30am for 9am start (Sat). Forms: available late May from www.mrsac.com; from selected hobby shops; Adelaide Model Railway June Exhibition Email: mrsaconvention@gmail.com or convention@mrsac.com.

EPPING – NSW. September 25, 2026. *Modelling the Early Days of NSW Railways*. Dence Park Creative Centre, 26 Stanley Road, Epping. Registrations essential. Phone: 02 9311 2036.

SALE DAYS

DICKY BEACH – QLD. March 21, 2026. Caloundra & District Model Railway Club sale and display day at Church Of Christ, Beerburum Street, Dicky Beach. Open: 9am-12pm (Sat). Table bookings and enquiries welcome. Further info phone: 0434 541 915.

EPPING – NSW. July 25, 2026. Model Railway Market Day, Epping Creative Centre, Dence Park, 26 Standley Road, Epping. Open: 9.30am-1pm. Table rental: contact@eppingmodelrailwayclub.org.au

SLACKS CREEK – QLD. November 1, 2026. Logan District Model Railway Club sale day, 76 Springlands Dr Slacks Creek. Open: 8.30am-1pm (Sun). Adults \$5 Kids under 12 free. No cost to sellers. Pre book by emailing president@ldmrc.com. Seller's setup 7am.

OPEN DAYS

ZILLMERE – QLD. April 18 & October 17, 2026. AMRA Qld. Inc. premises, 20A Murphy Road Zillmere, just before the railway overpass. Disability parking only in grounds. Open: 8am to 1pm.

EPPING – NSW. June 8, 2026. (Kings Birthday Public Holiday). SCMRA, Epping Creative Centre, Dence Park, 26 Stanley Road, Epping. Open: 9.30am-2pm (Mon). Contact: Trevor 0419 492 533.

Market Place

COMMERCIAL: \$9.00 per line, minimum of \$21.00. Continuous or Advance insertions not guaranteed.

PRIVATE: 60 cents per word - name, address and phone number free. Minimum \$6.00 per insertion. Continuous insertions not guaranteed. All monies must accompany copy, which must be written clearly on paper. Phone insertions not accepted.

Send all copy and payment to SCR Publications, PO Box 345, MATRAVILLE, 2036. All copy must be received by advertising deadline for the issue required. (Advertising Deadlines listed on page 4.)

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Melbourne-based business Brad's Trains is looking to purchase deceased estates and unwanted collections, with a particular interest in brass items. No collection is too big or small! Offering friendly, honest service and fair cash offers. Based in Melbourne but happy to travel. Contact Brad on 0415 819 965 or brads.trains.store@gmail.com for a no-obligation chat today.

PRIVATE - WANTED

AUSTRANS NSWGR Four Wheeler MV Meat Van three van's pack or, as a single item. Phone or Text 0452 649 659.

VOLUMES 1 to 5 of the AMRM, part or complete volumes. Phone or text: Alan 0419 255 949.



ADVERTISING DEADLINE

June 2026 Issue 378

Advertising deadline is:
9 April 2026

The June 2026 issue should be available at the normal outlets around 14 May 2026.





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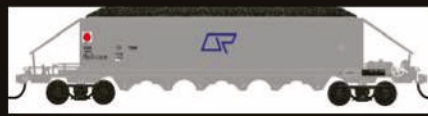
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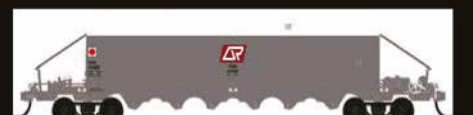
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